

“Why People Miss their Hospital Appointments” – a collaborative partnership approach between Healthwatch Doncaster, Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and NHS Doncaster Clinical Commissioning Group

Executive Summary

In October 2017 Healthwatch Doncaster, working in partnership with Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and NHS Doncaster Clinical Commissioning Group commenced a three3month engagement project to look at why people miss their hospital appointments.

Over 50,000 hospital appointments are missed every year at Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. This equates to 4,166 per month and over 140 per day. Not only does this impact on the productivity of the Hospital and inevitably causes administrative burden on both secondary and primary care in chasing up those who do not attend their appointment, but more importantly patients may not access the diagnosis and subsequent treatment required.

1. Methodology

Preparation

- Healthwatch Doncaster and DBTH discussed how patients receive their appointment info and what the hospital thought were impacting on the issues
- Healthwatch Doncaster tried out a number of questions on various small groups to see how they responded before developing the final survey

Pre-engagement

Healthwatch Doncaster initially devised three surveys;

- An on-line survey consisting of six questions
- A paper survey which mirrored the on-line survey to be used to conduct face to face and focus group activity
- A short survey which consisted of three questions (did patients miss an appointment, if so why and did they receive a text message to remind them of their appointment?)

6-week engagement campaign

In October 2017 Healthwatch Doncaster, in partnership with NHS Doncaster CCG and Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust launched the on-line survey, together with the campaign plan to conduct face to face interviews as well as promote the on-line survey through social media.

Face to face interviews were carried out utilising existing forums such as Choice for All Doncaster, Men’s Group Doncaster and Keeping Safe Forum as well as engaging partner organisations in identifying community venues and meetings for Healthwatch Doncaster to meet people. This included St Leger Homes Tenants meetings in Denaby and Bentley, B:Friend group, Doncaster Communication College and Deaf Golden Oldies. Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council and Doncaster Chamber of Commerce were also approached to help promote the survey to ensure working people, employer’s and citizens using public services were given an opportunity to take part in the survey.

The on-line survey ran from 26th October to 8th December 2017 inclusive and the face to face interviews continued until 13th December 2017.

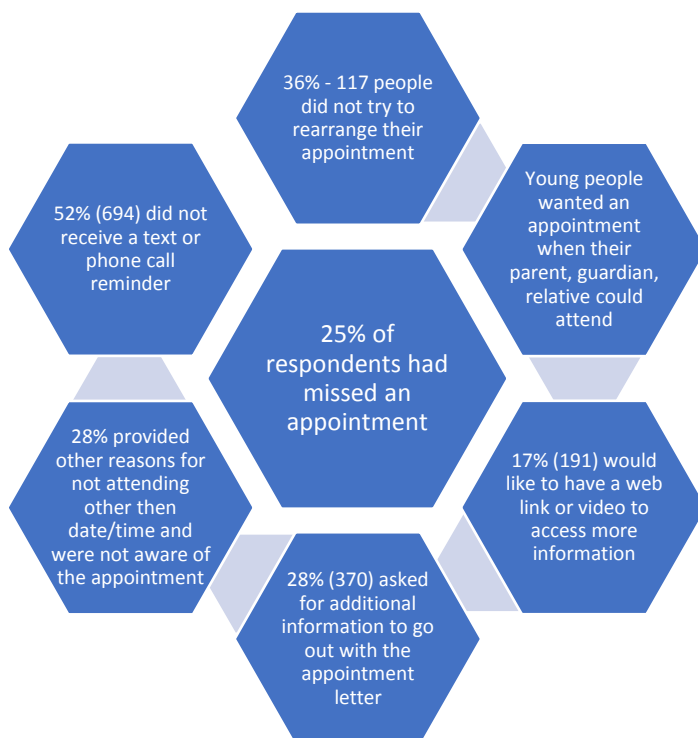
The Task and Finish Group continued to meet throughout the period of the engagement process to ensure key objectives were met and a high level interim report was presented to the Planned Care Delivery Board on 21st December 2017.

2. High level outcomes

The total number of people participating in the project was 1,630 which equates to 0.5% of the population of Doncaster.

1,323 people responded to the on-line survey and 307 young people were engaged via focus groups.

Findings



Improvements



3. Recommendations



4. Next steps

Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals have received the report and recommendations. All the recommendations are being implemented through a joint task and finish group. Some examples include

- Procurement of multiple communication methods and involving patients in the evaluation process
- DBTH Governor sponsored improvement target to reduce missed appointments to 7%
- Developing a Young Persons Charter

- Select a service to introduce change and measure success based on KPIs:
Ophthalmology
- Doncaster College support to enhance communication and access
- Ongoing media and communication plan – patient information

5. Success and learning

This partnership project has been a huge success for the organisations involved by securing a common purpose, a collective understanding of the problem and delivering a collaborative approach to listen, learn and identify recommendations base on rich data provided by our teams and the public.

Together Healthwatch Doncaster and Doncaster and Bassetlaw Teaching Hospitals will wrap robust regular, planned communication and engagement around our actions to maximise impact and continue engaging with Doncaster and Bassetlaw patients.