Involving local people in developing a Local Health and Care Plan for Merton
1. **Introduction**

The Merton Health and Care Plan describes our vision, priorities and actions to meet the health and care needs of local people and deliver improvements in their health and wellbeing through the life stages of start well, live well and age well. It is a two-year (2019–2021) plan which focuses on the actions which no single organisation could achieve alone. By working together, we believe health, social care and the voluntary sector can deliver quality health and care services that support local people.

It has been essential to develop this plan with local people – a commitment of all our partners. Between August 2018 and July 2019, we spoke to hundreds of local people to hear what you want from health and care services and to test our ideas with local people at different stages in the development of the plan.

2. **Our engagement process**

   - **August - November 2018**: Using local insight to inform our early thinking around health and care priorities
   - **November 2018**: Testing our early thinking and draft health and care priorities to inform the actions and impact
   - **May - June 2019**: Testing our draft plan with key stakeholders before finalisation
   - **September 2019 onwards**: Launching and implementing our plan with the ongoing involvement of our local community
3. Using local insight to inform our early thinking

Merton’s health and care partners considered the views of local people gathered over the last year, including what we learnt through our commissioning intentions engagement work undertaken in Summer/Autumn 2018. This shaped our thinking as we developed our early ideas about what health and care priorities for Merton would look like. This included hearing from communities and groups who do not always feel their voice is heard or may face specific barriers to involvement, for example, those with physical and learning disabilities, those with Dementia, those from different ethnic backgrounds including BAME and Polish communities, Carers, residents of working age and older people. We used feedback from local people to refine our early ideas into a set of draft priorities that were presented at our deliberative event in November 2018.

4. Testing our early thinking and draft priorities

In November 2018, we held an engagement event for local people, health and care staff, and representatives from community organisations. We talked about the kinds of things which no single organisation can achieve alone and how organisations could work better together. We also shared what people had already told us about what they want from local services. Discussions focused on:

- Children and young people's mental health and community services
- Primary care
- Diabetes
- Mental health
- Health and social care integration
- Dementia
- Making positive lifestyle choices
- How to make the most of the Wilson redevelopment

More than 130 people attended the day – including around 50 local people who had been specifically recruited to represent the diverse community in Merton and who had never worked with us before. We worked with a specialist organisation to reach out to a representative cross section of the community using online advertising and on-street recruitment. As a result, we heard from a range of people we wouldn't ordinarily have reached including from those in deprived communities, young adults and people from multicultural backgrounds. Local community groups such as the Merton Voluntary Service Council, Inner Strength Network, Mitcham Town Community Trust, Mental Health Forum, Healthwatch, London in Your Language, South Mitcham Community Centre, Merton Seniors, LGBT forum, Friends of St Helier, BAME Voice, Ethnic Minority Centre, Wimbledon Guild, Polish Family Association, Carers Support Merton and MENCAP were also a part of the day.
There was great energy and fresh ideas in the room. It was clear that people were passionate about health and care in our borough and wanted to support us. We made a video of the event which captured the feeling of the day: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HhrdyYs_RWs

The following provides a snapshot of some of what people told us at the event. Overall, people were supportive of a focus on prevention, community activation and self-management as well as greater involvement of the voluntary sector in providing solutions to health and social care challenges, with the right resources. It was recognised that none of this would be possible without a strong and stable workforce and increasing the use of technology. A strong theme throughout the event was around increased support and recognition for carers.

**Start Well**

People would like to see continued and improved collaboration between health, social care and schools to better support children as they grow up. They are concerned about the reduction in spending and how that will impact on children in general, and particularly those who need additional support, such as those with a learning disability.

They are keen that emotional wellbeing services for young people are easy to use, easy to access and non-stigmatising. Children should be taught how to look after themselves and what to do when they need help. Local collaborations should adopt fun ways of educating children about healthy lifestyles.

It was noted as important to get transitions from children’s to adult services right – as this is can often seriously impact both quality and quality of care for young people.

**Live Well**

People told us they wanted it to be easier to access primary care services, included better quality information – linking this with social prescribing for support to self-manage. They would like to see a more holistic approach to mental health services – offering alternative therapies, efforts to reduce stigma and linking in with voluntary and community organisations to reach those who might not be coming forward for support when they need it.

More targeted and practical support for people with diabetes was also another key theme.

**Age Well**

To better integrate health and social care, feedback highlighted good I.T. as a key feature for success. Integrated health and care plans for frail and elderly people as well as coordinated discharge were cited as fundamental. To promote a Dementia friendly Merton, greater education across the local population is needed across all age groups.

It was felt a big public health campaign around advanced care planning could promote choice and involvement - not waiting for an end of life diagnosis.
We have also created a summary of the key themes from the event in the infographic, below.

5. Testing our draft plan with key stakeholders before finalisation

We have used the ideas generated during the event, and from existing insight, to develop our Health and Care Plan, as well as considering priorities around prevention and early intervention that have been published in the NHS long-term plan, issued recently by the Government.

The plan was published as a discussion document in May 2019 to test it with our partners and those who helped shape it. We used this discussion document to continue the conversation - and start talking to people about how to put ideas into action. We did this through a mix of face to face discussions, online survey and written feedback – targeting those who attended our deliberative event in November, our Patient Engagement Group, local voluntary and community groups (including Healthwatch and Merton Voluntary Services Council), NHS staff and GPs.
People told us that they were supportive of the areas the plan were trying to address and agreed that the actions we are proposing to take are the right ones. Those who feedback to us felt post-natal support and services for people with Learning Disabilities were missing from the plan. They would also like to see more information about who will be taking this plan forward and how, how people will continue to be involved and what support will be given for the voluntary sector to deliver some of the plan.

6. So what?

It’s important for all partners involved in implementing the health and care plan to demonstrate how feedback from local people has shaped the final plan. Health and care partners have considered the themes from the feedback provided to inform the final version of the health and care plan. The following changes have been made to the plan in response to the feedback received:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>You said</th>
<th>We did</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Start well</strong></td>
<td><strong>Schools, Merton Council and health organisations will continue to work together through the CAMHS Partnership Board.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We want to see collaboration between health, social care and schools to better support children as they grow up.</td>
<td>Working with local schools, we have successfully bid for national money to introduce mental health support teams into schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We want emotional wellbeing services for young people are easy to use, easy to access and non-stigmatising.</td>
<td>We will launch a communications campaign to promote online mental health services through schools in 2020 – influenced by young people’s feedback.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Live well</strong></td>
<td><strong>We have launched the new integrated mental health services - Merton Uplift. Merton Uplift offers counselling services and other support for common mental health problems, as well as a wellbeing service, that can link people into community activities and support.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We want to see a holistic approach to mental health services – offering alternative therapies and linking in with voluntary and community organisations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


We want it to be easier to access primary care services

Over 20,000 more GP appointments will be made available and all Merton registered patients able to access primary care services online.

**Age well**

Feedback highlighted good IT as a key feature for success in integrating health and social care

Our plan to improve care home services includes improved IT infrastructure.

To promote a Dementia friendly Merton, greater education across the local population is needed across all age groups.

We will be working with partners to discuss how to increase awareness through promoting the national Dementia Friends programme across the borough.

**What’s missing from the plan**

Post-natal support and services for people with Learning Disabilities were missing from the plan

Post-natal care is commissioning once for South West London. In line with the NHS Long Term Plan, we will be expanding post-natal support including perinatal mental health support.

We would also like to see more information about who will be taking this plan forward

We are producing detailed implementation plans for each area of the health and care plan.

What support will be given for the voluntary sector to deliver some of the plan.

Merton Voluntary Services Council are a member of the Merton Health and Care Together Board and are a key delivery partner in social prescribing, and in the development of the East Merton Model of Health and Wellbeing.

7. **Implementing our plan with the ongoing involvement of our local community**

Publishing this plan won’t be the end of the conversation and we want to work together with local people and community organisations to put these plans into action.

We know, from looking at the profile of people we’ve heard from during our engagement work, that we’ve reached a good cross section of the community. But, there’s always more we can do. Our approach to ongoing engagement will be multi-faceted:
1. Direct engagement – involving people with lived experience of services directly in project working groups, where possible. Testing communications and engagement plans with existing channels, such as the CCGs Patient Engagement Group

2. Wider engagement – working with existing voluntary and community groups to speak to those they work with

3. Targeted engagement – working with those most impacted by specific projects within the plan and current service users. This might be through holding bespoke focus groups, surveys and telephone interviews.

Work is already underway to involve local people in several projects within this plan – see some examples of this below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of the plan</th>
<th>How are we already involving local people in implementing the plan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Start Well       | • Working with the council to involve young people in improving mental health services by introducing the Thrive model for change  
                   • Working with children in schools to seek feedback on the mental health support being provided – including selecting a provider for online counselling services and tailoring promotional materials so they are more young people friendly |
| Live Well        | • Interviewing mental health service users, in partnership with Healthwatch, to improve the pathway for those in crisis  
                   • Continuing to involve local people in the redevelopment of the Wilson Hospital into a Wellbeing Campus  
                   • Improve the uptake of structured diabetes education by engaging targeted communities such as men and those from BAME communities to understand how courses could be tailored to better meet different needs |
| Age Well         | • Merton Seniors Forum undertake inspections of care homes and take views from residents that feed into improving care in these homes  
                   • The Healthy Ageing Guide in Merton has been developed with the voluntary sector and with support from Merton CCG Patient Engagement Group  
                   • Co-production panels held at the Dementia Hub continue to ensure the voice of carers is heard |
8. **Next steps**

We are committed to making sure we share the outputs of our engagement work by feeding back directly to groups we’ve worked with, publishing feedback reports online and using those involved as champions to spread the word about the impact their involvement has had.

As we begin to implement the Local Health and Care Plan, keep an eye on our website for updates on our work. If you would like more information about how you can get involved, please visit our website: https://www.mertonccg.nhs.uk/Get%20Involved/Pages/default.aspx or contact us by emailing: mertonccg.getinvolved@swlondon.nhs.uk