



Healthwatch Kent scrutinises the Integrated Urgent Care Review in Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley

July 2019

About Healthwatch Kent

Healthwatch Kent has a statutory role to scrutinise organisations who carry out consultations. To aid this process, we produced the Healthwatch Kent Best Practice Guide to consultations which clearly sets out both the legal process and our expectations.

Our trained volunteers use the Best Practice Guide, which was developed with the Consultation Institute, to compare the process that organisations follow and how it meets up to our guidance.

Integrated Urgent Care Review

Urgent Care services are being reviewed in Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley by the Clinical Commissioning Group.

Healthwatch Kent has attended some of the public meetings and commissioners have met with our volunteers to keep them up to date on the review to date. We also attended the options appraisal session and fed into the process.

Our findings

Two of our volunteers who have been trained by the Consultation Institute have studied the Pre Consultation Business Case and associated documents. Our findings are based on these documents.

1. Establishing the case for change



The documentation clearly sets out why the current urgent care service needs to change to meet the needs of local people. It also explains how this need fits with the strategic vision for the NHS both locally and nationally.

The organisers have completed a detailed impact assessment to understand which people and communities may be impacted by any changes to the service. They have looked at the areas of equality, privacy and quality and these have been reviewed.

2. Have the public been involved in any way with developing the case for change?

Three listening events were held in 2017 for the public to hear about the review and feed into the case for change. These events also covered the Swale area which is now part of a separate review. Additional engagement took place through a roving roadshow across the patch and visiting some limited groups. Patients were also part of the Urgent Care Steering Group.

3. Pre - consultation

A detailed Communications & Engagement Plan clearly lists the audiences that they wished to reach including those communities that are harder to reach. This informed a range of community events from August to October 2017. There is written evidence that feedback from the people who attended these events has informed the development of the options. For example, the public raised concerns about traffic and travel which has triggered further thought and investigation.

4. Have a range of people been heard during the review?

4,000 people have been involved in the review of Urgent Care in Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley to date. 2,000 of these completed an online survey. It should be noted that this total has built since the CCG first started talking to the public about urgent care services in 2015 and so is spread across four years.

5. Has the engagement to date resulted in a number of options?



Yes, there are now two options which are now being put forward for the public consultation. These options have been refined and developed during the pre-consultation process.

Conclusion

The work to review Urgent Care services in Dartford, Gravesham & Swanley has to date involved a range of people within the area. There is a detailed engagement plan and the impact on communities for both options has clearly been considered.

We would like to see more evidence of which seldom heard communities have proactively been involved including those on the border who may travel from outside the DGS area to use urgent care services.