



April-June 2023

About us

About Healthwatch Wiltshire

Healthwatch Wiltshire is your local health and social care champion. As an independent statutory body, we have the power to make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers listen to local feedback and improve standards of care. We also help people to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.

Our priorities

For 2023/24 are:

Hospital discharge and care at home/virtual wards

- Hearing the views of people who have been discharged from hospital with an NHS@Home (virtual ward) package, and how this is working for them.

Children and young people's wellbeing

- Finding out what young people are concerned about and what local support they would like.

Mental health and autism

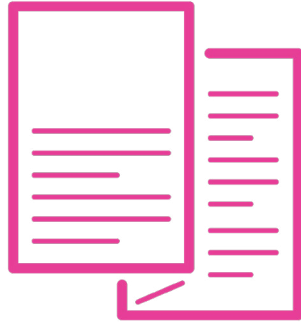
- Our joint project with Wiltshire Service Users' Network to find out what autistic people, and their carers and families, think of local mental health services.

Access to GP services

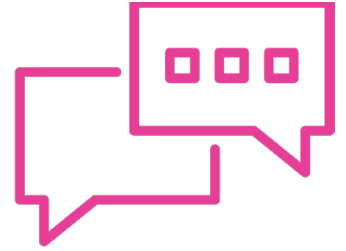
- Continuing our work to see how practices are adapting and changing since the pandemic.

Highlights

**Published 2 reports,
including our annual
report**



**Set our priorities for the
year ahead**



**Recruited a new
member of staff**



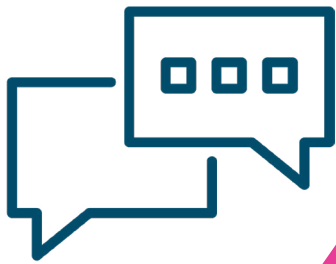
**Launched our project
on mental health and
autism**



**Recruited a new
volunteer**

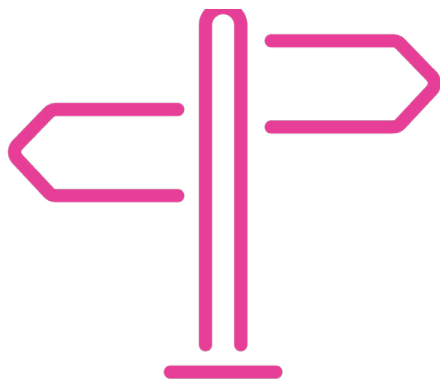


Talking and listening



152 people shared their experience of services with us

We attended **40** meetings, forums and events



35 contacts were given information and signposted through our Helpdesk Hub Team...

...with an average call time of **35** minutes

20 volunteers were involved...

...and volunteered over **120** hours



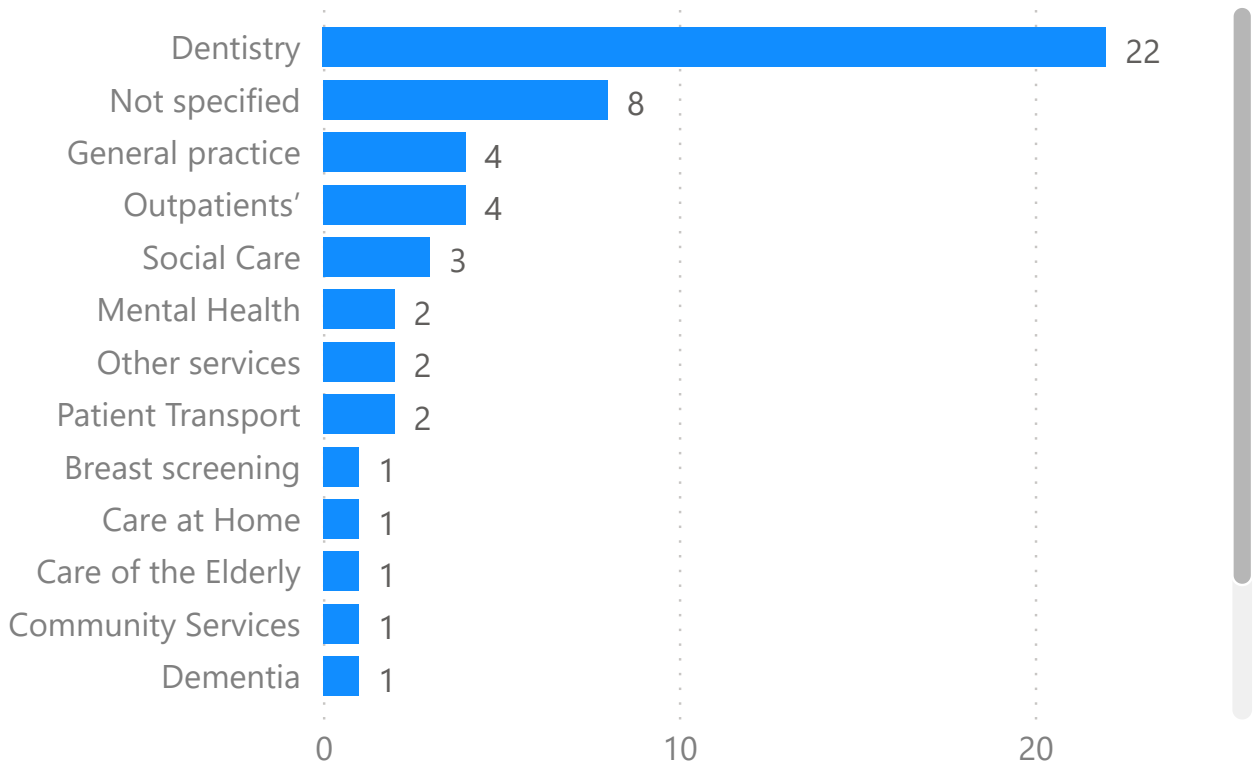
234 social media posts...

...reached **9,065** people

...and our website received **5,816** page views

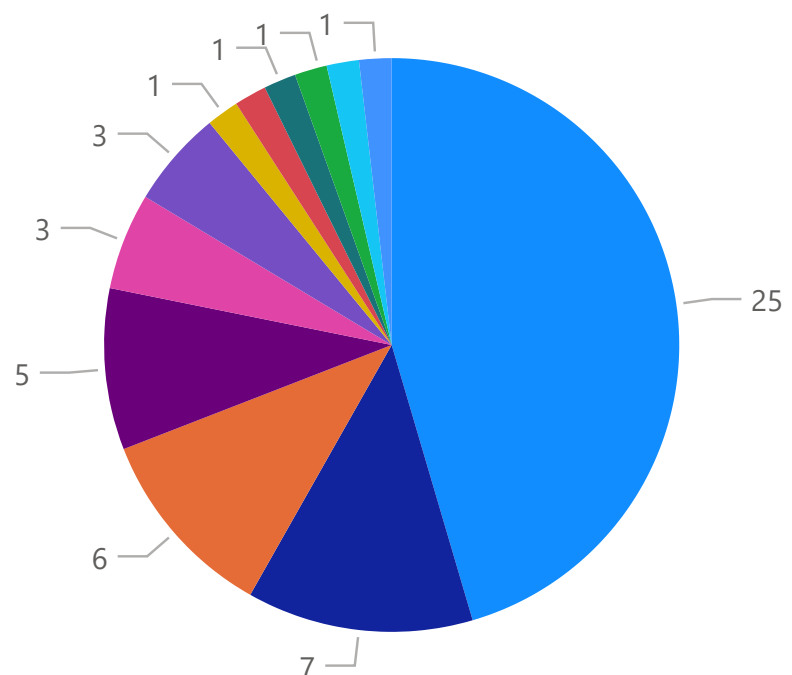
Experiences you shared

Top 10 Services

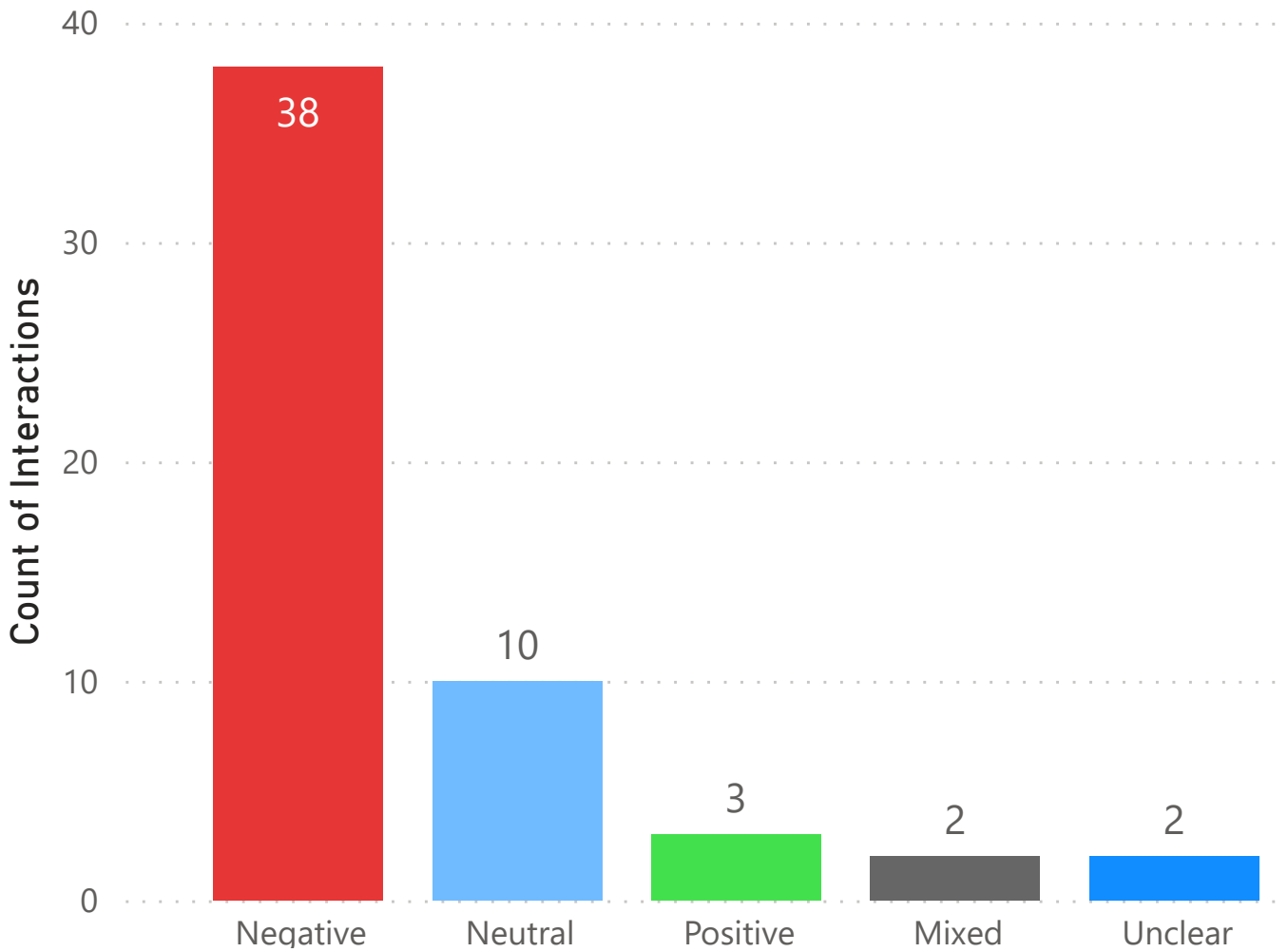


Top 10 Themes

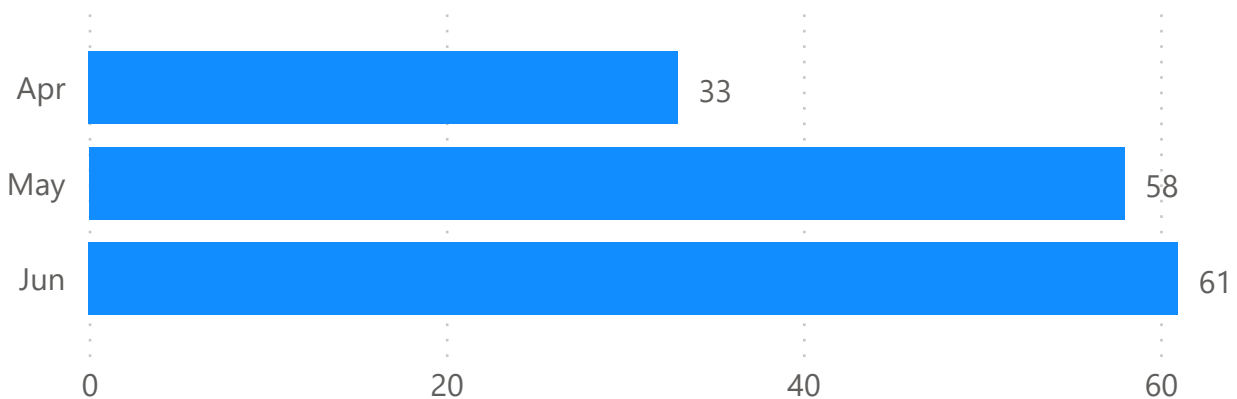
- Access and Choice
- Support available
- Treatment/Care
- Not specified
- Communication
- Waiting times
- Assessment
- Care planning
- Death of patient
- Level of provision
- Pathways of care
- Staffing/Staff attitudes



Story Sentiment



Number of people who shared their feedback/raised issues about health and care services



Our work

Setting our priorities for the year ahead

Every year we set our priorities based on what we hear from local people. A robust process is used which looks at what we have heard over the past year, what work we could do and how this would have an impact for local people.

This year we also ran a short survey asking for people to choose their preference from 6 key project areas. All of this information is shared with staff, volunteers and local commissioners for their input before the final decision is made by our Local Leadership Board. This year our priority areas are:

- **Hospital discharge and care at home/ virtual wards** – Hearing the views of people who have been discharged from hospital with an NHS@Home (virtual ward) package, and how this is working for them.
- **Children and young people’s wellbeing** – finding out what young people are concerned about and what local support they would like.
- **Mental health and autism** – our joint project with Wiltshire Service Users’ Network



to find out what autistic people, and their carers and families, think of local mental health services.

- **Access to GP services** – continuing our work to see how practices are adapting and changing since the pandemic.

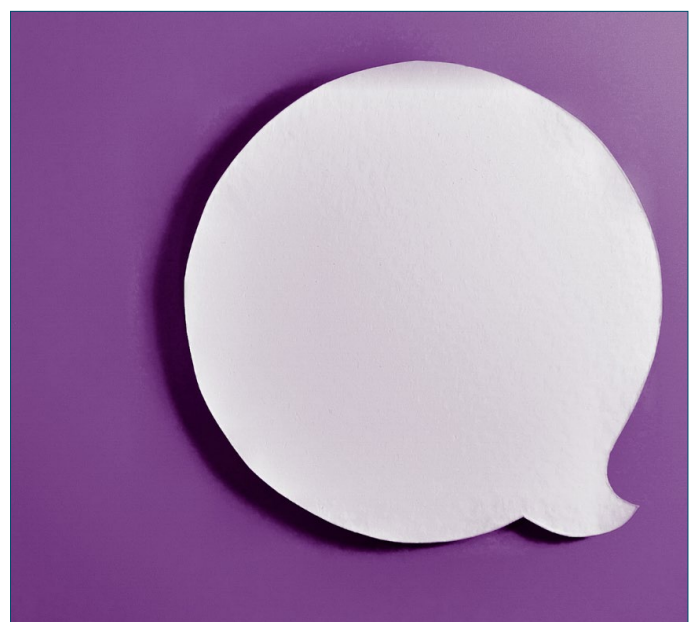
Find out more [in our blog](#).

Autistic people share views on mental health services

We ran two surveys during May and June – one for autistic people, and another for their families and carers, to hear what they think about mental health services in the county.

Working in partnership with Wiltshire Service Users Network (WSUN), which runs the National Lottery funded Wiltshire Autism Hub, we wanted to learn more about the experiences of autistic people, aged 14 and over, who have accessed mental health support in Wiltshire in the last three years, and what they think could be better.

Thank you to the 55 people that responded to these surveys. We are now analysing what you told us and a report will be shared in due course.



Hearing views on pilot rehabilitation scheme

Our report highlighting the findings from a survey that aimed to gather the views of patients, staff, families and carers on a pilot scheme for hospital discharge and accelerated rehabilitation, known as the Pathway 2 pilot, was published in April.

The survey was carried out in October 2022 involving face to face interviews with patients and staff at Little Manor Care Centre, Salisbury. Families and carers were also invited to give their views by completing a questionnaire. We also interviewed care staff, nursing staff, social care workers and therapists as well as the Quality Assurance and Placement Manager.

What were the key findings?

- Most patients had not been prepared by the hospital for their arrival at Little Manor. They had no understanding of their destination, the reason they were there, or how long they would be there. Many were distressed and confused and it took considerable time for them to be reassured.
- Patients felt involved and supported in their rehabilitation and appreciated the staff and care setting.
- Key to the model's success is accepting patients who meet the Pathway 2 criteria as they are able to take full advantage of the therapy provided, make a more rapid recovery and leave within 28 days.

- Brokerage teams (who find care home beds for people who are ready to leave hospital) need to better understand the importance of patients correctly meeting the eligibility criteria and the capacity of Little Manor.
- Most staff felt that Pathway 2 was a different way of working but were comfortable with this and felt that the multidisciplinary approach improved outcomes for Pathway 2 patients.
- A multidisciplinary team working together on one site makes a huge difference; saving time, enabling a more informed picture of the patient and their needs and a better service.
- Having social workers on site helps to identify the care packages patients' needs much earlier, reducing delays to the patient's return home.
- Experience of the Pathway 2 pilot has been positive to date.

Overall, patients, staff and the families and carers who gave their views were very positive about the benefits of the Pathway 2 pilot model being trialled at Little Manor. But improvements could be made around referrals and better information is needed for patients on their discharge from hospital and for them to understand why they have been sent to a care home for rehabilitation.

[Read more in our report.](#)



"Following successful tenders, two care homes in Wiltshire are now providing the Pathway 2 hub model and we are continuing to develop the hub, reflecting on all points highlighted through the Healthwatch survey."

Helen Mullinger, Commissioning Manager — Better Care Fund, Wiltshire Council

What is Pathway 2?

Pathway 2 is a term used by the NHS to describe the type of "pathway" or process for discharging patients from hospital who are medically ready but need some extra help in a care setting before being able to return home (ie, where they lived before their hospital admission).

The pilot Pathway 2 model involves a multidisciplinary team of therapists, social

care workers and care/nursing staff being based together on one site. The aim is to speed up patients' recovery away from a hospital environment and build their confidence and independence so that they are ready to move on after 28 days.

Patients are supported to achieve their goals and receive a social care assessment alongside their rehabilitation programme.

Advice and support when you need it

Our website offers a range of advice and information to help you keep up to date with the latest changes in health and care.

Over the last quarter we have added an article about looking after your health during the cost of living crisis, how to save money on prescriptions for Hormone Replacement

Therapy, and what support you can get as a carer. Our blog on how we set our priorities and our advice articles on where to get mental health support in Wiltshire were the most visited pages during this quarter.

[Visit our advice and information section](#) for more articles.

How can you save money on your Hormone Replacement Therapy?

Advice and Information - 24 May 2023

A new scheme could see women across England save hundreds of pounds yearly on their Hormone Replacement Therapy with a prepayment certificate.



Making a difference

How your feedback helps improve health and care for everyone

Our annual report showcases how we've been using your feedback to improve health and care across the county.

Together We're Making Health and Social Care Better details the changes being made to services based on what you have told us. These include an overhaul of the complaints process at Salisbury District Hospital, and improving the way people apply for NHS Continuing Healthcare.

Now in our 10th year, we also look back at highlights from the last decade, such as winning two national awards for our work.

[Visit our website](#) to read the full report.



Making the application process for Continuing Healthcare (CHC) easier

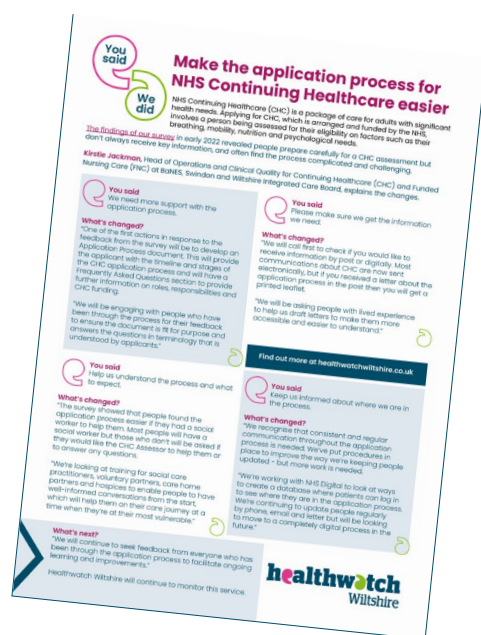
We have produced a **You Said, We Did** with the CHC team to highlight how the findings of our survey, which focused on how people apply for the CHC package of care, has led to changes in the process and better support for applicants.

This includes plans to develop an application process document and having people on hand to support them through the application process.

Find out more [on our website](#).

“We will continue to seek feedback from everyone who has been through the application process to facilitate ongoing learning and improvements.”

Kirstie Jackman, Head of Operations and Clinical Quality for Continuing Healthcare (CHC) and Funded Nursing Care (FNC) at BaNES, Swindon and Wiltshire Integrated Care Board



Sharing the outcomes of our Community Cash Fund projects

Our [Community Cash Fund projects](#) have now drawn to a close and we are able to share the benefits that they have had for the local community.

Sounds Better CIC developed the [Sing and Breathe Academy](#) as a pilot project, working across two schools in the Salisbury area, with children and their families taking part. The project was delivered in partnership with a local Parish Nurse.

Activities included relaxation, breathing exercises, rhythm and pitch games, singing songs, lyric creation and general vocalisation. Craft and stories were also used to underpin learning objectives.

Parents noted how their children had improved their breathing and inhaler techniques, and that the project had an impact on their own breathing, as many of the parents also lived with asthma. They also valued the opportunity to discuss health issues with the Parish Nurse.

Liv McClennan, Co-Director of Sounds Better CIC, said: "The project helped us create new musical repertoire suitable for supporting breathing, and improved asthma management understanding. It will lay the foundations of the next stage of development. Thank you to Healthwatch Wiltshire for the opportunity."

Rethink Mental Illness used our grant to fund the [Wiltshire Hearing Voices Group](#), a safe and non-judgemental space for people with unusual sensory experiences – such as hearing, seeing, feeling, sensing and tasting things that others do not – to share experiences and coping strategies.

Gavin Perry Harry, Peer and Volunteer Co-ordinator, at Rethink Mental Illness, said: "During the year, an average of seven individuals attended – the majority of whom got no mental health support outside of the group. Most people who attended had chronic mental health issues, which, in many

cases, had marred their lives for decades.

"The grant was used to provide a safe space where individuals could give and receive peer support about experiences. This resulted in the formation of friendships that then became an important part of people's support networks. Stigma and discrimination meant that many members had few people to talk about their experiences outside of the group.

"There were three occasions when group members gave feedback to Healthwatch Wiltshire on the health and social care services that they had accessed. This was invaluable as it gave members a voice and made them feel that their experiences might bring about change. One volunteer (who was previously a group member) also produced a short video to document his experiences of attending the group."

Mind Reset helps people with anxiety, depression, stress and phobias. They hosted a series of workshops, primarily in Malmesbury, for people who have been diagnosed with bipolar disorder, and people who live with someone who has the condition. The aim was to provide more information and advice on the disorder and what support is available.

The workshops also enabled people to discuss their needs and how they could be met in the future. Attendees thought having a group that focused solely on bipolar disorder was a real benefit to them.

The workshops identified several key themes, including the wish to be listened to, to be able to discuss medication and its effects, to get advice on how to adapt behaviour, and to share problems attendees had encountered at work which related to their condition.

A peer group was set up on WhatsApp so attendees could continue to support each other once the project had ended.

[See our website](#) for more details.

What people said

A selection of feedback we have received this quarter.

Fantastic team in the breast clinic and have felt supported throughout my journey. They deserve all the high praise that they can get.

I can't get a dentist. keep trying to make appointments. My 2.5year old has not seen dentist since they were 1. Really want them to go. If I went private they would see him.

It has been increasingly difficult to get a GP appointment at my surgery. Last week it took me 45 redials and a wait of 10mins once in the system to get an appointment with the nurse.

Following on from my treatment I was called to say that I would need to come in for a follow up appointment with a GP but they had no appointments to offer me. I was told I would have to get on the phone at 8am the following morning to book an 'emergency' appointment.

I have also tried to book a routine appointment. I was told these can only be booked on a Monday morning but in the same conversation was told that it was virtually impossible to get through to the surgery on a Monday morning. It seems the onus is on patient navigators to make clinical decisions. I think if the surgery operated a triage system it would be a lot more efficient. It would also be great if they could reinstate email/online contact.

More help for families in need and mental health services. We've exhausted one service but don't meet the criteria for the service above. I'm too complex for IAPTs [NHS Talking Therapies, formerly known as Improving Access to Psychological Therapies] but been mentally ill too long to be helped by next service. The gaps are too big and families suffer as a result.

There is a lack of sport options available for partially sighted people. He used to go to walking football but can't anymore as he wouldn't be covered on their insurance. He also has difficulties in winter attending appointments as he needs to travel in daylight hours.

How our Hub team can help

Our Healthwatch hub team are on hand to offer advice, information and signposting.

Signposting story – advocacy support

Simon* has a social worker for the Learning Disability and Autism service and shared that he is currently receiving help for his hoarding but is uncomfortable with the way this is progressing.

He said communication and processing information takes him a while and that he has a poor memory. He reported that the person helping him to clear out his property was rushing him to the extent that he didn't feel able to make decisions or process what was happening. He said he has recently found some new items with the price tag on in his bin.

He also said his social worker shared a new Care Plan with him, and gave him about 20 minutes to read the 7 page document. He felt he hasn't been given

the chance to digest it or be involved and is being pressured to agree to it.

The Hub team discussed the emotional difficulties of someone clearing his property for him and suggested talking therapies could help. Simon mentioned he has an assessment with Mental Health services coming up and that he used to be a member of a hoarders support group.

The Hub team called The Advocacy People who advised that Simon may be able to access Care Act advocacy but would need a referral from his social worker. The Hub team spoke to Simon about this, and also signposted him to the Mencap helpline for further advice and support.

Signposting story – help finding an NHS dentist

Cynthia* is 20 weeks pregnant and currently moves around a lot as her husband is in the military. She said that she needs her teeth looked at as they are currently sensitive and bleed often due to pregnancy. She also stated that her midwife advised her that she is entitled to free dental checks as she is pregnant.

Cynthia said that she has already

contacted NHS England and they advised there is nothing they can do at the moment and advised her to continue to look around. The Hub team suggested she visits the NHS website to find a dentist and at organisations who can provide advice online, such as the Oral Health Foundation and eLearning for Healthcare. The Hub team also advised her to contact NHS 111 if she experiences any pain or discomfort.

Coming up



Find out more about our work at healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk

healthwatch Wiltshire

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