

**Spotlight On**  
**Working together: Keele University 5<sup>th</sup> year**  
**Medical Students Community leadership**  
**Project**

**Who is Healthwatch Shropshire?**

Healthwatch Shropshire is the independent consumer champion for health and social care in Shropshire. We aim to ensure that people from across the county have an opportunity to voice their opinion on the health and social care services affecting them. We are one of many local Healthwatch across England.

**What we do**

We listen to peoples' experiences, look for trends and influence commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local health and social care services. We also provide an information and signposting service. We are not individual case workers, but where people need that we signpost them to the right service.

**The Community Leadership project**

The Community Leadership Project is a 15 week programme for Keele University's 5<sup>th</sup> year medical students, it is part of their General Practice assistantship and enables students to develop skills relevant to their role as doctors and facilitate them to give back to the local community.

The Keele project was supervised by Healthwatch Shropshire to look at local Shropshire priorities. We worked with 2 rotations over a 30 week period in 2016.

**What we wanted to do**

We were aware that there was a gap in feedback received from people aged 16-25 years old about their experiences of health services. As this age group are the generation that service design needs to focus on for future provision we wanted to explore how they accessed health information and services, and what mattered most to them about their health.

## What we did

The first Keele rotation decided that the best way to gather this information was via a survey which they designed and distributed. This was tested on a sample of 10 subjects and the questionnaire revised accordingly. The students then arranged to visit various classes at Ludlow and Hereford College to conduct the survey.

Paper-based surveys and leaflets with contact details of the organisation were distributed. They also produced an easy-read and online version. The questionnaires comprised of a combination of qualitative and quantitative questions.

## What we found out rotation 1

### Demographics

- 150 questionnaires distributed, 137 were selected based on the following criteria: age 16-25 and location within and/or use of services in Shropshire
- 79.5% of respondents were aged 16-17 years old
- 20.5% of respondents were 18-25 years old
- 80% of respondents were female

### Services

- 126 people had used services in the last year
- The top three most used services per year were, GP (average of 3.2 visits), pharmacy (average of 3.8 visits) and dentists (average of 4.75 visits)
- Approximately 1 in 5 correspondents used Accident and Emergency service in the past year
- Only 11% of people had used mental health and sexual health services.

### Experiences

- Most people reported positive rather than negative experiences. Positive experiences included encountering friendly staff, helpful consultations, short waiting time and effective treatment.
- Negative experiences included long waiting time, ineffective treatment and dismissive clinicians.

### Access

- Approximately 1 in 5 felt that distance and transport affected access to health
- 1 in 6 felt stigma and embarrassment were barriers
- Other issues included: early closing times and being unaware of where to go.

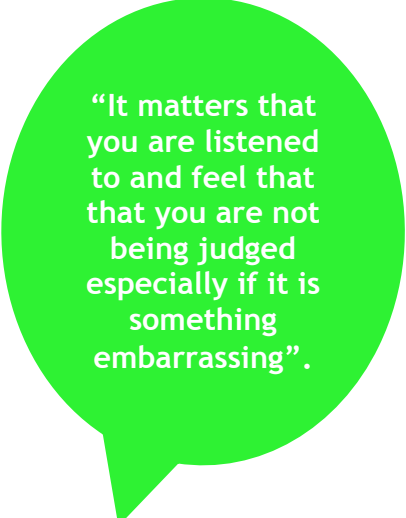
### Health Information

- 50% of people surveyed used friends, family and GP as sources of health information
- 40% of correspondents used health websites such as NHS choice.
- 1 in 5 participants used school/college health services

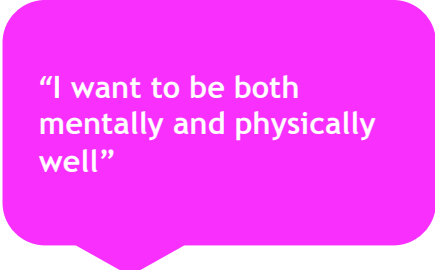
- 3.6% used NHS 111
- Less than 13% relied on social media platforms

### ● **Health priorities**

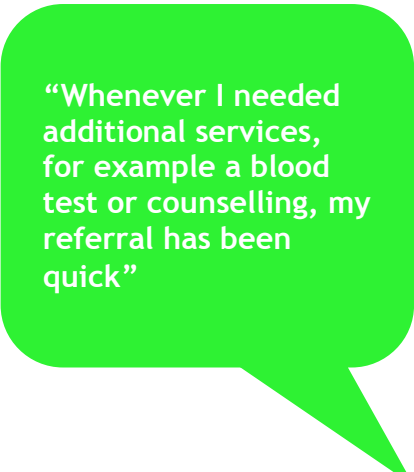
- Achieving good health was a priority
- A well-balanced diet and longevity mattered most.
- The important attributes were that health care providers were approachable, good listeners and trustworthy.
- Confidentiality was also a key theme



“It matters that you are listened to and feel that that you are not being judged especially if it is something embarrassing”.



“I want to be both mentally and physically well”



“Whenever I needed additional services, for example a blood test or counselling, my referral has been quick”

## Data Tools



The information you have provided will be handled confidentially in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. The information will be anonymised and you will not be identifiable in the final report.  
You have the right to withdraw your contribution at any time in the process. Should you decide to withdraw you must contact and clearly inform us. To enable us to oblige you must quote the reference number at bottom of the form so that we can isolate your contribution.

Age:	Occupation:
Sex: M / F	Area of residence:

### Section 1: Your Health

1a) Have you used health services in the last 12 months? Yes  No

If no, please state why not below

1b) If yes, please state the number of times you have used each service in brackets eg GP, ( )

- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| GP [ ]                     | Pharmacy [ ]               |
| Sexual health [ ]          | School services [ ]        |
| Mental health services [ ] | College services [ ]       |
| A&E [ ]                    | Physio [ ]                 |
| Minor injuries [ ]         | Wendy service [ ]          |
| ShropDoc [ ]               | Other (please state) _____ |

2) What factors prevent you from accessing health services?

Stigma/embarrassment  Distance/Transport  Unaware of where to go

Waiting time  Early closing time

Other  \_\_\_\_\_

3) Please describe any good or bad experiences you have had with health services?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Questionnaire A

4) Are there any other health services that you feel you would benefit from?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### Section 2: Communication

1) Which of the following have you used in the last 12 months to access information about health?

- |   |                                      |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Forums <input type="checkbox"/>         | Instagram <input type="checkbox"/>   |
| Friends/Family <input type="checkbox"/> | NHS choices <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Twitter <input type="checkbox"/>        | 111 <input type="checkbox"/>         |
| Facebook <input type="checkbox"/>       | GP <input type="checkbox"/>          |
| Health website <input type="checkbox"/> | Other <input type="checkbox"/>       |
| College/School <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                |

2) Do you book your own appointments? Yes  No

If yes, how do you book your appointments?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3) Are there any other ways you would like to be able to communicate with health services?

Please explain

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4) When it comes to health, what matters most to you?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If you have any additional feedback or would like to share your experiences with us please contact Healthwatch Shropshire at 01743 237884 / enquiries@healthwatchshropshire.co.uk

Questionnaire B

## Easy Read Survey



The information you have provided will be handled confidentially in line with the Data Protection Act 1998. The information will be anonymised and you will not be identifiable in the final report.  
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Age:	Are you male or female?
What do you do? (work, student)	Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/>
	Which town do you live in?

### Section 1: Your health

 2015    2016	1. Have you used NHS services in the last year? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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2. Tick the ones you have used and write how many times you have been here this year.



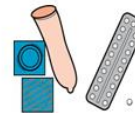
**The Doctor / GP Surgery**  
Used  Number of times:



**Pharmacist**  
Used  Number of times:



**Accident & Emergency**  
Used  Number of times:



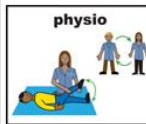
**Sexual Health Services**  
Used  Number of times:



**Mental Health Services**  
Used  Number of times:



**Shropdoc**  
Used  Number of times:



**Physio / Physiotherapy**  
Used  Number of times:



**Health in college**  
Used  Number of times:

## Hand over

It was recommended that there was a handover of this project to the second rotation of student to extend the findings. The majority of data came from individuals aged 16-17, and so was not a true representation of our targeted age demographic. The second rotation was tasked with gathering the voices of 17 plus age group.

For the second rotation the questionnaire was adapted slightly to include: Do you feel like your age has ever impacted on your healthcare? The layout of the questionnaire was also altered into a more user-friendly design.

In addition to the data gathered by the keele students, Shrewsbury College's Health and Social Care students took part in a volunteering project with Healthwatch Shropshire to get the views of fellow students on their Health and Social care needs. This data was collated along with the revised questionnaire information and the results analysed by the Keele second rotation.

### Demographics and further findings

- 88 people responded to the second questionnaire
- The most common age group was 24 years old (17 respondents) 20 years old (16 respondents)
- 341 people were surveyed over both studies, with age-17 being the most common with 106 respondents, followed by age-16 with 90 respondents. The smallest age category was age-22 with only 7 participants.
- Out of the 341 surveyed, 209 were female, 128 were male and 4 did not declare their gender
- 85 respondents who completed the revised questionnaire responded to the question regarding age impact on healthcare. 76% of respondents believed their healthcare was not affected by their age. 24% of respondents believed their healthcare was affected by their age.

### Services

- Per year on average people attended their GP 2.2 times, their pharmacy 2.1 times and their dentist 1 time. Accident and Emergency alongside Mental Health services were the next most attended at 0.5 attendances per year.

### Health Information

- The top 3 sources of health information amongst 16-25 year olds were Family/Friends (22%), the GP (21%) or NHS Choices Website (16%) this reflected the earlier results.

### Impact of age on health services

- Only 85 people in the study commented on whether they believed that their age impacted on their healthcare. Of those, 75% stated that age did not affect their healthcare, whilst 25% believed it did.

- Some believed that the elderly are treated as a priority, stating that patients are given more time and more of an explanation about their health condition if they are older.

“I felt judged”

“Found the healthcare provider patronising”

“Disregarded”

## Conclusions

- Many participants reported several A&E attendances without ever going to the GP or ShropDoc, and it would be helpful to know if these were appropriate. There was a gender bias here with more males attending A&E than females. This could be explored further.
- The largest barrier to accessing healthcare services was reported as waiting times, distance to travel and early closing time. This suggests that younger patients may benefit from commonly used services such as GPs staying open longer on certain days to allow for access.
- In order to create services that meet the needs of the younger population, the issues preventing them from accessing health services have to be addressed. Patients in rural areas may face difficulties such as poor modes of transportation and associated costs, as well as long distances to access health services. In addition, it may be difficult to maintain confidentiality and privacy in a close-knit community as patients generally know each other consequently concerns of confidentiality may affect accessibility to health services
- Qualitative responses stating that people felt “patronised” and “judged” suggests that health practitioners may need to adjust their approach to younger patients or work to change the perception that young people have regarding them.
- Most young people still rely on traditional sources of information. Consequently, this suggests that in future, it would be better to direct resources and education campaigns through these traditional channels and not through more recent phenomena such as social media. One possibility would be for more information about local services to be given through GPs and on the NHS Choices website.
- The most used health service was GP. This may relate to the geography, as GPs in a rural setting may have additional roles in the community, which allows for a greater level of rapport with patients.
- The benefits of school and college services for health provision may not be known or fully utilised for reasons which need further exploration.
- Perceptions of good health amongst young people included both a physical and mental component to one’s well-being