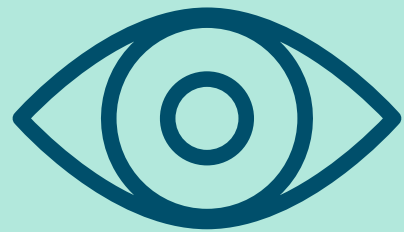


Insight



The public's health and
social care views

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Introduction

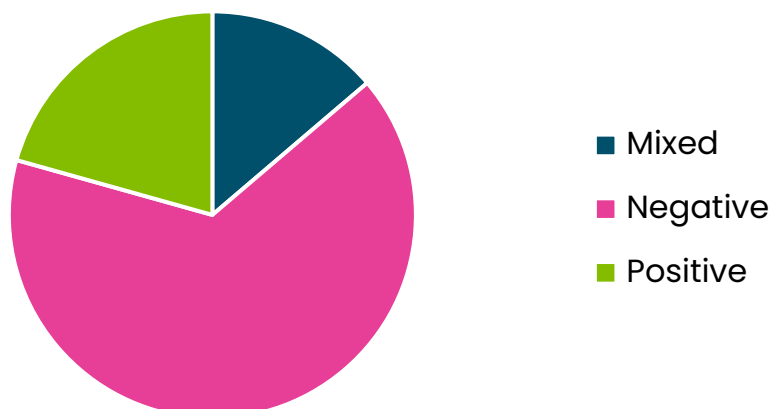
Healthwatch North Yorkshire, the independent champion for people who use NHS and social care services, are listening to what people like about the care they receive, what works well and what they think could be improved.

Healthwatch North Yorkshire produce a monthly patient experiences log which brings together feedback from people who have been in touch with us, have talked to us at events, responded via Care Opinion (which is the UK's leading independent feedback website, enabling patients to share their experiences of healthcare services). These logs provide a snapshot of people's positive and negative experiences of health and care services across the county. The feedback we receive each month varies but there is often feedback about GP services, hospital care, social care, dentistry, and mental health services to name a few.

This report provides a summary of the public's experiences from December 2023 to March 2024. We received feedback from 276 people via our phone line, website, email and through events. Please note, this figure does not include the feedback we have gathered for specific projects via surveys and focus groups and does not include the feedback we have received via our visits to care homes (known as enter and view).

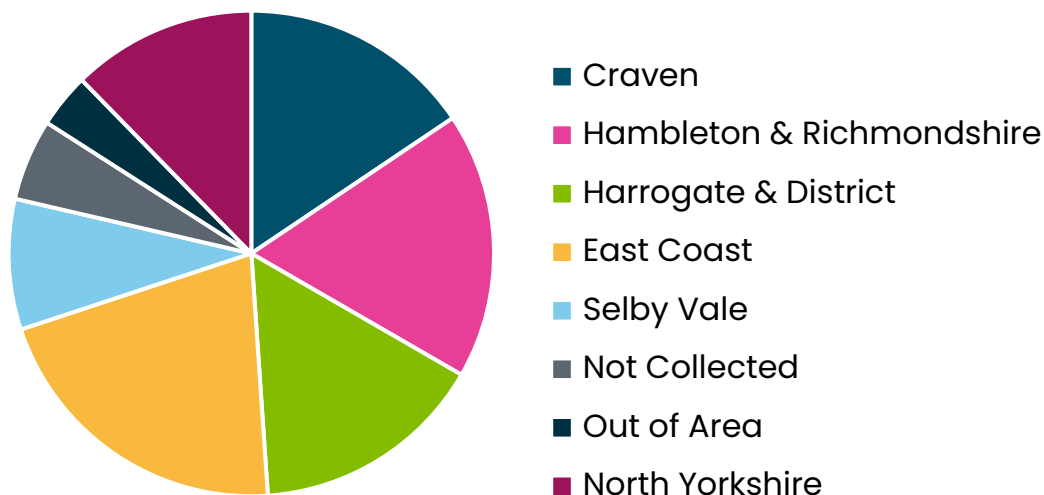
66% of the feedback was negative, 21% positive and the remaining feedback was mixed.

Sentiment of feedback



There was a spread of feedback from across the different areas of North Yorkshire, as shown below.

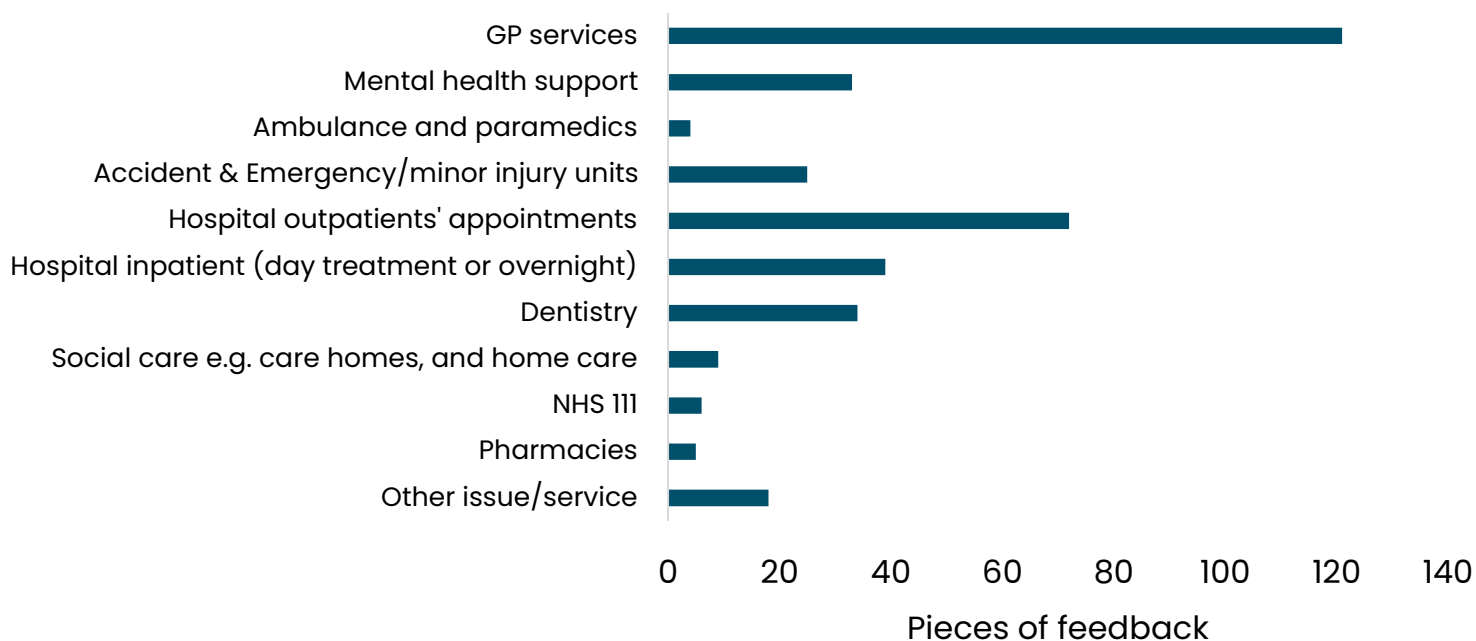
Feedback by area



Feedback by service area

We received the most feedback about GP services (33%), followed by hospital care (31%)¹, dentistry (9%) and mental health support (9%).

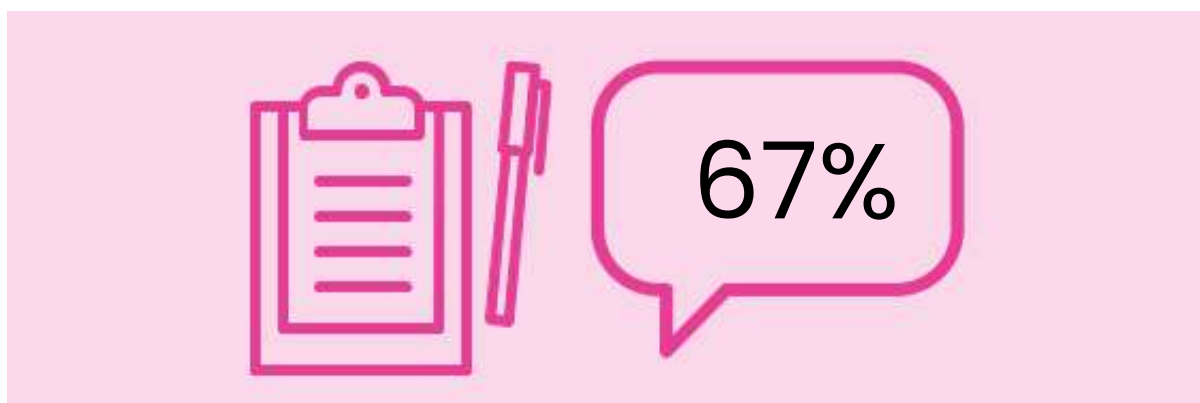
Feedback by service area



¹ Hospital care includes outpatient appointments, inpatient care and accident and emergency

Feedback about GP services

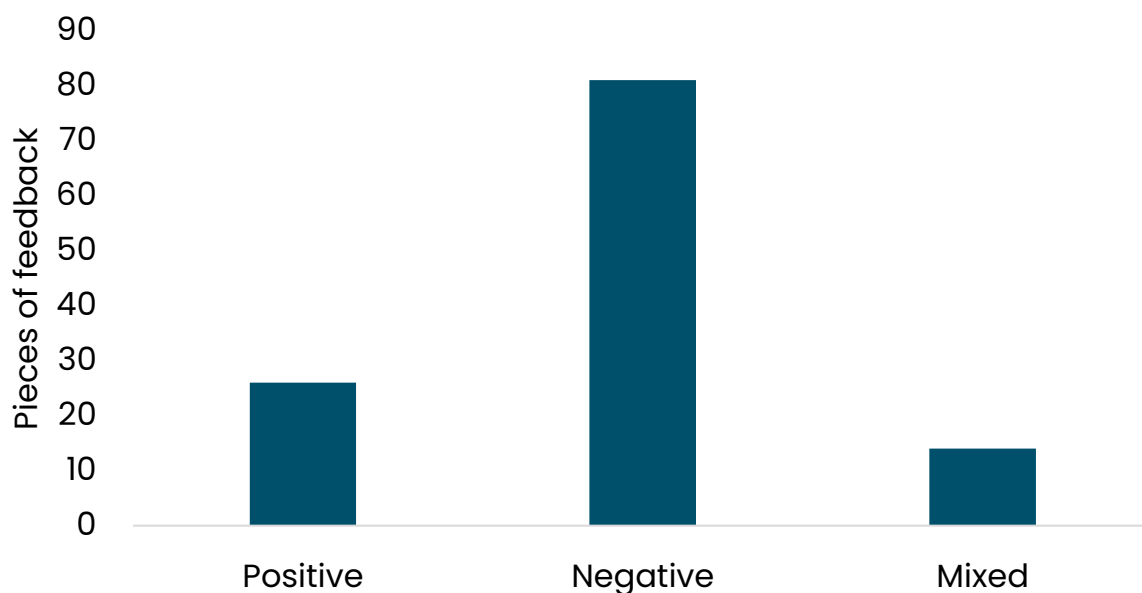
What the public told us



Around 67% of the feedback about GP services was negative.

The main concern raised was around access, with people expressing frustrations with long phone queues when trying to book an appointment and long waiting times for appointments. When people can get an appointment at their GP practice, they are often happy with the quality of care, the fundamental issue is access.

Sentiment of GP services feedback



We received feedback about 53 different GP practices across North Yorkshire. The practices that received the most feedback are explored in more detail on the next pages.

Fisher Medical Centre, Craven

There were 13 people who shared feedback about this practice. Twelve pieces of feedback were negative and one mixed.

- The key issue raised was relating to the online system. People said they have filled in the long questionnaire requesting an appointment but have had no response. One person said it had been two weeks and they still had not heard anything. Another said when they tried to fill in the online survey it said the service was not working.
- People raised issues about not receiving phone call appointments within the time specified. One person called to book an appointment and was told someone would call back that day but no one called all day. Another said they were told they would get a call within 24 hours, and 6 days later they had still not had a call.



“I had bad pain in my side, filled in an online form and was told they would be in touch. It’s been over two weeks and I’m still waiting. This GP surgery do not care at all.”



“I completed the lengthy questionnaire Tuesday morning and still waiting to hear back on Saturday.

The automated email says not to contact them again if you don’t hear anything but how long am I supposed to wait before I must submit again?”



Haxby Surgery (Lawrence House), Scarborough

There were 12 pieces of feedback received about this practice. Nine were negative, one positive and two mixed.

- Long waiting times for appointments was a key issue. One person said it took 12 weeks to get a routine appointment.
- People said there are long phone queues to get through to the practice, with one person saying they waited on the phone for 105

minutes and for the whole time they remained at number 3 in the queue.

- Despite the negatives, a few people did praise the quality of care received once they were able to see a doctor.



“Can’t get an appointment or get put on a long waiting list.

Took me five weeks to get an appointment for antibiotics and took my under one-year-old nine weeks to get an appointment.”



“On the phone at number three in the queue nearly two hours.”

My wife phoned up while I was still on the phone, and she got through in two minutes (and was also number three in queue). Then waited for doctor to phone back, they sent me straight to accident and emergency. Before this, on a different occasion, the phone line cut off 5 times. This is not an isolated incident.”



Glebe House Surgery, Hambleton

There were 7 pieces of feedback about this practice. Three pieces were negative, two positive and two mixed.

- There was positive feedback about mental health support provided by the practice and another person praised the excellent services provided by the practice.
- The negative feedback was related to some people feeling their issues have been dismissed by the practice.



“I can’t fault both my GP and mental health team who supported me through a tough time. They thought outside of the box.

Used a wide range of treatment types and persevered till they found a solution.”





“I feel a victim of ageism at my GP surgery.

When I presented at the GP recently it was pointed out to me that at my age, I am 76, what did I think could be done. I have a severely sore shoulder and arm for which I have been paying for physio. The physio wants an magnetic resonance imaging scan, the wait for which is long as it has to be done through the musculoskeletal clinic so I wanted to pay privately, and the GP would not hear of it because she would not act on any findings.

She finally offered a steroid injection but was told there was a waiting list and anyway until they know what’s causing the problem it doesn’t seem appropriate, but I was desperate to get rid of the pain. I have suffered this problem for nearly six months.”



Cross Hills Group Practice, Craven

There were 5 pieces of feedback about this practice. All five pieces were negative.

- Referrals not being sent was the key issue raised. One person was meant to be fast track to gastroenterology in February to be seen in two weeks, but still hadn’t been seen by December. Another was still waiting for a psychiatric referral to be sent.
- Concerns for people who are unable or not confident enough to use the online e-consult system were also mentioned.



“Was supposedly fast tracked to gastroenterology in February to be seen in two weeks. It’s now December and I’m still waiting despite contacting them.”



Beech Tree Surgery, Selby

There were 4 people who shared their views on this practice. Three pieces were positive and one negative.

- The new online system was praised. However, concerns were raised for those who do not have digital access or the IT skills to use the system.

- People praised the quality of care received and said they did not feel rushed in the appointments and had time to share their concerns.

6

“Thank you to the Advanced Care Practitioner who I saw last week.

I was treated with great care and listened to during the appointment. I did not feel at all rushed and I felt comfortable and confident that I was being given appropriate treatment for my skin condition. Keep up the good work.”

9

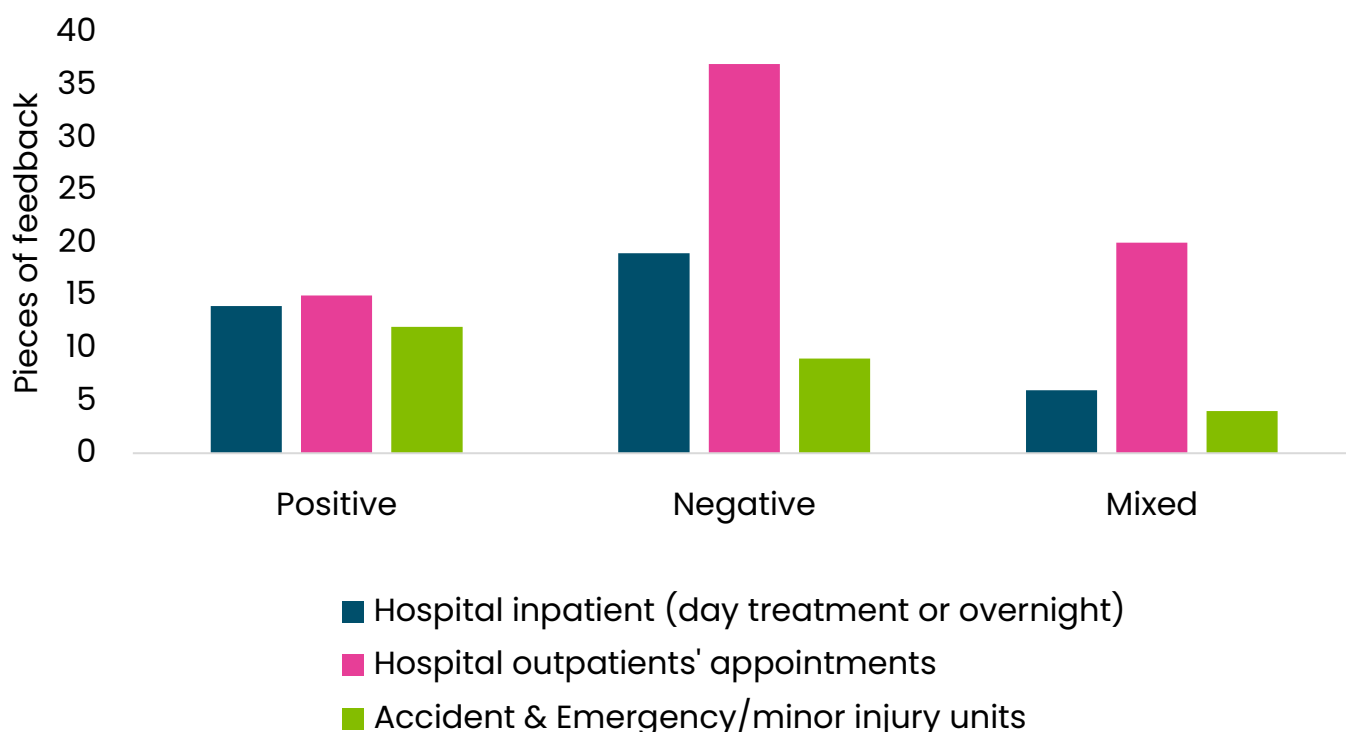


Feedback about hospital care

Around 48% of feedback about hospital care was negative, 30% positive and 22% mixed.

Praise for staff was reflected in the feedback, with many reporting that the staff they saw were professional, understanding, and efficient. Despite these positives, long waiting times at hospital (accident and emergency), long waiting times for outpatient appointments and issues related to maternity services were also raised.

Sentiment of hospital care feedback



Scarborough Hospital

There were 24 people who shared their views on Scarborough Hospital. Eleven pieces were positive, nine negative and four mixed.

- Most of the positive feedback centred around the friendly and professional staff. People said the kindness and quality of care provided by staff was excellent and very much appreciated.
- Positive feedback about the food at the hospital was also received.
- Waiting areas being very busy and seating not always being available in accident and emergency were mentioned.

- Long waiting times for outpatient appointments were raised:
 - Three people mentioned long delays for cardiology appointments. One person said they had a heart scan in January 2023 and as of December 2023 they still hadn't heard back about what was found or what the next procedure will be.
 - One person said they were told the waiting time for NHS hearings aids is 2-3 years.
 - One person said the wait time for an ophthalmology appointment is more than a year (after the optician found a suspicious lesion in the back of their eye).
- Frustration with the centralisation of services to York Hospital were raised. One person said they had to go to York Hospital rather than their local hospital in Scarborough for urgent ophthalmology treatment and that they were only able to receive this treatment because someone kindly drove them to York. Otherwise, they wouldn't have been able to make it.



“I was recently hospitalised due to a persistent and ongoing stomach issue and the care I received within those hours was nothing short of first rate.

Although I was slightly upset with my wait due to being in pain this was quickly addressed and was no fault of the wonderful staff helping me but down to a lack of resources from chronic underfunding. Every single member of staff treated with me with respect and compassion in what was a very hard and uncomfortable time for me, including constantly checking up on me and even cracking jokes and making me smile. Every single member of staff at Scarborough hospital is nothing short of incredible.”





“I was rushed into the Resus Unit with heavy bleeding 10 days after a hemorrhoidectomy. I was very grateful for the calm professional manner of everyone who got me stabilised. A shout out to the ambulance crew who pulled out all the stops

to get me there quickly.

I would also like to thank all the staff on Maple Ward for their cheerful friendly care and attention to detail. They monitored my gradual recovery. Plus of course the doctors and surgeon overseeing this. You are all stars. A mention too about catering. Hospital food generally does not seem too well thought of but at Scarborough the famous chef recipes really impressed all the patients I got to know. Once again, a huge thank you.”



York Hospital

There were 22 people who shared their views about York Hospital, with a mix of positive (3), negative (14) and mixed (5) feedback.

- There was positive feedback about cancer care from the Magnolia Centre.
- Other positive feedback centred around the quality of care received; endoscopies, day surgery procedures and pacemaker fittings were all praised.
- Long waiting times in accident and emergency.
- Maternity issues were raised, one person reported concerns about infection control, a lack of response from the patient advice and liaison service despite multiple follow-ups and the inaccurate recording of concerns during a birth debrief.
- Long waiting times for cardiology appointments and treatment were mentioned. One person said it would have taken 16 to 18 months to treat a life-threatening heart condition, so they paid for private treatment which cost £15,000.



The Magnolia Centre were excellent, I was seen very quickly after a routine mammogram. Everybody was very kind, and I felt reassured.





"I was referred to the rapid access clinic, the wait time was 3 weeks. Then referred for cardiac computerized tomography angiogram at York Hospital. There was no information on wait time or self-care while waiting. I had to complain to get information. The expected wait time was six months! Due to admin errors as I cancelled and went privately.

I got an actual appointment from York for 18th December – **a wait of seven months!** Time expected before report produced five to ten weeks so it would have been nine to ten months before I got a diagnosis. NHS wait time for elective treatment i.e. stent is five months so **it would have taken 16 to 18 months to treat a life-threatening heart condition.**

I paid privately for a computerized tomography angiogram which showed CADRAD4 severity 70–90% block of left anterior descending artery. It is known as the widow maker due to the high probability of sudden death if left. I took the decision to have treatment privately and used lifetime savings for care intended for home care/care home. £15,000 cost of private care."



Friarage Hospital

There were 18 pieces of feedback about the Friarage Hospital. Nine were negative, four were positive and five mixed.

- There was positive feedback about the quality of care received for various procedures such as knee surgeries, endoscopies and ultrasounds.
- People praised the minor injury unit at the Friarage Hospital.
- Administration issues at Friarage Hospital were raised. One person said they arrived for their appointment on the time/date stated on their letter, but the letter had been incorrectly completed and should have given the date for the following week. This involved a 50-mile round car journey.
- Long delays reported for neurology appointments were mentioned. One person said their neurology appointment for June 2024 has been cancelled and rearranged for August 2025.

- Delayed check-ups for Parkinson's disease were raised by three people.



“I can't praise the staff enough, from admission to discharge. I want to thank every member of staff at surgical assessment unit yesterday. Brilliant hospital with wonderful, dedicated staff. They went out there way to make me relaxed. They are a very caring, and very considerate team. Every single detail was explained of what was going to happen next. It was wonderful to be treated with kindness and respect.”



“After waiting a long time to see a consultant I was told I had Parkinsons. He told me a Specialist Nurse would be there for me and to help me through my problems. All the above seems great until the appointment came through and the date was November 2025. To be then told at the age of 86 my appointment would be November 2025. At first, I thought it was an error, but not so”.



James Cook Hospital

There were 16 pieces of feedback about James Cook Hospital. Eight were negative, four were positive and four mixed.

- There was positive feedback about the quality of care received; one person said they were seen promptly, admitted onto a ward and had surgery 18 hours later. Another praised the speed at which they were seen for suspected throat cancer.
- There was also positive feedback about the pain clinic at the hospital.
- One person who has sight issues raised concerns about the absence of large print forms and private areas for completing them when arriving for their annual CT scan after lung cancer surgery. They suggested that forms could be included with appointment letters for pre-completion.
- There was some negative feedback about the long waiting times in hospital (accident and emergency).

- Long waiting times for Parkinson's appointments were also mentioned.



"I saw a Physician Associate in a GP practice who, after assessing my health condition at two points in time referred me to an outpatient service available at James Cook Hospital to rule out the possibility of throat cancer. **I had an outpatient appointment 3 days after I had been referred.** This involved a flexible lens being put into my throat via my nose. No cancer was found, and I was told this at the outpatient appointment."



"Consultant appointments for Parkinson's are every 12 months (in theory). Having waited 14 months for an appointment, my husband was seen by a doctor for the elderly not a neurologist or Parkinson's nurse. **We both felt cheated and that the 4 hour round trip had been a waste of time** - issues which we shared were not addressed and the following report to the GP did not reflect our conversation."



Harrogate Hospital

There were 14 people who shared their views on Harrogate Hospital, with a mix of negative (6), positive (5) and mixed (3) feedback.

- There was positive feedback about the hospital (accident and emergency); while waiting times can be long, the efficient and caring staff were mentioned.
- The podiatry and orthotics departments were praised and there was positive feedback from a few people who had operations as day patients.
- Some concerns with the new parking eye system were raised.
- Long waiting times for outpatient appointments were raised. One person said their GP requested an appointment with Harrogate Hospital respiratory department and they had still not seen anybody after almost six months.
- There was some negative feedback about the hospital discharge process.



“I was looked after well, treated with kindness and respect.

Every step of my operation and details explained in full. I was in as a day patient and if possible, I would always come here for any treatment in future. I would say they were a fantastic staff from moment we walked in until we left. Very impressed. Big thanks to everyone Harrogate Hospital.”



“I’d like to emphasis how important it is for patients to feel cared about when they are discharged from any services or after a hospital stay.

Recently my father suffered a stroke, we were told this was going to be a long journey to recovery. After just two months and unready for discharge, someone from admin or wherever, swiftly walked up to him and curtly said" here's your discharge note you're going home tomorrow" then left, leaving my father absolutely devastated. When I went to visit him in the evening he was so frightened not knowing how he was going to cope, he was in tears.”



Airedale Hospital

There were 12 pieces of feedback about Airedale Hospital. Ten were negative, one positive and one mixed.

- There was positive feedback about bladder cancer treatment at the hospital.
- Long waiting times in hospital (accident and emergency).
- One person said they’ve been referred to the musculoskeletal clinic and were told they won’t be seen for weeks if not months and they are in agony.
- Three people mentioned the lack of support for Parkinson’s disease. One person said they used to have regular sessions at Airedale hospital for help coping with Parkinson's, and this service is very much missed since it has been discontinued.



“I am having treatment for bladder cancer at endoscopy, Airedale General Hospital, which is now five years clear. **I have found this treatment has been going very well** and I am satisfied with the way it is carried out.”



“I am a carer for my husband who has Parkinson's disease. We see our consultant's specialist Parkinson's nurse approximately once every six months if we are lucky. My husband's Parkinson's is becoming more advanced, and **I feel that we have no-one to consult with about help with his mobility.**

We used to see the Parkinson's nurse in our own area, but we were told we could not see her as well as the consultants' nurse. We used to have regular sessions at the Aire Unit, organised by the speech therapist, which gave us information about speech problems, physio needs and medication. None of that is available anymore.

We have recently seen the physios at Airedale who have been very good, but my husband has now been signed off from them and we are paying for private physio. We have not seen an occupational therapist for a discussion about home aids and adaptations for several years. It feels like the burden of care is on myself to try and get help for him and I feel very vulnerable and isolated.”



Malton Urgent Treatment Centre

There were five pieces of feedback about Malton Urgent Treatment Centre. Three were positive and two mixed.

- People praised the efficiency of the urgent treatment centre. One person said they are pleased to have the centre in Malton as it means they don't have to travel to York or Hull for care.
- The friendly and professional staff were also mentioned.

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“Very glad to have the community hospital in Malton, to avoid having to spend a lot of money and time travelling to York or Hull to access outpatient services. The urgent care unit was especially useful when my husband cut his hand badly as it would have taken us an hour to get into York when he was bleeding heavily from the wound.”

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“I called 111 re my elderly Mum who had a chesty cough and was deteriorating on Sunday. We had a call back from a lovely Dr who asked me to take Mum down to the urgent care centre for review. **He was very thorough and kind. We were home with antibiotics within an hour.**”

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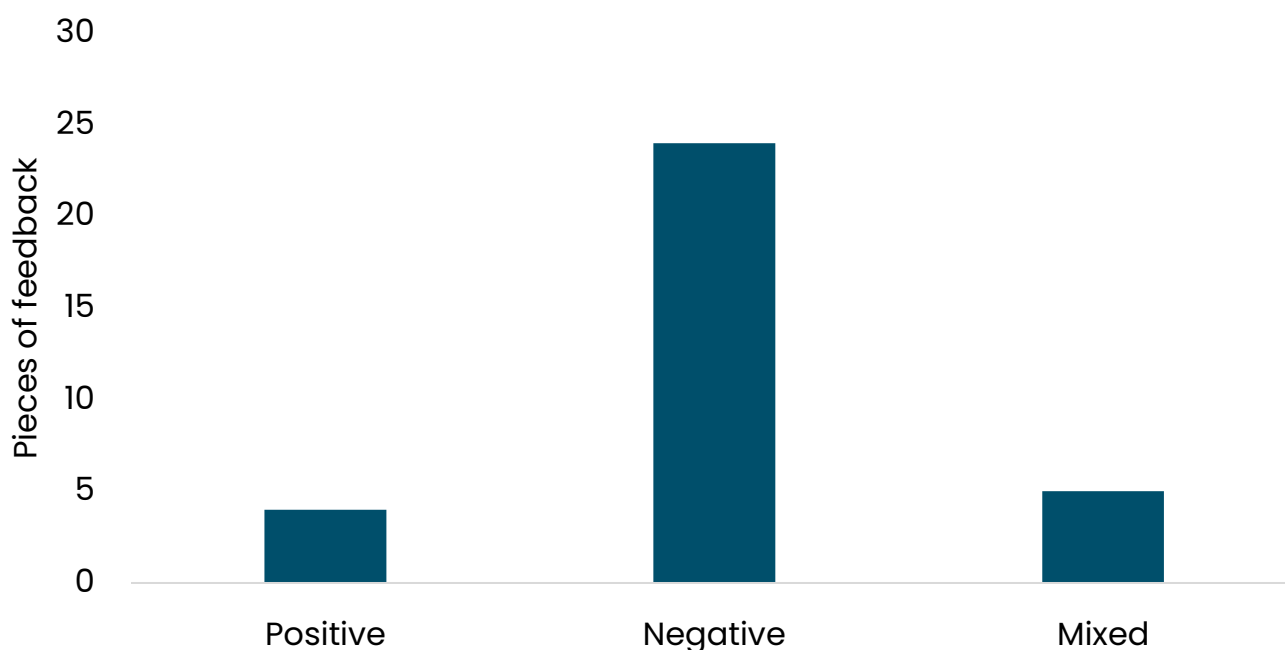


Feedback about mental health support

Feedback about mental health support was mostly negative (73%).

Key issues included concerns surrounding the long waiting times to access child and adolescent mental health services and issues with the NHS's talking therapies.

Sentiment of mental health support feedback



There were seven pieces of feedback about CAMHS services. Six pieces were negative, one positive.

- The long waiting lists to be seen was the key issue raised, with one person saying they have been waiting since 2021.
- Issues with getting access to the child and adolescent mental health services particularly for children with autism and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- One mother said all child and adolescent mental health services have done is sent her emails about coping techniques which her son won't listen or respond to.
- One person said child and adolescent mental health services (and the children's charity SELFA) has really helped them with their mental health.



“The child and adolescent mental health services and SELFA were nice. **They really helped me.**”



“My son is talking about death and self-harm on a regular basis. I have been in contact with York and Selby child and adolescent mental health services several times. They’re very nice people but all they can do is send me documents via email. **My son won’t listen to any advice from his parents as he’s a pre-teen so sending me emails on coping techniques is utterly pointless as he won’t listen to me about them.** We’re on a three-year waiting list for an autism assessment. I am completely baffled by the lack of support being offered.”



NHS Talking Therapies

There were 4 pieces of feedback about NHS Talking Therapies. Three were negative, one positive.

- The limited number of sessions that can be provided by NHS talking therapies was raised. One person said they have turned to private trauma therapy due to this.
- Issues with telephone appointments were mentioned.
 - One person said they are autistic and explained at their assessment that phone calls were difficult due to their slow processing speed and cognitive delay, however they were still given telephone appointments.
 - Another person said they took time off work for their phone appointment only to be told on the day, due to technical difficulties, the appointment needed to be rearranged. They then couldn’t accept the other time offered due to being at work.
- One person praised the service saying they felt supported and listened to.



"I have used private trauma therapy services for the last two years. The NHS cannot provide the appropriate amount of care needed. It rations therapy to six sessions (12 at most). **My complex needs cannot fit into a rationed service.** The service does not have enough therapists. Patients can only work with someone they trust."



"**Fantastic!** There was an easy self-referral to talking therapies with the NHS. I feel supported and listened to."



Crisis line

There were two pieces of feedback about the crisis line. One was negative and one mixed.

- Calls taking a long time to be answered was the key issue. However, one person said although it all took a long time the care was good once they got through.

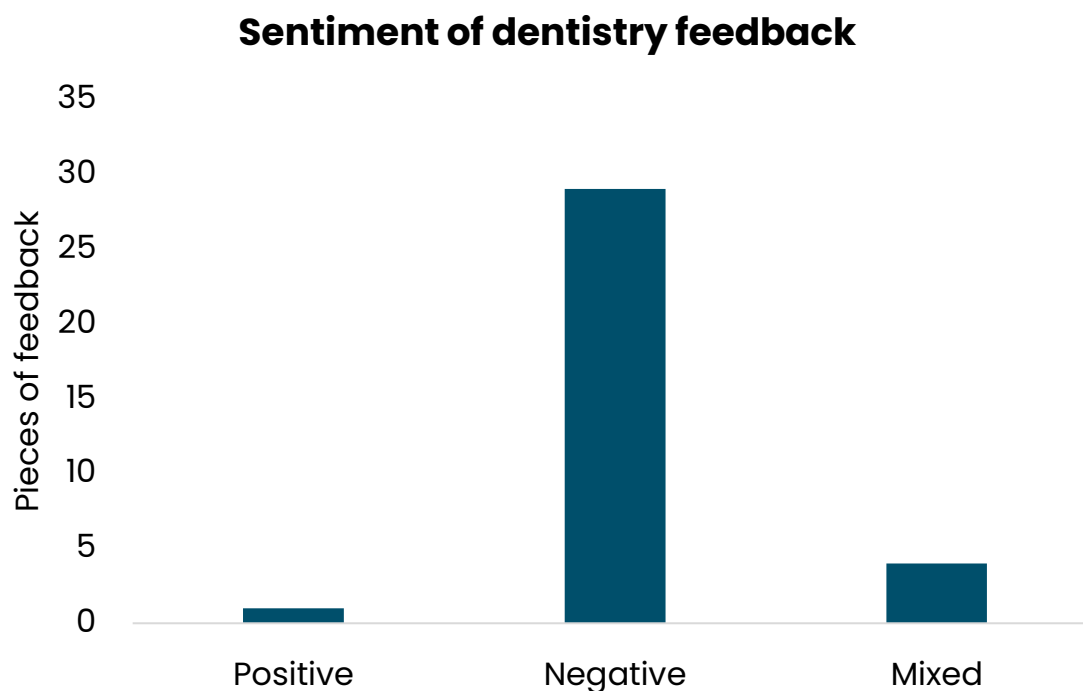


"I was in crisis from a manic episode. I rang the North Yorkshire crisis team. **It took 10 calls and two days for anyone to even answer the phone.** When I did speak to someone, they could not have been any more helpful. **The care I got, as an outpatient, was very good** but I don't think it should take days and multiple calls to get help in a crisis."



Feedback about dentistry

Most of the feedback about dentistry was negative (85%). Most of the feedback (74%) was regarding people being unable to register for an NHS dentist.



Many people said that when they try to register with an NHS dentist, they are told there is no availability, but they could be seen as a private patient. However, many cannot afford this. One person said their NHS dentist recently turned private and while they pay a monthly membership, they were still told they would have to pay for a filling repair which would cost £100 more than their monthly mortgage payment.

One person said they have resorted to pulling four of their own teeth out which has resulted in them not wanting to leave the house. Another said they have recently moved Catterick garrison for a two-year posting and it's a five-year wait to see an NHS dentist.

There were a few pieces of positive feedback. One person said she still has access to the NHS dentist in her area and the care provided has been fantastic.

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“Since lockdown I have not managed to get an appointment at all. **I have pulled out four of my own teeth and number five is getting to stage it’s going to come out.** It’s a total disgrace. I can’t even have my broken lower denture repaired or replaced. So, I won’t go out anymore.”

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“**I was fortunate to be able to register with an NHS dental provider in the town where I live.** Their service has been fantastic, no issues or comments other than to offer praise and gratitude for what they do. There have been a lot of staff changes in the practice, with Dentists and Hygienists leaving and being replaced, this has never impacted on my access to services, but it is good to get to know your practitioners and build a relationship and knowledge.”

9

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“**We are on a low income, partner is very disabled, we were with the last NHS dentist in our area who have just gone private.** We pay a monthly membership, but I was still just offered a preventive repair to a filling that would cost £100 MORE than my monthly mortgage payment. We can’t afford to maintain our dental health or that of our children to the standard we should now.”

9



Other feedback

Social care

There were nine pieces of feedback relating to social care, all of which were negative.

- There was some negative feedback about the quality of care received from Rambla Nursing Home, Anley Hall Nursing Home and Minster Grange Care Home.
- One person said she is on the waiting list for home care for her husband and has no idea how long the wait will be.

NHS 111

There were three pieces of feedback about NHS 111. Two were positive and one negative.

- One person said they called 111 for their elderly Mum who had a cough and was deteriorating on Sunday. They had a prompt call back from a doctor who said to go to Urgent Care Centre for review.
- The negative feedback centred around the long waiting time for a call back after ringing 111. One person said they called 111 and received a response nine hours later at 2.30am telling them their GP would call later that day at a set time, but the call never came.



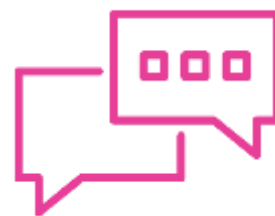
Conclusion

This summary report highlights that access continues to be the key issue for many, whether it be access to GP appointments, hospital appointments, mental health support or dentists.

However, when people do receive treatment and support, they are often positive about the care they have received and tend to be appreciative of the caring and hard-working staff.

We ask that service providers and commissioners who are mentioned in this report act on the feedback and insight and where possible share with us what actions they have or intend to take to remedy these concerns. Our next insight report will be based on feedback from April to June 2024.

Thank you to the people who shared their feedback with us, your voices will help inform and shape health and care services across North Yorkshire.



healthwatch
North Yorkshire



**Committed
to quality**

We are committed to the quality of our information. Every three years we perform an in-depth audit so that we can be certain of this.

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