



Young People's Survey Findings

**Feedback and views of 16-25 year olds on
Coventry health services and information
about services**

August 2010

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1 Introduction

1.1 Coventry LINK

Coventry Local Involvement Network or LINK is one of 151 LINKs in England set up by the Government through the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The role of a LINK is to enable local people to have greater influence on how local NHS and adult social care services are delivered and commissioned. Coventry LINK, therefore, is an independent network of local people and local voluntary and community groups

1.2 The issues

Coventry LINK spent several months of 2009 consulting with local people and organisations to identify issues for the LINK's first work plan. The majority of the issues raised related to health and social services for adults. Also the demographics of the LINK membership were yet to be fully representative of Coventry. To overcome these issues The LINK's Interim Steering Group identified that young people (16-25 year olds) would be a specific group to target and the LINK staff team carried out some focused work on the engagement of young people by creating a young person's working group.

The Public and Patient Forum carried out a survey in 2007 called 'Engaging 16-19 Year Olds in Health Matters' which raised concerns over Young people accessing information about services. The report made several recommendations about improvements to be made to better support young people in not only accessing services but also in informing young people on general health issues.

These issues are looked at further in this report.

1.3 Development of the LINK's Young People's Group

The role of a young volunteer for LINK was devised in partnership with V-involved. V-Involved is a national project working to support organisations who would like to involve young people in their volunteering programme and supporting young people into volunteering. Coventry V-Involved is managed by Voluntary Action Coventry. The connection with V-Involved provided an added incentive for participation as the volunteering the young people do counts towards a certificate.

The volunteering role was advertised via the Volunteers Centre and the national do-it website), local Universities and outreach work at local colleges.

The group was formed with 6 people, all of different backgrounds and ages. Other young people chose to be involved in LINK via LINK's four working

groups. One aim was to enable young people to gain a greater understanding of health and social care services. It was also an opportunity to work on a project from scratch and decide the best way to engage with other young people to find out views on health and social care services in Coventry.

The group spent some time designing some focused publicity solely to attract under 25's to become involved in LINK.

The group were aware of work being carried out to address health targets for young people and were concerned that these targets were not relevant to them. The NHS Strategic Health Plan for Coventry focuses on reducing the following:

- Smoking
- Weight management
- Sexual health (including teenage pregnancy)

For a full breakdown of the strategy for Coventry please visit www.coventrypct.nhs.uk.

The group felt the main issue they had with accessing services was that there was not sufficient information provided about services, their purpose and when/how to use them.

2 Methodology

2.1 Purpose and approach

The Young People's group decided that carrying out a survey aimed at young people would be the best starting point to capture some of the views of young people about health services in Coventry. It was anticipated that this survey may be the starting point for further work through LINK's work programme and it was therefore designed to help identify some of the issues young people had.

The LINK was aware that research had previously been undertaken in the area of young people and health and was keen to use some of these findings as a foundation on which to build the work.

Coventry Partnership's 'Communities that care' survey recently focused on young people in Coventry and the intake of drugs, alcohol and smoking. The Department of Health recently profiled Coventry and results indicated that there are serious concerns about teenage pregnancy. Coventry University undertook a study investigating the NHS targets for young people and the barriers young homeless people have in addressing these health priorities.

More information on these studies can be found at:

- Communities that care www.coventrycypsp.org.uk
- Barriers to addressing health priorities (Coventry University)
- Teenage Pregnancy www.onplace.direct.gov.uk

The group were aware through information they were given that specific issues were:

- Obesity
- Sexual Health
- Teenage Pregnancy
- Smoking

It was agreed that more information would be gathered not just on young people's experiences of accessing health and social care services in Coventry, but also to find out if the above issues directly affected individuals.

The group made the decision that in order to obtain the relevant feedback the survey should be incentivised. The LINK Steering Group authorised the use of a prize draw. Therefore all respondents were given the opportunity to be entered into a prize draw to win an iPod Touch.

The survey was devised by the young group themselves; the challenge was deciding which services would be targeted to gauge user experiences. The final selection was made based on the most recognisable and used services.

2.2 Survey Distribution

Paper copies of the survey were put in both of the local colleges (Henley and City), Coventry University, Warwick University, Broad Horizons Youth Centre, the Volunteer Centre, King Henry VIII Sixth form, Connexions and a variety of youth groups within the city. The young people within the group were responsible for the distribution and collection of the paper versions of the survey.

The survey was sent out to the professionals at each of the locations. The design of the survey enabled an individual to fill out the survey without direction. A post box was left at each place for the completed copies to be put into; each young LINK person was responsible for the monitoring of a particular location and collecting returned copies once completed.

300 paper copies of the questionnaire were produced and distributed.

The survey was made available for electronic completion on the LINK website and was promoted via the Coventry LINK Facebook and Twitter pages. Information about the survey was sent to 300 voluntary groups via Voluntary Action Coventry's monthly mailing.

No names were collected to ensure that responses to the survey cannot be traced back to specific individuals. Contact details were used in accordance with LINK's confidentiality and data protection policy.

3 Survey Response

3.1 Response rate

Collectively (online and paper versions) 142 surveys were completed sufficiently to be analysed. 27 were completed online and 115 were completed in paper form.

3.2 Who Took Part

62% of respondents were female. The age breakdown of respondents is as follows:

Table 1: age of respondents

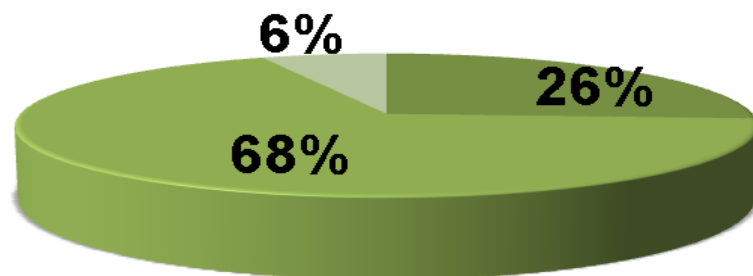
Age	Total
25 years old	2
24 years old	4
23 years old	2
22 years old	8
21 years old	14
20 years old	10
19 years old	20
18 years old	25
17 years old	27
16 years old	15
Unstated	15

Table 2: Ethnicity

African	8	Other ethnic group	9
Asian or Asian British	2	Other White	1
Caribbean	1	Pakistani	6
Chinese	1	Traveller/Romany	2
Indian	10	White British	96
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean	1	White Irish	5

Chart 1: Ethnicity

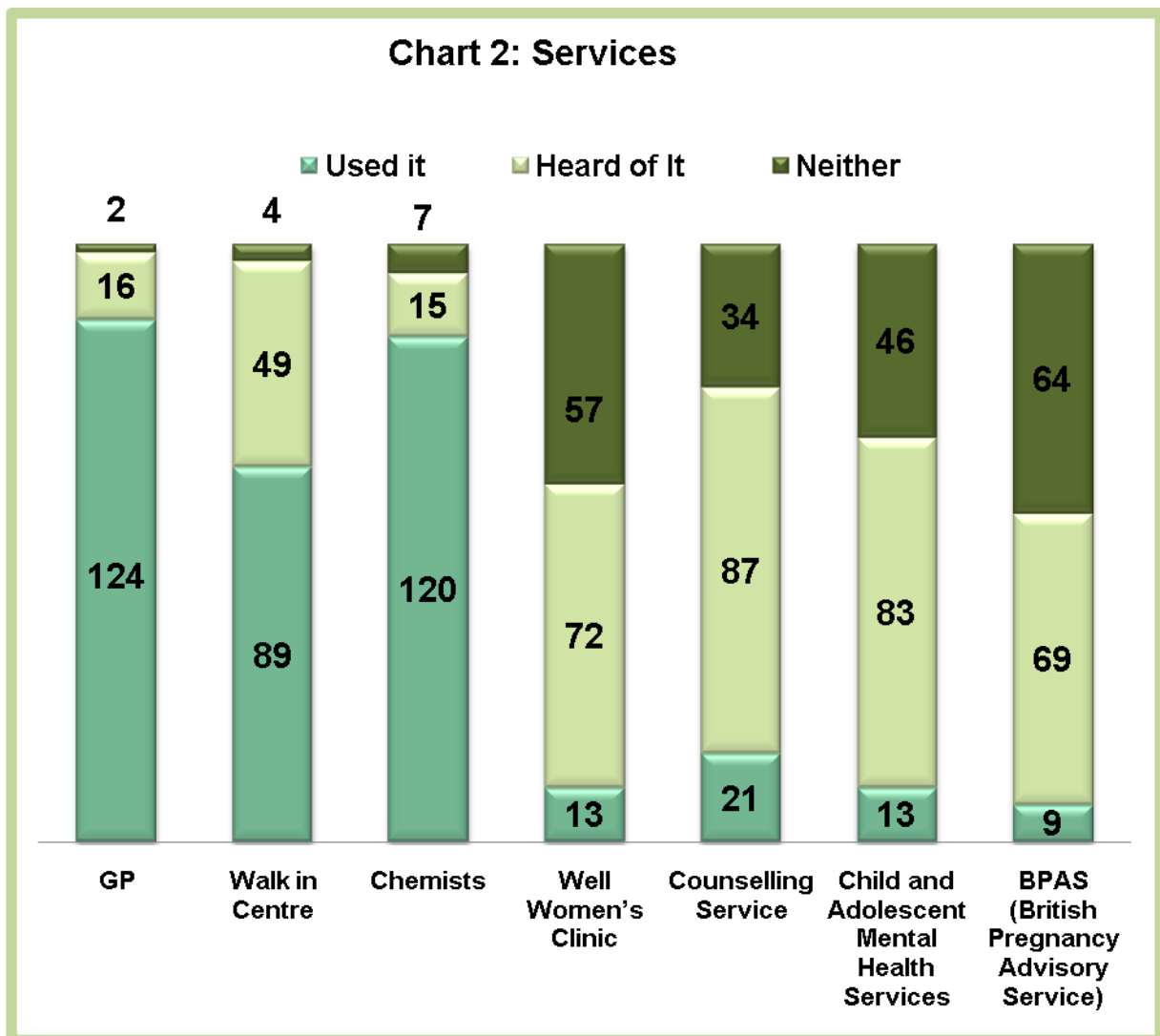
■ BME ■ White British ■ Other



4 Survey Findings

4.1 Have you used or heard of the following services?

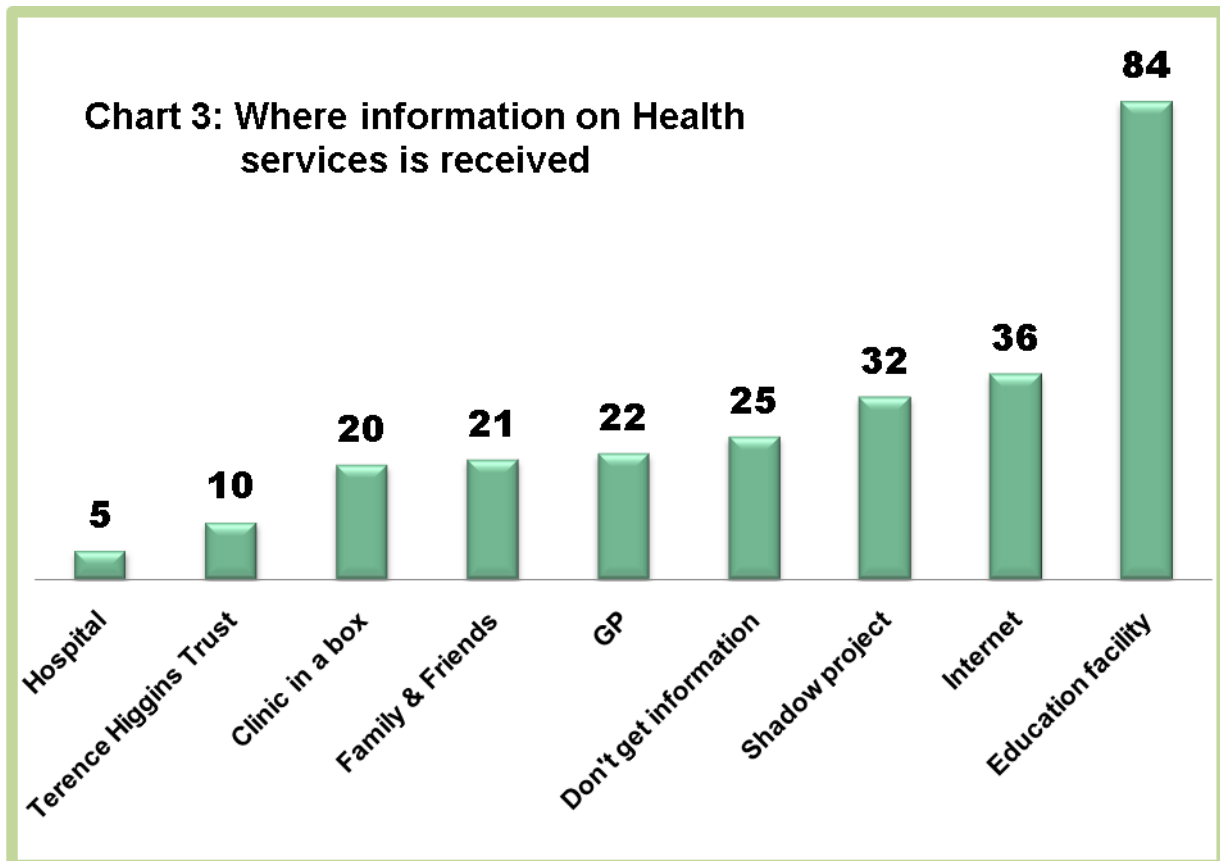
This was the first question asked and chart 2 below shows a breakdown of the amount of people using the listed services (shown in the first block of each column); the amount of people who have heard of the service (shown in the middle block); and the people who have neither used nor heard of the service (shown in top block).



Understandably, higher numbers of respondents had used and heard of the generic services of GP, Chemist and the Walk in Centre. 21 people had used counselling services; 13 Child and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAHMS); and 13 had used the Well Women's Clinic.

We found that counselling services and CAHMS service were the most recognised of the specific services with counselling service recognised by 61% of respondents and CAHMS by 58%

4.2 Information about health and social care services



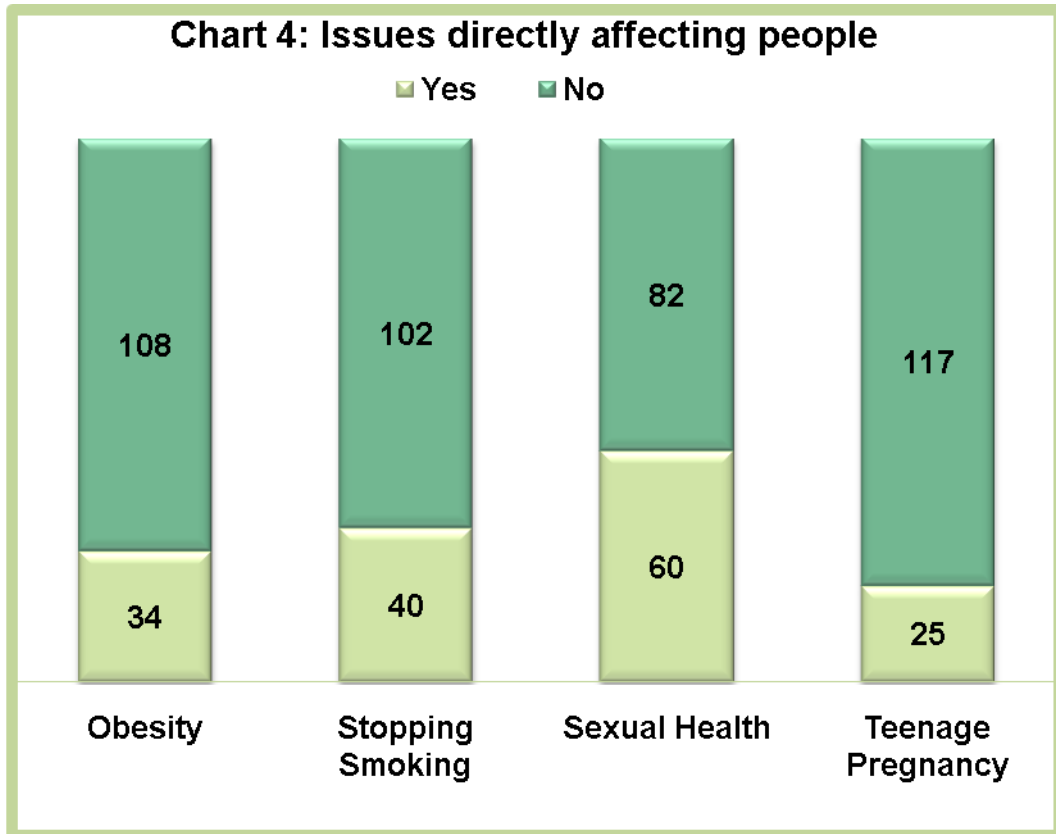
Each respondent could tick more than one option as one source was unlikely to be the sole provider of information. Therefore the number on each block represents how many people out of 142 obtain their information on health and social care services from these places.

The results indicate the importance of schools, colleges and universities having access to the most up to date and accurate information, as this is where the majority of people gain their knowledge. This highlights the importance of the different health projects working within these establishments (such as Shadow and Clinic in a box).

The Internet is the second most frequently used source of all information, the ease in which the information can be accessed and the ability to be anonymous may be some of the reasons why. People who do not access information from other sources or who are unclear about the information they have been given may use the Internet.

A number of respondents said they did not receive information at all, 25 out of 142.

4.3 Which of the following health priorities for health promotion and targeting are issues that affect you directly?



The topics above are the targets for health promotion work by NHS Coventry as these figures are high for Coventry. For more information on these targets please visit: www.coventrypct.nhs.uk

Each column in chart 4 represents 142 respondents. The first block of each column is the amount of people who say they are affected directly by these issues and the second block on top is the amount of people who are not affected. The responses indicate that the majority of this sample do not see these four areas as being of particular concern to them.

Obesity

Our survey indicates that a small number of young people feel they are directly affected by obesity. However, several young people commented that they would like greater information on living and eating healthily. Comments were;

“Think it would be good to learn how to make healthy things to eat at school”

“More information on living healthy”

Obesity is a key target for Coventry as the health implications for adult life cost the NHS billions of pounds. Recent studies indicate that 1 in 3 Coventry children are overweight or obese, Coventry’s Local Area Agreement (2008 - 11) also includes reducing childhood obesity as a target and more recently Coventry’s Strategic Plan for health improvement (2010 – 2014) has obesity as a priority for action. More information can be found by visiting; www.coventrypartnership.com/LAA

Teenage Pregnancy and Stopping Smoking

25 people said they are directly affected by teenage pregnancy. A larger amount of people were affected by stopping smoking (40).

In the last decade Coventry had one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in the country and health officials faced the challenge of finding new ways of working that would tackle teenage pregnancies.

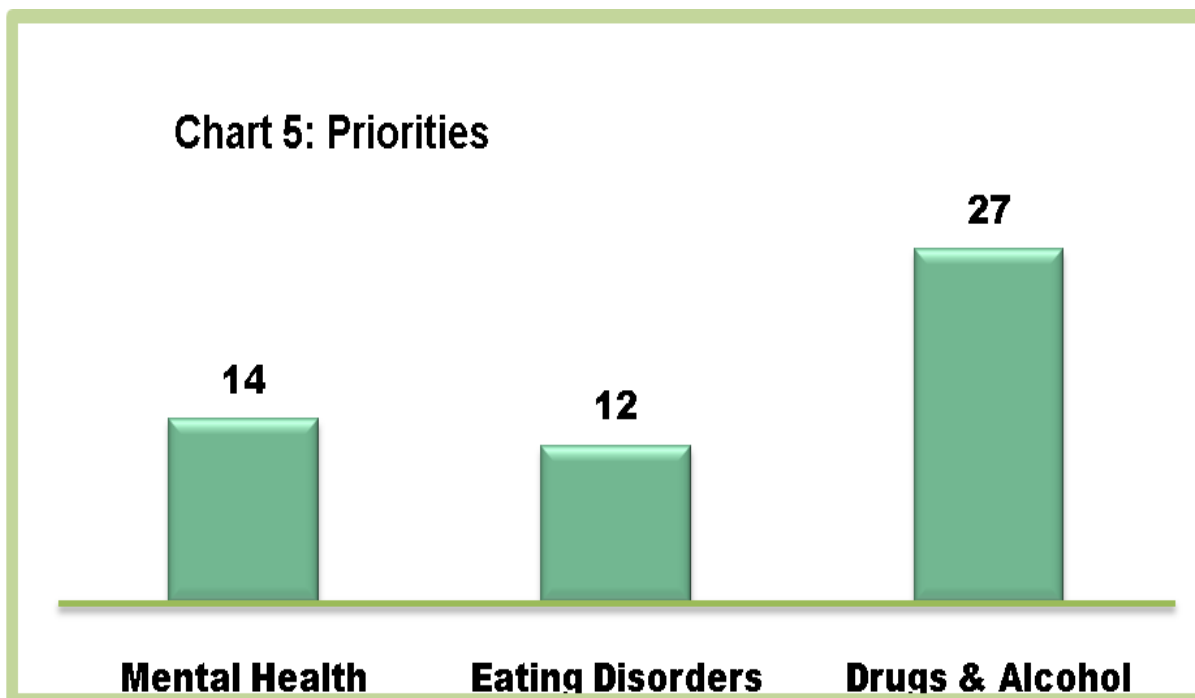
Funded by the Coventry Teaching Primary Care Trust , Coventry Drug and Alcohol Action Team, Coventry Youth Service and Teenage Pregnancy, a project team known as 'Shadow' was set up to combat the growing problems. The aim was to combine services and find interesting ways to reach out to young people by visiting every secondary school, college, special school and pupil referral unit. The SHADOW project delivers sex, drugs and healthy lifestyle education sessions not just in youth service but in every secondary school, college, special school and pupil referral unit in the authority. The Communities that Care survey indicates that young people taking drugs, drinking alcohol and smoking has decreased since 2004, perhaps in response to the work of this project.

Sexual Health

The results in Chart 4 show that the highest percentage of people are affected by sexual health.

4.4 What other priorities for health promotion for young people do you think there should be?

The next part of the survey went on to find out what other issues young people felt were their priorities for information and services. Chart 5 shows the top three priorities identified



Mental health, eating disorders and drugs and alcohol had the most comments. Therefore these were issues of concern to young people which they felt should be acknowledged.

The results indicate that young people would like to be given more information and support about these issues.

4.4.1 Further Research

Research indicates that a number of the issues and concerns of young people are linked together.

Eating Disorders are linked to mental health and alcohol misuse can have serious physical and medical consequences and often leads to psychological dependence. There are strong links between alcohol misuse and violence and risky sexual behaviour in young people.

Certain drugs such as cannabis have been linked with depression and psychosis in some susceptible young people.

1 in 5 young people experience a mental health problem in the course of a year. Most children grow up mentally healthy, but evidence suggests that more children and young people have problems with their mental health today than 30 years ago. Teenagers often experience emotional turmoil as their minds and bodies develop. An important part of growing up is working out and accepting who you are. Some young people find it hard to cope and may experiment with alcohol, drugs or other substances that can alter how they feel. More information can be found at:

www.mind.org.uk

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/information/mental-health-a-z/children-and-young-people/

4.5 Qualitative findings

Some of the questions we asked allowed young people to express their views in free form comments boxes.

4.5.1 What is good about the following service?

The walk in centre in Coventry

78 out of 89 people who indicated they used the service had positive comments about the Walk in Centre. Specific comments made were:

“Quick, easy, convenient and great when other services are closed”

“It was good to go to when I couldn’t get an appointment with my GP”

GPs

102 out of 124 people who indicated they had used the service had positive comments to make about their local GP. Specific comments made were:

“They know you, it’s a good relationship and you trust them”

Chemists

88 out of 120 people who indicated they had used the service were happy with their local chemist, however just 10 people made reference to using the pharmacist for advice on health issues.

Well Women’s Clinic

11 out of 13 people who had indicated they had used the service, had positive comments on this service. The main comment was around free contraception and good advice.

Counselling service

17 out of 21 people who had indicated they had used the service commented positively. Most thought it was a very discreet, very good service.

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

13 out of 13 people who had indicated they had used the service made positive comments about this service.

British Pregnancy Advisory Service

5 out of 9 people who had indicated they had used the service made positive comments on this service, largely about the discreet pregnancy tests and the advice and support which then follows.

4.5.2 What could be improved?

The walk in centre

48 people thought something could be improved about this service, comments made included: the waiting room being made larger, more staff to support demand and more information given on waiting times.

GPs

47 people thought something could be improved about their GP practice, comments made were; Consultation times being made longer, greater care taken to ensure the patient understands all of the information given and waiting times.

“To try to get in to see a doctor or nurse it’s a week’s waiting and for a good doctor it’s about 3 weeks unless you can get an emergency appointment in the morning.”

“I wish they would just listen to young people more”

Chemists

17 people thought chemists could be improved; comments made were around the need for longer opening times and more information on free prescriptions.

Well women’s clinic

2 people commented on this service stating,

“The interview process is too intrusive”

“Better information should be given about contraception”

Counselling service

3 people commented on this service, comments made were around the need to advertise this service more.

Child Adolescent Mental Health Service

2 people commented on this service both comments were around the referral process and the long waits for support.

“My sister has had to use CAMHS before and the doctor referred her in January yet she didn’t get an appointment till the end of March”

British Pregnancy Advisory Service

No suggestion for improvements were made for this service.

4.5.3 What other information would you find useful?

Overall the majority of comments about health and social care services were very positive,

Comments were made about waiting times for various services and access to information. There also seemed to be confusion around prescriptions and when they were free and who was entitled. Very few people would use their local pharmacist for advice and guidance and have only been to the chemist to pick up medication.

A lot of the responses indicated that young people had no interest unless it was something which directly affected them.

Specific comments were:

“More information in easy to read formats on what services do what in Coventry, when you should use them and where you can find them”

“Advice on general health care rather than being bombarded with sexual health information”

“Bring down the age of cervical smear tests”

5 Limitations of the investigation

The sample size was not large enough to be fully representative of all young people in Coventry.

It seems likely that there is a bias in this sample of young people who attend school and colleges because of the distribution methods used. Therefore the results will not necessarily represent the perspective of young people who do not do this. However as many young people do their opinions are useful.

This study did not capture views of disabled young people (only 1 person ticked the disability box); at the time of going to print a plan was underway to target more disabled young people.

6 Conclusions

It was acknowledged early on in this report that the PPI Forum carried out a survey looking at Young People and how they access health services in Coventry. The recommendations which then came from this report are very similar to points raised in this report some four years on. Greater work must

be done to tackle some of these issues. Please see Appendix 2 for more information.

- 6.1 We found that schools, colleges and universities are significant as places where young people receive information about health matters. Therefore it is important that schools, colleges and Universities are supported in this role with consistent and good quality information resources. Specific projects which work in these environments to target young people to raise awareness of issues and routes of getting support are worthwhile.
- 6.2 Our sample highlighted concerns about young people's mental health, including eating disorders, drugs and alcohol misuse. It may be that the focus on the 4 priority areas of obesity, sexual health, and teenage pregnancy means that not enough focus is being given to information about these alternative priorities or to services to address the issues.
- 6.3 We found that young people have some trouble identifying what services are for, where they are and how they should be used. Therefore providing more, easy to access information about services would be helpful.

A lack of continuity of services as result of short lived initiatives/projects affects signposting.

Information is needed about how to access the specific targeted projects which work with young people.

Some of the young people specified projects which target deprived communities, therefore it is important that information also reaches young people in other areas of the City.

As a significant proportion of our sample turned to the Internet for information having a good quality accessible site which is publicised to young people in Coventry would be effective.

- 6.4 There appears to be a lack of mapping of the types of services and information provided to young people and as a result it could be that many of the professionals (youth health projects) duplicate information and advice. A simple system would enable service users and professionals alike to have a greater knowledge on service provision. Many projects working with young people are short and often subject for funding , multi agency working may help to ensure that information gathered and the support offered to young people is still continued when new projects are set up.
- 6.5 The numbers of respondents who had used no generic health services was low. The majority of comments they made about these services were positive. Therefore we have not found evidence to support further investigation of these services by LINK. However we have picked up comments about waiting times for mental health services for young people which replicate comments LINK

has previously received about long waiting times for services. Therefore this is a potential area for further investigation by LINK.

- 6.6 Many projects working in the city are not available to all young people; this is for a variety of reasons. Greater emphasis needs to be put on offering all services to young people all over the city regardless of gender, race or class.

**FREE
iPOD
TOUCH?**

R U BOVVERD?

Survey for 16-25s

Coventry LINK is an independent network which gives local people a greater say in their health and social care services.

To do this we collect views and opinions about local NHS and social care services in Coventry.

We need information specifically on younger people's experiences. If you are aged between 16-25 please take a few moments to complete this survey giving as much information as you can.

Your opinion will go towards making a difference to the services you use. By completing and returning

this questionnaire you will be entered into a prize draw for a chance to win an iPod touch. The deadline for this survey is **4th June 2010**. Please give as much information as possible to the following questions.

"I needed the morning after pill, so I went to the local Pharmacy. The professional who was there to help me, made me feel like a slapper. He judged me and made me cry. I'll never go back there again, no matter how desperate!"

(One comment from a local Teenager 17)

1a Have you used or heard of the following services? (Please tick)

	Used it?	Heard of it?
GP		
Walk in Centre		
Chemists		
Well Women's Clinic		
Counselling Service		
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services		
BPAS (British Pregnancy Advisory Service)		

1b What other health services have you used (please list)?

2 Which services were useful to you and why?

Service	Why was it useful/ good experience for you?
Your GP	
The Walk in Centre	
Chemists	
Well Women's Clinic	
Counselling Service	
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	
BPAS (British Pregnancy Advisory Service)	

3 Which services did you find unhelpful and why?

Service	Why did you think the service was unhelpful/what could be better about it?
Your GP	
The Walk in Centre	
Chemists	
Well Women's Clinic	
Counselling Service	
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services	
BPAS (British Pregnancy Advisory Service)	

4. Do you have any other comments about good and bad experiences of using health services – please give details below:

5. Where do you get general information and support about health issues from?(please tick)

- | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Clinic in a box | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shadow project | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Terence Higgins Trust | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| College/University | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Where else do you get information from about health issues and services?

6. What other information about health issues and health services would you find useful?

7. Which of the following health priorities for health promotion and targeting are issues that affect you directly? (please tick)

Obesity	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stopping smoking	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual Health	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teenage Pregnancy	<input type="checkbox"/>

What other priorities for health promotion for young people do you think there should be?

About You

Are you?

White

British

Irish

Traveller/Romany

Eastern European

Other White (please say)

Mixed

White and Black Caribbean

White and Black African

White and Asian

Other Mixed (please say)

Asian or Asian British

Indian

Pakistani

Bangladeshi

Other Asian (please say)

Black or Black British

Caribbean

African

Other Black (please say)

Chinese or other ethnic group

Chinese

Other ethnic group (Please say)

Disability

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?

Yes

No

Gender: are you:

Male

Female

Transgender

Fill out the details below to be entered into our Prize Draw

If you wish to be entered into our prize draw for your chance to win the iPod Touch please fill out the information below (please note you will need to collect the prize from us in person):

Your date of Birth:	
Your Post Code:	
A daytime contact phone number for you	

Confidentiality

The information we are gathering from this survey will be used by LINK to support its work programme through identifying issues and concerns about health services. The information gathered will be used anonymously. Personal contact details will be treated as confidential and will not be passed on to third parties without consent.

More Information

Coventry LINK can improve the services within your NHS and social care. If you want to find out more visit our website www.coventrylink.org.uk or call 024 7622 0381

Appendix 2: Summary of PPI Forum Report

The thing that most respondents cited that local health services needed to change was accessibility to these services (see pages 7 and 8). 51% of responses given cited this and included a whole variety of issues e.g. emergency doctor appointments, longer GP opening times, improved walk in centre opening times, better access to A&E. Some of these concerns may be alleviated by better communication of when and how to use these services.

The main findings indicate that the availability of information in a form which is readily accessible to 16-19 year olds is not easy to get hold of or is not being passed onto them. Often information which is 'out there' is not being picked up by this age group e.g. opening times of the walk in centre.

The method of communication may also form part of this barrier (see pages 4 and 5). Respondents were often unhappy by the presentation of information, believing health issues were an add-on delivered by 'non specialists', basically teachers, who may not be able to give them adequate advice. What most wanted was more specific topics relevant to them and delivered by 'experts', presumably employees of the NHS.

The following recommendations are not intended to show that good practice is not already taking place, but to highlight where some reinforcing needs to be considered to ensure that information and perceptions of the health service are more positively received and the information adequately disseminated.

1. Ensure that information e.g. leaflets use appropriate language for the age group, and are sent to schools on a wide range of topics including:
 - a) Where and when health clinics are located and open
 - b) Available information on sexual health
 - c) More information on healthy eating and lifestyles
2. Bullet point 1 to be supported by closer liaison between health 'professionals' and schools to try and ensure that visits take place with speakers who are 'experts' considering the use of assemblies and PSHE time
3. Look at additional ways in which information could be disseminated through IT e.g. MySpace bulletins, e-mails, e-newsletter
4. Encourage 16-19 year olds to be more involved including:
 - a) Work experience, placements and visits to NHS departments
 - b) Invite young adults to be representatives on patient panels
 - c) A 'young people' committee
5. More comprehensive study on health lifestyles by 16-19 year olds.

Coventry LINK is an independent network supported by the charity Voluntary Action Coventry, which acts as the Host organisation.



Coventry LINK is one of 151 LINKs in England.



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