



Sexual Health &
Contraceptive Services
5th January 2016 – 9th
February 2016



Introduction

Healthwatch Darlington Ltd (HWD) is a strong independent community champion giving local people a voice that improves and enhances health and social care provision on behalf of the people of Darlington. HWD believe that no matter who you are, where you live or what age you are, you do have a voice and you have the right for that voice to be listened to.

Our Strategic Duties include:

Information Gathering

- Gathering views, experiences and needs of local people about their health and social care, focusing on those who are under-represented in decision making or face barriers to influencing the system.
- Gathering and monitoring other key information that tells us how the local health and social care system is working for people.

Influencing

- Influencing services and their commissioners to consider and act upon the views, experiences and needs we present.
- Championing the involvement of Darlington residents in the development and evaluation of services.

Informing

- Enabling people to get the most out of the current system by providing information about service provision, the rights people have in relation to their care, and opportunities they have to influence what care looks like.

Sexual Health and Contraceptive Services

As part of our information and signposting duties, HWD cascaded new information about Sexual Health and Contraceptive Services, published by Public Health, to our network of networks including e-bulletins, social media and our large database of organisations and individuals.

It soon became apparent that the information was confusing, not only for service users but also for the HWD Team and providers of the services. HWD attended the Health Week event at Darlington College and whilst engaging with the staff within the College Clinic it also became apparent that they were concerned about the changes to the services and believed this would lead to an increase in unwanted pregnancies amongst young people living in Darlington.

HWD decided to monitor the situation further to find out if the confusion was being felt by other residents and providers in Darlington.

Information was gathered by Healthwatch Darlington Limited regarding the changes to Darlington Sexual Health and Contraceptive Services from 5th January 2016 - 9th February 2016.

All data was collected via **Surveys, Events, Children and Young People focus group, Telephone and Emails**. All data excluding the survey data is inputted into the Healthwatch CRM - Customer Relationship Management System.

Findings

During the **1** month we gathered **28** responses regarding the Sexual Health and Contraceptive services in the Darlington area.

Public Feedback Survey: -

Some of the feedback received was collected through a Healthwatch Darlington survey. This is what we were told via our survey by **17** participants.

Q1 - Did you know about the changes to the Sexual Health & Contraceptive Health services in Darlington?

Yes - **7** No - **10**

Q1a - If yes, where did you find out about these changes?

“The Clinic” - *Survey Monkey*

“The College” - *Survey Monkey*

“Surgery” - *Survey Money*

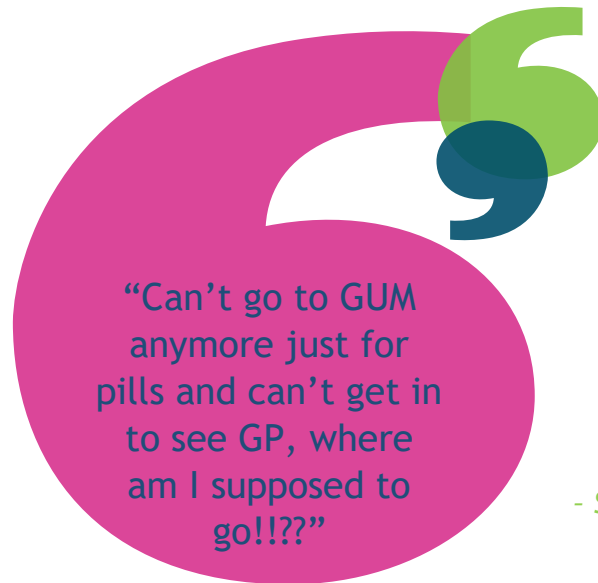


Q2 - Are these changes effecting the way you receive help and support regarding your Sexual Health Contraceptive Health?

Yes - **10**

No - **5**

Q2a - If yes, tell us why?



- *Survey Monkey*

“GUM clinic most accessible for appts or drop in. Limited services from GP’s” - *Survey Monkey*

“No longer can get access to the CASH at Park Place, or c card and community based STI testing as easily.” - *Survey Monkey*

“Don’t know where to go now, not going to doctors because I know people there” - *Survey Monkey*

“Not enough places” - *Survey Monkey*

“I won’t know where else I can get help” - *Survey Monkey*

“Affecting me as I didn’t know anything about it” - *Survey Monkey*

Q3 - Would you like to see more information about these changes?

Yes - **15**

No - **2**

Q3a - If yes, where would you like to find this information?

“Don’t know but need to know where I can actually go and be seen, ridiculous!!” - *Survey Monkey*

“Don’t know because the clinic is not on now.” - *Survey Monkey*

“Keep the public nurses and doctors informed better.” - *Survey Monkey*

“Social Media” - *Survey Monkey*

“Surgery websites specific Darlington cash websites” - *Survey Monkey*

Additional Public Feedback: -

Additional feedback from residents in Darlington received from people who approached Healthwatch and told us there concerns face to face.

- A lady was unable to get a coil fitted at her GP surgery in Darlington which resulted in her having to travel to Bishop Auckland to have this done.
- A lady who works in Darlington has always used Parkgate surgery to renew her contraceptive pill, she went to book an appointment and was told she would have to go to her doctors, she works fulltime and finds it hard to get a doctor’s appointment and her doctors are out of town and are not based in Darlington.



- Someone told Healthwatch they did not know anything at all about the changes to the services and would like to see more information available.

Youthwatch

Healthwatch Darlington holds regular 'Youthwatch' focus groups with children and young people. During January we engaged with the young members about the changes to the Sexual Health and Contraceptive services.

7 young people attended this focus group. Three older young people of the group said they had been informed of the changes. Two from their college and one from school. They all agreed these changes will affect them. One member was told they won't be giving out condoms anymore at pharmacies and said this will affect them as they can go there after school hours. Another member said this will affect him as there is no way he can afford to buy condoms. They all agreed there should be a list which states the place they can and cannot get condoms. This will stop any frustration and time for young people.

Provider Feedback

Healthwatch Darlington engaged with staff members at some of the services that will be delivering the sexual health clinic or used to deliver sexual health services.

- Darlington College nurses told Healthwatch at a recent Health event based within the college, that they had concerns about pregnancies increasing in Darlington. They have had an increase in young people asking for C-Cards.
- A staff member at the Healthy Hub in Darlington told Healthwatch that two 13 year old girls went into the Dolphin Centre to request the contraceptive pill. They were sent by their school. The girls are unable to get contraceptive pills from the Dolphin Centre. - HWD feel this is already an embarrassing situation for a young girl without being told to go to the wrong service to begin with.
- A staff member at the Healthy Hub told Healthwatch two young lads went into the hub asking for C-Cards, they do not provide this service any more.
- Another staff member from the Healthy Hub told Healthwatch that they do not provide the new outreach service and that NHS staff book a room within the Dolphin Centre to deliver this.
- Healthwatch visited the Sexual Health Clinic in the Dolphin Centre to speak to the ladies about the recent changes. Their impression is that young people cannot have a new C-Card and young people who have already got a C-Card

can only get condoms from a few pharmacies in the town, the College and the GUM clinic. The Sexual Health Team have a room in Darlington College and will be holding a new room in the QE College as from the 8th February. They said they have had a couple of girls come into the drop in at the Dolphin Centre. They were students at the QE College and they have not heard of any changes.

- They are still unsure where young people can collect contraceptives as they are receiving different information.
- They are feeling really frustrated with the changes and think there will be a lot of unwanted pregnancies due to the lack of communication and information for young people.

Healthwatch Key Findings

- There seems to be confusion over who provides the Sexual Health service within the Dolphin Centre. Healthwatch discovered that all posters and advertisements include the 'Healthy Darlington' logo, which is the recognised logo for the Healthy Hub. There is no sign of any NHS logos which may be misleading and leading people to believe the Healthy Hub are still delivering the service, especially since they used to provide the C-Card service etc beforehand. There seems to be a general lack of understanding and information about the service changes.
- Any publications about the Sexual Health Clinic states 'All Contraception' as part of the service they deliver. This could be misleading people to think that young people can access the contraceptive pill from the Sexual Health Clinic.
- The Sexual Health Clinic based in the Dolphin Centre is only during the hours of 12:30pm-2:30pm on Mondays during term time, which is also worrying, what will young people do during the holidays? It was noted that the clinic is only held between 12:30pm-2:30pm. Although this is around lunch time, can young people leave school premises and get to and from the Dolphin Centre in enough time to return to school?
- EOHC services will be running from community pharmacies. Healthwatch have concerns that young people in general won't realise what they can and cannot access from a pharmacist.

What We Did Next

- Healthwatch Darlington held a meeting with Public Health to discuss these findings and it was agreed that Healthwatch would help distribute new information regarding the Sexual Health Services far and wide in Darlington. The new information is clear and consists of where the services are based,

what times you can access these services and where new services will be based in the future. Healthwatch will be encouraging our volunteer Health Connectors to help share the information within the hard to reach communities in Darlington.

- Public Health said to Healthwatch *“We really welcome the information you provided and as you know we are committed to using this to shape and inform service provision. As requested I have summarised below our actions/responses thus far in relation to the issues that have been raised so that you can feed these back to those involved in the consultation work.”*

You Said	We did
<i>We don't know where to get condoms anymore and have been told that no new registrations are available.</i>	<p>Provided a detailed up to date list of how and where you can access c card in Darlington for new and repeat visits.</p> <p>Confirmed that you can still get new registrations for C card from some outlets. Provided new cards to outlets offering new registrations so that these are available when requested.</p>
<i>Not sure where under 16s can get contraception if they don't want to go to their GP.</i>	<p>The session at the Dolphin Centre (Mondays 12.30 - 2.30) and Darlington College are free and confidential to young people aged 13 - 25 years. Just drop in when the session is running no need for an appointment. We are meeting with some of the staff working in the Dolphin Centre to make sure they are aware of the sessions if young people ask and will ask them to put up posters so that young people know how to find the service when they turn up.</p>
<i>Worried that there is nowhere to get contraception during school holidays and in the evenings.</i>	<p>The session at the Dolphin centre is available every week even during school holidays.</p> <p>To provide access at evenings and weekends for over and under 25s from the 27th February the following sessions will be available:</p> <p>Mondays 5.30 - 8.30 Moorlands Surgery Tel: 01325 469168 to make an appointment.</p> <p>One Saturday session per month at Denmark Street Surgery Annexe. Contact your own GP practice to make an appointment.</p>
<i>Not sure where to get advice and testing for sexually transmitted infections.</i>	<p>Under and over 25s can access the GUM service at Darlington Memorial Hospital.</p> <p>Under 25s can also get testing at the Monday Dolphin Centre session and the drop ins at Darlington College.</p>

Next Steps

- Healthwatch needed reassurance that issues raised would be dealt with both at the operational level and in terms of strategic planning for this interim period as well as for the future formulation of the contract to the new providers.
- Healthwatch feel it is evident from Public Health's response that they have responded to concerns expressed, made some appropriate additional provision and arranged to meet with front line staff so they have accurate information to share with patients of 13+ years.
- The success of the additional provision, the publicity and the consistency of the message given to patients will, of course, be seen retrospectively but Healthwatch now feel confident that our concerns have informed Public Health's interventions.
- Healthwatch feel the increased awareness will inform the writing of the contract to the new provider.
- Healthwatch were pleased with Public Health's cooperation with our CEO in the management of the press release for the Northern Echo.
- Healthwatch will continue to monitor the situation and will continue communicating any findings to Public Health.
- Healthwatch Darlington will be sending out information far and wide, to ensure young people know where to access services.

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