

Dhek Bhal Women's Day Centre

What is Healthwatch?

Healthwatch is here to **demonstrably influence commissioning, service provision or strategic decision making...** and this impact report outlines how we will achieve this following engagement with Dhek Bhal Day Centre Women's Project.



Healthwatch worked in partnership with Dhek Bhal in organising focus groups workshops on emotional health and wellbeing to find out from the South Asian community - how do local services help support their health and wellbeing and what areas could be improved?

We use our Wellbeing questionnaire <http://bit.ly/2BYqmxH>

[Dhek Bhal's helps to promote the health and social wellbeing of South Asian people living in Bristol & South Gloucestershire through a range of services.](#)

Healthwatch Bristol worked in partnership with Dhek Bhal women's Group and organised and facilitated focus groups and one to ones workshops to listen to the service users experiences about emotional health and wellbeing.

"Attending Dhek Bhal has helped me tremendously with my depression and isolation as my children are older now and left home and my husband is out working which left me alone and isolated."

Service user

"I was referred by my GP to Dhek Bhal as I suffer from depression and I was going through a very difficult time in my life. With this support I now feel confident and able to speak to other people."

Service user

"Dhek Bhal helps supports me very well and improves my mental health as I mix with other women and enjoy my time here!"

Service user

Follow up

What did we do?

Healthwatch Bristol was delighted to work with Amara, our university student volunteer, and Dhek Bhal staff. We worked in partnership with Dhek Bhal strengthening the voice of the South Asian community. We did this by holding one-to-one focus groups for their service users to enjoy, and discussed which services and activities they use to keep emotionally well over a cup of tea. Healthwatch facilitated two workshops discussing what amenities they felt helped support them as individuals with their emotional health. Healthwatch and Amara spoke to service users using our survey and we then collated the findings. Both Healthwatch and Amara were able to support people's language needs in Punjabi/ Urdu which made communication with some service users much more productive. Support workers helped to translate into Tamil. The workshops were very well attended. Forty people attended and 23 people participated in the Healthwatch emotional health and wellbeing survey.

They told us several valuable pieces of feedback about services, and also how support could work better for them - this will be part of our overall report which will be published in May 2018. Here is an extract of our findings from the workshops.

What did we hear? Q.1/2 Which voluntary or community groups provided support?

The majority of the 23 participants said that by attending Dhek Bhal it helps them reduce loneliness and social isolation. They were very enthusiastic about the benefits of having free transport, as well as attending groups like these, as chatting to other people and involvement with people of their own age benefitted them greatly. By having activities like exercise, health check-ups, flower arranging and trips, it helps stimulate them and keep them busy. Likewise the hot homemade lunches were also appreciated and assisted with the social element of chatting to others whilst relishing a lovely communal meal. One person stated, "I look forward in attending every week as it

keeps me physically and mentally happy!"

Peer support and provision from staff also helped support them with answers when they felt concerned or worried about issues which were affecting them or their families. "The organisation helps us to discuss problems and issues and is a good place to resolve problems and get peer support." Healthwatch was informed that the majority of the service users are religious and that they participate in regular prayers. Faith also helps aid them when they are feeling low and unhappy. Attending religious events also provides an opportunity for people to meet and congregate.

Q.3/4 Which health services provide support?

The majority of the 26 participants said that they felt very well supported by their GPs. One stated "I suffered from depression and my GP helped provide medication for this and referred me to Dhek Bhal. Dhek Bhal has had a huge impact on my health as I am no longer taking anti-depressants or sleeping tablets and I am happier now I have made

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Follow up

friends and I feel welcomed here! Another said "My GP at Wells Road Health Centre helped me tremendously with my depression when my husband died." Another said, "I have recently been diagnosed with dementia by my GP. He is helping me understand the condition and the support available for me."

A minority of participants have been referred to counselling and a psychotherapist and we received positive feedback about their service provision. One stated "My psychotherapist supported me very well when I accessed support after my husband died." Twenty out of 23 stated that they felt their GP supported them quite well. Many said that the lack of provision was a problem when attending their GP, with some saying that the support they received was not very good. A minority accesses services from a social worker, a counsellor, as well as Princes Trust, and said these services had helped them greatly with their emotional wellbeing and provided a good support service.

Q5 Was there anything else they wanted to see?

The majority were happy with the services they received. A

few people stated that they felt there should be more organisations like Dhek Bhal providing services for the over 50s, as they felt that it is a great service and helps many people overcome social isolation and loneliness.

Summary.

This report articulated well the importance of organisations and community groups for people over 50. They help people socialise and assists people in the South Asian Community overcome isolation. The report provides strong evidence that people felt very well supported by their GPs and the services which they provide. Dhek Bhal participants are accommodated by health and social care professionals on a referral basis only. Many participants felt that they had greatly benefited from being referred by their GPs to organisations such as Dhek Bhal. This and other day centres had helped shape and improve their mental health and wellbeing. Some people no longer took medication for their depression and felt integrated within the group/society, as well as learning about health check-ups, participating in exercise and crafts and socialising on trips and during

events. We found out which health services people accessed to help them with both their physical and mental health.

Healthwatch will be visiting Dhek Bhal Men's Group next month to hear about their experiences of emotional health and wellbeing and will report on its outcomes.

Recommendations.

Through doing focus group workshops and by providing one-to-one sessions, people from the South Asian community have felt more empowered to talk to Healthwatch openly and confidentially in a safe space about the benefits, as well as the lack of support, from services which they used. Clearly highlighting the GPs' services in Bristol and praising their support, treatment and care. People felt that more day centre provisions like Dhek Bhal should be organised because of the great benefits and positive influence on their mental health and wellbeing.

Healthwatch will.....

All the feedback Healthwatch Bristol gathers is analysed and used to inform the Healthwatch Bristol quarterly reports which are shared with Healthwatch

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Follow up

Bristol partners including Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group, the Bristol Health and Wellbeing Board, Bristol City Council, the Care Quality Commission, NHS England and Healthwatch England. The quarterly report is also presented to the Healthwatch Bristol Advisory Group to propose further uptake of the issues identified

in the report. The report will be available on the Healthwatch Bristol website (www.healthwatchbristol.co.uk) and circulated to our mailing lists via the monthly e-bulletin.

We're asking the same questions of a range of participants as part of our mission to

demonstrate range of community reach by developing relationships with stakeholders

Healthwatch Bristol will continue to work with Dhek Bhal on joint outcomes related to Mental Health.



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