

LAS Strategy

Feedback from engagement activities

Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham
January 2023



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Activities undertaken

Survey

Healthwatch Hammersmith & Fulham developed a survey with five other local Healthwatch organisations run by Your Voice in Health and Social Care (YVHSC). The survey covered 3 main elements – 999, 111 and working with partners – with questions very closely aligning to the issues outlined by LAS in the project brief provided to Healthwatch.

The survey was posted online in December, distributed via available email networks across the Healthwatch staff team and supported by Facebook posts and twitter activity, including paid for adverts.

In January the survey was additionally printed and distributed to some GP practices as part of our regular attendance at practices to engage with patients.

Carer interviews

Healthwatch Hammersmith and Fulham visited the Carers Network coffee morning on the 19th January. The officers who visited the coffee morning group completed one on one interviews with carers who had used urgent and emergency care in the borough of Hammersmith and Fulham in the last year. Carers were taken through a paper questionnaire that focused on the following key themes. 1. Staff attitude, 2. Communication 3. Waiting time, 4. Quality of care 5. Public confidence.

In total, we completed 12 carer interviews.

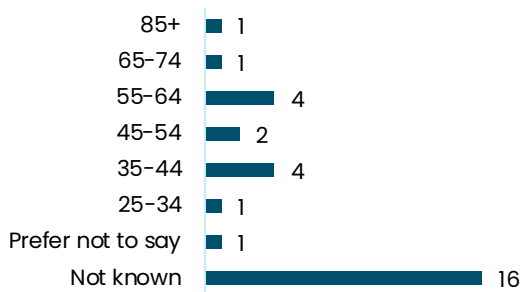


Demographics

Online Survey

We received three responses from males and ten from females. Majority of respondents who disclosed their sexual orientation (n.8) were Heterosexual/straight persons. In terms of age groups, we received four responses from people aged 55-64 and four responses from 35-44 year olds followed by two from 45-44 year olds. There were only two responses from people aged 65 or older. Seven responses came from people from White British background and only three respondents who disclosed their ethnicity were from Black and Asian minority ethnic background. Seven of the respondents identified as Christians; one as a Hindu; and another as a Muslim. Eight of the respondents reported having a long term condition or health and social care needs, and six said they consider themselves to have a disability. Seven respondents reported looking after someone else. Four of the respondents are in paid employment and four are not in employment and unable to work.

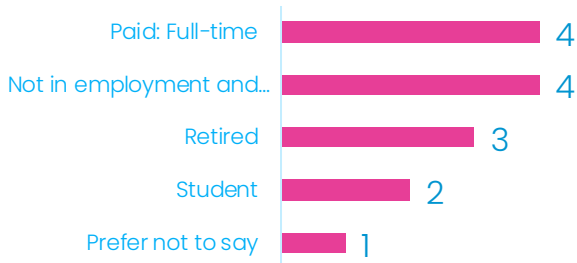
Age Group



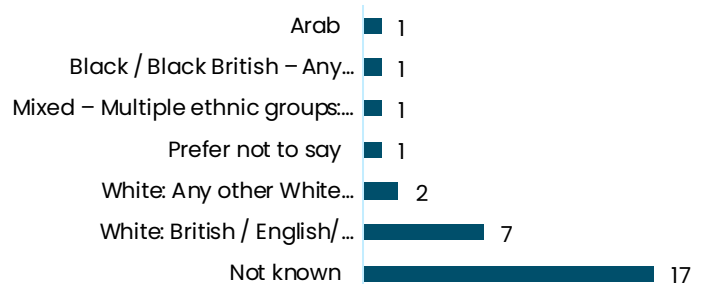
Sexual Orientation



Financial Status



Ethnicity

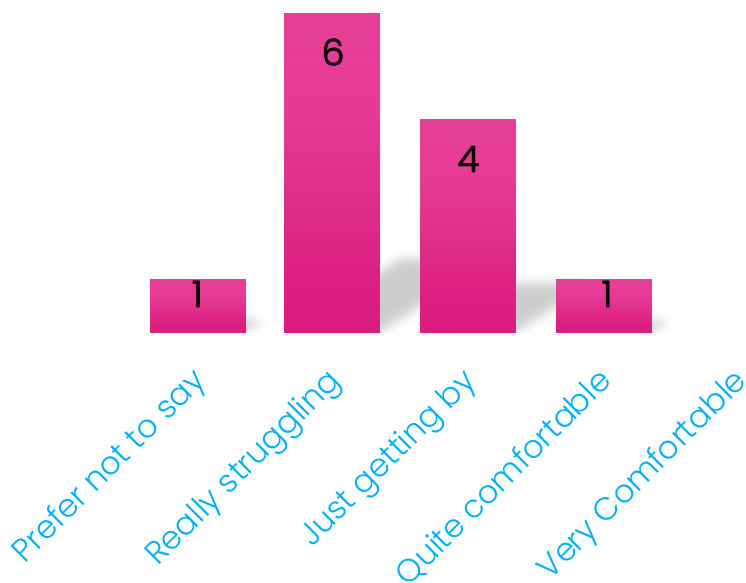


Demographics

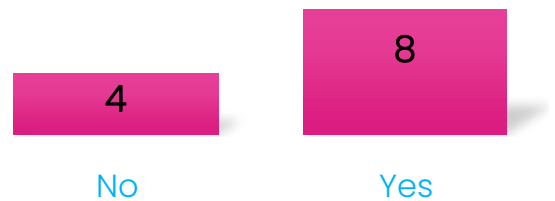
Carer interviews

Of the 12 carers we spoke to We received three responses from males and nine from females. Majority of respondents who disclosed their sexual orientation (n.9) were Heterosexual/straight persons. We spoke to 8 full time carers and 4 part time carers. Majority of carers had their own health issues (n.8) and were financially struggling or just getting by. (n.10)

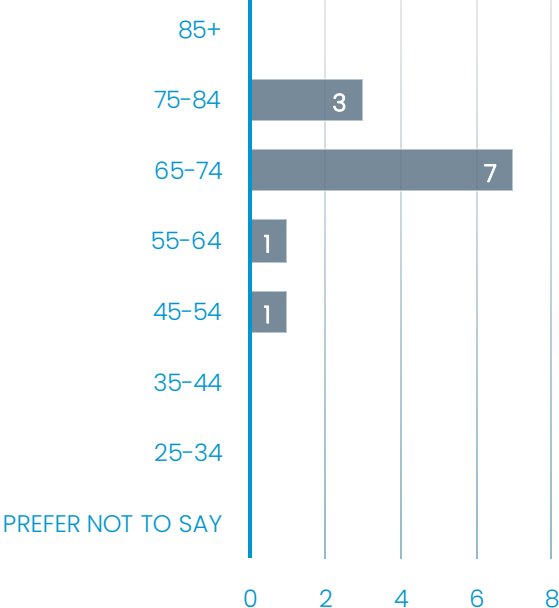
Which of these best describes your financial status?



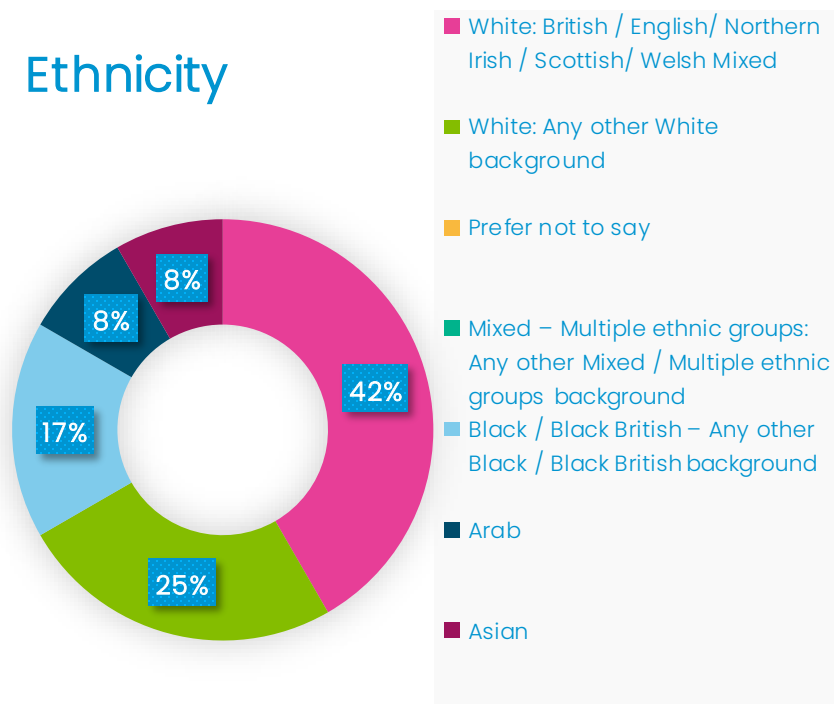
Do you consider yourself to have a long-term condition or health and social care need?



Age group



Ethnicity



Summary of Findings

The table below highlights the key issues identified through the engagement work carried out in Hammersmith and Fulham, and the key priorities suggested for LAS to take forward in their strategy for 2023–2026.

The subsequent pages highlight each priority in turn and present the evidence base for this.

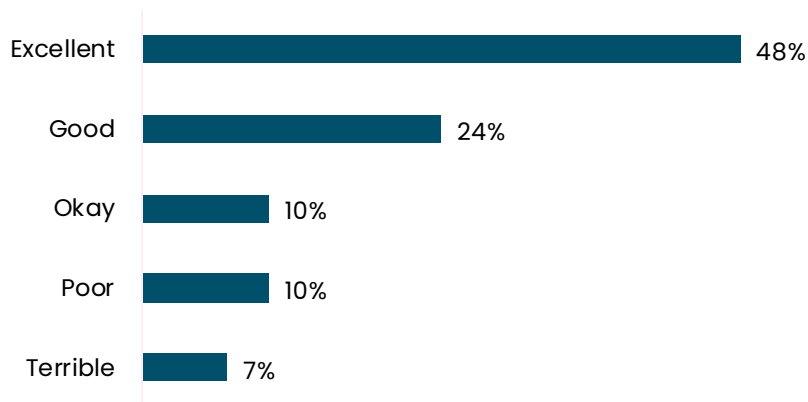
Findings

Key issue / priority identified	Details
999 – Experience of 999 and LAS emergency care is positive.	72% of the respondents rated the overall service as <i>Excellent</i> or <i>Good</i> .
999 – Patients expressed frustration with slow response time and supported improving the waiting times for the emergency service.	28% of the people who responded to our survey had experienced long wait time for an ambulance or receiving care and/or suggested improvements in waiting times.
111 – Experience of 111 service and urgent care is mixed.	45% of the respondents rated the overall service as <i>Excellent</i> or <i>Good</i> , and 45% rated it as <i>Okay</i> .
111 – Patients reported long wait times for call backs and frustration with the long triage process.	27% reported delays to call backs and another 27% reported frustration with the long triage process.
Partners (health and care) – Patients need communications and joined up working between health and care partners to work better.	General communication and joined up working was mentioned repeatedly by survey respondents. Particular attention was focused around mental health partners, GPs, social care and community care services.
Partners (wider community) – Patients felt that more community engagement activities to educate public about the LAS service and first aid training would positively contribute to the local communities.	Patients suggested public are better educated about using health care services to ease the burden on emergency services. It was also suggested the service increase their community engagement by sharing information about all the work LAS does within communities and provides first aid training for children and young people in particular.

Finding 1

72% of the respondents rated the overall service as *Excellent* or *Good*. Patients commented on positive staff attitudes, and most notably, when patients rated the service positively, they reported having experienced a quick response time.

Overall Experience of Using 999 Service



Comments:

"They [are] always so helpful on the phone and the ambulance drivers when they come explain everything and [are] very patient with my elderly mother. They are the first people on the scene and always are very, very smiley even though the hours are extremely long."

Female, 45-54, Unknown

"Caring staff who took my complaint seriously even as I tried to be blasé about it. Thorough and competent care, did not feel in any way uncomfortable even though there were 2 strange men sticking ecg wires into my torso."

Female, 18-24, Asian/Asian British: Pakistani

"They came quite quickly. The staff were very warm and friendly also very caring. My journey to the hospital was pleasant I was treated kindly and I felt safe."

Male, 18-24, Asian/Asian British: Indian

"Friendly, reassuring and quick to arrive, they took great care of my brother who fell from a height."

Male, 55-64, Black / Black British – Any other Black / Black British background

"Very quick - was told that we might have to wait 1 hour because of demand, but that couldn't be promised. But ambulance arrived within six minutes. Have been using LAS for 20 years and never had a problem".

Female, 65-74, White: British / English/ Northern Irish / Scottish/ Welsh Mixed

Finding 2

999 – Patients expressed frustration with slow response time and supported improving the waiting times for the emergency service.

When patients were asked how 999 and LAS emergency care could improve, 28% of the people who responded to our survey had experienced a long wait time for an ambulance or receiving care and/or suggested improvements in waiting times.

Comments:

“Ambulance was delayed getting to my partner. She had to wait hours before she was seen in A&E.

Male, 18-24, White: British / English/ Northern Irish / Scottish/ Welsh Mixed

“I fractured my collarbone and was advised it would be a 6 hour wait for an ambulance, so I had to make my own way.”

Unknown

“I called 999 yesterday evening as husband had collapsed and was unconscious. Took a few minutes to speak to someone, husband gained consciousness so was advised to call 111.”

Female, 45-54, White: British / English/ Northern Irish / Scottish/ Welsh Mixed

“Get the response time improved.”

Female, 25-44, Unknown

“Make call as quickly as possible. Don't make it repetitive. Being told waiting times of more than 1 hour is not an emergency service.”

Unknown

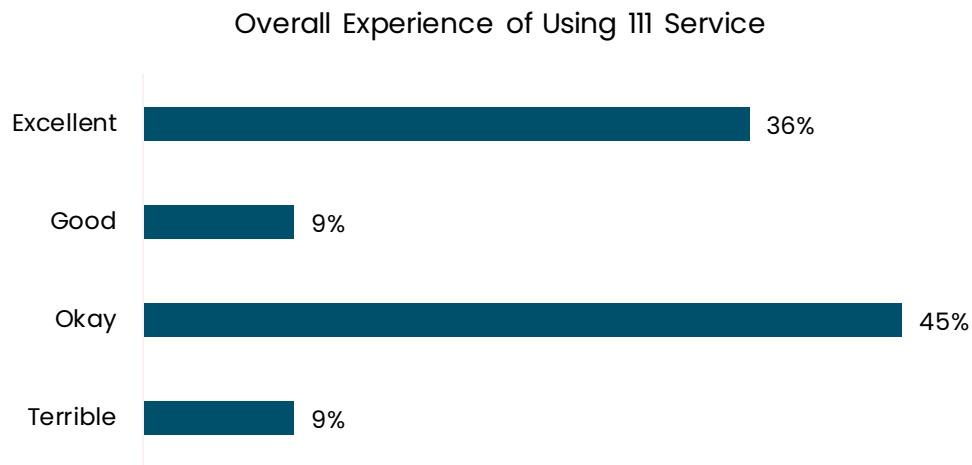
“Staff were kind/nice but could be more helpful. Was told to wait 4 hours but was seen slightly earlier.”

Male, 35-44, White: British / English/ Northern Irish / Scottish/ Welsh Mixed

Finding 3

111 – Experience of 111 service and urgent care is mixed.

45% of the respondents rated the overall service as *Excellent* or *Good*, and 45% rated it as *Okay*. Patients positively commented on the quality of care and the positive staff attitude.



Comments:

"Good call centre staff."
Unknown

"They listen and seem to care and act in patients' best interest. Although telephoning can mean long wait times, [you] can go online and book a call, although that option not available to those not using technology for any reason."
Female, 55-64, Unknown

"They responded when they said they would, gave me advice and reassured me regarding my condition."
Female, 45-54, White: British / English / Northern Irish / Scottish / Welsh Mixed

Finding 4

111 – Patients reported long wait times for call backs and frustration with the long triage process.

When asked how the 111 service could be improved, 27% reported delays to call backs and another 27% reported frustration with the long triage process.

Comments:

“Triage system time consuming. In one particular event it would have been better to go to A&E.”

Male, 18-24, Unknown

“Sometimes delays in getting a call back.”

Female, 25-34, Unknown

“Wait time was longer than I would have liked.”

Unknown

“I find the questioning too much. It makes one feel frustrated when seeking assistance especially when they are feeling frightened and is not clear what is happening when feeling unwell.”

Female, 25-34, Unknown

“Last called on a Saturday early evening. Had to wait about an hour for return call & then went through problem with operator & told would get a doctor call back. Got call back from a doctor, again about an hour wait, who arranged for a prescription to be electronically sent to a Sainsburys pharmacy & that was picked up at 9.45pm same evening just before they closed..”

Female, 45-54, Asian/Asian British: Indian

“There needs to be less reliance on technology and digital communication. I need reassurance and regular updates from a person not a computer.”

Male, 45-54, Black / Black British – Any other Black / Black British background

Finding 5

Partners (health and care) – Patients need communications and joined up working between health and care partners to work better.

General communication and joined up working was mentioned repeatedly by survey respondents. Particular attention was focused around mental health partners, GPs, social care and community care services.

Comments:

“Better links with mental health providers as a lot of people that call are in mental health crisis.”

Female, 25–34, White: British / English/ Northern Irish / Scottish/ Welsh Mixed

“Better pathways to care a social worker or key worker that can coordinate care plans talking to LAS. Discharge plans where patients are not kept overdue waiting for discharge.”

Unknown

“Communication is extremely poor from Social Services as I’ve said before there is no main person or department to get in touch with as a carer I am often left on the phone all afternoon trying to get my mum home and organised with care and medication Social Services are a nightmare in my borough at the moment.”

Female, 55–64, White: British / English/ Northern Irish / Scottish/ Welsh Mixed

“Maybe be more links with services providing medical help to cancer patients.”

Male, 25–34, Unknown

“Better communication with GPs.”

Female, 55–64, White: British / English/ Northern Irish / Scottish/ Welsh Mixed

“Work with social care to help patient transport and discharge pressures. Clearer direct links between 111 and 999 – more seamless for patients.”

Unknown

“Perhaps having access to a patients’ medical records, if none already, may help in signposting to the appropriate care.”

Female, 18–24, Unknown

“They need to work better with mental health providers so that in crisis you can go straight to MH hospital rather than going to A&E and waiting for hours and causing more distress.”

Male, 18–24, Black / Black British – Any other Black / Black British background

Finding 6

Partners (wider community) – Patients felt that more community engagement activities to educate public about the LAS service and first aid training would positively contribute to the local communities.

Patients suggested public are better educated about using health care services to ease the burden on emergency services. This was mentioned by more than half of carers who pointed out they are the first responders in a medical crisis for the person they care for. It was also suggested the service increase their community engagement by sharing information about all the work LAS does within communities and provides first aid training for children and young people in particular.

Comments:

“More first aid in schools and to young carer groups and making sure children know how to call 999 and what to do in an emergency.”

Female, 25-34, Unknown

“More alcohol and drug awareness in the community. Teaching first aid alongside knife crime.”

Unknown

“Go into schools to give first aid training.”

Unknown

“It is amazing that they do this additional social outreach – this could be communicated with the public and communities more to strengthen reputation.”

Female, 55-64, White: British / English / Northern Irish / Scottish / Welsh Mixed

“In Manchester they are piloting a scheme where there is a network of support for people coming home from hospital transfer discharged and the communication from the news programs looks fantastic what they are doing should be rolled out in London and again the next of kin or another family member should have full support as it impacts on their health.”

Unknown

“Better awareness of mental health and mental health training during engagement events so that people realise it is an illness.”

Male, 45-54, Black / Black British – Any other Black / Black British background

“More engagement with carers and caring support groups. Offer basic training of what to do in an emergency.”

Female, 55-64, White: British / English / Northern Irish / Scottish / Welsh Mixed

Additional considerations

Confidence in emergency services

4 out of 12 carers felt that their confidence in emergency services has decreased in the last 12 months. There was no theme or trend identified in responses on why confidence had decreased. Reasons listed ranged from increased waiting times, stories heard on social media and a lack of clarity and communication from staff.

Limitations

This report is based on the individual experiences of residents that Healthwatch spoke to on the day of our carers coffee morning visit, and residents that completed the survey through Smart survey. We recognise that it does not necessarily represent the views and experiences of all the residents in the borough who have used the London Ambulance Service.



Contact Us

If you would like to discuss this report or our work, please get in touch



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