Healthwatch Luton in collaboration with Luton Clinical Commissioning Group

Luton’s Young Person Event

Held on Saturday 22nd September 2018
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Introduction and Overview

Healthwatch Luton were involved in creating the first ever Luton’s Young Person’s Event in 2018 in co-production.

In 2018 Healthwatch Luton ran with Luton Clinical Commissioning Group Luton’s first ever Young Persons Event. In 2017 Healthwatch Luton spoke with over 200 young people in Luton, asking them about their experiences of health and social care in Luton. A focus of Healthwatch Luton was to gather the voice of the young people, to ensure it was heard. Healthwatch Luton ran three youth forums through 2016 -2017 with Luton Sixth Form College, Barnfield College and TOKKO (Luton youth space), where young people of Luton were invited to share their experiences of health and social care.

The main themes and trends that were identified from the feedback of the young people was: a need to have access to more health and social care information, but in a setting that was not a typical educational manner. Based on this, Healthwatch Luton embarked on a partnership with Luton Clinical Commissioning Group.

In 2018, Luton Clinical Commissioning Group had an aim to reach out to young people of Luton to find out what they thought of ‘their Luton’ and how safeguarding was promoted.

“I have no idea of what services are available to me in Luton.”

Young Person, 2017

This collaboration of aims and needs of the young people of Luton created the first ever young person’s event, with the main aim of giving awareness of services for Healthwatch Luton. Other aims included finding out how the youth of Luton felt about their town, defining what Luton is and means to them as well as safeguarding within their lives for Luton Clinical Commissioning Group.

Healthwatch Luton and Luton Clinical Commissioning Group were lucky enough to have the Mayor of Luton, Cllr Naseem Ayub and the National Director of Healthwatch England, Imelda Redmond, attend.
Healthwatch Luton wanted to be able to empower the young people of Luton to take responsibility for their health and social care needs by being informed and aware of services available. We hoped that giving the young people of Luton access to service providers and organisations within the town they would be informed to make choices on their health and wellbeing.

Healthwatch Luton had found previously within our Youth Forums, that certain areas were the focus of the feedback; namely CAMHS (Child and Adolescence Mental Health Services), sexual health and awareness of services.

“Healthwatch Luton’s Youth Forums were so informative, as I am learning new information that helps me know how to help myself ”

Young Person, 2016

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**Highlights of young people’s feedback**

**Access to services:** Many did not know how to access services in Luton

**Guidance and Rights:** Many were unsure what their rights were when accessing services

**Sexual Health:** Many young people struggled to access or know of sexual health support

**Mental Health:** Many felt there was limited support for young people regarding support

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**Treatment and Care:** Many felt because they were young, attitudes toward them were poor

**Awareness:** Many felt they did not know what was available to them in Luton

(taken from Healthwatch Luton Report ‘Hearing Young People in Luton’)

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Aims

The young people of Luton wanted an alternative, interactive way to gather information about health and social care. The Luton Clinical Commissioning Group had engagement aims to meet and Healthwatch Luton aimed to bring young people and services together, to have young people’s voices heard.

The main objective was to obtain a wider opinion of young people by building on feedback initially collected by Healthwatch Luton. It was also to provide access to providers, for young people to come to one venue to understand more on health and social care.

It was an opportunity for the young people of Luton to find out about what health services are available to them and how to access them, as well as reminding them of the importance of primary care. There was a desire to talk to the young people of Luton to see what they think of the health and social care provision within Luton.

There was an overall objective of Luton Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure the population of Luton are ‘making safeguarding personal’. This includes professionals, organisations and the public, whether that is young people or older people.

The main service provider areas who attended were:

- Mental health
- Dentistry
- School nurses/provisions
- Sexual health
- Drugs and alcohol services
- And voluntary sector organisations

By definition for both Healthwatch Luton and Luton Clinical Commissioning Group, a youth is a person aged 14 - 25 years old.

As well as speaking with the young people of Luton, the event was an opportunity for the young people of Luton to showcase their talents and show what has come from Luton.

To appeal to young people, there were two stage areas, which included music, theatre, spoken word and dance from a variety of Luton based groups and individuals.

The event was held in St George’s Square in Luton town centre. An area that is used for a lot of events and chosen as easily accessible for those on public transport and those already using the town for the entertainment complex or shopping mall.

There was a main market stall area where providers and organisations could share information and gather feedback from the young people. A main stage was outside this marquee which was used for performances of laughter yoga, music, spoken word and theatre groups.

A second quieter area was used for ‘sound bites’ given by local providers such as
Community Dental Services, spoken word artists and Luton Borough Council. Luton’s Peace Walk organised by Luton Council of Faiths was opened and set off from the main stage.

New Generation Youth Theatre (NGYT)

A questionnaire was completed by the young people to ascertain some of their views around the areas that were important to the young people and their health and social care knowledge.

The questionnaire was handed out to the attendees which had a map of the event stalls. The young people had to visit each stall and answer a question to gain a coloured sticker. The questions were aimed specifically to get information from the young people on health, social and personal safety. Once they had collected all the stickers, they were able to collect a free gift.

The answers were collated by the stall holders and then returned to Healthwatch Luton for analysis. These findings can be found on page 9 of this report.

Performances from:

Spoken word:
Tene Edwards
Haneefa Muhammad

Musical:
Ravi Amruth
James Bloom
Danger of Drowning

Performing Arts:
Cheryl - Laughter Yoga
Priya - Bollywood Dancing
New Generation Youth Theatre
Attendance

Whilst the event was aimed at young people of Luton, there was no barrier to prevent any member of the public to attend or be involved with the activities of the day.

It is believed in excess of 100 people were spoken to during the afternoon event.

The recorded age range of those who completed the survey was from eight years old to 53 years old.

There was a wide array of ethnicities noted, including Greek, British, Indian, Kenyan, Sri Lankan and Bangladeshi.

No-one disclosed that they had a disability.

The way people found out about the event varied between school, online (for example the website and social media) and seeing the event happening on the day.

The young person’s event was opened by Jenni Russell, LCCG and Lucy Nicholson, Healthwatch Luton. The organisations who attended were from a range of mental health, children’s health and Luton based providers.

The providers attended were a mixture of statutory services and voluntary sector:

+ Active Luton
+ Asthma nurses
+ Chums
+ Community Dental Services
+ ELFT
+ Healthwatch Luton
+ LBC Housing Strategy
+ LCCG Communications
+ LCCG - Unplanned Care
+ Luton and Dunstable Hospital Patient Experience
+ Luton Sexual Health
+ Luton Safeguarding Adults Board (Luton Borough Council)
+ Luton Safeguarding Children’s Board (Luton Borough Council)
+ MIND BLMK
+ Resolutions
+ School Nurses
+ SOS Bus
+ Terrence Higgins Trust
+ Transitions UK
+ Unseen UK

‘Amazing’ LYPE attendee, 14
This was a collaborative approach and in true co-production access was offered to many organisations. As this was the first event, not all providers invited wished to join us on the day.

Musical and theatre groups took to the stage, including spoken word artists Haneefa Muhammad and Tene Edwards. A short video clip can be viewed here: https://tinyurl.com/teneedwardslutonyoungperson.

Next Generation Youth Talent wrote a bespoke piece to perform at the event which was very thought provoking and appropriate for the youth of Luton.

Laughter yoga and Bollywood dancing were amongst some of the other talents shown at the event.

Luton Council of Faiths began their Peace Walk on the stage and the event itself was open by the mayor of Luton, Councillor Ayub.

Tene Edwards - spoken word artist

Next Generation Youth Theatre (NYGT)

Artists James Bloom and Ravi Amruth played some musical sets. As well as an independent band called Danger of Drowning.

James Bloom
Feedback

The completed questionnaire provided the answers to some questions Luton Clinical Commissioning Group and Healthwatch Luton were after.

Do you think you know enough about the health services that are available to you?

- Yes
- No
- Don’t know

Some young people felt they did not need to know as they were not in need of the services or they were ‘too young’. Some felt they were aware of the services in the Luton area, but the locations keep changing.

‘Events like this help.’ Professional

If you felt low would you:

- Go to bed and wait until it passes
- Talk to friends and family
- Go online and find support locally
- Other

Some young people were very honest with their feedback. The event provided an opportunity to signpost young people who wouldn’t usually access Healthwatch Luton, to organisations that would help with their health and wellbeing.

‘I would self-harm, then go to bed. Last resort would be speaking to my family’ young person, LYPE attendee

What concerns you about your safety in Luton?

- Gang crime
- Gun crime
- Terrorism
- Bullying
- Knife attacks
- Drug crime
- Walking home late at night
- Violence

Yes
No
Don’t know

If you needed social care services like housing, do you know where to go to access them?
All of the young people who answered this question marked more than one area of concern, with most marking four or more areas. It would seem by a small margin; the young people are less concerned with terrorism than any other crime. However, the biggest concern for the young people was knife crime. Of equal concerned for the young people was drug crime, bullying and walking home late at night.

Some young people were also registered with other services including mental health, Luton and Dunstable Hospital and private chiropodists.

Outcome met:
Young people were aware of ‘Safeguarding’ and the importance of ‘making it personal’

All those who answered, ‘What do concerns about ‘safeguarding’ mean?’ selected all options, suggesting that those young people of Luton had a good knowledge of the term ‘Safeguarding’. This is positive, but some were unsure what to do if they saw something that needed a safeguarding raised.

‘I knew this [safeguarding] as we did it at school’ LYPE attendee

It was noted that ‘getting in a taxi’ was also deemed a risky behaviour. The riskiest behaviours were meeting with strangers met online, drinking excessively and having unprotected sex, yet, sex with strangers was deemed least risky.
What would you like to see in Luton?

- More information for young people on keeping fit and a healthy diet and how it can help well-being
- More information on eating disorders
- More information on self harm and suicide prevention
- More information on sexual health
- More information on how to report safeguarding issues
- Have somewhere to go to discuss young peoples issues

The young people were given some suggestions of what they might like to see more of in Luton, that had come from LCCG previous engagement, Healthwatch Luton, as well as suggestions from the group of professionals who organised the event. These options were based on feedback received and what people had said they felt there was a lack of.

Whilst there are less requests for information surrounding eating disorders and keeping fit and a healthy diet, there is a higher proportion for there to be somewhere to go and discuss young people’s issues. This is double the amount of other high agenda issues, such as self-harm and suicide prevention and reporting of safeguarding issues.

‘If there had been more things like this when I was younger, I probably wouldn’t have ended up the depressed mess I am now, with so many issues’ male, 38

Those organisations who attended felt that the event was a great success and something that Luton needs. Several providers felt that the event was needed to support the community as a whole, not just young people.

‘We found today invaluable as we were able to speak with people we wouldn’t normally reach’ CDS

Outcome met:
Local organisations and providers were able to raise awareness of their services and how to access them to the people of Luton.
Feedback was provided from the organisations who attended the event. They were asked a few questions about the event itself, the organisation of it, attendance of organisations and other providers. All were happy with the event itself.

‘I enjoyed myself immensely and found it valuable to be under one roof with other organisations who are passionate about supporting young people in Luton’ local provider

Outcome met:
Organisations were able to network with one another

All organisations who attended said they would tell their colleagues about the event and they found the event useful.

‘I liked learning about the other organisations in Luton. I definitely think this is the start of something big’ local organisation

Everyone felt the event benefitted the young people of Luton.

Some organisations offered examples of ways to improve the event, such as having the local schools have stalls to share things they are doing to encourage young people to the event.

One organisation felt the timing of the event could have been earlier in the year, and in the summer. This is something that was considered, however it was decided Luton has a lot to offer throughout the summer and it was hoped it would coincide with the University students arriving in town for the new academic year.
What next

The event was met with lots of positive feedback from organisations, the public, professionals and local dignitaries.

Going forward Healthwatch Luton will continue the focus on young people in Luton, within mental health provisions and those for people with learning difficulties and disabilities.

There is a need to hold more health and wellbeing events within Luton, for the public to be able to access organisations and providers they may not know of or how to access.

Luton Clinical Commissioning Group would like to speak to more young people and engage them in forums and activities to work towards a larger aim of creating a space where young people can access advice and guidance on an ad-hoc basis.

The young people who are interested in being the voice of Luton are able to meet and share ideas with Healthwatch Luton with the possibility of a Young Healthwatch or Young Inspectors programme.

This event would need developing to ensure a wider range of people were able to attend. There is the potential for organisations to run a series of events to encapsulate a range of people, for example a roadshow that covered a central area, such as St Georges Square, another in a predominantly young person focussed place, such as Luton Sixth Form College and further out reach places within Luton.

‘This is a much-needed event for the public in Luton’ local professional

Outcome met:
Health and wellbeing service providers and organisations known to young people and their families within Luton

‘Looking forward to the next one!’ local professional
Recommendations

Healthwatch Luton would like this report to be used by all providers of health and social care when considering working on, commissioning or running services for young people.

General recommendations

Potentially the young persons event model could be used as a guide to focus on different areas of the community, such as an older person’s event that focuses on the providers relevant to the elder generations within Luton and ensuring they could access the organisations and providers relevant to them. This has been done around the country and is a great way of engaging with the public on various topics.

A steering group will need to be set up to decide how best to take this forward and adapt to meet the needs of Luton.

A recommendation for all organisations within Luton, would be to develop relationships with youth organisations based in or who work with young people in Luton. This would include working alongside, in co-production with voluntary sector organisations or community groups who are dealing with and working with young people every day.

Knowing health services available

Young people felt they did not know enough about the health services available to them. It would be a recommendation that those services local to Luton make themselves known to the young people through connections to voluntary sector organisations, or through running local young people events. Public Health could run a campaign to make health services more prominent for the young people. LBC have a directory of services, but young people still don’t know of this and use it to contact services. Looking at more appropriate toolkits to communicate with young people may aid them in interacting with services.

Knowing about housing and social care

Social care services, specifically housing, need to be promoted to the young people. The local authority could consult or share this information with the young people and work with or use young groups or forums to involve young people in how to promote to them. Working in collaboration with young people will assist the local authority in understanding how to communicate services to them.

Knowing mental health wellbeing services

Young people need more support and information from local organisations about services relating to mental wellbeing. This report recommends that the LCCG and local authority support this and ELFT, our mental health provider in Luton could consider more focus groups on young people in Luton. Voluntary organisations covering Luton could work in partnership with statutory organisations and promote their services more thoroughly across the borough, to ensure young people know where to turn.

There is a need for young people to have somewhere to talk. This is something provided and available in Luton, so it needs to be promoted to this age group to increase awareness.

Knowing how to be safe

Safety was a big concern for young people. There needs to be a focus on making Luton a safer place for all those in the town. The
greatest concerns of the young people were around weapons (gun and knife crime), closely followed by drug crime and walking home late at night.

The local authority needs to ensure there is enough education for the young people around how to make sure they remain safe, as well as understanding safeguarding and how to report safeguarding concerns. The Police do forums with young people, but a larger campaign across Luton would support young people knowing where to go when they are not feeling safe. Young people have a knowledge of safeguarding but what to do with this knowledge needs to be addressed.

Overall the event was great to run. We would have liked more people to have attended, but were happy to speak to those who did.

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**Final words**

**Luton Clinical Commissioning Group**

‘The Young Peoples’ Event held on the 22nd of September 2018, was evidence of good collaborative work. Healthwatch carried out a survey on young people, which highlighted some gaps in information to young people.

The focus on young people was key for Luton and therefore this joint event made it possible for most key services for both young people and adults to show case their offers and provide advice to young people and adults. A clear request was for there to be a roll-on event.

The CCG learnt the importance of working Together, having a good consultation, using local skills and working with services like Healthwatch.’

**Healthwatch Luton**

‘It was a great experience to work in collaboration with the LCCG on this event and to be able to summarise young people’s views across Luton. It is of upmost importance that young people’s views are used in the design of and commissioning of services. It was a great pleasure to run this event, and we hope to work in collaboration more in the future with local providers’
With thanks for funding and grants/subsidisation from:

ASDA
NHS England
NHS Luton
Clinical Commissioning Group

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