

Islington LiNk Community Views Report

1,000 Voices

Views from the people of Islington, collected during LiNk Out-reach activity, 2010-12

June 2012

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Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the local people who took time to give their views to LINK. Thanks too to all the local organisations which helped LINK make contact with their service users and members.

1. Introduction

1.1 About Islington LiNk

Islington LiNk (Local Involvement Network) is an independent organisation, led by a network of elected volunteers from the local community (both individuals and representatives of community and voluntary organisations). LiNks were set up in every local authority area in England in 2008, under the 'Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act' 2007. The Act states that LiNks are responsible for collecting and reporting the views of local people in relation to health and social care services.

1.2 About 1,000 voices

In February 2010 LiNk launched its 1,000 voices campaign. At that stage it had already spoken to several hundred people in Islington about their experiences of local health and social care services. LiNk allocated additional resources to this core function of its work to ensure that the views of local people were collected and could be reported with to achieve maximum impact. The idea was to collect the views of 1,000 local people through face to face and telephone interviews, and from on-line comments.

2. Methodology

2.1 How views are collected

LiNk carried out a range of outreach activities between April 2010 and March 2011. These outreach activities vary from month to month to ensure LiNk captures a diverse range of views. Generally LiNk holds one-to-one interviews with participants, though on occasion LiNk may also hold focus groups to collect views.

LiNk asks service users to relay experiences of services that they have used in the last twelve months. The survey was carried out between April 2010 and March 2012, so the comments cover April 2009 (within the last 12 months from April 2010 when the survey began) and March 2012.

As well as arranging to visit local groups and networks within Islington, the LiNk holds a regular drop-in stall at the Central Library and receives feedback through its Pentonville Road office, an on-line comment form and freepost comment forms are made available in local health and social care settings (For the basic form used see [Appendix A](#)).

In June 2010 LiNk produced an interim report which was submitted to the Islington Clinical Commissioning Group (ICCG) as the new commissioners for most local health care services. The LiNk is pleased that the ICCG picked up the themes around access to GP services and is supporting GP practices to review their appointment systems.

2.2 How views are collated

Comments are stored on the LINK's Feedback Database by date and categorised as either 'health', 'social care' or 'joint' (meaning health and social care) to identify which authority commissions the service. Comments are then categorised by more specific service categories to which they relate. Service categories are outlined in [Appendix B](#).

Comments are also categorised by the key themes raised; the 'issues' and 'sub-issues' within the comment. This coding has been developed based on the content of the comments LINK has been receiving. Islington LINK staff worked with Lewisham LINK on this coding system and thanks them for their support. [Appendix B](#) shows the issues and sub-issues raised.

3. Findings

3.1 Who the LINK spoke to during the year

From 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2012 LINK collected views through a range of groups and at information stalls as well as through the website, and by email. For a list of places where views were collected (see [Appendix D](#)).

As part of its data collection LINK asks participants to complete a short Equality Monitoring Form (see [Appendix A](#)). Participants may choose not to complete the form or may not complete it in full.

2276 comments were received from 1,013 people between 1st April 2010 and 31st March 2012 covering the period April 2009 to March 2012. This report builds on the 500 voices report from 2011.

Table 1: Equality Monitoring Data for the 1,013 people who gave their views

Gender	Number	%
Female	442	44
Male	164	16
Transsexual	1	0
No Answer	406	40
Total	1013	

Disability	Number	%
Yes	175	17
No	377	37
No Answer	461	46

Total	1013
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Ethnicity	Number	%
White British	258	25
White Other	61	6
White Irish	31	3
Black African	56	6
Black British	41	4
Black Caribbean	24	2
Bangladeshi	7	
Chinese	5	
Indian	4	
British Asian	5	
Pakistani	1	
Other	89	9
No Answer	431	43
Total	1013	

Age	Number	%
Under 18	5	
18 to 30	75	7
31 to 45	182	18
46 to 60	148	15
61 to 75	109	11
Over 75	61	6
No Answer	433	43
Total	1013	

Religion	Number	%
Yes	414	41
No	66	7
No answer	533	53
Total	1013	

Sexuality	Number	%
Heterosexual	490	48
Gay	3	
Bisexual	7	
Lesbian	4	
No Answer	509	50
Total	1013	

Post code	Number	%
EC1	24	2
N1	79	8
N4	37	4
N5	59	6
N7	150	15
N8	4	
N19	72	7
Other	13	1
No Answer	575	57
Total	1013	

44% of respondents were female, 16% were male, 40%. 17% of people described themselves as having a disability, 37% said they did not and 46% of people did not respond.

25% of respondents described themselves as White British, 6% as White Other and 3% as White Irish. 6% people described themselves as Black African, 4% as Black British and 2% as Black Caribbean. Seven people described themselves as Bangladeshi, four as Indian, five as British Asian and one as Pakistani. Five people described themselves as Chinese, 9% people described themselves as Other and 43% of people did not respond.

Five of the respondents were under 18, 7% were 18-30, 18% were 31 to 45, 15% were 46-60, 11% were aged 61-75 and 6% were over 75. 43% did not respond.

2% of participants live in the EC1 area of the borough, 8% in the N1 area, 7% in N19, 4% in N4, 6% in N5, 15% in N7, 1% in other postcode areas and 57% did not respond.

3.2 Comments in relation to health and social care by rating

LINK collects people's views on both local health and social care services. Of the 2276 comments collected, 2166 related to health care (95%), 104 related to social care (4.6%) and six comments related to joint services. Three additional comments collected related to neither health nor social care services and have therefore been excluded. (One related to LINK, one to the Library Service and one to Housing).

Table 2: Service area by satisfaction ratings

Service Area	+	-	Neutral	Total
Health	1349	747	70	2166
Social Care	33	65	6	104
Joint	2	4	0	6
Neither	1	2	0	3
Total	1385	818	76	2279

It should be noted that the outreach programme is not the only way that the LINK collects people's views on local services. Views on health and social care services have also been collected through 'Enter and View' visits including to care homes, GP surgeries and the Whittington, as well as through specific surveys on home adaptations, personal budgets and access to young carers' services.

Islington has a population of around 202,300 [1]. The whole population is eligible for health care services, whilst only a proportion are eligible for social care services, hence the LINK receiving more comments on health care services. Also people tend to need healthcare services more often than social care.

Issues relating to health care services

For health care services the most commonly reported issues related to:

- Customer service and/or treatment of the user's condition
- Service accessibility relating to appointments/ admissions/ referrals
- Communication
- Comfort
- Cost of some treatments (most notably dental treatment)
- Accessibility relating to physical environment
- Diagnosis
- Medication
- Sanitation (cleanliness)

The top three issues remain the same as in the previous report (500 voices); customer service/ treatment, service accessibility in terms of waiting times and communication.

For social care services the most commonly reported issues were, as for health care:

- Customer service and/or treatment
- Service accessibility in terms of appointments and referrals
- Communication
- Accessibility in terms of physical location

Table 3 below shows the issues to which those Health and Social Care comments related. The 'issue' categories were selected by the LINK based on the most commonly occurring issues reported.

Table 3: Number of comments relating to service issues

Issue	Health	Social Care	Joint	Total	Total as %
Accessibility	31	9	0	40	1.8
Comfort	55	3	0	58	2.5
Communication / Information	170	13	4	187	8.2
Cost	36	3	0	39	1.7
Customer Service / Treatment	1039	42	2	1084	47.6
Diagnosis	18	1	0	19	0.8
Medication	16	0	0	16	0.7
Nutrition	8	1	0	9	0.3
Personal Property	1	1	0	2	0.1
Sanitation	14	1	0	15	0.7
Service Accessibility / Waiting Time	733	26	0	759	33.3
Comment not specific enough to code	41	4	0	45	2.0
Total	2162	104	6	2276	99.7

The LINK receives both compliments and concerns about health and social care services. Table 4 shows how many of the comments received were positive, negative or neutral in relation to health services.

Table 4: Issues raised and service ratings given

Issue	Positive	%	Neutral	%	Negative	%	Total
Accessibility	17	42.5	2	5.0	21	52.5	40
Comfort	31	53.4	3	5.2	24	41.4	58
Communication / Information	68	36.4	18	9.6	101	54.0	187
Cost	4	10.3	0	0.0	35	89.7	39
Customer Service / Treatment	794	73.2	22	2.0	268	24.7	1084
Diagnosis	2	10.5	0	0.0	17	89.5	19
Medication	8	50.0	0	0.0	8	50.0	16

Nutrition	4	44.4	0	0.0	5	55.6	9
Personal Property	0	0.0	0	0.0	2	100.0	2
Sanitation	10	66.6	0	0.0	5	33.3	15
Service Access /Waiting Time	416	54.8	23	3.0	320	42.2	759
Blank	29	64.4	7	15.6	9	20.0	45
Total	1385	60.9	76	3.3	818	35.9	2276

Generally the LINK receives more positive than negative comments about health services. For example, although 25% of people raised concerns about how they were cared for or their treatment, in contrast 73% had compliments to make.

There were, however, more negative than positive comments in relation to:

- cost of some services (mostly dental care),
- communication with service users or between services,
- accessibility (location or physical access issues),
- diagnosis (although this is hard to judge and LINK is recording when a person feels that they have not had the correct diagnosis).

3.3 Comments by service area and rating

The LINK's work as a recipient of community views offers a snapshot of experiences of local services over the past two years.

For health, the service categories that received the most comments were for General Practice (45%), Hospital (27%) and Dental (11.4). As mentioned above, the LINK receives more compliments for services than concerns. Though 68% of comments about GPs were compliments, 32% raised concerns. For hospital services 66% of comments were compliments and 34% were concerns, for dental services 61% were compliments and 39% were concerns and, for podiatry 51% were compliments and 49% were concerns. Mental health was the only service category with more concerns than compliments 51% were concerns and 49% were compliments.

Table 4: Service ratings by service category

Service Category	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Total
No category stated	6	3	16	25
Adult Assessment and Care Management	3	0	10	13
Advice and Advocacy	6	1	10	17
Care Home	2	0	5	7
Carers	0	1	5	6
Central Government	0	1	0	1
Childcare	4	0	2	6
Children's Service	0	0	1	1

Counselling	1	0	1	2
Customer Services Team	0	0	1	1
Day Centre	3	0	1	4
Dental	153	7	99	259
Dental – community	2	0	1	3
Department of Health	0	0	1	1
District Nursing	3	0	1	4
Emergency	12	0	11	23
Equipment	5	2	10	17
General Services	0	0	1	1
General Practice	675	36	324	1035
Health Visitor	7	0	0	7
Home care	6	0	11	17
Homeless	0	0	3	3
Hospital	393	15	197	605
Interpretation	2	0	1	3
Local Authority	1	1	2	4
Mental Health	17	0	19	36
NHS Islington	3	5	8	16
Occupational Therapy	3	1	3	7
Opticians	10	0	7	17
Orthotics	2	0	0	2
Other	14	0	8	22
Out of Hours services	2	0	1	3
Parenting Support	0	0	1	1
Pharmacy	10	0	5	15
Physiotherapy	10	0	18	28
Podiatry	25	3	24	52
Practice Nurse	0	0	2	2
Re-ablement	2	0	0	2
Service User Engagement	1	0	1	2
Sexual Health	1	0	1	2
Sheltered Housing	1	0	0	1
Transport	0	0	4	4
Total	1385	818	76	2276

3.4 Key themes in more detail

Quotes from service users below are cited to give some sense of the service user experience and journey through the system. Where equality monitoring data has been given this is quoted alongside the comment, with the comment code. Where comments are listed as 'No EQM' this means that monitoring data was not stated. Each comment is given a unique code as it is entered in to the database, these are allocated chronologically.

Much of the feedback about services, as shown in the tables above, is positive. The report will highlight some areas for improvement, but it should also be noted that many service users are satisfied with the services they have been using.

My GP has been exceptional. They work every day. They were available right through the Christmas break. They open from 8.30am and finish at 6pm. When your GP is away, others will see you if you want. I like them.

Comment 660, no EQM

[It] was a wonderful experience, they helped me get housed. Islington Council sent me to Haringey (there are no three beds available) but the children are at school in Drayton Park. The Support Co-ordinator is telling me to find a rental property. The co-ordinator is good and understands the process.

Comment 620, White British Female 46-60

I went to see my GP on Monday. She was very polite and very caring. She asked me about my stress, which was the reason that I visited the surgery nearly 12 months ago. I was impressed about caring she was and I will recommend them again.

Comment 225, no EQM

I went to the physiotherapist last April. Very good. People listened (they didn't have preconceived ideas) and reacted accordingly. Good examination and exercises and follow up.

Comment 627, White British Female, 61-75, no disability

There's good attention in outpatients from all staff. My son broke his leg, so we came three times and everything was great.

Comment 574, Turkish Female 46-60

Health service issues raised

GP Services

The highest number of comments (1034) related to GP services. There were positive comments about access to GP appointments and services and referrals obtained through GPs as well as concerns raised about the same issues.

We know from the LINK's previous [interim report](#) and their Enter and View visits to GPs that local people had raised concerns about appointment systems. The report highlighted that respondents tended not to like waiting to get through on the phone but appreciated being able to make an appointment on the same day that they call,

and that on-line appointments were appreciated by some patients but would not suit all. These concerns continue to be raised by patients.

I use xxx Practice and it is hard to get an appointment there. I was seriously ill and had to wait two weeks for an appointment so ended up going to A&E instead. I had seen my GPs 6 times before and it was always a different doctor, always a temporary doctor so I never made any progress on my problem so I had to go private and they found what my problem was instantly - cancer - and they referred me to a specialist. Despite seeing my local GP six times they never referred me to a specialist. I was actually dying. I think there are too many people to see at that surgery and not enough time per appointment. The receptionist seems to be fighting really hard for you not to see a GP even though I really needed it. They were trying to put me off and make me feel guilty for trying to get an appointment.

Comment 69 South American Woman 31-45 no disability

Since the LINK's 500 voices report, Islington Clinical Commissioning Group has been working with half of the borough's practices to review their appointment systems and trial changes to the process for obtaining an appointment.

LINK also highlighted the lack of clarity for patients around appointment systems. The Clinical Commissioning Group is in the process of reviewing information available in GP practices.

People also raised the following concerns:

- **Patient and GP communication:** Some patients felt that their GP did not take them seriously, or did not have time to discuss their needs fully.

You can only talk to the GP for ten minutes but you can only discuss one subject so if you take two minutes you can't use the rest of the time to talk about other things, and you're told you need to make another appointment. It used to be good but they have made different rules.....They just give you pills. You're in/out and they don't listen. And you don't get results.

Comment 435 and 431 White British Female 61-75

Doctor too busy to do thorough checks eg I had swollen legs and he only gave me painkillers. They don't seem to have enough time for the patient.

Comment 202 Turkish Male 31-45 No disability

But the doctor didn't listen to me, they were too busy.

Comment 629 Wite British Female 18-30 No disability

...Not enough time with doctor.

Comment 802, Black African Female 31-45 no disability

- **Decisions about patients care:** Some patients disagreed with their clinician about their treatment or felt that they had not been referred when they needed to be.

Medical knowledge not always perfect, they're quick to give prescriptions instead of offering alternatives. I've got high cholesterol and they wanted me on statins. But I switched diet and my level came down.

Comment 444 British Bangladeshi Female 31-45 no disability

There is a big barrier with my language. I keep asking to be sent to a specialist, and they keep asking me to try a different medication instead. I had a very bad back ache. I was sent for a scan over 9 months ago. I have not received the results yet.

Comment 214 Somalian Female

Its OK. Don't give you enough time. Had two strokes, the first one they told me it was my ear [has trouble with ear] and didn't refer me on - no scan or anything. Assumed it was cos I had a bad ear, but my face had dropped, that's not normal.

Comment 966, no EQM

I have diabetes but have chosen to manage my condition by diet rather than taking medication. My GP doesn't like this [approach] and doesn't listen to me. I have seen most of the GPs in the practice but they don't [want to] listen to what I have to say.

Comment 479, White Female 31-45

I told the GP I had stopped smoking but that I wanted a chest x-ray. They won't give me one. I've got pain in my heart and my legs and she didn't look at me.

Comment 784, no EQM

They deal with your health problems straight away. But it is hard to get a second opinion. I had some foot ulcers and I called my consultant at the Royal Free (who is really good) but they sent me a letter to say that I needed

a referral from my GP. So they tried to deal with the problem at [the GP surgery].

Comment 923 no EQM

I want an analysis done but my doctor will not refer me, says that I am ok. The doctor is not listening to me and just tries to give me Paracetamol.

Comment 1031 no EQM

When I call my GP for an emergency appointment the receptionist says the doctor will call back. When the doctor calls back they often just refer me to the pharmacy without assessing me, that's very bad.

Comment 374 Black British Male 46-60 no disability

Some doctors don't examine you, they just give you medications.

Comment 270 Asian Swedish Female 31-45 no disability

- **Communication between services:** It was felt by some patients that poor communication between NHS services delayed treatment.

Services are really not connected. I love the NHS but GPs are not aware of what is out there. I had a miscarriage and I was referred for counselling but I wasn't referred for employment advice. I had to self refer. My daughter has hyperactivity and I finally managed to get her some extra nursery time to help get her ready for school, but I had to do it all myself. I've got an MA and I found it hard. The doctor is great but there needs to be more communication. I saw a woman's health counsellor who was great but only dealt with the loss of the pregnancy, it was very infinite. You need to be educated and aggressive, which was hard as I had depression and anxiety. I can't face going through all that process at the Job Centre when I don't even know if they will be able to help me.

Comment 118, no EQM

My doctor is supposed to be chasing up my appointment with the physiotherapists but nothing is happening still.

Comment 85 American Female 31-45 with depression

Had to have something done to my heart and it took the GP 4 months to react to a letter that the hospital had given the reception staff by hand.

Comment 466 no EQM

- **Appointments:** Patients continued to emphasise that it can be difficult to obtain appointments and that there can be long waits at appointments.

Lovely people but the appointment system is very poor. When you call, the GP has to call you back to confirm if you really need to be seen. I struggle to get to the surgery. I really want the old system back. This new system is ridiculous.

Comment 199 Turkish Female 31-45 no disability

It's just waiting for appointments. The doctor, for routine appointments you wait two weeks. For an emergency you can come in the next day. It got better but its getting worse again. I had an ear infection and had to wait two weeks.

Comment 225 White British Male 46-60 no disability

I have to get to the GP by 8am. There's no point in phoning as the phone lines are jammed. It used to take 2 weeks to get an appointment so its easier to walk-in.

Comment 201 Black African Female 31-45

Not always emergency appointments available. Referral to Ritchie Street on one occasion and was seen very quickly and referred to hospital.

Lots of waiting for quick appointment.

Comment 596 Black British Female Under 18 no disability

Have to ring and say it's an emergency to get an appointment, otherwise there is a 1 month plus wait to see the doctor.

Comment 395 White British Female 31-45

The LINK Enter and View visits to local GP practices showed that generally patients valued flexibility in appointment systems and the ability to make same day appointments. (For a copy of the report visit: <http://www.vai.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2011/07/LINK-GP-Enter-and-View-Report-November-2010.pdf>)

LINK will continue to promote service user's entitlements and responsibilities based on the NHS constitution and health and care policies. The LINK recognises and welcomes Islington Clinical Commissioning Group's (ICCG) work to review appointment systems.

LINK will continue to work with the ICCG and Patient Participation Groups to ensure that people's views are reported and that their experiences influence how services develop.

Hospital services

As in the 500 voices report, participants had mainly been satisfied with the services offered in hospital. Some had concerns about waiting times to access services, both for referrals to services and waiting to be seen once at the hospital. Communication with patients was also raised as a concern.

- **Waiting times:** Patients expressed concerns about waiting for referrals and appointments as well as waiting at appointments.

Its always difficult to get an appointment. Its two weeks in advance and then a referral. Specialist appointments take a long time.

Comment 769 White British female 61-75 no Disability

My GP didn't even do a pregnancy test for 3 months. I waited 3 months. And I didn't get a referral to the hospital until I moved doctors. They are trying to get patient feedback at Bingfield and trying to improve

Comment 553 Black African female

Others felt that they had been seen quickly.

Get referral then within 2 weeks I was seen. They thought it was cancer. Very quick. I'd been there with bowel problems too and the target referral was 1 week.

Comment 2139, no EQM

I'm on waiting list. The doctor referred me. I got an appointment for that then the problem came back so I self-referred. Got a letter in January (2012) saying there was a waiting list but not how long it was. Said I've got to wait.

Comment 2304 White British Male 46-60 No disability

- **Communication:** A lack of timely information and communication about processes, treatment and any follow up had also been raised as an issue by several participants.

I thought I would mention something in case you also hear about it from other quarters so it is a more general problem. My GP agreed I need physiotherapy recently and the referral system has changed in a way which I think is really not good. The main problem though is the form! It bears all the marks of having been drawn up by a physio or administrator rather than someone who knows how to make forms accessible. It is incredibly badly laid out, difficult to fill in, far too long and generally off putting. I am also not sure if it contains anything about where you get copies in other languages. I would think the whole thing effectively acts as a barrier to access

Comment 713 White British female 61-75 no Disability

The man who does physiotherapy for my back does arms too but I need a separate referral for this. He's looking in to it.

Comment 2305 White British Male 46-60 No disability

My daughter tried to commit suicide and was taken to the [hospital]. After she had been in the hospital there was no follow up. The hospital said they would follow up but they didn't. I chased it up and the school chased it up. The school have put in place a support worker to help but the hospital didn't keep in touch.

Comments 119 White British Female 61-75

I have had problems clarifying whether I am eligible for the Health Care Travel Costs Scheme. I was eligible at Pine St but Hornsey St had told me that I were not eligible. Also at Hornsey St the way they explained my dental treatment exacerbated my concerns about the treatment.

Comment 110 no EQM

Had to have something done to my heart and it took the GP 4 months to react to a letter that the hospital had given the reception staff by hand.

2292 White Irish Female 61-75 disability

Didn't know my doctor was leaving. Got there and it was a new doctor.

Comment 1402 White British Female 31- 45 no disability

Then transferred me to other teams of consultants who has problem to follow my complicated situation and delays my treatment again and again.

Comment 1886 Chinese Male 46-60

- **Staff and standards of care:** Generally there was praise for staff and their care of the patients.

Many people described the care that they had received as 'wonderful', 'first-rate', 'attentive' and said positive things about the staff who had treated them.

Some patients complain but it's sometimes the patient. They looked after my husband well and still changed him even though he was just about to die. The consultant was open and said anything you need just ask the nurse.

Comment 1285, White British, over 75

Dental Services

Generally users of dental services find them quicker to access than GP services and many are happy with the care they receive and the efficiency of the service. Some of the concerns raised were as follows:

- **Awareness of eligibility:** Awareness of the eligibility criteria and concerns about the cost for NHS treatment.

Although the LINK does not record the details of people who are not using services, LINK ambassadors have needed to signpost some people to NHS Islington's web-site to help them sign up for dental treatment. The LINK refers the public to both the NHS Islington web-site to locate an NHS dentist and to the Department of Health guidance on what they will be charged.

- **Additional costs / services:** Several respondents reported that they were only offered a scale and polish (tooth cleaning) as a private service.

Always try to get me to go private but I am on benefits.

Comment 2222, no EQM

The dentist says that he cannot treat me because it's expensive. He only sees the commercial side of his business, not NHS. The Dentist told me that its not cost effective to treat me properly. I rate him 0/10.

Comment 369, White British Female 61-75

Spends no time in appointment. Tries to get me to buy products for hygiene. No cleaning or scaling any more. Must pay for basic cleaning.

Comment 2236, 'Other' Male 46-60 no disability

Though in one practice a service user said that staff explain 'the choices of NHS and private care'.

In April 2010, my wife had a tooth infection and her jaw swelled up. She was very unhappy and in crippling pain. After investigations and X-rays the dentist couldn't find anything and referred her to hospital where we are still waiting for an appointment. Although the infection was treated with amoxicillin it flared up repeatedly and eventually we had to find £1,300 to get her treatment privately.

Comment 184, White British 46-60, no disability

Dentists use cheap materials for NHS patients. I had a filling at my dentists and it was not very good quality. I'm not happy. They told me to go private for much more money. I still get pain in it now particularly in the winter. They keep telling me to come back, they never seem to finish the work. The problem is never solved.

My daughter is 2 1/2 and had teeth problems. We visited the dentist two or three times and the dentist said that as these were first teeth they would come out so we should just leave it. In the end I went to my GP and the tooth and gums were infected because the dentist had not dealt with the problem.

Comment 330 White British Female 46-60

I feel like they are only interested in signing me up for the cosmetic stuff. I'd not been for three years because last time I'd been given 9 injections to freeze one tooth so I was put off. The dentist told me I had no holes, then gave me the spiel about the cosmetic stuff.

Comment 646 White British Male 31-45 no disability

- **Access to appointments:** Generally participants reported being satisfied with how they were able to obtain a dental appointment.

Reasonably easy to get an appointment

Comment 2081, no EQM

Easy to get appointment.

Comment 1704, no EQM.

- **Treatment:** Although most patients were satisfied with the care and treatment that they had received, almost half of participants were not satisfied. More patients using the community dentist were satisfied.

I had a NHS appointment at my dentist. It was really good. They specialised in treating people who are nervous. They were friendly and quite quick.

Comment 521 White British Male 46-60

It appears that many participants are not using dental services regularly. LINK asks people to comment on any services they have used in the last year and many participants state that they have not visited a dentist in the last 12 months.

LINK plans to carry out further work to find out about access to NHS and private services.

Podiatry

In the year 2011-12 the LINK received an increased number of comments on podiatry services. Although the number of comments was equally divided between positive

(25) and negative (24), most positive comments were about treatment and care while most negative comments (19) related to waiting for treatment.

LINK plans to investigate this further in 2011-12. Visit the LINK [website](#) for more details.

I have had to wait 4 months for a podiatry appointment. It used to be an automated system but the letter for my next appointment hasn't come.

Comment 109, no EQM.

I used the podiatry service at Holloway Community Health Centre. It was my first appointment. I waited 3 months for the appointment, I wanted it sooner but I couldn't. I don't know why it took so long. I had to keep chasing up the GP, then I was told there was a backlog. The treatment was OK, I'm going back in 2 months for more. My feet are more comfortable now. It's OK to wait two months but it is a bit long.

Comment 472 White British Male. 46-60 no disability

I had a foot problem and needed a podiatry service. Took ages and ages, six months at least. Not a good experience. I couldn't walk. Now I go occasionally, they try their best.

Comment 772 White British Female 61-75 no disability

I go to xxx for the podiatry. Now it's an 8 week wait. They've cut the staff. It used to be 4 weeks, then they cut it to 6. It's uncomfy [uncomfortable]. I've had an ingrown toenail and can't get my shoe on.

Comment 808, no EQM

I've been waiting for an appointment letter for podiatry, it used to be every 8 weeks but now its every 12 weeks.

Comment 1296, no EQM

Some patients had not experienced problems accessing the service and found it user-friendly.

A community podiatrist comes out to see my husband one a month. They're brilliant. If they didn't come, I'd have to organise to take him and it would be difficult to organise around work. The service is a brilliant back up. Organised through my GP. I wouldn't be able to work without services like this.

Comment 595 no EQM

The standard of care given within podiatry services is generally rated very positively.

Kind attention given to painful part of feet.

Comment 2380 no EQM

Foot problem was seen to with care

Comment 1458 White British Female 46-60 no disability

Hornsey Street is difficult to get to if you are restricted in your movement (podiatry service user)

Comment 1456 White British Female 46-60 no disability

Mental Health

Comments about mental health services were fairly evenly divided between positive (17) and negative (19). Patient treatment received the most comments and these again were fairly evenly split between positive and negative. Waiting times for referrals had only received negative comments.

Social Care services

The LINK has received a range of comments about social care services, the majority related to customer service and waiting for services. This feedback will inform the LINK's work plan, and the LINK will gather further information.

4. Recommendations and follow-on work

- Liaise with the Clinical Commissioning Group to support or host an event aimed at sharing good practice between Patient Participation Groups (PPG) and support PPGs to become effective, influential organisations.
- Set up working groups to look at some of the issues around dental and podiatry services in more detail. LINK will consult relevant commissioners in relation to this work.
- Work with groups of providers and commissioners to ensure that relevant and required service information is on display in dental surgeries.
- Ensure that Local Healthwatch has relevant information for April 2013 on how people can obtain interpreters in all local health and care services and that services promote this to patients (dentist)
- Work with local services to increase feedback received from users of social care services.

Appendix A: LINK Comment Sheet

LINK Comment Sheet

We are from Islington LINK which collects views on health and social care services. We share those views anonymously with the people responsible for services.

Interview Questions

Have you used any health or social care services in the last 12 months?

Check: Would you mind if I made a note of your comments - anonymously

How would you rate that service?

Could you tell me a bit about why?

What is the name of the service? (NOT the staff member)

When did you use the service?

How could the service been improved/ issue resolved?

Equality Monitoring - You do not need to answer these questions, but this data helps us to ensure we are speaking to a diverse range of people across the borough.

- [1] **Sex**
- | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Male | <input type="checkbox"/> Transgender |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Female | <input type="checkbox"/> Transsexual |

- [2] **Disability**
- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------|

- [3] **Sexuality**
- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual | <input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gay | <input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian |

- [4] **Ethnicity**
- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White British | <input type="checkbox"/> Black British |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Irish | <input type="checkbox"/> Black African |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean |
| <input type="checkbox"/> British Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese | <input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Indian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |
-

[5] Age

- ☐ 18 – 30
- ☐ 31 – 45
- ☐ 46 – 60
- ☐ 61 – 75
- ☐ 75+

[6] Faith, religion or belief system:

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catholic | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Christian | <input type="checkbox"/> Atheist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Buddhism | <input type="checkbox"/> Pagan |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hinduism | <input type="checkbox"/> Agnostic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Islam | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Judaism | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sikhism | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

[7] Where does the interviewee live?

- ☐ Ward
- ☐ Street
- ☐ Post code (*first part*)
- ☐ Organisation

Appendix B: Service Categories

Service Category
Adult Assessment and Care Management
Advice and Advocacy
Care Home
Carers
Central Government
Child and Adolescent Mental Health
Childcare
Children's Services
Counselling
Customer Service Team
Day Centre
Dental
Dental - Community
Department of Health - Corporate Level
District Nursing
Emergency
Equipment
GP
Health Visitor
Home Care
Homeless
Hospital
Housing
Interpretation
Local Authority - Corporate Level
Mental Health
Occupational Therapy
Optician
Orthotics
Osteopathy
Other
Out of Hours
Parenting Support
Pharmacy
Physiotherapy
Podiatry
Polyclinic
Practice Nurse
Primary Care Trust - Corporate Level
Reablement
Service User Engagement
Sexual Health
Transport

Appendix C: Issues and sub-issues raised in relation to services.

Issue and Sub-Issue Categorisation	
Issue	Subissue
Accessibility	Distance
	Entry to Appointment
	Equipment
	Transport / Parking
	Mobility
	Hidden Access Needs
Comfort	Premises
	Privacy / Dignity
	Relocation
Communication / Information	Carer Information
	Language / Literacy
	Staff Awareness
	Staff Response
	User Awareness
	Ward Restrictions
	Communication between Services
Cost	Transport / Parking
	Treatment / Care
Customer Service / Treatment	Administration
	Treatment of Service User
	Treatment of Condition / Need
Diagnosis	Delay
	Misdiagnosis
Discharge	Planning
Medication	Delay
	Medical Records
	Prescription
Nutrition	Diet
	Malnutrition
Personal Property	Damage
	Loss
	Retrieval
Sanitation	Personal Hygiene
	Premises
Service Accessibility / Waiting Time	Admission / Referral
	Obtaining Appointment
	Registration
	Wait at Appointment
	Waiting for Appointment
	Supply of Service

Appendix D: Places where views were collected

Location in which comments were received
Alsen Day Centre
Andover Bright Start
Andover Estate Health Day
Archway Library
Bemerton Children's Centre - Somali Women's Group
Blythwood Community Nursery
BME Forum Wellbeing Event
Breathe Easy Group
Caxton House Community Centre
Caxton House Under 5s
Celebrating Carers Event
Central Library
Centre 404 Health Fair
Circle 33 Health Fair
Circle 33 Housing Fair
Citizen's Advice Bureau
Duval House Open Day
Expert Patient Panel
Family Fun Day Central Library
Finsbury Library
Goodinge Health Centre
Half Moon Crescent Tenants Cooperative
Hanley Crouch Stay and Play
Hungerford School
Islington Borough User Group
Islington Chinese Association
Islington Outlook Day Centre
Islington Pensioner's Forum
Killick Street Health Centre
LBI Housing Options
Light Project International
LINK Fair
Manor Gardens Health Advocacy Project
Mayton Street Festival
Mental Health Forum Older People's Event
Mosaic (Housing)
N4 Library
Northern Health Centre
Older People's Festival
Peel Centre
Pilion Trust
Somali Human Hope
Sotheby Mews Day Centre
South Library

Location in which comments were received
St Mary Magdalene Parent and Baby Group
Time to Change N1
Underground Youth Centre
VAI
West Library
Whittington Hospital
Whittington Park Community Association - Lunch Club

End Notes

1. 'Health in Islington the Facts, Update 2010, by NHS Islington.
2. 'GP Services:Patient Experiences of Appointment Systems at Medical Centres in Islington', November 2010, Islington LINK

Islington LINK Membership Form

Contact details

Title	<input type="text"/>	First name	<input type="text"/>	Surname	<input type="text"/>
Organisation (if applicable)	<input type="text"/>				
Address	<input type="text"/>				
Post code	<input type="text"/>	Email	<input type="text"/>		
Telephone Number	<input type="text"/>				
Mobile Number	<input type="text"/>				

My areas of interest / expertise in health and social care are:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Primary Care (eg doctors, dentists, podiatry, eye tests)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Secondary Care (eg hospitals, specialist clinics)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Social / Community Care (eg Meals on Wheels/Home Help/District nurse)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Residential Care and Nursing Homes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Emergency services (e.g. ambulance service)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please state) <input type="text"/>

I am interested in services for:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Children & Young People
<input type="checkbox"/>	Older People
<input type="checkbox"/>	Carers
<input type="checkbox"/>	Disabled People
<input type="checkbox"/>	People with learning difficulties
<input type="checkbox"/>	People with mental health issues
<input type="checkbox"/>	Black and Minority Ethnic (BME)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="text"/>

Data Protection

Any information you have given us here will be treated as confidential.
We will not share your contact details unless indicated below.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Please tick the box to share your contact details with other LINK members
--------------------------	--

Contact the LINK

link@vai.org.uk
020 7832 5814
www.islingtonlink.org



Equality monitoring form

We would like to gather monitoring information so that we can understand the diversity of the people involved with the LINK to make sure that we are reaching out to the whole community. We are required by the Department of Health to record this data. You do not have to complete this form.

Please help us by answering these questions:

1. Are you?

☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Transgender ☐ Transsexual

2. Would you describe yourself as?

☐ White British
☐ White Irish
☐ White Other: please specify
☐ Black British
☐ Black - African
☐ Black – Caribbean
☐ Black – other: please specify
☐ British Asian
☐ Indian
☐ Pakistani
☐ Bangladeshi
☐ Chinese
☐ Other – please specify

3. Would you describe yourself as having a disability?

☐ No
☐ Yes – please describe in your own words:

4. Would you describe yourself as:

☐ Gay man ☐ Lesbian woman ☐ Bisexual ☐ Heterosexual

5. Which age group do you belong to?

☐ Under 18 years ☐ 18 to 30 years ☐ 31 to 45 years ☐ 46 to 60 years
☐ 61 to 75 years ☐ 76 years & over

6. Do you have a religion or belief?

☐ No
☐ Yes – please specify:

Contact the LINK

link@vai.org.uk
020 7832 5814
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Islington LINK

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