

what
would you do?

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NHS Long Term Plan

Deaf Futures Focus Group

Friday 26th April 2019

1 Introduction

1.1 Description of the focus group/engagement activity

Deaf Futures Focus Group

Deaf Futures meet every Friday in a local community centre and have access to a BSL interpreter. The session is for the deaf community of Rotherham to attend as a social activity, to find out information on what is happening in the community, they are able to receive advice and information on a wide range of issues. Healthwatch attend on a regular basis to assist with health related queries.

1.2 Acknowledgements

Garry Byers, Rotherfed, Tracey Shipton-Wells, Deaf Futures

2 What was the purpose of the activity/session?

2.1 Purpose

The purpose of the focus group was to ensure that the deaf community in Rotherham

- are aware of the NHS Long Term Plan
- to understand what is important to our deaf Rotherham residents
- to find out how we can best improve local services for the deaf community.
- to ensure that the deaf community in Rotherham have an opportunity to find out about the NHS Long Term Plan, with the help of videos and a BSL Interpreter.

2.2 What did you do?

We pre-arranged to attend the weekly session, advertising it to attendees and via Deaf Futures Facebook group in the weeks prior to the session. We took along, banners, leaflets, information on the Long Term Plan and hard copies of the Easy Read Surveys.

We set up a projection screen and showed the Healthwatch England BSL videos to the group and we had the services of a BSL interpreter for any questions that may arise from the video.

2.3 Results of the activity/session(s)

Even though the video has been designed using a BSL interpreter it became apparent through the session that there is also “local terms” almost like an accent that is used in BSL, so the video had to be stopped and explained at various parts of the presentation, to ensure that the audience understood.

Once the videos had been played the residents were able to ask questions via the interpreter which were answered by a member of Healthwatch staff. Many of the points raised were regarding problems that the deaf community have getting access to BSL interpreters for appointments. There seems to be a lack of understanding on how interpreters should be booked by hospital/GP services. Many residents had arrived for appointments to find an interpreter had not been arranged, meaning the resident had to re arrange appointments for another time – this is not always convenient. There were also problems when a specific gender of interpreter was requested, the requests were not followed through.

It was also pointed out that when the new Rotherham Health App was launched, it gave the ability for appointments to be booked online but it did not give the surgery an indication that the appointment was for a deaf person and therefor would need the services of an interpreter. This has been raised with the local CCG and hopefully has now been resolved.

Another point raised was that the deaf community felt that they had little or no support in accessing counselling services, especially when going through difficult times for example bereavement.



Feedback from people who took part

“It is essential that we are made aware of these plans in an easy to understand format, we have the right to know about these changes as much as everyone else.”

“There seems to be a big focus on mental health, but for us the bigger issue is getting interpreters to attend appointments with us, sometimes things can get misconstrued if they are not communicated to us properly.”

Feedback from staff/volunteers who took part

The deaf community really appreciated that they were able to have their say on the NHS and were able to say how changes affect them in the deaf community. We talk about how we will support our most vulnerable residents, but it is only by including them in consultations that we can get a real insight into what the changes mean to a deaf or hard of hearing person.

2.4 Conclusion

The deaf community is often under represented, so they value the chance to be able to have their views heard. The biggest problem faced by the deaf community is the lack of interpreters, or the interpreters not being booked by services, this is not unique to NHS services.

They value the chance to have their views heard and to be included in any consultations, we have a fantastic relationship with them and we are able to ask their opinions.

2.5 Data and information summary

Please complete the table below with all the info gathered from your focus group/engagement session

Date of Focus Group/Engagement Session	Friday 26 th April 2019
Group name	Deaf Futures
Description of the group or session	To inform the deaf community in Rotherham of the Long Term Plan, and to ensure that their voice is heard at a national level when the changes are being implemented.
Life stage – (Starting Well, Living Well, Ageing Well)	Living Well, Ageing Well
No. of attendees	20
Theme area (Mental Wellbeing, Choice and Control and Independence, Care near where you live)	General
Was it a condition specific session – if so please identify the specific condition	N/A
What were the key outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deaf residents in Rotherham feel that they have been able to have their say on the NHS Long Term Plan and that their voices have been heard. • Deaf residents of Rotherham are now well aware of Healthwatch and its activities. • Contacts established for future engagement and networking. • Information on findings from the event and comments to be passed back to local CCG, Healthwatch England and RMBC Health & Wellbeing Board