



**healthwatch**  
South Gloucestershire

## **SINGING FOR THE BRAIN**

A Healthwatch South Gloucestershire volunteer champion visited Downend singing for the brain group to hear patient experiences. Information about their experiences will be fed back to health and social care providers through this report.

# **SINGING FOR THE BRAIN**

## **THE PATIENT EXPERIENCE**

Healthwatch South Gloucestershire visited to:

- hear the views of patients, staff and visitors about health and social care services;
- inform the community about Healthwatch South Gloucestershire;
- encourage members of the public to volunteer with Healthwatch South Gloucestershire.

Healthwatch focused on;

- experiences of using local services, particularly acute services (in the run-up to our Winter project)
- links between community services and acute services
- ease of service access

**You Said.....**

**23 comments were received relating to Southmead Hospital; various GP practices; Sirona; adult social care and a number of other services**

## Feedback

### 1. Patient experience, parking, information provision at Southmead Hospital

Patient had a post colonoscopy procedure, but felt feedback regarding findings was too brief and given whilst still partly sedated- so information was difficult to retain. Patient felt that they had not received information regarding possible after effects, following treatment. For example, they were told to use a phone number if bleeding was 'excessive' - but did not understand what 'excessive' looks like. Patient bled quite a lot and needed to get friend, an ex- nurse to visit her for reassurance instead.

Patient reported that they had been given a follow-up referral appointment is 23/24 weeks away and not within 18 weeks . This will be October, which feels very late.

Several patients reported that parking remains a problem. One patient reported a difficult walk to Breast care centre from a car park. Also, no drop off parking at main entrance on June 28 as barricades up for work. Had to leave relative in car on side street, and run to main entrance to return cardiac monitor.

### 2. Good quality care, but delayed appointments and staffing issues at Emerson's Green surgery

Several group members are registered at Emerson's Green surgery and all reported difficulties getting GP appointments.

It was reported that the surgery is unable to recruit another full time GP, so waiting times for any appointment- even telephone appointments- are extensive.

Patients reported that a normal wait for an appointment with a particular GP can be 4 to 6 weeks.

Some commentators reported long waits when making telephone calls for results.

Some commentators reported that repeat prescriptions can be delayed awaiting GP signature.

Telephone appointments were reported to be less effective by some commentators.

Full information on tests can be unavailable over the phone - for example, the results of one blood test could only given at next face to face appointment. But patients feel that they must accept these telephone appointments to avoid an even longer wait.

One volunteer reported many 'telephone' diagnoses- leading to several lots of antibiotics without any visual examination of problem.

Patients were positive about several aspects of their care, including the fact that if results need following up, receptionists will phone or text quickly. Patients were generally satisfied with the doctors when able to see one.

### **3. Leap valley surgery**

Commentators reported positive experiences at this surgery. It was stated that if a patient telephones for a consultation, a GP usually calls back on the same day.

Appointments can usually be obtained in 3 or 4 days.

One patient was pleased that they receive an annual recall for blood pressure testing.

On occasion, it was reported that prescriptions can go missing when being sent to Westbourne pharmacy.

### **4. Willow surgery**

One commentator reported that his mother's GP (Dr Pearce) is approachable and does a home visit when needed which is greatly valued.

One commentator was very pleased with the service provided by a named member of staff at Cleevewood pharmacy. The staff member was reported to be helpful, efficient and prompt.

### **5. Fishponds Health Centre**

One commentator reported feeling that advice given was not helpful or sympathetic enough when discussing mother's loss of weight due to dementia.

### **6. Well Pharmacy, Lodge Causeway**

One commentator reported problems with mother's dosette box.

### **7. The Carer's Support Centre, Fishponds**

One commentator reported that support days are very helpful with signposting to Nutritionist, Carers Choir and other information.

### **8. SALT (Speech and language therapy)**

A very positive report was made by a service user who feels that the therapist is very supportive and understands the issues around dementia.

### **9. Adult social care**

One commentator was concerned about his experiences of a safeguarding process.

### **10. Sirona**

Commentators reported that the district nurses team treat carer as very important. Open and honest-are now involved in Palliative care of wife. Regular phone calls. Podiatrist-excellent, and empathetic towards wife. Social carers,' Elite,' very good

## 11. NHS111

In July 2016, commentator called NHS111 service at 12.30am on behalf of husband who has emphysema and was experiencing upper abdominal pain. Call handler answered, but spoke so fast commentator could not understand her.

The handler was asked to speak slowly but did not. The advice given was felt to be unwise, as patient was advised to take 4 aspirin but had already been taking aspirin.

Commentator believed that call handler thought the problem was cardiac pain, and was informed that paramedics would be called but these did not arrive. 45 minutes later, commentator called back and stood the call for paramedics down as husbands pain had become bearable.

### Action taken:

All commentators are supported to understand that they have the right to complement, complain or feedback to providers. Healthwatch always encourages patients to use this right in order to support services to improve.

Healthwatch is monitoring service-specific feedback, and will make use of this information as we conduct work looking at use of services this winter, and in the run-up to planned enter and view work into minor injuries provision in GP practice clusters.

Healthwatch is also examining how patient flow works during winter peak times, and will ensure that any feedback about NHS111 or access to health support via GPs or pharmacists informs this work.

### Tell Us Your Story...

Healthwatch South Gloucestershire wants to hear from you about your experiences so that we can tell services your needs to create the best local services.



Text us - text SG followed by your message to 07860 021 603



Email us at [info@healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk)



Call us: 01454 543 402



Write to us at: Healthwatch South Gloucestershire,  
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Or visit our website to see more at: [www.healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchsouthglos.co.uk)