

Information and Signposting Service: Enquiries during November 2022

The Healthwatch East Sussex Information and Signposting (I&S) Service helps people to access the right health or social care service or organisation for their needs.

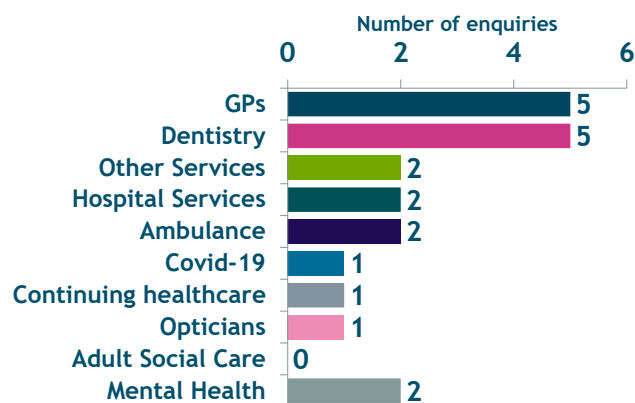
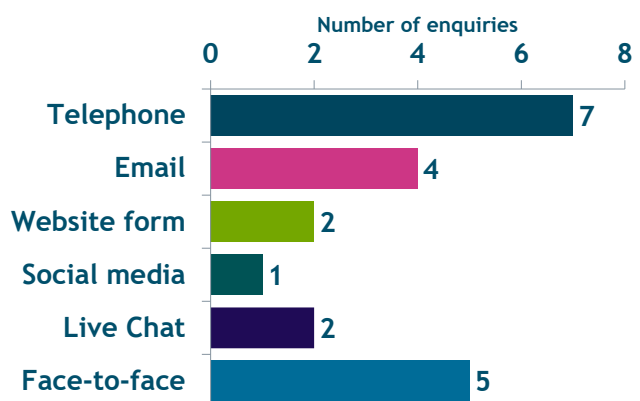
We also offer information if people want to share their experience or make a complaint.

An overview of the enquiries received in November 2022

Method of contact

We received 21 enquiries during November 2022, which was a significant decrease from 67 received in October.

The most common method by which people made their enquiry was telephone, followed by face-to-face, then email.



Enquiry themes

The most common enquiry theme in November related to GP and dentistry services, with 5 enquiries received for each. Two enquiries were received for hospital services, mental health, and ambulance services.

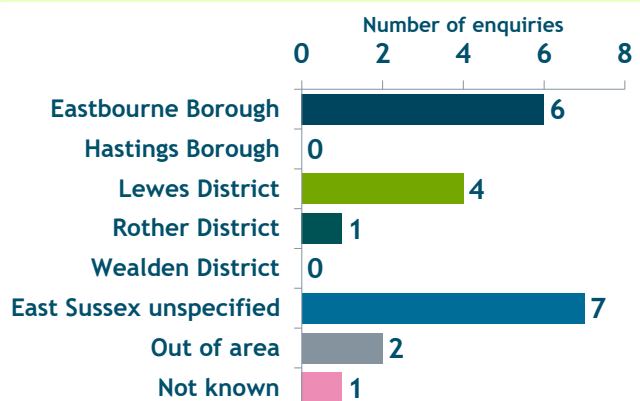
Services that made up other enquiry themes included Continuing Healthcare

and Covid-19 vaccinations.

Location of enquiries

East Sussex unspecified area was the most common location for enquiries in November 2022. This was followed by Eastbourne, and Lewes District.

No enquiries were received this month from Hastings or Wealden.



Four most common enquiry themes:

GP Services (5)

GP Services was one of the most common themes for enquiries received this month, despite a significant decrease compared to October which received 28 enquiries.

Multiple GP enquiries received this month, were in relation to patients complaining that their GP had agreed to make a referral to hospital for them, but that this had not happened. Two enquiries expressed dissatisfaction with the standard of care they had received.

Further issues this month concerned how to register with a GP practice and access treatment.

Dentistry (5)

Dentistry was again one of the most common enquiries in November.

All enquiries related to the lack of NHS dentistry. Two enquiries were from individuals in need of treatment but unable to find an NHS dentist and could not afford private treatment. Whilst they were not currently in pain, they both expressed concern that their situation could soon escalate into an emergency.

Other enquiries complained that the NHS Find-a-Dentist website is not accurate, and that their current dentist has stopped treating patients on the NHS.

Hospital (2)

Only two enquiries related to hospitals this month, down from 10 enquiries in October. These enquiries related to concerns about the length of time they will have to wait for an appointment.

For one individual, this is impacting on their ability to work, and another is worried about their child's health.

Mental Health (2)

Mental health was the focus of two enquiries this month. Both enquiries wanted advice regarding how to access mental health services.

Trends in enquiries

We received 21 enquiries in November, which is a significant decrease in enquiries compared to October (67). October saw a large rise in enquiries partly due to the outreach work undertaken by Healthwatch East Sussex as part of the Eastbourne Listening Tour.

In addition to the most common enquiry themes, identified above, I&S enquiries also related to:

- Continuing healthcare package not being fulfilled
- Long delay waiting for an ambulance
- Optician charging someone for an eye test who was exempt from payment
- Covid-19 vaccination side effects

Complaints about health and care:

Our Information and Signposting service engages with people who may be unhappy with the health or care services they have used.

We advise people on how they can raise their concerns with providers and, where appropriate, refer them for support from an NHS complaint advocate.

One enquiry received during November related to a direct complaint about health or care services, which is a decrease from October. Three individuals were referred or signposted to The Advocacy People for support with the NHS Independent Health Complaints process.

Topics of complaints/ reasons for signposting during November 2022 included:

- Continuing healthcare package not being properly delivered
- Unhappy with care provided by GP

If you need help to make a complaint about an NHS service, please contact The Advocacy People: Tel: 0300 440 9000 or email: info@theadvocacypeople.org.uk or visit their website: <https://www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk/>



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