

Committee:	Health & Social Care Review Group (HSCRG)
Date of Meeting:	04 August 2021
Subject:	Healthwatch Luton Update on MH patient views (RAR)
Report by:	Lucy Nicholson, Chief Executive Officer
Contact Officer:	Lisa Herrick Project Support Officer

Purpose

1. To update HSCRG on the progress of the MH recommendations, actions and review (RAR) table provided to ELFT on mental health patient views from Healthwatch Luton's report (2019).

Recommendation

2. **HSCRG is recommended to note the report, comment and or make recommendation on progress.**

Background

3. Healthwatch Luton spent a year (2018-2019) researching and gathering mental health experiences in Luton, both from inpatients and community mental health support. Our report 'It's all about Perspective' outlined Luton resident views of mental health support in Luton, and Healthwatch Luton created a Recommendation, Action and Review (RAR) table in discussion with ELFT. This report is to review the progress of our and the patient recommendations being taken forward by ELFT as agreed with ELFT, Quality Surveillance Group and HSCRG.
4. ELFT and Healthwatch Luton have met regularly (CMHT Assistant Director, Inpatients Assistant Director, Crisis Pathway Manager and HWL Project Officer) to review the RAR throughout the year, despite the pandemic, to review progress. Due to COVID-19 pandemic – some actions have not progressed as much as would normally take place. There have been some recommendations which are currently live, for example, the admissions pack/discharge packs are currently being trialled and reviewed. This work has been taken on by the People Participation Working Together Group. Appendix 2 outlines the progress for the HSCRG to review.

Report

5. Healthwatch Luton spoke to 250 people in Luton who had a current mental health diagnosed condition in 2018-2019, or family members or carers of people who were currently being supported for mental health conditions. This equated to nearly 10% of all our feedback, and we were contacted by people currently on inpatient wards as well as thematic views of community mental health support. We provided these views to ELFT as the mental health provider, and agreed recommendations from the patients, actions ELFT would or could take (or could not) and review the progress with each other ongoing.
6. Our report outlined many positive aspects of the current mental health provision in Luton, as well as outlining the eclectic mix of support and provision that is available across the

town. However, there was also a lot of concern about how people felt they were supported in Luton under the mental health provision, and this created Healthwatch Luton to create their report which held recommendations, actions taken by ELFT and review (RAR) table, which was created with ELFT.

7. Healthwatch escalated our report and reviews to ELFT – as well as to the commissioners of the provider service. We also raised some concerns further to NHS England under the Quality Surveillance Group (East of England NHS). This group escalated their surveillance rating of ELFT in their monitoring (2019) but has since reduced their surveillance rating. (2020).
8. Since our report – there have been changes to quality monitoring of mental health services, and in particular in relation to this report – the monitoring of quality has now been moved to the BLMK CCG's new System Quality Meetings. These meetings are yet to be provided a formal framework in which to monitor quality of the mental health provision. We have asked the Chair of these meetings how our RAR will be reviewed, and this will be taken into consideration once the formal framework of the SQG's have been finalised.
9. **Our main recommendation to the HSCRG is to review progress of Healthwatch Luton's RAR, and to support our proposal to re-address these further with ELFT with clear timescales on completion.**

Other Background Information: other concerns

10. There are many mental health initiatives taking place across the town. These are being led by ELFT (MH Strategy), the CCG (Reimagining MH), Public Health Luton (MH strategy in Luton), charity and community groups (individual strategies from MIND, Penrose and other community organisations), and across the region from BLMK CCG (BLMK Mental Health strategy). Healthwatch Luton's concern is that few of these groups have reviewed our report and recommendations, using the patient voice of over 250 people to help shape their strategies and progress – and we would recommend the joining up of these strategies is managed somewhere. We would ask a) that our report is reviewed and b) that HSCRG discuss the joining up of all these mental health approaches.
11. Healthwatch Luton continue to receive feedback resulting in safeguarding concerns - Whilst there have not been many formal safeguarding referrals made by Healthwatch Luton in relation to ELFT this last six months, there have been several concerns raised and several incidents where Healthwatch Luton have contacted the Safeguarding Lead or Assistant Directors in response to feedback. There have been three concerns for people self-harming or having suicidal thoughts whilst on an inpatient ward who have contacted Healthwatch Luton in the last quarter. It would seem there is an increase in feedback of a safeguarding nature over recent months.
12. Patient Perspectives - The perspective of patients does not seem to, on the whole, have improved from the thematic response of our feedback. There were recommendations made that included improving the provision of activities on the wards. This has been improved by having activity packs available on the wards during covid and an increase in virtual activities, however, patients have reported in targeted engagement that many of these activities were cancelled without any notice and there is no gym facilities or independent activities to do. Without our independent review we cannot have assurance from patient perspectives that their overall feedback has improved.

13. Independent view not possible: in the present climate, Healthwatch Luton cannot get on to the wards to carry out independent reviews. Ordinarily, based on the current feedback and the previous Enter and View schedule, Healthwatch Luton would have returned in Autumn 2020 to carry out reviews of the wards from twelve months prior. Unfortunately, this has not been done as yet. There is discussion about a multi-agency audit with the Luton Safeguarding Adults Board. This is a piece of work being led by LSAB and would begin in the Autumn.
14. Healthwatch Luton have attempted to hold inpatient forums or virtual conversations with current inpatients, however these have not been entirely successful. There have been limited availability to hold these due to the demands and capacity on the wards. These sessions have not been impartial as there is a member of staff at all times with the inpatients when speaking to Healthwatch Luton. They have become increasingly hard to organise with staff, however, the feedback gathered has been useful in forming trends and understanding some limited perspective of the current inpatients.

Proposal/Options

15. To request the HSCRG support Healthwatch Luton in continuing to review the recommendations and actions proposed in our report – and ensure patient perception of care improves, despite many transformations of MH and strategies being put in place, and changes to the health and care landscape. It is imperative that those people experiencing the mental health provision in Luton feel the improvements and their perceptions chime with the amount of resource, time and financial investments placed in Mental Health.

Appendices

Appendix 1

Healthwatch Luton Report: [MH-Main-report-FINAL.pdf \(healthwatchluton.co.uk\)](https://healthwatchluton.co.uk/MH-Main-report-FINAL.pdf)

Appendix 2

Healthwatch Luton – RAR Updated – Recommendation, Review and Action table.

List of Background Papers - Local Government Act 1972, Section 100D

None