

Report for NHS One Gloucestershire Engagement Workshops 1st August – 17th October 2019

NHS One Gloucestershire organised a series of engagement events which were part of the One Gloucestershire “Fit for the Future” engagement process. The workshops were run by the Clinical Commissioning Group, between the 1st August and the 17th October 2019.

1. What we did

Inclusion Gloucestershire were commissioned to recruit and support individuals from seldom heard groups to attend approximately 10 engagement events over the course of the six months, coproduced between Inclusion Gloucestershire and commissioners to ensure that they were as inclusive and accessible as possible. We employed a Project Co-Ordinator who contacted a wide range of organisations and individuals to promote the workshops and created a database for everyone that was contacted. The Co-Ordinator also supported people to get to the workshops where possible and engage whilst there. We promoted and supported individuals to attend 11 workshops across the county. In August there were originally 4 workshops, 2 of these were postponed and rescheduled for October. In October there were 9 workshops.

We were asked to identify individuals from protected characteristic groups and invite them to attend the workshops, to enable people to have their voices heard.

Protected characteristics are identified as:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race (including gypsy or traveller)
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation
- Those who experience substance or alcohol misuse
- Those who are socially isolated
- Those who live in areas of deprivation
- People who experience homelessness

Inclusion Gloucestershire contacted a variety of organisations, groups and individuals within the areas of focus, which were Gloucester, Cheltenham, North Cotswolds, South Cotswolds, Stroud and Berkeley Vale, Tewkesbury and the Forest of Dean to enable us to reach people considered to meet characteristics within the seldom heard groups. Once people let us know that they were able to attend a workshop, we sent them an official invite and those who attended and took part in the workshops received a £35 voucher as a thank you for their participation courtesy of the CCG.

2. Who came (by protected characteristic group)

Through promoting the workshops, we had 45 individuals who attended the workshops, some of whom attended more than one workshop depending on their experience relating to the topics. Characteristic groups relating to those who attended the workshops were as follows:

- Age – including a young carer
- Disability – physical disability, Autism and learning disabilities
- Race – individuals from different BME communities
- Religion or belief
- Substance misuse
- Sexual orientation
- Those who are socially isolated

3. Feedback/observations

Feedback for the workshops were as follows:

What worked well:

From conversations that we had with people, they valued having the opportunity to share their views and people were very interested in the topics.

- 'It was good to see health professionals supporting people (especially those with a learning disability) on their tables to understand the questions, that enabled them to give their views'
- 'The venues were accessible, plenty of breaks and kept to time'
- 'Working on individual tables was a good way for people to engage'
- 'A great way for people to ask questions and give their comments'
- 'External facilitator was very inclusive - he gave people time to speak'
- 'The table plan was a good idea'
- 'The CCG Team were very helpful'
- 'Time was given to those who were experiencing difficulties that were not relevant to the workshop'

What did not work so well:

- The presentation was very long, and a lot of information was given, which was hard for some people to follow. This was particularly difficult for people with learning disabilities, Autism and people from the BME communities for whom English was not their first language.
- The morning workshops were held at 09.00am – people who use public transport are not able to use their concessionary bus passes before 09.30am. Whilst we encouraged individuals to see the £35 voucher as more than offsetting this cost, for some simply handling change to pay for a bus is off putting.
- Some of the workshops were not easy to get to unless by car, such as Highnam.

- The Forest workshop was felt to be poor in terms of making it an inclusive engagement event, as there were no accessible materials, too many words on all the slides, not enough time for people to understand what they needed to do. Feedback was that everyone did their best but it was hard for them to get fully engaged.
- Participants felt there was a lot of jargon on the slides and in conversations.
- Some NHS professionals excluded Experts by Experience in discussions (whether intentionally or not).
- 'The presentation was very wordy and lengthy, not engaging'.
- It was felt that a flowchart on the presentation was particularly complicated and hard to read.
- Information was not given out in Easy Read.
- We had very negative feedback from representatives from some organisations about the short period of notice for the workshops, and timings and location of venues.
- Not enough time to reach out to organisations working with or in contact with people within the identified seldom heard groups.
- Interpreters were not available for people from the BME communities.
- People with Autism who attended the workshops, experienced information overload.

4. Learning (what would improve participation in future)

Less information, less jargon and easy read copies of all information.

From our experience, people who represent the seldom heard groups tend to need **more time and preparation** to support them to engage. It would have been helpful to have had at least two weeks research time prior to each area workshops.

Workshops to be held **later in the morning** to enable people who use public transport to use their bus passes.

Workshops to be held in the **actual areas** and at times that people can attend. For example: Tewkesbury was held in Highnam for 09.00am, Stroud and Berkley Vale held in Nailsworth for 09.00am and North Cotswolds was held in Cirencester for 09.00am.

Some people from the BME communities were not able to engage in the workshops due to a language barrier. Going forward it might be more beneficial to liaise with **community leaders** to hold specific workshops within the BME communities with community support for **interpreters**. We know that there are many barriers for people from the BME communities accessing health care. For many, they don't know how to ask for the health care that they need or struggle to understand treatment options.

For One Gloucestershire to **go out to community groups** such as the Inclusion Hubs for those who need to go at a slower pace and for a wider group of people to be included in the process.