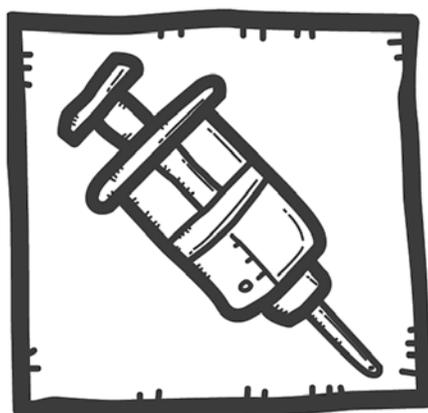


# Our Health Matters

Listening to Gypsy, Romany and Travellers' health needs.



We want to make sure you have a say about your health and social care services. We listen to your experiences.

We share them with the people who make decisions about local services, to help them improve care.

## What we wanted to do

We wanted to find out more about the health needs and care experiences of local Gypsies, Romany and Travellers. They are more likely to have poor health than other local people, which worries us.

Our volunteer Kate went out with Terri-Lee and Rose, who work for the Traveller Health Team at Cambridgeshire County Council. They talked to 14 women and one man in Wisbech, Cottenham and the Cambridge area.

## We asked people about

- Their own health and their family's health.
- How easy or hard it is to see a health or social care professional when they need to.
- What they think about the care they get.
- Which health issues are most important to them.
- How things could be made better.
- We also asked each person three scenario questions. We wanted to know what people would do about a specific problem, e.g. depression. This helped us understand how well information about support was known to people.

## What people told us

*My life is a health issue. I have that many things wrong with me, I would not know where to start!*

*Every time I go to the doctor I have more!*

People often had difficulties getting medical appointments, or collecting their medication.

*Sometimes my medication is up there (chemist) for two - three days before I can get it. If not raining, someone like my daughter will walk up with her little girls. Not too bad in summer, but winter not easy. Winter is bad.*

People said that doctors and hospitals don't always explain their medical conditions and treatments clearly. This means they may not understand what is wrong with them, so don't get the care they need.



Gypsies, Romany and Travellers are strong and resilient. They only ask for help when they really need it. This makes it hard when they can't get quick appointments, or the help they need.

One person who had a number of different health conditions, told us:

*When I go to doctors, I have to keep waiting. I missed two appointments because I have been so sick. I then went to make a new appointment, and they tell me they have none.*

*They don't understand how much pain I am in. I cannot get up to doctors I said. She said, you have a review for your lungs, but you might not be able to get a general appointment until July, if you don't phone by 2.30. This is what I am saying - you could be dead here!*



Older people rely on their families a lot, and can be lonely if their family are not close by.

People did not know about lots of services that could help them.

Families rely on the Traveller Health Team, who they trust to help them.

## What's next?

We want to thank the people we spoke to, for helping us understand what care is like for them.

Health and social care organisations need to work better for Gypsies, Romany and Travellers. To help this happen, we are arranging an event on March 2<sup>nd</sup> 2016. We are inviting:

- ✓ local Gypsies, Romany and Travellers;
- ✓ Shaynie, Rose and Terri-Lee from the Traveller Health Team; and
- ✓ local health and social care people, who have the power to make decisions to improve services.

We will be asking the organisations that come what they are going to do to improve care for local Gypsies, Romany and Travellers.

We want as many local Gypsies, Romany and Travellers to come to this event as possible. It is important that they can tell decision makers what care is like for them.

**If you are Gypsy, Romany or a Traveller and want to talk to us about your experiences, please get in touch. Kate is happy to chat with you on the phone, or arrange a visit.**

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