Healthwatch Bristol engaged with the Bristol Area Stroke Foundation stroke café members, to hear their experiences of accessing health and social care services particularly post-stroke services.
Healthwatch Bristol engaged with the Bristol Area Stroke Foundation at the following stroke cafés in Bristol:

- St Monica Trust, Oatley Hall, Bristol.

At the engagement session, Healthwatch Bristol engaged with a total of 30 individuals who had a range of experiences in relation to accessing health and social care (HSC) services in Bristol, particularly stroke-related and other HSC services such as:

The Bristol Stroke Café is a service run by the Bristol Area Stroke service.

The café provides information and support to people who have sustained a stroke. Stroke cafés are generally drop-in facilities, which are informal in nature.

Commentator Quote

“Mr. Sood’s pharmacy is very good as he provides a courier service for elderly patients who are not able to visit the chemist to pick up their prescriptions.”

(Anonymous)
Anyone is welcomed at a stroke café who would like to meet others, it is a place to socialise and meet other people who are affected by a stroke, their carers, family members and friends.

Members who attend the stroke café also have the opportunity to speak with a member of staff from the Bristol Area Stroke Foundation. To discuss any concerns that they may have in relation to their lifestyle or care needs following a stroke.

For more information about memory cafes in Bristol. Please visit:

W: [http://www.basf.uk.com/services-stroke-cafe.html](http://www.basf.uk.com/services-stroke-cafe.html)

T: 0117 964 7657

E: office@basf.uk.com

**STROKES AND TIAs**

**Strokes**

**According to the Bristol Area Stroke Foundation:** A stroke is an attack to the brain. It can happen suddenly, often without warning. It occurs when the blood supply to the brain is either interrupted by a clot or when blood leaks out of the blood vessels into the brain. The brain cells in that area of the brain become damaged.

The damage to these cells may recover over time but some may never function again. The effects of a stroke may cause a paralysis, loss of speech, coordination and comprehension problems. But a stroke is very individual and will affect people in different ways.

Stroke is the common name for this illness, although, depending on the type of stroke, it may be referred to as a Cerebral Infarction; Cerebral Thrombosis, Cerebral Haemorrhage or Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA).

**A Transient Ischaemic Attack is also known as a TIA**

This behaves like a stroke except that the symptoms pass quickly. These symptoms may be present for a few minutes or a number of hours and then completely disappear. It occurs because, for a short time, not enough blood has reached a part of the brain. Anyone who experiences a TIA, or thinks they might have the condition should consult their GP immediately or call the emergency services.

**Please Note:** Healthwatch Bristol and The Bristol Area Stroke Foundation are not qualified to give medical advice on your stroke or medication. Any concerns of this nature should be taken up with your General Practitioner (GP)/Consultant.

For more information on the causes or effects of stroke refer to the Stroke Association:

W: [www.stroke.org.uk](http://www.stroke.org.uk)

P: 0845 3033 100
Data Collections and Resources

Healthwatch Bristol Web Page

Healthwatch Bristol Resources

Healthwatch Bristol Tell Us Your Story Leaflet
You Said…
Comments received
Primary Care: GPs Surgery

The general themes analysed from the group discussions in relation to primary care services were access to services in relation to administration, appointments availability, appointment booking, patient choice and treatment and care. Patient experience of treatment and care the quality of treatment. Staffing in relation to staff attitudes and finance were also themes analysed.

Health Centres
Falation Way: Henlease / Montpelier Surgery Montpelier: Both Montpelier Health Surgery and Falation Way Surgeries, provides a service for the over 65 which enables patients to be seen by the same general practitioner (GP). The Commentators further stated that they find this service very helpful, as it enables consistency in relation to their care and treatment which encourages them to not only build a professional relationship with their GP but also having the opportunity to choose who attends to their health needs.

Southmead Health Centre: Commentator informed Healthwatch that they are not able to book appointments at the surgery due to malfunctioning screens.

Southmead Health Centre: Commentator stated that they are not able to access the online booking system at Southmead and finds it better to go directly to the surgery to speak with the receptionist to book appointments.

Southmead Health Centre: Commentator informed Healthwatch that there is currently waiting times of over 2-3 weeks before they are able to see a GP at their surgery.

Eastville Medical Practice: Commentator informed Healthwatch that they are not able to get an appointment at their GPs because they are not able to speak with anyone on the phone, as the lines are constantly busy or the phone constantly rings with no answering the call at the surgery.

Stockwood Medical Centre: The commentator stated that they are happy with the support they receive from their doctor at the practice, which is very good.

Opticians
Boots- Emerson’s Green: Commentator informed Healthwatch that they are very happy with the service provided by their optician. The commentator stated that they are able to obtain appointments when needed and are also able to have their prescription made and available to collect within one week.

Boots- Avonmeads: The Commentator commented on their experience accessing Boots opticians. They said it has been brilliant and they are happy with the services provided.

Vision Express - Westbury Village: The commentator stated that their opticians are very helpful and supportive and that they are provided with a good quality service.
**Specsavers-Bedminster:** The commentator informed Healthwatch of their experience accessing services at their opticians. The commentator highlighted that the services received were mixed depending on the time of day they accessed the service.

**Dentists**

**Redland Dental Practice:** Commentator stated that they are not happy with the cost of dental treatment at their dental surgery which is very expensive. The commentator also highlighted their view on the cost of treatment and feels that something should be done, to aid transparency in the cost of treatments, such as having a standardised costs across all dental practices.

**Hengrove Dental Hospital:** The commentator stated that they are happy with the services provided by their dentist at the Hengrove dental hospital. The commentator also highlighted their preference of accessing treatment from NHS dentists opposed to a privately funded dentist as they believe the quality of treatments provided at NHS practices is better than private dental practices.

**Easton Dental Practice:** Commentator stated that they like the text service provided by their dental practice because it enables them to have a reminder of their dental appointment.

**Pharmacies**

**Lloyds- Westbury on Trym:** Commentator stated that they are not happy with their pharmacy as they have made two complaints in the past with regard to the wrong dispensing of prescribed medication.

**Lloyds- Montpelier:** The commentator informed Healthwatch Bristol that they are not happy with the service provided at their pharmacy and feels that the employees at the pharmacy 'don't know what they are doing:

**Ashgrove- Ashley Down:** Commentator informed Healthwatch that they are able to get the support they need from their pharmacist and are happy with the support provided with regard to obtaining their prescriptions directly from their GP.

**Mr. Sood’s Pharmacy:** Commentator informed Healthwatch that the services provided at Mr. Sood’s pharmacy are very good as they provide a courier service for elderly patients who cannot visit the chemist to pick up their prescriptions.

**General comment relating to pharmacies:** Commentator stated that online prescription is a step in the right direction but it does not always work, or the wrong medication is dispensed. Better communication is needed between the patient and GP.
Secondary Care: Hospitals

The general themes analysed from the data collected in relation to secondary care services were; referrals and general referrals in relation to waiting times, treatment and care in relation to quality and the safety of care and treatment delivered. Waiting times in relation to administration and access to services, commissioning and service provision, Discharge services in relation to coordination of services and the speed of discharge particularly to accessing medication. Communication and the lack of communication, diagnosis and assessments in relation to testing and misdiagnosis were key themes analyses from the comments received from commentators.

Bristol Royal Infirmary (BRI)-Heart: The commentator informed Healthwatch of their experiences of accessing health care treatment from both Southmead Hospital, North Bristol Trust and the BRI. The commentator felt that the treatment received from the BRI Hospital was by far better than Southmead Hospital.

Southmead Hospital (North Bristol NHS Trust): The commentator stated that they are not happy with the services that they were provided with at the Southmead Hospital. The commentator further stated that they had to wait approximately 3 months before they could obtain an appointment to see a consultant at Southmead Hospital. The commentator further highlighted that they also had to wait and additional 2 hours before they could be seen on the day of the appointment, as there were very large queues.

Bristol Royal Infirmary (BRI): The commentator commented on the care they received as an inpatient at the BRI. The commentator stated that the staff was very kind, considerate and helpful.

Southmead Hospital (North Bristol NHS Trust): Commentator stated that they are not happy with the service that they were provided with as an outpatient at Southmead Hospital. The commentator further explained, that following treatment for a stroke at the Southmead hospital and upon being discharged, there was no follow-up appointment given nor any signposting or referrals were provided for support.

Southmead Hospital (North Bristol NHS Trust): Commentator informed Healthwatch that they were initially misdiagnosed by consultants at Southmead Hospital. The commentator further stated that they presented at Southmead with symptoms of a stroke but was diagnosed as sustaining a TIA when in fact they had sustained a stroke. The commentator further indicated that they were issued with a letter stating that they will be seen in 6 weeks, which never happened. Also no dates were given for the appointment or any follow-up appointment given after that.

North Bristol NHS Trust- Southmead Hospital: The commentator informed Healthwatch Bristol that upon being discharged from Southmead Hospital their families were not informed of their discharge plans and they also had to wait for a very long time for their medications to be dispensed, as their medication was not ready, even thou the pharmacy had prior notification of their discharge plan. The commentator also stated that there was no follow-up care provided after leaving hospital.
Southmead Hospital (North Bristol NHS Trust): The commentator informed Healthwatch Bristol of their experience at the Southmead hospital accident and emergency department. The Commentator stated the service received was excellent and the nurses were very professional.

Emergency Care/Ambulance service
111/999: Commentator stated the service received from the ambulance service has been exceptional and was treated with dignity even though the ambulance had broken down on its way to the hospital.

Social Care:

0 Negative 0 Mixed 1 Positive

The general themes analysed from the data collected in relation to social care services were access to service with regards to the suitability of provider and quality of care and treatment.

Sheltered Accommodation.
St Monica’s Trust- Supported Living (Social Care): The commentator informed Healthwatch Bristol that they are currently residing in supported living accommodation provided by St Monica’s Trust. The commentator further stated that they are very happy with the care and supported provided by the team and feel very well looked after.

General comments relating to Home Care: The commentator stated that rapid response nurses are brilliant at their jobs.

Social Services- Intermediate Care: The commentator stated that following a stroke they had a period of rehab and had a good experience of care and support from the intermediate care staff team.
Healthwatch will.....
All the feedback provided by the group has been inputted to Healthwatch Bristol’s Feedback Feed Forward database and will be included in the Healthwatch Bristol Quarterly Report. Healthwatch will be sharing this report with Healthwatch partners including Bristol Clinical Commissioning Group, Bristol City Council, the Care Quality Commission, NHS England and Healthwatch England. The report will also be presented to the Healthwatch Bristol Advisory Group to propose further uptake of the issues identified in this 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.

Looking forward....
Plans for future work between Healthwatch Bristol and Bristol Area Stroke Foundation. Healthwatch welcomes and encourages users of the stroke foundation to continue to contribute their feedback to us using the communication methods included at the end of this report.

Healthwatch also supports members of community groups to become Volunteer Champions so that they can represent the experiences and needs of their community group. If you would like to find out more about volunteering with Healthwatch, please contact us using the details below.

Tell Us Your Story...
Healthwatch Bristol wants to hear from you about your experiences so that we can tell services your needs to create the best local services.

Text us - text bris followed by your message to 07860 021 603
Email us at info@healthwatchbristol.co.uk
Call us: 0117 2690400
Write to us at Healthwatch Bristol,
The Care Forum, The Vassall Centre,
Gill Ave, Fishponds, Bristol, BS16 2QQ

Or visit our website to see more at www.healthwatchbristol.co.uk