

Community Forum Assurance Report 2019/20

'So What?'

Introduction

The Community Forum is part of the North East Lincolnshire Clinical Commissioning Group's governance arrangements that exist to provide assurance to the Governing Body that patients, service users, carers and the public are effectively engaged and involved in decisions made about health and social care services in North East Lincolnshire.

The forum is made up of people who volunteer from the local community who work alongside clinical and managerial staff from the CCG. There are dedicated community leads to support a wide range of service areas, committees and working groups.

Community Forum members have the responsibility of making sure the public's views are always considered. They meet every month to discuss CCG service developments, updates, and issues. The Forum's Agenda Forward Plan corresponds with the CCG Corporate Plan to ensure that conversations with the Forum take place early and at appropriate times across the commissioning cycle.

Each year members come together for our 'So What?' workshop to evaluate our work with the CCG both as individual leads and collectively as a Forum.

This workshop usually takes place in April however with the event of the Covid 19 outbreak this was postponed until June and took place virtually. The session was facilitated by the Chair of the Forum supported by the CCG Engagement Lead. Prior to the meeting members were asked to complete a Reflections template to help us to identify the key themes to consider in the workshop.

We asked members to reflect on the most important activities they have been involved with over the past year in relation to their community leadership role, and their personal contribution to these. We also then consider the achievements of the Community Forum and the difference these have made to health and social care commissioning by asking ourselves the all-important question - 'So What?' During the workshop we:

- Shared our reflections for 2019/20
- Considered what has gone well and not so well
- Evaluated the effectiveness of the Forum – So What?
- Agreed the key messages to feedback to the Governing Body
- Determined the important things the Forum needs to consider over the course of the year at meetings to effectively carry out our assurance role

Community Lead achievements

Once again community leads were involved in a range of projects, initiatives, statutory committees, working groups, procurement panels and recruitment interviews over the course of the year. Individual highlights identified by members included:

- Mental Capacity Act policy review and development of training programmes
- Planning, researching, developing and co-producing Talking, and Working Together community engagement strategy for North East Lincolnshire Union
- Humber Acute Service Review Citizens Panel
- Support to Care Homes project
- Domiciliary Care and Sector Support procurement

- Equality Impact Assessments
- Promotion of self-care Apps and technology (COPD and Diabetes)
- Extra Care Housing - Strand Court and Burchester Court.
- Preventative screening planning
- Access pathways – engaging with parent groups

What we discussed in Forum meetings

At the ‘So What?’ session in 2019 we agreed that our Agenda Forward Plan for the year was to focus on:

- Embedding the Community Forum as part of the Governance (and Union) arrangements
- Transformation Plans – ensuring that timely engagement with the Forum is built into transformational plans consistently
- Continued involvement in health and care activity on a wider footprint such as the Humber Acute Services Review and Humber Coast and Vale Care Partnership

During the course of 2019/20 each monthly meeting was well-attended and the Forum dealt with a wide range of agenda items covering three aspects of our role – receiving and commenting on information, engagement around specific plans or proposals, and advising on patient and public involvement activity.

Information from the CCG included Primary Care Networks and planned care transformation, cancer screening, digital solutions, telecare, independently living through aids and adaptations, finance, contracts, and procurements, prescribing and medicines, mental health and disabilities, urgent care, and quality.

Members were invited to comment on a number of plans or proposals including the Primary Care Strategy, reablement review, access to Infertility Treatment Policy, Care at Home Services, the Long Term Strategic Plan, Corporate Plan, Commissioning Intentions and the Adult Services Review,

The Forum was consulted early during the development of projects and asked to comment on and advise on the communications and engagement plans for Union Engagement Strategy, changes to repeat prescription ordering and patient transport services.

We also discussed regional developments such as the Integrated Care System, Healthcare Executive and the Humber Coast and Vale partnership.

Each Forum meeting attended by a representative of the Leadership Team on a rotational basis on behalf of the CCG with Helen Kenyon, Chief Operating officer attending quarterly. We also welcomed Mark Webb, CCG Chair and Rob Walsh, Joint Chief Executive on occasions to meetings and appreciated their informative updates, candid responses to our questions and attention to members views and comments.

A year of change - This was another year of change and growth for the Forum. We also saw the retirement of one of our long-standing Council of Members Community lead who has served the local health community in a voluntary capacity for many, many years and deserved a well-earned break!

We were also joined by two new community members for Long Term Conditions (a new role) and Mental Health and Disabilities. Another new role for Patient Experience was also established with an incumbent member of the Forum successfully applying for an appointed

to that role. The Unplanned Care Community Lead role was abolished and a new role in Primary Care developed which has recently been filled.

The new clinical leadership structure resulted in a change to the way that service leads, clinicians and community members work together. Whilst the 'Triangle' approach of clinical/managerial/community leadership in commissioning health and social care remained central to the CCG's culture and values; the practical working arrangements have changed with some community members reporting more engagement with clinical leads than others.

Community Forum assurance - The Community Forum is listened to and its views acted upon. The Forum noted that key speakers had attended at the appropriate time and the cover sheet that presenters are required to complete introduce their item is designed to enable both presenters and forum members to be well prepared and understand what is required of them. The Forum noted that this is not always supplied and asks the CCG to ensure full compliance with this requirement.

Members also felt that they were growing in knowledge and confidence to challenge and had done so robustly when appropriate.

We reviewed how we carried out our responsibilities (as outlined in the Terms of Reference) and were able to readily identify examples where we had:

- Challenged and held commissioners to account around involving local people in their decision making
- Ensured proposals/decisions have had appropriate community involvement
- Listened to, discussed, and agreed new proposals/changes that are required, challenging decisions, where appropriate

Last year members we identified that the Forum should focus more on how the CCG is meeting the Public Sector Equality Duty when considering the needs of groups who share a protected characteristic when planning and buying services. This has been taken forward as a priority area in 2020/21 along with plans to tackle health inequalities.

The Forum had received and contributed to quarterly engagement activity reports which enable them to review the methods and scope of CCG engagement. In 2020/21 following the implementation of the Union Engagement Strategy this report will be reconfigured to measure CCG engagement against the NEL Commitment – Talking, Listening and Working Together.

Finally – “So What?”

Once again this has been a very busy year for Forum volunteers who have provided a community view across all aspects of CCG business. Members have been able to identify tangible outcomes from their involvement and the CCG has recognised the value of working with members both in their appointed roles and collective engagement with the Forum throughout the year.

We have considered our performance against the priority areas we identified in last year's “So What?” Report. These were:

- To continue to explore the options for clinical/service/community collaboration to ensure this approach remains central to the CCG's commissioning ethos

So What? We felt there had been some very good outcomes from collaborative community/clinical and service working during the year, but there is more to do to

ensure all service areas benefit fully from this approach. Members would like to see more clinical engagement with the Forum.

- To work as part of the Union to ensure the commitment of 'Talking, Listening and Working Together' set out in the joint engagement strategy works for people in North East Lincolnshire; including those who are seldom heard

“So What?” The strategy was ratified by the Union Board in November 2019 and was co-produced by community members, council and CCG staff and representatives from the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector. After all that hard work the focus must be on ground up engagement and involvement and not slip back to top down directions.

- Equality and Diversity is everyone's responsibility. Training for Community Forum Members, will help ensure that the needs of groups who share a protected characteristic, are considered in discussions around the planning, buying and delivery of services. Requesting speakers at the monthly meetings, to comment upon equality and diversity implications, and to provide any equalities analysis, will help ensure that the Public Sector Equality Duty is being met and the needs of all members of our local community are being considered.

“So What?” Members participated in Equality and Diversity training in July 2019. The Community Forum cover sheet does now ask presenters to report on Equality and Diversity implications and the Equalities Community Lead has been very steadfast in providing insight and challenge around equalities issues.

- To review the role, membership, and make-up of the Forum to ensure future sustainability and relevance

“So What?” Following a review of the Forum's Terms of Reference the role of the Chair was further developed to include attendance at Governing Body and Council of Members meetings to ensure the Forum influences all the three pillars of governance in the organisation. Succession planning must be addressed as some members are due to complete their final terms of office in the next couple of years.

The Forum agreed that **all** the above will remain areas of focus in 2020/21 in addition to:

- **Covid 19** and the implications for our community's health and wellbeing specifically to consider:
 - The impact of cancellation of elective surgery and delayed appointments, staff shortages and the suspension of some services
 - Mental health and the impact on people who are isolated and struggling families
 - Speed of change in how the NHS is delivered in future, how the Forum can engage with community and professionals and contribute to enabling understanding of such change.
- Raise better awareness of the work of the Forum within both the health and care system and the wider population and us to all champion the positive work that the CCG and partners have done to benefit our community.

Anne Hames, Chair and Sally Czabaniuk, CCG Engagement Lead

Approved by the Community Forum on August 5th, 2020