



healthwatch
Wakefield

WAKEFIELD DISTRICT

Adult Social Care Service User Wellbeing

Report
January 2021

Healthwatch is the independent champion for people who use health and social care services.

We are here to find out what matters to people and help make sure their views shape the support they need.

There is a local Healthwatch in every area of England.

We listen to what people like about services, and what could be improved, and we share their views with those with the power to make change happen.

We also help people find the information they need about services in their area.

We have the power to ensure that the government and those running the services hear people’s voices.

As well as seeking the public’s views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them.

Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.

Healthwatch Wakefield 2021

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Background and Methodology

In November 2020, a working group was formed including the Service Director for Adult Social Care (Older People and Physical Disabilities) and several members of her team alongside the Healthwatch Research Officer.

A series of questions were put together to find out how well services were working for people, and whether any improvements could be made in the future.

People from the Adult Social Care database were telephoned by the Healthwatch Research Officer between December 2020 and January 2021. They were asked if they would be willing to answer a few questions about the care and support that they had received over the previous six months, and their thoughts and feelings about the future.

Of the 126 people who answered the phone call, 120 people agreed to take part and answer the questions.

97 of the respondents were from the Adult Social Care database, and 23 of the respondents were from the Mental Health Service database.

Executive Summary

Overall, people were very appreciative of the phone call and that someone was checking in on them and taking an interest in how they were feeling.

Most people who were receiving care in the home were also very appreciative of it, with several people calling this contact from their carers a 'life saver' particularly at the moment.

There were many positive comments about the care in the home that people were receiving and how much it meant to them.

Where there were some negative comments about care in the home, these tended to be more around the organisation of the care. Carers not turning up at the expected time can have a big impact on mental health. For example, one elderly lady told us that when the carers turned up an hour or more later than expected on a morning, she was hardly able to wait to get to the toilet and she was, of course, very upset about this.

Where telephone appointments had been accessed there was very positive feedback about them. Most people would still prefer to have a face to face appointment and worried about things being missed, but on the whole, people understood the need for different ways of doing things.

Most people reported that they had additional support from family and friends or neighbours. This was often in the form of a family member providing care or help with shopping.

Many people were clearly very lonely. For example, we spoke to a 99 year old lady who was very happy with the carers who came to help her, she was hard of hearing but could just manage on the telephone. She told us that although she was managing ok, she would very much like someone else to talk to. She mentioned several times that we could ring her again and how lovely it had been to chat.

Some people were clearly not managing very well, and the isolation was having a grave impact on them. A few people mentioned suicidal thoughts. Worryingly one lady told us that she had rung the Samaritans and was unable to get through to speak to anyone. Even for these people, one phone call and the knowledge that someone cared seemed to make a big difference to them.

This report highlights some of the key findings from these 120 completed surveys. Full responses are available on request.

Have you had support or contact with any of the following adult social care services over the last six months or so?

Answers total more than 120 as some people had contact with more than one service. The support most people had received in the last six months was care in the home, a social worker, and Care Link tele care.

Have you had support or contact with any of the following adult social care services over the last six months or so?	Response	
	%	No.
Social worker / Care coordinator	41.67	50
Care in the home	76.67	92
Supported living	2.50	3
Day opportunities	1.67	2
Shared lives	1.67	2
Adaptations and equipment	13.33	16
Reablement services	0.83	1
Tele-care / Care Link	43.33	52
Sensory impairment team	0.83	1
Occupational Therapy	5.83	7
Other	3.33	4
None	0.83	1

The support most people had received in the last six months was care in the home, a social worker, and Care Link tele care.



If you have had contact with a service over the last six months, were you satisfied with the support that you received?

If you have had contact with a service over the last six months, were you satisfied with the support that you received?	Response	
	%	No.
Yes	81.97	100
No	3.28	4
Somewhat	10.66	13

The vast majority of respondents, 82%, said that they were satisfied with the support that they had received over the last six months.

When asked what they were most satisfied with and what had worked really well, 87 people responded, the responses were categorised as:

Respondents	Category
39	Very happy with their carers
45	Everything!
2	Care Link (tele care)
2	Other
1	Having a trusted Social Worker
2	Occupational Health
1	Respite care

“Could not be more complimentary about her carers, they are a lifeline to her. The carers are really friendly, no complaints whatsoever.”

“Care link whole system has worked well, it has been a God send. She can't fault her carer who goes over and above to make sure that she is ok. She feels she would have really struggled mentally without her carer over the last six months.”

“They are the most marvellous bunch of carers I have known. They are absolutely wonderful I wouldn't be here without them.”

“Occupational therapist was wonderful getting her a hospital bed has made a real difference to her life.”

“Really happy with her carers, she just wishes they had a bit more time to talk to her, but they are busy doing their jobs.”

Of the 17 people that were either ‘not satisfied’ or ‘somewhat satisfied’ the main issues were problems with carers and / or the care company (nine people).

Other issues mentioned were feeling abandoned and a lack of adaptations in the home.

“The carers have been a lifeline; they couldn't have managed without them. The problem has been the inconsistency of carers...”

They have different people coming each week which means that the carers don't have the knowledge needed to deal with her husband. With dementia sufferers this is particularly hard as they can't understand why it is someone different coming each day.”

Have any of the services you've received been affected by the restrictions over the last six months?

Have any of the services you've received been affected by the restrictions over the last six months? Were you happy with how this went?	Happy	Somewhat happy	Not happy
Telephone appointment instead of face to face	24	7	4
Video appointment instead of face to face	2	0	0

35 respondents had experience of having a telephone appointment in place of a face to face appointment over the last six months.

The majority of those appointments were with the GP or Hospital.

69% of respondents were completely satisfied with how their appointment went.

“Hospital lots of telephone appointments and this has worked well where a face to face appointment wasn't necessary.”

“She is in touch with her PA mainly online at the moment, it works really well.”

The comments from the four people who were *not* satisfied with their telephone appointment were:

“Doctors have been a waste of time. Prescribed medicine that wasn't correct, he won't be ringing the doctors again.”

“Hospital - diabetic clinic - she was horrible! The doctor that she spoke to was very dismissive of her illnesses, also made her feel that she shouldn't be taking strong pain relief even though she wakes up in the night in agony. She felt that the doctor didn't take the time to get to know her and her background.”

“They feel that with telephone calls it's easy for the person to say that they're ok when really they're not. This is not picked up in a telephone call.”

“Psychiatrist – I would rather have face to face though.”

Other comments from the seven people who were ‘somewhat happy’ were largely around problems with the timing of the calls or that they would prefer face to face appointments and worry that things could get missed over the telephone.

“Telephone isn't good. He has dementia and epilepsy, and things can get missed over the telephone. It is hard to describe what the seizures are like without someone seeing him.”

Only two people had experienced a video appointment over the last six months, both were happy with how the appointment went.

Have you had any other support over the last six months?

Have you had any other support over the last six months?	Response	
	%	No.
Family or friends	90.65	97
Neighbours	9.35	10
Food parcels	0.00	0

How are you feeling generally at the moment and about the next six months?

These responses have been put into nine different categories.

Respondents	Category
54	Feeling ok
25	Sad / lonely / fed up
17	Good and bad days
14	Worried
9	Optimistic
6	Extremely down and fed up
3	Not sure
3	Other
2	Tired

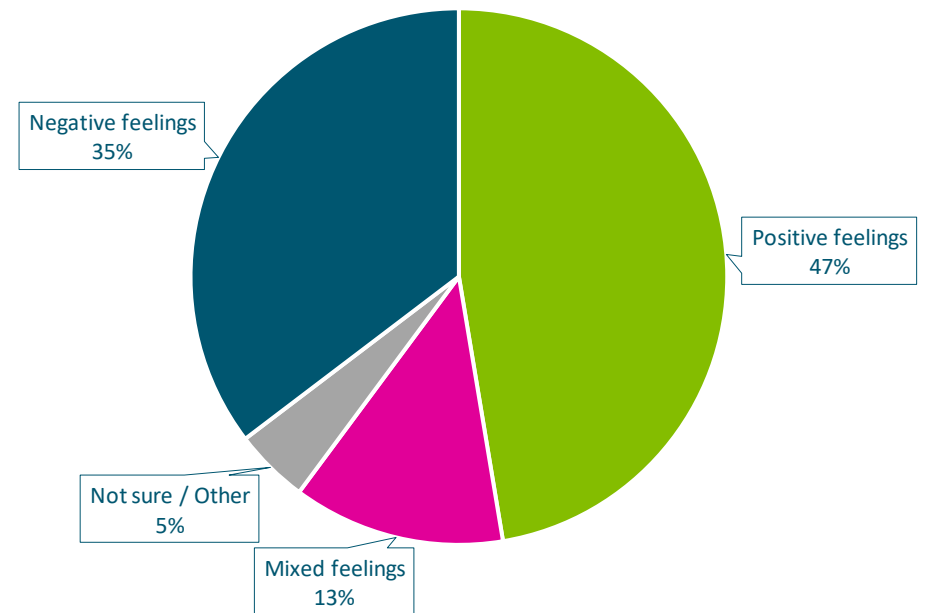
“Really fed up of not being able to go anywhere but taking each day at a time.”

“Very tired, she needs a day off from caring! Looking forward to day care starting again so she can have a break. She has been in touch with Carers support for over 10 years, so she does have support from them.”

“Sad, it has been hard isolating, she lives on her own. Looking forward to being able to see people again.”

“Quite anxious and worried but aware that she's not the only one feeling this way, scared of getting covid but is doing everything she can to keep safe.”

“Their mental health has really been affected by the problems with the care company they have been having. They are hopeful that things have turned a corner now but still worried.”



Thinking ahead to the next six months, what kind of things would help you to feel supported?

These responses have been put into seven different categories.

Respondents	Category
83	Ok/Happy with services/Happy with amount of support
22	Would like more support
12	Extra home adaptations or equipment
9	Other
5	Would like better communication
2	Would like day care to start again
1	Would like some respite

“She told us that she would like to have more people to talk to, the carers don't always have time. She clearly was really happy to talk to someone and would love to have other people to talk to.”

This lady was hard of hearing; she could hear when the caller spoke very loudly, but it made the conversation difficult. A Referral to Social Care Direct was made.

“Her husband is incontinent, and she is having to wash bedding every day and has nowhere to dry it and no room for a tumble dryer. The District nurse is looking into something different to put on the bed to help with this and she will chase this up again with the district nurse.”

“She is managing ok at the moment and knows who to contact if she needs any additional support.”

“Talked a lot about the lack of contact that they have had. No visits since March, very minimal telephone contact, nobody has actually spoken to him only to his sister who is his full time carer. She worries what would happen to him if she was ill for example. She worries about other people who don't have the care that she is giving her brother and how they are managing, feels people are slipping through the net. She feels that there isn't enough contact, even as a minimum checking up on people over the telephone on a regular basis as an appointment for them.”

Thank you

Thank you to Wakefield Council for inviting us to talk to local people about the services they were receiving, and to those who took part.



Message from Wakefield Council's Adult Social Care Service Directors

At Wakefield Council we have been concerned about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on our service users in adult social care.

We therefore commissioned Healthwatch Wakefield to help us find out how people were coping.

We have been very pleased with the positive responses to the telephone surveys and happy to see that most people have felt supported by services.

We note however that many people have felt lonely and some are not managing well.

As a result of the Healthwatch Wakefield work, we are planning to put in a 'check in and chat' service to offer informal support and company for people who feel that this would be helpful.

We have also commissioned Healthwatch Wakefield to continue and expand the engagement work they have done for us, improving our ability to listen to and support our service users.

We would like to thank Healthwatch Wakefield for giving us a valuable insight into the experiences of local people who need our support.

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