

## Accessible Information Standard: Project Update

### Purpose

1. This report provides an update on the progress made by local providers regarding the NHS Accessible Information Standard (AIS) following publication of the Healthwatch Peterborough and Cambridgeshire report in November 2017.

### Key issues

2. During the past year our Healthwatch has raised awareness of the requirements of the Standard across health and care provider and worked with larger providers to improve their communications offer.
3. We have developed a Toolkit to help GP surgeries meet the Standard. This information is also helpful for other providers. We have advised and supported Trusts in developing their own resources.
4. In the past year we are very pleased to see that so many changes have been made in our hospitals and other services. The majority of these improvements would not have happened without our work raising awareness and offering support and solutions.
5. We have raised awareness of the Standard within the CQC and have received confirmation that inspections include an assessment of how providers meet communications needs.
6. Healthwatch will continue to gather feedback from people about their experiences so that we can continue to help services improve how they communicate with people with additional communications needs.

### Action required by the Board

7. The Board is asked to:
  - Note the report.

### Author

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*The Accessible Information Standard.*

8. The Accessible Information Standard came into effect from 1 August 2016. The Standard states that organisations that provide publicly-funded care and health services need to provide information in a way that people with sensory or learning disability can understand.
9. The Standard states that health and care providers must do these five things:
  - Ask patients if they have any information or communication needs
  - Record the needs clearly
  - Highlight the needs and how to meet those needs
  - Share the information to other providers of the NHS and Adult Social Care and
  - Take steps to ensure patients get information in a way they understand and communication support.

*Raising awareness of the Standard locally.*

10. Healthwatch heard from people with additional communications needs that they were not getting information in a format that they could understand. So we undertook a project to learn more about their experiences and raise awareness of the requirements of the Accessible Information Standard.
11. As part of this project we collated information and produced the report 'Accessible Information as Standard: Improving access to health and care for people with a sensory or learning disability'<sup>1</sup>. This report showed that people were not always getting the information in a way they could understand, or the communication support they needed.
12. Throughout 2018 we have followed up the report by contacting all providers and encouraged them to make improvements and offered our support. The following is an update on the current position with the main provider organisations.

*Clinical Commissioning Group*

13. The CCG is introducing a standing agenda item to review AIS compliance by Primary Care providers.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.healthwatchcambridgeshire.co.uk/news/new-healthwatch-report-aims-improve-healthwatch-campaigns-improve-care-people-learning-and>

14. Healthwatch wrote and provided a tool kit 'A quick guide to improving access to information in your surgery'. We also audited the Cambridgeshire GP websites, and recommended a range of improvements. This was shared by the CCG with the teams responsible for developing GP websites and at a practice managers meeting.
15. We asked for GP practices to add a strap line to referral letters regarding communication requirements. This was published in the CCG weekly e- news to practices.
16. The CCG are considering the Healthwatch suggestion that the newly co-produced 'Care Navigation' leaflet is available in Easy Read.
17. Healthwatch engaged with four primary care providers to discuss how to make AIS better within the surgery. Using our tool kit some practices have made changes. This includes ensuring that communication requirements are logged, there is training for staff and there is clear and visible information for patients in waiting rooms.

*Peterborough City College Access Champions.*

18. Working in partnership with the Access Champions, information packs including our AIS report and the tool kit have been delivered to all GP surgeries and Practice Managers within Peterborough City. The Access Champions together with Healthwatch have worked with the newly formed Octagon Practice to ensure the accessibility of the web site for the 9 practices within the partnership.

*North West Anglia Foundation Trust*

19. Currently the Trust is updating its IT system. This is expected to be complete by Spring 2019. The new system will ensure that sharing of information between departments will happen as required the Standard.
20. The trust has worked with Cambridgeshire Deaf Association (CDA) to trial SignLive in the A&E departments at Peterborough City and Hinchingsbrooke hospitals. This service provides a real time BSL interpreter via an iPad to enable faster communication to Deaf patients. The success of this trial means this will now roll out to other wards.
21. Staff awareness training is ongoing, including the Mencap 'Treat Me Well' campaign.
22. On the suggestion from Healthwatch, designated seating with signage for Hard of Hearing people is being trialled in A&E. This seating is closer to the staff who call people in. An increase to the font size on eye clinic screens is also being considered because of Healthwatch patient feedback.

23. 'Pipa' boards above in-patient beds have more communication options to enable staff recognise communication requirements.
24. Appointment reminders sent by text now have a 'respond to' web address for patients who wish to change or cancel appointments.
25. Healthwatch have facilitated a meeting between RNIB/PCC regarding funding for an Eye Clinic Liaison Officer. Although part funding through the hospital is an issue, further discussions are being held.
26. The Trust web site has a link to AccessAble (was DisabledGo). This is a web site that reviews and gives the public information about the accessibility of public buildings, including health and social care venues.

#### *Cambridge University Hospitals*

27. Work is continuing to identify patients with specific communication needs for outpatient booking teams. This will ensure appointment clerks are aware of requirements as early as possible to support adaptations.
28. Staff training is now embedded in mandatory Equality and Diversity and Disability Aware training.
29. Following a discussion with the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), GP practices have been reminded to complete the accessibility field in e-referral forms.
30. BSL interpreters are available. A trial for on-line BSL provision is being planned.
31. A patient access portal called MyChart is being developed. This allows patients to access appointment information, letters etc. If patients have their own accessibility software this can be used with MyChart.
32. The communications team are planning significant improvements to the CUH website.
33. CUH have purchased and distributed a pictorial communication book for people with learning disabilities to all wards and clinics.
34. Patient text reminders have a return text service for patients to rebook or cancel appointments.

#### *Royal Papworth Hospital*

35. We have established that BSL interpreters are available throughout the hospital.
36. Patient experience groups are used to make sure that AIS standards are met.

37. An audit of AIS information was planned for April 2018 but we have not been able to obtain an update.

*Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Foundation Trust*

38. As of March 2018, 70% of service users have been asked if they require communication support.
39. The Equality Diversity and Inclusion team are currently working with the IT team to enable RiO (CPFT internal system) and SystemOne to automatically capture AIS information and flagged up to enable ongoing monitoring.
40. Referral letters have a strap line informing of service users communication needs.
41. Staff Equality Diversity and Inclusion e- learning training 'Treating People with respect' has been revised to include AIS awareness.

*Cambridgeshire Community Services*

42. CCS have introduced AccessAble (Was DisabledGo) within all service areas.

*Peterborough City Council*

43. The Council have set up Sensory Strategy Workshops to improve two-way communications and collect feedback to improve awareness and accessibility.
44. Upon our suggestion the PCC have met with the City College Access Champions for suggestions to improve AIS and the website. Website is now provided in Easyread, Browsealoud and videos have transcripts.
45. The Council are trialling SignLive for Direct Access payment clients.

*Cambridgeshire County Council*

46. The Council use a standard script of questions to identify an individual's information and communication support requirements.
47. The information is recorded in the Councils Social Care database system. Compliance is checked by the Adult Social Care Quality Governance and practice team.

*Next Steps*

48. We will encourage and record feedback from the public and groups to ensure the Standard is being followed. Through our strengthened relationships within organisations and groups, we shall check that further improvements are being introduced.