

Talking and listening to people in Bewbush, Crawley

Listening to and amplifying local voices, with
recommendations for change

January 2020



“

The Bewbush Centre is excellent. A lot of people come in daily and it attracts a lot of people. I am 72 years and my problem is loneliness.

I like to come in as there is a really good mix of people like me to talk to

Resident

”



Why we are engaging with local people?

When planning our engagement events and activities, we endeavour to visit the places where local people of different ages and demographics are, this includes making sure we find opportunities to talk to people outside normal office hours.

We do this because we need to



proactively engage with, and respond to, the different populations that live in West Sussex



understand and help meet their health and social care needs.

One of the ways we do this is by listening to people in a specific area within our county. On this occasion, our focus has been in Bewbush part of Crawley Borough. This helps us to better understand the health and social care experiences for local people living in a an urban, non affluent area.

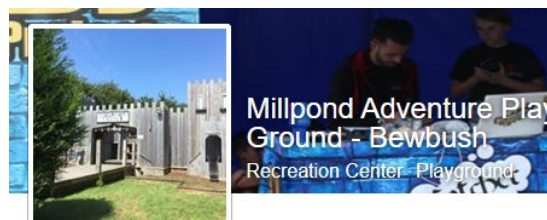
Bewbush is in South West Crawley and was built during the 1970s and 80s. In 2011 (the last Census), there were 3,234 households and 8,865 residents living in Bewbush.

Thank You

We would like to thank all the people who talked to us in November 2019. We are also incredibly grateful for the support of the organisations, services and groups who let us come to their facilities to talk to people, which include:



Rivers Resource
SPACE for Women



Bewbush Medical Centre



Recommendations

There are requirements for a local health and care system to respond to our reports¹ and recommendations. This report is being widely circulated and will be presented to:

- West Sussex Health and Wellbeing Board
- West Sussex Health and Social Care Select Committee.

A copy of this report is also provided to the following organisations:

- Talking Bewbush
- Crawley Borough Council
- Clinical Commissioning Group
- Care Quality Commission
- Healthwatch England.

A separate report on peoples' experience of general practice has been shared with the Clinical Director of the South Crawley Primary Care Network (PCN) and its practice members.

Whilst we would normally ask for a formal response to recommendations within 20 days of receiving the report, we acknowledge these require organisations to work together to explore and make changes.



We will: expect to see evidence of how these recommendations have been acted upon and will be publishing an impact report in 2020. We invite stakeholders to provide information in response to this report so they can be included before full publication.

We recommend:

- Adult Social Care Team consider the social opportunities available locally for older Bewbush residents who cannot access the Community Café independently, to see if there is a need for additional community support, such as a chat group/luncheon club.

¹ Section 44 of The NHS Bodies and Local Authorities (Partnership Arrangements, Care Trusts, Public Health and Local Healthwatch) Regulations 2012



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- The PCN explore how they can create a more effective telephone service by sharing resources and best practice to improve the patient experience.
- All clinicians within the member practices download the Best Interest Decision-Making Toolkit and test out its effectiveness for their practice, as a way of exploring alternative ways of communicating with people who may struggle with communication and decision-making
- The Bewbush Centre to hold more leaflets and information to help people to self-care and navigate their way around the health and care system.
- All clinicians within the member practices ask, when agreeing to refer a patient to secondary or specialist care, which hospital they are able to travel to and detail this on the referral form, to reduce the risk of people having unnecessary stress, anxiety or issues with travelling.
- Administration teams include information about travel concessions and providers when writing to patients, and that this information is made more readily available within each practice.

Please note Healthwatch can support the practice with accessing this information.

- The Bewbush Medical Centre reception team (supported by the practice team) work directly with patients about the layout and design of the waiting area, to understand how they believe it could be improved.

Following up on our recommendations



We are keen to discuss the recommendation with the PCN and will seek to confirm the actions and outcomes from these recommendations by examining the formal responses to the recommendations. We will identify ways of checking the actions taken.



We will understand if we have made a difference by:

- Using our February 2020 Community Information Event to ask people about their experiences.
- Producing an impact report so residents can see what has happened as a result of them sharing their experiences and concerns.



What local people told us?

SUMMARY

We met over 300 residents and had many valuable conversations. Most Bewbush residents were more than happy to share their lived experiences and views with us.

We captured over 220 stories.

During our visits we took advantage of the **Bewbush Centre** and it is clear to see how the café is used socially by local residents. From our conversations, this community facility is not only valued but it has a direct positive impact on peoples' health and wellbeing.



Bewbush is a deprived area, many people are on benefits, have mental health issues and there is not enough funding going into services.

They are planning to build a further 10,000 homes in the Ifield/Bewbush area. We will have joined up with Horsham, as there will be no gap. This will mean this southern area of Crawley will become a small town on its own. But it is just housing not shops or GPs.

The Bewbush Centre has bought back a community spirit and we look out for one another. At one time there was a loneliness minister who was concerned about loneliness and how it affects mental health issues. But mental health issues have slipped down the line.

Bewbush has good bus services and an excellent gym. The council closed down the Youth Club and this is now set-up as a charity.

Local residents describing their community



Starting well

- Local mothers spoke positively about their experiences of hospital-based maternity services but made some comments that offer valuable insight for improving services.
- The local Children and Family Centre is well liked by parents, as it offers non-judgmental facilities where they can relax with age-appropriate activities and get helpful advice.



Living and Working Well

- Some people expressed **concern that it will become impossible to get support** if the 10,000 new homes are developed, as there are unlikely to be new GP services.
- Two-thirds of people who mentioned accessing (or trying to access GP support) said that **getting through to the local GP service is both challenging and frustrating**, with many saying they have had to try many times and on multiple days.
- There is a need to **promote alternative ways of accessing GP consultations**.
- Having the **right people at *front of house*** is a key part of general practice business and helps to create a positive patient/consumer experience.
- People living with a **learning disability have different experiences if they are supported** or if they attend consultations independently.
- Local people do not know about services, or when they have heard about a service they do not know what it offers or how to access it.
- For some families there is a huge and negative carer burden, that serves to impact on their own mental wellbeing. These people appear caught in a vicious cycle.
- People are concerned they are not getting mental health medication reviews.
- Families are struggling to get support for young people who are living with mental ill-health.

Aging Well

- People are being referred to Horsham Hospital and not locally and this is having a **impact of their health and wellbeing because of the travel difficulties**.

As well as not being good for patients, this is putting an extra burden on GPs, as the story below shows.

- We were unable to find any luncheon/tea group, or chat groups for the older residents of Bewbush and people appear to have to travel out of the area. Whilst the Community Café provides a social environment for residents, there does not appear to be a local offer for residents who cannot independently access this service.



IN DETAIL

Starting Well

Starting Well: is one of three strategic priorities for the health and wellbeing of the West Sussex population.

Starting Well



Improved mother and baby health and wellbeing, especially for those in most need



Good mental health for all children



Children growing in a safe & healthy home environment with supporting and nurturing parents and carers



Children and young people leaving care are healthy and independent

Demographics and statistics

Bewbush falls into the bottom ten areas for children and young peoples' deprivation and poverty.

Mother and Baby Health

The Children and Families Centre is centrally located and appears to be well used by local families. Many spoke very positively about the support they have received and the importance of this service. The centres' team run a range of activities, themed services and discussions (with sleeping being talked about on the Friday we visited).



It's my favourite group for babies, as all the babies are the same age and it's a good atmosphere.

*Young Eastern European mother,
who has no one but her husband in the country*



A number of the mothers (using the Children and Families Centre) spoke about the importance of being listened to, having non-judgmental conversations and getting assurance they were doing a good parenting job.

We observed these types of conversations happening, with good empathy and in ways parents appeared to relate to, during our visit. We feel this contributes to the positive atmosphere.



Maternity Support

Bewbush is equidistant for hospital maternity services, between East Surrey Hospital (run by Surrey and Sussex NHS Foundation Trust) and the Princess Royal Hospital (run by Brighton and Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust), Haywards Heath. Expectant parents can choose either.

The 26 maternity stories showed **overwhelmingly that local people had positive labour experiences and transfer of onward care went smoothly after birth.**



Rubina had spent a lot of time in hospital before her son was born prematurely. The midwife was due to leave at 1.30, but the operation had been delayed, she stayed until Rubina's son was delivered 4 hours later. The midwife helped her prepare for, and supported during the birth, which made her feel she and her baby were cared for and valued.

Another parent said she valued the midwife coming to see her after she had given birth (after their shift change).



However, parents made comments that offer valuable insight for improving services:

- A mother had heard lots of negative stories about East Surrey Hospital and so was worried about going to them but having visited the Princess Royal Hospital and found the journey more difficult. She chose to go there any way. She told us she had an *excellent experience and would certainly opt immediately to go there again to give birth.*
- A mother whose baby was delivered by c-section was in hospital for two days, and then told she must come back to the hospital on days 5 and 10 to be checked. *I was in a lot of pain from the operation and had to travel on my own because it only me and my partner here. So, I drove.*
- A young first-time mother said she had a good experience but could not get staff to accept she was in too much pain to go home, She was told that she was a long way off giving birth (only being 1cm). In the end she sat in the day room and after an hour had progressed to 4cms and her baby arrived quickly.
- Quality of midwife support varied, some being described as being *fantastic* (through the Maple Team) and this was put down to how they encouraged mothers and told them they are doing well (particularly when the pregnancy was complicated).
- Miscommunication between GP and Horsham Hospital, over paperwork needed for pregnancy related tests - when the expectant mother got to the hospital, she was told she needed a form but that the GP could fax this to the service. She called the surgery to be told they would not fax it because *they didn't need the paperwork.* In the end she had to go back because too much time had elapsed.



Out of Area Service

We heard one parents account of being transferred to Chertsey due to an emergency, which meant that her planned C-Section could not take place there. When she arrived, she was told that they could not carry out the operation. In contrast to East Surrey Hospital, this lady felt the environment was poor (rows and rows of curtains) and the care was lacking. After being there for three days she felt unable to stay and asked to be transferred back to East Surrey Hospital. Whilst a bed was available, she was told they could not spare a midwife to go with her and that she would have to *discharge herself* in order to move back to the original hospital. The mother told us this is what she did in the end and so did another woman at the same time.

This lady said she had also seen another couple come in as an emergency. The couple had been unprepared and had nothing for the baby (who had been delivered by an emergency C-section). They asked for nappies and a hat, only to be told they could have one nappy but would then have to get their own and that there were no hats or clothing for babies on site.

Post birth support

The issue of judgment was spoken about and the need for health visitors to consider how they *word things*.



I went to get my son weighed this week and the health visitor said *oh his weight has jumped up by 1 on the centile chart. I have a friend who is a midwife and she told me it is OK if he goes up 2. The health visitor told me this was not right, and she needed to check he was OK. She went off and checked, came back and said it was OK.*



(we asked if this was a Health Visitor in training and the mother said the person was not a trainee.)

Other issues:

- A parent was unclear where baby weighing took place since it stopped happening at the Children and Families Centre.
- A Mother did not know who to call when she was concerned that her baby (who was not a week old) had not had a bowel movement in 12 hours. She called the East Surrey Hospital Team and got reassurance.
- A mother told us she has struggled to get results from tests on her placenta from the hospital she had delivered her baby over 3 months' ago. She was finding this stressful and challenging, having left messages and spoken to health professionals and getting no answer. She was still chasing, as she needed to understand what had caused the need for steroids and other treatment to help delay the birth (otherwise her baby would have been extremely premature).



Living and Working Well

Living and Working Well: is one of the three strategic priorities for the health and wellbeing of the West Sussex population.

Living and Working Well



Individuals, families, friends and communities are connected



People are able to look after their own health



People have access to good quality homes providing a secure place to thrive and promote good health, wellbeing and independent living

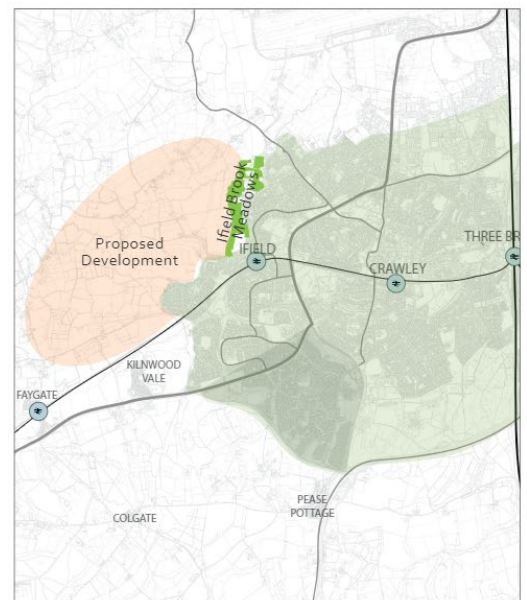
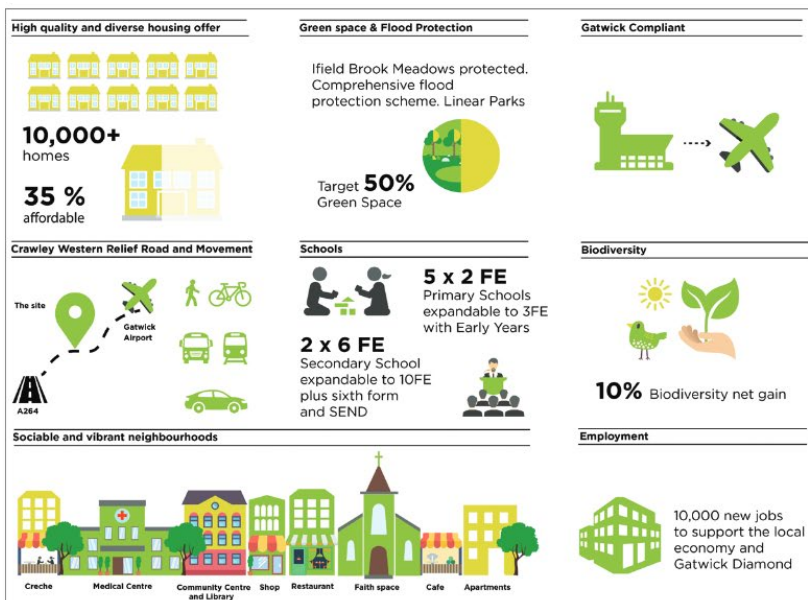


People live, work & play in environments that promote health and wellbeing

Demand on infrastructure

Like many areas across England there are proposals to develop more homes in the area. The consultations for planning west of Ifield is currently on hold due to the General Election on 12 December 2019.

People voiced concern over the current demand and how new housing *would make it impossible to get an appointment.*



Location plan only. Not to scale



Local health services

As part of any Neighbourhood-based engagement we visit local GP surgeries. This time we spent a morning in the Bewbush Medical Centre. We gained a lot of stories from listening to residents whilst visiting community venues.

Many residents, and visitors to Bewbush, are patients at the local practice but others were registered with other Crawley practices. We also spoke to people who were registered at surgeries in Mid Sussex, who had come to the area for networking activities.

44% of the experiences captured were about Bewbush Medical Group.

19% from Ifield Medical Group patients and remaining related to local practices in the Crawley area but in lower numbers.

The intelligence from people has been shared with the Clinical Directors of the local Primary Care Networks, to inform their plans for service development but we have listed below the common themes from what people shared.

Getting to appointments

The issue for many Bewbush Medical Group patients was getting an appointment.

From conversations (when we asked people about their experience, rather than surveying with specific questions) the issue appears to be not getting through on the phone quick enough to get an appointment, than about the GP service

Those who spoke about access described this as *challenging* and *frustrating* - **with over two-thirds saying they had experienced problems in getting through.**



You begin phoning at 8:30am and it will be engaged and by 9:00am all appointments have gone. They never phone you back or say when an appointment will be available. If you pop in it is no better.



On the whole, when people **got a service, they rated it as good.**

A small number of people said they had not had a problem getting an appointment. Gossops Green Medical Centre patients told us they found it easy enough to get an appointment, but this was based on a small statistical sample.

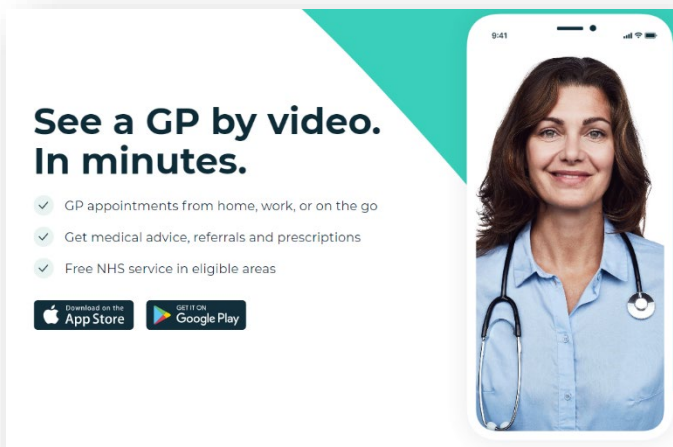
For some this issue had a **direct and negative impact on them financially** and emotionally as well as causing financial wastage for practices and the NHS.



A few people spoke about **using urgent care services, rather than trying to get an appointment** at their practice because it has become too difficult and this *fits in with their work patterns*.

Over half (56%) of the patients registered at the Bewbush Medical Centre fall into the working age group (25-64) and given the challenges people have expressed with getting an appointment the promotion of other access options is very important.

When talking to patients about access, we took the opportunity to raise awareness of the *improved GP access service*.



Free to residents, as part of the local NHS GP service...

...is the new video consultation service - called LIVI.

Residents are expected to get a letter in the post about this new service.

You can read more about it [here](#) or pick-up a leaflet at your surgery.

This surgery was not the only local practice where getting through on the phone was an issue for patients. However, a resident who was registered with another practice told us: *If I phone in the morning and they don't have an appointment, they will always call you back and advise over the phone.*

We have **recommended** to the Primary Care Network that they explore how to share resources and different practices to improve the patient experience and create a more effective telephone service.

This [link](#) details how another practice has engaged with patients and developed short telephone scripts and different messages.



Communication

- Having the **right people at front of house** is a key part of general practice business and helps to create a positive patient/consumer experience.

Patients spoke very highly of Maria, and also Charlie, who work on reception and we observed Maria managing expectations and communicating well with people.

- Through our engagement with a support group for people living with a **learning disability**, we heard peoples' experiences seem to be more positive when the **patient attends with a support worker or family member**. Where this is not the case the experience is not so positive.

“ I am not going back to see my GP as he did not put me at ease. This is so irritating.

They do not communicate well and this does not help me.

”

Our [Best Interest Decision-Making Toolkit](#) is designed to support clinicians and patients/family in conversations with people who lack the mental capacity to make specific health and care decisions. It removes or reduces risks and improves patient care.



“ It will make a real difference to the lives of many vulnerable people.
— Anne Sweeney, CEO, The Abilities Trust ”

We have **recommended** all the clinicians within the member practices download this Toolkit and test its effectiveness for their practice, as a ways of exploring alternative ways of communicating with people who may struggle with communication and decision-making.

- A few patients shared how **secondary and primary care does not communicate effectively**, resulting in the patient bouncing back and forth between the two.
- There were a number of examples to suggest local people do not know about services, or when they have heard about a service, they do not know what it offers or how to access it.

“ I did not realise you could self-refer to physio. I found out from my GP. Crazy really, as I had to take an appointment to learn that I could refer using the webpage, if only they told us!

”


We heard how patients valued the support from this self-referral service.

We **recommend** the Bewbush Centre hold more leaflets and information to help people to self-care and navigate their way around the health and care system.



Healthwatch is sponsoring and support a Community Information event in early next year to enable women to find out more about services in this area.

healthwatch
West Sussex



Community Information Event

Healthwatch West Sussex are working in partnership with Rivers LPC, an independent charity for women, to hold a small Community Information event.

Come along for an opportunity to meet local charities, groups and organisations, and learn what they can do to support you.

FREE drop in event for women, refreshments included

Thursday 13th February
9.30 to 12pm at the Broadfield Community Center,
Broadfield Barton, Crawley RH11 9BA

Organisations attending

Relate North and South West Sussex	Carers Health Team
Sussex Oakleaf	Carers Support West Sussex
Crawley Jobcentre Plus	Expert Patients Programme
NHS West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Groups	My Care Matters
Crawley Borough Council - lifeline	St. Catherine's Hospice
Age UK West Sussex - Crawley Centre	Healthwatch West Sussex
Home Instead Senior Care	LPC
Rape Crisis Surrey & Sussex	

More information: cheryl.berry@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk

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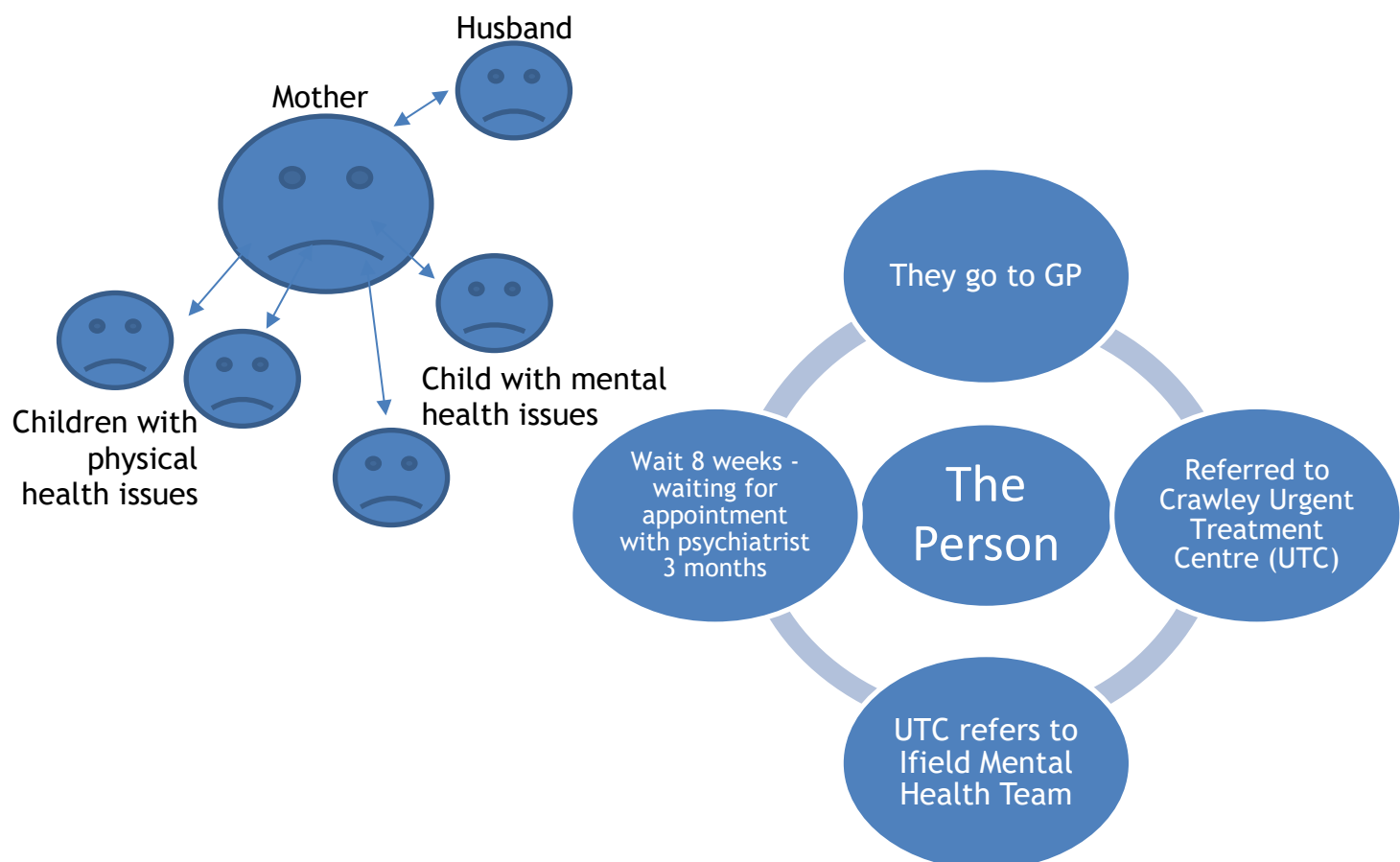


Supporting those living with Mental Ill-health

We heard stories suggesting concern over how well local residents, living with mental ill-health are supported. We heard phrases such as *fobbed off* in relation to healthcare professionals.

People spoke about the *Time to Talk* service, which people can self refer to. Whilst the service worked well for one working mother, she told us she found it hard to attend the sessions because of her work commitments. Someone also felt they would benefit from the service but had been told there were not a priority.

Our discussions showed that some residents have a huge and negative carer burden, that serves to impact on their mental wellbeing. These people appear caught in a vicious cycle. They did not seem to have been told about community mental health services or other organisations that may be able to help them.



This suggests a need to have some form of navigator to help these families and to making appropriate information available to them, such as [Pathfinder](#).

We heard how a healthcare professional had tried to get support for a young man who had disclosed to them that he was feeling suicidal. The professional made a referral immediately to the mental health team, but the referral was refused as the person *did not meet the criteria for support*. **Both the professional and the young man's family were concern and the family took him to the crisis service. Once he presented in front of the service, support was offered.**



“Mandy says she is unable to get any support for her teenage son. Every time he gets a service, they sign him off. He has been seen previously by CAMHS (Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service) and his GP has told us he can only make three referrals as the quota has been cut. I have tried getting support via the school but this just gets another appointment with the child psychiatrist. If, he does not co-operate they just stop seeing him. He’s at an age where he likes to show his independence. What can I do now. CAMHS has a 2.5 year waiting list I’m told.

”

The above story is not unique. Over the last 12 months, we engaged with over 1,400 young people and their families and we have submitted a comprehensive report to the Sussex-wide Independent Review looking at children and young peoples’ emotional and mental health services. The report will be published after the election and has been shared with local commissioners.

People also shared concerned that medication is not being reviewed.

Ageing Well

Ageing Well: is one of three strategic priorities for the health and wellbeing of the West Sussex population.

Ageing Well



Fewer older people feel lonely or socially isolated



Older adults stay healthier, happier and independent for longer



There is a reduction in the number of older people having falls



People receive good quality end of life care and have a good death

Choice and impact of travel difficulties

Some patients do not appear to be offered a choice of where to go for services, e.g. people being sent to Horsham Hospital when they live close to Crawley Hospital. This has an impact on their health and wellbeing.



“My mum lives behind Crawley Hospital and has been told that she has to go to Horsham Hospital. They do not consider her age, health or transport issues. She is not of an age to complain, and they know this!

I am unable to go to Horsham Hospital each week for a couple of months for treatment. It is too tiring, and I do not have transport. I do not want to be standing around in the cold, waiting for the buses. I have refused to go and am waiting for a Crawley appointment. I do not know how long I will have to wait.

”

As well as not being good for patients, this is putting an extra burden on GPs, as the story below shows.

“Sally, a retired lady was referred by her GP to see a specialist for an assessment. She was told she needed to attend Horsham Hospital in the first instance, which she did.

Sally said, it was quite difficult as I don't have personal transport or family/friends to support with transport. I care for my husband and don't like to leave him at home for long on his own and he is too frail to travel with me. I went to the appointment by public transport and was told I would have to attend Worthing Hospital for the follow-up. I queried this at the time but was told there was no alternative. I then got a letter changing this to another [coastal hospital]. I had no idea how I'd get to this hospital, or even if I could get there by public transport? In the end, I spoke to my doctor, who agreed to sort something out for me. A few days later I received a new appointment at Crawley Hospital, which was much more convenient and reduced my stress!

”

We have **recommended** all clinicians within the member practices ask, when agreeing to refer a patient to secondary or specialist care, if they are able to travel to any hospitals and details any issues on the referral form. To reduce the risk of people having unnecessary anxiety or issues with travelling.

We have **recommended** that administration and secretarial teams include information about travel concessions and providers when writing to patients, and that this information is made more readily available within each practice.



About Us

Healthwatch is here to make care better.

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We're here to find out what matters to people and help make sure their views shape the support they need.

We also help people find the information they need about services in West Sussex.



We here to help you on the next step of your health and social care journey

We have the power to make sure that the government and those in charge of services hear people's voices. As well as see the public's views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them.

You can review how we performed and how we report on what we have done by visiting our website www.healthwatch.co.uk

Contact us

Healthwatch West Sussex CIC is a Community Interest Company limited by guarantee and registered in England & Wales (No. 08557470) at Pokesdown Centre, 896 Christchurch Road, Pokesdown. BH7 6DL.



Healthwatch West Sussex works with Help & Care to provide its statutory activities.



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Healthwatch West Sussex

Billingshurst Community Centre

Roman Way

Billingshurst