

Public questions from Healthwatch Rochdale Board Meeting.

Thursday 11th June 2020, 2pm - 4pm.

The following questions were submitted in advance:

	Questions	Healthwatch Rochdale response;
1.	<p>The new Walk In Testing Centre at Packer Street is excellent. The process is efficient and well organised by enthusiastic and supportive volunteers. I got my negative test back in less than 48 hrs so can now return to work.</p> <p>My question is: What provision locally is available for walk in testing for those with no internet access or mobile phones since these are necessary to both book a test & get the results back?</p> <p>I am thinking here of homeless people, rough sleepers & those digitally excluded, with sight issues or mobility issues. I have only seen online adverts so far for the testing centre. Will it be advertised in other formats such as Local paper, radio, posters?</p>	<p>Healthwatch Rochdale do not commission or provide this service and therefore are not able to provide comments.</p> <p>Healthwatch Rochdale raised this question with HMR CCG and the response is detailed below;</p> <p><i>“The availability of the new walk in service will be promoted in a range of ways including social media, via email cascades to local employers, outdoor advertising, leaflets, posters and flyers to a range of community and town centre venues, health sites and by word of mouth. It is hoped that the site may be able to offers tests on a no appointment basis. Staff are available at the site to help any potential users with additional needs.”</i></p>
2.	<p>What is the percentage of local care homes where staff & residents have been tested for Covid - 19?</p>	<p>Healthwatch Rochdale do not commission or provide this service and therefore are not able to provide comments.</p> <p>Healthwatch Rochdale raised this question with Rochdale Borough Council and the response is detailed below;</p> <p><i>“100% of care homes have been provided with tests for staff and residents.”</i></p>
3.	<p>What is the percentage of local homeless hostels, where residents, volunteers & staff have been tested for Covid - 19?</p>	<p>Healthwatch Rochdale do not commission or provide this service and therefore are not able to provide comments.</p>

<p>Additionally, Broadfield Park Hotel has been used as an 'Everybody In' emergency hostel during the crisis. Who is responsible, if anyone, for ensuring the residents, volunteers & staff at that site are tested for Covid - 19?</p>	<p>Healthwatch Rochdale raised this question with Rochdale Borough Council and the response is detailed below;</p> <p><i>“Earlier Govt and PHE guidelines were quite explicit in that ‘generic’ C-19 testing was prioritised for NHS and similar front line workers and did not include volunteers or staff at homeless hostels and similar. Advice was to self isolate or to enable people to self isolate that were symptomatic. Only those that were showing symptoms of illness were encouraged to seek advice and to access testing. Govt did not update advice throughout the period until much later down the line when the C 19 testing was broadened out.</i></p> <p><i>All of the accommodation provision that would fall under the term ‘homeless hostels’ that are commissioned or managed on behalf of the council. Each provider has in place advice and guidance and have introduced risk management processes and to mitigate infection. The council forwarded the latest Govt/PHE advice of steps that should be taken to ensure services could be operated safely and to ensure any risk to staff, residents or visitors would be minimised. Although no formal requirement was made to ensure that any actual or suspected C 19 cases should be notified, this was a regular agenda item on the bi-weekly and then weekly C 19 operational meetings. Similarly, Strategic Housing Services were/and are in daily contact with the Rough Sleeper Outreach service and the councils Rough Sleeper Coordinator.</i></p> <p><i>The council has commissioned Sanctuary Trust to provide the on site 24/7 management and support for the Broadfield Park Hotel. Sanctuary Trust are directly responsible for the day to day oversight and management of procedures and processes to implement safe distancing, infection control and minimisation and to ensure staff and residents are adhering to social distancing and other guidance as set out by PHE/Govt. The facility has been</i></p>
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		<i>inspected by the councils Public Health representative. All residents are issued with a pack including hand sanitiser (that meets PHE standard), face mask, and wound dressing. Residents were encouraged to use the Temporary Walk in Test centre that was sited outside the Town Hall. There had been some issues raised about the previous testing arrangements that required people to produce ID and proof of address. (provided by Homelessness Team)”</i>
4.	Who is taking overall local responsibility for ensuring testing of residents & frontline workers in the care homes, social care, and homeless Sector and who are they ultimately accountable to?	<p>Healthwatch Rochdale do not commission or provide this service and therefore are not able to provide comments.</p> <p>Healthwatch Rochdale raised this question with HMR CCG and the response is detailed below;</p> <p>“Overall responsibility lies with The Health Protection Board led by Public Health, overseen and accountable to the Director of Public of Health. The Board has representation from the wider Council and the CCG.”</p>
5.	How does the Track & Trace system enable local agencies to be aware of how people from all of the above are dispersed across the community into care homes, hostels hotels & the wider community?	<p>Healthwatch Rochdale do not commission or provide this service and therefore are not able to provide comments.</p> <p><i>“There are 3 levels to contact tracing. National test and trace levels 2 and 3 - when an individual tests positive, their result will automatically be fed into the National Contact Tracing Service. If a case is more complex then this will be escalated to level 1. Level 1 is the regional level - a collaboration between Greater Manchester and the ten GM Local Authorities. At a local level we have identified key settings and groups within the community, and built systems and relationships to be able to respond effectively as we become aware of cases and situations.”</i></p>
6.	We have seen in this pandemic that locally there were issues with having vital health information translated into community languages.	Healthwatch Rochdale raised this question with HMR CCG and the response is detailed below;

	<p>Will Services be ensuring their information for local health services is more accessible and inclusive in the future?</p>	<p><i>“Throughout this pandemic, locally we have signposted patients to the national resources relating to Coronavirus and services that are in a variety of formats, including our community languages. For our Rochdale specific resources, we have kept these as visual as possible and linked to national resources that are updated regularly.”</i></p>
7.	<p>Will a report into the local response to the pandemic examining local provision of health services & support agencies be commissioned by Healthwatch post Covid - 19 crisis so lessons can be learned and best practice shared , cascaded & adopted to meet the challenges of any future pandemics ?</p>	<p>Healthwatch Rochdale understand the need for more analysis to fully understand the pandemic and therefore we have developed a programme of work to provide more insight into the impact of COVID-19 over the next six months.</p>
8.	<p>Particularly how the epidemic had impacted most significantly on BAME communities and appears to have a higher incidence in the areas of higher density, poorer quality and overcrowded housing & increased incidence of child poverty & unemployment. For example, the ONS data shows Milkstone & Deepdish to be one of the most impacted wards in the borough. It also has higher levels of overcrowding, poorer quality housing & child poverty.</p> <p>Will Healthwatch be advocating for more local investment in services to improve health outcomes in the ward?</p>	<p>It has been made clear that the coronavirus pandemic has confirmed the vital role of our health and social care sector, and we need to support these sectors’ preparations for the future.</p> <p>Healthwatch Rochdale understand the need for more analysis to fully understand the pandemic and therefore we have developed a programme of work to provide more insight into the impact of COVID-19 over the next six months.</p>
9.	<p>Will Rochdale Healthwatch / Healthwatch England be able to put pressure on Local / Central Government to ensure food vouchers are made available throughout the six week holiday to ensure local children are able to have access to nutritious meals during the six week holiday ?</p> <p>I understand that there are existing plans by the Westminster government to cut this vital lifeline to vulnerable children from poorer households this summer despite the pandemic.</p>	<p>Currently, Healthwatch Rochdale is working to capture patient’s experiences of health and care to aid the management of the response to the coronavirus pandemic locally in the borough of Rochdale. Healthwatch Rochdale is also working with stakeholders to ensure people have the best possible information about the effect of COVID-19 on changes to health and care services.</p> <p>Healthwatch Rochdale will continually review intelligence received from service users and inform providers and commissioners through evidenced based information.</p>

