

Homelessness in Hounslow: Improving Access to Healthcare

Dr Joanna Brilliant

NWL Mid-Career Fellowship 2023-2024

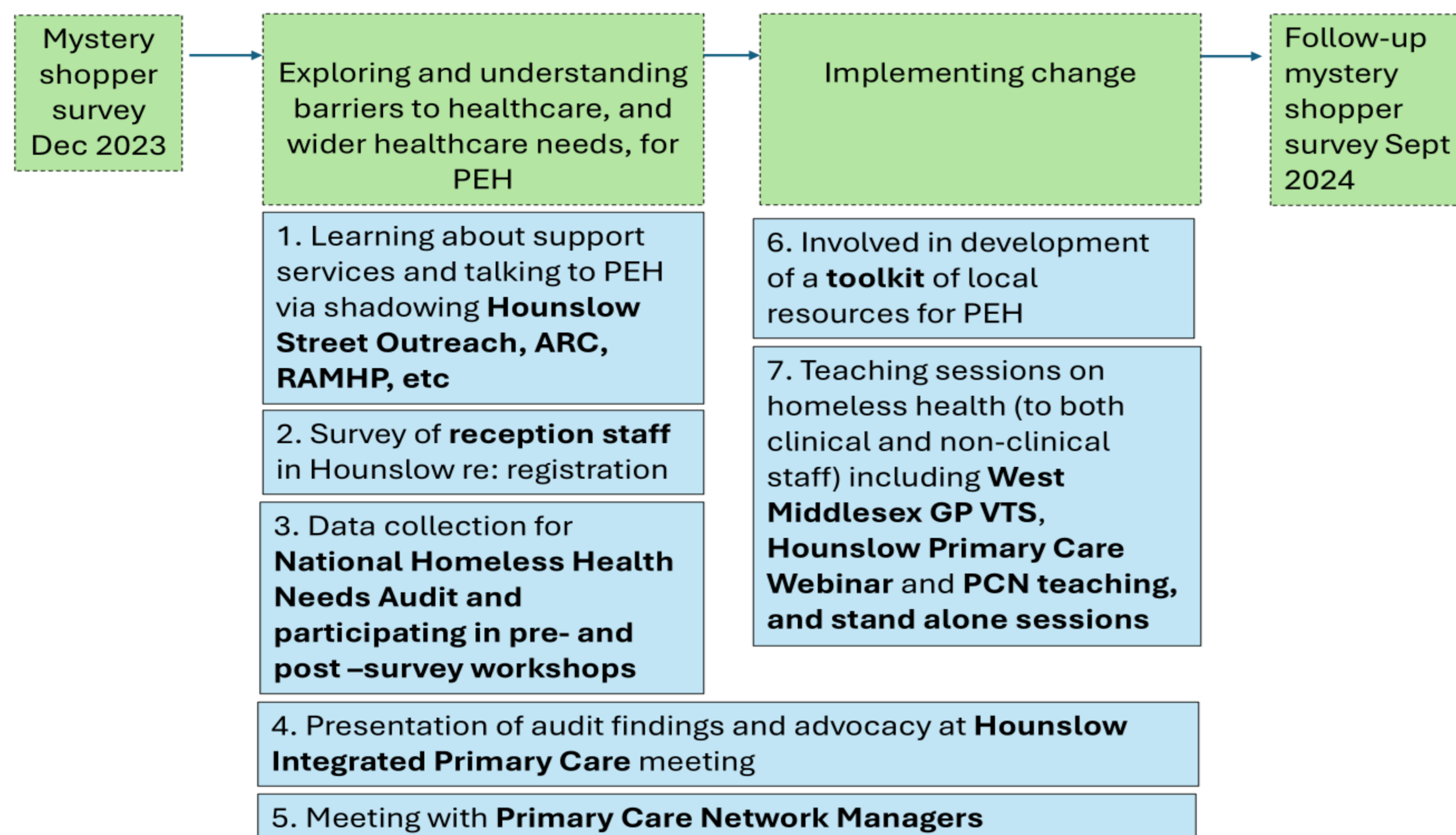
Background

- People experiencing homelessness face significant health inequalities compared with the general population
- Previous “mystery shopper” surveys have identified barriers to accessing primary care at the front door including the insistence on proof of address/ID to register
- Fellowship aims align with Hounslow borough priorities: population health and inequality, and access to health care

Aim

1. Explore and understand barriers to accessing primary care for PEH
2. Support clinical and non-clinical staff to overcome these barriers through education, empowering them with the knowledge required to understand the importance of - and ways to - make every contact count

Methods



Results

Activity	Result
1. Not only shadowing but also many, many meetings!	Discussions with like-minded GPs in different parts of London, & Dr Natalie Miller, Dr Chris Sargeant, Groundswell, Healthwatch Hounslow, Homeless Health Community of Practice, etc
2. Reception staff survey	39 responses
3. National HHNA	Helping to design, execute, and evaluate findings for survey; meeting PEH at Trinity Church in-reach
4. HIPC meeting	Presented baseline mystery shopper survey results; gathered opinions from borough leads re: barriers to registration, advocated at BBP level
5. PCN managers	Collaborative discussion re: how to reduce barriers to registration; education re: safe surgeries
6. Toolkit	Contributed to consolidation and awareness of local initiative to collate resources
7. Teaching sessions	Delivered five teaching sessions to clinical and non-clinical staff, with positive feedback

Acknowledgements

Dr Natalie Miller (NWL Clinical Lead for PEH), Dr Amit Gupta (Hounslow borough medical director), Dr Clare Etherington (mentor), Kate and Chanty (mystery shoppers), Richard Reeves (public health officer), Jessica Bennett (PCN manager), Them Tshabangu (ARC nurse), Dr Lucy Langford, Dr Claire Rees, Dr Aaminah Verity, Dr Amisha Babla, Marina Davidson (Doctors of the World), Karen De Say (head of PCN education, Hounslow), Claire Wilson (programme delivery manager), Jordan Smythers (homeless outreach), Dr Chris Sargeant (Pathways), & Aastha Binrajka (Healthwatch Hounslow)

Not registered with a GP practice?

NHS

Being registered will help you get the right care when you need it.

There's no need for proof of address or immigration status, ID or an NHS number.

Contact your local GP practice today or visit nhs.uk/register

Your health matters help us help you

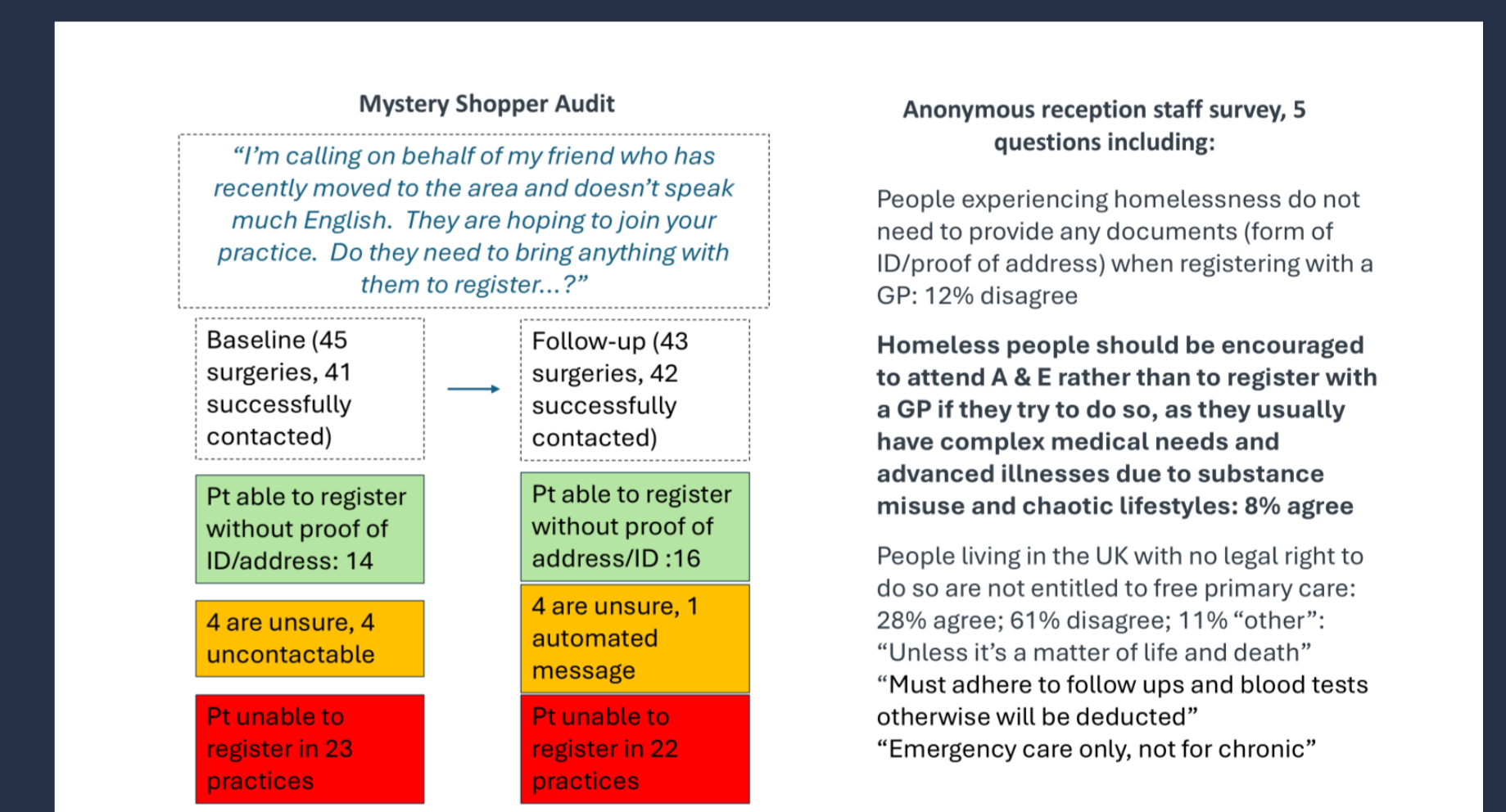


Adebola Adisa, GP



Key findings

- Barriers to healthcare continue exist at the front door for some of our most vulnerable patients; multidisciplinary effort (at various leadership levels) is required to overcome these
- Some identified factors include staff misconceptions, administrative barriers (PCSE) and “gate-keeping” sentiment
- Lack of knowledge amongst GPs/GP trainees re: homeless health (not usually formally taught)



Conclusions

- Fellowship provided an opportunity:
1. To demonstrate that barriers at the front door still exist in Hounslow and to explore the reasons for this in greater detail in order to be able to begin to address them
 2. To hear first hand from PEH about their health needs
 3. To be involved in various “Communities of Practices”; to learn from like-minded clinicians/professionals – invaluable
3. To educate, raise awareness, and advocate

Personal reflections: fellowship work enriched my working self in a multitude of ways; I learned about inclusion health, working inter-professionally, overcoming challenges, collaboration, and - above all - the importance of respect and kindness. I have since started a wonderful job with Doctors of the World; my role is to help improve access to healthcare for those seeking asylum staying in home office accommodation.

