

Healthwatch Quarterly Impact Report

Quarter 4: January to March 2024

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About Us

Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay (HWDPT) are your local health and social care champions.

We're here to speak up for the 1.2 million people in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, making sure NHS leaders and other decision makers hear their voices and use their feedback to improve care. We can also help them find reliable, trustworthy information and advice.

We offer dedicated walk-in centres in Torbay and Plymouth, and in wider Devon 'Healthwatch Champions' are located at Citizens Advice offices based throughout the county to carry out Healthwatch core functions.



About this report

This report details our key activities for the last quarter, including how we have engaged with the public, a summary of the feedback we have collected, our reports, recommendations and any outcomes or impact made.



Quarter at a glance

We've met **hundreds** of local people at community events across Devon, Plymouth & Torbay



Social media users have seen our posts over **100,000** times with **5,000** of you seeing our Email Bulletins



100 people have reviewed services on our feedback websites



We've escalated **118** of your complaints or concerns to those in charge



446 of you have shared your health or care feedback with us this quarter



We've helped **138** of you looking for advice on other organisations



We've released **2** reports on local Emergency Departments and Pharmacy services



We had in-depth conversations with **35** patients at the brand new Royal Eye Infirmary building in Plymouth to find out what they think of it





Our News in Brief

A snapshot of some of our main activities during the past three months

We have won a National Award!

This quarter our team at Healthwatch Torbay were commended in the annual National Healthwatch Impact Awards, recognising outstanding work that uses local people’s views to improve health and care support. In the running against 18 other shortlisted projects, the team was commended for their work on helping to improve care for local people.

The National Healthwatch Impact Awards recognises outstanding examples of where the views of local people have been used to make positive changes to local NHS and social care services. This year, to recognise the ten year anniversary of Healthwatch, the award reflected on an improvement to people’s care that has resulted from a local Healthwatch’s work at any point over the past ten years, and work that still benefits people today. The team at Healthwatch Torbay were commended for their work highlighting concerns about local domiciliary care, which led in 2017 to the Care Quality Commission (CQC) placing the care organisation into special measures until improvements were made.

Dr Kevin Dixon, Chair for Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay said:

“Our staff and volunteers work so hard to find out if health and care services are working for local people and, if they are not, to try and get services to fix the issues. So, finding out that our work has been commended nationally is a real pat on the back. However, we can’t do anything without local people coming forward to share your views, so this is not just great news for us but also for everyone in Torbay. I’d especially like to thank the service users themselves for raising their concerns with us throughout this piece of work, the importance of local people speaking out cannot be understated.”

Joanna Williams, Director of Adult and Community Services in Torbay said:

“This is fantastic news and a real testament to the joint working relationship between Healthwatch and local social care providers and commissioners, it’s a relationship we are committed to and very grateful for. At the time Healthwatch Torbay’s input was invaluable and allowed us to re-commission new services for local people based on the learning that they provided. They continue to be a key part of service user co-production and involvement so that we don’t get back to that situation again. I congratulate them on winning this nationally commended award.”

Commenting on the award, Louise Ansari, Chief Executive of Healthwatch England said:

“The team should feel really proud. Our awards recognise outstanding work that makes a real difference to local people, and the competition this year from across England was very high. Being recognised is also a testament to all the local people who were prepared to speak up and the health professionals who listened. It just shows what can be achieved when we work together to improve care.”



Dr Kevin Dixon, Chair for HWDPT with Strategic Lead Pat Harris receiving a National Healthwatch Award in 2017

Impact : At the time Healthwatch Torbay were invited to raise their social care concerns and offer key recommendations nationally during an accountability hearing with the CQC and the Government’s Health Select Committee. They now have regular meetings with the local authority, commissioners and local CQC lead inspectors and continue to work with key service users to monitor improvements to ensure the voice of local people is listened to.



Healthwatch Network News

A snapshot of some of our national partner Healthwatch England's news, briefings and reports during the past three months

About Healthwatch England

Healthwatch was established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 on a national and local level. Healthwatch England (HWE) are a statutory committee of the independent regulator the Care Quality Commission (CQC). HWE escalate local Healthwatch concerns to CQC and provide advice to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, NHS England and local authorities. There are 152 independent local Healthwatch set up across each local authority in England.

Healthwatch England Key Reports and Briefings This Quarter

A vision for the NHS in 2030 – This quarter Healthwatch England used the experiences of care from over 10 million people collected over the past ten years to create a bold vision for the NHS in 2030. The vision calls for a focus on three key themes:

1. Making the NHS easier to access and navigate.
2. Tackling health inequalities.
3. Building a patient-centred culture.

Find out where Healthwatch think the NHS should be in six years and how it can get there in their latest report – 'What patients want: a vision for the NHS in 2030'. Please click one of the links below to download the report:

- **Download the Full Report** – https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/sites/healthwatch.co.uk/files/20240229%20%20-%20What%20patients%20want%20-%20a%20vision%20for%20the%20NHS%20in%202030_0.pdf
- **Download the Executive summary of recommendations** – https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/sites/healthwatch.co.uk/files/20240301_PatVisonTwoPageSummary.pdf
- **Download the Easy Read Report** – <https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/sites/healthwatch.co.uk/files/20240325%20What%20patients%20want%20Easy%20Read%20v2%20WEB%20ACCESSIBLE.pdf>

Healthwatch England released their latest annual report – within which they share the value that the public's voices bring to health and social care services. They also call on health and social care decision-makers to focus on tackling health inequalities, building a patient-centred NHS culture and making the NHS easier to access and navigate.

As well as sharing their work, Healthwatch England have highlighted a few brilliant local Healthwatch projects too, including one of our own pieces of work in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay on page 13. Please click one of the links below to download the report:

- **Download the report** – https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/sites/healthwatch.co.uk/files/20240314%20HWE%20Annual%20report%20%26%20Accounts%202022_23%20FINAL_0.pdf
- **Download the easy read report** – <https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/sites/healthwatch.co.uk/files/4118%20Healthwatch%20England%20Annual%20Report%2022-23%20Easy%20Read%20v1a.pdf>
- **Download large print version** – <https://www.healthwatch.co.uk/sites/healthwatch.co.uk/files/4118%20Healthwatch%20England%20Annual%20Report%2022-23%20Easy%20Read%20v1a.pdf>

Impact : What we do with these reports and briefings HWDPT contribute real local public feedback to all of HWE's reports and briefings. We share these with key stakeholders, including health and social care providers & commissioners, the Devon Integrated Care Partnership Board, our local authorities, Local Care Partnerships and the voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE) sector.



Healthwatch Network News

A look at Healthwatch England's ongoing campaigns and work to come

Healthwatch England respond to national and regional health and care developments and run a number of different campaigns throughout the year that focus on many different aspects of health and social care. Find out more about their work in the last quarter in this section.

Healthwatch England Official Responses

- Under a new plan, people should benefit from millions more NHS dental appointments over the next year. Healthwatch responded welcoming the new funding as a 'good start' but are calling for more radical long-term solutions to get NHS dentistry back on track.
- A new report which uses the information you provide to analyse the issues, challenges and opportunities faced by Healthwatch is now available. 'The Healthwatch Network: A National Picture of Key Trends' highlights that while impact, income generation and data sharing have increased, core funding has experienced a real-terms cut. [Read the full report here.](#)
- Public satisfaction with the NHS has fallen to the lowest level ever recorded, according to analysis of the latest British Social Attitudes Survey. In response, Healthwatch highlighted that it was worrying that public satisfaction with the NHS and social care services has slid from already record-low levels but unfortunately, many of the concerns highlighted in this report are reflected in the stories people share with Healthwatch teams across the country.
- Last year, Healthwatch polling highlighted the stark impact the cost of living crisis was having on people's access to health and care. A new poll, conducted with more than 2,000 adults in January, shows modest improvements in some areas. However, Healthwatch found the cost of living remains a barrier to health, particularly for those under the most financial pressure and those requiring dental care.

Share for Better Care: the new campaign

Doctors, nurses and healthcare staff are doing their best to provide good quality care. But did you know public feedback can play a vital role in helping these services spot issues quickly? Healthwatch England's new campaign, 'Share for Better Care', is a chance for you to share feedback about NHS and social care services – to improve care for you and your community.

Health and care services are for everyone, and whether it's good or bad, big or small, we are here to listen and act on your feedback. The campaign will run from February 2024-April 2025 and will be made up of four distinct phases:

Phase 1: National launch.

Phase 2: Health inequalities and deprivation.

Phase 3: Care the way you need it.

Phase 4: The Staff Perspective.

Impact : Get involved with the campaign by sharing your feedback and making a real difference. Call us free on **0800 520 0640** or visit one of our websites:
www.healthwatchdevon.co.uk
www.healthwatchplymouth.co.uk
www.healthwatchtorbay.org.uk

Other Healthwatch England Activities Coming Next Quarter

- New accessibility guidance for the Healthwatch Network to ensure the content we produce meets high standards to ensure everyone can access and benefit from it.
- A new report, "Pharmacy: what people want", explores the current state of pharmacy services and offers actions for healthcare leaders and the wider sector. The report dives into people's experiences of and attitudes towards pharmacy services.



Our Engagement Activity

Some ways we have engaged with our communities to gather feedback

The last three months have seen us take our information stands out into the community and attended events in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, capturing experiences of local health and social care along the way.

Some selected events where we have been raising awareness of HWDPT, gathering feedback and taking the opportunity to discuss and share issues or experience included:

healthwatch Devon

- Buckfastleigh Food Bank drop-in
- MS Society Health and Wellbeing Event in North Devon
- West Devon CVS, Hatherleigh.

healthwatch Plymouth

- Wellbeing Wednesday at University of Plymouth
- Health Chat at The Village Hub
- Feel Good Friday Health & Wellbeing Fair
- Plymouth MS Group
- Royal Eye Infirmary Patient Engagement.

healthwatch Torbay

- The Big Plan event at the Riviera Centre, Torquay
- Chronic Pain Café, Windmill Centre, Torquay
- Dimensions for Autism, Jasmyn House, Paignton.



The HW Plymouth volunteer engagement team attending 'Wellbeing Wednesday' at University of Plymouth

Royal Eye Infirmary Patient Engagement

This quarter Healthwatch Plymouth and the Patient Experience team at University Hospitals Plymouth (UHP) co-designed piece of conversational research using a short survey, in order to get feedback on issues relating to accessibility (issues raised by patients since opening of the building; lack of public transport, inadequate signage, written communications and making the building easier for people with visual impairment to navigate) of the new Royal Eye Infirmary (REI) building in Plymouth.

Four of our volunteers attended the REI over 2 weeks to have informal conversations with patients about their experience of using this new service and were able to capture 35 conversations with people as they sat in the waiting areas. We will feedback to UHP Patient services and to the team at the REI, along with a brief report of what patients have told us.

Coming up next quarter : we are planning to attend many more outreach locations in Devon, Plymouth & Torbay, keeping you updated via our eBulletin and three local websites:

www.healthwatchdevon.co.uk www.healthwatchplymouth.co.uk www.healthwatchtorbay.org.uk



Healthwatch Assist Network News

Key activities from our Healthwatch Assist Network this quarter

About the HW Assist Network

Our Healthwatch Assist Network allows us to build links with communities in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay so we can gather information about the health and care services they use. This information is fed back into the community and shared with key healthcare decision makers who can learn from good practice and make improvements to local services.

HW Assist Network News

We currently have nearly **150 Healthwatch Assist Network members**, including local support groups, school councils, parent groups, committees and sports groups. Last quarter we had **3 new members** join the Network. These included:

- Torbay Prostate Support Association (TPSA)
- Brixham Community Partnership
- YES! Brixham



Pictured above, the map shows some of the locations of our Healthwatch Assist Network members across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

This quarter ten members of the Healthwatch Torbay Assist Network met up with volunteers and staff to discuss the work of Healthwatch, how we can help support local people and to raise any issues they or the people they support had experienced locally.

They were joined by Guest speaker Karen Button, who spoke about the new community pharmacy strategy. Assistants had chance to feedback about health and social care issues they're picking up from their respective service users, as well as ask questions on changes happening with community pharmacies. Some of the issues raised by members included:

- VCSE support organisations not being able to apply for funding from a national work well scheme to help people get back into employment as it's being diverted to the NHS.
- Young people who go to their GP with an issue immediately being referred to CAMHS, who have an 18month waiting list. There appears to be a big gap in provision.
- Difficulties registering with local dentists and other services for people new to the area.
- Significant inequality of health and wellbeing outcomes for vulnerable groups from living in cold and hard to heat homes.
- NHS systems not communicating effectively with each other that vulnerable patients need special and reasonable adjustments made to their ongoing care.
- The need for care workers to be trained and managed properly to improve the quality of the paid care they provide. This includes the quality of the contracting process for carers.
- Need for redevelopment of hospital IT systems so they are joined up and whether the VCSE sector could be incorporated into that design to support patients.

Impact: All the feedback gathered is shared with key healthcare decision makers who can learn from good practice and make improvements to local services. To join our Assist Network please call free on **0800 520 0640** or email hwassist@hwdevon-plymouth-torbay.org



Healthwatch Feedback

Where we gathered your experiences from in the past three months

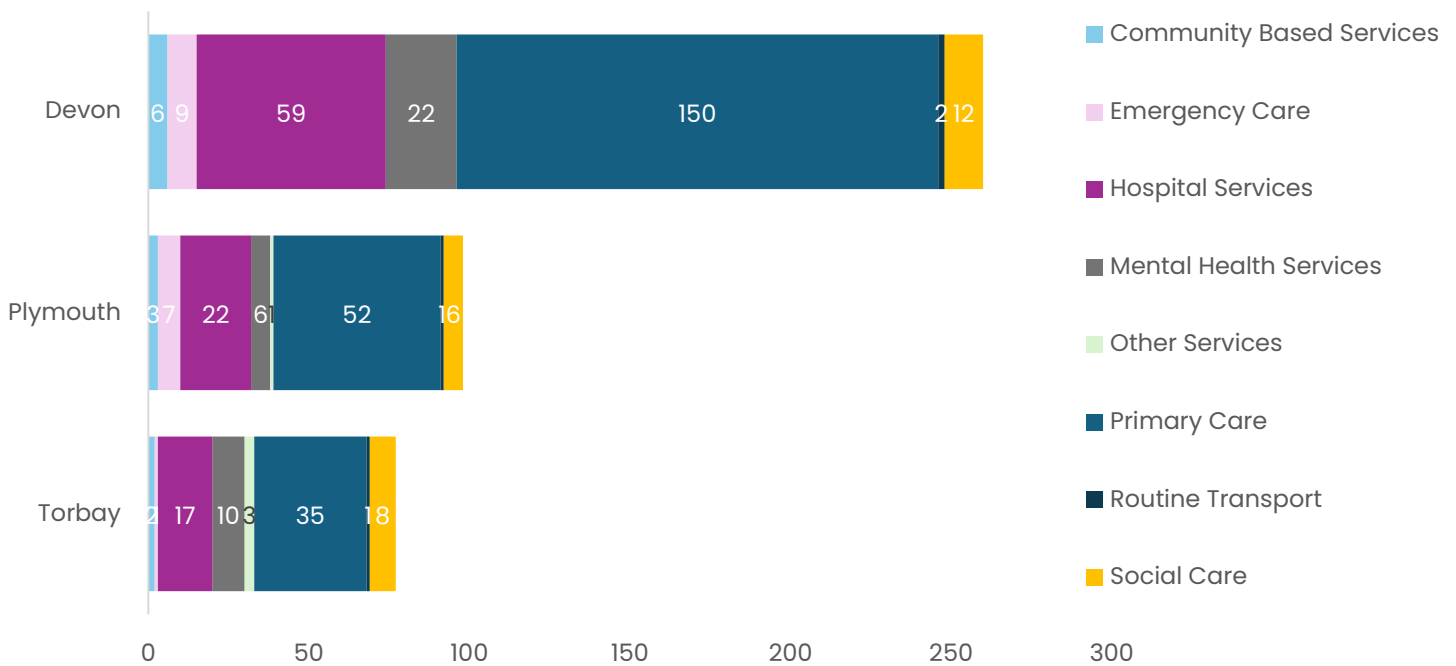
Number of Experiences shared with Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

446 people contacted Healthwatch to share their experiences of health and social care services in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. 260 were about services in Devon, 98 about Plymouth services and 77 about Torbay services. 5 were more generic experiences about services in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay as a whole and 3 were from out of area.

100 of these experiences were shared with us at HWDPT through one of our three online rate and review feedback centres, 315 were handled by our contact centre and 31 experiences were captured through online or community engagement.

Source of Feedback shared with HWDPT and Type of Service

Breakdown of feedback recorded by service level and locality – Jan to March 2024



Of these shared experiences gathered across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, the most commonly discussed theme was **Primary Care Services**.

Feedback about Primary Care Services

237 experiences (53% of overall feedback) were about primary care services, of those:

- 148 experiences related to GP Services
- 51 experiences related to Dental Services and
- 38 experiences related to Pharmacy Services.



Healthwatch Feedback

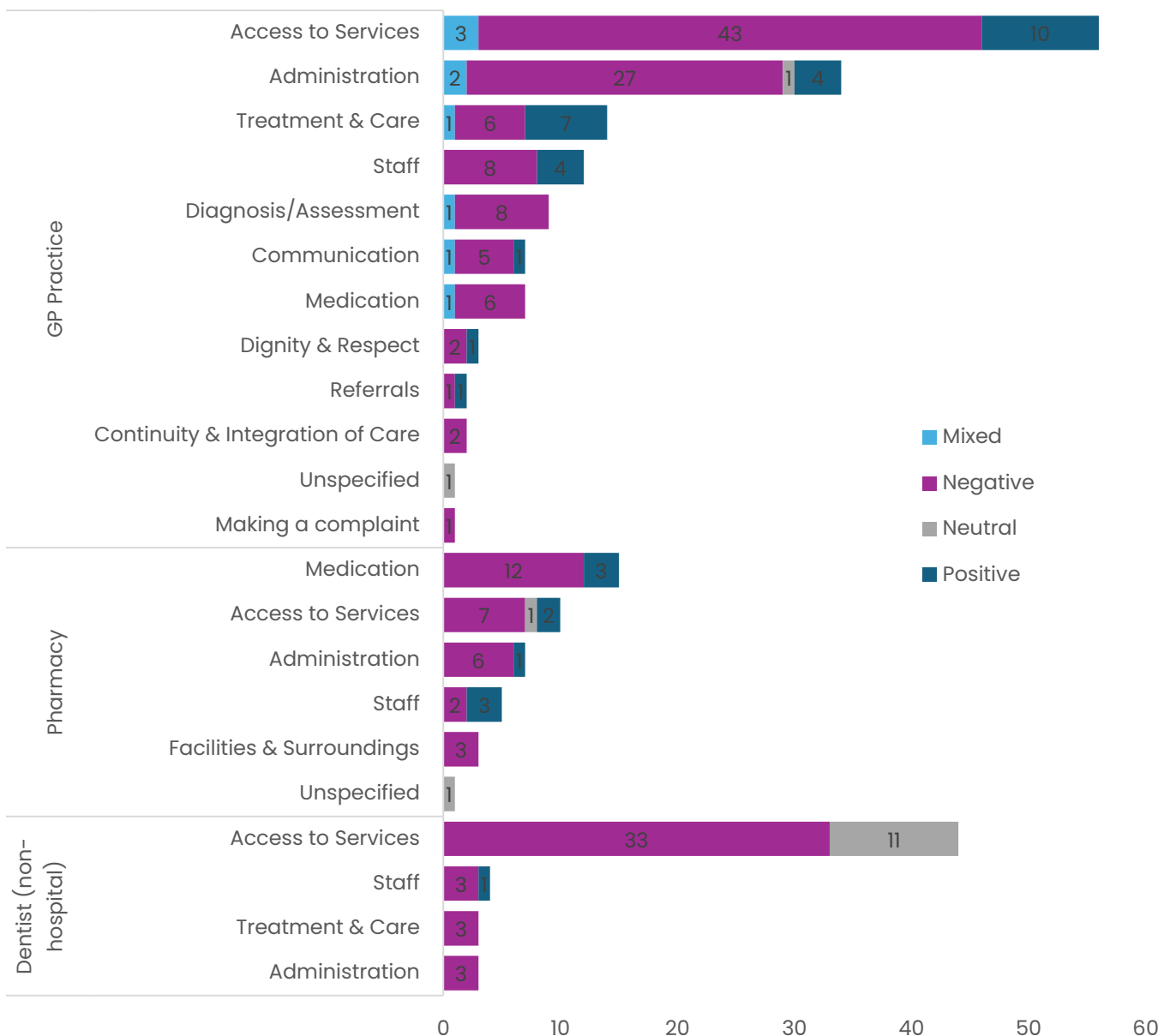
What you have been telling us about the care you have received locally

Feedback about Primary Care Services (continued)

The most common themes in relation to Primary Care Services were Access to Services, Administration Systems and Medication.

The chart below shows how the public felt about the Primary Care Services they told us about across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, separated by the type of service, over the past three months:

Summary of themes – Primary Care Services feedback





Feedback about Hospital Services

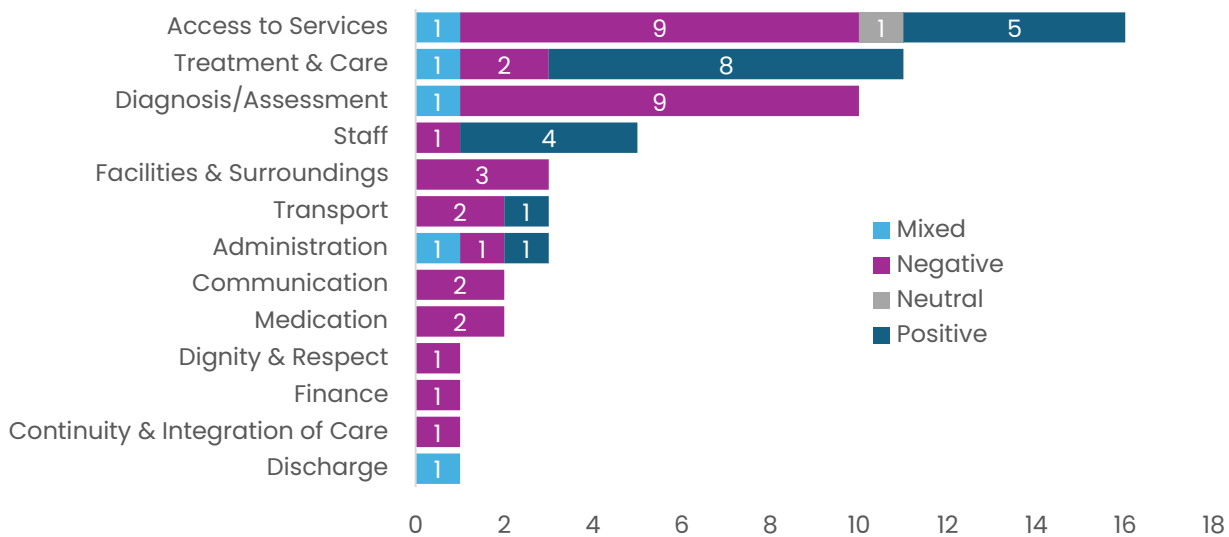
98 experiences (22% of overall feedback) were about hospital services. Of those:

- 59 experiences related to hospital services in Devon
- 22 experiences related to hospital services in Plymouth
- 17 experiences related to hospital services in Torbay.

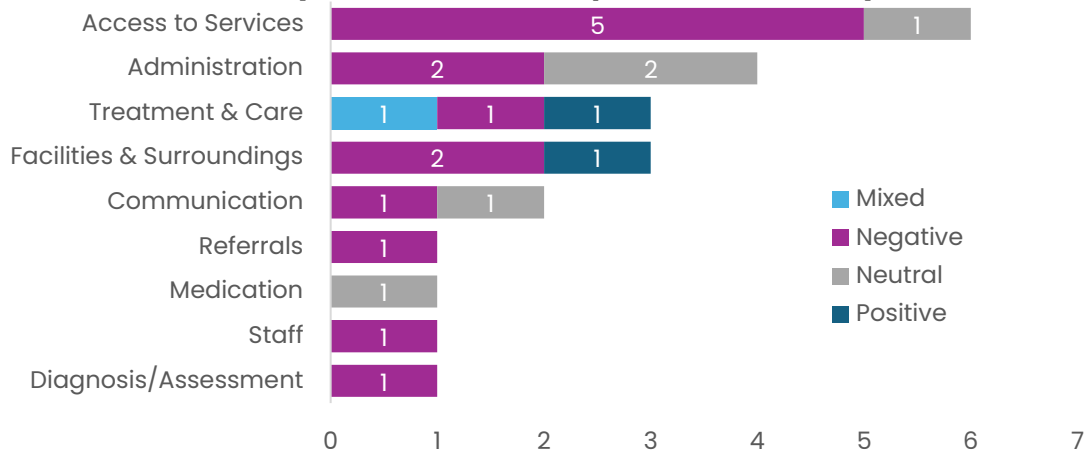
The most common themes overall in relation to Hospital Services were **Access to Services**, **Quality of Care and Treatment** and **Assessment / Diagnosis**.

The charts below shows how the public felt about the Hospital Services across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay, separated by the type the theme and sentiment, over the past three months:

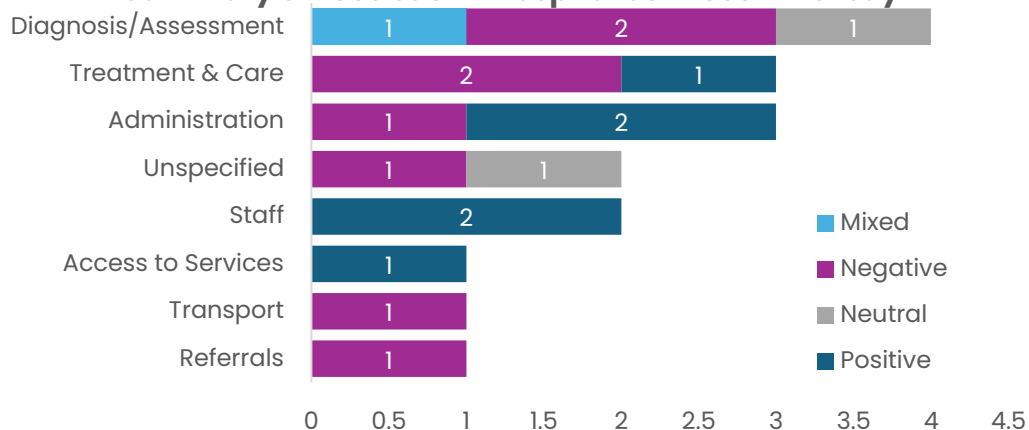
Summary of Feedback - Hospital Services in Devon



Summary of Feedback - Hospital Services in Plymouth



Summary of Feedback - Hospital Services in Torbay





Healthwatch Case Studies

Your experiences of local health and social care in your words

The following pages shows some of your experiences across Devon, Plymouth and Torbay related to the feedback analysis on the previous pages. Any client's names and photographs have been replaced to protect their identities.

Colin was unhappy with his local GP service. He said that the triage system currently in place there was convoluted, mainly resulting in onward signposting to other NHS services such as the hospital emergency department. Colin had concerns for the impact on patient's health and on waiting times for other emergency services. Colin was also unhappy with the quality of care provided by the reception team. He reported an incident where staff had been rude and submitted a complaint to the surgery but was yet to receive a response, contrary to the surgery complaints process.



What we did

A Healthwatch Champion contacted the Practice Manager at the surgery to highlight that their complaints process had not been adhered to and to request a response to their client's complaint. The Practice Manager contacted Colin following the Healthwatch Champion's intervention, but Colin was unhappy with their initial response, so the Healthwatch Champion made further contact with the Practice Manager to obtain clarity and reassurance for Colin.

What difference did it make?

The Practice Manager apologised to Colin and the Triage GP Lead at the Practice is reviewing the issues and concerns he raised. These issues are also being fed back to the surgery team. The surgery has agreed to write to all complainants to detail the outcome of telephone conversations and the changes that will be implemented because of their feedback. The action being taken by the GP Practice has resulted in Colin feeling heard whereas previously he had felt ignored.



Derek came to Healthwatch for support in registering with a GP following a recent move. He has a diagnosis of ADHD but suspects that he is also neuro divergent (autism spectrum). Derek found it difficult contacting NHS services because he felt "let down" in the past when he has tried to get a GP referral for an NHS autism assessment. He feels this will lead to other support but despite assurances, nothing has progressed.

What we did

A Healthwatch Champion checked which GP surgeries in the local area Derek could register with and talked through the required process, which helped Derek to feel confident in attending a surgery to register. The Healthwatch Champion also talked through the ratings on the CQC website for the GP surgeries in the local area, highlighting those which had an 'outstanding rating' on their support for patients "whose circumstances may make them vulnerable. They also made Derek aware of the delay in Devon for an autism assessment and provided details of support organisations for autism and mental health that Derek could contact whilst waiting for an assessment.

What difference did it make?

By providing information and advice to Derek he saw an improvement in his capacity to manage his own health and wellbeing and he felt empowered to register with the GP surgery. He now has a greater choice and control over which services he can access.



Bob, recently widowed, who's late wife was a resident in a care home, wanted help to resolve an issue he had with his wife's care costs. The initial financial assessment resulted in Bob paying £17 per week as a contribution towards the costs for his wife's care. However, after she died, he received a backdated invoice for increased charges, as it was identified that he should have been paying more than was originally assessed.



What we did

Bob received advice from a Healthwatch Champion, and they discussed making a complaint regarding the insensitive timing of the bill for his late wife's care and the inadequate explanation that was provided for the amount charged.

What difference did it make?

Bob said he was confident to raise a complaint unaided following his discussion with the Healthwatch Champion who provided him with all the information and advice he needed to raise a complaint.



Emily has acid reflux and reacts very badly to medication administered at Hospital. Surgery was mentioned at hospital, which Emily would love to have done, however she has been put on a surgery list and taken off it multiple times. She has seen 5 different doctors, with the latest putting her back on the surgery again, but she hasn't heard back. She had requested her full health record which revealed that one of the Doctors thinks she has an eating disorder - which was never communicated to her. Emily would like a second opinion on her condition and around having surgery.

What we did

Healthwatch contacted the Hospital Patient and Liaison Service (PALS) and Devon Integrated Care Board (ICB) to clarify how someone would get a second opinion as well as more information on Martha's Rule - a brand new (April 2024) NHS patient safety initiative which enables patients to seek an urgent independent clinical review of their condition if they feel their concerns are not being listened to.

What difference did it make?

PALS responded to advise they are not yet involved in the pilot of Martha's Law, however they are implementing a similar 'Call for Concern' scheme soon. They advised us to explain to Emily to liaise directly with the clinical team caring for her to gain a second opinion. We provided all of this information to Emily in order for her to seek the second opinion she wants and will send her details regarding the new 'Call for Concern' scheme as soon as they are available.

Impact : Making Sure Your Voice is Heard

We regularly share and report all of your feedback and our intelligence with key stakeholders, including health and social care providers & commissioners, the Devon Integrated Care Partnership Board, our local authorities, Local Care Partnerships and the voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE) sector. We also share our data with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Healthwatch England (HWE) to help address health and care issues at a national level.



What we did with your views

How we have used your feedback to make reports & recommendations

This quarter the focussed HWDPT engagement activities that we independently facilitated, allowed us to produce the following key reports:

Emergency Departments

In the last quarterly impact report we told you about our NHS Devon commissioned report on Emergency Departments (EDs) across Devon's four Acute Hospital sites to speak to patients to better understand what informed and influenced their decision to attend ED. 511 people conversed with HWDPT during 34 visits at various times and days, which included daytime, evenings and weekends.

Following the report's release, this quarter we were asked to jointly present its findings with NHS Devon at the South West Clinical Senate Conference in Exeter. You can see some of the key findings from the presentation in the slides on the right.

Ajike Alli Ameh, Head of the South West Clinical Senate thanked us for our presentation, saying:

"On behalf of the South West Clinical Senate, I write to thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to speak at our Senate Assembly conference "Reimagining the NHS ... the next 75 years". It is much appreciated and contributed to the success of the conference.

Feedback received on the day was that the conference topic is timely and thought-provoking particularly, given the challenges and pressures faced by the NHS over the last couple of years. Thank you for an excellent conference."

What we found

Across all sites, we found that:

- Nearly everyone knew about the other services available to them and over half of them (63%) had contacted another service (such as the GP or 111) before coming to ED.
- Just over half of patients who had spoken to a clinician at their GP Practice were referred on to ED.
- Of those who contacted NHS 111 only before attending the ED, most of them were referred onto the ED by the service.
- Many patients that we spoke to said they would have preferred to speak to a GP first, rather than attend ED, but they were unable to book a timely appointment.

What we found continued

We also found:

- Where people had visited Minor Injuries Units (MIUs) or urgent treatment centres (UTCs) prior to ED, the majority went on to ED because the patient was not able to access the services required, such as X-Ray or a specialist or consultant at the MIU or UTC.
- Waiting rooms appeared busier than they were due to large numbers of those accompanying patients.
- Patients were positive about the new waiting room at the RDUH, but critical of the waiting room at Torbay Hospital due to the broken heating system.

Impact : NHS Devon welcomed the findings of the report and shared it with our trusts and Urgent and Emergency Care Boards. The report has also been presented at the NHS Devon Primary Care Commissioning Committee and the South West Clinical Senate to help them to make the best possible decisions about health and care provision in the South West. **The full report is available to read via:**

<https://cdn.whitebearplatform.com/hwdevon/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/30093656/Final-HWDPT-ED-report-v22.pdf>



What we did with your views

How we use the rest of your feedback and some of our work in progress

Impact : Escalations and Referrals

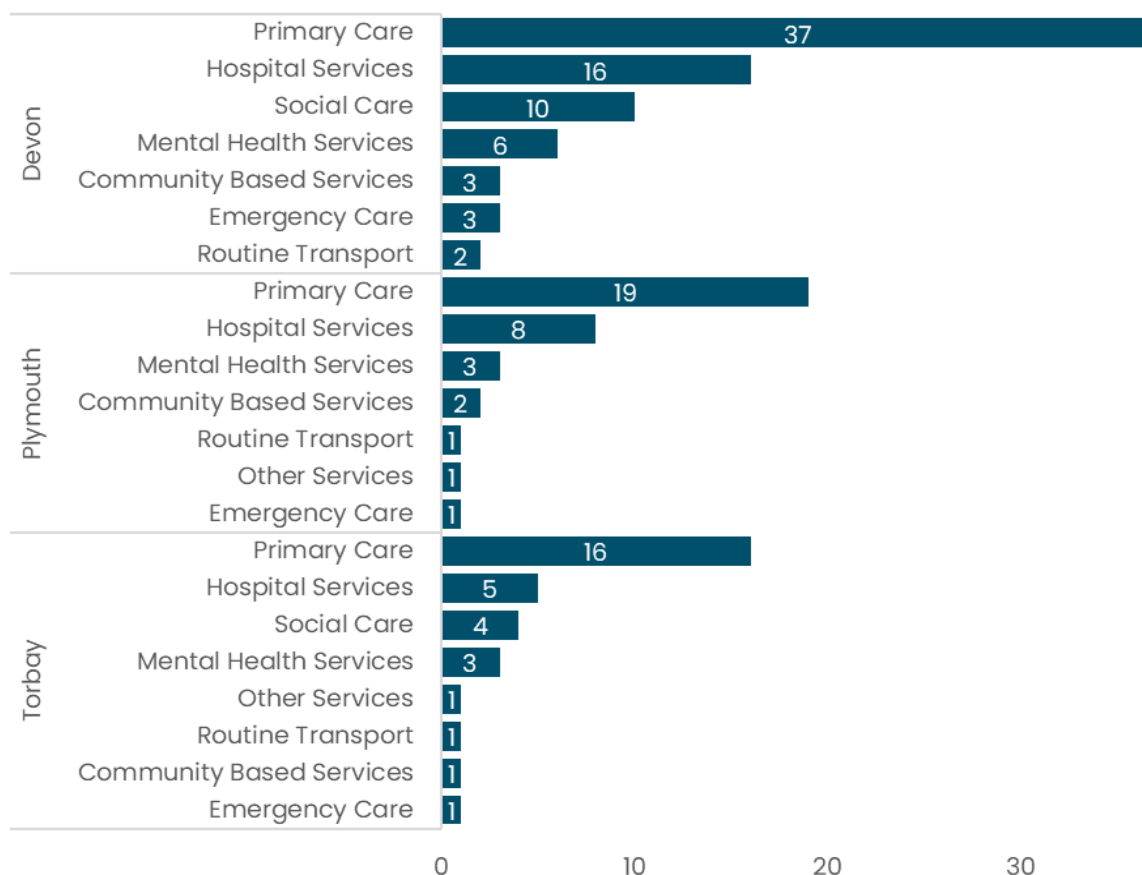
All public feedback we receive is logged in our secure system for further analysis. This includes working with other local organisations to gather feedback such as Citizen’s Advice, Community Trusts and Community Hubs. Some are serious concerns or complaints that need to be escalated further for immediate action. This quarter there have been **118** such cases. Of these:

- 52 were provided with advice and information by the contact centre,
- 19 were referred to a Healthwatch Champion,
- 20 were signposted to PALS,
- 15 were signposted to an advocacy service,
- 12 were signposted to Access Dental.

Members of the public wanting to make an official complaint have been referred to organisations such as the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS), the Advocacy People, health trusts, Safeguarding, the Devon Integrated Care System (ICS), NHS England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

The graph below shows a breakdown of where these **118** cases originated in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay and which type of service they referred to. The total is more than **118** as some cases referred to multiple types of service at a time.

Breakdown of the service level in each locality where commentator required advice, information or signposting to another service



What we did with your views



How your views help shape ongoing work in the local community

All of your feedback is used both to inform us on specific areas where we need to find out more information from other health and social care organisations in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. This section shows in brief how this has happened in the last quarter.

Specific places we have shared your feedback this quarter

We regularly share your feedback with decision-makers via meetings such as each of the Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Health & Wellbeing Boards (H&WBB), Health & Adult Social Care Overview & Scrutiny Boards (H&SC OSC), Safeguarding Adults Partnerships, Local Care Partnerships, Devon Integrated Care Partnership Board and Devon Learning Disability Partnership Board. In addition, this quarter we have provided upon request specific feedback and intelligence for the following 5 organisations, groups or decision-making Boards:

- Plymouth H&WBB and H&SC OSC requested a summary report of local patient experiences with the NHS 111 service, following reports of issues with the out of hours service.
- Plymouth H&SC OSC requested a summary of feedback referencing end of life care.
- Torbay H&SC OSC requested we present the findings of the Torbay Carers' Strategy 2024-27 [consultation report](#) – which Healthwatch Torbay worked in partnership with local organisation Engaging Communities South West to produce. We provided assurance that the voice of the Carer has been considered in the development of the new strategy.
- Torbay H&SC OSC requested a briefing on local people's experiences accessing and using local dementia care services. Healthwatch Torbay and Torbay Age UK provided an overview of the voluntary sector and service user perspective related to dementia services.
- The Care Quality Commission (CQC) requested information regarding the Emergency Department at Derriford Hospital to use as part of their assessment process.

Our Requests For Information

An RFI (request for information) is a formal process for gathering information from providers of a service such as health care trusts or commissioners. Based on patient feedback, this quarter we made 9 requests for information related to the priorities above to support our work – 2 Devon-wide, 2 Devon Specific, 2 in Plymouth, and 3 in Torbay. These are detailed in brief below:

Devon RFIs

- **NHS Devon** on whether they are thinking of potentially closing their High Bickington GP Surgery branch in North Devon and for information we can provide to patients.
- **Devon Partnership Trust** for clarification around the process of managing a patient's treatment of anti-psychotic medication and what steps need to be taken.
- **NHS Devon** on whether selected services for people with dementia and their carers may be reduced at the end of March 2024.
- **Devon Partnership Trust** on the potential reduction in the support provided by the Devon Recovery Learning Community.

Plymouth RFIs

- **Improving Lives** for clarification on the process for arranging replacement / respite care.
- **Devon Local Pharmaceutical Committee** for clarification about where unused prescription medication can be taken for disposal when no longer required.

Torbay RFIs

- **NHS Devon** and 2 separate **GP Surgeries** for clarification on the process on access to Satellite GP Services at Brixham Hospital.

Impact: NHS Devon have advised the GP Practice in High Bickington, North Devon how patient engagement should be progressed so that patient feedback is included in any future decisions. They have reassured patients that no decision has been made and will only be considered once a formal application has been received which includes patient feedback.



Our Current Priorities

How your feedback shapes our local priorities in the community

All your feedback is used to inform us on the specific priorities we should be focussing on when working with local health and social care organisations. Currently our five key priorities are:

1. **Adult Social Care:** Accessing Social Care Services, residential and home support services.
2. **Health:** Accessing Primary Care, Secondary Care, Mental Health services and elective surgery.
3. **Mental Health:** Accessing Mental Health services under the Community Mental Health Framework.
4. **Children & Young People:** Development and integration of Children & Young People services
5. **Accessible Standards:** Consistency and standard of provider communications and information to service users including those with learning disabilities/language barriers/sight impairment/hearing loss.

Coming Up Next Quarter

Some of our other work set to be completed and shared next quarter

healthwatch Devon

- Dimensions for Autism (Newton Abbot) drop-in.
- Continuing to engage with community groups and attend events across Devon to capture feedback about health & social care services.
- Healthwatch Assist Network Members Meeting.

healthwatch Plymouth

- Age Positive Project Talk.
- Helping Families Early Conference.
- Meeting with community groups and attending network events across Plymouth to gather feedback.
- Healthwatch Assist Network Members Meeting.

healthwatch Torbay

- Drop-in with Torbay Breast Cancer Now support group.
- Mencap Torbay committee meeting.
- Meeting with community groups and attending events across Torbay to gather feedback.
- Healthwatch Assist Network Members Meeting.

Other HWDPT Reports Coming Soon

- Our Unpaid Carers Survey received **224** responses. The full report will be produced and shared in the next Impact report next quarter.
- The feedback of over **200** people has been collated regarding access to NHS services for common mental health conditions in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay. The report on this feedback will be released next quarter.
- We will be releasing a report on what patients think of Plymouth's new Royal Eye Infirmary to speak, launched in Winter 2023.
- Our 2024 HWDPT Annual Report will be released, highlighting all our key activities for the last 12 months, along with our financial information for the year.

Impact : What we do with this report

We publicise this report on our three websites, three email bulletins and various social media channels. We share this report with key stakeholders, including health and social care providers & commissioners, the Devon Integrated Care Partnership Board, our local authorities, Local Care Partnerships and the voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE) sector. We also share this report with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) and Healthwatch England (HWE) to help address health and care issues at a national level. For more information, please contact Healthwatch in Devon, Plymouth or Torbay using our contact details on the right.

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healthwatch
in Devon, Plymouth and Torbay

Our vision

A world where we can all get the health and care we need.

Our mission

To make sure people's experiences help make health and care better.