

Executive Summary of Seminar held on 16th June 2009

The overall aim of the Seminar was to give delegates a chance to discuss their experiences of inequality in four service areas from across the public sector organisations. These areas were identified by the Edinburgh Equalities Network (EEN) membership group as being areas of importance to them. The four topics were: Community Safety, Community Engagement and Consultation, Health and Wellbeing and Social Care.

A summary of the discussion and the Network's commitment to respond to this discussion is recorded below.

Community Safety

You said:

- Communities want to know who their community police officers are, and to see them regularly, for direct contact with them and to be assured that the local issues will be taken seriously.
- A visible police presence on the street and quicker response times are of top priority.
- The group felt that it was important to feel part of a community and that it was the communities' responsibility to report crime and to ensure community services are available i.e. schools, neighbourhood watch.
- Better street lighting and lighting on the cycle paths is still required to make people feel safer.
- Concerns were made regarding the closure of police stations and that the police had become inaccessible and difficult to contact - often

We will:

- Send this report to Lothian and Borders Police "A" Division and ask them to provide feedback on these discussion points and inform the Network of any actions arising from this report.
- Send this report to the Edinburgh Community Safety Partnership staff for information and to ask for a response on these issues.
- Send this report to the Neighbourhood Partnership Managers to ask them about proposed budgets for street lighting and lighting on cycle paths and request a response.
- Set up an information and discussion session on "Remote Reporting and Hate Crime" to allow the Network members to discuss this

<p>unfriendly and unsympathetic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People also felt comfortable contacting the police if they witnessed what they classed as a serious crime but felt that more minor issues which affect them were treated as time wasting. • Many people are not clear about what “hate crime” means and did not realise there was a different system for reporting this. 	<p>topic and know how to report verbal or physical abuse.</p>
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Consultation / Community Engagement

<p>You said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early involvement of community members is crucial to make people feel fully included and able to participate in the work. • Local consultation exercises held in community or voluntary sector settings have had a better turn out than public sector led events. This is a positive development but the costs and time for running consultations are often ignored or go unrecognised. • Feedback and impact of changes needs to be given from all events. • Develop ways to engage that are not always paper based and reliant on long and nearly completed drafts of reports. • Develop ways of engaging with people with learning disabilities. • Explain how consultation takes place within the tendering process across the public sector organisations and if and when an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is carried out. • Highlight good practice more often. • Consultation structures need to be identified and consistent across community planning structures. • Join up interagency approach to help eradicate consultation fatigue. 	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send this report to the Edinburgh Partnership Community Engagement Working Group to note and feedback to us on these issues and any actions arising. • Send this report to the Health and Social Care lead officer for the Strategic Development Group for Learning Disabilities and seek guidance and advice about how and when to engage with adults with learning disabilities. • Ask the Edinburgh Partnership Community Engagement Working Group to request the public sector partners if and when they consult on tendering arrangements and if EIAs have been carried out in this area. • Develop a Guidance Note on EEN Standards of Good Practice which will be issued out to anyone operating a consultation or
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involvement event through EEN structures.

Health and Wellbeing / Primary Care Services

You said:

- There have been general areas of improvement that are visible to the public, such as NHS 24 and more access to GP services, reduced prescription charges, better awareness of cultural issues and more leaflets about preventative health care are available.
- That health care should not be divided by age categories but by health needs.
- Some people were concerned that there is still a reliance on medication rather than encouraging active lifestyles, especially for older people or adults in care homes.
- Concerned about the low visibility of black and minority ethnic staff in GP surgeries and NHS Lothian.
- Concerns about budget and service cuts were raised and queries asked about whether these cuts are accompanied by an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA)?
- Specific concerns were raised about NHS Lothian and that consultation reports are not seen by managers or Board members – public perception that their voice is not heard by management.
- Specific approach and services needed for sexual health and, in particular, for prostitutes. More information on this requested.
- Difficulty getting men to access preventative and screening programmes.
- Communications issues were raised - accessible information in Plain English, information for people with visual impairments, access to

We will:

- Send this report to NHS Lothian Health Inequalities Manager and ask for feedback on these discussion points and inform the Network of any actions arising from this report from the issues raised.
- Ask the Public Partnership Forum for the Community Health Partnership to consider these issues and advise the Network if any of the issues fit in with the Forum's current priorities.

information in public places e.g. libraries.

- Disability awareness training should be provided to staff and GPs.

Social Care

You said:

- You would like to see more information about training courses for carers.
- Strong feeling that more dedicated work was needed to tackle isolation of older and vulnerable people.
- Many delegates had been treated very well by staff and had their concerns dealt with quickly – especially adaptations.
- More information needed on home helps and what they can and cannot assist with, if their travel time is included in time allocated to each client, continuity concerns raised especially affecting those with dementia.
- Wide differences in knowledge about social care services and felt that more information could go out to describe services and who they are available to.
- Assessment of need was raised as a difficulty for some older people who expressed concern that the services were not flexible enough to assist them to stay in their own homes.
- Means testing and savings were discussed as a barrier despite health needs.
- Hearing Aids are in very short supply and there is a huge waiting list in Deaf Action – can the partners help with this?
- Some groups feel excluded from being involved – sex workers and

We will:

- Send this report to the City of Edinburgh Council's Health and Social Care Department and ask them to note the comments raised and provide information and feedback on issues / actions arising.
- Ask Health and Social Care to review the information that goes out to citizens about their services.
- Investigate the option to run a conference for Network members and describe the work of the Strategic Development Groups and hold workshops with the lead officers covering some of the following topics: mental health, dementia, carers, physical disabilities, learning disabilities and older people.
- Ask Health and Social Care to clarify the issues raised about home helps and care plans.
- See feedback on Evaluation of Seminar for EEN's action on involving more excluded community members.

Gypsy/Travellers.

- A more lively and active agenda should be encouraged within all Care Homes.
- Are Care Plans looked at by all staff working with the individual?
- Complaints – elderly and vulnerable people do not feel safe or confident about complaining about care workers, they need more confidentiality to make a complaint.
- For projects that are being closed down, the members would like to request that an Equality Impact Assessment is always carried out.

Edinburgh Equalities Network Evaluation Comments

You said:

- Many members stated that the seminar was a good start but they would reserve judgement on the value of the Network until further down the line.
- Complaints about the acoustics and difficulties with hearing were expressed about the seminar venue and because workshops were held in one room.
- Some groups were dominated by a single equality strand and felt uncomfortable about that.
- Many people expressed the view that it was interesting to hear such a diverse range of opinions and to hear about other people's experiences.
- A wide-ranging and lengthy list of topics was collated about what the members would like to discuss at future EEN events.

We will:

- Take note of difficulties around the acoustics and the layout at the meeting and attempt to learn from this.
- Vary the time of day when we hold meetings to allow others to attend.
- Ensure that you get feedback from the discussions you have been part of.
- Seek new Network members, especially from the most excluded people in Edinburgh, and visit them within their organisations and agree to work with them to look at ways of involving them.
- Make arrangements to involve Network members in discussion and involvement meetings by raising the profile of the

Network within the public and voluntary sector organisations in Edinburgh and through partnership structures.

- Arrange to run future seminars on some of the topics you have highlighted.

For a copy of the write up of all seminar workshop discussions, evaluation feedback report and delegate attendance list from the EEN Seminar of 16th June, please contact:

Julie Houston
Edinburgh Equalities Network Co-ordinator
City of Edinburgh Council
Performance, Strategy and Policy
Department of Corporate Services
Business Centre 2/1
4 East Market Street
Edinburgh, EH8 8BG

Email: julie.houston@edinburgh.gov.uk

Tel: 0131 469 3632

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