



East Sussex LINK

The County's Local Involvement Network in Health and Social Care

Your voice for health and social care in East Sussex

Rural service users' experiences

Elizabeth Mackie

East Sussex LINK

HOSC Rural Health Event
Investigating NHS Delivery in rural East Sussex
Friday 27th November 2009

LINK
**MAKE IT
HAPPEN!**

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Your voice for health and social care in East Sussex

Part of the role of a LINK is to capture experiences, comments & good practices about Health services (not exclusively!)

Log all comments & concerns gathered

Tell providers what local people think is important about their services

“Authentic voice of local people”



General sweeping comments captured.....

“people in rural areas feel they receive sub standard health services - not valued”

“access to rural services – Lack of public transport”

“rural and living near the county boundary - means I have to use services outside East Sussex”

“Hospital appointments systems assume you live close by and have a car!”

Access to rural Mental Health Services

Service users feel access to rural mental health services is not good and asked a direct question “how accessible are Mental Health services in more rural areas?”

Providers of services agree.....in comparison, they are not as well provided for. Many people in rural areas experience a different form of exclusion around housing or the stigma around mental health for example.

The models of care are to be looked at with a reorganisation of the rural Mental Health service in north–east Sussex.

Services available and accessible in the **RIGHT PLACES** for local people.....

Hartfield and Groombridge health centres have joined together which means that appointments to see a GP can be at either surgery but not necessarily both. This means that at times you have to travel to the other village to see a GP whilst the surgery closer to your home is closed.

Comments from Hartfield: no community transport service. Bus service to East Grinstead and Tunbridge Wells from but not to Crowborough – especially as there is a birthing unit at Crowborough!

“.....Long travel times”

“.....COSTLY for patients, carers and users”

“Sometimes it's easier to go out of county because there is a more direct bus route” - Heathfield

“Don't always know where you're going for treatment” –
Newick area

“reorganising and restructuring spells misery for patients –
worse when they don't tell you what is happening”

Out of hours GP services

“Difficulties getting out of hours Doctor to come out, especially after midnight.” The person sharing this experience knew of a cancer patient who needed extra pain relief on top of syringe driver and ended up being admitted and ending their life in the Conquest Hospital instead of at home where they wanted to be due to inability to get a Doctor to visit and give a morphine injection

“NHS Direct are not aware of all the sites that South East Health Ltd have where a GP can be accessed after hours – i.e. they were told to go to Conquest Hospital from Rye when there is GP out of hours service at Rye Memorial Hospital”

How decisions about other services affect the health and well being of rurally isolated people?

potential closure of home in Forest Row
all residents informed by letter the home would have to undergo considerable refurbishment or demolition
no new residents for 2 years,
lack of clarity around what type of accommodation will replace the home if demolitions plan go ahead
some residents have moved out
some have died, all offered £7.5 to move out, some took up this offer, those still there will be moved or re-housed, don't know where, communication is poor with existing residents causing considerable implication on their health, no one listening to those left behind

In conclusion

Four main categories of general experiences

Access to rural mental health services

Cross border concerns – rural and living near the county boundary

Out of hours GP services

Cross cutting concerns where decisions made in other services
impact individuals health and well being

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Thank you

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