

Healthwatch Worcestershire

Public Board Meeting 28 May 2020

Covid-19 Survey

In collaboration with NHS ‘Worcestershire’ and Worcestershire County Council Healthwatch Worcestershire developed a Survey based on Healthwatch England’s national template, to find out people’s experiences of health and care services during the Covid-19 Pandemic. The Survey was launched on 22nd April 2020 and has been aimed at the general public rather than specifically at known users of health and social care services.

Although the survey will be open until there is a significant change in current circumstances we undertook at the request of commissioners and providers to make periodic summary reports available of the responses to inform service planning and delivery, as opposed to solely reporting at the conclusion of the survey. By 4th May 2020 we had received **1969** responses.

Despite the widespread nature of Survey distribution **32% of respondents** (612) considered themselves to be at high **risk** of Coronavirus, and of these, 27% (163) were in the ‘shielded’ group. A further **32% of respondents** (620) were **caring for someone** at high risk of Covid-19 and of the people they were caring for 35% (218) were in the ‘shielded’ group.

The majority of responses had come from the Wychavon District (29%), the lowest response rate was from Redditch Borough (8%). Most people had heard about the Survey through Healthwatch Worcestershire’s communications, and we have had a good response from the Worcestershire Viewpoint Panel. However fewer respondents heard about the Survey through schools (10%) and GP practices (2%) than we had anticipated.

Having reviewed the response as at 4 May 2020 we suggested to commissioners and providers that they have regard to the following:

- Dentistry - clarity about what access is available to dental services
- Adequacy of communication to address people’s concerns re planned treatments and ongoing care (to both individuals and the “general public”)
- Communication of changes in General Practice (248 respondents reported that they had not received any communication from their GP)
- Opportunity to further promote Here2Help Worcestershire within the general population
- Enhancing communication about available mental health services and addressing the perception that services are unavailable / inaccessible

- Continuation of domiciliary care services where circumstances in the home have changed due to Covid-19

In our next phase of communication about the Survey we will be targeting BAME communities, people with learning disabilities, those living with health inequalities and communities in those Districts with lower response rates.

HWE recognised that we had achieved a very good response rate and asked us to share information about how we had done this. We provided details of our approach, which has included collaborative working with Councils, the NHS and distribution through business networks. We also outlined how we will approach the second phase of communications, where we will target communities and geographies who were under-represented in the responses. This includes people from BAME communities and people living in the Redditch area.

We will be taking a different approach to gathering the views of people with learning disabilities (e.g. through Zoom meetings and telephone contacts) and those who are homeless (e.g. through distribution of paper copies of the Survey). This is particularly relevant to HWE, as they had asked if we had been able to reach people who would struggle to get online.

HWE were impressed with the approach being taken and are considering publishing something on the network part of their website about this work.