

Public Engagement

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust is committed to involving the public, patients and service users within Buckinghamshire in developing its services and influencing the strategic direction of the organisation.

The detail below highlights the public engagement which took place between April 2023 and March 2024.

Public & Patient Engagement PSED

We know that good health is influenced by factors including lifestyle, genes, housing, income, employment, education as well as access to and quality of healthcare.

The Trust's strategy reflects the NHS Long Term Plan published in early 2019 and is aligned to the Buckinghamshire Joint Local Health and Wellbeing strategy: [Healthier, Happier Lives](#) developed by the Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board.

The Buckinghamshire Health and Wellbeing Board comprises of representatives from our Trust, Buckinghamshire Council, Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (ICB) and voluntary and community sectors. Healthier, Happier Lives focuses on improvements throughout life so that residents start well, live well and age well. Together we are committed to improving health and social care in the long term and to reducing health inequalities for those living in areas with greater need and groups with poorer health. Working with our health and social care partners, we want to help the residents of Buckinghamshire to start well, live well and age well. As a Trust it is our responsibility to not only deliver outstanding healthcare which is accessible to all but also to play our part in health education and prevention as a major employer in the county.

Health and Wellbeing Days for Older Residents

Following on from the work that took place last year, a blueprint was created to enable more community sites to run health and wellbeing older people's events for local communities. Events were held at Marlow Community Hospital on 19th April 2023 and at Chalfont and Gerrards Cross Community Hospital on 4th October 2023.

The aim of the events was to:

- Engage with the local community
- Educate local residents about their general health & wellbeing and reduce the likelihood of them needing to access health services in the future
- Engage with local charitable/voluntary sector organisations
- Raise awareness of local services and support

A total of 30 stand holders were present at these events providing information, guidance and advice on a range of services and support. These included including Age Concern, Dementia Action Marlow, Thames Valley Police, Alzheimer's Society, LEAP, Carers Bucks,

Chiltern Prostate Cancer Support Group, Trading Standards and Buckinghamshire Council as well as the Trust's falls prevention, continence, rapid response and immediate care teams and representatives from the Community Assessment Treatment service. In addition, blood pressure, weight and height checks were offered to those who attended.

A total of over 100 residents attended both events and 85% of them said the event was "extremely useful".

Equality Monitoring

- Attendees age ranged from 35 – 80+
- A slightly higher proportion of women attended than men.
- 45% of attendees said they had a long-term health condition or disability.
- 16% of attendees were South Asian, 6% of attendees were Black.

It has been agreed that events will take place in 2024 in Chesham, Buckingham and Lane End.

Community Action Day

As part of the Opportunity Bucks levelling up programme, Buckinghamshire Council and a number of services, held several multi-agency days of action across the county to help reduce the perception of crime and Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and improve the feelings of safety within the 10 wards within Buckinghamshire identified as needing additional support.

BHT took part in the Aylesbury Community Action Day (25 October 2023) and had some stalls in Unit 33, Friars square shopping centre. Unit 33 opened on the 26 September 2023 as the first 'health on the high street' in Buckinghamshire. Health on the high street enables healthcare services to be delivered alongside public health and wellbeing initiatives, as well as social support services in the middle of our local town. Unit 33 offers a range of services including blood pressure testing, health visiting services, NHS Health Checks, sexual health services, veteran support, and immunisation. It supports residents in one of the most deprived areas of the Buckinghamshire, to take control of their health and wellbeing and helps to free up appointments from other local services by offering proactive support and advice, in a convenient location with excellent public transport links. Unit 33 offers both booked appointments and drop-in services to be able to fully support our community.

Teams/ services which attended to represent BHT at the Community Action Day were:

- Research and Innovation

- School Nursing
- Children and Young People (CYP) Therapies
- Health Visiting

Over 500 members of the public attended this event.

Additional events held at Unit 33 during 2023/24 included:

- Resuscitation Team education event
- Homeless Clinic

Research & Innovation

The Trust's Research and Innovation department has had a highly active year, engaging with various stakeholders and achieving remarkable milestones. It ranked 2nd in England for research trial recruitment among similar-sized acute trusts and 1st for setting up trials. Over 4,500 Buckinghamshire residents, a quarter from primary care, participated in 70 studies across 26 specialties, including a significant Spinal Muscular Atrophy study.

The department opened 45 new studies and continued engagement in Research Ready Community Programmes, with approximately 1,500 individuals signing up for preventative health assessments.

As well as research, the team has continued to champion healthcare innovation with a clear focus on enhancing patient care and providing a supportive work environment for colleagues.

During 2023/24 the Trust's Research & Innovation team continued to participate in the Research Ready Community Programme which is designed to engage under-served communities and improve inclusion and representation in health and care research.

Research has shown that people with a South Asian heritage are at high risk of cardiovascular disease, type-2 diabetes, and other common life-threatening illnesses. Furthermore, death rates from cardiovascular disease have continued to increase at alarming rates in South Asia which contrast with nearly a two-third reduction in US and Western Europe.

We have worked in partnership with the Islamic Karima Foundation and the Wycombe Islamic Society to recruit Community Champions within the Muslim community to understand their levels of awareness and perceptions of research.

As a result, a further c.1,500 people have signed up for the Lolipop Biobank study, bringing the total to almost 5,000. The Lolipop study, which runs at Wycombe Hospital, invites participants from the South Asian community to undergo a 90-minute series of tests including blood pressure, physical measurements, and retinal imaging. These individuals then receive a detailed preventative health assessment report which identifies risk factors and offers advice and education on appropriate action that may prevent certain diseases.

Health on the High Street

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust opened out first 'health on the high street' 1 year pilot scheme opened on 26 September 2023 in the heart of Aylesbury within the Friars Square shopping centre. The high street plays a pivotal role in our communities as the place where people shop, meet and work. 'Health on the high street' enables healthcare services to be delivered alongside public health and wellbeing initiatives, as well as social support services in the middle of our local town.

The unit provides services in an accessible place, within one of more deprived areas, close to public transport and in a different way to traditional methods of care including drop in advice, guidance, and support. With the aim to improve the health outcomes of the Aylesbury populations. Services provided include, immunisations, health visiting, sexual health, NHS Health checks, veteran drop-in services and more.

In the first 6 months 6,500 people having accessed the unit and nearly 700 have had their blood pressure checked.

Communications Advisory Panel (CAP)

Patient, public, carer, and user involvement is a pre-requisite for developing patient-centred services. The Trust is committed to learning from the views and preferences of care givers, care receivers their supporters and local communities. The CAP aims to work with the Trust to support improvements in patient and carer communication published or approved via the Communications team. CAP is a group of volunteer patient, carer and disability group representatives who ensure that the information created and provided for patients is written and presented in a consistent style and tone appropriate for patients and their families or carers.

Objectives of the CAP group:

- To scrutinise patient communication published by the Trust via online and offline channels (e.g. in print and on websites).
- To provide constructive feedback and appropriate challenge to help improve the standard of public information provided by the Trust.
- To help shape the design and development of Trusts public publication templates and tools.
- To contribute ideas and suggestions in discussions with the Communications team about public/patient communication developments.
- To ensure all communication is: clear, written in plain English, contains helpful images or diagrams (if required), is easy to understand and navigate.

CAP is working together with the communications team to transfer patient information from what has been primarily a paper-based set of leaflet resources to a digital set of information on the Trust website. In doing this, however, CAP is mindful that not all patients and carers can access information via digital channels and the panel champions the development of appropriate, alternative accessible sources of information in addition to these.

Over the last 12 months the panel members have reviewed 95 patient information leaflets and 12 pages on the Trust's website. They have also provided feedback on posters, flyers & infographics, and made recommendations for specific and standard patient letters. It also inputs into signage and wayfinding proposals. In the year ahead CAP will continue to support our patients to be able to access authoritative, easy to read information that improves their knowledge and helps them better manage their health.

Equality Monitoring CAP

CAP has a membership of 32 people. Of those 32, 30 filled out an equality monitoring form. The highlights from the results are shown below:

- 5 religions are represented within this group
- 5 ethnic groups are represented within this group
- We have an almost 50-50 split of men and women in this group
- 31% are aged between 65-79. This is the highest percentage age group within CAP
- 40% of members have a disability or long-term health condition

Community Hub Stakeholder Group meetings

The purpose of the Community Hub Stakeholder Group is to ensure experiences and feedback from patients, carers, service users and the public inform the development of community hubs so that they evolve in line with the needs of local residents.

This group meets every 8 weeks, has 22 stakeholder members with representatives from both Marlow and Thame Community Hubs.

During 2023/24 this group supported and helped the Trust communicate key messages into the local communities they each represent.

Equality Monitoring for Community Hub Stakeholder group

The Community Hub Stakeholder group has a membership of 22 people. 19 out of the 22 filled in an equality monitoring form. Highlights from the results are shown below:

- 3 ethnic groups are represented within this group
- 2 religions are represented within this group
- We have more male attendees in this group than female
- 36% are aged between 65-79. This is the highest percentage age group within the Community Hub Stakeholder group
- 40% of attendees have a disability or long-term health condition

The majority of the 54 combined members are across the age groups for 55 years and above. Our local Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2021 highlights that in Buckinghamshire, there has been an increase of 23.2% of the population that are 65 and over.

We have slightly more males attending these regular meetings than females.

The 2021 census information, 79.9% of the population of Buckinghamshire are from a white British ethnic group. This is reflected in our breakdown for CAP and Community Hub Stakeholder members as 74% of respondents are from a white British ethnic group. However, there has been an increase within Buckinghamshire in Black, Asian, mixed, or multiple ethnic groups and therefore we need to ensure our memberships reflect this. Currently 13% of our members represent Black, Asian, mixed, or ethnic groups.

In the 2021 census, it was reported that 47.2% of Buckinghamshire residents are Christian with 34.2% reporting they have no religion. The second highest reported religion in Buckinghamshire is Muslim at 7%. Only 5.5% of members of CAP and the Community Hub stakeholder group have stated that their religion is Muslim which is a 1% increase in last year, but we still have some improvements to make with membership.

Stakeholder Events -

Chiltern Prostate Cancer Group

This group promotes awareness and supports individuals affected by prostate cancer either those with the disease or their carers.

A grant was awarded by Heart of Bucks to enable the Chiltern Prostate Group to run further events during 2023/4, particularly targeted at men from the Afro-Caribbean population who are at much higher risk.

At the first session held on 15 July 174 men booked. 11% were identified as needing to consult with their GP. The second session held on 28 October 184 men booked. 10% were identified as needing to consult with their GP. These men were asymptomatic and would not have been picked up without such testing.

BHT supported this event by providing a volunteer to book patients into their time slots and give them the relevant paperwork for their tests.

BHT Open Day and Careers Fair

On Saturday 29th July 2023 BHT held its first open day since COVID. The open day is a public event that gives the general public the opportunity to hear from services and departments within BHT; attend some behind the scenes tours of areas that the public do not have access to ordinarily; plus, to find out about plans for the future of healthcare in Buckinghamshire.

22 stalls were present at this event representing BHT services and departments giving out details of the services they offer our local communities. BHT also ran 5 behind the scenes tours operating throughout the duration of the event. Behind the scenes tours included:

- A Mortuary tour
- A tour of Horatio's Garden (National Spinal Injuries Centre – NSIC)
- A tour of our simulation suite
- A tour of our theatres
- A tour of our Upper Limb Studio (NSIC)

A careers fair operated throughout the event which held 4 talks about careers within the NHS. Approximately 200 people attended this event.

AGM video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h5rnHla1LEI>

Open Day 2023 wrap up video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XfnKWFjOwQs>

Homeless Clinic Workshop

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust (BHT) has been running a Homeless clinic since May 2022 engaging with two local homeless charities, Aylesbury Homeless Action Group (AHAG) and Wycombe Homeless Connection (WHC). Social, economic and physical environments are major drivers of ill health and one factor determining this can be having a home. People become homeless for a variety of reasons; however, homelessness can have a major impact on health, with the average age of death for people experiencing homelessness as 45 for men and 43 for women (Crisis UK, 2022).

To try and combat this, the Trust has been collaborating with the Aylesbury Homeless Action Group (AHAG) and Wycombe Homeless Connection (WHC) to provide a routine outpatient service for their clients. Clinics have been running alternatively at Wycombe and Stoke Mandeville Hospitals monthly since May 2022.

The original aim of the homeless clinic service:

- To create an outpatient service for patients with no fixed abode. The service will review each patient's overall health. They may have a ranged of comorbidities and/or complex needs.

BHT invited local key stakeholders within the community to attend this workshop. These includes representatives from:

- Oxford Health Trust
- Local General Practice
- One Recovery Bucks
- Buckinghamshire Council
- Local Homeless Charities
- BOB Prevention and Health Inequalities team

The purpose of this workshop was to understand and gather information on:

- Local health deprivation
- Provide an update on BHT's current homeless clinic service
- Find out what the current gaps are in provision for our homeless and vulnerable communities
- To record suggestions for how BHT and the above organisations could work together as a multi professional BOB service

- The development of a working group

15 representatives attended the meeting. A working group is currently in place and meets regularly to discuss support available by each key stakeholder to help individuals within our local homeless community.