

Appendix 2

Views of service users

This Appendix provides a summary of the views of services users, carers and people with learning disabilities.

1. Views of users of Adult Social Care

Within the Adult Social Care Outcome Framework (ASCOF) is the annual statutory Client Survey that all councils must partake in. It enables councils to gather the views and concerns of the people who receive social care services and enables national benchmarking comparisons to be made against the national framework indicators called ASCOF Indicators.

In Swindon the survey was sent to a sample of service users who had received social care support from the council during the months of September to December 2014. The sample is selected using a formula which electronically picks the sample from the full cohort of clients.

We sent out 943 surveys, and 437 were returned completed equating to a 46% which is a good improvement on the previous year's response rate of 40.5%. This is the fourth national survey which looked at the Social Care users' perceptions of their services and how they felt about their own quality of life.

The results of this survey will be made publicly available in early October and we will then be able to compare Swindon's results against the national average for the 7 key indicators that fall out of the survey.

2. Views of people with Learning Disabilities and the Learning Disability Partnership Board

The Learning Disability Partnership Board meets six times a year and has a range of members including user reps, family carer reps, voluntary sector organisations, independent provider reps, social care and health services and other Swindon Borough Council Departments such as Housing, Leisure and Localities.

The core purpose of the Board is to ensure the vision outlined in documents such as Valuing People and Valuing People Now continue to influence developments in Swindon both in health and social care provision as well as the wider community. The Board achieves this through providing an arena for service user and carer involvement and feedback along with opportunities for stakeholders to work together. For the past two years the Board has also been involved in co-ordinating the Swindon response to the Joint Health & Social Care Self-Assessment Framework. This is conducted by Public Health England who use the information to produce a report on national and regional progress with implementing key policy initiatives.

What went well?

After reviewing the format of the Partnership Board meetings last year, it was agreed that every other meeting would take the form of a wider forum in order to gather views from more people and facilitate better networking opportunities. This has been successful with three forums having taken place. Each forum is planned by a small sub group, including Healthwatch Swindon, who then collate feedback and report this back to the Board.

The first forum was held in July 2014 and considered people's experiences around 'Independence & Choice'. This highlighted an issue for people with learning disabilities who did not always feel they had the right support to understand and manage their money.

As a result the second forum in November 2014 was titled 'Money: Who's in Control?' A range of key services were invited along with service users and carers and several actions resulted from the meeting including: writing to banks to find out about the reasonable adjustments they make for customers with learning disabilities; meeting with the Council's Appointee & Deputy Team to address issues around access to personal money; finding out more about budgeting support available. Reporting on the latter prompted a local free-lance worker to secure funding to set up a money management course for people with learning disabilities.

The third forum held in March 2015 focused on 'Dignity & Respect'. This was because the Learning Disability self-assessment asks service users and carers for their views on whether they feel services treat them with compassion, dignity and respect. Our carer and user reps felt this was a very difficult question to answer so this session was held in preparation for next year's self-assessment to help everyone understand the concepts in more detail.

The meeting looked at dignity & respect in the following areas: hospitals & GPs; social care assessments; leisure time (e.g. cinemas, restaurants, leisure centres etc.); using public transport. There has been good feedback following each Forum particularly in terms of networking and information sharing and there has been a much wider range of service users involved than would be represented at formal Board meetings. Some direct actions have been possible with Board members making things happen as well as feeding issues and ideas back to commissioners and service providers.

What would you do differently?

The Learning Disability Joint Health & Social Care Self-Assessment has been in place for two years now, co-ordinated by Public Health England. Both years it has been difficult to collect all the information requested, particularly information from Health services. We are working with the CCG to ensure that we have the necessary information for the Needs Assessment in 2015/16.

What are the challenges?

The main challenge is the capacity amongst Partnership Board members to provide resources to service the Board. Commissioners are discussing with Healthwatch and Swindon Advocacy Movement how they might provide support around planning and operating the Board.

Due to the Board's involvement in the Learning Disability Joint Strategic Needs Assessment in November 2012 and the Self-Assessment mentioned above, there has been a better link with commissioning at a strategic level. However, this could be strengthened through improvements around collating data and views for the Self-Assessment.