



Early Years 0-2

West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board Theme



healthwatch
West Sussex

Annual Report 2017/18
We've a simple ambition, to help make local health and social care services better for people that use them. We're here to listen, take action and influence for positive changes in West Sussex.

It Starts with You

Often West Sussex geography it's important we've a range of ways of reaching out to local people and communities.

We've listened and improved our listening tours, so we're flexible and robust in the use of our time, when touring specific areas. We're pleased to be able to share our **learning** with other local healthwatch and organisations.

The introduction of our **It Starts with You Network** strengthened our opportunities for communicating and working with local clubs and groups.

We are in the process of developing resources to support those groups to have health and care conversations with their participants and will be improving our youth leader resources.

We're recruiting more community groups all the time. If you want to know how you can get involved in shaping local services call us, 0300 012 0122

950 engagement + influencing opportunities

... as part of our **Kater & Vale** visiting which includes the national Patient-Led Assessment of the Care Environment (PLACE) Improvement work, which lets us speak to people about their experiences, as well as observe services and the environment in which these are delivered.

We visited over **50** local services

We've built on our national award-winning collaboration work with **Autism Support Crawley and Peacehill Medical Group**, by looking for new opportunities to work closely with other organisations and tap into knowledge to better understand local experiences.

Thank you for getting involved!

Thanks all the local people and communities, partners and staff who have supported us to listen and understand what's working well and what could improve with our health and care locally. A special mention, and thanks are reserved for a wonderful group of dedicated, dedicated army of local people who have volunteered to be part of our listening and influencing work. We're really pleased and grateful to have you on board. We're looking forward to working with you again in the future. If you are interested in getting involved with the work we do, want to receive our monthly healthwatch bulletin or plan to join your group or contact us call 0300 012 0122 or go to www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

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ANNUAL REPORT HIGHLIGHTS





Context

In 2016 Better Births set out the *Five Year Forward View* for NHS maternity services in England.

Using parents' lived experience and insight offered by those providing services, it acknowledges the need to do better and seeks to describe how we might do so.



The vision is clear: *we should work together across organisational boundaries in larger place-based systems to provide a service that is kind, professional and safe, offering women informed choice and a better experience by personalising their care*



Informing the work plan for achieving Better Births

- Our **Local Maternity System (LMS)** is looking at transforming services across Sussex and East Surrey, based on the needs of the local communities it serves.

Healthwatch has been supporting its engagement work and development of a Systems Leadership approach.

- Key focus is on reducing inequalities in health outcomes of both mothers and their babies.
- LMS is seeking to fully understand women and their families' current experience of maternity services.





The system gathered feedback from women and their families from January to March 2018 via:

- Online survey
- Focus groups
- Summary surveys at various existing groups such as younger parent meet ups and rainbow family groups, and more vulnerable/hard to reach groups

LMS received feedback from over 1000 women/partners.

This briefing is also informed by 20 personal accounts to Healthwatch West Sussex in last 12 months and our previous reporting on maternity.





Offering more choice on antenatal care, where to have a baby, postnatal care and early years development.

Women reported **limited choice** - with less than half reporting being offered a home birth.

Feedback shows **less choice** was given to those who needed **support with their fertility** or who were aged **36 or over**.

Only 1 in 5 women reported a **choice for their antenatal appointments** - and slightly higher (27%) for health visitor appointments.

Over half of respondents felt choice was important were they to have another baby in the future. 65% would be interested in giving birth at a local midwifery-led unit.





Having the chance to develop a birth/care plan is a key aspiration within *Better Births*

68% said they'd developed a birth/care plan.

10% said they weren't given this as an option - and those who couldn't develop a birth plan for *medical reasons* felt strongly that they would have liked to have felt like they had some choice, even if their options were limited.

Some of the **personal stories** heard by Healthwatch suggest parents do not feel their plans are respected.





Better Births acknowledges the need for continuity of care

About half reported seeing the same or almost always seeing the same midwife.

Where people saw multiple midwives, 3 in 10 said this had a negative impact on their care. (45% reported this hadn't affected their care).

People described feeling

- ☹ increased anxiety
- ☹ Impersonal
- ☹ errors were made
- ☹ frustrated.





Offering information is recognised as important in *Better Births*

Whilst most people stated they had received information to support their pregnancy and that this was *quite or very useful*, there are issues around this.

Not being able to read and write, or fully understand the language used, were an issue. Leading to a sense of feeling overwhelmed or stigmatised.





Support mental wellbeing



National research indicates up to **2 in every 10 families** will be affected by a mental health condition during pregnancy or up to one year after birth (known as perinatal).

Only 22% said they were asked at every antenatal appointment about their mental health and wellbeing.

With **over 41's** saying they were **never asked** about their mental health and wellbeing during these appointments.

One vulnerable mother shared that she had been taken off antidepressants when she became pregnant and subsequently was never asked about her mental health again.





SUMMARY

- More vulnerable women may be offered less choice on where to have their baby or babies.
- Most but not all people have the chance to develop a birth/care plan
- 75% stated that having the same midwives throughout any future pregnancies was important to them.
- Respondents literacy needs or with English as a second language and those with learning disabilities, reported that advice and literature was not always provided in a way they could understand.
- Feedback indicates that health care professionals are not consistently asking about women's mental health and wellbeing at each appointment resulting in missed opportunities to diagnose perinatal mental health conditions, including for fathers/partners and difficulties in accessing support once diagnosed.
- A number of respondents, that had lost previous babies fed-back a lack of sensitivity from some staff regarding this during their pregnancy and birthing.
- Feedback on need for improved facilities for partners at the place of birth.
- 3 in 10 were unsatisfied with the support/advice provided regarding feeding. With just under half saying they weren't given consistent feeding advice.



Healthy Child Programme 0 - 2.5yrs

- The System Leadership work Healthwatch have supported with the LMS includes the 0-5 Healthy Child Programme with the Health Visitor network.
- West Sussex has approx. 9000 births a year, each of who should have **5 contacts** through this programme - potentially 45000 contacts up to the age of 2.5 years
 1. Ante natal contact – holistic assessment made including issues such as mental health, employment, housing, parental expectation as well as physical health
 2. New Birth Visit ideally by 14 days; review of family assessment
 3. 6/8 week visit – focus on maternal mental health, breast feeding as well as general wellbeing; review of assessment
 4. Development review by 1 year old
 5. Development review by 2.5 years ideally alongside pre school setting





Healthy Child Programme 0 - 2.5yrs

- Also deliver universal **Healthy Child Clinics** - open access for advice and the opportunity to weigh the baby as recommended by NICE guidance. Will be delivering 'Discover Baby' groups (early parenting sessions) with colleagues in Children & Family Centres from September. This is patchy at present.
- Key role in early identification; working closely with other professionals to support those most vulnerable including child protection.
- Working really closely with WSCC staff in the Integrated Prevention and Earliest Help (IPEH) system.

Biggest challenges;

- Reduced budget = reduced staffing
- Increase in children subject of a child protection plan
- Learning about IPEH and how to integrate effectively
- Communication with maternity services - hoping the LMS will promote improved pathways





Moving forward

There are 9 worksteams within the Local Maternity System to develop the local plans in key areas and the additional priority of Neonatal care, to implement *Better Births*.

1. Choice and personalisation
2. Engagement with those who use services
3. Improving prevention
4. Promoting good practice for safe care
5. Harnessing digital technology
6. Workforce transformation
7. Sharing data and information
8. Perinatal mental health
9. Supporting Local transformation.





Moving forward

The 2018/2019 focus in Sussex and East Surrey are:

1. Safety and prevention
2. Women's voices in shaping services
3. Data
4. Digital.

All workstreams have leads from all parts of the local maternity system, and are working at vary degrees of engagement.

The system is looking at a common IT platform across the area or one that has the ability/software to exchange and make use of information from various computer systems.





How to get in touch and be involved

Please contact us at helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk
or call

0300 012 0122

For more information about our work and how this makes a difference visit our website or follow us on social media

www.healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk



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