ACCESSING WALSALL HEALTH & CARE SERVICES

REPORT - OCTOBER 2021

healthw⦿tch
Walsall

your
**voice
counts**

Contents

Introduction

This survey was open to Walsall residents only, who had accessed or had tried to access any Walsall Health or Social Care services in the last 12 months.

We developed a survey that was available online and a paper copy which was used at the 'Women's International Cycling Event a stage that was held in Walsall on the 5th October. Paper copies were available on request or to be posted out and or completed with telephone participants.

The survey was open to Walsall residents only from the age of 18. It was available from the 5th October and ran for 6 weeks.

There were 85 repsondents.

It is important to note when looking at the graphs that not all 85 repsondents answered all of the questions. Some questions were multiple choice and some were single answer only.
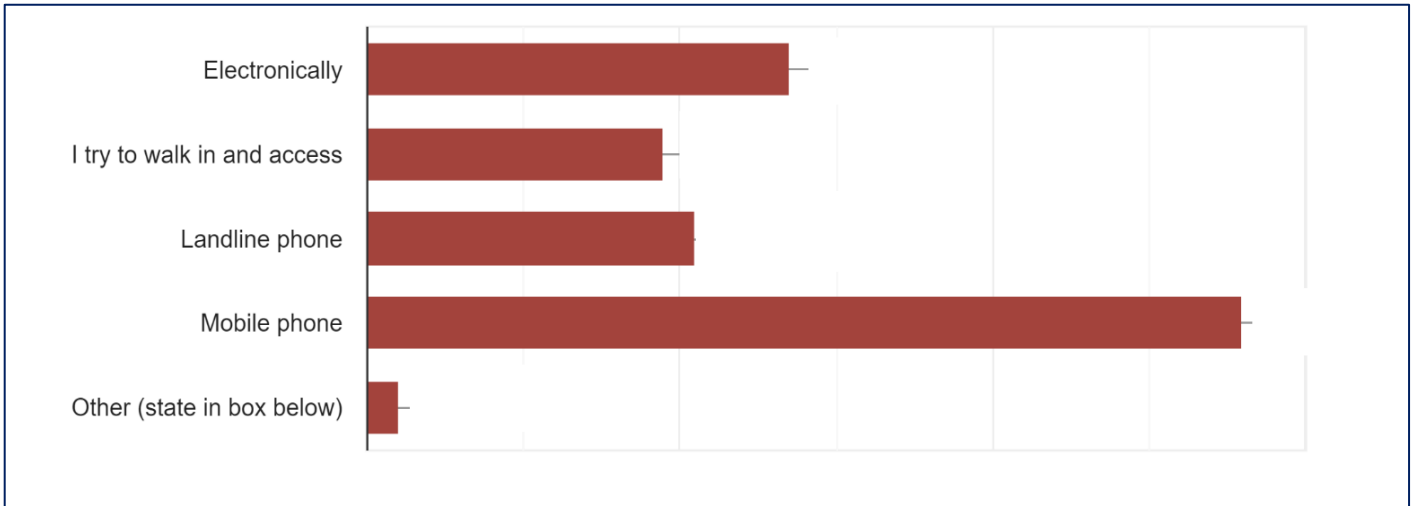
Survey Results

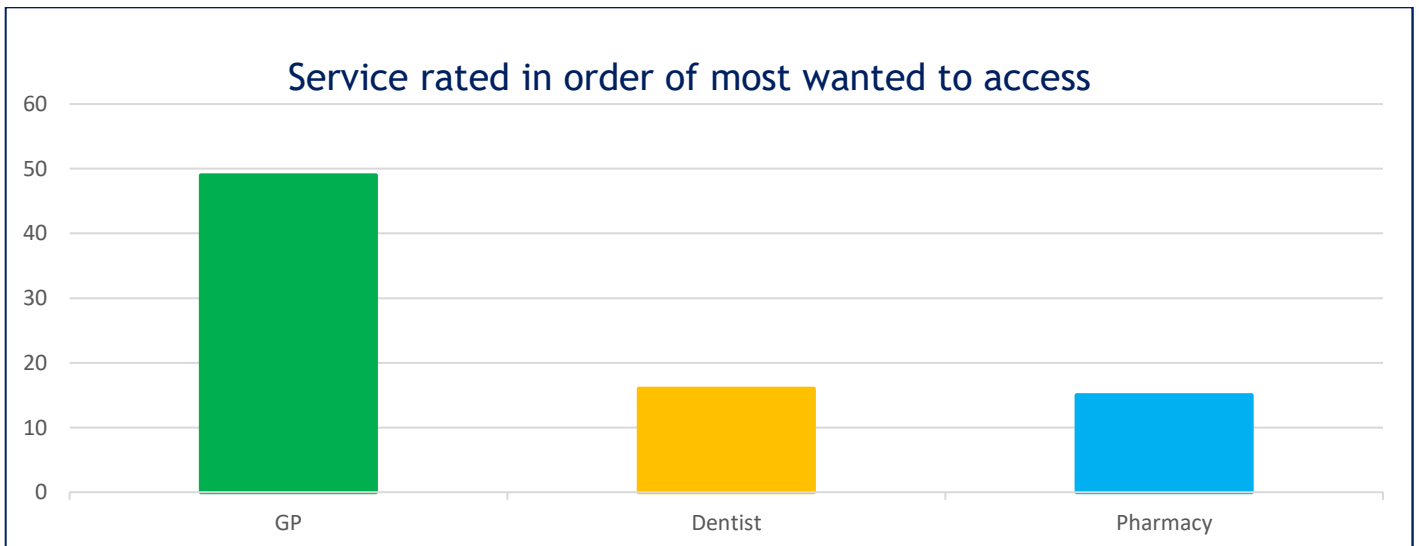**Q1 Do you have access to the internet**
85 repsonses
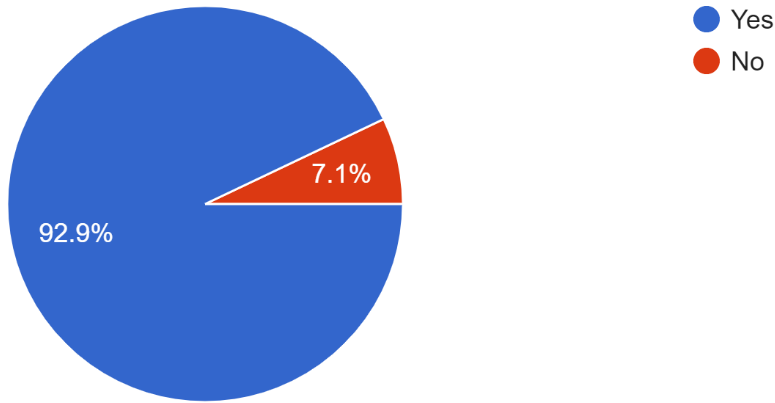
Almost 93% of respondents have access to the internet.

Q2 How do you access your health care?
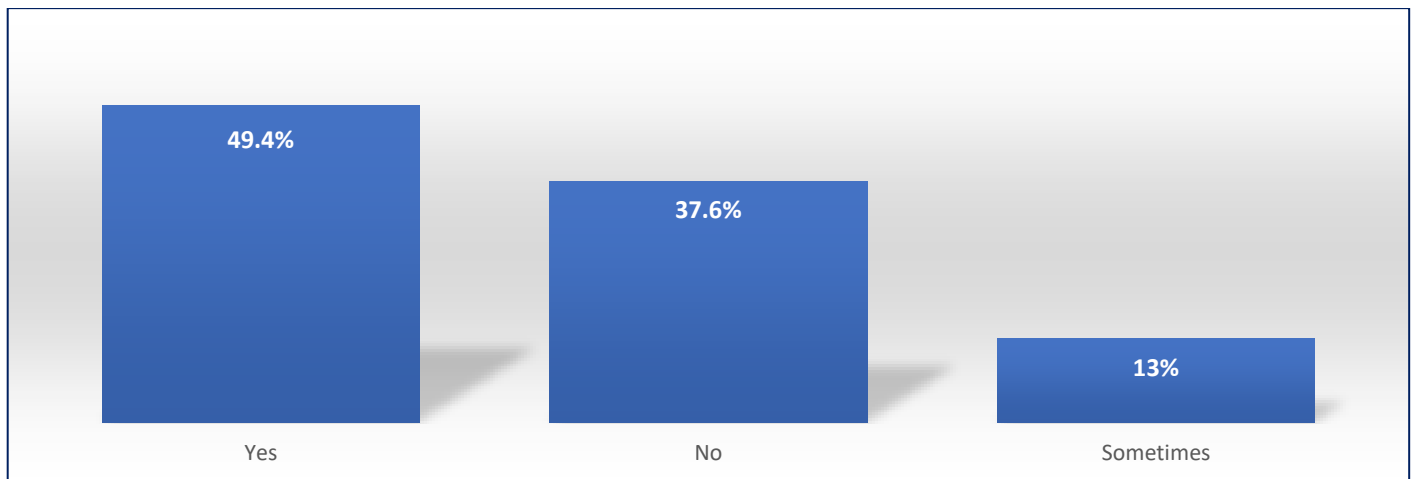(Respondents could choose more than one method)

Other: Via CPN (Community Psychiatric Nurse)

**Q3 Please list the top 3 services you try to access the most?**

GP services is the service most respondents seek to access.

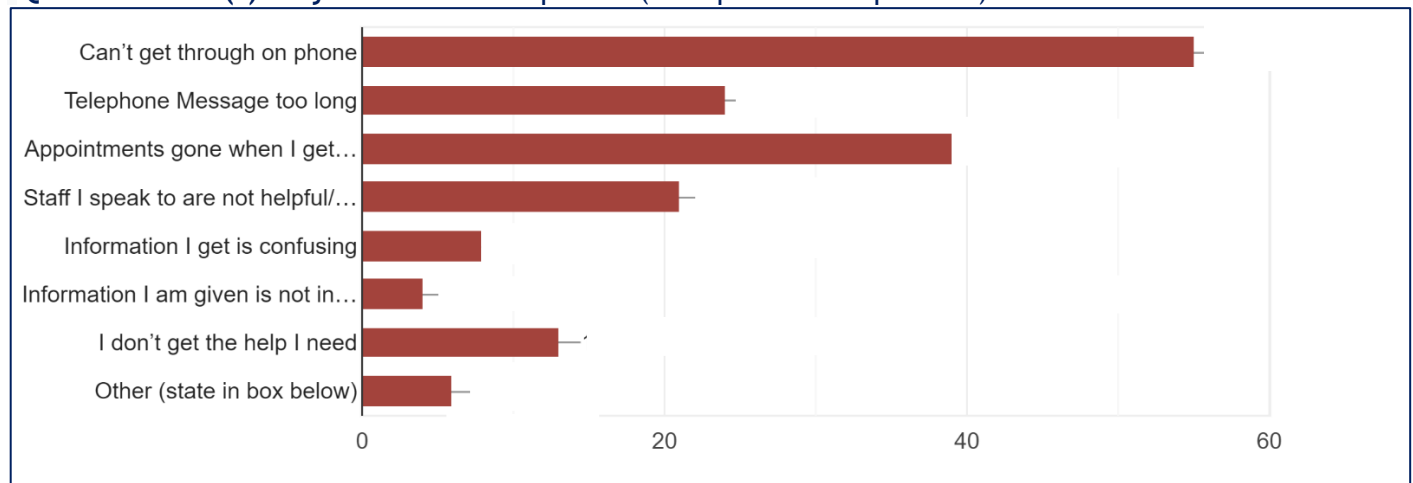**Q4 Do you have any difficulties accessing particular services?** 85 responses

49.4%	**37.6%**	**13%**
Yes	No	Sometimes

Q5 From the list, please indicate the top 3 services you have the most problems accessing

Service most have difficulty accessing

- GP ■ Dentist ■ Pharmacy
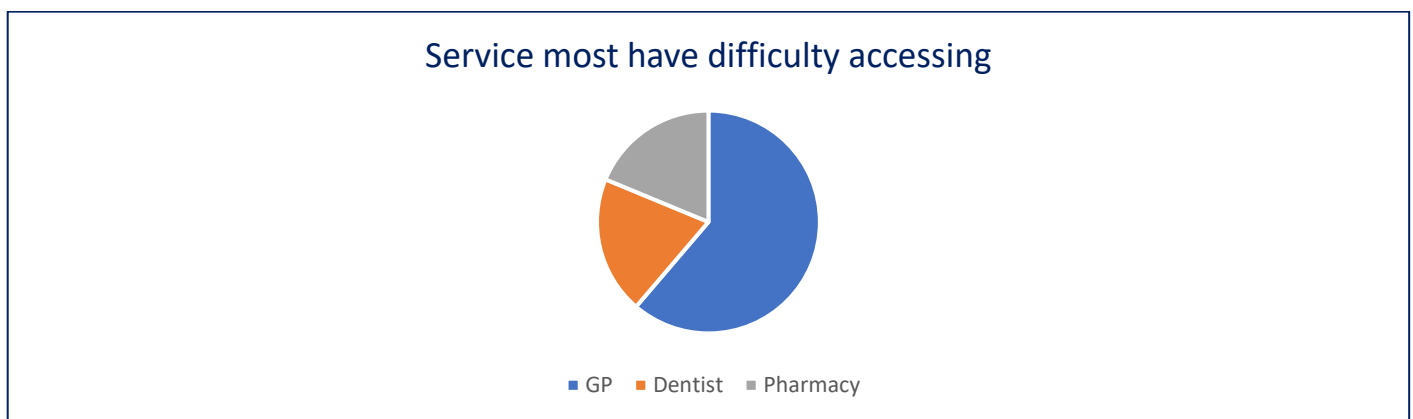
GP services is the one service respondents have the most difficulty getting access to.

Q 6 What issue(s) do you have? 77 responses (Multiple choice question)

Can't get through on phone
Telephone Message too long
Appointments gone when I get…
Staff I speak to are not helpful/…
Information I get is confusing
Information I am given is not in…
I don't get the help I need
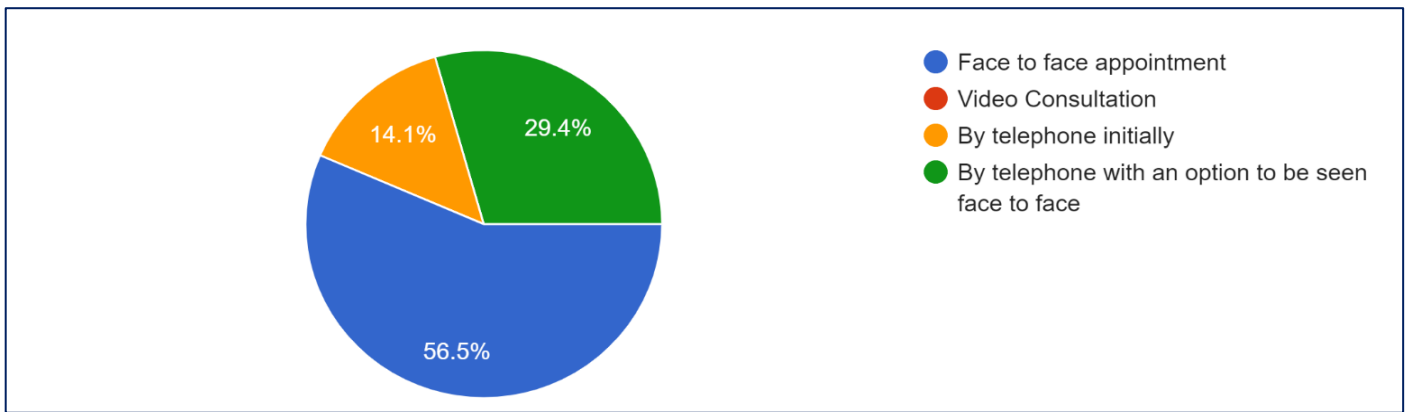Other (state in box below)

0   20   40   60

The main issue respondents had was 'Can't get through on the phone' then 'Appointments gone when I get through' and 'telephone messages are too long'.

Participants comments
- I need to see GP for more than one problem
- NHS app - I want to use the NHS app but GP won't help set it up and send link
- Occasionally I get confused with information given
- Difficult to get referrals accepted even by senior consultants
- I'm a carer for my wife and can't get help

Q7 How would you like to access healthcare services? 85 responses

- Face to face appointment
- Video Consultation
- By telephone initially
- By telephone with an option to be seen face to face

29.4%
14.1%
56.5%

Over half of the respondents wish to have face to face appointments. Of the 85 respondents **NONE** selected video consultation.

Q8 If you are unable to access an appointment, what medical service(s) do you contact or go to? 85 respondents. This is a multiple choice so some respondents may have chosen more than one service.
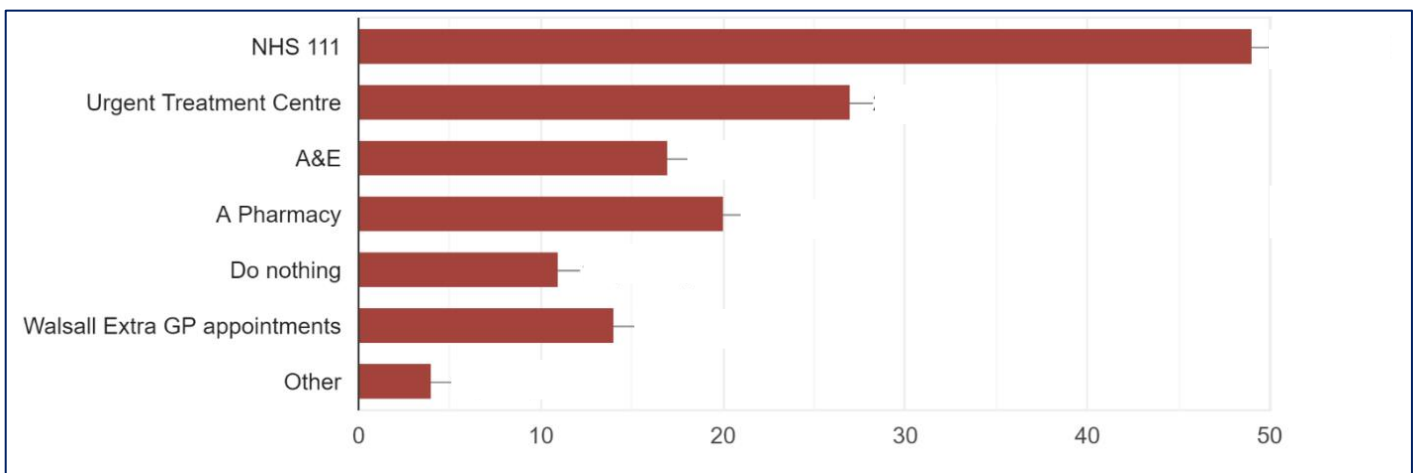
Q9 Do you have a long-term condition? 85 responses

Almost two thirds of reopsondents have a long term condition.

- Yes
- No (if no move to question 10)
- Prefer not to say

31.8%
3.5%
64.7%
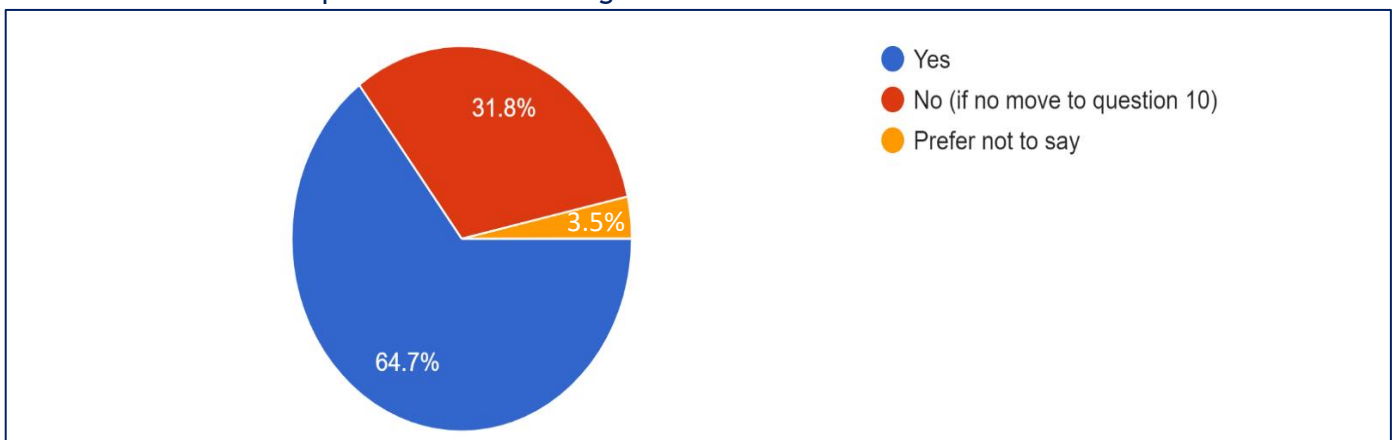
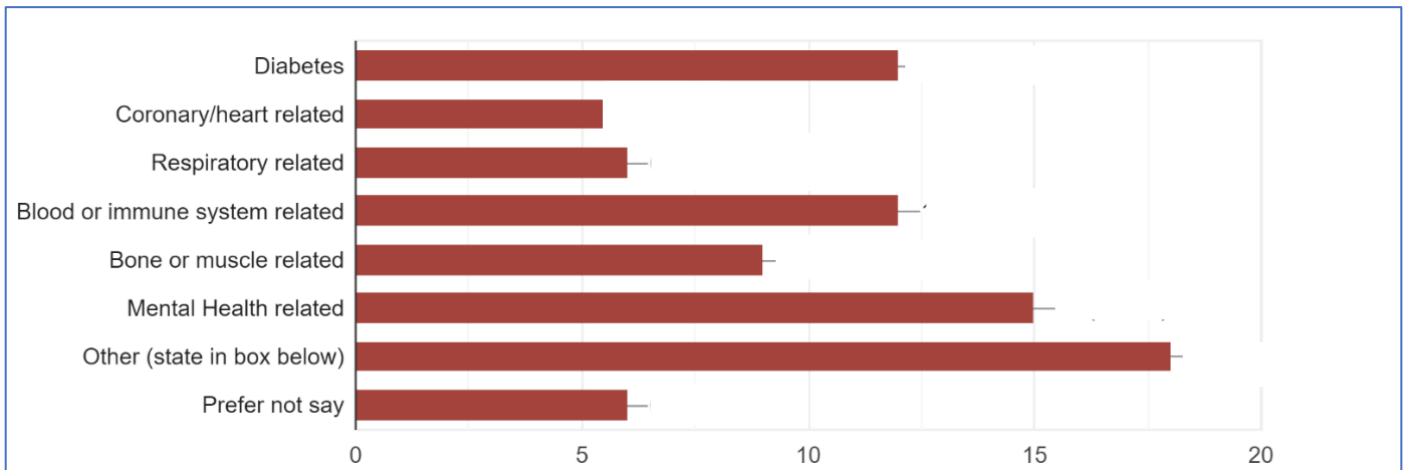**Q10 If yes what is/are the condition(s)** 59 repsonses. Multiple choice question so smome repondents may have multiple conditions

Other conditions included:
- C section gone wrong
- Chiari Malformation
- Fibromyalgia,
- Hyper Mobility
- Lymphedema
- IBS
- Asthma
- Arthritis
- Major surgery recovery

- Water on brain
- Mild cerebral palsy
- Spina bifida
- CFS
- Child with severe autism
- LD
- Back problems
- High blood pressure
- ASD

- Contraception
- Crohn's disease
- Arthritis
- Suffer from blood clotting
- Arthritis in spine
- Pacemaker
- PCOS
- Endometriosis

Q11 How does it affect you? 85 responses. Multiple choice question, respondents may be affected by more than one issue.
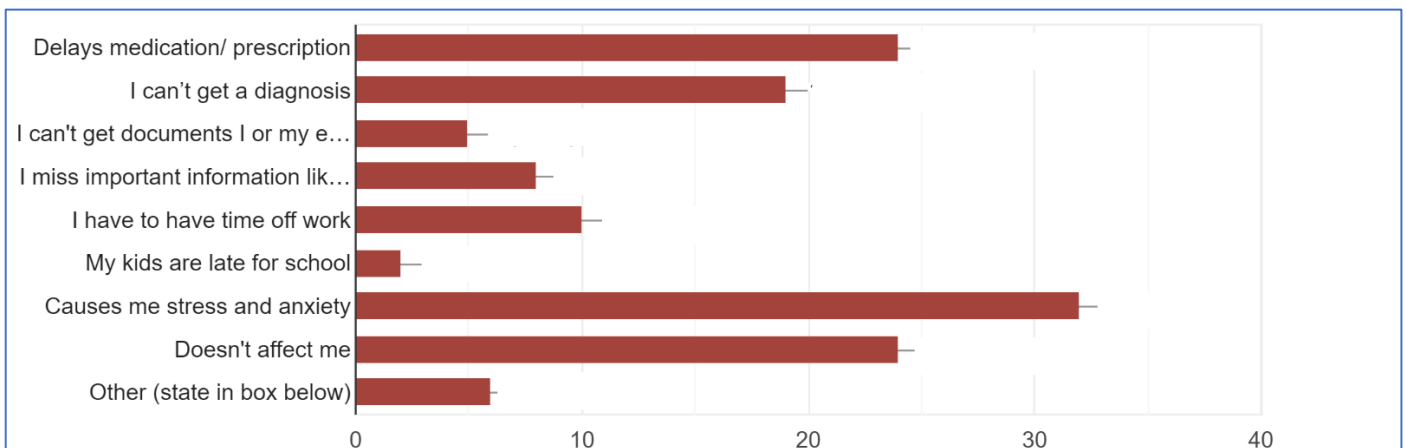
The top 3 effects on respondents were 'Causes me stress and anxiety', 'Delays medication/prescriptions' and 'I can't get a diagnosis'

Participants comments
- Have to wait 2 weeks for phone appointment and need face to face as phone appointment is only for one problem
- Doctors google my condition, no appointments
- GP leaving me without lifesaving medication or support for 3 days + on 2 occasions, huge costs paying for treatment and medication privately as unable to get any appointments with my GP even telephone appointments, full days of unpaid leave for telephone consultations that do not resolve issues

Our summary findings

- Almost 93% of participants have access to the internet
- The majority of participants seek to access healthcare by mobile/landline phone with electronically (internet) being the 3rd most used
- Just over 22% of participants seek to walk into services
- The service that is most sought to access is GP services, Pharmacies, Dentists then Hospital(s)
- Almost half of participants encounter difficulties accessing services, over a third do not and the remaining cohort sometimes experience difficulties
- The most difficult service participants try to access is GP services, Dentists then Pharmacies other mentioned services were 'Stroke Services' and 'Children, Adolescent Mental Health Services' (CAMHS)
- The issues that participants communicated were:
  - ☐ Can't get through on phone
  - ☐ Telephone message too long
  - ☐ Appointments gone when I get through
  - ☐ Staff I speak to are not helpful
  - ☐ Information I get is confusing
  - ☐ Information I am given is not in the format I need
- Patients encounter difficulties getting referrals
- Patients would like to discuss more than one issue when seeing a GP
- Carers may feel that it is difficult or that they are not able to get help
- Almost 57% of the participants would like to have face to face access with service providers, 29% would take a telephone appointment with an option to have a face-to-face appointment if needed, 14% by telephone but **NONE** of the participants wanted video consultations
- No participants liked/chose to access healthcare by video consultation
- Participants unable to access the service they need turn to other services such as NHS111, Walsall Urgent Treatment Centre, a Pharmacy, A&E, Walsall Extra GP appointments but almost 13% do nothing and a participant has sought to pay privately to seek help
- Almost two thirds of participants have a long-term condition of which there is an extensive range of conditions
- Delays in access to services causes levels of anxiety and stress for patients, some are unable to get a diagnosis and causes delays in getting medication or prescriptions

Our summary recommendations

- Service providers should have adequate telephone lines and staff for patients to access health and care services
- Service providers could revise their telephone messages and consider shortening them if possible
- Service providers could ensure front facing staff have customer service training and mystery shopper calls could be made to services to identify quality/levels of customer service and information that is being asked for and given is in positive manner and a format that suits the request of patients
- Service providers should consider those that do not have access to technology, the internet or may have communication difficulties due to impairments or language barriers
- To avoid escalations to urgent medical intervention those patients with confirmed conditions and treatment needs should have continued access to manage or address those conditions to avoid pressure on other services
- Patients with undiagnosed conditions should have access to initial diagnosis to identify relevant treatment/care pathway
- Further investigation into dentistry issues may be considered as some patients have reported being removed from NHS lists and have been asked to pay for previously NHS treated work from other intelligence Healthwatch Walsall has received
- Carers and those who are individually isolated need a contact point and a network of support that be presented to them if they do not already have access to or do not know about
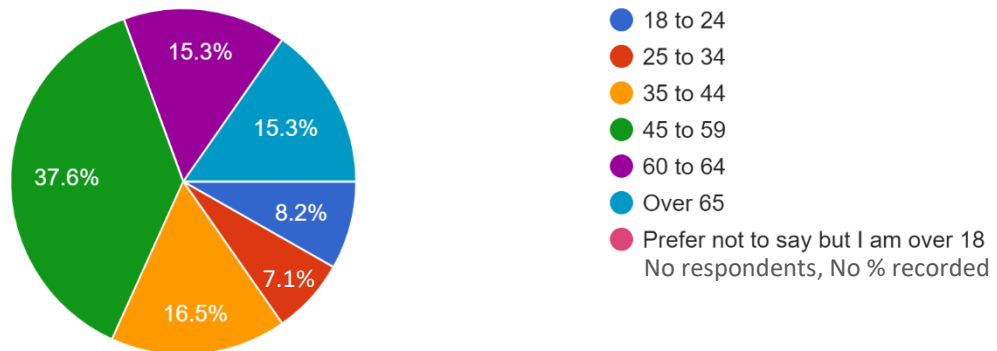
About you – Demographics

Q12 Asked to input the first 4 characters of the participants postcode to ensure they fell in the Walsall Borough area. Postcode data will not be shared.
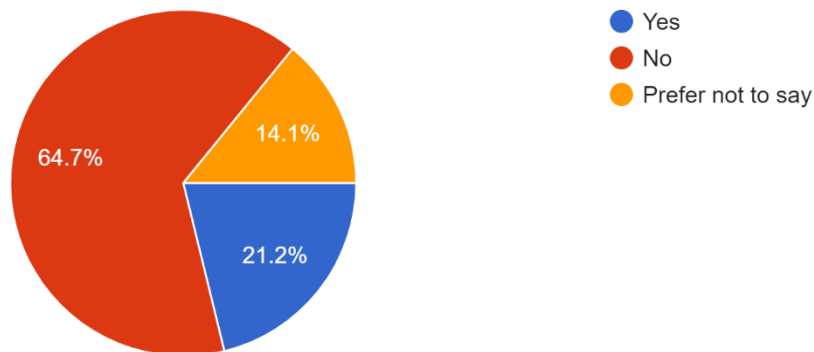
Q 13 Your age (you must be 18years of age and over to enter this draw)
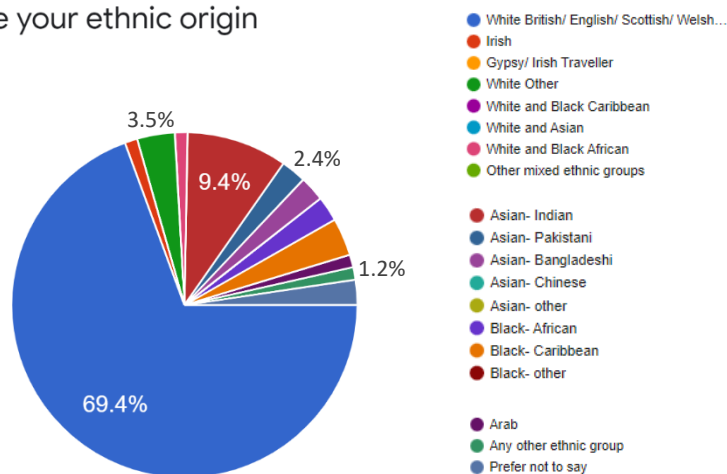85 responses

Segment	Value
18 to 24	8.2%
25 to 34	7.1%
35 to 44	16.5%
45 to 59	37.6%
60 to 64	15.3%
Over 65	15.3%
Prefer not to say but I am over 18	No respondents, No % recorded

Q 14 Do you consider yourself to have a disability
85 responses

Segment	Value
Yes	21.2%
No	64.7%
Prefer not to say	14.1%

Q 15 Please share your ethnic origin
85 responses

Legend:
- White British/ English/ Scottish/ Welsh…
- Irish
- Gypsy/ Irish Traveller
- White Other
- White and Black Caribbean
- White and Asian
- White and Black African
- Other mixed ethnic groups
- Asian- Indian
- Asian- Pakistani
- Asian- Bangladeshi
- Asian- Chinese
- Asian- other
- Black- African
- Black- Caribbean
- Black- other
- Arab
- Any other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

Values shown: 3.5%, 2.4%, 9.4%, 1.2%, 69.4%

Smaller pie segments represent 3.5%, 2.4% & 1.2% respondents

ACCESSING WALSALL HEALTH & CARE SERVICES

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