

Wheelchair User Forum

Wednesday 9th October 2024, 11–1pm. Hybrid Meeting (via Zoom).
From Maple Centre, 6 Oak Drive, Huntingdon, PE29 7LB.

Useful Acronyms

ASCF – Adult Social Care Forum
CCC – Cambridgeshire County Council
CPB – Carers Partnership Board

ICB – Integrated Care Board
ILS – Independent Living Service
PB – Partnership Board (Healthwatch)
PCC – Peterborough City Council

What We Discussed

1) Welcome, Introductions, Apologies and Housekeeping – Chair and Graham Lewis.

Healthwatch asked to record the meeting for the minutes. All agreed.

2) Healthwatch Strategy Consultation – Jess Slater CEO Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough

- Jess introduced the strategy development and explained that this was one of a number of stakeholder discussions that will help shape Healthwatch's strategy for the next five years.
- Discussions centred around questions that included:
 - What do you understand about Healthwatch and its role?
 - How can Healthwatch make a difference for you and help address your needs?
 - How can we ensure your voice is heard?
 - What are your priorities for Healthwatch and how would you like to get involved?
- Jess also asked about what people wanted from the Health and Care Forum's and Partnership Boards.
- The stakeholder sessions are taking place until the end of January 2025. The Strategy will be drafted during February, approved in March and will run from 1st April 2025 to 31st March 2030.

3) Minutes of last meeting and Action Log Updates – Graham Lewis

- The minutes were agreed, and Action Log items were covered as follows:
- (732) Ongoing – Graham to follow up again with local councils as people are still experiencing problems accessing Taxi Services.

- (82) Ongoing – progress has stalled, Graham will email with a follow up.
- (83) This will be complete as Fish Insurance will be attending this meeting to cover all points raised in this item.

4) Recent experiences of the Wheelchair Service

- Some people have reported that they've had some difficulties getting through to AJM Healthcare by telephone. Steph offered to explain during her update.

5) AJM Healthcare Wheelchair Service Update – Steph Splevings

- Our did not attend rate still remains high at 20% – meaning 1 in 5 appointments were missed without prior warning. Most affected were clinic appointments and special seating. This has a huge impact on our waiting lists, and staff time. Hopefully, the new PT supplier will be able to improve on this.
- Michaela has moved roles; she was the Clinical Lead for C&P but is now the Clinical Manager of AJM Choices. Denise (CS Manager) has also left, and we are recruiting for her replacement.
- Due to Denise leaving and annual leave, we currently have 1 Admin working so aware that calls may not be answered as quickly as usual and we are trying to find support where we can, but please bear with us during this time.
- The PWB/CCS Team are being re-branded as AJM Choices – their focus will be on private sales and 3rd party PWB's. As part of this, a new website will be launched (hopefully end of Nov) where anyone can view and buy wheelchairs, accessories and show upgrade options. With this, our clinical team will also be equipped with a catalogue that can be shown during appointments.
- We have recently employed Kerry as our lived experience champion. Kerry runs a blog called "My Life, Kerry's Way" and focuses on campaigning for a more diverse and inclusive world, including changing places toilets, accessible housing and women's health. Kerry has joined AJM to help get forms up and running in areas where there isn't much engagement and is helping AJM in shaping the way our service centres are laid out, amongst other things. I will ask her to join the next meeting in January.
- Kerry has also received permission from Elaine Marries, for me to pass on her e-mail address – this is the lady in MK who has taken local licensing authorities to court over wheelchair accessible taxis and refusal to take wheelchairs, guide dogs etc. Contact Steph for the email address.

6) FISH Insurance (Including Breakdown) – James O’Neill of FISH

James gave an overview of the insurance they can provide for people who have an NHS provided wheelchair.

Three new policy levels were introduced 2 years ago, one is for manual wheelchairs and two are for powered wheelchairs. Some policies offer accidental cover and some cover for breakdowns.

FISH found that people required wheelchair cover when going on holiday including worldwide travel and travelling by aeroplanes. Awareness has been raised by a recent documentary that high lighted damage during transit or by baggage handlers.

Our claim handlers are very experienced and understand the need of the patients. Most claims are for accidental damage although occasionally liability claims do happen.

Q. How does breakdown recovery work for someone who’s wheelchair has broken down and needs to have a like for like wheelchair?

A. FISH will refer to a preferred list of taxi providers to assist the individual. We have moved the breakdown recovery service from Call Assist to an in house provider. James will take this feedback on.

Q. What happens if my breakdown is due to the wheelchair battery being completely dead. How would I get home and what would happen to my chair?

A. Call the claims line they would ask questions about your circumstances and arrange the most appropriate help. The average response time is 42 minutes. Positive feedback has been received recently.

James advised that you could find out all the details about the policies. You can join FISH online and get cover immediately. He will share the customer information booklet with anyone who is interested.

7) Feedback from other meetings - Graham Lewis

- The most recent Health and Care Forums have held stakeholder sessions on the Healthwatch Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Strategy for 2025-2030.
- The Partnership Boards have heard from Addenbrookes and the Rosie Hospitals about their plans to refresh Outpatients Services. Initiatives being discussed include introducing more digital appointment options and delivering more of the services in local healthcare settings rather than at the hospital.

- The Carers Board heard about the Bridgit App and website that will provide more resources for established and new carers.
- Peterborough train station will be redesigned, and we have shared details of the consultations. Feedback from wheelchair users would be very welcome.
- The Healthwatch Summit last week was a success, and included keynote speaker Liz Owen, who spoke about her experiences of healthcare inequalities as a wheelchair user and a person with a physical disability.
- Other speakers were Jan Thomas, Chief Executive of our local Integrated Care Board and Dr John Ford, Director of Health Equity Evidence at Queen Mary University in London.
- Workshops discussed what local health and social care services are working well and what is not working well. The focus of the summit was on healthcare inequalities and the importance of lived experiences in shaping discussions.

8) Any Other Business

Recommissioning of the NHS wheelchair service contract by the ICB.

Q. Has this already been completed?

A. No, not yet it was felt this was held up due to the General Election. Graham will seek feedback about the current providers AJM Healthcare when he has heard that it is appropriate to do so.

C. One service user voiced that AJM has done a very good job in the past years.

Housing Repairs and Adaptions in Cambridgeshire

- An engagement event is being held on Zoom 16th October between 2-4pm. Anyone who would like to hear more about the service or has any feedback is welcome. They will be setting the priorities for the future service.

Disability Discrimination Act 30 Year Anniversary Celebration

- Cambridgeshire County Council will hold a meeting on Teams on 13th October between 11am -12.30pm to commemorate this landmark and would like people with a disability to join so that they can share their views and experiences. Graham will share the details and all to share to their networks.

9) Date of next meeting –

Date: Wednesday 8th January 2025.

Time: 11am to 1pm. **Venue:** TBC