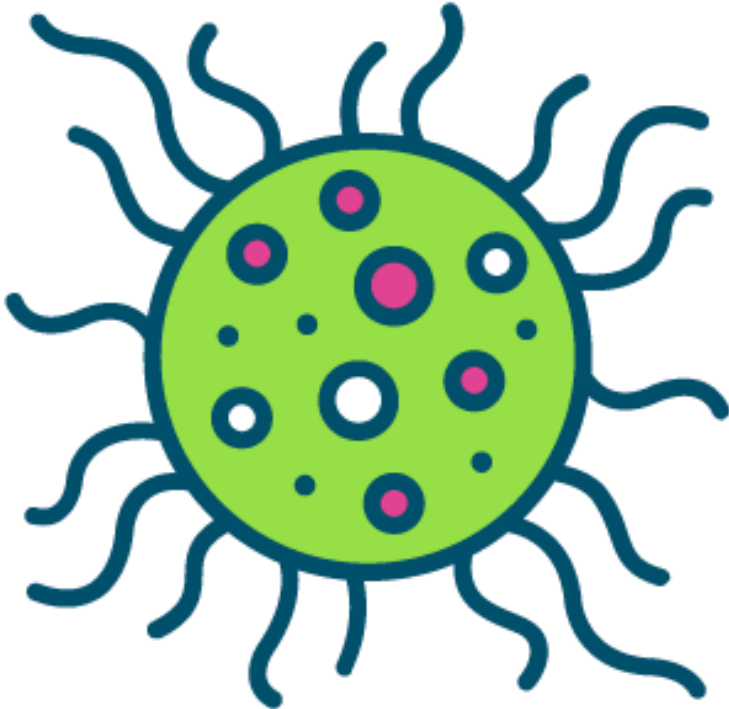


# **Impact Report:**

## **Coronavirus Survey**

### **Results 19–29 May**



**healthwatch**  
Milton Keynes

# HWMK Coronavirus Survey

## Results 19 May to 29 May 2020

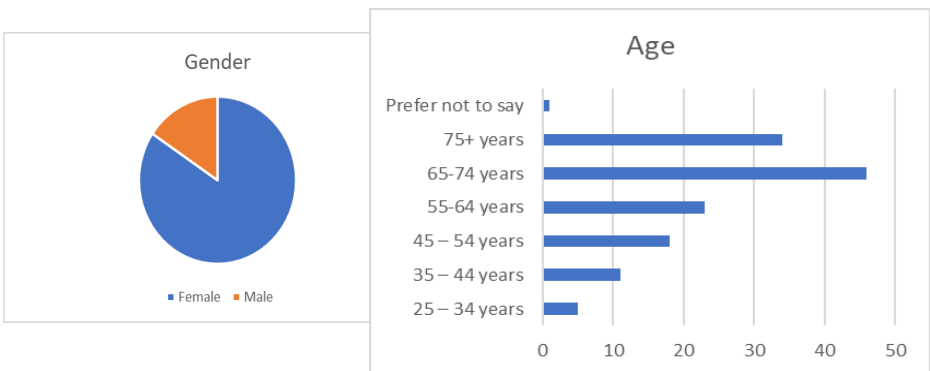
During this challenging time, it is more important than ever that people are able to share their experiences of health and social care services so that Healthwatch Milton Keynes can help resolve key health and care issues now, and so that we can support our local system to learn lessons for service quality and delivery the future.

To aid the professionals who are working hard to ensure that the people of Milton Keynes receive the support they require, Healthwatch Milton Keynes are collating the results of our ongoing survey so that there is up to date information about what is working well, and where further support or communication is needed.

This first report contains the survey results from a further 138 Milton Keynes residents who responded between 19 May 2020 and 29 May 2020.

30 respondents identified themselves as Carers. The majority of responses were from people of a White British background, with 10 people telling us they were from various BAME backgrounds.

Age and gender demographics of respondents to date:



# Information & Advice



64 People said they considered themselves to be at high risk with 38 saying they had not received a text or letter. 49 people said their risk was due to an existing health condition. 23 people with an existing condition said they were also over 70.

More people have found it easy to find the information they need, in the format they need, to keep themselves and others safe at this time. However, more respondents are reporting it difficult or very difficult to understand the information. This may be a result of the rapidly changing, and often non-specific, information that is being disseminated as the situation changes.

We asked if any specific information or sources of information had been especially helpful, and why.

People have appreciated being signposted to the Government and NHS webpages; more people in this round of results are reporting that the daily briefings have been helpful, although often needing to have these messages clarified by various news outlets afterwards.

People also told us they are finding sites such as Diabetes UK, Crohns and Colitis UK, Asthma UK, and Age UK are very useful for condition specific advice that is not necessarily covered in the more general briefings. Cbeebies was noted as having good information for children.

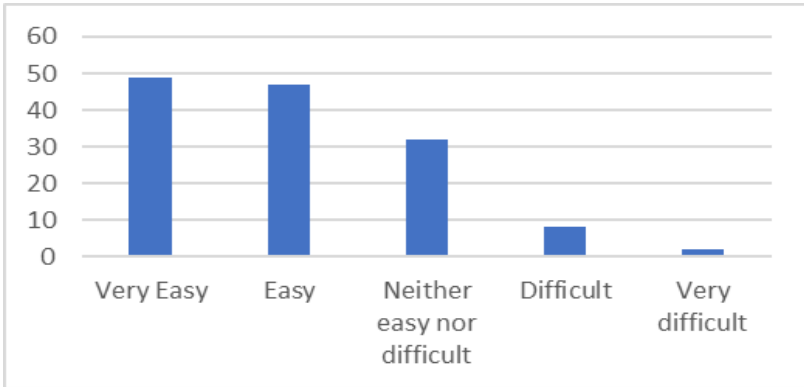
The local Parish Councils and local Facebook Groups were also mentioned as especially useful to keep up with what is available and happening in people's local areas.

The reasons given as to why the information from these local and national sources was especially helpful were: that information was factual; up to date; concise; and coherent.

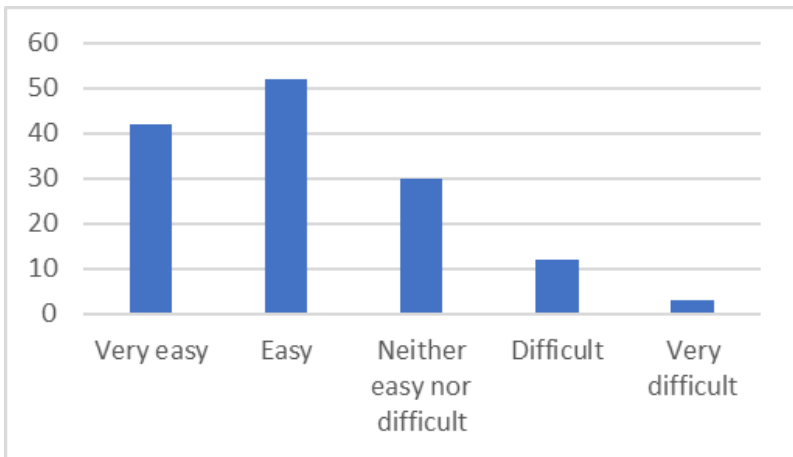
# By the numbers



How easy have you found it to find the information you need about how to keep yourself and others safe during the Coronavirus



How easy have you found it to understand information you need about how to keep yourself and others safe during the Coronavirus Pandemic?



# Information & Advice



**What specific topics would people like more information on?**

“How to treat COVID at home”

“What support is available to autistic adults?”

“How the virus would affect people with ME, chronic fatigue syndrome, fibromyalgia syndrome, hypermobility syndrome, osteoporosis”

“What is happening with Dentists?”

“When can I get Hospital treatment again?”

But how do we find out if I can have treatment, eg. B12 injections suspended in March but vital”

“Availability of non-C19 related health services, I am waiting for an ENT appointment and have heard nothing”

“I would like to know when it will be safe for the elderly to go to shops, parks and travel distances.

“I'd like more information on advances in treatment, vaccine and antibody testing, when it's available”

“how we apply the COVID legislation to the release of lock down measures?”

# Information & Advice



## What specific topics would people like more information on?

“We think we may have had the virus at new year, can we be tested to check?”

“How to obtain face masks or other equipment. Also how to get hold of hand sanitizer”

“Not sure how it works going to the Doctor now. Haven't needed to yet but may need a blood test soon”

“In general it is hard to tell what is still available especially face to face appointments and availability of tests that are now significantly delayed”

“We think we may have had the virus at new year, can we be tested to check?”

“The risk to children with asthma contracting coronavirus”

“Return to work dates for the over 70s”

“Resumption of help for existing care for Depression”

“Updates on Shielding information seems to be forgotten now (as at 29/05/20)”

“Risks of infection from handling newspapers and post”

“When we can see grandchildren again”

# Experience of Change in GPs



**Some people chose to tell us more about the changes, good and not so good, they have experienced**

“Very happy with being able to get advice and treatment. Better than pre-Covid availability, telephone appointment suited me much better”

“I found that the speed and approach of the GP phone service was very helpful. I had been given contradictory advice via the 111 service. The GP however was responsive and gave me clear information in an empathetic way”

“All done by telephone. Although recognising that face to face is sometimes needed, or indeed desired, telephone consultations have worked well. Better still if we had video. I appreciate that this does not work for some people, but it strikes me that this make better use of limited resources, and getting consultation slots quicker i.e. less waiting time”

“Obviously, telephone appointments. This has worked well and been very quick. On the second contact, they decided I needed to be seen and I had a face to face appointment less than 2 hrs after a telephone appointment (and the telephone appt was the morning after I contacted them late afternoon). VERY impressed with my Practice!”

“It's easier to speak to them when it doesn't involve making an appointment to see them”

“GPs suspending services, without informing elderly people many who do not have computers or smart phones”

# Experience of Change in GPs



“Practices have become guarded fortresses. If you manage to get through the door you are viewed very suspiciously. I tried to get an appointment with my dedicated doctor to be told he was too busy and was also working from home. I did get an appointment with another doctor but found out he was also working from home. This is no big deal so why make a thing about it. We keep hearing doctors are open but when you start hearing excuses to keep you away one wonders what is going on. There is nothing wrong with the new way of working but be responsible after all patients are not the enemy”

“...appointments were cancelled, mostly by letter. However, after several weeks, I am worrying about nothing being rearranged. Surely now my GP could give me the Cortisone injection I was due to have and the Nurse could freeze off a wart on my arm”

“Completed an on-line questionnaire and received a call back to discuss symptoms and action required (none)

“Phone appts only so not able to assess physical injuries”

“As a currently healthy 70 year-old I feel that if I were to get ill it would be difficult to access services (GP, Hospital etc) and therefore I feel vulnerable and anxious to stay as well as possible”

“Had to send a picture of a skin problem to GP. As this could be skin cancer, not impressed”

“Can't get to GP for less serious issues”





# Experience of Change in GPs



“Useless if you’re not online, there is no communication for most vulnerable groups. I can’t get to talk to a GP as you’re cast adrift if not online. Notices are poor in the practice, I only know what is happening through my neighbours”

“Phone call consultation with a nurse at my practice, very good advice on how to treat open wound. Cleared up in a few days”

“Difficult to get through to GP practice”

“I would like my GP surgery to tell me when they expect routine blood test screening to re-start. I am overdue a test for prostate cancer but haven't yet been able to find out when this might be performed”

“Communication between doctors and pharmacy have led to me having to chase round for my mother's meds because they were forgotten”

# Experience of Change in Hospitals



“My Thoracic Dept was cancelled (internally, I guess) without informing me. Then I got two letters from the referral system telling me that I needed to rebook. Which I can't because they aren't taking outpatient bookings until the hospital re-opens more generally”

“I had a request from my consultant for some tests to be performed at Northampton Hospital. This was in January. I've heard nothing...”

“Could the hospitals not now organise the scans and electro-cardiograms. The hospitals are supposed to have Covid-19 free zones; it's time they started to rearrange everything they cancelled. Are they even going to? Or is it up to the patient?”

“Hospital services related to pancreatic cancer. Restricted availability of resources may have put limitations on available treatment, and caused minor delays. I cannot know the implications of this, or whether/to what extent it may have affected my illness”

“Just had a hysterectomy due to cancer, although I needed no follow up treatment my follow up appointment by my surgeon was cancelled until June, 16 weeks after my op. Fortunately I have been well but I did feel a little bit abandoned . Also waiting for follow up scan on a different matter.

# Experience of Change in Hospitals



“I am due to have various regular scans. I assume I won't get them now for a while but have not been advised about these. The scans are important for my condition”

“My consultant said in Nov '19, I needed a prolapse repair which would be done in about 12 weeks. I had my pre op appointment in February 2020. I heard nothing more. I phoned the department and left a message asking what was the situation. Then came lockdown Noone has ever replied”

“Had automated phone call from the Eye Clinic saying confirm appointment. I phoned hospital about March appointment. They said don't come. No one has contacted me since to find out how my eye is”

“Ongoing gastro investigation: everything has gone radio silent, no news of test results, no follow up, can't get hold of clinician. basically all is on hold. I understand the challenges of Covid, but letters are still arriving from Hospital so some clerical functions are still alive”

“Post stroke rehab services - clinical appointments not happening e.g Arthritis consultant was reallocated to virus. Face to face replaced by telephone calls with two specialists but told nothing now for a while and now left to him to chase up”

“Oncology check ups cancelled which add to the depression and anxiety”

“I'm waiting for treatment to help my mobility following an RTA last year - came to a halt in March and hasn't yet started again though I've talked to the specialist at Oxford

# Experience of Change in other health services



“Didn’t realise how a pandemic would affect dentists. I Need work done”

“Advice on suspension of services and emergency provisions would be very helpful”

“The person I support has been left without any support for her longstanding mental health issues which has set her back considerably”

“CAMHS appointments have moved to telephone, which has generally been ok but I’m worried about the lack of blood pressure checks for my child who’s on strong medication.”

“Pull out Services e.g. Home Help, footcare, but no indication of alternative support sources when you are on your own”

“New spectacles require proper fitting”

“Our daughters counselling session had to be changed from going to the Moorlands centre to telephone and then video. It was communicated really well about the change and although our daughter felt slightly nervous about it she came out of her first telephone counselling feeling very positive about it.”

“I suffered mental health for many years. I desperately needed their services. They telephoned me asked a great deal of personal questions. They came back to me a few days later. They told me I needed help and the tools were all on line and to remember to call Samaritans if I needed them. I have heard Physician heal thy self but now it’s mental health person heal thy self”

“Private physio has stopped but podiatrist still coming -has explained the precautions so they could make a decision”

# Experience of Change for Carers and people with disabilities



“I have registered the person I care for on advice of GP on Gov.UK but this has not given me access to supermarket deliveries even though I am registered with 3. This maybe because it asked if she had food, which she does, but only because I buy it. In order not to take the infection to her I decided not to visit any shops & getting delivery slot is stressful & often impossible. She lives in an independent living housing scheme and has personal care so I still have to visit her. I am 77 and she is 100 +”

“Carers allocated without communication to patient on discharge from hospital”

“I had no messages to say there would not be no access to respite. I had to contact adult services myself and have had no information regarding when it could start!

“Home help services have stopped but expects cleaner will return soon and client will sit in the garden”

“At times like this and always, there isn’t any support for adults with learning disabilities”

# If you could change one thing about your experience...



“Keeping us properly, and timely, updated with the state of affairs. This should come from local sources, GPs, local health professionals and the like. An occasional contact by phone (we had one such) would be more than welcome to enquire on our circumstances”

“Improved communication from GP practice especially for people without computers”

“More contact and information. Not everyone has the access that they need to locate the information required”

“Better access to mental health support for ALL inclusive of those who are not necessarily on the high risk list who may suffer/have suffered with mental illness”

“More communication with 'customers'. Even if it is to say 'wait'”

“More information about individual patients info so that all relevant Services can be obtained”

“Check up more regularly on those who are housebound due to shielding”

“I think you still need to provide a service where people can access a GP if possible”

“Make the rules and guidelines clearer so that everyone can understand them. I would also make sure everyone knew what support was available to them”

# If you could change one thing about your experience...



“Not sure if this appertains to your question however but the guidelines on home shopping deliveries are too stringent on vulnerable people. Yes of course the very vulnerable should be first but I find shopping quite difficult as I’m over 70 and use a walking stick and my Husband suffers from degenerative scoliosis but we are not classed as the most vulnerable and unable to get prime delivery slots for shopping therefore it would be helpful if they made exceptions”

“Check up more regularly on those who are house-bound due to shielding”

“Centralise all the information, too many places to find it. Merge all the organisations information together”

“Home visits where it's necessary. Encouraging people to still seek treatment when they need to rather than being scared of doing so”

“To be recognised as essential service as I am a full time carer for my husband who has had a stroke so is physically and mentally disabled and has Alzheimer's. He is abusive and difficult to me and my respite breaks are essential for my mental wellbeing! I have no idea when I might be able to have a break and the longer this goes on the more stressed I will be!”

“For there to be a system wide multi sector emergency plan, with a clear communications plan that helps all organisations help people understand referral routes and organisations remit and responsibility.”

# If you could change one thing about your experience...



“Better co-ordination and easier access to advice from a human being - not a pre-recorded message or online information which doesn't fit your circumstances. Access to, and help with very practical things at the beginning - shopping, prescriptions etc, was difficult and worrying. We had to pester, ring, email etc which we are able to do and have family to help with this, but it must be extremely hard for those who cannot do this”

“Communication by sms, txt, letter, phone call, and e-mail”

“Direct information from Dr's Surgery explaining how things will work during the pandemic”

“Ensure that the treatment of individuals is not hampered by lack of equipment (PPE in this case)”

“To be contacted occasionally to see if everything was ok”

“Fullest communication between all healthcare services”

“For there to be a system wide multi sector emergency plan, with a clear communications plan that helps all organisations help people understand referral routes and organisations remit and responsibility.

“Communicate with patients 'at risk' of any age, who receive regular medication to ensure they understand the way their GP is working. Or to their carer (or family who may not be able to have contact.) GPs & practice staff are under great pressure, but elderly/ disabled patients need support. Especially if they do not have family nearby”