

Communities of Interest Virtual Session Notes
Wednesday 16 September 2020
9:30-11am | via Zoom

Attendees

- **Ali Kaye** – Leeds Older People’s Forum
- **Annette Morris** – Voluntary Action Leeds
- **Ann Crossland** - Voluntary Action Leeds
- **Anna Chippindale** – Healthwatch Leeds
- **Bev Yearwood** – Leeds City Council
- **Charis Green** – Leeds Society for Deaf and Blind People
- **Daisy Morgan** – Forum Central
- **Damian Dawtry** – Feel Good Factor
- **Emily Turner** – Women’s Lives Leeds
- **Gina Rowlands** – Bevan Healthcare
- **Hannah Davies** – Healthwatch Leeds
- **Jane McDonnall** – Healthwatch Volunteer
- **Karl Witty** – Forum Central
- **Owen Walker** – Leeds Autism AIM
- **Pip Goff** – Forum Central (chair)
- **Simon Phillips** – Leeds Faiths Forum

Introductions/check ins

- **Ali (older people):** starting to do socially distanced work, but due to rule of six, things are up and down so taking it day by day; imperative to support older people to have access to digital; care homes are starting to close so people are becoming more isolated; issue around access to food; impact of ongoing social isolation, especially with shielding coming back into the picture – Neighbourhood Networks looking at alleviating that over the Autumn/Winter
- **Ann (young people):** hosted a meeting on 7th September with providers and community hubs (as part of the Cabinet Office visit to Leeds) to get views on how messaging to young people can be improved, came up with a number of suggestions that have been forwarded to Public Health, and looking at ways of rolling the information out; concerns around dealing with expected influx of referrals; uncovering safeguarding issues now children are back in school; concerns around medium to long term funding
- **Annette (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Hub):** mental health one of biggest issues; Hub involved with Black Lives Matter sub-group set up by LCC – reps representing across seven workstreams; looking at education, parents sceptical about sending children back to school because they’re in a vulnerable group, worry for multi-layered families with both older and younger people living together; involved with Phoenix Fund aimed at Black and Minority Ethnic led communities that are struggling for funding.

- **Bev (counter-extremism)**: monitoring recent upsurge in anti-immigration rhetoric particularly targeting hotels nationally, primarily conducted by Britain First; trying to manage tension resulting from online comments; please share things you come across on social media etc via intelligence portal; also involved in young people's comms around Covid.
- **Charis (Deaf and Blind people)**: a lot of disparity in people's understanding of messages and how they're shared/accessed; people seem to either be ploughing along or shutting back down again; people stopping meeting up or going out again because they're fearful of rising cases; apprehension around returning back to services and schools, including practitioners; strong desire for face-to-face interaction amongst Deaf community; younger members of community getting involved again, although very small groups; people wanting to see GPs face-to-face.
- **Damian (men's health)**: resource secured through the National Lottery to coordinate a Men's Health network across the city – partners include Barca, Touchstone, Orion Partnership led by Leeds Older People's Forum on behalf of Forum Central. Plans are changing every day; a lot of people in the area aren't necessary following guidelines so wary of risk of infection; setting up more in-person projects e.g. Tai Chi in the garden; men missing joining groups in person.
- **Emily (women's health)**: Great to see recognition of gender impacts faced by men as well as women. Worry that Leeds has become a concerning area; lots of increase in isolation and people choosing to stay in a lot more; schools returning, mental health and wellbeing around kids adjusting; people coming to terms with realisation that things are unlikely to change over the longer-term; sharing key messages on social media around women's survey; working on women's wellbeing packs with Space2 with the idea of reducing isolation.
- **Gina (vulnerable groups)**: so much work happening in primary care with most people being seen face to face by Bevan. Over 100 homeless people have now been placed in supported housing; concerned around R rate in Leeds; but have access to Covid testing for homeless – interestingly not many homeless people have tested positive; working hard on Winter planning, awaiting the delivery of the flu vaccine
- **Karl (Local Care Partnerships)**: focus is on Winter Planning workshops starting next week, running through September and October – bring people together from across the system to share Winter plans and ensure communities don't fall through the gaps; will bring learning from this Forum and the Third Sector and hopefully transfer some of that learning to Winter planning; Forum Central is hosting [a Third Sector digitalisation event](#) as part of Leeds Digital Festival on 29th September.
- **Owen (people with a learning disability and/or Autism)**: supported living settings have issues around guidance and risk assessments, as well as testing; trying to start face-to-face work in October, would be good to know where there's around specific guidance around opening up physical

spaces, what best practice is and what is lawful; lots of conspiracy theories circulating both from staff and clients, undermining the message; Leep1 have funding to increase digital access.

- **Rajesh (care leavers)**: in touch with a lot of young people going back to school/college/uni, talking about mental health support etc; still using 'Clued Up' Facebook page to meet in virtual social groups, but some loss of interest; able to do some face-to-face visits through activity centres, allowing people to go along with someone they feel comfortable with; trying to plan something for National Care Leavers Week at the end of October; concern that young people are driving the rise in cases – working with the comms team to start developing better messages to get to young people
- **Simon (Faith groups)**: contingency around major festivals – Jewish New Year this weekend; ongoing support in terms of food banks; interested to connect with Damian re how men from Faith communities can work with network

Hannah Davies – Healthwatch

Hannah introduced a piece of work Healthwatch is doing around people's experiences of accessing their GPs. The following points were raised by the group on behalf of various Communities of Interest, in terms of barriers faced and recommendations for improvement:

- It would be good to put together some clear guidance for GPs to let them know what reasonable adjustments are for people
 - Some GPs are probably saying people's needs have been met as they've had a phone appointment, but there's no method of measuring that impact at the moment
 - Also been doing a wider piece of work focused on the Accessible Information Standard; report last year found that GPs weren't meeting the standards for Deaf and Blind people, also extended to whether people are offering the right translations etc
- Also important to consider implications of carers liaising with GPs on behalf of person they care for, particularly older carers who struggle with technology
 - Having to call at 8am for an appointment doesn't work for a lot of carers as they're caring at that time
- Such a big disparity – some examples of really good practice but some not so good. Some GPs understood video systems really well, but in other situations, patients aren't always being seen. There is a lot of positive engagement to share – some community want to be seen face-to-face, and GP will accommodate a video appointment, so there has been examples of both

- A lot of community members contact us for help with organising an appointment, which means administrators are holding on the phone for a long time to get an appointment. Text service is worth looking at. Not feasible for a lot of people to join using video calling, services dropped a lot during March and April in particular
 - Sometimes there are so many challenges, people aren't bothering trying to access services which is a big worry in terms of people getting the right support
- Reports that women haven't accessing things like cervical screenings and breast screenings
- There is no reason that routine screenings etc should stop if you have the right measures in place – it's about attitude, and a change in culture is needed. You don't always need to see a doctor; there are other multi-disciplinary members of the team that can help people with what they need

This piece of work is ongoing – Healthwatch may be in contact with people individually to make sure the voice of communities is captured in this piece of work.

Key issues (Pip)

- **'How does it feel to me':** [a series of videos](#) have been used to give a voice to people with long-term conditions and depict their journeys over the health and care system. Healthwatch is now looking for people to take part in the next phase of this, and particularly from the following groups:
 - o People who have had their treatment paused or affected in another way during lockdown
 - o People who care for someone with multiple health conditions and how lockdown has affected them and the person they care for
 - o People with mental health problems or their relative/carer
 - o Men
 - o People from Black and Minority Ethnic background
- **Digital Inclusion:** Following the People's Voices Group Digital Inclusion Report published in July, Healthwatch is working on the first quarterly report, which will hopefully be out in October. Anna will be in touch with people individually to gather input to this over the next 4-6 weeks.
- **Cases in Leeds:** significantly rising but everyone working together in partnership. There is testing available for key workers including workers from the Third Sector. We will make sure we keep you up to date through our emails.
- **Outbreak Plan:** Public Health is significantly investing in the Third Sector in terms of funding to go straight to organisations, and the initial focus is on working with Third Sector organisations and other trusted community networks that work with young people. An event is starting from next

week for young people and children's organisations to come through and start to understand what the situation is and how they can support it

Please do share any themes you'd like us to touch upon at future meetings.