



What we are hearing

Quarterly Report: October–December 2024

healthwatch
York

Contents

Content warning: contains reference to mental ill-health, breakdown, trauma, self-harm, suicide and suicidal ideation, anxiety, distress, struggles with daily living, family breakdown.

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Key: Compliments in own words – no background, speech bubbles

3rd party reported compliments – green background

3rd party reported negative feedback – pink background

Concerns and complaints in own words – blue background

Cover photo by Nate Holland via unsplash

Introduction

What we do

Healthwatch York is your way to influence local health and social care services – hospitals, care homes, GP surgeries, dentists, pharmacies, home care services and many others. We make sure your voices are heard by those who buy and deliver local health and care services.

Healthwatch York:

- Provides information about local services to make sure you know how to access the help you need
- Signposts you to independent complaints advocacy if you need support to complain about a service you have received
- Listens to your views about local services and makes sure these are taken into account when services are planned and delivered

Every month we hear from people across York about your experiences of local health and care services. Where requested, we signpost and / or provide helpful information about their options. We share what we hear anonymously with the people who buy and deliver those services.

This Report

We have put this report together based on what you have shared with us in the 3 months from 1 October to 31 December 2024. This report gives a flavour of the issues and themes this quarter.

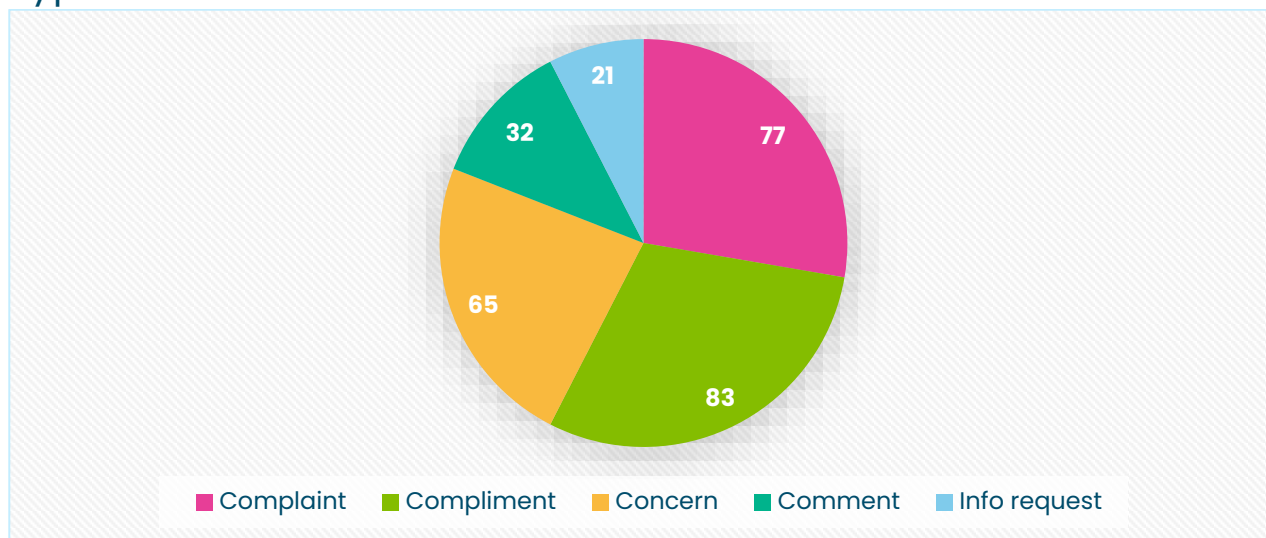
The service areas highlighted in this report are as follows:

- GP services
- Hospital services
- Mental health services
- Commissioning
- Dental services
- Social care services

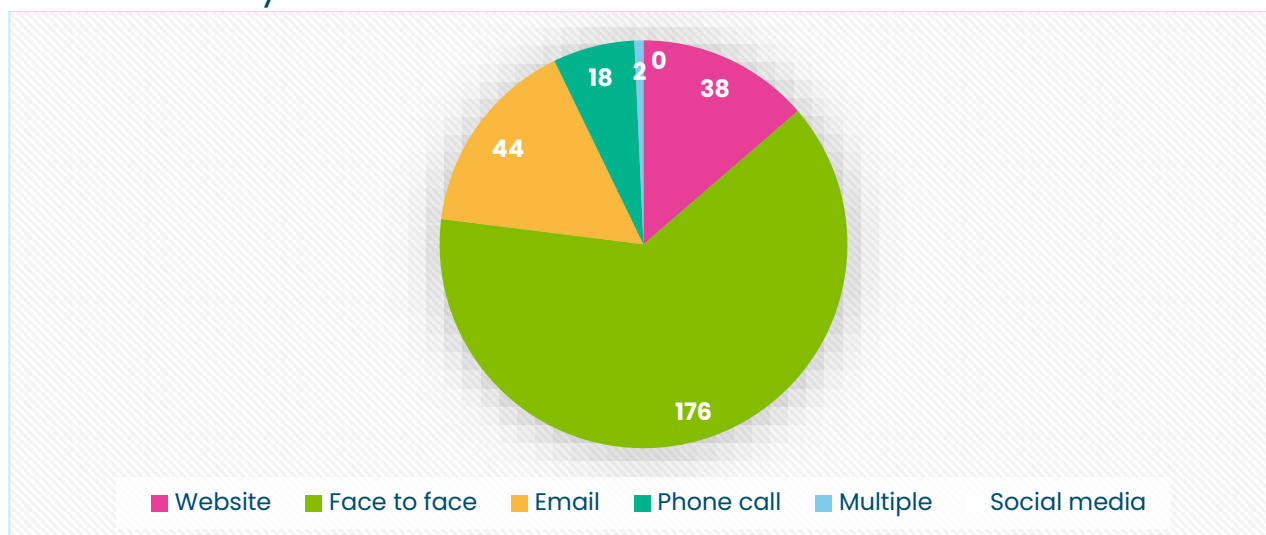
Overview of contacts received

From October to the end of December 278 people contacted us directly to ask for information / advice or share their feedback.

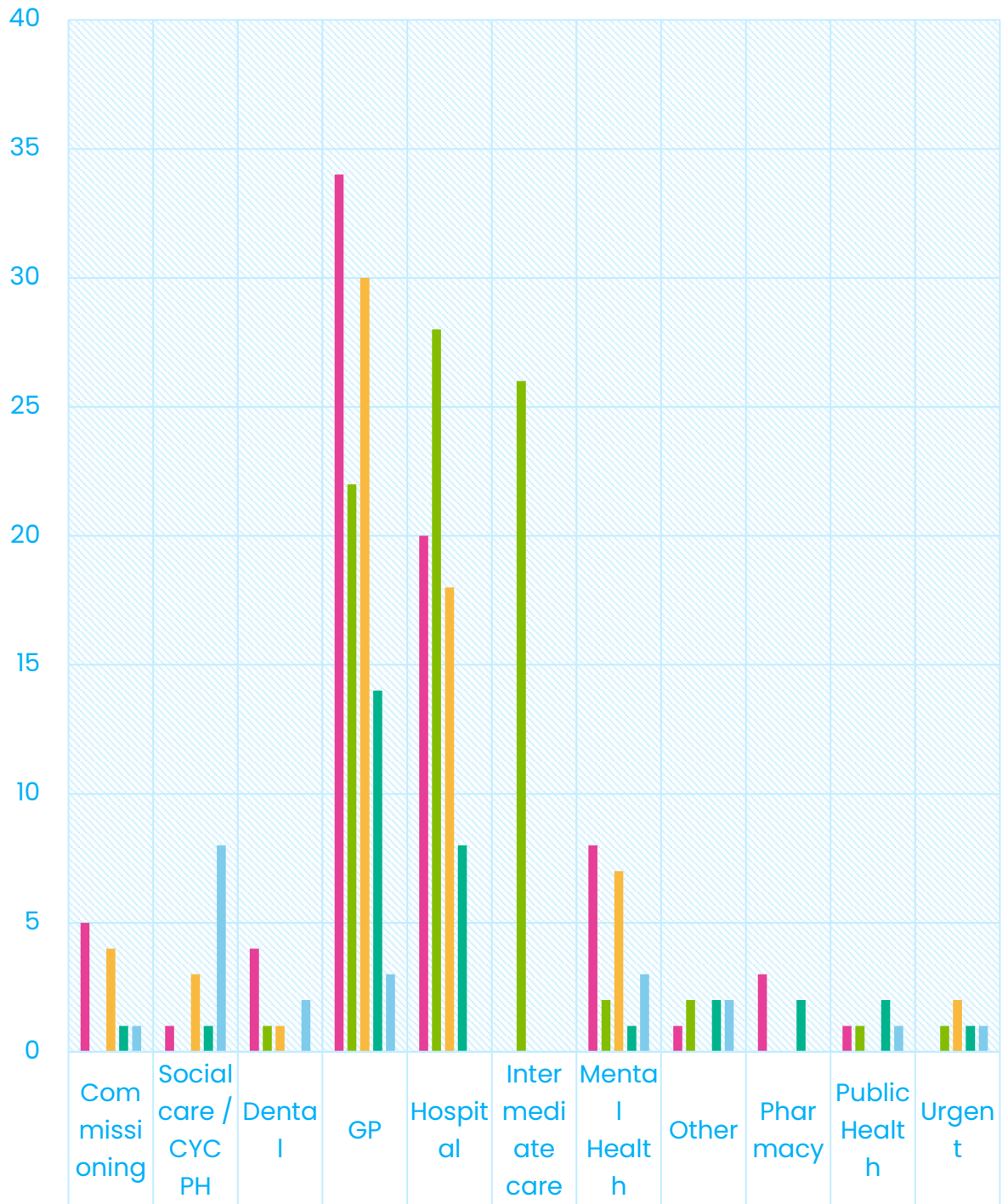
Type of feedback received



Contacted by



Feedback received by type and area of care



Complaint	5	1	4	34	20		8	1	3	1	0
Compliment	0	0	1	22	28	26	2	2	0	1	1
Concern	4	3	1	30	18		7	0	0	0	2
Comment	1	1	0	14	8		1	2	2	2	1
Request for info	1	8	2	3	0		3	2	0	1	1

Complaint Compliment Concern Comment Request for info

Key themes by area of care

GP Services

There were 22 compliments for GPs and GP practices.

6 Usually book appointment online but none available. Filled in contact form. Three hours later receptionist called, face to face appointment booked for same day. Examined, prescription sent immediately to pharmacy but also a further appointment booked by the GP for two days on as he was concerned and advised antibiotics might not be enough. Second appointment, examined and call made to Surgical Assessment - booked in same day. After procedure told I would need to see the Practice Nurse everyday for dressing change. Husband called in in person. Initially no slots available but receptionist contacted practice nurse and within the hour they had texted me with a week's worth of time slots. Cannot fault the care I've had from this surgery and seeing different GPs seems a small price to get such a service.



6 I moved from {Name of surgery} to Jorvik Gillygate as I thought my issues weren't being taken seriously and I don't think I would be here but for their care. I had an annual review and regular tests and they identified that something wasn't right. They asked me to do further urine and poo samples and saw there was a hint of blood in the poo

sample. They immediately referred me to the hospital who were quick to get my results and get me on treatment. I can't fault anything and really feel I would not be alive but for Jorvik Gillygate.



Themes from compliments included:

- Fast, effective diagnosis and ongoing support
- Warm, caring staff
- Able to get appointments as needed

We also received 34 complaints, 30 concerns, 14 comments and 3 requests for information. Within these the key themes are:

- Communication problems, including using online forms
- Long waiting times to be seen
- Not being listened to, dismissive attitudes, and failure to respect pronouns of trans- and non-binary people
- Diagnoses being missed
- Problems with service availability and lack of patient pathways
- Concerns about lack of blood taking services at GP level, and results going missing

Personal Story: "Lack of support across the board."



I went to the GP earlier this year with symptoms of PCOS (polycystic ovary syndrome), I was referred quite quickly to York Hospital for scans and tests, the GP confirmed with me that I do have PCOS but wasn't willing to help with symptoms unless I was actively trying for a baby and told me to come back then. I put numerous requests in to be seen as due to insulin resistance, I can't lose weight naturally and need to lose weight in order to go through with IVF. The GP got back to me via no-reply text after an 8

week wait to say that they will refer me to Tier 3 Weight Management services. But this referral came back with the GP saying I don't fit any of the criteria that North Yorkshire ICB have set and that they suggest I go to slimming world instead. This even though I had said this hasn't worked for me. After looking into things a bit more, I did a self-assessment to Oviva (an NHS weight management program) but again, my GP came back saying I don't fit any ICB criteria and do not have the right to choose. I did get back to my GP asking to clarify how I don't fit ICB criteria as from research I do and also how I don't have the right to choose. They have stated I will have another 8 week wait for a response with this. Overall, I feel completely let down by my GP. They gave me a diagnosis and basically said to get on with it by myself and won't help me lose weight nor will they allow any other service to help either. I am at a loss which is affecting my mental health as I can't afford a private endocrinologist and can't move forward with IVF until I lose weight. I have also struggled to get through to a GP, all responses I've gotten have been either no-reply texts or GP receptionists passing on messages and haven't spoken to a GP since I went to an appointment with my symptoms near the start of the year.





Personal Story: "Don't take health issue seriously."





I have prostate cancer and have been receiving treatment which has been working as far as I know. I was told to book a PSA test every six months to keep a check on it, but I always have to chase this to make it happen. Then when I do, I am never sent the results so I don't know what the situation is. It is very frustrating for a serious health issue.





Personal Story: “Seriously poor communication.”

 Been weeks without daily medication. Did not get a single phone call or communication from a GP or prescriber for two weeks after the initial concern was raised. Contacted the GP daily for updates and it was noted as urgent every day but three weeks on still nothing. The care for patients is unacceptable I understand GP services are under strain but these are people's lives and health you are neglecting, and I am almost sure this issue could be resolved with a five minute phone call. 

Personal Story: “No information about blood test needed caused issues.”

 Just got back from the blood clinic at the stadium after a long wait only to be told I should have fasted before I have blood taken. I don't normally have to fast and when I queried it I was told they have had to refuse several patients all of whom were from {Name of GP Practice} and they were having a lot of problems with {Name of GP Practice} not informing patients correctly and I should report it as it was causing them problems. She was very apologetic but I could see they were really fed up with the situation. I dont know if you have received a lot of bad feedback {about Name of GP Practice} but it would seem standards have slipped. 

Personal Story: “Not using correct name or pronouns for trans patient.”

 I'm with x surgery. The occasional person there will get my name right but it's rare, they almost always use my old name. I don't think a single staff member has ever used my pronouns correctly. 

“Mixed experience of GP practice.”

Person is a refugee from Syria who is now living in York and has a number of health issues. He really struggles with the online form and can't use it to explain his symptoms as his English is not good enough and there is no facility to change the language for the online form. He tried and failed to register concerns about his memory and is keen to get treatment to help him. When he has seen GPs he finds them very good and they use a phone interpreter which really helps.

“Physio didn't listen.”

Person had a stroke five years ago and her family was told that she was unlikely to survive. However, she did and made excellent progress going on to talk and walk again, things that weren't expected. While recovering, she was moved on to a hip replacement ward as that was where the space was. After leaving hospital she had some physiotherapy that helped. She also had back pain from a previous issue. Once home and recovering from the stroke well, she contacted her GP to request physio for her back. She went to see a physiotherapist but felt he did not listen. He looked at her notes and thought she had had a hip replacement due to the hospital ward mentioned and focused on that, including it as something she had had in her notes. She was very frustrated as it took two years to get the physio she needed for her back as they continued to think she had a hip replacement due to the physiotherapist who didn't listen.

“Poor approach from GP.”

Person's husband has dementia and had a heart attack. They went to see the GP to find out what support was available and the wife was told that she mollycoddled her husband. When she asked, her husband's diagnosis of dementia wasn't on his GP record.

Hospital

We received 28 compliments about hospital care.



My husband has been referred to cardiology and has had an excellent service and great care.



My mum is on ward 24 and the care is fantastic. She spent her first 24 hours in A&E and they were wonderful too. She has a chest infection and dementia. The nurses have been great and supported her to make sure she is eating and drinking – it is something she struggles with.



We have also had great support at home from the memory team, Dementia Forward and Carers support.

“Good service in GP out of hours.”

Person went to A&E with someone from West Africa whose main language was French. They were triaged to the GP out of hours and had to wait for four hours. But when they saw them, the doctor was excellent. He used a telephone translation service which was excellent and ensured the person was confident in what was happening and was very happy with the treatment and care.

“Excellent communication.”

Person finds that text messages are the easiest way for them to get information about health. They were recently invited for a liver ultrasound by text which was brilliant and meant they were able to process the information effectively.

Themes from compliments included:



- Meeting communication needs
- High quality care

We also received 20 complaints, 18 concerns, and 8 comments.



Within these the key themes were:

- Challenges with communication
- Failure to support people with additional needs appropriately
- Long waiting times
- Problems with discharge planning and information provided to family members

Personal Story: “Lack of care and information on discharge.”

 Nothing went well! How can you go into hospital with a kidney infection and two weeks later be sent home with severe septic shock. We were never told verbally by the hospital how very very poorly my husband was, it was only a few days after being discharged that I found his discharge letter which stated the severity of what we have had to face and deal with on our own. Incompetence and abject neglect by whoever was dealing with my husband’s care. 

Personal Story: “Support lacking for someone with a learning difficulty.”

 I would have liked it if I was communicated to more by the A&E staff. Because I have a learning difficulty, I felt I was being ignored, and hospital staff were not talking to me about what was going to happen to me. 

Personal Story: “Lack of understanding and support for people who are neurodivergent.”



I was admitted to York Hospital, ward 21, the urgent care assessment, with very high blood pressure. When I got there I explained that I am autistic and have ADHD but the nurse said: 'you look normal, seem normal, you are normal'. There was no chance after that for me to add anything and explain what I needed. After four hours they hadn't checked my blood pressure so I asked them to. The nurses never checked on me. I sat feeling ill, but I had no-one to tell. I saw a doctor who said he couldn't treat me due to the other medication I was taking, but said they would monitor my blood pressure. He said I could have a room and morphine and that they'd give me some blood pressure medication but it never came. In the morning I asked about pain medication and was asked what my pain levels were. But before I could say anything the nurse said they were about four. I thought they were more like seven. I later asked about having my blood pressure taken again when I saw someone doing it. But he said that I didn't need it doing. Then he came back later and loudly said 'I'm only doing it because you asked me' and did do it. I asked him a question but he didn't talk to me. When I saw the doctor later I lost it and was ranting and crying. I don't understand why no-one was concerned that I am autistic and didn't do anything to support me. There seems to be no protocol. All they need to do is ask a few questions about what I need and what would help, but they didn't bother. It is not good enough and is heartbreaking. It means I don't ever want to go back to the hospital.



“Long waiting time for urgent referral”

Person had a CT scan which showed a small dead area in their brain in the same area as would be seen for Parkinson's. As a result an urgent

referral was made to a neurologist at York hospital. But the person found that the urgent referral would take a year. They don't want to wait that long as, if they have Parkinson's, they'd like to start medication as soon as possible. So they have gone to Benenden/Nuffield and have an appointment with a neurologist in early November. If they'd waited for an NHS appointment, it would have been summer 2025 at the earliest. They worry for other people who can't go private.

“Poor Communication.”

Person's son has a number of appointments at the hospital, particularly with Head and Neck, ENT and audiology. He has a learning difficulty, so his mum deals with his appointments. She has found that on almost every letter the phone number is not the right one. She has often had to ring to check an appointment or for another reason and been told that the number on the letter is not the right department. She has also received text messages with a number to call and when she called the number it didn't work or the message says leave a message and there is no function to leave a message. It is very time consuming and frustrating. Also the appointment letters say who the appointment is with, but not their role or what the appointment is actually for. When someone has multiple issues it is really important to know what each appointment is for.

“No call but they say it is a Did Not Attend.”

Person was waiting for a phone appointment with gastroenterology. They sat for 1.5 hours waiting for the call and were with their phone for the afternoon when the appointment was due. They checked on Patient Knows Best but there was no information that the appointment had been cancelled. They later found out that the appointment was logged as a 'did not attend' and they had been discharged. But no one called them. They didn't miss the appointment.

Mental Health services

We received 2 compliments about mental health care.



Staff at Foss Park Hospital are always there to support my dad. As daughters, we cannot fault their care.



We received 8 complaints, 7 concerns, 3 requests for information and 1 comment. Within these the key themes were:

- Confusion about who is taking crisis calls and providing crisis support
- Long waiting times for support
- Problems with medication and medication reviews
- Not feeling listened to
- Continuing concerns about young people 'timing out' of the assessment process for ADHD and / or Autism

Personal Story: "Extremely poor experience when in a crisis."



Yesterday I was in a bad crisis all day, I called the crisis team but because it was before 5pm they told me I needed to contact my CMHT so the crisis team had asked the duty worker in the CMHT to call me. I waited all day I heard nothing. So at about 6pm last night I called the crisis team back and the lady I called on 111 said "I can tell you need help so I'll put you through to the crisis team" a few minutes later the lady in the crisis team answered when she first answered she said "hello you're through to the crisis team how can I help"? So I started telling her how I was feeling and half way through that conversation she turned around and said to me "well have you tried

contacting the crisis team?" I was literally speaking to the crisis team and told her I felt suicidal so why ask me to call the crisis team when I was already speaking to her. I then hung up because I did not know what to say. My mum called back on 111 and spoke to the same lady again and she was shocked by what the person in the crisis team had said she put me through again to the crisis team and we spoke to a man this time. His response was "we can't help you because we can't take away your feelings" and then followed it up by saying "you need to take accountability for your actions." When are things going to change with the crisis team in York area? I don't know who I can contact about this anymore.



Personal Story: "Feels like a vicious circle."



My son has an acquired brain injury and as a result developed depression in his mid 20s. He has been on anti-depression and anti-psychotic medication since, even though he has never been psychotic. We want to make sure the medication is reviewed but are struggling to do that. The GP is helpful, they listened and referred my son to TEWV, but then he just gets discharged again with the same medication. It just feels like you are on a treadmill and no one is listening. We really want him to have a thorough medication review, but it never happens. The system doesn't work.



"Concerned for child with mental ill health."

Person concerned about the treatment their child is receiving at Huntington House from the mental health team. They agreed to provide psychotherapy but it never happened. Parent has made a complaint to PALs, but they don't think they are doing anything and they haven't heard back from them. Tried to escalate and spoke to social services, who tried to do an assessment, but child was abusive towards social worker so she stepped away.

Concerned about continued deterioration in their child's health and lack of support, and has impacted their own mental health and they are also now under the mental health team.

“Long waits for vital help.”

Young adult with anorexia has experienced very long waits for help. Now has a BMI of 14 amongst other very concerning health issues, but still waiting to be seen.

“Can autism assessment for 17 year old be completed before he turns 18?”

Person seeking information about what they can do to expedite an autism assessment for 17 year old son before he turns 18 and moves to adult services. They previously had contact with the CAMHS crisis team last year, but this was not helpful. Later they were referred to community CAMHS and had one good care coordinator who has now left York. They were told that they would be allocated a new care coordinator, but have heard nothing since. Son's health is deteriorating and they are concerned about his manic episodes and panic attacks, and the delay for his autism assessment is having a further impact on his mental health.

“No help offered.”

Person had been referred to a mental health care coordinator by her GP as a result of a shutdown in the GP practice waiting room. The person wasn't confident that the care coordinator would provide any help and that was the case. The care coordinator's approach was to say that life is not always easy and there are ups and downs. This despite knowing the person had struggled with mental health issues including an eating

disorder as well as an autism diagnosis. When they were discussing the person's eating disorder and she talked about the limited calories she was eating the care coordinator didn't really comment or offer any support to try and address the issue to have a healthier diet. They just said the person can solve their own problems and knows what they are doing. The person is on a waiting list for support but it has a two year wait. They have previously asked to be referred to a dietitian but this has not happened. The care coordinator sent a letter summarising the appointment and offered to amend anything which the person was grateful for as the letter didn't reflect the appointment in her eyes.


Commissioning


We received no compliments about commissioning.

We received 5 complaints and 4 concerns. We also received 1 information request and 1 comment. Key themes from these include:


- Difficulties in accessing ADHD and Autism assessments
- Changes in support for hEDS
- Concerns about ear wax removal following June 2018 change in NICE guidance
- Concerns about weight loss support available locally and the wider impacts on health and wellbeing
- Difficulties accessing support and medication for trans young people, including lack of information about position on waiting lists, no access to puberty blockers after the Cass report, and challenges accessing testosterone
- Challenges following move to health-funded care


Personal Story: "Autism and ADHD assessment process is not clear."

 I am so confused and frustrated by the support and help I have been given or rather not given to be able to have my son of 22 years old assessed for Autism and ADHD. The early intervention team referred him to the GP and the GP just sent us a link with no help or support what so ever. I'm now left with the uncertainty of if I have completed everything as I found last night I hadn't completed some parts on the Do It Provider. My son is looking to me for answers to how he can deal with his mental health because he just thinks killing himself or us is his only option. There is so much information been thrown at me and I just don't know what I've completed correctly to make sure he's on a waiting list for an assessment and what the best support he needs for the years and years he is going to have wait for an assessment. If you can help with any clarity in what seems so overwhelming for us let alone my son.




Personal Story: "No support for hEDS."

 I was diagnosed with hEDS (hypermobile ehlers-danlos in April 2024. I've been struggling for over a decade. Leeds Teaching Hospitals Trust Rheumatology department has recently decided not to support and treat patients with Hypermobility disorders. My GP told me this just this week. There are no specialists. GPs say 'I don't know anything about hEDS, you need to see someone who does' but there's no one to refer us to. The doctor who diagnosed me has left. I'm in pain every day, struggle with fatigue every day and no one knows what to do. I'm researching it all myself and figuring it out on my own with charity help but when I go back to the NHS with the information given to me they still don't know what to do. I'm frightened, I can't work full time, I can't get benefits, I'm struggling with my mobility, when it's very bad I'm housebound, I have MCAS (Mast cell activation syndrome) symptoms and was hospitalised last year but Leeds Teaching Hospital Trust says MCAS is 'too controversial' so they won't help. They still do not know what happened to me last year. I was incapacitated for six months. No one understands my health condition and I'd be homeless by now without my partner and family.



Personal Story: "Issues with private hearing aids."

 Can Healthwatch investigate private hearing aids/hearing services and ear wax removal services which we are all going to since we cannot get these services on the NHS? We have had poor experiences of being sold 'not fit for purpose expensive hearing aids', and a poor paid for after service. The hearing aids are of no use, they are in the drawer, and they whistle constantly and are very uncomfortable. We feel we are being taken advantage of. When we raised the problem with the person who sold us the hearing aids/service including wax removal he patronizes us. He is quite passive-aggressive and says he's been in the business for decades and claimed

he worked for the NHS in his career so we falsely thought he was the right man to go to as we cannot get appointments for the NHS hearing aid department. The moulds/tubing are not correct and causing swelling/infection and pain and there is constant feedback whistling, we cannot hear through the hearing aids. We are getting allergic reactions and ear infections constantly because of the moulds/hearing aids/tubing and the wax removal. Are private hearing centres/hearing services checked by the authorities on a regular basis? If they don't they should. We are elderly with severe hearing loss.





Personal Story: “No access to weight loss medication.”

6 I am writing to express my concern regarding the lack of Semaglutide availability in the Tier 3 Weight Management programme. The Specialist Pharmacy Service confirms that Wegovy (versus Ozempic) is available. As you know, Wegovy has been approved by both NICE and the Humber and North Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, which is a commendable step towards addressing obesity and its related health issues. However, Wegovy is unavailable through the Tier 3 Weight Management programme despite this approval. ... By not offering this approved and effective treatment, the ICB limits patients' access to essential medical support that could significantly improve their health outcomes. ... After being referred by my GP (as they advised that they're unable to prescribe Wegovy), I had to wait eight months to start on the programme, only to be told that it was unavailable there too. In my case, the urgency is even greater as I require an operation on my back, and it is contingent upon significant weight loss. I am currently losing weight but cannot do it quickly enough due to other factors.... Not having the back surgery affects my work and, going forward, my income. This situation is also impacting my dignity and quality of life.



Personal Story: “No community testosterone prescribing.”

 I am writing as an advocate for x, who is a 19 year old trans-male, who cannot get access to testosterone treatment in the community. There is a commissioning black hole - Gender Identity Services are not commissioned to provide medication (only treatment advice) and GP services are not commissioned with Shared Care Agreements to take on the prescribing recommendations. x is incredibly frustrated and wanting help. He is illiterate and struggles with low self-esteem and has increasing suicidal thoughts as he feels care is being withheld. GP (me) has written to MP- but had no response. GP (me) has written to NHSE and NHS Specialist commissioning. Informed by both that the other is responsible for commissioning this, but neither offering it. x has given me permission to write on his behalf and be his advocate, as so distressed and unable to gain the support he needs. If you have any ability to raise this significant health inequality and commissioning gap for GID patients, x would be most grateful.



“No response to care queries and no choice of care provider.”

Person used to get care via City of York Council. They used to have a social worker and contribute to the costs of their care. That meant they could choose the care provider and it worked well and had 10 hours of care a day. However, they were moved to health funding. They no longer have contact with a social worker and have been allocated two x 30 minute care slots to help them get up and dress. However, getting up takes two hours as does eating lunch. The amount of care they are getting is what was originally agreed before the social worker recognised the level of their need and increased the amount. They also used to get three hours a week of support for socialising, but this has been removed. The person had tried to get in touch with someone from the health funding team

but never gets a response. The person would rather go back to the old system but has been told that they can't. They have a care company that they trust and would like to start using again, but they no longer have any choice. They moved to the health funding approach on 17 October and haven't yet had any carers. The main thing is that they want to talk to someone as soon as possible.

Dentistry

We received 1 compliment about dental care.



Wortley dentist in Haxby is excellent. They are an NHS dentist and always make sure that I have a downstairs room as I can't go upstairs. The treatment is good too!



We received 4 complaints and 1 concern. We also received 2 information requests.

Within these the key themes are:

- Lack of NHS dentists in the city
- Particular difficulties for people with limited mobility
- Unaffordable costs of private care
- Poor experiences moving between services

Personal Story: "Cost of private dental treatment."



I have made contact with you about being unable to receive dental treatment NHS for over seven years. I had bad gum disease and teeth rotting, receding, bleeding gums, teeth dropping out and like everyone struggling with the impossibility of receiving treatment. It got that bad that I knew the only way I could receive treatment for my severe gum disease was by going private, so I borrowed one thousand pounds from family to pay. Because I am on sickness benefit and universal credit I believed I would still be able to retrieve some of my dentist costs back. I sent the form off and was told by letter NO! However this treatment was for gum disease and fillings etc a course of good treatment (which I must say I am very happy with but this was not routine it was a health issue and needed treatment which I

have waited over seven years to try and get an NHS appointment. I do not understand why I cannot claim at least some of my costs that really I should not have even had to pay? I had no choice or all my teeth would fall out and bad gum disease is unhealthy.



Personal Story: "Lack of care and treatment."



I had a jaw problem for two to three years which left me with painful teeth. I went to the dentist who did an x ray but couldn't see anything. I changed dentist (another private dentist) and explained the issue again. They thought that it was a wisdom tooth which was impacting another tooth as it emerged and sent me to the hospital for a different x ray that they couldn't do. When I went to the hospital, they charged me £78. I was very surprised although the dentist said it might happen. The dentist said they couldn't help as it was more than they could do. But at this stage the hospital said it wasn't their issue and referred me back to the dentist. In March 2024, the dentist referred me back to the hospital, but I heard nothing. I was going to Spain to see my family and while I was there I had an operation and lots of appointments to have both teeth removed. If I had waited for something to happen here I don't know how long it would have taken. I am now going to go to Spain to see a dentist as it is so much easier, better and quicker.



Personal Story: "Can't get an NHS dentist."



I was homeless recently and have just got somewhere to live. I really want to get my teeth sorted out. I have lost a number of teeth and have a lot of pain.



"Can't get an NHS dentist in York."

Person's dentist went private. They are on Pension Credit and can't afford to go private. They wanted advice on NHS dentists in York and suggested that it would be helpful if private dentists offered a voucher for NHS patients, like opticians, so you can still get the treatment you need but at NHS prices even though you haven't got an NHS dentist.

Social care and public health services

We received no compliments about social care and public health.

We received 1 complaint and 3 concerns. We also received 8 information requests and 1 comment. Key themes from these include:

- People looking for information about dementia support
- Lack of clarity around finances and financial assessments
- Difficulties resolving concerns about care

“No help despite need.”

Person's husband is disabled and needs help to get out of bed and up in the morning and to get into bed at night. The wife has been providing that support, but has been diagnosed with myeloma and is receiving chemotherapy. The wife applied to social services to get some help as there are sometimes she hasn't got the strength to help her husband but he needs to get up each day to retain what mobility he has. After the assessment, the wife was told that she could cope and that the council couldn't offer any support as there were people who needed the help more. The wife accepts there are some people who do need the help more, but there are times when she doesn't know how she will be able to help her husband. Her consultant has clearly said that she shouldn't be doing everything she is.

“Concern about care arrangements.”

Woman's fostered son has learning difficulties. He is now an adult but she is still in touch and worried about his care. Her son is sharing supported housing with another man. His behaviour has deteriorated to a level that her son seems to be acting as a carer for the other man. This includes being the

cleaner when the other man soils the bathroom and doesn't clean up. This is despite her son needing support himself. Previously the support for both men was provided by {name of provider} and no reviews were provided. The person's last annual review was in 2019 and he didn't have another until February 2024. {Name of provider} didn't respond to queries by email or phone and managers never responded. In 2024 the son's care moved to {New provider name} which is much better and they are tackling some of the issues he is facing due to the previous lack of support. These include rent arrears and changing him to Universal Credit. However, he wants to move into a single person property because of the issues for the man he is sharing with. The other man's care is still provided by {Name of provider} and the care is very poor. When asking the Council about moving to a different property they said that they don't have any influence over this housing.

“Seeking advice for struggling friend.”

Person's friend is 79 and is really struggling at home. They wondered if their friend may qualify for social care and/or benefits to help them get extra support. They are currently not able to leave their home.

Things we're aware of

Through the feedback we've received recently, we are aware of:

- People waiting for social care support
- Support and services for people living with long Covid
- Concerns around support available for people with ME / Chronic Fatigue
- Difficulties accessing HRT and other menopause support for those experiencing early menopause
- Long waiting times for assessments for ADHD and autism
- Long waits for hospital care

We welcome your feedback on all aspects of health and care but would particularly love to hear from you about your experiences of any of these themes.

Recent Reports

Our Winter Magazine can be found here:

<https://bit.ly/HWYWinter24>

We have recently published a report about the experiences of Neurodivergent families in York, developed in partnership with the Land, York Disability Rights Forum, York Carers Centre and Parent Carer Forum York. You can read this report here:

<https://bit.ly/NDfamiliesJan25>

Current surveys and consultations

Local surveys

City of York Council – Help shape York’s Adult Social Care Strategy

Your voice matters in refining and shaping a strategy that will guide the way in which Adult Social Care delivers its duties and ambitions in York. We want to hear from people who receive care and support, carers, residents, and professionals in the sector. We need your views to make sure the strategy is both meaningful and effective.

We’re committed to making resident-centred decisions informed by your feedback. Here’s how:

- **continuous engagement:** share your thoughts and views with us – we’re always open to your views
- **transparency in action:** we will share the key findings of this engagement within the 2025 Local Account and explain how they have directly shaped our strategy
- **progress updates:** we will continually update progress on our actions, priorities and ambitions through quarterly reports and within the 2025 Local Account

Our Vision for York’s Adult Social Care

York is a place where we recognise the unique strengths of individuals and communities. We support people to live happier, healthier, longer and more independent lives, reducing inequalities.

We work in partnership to provide support at home that is accessible, affordable, safe, high quality, and promotes fairness and independence.

Read our draft Adult Social Care Strategy

You can read the draft strategy on our

website: <https://www.york.gov.uk/AdultSocialCareStrategy2025>

Or download a portable document file (PDF) version:

<https://www.york.gov.uk/AdultSocialCareStrategyConsultation>

Share your thoughts

We want to hear from you if:

- you receive care or support
- you are a resident of York
- you work for or with organisations that deliver care and support
- you are part of a charity, voluntary or community sector organisation
- you are a carer, friend, neighbour or family member of an adult who receives social care in York

Complete our questionnaire online by 9 March 2025:

<https://www.york.gov.uk/AdultSocialCareStrategyConsultation>

Alternative formats and ways to complete:

- We have attached a copy of the survey that can be printed and completed by hand or completed electronically.
- If you need the survey in a different language or format (e.g. large print, braille, Audio, or BSL) you can:
 - Email: cycaccessteam@york.gov.uk
 - Call 01904 551 550 and customer services will pass your request onto the access team
 - Use our [BSL Video Relay Service](#) where you can select 'Switchboard' from the menu
- Easy Read versions of the strategy and questionnaire are being prepared and will be available to download from the consultation page soon.

If you have any questions or want to give feedback in a different way, email ASCTransformationTeam@york.gov.uk or call 01904 551 550.

Together, we can create an Adult Social Care strategy that helps make York a place where everyone can thrive, with support that truly matters. Thank you for helping us create a healthier, more independent and more inclusive York.

City of York Council Unpaid Carers Survey

We need your help to understand how to improve support for unpaid carers in York.

We're inviting unpaid carers, their families and friends, residents and people who support carers to take part in our survey and get involved in future discussions.

This survey is split into 2 sections.

York Carers Strategy Survey – Section 1

We're working with partner organisations and carers in York to develop a new Carers Strategy for 2025 to 2030. The strategy will set out our shared vision for improving support for unpaid carers in York. It will also describe the key priority areas and commitments we plan to focus on to achieve the vision.

Your feedback will help us make sure our strategy is as good as it can be, and that we are focusing on what is most important to carers in York.

York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Survey – Section 2

York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals Trust would like to hear about the experience of carers when visiting the hospital.

The Trust are currently developing a carers improvement plan and sharing your experience will help the Trust understand what's going well and what they could improve on.

Find the survey at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YorkUnpaidCarers2025>

The survey closes on 16 March.

City of York Council and North Yorkshire Council – North Yorkshire and York Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment Survey

We would like your views about the locations, accessibility and services provided by pharmacies across North Yorkshire and the City of York.

Your feedback will help us produce our next Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) which will be published in autumn 2025. This report is used to shape future pharmacy services and inform local plans which will help provide good access to the services you need at the right time.

Even if you do not use your pharmacy very often, any feedback you have will be very useful.

The survey only takes around 10 minutes to complete. It is open to everyone who uses pharmacy services across North Yorkshire and the City of York. All responses are confidential and will only be used to support the Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment.

In York, paper copies will also be available at York Explore, Acomb Explore, Clifton Explore and Tang Hall Explore.

This survey closes on Sunday 2 March 2025 at 11.59pm.

<https://bit.ly/PNA25-28>

City of York Council Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy

As an employer we'll ensure equity in the recruitment, training and promotion of our employees as well as celebrate diversity within the workplace and our city, encouraging our employees to embrace continuous learning and development in all aspects of their role as officers and as individuals supporting our communities.

As part of this process our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (EDI Strategy) aims to ensure we deliver on our commitments and, drive change at all levels of the Council.

We'd like to invite you to take part in our consultation to get your views on our strategy.

View the draft survey here: <https://bit.ly/CYCEDI2427>

Take the survey here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CYC-EDI-Strategy2024>

National surveys

The Department of Health and Social Care has recently launched the **Change NHS** consultation.

“Our NHS is broken, but not beaten. Together we can fix it.”

We want the biggest ever conversation about the future of the NHS. Your views, experiences and ideas will shape a new 10 Year Health Plan for England. This is open to everyone. If you are a member of the public or someone who works in health and care in England, visit <https://change.nhs.uk/en-GB/projects/start-here>, to tell us how the NHS needs to change.

If you are contributing as a representative of an organisation, complete the organisation's questionnaire here: <https://change.nhs.uk/en-GB/folders/organisations>

NHS England – Mental Health Crisis Care 111 survey

Have you accessed mental health crisis care via the NHS 111 mental health service?

If you have used the service, NHS England would like to hear your feedback about your experiences and the support you received. This will help them to identify areas for improvement and ensure that the service is meeting the needs of people in crisis and providing the highest quality of care.

If you would like to take part, please visit this website to take the survey:

<https://www.engage.england.nhs.uk/survey/1d60f9bb/consultation/intro/>

If you require an alternative format of this survey, please contact england.adultmh@nhs.net. The survey closes 15 July 2025.

Why we do this

We believe that the best health and care services put people at the heart of their work. We put this report together to help local services hear more about your experiences of health and care in our city, and can use this to help shape what they do next.

We also want to encourage more people to speak up about their experiences, whether good or bad. It is important to celebrate those providing excellent care. It is also important to highlight what could be improved – when we share what doesn't work, we provide those delivering and buying care with an opportunity to make services better.

This report also gives more insight into the work we do through our signposting, information and advice service. This service exists to:

- help people find out about services and support available to them
- provide information that can help people understand their options and make decisions about health and care
- provide a listening ear to anyone who has had a difficult experience

We hope you find this report of interest, and please get in touch if there is anything we can help you with.



healthwatch York

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