

Healthwatch Cheshire Citizens Focus Panel

Survey 5 - August 2021

NHS Help Us Help You Campaign



Introduction

Healthwatch Cheshire are helping to plan, shape and improve local health and care services. We're gaining feedback and starting discussions to influence decision making, using your voice to encourage those who run health and care services to act on what matters to you.

Healthwatch Cheshire's Citizens Focus Panel enables us to get feedback on topical issues from a set group of Cheshire residents on a regular basis. Our panel is made up of a wide range of people from all across Cheshire and continues to grow, we're always looking for new volunteers to join us.

During the winter months of late 2020 and early 2021, the NHS in Cheshire joined with a range of public and voluntary sector partners to run a campaign called *Help Us Help You*. The aim was to support people to live healthy lives, self-care when safe to do so and choose the right service at the right time if medical help was needed. By doing this, the campaign also set out to reduce unnecessary demand on urgent and emergency care during one of the most difficult winters the NHS has ever faced.

This Citizens Focus Panel aims to help our local NHS and its partners measure the effectiveness of the campaign and to plan the campaign for this winter. We sent out our survey to 100 panel members during August 2021 and received 65 responses.

We'll feed this information into those who provide other health and care services to improve the future experiences of people. This includes the Care Quality Commission, NHS Cheshire Clinical Commissioning Group, Cheshire West and Chester and Cheshire East Councils and Local NHS Foundation Trusts as well as our colleagues at Healthwatch England. To view previous reports, please visit:

healthwatchcwac.org.uk/what-we-do/our-reports

healthwatchcheshireeast.org.uk/what-we-do/our-reports



Survey Results



Q1: Have you seen or heard about the NHS Help Us, Help You Campaign? (If no, skip to Question 4.)

Answered: 65 Skipped: 0



15 out of 65 respondents
had heard about the
NHS Help Us Help You
campaign

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	23.08%	15
No	58.46%	38
Not sure	18.46%	12
TOTAL		65



Q2: Where have you seen or heard about the NHS Help Us Help You campaign? (Choose all that apply)

Answered: 15 Skipped: 54



15 respondents had seen or heard about NHS Help, Us Help You campaign.

We asked the respondents where they had seen or heard about it, choosing multiple options, where necessary.

The majority had discovered the campaign online.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
GP surgery	0.00%	0
National or local media (Newspapers, TV, Radio)	36.36%	4
Hospital	0.00%	0
Online – social media	27.27%	3
Online – NHS, local authority or voluntary sector website	72.73%	8
Staff bulletin or intranet	9.09%	1
Total Respondents: 11		



Q3. To what extent do you agree with the following statements about the Help Us Help You campaign?

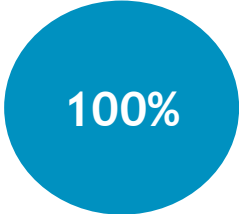
Answered: 15 Skipped: 54

15 respondents had seen or heard about the NHS *Help Us Help You* campaign.

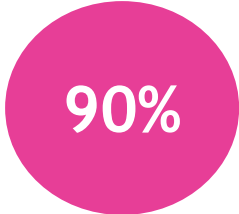
I'm now clearer about where I should go for medical advice



I'm now clearer about what kinds of ailments require medical attention

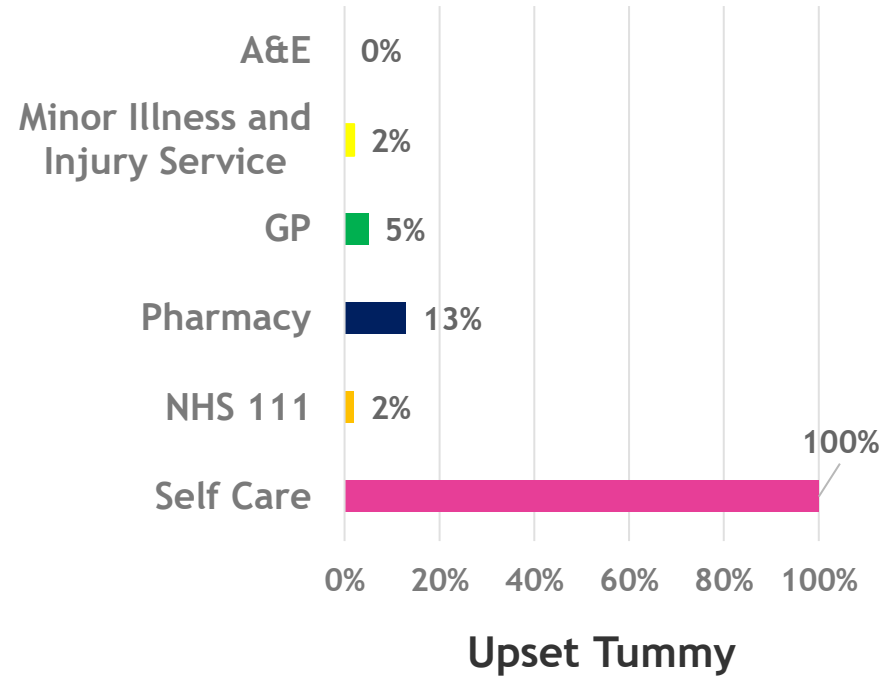
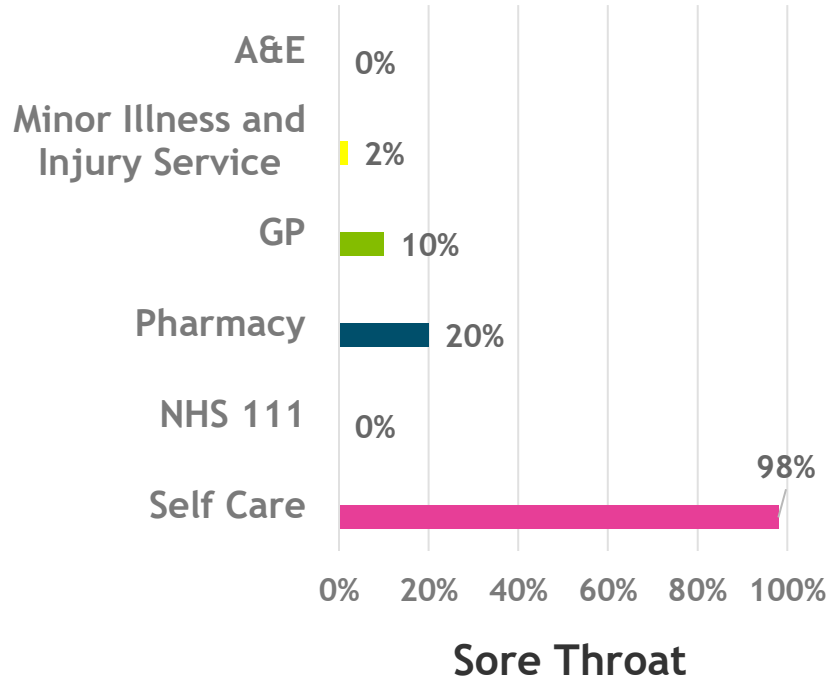


The campaign was clear and easy to understand



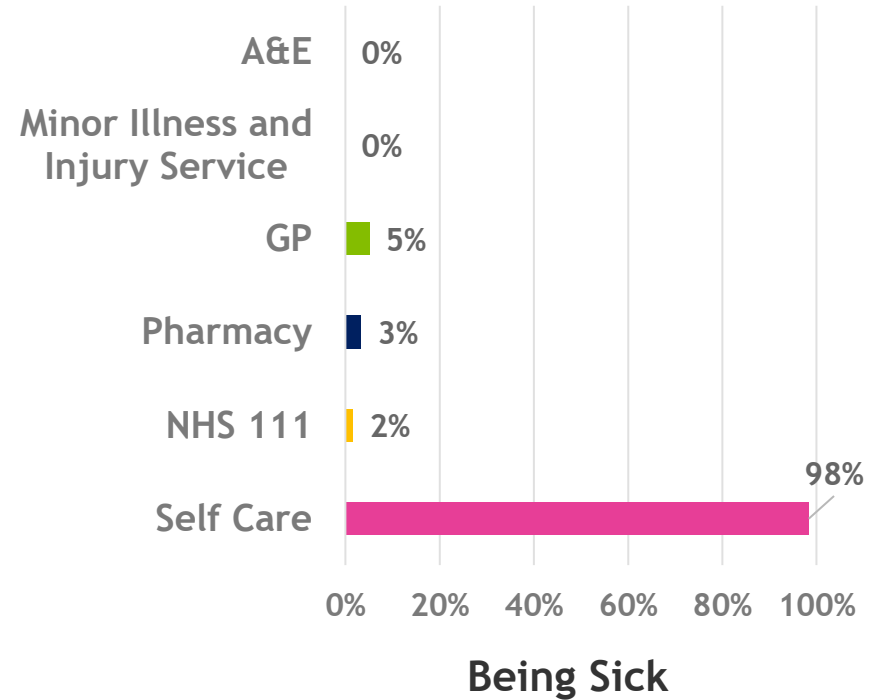
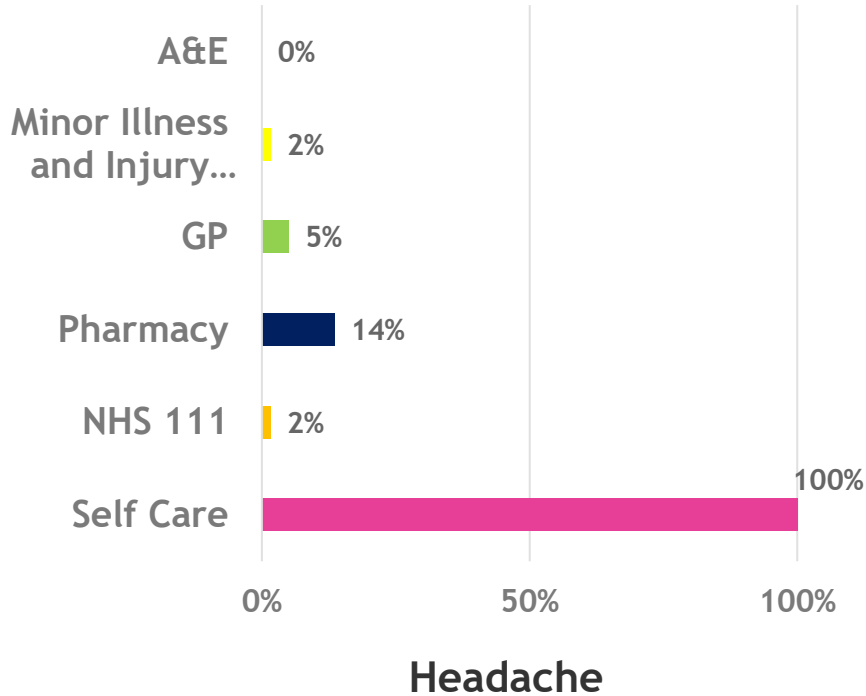
Q4. How would you deal with a number of common ailments? (Choose all that apply for each ailment).

Answered: 59 Skipped: 6



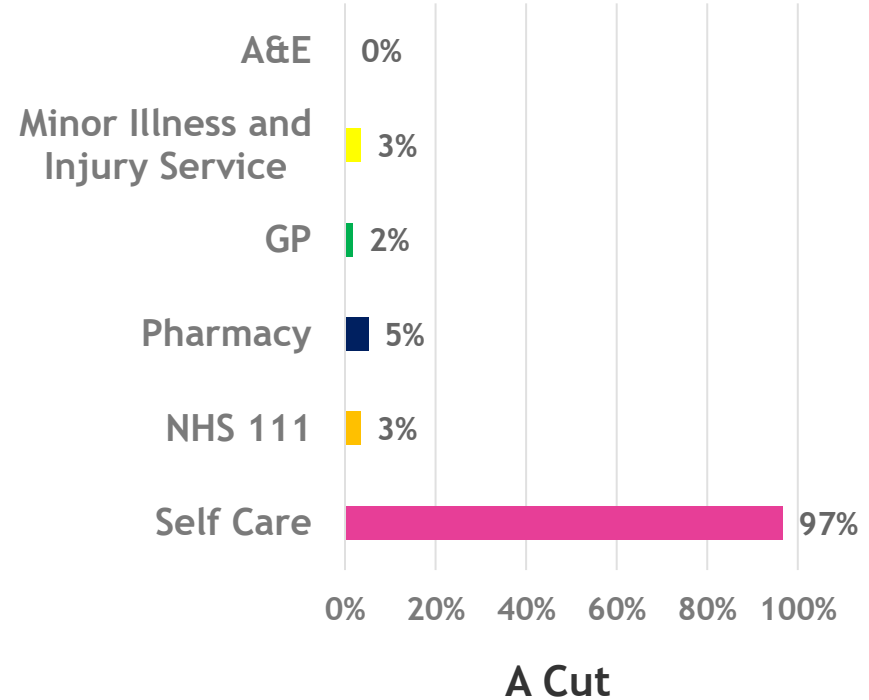
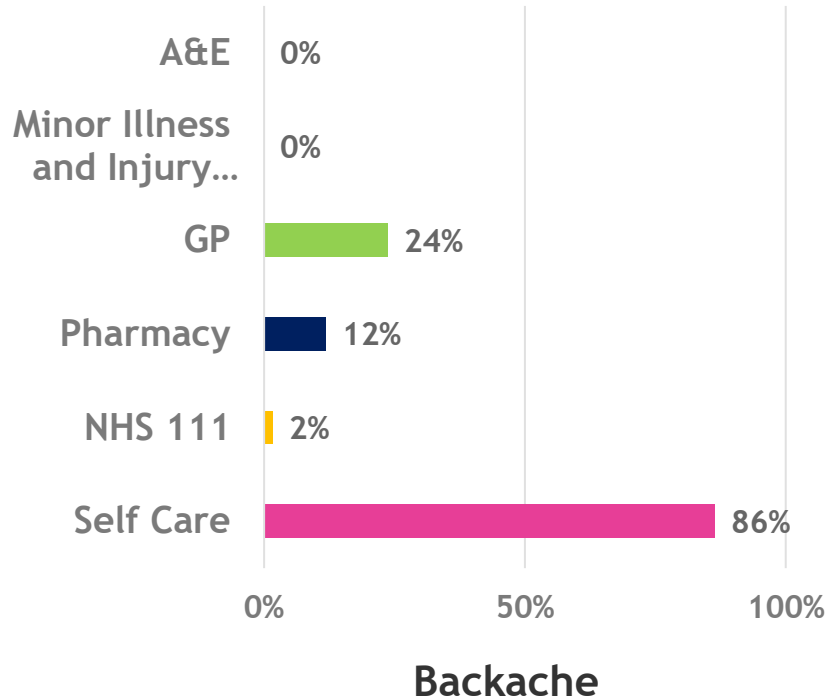
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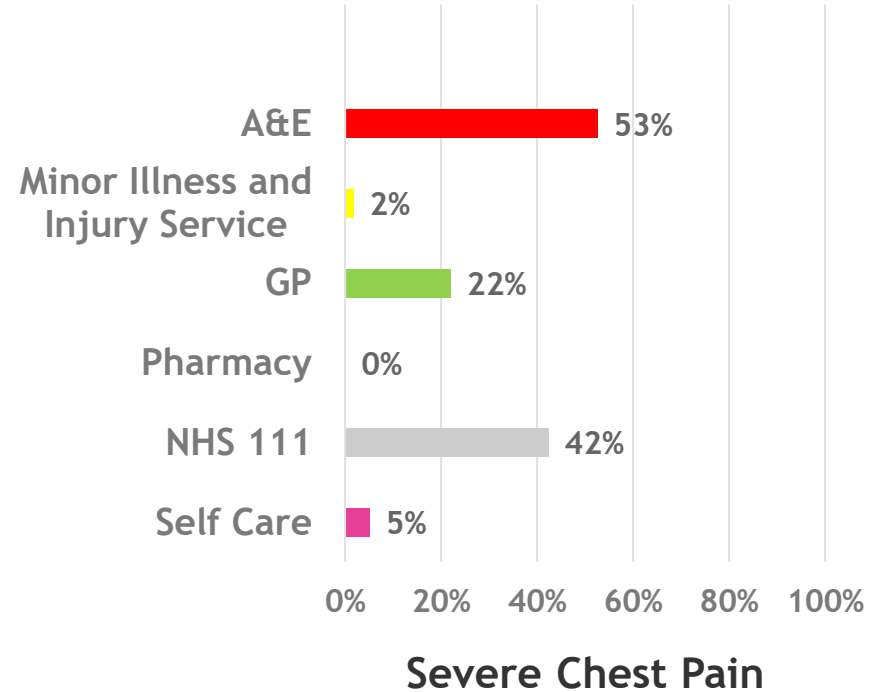
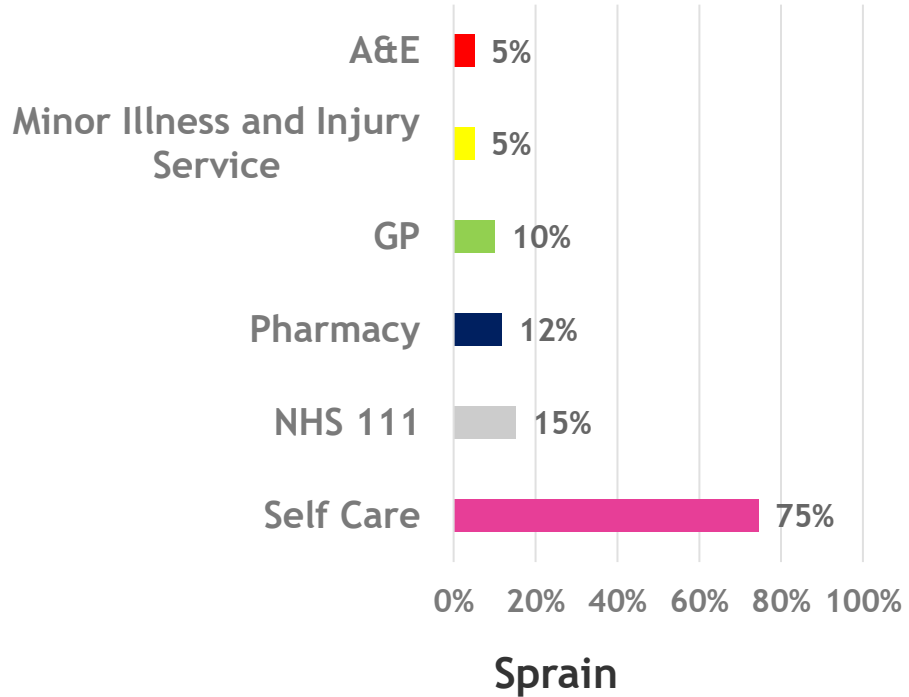
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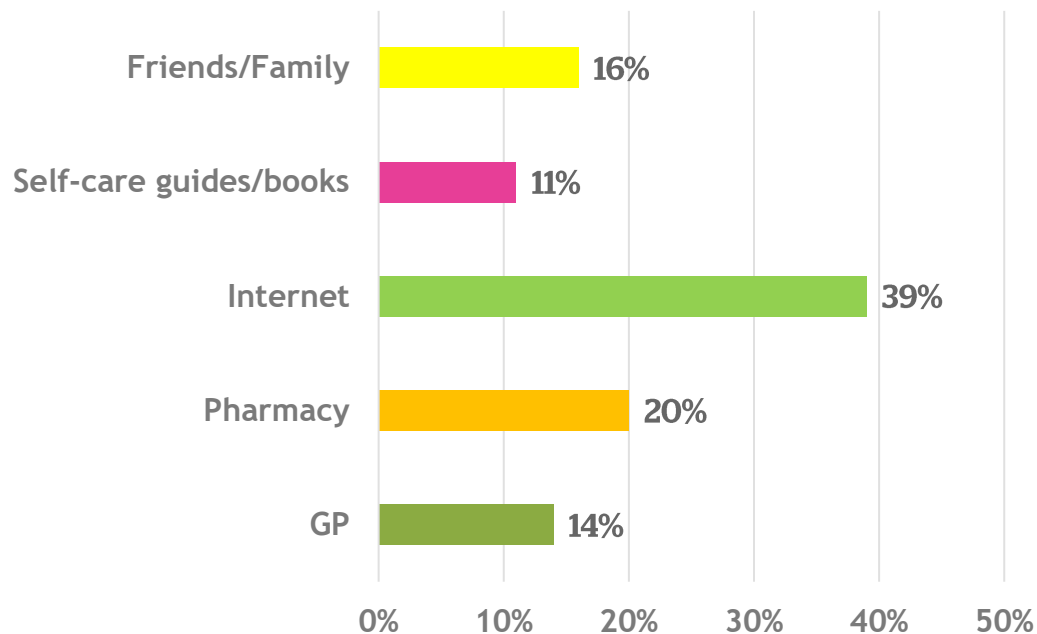
	SELF-CARE	NHS 111	PHARMACY	GP	MINOR ILLNESS AND INJURY SERVICE	A&E	TOTAL RESPONDENTS
Sore Throat	98.31% 58	0.00% 0	20.34% 12	10.17% 6	1.69% 1	0.00% 0	59
Upset Tummy	100.00% 59	1.69% 1	13.56% 8	5.08% 3	1.69% 1	0.00% 0	59
Headache	100.00% 59	1.69% 1	13.56% 8	5.08% 3	1.69% 1	0.00% 0	59
Being sick	98.31% 58	1.69% 1	3.39% 2	5.08% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	59
Backache	86.44% 51	1.69% 1	11.86% 7	23.73% 14	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	59
A cut	96.61% 57	3.39% 2	5.08% 3	1.69% 1	3.39% 2	0.00% 0	59
A sprain	74.58% 44	15.25% 9	11.86% 7	10.17% 6	5.08% 3	5.08% 3	59
Severe chest pain	5.08% 3	42.37% 25	0.00% 0	22.03% 13	1.69% 1	52.54% 31	59

This table summarises how the people we asked would choose to deal with a number of common ailments.



Q5. Where do you primarily source your self-care/treatment advice/information? (Please choose ONE option)

Answered: 59 Skipped: 6



The internet was most people's 'go to' place for information about self-care advice or treatment.

Listing the options above, we asked people where they sourced the information necessary to conduct their own self-care.



Q5 (a): Why do you primarily use this source of information?

Below are a variety of responses as to why people we asked prefer to use the internet as a source of information and advice for their self-care:

- *“[The internet] is easy to access, it has a wide variety of information, from sources such as the NHS.”*
- *“It prevents me from having to burden health care services for everyday ailments”.*
- *“It provides instant access to most of the health questions I need answering.”*
- *“I’m able to research any number of websites to gain a balanced view from the ease and comfort of my own home.”*
- *“I use the NHS website as it’s full of useful information targeted for specific symptoms.”*
- *“Information is quick and easy to attain.”*
- *“It’s the first place I go to become more informed before I take my next steps.”*
- *“I use online forums as a source of peer support and they contain people with the same condition who have lived experience.”*
- *“It’s a ‘one-stop-shop’ for this kind of information.”*



Q5 (a): Why do you primarily use this source of information? Cont.

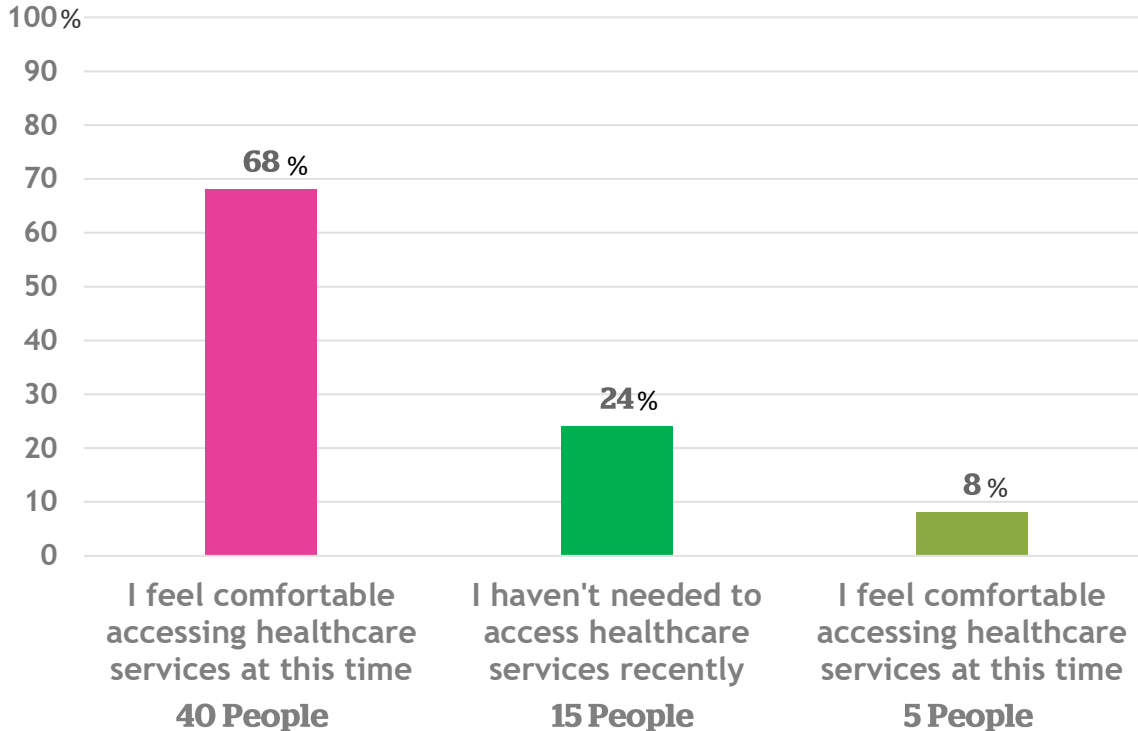
Below are a variety of responses as to why people we asked use other sources of information and advice for their self-care:

- *“[Pharmacists] have had the relevant training.”*
- *“I trust them [friends and family] for advice.”*
- *“My [GP] is a credible source of information and it’s relatively easy to access a telephone appointment.”*
- *“My [pharmacist] is very knowledgeable on common ailments and is very easy to access without the need for an appointment.”*
- *“[Ringing my GP] It’s what I’ve always done, I might ring 111 or access secondary care if I’m worried.”*
- *“[Self-care guides and books] can prevent an unnecessary trip to the GP.”*
- *“I always ask my friends and family before I make any more decisions.”*
- *“They [the Pharmacist] are local an easy to access.”*



Q6: How do you currently feel about accessing healthcare services? (Such as; GPs, Hospitals, Pharmacies, Dentists etc.)

Answered: 59 Skipped: 6



Most people we asked feel comfortable about accessing health services at this time.



Q6 (a): Can you tell us why?

Below are a variety of responses as to why people we asked feel comfortable about accessing healthcare services at this time:

- *“I’ve accessed my GP and local hospital and there are still social distancing and Covid safe practices in place.”*
- *“I trust them [friends and family] for advice.”*
- *“I’ve had both my jabs, wear a mask and follow the instructions in place by the health care provider.”*
- *“I’m receiving good care from all of my health care providers.”*
- *“My local GP is very professional and I feel safe when attending.”*
- *“My GP has kept strict precautions in place to stop the spread of the virus.”*
- *“Now the Covid rules have relaxed, we’re encouraged to use health services again.”*
- *“Now that I’ve had both Covid vaccinations, I feel the health risks or accessing services are low.”*
- *“I’ve had no problem accessing the healthcare I need, during the pandemic.”*



Q6 (a): Can you tell us why? Cont...

Below are a variety of responses as to why people we asked do not feel comfortable about accessing healthcare services at this time:

- *“The message they are sending out, seems to be putting you off contacting them - especially GP surgeries.”*
- *“I feel that the [number of Covid-19 cases] in Cheshire is still very high.”*
- *“My [GP] is a credible source of information and it’s relatively easy to access a telephone appointment.”*
- *“Trying to get an appointment with a GP is an uphill struggle - having to go online and answer lots of questions when you’re unwell, instead of just speaking to a human.”*
- *“It feels like the NHS is fast disappearing.”*
- *“GP appointments are difficult to access and there are no Dentist appointments available locally”*
- *“I feel like a I can never get an appointment when I need one.”*
- *“I won’t access services in person - my last 3 appointments have been by telephone.”*



Q7: Do you have any comments or concerns regarding health and care at this time?

- *“I’m finding it difficult to access a dentist at the moment.”*
- *“I feel that my health has been managed well recently.”*
- *“I’m concerned about the length of time for hospital treatments, particularly for painful conditions, the length of waiting lists is a serious situation.”*
- *“I think the back log of cases created by Coronavirus will take a few years to tackle and may shorten lives.”*
- *“I feel that I’m receiving good care from all NHS services at the moment.”*
- *“I’m aware that there are great strains on all aspects of care at the moment.”*
- *“It feels like the NHS is disappearing .”*
- *“There is still a backlog of conditions, and services are not back to normal yet, so I probably wont go to a GP unless it is urgent.*
- *“I feel more comfortable asking my GP for support when I have a more serious problem.”*
- *“I’ve had no problem accessing the care I need during the pandemic.”*



Q7: Do you have any comments or concerns regarding health and care at this time? Contd...

- *“I feel that I am still receiving great service from the NHS.”*
- *“Accessing GP appointments has been a bit of a nightmare.”*
- *“I feel that GPs have hidden away behind closed doors and haven’t offered the same help to patients as those on the front lines.”*
- *“I am very concerned about the creeping privatisation of health care at the moment.*
- *“Some referral services are becoming difficult to access due to long waiting times, i.e. my families experiences with physio taking over a month and we have been told ADHD referrals may take years.”*
- *“I don’t think we’ve had the Covid vaccine long enough to know how effective it is and how long it will last.”*
- *“I’m happy that GPs have started making full use of technology i.e, more telephone appointments and having patients upload photos for triage.”*
- *“I’ve been experiencing delays, long waiting times and poor communication lately.”*



Summary

15 respondents to our survey had seen or heard about the NHS *Help Us, Help You* campaign. The vast majority of whom had discovered it online. Of these respondents, the majority said that the campaign was clear and easy to understand. It made them clearer about where they should go to for medical advice and what kind of ailments required medical attention.

We asked all 65 of the respondents to our survey how they would deal with a number of common ailments. We presented a range of options; from self-care and seeking advice from NHS 111, through to approaching Primary Care services (such as a GP or pharmacy) or Secondary Care (such as attending A&E). Most respondents told us that they would use self-care to deal with what they perceived to be more minor ailments. More moderate health concerns were deemed serious enough to also approach a health professional such as a GP, pharmacist or NHS 111, though most would still incorporate self-care. For more serious health concerns, most people told us that they would go to A&E, and a notable number of respondents would call a GP or NHS 111 as part of their response.

Most people told us that the internet was a primary source of self-care advice or information. Mainly because there is such a vast range of information that is convenient and easy to attain. Many people also said they would approach someone they trusted for treatment advice, such as a family member or friend or their local pharmacist. A notable number of people told us that these options were all that was needed in most cases, and if not, they acted as a good 'first step' before making a more formal approach to local health and care services.

