

Winning the Best Community Health Care

Appreciative Inquiry

Summary Report

Key Messages from the Appreciative Inquiry

The best community healthcare includes pathways in and out of hospitals. Lewisham Hospital is at the heart of our community. To maintain such high quality care our work has shown that we need:

- Well trained and well paid staff, well supported, who have the time to offer patient centred services.
- A holistic approach, taking into account many aspects of the patient's life and health.
- Connectedness and cooperation between services, the voluntary sector and the community.
- The patient supported to make as many decisions about their care as they want.
- Healthcare as a whole - we reject suggestions that boosting community healthcare opens the door to reductions in hospital care
- No privatisation. Smooth integrated pathways cannot be provided through privatisation and fragmentation.
- If there are clinically sound and citizen-backed reasons for closing hospital services, then community services need to be in place and effective first.
- Renegotiation Private Finance Initiative where possible
- New media should be used where appropriate

Introduction

Over the past three months the [Save Lewisham Hospital](#) campaign and [Healthwatch Lewisham](#), [Carers Lewisham](#) and others have collected over 100 stories gathered from users, clinicians and managers to find out from people's personal experience what are the key features, the magic ingredients that make good community healthcare so valuable.

The Campaign began this process because, despite government rhetoric, the Campaign expects that community healthcare will come under threat in the next couple of years through budget cuts and privatisation, resulting in shrinking and fragmented services.

The Campaign is also concerned that community services are being positioned against hospital services: altering community care to enable cuts in hospitals. The Campaign rejects this approach, seeing healthcare as a whole and certainly not pitting one part against another.

The Campaign opted for a process called Appreciative Inquiry. This is a 5 stage participative process which includes gathering stories which focus on the best of their experiences, building a picture of what they want to create and working out together how to achieve the future they want. This provided a basic framework for us to work together to maintain, protect and improve community health care.

Healthwatch Lewisham is an inclusive network that enables people and organisations in Lewisham to have a say and influence the planning, commissioning and delivery of health and social care services to improve the health and well-being of patients, service users and members of the public. Healthwatch wanted to be involved as it meets some of our core functions:

1. Gathering the views and experiences of service users, carers, and the wider community,
2. Making people's views known,
3. Involving locals in the commissioning process for health and social care services, and process for their continual scrutiny.

The Appreciative Inquiry helps us to define people's standards for good quality care. Healthwatch is committed to using the findings from the inquiry to influence the commissioning of health and social care services.

The event at the Lessoff Auditorium was a key step on the way.

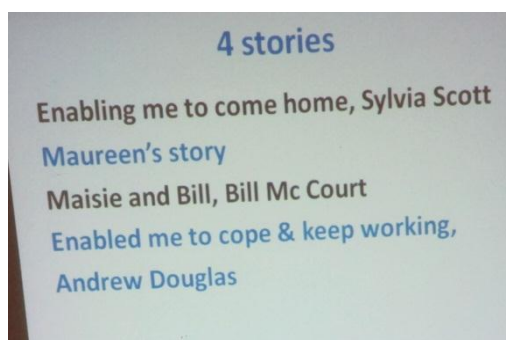
Aims of the Inquiry Event

1. To develop a shared sense of the essence and quality standards of Community Health Care services we expect to be commissioned in Lewisham
2. To inspire and energise participants to work within and outside the campaign to realise these expectations
3. To work together to see how these insights can help protect and improve community health services in Lewisham

Who Attended

The event was well attended with over 40 people representing the diversity of Lewisham including young people, older residents, service users, CVS representatives, local councillors, NHS staff, Health and Wellbeing Board Members, LESOCO college, the North Lewisham Plan and Community Connections.

The Stories



Four of those stories were presented on the day by the story tellers themselves and these were recorded and will be available to watch at a later date. Here is part of one:

“Getting home to find everything ready for me was key. All my equipment was in place ready in my home; 2 zimmer frames, leg raises, a trolley, grabber, cushion it was all organised with my neighbour while I was in hospital. They asked my permission of course.”

“The OT, social worker, nurse, trainer and neighbour working together. The trainer had taught me while I was in hospital how to get in and out of the bath and my bed etc so that I was ready for when I left hospital. All the team came to visit me the day after I arrived “it was like Piccadilly Circus at my house”. It was all joined up, amazing. All worked perfectly.”

Watch Sylvia's story here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/yb5bng78h2bdopp/Appreciative%20Inquiry%20%284%29.avi>

Themes Identified



Story Collectors had previously analysed the 100 stories to identify the following themes from the stories' magic ingredients:

1. Time
2. Accessibility
3. Smooth Proactive pathways
4. Empowerment of the Patient
5. Professionalism, Skill, Sensitivity, Listening
6. Sees the person and the social situation not just the condition
Incorporating the social determinants
7. What Value Most; Fear

Time

for clinicians and services to spend with people. This then enables the other ingredients:

Accessibility

to services in a timely and easy way

"I have seen same GP since a little girl aged 12. He is friendly, easy to approach. He is professional which means everything runs smoothly. They mainly offer good access and I see the same person every time which I love." PATIENT

Smooth Proactive Pathways of Care

where different parts of the system work smoothly together, wrapped around the patient

Empowerment of the Patient

so that people can take control over their health and disease management as much as they want to

Professionalism, Skill, Sensitivity, Listening

Story-tellers emphasised this. Clinicians were highly valued if they listened, understood, heard people's stories saw the person behind the disease, went the extra mile. People were clear that this requires time and skill.

"I felt I was going mad, putting up with bullying for so long. GP saw it immediately and with empathy she understood. She insisted that I be signed off. She told me to go away and that I could call her from Ireland if I needed to."

Took time to listen

Taking responsibility

Went the extra mile

Professional and skilled

Balanced treatment against not treating

Continual assessment - "I was asked to go back." PATIENT

Sees the person and the social situation not just the condition

Incorporating the social determinants of health

What we value most - and fear most.

The risk to services of privatisation was spontaneously mentioned on a number of occasions.

Connected services, patient involvement

“We wanted to improve the COPD pathway. Designed with patients and primary and secondary care clinicians, we now have rapid easy access to a nurse specialist who offers patients a multi-disciplinary needs assessment and education as well as rapid access to treatment. It is already reaping benefits. We need to move from a short-term financial-based approach to invest to save, planning with patients for the future.” GP COMMISSIONER



These seven themes were endorsed by participants' own stories shared on the day.

The Vision: All contribute, All benefit

Participants divided into four groups to develop a sketch to portray how they would like community health to look in 2017. The sketches maintained a similar vision; excellent community health care is delivered by well trained and well paid staff who are well supported and have the time to offer patient centred services. It is holistic, taking into account many aspects of the patient's life and health. Central to successful delivery is cooperation between services, the voluntary sector and the community.

Common to all the stories was staff having the time to deliver excellent care. Time enabled them to listen to and understand the patient and their needs, create a smooth pathway between services and empower the patient to manage their own health. There was an emphasis on the need to integrate health and social care in order to offer barrier-free care to those who need it.

You can see one of the visions here:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/qxh1ql6s2t7dp87/Appreciative%20Inquiry%20%285%29.avi>

After time to network over lunch participants were invited into an open-space style workshop where individuals could suggest a topic they would like to discuss and members could join the discussion they felt most relevant. Here is a summary of the action points to take forward.

- **Joining health and social care**
which could include sharing health and social care electronic records, supporting the Community Connections project to get GPs more informed/involved
- **A public education programme**
is needed to help people understand and get involved with the design of local health strategy and policy;
- **Ensuring NHS staff are involved in all decisions about the delivery of community healthcare**
- **Making sure the voluntary sector is represented**
in the right places to promote a joined up health and social care strategy.
- **Challenge the NHS on the Private Finance Initiative,**
a mortgage on NHS property which is draining our NHS of cash which goes to private corporations.

Key Messages

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More video clips and photos from the day will be available soon via www.savelewishamhospital.com and <http://www.healthwatchlewisham.co.uk/>

What's next?

There will be a public meeting on **Tuesday the 29th of July from 10.30-2pm in the Civic Suite, Catford** as part of the Healthwatch Lewisham Reference Group Meeting to continue to take forward the Community Health Care Appreciative Inquiry and use the evidence gathered thus far to influence the South east London commissioning strategy. We welcome your attendance.



Save Lewisham Campaign and Healthwatch Lewisham are considering developing quality assured criteria based on the themes identified by this inquiry in order to hold commissioners accountable when monitoring current provisioning and looking to commission new services.

We also will consider how to best take forward the new ideas which surfaced through the day. We are committed to keeping in touch with the many people who participated in the story gathering and the event itself.

To contribute to the inquiry additional positive community health care stories can be submitted on Save Lewisham Hospital website at <http://www.savelewishamhospital.com/community-care-survey/> Or alternatively call Healthwatch Lewisham on 020 7998 7796 to tell your story or find out more information about the event.

