



Health Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee 27th March 2012

Report from the Director of Strategy, Partnerships and Improvement

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

Health services for people with Learning Disabilities – A report from Brent MENCAP

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Brent Mencap has campaigned locally to reduce health inequalities, promote better understanding of the needs of people with learning disabilities and engage with health service partners on providing services for people with learning disabilities. Nationally it is known that people with learning disabilities have greater levels of health need and receive a poorer service from healthcare providers than the general population.
- 1.2 Brent MENCAP has run a project in the borough with the aim of removing barriers to local people with learning disabilities receiving the right healthcare and support from local NHS services by providing information, specialised training and advice.
- 1.3 The project covered a number of areas:
 - Learning disability awareness training for Brent NHS senior managers, General Practitioners (GPs) and practice staff
 - Training including consumer trainers (with a learning disability) for acute hospital, community and mental health trust staff
 - Participation in the local Health Action Group, and leading the group from August 2011
 - Regular information stalls at NHS sites
 - Focus groups to gather patient stories, and learn from people's experience of local healthcare
 - Mystery patient visits to acute healthcare settings
 - Evaluation of the effectiveness of the project, in terms of training outcomes, action plans implemented and changes in attitude and working practice.
- 1.4 A full report, setting out the details of the project and its main findings are included on the committee's agenda. An easy read version has also been published. Among the

issues highlighted in the report in relation to health services for people with learning disabilities in Brent were:

- Communication between doctors and patients could be improved, as well as issues around dignity and understanding and using appointment booking systems
- 104 people attended GP practice training on working with people with learning disabilities, 40% of whom were GPs; 115 people attended training from Northwick Park and Central Middlesex Hospital. However, there were issues connected to the training, such as difficulties in advertising it to NHS staff, sessions being cancelled due to lack of participants and trainers turning up to find that there were no participants
- Hospital signage at CMH and Northwick Park needs to be improved for people with learning disabilities
- Proactive volunteers were helpful towards mystery shoppers at Northwick Park Hospital

1.5 The report contains a number of recommendations, which the Health Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee should consider endorsing. Members may wish to ask MENCAP how they can help to ensure their recommendations are implemented by local healthcare organisations:

- Secure commissioner and senior management commitment to further training within Brent NHS and across GP practice and hospital settings (including medical staff and consultants) with targeted expectations for staff to attend
- Consider use of LD 'champions' in wards and departments with dedicated time (through CPD) to ensure availability of appropriate resources and implement projects to ensure 'reasonable adjustments' are made.
- Review signage at hospitals and healthcare centres together with service user groups, to include pictures and symbols where possible
- Identify funds to review healthcare leaflets and work together with service user groups and speech and language therapists to provide accessible versions, e.g. 'Your stay'
- Continue to build on links between primary and acute and specialist Learning Disability services. There are encouraging signs with the GP practice LD link nurse model and the new Acute Liaison Nurse role in North West London Hospitals trust.
- Continue to build links with service user and self advocacy groups and organisations for specialist resources and advice.
- Encourage people with learning disabilities to take part in patient forums, with appropriate support.

1.6 Members are reminded that the Health Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee has previously carried out a task group on health services for people with learning disabilities. This project has addressed a number of concerns raised in the task group's report about services received by people with learning disabilities.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 The Health Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider the Brent MENCAP report on health services in Brent for people with learning disabilities and decide how it wishes to support MENCAP with this work.

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