

# Monthly Feedback Report

May 2024

## About us

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. We're here to make sure that those running services, put people at the heart of care.



Participants at the third Mental Well-Being Workshop organized by Healthwatch Greenwich and Royal Borough of Greenwich Public Health.

## What did we hear in May?

We heard from 173 Greenwich residents about their experience of health and care services.

**“ I was looked after very well at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. They were very quick with sharing information with me.**

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

**“ I was very unhappy with services because everything is digital and not everyone is aware of how to use the internet as well as setting up appointments online.**

GP Practice

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## Community Engagement – Mental Well-being

Healthwatch Greenwich and Royal Borough of Greenwich Public Health and Well-being organised a series of three interactive workshops aimed at developing community-led approaches to improve mental well-being support.

The first workshop, attended by 11 community leaders on 21 February, explored mental well-being experiences within local communities and their awareness of available resources. During this workshop, local community leaders discussed factors impacting people's mental well-being. This included social, cultural, and financial factors and experiences of multiple forms of inequality. Specifically, those facing various forms of disadvantage are presented with unique challenges to their mental well-being. These experiences are then exacerbated by a lack of culturally sensitive mental health resources and support tailored to their individual needs and identities.

*“Speaking from a Black African [Nigerian] context, and intergenerational differences, reflects how younger people are starting to speak about mental health, but that doesn’t mean they know where/ how to engage with services”.*

The workshop also focused on the accessibility of mental well-being information and resources. Community leaders discussed that both their own and their community's awareness of mental well-being support resources are low. This was attributed to a range of challenges in accessing information, including language and cultural barriers. Leaders agreed on the need to develop contextually salient solutions to address the low levels of mental well-being information, resources, and services.

Building on these findings, the second workshop attended by 9 community leaders on the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, focused on exploring factors important for mental well-being and identifying actionable approaches to increase awareness of mental well-being resources. During this workshop, leaders identified that local service users were hesitant to engage with larger, official, or funded services. They shared that many people feel more comfortable seeking help from local advocates who share their background and who are therefore seen as more trustworthy and relatable.

“...people might go on the internet, but they would just prefer going to community leaders. We will signpost but they feel [the borough services] just aren't going to solve their problems, they trust leaders in the faith/culture to solve their problems for them. But it becomes very challenging to help everyone.

Considering this, leaders described ways in which RGB PH could leverage existing trusted relationships to raise awareness of mental well-being information and resources, including greater use of culturally sensitive information and approaches.

Moreover, they discussed using public spaces, existing events, and community communication channels to make information more accessible, including developing a local forum and nominating ambassadors to share information and signpost members to relevant resources.

“Create a layer of community advocates, who contact LiveWell for them, get the information back to the people who need it without fear of repercussions”.

The third workshop, attended by 22 community leaders on 21 March, focused on identifying practical approaches to empower leaders to work with their communities and increase awareness of existing mental well-being resources. During this workshop, leaders gathered more information on how a community forum might operate, what tasks might be undertaken by ambassadors, and what support and funding might be required.

In this discussion, community leaders highlighted how community forums should be used to facilitate dialogue rather than just information sharing. Moreover, ambassador roles should include actively promoting mental well-being information, connecting individuals with the help they need, and reducing stigma around mental health.

However, community leaders also acknowledged that providing financial support through mini grants might not be enough to create lasting change. While these grants can kickstart initiatives, there's a need for sustainable, long-term solutions.

“I would use the money to start a project, but we need continuity after the grant. We need to think realistically”.

Overall, the workshops served as an important platform for communities to come together, share their experiences, and brainstorm solutions to create a more inclusive and supportive environment to improve access to mental well-being information and resources.

## What Greenwich residents are saying...

### Accessibility of Services

**“ I hate filling forms in online- not all of us have access to computers.**

GP Practice

**“ I am not happy about getting to the GP as I have mobility issues. It is not always easy to go there as I am not mobile. Some other practices, they will send you a taxi if you can't get there or a doctor will do a home visit.**

GP Practice

**“ My local GP practice is a nightmare to get in touch with. I have been trying to book an immunisation appointment for my child and for the past three weeks, I cannot get through on the phone to book an appointment. Booking appointments needs to be improved, it is terrible!**

GP Practice

**“ The only problem is not everyone has access to a computer and if you phone to book an appointment, they tell you to phone back tomorrow. If you are ill, you can't always phone at the designated time or feel up to using a computer to log in to book an appointment.**

Greenwich Resident

**“ I visited the sleep clinic at Queen Elizabeth Hospital to have my snoring looked at. They were very flexible with appointments and helped me book an appointment that didn't interfere with my work.**

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

**“ Because of my age, I should have regular check-ups and not wait until I am already there for something else to get routine check-ups. There should be regular check-ups for the elderly to check things like blood pressure and blood sugar. At my GP, I feel I am not seen frequently enough for health checks and to make sure I am OK.**

GP Practice

**“ Queen Elizabeth Hospital has amazing services. The staff are very kind and professional, but the waiting times are very long. It took me 2 years to be seen by a doctor.**

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

**“ My grandson was admitted to Queen Elizabeth Hospital. We had an awful experience. The waiting times were very bad, especially for my grandson who had a high fever.**

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

### Service User Support and Communication

**“ I had very good communication but to get support and to book an appointment took a long time.**

GP Practice

**“ I visited my aunt at Queen Elizabeth Hospital. It was the worst service- hardly saw any nurses around, they're not attentive and should be much nicer. Better customer service skills are needed.**

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

**“ My GP was very good at communicating information and was supportive.**

GP Practice

### Signposting and Referrals

**“ The GP and staff at my local health centre were very helpful. Overall, it was a very positive experience, and the GP referred me to the Migrant Hub for further support.**

GP Practice

**“ I used an audiology service when I was experiencing hearing loss. I was referred to Queen Elizabeth Hospital through my GP app. I later saw the audiologist and had an appointment at Spec Savers where I got free hearing aids. The NHS was Fantastic!**

Queen Elizabeth Hospital



## Next Steps

We follow up on all concerns or issues raised.

We work with commissioners, providers, regulators, and service users to understand where services are working well and where there needs to be further development.

## Contact Us

For more information on our feedback report, or to request it in large print or easy-read format, contact:

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