QUARTERLY FEEDBACK REPORT OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2022

People who use health and social care services tell Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham about their experiences throughout the year. This report shares a summary of the feedback collected from October to December 2022. During this quarter Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham has conducted engagements in different locations and collected feedback from 93 residents.

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham has also been continuing carrying out Health Visiting surveys during the past quarter, findings for which will be published in January 2023. This project focuses on the impact the recent coronavirus pandemic has had on parents and children under 4 years of age. There also were two engagements carried out that focused on a soon to be launched EHCP project – Carer`s Centre Parent support group (approximately 10 parent carers attended and expressed their views on EHCP) and Just Say forum at the Vibe centre (approximately 15 parents attended) were visited to establish relationships with them. Newly reopened Heath Park community Hub has been visited too and partnership with Healthwatch has been discussed.

The service provider most frequently mentioned in the feedback during October – December 2022 was General Practitioner services (73%), Barking, Havering, and Redbridge University Trust (12%), NELFT (8%), LBBD (5%) and pharmacies (1%). Based on the feedback this quarter, similarly as the previous quarter, most respondents were expressing difficulties getting a GP appointment booked and seen face to face. The way residents access GP services have shifted and instead of phoning for an appointment or walking-in to a local surgery, access to care has moved to online bookings, and video and phone consultations – a situation that residents from Barking and Dagenham are still struggling to come to terms with.

**Selected quotes and comments:**

“Problem getting an appointment face-to-face with the GP. All you get is a phone consultation and could be the wrong medicine.”

“Every time I have rung my GP all I get is a phone call, not face-to face for the last 3 years.”

“I can't get a G.P. face to face appointment and I need a referral for mental health services.”

“Cannot access NHS services G.P, week for telephone appointment. A and E over stretched waited 6 - 10 hours, A + E because no G.P. appointments. Ambulances take 5 - 6 hours to a serious O/D case. I`ve even considered private G.P. appointments though I can't afford it. Mental Health services not able to cope with demand, becoming stressed and leading to more serious mental health conditions, mental health A + E needed in borough.”

“I cannot get a face-to-face appointment before having e-consult. My parents are elderly, and they don’t know how to use it, this system is discriminating people who cannot use technology.”

Following on from that, the service type mentioned most was General Practitioners’ services (69%), dentists (6%) Surgery departments (6%).

Most of the feedback provided were about booking appointments (23%). Other subjects that respondents gave their feedback on were Registration and access (21%) and General comments (21%). To conclude, access to General Practice is such a significant issue for the residents of Barking and Dagenham. Access to General Practice has been the issue people talk to us about the most. Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham is frequently hearing that remote GP appointments haven’t met everyone’s needs. While telephone appointments can be convenient for some, others are worried that their health issues will not be accurately

diagnosed or that they will not be able to answer their phone on that particular time.

# **Selected quotes and comments**

“We never get through on 111 or get a GP appointment even in an emergency.”

“I have changed my doctor three times, they don’t follow through on appointments, 6 years I have been waiting. They cancel the appointments, spoke about the op, but not done it.”

“The system is not fit for purpose; I call them, and I am told I am number 33 in the queue. 9 times out of 10 I cannot get an appointment.”

“I have been coughing since September, I am not able to see my GP, every time I call, they cut me off. My GP is Church Elm Lane.”

Have you got any feedback to share? Get in touch with us by ringing our phoneline 0800 298 5331 or email us at info@healthwatchbarkinganddagenham.co.uk