

## SCRUTINY INITIATION DOCUMENT (SID)

**Title of review: Access to Health and Care Services in Islington**

**Scrutiny Committee: Health and Care Scrutiny Committee**

**Director leading the review: John Everson & Jonathan O'Sullivan**

**Lead officers:**

**Overall aim of the review:** To consider if residents are able to access health and care services in Islington effectively; specifically GP appointments, and the Adult Social Care "front door".

**Objectives of the review:**

- To review if health and care services in Islington are easy to access.
- To consider if all residents are able to access health and care services equally, to assess the reasons why some groups may find it difficult to access services, and to consider the support available to help people access services.
- To consider the capacity and demand for health and care services in Islington; and if there are opportunities within the local system to help manage these issues.
- To review opportunities for improving access to health and care services; considering if communications and systems meet the needs of Islington's diverse communities, and if there is scope to develop these further.
- To evaluate best practice in facilitating access to health and care services.

**How does this review contribute to the Council's priorities?**

This review will contribute to the following priorities in the Islington Together 2023 Plan:

**Fairer Together:** Everyone in Islington who needs extra help can access the right support for them at the right time and in the right place.

**Healthier Islington:** People in Islington can live healthy and independent lives and enjoy London's greenest, cleanest and healthiest neighbourhoods

## **Scope of the review and evidence to be received:**

The review will focus on...

### **Access to GP Surgery Appointments**

- Do residents find it easy to book GP appointments in Islington?
- How do residents book GP appointments in Islington; and how are appointments defined?
- Do patients face challenges in booking appointments?
- If there is appropriate access to out of hours GP services
- The use of online GP services and how these are publicised to the local community; are online forms easy to use and accessible, and are they effective in saving time and resources?
- How are GP surgeries consulting patients around their preferred options (i.e. in person, telephone, or virtual appointments);
- What challenges do GP surgeries face in terms of demand and capacity; how is this measured and monitored, and are there opportunities in the local system to help ease these pressures.
- Are all communities able to access GP appointments equally?
- What challenges are associated with missed appointments, and how can local services help to address this?

### **Access to Adult Social Care**

- Do residents find it easy or difficult to access the Adult Social Care "front door"
- Are there effective signposting services to help people access the care they need?
- What is the council's approach to triaging those seeking Adult Social Care services; what systems does the council have in place to support and manage referrals?
- Are all communities able to access social care services equally, what information, advice and support is available to support referrals? Is advice and information accessible, in line with best practice and government guidelines?
- What more can be done to support "hard to reach" groups?

### **Opportunities for improving access to Health and Care services in Islington**

- What opportunities are there to increase and facilitate access to health and care services in Islington?
- What is the role of the Voluntary and Community Sector, and how can they support access to services and the join-up of health and care services? Can more be done to support these signposting services?
  - Are communications and systems resident focused and appropriate for the needs of Islington's diverse communities?

The Committee will receive the following evidence:

**1. Meeting - 3 July 2023**

- Presentation from NHS North Central London Integrated Care Board on GP access

**2. Meeting – 5 September 2023**

- Adult Social Care to present on Adult Social Care “Front Door” (including an overview of the current system and relevant performance data, such as call-handling).
- Healthwatch Islington to present on primary care access issues and GP websites
- Overview of GP provision (including statistics on number of GPs, GP/patient ratios, etc.)

**3. Meeting – 5 October 2023**

- ASC Officers - Equalities information on access to services – are any groups under-represented, is there outreach/engagement with hard to reach groups?
- Evidence on Access Islington Hubs – what is their role, do they help to increase access to health and care services?

**4. Meeting 3 – 14 November 2023**

- Islington GP Federation

**5. Meeting – 18 December 2023**

Voluntary Sector on their role and signposting – Age UK

**6. Meeting – 23 January 2024**

**Details of any visits**

- Workshop / focus group with residents on their experiences of accessing services;
- Meetings with under-represented community groups on difficulties with accessing services;
- The views of older people - Islington Pensioners Forum? Visits to day centres / sheltered accommodation?
- The views of younger people – Youth Council? Do young people find it easy to access health services?
- Help on your Doorstep?

**Written Evidence**

- Healthwatch Islington reports on GP access and websites
- Online survey for residents on their experiences of accessing services (via Lets Talk Islington);
- Data on website statistics, patient and service user feedback, “mystery shopper” exercises, and so on.

**Review timetable (list specific meeting dates if possible)**

1. SID to be agreed: 5 September 2023
2. Witness evidence to be received: September 2023 to January 2024
3. Draft recommendations to be considered: 4 March 2024
4. Report to be approved: 15 April 2024
5. Report to be submitted to Executive: June 2024
6. Provisional date for Executive response: September 2024
7. Provisional date for 12 month update report back to the Committee: September 2025

**Additional information:**

In carrying out the review the committee will consider equalities implications and resident impacts identified by witnesses. The Executive is required to have due regard to these, and any other relevant implications, when responding to the review recommendations.