

Healthcare Services



JSNA 2009

The borough has the lowest uptake of NHS dental services in the country for both adults and children.

Between March 2009 and September 2010, Kensington and Chelsea experienced a 22 per cent rise in adults and an 18 per cent rise in children visiting the borough's dentists (the fourth highest and third highest rises in the country). However, the borough's dentists still see the lowest levels of activity per population size of any PCT in the country, with many patients likely to be travelling out of borough or using private dentistry.

The last JSNA highlighted that, whilst many people in the borough wanted to attend NHS services, there was a perception that there was limited availability locally. Since this time, there have been marketing campaigns to improve the profile of NHS dental services in the borough, for instance through increasing signage. Also, four additional dental practices are now offering NHS treatment and a new NHS dental practice has recently opened in central Kensington.

The PCT has ensured that existing practices are now increasingly focused on attracting new patients in addition to meeting the needs of existing patients. A public campaign carried out last year encouraged local residents to register with a Kensington and Chelsea dentist. As part of the campaign, residents were encouraged to contact the PCT with their requirements; they were then supplied with the most appropriate local dental practice information, in order to arrange a convenient appointment.

A new set of quality standards has also been developed for dentistry in Kensington and Chelsea, designed to ensure high quality among dental practice and guarantee that patients have a positive experience during their visit. It is hoped that this will help to break down the many barriers that people experience when visiting dentists.

JSNA 2009

Breast and cervical screening uptake is very low. Uptake of breast screening is lowest in high income areas.

The recorded breast and cervical screening coverage rates remain among the lowest in the country (with the lowest performing PCTs predominantly from London). An in-depth PCT analysis of coverage earlier in the year confirmed that population factors such as migration and affluence account for much of the low coverage: they play an important role in women deciding to attend NHS screening appointments over private care and affect the likelihood of receiving an invitation (many women move addresses or are frequently out of the country). The analysis also confirmed that even the high performing areas within the borough were not sufficiently high performing compared to national benchmarks.

The PCT now has an action plan to improve coverage using a range of approaches, including the 'cleaning' of patient lists to ensure invitations reach the intended recipients. The PCT is working closely with local GPs and nurses to ensure they opportunistically recommend the NHS Breast Screening Programme and to regularly communicate with patients about the latest advances in cancer screening evidence.

JSNA 2009

Satisfaction with hospital experience is variable, but generally more favourable in Chelsea and Westminster Hospital than St Mary's.

Chelsea and Westminster Hospital currently performs in the top 20 per cent of trusts in the country for overall inpatient experience according to the 2009 Inpatient and Outpatient surveys by the Care Quality Commission (CQC). Imperial College Hospitals fall within the middle 60 per cent. However, both hospitals rank in the bottom 20 per cent for outpatient experience. The PCT discusses patient survey findings with all Trusts to ensure that action is taken to see improvement, a process that is overseen by NHS London. The hospitals are constantly aiming to improve on patient satisfaction and future surveys will identify whether changes have had a positive impact on experience.

JSNA 2009

Planned and Emergency care has been rising much faster than population growth.

The PCT is tackling the rise in unscheduled care by supporting some patients more intensively in a community setting and offering more appropriate alternatives for those needing unplanned care. For example, the St Charles Centre for Health and Wellbeing has recently been launched, which has become a 'hub' for local healthcare needs and provides emergency care in the GP-led

unscheduled care centre. The Chelsea and Westminster Hospital now has a GP-led unscheduled care centre in the front of A&E, and the PCT has committed to opening a GP-led health centre in Earl's Court with a drop-in surgery for all local people. There is also a single point telephone number to access out of hours care. The aim of these developments is to reduce unnecessary attendance at A&E by providing more efficient and effective alternatives.

The PCT has developed a 'case management' programme, whereby those with long-term conditions who are considered to be 'at-risk' of hospital admission are managed more intensively within a community setting, via GPs, district nurses and other health professionals. The PCT has purchased on behalf of the GPs a 'tool' which stratifies the risk level of all their patients, allowing them to identify those most appropriate for case management.

The PCT and local Practice Based Commissioning Group have identified a number of planned hospital procedures which have little or no evidence of clinical effectiveness. These procedures will no longer be funded via the NHS, or will be subject to "treatment thresholds" to ensure treatment is reserved for those who would benefit most. Examples of such treatments are cosmetic procedures and some cases of wisdom teeth removal.