



What you told us: March 2026

Total number of contacts this month: 191, of which 65 gave us more detailed feedback

Top issues

Hospital - outpatients

Poor communication between departments and with patients.

Insufficient parking, particularly lack of disabled parking spaces.

Audiology services

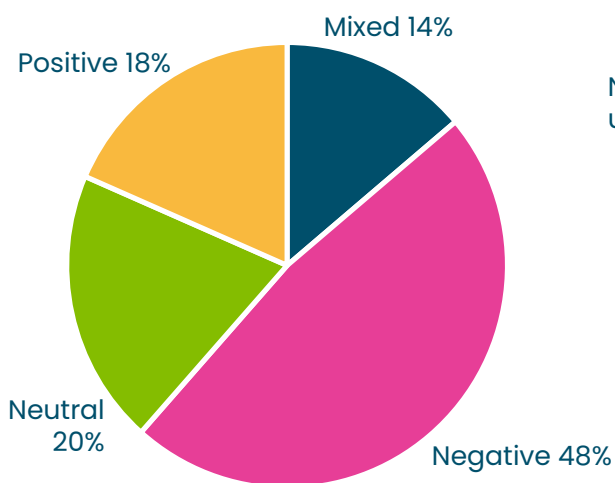
Insufficiently resourced hearing aid maintenance drop-in sessions for the numbers attending meant patients were often turned away.

Difficulty getting appointments with long waiting times until an appointment became available.

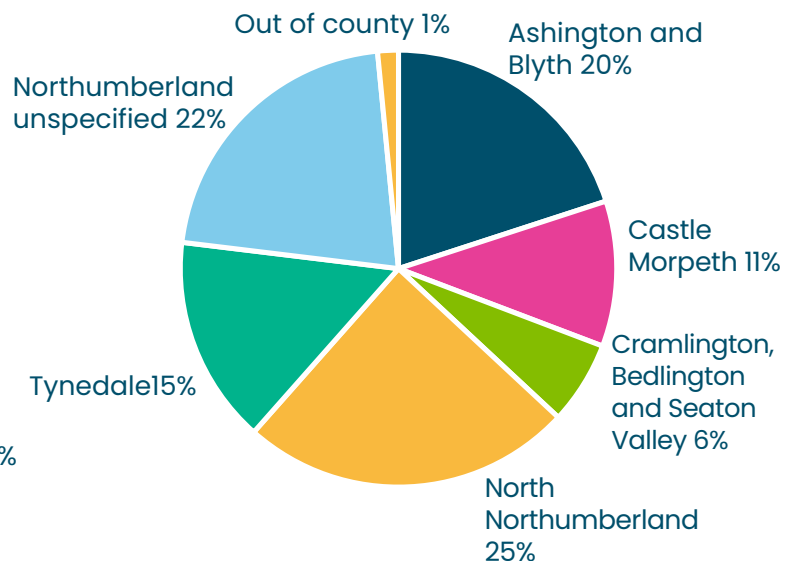
GP services

Difficulty booking an appointment and poor quality of care were the most common issues. However just under half of the feedback praised the quality of care received.

How people were feeling



Where they were from



Information and Signposting Service

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Local hearing aid support clinic | 3 |
| Sight loss support groups | 1 |
| Data access | 1 |
| Supported living services | 1 |
| NHS dentist | 1 |
| Nursing care homes | 1 |
| Hidden disability lanyards | 1 |
| Stroke support | 1 |
| Homeless support | 1 |
| Appealing a NCC Highways decision | 1 |
| Mental health support | 1 |

Service providers and number of enquiries

| | |
|--|---|
| Lindisfarne Health (Wooler) | 4 |
| Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital | 4 |
| Freeman Hospital audiology (RNID) | 3 |
| Greystoke Medical Group | 3 |
| Freeman Hospital audiology | 3 |
| Railway Medical Group | 2 |
| Wansbeck General Hospital | 2 |
| Gas House Lane Surgery | 2 |
| Royal Victoria Infirmary | 2 |

We also heard about 26 other service providers once each.

Feedback and enquiry issues

17 Hospital outpatients

13 GP services

6 Audiology

5 Hospital inpatients

3 Mental health

2 Physiotherapy

1 Opticians

1 NHS App

1 Dentist

1 Care home

1 Telephone appointment service

1 Drug/alcohol services



This month's focus

This month we presented our first Stellar Award to the Hyperacute Stroke Unit team at Northumbria Specialist Emergency Care Hospital.

Our [Stellar Awards](#) celebrate the people and services who go the extra mile to provide positive health and social care experiences for people across Northumberland.

We held our regular Here to Hear drop-ins during March – at Bedlington, Alnwick, Ashington, Morpeth and at Hexham General Hospital.

We also attended some additional face-to-face sessions at Northumberland County of Sanctuary in Ashington, the Meet and Eat session in Allendale, Hadston House, and Hexham Livestock Mart.

Throughout the month we promoted our Annual Survey and aim to publish the findings by the end of April.

This month's online talk was from Autism in Mind which covered the support available for autistic adults. This was a very popular event, attracting our largest audience for 2025-26.



Negative feedback

Discussion with member of the public who is a NHS hearing aid user. States that they are having long waits for appointments to get hearing aids tuned. Has not struggled so much with getting parts but appointments for tuning more of a problem and it can be a struggle with hearing properly in the meantime.

North Northumberland resident



Positive feedback

A woman and her husband came to our Hexham Here to Hear drop-in session to tell us that she had been in Haltwhistle hospital for ten days. She was very happy with the care she had experienced. The staff were very friendly and supportive and nothing was too much bother for them. Excellent service!

Tynedale resident



Impact

We were recognised for our contribution to Northumberland County Council Director of Public Health's annual report: "I would like to thank Public Health team members for their individual contributions and Healthwatch Northumberland for their valuable input into understanding healthcare access."

Northumberland Public Health team.