

# Monthly Report

## December 2022

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## Location of comments:

Location data is mapped using postcodes of services. The map points are coloured according to the sentiment of the comment:

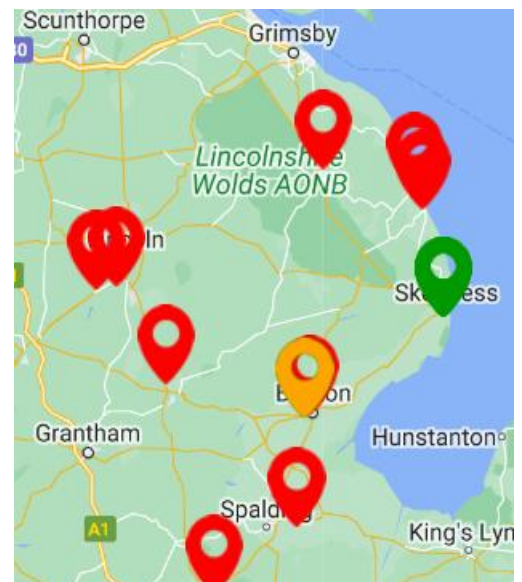
**Positive - green**

**Negative - red**

**Mixed - orange**

**Neutral - blue**

**Unclear - grey**



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# Overview

## December 2022 Monthly

During December 2022 Healthwatch Lincolnshire received 35 patient experiences directly to our Information Signposting Officer. This is a summary of the key themes raised by patients, carers and service users during December 2022 about services in Lincolnshire.

For more details you can call us on 01205 820892  
Email: [info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchlincolnshire.co.uk)



## Overall Sentiment

**20%** of all comments were **positive**  
**54%** of all comments were **negative**

**14%** of all comments were **neutral**  
**6%** of all comments were **mixed**

## December 2022 – Feedback Service Themes Sentiment



46%

Hospital Services  
(All services)



26%

GP Services



0%

Community Health  
Services



11%

Accident &  
Emergency



3%

Diagnosis &  
Screening Services  
(GP)



17%

Dentistry



0%

Mental Health &  
Learning  
Disabilities



14%

Social Care

%s total greater than 100% as many comments we receive contain multiple service themes

## Dental Services

This month we continued to hear from individuals struggling to access an NHS dentistry. The concerns shared with us this month, echo that of previous months. The only option for many patients throughout the county is to pay for private dental care, which is not feasible for the majority, especially those on low incomes. The importance of having local access to care was highlighted by one individual, as some individuals are unable to travel long distances for treatment.



### What is Healthwatch Lincolnshire doing to improve access to NHS dental services in the county?

Healthwatch Lincolnshire continue to raise dental access concerns both locally and nationally. The findings of this report will be shared and directly influence the Lincolnshire Dental strategy 2023-2026 that is currently being put together. This strategy will set out what needs to be done over the next three years to improve NHS oral health services and drive improvements in oral health across the county. We have also been asked to provide patient participation at the Lincolnshire Dental Strategy face to face stakeholders' workshop and as a result of overwhelming interest we are now setting up our own focus group to record even more patient experiences.



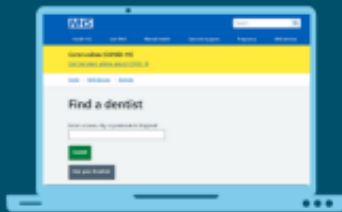
Our campaign will next look at feedback from seldom-heard groups: those who are living in deprived and rurally isolated areas, cancer patients, wheelchair users, pregnant women, parents, those with sensory loss as well as the dental workforce themselves. The full report will be published in due course.

# Finding it hard to get a dentist appointment?

Dental practices are recovering from backlogs due to strict hygiene measures to minimise the risk of spreading COVID-19 to patients and staff. The situation is improving but we are hearing that Lincolnshire residents without a regular dentist are still finding it difficult to get an appointment. Read our steps below on accessing NHS dentistry.

**1** If you have a dentist you usually visit phone them to make an appointment. Appointments will be available according to your individual situation and dental need. Be prepared to **wait longer** than usual for a routine, non-urgent appointment. You can also **take personal steps** to maintain healthy teeth.

**2** Unlike registering at a GP practice, NHS dental practices are available to everyone to attend a course of treatment regardless of where they live. Visit the [NHS Find a Dentist website](#) to search for a dentist in your area. You should also consider **widening your search area** to where you can travel to.



**What is Healthwatch Lincolnshire doing about this issue?** We regularly monitor the access to NHS dentistry in Lincolnshire sharing our findings with dental commissioners to **influence positive change**.

**3** **Is your dental need urgent?** Phone or go [online to NHS 111](#) to check your symptoms and see if you need urgent help. You will be advised if you need to visit your hospital emergency department (A&E) or advised of your nearest NHS dentists providing urgent appointments. The number of urgent appointments available each day is limited. When phoning a dental practice, clearly describe your symptoms, any pain or swelling and the impact it is having on your daily living.

111

**4** If you can't find a dentist for urgent treatment, call [NHS England's Customer Contact Centre](#) on 0300 311 2233 stating your situation. Keep **sharing your experiences with us**, positive and negative, the more information we have the more we can help.



# Communication

Concerns around communication between services and patients was again raised this month.

## Key Themes

- **Waiting for test results via their GP Surgery**

Patients shared their worry of long waits for test results. In one instance, a patient was waiting over a month for the results of an urgent brain scan. Upon trying to contact their surgery to discuss this, they were firstly unable to get through, then the receptionist proceeded to tell them the results. The delay in tests results and the lack of communication that results are delayed is causing some patient's additional worry.



- **Getting through to a department**

It was brought to our attention that it can be very difficult to get through to some hospital departments on the phone. This may be due to the fact that; patients are struggling to find the contact details for the specific department they need (and so have to ring round different departments), no one answers the phone or the phone rings out and then cuts off. This appears to especially be a problem when trying to book breast cancer screening appointments via the now centralised number and when trying to get updates on individuals who are in hospital.



- **Lack of information sharing with patients (within A&E / when in hospital for procedures)**

This concern relates to the fact that whilst patients were in A&E, waiting to be admitted or in hospital for planned procedures, communication was poor. Patients were left unsure of what was happening next.



- **Missing information in patient medical notes**

Information missing from medical notes included medication(s), previous referrals and tests results. In some cases, patients had to provide the details of this information themselves but in other cases, referrals were 'lost'. Again, this creates additional stress for the patient.



- **Cancellation of transport and therefore not being able to attend an appointment for follow up treatment**

One individual shared that their transport (TASL) was cancelled on the day of the appointment and subsequently they missed their appointment. The appointment has since been rearranged but there are concerns that the transport may be cancelled again and the patient's treatment will be further delayed.



## Your experiences



### Story 1

"I have been waiting for results of an urgent brain scan since the scan in early November 2022.

I chased up the scan and was informed it had been sent to ELMG (East Lindsey Medical Group) and despite requesting a face to face appointment I was informed the duty doctor would call me that day, this didn't happen.

I have now rung three times, today I was told by the receptionist they would check my notes and read the results which they started to do, until I stopped them.

How can a receptionist have been given access to my medical notes and then start to tell me my results? I am appalled to say the least, I then receive a call from a doctor at the practice to inform me over the phone of my problems!

What happened to the face to face appointment for something so serious I am so upset of being treated this way, it is inhuman. Our puppy receives better treatment from a vet?"

### Story 2

"I am forced to make a complaint against TASL (non emergency hospital transport provider)

My 94 year-old parent who lives in a Residential Home in Tattershall, was scheduled to have an appointment yesterday at the fracture clinic at Boston Pilgrim Hospital. Parent broke their hip a few months ago and was operated on at Pilgrim. Since then, they have been confined to a wheelchair at the care home because the staff cannot allow them to stand or walk until cleared to do so by the fracture clinic. They believe parent may be fit enough to walk, with the aid of a frame.

Parent had to miss their appointment because TASL cancelled the transportation to the hospital at 8.00am yesterday, the day of the appointment. We, family members, see this as a serious blow - we were hoping that parent would be cleared to walk again, thereby giving them a small amount of independence and a much-improved quality of life. The care home staff must, at present, use a hoist to get them in and out of bed, a practice our parent find very stressful and unpleasant.

Residential Home have asked Boston Pilgrim Hospital to re-schedule the appointment as soon as possible.

I would like TASL to explain why the transportation to Pilgrim Hospital was cancelled on the day of the appointment and to give us, the family, an assurance that they will provide transportation when the appointment is rescheduled."

### Story 3

"I received a letter to attend a ULHT Hospital for Breast Screening. To be allocated an appointment, preferably at Pilgrim, took a number of telephone calls which was quite frustrating as I had to call Lincoln County for the appointment when my spouse works at Pilgrim and could have got the appointment for me if that had been possible. The telephone number that I was given to call does not appear to be manned all of the time and therefore, when calling, the phone would ring out for about 60 seconds and then just completely cut off. This meant that I

had to keep constantly ringing the same number again and again and as I work full time this was infuriating as I have a job to do and so cannot be expected to sit with the phone to my ear for hours on end.

After a few attempts at calling, all to no avail, my spouse did physically go to the breast screening unit at Pilgrim to try to get me an appointment for me but was dismissed by the receptionist who apologised but said that I must go through the correct procedure of contacting Lincoln.

Again after many failed attempts I did eventually get through and was given an appointment to attend Pilgrim Hospital the following week.

Surely if all of Lincolnshire patients are expected to call Lincoln County to book an appointment then the phone lines should be manned constantly, when I called the line was never engaged it was just not answered and then cut off after a certain period of time."



### What is Healthwatch Lincolnshire doing about this?

We continue to share the concerns raised to us with the relevant providers. At the end of last year, we attended a meeting where a presentation was given detailing how the Integrated Care System (ICS) will use the information we shared to improve communication throughout the ICS. The presentation outlined the system changes needed to respond to the concerns patients had raised to us about communication. The areas covered included:

- Administration changes
- Verbal communication
- Accessible Information Standard
- Systems working together

We look forward to seeing the impact these changes will have on patients' experiences of communication with health and care services. We will also continue to report any issues with communication raised to us to relevant providers.



# Accident and Emergency

This month several individuals shared their experiences of the A&E departments in our county. Concerns were raised over:

- Long waits in ambulances outside of A&E and in A&E itself
- Delays in the provision of treatment
- Quality of care
- The impact the above have on the patient's prognosis



## Your experiences



### Story 1

"Patient raised the concerns over the long waits in an ambulance outside of Pilgrim Hospital (late December). They were waiting in the ambulance for over 8 hours before they were seen by anyone. The paramedics were wonderful.

The patient had taken a nasty fall in the garden and had already waited for more than 4 hours for the ambulance crew to arrive in the first place. Lives on their own and a neighbour who does not drive stayed with them until they were taken by the ambulance.

The crew had told the patient whilst making them as comfortable as they could that there were over 50 "jobs" on their system before they had got to this patient. Patient was eventually admitted to hospital after a long delay in A&E having broken their hip."

### Story 2

"Feedback on Lincoln Hospital. Well my 88 year spouse was unfortunate to fall last Thursday after struggling for an hour to get up I called an ambulance waited 3 hrs to arrive, they got them up and did an ECG ([Electrocardiogram](#)), they had severe tachycardia and said must go to hospital... Grantham A&E shut by then, only option was Lincoln spouse said they did not want to go and would go to Grantham in the morning. They said spouse might not make it till morning with a heart rate that fast so reluctantly they went.

In A&E they had many tests and said needed admitting but no beds, spouse waited nearly 30hrs on a trolley being wheel round from corridor to room and even dumped in the plaster room on trolley, finally went to emergency Admissions ward at 2am on Saturday by this time was very unwell and confused by Saturday afternoon was delirious.

In A&E said needed IV fluids and was going to put drip up, but they did not and still was not done on Saturday. On Saturday evening spouse was so confused they became aggressive and had to be sedated which was totally out of character, by Sunday was suffering from sepsis and dehydration, luckily a place on Navenby Ward became available and they soon got on IV fluid drip, IV antibiotics and a catheter to measure their urine.

I am so saddened that if this had been done on the Thursday or Friday they would not have developed into sepsis!. Luckily they are responding well to IV antibiotics and next step will be for physios to get them on their feet as they have been in bed now for 4 days, at 88 and already suffering kidney disease and had several kidney infections recently you would have thought they would have treated them quicker. The problem lies with A&E and the admissions ward I dislike both while in A&E I rang 20 times but no one answered the phone. I was worried sick not knowing if they were dead or alive ..I got my family member to take me in the end and the scene was the horrendous waiting room. I wish the manager and MPs would spend a day there to see the scale of it it is broken and dangerous."



## What is Healthwatch Lincolnshire doing about this?

We have shared these experiences with United Lincolnshire Hospitals NHS Trust (ULHT). Healthwatch has the legal power to visit health and social care services and see them in action. This power to "Enter and View" services allow us to identify what is working well and where improvements could be made. "Enter and View" visits to the A&E departments in our county will start imminently. The information gathered during these visits will supplement the information and experiences shared with us already and allow us to make recommendations to the trust on what is working well in A&E and what needs to be improved.

## Positive Stories

It was encouraging to hear some positive experiences of health and care services in our county this month.



### Story 1

"Elderly coordinator - Greyfriars Surgery, Boston. staff member has been professional and supportive in allowing Lasting Power of Attorneys of a loved one to be kept in contact with their medical and wellbeing needs. We appreciate this takes an extra part of the day, keeping everyone involved and updated, but for us it is the most important part of their role at the surgery. Thank you Greyfriars."

### Story 2

"Dermatology Department - Pilgrim Hospital.

Thank you to a particular Nurse and Doctor, their empathy, respect and patience, with a patient who is suffering from cognitive decline and living in a permanently confused state is greatly appreciated and respected. Their care has allowed what could have been a traumatic process, involving surgery, to be actually a smooth and well organised process. Thank you and your team for all that you do."

### **Story 3**

"I attended Pilgrim Hospital for breast screening recently and can only praise the staff and the service they provide.

My appointment took place on time with no waiting around at all. The staff were friendly, polite and professional.

Never an appointment that I look forward to but the staff certainly helped in making it as seamless and pleasant experience as possible."

### **Story 4**

"I showed signs of a stroke and the ambulance called which arrived in fifteen minutes. Admitted to Peterborough City Hospital at approx 9.30pm to A&E. I was taken straight to a bay. Ambulance crew were excellent; very friendly and thoroughly professional. I spent the night in A&E, (too noisy to sleep, but not complaining), transferred to SSMU (Short Stay Medical Unit) and later to Ward B11.

Investigations included bloods, CT scan, MRI and vascular ultrasound. Discharged late November with stroke and anaemia diagnosis but faculties fully restored. My sincere thanks to the staff in A&E, SSMU and B11 for their caring professionalism. I am most grateful."

### **Story 5**

"A particular Social Worker has played a leading role in supporting a family in crisis. They have been kind, empathetic and supportive at the same time as being professional and proactive in engaging with disjointed systems and processes.

The outcome of which is a far greater improved baseline health and wellbeing for the individual in their care. As a family we know we can reach out and be listened to, which is incredibly important in times where a social worker may be required. Thank you from us all!"

### **Story 6**

"To all the staff, there are too many of you to name, but you all play such a fundamental role in supporting individuals, live, excel and enjoy their lives in a safe and respectful environment.

Person centred care is highlighted and specific areas include - Foresight of Staff member to manage continence wear during an outing for the individual.

Support given to a resident ensuring they take charge of auditory devices to allow the individual to feel involved and part of life at the care home.

Kitchen staff are friendly and welcoming. Laundry staff are willing to share their time with individuals living at the home and with the family and visitors. The constant communication from all staff when simply passing, those little hellos and hugs and prompts are priceless to supporting individuals in your care.

Communication between the staff and visitors and loved ones is second to none, thank you for taking time to allow us to feel involved in our loved ones care and wellbeing. Above all, thank you for everything you do, your roles and your working life is not an easy one, you choose this, because of the people you are - kind, supporting, respectful and loving. You are appreciated, you are noticed!"

### **Story 7**

"Thank you for being open and willing to discuss topics with families and visitors. Also thank you for providing the time, staffing numbers and employing the right staff to not only allow them all to succeed in their roles but also to be able to have the opportunity in the day to make the home feel safe, supportive and kind. The staff can only do what they are able to, because of your management and leadership. Thank you."



## Demographics

In addition to location data, for those who consent, we are now able to collect demographic data from the individuals who contact our Information Signposting Officer.

Demographic	Number of people	Demographic	Number of people
<b>Age</b>		<b>Ethnicity</b>	
18 to 24	2	White: British/English/Northern Irish/Scottish/Welsh	6
25 to 49	1	White: Irish	3
50 to 64	6		
65 to 79	4		
80+	3		
<b>Gender</b>		<b>Carer</b>	
Male	4	Yes	1
Female	11	No	5
<b>Birth Sex</b>		<b>Pregnancy/Maternity Status</b>	
Current same as birth	9	Currently pregnant	1
<b>Sexual Orientation</b>			
Heterosexual/Straight	6		
<b>Disability</b>			
Physical or mobility impairment	2		
Other	1		



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