

Equity in experience and outcomes

Score: 3

3 - Evidence shows a good standard

What people expect

I have care and support that enables me to live as I want to, seeing me as a unique person with skills, strengths and goals.

The local authority commitment

We actively seek out and listen to information about people who are most likely to experience inequality in experience or outcomes. We tailor the care, support and treatment in response to this.

Key findings for this quality statement

Understanding and reducing barriers to care and support and reducing inequalities

The local authority demonstrated a good understanding of the local population and demographics. Leaders and staff had due regard for groups of people living in Islington who were more likely to experience health and social care inequalities such as Black Asian and Minority Ethnic communities, people who are homeless, people who misused substances and alcohol, people with mental health needs, older people, and people who are neurodivergent. Further work was underway with the local authority to ensure consistent recording of equality data of people who contacted the local authority to identify and reduce inequalities in people's care and support experiences and outcomes. Public health also carried out data monitoring processes which would then be shared with adult social care to identify people who were seldom heard.

The local authority had started to proactively engage with the people and groups where inequalities had been identified, to understand and address the specific risks and issues experienced by them. For example, the local authority held an open day for people with learning disabilities and their carers. The open day called "My Way Day" had over 30 stalls from providers and voluntary services to raise awareness of the care and support available for people with learning disabilities. The local authority told us feedback from people who attended the open day was positive.

The local authority worked together with partners and the voluntary and community sector to identify people's needs and to reach seldom heard people. Partners told us this work was effective and had seen an increase of people contacting voluntary services for advice and support however, they identified there was still work to be done to further support and reach people who may be at risk of inequalities.

Partners told us how the local authority worked with them and the community sector to identify people who were seldom heard. Islington is a diverse borough with areas of deprivation and homelessness. The local authority understood there were a lot of asylum seekers in the area who may be unsure as to how they would be supported or treated by professionals, one voluntary organisation told us that the language barrier, poverty, mental health and wellbeing were all barriers which stopped people from accessing help and support.

Partners told us the local authority worked proactively with health and the voluntary and community sector to identify and support people from diverse communities. Partners, staff and leaders told us about several groups in the community such as the Bangladeshi Association who support people to have their voice heard, they have also built relationships with the Somali community. Islington also has a thriving LGBTQ+ community.

The local authority worked with health partners to share data about demographics and meet need. For example, the Mental Health Partnership Board consisted of several partners and people with mental health needs working together to reduce the inequalities of people with mental ill health, focusing on the commissioning and service delivery of mental health services.

The local authority proactively engaged with the people and groups where inequalities had been identified, to understand and address the specific risks and issues experienced by them. The local authority worked in partnership with The London Vanguard, NHS England and the Mental Health Trust to develop and implement the Young Black Men and Mental Health Programme. The London Vanguards were being piloted in North Central London (NCL), North East London (NEL) and South East London (SEL) between October 2021 and September 2024. They aimed to enable vulnerable children and young people up to age 25 affected by violence to thrive. The Young Black Men and Mental Health Programme was designed to improve the mental health and wellbeing outcomes for young Black men improving their life chances in Islington.

Local authority staff involved in carrying out Care Act duties had a good understanding of cultural diversity within the area and how to engage appropriately. The Islington workforce was diverse, and staff were aware of how to communicate with people appropriately. Staff received training on cultural competency and were aware of the seldom heard people in the community and their needs. The local authority had an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) lead in place to highlight the importance of EDI to staff and in the community.

There were clear policies and procedures in place for people who would not engage with services and staff gave examples of how they would visit at different times and communicate in different ways to try and reach people who were hard to engage.

Inclusion and accessibility arrangements

There were appropriate inclusion and accessibility arrangements in place so that people could engage with the local authority in ways that worked for them, for example, British Sign Language (BSL) or interpreter services. The local authority had a specialist Sensory Needs team in which staff were trained BSL interpreters and supported staff with other communication tools to support people who were deaf and or blind. The first point of contact team also had staff trained in BSL to support people with communication needs. Staff told us how they would carry out joint visits with the Sensory team to support people with their communication needs. The local authority also provided online BSL support, information to people through Facebook or YouTube and published a BSL newsletter. Staff were aware this would not meet everyone's needs as some people in Islington would not have access to the internet. Staff had access to paper copies of information in different formats and languages if needed.

The local authority also worked with Speech and Language Therapists to learn communication tools such as Talking Mats and other pictorial communication methods. Staff told us about how they worked with health colleagues to look at different techniques for communication with people with learning disabilities such as using videos to communicate.

Communication was provided either via the telephone, online or in paper format. The local authority told us they had paper copies of documents translated in several languages to support people whose first language was not English. Languages included Arabic, Chinese, Somali, Turkish, Bengali, Greek or Spanish to meet the main needs of people in the community, staff told us they would be able to access these in other languages also if required however, some staff told us they were not aware how to provide information in other languages to people.

People we spoke with told us information was given to them in the correct format to meet their communication and cultural needs. One person told us how the Care Act assessment for the cared for person was carried out over several visits to allow the cared for person to be able to listen, reflect and understand the process and be as involved as possible providing different formats such as written and verbal to ensure the person was able to access and understand the relevant information provided to them to allow an informed decision and choice.
