

# HOW PATIENTS ACCESS NHS INFORMATION

DRAFT Version





**Written by  
Jay Pannu  
Engagement  
Officer**

**Draft 6  
Version**

**Published  
November  
2025**

# Table of Contents

	03	Executive Summary
	05	How Our Survey Was Conducted
	07	Key Findings
	14	Conclusion
	15	Recommendations
	17	Appendix
	19	Glossary
	20	Acknowledgements

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

Healthwatch Worcestershire (HWW) was asked by the Director of Communications at the Hereford & Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) to conduct a public survey exploring awareness and understanding of the NHS App in Worcestershire. This initiative comes at a time when the ICB is facing significant budget reductions, particularly impacting its Communications and Engagement function. Against this backdrop, the purpose of this report is to provide actionable insights into how the reduced team can prioritise its efforts when promoting NHS services to the public.

By identifying key areas of public knowledge and gaps, the findings will help ensure that limited resources are used in ways that deliver the greatest impact.

## KEY FINDINGS

### Confidence in choosing the right NHS service

- The survey showed the majority of respondents, over 70%, are confident in choosing the right NHS Service
- The least understood NHS service was the GP Out Of Hours service and Minor Injuries Unit

### Awareness of the NHS App and its features

- 96% of participants in main survey were aware of the NHS app
- 85% of participants used the NHS app to view & request repeat prescriptions
- Less than half of those with learning difficulties were aware of the NHS app

### Trusted sources of information for NHS services in Worcestershire

- Most trusted: NHS Professionals (face to face), NHS website, GP practice website
- Least trusted: Newspaper, Television, Radio

### Top three preferred communications channels:

- GP Surgery
- NHS App
- NHS website

## CONCLUSION

This survey provides clear evidence of both strengths and gaps in public understanding of NHS services and the NHS App. While overall awareness of the App and confidence in choosing the right service is high among the general population, significant disparities remain for people with learning disabilities and other groups experiencing health inequalities. These findings underline the importance of maintaining a blended communication approach—combining digital tools with accessible, offline options—to ensure inclusivity.

The work is critical because effective communication is not just about sharing information; it directly influences how people access care, impacts NHS efficiency, and supports patient safety. By focusing on trusted channels, clarifying service roles, and promoting the NHS App in an accessible way, the ICB can maximize impact and help ensure that every resident of Worcestershire can confidently navigate NHS services.

## RECOMMENDATIONS:

### 1) Adopt a blended communication strategy

Combine digital channels (NHS App, NHS and GP websites, text messages) with accessible offline options (leaflets, posters, face-to-face) to ensure inclusivity.

### 2) Clarify and promote the purpose of less-understood NHS services

Targeted campaigns to explain GP Out of Hours and Minor Injuries Units, using trusted channels like GP surgeries and NHS websites.

### 3) Increase awareness and accessibility of the NHS App

Promote the App through demonstrations, videos, and one-to-one support. Ensure traditional communication remains for those with limited digital access. Highlight lesser-known app features.

### 4) Use Data to Guide Decisions

Analyse NHS App analytics and Google Analytics to see how much traffic comes from the App to the website. Review the most visited pages to understand what people are looking for and reflect these priorities in the App.

### 5) Work with partner communications teams to promote the NHS App to hard to reach audiences with health inequalities

ICB communications team to collaborate with partners to promote NHS App to those with health inequalities. e.g. Housing Associations and Local Government

# How the survey was conducted

The survey ran from 1 June to 30 September 2025, questions can be found in Appendix 1, using a mixed approach to engage three key audiences:

## General Public (Digital Audience)

- A paid Facebook advertising campaign directed users straight to the online survey, supported by promotion through the Healthwatch Worcestershire newsletter and website.
- This group represents the majority of NHS service users and provides insight into mainstream awareness, confidence levels, and digital adoption trends –critical for shaping broad communication strategies.

## Community Event Attendees

- Surveys were completed face-to-face at six local events, enabling participation from individuals who may not respond online and offering support for those less digitally confident.
- Their input ensures recommendations do not rely solely on digital solutions and highlights the need for offline communication options.
- in total 811 individuals took part.

## People with Learning Disabilities (SpeakEasy N.O.W.)

- An accessible version of the survey was shared during SpeakEasy N.O.W.'s SpeakUp and Pop Up groups. SpeakEasy Staff supported participants in completing the survey, and 69 individuals took part.
- Why they matter: This audience is often underrepresented in health engagement. Their feedback reveals unique accessibility challenges and communication needs, ensuring strategies are inclusive and comply with the Accessible Information Standard.

By engaging these distinct audiences, the research provides a comprehensive view of communication needs across Worcestershire, helping the Integrated Care Board prioritise resources effectively and equitably.

# Demographics

## Snapshot of Demographics

100% living or working in Worcestershire

99% first language is English

93% white British

93% over 45 years of age

92% heterosexual/ straight

86% uses home internet

86% uses mobile phone data

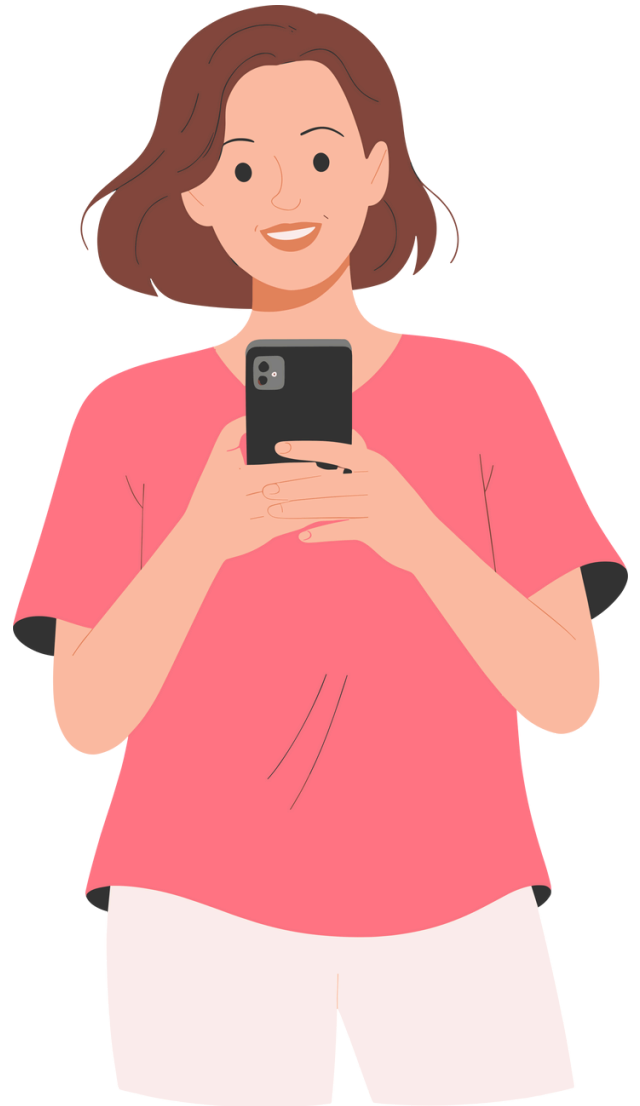
85% gender is female

34% with disability

21% are unpaid carers

3% members of armed forces

\*full breakdown in Appendix 2



The survey gathered feedback from across Worcestershire's population. However, as with most surveys, there were some limitations. To help address this, we engaged with a wider range of communities by attending events such as Worcestershire Pride and Deaf Awareness Week, and by collecting additional data through SpeakEasy N.O.W.

In this report, we highlight the insights from people with learning disabilities to compare their experiences with main survey (data set 1). This helps identify whether this different demographics have distinct needs. This allows us to recognise that those experiencing health inequalities may require different communication approaches. These comparisons provide valuable learning for how future engagement and research can be tailored to specific communities if required.

# Our Findings In Detail

The following section outlines the questions that were asked, followed by the findings from both the main survey (dataset 1) and the Speakeasy survey (dataset 2). Speakeasy adapted the original survey to make the questions more accessible for their cohort, providing reasonable adjustments where needed.

The statistics requiring attention have been highlighted in pink to indicate key areas that need addressing.

1. Which of the following NHS services do you feel confident you understand the purpose of? (Select all that apply)

**Main Survey:** 664 participants answered & gave multiple responses.

92% general practitioner (GP)

85% accident & emergency (A&E)

82% pharmacy

77% NHS 111

73% minor injuries unit (MIU)

52% GP out of hours

3% None of the above

## Summary

- Over 70% of respondents understood the purpose of core NHS services: GP, A&E, pharmacy, NHS 111 and MIU.
- Confidence lower for the GP Out of Hours service, suggesting uncertainty about its role or when it should be used.
- A very small number 3% indicated no understanding of any listed service, highlighting that some people have no awareness of NHS services listed.



## 1. Which of the following NHS services do you feel confident you understand the purpose of? (Select all that apply)

**Speakeasy Survey:** 69 participants answered & gave multiple responses.

100% general practitioner (GP)  
93% pharmacy  
85% accident & emergency (A&E)  
74% NHS 111  
49% GP out of hours  
22% minor injuries unit (MIU)

### Summary:

- 100% of those surveyed understood the purpose of a GP
- The other most understood services were pharmacies, A&E, NHS 111. It is likely that these services are used more frequently, meaning people understand them better through personal experience.
- Understanding of GP Out of Hours and MIU was lower, suggesting that more information and clearer communication about these three services would be beneficial.
- Comments suggested confidence varied with some reliant on carers or support workers guidance and knowledge.

### SpeakEasy Comments on understanding of NHS services :

Sophie: *"I know what 111 is, you call it if it is not an emergency. Don't forget that doctors work a minimum of 7 hours a day and some do over that."*

Matthew: *"Is A&E where you go if you've been hurt?"*

Nicholas: *"I wouldn't know who to call if something happened to me. I think my support worker would take over and make the call."*



## 2. How confident are you in knowing which NHS service to use in different health situations?

**Main Survey/Dataset 1:** 661 participants answered the question

40% very confident

48% somewhat confident

9% not very confident

3% not at all confident

### **Summary:**

- 88% respondents expressed some level of confidence choosing the correct NHS service, a small proportion 12% reported low confidence.
- Although people graded their confidence level, we actually don't know if that confidence leads to accessing the correct service.

**Speakeasy/ Dataset 2:** 69 participants answered the question

46% yes

38% maybe

16% no

### **Summary:**

- 46% responded 'yes' they knew which NHS service to use. This suggests that while many people have some confidence in navigating NHS services, a significant proportion 54% remain uncertain and may not always access the most appropriate care.

### 3. What prevents you from using the correct NHS service? (Select all that apply)

**Main Survey:** 649 participants answered & selected multiple answers.

40% services are not available when I need them

39% I can't get an appointment

19% I'm not sure which service to use

5% I don't trust the service

2% I prefer to go straight to A&E

28% None – no barrier to using correct service

7% Other (please specify)

#### Summary

- Difficulties accessing appointments and limited service availability were the most common barriers to using the correct service.
- A smaller proportion were uncertain about which service to choose, indicating a need for clearer guidance and more consistent service information.

#### what prevents patient from using correct NHS Service, taken from comments:

##### Service issue

"Frequent cancellations by outpatient services"

"Long waiting times, leading to seek private care"

##### Information issue

"NHS system too complex and difficult to navigate"

"Poor communication"

##### NHS App Issue

"Can not book GP appointment on NHS app"

"Limited availability of services on the NHS App"

"NHS app does not offer locally what is listed here"

##### 111 service issue

"Negative experiences with NHS 111, including receiving incorrect information"

"Attempted to use GP out of hours via 111 but told to go A&E but was GP issue"

### 3. What prevents you from using the correct NHS service? (Select all that apply)

**Speakeasy/ Dataset 2:** 69 participants answered

- 59% I'm not sure which service to use
- 10% Services are not available when I need them
- 9% I can't get an appointment
- 12% I don't trust the service
- 0% I prefer to go straight to A&E

#### **Summary**

Over 50% said they were not sure which NHS service to use, suggesting that many people lack confidence in navigating NHS services.

A smaller but similar proportion reported that services were not available when needed, that they could not get an appointment, or that they did not trust the service.

## 4. Are you aware of NHS App

**Main Survey:** 661 participants answered

96% aware of the NHS app

4% not aware of the NHS app

### Summary

- A high response of those who are aware of the app
- 4% reported being unaware of the NHS App, indicating that among this digitally literate demographic, awareness is high – with 96% familiar with the NHS App.
- Limitation of the survey is that participants were not asked whether they actively use the app.

**Speakeasy Survey:** 34 responses

42% % Heard of the NHS App (14 yes response out of 34)

58% % Heard of the NHS App (20 no response out of 34)

### Summary

- Low response for this question only 34 responses, but fewer than half of those who did respond were aware of the NHS App, indicating lower awareness within this group..

### SpeakEasy Comments

Richie shared: *"Yes I have it on my phone. You can see what appointments you have coming up. My support worker helps me to use it because sometimes I don't know how to."*

• Sophie explained: *"Yes, you have to download it onto your phone and put in your personal details and upload it onto their system. My support worker looks at it with me or my brother and sister help me."*

Anna added: *"I've heard about it but I haven't used it."*

## 5. Which of the following features of the NHS App were you aware of before this survey? (Select all that apply)

**Main Survey:** 661 participants answered & gave multiple responses.

### NEED TO CONFIRM WITH TOM AT ICB FEATURES AVAIL IN WORCESTERSHIRE

- 85% View & request repeat prescriptions
- 74% View your GP health record
- 72% View test results which your GP practice has requested
- 53% Book GP appointments – (not available in Worcestershire)
- 56% Receive messages from your GP surgery, instead of SMS /or letter
- 55% View your COVID-19 vaccine record
- 52 % View your NHS number
- 43% Contact your GP surgery about a health problem, document or update
- 34% Send non-urgent enquiries to your GP practice
- 31% View and manage your hospital referrals and outpatient appointments
- 27% Register with a GP surgery
- 26% Use NHS 111 online to answer questions and get instant advice or medical help near you
- 20% Manage health services for someone else, such as a child, or someone else you care for
- 18% Register your organ donation decision
- 19% Choose how the NHS uses your data
- 15% Be part of health research
- 10% View average NHS hospital waiting times when you are referred for treatment
- 6% None of the above
- 4% I was not aware of the NHS app

### Summary

- Awareness of features of the NHS App is high for prescription and record-viewing functions. However, awareness of less common features—such as managing hospital appointments or using 111 online—is considerably lower.
- Some of the features of the NHS app are not available in Worcestershire (highlighted in pink) however, respondents have reported they are aware of that feature for example:
- **hospital referrals:** it is possible that a Worcestershire resident could be having treatment at a hospital outside of Worcestershire where that NHS app feature is available.
- **Booking GP appointments:** is not available , possibilities' for high response, confused booking appointment via NHS app and GP website

## 5. Which of the following features of the NHS App were you aware of before this survey? (Select all that apply)

### **SpeakEasy/ Dataset 2:**

To understand what participants knew about the features of the NHS App, they were not given a list to choose from. Instead, they were asked an open-ended question: "What do you know about the NHS App?" Their responses have been summarised below.

### **Summary**

- Qualitative responses showed that some participants use it with help from family or support workers to view appointments or order prescriptions.
- Many have never heard of it or do not have suitable devices.
- Barriers included reading difficulties, poor eyesight, and lack of digital skills.

### **SpeakEasy Comments about the NHS App features:**

Rachel: 'It is good. I order my repeat prescriptions on it and it saves a lot of time'

Anna: 'I don't understand the logos at the bottom. I can get a report from my doctor or nurse through it though but I do not know everything it can do'

Hayley: 'I have it and downloaded it to my phone myself. My partner was sick and I didn't know what to do so I called 111 through the app and told them what was happening'

## 6. Most trusted sources of health information?

### Main Survey

661 participants answered the question & graded their feeling of trust, for simplicity we have taken the top 5 answers, but full answers are in the appendix 3.

### Completely trust or somewhat trust

- 92% NHS professionals (face-to-face)
- 88% NHS websites
- 82% NHS App
- 81% GP practice websites
- 81% NHS leaflets

### Summary

- The top 5 most trusted sources of health information is NHS professionals (face-to-face), followed by digital means; NHS website, NHS App, GP websites, and in 5th place are NHS leaflets, a traditional print medium.
- the data shows that around one-third of respondents completely trust NHS professionals (face-to-face), making them the most trusted source of health information. This is followed by other official NHS sources and GP practices.
- This indicates that the NHS and GP surgeries are the most credible and trusted channels for sharing health information and should therefore be prioritised when promoting health campaigns.

### Main survey comments about trusted sources:

"NHS 111 not fit for purpose. My son in law waited over 48 hours for call back: I took to A&E - he had sepsis"

"Social media do not trust"

Trust "websites for particular conditions"

Do not trust "private subcontractors to the NHS, for e.g. for diagnostic services"



## 6. Most trusted sources of health information?

### **Speakeasy Survey**

69 participants answered the question, “Where would you go for information about NHS services?” They were provided with a list of potential sources and asked to indicate which ones they would use. Top 5 answers indicated here.

45% NHS Professionals (face to face)

35% NHS Websites

29% NHS 111

26% NHS posters

21% GP Websites

### **Summary**

- The responses from the Speakeasy group regarding the most trusted sources of information mirrored those of the main survey. Participants ranked NHS professionals face-to-face as the most trusted, followed by NHS websites, then NHS 111 call service, print media, and GP websites.
- This highlights the need for a mixed communication approach, ensuring health information is accessible through both digital platforms and printed materials.

Please note - no comments from speak easy regarding this collected

## 6. Least trusted sources of health information?

### Main Survey

661 participants answered the question, shown as highest marked for do not trust ascending order

### Do not trust

- 63% Newspapers
- 36% Television
- 34% Radio
- 21% Council websites
- 14% NHS 111

### Summary

- Mainstream media sources — including newspapers, television, and radio — were among the least trusted, followed by council websites and NHS 111.
- This suggests that investing heavily in mass media channels to promote health information is unlikely to achieve strong engagement or trust among the public.

## 6. Least trusted sources of health information?

### Speakeasy Survey

69 participants answered, the following as the least marked for trusted ascending order

#### Lowest score for trusted

- 3% Council website
- 6% Newspaper
- 6% NHS social media accounts
- 7% Healthwatch Worcestershire website (we discussed removing this data and keeping for internal use as people will not be necessarily looking health information on healthwatch website, which is different from looking for signposting if they cant find info they are looking for or if they need a pathway to complain.
- 10% NHS App

#### Summary

- The council website was identified as the least trusted source of health information, possibly because people do not typically seek health information there.
- Newspapers and social media were also rated low in trust.
- Healthwatch Worcestershire was perceived as less trusted, likely because many participants were unfamiliar with the role it plays.
- It was noted, that the NHS App is also been marked as one of the least trusted sources of health information and that could be reflective of the low usage of the NHS app in this group.

## 6. Don't know if to trust these sources of health Information

### Main survey

661 participants answered the question, shown as highest marked for do not trust descending order

### Don't know

- 52% Healthwatch Worcestershire website
- 26% NHS social media accounts
- 20% Radio
- 19% Council websites
- 18% NHS posters

### Don't Know

- More than half of respondents said they did not know whether to trust Healthwatch Worcestershire as a source of health information. (do we need to include in report or can we take out?)
- Similar uncertainty was reported for NHS social media, radio, council websites, and NHS posters.
- This highlights an opportunity to build greater public awareness and trust in these channels, but they should not currently be used as primary sources of health communication.

## Where would you prefer to receive information about NHS services? (Select all that apply)

### Main survey

661 participants answered the question

- 62% GP surgery
- 62% NHS App
- 61% NHS website
- 38% Text messages
- 17% Posters in public places
- 12% Social media
- 6% Local radio
- 3% Other

### Summary

- Digital channels dominate as preferred sources of information, particularly the NHS website and the NHS App, including the GP Surgery which would have a mixture of information on a digital display and paperbased and verbal.
- However, a significant minority still value posters and local radio, showing that a multi-channel approach remains important.

### Speakeasy - no data

#### Main survey comments about where participants prefer to receive NHS information that responded with 'other' sources:

A number of comments responded with there other preference as:

##### Preference for Online

- "Healthwatch"
- email
- BBC local website

##### Preference for face to face

- social prescriber
- clinical consultant or nurse

##### Preference for written material

- Letters in the post

I prefer reading material

## Other Key Findings

### Digital Access

**Main Survey** – 86% all had mobile or home internet

**Speakeasy Survey** – Qualitative data shows some had digital access others did not have smartphone. Would need to do more research to verify.

**Recommendations**– Digital is a good communication strategies, however, they the reach only part of the population; accessible offline options are still essential to reach hard to reach groups like those with learning difficulties.

### Reasonable adjustment

**Main Survey** – Less commonly raised issue.

**Speakeasy Survey** – Frequently mentioned: plain English, big print, use of images, and longer consultation time.

**Recommendations** – Accessibility needs to be a standard design principle, not an afterthought.

Inclusion of views into the process– TO BE ADDED

# Recommendations

## 1) Adopt a Blended Communication Strategy

The survey shows that while digital channels (NHS App, NHS and GP websites) are highly preferred and trusted, a significant minority still rely on offline options like posters and face-to-face interactions. People with learning disabilities and those experiencing health inequalities often need accessible formats such as plain English, large print, and visual aids.

Recommendation:

- Pair digital channels (NHS App, GP and NHS websites, text messages) with offline options (leaflets, posters, community events, and face-to-face advice).
- Ensure all printed materials meet the Accessible Information Standard and include easy-read versions.
- Use GP surgeries as a hub for both digital and physical communication, as they are among the most trusted sources.
- Monitor inclusion metrics to ensure digital campaigns do not unintentionally exclude those without internet access.

## 2) Clarify and Promote the Purpose of Less-Understood NHS Services

Confidence in understanding GP Out of Hours and Minor Injuries Units (MIU) is significantly lower than for core services like GP and A&E. Over 50% of people with learning disabilities were unsure which service to use.

Recommendation:

- Develop simple guides explaining when and how to use GP Out of Hours and MIU, using plain language and visuals.
- Promote these guides through trusted channels: GP surgeries, NHS websites, and community venues.
- Include real-life examples or scenarios to help people understand which service is appropriate for different situations.
- Consider short videos or animations for digital platforms and easy-read posters for offline settings.

## 3) Increase Awareness and Accessibility of the NHS App

While 96% of the main survey group were aware of the NHS App, fewer than half of people with learning disabilities had heard of it, and only 24% had downloaded it. Awareness of lesser-known features (e.g., managing hospital referrals, using NHS 111 online) is low.

Recommendation:

- Promote the NHS App through demonstrations, short explainer videos, and one-to-one support sessions at GP surgeries and community events.
- Highlight lesser-known features such as viewing test results, managing referrals, and using NHS 111 online.
- Make clear which features are available locally (e.g., booking GP appointments may not be enabled in Worcestershire).
- Test future versions of the App with people who have learning disabilities to improve usability.
- Maintain traditional communication options for those without smartphones or digital skills.



# Recommendations

## 4) Use Data to Guide Decisions

Why: The report emphasizes the need to align communication priorities with what people search for and use most.

Recommendation:

- Analyse NHS App usage data and Google Analytics to identify:
  - Which features are most used (e.g., repeat prescriptions, viewing health records).
  - Which pages on NHS and GP websites attract the most traffic.
- Use these insights to:
  - Prioritize content updates and campaigns around high-demand topics.
  - Identify gaps in awareness (e.g., low engagement with MIU or GP Out of Hours information).
- Share findings with ICB and partner teams to ensure consistent messaging across all channels.

## 5) Work with Partner Communications Teams to Reach Hard-to-Reach Audiences

People experiencing health inequalities, such as those with learning disabilities, often have lower awareness of digital tools and face barriers like poor eyesight, reading difficulties, and lack of devices.

Recommendation:

- Collaborate with housing associations, local councils, and voluntary sector organisations to promote the NHS App and service guides.
- Use community champions and trusted intermediaries to deliver messages in accessible formats.
- Provide supported workshops and device-loan schemes to improve digital inclusion.
- Co-produce materials with these groups to ensure relevance and clarity (e.g., easy-read guides, videos with subtitles).

# Conclusion

Effective communication within the NHS is more than the exchange of information—it is a cornerstone of patient safety, service efficiency, and equitable access to care. When residents understand how to navigate services confidently, the entire system benefits. Clear, consistent messaging reduces confusion, prevents unnecessary demand on urgent care, and ensures that patients reach the right service at the right time.

By prioritising trusted communication channels, the ICB can strengthen public confidence and engagement. Clarifying service roles and responsibilities helps eliminate ambiguity, enabling patients to make informed decisions without delay. Furthermore, promoting the NHS App in an accessible and inclusive way empowers individuals to manage their health proactively, from booking appointments to accessing medical records.

Every improvement in communication translates into better patient outcomes, reduced strain on frontline services, and a more resilient healthcare system. For Worcestershire, this means creating a unified, user-friendly experience that supports the diverse needs of its population and aligns with national priorities for digital transformation and integrated care.

# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to this report including:

- Speakeasy NOW
- Survey Participants across Worcestershire

We would also like to acknowledge one of our Healthwatch Worcestershire Volunteers and thank them for their assistance.

Please note AI has not been used in the collection or analysis of the data. AI has assisted in the drafting of the report.

## Contact

Jay Pannu, Engagement Officer  
Healthwatch Worcestershire

[info@healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk)

01386 550264

Healthwatch Worcestershire, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore,  
Worcestershire, WR10 1PT

© 2025

# Appendix Section

# Appendix 1:

# List of survey questions

## Summer Survey 2025 – NHS Services Communication Questionnaire

1. Which of the following NHS services do you feel confident you understand the purpose of? (Select all that apply)
2. How confident are you in knowing which NHS service to use in different health situations?
3. Which of the following features of the NHS App were you aware of before this survey?(Select all that apply)
4. How much do you trust the following sources of health information? (Please select one response for each source)
5. What prevents you from using the correct NHS service? (Select all that apply)
6. Where would you prefer to receive information about NHS services? (Select all that apply)

## Demographic Questions

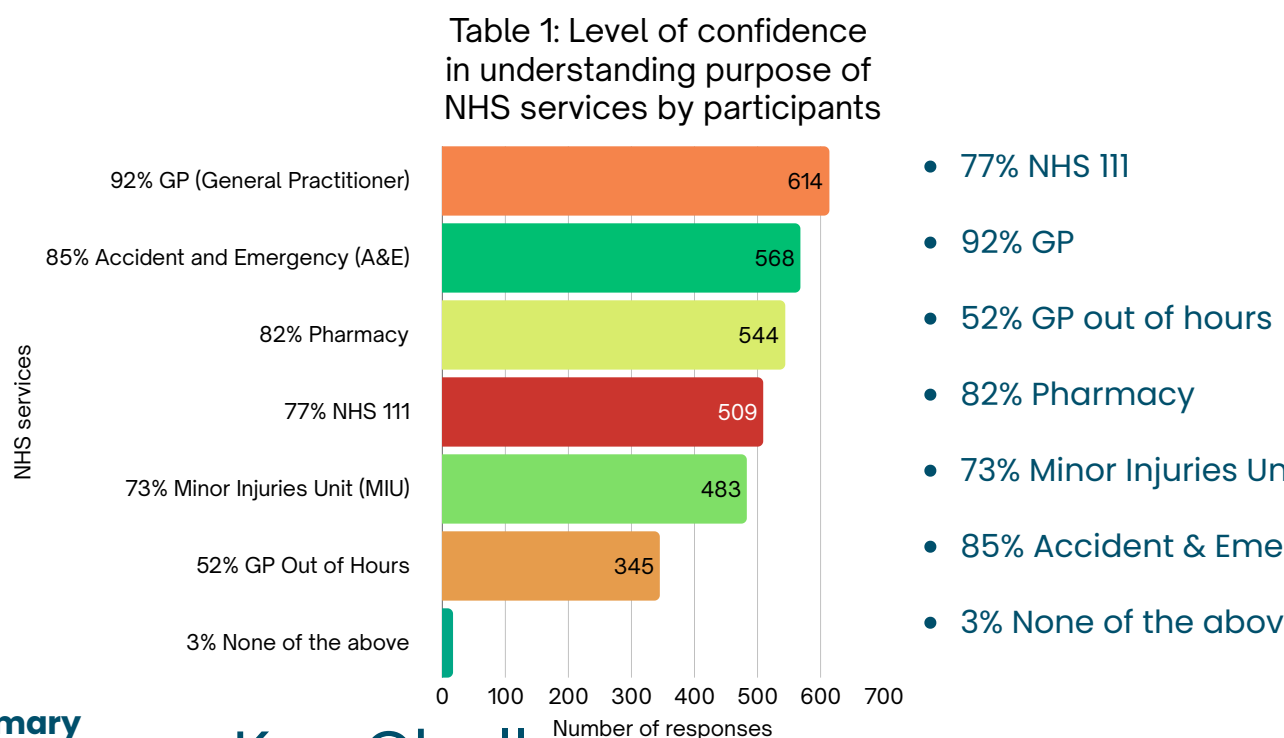
- What is your age group?
- Which district in Worcestershire do you live in?
- Do you have a disability?
- If yes, select category
- Are you serving member or former member of armed forces?
- What is your ethnic background?
- What is your first language?
- What is your gender?
- What is your sexual orientation?
- Are you an unpaid carer?
- Do you access the internet?

# Appendix Section

# Appendix 2 - Demographics of the Main Survey

## 1. Are people Confident in choosing correct NHS service for their situation?

- 664 participants answered the question & gave multiple responses.



### Summary

- The majority of respondents, over 70%, said they understood the purpose of core NHS services such as GPs, A&E, pharmacy, NHS 111 and MIU.
- Confidence was notably lower for the GP Out of Hours service, suggesting uncertainty about its role or when it should be used.
- A very small number indicated no understanding of any listed service, highlighting that some people have no awareness of NHS services listed.

### Recommendation

Increase public awareness of GP Out of Hours through targeted communication campaigns and clear signposting at GP practice and NHS websites.



# Appendix

## Demographics A

### Demographics of participants:

#### 99% first language is English

- 7 participants first language was not English out of 651 participants

#### 93% are white British ethnic background

- 40 participants other ethnic group out of 651 responses, therefore not representative sample for ethnic diversity

#### 92% heterosexual/ straight

- 44 people are other sexual orientation or preferred not to say out of 646 responses

#### 85% female gender

- 555 participants were female and 88 male and 7 identified as other

#### 21% are unpaid carers

- 135 people are unpaid carers out of 643 responses

#### 3% member of armed forces

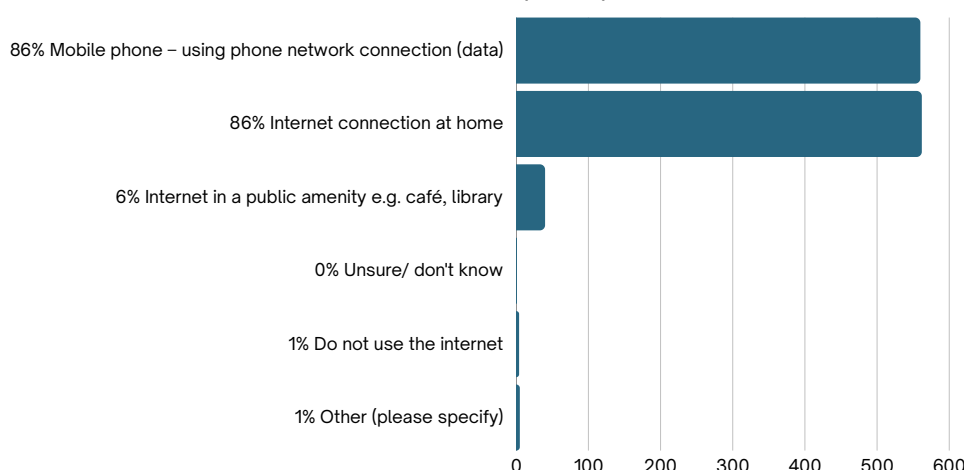
- 1 person currently serving and 17 people former member of armed forces out of 642 responses, therefore not representative sample for armed forces

### Internet access of participants

- 653 participants answered the question & gave multiple responses.
- 86% used home internet 562 responses
- 86% used mobile phone data 560 responses
- 6% used public amenity eg cafe, library internet 40 responses
- 1% unsure/ don't know how to use internet 10 responses

### Key Challenges

Table 4: Percentage of participants with internet access



# Appendix

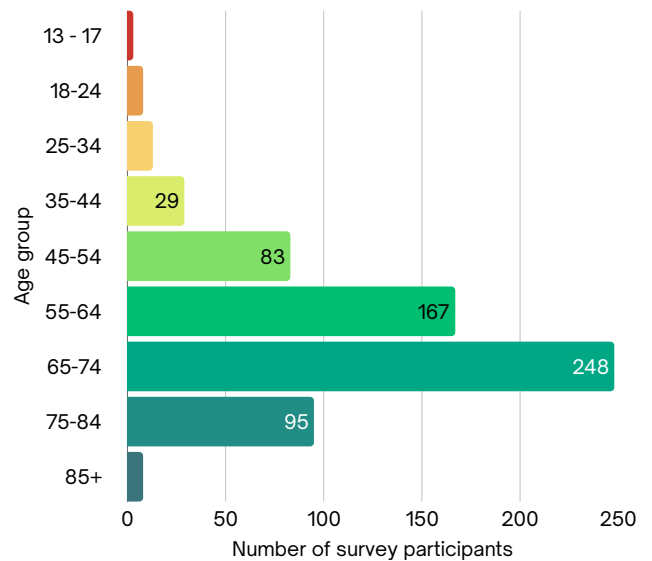
## Demographics B

### Age of participants

- 93% of the respondents are over 45 years old
- Therefore we know very clearly how over 45 age group prefer NHS communication.
- Limitation: it maybe useful to do a piece of work to find out how under 44 aged demography prefer NHS information.

Answered 654  
Skipped 157

Table 1: Percentage of participants in each age group

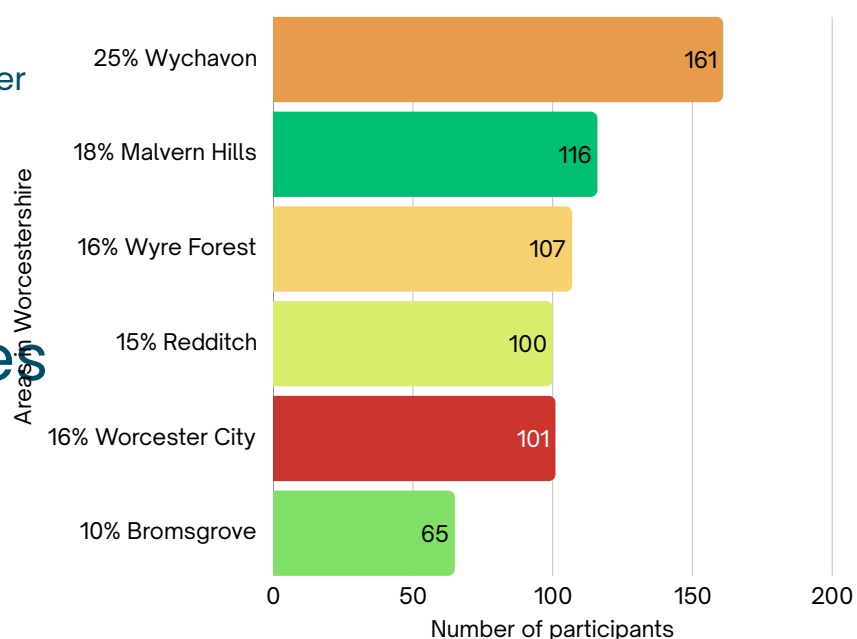


### Location of participants

- Evenly covers the county, the city and towns in rural areas, however misses Kidderminster

Answered 650  
Skipped 161

Table 2: Percentage of participants from each area



Key Challenges

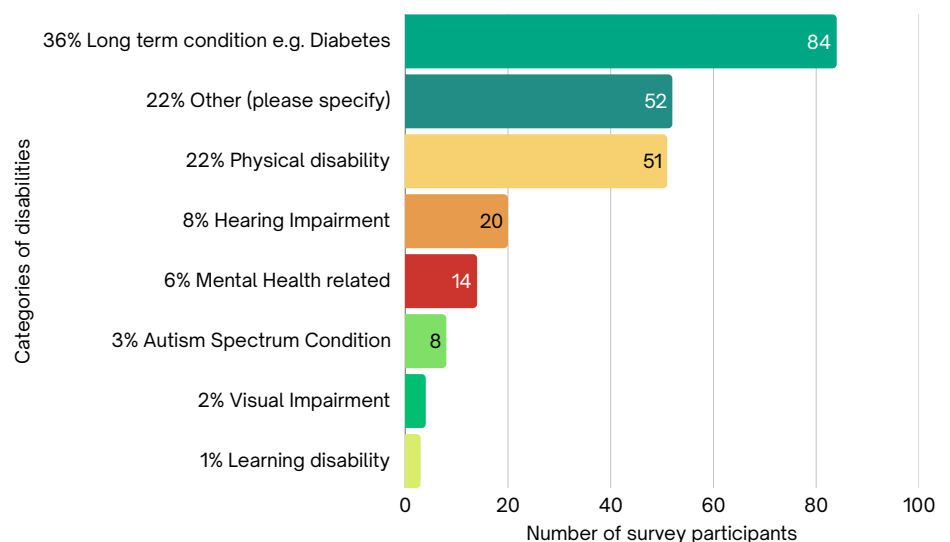
# Appendix Demographics C

Answered 648  
Skipped 163

## Disabilities of participants

- 33% of respondents said they have a disability, with XX% of those reporting a long-term health condition, so this was larger than those identifying with a mental or physical disability.
- These differences may influence how people access NHS information. It's possible that people with mental or physical disability face different challenges or have different levels access needs for NHS information compared to those with long-term health conditions. A survey can be made to explore this further.

Table 3: Percentage of participants with different disabilities



Answered 236  
Skipped 575

## Key Challenges

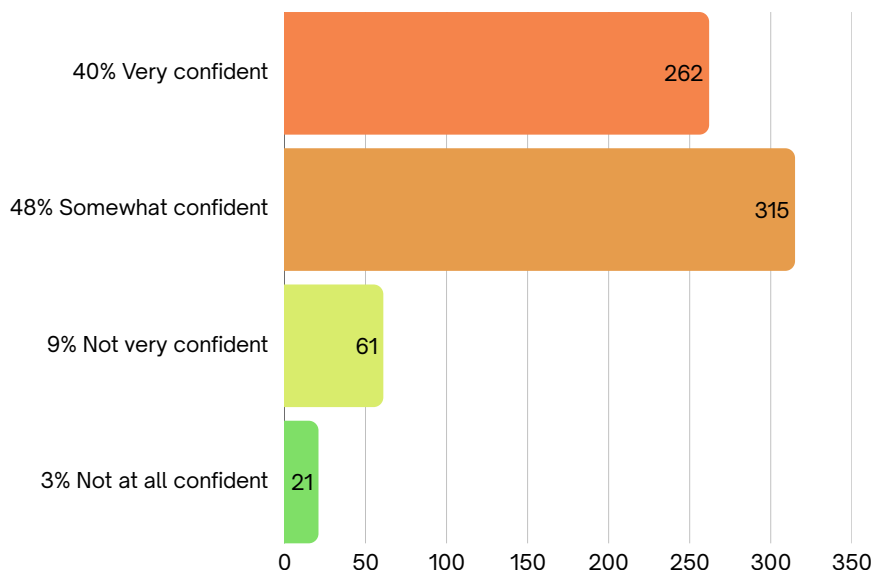
# Appendix Section

# Key Findings

## 1. are people Confident in choosing correct NHS service for their situation

**How confident are you in knowing which NHS service to use in different health situations?**

- 661 participants answered the question



### Summary

Nearly 9 out of 10 respondents expressed some level of confidence choosing the correct NHS service, though a small proportion reported low confidence.

## Key Challenges

It is possible as Comments indicated that uncertainty often arises from inconsistent triage advice and confusion about overlapping service functions.

### Recommendation

Develop a simple decision-making guide for residents (digital and printed) outlining which NHS service to use in common scenarios, supported by local awareness campaigns.

# Key Findings

## Barriers to Using the Correct Service

### Survey Question:

**What prevents you from using the correct NHS service?  
(Select all that apply)**

- 649 participants answered the question & selected multiple answers
- 40% Services are not available when I need them
- 39% I can't get an appointment
- 19% I'm not sure which service to use
- 5% I don't trust the service
- 2% I prefer to go straight to A&E
- 28% None
- 7% Other (please specify)

### Summary

Difficulties accessing appointments and limited service availability were the most common barriers to using the correct service. A smaller proportion were uncertain about which service to choose, indicating a need for clearer guidance and more consistent service information.

## Key Challenges

### Recommendation

Work with providers to address appointment availability and promote consistent signposting so people can access appropriate care first time.

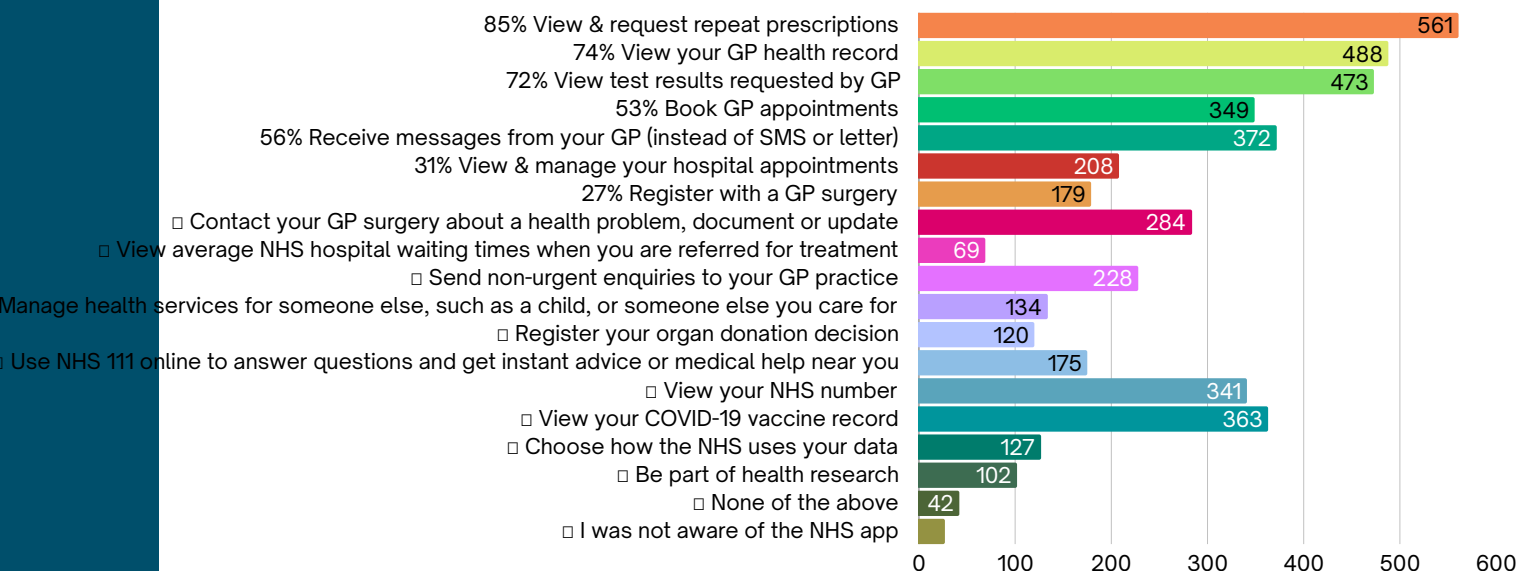
# Key Findings

## 2. are people Aware of the NHS App & features

### Survey Question:

**Which of the following features of the NHS App were you aware of before this survey? (Select all that apply)**

- 661 participants answered the question & gave multiple responses.



### Summary

## Key Challenges

Awareness of the NHS App is generally high, particularly for prescription and record-viewing functions. However, awareness of less common features—such as managing hospital appointments or using 111 online—is considerably lower. A small group reported no awareness of the App at all.

### Recommendation

Expand communication about lesser-known App features through GP surgeries and community channels, emphasising convenience and security benefits.

# Key Findings

## ALT

### 2. are people Aware of the NHS App & features

#### Survey Question:

**“Which of the following features of the NHS App were you aware of before this survey? (Select all that apply)”**

- 661 participants answered the question & gave multiple responses.

85% View prescriptions and request repeat prescriptions  
27% Register with a GP surgery  
74% View your GP health record  
72% View test results which your GP practice has requested  
53% Book GP appointments  
56% Receive messages from your GP surgery, instead of SMS (text message) or letter  
31% View and manage your hospital referrals and outpatient appointments  
43% Contact your GP surgery about a health problem, document or update  
10% View average NHS hospital waiting times when you are referred for treatment  
34% Send non-urgent enquiries to your GP practice  
20% Manage health services for someone else, such as a child, or someone else you care for  
18% Register your organ donation decision  
26% Use NHS 111 online to answer questions and get instant advice or medical help near you  
52 % View your NHS number  
55% View your COVID-19 vaccine record  
19% Choose how the NHS uses your data  
15% Be part of health research  
6% None of the above  
4% I was not aware of the NHS app

#### Summary

Awareness of the NHS App is generally high, particularly for prescription and record-viewing functions. However, awareness of less common features—such as managing hospital appointments or using 111 online—is considerably lower. A small group reported no awareness of the App at all.

#### Recommendation

Expand communication about lesser-known App features through GP surgeries and community channels, emphasising convenience and security benefits.

## Key Challenges



# Key Findings

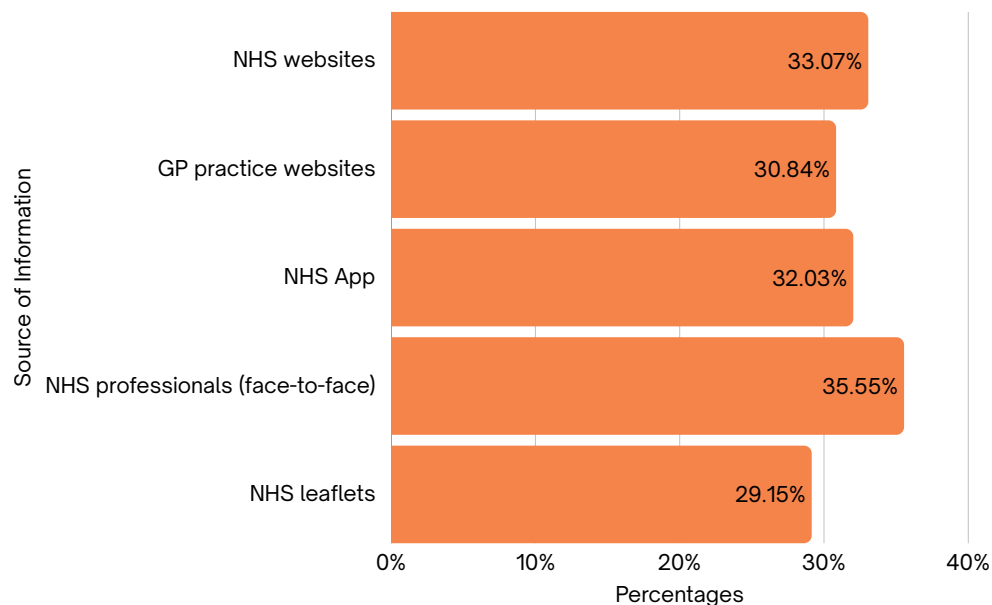
## Trust in Sources of Health Information

### Survey Question:

**How much do you trust the following sources of health information?"**  
(trust completely, trust somewhat, do not trust, don't know.)

- 661 participants answered the question & graded their feeling of trust, for simplicity I have taken the top 5 answers, but full answers are in the appendix.

### Trust completely



### Summary

Respondents expressed the highest trust in NHS professionals and official websites, while traditional media and social media channels were rated much lower. This pattern underscores the importance of official NHS digital platforms as trusted sources of health information.

### Recommendation

Continue to strengthen official digital communication, while ensuring that printed materials and in-person information remain available for those who are less digitally active.

# Key Findings Alt

## Trust in Sources of Health Information

### Survey Question:

**How much do you trust the following sources of health information?  
(trust completely, trust somewhat, do not trust, don't know)**

- 661 participants answered the question & graded their feelings of trust, for simplicity I have taken the top 5 answers. Full response found in appendix)

### Trust completely

- 36% NHS professionals (face-to-face)
- 33% NHS websites
- 32% NHS App
- 31% GP practice websites
- 29% NHS leaflets

### Somewhat trust

- 55% NHS websites
- 52% NHS leaflets
- 51% Council websites
- 51% NHS professionals (face-to-face)
- 50% NHS App

### Do not trust

- 63% Newspapers
- 36% Television
- 34% Radio
- 21% Council websites
- 14% NHS 111

### Don't know

- 52% Healthwatch Worcestershire website
- 26% NHS social media accounts
- 20% Radio
- 19% Council websites
- 18% NHS posters

# Key Findings

## Trust in Sources of Health Information

### Trust Completely

- The data shows that around one-third of respondents completely trust NHS professionals (face-to-face), making them the most trusted source of health information. This is followed by other official NHS sources and GP practices.
- This indicates that the NHS and GP surgeries are the most credible and trusted channels for sharing health information and should therefore be prioritised when promoting health campaigns.

### Somewhat Trust

- Approximately half of respondents somewhat trust health information communicated through NHS and council websites.
- These platforms are valuable secondary or supporting channels for reinforcing key health messages.

### Do Not Trust

- Mainstream media sources — including newspapers, television, and radio — were among the least trusted, followed by council websites and NHS 111.
- This suggests that investing heavily in mass media channels to promote health information is unlikely to achieve strong engagement or trust among the public.

### Don't Know

- More than half of respondents said they did not know whether to trust Healthwatch Worcestershire as a source of health information. Similar uncertainty was reported for NHS social media, radio, council websites, and NHS posters.
- This highlights an opportunity to build greater public awareness and trust in these channels, but they should not currently be used as primary sources of health communication.

# Key Findings

## 4. Which communications channels do people prefer to get their NHS information?

### Survey Question:

**Where would you prefer to receive information about NHS services?  
(Select all that apply)**

- female
- 62% GP surgery
- 62% NHS App
- 61% NHS website
- 38% Text messages
- 17% Posters in public places
- 12% Social media
- 6% Local radio
- 3% Other

### Summary

Digital channels dominate as preferred sources of information, particularly the NHS website and the NHS App, including the GP Surgery which would have a mixture of information on a digital display and paperbased and verbal.

## Key Challenges

However, a significant minority still value posters and local radio, showing that a multi-channel approach remains important.

### Recommendation

Adopt a blended communication strategy that combines digital tools (NHS App, texts, email) with visible local materials to ensure information reaches all demographic groups..

# Appendix Section

# Appendix 3:

## Trust in Sources of Health Information

	Trust Completely		Trust Somewhat		Do Not Trust		Don't Know	
NHS social media accounts	11.21%	72	47.82%	307	15.42%	99	25.55%	164
NHS websites	33.07%	212	55.38%	355	4.37%	28	7.18%	46
Council websites	9.28%	58	50.88%	318	21.12%	132	18.72%	117
Healthwatch Worcestershire	9.86%	63	31.77%	203	6.10%	39	52.27%	334
GP practice websites	30.84%	198	50.00%	321	7.17%	46	11.99%	77
NHS App	32.03%	205	50.47%	323	4.84%	31	12.66%	81
NHS 111	19.62%	125	49.92%	318	14.44%	92	16.01%	102
NHS professionals (face-to-face)	35.55%	230	55.80%	361	4.79%	31	3.86%	25
NHS leaflets	29.15%	186	51.72%	330	5.17%	33	13.95%	89
NHS posters	24.96%	159	49.45%	315	7.85%	50	17.74%	113
Newspapers	0.62%	4	20.56%	132	63.08%	405	15.73%	101
Radio	1.26%	8	43.87%	279	34.43%	219	20.44%	130
Television	1.73%	11	44.90%	286	36.11%	230	17.27%	110
Other (please specify)								

# Appendix Section

# Appendix 2: Speakeasy Report



Healthwatch Worcestershire Survey

NHS Services Communication



1. Do you understand what these NHS services do?

## Summary Report

This report presents the responses we gathered as part of a survey on NHS service communication, which Healthwatch Worcestershire asked us to help complete. The aim of the survey was to better understand how people with a learning disability experience communication from NHS services, and how accessible this communication is for them.

To support this work, we took the survey to 9 of our Speakup and Pop Up groups across Worcestershire. A total of 69 people with a learning disability participated in the survey and shared their experiences, ideas, and concerns.

To make the questionnaire more accessible, we made some changes to the format and wording of the original survey. This was necessary to ensure that the questions were easy to understand for our members, and to help us gather more accurate and meaningful responses.

Please note that some participants gave more than one answer to certain questions, while others chose not to respond to some questions at all. These variations are reflected in the numbers and summaries presented throughout this report.

We have also included quotes from participants to give a clearer sense of their voices and to illustrate the kinds of conversations and insights that emerged during the sessions. For example:

*Sophie said: "I know what 111 is, you call it if it is not an emergency. Don't forget that doctors work a minimum of 7 hours a day and some do over that."*

*Matthew asked: "Is A&E where you go if you've been hurt?"*







*Nicholas said: "I wouldn't know who to call if something happened to me. I think my support worker would take over and make the call."*





## NHS Services Communication

### 1. Do you understand what these NHS services do?

	Yes	A bit	No
 NHS 111	35	16	18
 GP	65	6	0
 GP Out of Hours	25	9	23
 Pharmacy	52	12	4
 Minor Injuries Unit	13	2	53
 Accident & Emergency	53	6	0



## 2. Do you think you know which NHS service to use in different situations?

Yes		Maybe	No
32		26	



## 3. What do you know about NHS App?

- Have you heard about the NHS App? Yes = 14 No = 20
- Have you got the NHS App?
- Would you use it? If not, why not?
- If you have used the NHS App – what do you think?
- Do you know what you are able to use the NHS App for?

When asked about the NHS App and whether people had heard of it or used it, responses were mixed:

- Richie shared: *"Yes I have it on my phone. You can see what appointments you have coming up. My support worker helps me to use it because sometimes I don't know how to."*
- Sophie explained: *"Yes, you have to download it onto your phone and put in your personal details and upload it onto their system. My support worker looks at it with me or my brother and sister help me."*
- Anna added: *"I've heard about it but I haven't used it."*

- Rachel: 'It is good. I order my repeat prescriptions on it and it saves a lot of time'
- Sam: 'I have dyslexia so I struggle to read as it is. I can't read the screen on a smart phone. They would need to make it bigger for me to see'
- Anna: 'I don't understand the logos at the bottom. I can get a report from my doctor or nurse through it though but I do not know everything it can do'
- Hayley: 'I have it and downloaded it to my phone myself. My partner was sick and I didn't know what to do so I called 111 through the app and told them what was happening'
- Louise said: "I have heard of the app but I haven't downloaded or used it yet. But I would know how to; I would go into my app store on my phone and download it."
- *Joe noted:* "I don't have a smartphone so I wouldn't even know how to use the app."
- *Alfie shared:* "Being blind, the app wouldn't be of much use to me anyway."

Some participants also spoke about their frustrations with access to GP appointments and communication more generally:

- *Louise said:* "The waiting times for the GP really gets on my nerves. I had an appointment for 4.20pm and I didn't get called in until 5pm."
- *Alfie:* "We could really do with an extra 5 minutes at the doctors to explain the problem. I always feel rushed to get my words out"

When asked about what reasonable adjustments could be made to help better communicate NHS services to people with a disability, some of the answers were as follows:

- Tom: 'Posters with big hand writing would help me, and maybe with some colour too but not clashing colours like red and yello

These quotes help highlight the different levels of understanding, access, and experience people with a learning disability have with NHS services. They also reflect how support workers, family, and digital

accessibility play a vital role in enabling people with a learning disability to engage with their healthcare.



#### 4. Where would you go for information about NHS services?

For example –

- NHS social media accounts
- NHS websites
- Council websites
- Healthwatch Worcestershire website
- GP practice websites
- NHS App
- NHS 111
- NHS professionals (face-to-face)
- NHS leaflets
- NHS posters
- Newspapers
- Radio
- Television

Anywhere else?



**5. Is there anything that stops you being able to use the right NHS service?**

For example -

- I'm not sure which service to use 41
- Services are not available when I need them 7
- I can't get an appointment 6
- I don't trust the service 8
- I prefer to go straight to A&E 1