

Withington Heart Help Support Group Workshop – November 2010

In November 2010, GM CLAHRC held a workshop with the Withington Heart Help Support group. The aim of the event was to develop closer ways of working with local cardiac patients, while gathering views, opinion and advice from local cardiac communities.

The Withington Heart Help Support group provides a range of social, leisure and phase 4 rehabilitation services to a wide range of people from the different communities of South and Central Manchester.

Gathering the views of local patient cardiac groups has been essential in the development, creation and evaluation of the GM CLAHRC heart failure programme, especially in regards to the [Manchester Heart Failure Website](#) and the creation of the [Heart Failure Alert Card](#).



The Heart Failure programme has been created to address problems that patients, carers and healthcare professionals have. The programme is focusing on improving communication, co-ordination and access to local heart failure services.

The November 2010 workshop was delivered using an interactive 'Roadmap' to provide a safe, informal and social environment where patients and carers felt comfortable in airing their views. The session began with an ice breaker: the audience was split into two groups and provided with a tube of Smarties. Both groups were then given the same remit... "*list as many things which you can use a Smartie for!*" Prizes were on offer for the most imaginative answer and for the team with the most answers. Some of the most imaginative of answers included:

- A suspender button
- Catapult ammunition
- Poker chips
- To reward the wife
- Cake decorations
- Placebo medication

This little discussion game worked well, as it broke the ice and set the scene for the group work which was to follow. The two groups were facilitated by [Michael Spence](#), [Lorraine Burey](#) and Tim Gough to answer three main questions...

1. What would you like to see on the website?
2. How would you like to promote the Withington Heart Support group?
3. What would you find useful on a long term conditions identification card?



Responses from Team 1



Responses from Team 2

Each group was provided with a 'Roadmap' of possible answers to the three questions. Each group member was provided with three stickers per question and were asked to place a sticker by the three answers they believed to be most applicable. There was also the option of adding additional answers if people thought necessary.

The answers which came out with the greatest number of stickers on are as follows:

1. What would you like to see on the website?

Team 1	Regular advice blog from a specialist i.e. Nurse, GP etc...
	Medication information
	Exercise information

Team 2	New treatment information
	Medication information
	Financial/Benefit advice

2. How would you like to promote the Withington Heart Support group?

Team 1	Word of Mouth
	Libraries
	Professionals i.e GP, Nurse etc...
	Local Newspapers

Team 2	Professionals i.e GP, Nurse etc...
	Community Centres
	Word of Mouth
	Libraries

3. What would you find useful on a long term conditions identification card?

Team 1	GP Surgery
	Contact details of nurse, community matron etc...
	Test results

Team 2	Disease Condition
	Contact details of nurse, community matron etc...
	Medication

The workshop ran extremely well and we were able to gain valuable information from the local cardiac community.

As a result of the workshop we are currently exploring how we can develop the website into a resource that is more user friendly and offers information which users want to access.

Discussions with key Manchester heart failure clinicians are currently being undertaken to provide a frequently updated generic heart failure advice blog to provide patients and carers with the latest news and disease specific advice.

It was also noted that not a single member of Team 1 or Team 2 wanted to know anything about 'other diseases'. This in itself has been built into the future development of the website, as initially the plan was to develop the [Manchester Heart Failure](#) site into a more generic long term conditions site. We now have to slightly re-think the way that we take things forward.

All of the views from the workshop are being considered and built in to the future decision making processes surrounding the GM CLAHRC heart failure programme.