



Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group

AGENDA ITEM NO: 8

Bristol Health & Wellbeing Board

HealthWatch Equalities Network

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1. Purpose of this Paper

To propose a HealthWatch Equalities Network that will feed into the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) through the HealthWatch representatives on the HWB.

2. Context

2.1 The central purpose of the Health and Wellbeing Board is to bring commissioning organisations together to get more out of the health and care system and better outcomes and experience through better integration. This is through collective leadership and connecting NHS and local government activity, with all public and VCS (voluntary and community sector) resources to improve health and wellbeing in our communities.

2.2 Central to this is:

- a responsibility to tackle health inequalities, as identified in the JSNA
- The Public Sector Equalities Duty (Equality Act 2010)
- Involvement of patients and public, particularly in the JSNA and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy – this can be described as ‘voice’ – and within this the voice of equalities communities and protected groups is key

3. The Public Sector Equalities Duty

- 3.1 This requires public bodies to consider all individuals when carrying out their day to day work, in shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations between different groups of people when carrying out their activities.
- 3.2 The Equality Duty supports good decision making. It encourages public bodies to understand how different people will be affected by their activities, so that their policies and services are appropriate and accessible to all and meet different people's needs. By understanding the effect of their activities on different people, and how inclusive public services can support and open up people's opportunities, public bodies can be more efficient and effective.
- 3.3 On the Health and Wellbeing Board each public sector organisation is individually responsible for their own decisions and plans being compliant with this duty. Collectively, the Health and Wellbeing Board, as a Committee of the Council will have this duty. All major recommendations, decisions and strategies will have an Equalities Impact Assessment as part of the process.
- 3.4 An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken recently on the JSNA and the developing Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy. The issue of the availability of equalities data was a key theme emerging from the process. Another key theme raised was mechanisms for feeding into the Health and Wellbeing Board. This is relevant to the development of this network.

4. The role of HealthWatch

- 4.1 HealthWatch has been established to be the consumer voice of patients and the public. In Bristol, there are specifications within the contract for the delivery of the HealthWatch functions that relate to the need to address equalities issues

and the concerns and views of equalities communities. The Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) will be taking a collaborative and on-going approach to the development of HealthWatch and will be pro-active in supporting this.

4.2 Developing a Network

4.3 HealthWatch Bristol will develop a network of equalities groups and organisations with an interest in health and wellbeing. The issues raised will be channelled into the work of the Health and Wellbeing Board by the HealthWatch representatives on the Board.

4.4 The HWB is developing a work programme or forward plan that will enable HealthWatch and the equalities network to influence particular issues.

4.5 HealthWatch and the equalities network will also identify issues that the HWB should consider and take action on. HealthWatch will report progress on the development of this network at the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting in November 2013 and 6 monthly thereafter.

4.6 It is also envisaged that the network will develop a relationship with local health and care sector commissioners and providers.

5. Key risks and Opportunities

5.1 The development of a HealthWatch Equalities Network is an opportunity to bring a strong equalities influence to the work of the Board.

6. Recommendations

6.1 That the HWB supports the development of this network.