

# Engagement Report Q&A – May 2023

**Boston Community Group**

# Engagement Report Q&A- May 2023

## Boston Community Group

### Background

Healthwatch Lincolnshire has an ongoing engagement program including listening to the concerns raised by seldom heard groups such as those from deprived areas, people living with disabilities and minority ethnic groups. One of the ways that we gather experiences of health and care is to do face to face sessions with groups. Our recent Cost of Living Survey, for example, highlighted the fact that people living with disabilities and long term health conditions are struggling accessing health and care as a direct result of the financial constraints that they find themselves in.

The purpose of the engagement activity was to:

- Gather feedback from the members of the group
- Find out about their concerns and issues and positive experiences
- Raise awareness of Healthwatch Lincolnshire as a source of information and signposting
- Ensure we meet our statutory duties set out in our Healthwatch contract to listen to people's experiences of health and social care so that we as an organisation can influence the providers and commissioners of health and social care services to hear the voice of the people that their decisions will affect.

Boston is an area that can be described as a market town with many deprived wards within its boundary and has a number of surrounding villages. There is a large number of people living with long term health conditions and disabilities. There are also a number of challenges in the Boston Town Centre itself due to the lack of cohesion of the diverse community in this area.

As part of our ongoing engagement with different communities, Oonagh Quinn our Healthwatch Involvement Officer was invited to the first meeting of a newly established Group supporting people living with disabilities in the Boston area. After the disbandment of the Boston Disability Forum, a few of the original members of that group have got together and are now in the progress of setting up a new group. The group had a number of representatives from other existing groups who support both adults and parents of disabled children. Throughout the discussions with the group, they raised a number of issues which have been highlighted in this report.

## Questions & Answers

### Response from ICB relating to Case 12188

**Q1. With centralisation of services, how is the Integrated Care Board ensuring that issues and extra support is being put into place to support these people who may have to travel further away from home and stay away longer to access treatment?**

#### Answer

Ordinarily, responsibility for getting to and from NHS appointments lies with the patient, though there are some obvious exceptions to this, such as when a patient's travels by emergency ambulance. In Lincolnshire, we want to make NHS services as accessible as possible, and therefore there are a number of initiatives in place to support people, when travel to and from an appointment may be difficult.

Whilst the NHS is not responsible for public transport and infrastructure, we do recognise the challenges of commuting around such a large rural county, particularly for the elderly and economically disadvantaged.

- Patients living in Lincolnshire with a medical condition that prevents them from using public transport or their own transport, may be eligible for patient transport. This is an ambulance service, currently run by TASL, that transports the patient directly from their home to their appointment. Anyone living in the county who is eligible and requires transport can contact TASL on 0808 164 4586.
- Many local Lincolnshire GP surgeries are also supported by a volunteer driver service, which can also transport people directly from their home to their appointment. Please enquire with your GP practice regarding availability and access.
- Lincolnshire County Council's Transport Helpline is another good source of advice on travel and transport options in the county. Full details and contact information can be found here [Transport Helpline - Lincolnshire Transport Services Group \(lincsbus.info\)](https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/transport-helpline)

The national Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme was established to help those who need support to pay for travel to NHS appointments. For more information about access and eligibility, please visit [Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme \(HTCS\) - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk/healthcare-travel-costs-scheme)

**Q2. Does the Integrated Care Board have Disability Working Groups (such as Sensory Impairment, Wheelchair Users, Adults and Children with Learning Difficulties, Long Term Health Conditions to name but a few) working alongside them at all stages of the development of and redesigning of new services? If the answer is NO, then why not?**

The ICB is committed to involving patients, the public and stakeholders in the development and redesign of services. We have a number of opportunities for people to get involved in the work that we do (<https://lincolnshire.icb.nhs.uk/get-involved/>) and often this includes working with service users and those with lived experiences when we are reviewing specific services or working to make improvements. We also have a number of co-production groups set up with service users working directly with project teams, again depending on the service being reviewed.

**Q3. When attending any ULHT premises for an appointment is there help available such as a volunteer to give assistance? Do these need to be booked in advance?**

We have meet & greet volunteers at main entrances at all our sites and will soon be launching a new initiative called 'book a volunteer'. In the meantime, if anyone needs assistance, please do not hesitate to let the clinic or service know and they can arrange support.

**Q4. Wheelchair users: if a person has a power chair and it has issues, whilst being repaired, how does the person get out and about? Is there access to one whilst their one is being repaired?**

It will depend on what the individual requirements are as wheelchairs are specific to the individual so a replacement may be available, but it would not be measured to the individual and may not be of the same specification. This would be a conversation with the provider by the individual if and when a repair is required.

**Q5. How are homeless people within the Boston area access basic primary health and care? What services are available and how are they accessed by those vulnerable people who need them?**

Response provided by Specialist neighbourhood practitioner -

- Currently in the Boston area the Neighbourhood team offer monthly drop-in clinics within centre point to offer advice on mental and physical health and ease the pathways of how to access primary care, assist with registering with GP surgeries, assist with medication and appointment enquiries. Offer low level testing where appropriate and offer wound care as required.
- The neighbourhood team offer the response for the homeless cohort around covid and flu injections where suitable
- The homeless charities and homeless service stakeholders link in with the neighbourhood team on a weekly basis at the neighbourhood Multi-Disciplinary Team which also hears the vulnerable adult's referrals.
- The neighbourhood team link in with the rough sleeping team, centre point , framework , housing , council and police.
- The Neighbourhood team / PCN community connector offers the low-level mental health BEAM café where homeless people are supported and assisted with mental and physical health via referral to the registered practitioners.

**Q6. Disability exercise programmes what is available locally and how do people access these programmes and resources? What additional resources such as transport is in place?**

Response from Boston PCN Lead OT -

- From a Falls Prevention perspective – we are doing a piece of work for Falls with our Partners in the Neighbourhood – this is very early days. Happy to update as we develop this.
- Age UK were starting to offer some group exercise Programmes.
- Some of our Care Homes have Activities Co-ordinators are delivering Exercise Sessions
- Some of the local Gyms/Football groups have Exercise classes for over 50s

- Classes - Boston Borough Council - <https://www.boston.gov.uk/article/21168/Classes>
- Learning Disability Sports - Boston United Community Foundation (bostonunitedcf.co.uk) <https://www.bostonunitedcf.co.uk/learning-disability-programme/>
- We can also use Social Prescribing to support access to Gyms.

**Q7. Advocacy and Support - many people experience short term support and have to reapply for each new thing that comes along. What is the criteria for access this service and how long can the individual get this support? How is this communicated to the individual? Why is a new case worker assigned each time?**

There are different types of criteria for different types of advocacies in different areas. The Advocacy is subject specific which means the client would only be supported with their issue that is raised at the enquiry stage. If a different reason for advocacy came up, then a new referral would need to be made for each new thing that came along.

This is communicated to the individual by the allocated advocate making contact with the client.

The allocation of the case worker depends on the capacity of the case worker and the allocation process does try to ensure the same advocate is used, this isn't always possible.

**Q8. What is being done to address the provision of both community and hospital physiotherapy?**

We are currently looking at our physiotherapy workforce plans both short and long term. This includes recruitment and retention of all therapy staff (Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy and Dietetics) in our business plans and how we can look at our skill mix to work more effectively and efficiently both in the hospital and in the community. Our staff do deal with carers or relatives looking after people with disabilities, and we treat each case on an individual basis according to their needs. This may include education on how to manage the long-term disability and/or provide advice and support for the carer/relative.

**Q9. How do people access interpretation services if they need it? Who's responsibility is it to book this for an appointment at a health and care appointment? How is this communicated with the patient and their carer?**

Re: interpretation services, they book this via the practice staff who will book an interpreter for their appointment, and it is the practices responsibility to book interpretation services. On how this is communicated the specifics will vary between practices, but generally there will be a combination of posters displayed, website and social media information available, language options on check-in screens and via electronic services, and if there are direct communication difficulties then the practice staff would offer or request consent for a translator to be booked.

**Q10. What is in place for people with a hearing or speech impairment when trying to access emergency medical assistance?**

There is a range of items both for face-to-face care and for remote care including calling 999. SMS to the emergency services | EmergencySMS <https://www.emergencysms.net/> allows for 999 calls to be processed via text rather than voice. We also except calls via textphone relay and can also use video calling for remote triage.

In terms of once we are on scene with someone, we have the option of multiple platforms such as interpreter services (including BSL), communications toolkits, apps etc. to aid all forms of communication not just speech or hearing impairment.

**Q11. What disability awareness training is offered to employees working within organisations across health and care?**

Equality and Diversity training is mandatory across health and care providers.

**Q12. What systems are in place with health care settings to identify vulnerable people to health and care staff? How consistent are these across all health and care systems and how are they monitored for effectiveness to improve the patient / carer experience.**

In healthcare, the use of "All About Me" is the preferred approach to enable staff to provide appropriate, patient-centred care. We are always keen to receive feedback and welcome comments from patients and carers on their experiences.

**Q13. What processes are in place for people who need assistance to attend a medical appointment and need support either to get there or once at the location?**

For healthcare in Lincolnshire, we have a non-emergency transport information helpline – 0345 456 4474. Patients and/or carers are welcome to liaise with specific clinics to highlight any assistance requirements.

**Q14. Do GP Practices have access to hoists for those patients that might need them during an examination?**

Practices are required to make reasonable adjustments for people in line with the Equality Act 2010. If there are specific examples where this has not happened – please let me know.

**Q15. Are disabled people being referred to social prescribers to support them in accessing befriending and socialising groups to improve their overall wellbeing? How is this being communicated to the individual?**

GPs and Social Services can refer people to wellbeing services, but patients and carers can also refer. Two great options are <https://www.wellbeinglincs.org/> and <https://www.oneyoulincolnshire.org.uk/>

**Q16. Who can qualify for home visits for medical checks up such as physical examinations (GPs, Nurses, physiotherapists, Opticians, Dental check-ups, screening etc)?**

Home visits from GPs and Nurses should be negotiated with the individual practice. Community physiotherapy and community occupational therapy are usually provided by Lincolnshire Community Health Services Trust – it would be useful to have additional details if there are concerns about service provision.



**Q17. Wheelchair users who are not able to transfer from a wheelchair to a dentist's chair easily, are all dentists equipped / trained with equipment to assist these people so that they can access treatment?**

The Lincolnshire Special Care Dental Service is for patients that are resident, including homeless and socially excluded groups within the county of Lincolnshire. The Special Care Dental Service in Lincolnshire provides a service for those whose oral care needs cannot be met through other NHS primary dental contracts owing to their additional needs. The Lincolnshire service has seven clinics across the county (listed below) offering services such as behavioural management, inhalation sedation, intravenous sedation, bariatric services, hoisting and wheelchair tipper. The service will accept patients with additional needs and the table also contains the contact information if a patient, carer or their representative would like to enquire about a referral, please note that attendance at the clinics is by appointment only and walk-ins will unfortunately not be seen.

Within the Lincolnshire area there are 7 Special Care Dental Care services listed below –

<b>Location</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Services</b>
Spalding  <a href="#">Spalding - Clinics - Community Dental Services</a>	Special Care Dental Service,  Johnson Community Hospital, Spalding Road,  Pinchbeck,  Spalding,  Lincolnshire,  PE11 3DT	0333 2076630  <a href="mailto:cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net">cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net</a>	Additional needs  Dental Anxiety  Sedation
Skegness	Special Care Dental Service,  Skegness Health Clinic,  Cecil Avenue,  Skegness,	0333 2076630  <a href="mailto:info@cds-cic.nhs.uk">info@cds-cic.nhs.uk</a>	Additional needs  Dental Anxiety  Sedation

	Lincolnshire PE25 2BX		Bariatric Services
Grantham	Grantham Health Clinic, Special Care Dental Service, St. Catherine's Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 6TT	0333 2076630  <a href="mailto:cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net">cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net</a>	Additional needs  Dental Anxiety  Sedation
Gainsborough	Gainsborough Health Centre Special Care Dental Service Hickman Street, Gainsborough Lincolnshire DN21 2DZ	0333 2076630  <a href="mailto:cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net">cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net</a>	Additional needs  Dental Anxiety  Sedation
Boston  <a href="#">Boston - Clinics - Community Dental Services</a>	Boston Health Clinic Lincoln Lane Boston, Lincolnshire PE21 8RU	0333 2076630  <a href="mailto:cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net">cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net</a>	Additional needs  Dental Anxiety  Sedation  Bariatric Services
North Hykeham  <a href="#">North Hykeham - Clinics - Community Dental Services</a>	North Hykeham Health Centre Moor Lane North Hykeham Lincoln Lincolnshire LN6 9BA	0333 2076630  <a href="mailto:cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net">cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net</a>	Additional needs  Dental Anxiety  Sedation

Louth	Special Care Dental Service South Block Louth County Hospital High Holme Road Louth, Lincolnshire LN11 0EU	0333 2076630  <a href="mailto:cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net">cds.lincsreferrals@nhs.net</a>	Additional needs  Dental Anxiety  Sedation  General Anaesthetic
-------	---	--	--

Referrals to the above services can be made via a General Dental Practitioner using the commissioned referral management system. Non dental healthcare professionals are also able to refer to this service details of which can be found at the following link - [Lincs-criteria.pdf \(communitydentalservices.co.uk\)](#)

Patients referred to the above services do need to meet certain clinical criteria in order to receive services, again, the details of the referral criteria can be found at this link [Lincs-criteria.pdf \(communitydentalservices.co.uk\)](#)

To support Special Care Dental Services, waiting list initiatives have been commissioned to run additional sessions for new referrals, first and follow up appointments for patients with open courses of treatment with a view to reducing waiting times.

## **Unanswered – Waiting Responses**

Q. What is the criteria for home visits from District Nurses for the more vulnerable elderly patients and those with disabilities?

Sent to LCHS

Q. Ambulance Transport (emergency) can a patient's wheelchair be carried in the vehicle?

Sent to EMAS



# healthwatch

Lincolnshire

Healthwatch Lincolnshire  
Rooms 33-35  
The Len Medlock Centre  
St Georges Road  
Boston  
Lincs  
PE21 8YB

[www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk)  
t: 01205 820892  
e: [info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk)  
@HealthwatchLinc  
Facebook.com/healthwatchlincolnshire