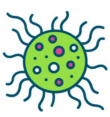


# How are you doing?

Gathering feedback from the public and professionals on how they are coping during the COVID 19 pandemic

Monthly project update: September



During March 2020, England was declared in a state of pandemic, and a 'lock down' was ordered by the Prime Minister. This had a knock on effect on all health and care services in Luton.

Healthwatch Luton began a project, to ask the public and professionals in Luton 'How are you doing?'. The word 'How' is in green in the original image.

The purpose of the project is to understand how the pandemic has affected the residents within Luton, their access to health and social care and their experiences since the pandemic began. There will also be an understanding of how this has affected the professionals within Luton, in both statutory and voluntary sectors.

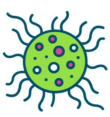
- Gather views to inform the wider health and care system, to improve delivery of care
- Ensure the voice of the public is heard
- Ensure people have an outlet for their voice
- Share current messages from partner organisations
- Promote guidance from the government
- Gather feedback from the seldom heard
- Pass on feedback to shape the system going forward
- Promote Healthwatch Luton

Activities have included a survey, calls to action, emails, case studies and phone calls to ask

- How people are feeling during the pandemic
- What is working well?
- What is not working so well?
- What can be improved and how?

Each month a report will be produced to update on the activities carried out, response rates, emerging themes and the next steps in the project.





From 14<sup>th</sup> September Luton was removed from the government watch list. Luton was mentioned in parliament on 30<sup>th</sup> September as being the only town or city, out of 48, to have successfully come out of extra measures.

September also saw a national issue with testing. During the second week of September there were issues with testing capacity and only those symptomatic (not those within their homes) were asked to be tested.

Track and trace continued to be implemented and the NHS created an app for this, which the public were encouraged to download onto their smart phones and devices to scan in to all venues.

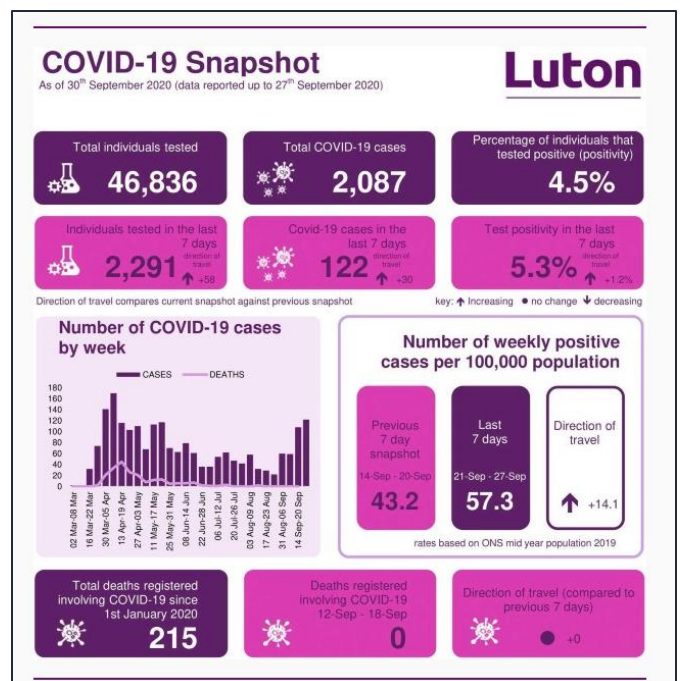
### NHS Covid-19 app



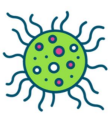
Healthwatch Luton continued to share the public messages via local authority and this included the 'Rule of 6' which meant no one could meet with any more than six people, whether that was in a private space or public space.

Luton Borough Council continued to inform the public on figures and showed how the change in figures was looking, in a snapshot view.

Healthwatch Luton continued to have meetings with providers and to support the sharing of communications from local organisations and the changes to their services.



Graph taken from:  
[https://www.luton.gov.uk/Health\\_and\\_social\\_care/coronavirus/community/Pages/COVID-19-cases-and-deaths-in-Luton.aspx](https://www.luton.gov.uk/Health_and_social_care/coronavirus/community/Pages/COVID-19-cases-and-deaths-in-Luton.aspx)



## What are the overall themes so far?

There has been a total of **82** pieces of feedback this month, **55** of Coronavirus related feedback received this month and **27** nonrelated feedbacks. The coronavirus feedback can be split in this manner:

Service	Number
Relating to GP	10
Relating to Supported living	1
Relating to hospital	3
Relating to pharmacy	4
Relating to emergency care	1
Relating to adult social care	3
Relating to community services	3
Relating to dentist	3
Relating to MH services	5
CV19 General Feedback	25

### Positive words included:

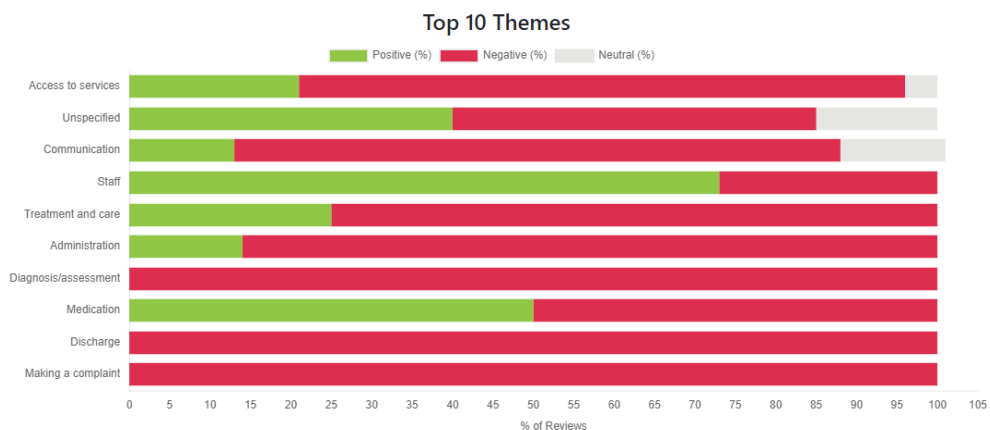
'lovely' 'helpful' 'good' 'great' 'have faith in'

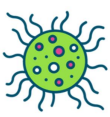
### Negative words included:

'issue' 'difficult' 'deteriorated' 'dreadful' 'heart-breaking' 'struggling' 'mistreated' 'delayed'

The main themes emerging were:

- **Enforcement of government guidelines** and ensuring people were abiding by them
- **Accessing tests** was proving increasingly difficult, even when symptomatic
- **Changes to treatment** and care was not always outlined or communicated well with patients so **expectations were not met**
- **Access to services** such as GPs was still an issue, some retrospectively to earlier during the pandemic
- Confusion remains over **communications**





## Social Media campaign:

Social media has been used throughout the month to share not only our own activities, but those of local organisations, to support the different activities they are also running for the public, or changes to their current service provisions.

Healthwatch Luton have continued to share the information from the local authority and from central government, to ensure the understanding of the rules for all.

Healthwatch Luton have also shared some easy read information to support those who have a need to receive information in this format.

Healthwatch Luton have continued to put out a call to action via social media using the #feedbackfriday to focus on care homes this month.

On Facebook alone, our posts have reached over 1000 people. The most popular posts being those that carry information or are for booking on to an event, such as flu vaccine or our Engagement Forums.

The AGM has been recorded and will be shared next month in a video format within our social media.

### What next?

The focus will be on engagement forums and the AGM information/video to ensure we are sharing this wide.

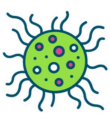
There will also be continued support of the local authority information and messages, as well as the winter flu campaign support.

**healthwatch**  
Luton

## Online engagement forum: Hospital discharge

Have you had experience with hospital discharge? Join our online engagement forum to share your experiences.  
[info@healthwatchluton.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchluton.co.uk)  
t: 01582817060

**Speakers from Hospital and Luton council**  
**Tuesday 20th October**  
**1pm-2pm**



## Testing feedback:

Luton had two walk in testing sites, one based in Bury Park and the other in Hockwell Ring, Initially these were to allow for those without access to a vehicle or those digitally excluded to have a test, however they soon became an option for those who were not able to book a test at the drive in site, or a home test. By 14<sup>th</sup> September, they were only accepting booked appointments, which were confirmed by a QR code being sent out.

Testing became very difficult in Luton, before it was taken off the ‘watch list’ by the government.

There was a message that those who were asymptomatic should still be tested, however, there was trouble booking tests for those who has symptoms. There became issues where home testing kits were no longer available and those who were booking site tests, were having to travel as far as Warwickshire, Leicester and Milton Keynes. One family went to Hackney.

Schools were requesting that when a child was symptomatic, their parent or carer needed to book a test, to get a negative result before returning to school, however parents were not able to get tests because of children’s age (only being 4 years old) or just because of lack of testing capability.

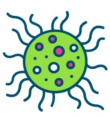
Patients were contacting PHE directly and were told that there was a national issue and lack of testing available. Some people were able to get tests by sitting and constantly refreshing the website, although one person spent around three days spending most of their time doing this, to finally get a test sent to their home, which would take longer for results.

Anecdotally, we heard people were not getting results for up to a week, when they were told at testing sites it would be a matter of days.



### What next?

We will continue to share information about testing and ensure we gather feedback about testing locally, to support keeping the transmission rate low within Luton



## Survey Monkey:

A general '4Qs' survey was created on Survey Monkey in May 2020.

The general survey has received an additional **four** responses this month. Two of these were from young people under 18 years of age.

This month, all responses were female and all self-defined their ethnicity as white.

Age	Total
under 18	2
19-29	1
30-39	1
40-49	
50-59	
60-69	
70+	

### What next?

The survey, whilst consistently receiving some responses, needs to be reshared. There will be a new survey specifically for carers to come out later on in Q3 and there will be a drive to share the current survey with younger audiences.

There was an additional survey from Healthwatch England around hospital discharge. It was considered quite lengthy, however, it did receive two responses, which were shared with Healthwatch Luton and included in our feedback for the month.



**healthwatch**  
Luton

## How are you doing?

Let us know how you are feeling about COVID-19: What works well, what doesn't and how do you think it could be improved?

[covid19@healthwatchluton.co.uk](mailto:covid19@healthwatchluton.co.uk)

01582 817 060

 Twitter: @hwluton

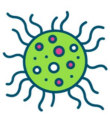
 Facebook: HealthwatchLuton

 Instagram: healthwatchluton

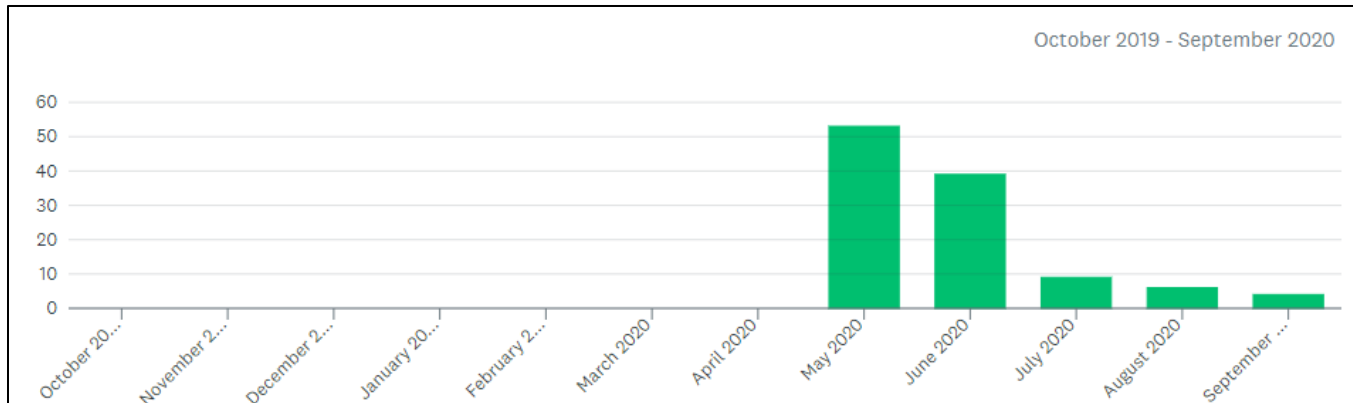
 Survey monkey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/77B7C3T>







## Survey Monkey:



Graph showing the response rates to the survey

The main themes from the questions asked were:

### How are you doing?

Generally, mood would seem low during the pandemic, people noted feeling worried, uncertain and 'more alone than usual'. One person felt they had changed 'a lot, but in good ways', but also noted the time as being emotionally challenging. A change in personal situations, due to the guidelines imposed, has effected people also.

### What is working well?

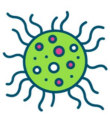
Digital ways of working was noted by all as being a positive. One person mentioned that

using a virtual platform was 'better than nothing at all' and another noted it meant not needing to take time off of work or children out of school to access GP appointments.

One person had still been able to access face to face appointments, which they felt was working well for them.







## Survey Monkey:

### What is not working so well?

There was a mix of responses to this question, with some feeling that there was prioritising of the wrong groups for things such as amenities, and others feeling they were having their services lessened, such as weekly meetings being cut down to monthly meetings, which were not conducive to the treatment plan and situation they were in. One person noted that they did not feel online meetings were working well.

It was noted as staff not enforcing government guidelines in a shared accommodation situation, meaning people were not staying home.

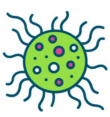
### What can be improved?

It was felt that the situation was 'out of our control' as it is a pandemic so nothing could be improved. Another felt that by having more consistency in their care would have helped and offered some solutions to this, such as a regular 'Webex' meeting rather than a brief phone call.

One person felt that by having another service not for the elderly or vulnerable would help people to know they would eventually get things, but not quite as fast as those vulnerable groups.

Enforcement and following of government guidelines was felt to be something that could be improved.





## Engagement

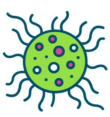
With no longer having an Engagement Officer in post, engagement was taken on by the Admin team who continued to contact those local organisations with BAME community to ask the 4Qs of them.

**Targeted Engagement** in a virtual manner is being trialled and this has begun with mental health inpatient wards. Healthwatch Luton were able to speak to patients and staff from one ward at the hospital and will be speaking with another in coming weeks. The main themes from the patients, was there does not seem to be enough staff. They felt they were pleasant staff and helpful, but getting to speak to them was hard as they were always 'so busy with patients who needed more attention'. One patient commented that, having been on the ward before, was 'dreading' being admitted, but due to a change in staff this time she felt that there was an improvement on management and staffing.

**Young People** are an area we have not heard from during this time, and we have been able to speak to the People Participation for CAMH. The feedback they gave included:

- Changes to treatment
- Not enforcing rules on public transport and other areas of society
- Access to GPs

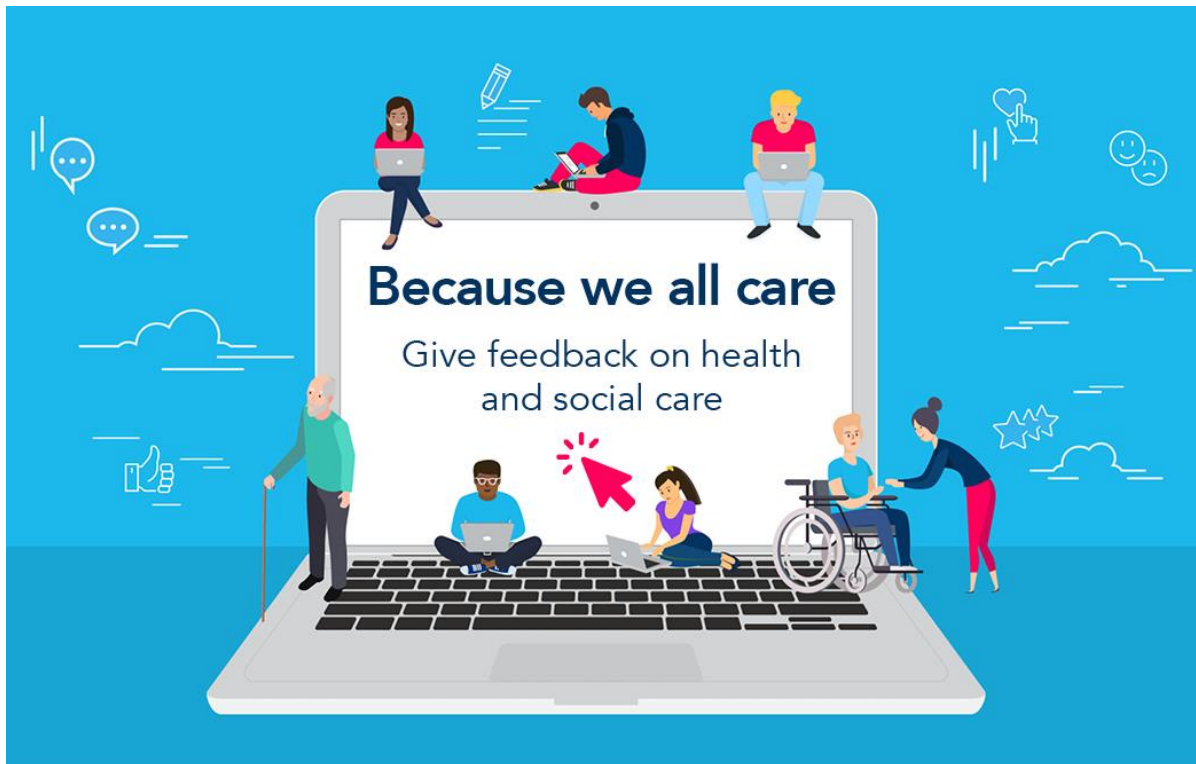


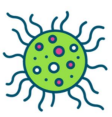


**Engagement Forums** will continue, with the next with speakers from LBC Social Care and Luton and Dunstable Hospital Patient Experience. These will continue monthly, with the focus reflecting the work of the Healthwatch England and CQC campaign #becauseweallcare.

All sessions feedback is included in monthly reporting and separate mini reports overviewing feedback are available for each session.

Healthwatch Luton have continued to call local organisations for their feedback using the 4Qs as a guide and this has included the start of the care homes within Luton. The care homes have provided feedback about accessing different external services for their residents, such as the doctors and hospital.





## Email

A separate email address was set up for this project [covid19@healthwatchluton.co.uk](mailto:covid19@healthwatchluton.co.uk). This email has been used on all our videos, posts and in signatures, to try to encourage people to use it to ensure information about COVID 19 does not get lost. The emails received still seems minimal.

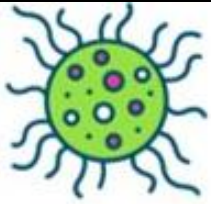
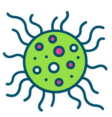
## Case studies

Case studies have begun into those who are digitally excluded. The purpose of these are to understand the perspective of those who are digitally excluded and how they have found the pandemic, through accessing service, receiving communication and understanding testing.

It is worth acknowledging that at times, if a person is digitally excluded, they would not necessarily know what they are missing out on or not receiving the communications for, as they are not in the know.

*See next page for an example*





# How are you doing?

Gathering feedback from the public and professionals on how they are coping during the COVID 19 pandemic

## Being Digitally Excluded



## A case study

This is the experience of an older retired lady in Luton, who is active in the community as a volunteer, and who chooses to be digitally excluded.

### Communications:

Information and communications are usually accessed through the TV, newspaper and radio, which has been no different during the coronavirus pandemic. One preference of a newspaper is that it can be read over a few times and the information can be taken in. Healthwatch Luton share information, as does the TV and usually verbally on the telephone via contacts.

### What has worked well?

'It would be nice if some local information could be provided, so that non digital people could find out more information for example when they got on the bus. Ideal way would be leaflet drops, may be GP's but they are closed or not accessible, putting up local leaflets, pharmacies (prime one as vulnerable people get their medicines delivered) and selected other locations and may be supermarkets.'

### What has not worked so well?

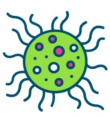
'Mixed messages coming out hasn't been helpful. It is difficult to differentiate what is relevant and the information changes quickly on a national level. There is no clarity.'

### Testing:

The individual had one experience of testing:

"As we have no internet and we heard that anyone in Luton could be tested I phoned 119 number to see if we could book tests for myself and husband. Lady who answered was extremely helpful gave me as much information as she could about how system worked for "non digital contacts" She booked us both in and explained the follow up procedure. We arrived on time, person directing us in was confused when I told her we were "non digital". Checks- she still gave me the online form and said go home and apply online. Explained this was not correct – so directed us to a group of people who were assisting people in cars what to do. It took some time but eventually they found the correct procedure and checked us in. It was not easy to complete the test sitting in the car and opening plastic pouches and breaking off the stick, but they were very helpful. It was not busy with people being tested. Directions to find correct car park were not very clear- signing was not obvious enough. To get the test results, a message left on answerphone at 2pm. To phone for results of tests. Phoned 119 and said message left- she took all personal details for both once again. I said we had the numbers on the confirmation sheets we had. She put me on hold for a long time then I was put through to people who give results. Once again gave personal details. She then confirmed both results as negative. I was on phone for quite a long time however 119 is a free phone number."

The test results came through quickly and the test itself was 'ok'. There was some confusion over finding the test site as it was not clear where to go or how to access the car park itself. It was 'frustrating not knowing where to go'.



## What next?

Feedback will be continued to be gathered from all sources.

We will attend meetings we have been invited to, that are held by local organisations who have clients and service users who would like to share feedback with us.

We will begin targeted engagement with some local organisations to gather feedback from those who are unable to attend Engagement Forums or not comfortable in a more public place providing feedback.

We will hold monthly Engagement Forums, each with a topic relating to the current workplan, and a focus on a disproportionately affected group within Luton.

We will continue to work with Mental Health services to gather feedback from those who are on an acute mental health ward.

We will continue to forge relationships with schools and other young people settings to gather the feedback of the younger people of Luton.

We will create posters to share with faith groups in Luton, to encourage the congregations to provide feedback to Healthwatch Luton.

We will support the local communication campaign for the flu vaccination programme and gather feedback about experiences of those trying to access flu vaccines.

We will continue to include the #becasueweallcare campaign within our work locally, to support the areas of the community to have their voice heard.

