

Report Title	Views of People living with Prostate Disease
Organisation	Bolton District Prostate Cancer Support Group
Date	January 2017
Research Team	Field Research and Report ; Gail Gregory (Healthwatch Bolton)
Contact Details	Healthwatch Bolton, 20-22 Bowker's Row, Bolton BL1 2JL

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bolton would like to thank those members of the Bolton District Prostate Cancer Support Group who attended their January meeting and participated in discussion about health and care services.

Disclaimer

This report relates verbatim comments gathered during the time of our visit. All comments recorded by Healthwatch Bolton have been added to Healthwatch Bolton's databank of patient comment.

Background

During the summer and autumn of 2016 Healthwatch Bolton worked on a piece of thematic engagement work on the subject of Men's Health. The visit to Bolton District Prostate Cancer Support Group was initiated part of this project.

Strategic drivers

- Engaging with hard to reach and vulnerable communities
- Monitoring quality in the provision of services
- People centred approaches to care

Who we spoke to

20 members of the Bolton District Prostate Cancer Support Group participated in the discussion.

Topics/Themes

Prostate Disease; PSA Testing Communication; GP; Access to Specialists; Access to Primary Care; GP Out of Hours Services, NHS Funding, Inequalities, Healthy lifestyles.

Method

Healthwatch Bolton Engagement Officer, Gail Gregory visited the group to introduce Healthwatch and lead a managed discussion which covered experiences of Prostate

specific services but also broader experiences of Health and social care. The discussion was recorded in verbatim format. Healthwatch Bolton has made a light touch edit of the material, grouping comments around the various themes that emerged.

The Discussion

Communication with Specialist Prostate Services

Getting in touch with my consultant (is a problem) – my GP will write to them

I was told I had prostate cancer by the consultant and then he walked out of the room. Thankfully there was a nurse there who could answer all

It could work by contacting the Specialist Nurse and then she could speak to the consultant and get back in touch with

I think it's wrong having to go through your GP when you've been treated previously if you have some further worries or concerns - can we not contact the secretary direct? It's all about hierarchy!

PSA Testing

There is a positive improvement in the way PSA tests are carried out. A blood test is done at your GPs and you collect those results and take them to your consultant's appointment. It gives you the time to prepare and get your questions ready

Access to Primary Care

It's a 1-2 week wait to see my GP. How do you know when you are going to be ill?

I'm a patient at Stonehill. You can't get through on the phone. When you do they say you should have rung earlier!

I make my appointment at Blackrod Health Centre by waiting outside at 8.30am. If you ring in you can never get through and the telephone rings constantly engaged.

The care at Harwood Health Centre is really good – it's positive

My wife has metastatic breast cancer but is no longer under the care of Christies. Over Christmas she was unwell and I had to contact the 'Out of Hours' GP service. I waited 40 minutes on the phone for my call to be answered and eight hours for a call back to tell us what to do. They gave her a prescription for anti-biotic. They shouldn't have closed the Walk-in Centre.

I'm a patient at Heaton Medical Centre and I can use my mobile to make appointments and request my prescriptions. I don't have any problems. The care is good.

Other Comments about Health and Health and Social Care Services

Get rid of management – it's not about savings. The NHS needs a cash injection.

Standardise entitlement!

People need to get the message about the importance of exercise and the other public health messages starting with children through to families in every place they go. It needs to be built in to public messages and become the norm.

The situation with the NHS and Social Care is down to politics. Birmingham Authority spends £3m on just gathering and working with data. How can that help peoples care?

In Bolton the long term nursing criteria are different from surrounding areas. I moved my Mother to Hyndburn and she received free care for 8 years.

Additional information

9 individuals reported having an NHS dentist

5 individuals reported having a private dentist

4 individuals reported making their GP appointments by internet

Summarising the discussion

- **Some individuals found it difficult to access their GP in terms of making an appointment**
- **Individuals recognised an improvement in how Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) test results were accessed at their GP practice**
- **Specialist Nurse provision was valued by individuals**