



Extending patient and public engagement

Extending Talking Health across Buckinghamshire

NHS Clusters have been established by the Department of Health to ensure that the NHS maintains business continuity in local healthcare commissioning and also to facilitate the change to the new NHS structure in 2013, including the move to Clinical Commissioning Groups. NHS Buckinghamshire and NHS Oxfordshire have become one of these new Clusters.

Oxfordshire's Talking Health engagement and consultation system has been extended to include Buckinghamshire as part of the new NHS Cluster, ensuring public involvement during the move towards clinically led commissioning. Staff at Buckinghamshire have been trained by INOVEM and are now using Talking Health to quickly and easily launch consultations. This means that consultations can be rapidly deployed and supported across county boundaries or tailored to one county as appropriate.

Using iPads to capture public views

Since September, the people of Buckinghamshire have been asked for their views and ideas on developing new ways to deliver sustainable healthcare services that better meet the needs of local people. To do this, Buckinghamshire's communications and engagement team have already started making full use of Talking Health to manage engagement activities.

A Talking Health survey was established and events have taken place across the country to capture public views. A survey accessible by mobile devices was also created, requiring no registration and asking only key questions so that the public could answer it quickly and conveniently. The communications and engagement team hired iPads and took this survey to the Eden shopping centre in High Wycombe at peak shopping times on a number of occasions, targeting a wide range of local people.

Using the iPads to access Talking Health, the team succeeded in getting an average of 45 responses per hour, compared with a total of 60 responses on the website in a 4 week period. This enabled Buckinghamshire to get a greater response from a much wider demographic – not just the familiar few that engage frequently. The use of iPads to support Talking Health was so successful that the Cluster is looking at other ways in which mobile devices can support engagement activities.

The main lesson learnt from using iPads to support engagement on Talking Health was that the language used in surveys on mobile devices needs to be more informal and less wordy than a full online or paper survey.

Closing the circle – Real accountability

Since April 2010, all Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) have had a duty to report on consultations about commissioning decisions undertaken during the previous financial year. To support this, NHS Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Cluster have incorporated a 'You said, we did' section into our Talking Health consultation and engagement system. This is used to tell local people about what we have consulted on, how we consulted, what local people told us and how that changed what we did.

Within the 'You said, we did' section, the 'Real Accountability 2011' report provides a summary of all our consultations from the past year (April 2010 to March 2011) together with an indication of some of the new consultations we are currently undertaking and others that we are planning. The report shows the range of methods we have used to consult with people, including online surveys commenting on strategy documents, focus groups, public meetings, attending existing community groups and one-to-one interviews, where appropriate.

As part of the consultation process, NHS Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Cluster engage with different people, groups and organisations such as the Local Involvement Network (LINK), members of voluntary organisations like Age UK and MIND, as well as going out to youth clubs, children's centres and prisons to make sure we reach as many relevant people as possible.

This report in particular highlights the key learning and developments, or changes, that have taken place as a result of each consultation. For example, we asked the people of Oxfordshire where counselling services should be based. As a result of public views gathered using Talking Health, as well as more traditional engagement methods, counselling services were commissioned to be based at GP Practices.

By reporting on what we have done in response to patient and public feedback we close the circle of engagement and the public are reassured that what they have told us makes a real difference to the healthcare services they receive.

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or visit:

<http://www.oxfordshirepct.nhs.uk/have-your-say/public-involvement/>

<http://www.inovem.com/HealthTrusts.html>

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