



Same Day Emergency Care Countess of Chester Hospital

Thursday 7 September and
Monday 11 September 2023

healthwatch
Cheshire West

healthwatch
Cheshire East

Report details

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| Address | <p>Same Day Emergency Care Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust Countess of Chester Health Park Liverpool Road Chester CH2 1UL</p> |
| Service Provider | Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust |
| Date of Visit | <p>Thursday 7 September 2023 - 5pm until 8pm Monday 11 September - 9am until 12pm</p> |
| Type of Visit | Announced (See methodology) |
| Representatives | <p>Thursday 7 September 2023 - Mark Groves Monday 11 September - Mark Groves</p> |
| Date and detail of previous visits by Healthwatch Cheshire East | No previous report has been completed for the Same Day Emergency Care Department |

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Cheshire West would like to thank the service provider, patients, visitors and staff for their contribution to the Enter & View Programme.

Disclaimer

This report relates to findings gathered on specific dates of visiting the service as set out above. Consequently, the report is not suggested to be a fully representative portrayal of the experiences of all the patients and family members or staff, but does provide an account of what was observed and presented to Healthwatch Cheshire Authorised Representatives (ARs) at the time of the visit.

This report is written for Healthwatch Cheshire West using the information gathered by the Enter and View Authorised Representatives named above who carried out the visit on behalf of Healthwatch Cheshire West.

What is Enter and View?

Healthwatch Cheshire is the local independent consumer champion for health and care services, forming part of the national network of local Healthwatch across England.

Under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, local Healthwatch have the power to carry out Enter and View visits as part of their scrutiny function. This legislation places a duty on health and social care providers to allow Authorised Representatives of Healthwatch to carry out an Enter and View visit on premises where health and social care is publicly funded and delivered. This includes:

- Health or care services which are contracted by local authorities or the NHS, such as adult social care homes and day-care centres.
- NHS Trusts
- NHS Foundation Trusts
- Local authorities
- Primary medical services, such as GPs
- Primary dental services, such as dentists

- Primary Ophthalmic services, such as opticians
- Pharmaceutical services, such as community pharmacists.

The list of service providers who have a duty to allow entry is set out in section 225 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and supplemented by Regulation 14 of the 2013 Local Authorities regulations.

At Healthwatch Cheshire, the Enter and View programme is conducted by a small team of trained staff and volunteers, who are prepared as Authorised Representatives to carry out visits to health and social care premises to find out how they are being run and, where there are areas for improvement, to make recommendations.

Following an Enter and View visit, a formal report is published where findings of good practice and recommendations to improve the service are made. These reports, which include feedback from the service provider, are circulated to the service provider, commissioner and the CQC and are made publicly available on the Healthwatch Cheshire websites:

- www.healthwatchcheshireeast.org.uk/what-we-do/enter-and-view
- www.healthwatchcwac.org.uk/what-we-do/enter-and-view.

Purpose of the Visit

- To engage with patients of the named service and understand their experiences
- To observe patients and relatives interacting with the staff and their surroundings
- Capture the experience of patients and relatives and any ideas they may have for change
- To consider the effects of current building work on the patient experience.

Methodology

This Enter & View visit was carried out with 'Prior Notice'.

A visit with 'Prior Notice' is when the setting is aware that we will be conducting an Enter & View visit. On this occasion an exact time and date were given, as the visits were linked with the Healthwatch Accident and Emergency Watch.

This report can be read in conjunction with our Countess of Chester A&E Report and Countess of Chester A&E Enter and View Report which can be found at: <https://healthwatchcwac.org.uk/what-we-do/our-reports/>

A&E Watch is designed to gain a snapshot view of the Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments at specific hospitals. Healthwatch Cheshire undertake A&E Watch periodically to gain experiences of patients, understand why they attended and how they thought services could be improved. The purpose of A&E Watch is to explore themes emerging from comments made and feed back to help improve services in the future.

The Enter and View visit took place over two days and there was input from all the Healthwatch Enter and View representatives attending at the Same Day Emergency Care Department (SDEC). This report is based on their observations and conversations at the time of the visits.

A preliminary visit of SDEC took place approximately a week before. This was between senior members of the A&E department and senior members of Healthwatch.

Details of Visits

Observations from the visits

Please note that comments from patients are included at the end of this report. Healthwatch also took advice from the Service Manager in relation to any patients who may have mental health issues.

Service and Organisation

Patients are referred to SDEC via GPs or other healthcare professionals, including the Emergency Department staff.

Car parking for the SDEC is part of the general hospital car parking. It can be a long walk from the SDEC department. In general, people we spoke to had no difficulty finding parking spaces. Healthwatch noted that the signage as you approached the SDEC Department from the car parks was clear and the route to the department, we felt, was obvious. However, unless you knew that the SDEC formed part of the A&E Department the signage could be confusing as Healthwatch only noted A&E signage as we could not find signage directing you to the SDEC department only.

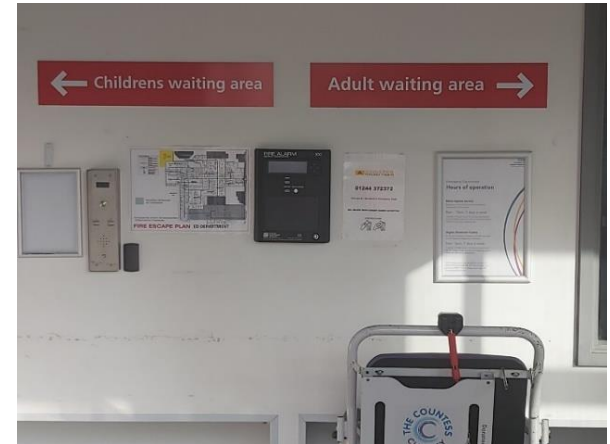
Upon entering the SDEC department patients book in with the receptionist. During the visits we noted that at no time were there queues and waiting times to see the receptionist were kept to a minimum.

A member of the nursing staff then completes an initial assessment. Depending upon the initial assessment other tests may be taken, including blood tests. Once the results of all the tests are known appropriate action will be taken and a treatment plan prepared before being discharged.

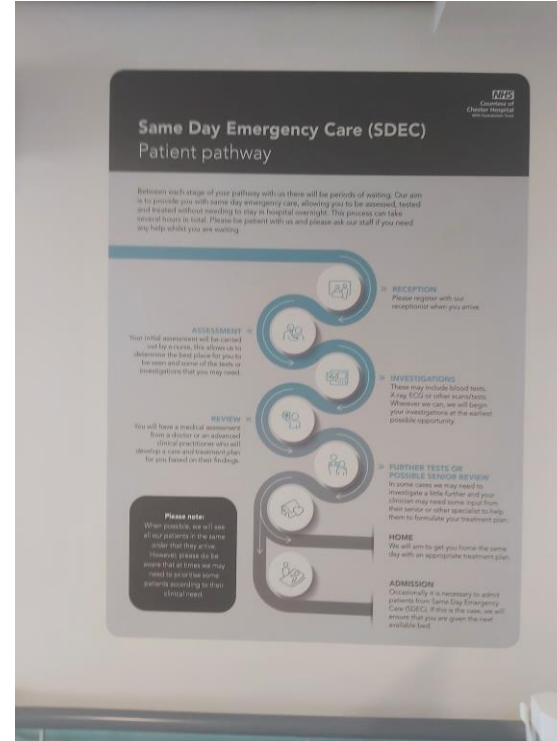
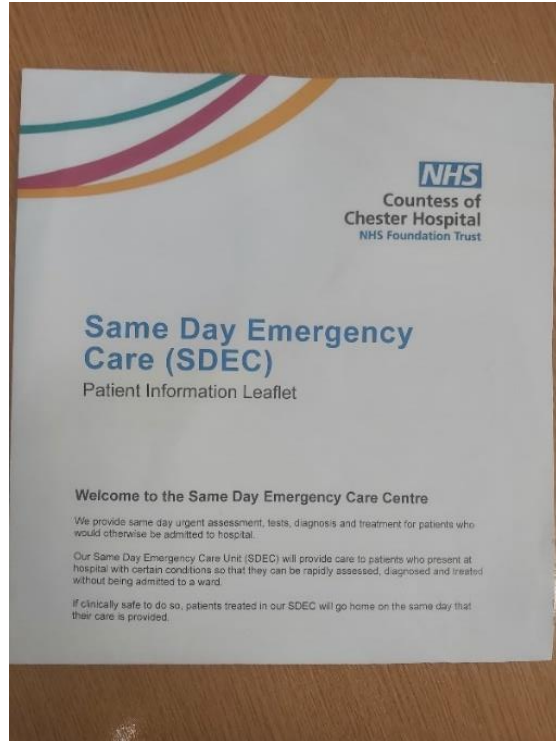
Environment

The department was never busy each time Healthwatch visited; it appeared calm and well organised. The staff were professional and helpful. On Thursday evening there were never more than ten patients in the department at any time.

On Monday morning there were never more than six patients in the waiting room.

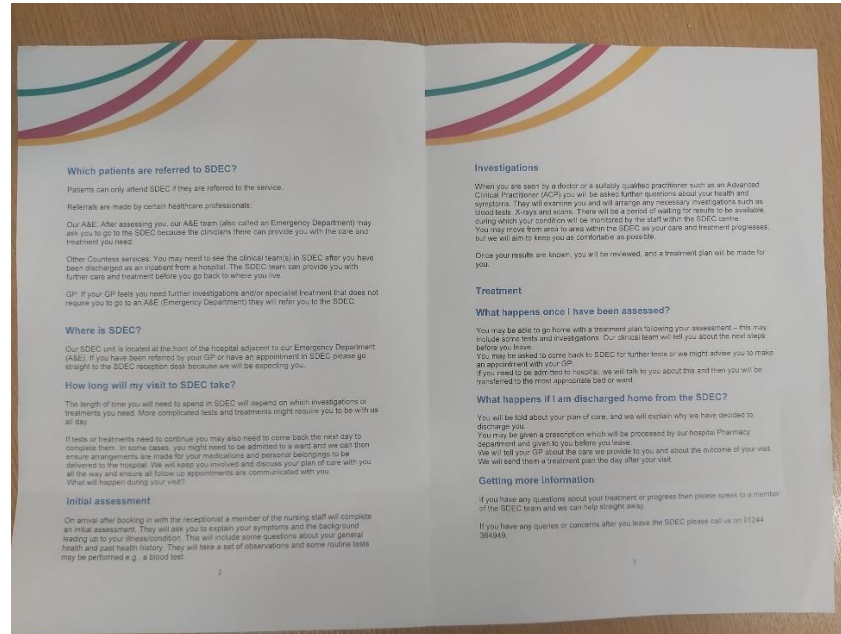


The department has only recently been opened and it was light and bright, clean and well presented.



Patient pathway poster and four page Patient Information Leaflet.

There was information available to patients including a Patient Pathway poster located on the wall in the waiting room. This described the routes through assessment and investigation. There was also a 4 page Patient Care leaflet which explained who is referred to the SDEC, initial assessment and any investigations that need to be undertaken and what happens following the assessment. These were placed around the waiting room.



Four page Patient Care Leaflet

Corridor and cubicles. All were well presented clean and spacious.



During our visits the weather was very warm but the waiting area was cool and at a comfortable temperature. There were well stocked vending machines available for patients. Toilet areas that we observed were clean and well maintained and situated at the entrance to the building. There were televisions in the waiting rooms.

Healthwatch noted that each time we visited people were smoking outside the SDEC Department, which appeared to be an overspill of people waiting for treatment at A&E, some standing directly under No Smoking signs. There were cigarette butts strewn around the entrance. It should be noted that the whole of the Countess of Chester Hospital is a No Smoking area.



Staffing

There appeared to be ample staff throughout our visits.

All staff we encountered were friendly, enthusiastic, pleasant and took the time to answer our questions. They all wore name badges. We observed them being helpful, courteous, respectful and caring to patients, friends and family. Without exception, all the patients we spoke to had nothing but praise for the staff.

Waiting Times

Several patients complained that they had no idea how long their wait would be. Due to the small numbers of patients in the waiting rooms it was easy for the staff to locate patients when they wanted to examine them.

Other hospitals have some system for the patients to have an idea of their wait. Either a numbering system or a screen with waiting times for the various departments. Patients explained that they understood there would be a wait but could not make any arrangements to be collected when they had been seen or what to do about meals as they had no idea of the length of their wait.

Same Day Emergency Care Patient Survey

As part of our Enter and View Visit to the Same Day Emergency Care Centre Healthwatch asked patients to complete a survey about their experiences of the department.

Summary

- Most patients were driven to the hospital by someone.
- Two thirds of those surveyed felt that they had not been kept informed of waiting times.
- Everyone surveyed felt that they had been kept up to date with their treatment and care.
- Everyone surveyed felt that they had been treated with dignity and respect.
- Everyone surveyed felt that their privacy had been respected as much as possible.
- Over 70% of those surveyed felt the service they received was excellent

Details of Visits

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Upon entering the SDEC department patients book in with the receptionist. During the visits we noted that at no time were there queues and waiting times to see the receptionist were kept to a minimum.

Who will this report be shared with?

The following report has been produced based on the responses from the 125 people who completed our survey.

A copy of the final report will be published on our Healthwatch Cheshire West website, and sent to the below with the recommendation that the information is used to provide intelligence for the planning of Accident and Emergency services at the Countess of Chester Hospital and across the Health and Care System.

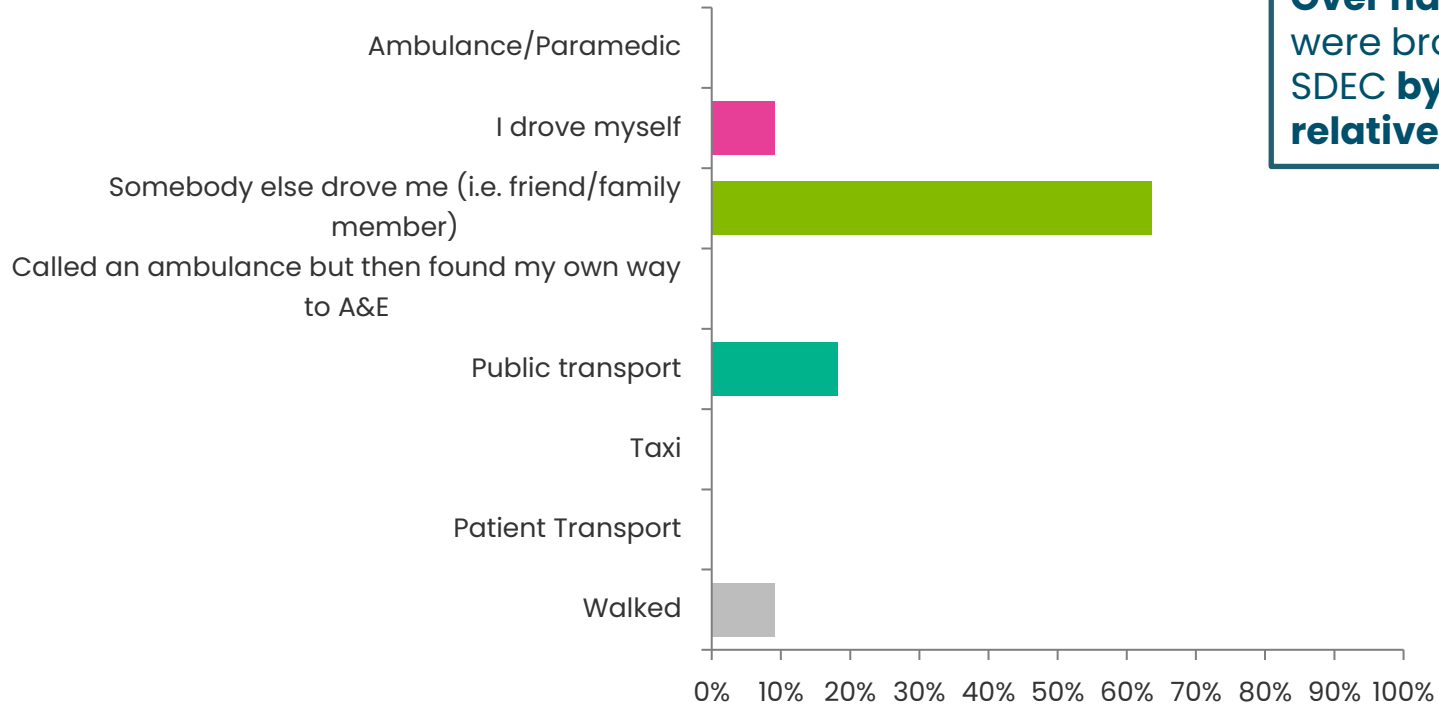
- Countess of Chester Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Cheshire West and Chester Health and Care Partnership Board
- Cheshire West and Chester Council Health Scrutiny Comm
- Cheshire West and Chester Health and Wellbeing Board
- North West Ambulance Service (NWAS)



Survey results

1) How did you travel here today?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



Over half, 64% (7) were brought to SDEC by a friend or relative.

Additional comments:

Answered: 4

"Parking is good."

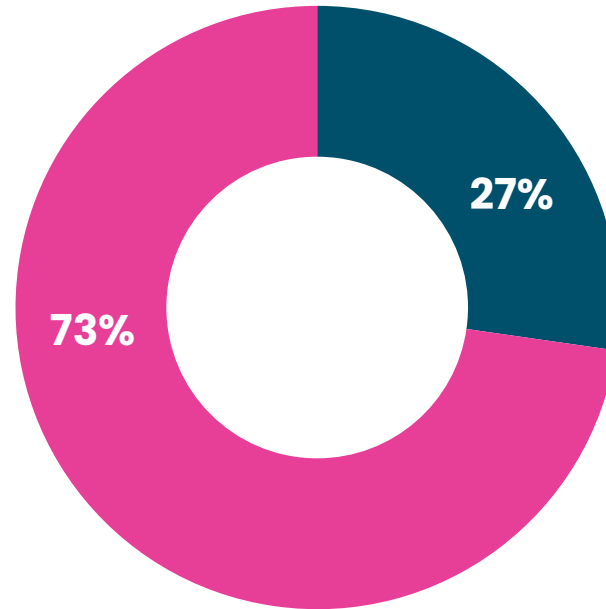
"Easy to park."

"Plenty of parking but signs were misleading."

"Plenty of parking."

2) Whilst in SDEC, are you being/have you been kept regularly informed about waiting times or delays?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



■ Yes ■ No

Almost three quarters (73% - 8 people) of those waiting at SDEC had not been kept regularly up to date on waiting times.

Additional comments:

Answered: 5

"They told me when I went to reception."

"I've only been here for half an hour."

"I've not been given the slightest idea."

"I've only just arrived."

"When I arrived I was told six hours."

4) Whilst in SDEC, are you being/have you been kept up to date regarding your treatment and care?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



■ Yes ■ No

All 11 respondents said they had been **kept up to date** regarding their treatment and care.

Additional comments:

Answered: 3

"So far yes."

"Yes, waiting for my test results."

"Assessments and bloods – I'm waiting for the results."

5) Do you feel you have been treated with dignity and respect during your time at SDEC?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



■ Yes ■ No ■ Sometimes ■ Don't know

All (11) of those who responded said they felt they had been **treated with dignity and respect.**

Additional comments:

Answered: 5

“So far yes.”

“Staff are very good.”

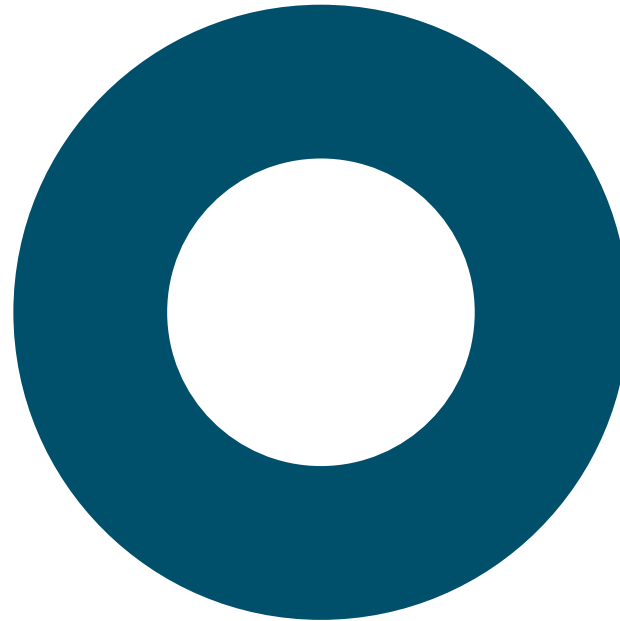
“Friendly staff.”

“Staff are very pleasant.”

“Staff are vey calm and helpful.”

6) Do you feel your privacy has been maintained as much as possible during your time at SDEC?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



■ Yes ■ No ■ Somewhat ■ Don't know

All (11) respondents said **their privacy had been maintained** as much as possible.

Additional comments:

Answered: 4

"There were lots of bays at the unit."

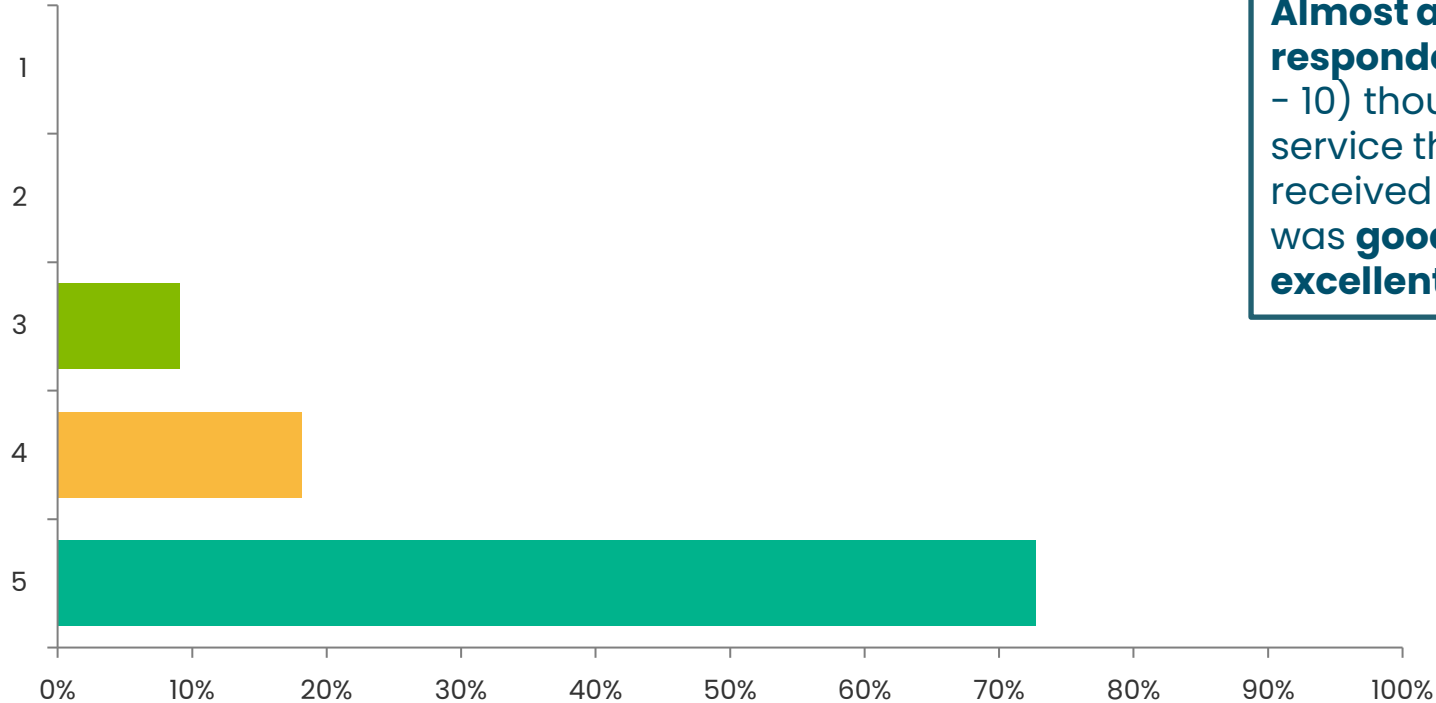
"So far yes."

"Individual bays."

"Although it is very crowded, the staff do their best."

7) How would you rate the service you have received so far in SDEC (1 being poor and 5 being excellent)?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



Almost all respondents (90% - 10) thought the service they received in SDEC was **good or excellent.**

8) How have you found your experience in SDEC? Positives

Answered: 10

"Lovely clean building."

"Pleasant staff."

"Lovely new building."

"The staff are positive so they make me feel positive."

"Great staff."

"Pleasant staff."

"Great building – air conditioned."

"Drinks machine as its hot today."

"Very clean."

"Staff easy to talk to for information and help."

9) How have you found your experience in SDEC? Negatives

Answered: 5

"Why isn't A&E like this?"

"Waiting time."

"Waiting time."

"Not sure how long I'm going to be here."

"Considering I was sent here by the GP, there is no communication between the GP and the hospital."

11) Which GP Practice are you registered with?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

| ANSWER CHOICES | RESPONSES |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| ▼ Handbridge Medical | 27.27% 3 |
| ▼ City Walls Medical Centre | 18.18% 2 |
| ▼ Great Sutton Medical Centre | 18.18% 2 |
| ▼ Fountains Medical Centre | 9.09% 1 |
| ▼ Park Road - Tarporley Health Centre | 9.09% 1 |
| ▼ Western Avenue | 9.09% 1 |
| ▼ Whitby Group Practice | 9.09% 1 |

Appendix - Demographics of survey respondents

12) What is your postcode?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

CH1 - Chester

CH2 x 3 - Chester

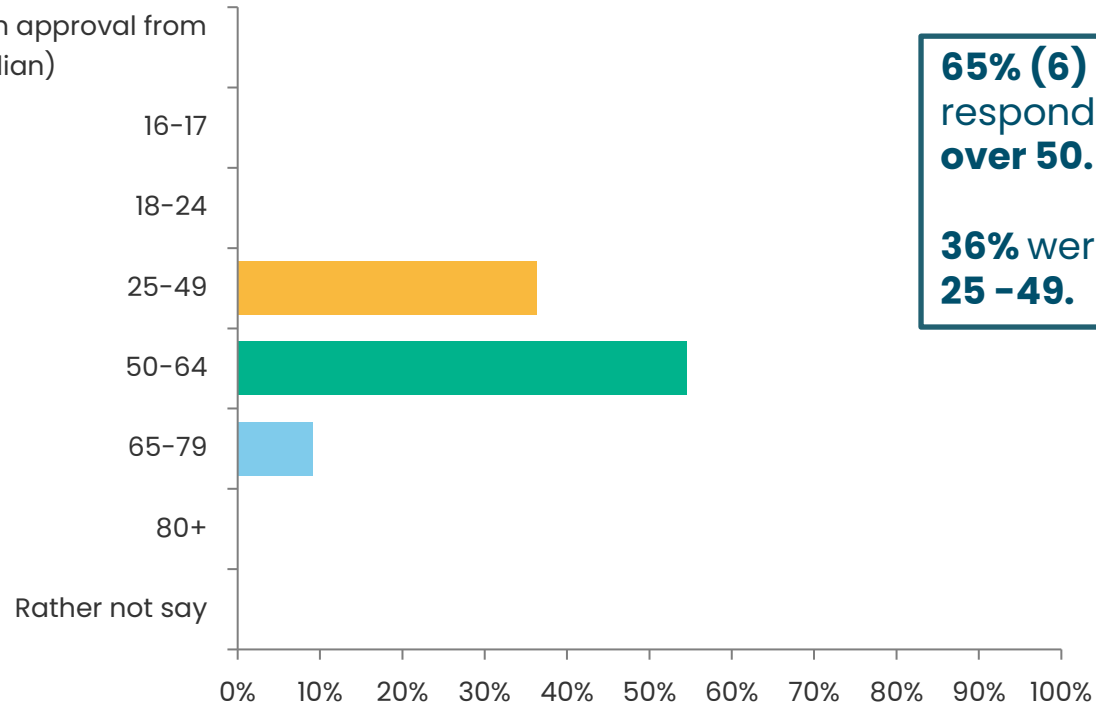
CH4 - Chester

CW6 - Tarporley

CH66 x 2 - Ellesmere Port

13) Age

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

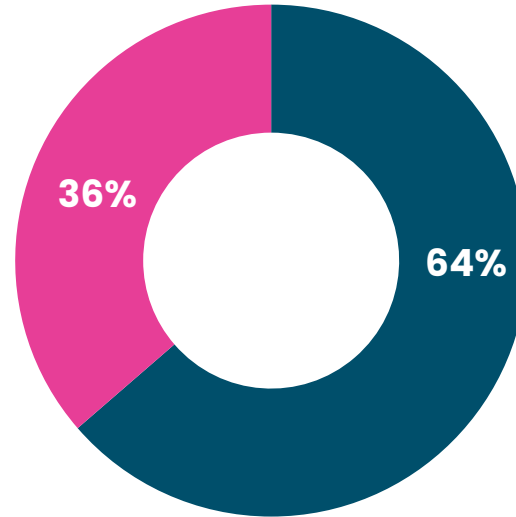


65% (6) of respondents **were over 50.**

36% were **between 25 - 49.**

14) Gender

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



64% (7) of respondents **were women.**

36% (4) of respondents **were men.**

- Woman (including trans woman)
- Man (including trans man)
- Non-binary
- Transsexual
- Transgender
- Rather not say

15) Do you consider yourself to be a carer?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

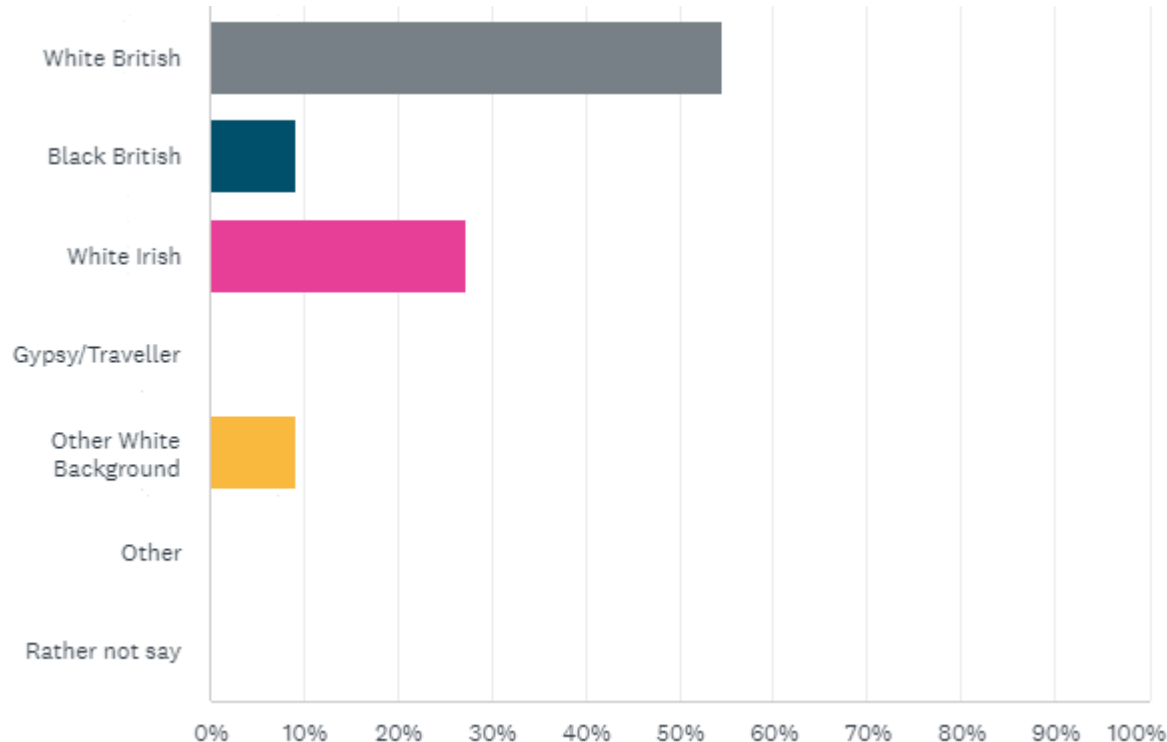


■ Yes ■ No

No respondents considered themselves to be a carer.

16) Ethnicity

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

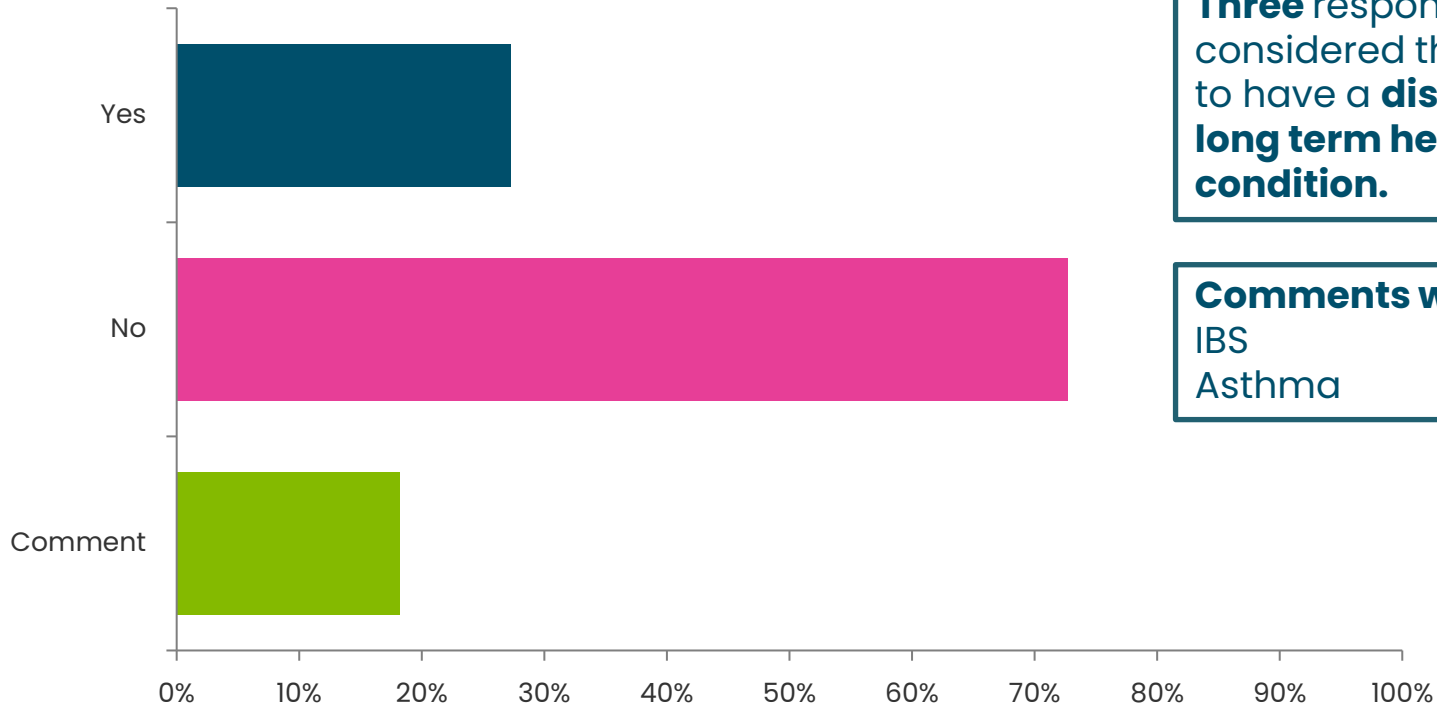


The vast majority of those spoken to were **White British or White Irish (82% - 9)**.

One respondent was Black British and **one from another white background**.

17) Do you consider yourself to have a disability/long term health condition?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



Three respondents considered themselves to have a **disability or long term health condition**.

Comments were:

IBS
Asthma

18) What sexual orientation do you identify with?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

All respondents said they were heterosexual.



■ Bisexual

■ Gay

■ Heterosexual

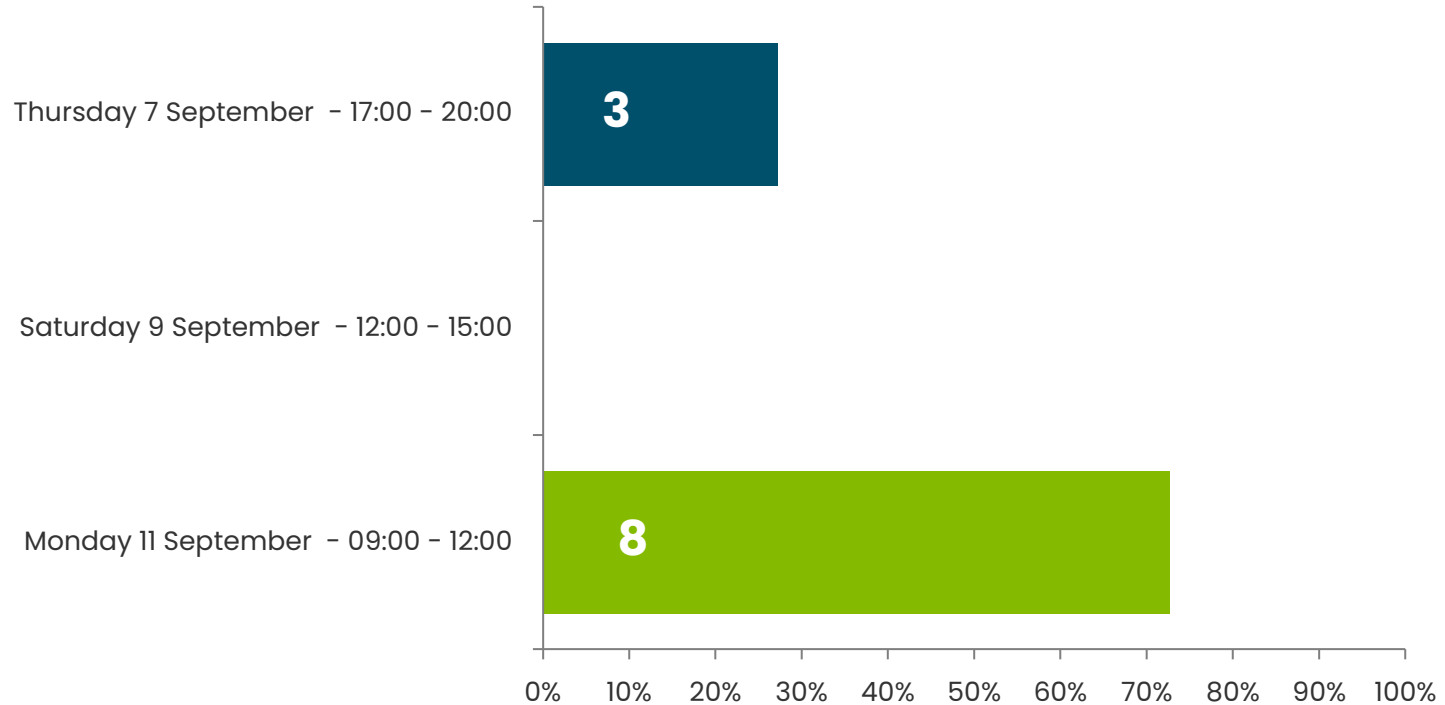
■ Lesbian or gay woman

■ Prefer not to say

■ If prefer to self describe please specify

19) Time and date completed


Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



Healthwatch Cheshire Feedback Centre can be found at:

 www.healthwatchcheshire.org.uk

Or contact us on :

 0300 323 0006

Email: info@healthwatchcheshire.org.uk

  @HealthwatchCW and @HealthwatchCE



Healthwatch Cheshire CIC, Sension House, Denton Drive,
Northwich, Cheshire, CW9 7LU