

Living with Covid 19

Understanding Information - Public Feedback Report

July 2020

COVID-19 Public Feedback Survey & Social Media Results

Background

In these difficult times during the Covid-19 pandemic, Healthwatch Bolton wanted to gather some feedback from the public about how the crisis is affecting their everyday lives. Working in partnership with Bolton Public Health, and students from Bolton University, it was agreed to seek the views of the public on particular areas of interest regarding information and health and wellbeing. In addition to this, Healthwatch Bolton are harvesting data collected via social media groups to provide information as to what people are talking about that is affecting their everyday lives. The survey and social media feedback will continue throughout the duration of the pandemic which will assist both Bolton Public Health, Bolton Council and Bolton CCG to tailor their public messages and information. Healthwatch Bolton will also make recommendations based on the intelligence collected.

Summary

Information

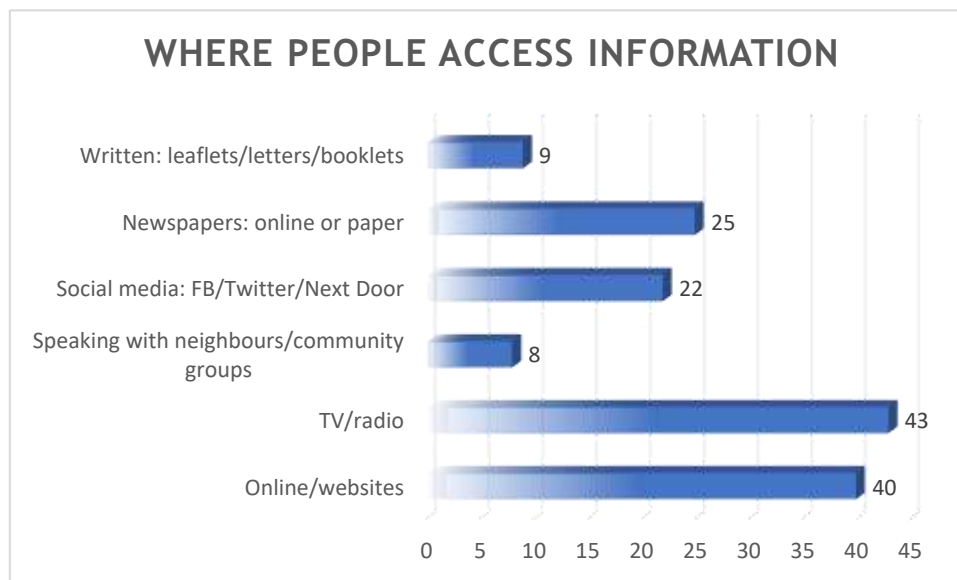
- ✚ The overwhelming consensus is that Coronavirus information and key messages are very ambiguous.
- ✚ In the confusion, respondents are “*using their common-sense*” and taking the necessary steps to protect themselves and their family based on their unique set of circumstances.
- ✚ Respondents would like to see more localised information.
- ✚ While people continue to turn to the internet for information, a call remains for information to be available in different formats such as leaflets.
- ✚ The use of infographics would help to simplify more complex information.
- ✚ There are still concerns that people who do not/cannot access the internet or social media are missing out on key information and messages.

Recommendations

- ✚ *We recommend that Bolton Council and Bolton CCG produce more localised information.*
- ✚ *As we recommended in the previous report, information needs to be produced in several different formats to make it accessible for all.*
- ✚ *We recommend that Bolton Local Authority and Bolton CCG make more use of local and community radio stations, Bolton CVS, UCAN Centres and faith communities to reach people who are not digitally engaged.*
- ✚ *We recommend that there is a dedicated number and/or website page where people can obtain answers to Frequently Asked Questions.*

Survey Monkey Results - Sample Size: 69 respondents

Q1. How have you been accessing information about Covid-19 and other key health topics?



The most popular methods of accessing Coronavirus information and key messages was via [TV, radio and online](#) sources followed by daily [newspapers \(online and in paper format\)](#) and various [social media](#) platforms. One respondent commented that they obtained information and from *“Daily Bulletins from Bolton Council and weekly Bulletin from Bolton CVS”* another person accessed information in their [workplace](#).

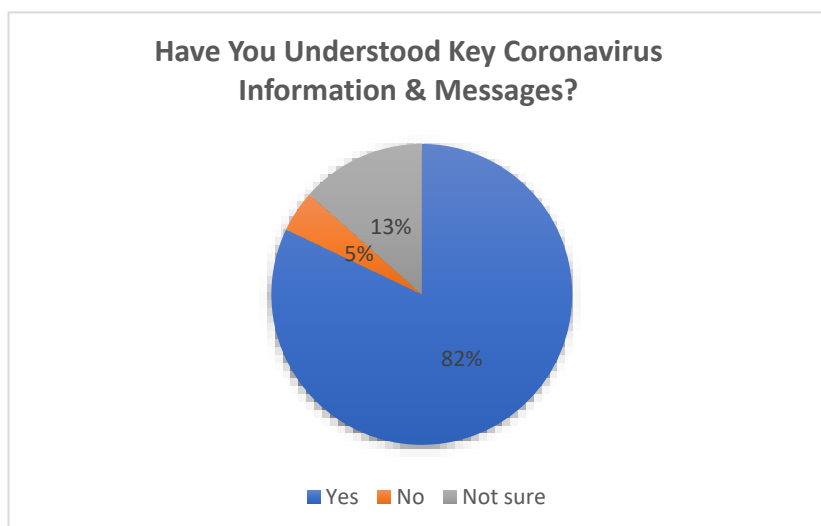
Q2. Would you prefer to receive this information in another way/format?

Overall, people are happy accessing information via websites, TV, radio, social media platforms and newspapers. One respondent stated, *“Government and Local Authority should make more use of social media.”* While another stated that *“Local information is not easy to access.”* One person may have the answer to this latter comment when they commented *“I would have preferred more localised messages from Bolton leaders rather than churned out copies of national messages.”*

Additional comments:

- *“I would like to see Bolton’s health and care team provide simple graphics to really simplified key messages.”*
- *“TV, as I could see/hear official Covid-19 announcements rather than getting things second and third hand which may be incorrect (unable to afford a TV licence currently).”*

Q3. Have you understood the information and key messages?



While the majority of respondents answered 'yes' they understood key coronavirus messages and information, there is a resounding 'but...' Overall, people are very confused by the content of information available.

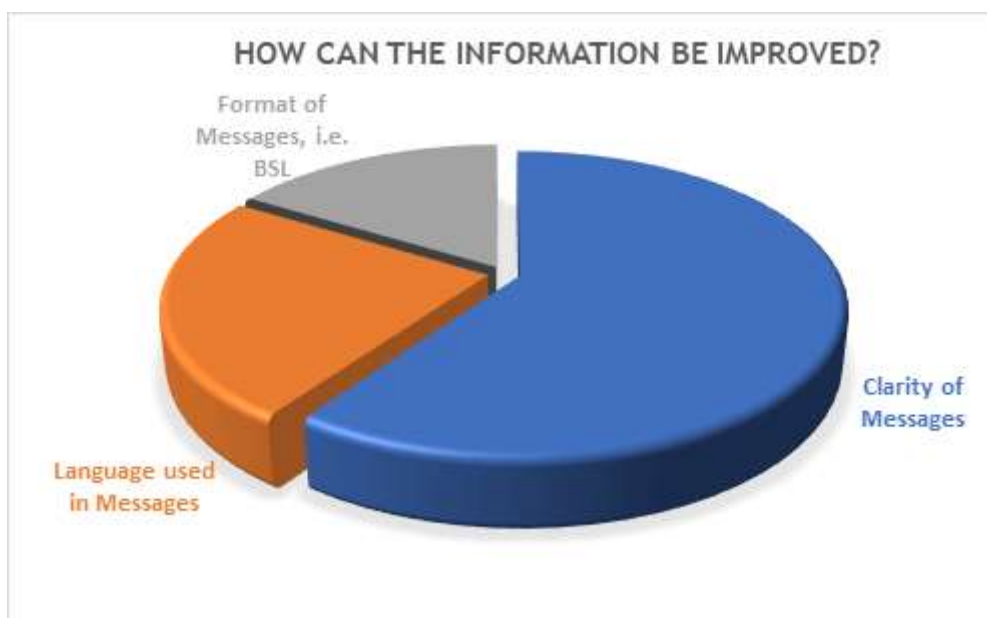
- *"I understand but only by research and discussion with others."*
- *"The information changes from one day to the next, which adds to confusion. Also, different media interpret the information in different ways."*
- *"I have spoken to a lot of people who do not understand the key message."*
- *"Found it has not always been clear at the outset and information has been conflicting at times."*
- *"Some of the information has been confusing."*
- *"Sometimes confusion on television messages."*
- *"I have understood the messages however they are very unclear and confusing."*
- *"I have understood them, but they have been changing and unreliable."*
- *"[I] think lockdown should have continued for couple more weeks until track and trace is well under way and giving us more idea of the safety of relaxing the rules."*
- *"It is basic common sense, [however] some people seem to like to complain about anything if it gets them attention."*

There was a small number of people that stated that they are 'not sure' they understood the information because it was sending out "*mixed messages*", they "*listen to information and advice, think I have understood it, then I watch a Coronavirus update and there's contradictions*", and "*I think I understand it but it does get quite confusing at times.*"

Several respondents gave the following reasons for not being able to understand Coronavirus information:

- *“Government ministers go against their own advice, so I’m confused. My family members are confused. So as a result, we’ve all broken lockdown rules.”*
- *“They are very confusing and easily misunderstood.”*
- *“I do not think the information has been clear and whilst I understand that the situation the world finds itself in is unprecedented, clear precise messages for that very reason are needed, from our government need to be messages that are agreed by the medical professionals.”*
- *“Some confusing messages coming out from the government - people don’t know what to do anymore, it’s ridiculous.”*

Q4. If anything, what could be improved in the key messages?



Unsurprisingly, most respondents believe the [clarity of the messages](#) need to be improved in order to avoid ambiguity:

- *“Lots of use of ‘should’ or ‘may’ instead of ‘must’.”*
- *“I think during the lockdown people have forgotten how to use their own sensible judgement and have been waiting for the Government or others to tell them exactly what to do. I can understand though that for people with anxiety or learning disabilities maybe a clearer explanation of every little part of the instructions might be needed, for anyone else I think the instructions and alerts have been fine.”*
- *“The advice from our own PM [Prime Minister] are confusing AF. It looks like he makes things up as he goes along.”*
- *“Everyone has taken them different ways.”*
- *“Reduce mixed messages.”*

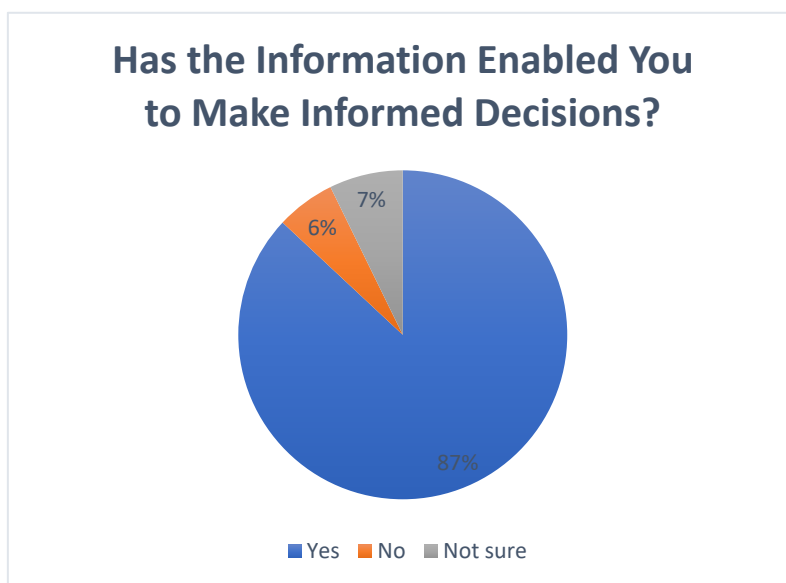
A handful of people **understood the information** and they are happy with the **format**, i.e. online resources:

- *“For me personally the messages have been clear enough.”*
- *“Messages for myself were clear enough but maybe some messages should have been less complicated for general public to fully understand.”*
- *“None the info I’m getting is fine.”*
- *“I am fine with the current formats.”*

Some respondents believe that more attention needs to be given to the **clarity, language used and the information** of the key messages:

- *“Stay alert is pretty nebulous.”*
- *“No adjustments are being made for disabled people.”*
- *“Straight forward clear message needed.”*
- *“Details of when I can use my own judgement on whether I should follow government rules.”*
- *“That actions will abide/follow rules set by official policy people.”*

Q5. Has this information enabled you to make decisions/take action to protect you and your community during COVID-19?



For those who answered **yes**, their rationale is as follows:

- *“I have done what I feel is best for my situation.”*
- *“We are remaining socially distanced and not visiting shops, parks etc as we do not feel that it is safe to do this, as the lockdown has been lifted far too quickly.”*
- *“But I do think the messages recently have been very unclear & confusing as the advice keeps changing. It would be better I feel if all UK countries gave the same advice and all the advice was consistent, i.e. regarding face covering.”*
- *“Will still stay home mostly but happy to see a friend maybe once a week in a garden.”*
- *“When thought needing BSL Information our profound deaf Advocates or our coda graduate put on our Webb site and Facebook. I forward one to Healthwatch Bolton.” (sic)*

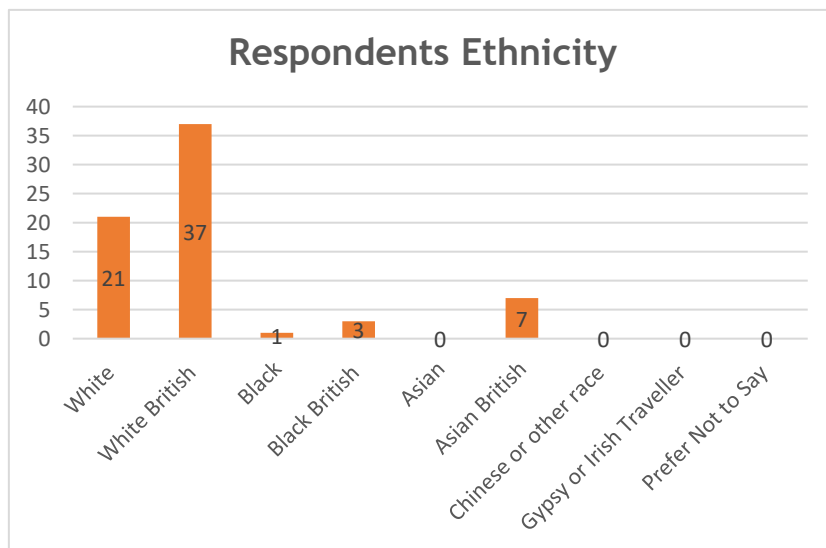
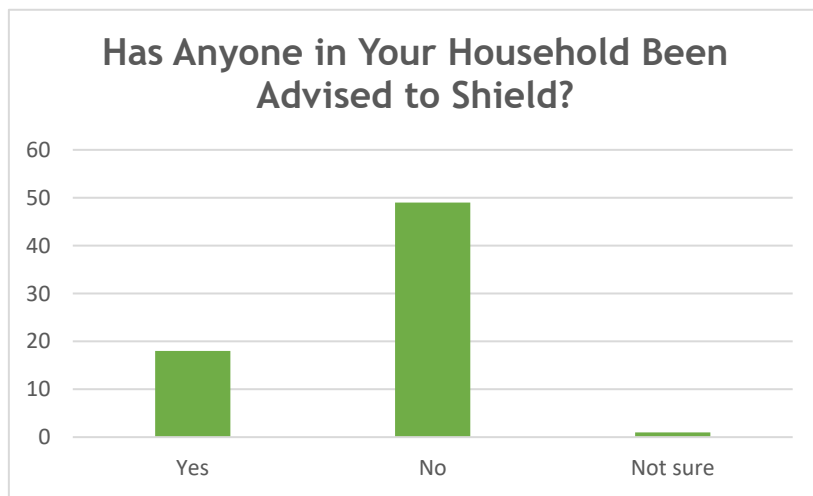
- “I have thought long and hard about how our household protects members.”
- “Once digested via many media platforms.”

One respondent stated that the information provided has not help them to make informed decisions and added *“We’ve been ok so far by adhering to the rules. If our people in charge, government ministers, break the rules so we will be doing so too.” “The messages are too vague.”*

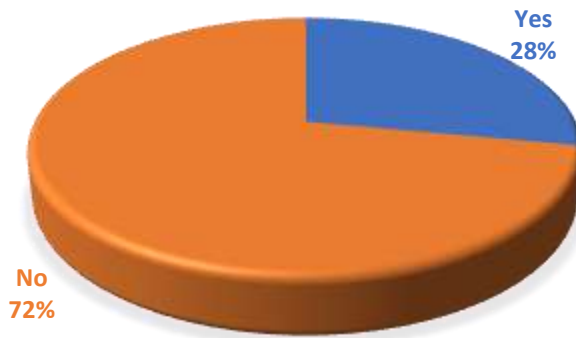
Survey Monkey Demographics

69 respondents completed the survey. 14 out of the 69 respondents live with children under the age of 18.

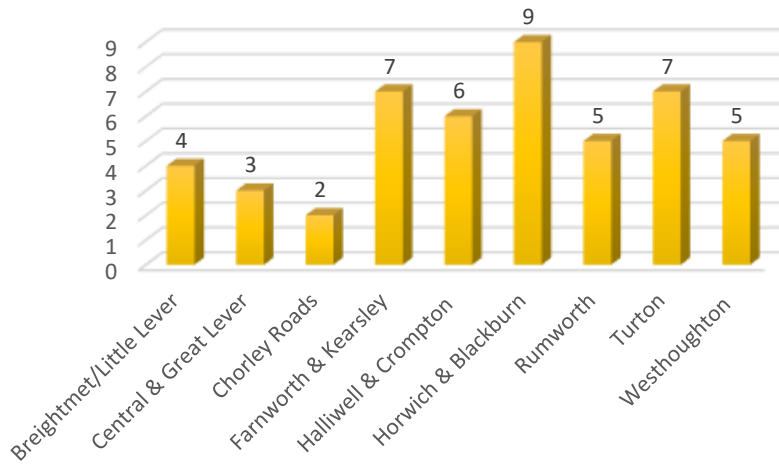
Q7. Has anyone in your household been advised to ‘shield’ due to health conditions? (Shielding is the word used to describe how to protect those at highest risk of severe illness if they catch coronavirus).



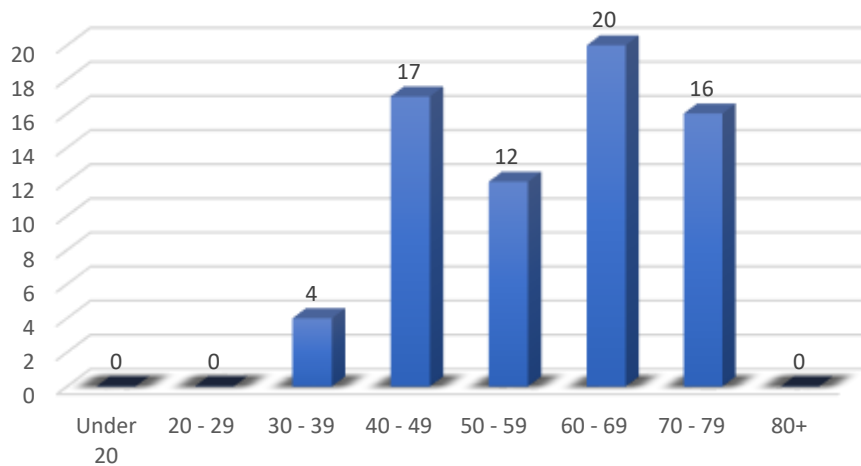
RESPONDENTS LIVING WITH A DISABILITY



Where Respondents Live

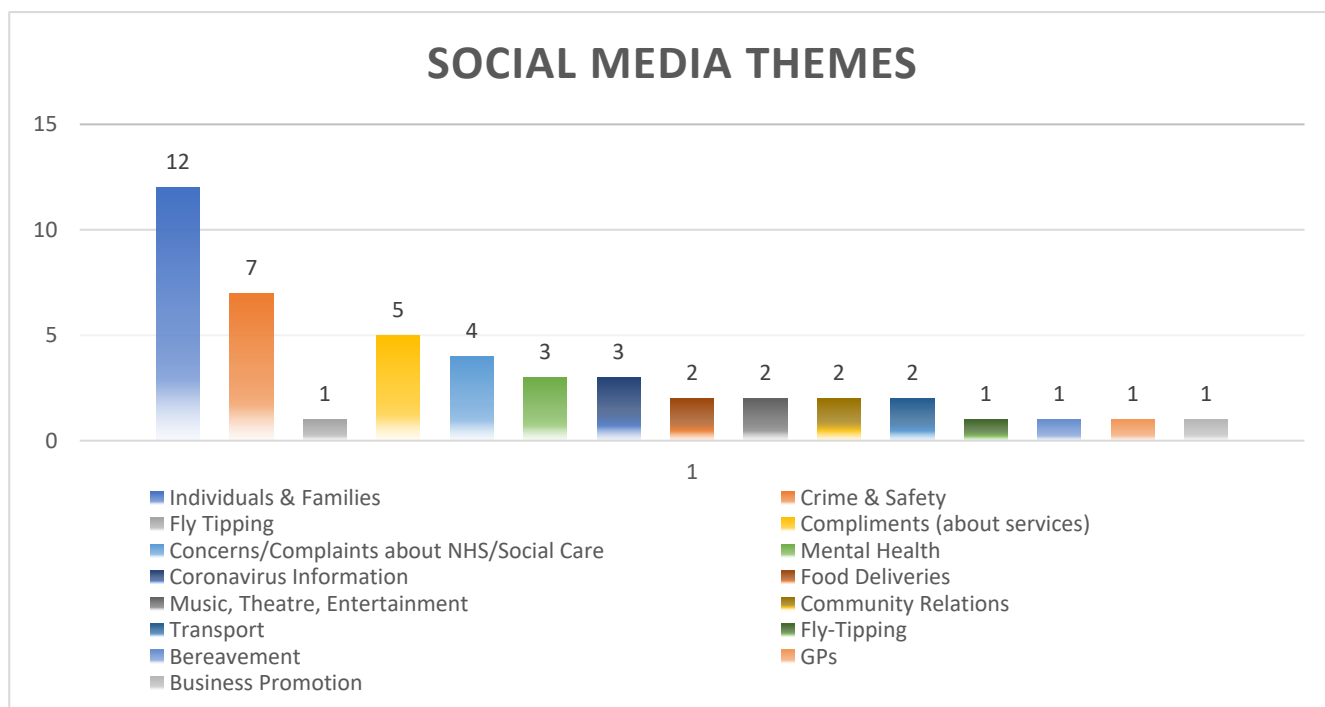


Age of Respondents



Covid-19 Social Media/Digital Feedback - 10.06.2020 to 16.07.2020

In total 39 social media postings were captured during this period. The themes are listed below with **individuals and families, crime and safety, compliments about services, mental health and coronavirus key messages/information** being the most common themes, followed by **food deliveries, concerns/complaint about health/social care, community relations and transport** then **fly-tipping, personal and business finance**. Comments were drawn from the Bolton News, Twitter, Next Door, Bolton Covid-19 Support Facebook Group and Care Opinion.



As well as collecting the themes of what people are saying, we are also collecting information about how some of the problems are being solved which we would like to share with you.

- ✚ The narrative is changing as the country is easing lockdown restrictions. However, it remains that most of social media posts inspired by people reaching out to offer others practical and emotional/wellbeing support. For instance, **baby clothes were needed for families that need support** with such items.
- ✚ **Individuals and supermarkets** (Sainsburys, Morrisons and Asda) are continuing to work with **charities who provide food and essential items to families**.
- ✚ To **prevent isolation, loneliness, make friends and improve mental health**, Chatty Café are planning to host regular Zoom drop-ins. There is also a call to for local people over 60 years old to form a band.
- ✚ **Potential scam**. Someone alerted others of a call they received claiming to be from UK housing, stating they have had about cavity wall insulation. The post advised people to visit <https://who-called.co.uk/> to check the credibility/authenticity of telephone numbers.

- ✚ Government notice to [takeaways](#) and their customers to remember order remotely if possible and to respect social distancing when collecting food and to pay ahead (by contactless).
- ✚ All Souls Community Centre (off Blackburn Road) announced they are planning to open their doors from 6th July 2020 for face to face consultations.
- ✚ NHS Bolton Foundation Trust reminded people that face covering must be worn if you are going to hospital.
- ✚ A patient raised concerns about the absence of hand sanitizer at their GP Practice. The patient then went to the pharmacy to collect their prescription and claims that social distancing measures were not being managed and once again there was no hand sanitizer. Feeling quite anxious by the lack of social distancing and the absence of hand sanitizer, the patient stood outside in the rain and waited for their medication. HWB raised these concerns with the Local Pharmacy Committee and the matter is currently being investigated.