

Alliance exCHANGE: Glasgow City HSCP Strategic Plan

Engagement Flash Report

Introduction

The Glasgow Alliance to End Homelessness and partners from across the city came together on Thursday 21 April, for an Alliance exCHANGE session to feed into the development of the updated Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership (HSCP) Strategic Plan. Below are some insights, themes and reflections from discussions on the day.

What's going well and why?

Joined up working due to the pandemic resulted in positive improvements and must continue. Removal of departmental barriers and collaborative commissioning has supported this.

The centralisation of complex needs was also seen to be working well. Establishing more joined-up ways of working and creating links across a range of services, such as health, has had a significant positive result.

It was acknowledged that being accommodated in hotels has not always been positive for some people, but it has meant that services have been able to access people with more ease. As a result, outreach support has been able to move people on more quickly and efficiently and has been able to engage with people who otherwise might have 'slipped through the cracks'.

Community involvement and linking people in with their local community had been a driver in supporting people with their recovery or addiction issues. As people move through the pandemic and work from home less often, the capacity and volume of volunteers has diminished compared to the earlier day of the pandemic. We must consider how we can replicate those community connections more naturally.

There was a noted increase in supporting people to become more knowledgeable about the benefits system or further support in the community. In addition to empowering people, this has provided staff with more links and resources to refer people to.

What could be better and why?

Digital access is a continuous challenge. For many people, access to wifi or devices is still a barrier due to cost, and poor digital literacy skills can further impede this. Participants spoke about the challenges of the people they support only having their mobile phone's small screen to complete a

complicated Universal Credit form or using unsecure public networks to complete forms that require sensitive, personal data.

Access to mental health services and assessments must be improved. It takes too long and is an inefficient process, which is challenging to keep people engaged in. It can also be traumatic, with people having to repeat their story. Improved links between mental health services and frontline staff are required. Participants felt that it was wasteful and unhelpful that individuals with addiction issues couldn't receive mental health support until they had their addiction treated first and separately when these are so often interlinked.

Supporting staff came through clearly in discussions as something to be improved. There are concerns about how to recruit and retain staff under the current circumstances, with participants feeling that the number of staff experiencing burnout will be much higher than suggested. Many staff won't realise that they're experiencing burnout symptoms, making it more challenging to manage.

Improving barriers and balance for staff was considered important. Participants discussed when staff experience guilt if they're unavailable to the people they support outwith their working hours, even if that individual has access to alternative support during that time. That feeling of never being able to 'switch off' needs to be addressed at a system level.

What could make a difference, and what matters most?

Accessibility to services and the speed at which people can move through the system would make a significant difference.

For service users, having access to information that's held about themselves matters. More information is helpful, particularly when their case is active, as for many people, it feels like being left in the dark – one service user mentioned that it felt like they had been 'left to rot'.

Addressing the incoming challenge presented by the cost of living increase and the rise in poverty is necessary. The cost of living increase will only put pressure on already strained resources, so this must be addressed through a crisis plan and a long term strategy. Collaboration is critical to supporting people and services through this.

Discussions also focused on how we can support people with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF). If this plan covers the city's citizens, it must also include this population group. Many individuals with NRPF also have long term conditions, mental health issues or disabilities, and how we can support them should be considered.

Supporting people across the community to become aware of opportunities across volunteering, education and health and wellbeing matters. Ways to connect people to local activities fosters engaged communities, resulting in stronger links and improved outcomes for those settling in these communities.

There's a need for a more holistic approach which can be influenced by the introduction of the National Care Service. We have an opportunity to shape this. People's health should also be a priority, not only to support their quality of life, but participants spoke of how access to services and receiving healthcare support can boost people's self-esteem. This includes access to dental care, diet and nutrition and general functional health.

What's next?

The findings from this exCHANGE have been shared with Glasgow City HSCP and, along with other engagement activities, will shape the updated Strategic Plan. Engagement and consolidation will continue throughout 2022.

Initial feedback will be gathered and used to form an initial plan which will go to consultation from July, with a final draft taken to the IJB in March 2023. Glasgow City HSCP will publish suggestions received and action taken to show how engagement has shaped the plan.

For more information, visit: [Strategic Plan 2023 | Glasgow City Health and Social Care Partnership \(hscp.scot\)](#) or contact gchscpstrategicplan@glasgow.gov.uk

If you have any questions about this session, or anything included in this Flash Report, then please get in touch with hello@glasgowalliance.org.