



Coalition of Latin Americans in the UK (CLAUK)

CLAUK's response to South London Healthcare Trust consultation

12/12/2012

Q. 3 What further comments, if any, do you have on any of the proposals outlined around recommendation one in the consultation document, including the reasons for your answer to questions 1 and 2? Please also include any improvements you would like to suggest to this recommendation?

Based on our experience working with Spanish and Portuguese speaking Latin Americans in South London, we strongly believe that the lack of translation and interpreting services is an important problem working against the efficiency of South London health services.

Having no help with dealing with the language barrier often lead people to:

- Refrain from visiting GPs for check-ups and information.
- Miss out on important information about their health and treatment.
- Attend appointments only to re-schedule them.
- Seek help outside the NHS.
- Repeat treatments and tests that are part of their medical history.

For those who can't speak English fluently, interpreting services are indispensable when attending appointments. If non-English speaking patients are unable to find translators, they end up missing or rescheduling their appointments. This situation often leads to physical and mental health deterioration and further use of NHS resources. In addition, those who have a medical condition bring their medical history in Spanish or Portuguese. As the NHS does not offer a translation service, this information is either lost or translated by others who are not specialised in health.

Q6. What further comments, if any, do you have on any of the proposals outlined around recommendation two in the consultation document, including the reasons for your answers to questions 4 and 5? Please also include any improvements you would like to suggest to this recommendation.

The relocation of services should be properly informed to all people in the area. If services are relocated across South London and elective in-patient surgery will only be provided in Lewisham in the future, a communication strategy that involves the voluntary sector should

be developed in order to ensure all groups are informed about the location of the different services, requirements to access them and transport options. With over 130,000 Latin Americans living in London, this information should be printed in Spanish and Portuguese.

Q40. Please tell us who the organisation or group represents and, if it applies, how you gathered and summarised the views of members.

CLAUK is a coalition of 7 Latin American organisations, 2 of which are located in South London. Representatives from these 2 community organisations, LAWRS and IRMO, participated in a consultation meeting lead by an NHS Healthcare Trust representative in which 6 Latin American service users and I have also participated. All statements included in this response are based on the discussion held during the consultation meeting.

The Coalition of Latin Americans in the UK (CLAUK) is made of the following member organisations:

- [The Latin American School of Artistic and Cultural Education](#) (ESFORAL)
- [Indoamerican Migrant and Refugee Organisation](#) (IRMO)
- [Latin American House](#)
- [Latin Support Group](#)
- [Latin American Women's Aid](#) (LAWA)
- [Latin American Women's Rights Service](#) (LAWRS)
- [Naz Latina](#)
- [Teléfono de la Esperanza](#)
- [The National Secretariat for Migrants from the Ecuadorian Government](#) (SENAMI, Observer)

For more information, please visit www.clauk.org.uk or contact CLAUK's Advocacy & Campaign Coordinator Lucila Granada at lucila@lawrs.org.uk