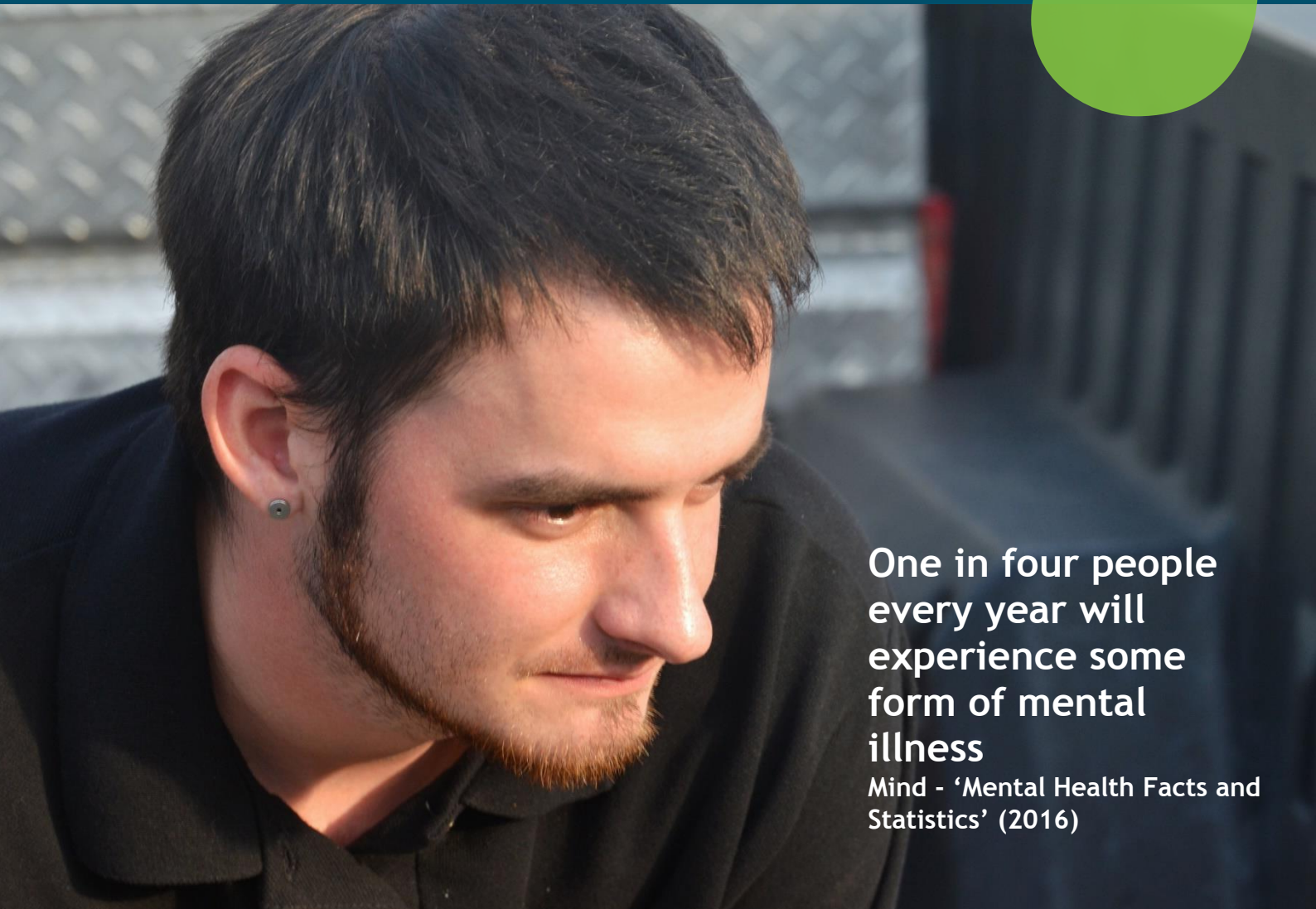


Report on Mental Health Services



**One in four people
every year will
experience some
form of mental
illness**

Mind - 'Mental Health Facts and
Statistics' (2016)



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We would like to thank the following for their contribution:

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1. Introduction

What is Healthwatch?

Local Healthwatch have been set up across England to create a strong, independent consumer champion whose aim is to:

- **Strengthen the collective voice of citizens and communities in influencing local health and social care services in order to better meet their needs and**
- **Enable people to find the right health and social care services for them by providing appropriate information, advice and signposting.**

Healthwatch Sunderland works with local people, patients, service users, carers, community groups, organisations, service providers and commissioners to get the best out of local health and social care services.

Background and rationale

In July 2016 Healthwatch Sunderland held a consultation to find out what health and social care priorities local people would like us to consider for our future work plan. Over 200 people took part and voted for ‘mental health provision in Sunderland’ as the number one priority.

At a national level the quality of mental health services across the country has also been highlighted by the Department of Health and Healthwatch England as a top priority.

Each year Healthwatch England ask local Healthwatch organisations to tell them what matters most to the local people in their area regarding health and social care. In 2016 it was mental health that came out on top, with 77 of 152 local Healthwatch identifying it as a priority.

Further to identifying mental health as a priority, Healthwatch England also asked local Healthwatch to inform them of any issues the public have brought to their attention regarding mental health treatment. Some of the problems identified included:



-
- General Practitioners (GPs) not being proactive in the treatment of mental health issues
 - A large variability in the levels of training and understanding of mental health problems amongst GPs
 - The views and concerns of carers not being taken fully into consideration. (Healthwatch England's briefing, Mental Health: the public's number one issue for 2016 (February 2016)).

On a local level Northumberland Tyne and Wear Foundation Trust (NTW), provider of mental health and disability services, has been rated as 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission (CQC).





2. Methodology

During the period October 2016 - January 2017, a series of activities were carried out by the Healthwatch Sunderland Engagement Team and volunteers with the aim of gathering current patient (adults aged 18+), carers and staff views on NHS funded mental health provision.

A variety of mechanisms were used to help increase both the reliability and validity of the data. This included online and hard copy surveys, which were promoted and distributed via websites and social media:

- Healthwatch Sunderland's e-newsletter - distributed to approximately 800 members and stakeholders
- Healthwatch Sunderland website: www.healthwatchesunderland.com
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/HWSunderland
- Twitter -550+ followers with reach of 75,000+ @HWSunderland
- Across other partners and stakeholders including; Health & Wellbeing Network, Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust, Public Health, GP Practices, Patient Participation Groups, local schools, Sunderland Care & Support, local Voluntary and Community sector organisations, Job Centre Plus etc.

In addition, we worked in partnership with the Sunderland voluntary and community sector to access service user groups where we supported the completion of surveys either on a one to one or group basis. These groups included, Sunderland Mind, Washington Mind, Headlight Sunderland, Autism In Mind (AIM), Sunderland Carers Centre, The Essence Service, Mental Health Matters, Sunderland Recovery College, The Parker Trust, Centre Point, Washington Support Group for Men and various NTW supported groups and activities.

The survey questions specifically looked at five service areas involved in mental health services available in Sunderland. These included GPs, Community Mental Health Teams, The Initial Response Team (Crisis Team) and In-Patient Services.

Under each of the services, respondents were asked which areas they would like to see improvements in and were given multiple choice answers. They were given the option to tick more than one answer in each section, (See appendices for survey).

Throughout the survey respondents also had the opportunity to leave comments in catch all comments boxes after each of the 5 main sections.



The response rate for the engagement work carried out was:

111 Service Users

51 Workers or carers





3. Summary

The quality of mental health services across the country has been highlighted by both Healthwatch England and the Department of Health as a top priority.

Feedback Healthwatch Sunderland collected from residents of Sunderland also reflected the importance of the subject matter as when asked they also ranked it as their top priority.

With these concerns in mind Healthwatch Sunderland wished to examine the quality of NHS provided mental health services in Sunderland.

To do this we worked in partnership with local voluntary sector organisations and NTW staff including Occupational Therapist and Support Workers to engage with service users of mental health provision, workers in the field and carers.

We spoke to a wide variety of people who were using mental health services and/or their carers and relevant staff.

We came across many areas of good practice and praise for treatment from Psychologists and CPN's, mental health support workers and the Initial Response Team.

The voluntary sector was also highly praised for all the services and support they provide to service users.

However, we also came across some areas where improvements need to be made. Some of the areas identified included;

- the variability in both the quality of treatment available and understanding of mental health issues amongst practitioners
- the difficulty in accessing services due to lack of knowledge and waiting times.

Based on our findings, we have made four recommendations:

Recommendation One - CCG, Washington Mind and Healthwatch Sunderland to further promote and raise awareness of the www.wellbeinginfo.org website by targeting available mechanisms such as Time in Time Out (TITO) CCG training which is available to GPs and practice staff.

Recommendation Two - CCG and Healthwatch Sunderland to further promote the available self-referral pathways into support services for mental health.

Recommendation Three -Sunderland Voluntary and Community Sector should have representation on strategic boards such as the Health & Wellbeing board.



Recommendation Four - NTW / NHS need to consider how to improve the delivery of a consistent service.

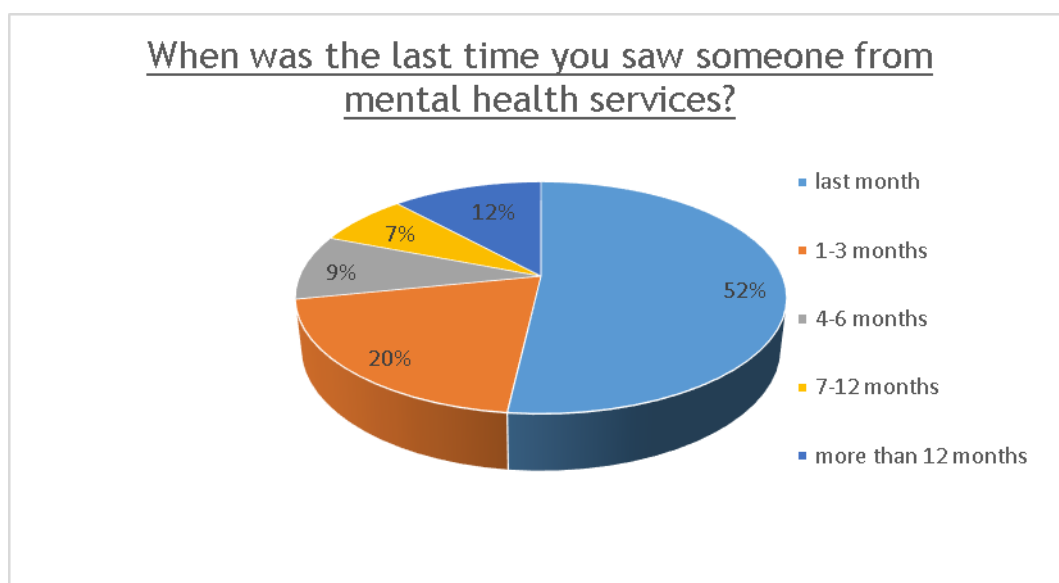




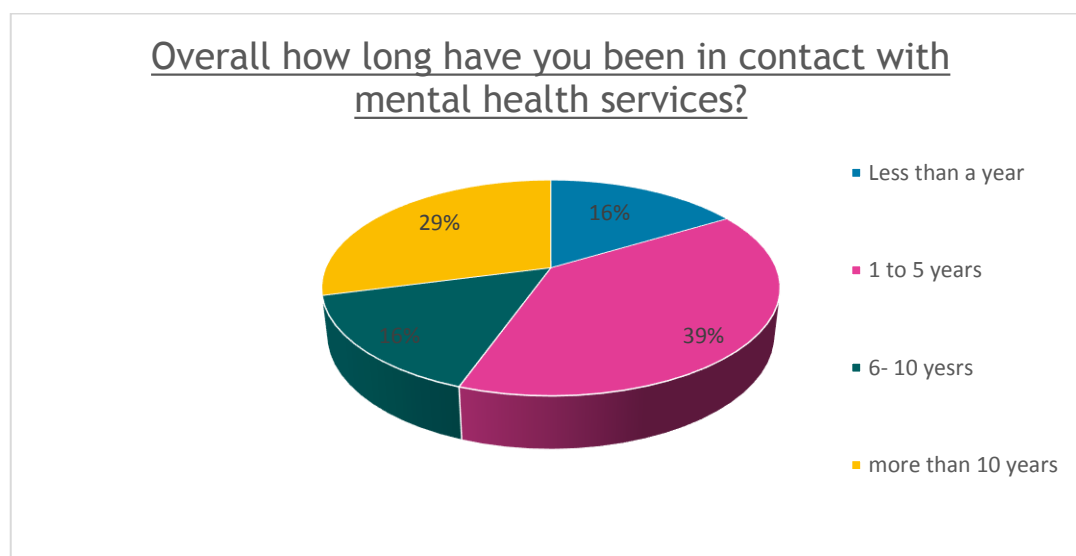
4. Findings

Contact with mental health services

The opening question on the service user survey helped to establish their contact with mental health services. The findings showed that a high proportion 57 (52%) of people have had contact with someone from mental health services in the last month.



Next it looked at the overall length of time the service users had been in contact with mental health services. As seen from the graph below 39% of respondents have been in contact with mental health services for 10 years or more.



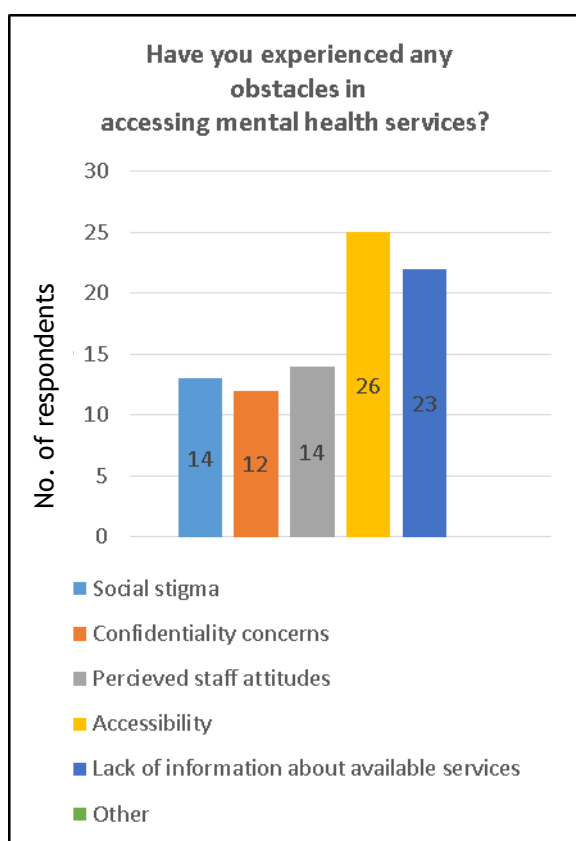


Perceived access to mental health services

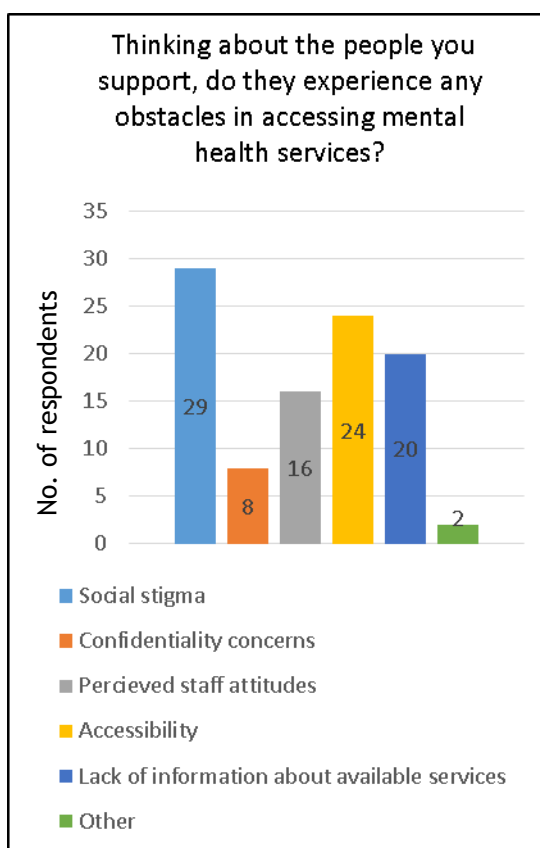
When questioned about perceived access, the results showed 61% of service users hadn't experienced any obstacles accessing mental health services. Of the remaining 39%, the most frequently reported obstacles were accessibility (74%) and lack of information about available mental health services (66%).

When asking the same question to workers or carers 91% ranked social stigma as the main obstacle followed by accessibility (75%), see graphs below.

Service Users



Workers and Carers





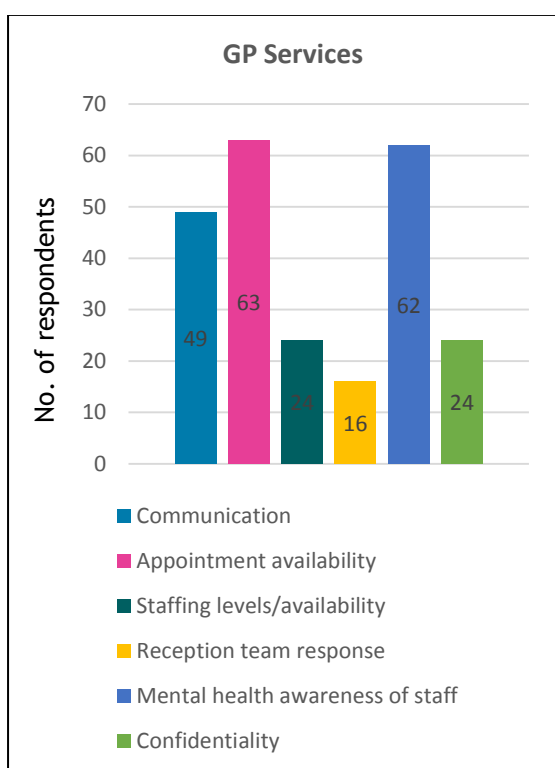
Areas for improvement

- **GP Services**

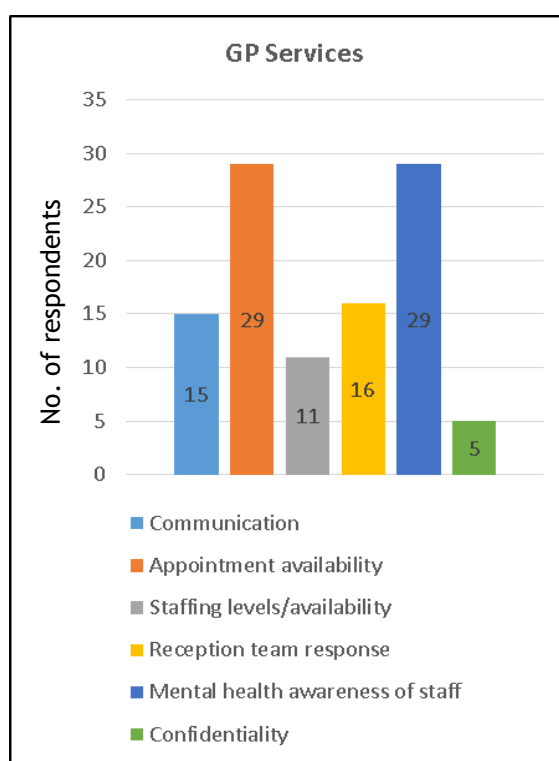
90% of service user respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see in GP services. 57% of these service users indicated they would like to see improvements in appointment availability, closely followed by mental health awareness of staff (56%).

94% of workers and carers respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see in GP services. They also ranked appointment availability and mental health awareness of staff as their top two areas for improvement both at 56%.

Service Users



Workers and Carers



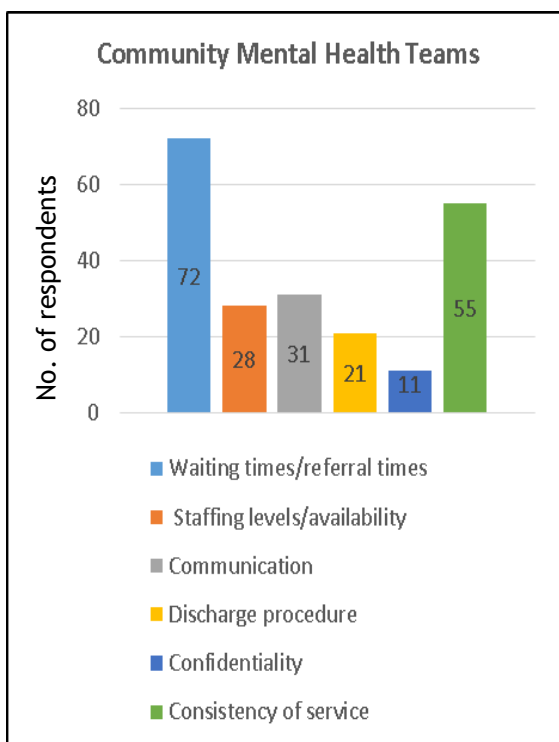


- **Community Mental Health Services**

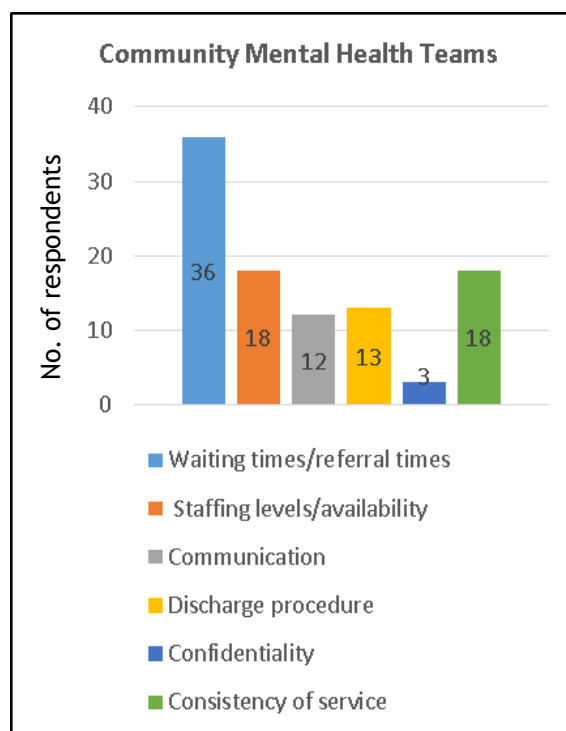
78% of service user respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see in Community Mental Health Services. They stated the top 2 areas they would like improvements in when it comes to Community Mental Health Teams were waiting/referral times (83%) followed by consistency of services at 63%.

94% of workers and carers respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see in Community Mental Health Services. Their responses recorded waiting times/referral times at 75% and consistency of service at 38%.

Service Users



Workers and Carers



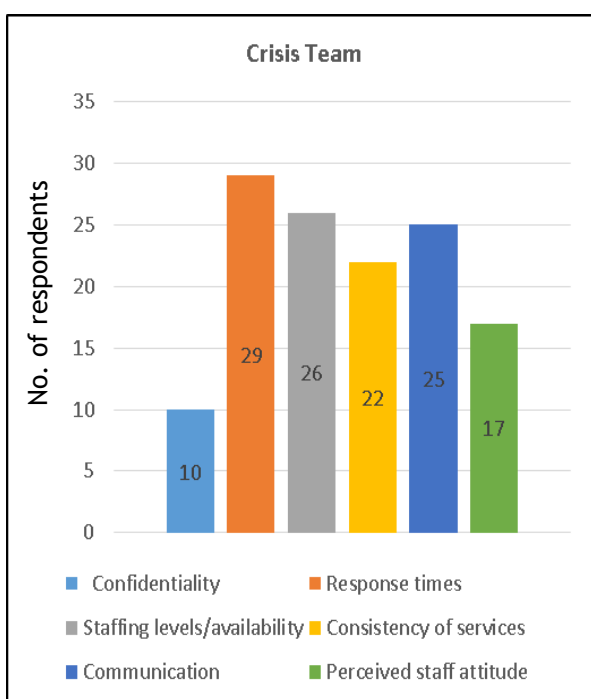


- **Initial Response Team / Crisis Team**

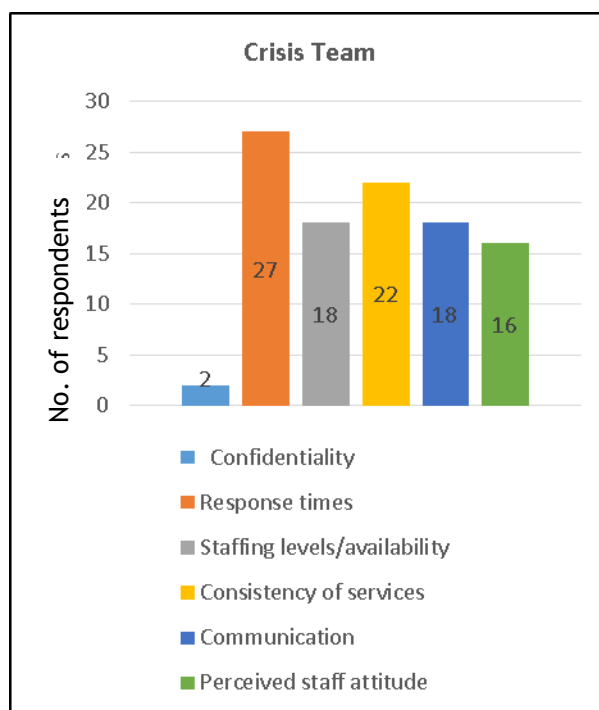
55% of service user respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see in the Initial Response Team / Crisis Team. 48% indicated they would like to see improvements in response times, 43% would like improvements in staffing levels/availability and 41% in communication.

75% of workers and carers respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see in the Initial Response Team / Crisis Team. 71% also rated response time as the main area they would like to see improvements followed by 58% indicating they would like to see improved consistency of services.

Service Users



Workers and Carers



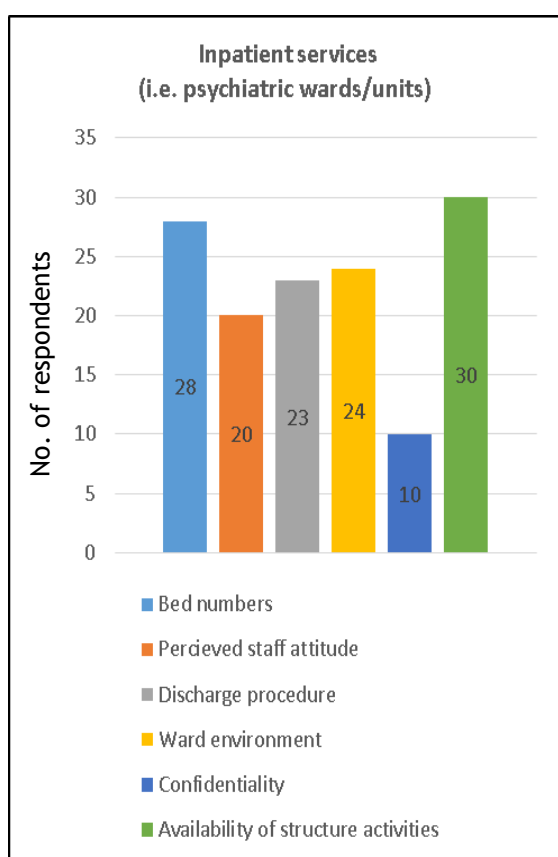


- **Inpatient services**

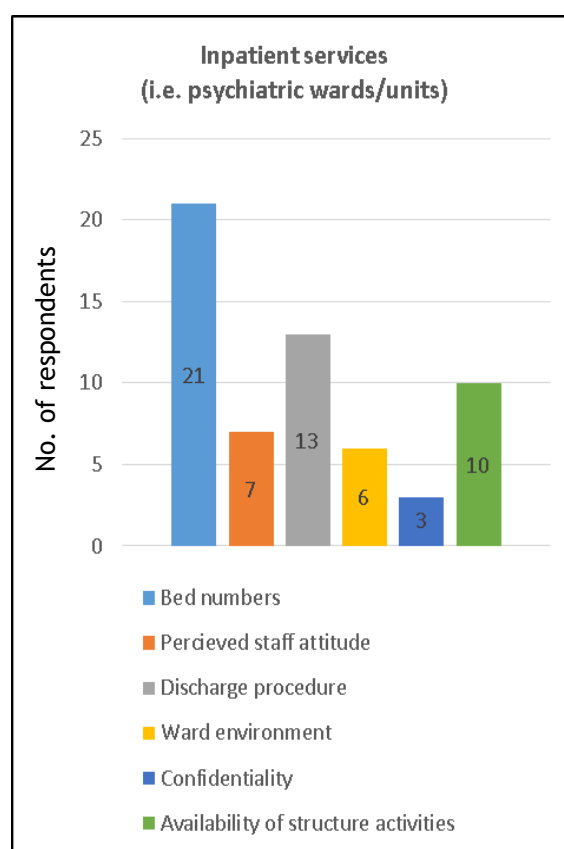
50% of service user respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see in inpatient services. 51% of these respondents indicated what improvement they would like to see at inpatient services. From those 54% would like to see improvement in structured activities and 50% improved bed numbers.

63% of workers and carers respondents indicated what improvements they would like to see in inpatient services. From those 66% would like to see improved bed numbers and 41% improved discharge procedure.

Service Users



Workers and carers





5. Emerging Themes

Positive feedback

The data highlighted some positive experiences respondents shared and included praise for:

● CPN's and Psychologists

'I'm on correct medications now thanks to CPN and Psychiatrist'

'CPN is amazing'

● Initial Response Team / Crisis Team

'The crisis team doctor was fantastic'

'Crisis Team - excellent in all aspects'

● Occupational Therapists and other Mental Health Support Workers

'OTs are great - commitment, kindness, trust etc.'

Although not specifically asked it was apparent the Voluntary and Community Sector provide valued support to many of the service users also accessing NHS funded services, feedback included:

'The care I have received from Sunderland Mind, generally has been exceptional'

'I attend Washington Mind's Arts and Crafts - this has really helped me. Unfortunately not everyone knows about it and I think there should be more information given about this service.'

However we also came across areas in NHS provision where improvements needed to be made, many of which matched those identified by Healthwatch England and Public Health. The emerging themes in areas for improvement are given below.

Areas of improvement

Waiting times / accessing services

Much of the qualitative and quantitative results feedback from service users, workers and carers expressed their concerns around the long waiting times to access various levels of mental health services including GP appointments, CPNs, counselling and psychiatrists.

"To be told you are seriously ill and you need treatment, to then be told there is an 18 month waiting list." (service user)

"Access to treatment - there is currently a lengthy wait due to referral availability" (worker)

"Crisis Team accessibility and services as a whole are extremely difficult to access or gain help or assistance from." (service user)



Mental Health Awareness of GPs

A number of respondents expressed concerns about their GP's knowledge of Mental Health issues. This applied to both service users, workers and carers and was the second highest ranked area for improvement from both sets of respondents.

“GPs need to know the signs of Mental Health” (service user)

“Some GPs are very poor to useless with respect to mental health issues” (worker)

Levels of support

This was specifically relating to the length and frequency available for patients to professional support.

“The availability of CPNs. There aren't enough in the community” (service user)

“Could still have some contact with CPN” (worker)

“I personally think the patient should have their CPN and support workers longer than they do, as it helped my husband enormously” (carer)

Availability of consistent support

This was an area that service users, carers and workers rated highly as requiring improvement.

Within Community Mental Health Teams 63% of service users rated this as their 2nd highest area that required improvement. With 35% of workers and carers rating it as their joint 2nd highest.

“Changes in services has, on occasion meant support has been disrupted”
(service user)

“No consistency of care” (service user)

“Some feel they are seeing different people and have to explain their circumstances over and over” (worker)

Workers and carers also responded to say that the levels of consistency was their 2nd highest area for improvement within the Initial Response Team / Crisis Team. Whereas service users only rated it as their 4th priority.

“Unable to get a response 90% of the time and no consistency” (carer)



Knowledge of available support services

When asked about obstacles when accessing services 66% of service users rated lack of information as their 2nd highest rated factor. Workers and carers rated this as their 3rd highest obstacle at 62%.

“Information about all available services was not clear in the beginning”
(service user)

“Drs could give more information of services” (service user)

“Only just learned that you can self-refer, which is excellent and would have helped our situation so much”
(carer given Healthwatch Sunderland mental health self-referral poster)

“It is important that people have choice, we often see people who do not want to access statutory provision”
(worker)





6. Conclusion & Recommendations

Recommendation One

CCG, Washington Mind and Healthwatch Sunderland to further promote and raise awareness of the www.wellbeinginfo.org website by targeting available mechanisms such as Time in Time Out (TITO) CCG training which is available to GPs and practice staff.

To help to improve issues around levels of knowledge of available support services all healthcare professionals need a better understanding of what is available from the Voluntary and Community Sector for the benefit of local people with mental ill health. This issue was ranked 2nd and 3rd highest amongst service users and carers/workers respectively as one of those areas that needs improving.

With this increased knowledge professionals including GPs could give a more holistic approach by informing those they support of opportunities for social inclusion in their community. This is especially important so individuals can maintain self-care once discharged from services. Practice staff can then share this with people presenting at the surgery as an early intervention or an enhancement to treatment.

Recommendation Two

CCG and Healthwatch Sunderland to further promote the available self-referral pathways into support services for mental health.

To help improve the potentially long waiting and referral times that individuals experience when accessing mental health services via their GP, further promotion is required of the self-referral pathways available to local individuals. From the service user's point of view 74% of individuals identified this as their number one obstacle when accessing mental health services.

Healthwatch Sunderland has designed a promotional poster that helps to clarify the available routes people suffering from mild to moderate anxiety and depression can take without making a GP appointment first.

This information has been disseminated to all Sunderland GPs, pharmacists and dentists. Self-referral will save GP appointments being accessed unnecessarily and speed the process to initial triage for service users.

(Poster can be found at: www.healthwatchsunderland.com)

Recommendation Three

Voluntary and Community Sector should have representation on strategic boards such as the Health and Wellbeing Board.

VCS are heavily involved in the delivery of many services that support and promote health and wellbeing for the local community. They should be involved at a strategic



level to reflect their involvement, share good practice and build on the highly valued work they provide. Our feedback has shown that service users are particularly reliant on voluntary sector services to aid their recovery and ongoing wellbeing and have highly praised VCS organisations.

Recommendation Four

NTW / NHS need to consider how to improve the delivery of a consistent service.

Many respondents commented that consistency of support often varied across a service and that support was often disrupted or changed with little notice given. Service users commented that this issue was their 2nd highest area for improvement in both community mental health teams and the Initial Response Team/Crisis Team.

This inconsistent style of delivery they noted has a detrimental effect on their health and consequently to their overall recovery rate.



7. Appendices

Appendix 1



Mental Health services survey

Based on feedback collated by us we have identified some key priorities that members of the public wish us to pay attention to, Mental Health services across Sunderland being one of them.

The results will be used to develop and improve current services. Your views are important to us and this is your opportunity to shape and design future services.

Completing the Survey

Completion of the survey is completely voluntary and if you choose not to take part it will not affect the care you receive from the NHS in any way. If you do not wish to take part or do not want to answer some of the questions, you do not have to give us a reason.

Your answers will be treated in complete confidence and all responses will be completely anonymous. Please do not write your name or address anywhere on this survey.

Please return to:

**Healthwatch Sunderland
Stanfield Business Centre
Addison Street
Sunderland
SR2 8SZ**



1. When was the last time you saw someone from mental health services?

This may have been a GP, psychiatrist, psychiatric nurse, social worker, mental health support worker, occupational therapist, psychologist, psychotherapist or other mental health or social care worker.

- In the last month
- 1-3 Months ago
- 4-6 Months ago
- 7-12 Months ago
- More than 12 months ago

2. Overall, how long have you been in contact with mental health services?

- Less than 1 year
- 1 to 5 years
- 6 to 10 years
- more than 10 years

3. Have you experienced any obstacles in accessing mental health services?

- No
- Yes, if so was it due to any of the following (you may tick more than one):
 - Social stigma
 - Confidentiality concerns
 - Perceived staff attitudes
 - Accessibility
 - Lack of information about available services
 - Other please state:

Comments:



4. Which areas would you like to see improvement in at the following services (you may tick more than one option):

a) GP Services

- Communication
- Appointment availability
- Staffing levels/availability
- Reception team response
- Mental health awareness of staff
- Confidentiality

b) Community Mental Health Teams

- Waiting times/referral times
- Staffing levels/availability
- Communication
- Discharge procedure
- Confidentiality
- Consistency of service

c) Crisis Team

- Confidentiality
- Response times
- Staffing levels/availability
- Consistency of services
- Communication
- Perceived staff attitude

d) Inpatient services (i.e. psychiatric wards/units)

- Bed numbers
- Perceived staff attitude
- Discharge procedure
- Ward environment
- Confidentiality
- Availability of structure activities

Additional comments (please make a note of anything else you would like to add in the space below);



Other comments

Is there anything particularly good about the care you receive/received?

Is there anything that could be improved?

Any other comments?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR HELP

Please check that you have answered all the questions that apply to you.



healthwatch Sunderland

Mental Health Workers and Carers Survey 2016

We are currently undertaking a survey with users of NHS funded mental health services based on feedback collated by us we have identified some key priorities that members of the public wish us to pay attention to, Mental Health services across Sunderland being one of them.

The results will be used to develop and improve current services. This survey is your opportunity to tell us how you feel things are currently working; good and bad.

1. Name of service (if applicable):
2. How long have you worked here or been a carer for?
3. What is your job title (if applicable)?
4. Thinking about the person/people you support, do they experience any obstacles in accessing mental health services?
 - No
 - Yes, if so do you think it is due to any of the following?
(you may tick more than one):
 - Social stigma
 - Confidentiality concerns
 - Perceived staff attitudes
 - Accessibility
 - Lack of information about available services
 - Other please state:

Further comments:



5. Thinking again about those you support, which areas would you like to see improvement in at the following services (you may tick more than one option):

e) GP Services

- Communication
- Appointment availability
- Staffing levels/availability
- Reception team response
- Mental health awareness of staff
- Confidentiality

f) Community Mental Health Teams

- Waiting times/referral times
- Staffing levels/availability
- Communication
- Discharge procedure
- Confidentiality
- Consistency of service

g) Crisis Team

- Confidentiality
- Response times
- Staffing levels/availability
- Consistency of services
- Communication
- Perceived staff attitude

h) Inpatient services (i.e. psychiatric wards/units)

- Bed numbers
- Perceived staff attitude
- Discharge procedure
- Ward environment
- Confidentiality
- Availability of structure activities



Additional comments (please make a note of anything else you would like to add in the space below):

.....
.....
.....

Please tell us about the NHS provided services which you feel are working well for the people you support:

Is there anything you feel could be improved:

Is there anything that could be improved?

Would you like to tell us anything else:



Please add your name and contact details if you would be happy to talk to us about your responses to this survey.

Name: Tele:

Email:

If you have any questions about this survey or the work of
Sunderland Healthwatch please contact us:
Telephone: 0191 514 7145 or email: healthwatchesunderland@pcp.uk.net
Website: www.healthwatchesunderland.com