



July-September 2021



About us

About Healthwatch Wiltshire

Healthwatch Wiltshire is your local health and social care champion. As an independent statutory body, we have the power to make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers listen to local feedback and improve standards of care. We also help people to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.

Our priorities

For 2021/22 are:

Primary care

- Gathering feedback on primary care services such as GP surgeries and dentists with a focus on access – both face to face and digital.

Mental health

- Listening to experiences of mental health services and shaping service redesign.

Children and young people

- Young Healthwatch volunteers will identify areas important to them and seek the views of children and young people.

Discharge pathways

- Hearing experiences of the discharge process from acute hospital to home.



Highlights

Recruited 1 new member of staff



Published 3 reports



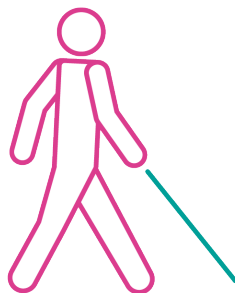
Carried out visits to Great Western Hospital, Swindon



Launched our survey on LGBTQ+ services for young people



Launched our survey on Medequip's community equipment service



Announced our Community Cash Fund winners



Talking & listening



253 people shared their experience of services with us

we attended **26** meetings, forums or events

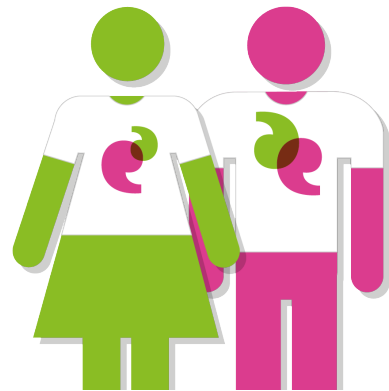


128 contacts were given information and signposted through our Helpdesk Hub Team...

...with an average call time of **29** minutes

30 volunteers were involved...

...and volunteered over **374** hours

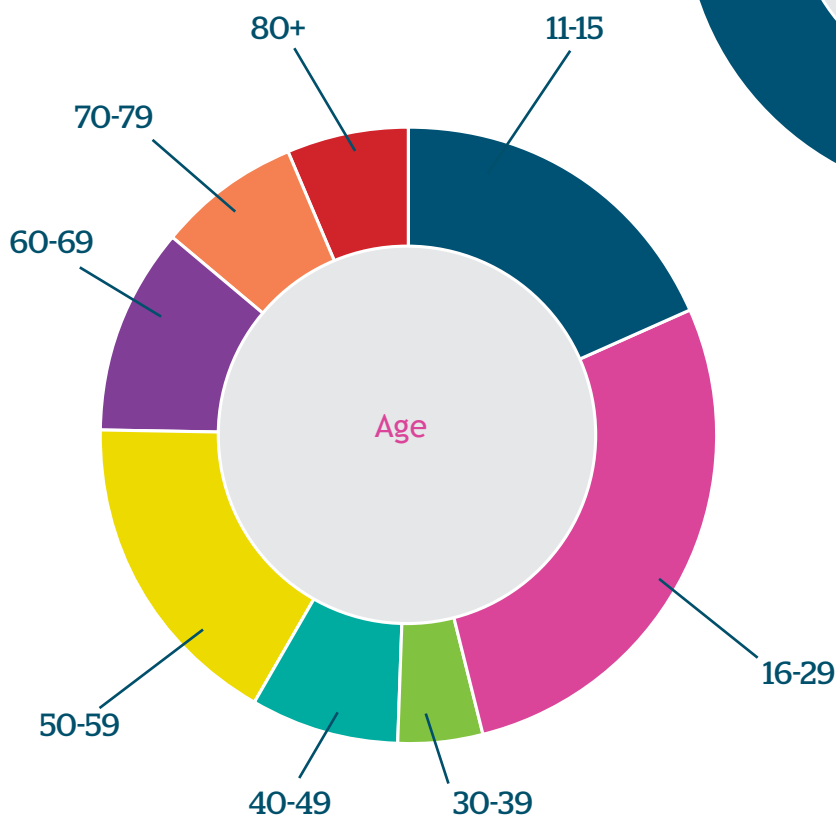
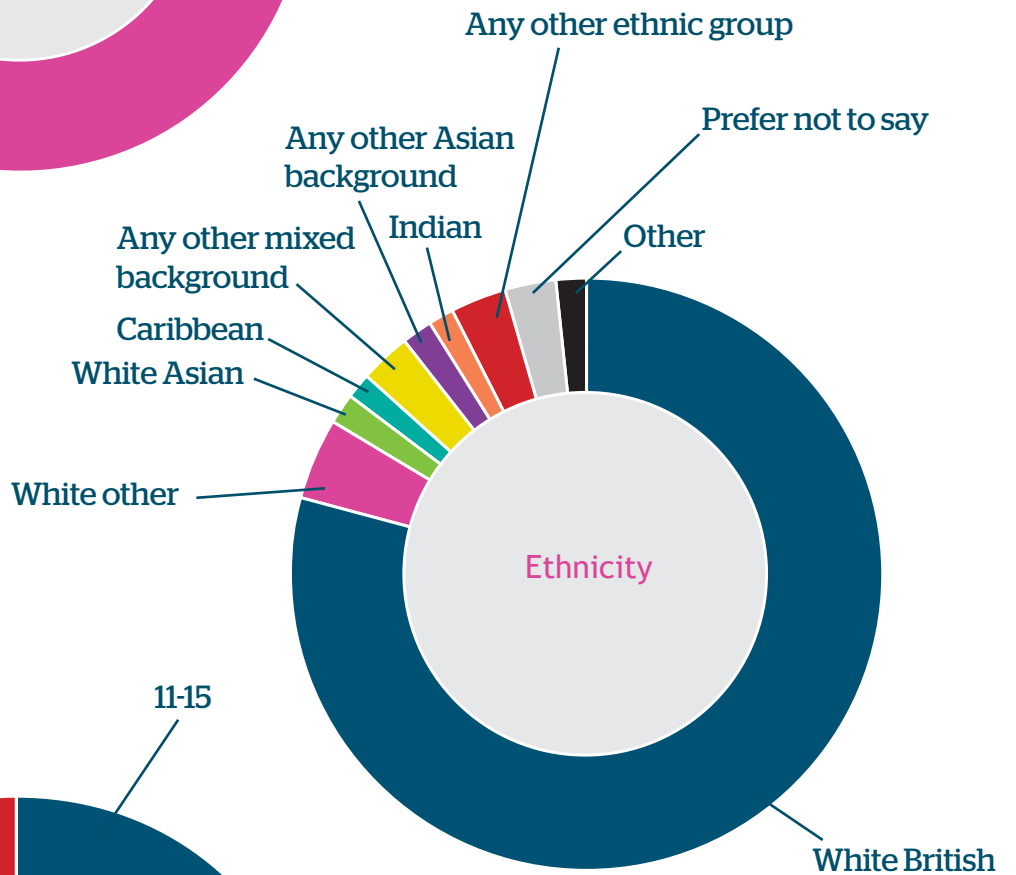
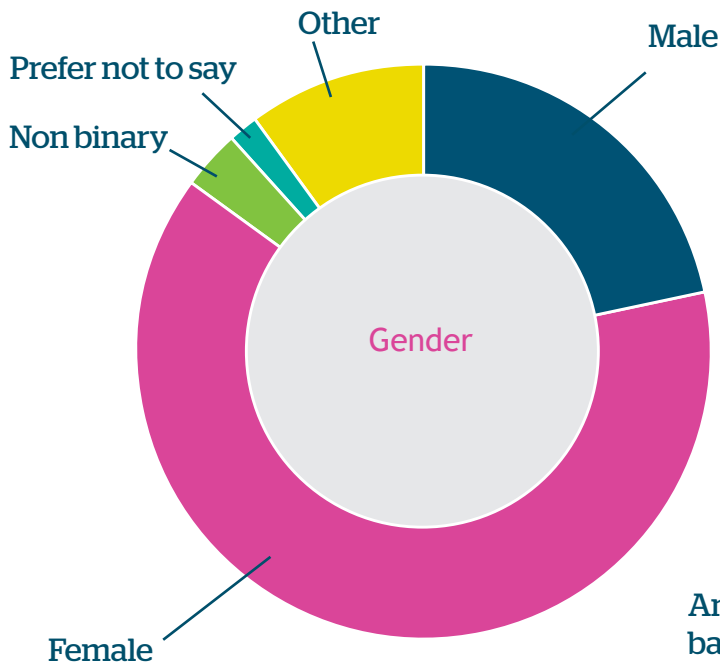


273 social media posts...

...reached **22,771** people

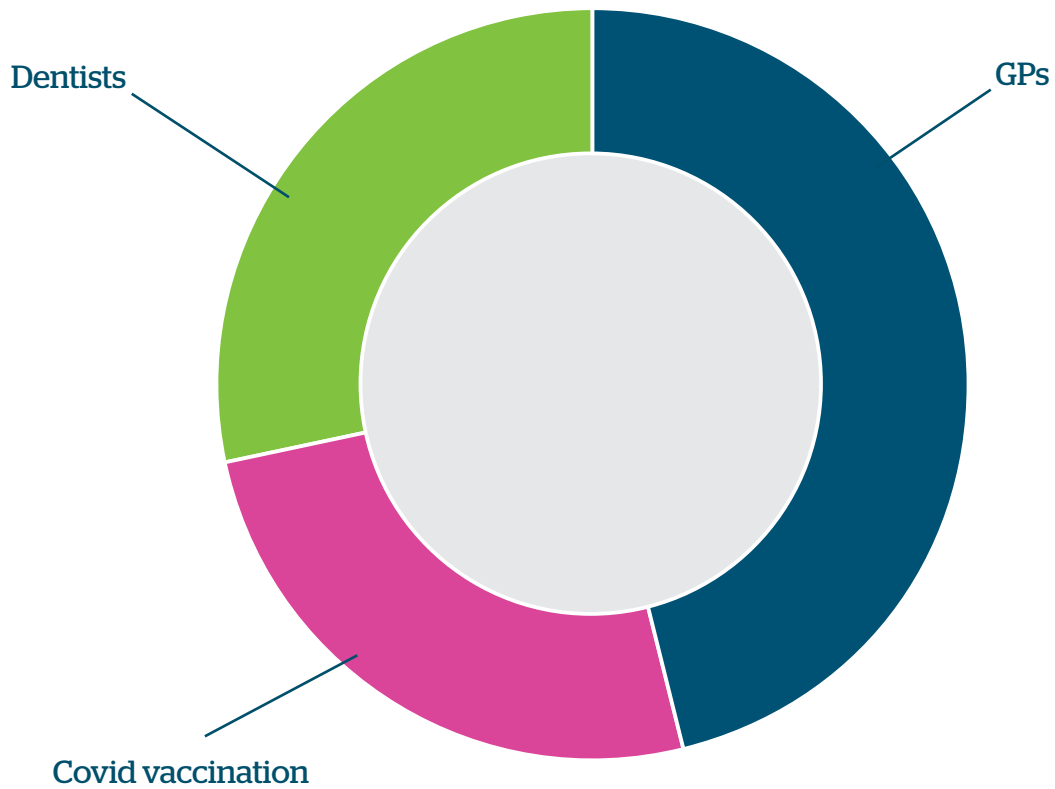
...and our website received **10,892** page views

Who shared their experience with us?



*Demographics not collected for all interactions.

What services did people speak to us about?



What were the comments about?

Service	Positive	Negative
GPs	Staff attitudes	Access
Dentists	-	Access
Covid vaccination	Access Staff attitudes	-

Our work

Young people asked for views on LGBTQ+ support services

In August, we launched a survey to find out what children and young people think of local health and support services for young LGBTQ+ people.

We're asking anyone aged 11-25 who identifies as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, or who is questioning their sexual or gender identity, to share their experiences of support they've received and tell us what support they'd like to see in their school, college or workplace and in their local community.

Our Young Healthwatch Wiltshire volunteers



devised a short, anonymous survey to gather young people's views which will be shared with NHS leaders and other decision makers to help improve local services. [The survey](#) is open until the end of October.

Community Cash Fund winners revealed

Three projects that will help people from seldom heard groups to share their ideas of how health, care and community services could be improved, have been awarded a grant from our Community Cash Fund.

The scheme, which was launched in April, invited local groups and organisations to apply for funds of up to £1,000 to get their project off the ground.

The three projects selected to receive a grant will not only boost their local communities but will provide a way for Healthwatch Wiltshire to get more feedback on local services from people it might not otherwise hear from.

And the winners are...

Mind Reset, which is based in Malmesbury, will be hosting a series of workshops for people living with bipolar disorder. The workshops will provide advice and information on the condition and where to access support, as well

as being a sounding board for people to discuss their needs and how they think these needs could be met in the future.

Music for Wellbeing will be launching a pilot project in Salisbury for families with primary school age children living with childhood asthma. The singing and play for better breathing course will focus on managing childhood asthma and breath management techniques, and provide an opportunity for families to give their feedback on asthma services for children.

Wiltshire Hearing Voices Group provides a safe and non-judgemental space for people with unusual sensory experiences, such as hearing voices or seeing things, to share experiences and coping strategies. Our grant will help fund the Trowbridge-based group for a year, and to gather feedback on services through regular focus groups.

[Find out more](#) on our website.

Hearing experiences of GWH services

Healthwatch Wiltshire, Healthwatch Swindon and Healthwatch West Berkshire have been working with Great Western hospital (GWH) in Swindon to hear the experiences of people that have used their services.

A survey ran for the whole of July asking for people to share their views of the Emergency

Department and Urgent Care, and inpatient wards. We also carried out a number of face to face and virtual enter and view visits in July to speak to patients using the service.

A report summarising what we heard will be shared with GWH and published in November. Thank you to everyone who spoke to us.

Have your say on equipment service

Healthwatch Wiltshire is looking for people to share their experiences of the county's Community Equipment Service. We're working with Medequip, which provides equipment such as walking frames, wheelchairs and hoists, to

find out what people think of the service, what they like about it and what they think could be improved.

[Share your views with us.](#)

Our response to Covid-19

Gathering experiences

We have recently published two reports highlighting peoples experiences of services during the pandemic:

Our [Covid-19 Insight Report: Experiences of health, care and community services](#) outlines what we heard from people from August 2020 onwards, in a survey that ran between December 2020 and March 2021. This period covered a second national lockdown and the initial rollout of the vaccination programme.

[A snapshot of views from people using the Covid-19 vaccination bus](#) highlights what people thought about getting the Covid vaccine and why they decided to use the bus.

During May and June 2021, we attended the Covid-19 vaccination bus on three occasions. This mobile vaccination clinic aims to provide the vaccine to those who are eligible for it, but unable to travel, or are hesitant and would like to speak to a medical professional.

As well as asking people to share their experiences of using the vaccination bus, we also asked about their experiences of other

health and social care services during the pandemic.

We are continuing to hear feedback from people about their experiences of the Covid vaccination which have been largely positive.

Information provision

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, our focus has been on ensuring that people can find the information that they need easily.

Information around Covid vaccines and where to get tested continues to see the highest number of page visits to our website, but away from the pandemic people are seeking advice on where they can get mental health support and advocacy.

Articles added to our advice and information pages this quarter include:

- What will the NHS do with my patient data?
- What should happen when you're diagnosed with dementia
- What should I expect when being referred for mental health support?
- What to expect when waiting for care.



What people said

My father has recently had deteriorating health and received end of life care in the last few weeks. I cannot thank the practice enough for their responsiveness and care in the last few months and weeks. My father received wonderful care from the nurses, GPs and the wider healthcare team, and we were supported right to the end, enabling us to care for him at home, which was his, and our, wish. We know the NHS is under huge pressure at the moment which makes our experience even more precious. Thank you.

I couldn't find a dentist to register with due to Covid. I went to the Emergency Dentist as I knew they were there. They sorted the issue with a temporary filling. I will need to get registered at some point to get it properly sorted.

Having tried to get an appointment three times and been fobbed off with a call back the doctor has failed to do so. Having rarely needed the assistance of our NHS I am not surprised it is being privatised. Total shambles. I have now resorted to going to A and E with neither an accident or emergency.

Having recently joined the surgery I have been very impressed with the level of professionalism in terms of the interaction I have had with the staff. They have been very helpful and efficient. I am glad to have chosen this surgery.

Signposting story

A person who provides information and signposting to military families in north Wiltshire asked for help in finding NHS dentists:

“One question I get asked a lot is about NHS dentists accepting patients in the area. I've had a lot of queries about this recently, and I usually give out the GWH dental helpline number for people to call in an emergency or for a list of who is taking on NHS patients, however I've been informed that they no longer keep a list (I believe this is partly due to Covid affecting the usual working practices).

“I know this is a problem across the UK and not just in Wiltshire. But as a county Wiltshire has the largest population of military personnel and while they are able

to access dental services through the MOD, the majority of their partners and children aren't able to. Due to the mobile nature of military life many spouses don't work and therefore can't afford to go private.

“Do you happen to have any details of dentists accepting NHS patients in the Wiltshire area? There is the 'find a dentist' service on the NHS website but this doesn't always appear to be up to date.”

Our reply: “We are finding this an increasing problem across all areas and are currently contacting all dental practices to urge them to update their websites and to help patients by stating whether they are accepting new patients. We will be presenting our findings to both local and national providers of these services.”



Making a difference

Local support early on key to future of mental health services, say focus groups

People with lived experience of mental ill health have shared their thoughts on what good mental health support should look like in Wiltshire.

Getting early support that helps prevent mental health issues getting worse and having a sense of purpose in life were the key takeaways from a series of online focus groups hosted by Healthwatch Wiltshire, Wiltshire Centre for Independent Living (Wiltshire CIL) and Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC) in June 2021.

The joint work follows the publication of the national Community Mental Health Services Framework, which looks at how support for people in the future can be delivered more locally, to help them live well.

Our online sessions, which listened to the views of 32 people from across Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire, asked:

- What does a good life look like for you?
- What do you need to live a healthy life in your community?
- What does good community mental health support look like for you?

What did people say?

- People told us they want to live their lives but be able to tap into support for their mental health as and when it's needed.
- They want to get support early on, and not be left to reach crisis point.
- They prefer help from peer-led support groups rather than interventions from professionals.
- They want support to be available locally, and not just 9-5.

- They want to be listened to and feel valued in their community.

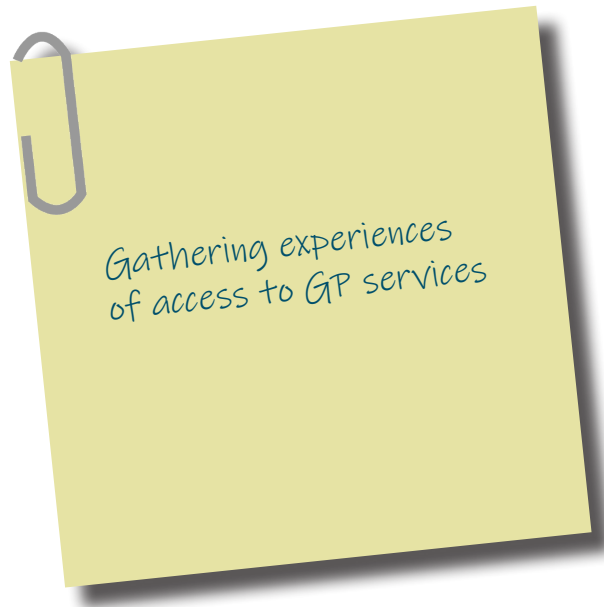
Our report, [The Future of Mental Health Support](#), has now been shared with Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BSW CCG), which plans and commissions mental health services for the region.

Emily Shepherd, Senior Commissioning Manager for Mental Health, Learning Disabilities and Autism at BSW CCG, said: "Thank you to Healthwatch Wiltshire, Wiltshire Parent Carer Council and Wiltshire CIL for hosting these valuable sessions, and to those who took part for sharing their ideas. We'll be using all the feedback we've received to help shape and develop local mental health support services."





Coming up



Find out more about our work at healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

healthwatch Wiltshire

Healthwatch Wiltshire
Freepost RTZK-ZZZG-CCBX
The Independent Living Centre
St George's Road
Semington
Trowbridge
BA14 6JQ

healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

t: 01225 434218

e: info@healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

 @HWWilts

 HealthwatchWiltshire

 healthwatchwiltshire