

HEALTHWATCH WIRRAL QUARTERLY REPORT MARCH 2024

HEALTHWATCH WIRRAL

LISTEN. SHARE. INFLUENCE

'Foundations of Quality Improvement should always have what patients tell us about their treatment and care at the heart of everything, as a system, that we plan and do. We must be able to evidence that all actions and decisions made come back to this, making certain that everyone feels respected, involved and valued at each and every part of the journey. We should all feel confident that we are either giving or receiving quality care.'

Healthwatch Wirral, Age UK Wirral, NHS England and ECIST, Wirral System

Our job at Healthwatch Wirral is simple: we are here to help make health and social care work better for everyone. Healthwatch is independent and the way we work is designed to give local people a powerful voice to help them get the best out of their local health and social care services, whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow.

Our statutory functions include:

- Obtaining people's views about their needs and experiences of local health and social care services and sharing these views with those involved in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of care services.
- Promoting and supporting the involvement of people in the monitoring, commissioning and provision of local health and social care services
- Providing information and advice to the public about accessing health and social care services and options available to them
- Conducting 'Enter and View' visits to health and social care services and reporting our observations and findings.

OUR UNIQUENESS:

We are uniquely placed to have conversations with patients about their lived experience with health and social care. We listen, observe, gather, interpret and report on the lived experience of local people to provide knowledge to help inform decisions about the planning and provision of both health and social care.

Healthwatch is independent and the way we work is designed to give local people a powerful voice.

We gather inequalities data and we have aligned our priorities again this year to the Core20Plus5 focussing on the Plus5 element and to include

Carers, Language & Translation, Sensory Impairment and Interpretation support, ensuring that HWW priorities are in tune with the local system.

REPORT DATA

Background

The Health & Wellbeing Board should be assured that the data within this report is retrospective. All contacts with Healthwatch Wirral (HWW) have been responded to and actioned. The information highlights the trends and themes that the residents of Wirral are experiencing.

Our programmes of work aim to reduce attendances at hospitals A&E and help staff and patients navigate our health and care system by providing up-to-date information and signposting to the most appropriate care.

HWW have an outreach programme, via our Inclusion Manager, who ensures those who find it harder to share their experiences are heard and are actively encouraged to share their views and opinions.

Public Feedback

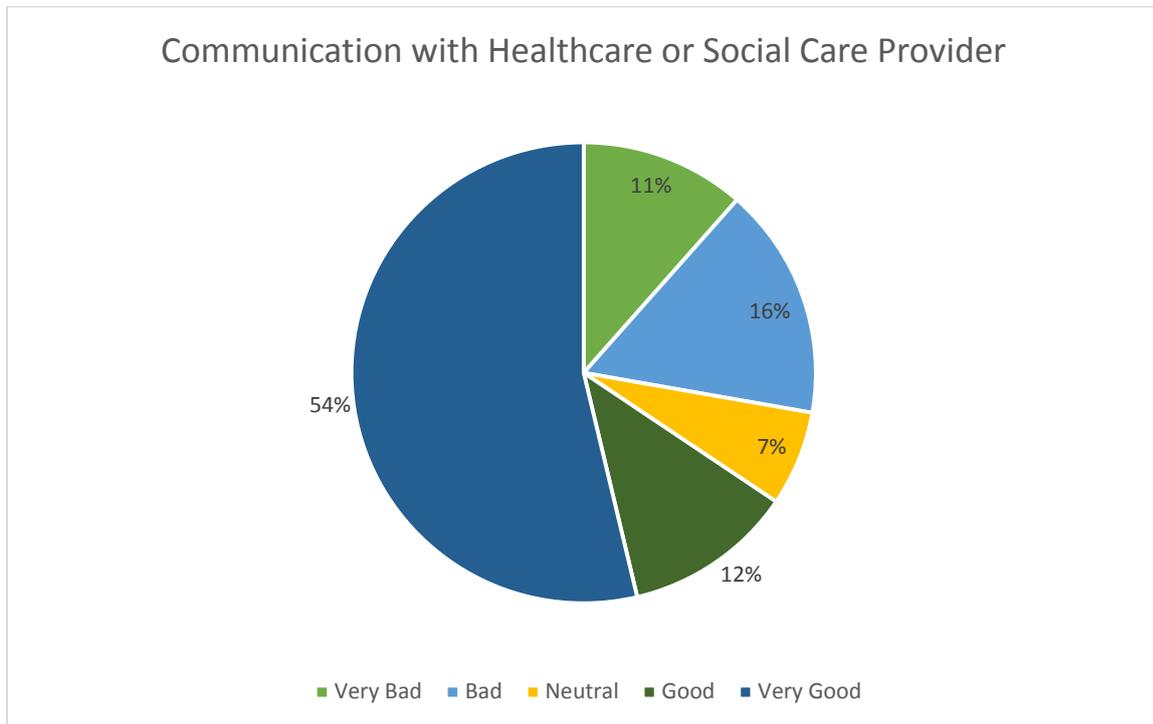
The Healthwatch Wirral Feedback Centre serves as a crucial channel for the public to voice their experiences and opinions on the various healthcare and social services in Wirral. In this part of the report we describe the feedback from the service users provided on our Feedback Centre platform. Over the three months from November 2023 to February 2024, a total of 101 reviews were received. It's key to recognise that while sample sizes may vary, the essence lies in the valuable content shared by the public. The content is the central point of our analysis, highlighting the importance of the feedback itself rather than the quantity.

It's worth noting that the data presented in this report comes from service users who actively engaged with the Feedback Centre during this period. It is important to acknowledge that the number of reviews might be influenced by providers advocating for the Feedback Centre and encouraging their service users to share their experiences.

Service users provided feedback on communication from their healthcare providers. 54% of the respondents were happy about the communication with their health professional providing a rating of 'Very Good', 12% mentioned the communication with their healthcare provider was 'Good', 7% provided 'Neutral' feedback in relation to the communication from their health professional, 16% rated it as 'Bad', and 11% of the public were unhappy about their communication with their health professional rating the communication as 'Very Bad' (refer to Graph 1).

These findings highlight the importance of effective communication between healthcare providers and service users, emphasising the need for constant improvements in communication to ensure delivery of good health care.

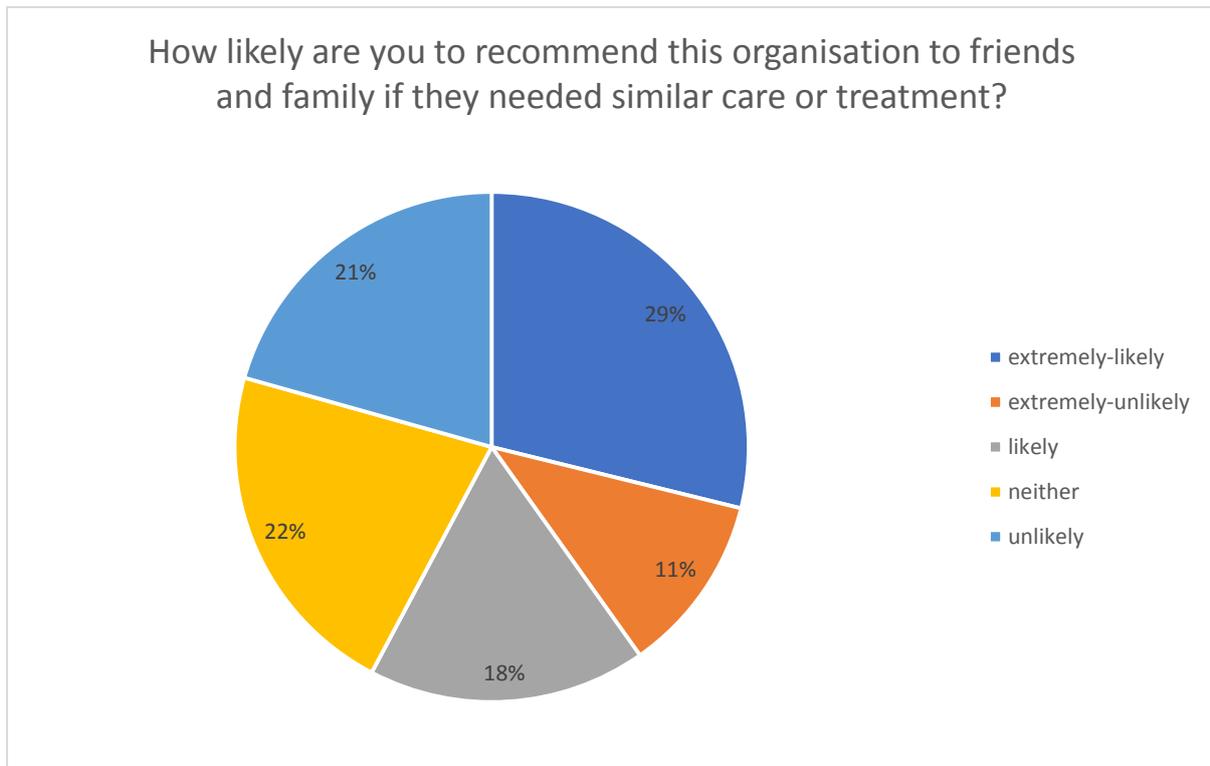
Graph 1: Public Satisfaction with Communication with Service Provider



From the services that received public feedback, a majority of people expressed satisfaction with the service. A significant portion, 29%, were extremely likely to recommend the service to friends or family in need of similar care. However, it's important to note that 11% of the public expressed being extremely unlikely to recommend the same service to their family and friends.

For more detailed information, please refer to the chart below (Graph 2).

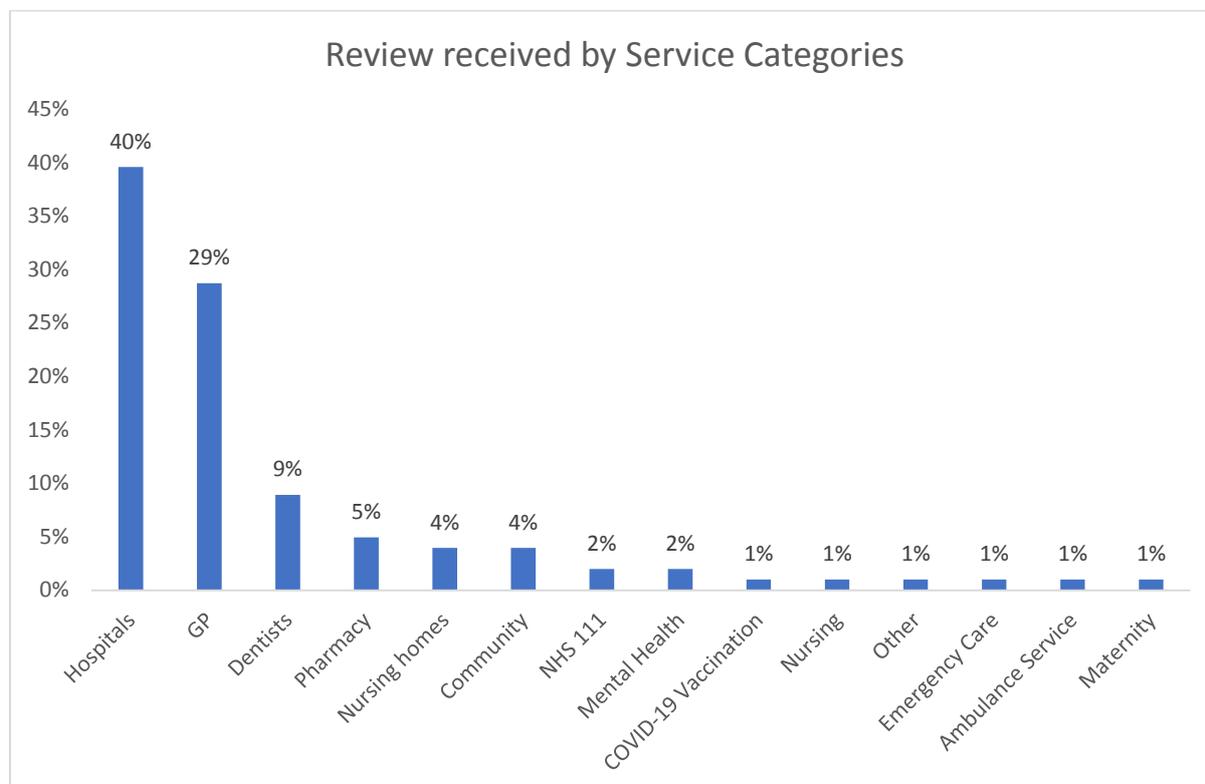
Graph 2: Percentage of public opinion in recommending the service to family or friends



Moreover, the public has offered feedback regarding various service providers.

The graph below (Graph 3) illustrates the distribution of a diverse range of healthcare and social services that service users engaged with during this period. The substantial percentage of reviews for hospitals and GP services underscores their significance in the community.

Graph 3: Distribution of Feedback received per Service Category



There was positive feedback received during this period, including:

Hospital

- Arrived before appointment time and was seen early. all went smoothly and professionally. Excellent service.
- I would like to express my sincere thanks for the care given to my husband and the rest of the family while he was in hospital. From domestic and nursing staff through to top medical specialists, they could not have been more caring or supportive.
- I was very happy with my experience during my recent appointment at the Ultrasound Department at Clatterbridge - staff were very pleasant and efficient. All in all, very good indeed.

Pharmacy

- Wanted to ask some advice about a skin complaint, the staff member was very helpful.

Healthwatch Wirral

- I want to express my thanks for such an enjoyable informative training session. It was interactive, engaging and I learnt so much. The training session felt safe and everybody got involved which was so lovely to see.

GP

- My visit for my covid booster jab went as well as can be expected. I have a phobia about injections, but the staff made me feel at ease and the person who administered the jab made it painless. Parking is easy.
- Attended Dr with a joint problem, they ended up giving me a full MOT, excellent care, Dr takes time to listen.
- Wanted some advice about an upcoming bone density scan so rang to ask my questions. The person I spoke to was very helpful and found out the info that I needed.

Care Home

- I am a resident and overall I like living here.

Dentist

- Following an initial visit, for an emergency extraction, I attended for a clean, done by S. S is very professional yet friendly and reassuring.

Some service providers received less favourable feedback from the public regarding the services they provided. Please refer to bullet points below: -

Hospital

- Tried to phone to rearrange appointment was passed to several depts and then cut off 3 times, resulting in a DNA which was not correct.
- Waited 13.5 hours in A & E with only one co-codamol given.

GP

- Rang for my very young son who has asthma and was struggling to breathe, I was told by surgery there were no appointments and to call an ambulance if I thought necessary. I did this and was told there was a 4-hour wait.
- I felt that I had been spoken to disrespectfully by the GP concerned. When I expressed my feelings, the Doctor continued to talk to me in a

disrespectful way. I raised this with Healthwatch who advised me to contact PALS. PALS told me to contact Healthwatch to make a complaint.

- Serious difficulty accessing support and advice for my husband's sudden hip deterioration, reduced mobility and loss of stability and strength in his leg. We used PATCHS to access help as it is very difficult to get through on the phone or to access an appointment.
- Lengthy waits in urgent care centre. I've also noticed the GP doesn't know us or follow-up. My daughter had a chest x-ray and bloods and I've had to push to be seen again to discuss the results. Ideally the GP should have been able to book a follow-up appt.
- I've been asking for mental health support for months now to be told the same; 'there's nothing we can do for you' or just 'wait for therapy'. My mental health is currently debilitating and I'm unable to work, eat, shower or even get out of bed most days.
- A scan had been arranged by my GP for a very old injury - I was annoyed that this had been made without my knowledge.
- At my GP's practice, first of all you have to have a telephone consultation, if they have any available. Eventually, if you get one, the GP then decides if you need a face-to-face appointment. If so, an appointment is made for you but usually with another GP.
- Patients are being pushed towards the new digital systems even when they have serious sensory / age limitations severe anxiety and depression.
- In excruciating pain and still waiting for Rheumatology appointment that was requested by my doctor in June 2023.
- GP appointments are virtually impossible to get. This means lengthy waits in urgent care centres. I've also noticed the GP doesn't know us.
- GP practice does not seem to contact and make an effort to keep the care for elderly people. My client relationship has broken-down and they now do not want to go to the doctor anymore regarding their health issues.

Dentist

- Called few times the last two years and they never have spaces for new patients.
- I have been trying this dentist for my family in the last years and there are never spaces for NHS patients. Our family needs now urgent care and nothing is available in the community ,and GP practice cannot advise. Where should we get this information from?

Community Nursing

- The nurses are ok but the office staff coordinating the nurses were rude and unhelpful and discriminatory to disabled.

Covid Vaccination

- I had Moderna earlier in the year and had a reaction which raised my heart rate and other issues. I raised this with my GP and was ignored and given Moderna again, and when the same thing happened I was told to ring a company abroad but I couldn't get through.

Mental Health

- When I eventually got through (to the Crisis Line) I felt like the person I was speaking with was talking to me from a script, didn't feel they understood or got what I was trying to say.
- I had a mental health nurse come to my house I received the report she has wrote today and she has told so many lies missed out major important things I told her about my trauma and just feel really let down when it has took so much for me to finally see someone.

GP PALS

- I was referred to PALS by Healthwatch Wirral - I tried 10 times and couldn't get through - kept going to answerphone. I went back to Healthwatch who helped - my GP called me back.

Walk In Centre

- arrived at 2pm waited until 5.30 when a senior nurse came into waiting room and asked any non-urgent cases to leave as the walk in was over capacity and patients who had not already been triaged would not be seen.

NHS 111

- Called 111 at 12:30pm re elderly Mum - was told to expect a call back shortly, 2 hours before a call back came.

Ambulance

- Chest pain, needed an ambulance for my partner. I was asked if I was able to get them to hospital myself which I couldn't. Ambulance didn't arrive for 3 hours so I asked a neighbour who took us to Arrowe Park.

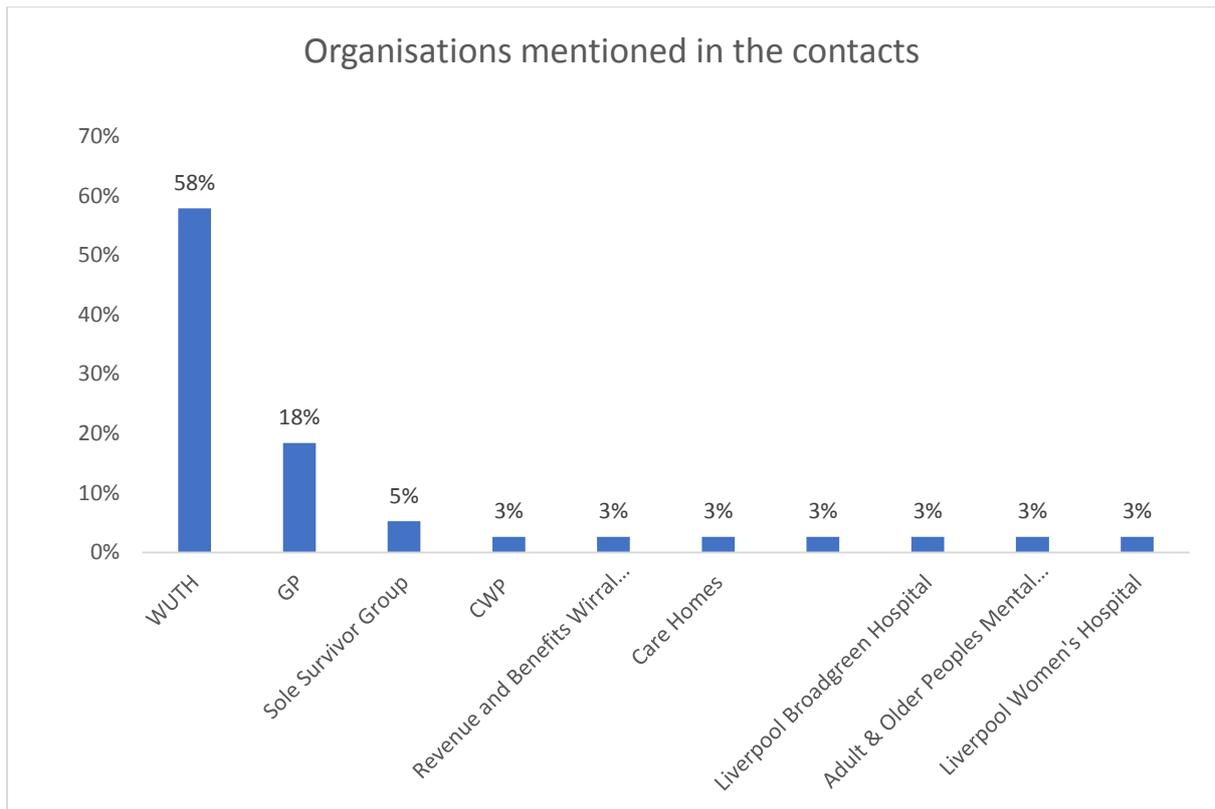
Phone calls, emails and face-to-face conversations

This section provides information regarding more detailed interactions, where members of the public made contact with Healthwatch for support between November 2023 to February 2024, comprising a total of 90 interactions. It is important to note that phone, emails and face-to-face interactions are sometimes complex in nature and difficult to resolve. The analysis aims to pinpoint the primary reasons for service users' contacts, helping us identify areas for improvement in aligning services with community needs.

Among the organisations mentioned by service users, WUTH accounted for 58% of contacts. GP practices followed with 19%. Other organisations mentioned include Sole Survivor Group (5%), Adult and Older People's Community Mental Health Teams (3%), Revenue and Benefits Wirral Council (3%), Care Homes (3%), CWP (3%), Wirral Council Adult Social Services (3%), Liverpool Broadgreen Hospital (3%), and Liverpool Women's Hospital (3%) (see Graph 4).

Service users mainly reached out to us for support with complaints, communication challenges between health providers and patients, assistance in contacting PALS, information about medical appointments, and concerns about the ADHD medication shortage, the full breakdown of the reasons for contact can be seen in graph 5 on page 13.

Graph 4: Distribution of Organisation mentioned in the contacts made with Healthwatch Wirral



Listed below are some of the reasons why service users have contacted Healthwatch:

1. Complaint Information and Self-Help Information Pack

Service users contact Healthwatch Wirral for more information on how to file a complaint. Healthwatch Wirral provides information and complaint packs to guide people through the process of raising a complaint. Healthwatch Wirral can also offer independent advice/support (which includes accompanying the person to meetings).

2. Communication Problems Patient-Health Provider

Service users have contacted us reporting breakdowns in communication between patients and healthcare providers leading to misunderstandings or delays in care.

3. Support contacting WUTH Patient Experience Team

Individuals seeking assistance in reaching out to Wirral University Teaching Hospital's Patient Experience Service regarding concerns they have with appointments and their (or a family members) care.

4. Calling for Information about Appointments

Service users call Healthwatch Wirral to have more information about upcoming appointments, some service users expressed frustration with the difficulty in obtaining information about upcoming healthcare appointments.

5. ADHD Medication Shortage

Service users reported challenges in obtaining ADHD medications due to a shortage in the local pharmacy.

6. Information or Contact Provided

Individuals asking Healthwatch Wirral for details or contact information about healthcare or social services.

7. Sourcing support to contact a service provider on behalf of the person.

Service users have contacted us seeking support to communicate with their GP on their behalf.

8. Support with Complaints

Service users have received support from Healthwatch Wirral in the process of submitting a formal complaint.

9. Raising a Complaint with NHS

Service users expressing challenges when attempting to raise a complaint directly with the National Health Service (NHS).

10. Support contacting PALS & WUTH Patient Experience Team

Individuals sought assistance from Healthwatch Wirral in reaching out to their GP Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and WUTH Patient Experience Team.

11. Issues with Communication about Appointment Time and Date

Service users facing problems due to unclear communication regarding appointment schedules.

12. Poor Mental Health Care Services

Service users have reported being unsatisfied with the quality of mental health care services provided.

13. Learning Disability Support

Service users have reported not having the required support related to learning disabilities at WUTH.

14. Waiting for Appointments

Service users expressed concerns and frustrations while waiting for medical appointments to be arranged.

15. Obstacles for Carers

Individuals acting as caregivers face challenges in coordinating and accessing healthcare services for their dependents.

16. Dental Care Issues

Service users reporting difficulties accessing dental care services.

17. Medication Challenges - Pharmacy

Service users have reported challenges in obtaining prescribed medications from local pharmacies.

18. Communication Issues with Care Home

Service users and families have reported to Healthwatch Wirral communication challenges between healthcare providers and the Care homes affecting the quality of care.

19. Negative Experience at A&E

Service users expressing dissatisfaction or negative experiences with Accident & Emergency (A&E) services.

20. Waiting for Test Results

Service users reported waiting too long for the results of medical tests experiencing anxiety.

21. Difficulties Accessing Mental Health Services

Reports of challenges faced by service users in accessing mental health services.

22. Dementia

Service users or their families expressing concerns or seeking support related to dementia care.

23. Issues Nursing Home

Reports of challenges or concerns related to the quality of care in nursing homes.

24. Waiting for Surgery

Service users expressing concerns due to waiting longer for surgical procedures.

25. Difficulties with GP Appointments

Reports of challenges in securing and accessing appointments with General Practitioners (GPs).

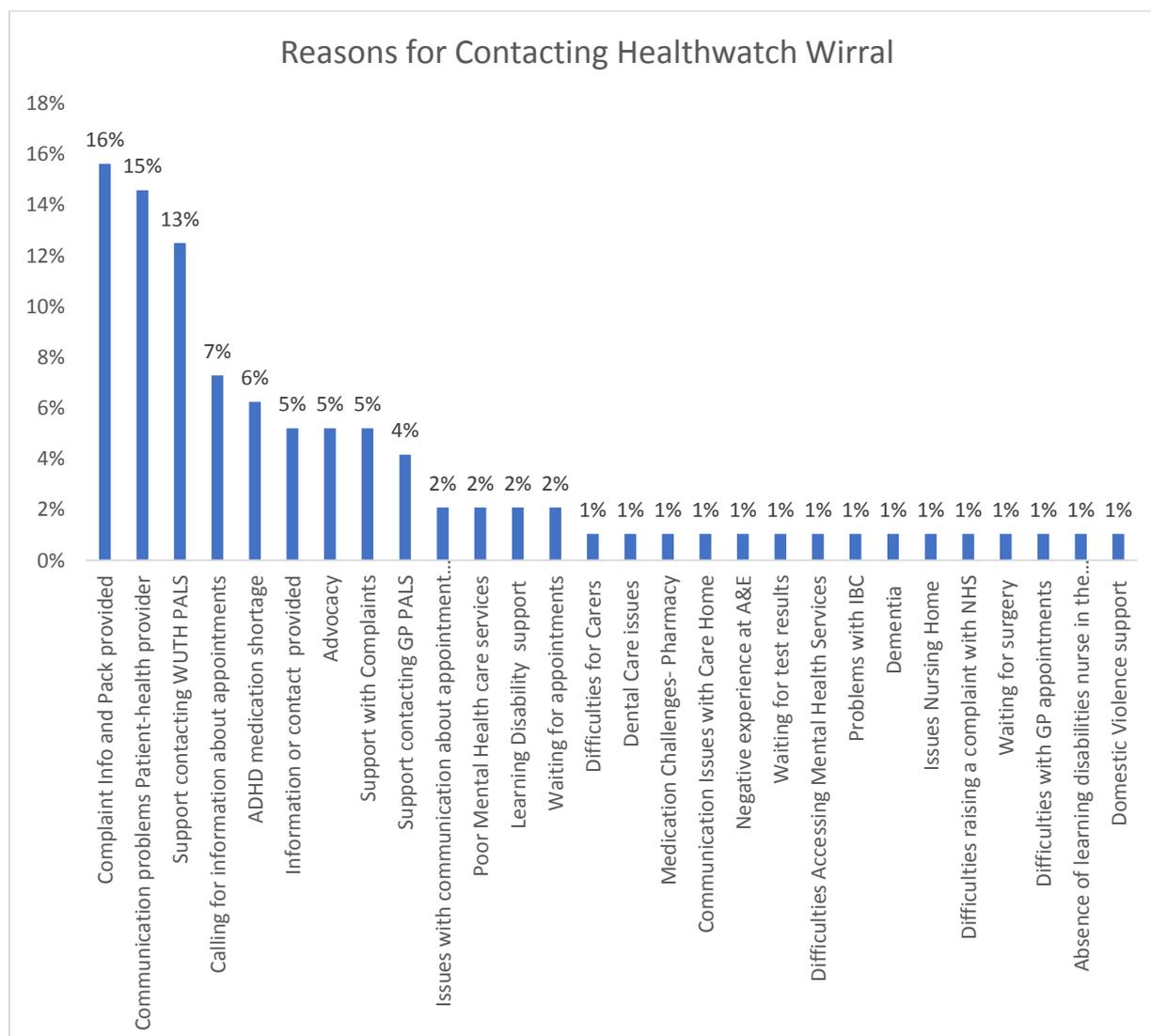
26. Absence of Learning Disabilities Nurse in the Hospital

Service users noting the absence of dedicated learning disabilities nursing support within WUTH

27. Domestic Violence Support

Individuals seeking support related to domestic violence and its impact on health and well-being.

Graph 5: Reasons for Contacting Healthwatch Wirral

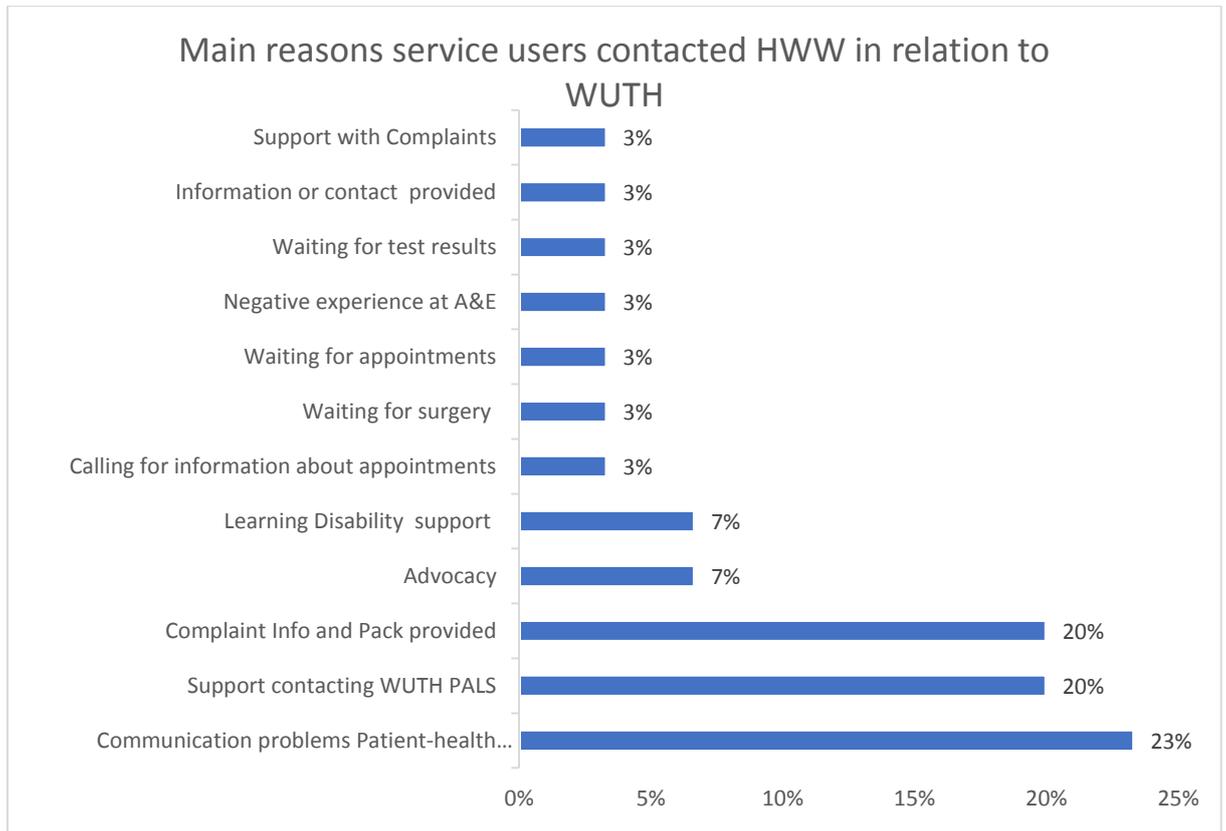


Service users have reached out to Healthwatch Wirral regarding WUTH primarily due to various reasons, with the most common being communication issues between patients and healthcare providers (23%).

Other notable reasons include seeking information and self-help packs for lodging complaints (20%), assistance in contacting WUTH PALS (20%), advocacy needs (7%), support for learning disabilities (7%), inquiries about appointments (3%), provision of information or contacts (3%), sharing negative experiences at A&E (3%), expressing concerns about waiting times for appointments (3%), test results, and surgeries (3%), and seeking support with formal complaints (3%).

(see Graph 6 below). This diverse range of concerns highlights the multifaceted nature of service users' interactions with Healthwatch Wirral in relation to WUTH.

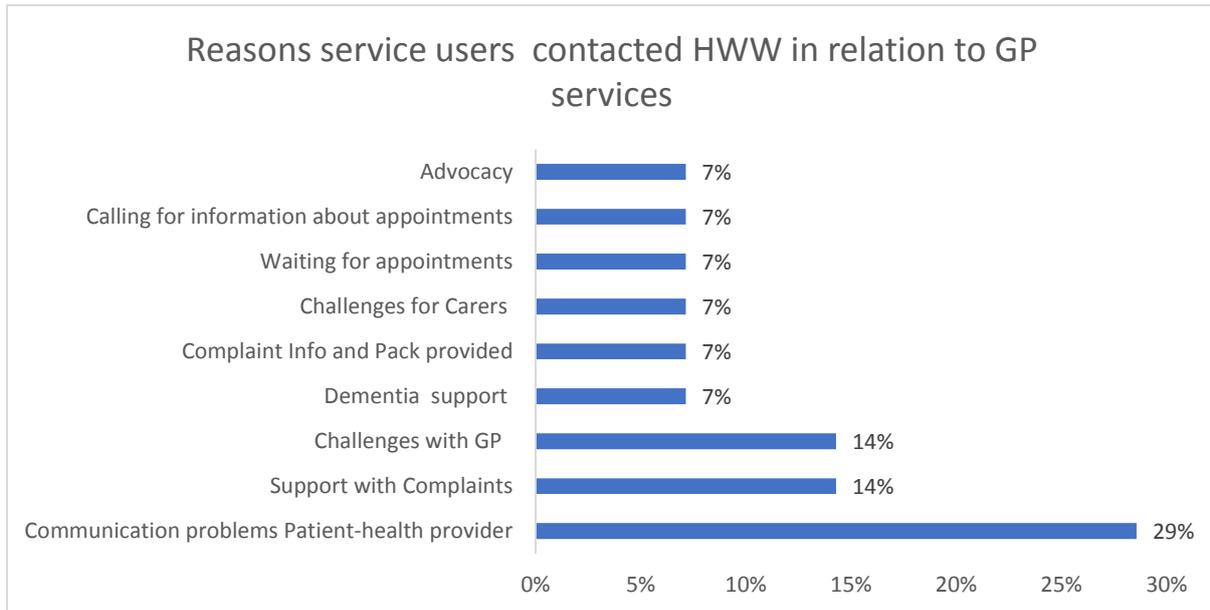
Graph 6: Main reasons for public contact with Healthwatch Wirral about WUTH



Other Services that received a substantial number of contacts into HWW was GP practices. This information provides valuable insights into the concerns and experiences of individuals, highlighting areas that may require attention or improvement.

The primary reasons for service users to contact Healthwatch Wirral about GP practices include communication problems between patients and healthcare providers (29%), seeking support with complaints (14%), facing challenges with GP services (14%), requiring dementia support (7%), obtaining information and packs for lodging complaints (7%), experiencing difficulties for caregivers (7%), expressing concerns about waiting times for appointments (7%), inquiring about appointments (7%), and seeking advocacy type support (7%) (see graph 7 below). This breakdown sheds light on the key issues and needs identified by service users in their interactions with GP practices.

Graph 7: Reasons for Public contact with Healthwatch Wirral about GP services



Conclusion

The report highlights significant feedback about Wirral University Teaching Hospital (WUTH) and GP practices, comprising 78% of all contacts. Primary concerns include communication breakdowns, appointment-related challenges, and advocacy-type needs. WUTH accounted for 59% of interactions, with GP practices at 19%. The findings underscore the importance of addressing communication gaps, optimising appointment processes, and enhancing advocacy services to better meet community needs. In conclusion, the report offers valuable insights for social care and healthcare providers to address concerns, enhance services, and ensure effective communication and accessibility.

CLOSER FOCUS BY HEALTHWATCH WIRRAL TO SUPPORT OUR LOCAL SYSTEM:

1. **GP ENHANCED ACCESS & RECOVERY PLANS** We are currently producing a final report for the Place Lead for Transformation & Partnerships which includes making recommendations based upon public feedback, meetings with Primary Care Network Leads and GP Practice Reception staff.

As part of this work, we have also carried out Enter & View visits and bespoke Bronze, Silver & Gold Care Navigation Training, also we are helping to raise the profile of the GP Enhanced Access offer and Recovery Plan through public engagement and our outreach work. via our Lived Experience Lead.

Final report published March, 2024.

2. **ENTER & VIEW** We have carried out E&V visits in the last few months to all Primary Care delivery sites. During these visits we observe health & social care environments, speak to staff about challenges and listen to patients & their families regarding any compliments or concerns.
3. **CARE NAVIGATION TRAINING** (Bronze, Silver & Gold levels) for Brighter Birkenhead and Meols & Moreton PCNs. As part of our work to improve patient flow, and ensure people receive the right care when they need it, we have developed a unique, award-winning training package to support care navigators and anyone working with the public in a health setting. The training is designed to provide delegates with knowledge and skills to help improve patient's navigation of various healthcare options as soon as they contact a Practice. The training, delivered by our Business Development & Volunteer Manager, has the Health Education England's Care Navigation Competency Framework at its heart is ideal for anyone working in General Practice especially reception staff, non-clinical staff and care navigators involved in triaging patients to the correct healthcare professional or service for the patient.
5. **WIRRAL CARERS FORUM** Healthwatch Wirral has been working closely with organisations and the community to raise awareness around carers support and highlighting carer's voices. We are presently working with The Positivitree, WIRED and other partners to help identify Carer representatives to ensure lived experiences are helping to influence positive change. In December we hosted a Christmas Fayre for Carers who look after an adult. We had a great turn out by partners from across Wirral. The Mayor and Mayoress joined to support.

This year we have begun developing a new Wirral Carers Forum. We are recruiting volunteer Carer Representatives who have past or current caring responsibilities for an adult. These volunteers will receive training and support from Healthwatch to provide representation at the Council's Carers Partnership Board (bi-monthly) and feeding back to the Carers Forum (bi-monthly) regarding issues raised about Health or Social Care relating to carers or the person they care for. This provides an opportunity for carers to have input at decision-making level and feedback their experiences, views and opinions. This will help with the development of future carer services. Healthwatch are keen for there to be diverse representation of carers.

Please contact us for further information.

- 6. BRIDGE FORUM** This monthly Forum is well attended by front line staff such as Community Connectors and Social Prescribers and also Patient Participation Group representatives (PPGs) and offers opportunities for the sharing of information.

BRIDGE Forum Notes –

[BRIDGE Forum Notes – January 2024 | Healthwatch Wirral](#)

- 7. FEEDBACK CENTRE** It is free and easy for the public to use and provides data in real time identifying successes and highlighting potential areas of concern. Our Feedback Centre can be found here: [Have Your Say | Healthwatch Wirral](#) Please promote the Feedback Centre to families, friends & colleagues.
- 8. HEALTHWATCH WIRRAL INDEPENDENT NHS COMPLAINTS ADVOCACY** service currently has an active caseload of 30 Tier 2 complaints. Complaints are varied and are becoming increasingly complex in relation to general NHS provision, primary care and mental health.
- 9. PATHWAY ZERO AND WELLBEING CALLS** We are continuing to contact patients recently discharged from hospital. The reduction in A&E attendances and the increase in quality patient discharge continue to be key factors and requirements for the health and care system for Wirral, and Cheshire & Merseyside.
- 10. HIGH INTENSITY USERS** Discussions are in place with the Lead for Transformation & Partnerships at Place for supporting patients who are deemed as 'High Intensity Users' of Urgent care.
- 11. ADHD MEDICATION SHORTAGES IN WIRRAL** ADHD medication has been out of stock for many since the NHS issued a Patient Safety Alert on the 27th of September 2023. Healthwatch Wirral were contacted by residents and organisations in relation to the impact this is having on them. We worked closely with Sole Survivor PTSD Support CIC to understand more about people's experiences and the challenges. Sole Survivor facilitate ADHD Peer Support Groups in the community on a weekly basis.

What we did

Healthwatch liaised with Wirral Medicines Management and local Mental Health Leaders to highlight concerns, seek assurances, and request the latest advice. Local guidance, developed by CWP has been issued to primary care and this is being used here on Wirral to support patients.

<https://www.sps.nhs.uk/articles/prescribing-available-medicines-to-treat-adhd/>

Healthwatch Wirral are continuing to speak with commissioners and senior leaders to try to ensure that everything possible is being done to support the issue.

Many thanks to Matt Shepley & Sole Survivor and members for sharing personal & important experiences. <https://ptsdsupport.co.uk/>

12. EXPERIENCES OF PTSD AND ADHD SUPPORT ON WIRRAL The purpose of this short report is to provide a unique snapshot of how people who access Sole Survivor PTSD Support CIC Peer Support Groups feel around access to services, quality of care and treatment in relation to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) & Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD); Through sharing real lived experiences, perspectives and perceived barriers to clinical support.

[Experiences of PTSD and ADHD support on Wirral | Healthwatch Wirral](#)

13. E-BULLETIN We have over 400 subscribers (individuals & organisations) receiving our monthly bulletin and almost 2,000 following our social media accounts. info@healthwatchwirral.co.uk