

Advocacy and Interpreting Services in Health

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Introduction

- Tower Hamlets CCG is committed to providing high quality, equitable, effective healthcare services that are responsive to the needs of all patients.
- Equality of access to health services is identified as a principle in several Acts and documents including:
 - The NHS Constitution
 - Tower Hamlets CCG Constitution
 - Equality Act 2010
 - Public Sector Equality Duty 2011
 - Health and Social Care Act 2012
- Advocacy and interpreting service are vital support services for Tower Hamlet's patients due to our diverse population and are provided to patients across the following care settings in the borough:
 - Primary Care
 - Community Care
 - Secondary Care
 - Mental Health Services
- 'Advocacy' and 'Interpreting' are used interchangeably and it is helpful to define both services separately.

Interpreting

- Patients, service users and/or their carers have the right to effective communication in a form, language and manner that enables them to understand the information provided.
- Clinical care should always be provided in such a manner as to ensure that patients and service users and their carers or significant others can:
 - Communicate accurate information to clinicians and practitioners so that symptoms and their meanings can be understood, correctly diagnosed and the best available treatment offered
 - Understand the health issues facing them, the treatment options available and the steps required to recover or maintain well-being
 - Express themselves fully and freely as appropriate to the context within which they receive care
- Interpretation and translation service provision in Tower Hamlets for patients who cannot communicate with health care professionals includes face to face first person translation and interpreting (including BSL) services, telephone first person translation and interpreting services and document translation.

Advocacy

- In relation to Advocacy, the CCG considers Advocacy to “involve taking action by communicating with patients and ensuring that they receive the services they need’.
- Advocacy helps patients to:
 - make clear their own needs;
 - express and present their views effectively;
 - obtain independent advice and accurate information;
 - negotiate and resolve misunderstandings or conflict
- The advocate role is to support people to take more control of the decisions that affect their health and life. It does this by giving active and practical support to help patients navigate the healthcare system, at the same time, empowering them to take responsibility for themselves. Advocacy should promote social inclusion and integration, equality and social justice.
- Advocacy services in Tower Hamlets deliver services which are
 - Targeted to meet local demand
 - Responsive to local needs
 - Promote self-care and independence

Primary and community care

- Advocacy and interpreting services to support the provision of primary and community care is commissioned directly by Tower Hamlets CCG. Currently provided by Barts Health NHS Trust as part of the Community Health Services contract and Praxis. Service provision forms part of the Community Health Services procurement currently due to complete in March 2016. Further information is currently commercially sensitive.
- Diabetes Education and Befriending - Women's Health and Family Service
- Tower Hamlets Health & Advice Link – Social Action for Health
- Community Mental Health Advocacy is provided by POhWER. This service is for anyone living in the community that would like support because of their mental health.
- Key Performance Indicators are monitored on a monthly basis to ensure need in the borough is met. Key Performance Indicators include:
 - Access, waiting times and responsiveness to patients
 - Activity levels, numbers of appointments and hours of provision
 - Patient satisfaction, feedback and complaints
 - Operational staffing levels, statutory training and safeguarding requirements

Barts Health

- The Bilingual Health Advocacy and Interpreting service (BHAIS) provides a dedicated service to patients, relatives and carers who do not speak English as a first language, who use sign language or who have learning disabilities.
- BHAIS facilitates face to face communication between health professionals and service users by bridging the language and cultural barrier to assist patients in achieving better access to their local health and social care services.
- They also help patients to make informed choices about their health with full involvement in their care plan and treatment. The service is available by self-referral to all patients and members of the community.
- The bilingual health advocates within the team use a range of skills and knowledge in addition to their bilingual expertise. They are trained in interpreting techniques, specialist terminology and in managing three way communications. They are also a source of cultural background information.
- If BHAIS are unable to respond to a specific interpreting requirement, suitable alternative options will be provided to support the patient and their family in accessing the right information.
- Text Relay service available for deaf people

Learning Disabilities

- Currently reprocurring a multidisciplinary Community Learning Disabilities Service (CLDS) aimed at delivering a joint health and social care service to support people with learning disabilities.
- A clear care co-ordination framework is integral to making this work, with an underpinning principle being to adopt a single integrated health and social care process to deliver continuity of care for vulnerable people with complex needs requiring intensive intervention and/or long-term support.
- Integral to the CLDS is the **Health Facilitation and Liaison** role which the provider is commissioned to undertake. This role is responsible for:
 - Supporting the delivery of health checks in GP practices/primary care
 - Ensuring that everyone known to them and registered with a GP as having a learning disability is offered a Health Action Plan.
 - Identifying known gaps in the provision and delivery of Health Action Plans and 'Reasonable Adjustments' by generic providers to improve access to health care for people with Learning Disabilities through the LD Partnership Boards and to Commissioners
 - Providing awareness raising, education training and support to statutory generic NHS providers to make reasonable adjustments and develop accessible information.
 - Providing proactive leadership in facilitating better coordination of care and improved patient experience involving specialist and mainstream healthcare.



Thank you and questions