

Information and Signposting Service: Enquiries during March 2023

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.

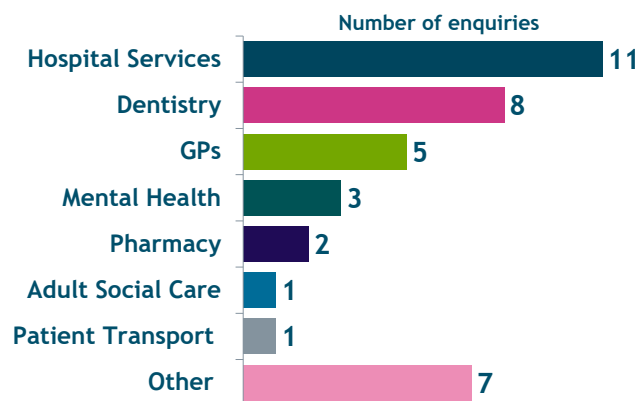
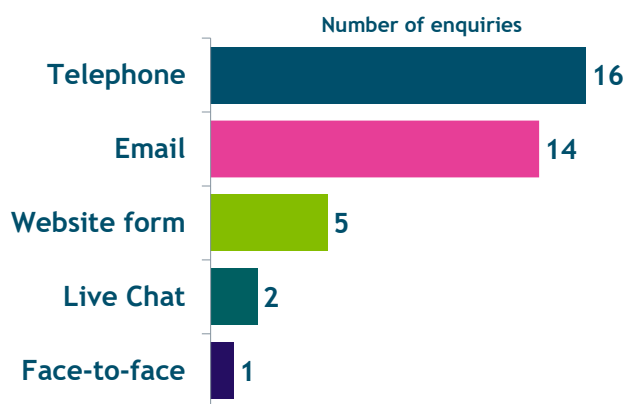
We also offer information if people want to share their experience or make a complaint.

An overview of the enquiries received in March 2023

Method of contact

We received 38 enquiries during March 2023, a slight decrease from the previous month.

The most common methods by which people made their enquiry was telephone, followed by email and then website contact form.



Enquiry themes

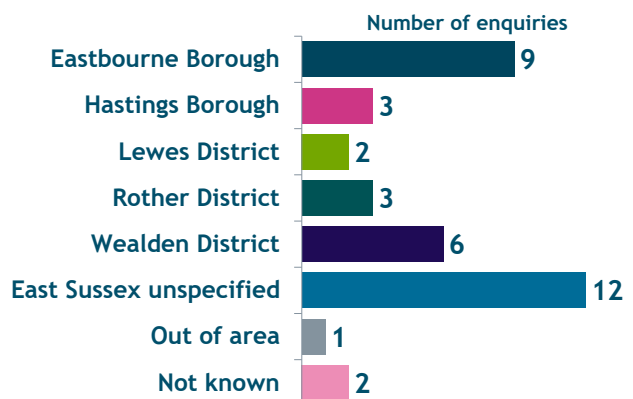
The most common enquiry theme in March was Hospital services, with 11 enquiries, a large increase from five the previous month. We received eight enquiries on Dentistry, compared to 15 in February.

'Other' enquiries related to services including palliative care, access to medical records and advocacy support.

Location of enquiries

'East Sussex unspecified area' was the most common location for enquiries in March 2023 with 12 enquiries.

This was followed by Eastbourne Borough, with nine enquiries and Wealden District with six.



Four most common enquiry themes:

Hospital Services (11)

The most common theme for enquiries received this month was Hospital Services, up from five the previous month.

Four enquiries were concerned about having to wait too long for urgent treatment. Two of these had been offered, or received, telephone appointments, but did not feel that these were appropriate for their situation. Individuals reported feeling stress and anxiety about the long term impact the waiting time will have on their health.

Dentistry (8)

Six enquiries were from individuals unable to find an NHS dentist taking new patients. Four of these reported they were currently in pain and needed treatment.

One enquiry related to concerns about the quality of treatment they had received. A further enquiry wanted assistance finding contact details for a dental practice.

GP Services (5)

Four enquiries received about GP services were regarding dissatisfaction with aspects of care including, feeling the GP was not taking their symptoms seriously, a surgery losing test results, and concern about a change of prescription.

Another enquiry related to an individual wanting to change GP practice due to a negative experience, but no other practice would take them as they live outside the catchment area.

Mental Health (3)

Two of the three enquiries expressed concern about poor standards of care that had been received from community mental health services.

There was also a concern about the lack of services on offer, in particular lack of support for people with ASC.

Trends in enquiries

We received 38 enquiries in March, slightly less than the 42 received in February.

In addition to the most common enquiry themes, identified above, Information and Signposting enquiries also related to:

- Information about the NHS optical voucher scheme
- Concern about palliative out-of-hours service
- How to access non-emergency patient transport
- Support available for people with dementia and their carers

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.

This month 14 individuals were referred or signposted to The Advocacy People for support with the NHS Independent Health Complaints Advocacy (IHCA) process.

Topics of complaints/reasons for signposting during March 2023 included:

- Pharmacy dispensing the wrong medication
- Poor care and experience of adult mental health services
- Poor inpatient hospital care leading to deterioration in health

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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