



Edition 17 Healthwatch Camden eNews

Welcome to our eNews round-up of health and social care news, events and consultations in Camden.

What this edition contains:

Focus on mental health

- **BMER health summit**
- **C&I inspection**
- **Mental health report**

New report - Children's specialist services

Strengthening the voice of the community - health and wellbeing plans

Advance notice of our AGM

Update on our start here project - and an invitation to get involved

News about our involvement audit

Request for volunteers

Update on our work - give us your feedback about the changes

Focus on mental health

Community views on mental health services

Over the summer, Healthwatch Camden asked local people for their views on community mental health services. We found that people want their GP to be able to help them with mental health issues, and they want GPs to get support to do this well. They also want good information about conditions and medication. Many are concerned about the speed of assessments and after care from mental health units.

We also found distinct concerns - for example at one event, the issue of mental health services for deaf and disabled people came up as a strong priority.

We found a widespread awareness that poor mental health is common, and a view that people who experience mental illness have a direct or indirect impact on the wellbeing of those who know them, support them, or live close to them.

We took our report to the council's Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee in September. Their whole meeting focused on mental health services. In addition to Healthwatch Camden, service users and carers spoke at the meeting, sharing their experience. There were also presentations from commissioners and providers.

You can download the papers from the meeting or view a webcast of the meeting on the council's [website](#)

Black, Minority Ethnic & Refugee Mental Health Summit

Healthwatch Camden was proud to be one of the co-sponsors of the BMER mental health summit. There were lots of good ideas for how to improve services. Among the ideas were providing services in community settings to enable professionals to see people in a more 'everyday' context; and community groups playing a bigger role than they currently do in bridging the gap between the grassroots and the statutory sector. The importance of creativity was stressed and we had a great rap performance from a group of young men called '[Key Changes](#)'. One immediate outcome of the meeting was the formation of a men's group for service users. (There is already a women's group.) A full report is still being prepared but meanwhile we have made a short summary of what came from the meeting. You can see it [here](#).

Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust CQC Inspection

The trust that provides mental health services in the borough, Camden and Islington NHS FT, was inspected by the Care Quality Commission earlier this year. In August, CQC gave us their report on their findings and invited us to their 'Quality Summit' with the trust, which

discussed the trust's action plan in response to the areas for improvement in the report. You can read the report on the [CQC website](#).

There were lots of good things noted about the services, and some areas for improvement. Among these were:

- Staff's understanding of the Mental Capacity Act and Deprivation of Liberty guidance
- Risk management of falls in the older people's services
- Risk-management of ligature points in the acute wards (while building work goes on to remove them)
- Learning from serious incidents on some wards.

The draft action plan has been [published by the trust](#) Healthwatch Camden will be monitoring how quickly the trust is putting improvements into action, especially around the acute wards. We will be making visits to the hospital. The trust covers Islington as well as Camden, so some of the follow up work will be in partnership with our sister organisation, Healthwatch Islington.

Alongside the action plan, Healthwatch Camden will

- carry out an audit of their user/carer involvement
- help the trust to review the information they provide to patients
- continue to raise the need for joined-up advocacy services.

Out and about in Camden

Healthwatch Camden took part in a number of open-air community events over the summer, for example at Queen's Crescent and Coram's Fields. We enjoyed meeting a lot of residents and finding out their views on local health and social care services. We are always delighted to be invited to take part in your community fairs or other events.



(Although now it is turning colder, we'd prefer to be at indoor events!)

Strengthening the voice of the community in Camden's Health and Wellbeing Board

Healthwatch Camden co-hosted an event on 5 September with voluntary and community sector organisations, to discuss how the sector wants to be involved in the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board and in particular in the development of the [JSNA and joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy](#) and in combatting health inequalities. The Health and Wellbeing Board engagement group, which is made up of people from the Public Health directorate, the CCG, VAC and Healthwatch Camden, will be following up the event to make sure the ideas from the event get put into action.

Linking up with patient groups

We've been increasing our contact with Patient Participation Groups (PPGs). These are linked to GP surgeries and are a way of people who use that surgery having a say in the work of the practice. They are also an opportunity for people to talk about other health services in the borough. For more information on our work with PPGs, please contact [Shelly Khan](#)

Focus on children with special needs

Healthwatch Camden published a [report](#) on the experience of parents whose children have special needs, based on interviews with parents. Review the [key messages](#) from the report.

We're pleased to say that Camden's Children Schools and Families team have responded really positively to our recommendations and are putting them into action.

Making the system work for you

Healthwatch Camden is putting together a guide to how to make the system work for you. Called "Start here..." it will cover where to find health and social care services, how to check quality of services, your rights in services, and having a say in services.

The guide is an online format, so it can be easily updated. We are looking for people to help us test it out, so we can make sure it meets people's needs and is easy to use.

Please contact [Len Lauk](#)

Checking on how services involve their users

Healthwatch Camden is developing an 'audit' of involvement, to check how well services are doing in involving their users. We'll be looking at how people are given a say about their own treatment and care and how they are given a say about the planning and running of the service. We're working with Camden and Islington NHS Foundation Trust and with Camden

Clinical Commissioning Group to pilot the audit. If you'd like to know more, or if you'd like to be a citizen 'auditor' with us, please contact [Anna Wright](#)

Update on us

We took a break from the newsletter in August; there were fewer events as many people were away. But we have increased the amount of information we share with you and we'd like your views. Each week we send an [Information Digest](#), with news of the latest developments in health and social care, locally and nationally. And we share news as we get it, via Twitter. We hope you find these regular updates useful. [Let us know what you think](#).

We know that we were hard to get hold of on some days during August - our whole building was hit by a communications problem, with phone and internet connections affected. We're sorry if you tried to reach us and couldn't - we are back to normal now.

Trustees and staff took a day out early in September to review our work and look at what we need to do over the coming year. We went to the Skip Garden, a community project in King's Cross, which has outdoor as well as indoor meeting space, and healthy home-grown food - a great way to get us all thinking.



We're continuing to develop our skills. Shelly Khan, our Community and Volunteer Engagement Manager, is trained as a [Dementia Friend](#). Shelly will be helping to spread dementia awareness at community events in coming months.

Volunteers

Volunteers are an essential part of our work. They are an important source of knowledge for us, bringing news from their own areas. They help us spread information about what Healthwatch Camden does, and they help us to gather views and experience from local people. We're always pleased to have help in the office, too. Currently we are joined by Juliet, who is helping with some of our research, and our newest recruit, Mario, who is helping with administration.

If you'd like to know more about volunteering or having a work-experience placement with Healthwatch Camden, please contact [Shelly](#)

Healthwatch Camden needs you!

If you have any comments on health and social care in Camden, or want to share best practice, please let us know. Your input is important and we're here to speak to you.

You can now also speak to us in real time on our [blog](#).

Best wishes from the Camden Healthwatch team!

[Frances Hasler - Director](#)

[Carl Mills - Business Coordinator](#)

[Shelly Khan - Community Engagement and Volunteer Manager](#)

[Lindiwe Maqhubela - Communications Manager](#)

[Anna Wright - Interim Policy and Insight Manager](#)

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To get real time updates on what we're up to....

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