Blood taking and testing services (phlebotomy) across Warwickshire

December 2025

healthwatch
Warwickshire

Background and introduction

"A blood test is often done to check your health, or to find out why you're having certain symptoms. It involves having a small amount of your blood taken for testing. If a healthcare professional such as a GP, nurse or specialist thinks you need a blood test they will tell you how to book one. Some GP surgeries or hospitals allow you to book a blood test online. You may get your blood test results after a few days, and usually within a few weeks. If you do not hear anything after a few weeks, contact the GP surgery or specialist."
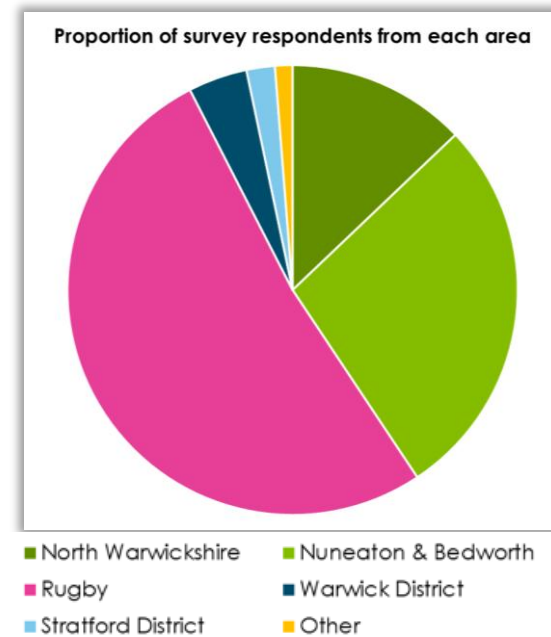https://www.nhs.uk/tests-and-treatments/blood-tests/

During our general engagement in the local community, we became aware that people across the county were experiencing blood taking services differently.

Between **September and November 2025** Healthwatch Warwickshire asked people about their experiences of blood taking services (phlebotomy) in the different districts and boroughs.

We focussed our engagement on Rugby and Warwickshire North and therefore have a lower response rate from South Warwickshire.

We encouraged people to fill in our survey digitally, by telephone or in person and received **637 survey responses.**

Proportion of survey respondents from each area

- North Warwickshire
- Nuneaton & Bedworth
- Rugby
- Warwick District
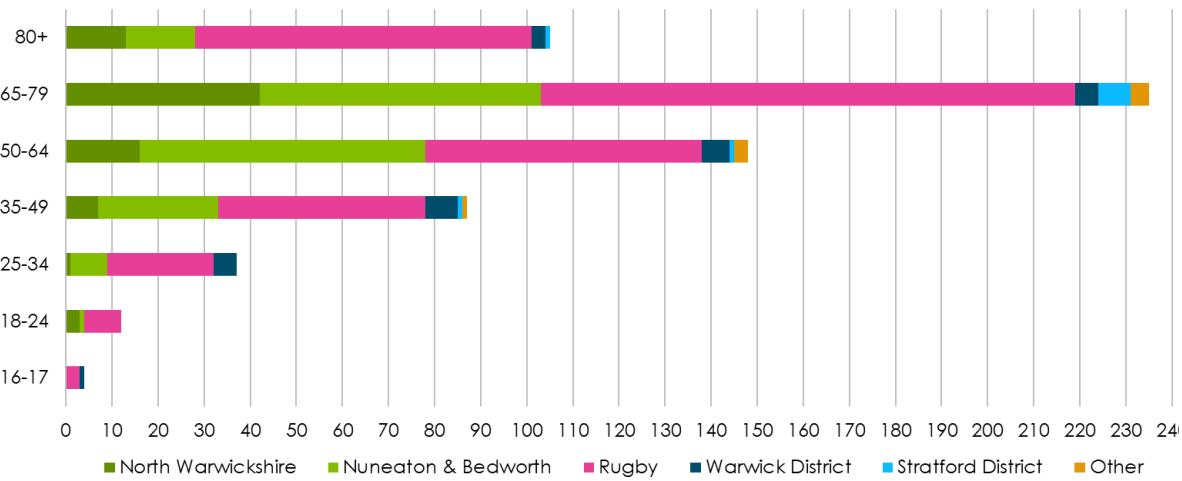- Stratford District
- Other

Key findings

- 7-20% of the people we spoke to in each area did not book blood tests for themselves.

- The majority of people we heard from in each area have regular blood tests, except for Rugby. In Rugby the majority of people we heard from told us they do not have blood tests regularly but had had more than one this year.

- Overall, in all areas, experience of booking a blood test was positive, where people expressed sentiment.

- A high proportion of people in each area, who expressed sentiment, found booking a blood test online to be a positive experience. There were more people in Rugby who had mixed or negative experiences when booking a blood test online.

- 9 people in Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough told us they pay for a private phlebotomist.
- Some by choice, others felt they had to, mainly due to long wait times.

- 74 people from Rugby Borough told us they waited longer than 14 days for a blood test appointment. 27 of these told us their experience was negative or mixed in sentiment.

- 135 people from Rugby Borough told us their results were not explained to them in a way they understood. *"I go onto my NHS app to see them, but they don't make sense to me as its in medical terminology."* 29 of these told us they don't always get an explanation about their test results.

healthwatch
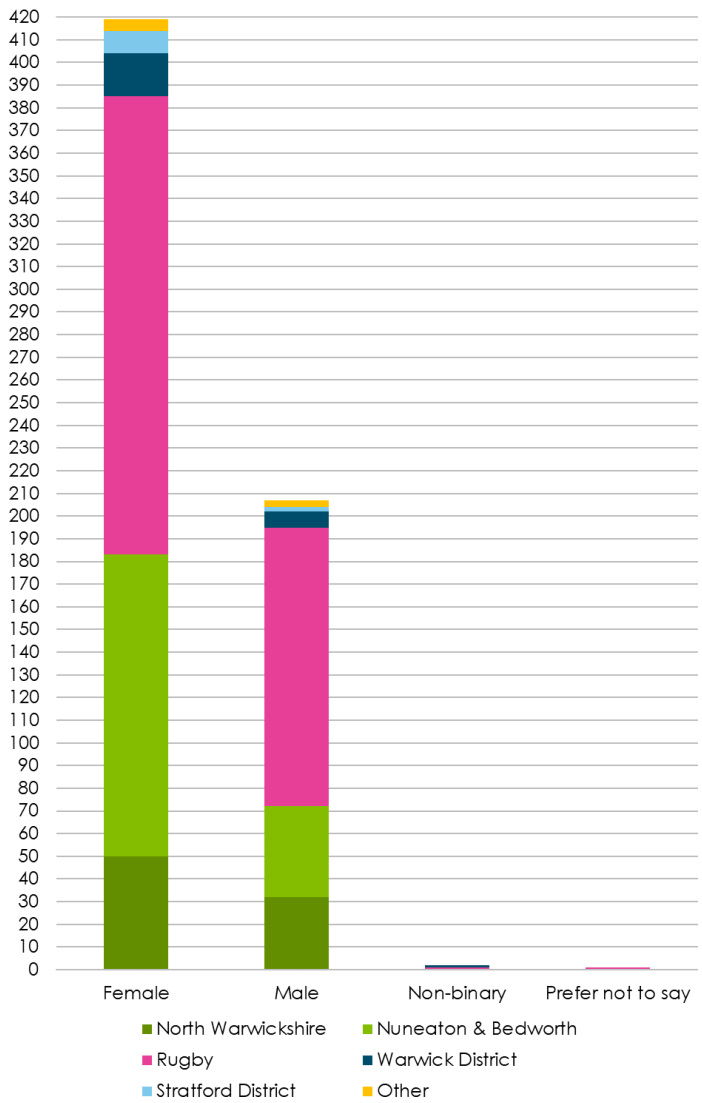Warwickshire

Who we heard from

We received **637 survey responses**. Some people did not answer every question.

Ages of survey respondents from different areas

Legend: North Warwickshire, Nuneaton & Bedworth, Rugby, Warwick District, Stratford District, Other

Gender of respondents from different areas

Legend: North Warwickshire, Nuneaton & Bedworth, Rugby, Warwick District, Stratford District, Other

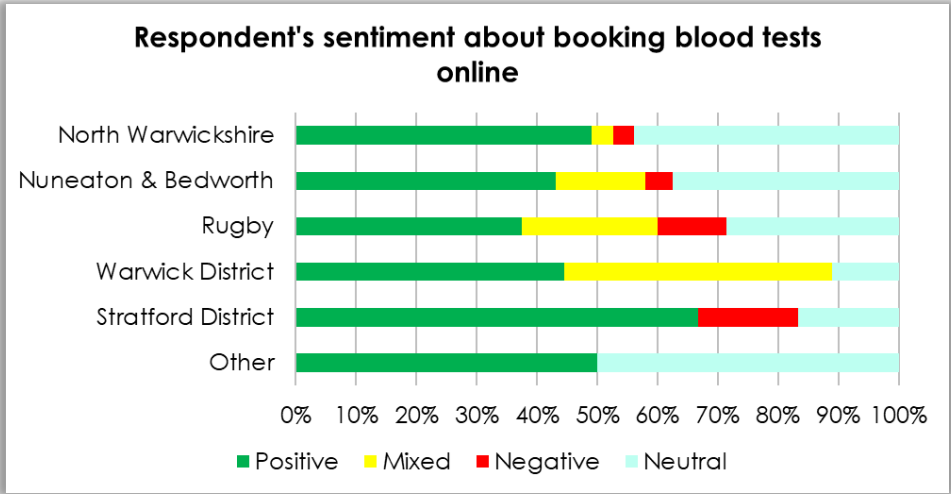|	Most common ethnicities of people responding to the survey in each area
North Warwickshire	**White: British/English/Northern Irish/ Scottish/ Welsh 94%**
Nuneaton & Bedworth	**White: British/English/Northern Irish/ Scottish/ Welsh 85%**
	Asian or Asian British-Indian 10%
Rugby	**White: British/English/Northern Irish/ Scottish/ Welsh 80%**
	Asian or Asian British-Indian 10%
Warwick District	**White: British/English/Northern Irish/ Scottish/ Welsh 80%**
	White: Any other White background 8%
Stratford District	**White: British/English/Northern Irish/ Scottish/ Welsh 90%**
	White: Any other White background 10%
Other	**White: British/English/Northern Irish/ Scottish/ Welsh 88%**
	Asian or Asian British-Indian 12%

healthwatch Warwickshire

What are people's experiences of booking blood tests?

In all areas, experience of booking a blood test was mainly positive, where people expressed sentiment. Some people gave us information about booking their blood test but didn't tell us how they felt about that experience (we categorised this as neutral).

For respondents in all areas, booking blood tests **online** was the most common option.

402 people told us about their experiences of booking blood tests **online**.

Respondent's sentiment about booking blood tests online

NOTE: Lower response rate from South Warwickshire

"I have injections every 6 months, I need to have a blood test 2 weeks before and 2 weeks after, so I plan my appointments online around that."
North Warwickshire Borough resident

"I book online, once you know how to navigate, you're okay the next time. Slow learning but more comfortable doing it now."
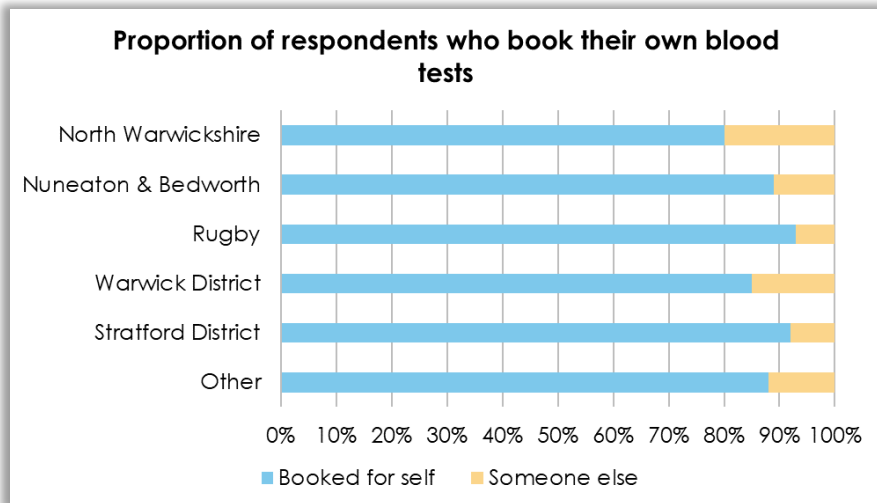**Rugby Borough resident**

- 9 people in Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough told us about booking private blood tests.
- 45 people in Rugby Borough told us they book their blood tests in person.
- 15 people in Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough and 15 people in Rugby Borough told us they book their blood tests by telephone.

Why do people not book blood tests for themselves?

65 people told us they book blood tests for someone else, or that someone else books blood tests for them.

Proportion of respondents who book their own blood tests

"My husband booked online for me, as I have anxiety."
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough resident

"I book for my dad as I'm his carer, I do all his bookings and take him to his appointments."
Rugby Borough resident

"I book for my husband as he is anti-online."
Rugby Borough resident

"It was really easy to book. I was sent a letter with a link to the online booking in the children's ward at Warwick Hospital, for my 6-year-old daughter."
Warwick District resident

Why do people pay for a private phlebotomist?

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough residents told us:

- *"I couldn't get an appointment quickly, so I had to resort to paying someone to come to my home."*
- *"Easy to use Swiftqueue, but there are long waits for appointments, even when I'm being flexible about where I can go. In the end I have chosen to use a private phlebotomist as they can usually do next day, and results come in very quickly."*
- *"I have a private company come to the house. I do not go to Bedworth Health Centre as trying to get an appointment is not easy and the nurses change. Being frightened of needles it is reassuring to see the same person."*

Negative experiences of booking blood tests

Ten people in Warwickshire North told us they would prefer to have blood taken at their GP surgery.
"It would be nice if my GP practice had a service for blood taking."
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough resident

"I booked online; it took me 3 attempts to make the booking!"
North Warwickshire Borough resident

"The GP told me I needed a blood test, and I've not had one done in a long time, so I had no idea how. The GP said to book it at reception. The receptionist told me I had to book it online, but I don't know how to do it online, or have the ability to do it, so, after much arguing with the receptionist they did book it for me. It's unfair we can't access services because they're online only now. I'm in my 80's and have no family who can show me or support me so what am I supposed to do?"
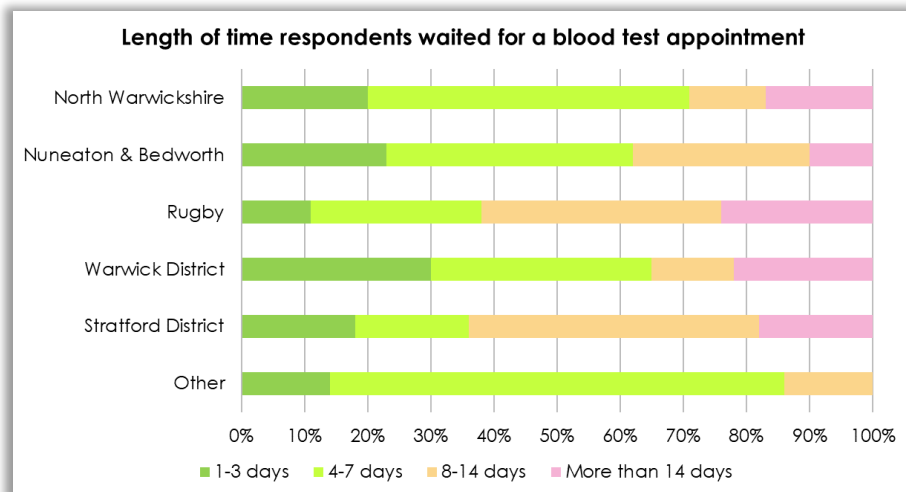**Rugby Borough resident**

"I booked via Swiftqueue for Stratford Hospital. When I went there, I had forgotten the form. They said they were sorry, but they couldn't do it without the form. I phoned my GP who emailed me and the form appeared in my NHS app. I showed the receptionist on my phone but was told they could not take it, and I would have to rebook."
Stratford District resident

healthwatch Warwickshire

How long do people wait for a blood test appointment?

Waiting times for an NHS blood test can vary depending on the reason for the test.

Length of time respondents waited for a blood test appointment

"Good, managed to get an appointment for the same day due to cancellation. Website was clear and there were a lot of choice of dates and times for appointments when I booked my appointment."
Waited 1-3 days
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough resident

"I booked on Swiftqueue and found the process really easy. I can choose the venue and time that suits me . It doesn't always mean the next available appointment."
Waited 4-7 days
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough resident

"I had a hiccup on the last occasion as the web page wasn't showing St Cross Hospital as a place to go to get it done. I had to log in another day and then it was on the list."
Waited 1-3 days
Rugby Borough resident

"I need to book far in advance so whilst there was a wait it was what I wanted."
Waited more than 14 days.
Warwick District resident

"Shipston medical centre tell me to come for a blood test and I book online – straightforward."
Waited 4-7 days
Stratford District resident

	Most common blood taking venue respondents told us about in each area
North Warwickshire	**Community Centre/ Hall 47%**
	Lesiure Centre 28%
Nuneaton & Bedworth	**CAVA / Newtown Centre 56%**
	Community Centre/ Hall 24%
Rugby	**St Cross Hospital 91%**
	GP/ Health Centre 4%
Warwick District	**GP/ Health Centre 56%**
	Warwick Hospital 41%
Stratford District	**GP/ Health Centre 69%**
	Stratford Hospital 31%
Other	**Communty Centre/ Hall 50%**
	CAVA / Newtown Centre 25%

healthwatch
Warwickshire

Negative experiences of waiting for a blood test appointment

"For fasting appointments, the wait is far too long and the earliest appointments available are 8.30am which is far too late in the morning."
Waited more than 14 days
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough resident

"Availability does vary so you never know if you can get an appointment within a few days or will be waiting for weeks."
Waited more than 14 days
Rugby Borough resident

"It took a long time to get the appointment. I went into the surgery, saw the doctor and made the blood test appointment then."
Waited more than 14 days
Stratford District resident

"It always takes way too long to book as appointments are always taken."
Waited more than 14 days
North Warwickshire Borough resident

"It's frustrating, always limited availability, long waits for appointments. I don't have time to keep checking for cancellations to get a sooner appointment."
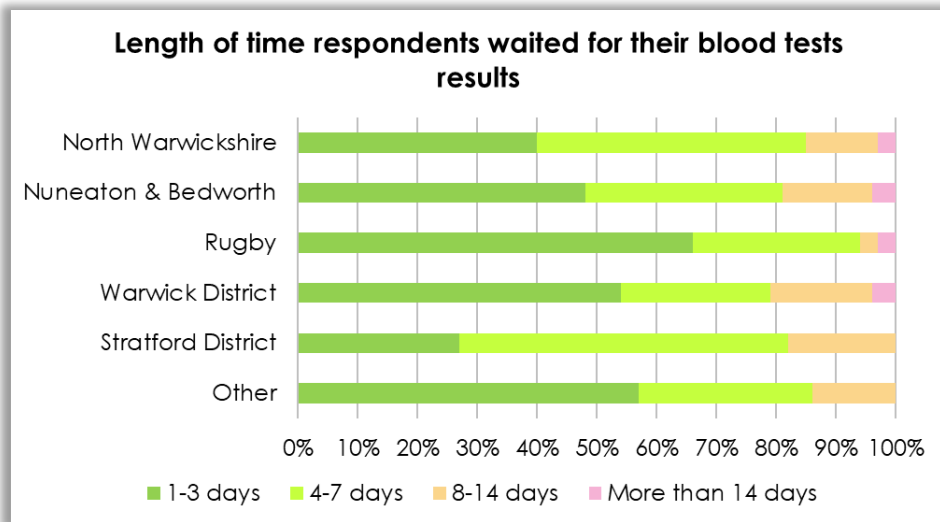Waited more than 14 days
Rugby Borough resident

"I booked in person. Very annoying as it's a 6 monthly recurring test that can't be booked until a few weeks ahead of the appointment because I'm told, 'the calendar isn't open yet'."
Waited more than 14 days
Warwick District resident

healthwatch Warwickshire

How long do people wait for blood test results?

Length of time respondents waited for their blood tests results

"I am still waiting for the results, almost a year later. They called me up to discuss the results, I missed the call. I tried to call back and was told I need to speak to a GP, but I can't get an appointment. I've called back several times and still not heard. Results are not on the NHS app."
Waited more than 14 days
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough resident

"I had to go hunting for the results myself via the NHS app. I was never informed they were ready."
Waited 8-14 days
Warwick District resident

Do people understand their blood test results?

Rugby Borough residents told us:

* *"I didn't really understand but they gave me medication, so I got what I needed."*
* *"They didn't really explain the results. They said there was an anomaly but no further information or explanation. I wasn't sure if I needed to have another blood test. It left me worried and concerned that I may have something medically wrong with me that they didn't want to tell me about."*
* *'Normal' and 'abnormal' result was easy to understand but some of the others had medical terms which were difficult to understand."*
* *I normally have to call and ask, and I have found they don't always explain everything as I can see my results online so now, I have to check as I feel they are missing information I need."*

Proportion of respondents from each area who told us their results were <u>not</u> explained in a way that they understood	
North Warwickshire	19%
Nuneaton & Bedworth	24%
Rugby	43%
Warwick District	14%
Stratford District	8%
Other	14%

Challenges faced by respondents getting blood test results

"My GP surgery does not disclose the results of blood tests unless there is a query. This I find rather disappointing."
North Warwickshire Borough resident

"My GP didn't email the results to me. The only reason I found out what the results were was because I had an asthma review and they told me then."
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough resident

Proportion of respondents from each area who told us they faced challenges getting their blood test results	
North Warwickshire	10%
Nuneaton & Bedworth	13%
Rugby	12%
Warwick District	12%
Stratford District	0%
Other	0%

"If a hospital doctor or consultant requires blood tests, then there should be facility for them to be done at the hospital. There are some bloods taken at the hospital, but it is never advertised, and the appointments are like gold dust (rare)."
Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough resident

"I had to call the docs and chase. My NHS app never shows results."
Rugby Borough resident

"I was told I needed the blood test for 2 things but was only sent the results for 1 and had to chase to get the other result. The consultant wrote me a letter, so I assumed it was ok and I am now waiting for an appointment to ask more questions."
Warwick District resident

healthwatch Warwickshire

What did people tell us about their overall experience?

In all areas, respondent's overall experience of blood taking and testing (phlebotomy) services was mainly positive.

Warwickshire North

Positives:
Accessibility of venues, friendliness of staff, well organised booking and testing arrangements.

Negatives:
Lack of blood taking services available at GP surgeries or George Eliot Hospital. Some issues with parking, or lack of availability of appointments, at certain venues causing people to choose to travel to venues that are further away from home.
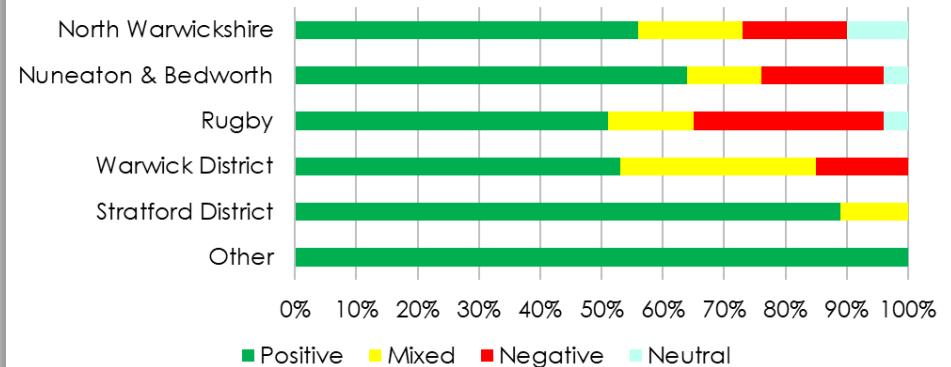
Rugby Borough

Positives:
Efficiency of systems, accessibility of St Cross Hospital.

Negatives:
Reliance on blood taking services at St Cross Hospital. Shift to digital excluding some patients.

Respondent's sentiment about overall experience of blood taking and testing (phlebotomy) services

Categories: North Warwickshire, Nuneaton & Bedworth, Rugby, Warwick District, Stratford District, Other

Legend: ■ Positive ■ Mixed ■ Negative ■ Neutral

NOTE: Lower response rate from South Warwickshire

South Warwickshire

Positives:
Great care from staff, efficiency of systems.

Negatives:
Lack of concern for patients' welfare, patients feeling they have to advocate for themselves.

healthwatch Warwickshire

Thank you to everyone across Warwickshire who shared their experiences of blood taking and testing services with us.

healthwatch
Warwickshire

Healthwatch Warwickshire Blood Taking (Phlebotomy) Services Survey Questions

healthwatch Warwickshire

1. Please tell us the district or borough you live in.

[ ]North Warwickshire Borough [ ]Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough
[ ]Rugby Borough [ ]Warwick District [ ]Stratford District [ ]Other
If you chose 'other' please tell us where you live:

2. In the last 12 months have you or someone you know had to book a blood test?

☐ Yes myself
☐ Yes, someone else (please tell us who: ……………………………………)
☐ No

3. Are the blood tests regular?

☐ No, this was the first one, or the first one this year
☐ Not regularly, but more than one this year
☐ Yes, the blood tests are regular

4. What was the experience of booking the blood test?

Did you   ☐ Book it online   ☐ Over the phone   ☐ In person

5. How long was the wait for the appointment?

☐ 1 - 3 days
☐ 4 - 7 days
☐ 8 – 14 days
☐ More than 14 days

6. Where was the most recent appointment?

☐ George Eliot Hospital (GEH), Nuneaton
☐ GP Surgery (please tell us which one below)   Continued over page

healthwatch Warwickshire

☐ Pharmacy (please tell us which one below)
☐ St Cross hospital, Rugby
☐ University Hospital (UHCW), Coventry
☐ Warwick Hospital (SWFT)
☐ A different place/ or the name of the GP or pharmacy
………………………………………………………………………

7. How long was the wait for the results?

☐ 1 - 3 days
☐ 4 - 7 days
☐ 8 – 14 days
☐ More than 14 days

8. Were there any challenges in getting the results?

9. Were the results explained in a way that was understood?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Please tell us more:
_____
_____
_____

10. How was the overall experience?

healthwatch Warwickshire

For more information:

Healthwatch Warwickshire
4-6 Clemens Street, Leamington Spa
CV31 2DL

website: www.healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk

telephone: 01926 422 823

email: info@healthwatchwarwickshire.co.uk

write: FREEEPOST Healthwatch Warwickshire

Let's stay connected:

Facebook/ Twitter: @HealthwatchWarw

Instagram: @healthwatch_warwickshire

Threads: @ healthwatch_warwickshire

Bluesky: @healthwatch-warwks.bsky.social