

# healthwatch

## Worcestershire

# How do patients access NHS information?



Written by  
Jay Pannu

Engagement  
Officer

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Healthwatch Worcestershire (HWW), as an independent organisation, was asked by the Director of Communications at the Herefordshire & Worcestershire Integrated Care Board (ICB) to conduct a public survey exploring awareness and understanding of information about using NHS services in Worcestershire. Using an impartial third party like HWW helps ensure patients feel more comfortable sharing honest feedback, which they may be less likely to provide directly to the NHS. This survey 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, ensuring efficiency and support patient safety.

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 services were the GP Out Of Hours service and the Minor Injuries Unit

### Awareness of the NHS App and its features

- 96% of participants in the 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 about 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 suggest 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, which 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 maximise 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

# Background

## Why it is important for people to access information

Access to NHS information is vital because it enables people to make informed decisions about their care, use services appropriately, and ultimately supports patient safety and the efficiency of the health system.

## Supporting Findings from Existing Research

We wrote this report at a time when public understanding of NHS services is a pressing issue nationally, and our findings are reinforced by a recent Healthwatch Oxfordshire study, which similarly highlights strong overall awareness but persistent gaps among groups experiencing digital or health inequalities.

Healthwatch Oxfordshire published a report “Digital health care and the NHS app” November 2025, which notes:

“Lower awareness in the outreach survey suggests that some underserved groups might not have the same access to information about the NHS App ... those who had not heard of it were often people who said they did not like or use digital apps ... The commonest reason for not using the App was a preference for in-person health care ... The results reflect people’s understanding and experiences of digital health care, the influence of digital literacy and exclusion ... and concerns about how digital technology might affect patient access to care.” (1)

This supports the point in this report about disparities: even though overall use is high, there remain significant gaps among people less comfortable with digital tools, reinforcing the need for a blended approach (digital and offline) to ensure accessibility.

Reference: (1) Healthwatch Oxfordshire report “Digital health care and the NHS app” Nov 2025 <https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/NHS-App-final-final-Nov-2025.pdf>

# Background

## Rationale for Including Two Survey Groups

We surveyed both the general population cross Worcestershire's population, and to ensure the views of a wider range of communities were included, and from a specific group experiencing health inequalities (learning difficulties) to highlight how experiences can differ, recognising that while this group offers valuable insight into inequality-related barriers, it represents only one set of issues and other groups would require further research to fully understand their distinct needs.

## Limitations of the survey

1. The survey did not ask participants whether they actively use the NHS App, which limits our ability to understand how awareness relates to actual usage.
2. Although we asked participants how confident they felt in choosing the right NHS service, we did not test whether they accurately understood what each service provides.
3. 93% of the respondents are over 45 years old, therefore we know very clearly how the over 45 age group prefer NHS communication, but it maybe useful to do a piece of work to find out how young people prefer to access NHS information.

# How the survey was conducted

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

## General Public - Digital Audience

- A total of 811 individuals from the general public took part.
- 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 NHS service user responses and provides insight into mainstream awareness, confidence levels, and digital adoption trends—critical for shaping broad communication strategies.

## General Public - 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.

## People with Learning Disabilities - SpeakEasy N.O.W. Event Attendees

- A total of 69 individuals from the SpeakEasy group took part.
- An accessible version of the survey was shared during SpeakEasy N.O.W.'s "SpeakUp" and "Pop Up" group events. SpeakEasy staff supported participants in completing the survey.
- 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 insight of communication needs across Worcestershire, helping the Integrated Care Board prioritise resources effectively and equitably.

# Demographics

## Demographics of the people who completed the main survey:

100% are living or working in Worcestershire

99% have English as their first language

93% are White - British

93% are over 45 years of age

92% are heterosexual/ straight

86% use home internet to access information

86% use mobile phone data to access information

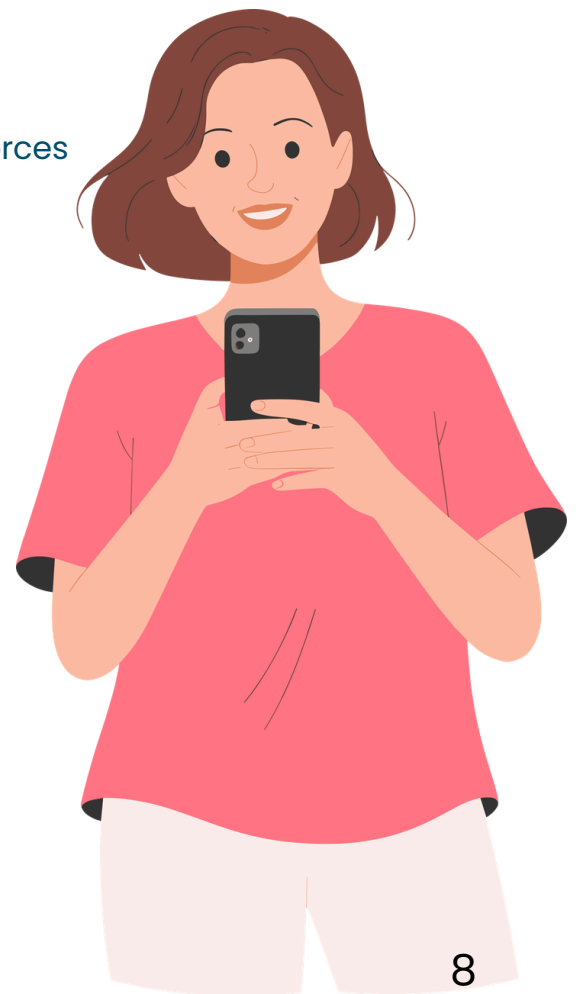
85% are female

34% have a disability

21% are unpaid carers

3% are, or have been, members of the armed forces

\*full breakdown can be found in Appendix 2



# Our Findings In Detail

The following section outlines the questions that were asked, followed by the findings from both the main survey and the Speakeasy survey. 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 and 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 is lower in relation to the GP Out of Hours service, suggesting uncertainty about its role or when it should be used.
- A very small number 3% indicated that they have 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 and 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 services would be beneficial.
- Comments suggested that peoples confidence varied with some reliant on the input of carers or support workers' guidance and knowledge.

### SpeakEasy comments on understanding NHS services

*"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."*

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

*"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:** 661 participants answered the question

40% very confident

48% somewhat confident

9% not very confident

3% not at all confident

### Summary

- 88% of respondents expressed some level of confidence in choosing the correct NHS service, a small proportion 12% reported low confidence.
- Although people graded their confidence level, the survey does not tell us that this is reflected in them accessing the correct service.

**Speakeasy:** 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 and 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 perceived to be 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 the provision of more consistent service information.

#### Main survey comments on what prevents patients from using correct NHS Services

##### 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:** 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 that they were not sure which NHS service to use, suggesting that many people lack confidence in navigating NHS services.
- A 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% are aware of the NHS app

4% are not aware of the NHS app

### Summary

- A high response of those who are aware of the app, representing that those with digitally literacy have a high level of awareness is high – with 96% familiar with the NHS App.
- 4% reported being unaware of the NHS App, the reasons for this lack of awareness are unclear and warrant further investigation.

**Speakeasy Survey:** 34 responses of 69 participants

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

58% % Have not heard of the NHS App (20 no response out of 34)

### Summary

- There was a low response rate for this question with only 34 responses out of 69 participants. Fewer than half of those who did respond were aware of the NHS App, indicating lower awareness within this group..

### SpeakEasy comments about the NHS App

*“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.”*

*“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.”*

*“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 and gave multiple responses.

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

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

20% Manage health services for someone else you care for, such as a child

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.
- In face to face data collection it was noted that some participants voiced that all of the features of the NHS app are not available to them in Worcestershire (highlighted in pink) for example:
- **Hospital referrals:** a participants voiced that they do not get appointments for hospital appointments within Worcestershire, but able to get hospital appointments via the NHS App for treatment at a hospital outside of Worcestershire.
- **Booking GP appointments:** participants also voiced they can not get GP appointments via the NHS app and this service is not available from their GP surgery.
- **Different Apps:** There was also some confusion and possibility that patients don't differentiate between the NHS App and Patient Access App or GP's own online booking service.

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

**SpeakEasy:** adapted the question, to understand what participants knew about the features of the NHS App, they were asked an open-ended question: "What do you know about the NHS App?" Their responses have been summarised below.

### Summary of qualitative responses showed that:

- some participants use it independently
- some participants use it with help from family or support workers
- It is used to view appointments or order prescriptions.
- Many have never heard of it
- Some do not have suitable devices to access the NHS App.
- Other barriers to use NHS App included reading difficulties, poor eyesight, and lack of digital skills.

### SpeakEasy comments about the NHS App features:

*"It is good. I order my repeat prescriptions on it and it saves a lot of time"*

*"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"*

*"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"*

*"I have it on my phone.. My support worker helps me to use it because sometimes I don't know how to"*

*"I have heard of the app but I haven't downloaded or used it yet."*

*"I don't have a smartphone so I wouldn't even know how to use the app."  
"Being blind, the app wouldn't be of much use to me anyway"*

## 6. Most trusted sources of health information

**Main Survey:** 661 participants answered the question & graded their feeling of trust. The highest scoring 5 answers are listed below, and the complete list is included 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 trusted sources of health information are NHS professionals (face-to-face), followed by digital; NHS website, NHS App, GP websites, and printed materials; NHS leaflets.
- 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 websites are the most credible and trusted channels for sharing health information. This is useful when prioritising when promoting health campaigns.

## 6. Most trusted sources of health information

**Speakeasy Survey** : 69 participants answered the question, “Where would you go for information about NHS services?” A list of potential sources of information was provided and participants were asked to indicate which ones they would use. The top 5 answers shown here, the full list is available in the appendix 4.

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 that SpeakEasy did not provide any comments for this.

## 6. Least trusted sources of health information

**Main Survey:** This question was answered by 661 participants, and the results are presented based on the highest “do not trust” ratings, the higher the percentage the less trusted the source.

### 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.

### 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”*

*“Do not trust “private subcontractors to the NHS, for e.g. for diagnostic services”*

## 6. Least trusted sources of health information

**Speakeasy Survey:** A total of 69 participants answered this question, which was adapted by SpeakEasy. The responses identified the least trusted sources, with a lower percentage indicating lower trust.

### Lowest score for trusted

- 3% Council website
- 6% Newspaper
- 6% NHS social media accounts
- 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.
- The NHS App has also been highlighted as one of the least trusted sources of health information for this group, and that could be why the usage of the NHS app is low 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

- 26% NHS social media accounts
- 20% Radio
- 19% Council websites
- 18% NHS posters

### Summary

- Don't know if to trust was highest 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.

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

**Speakeasy** - no data, the question was not asked

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

#### 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% of participants had mobile data or home internet.

### Speakeasy Survey

Qualitative data shows that some people had digital access and others did not have smartphone. Further research is need to understand the extent to which this affects people with health inequalities.

### Summary

- Digital approaches to share NHS health information are effective communication tools, however, these methods will only reach part of the population; accessible offline options are still essential for reach hard groups such as those with learning difficulties.

## Reasonable adjustment

### Main Survey

No reasonable adjustments were noted.

### Speakeasy Survey

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

### Summary

- Those with learning difficulties value their needs been taken into account and this needs to be a consideration when designing information.

# 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 other 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.

# Recommendations

## 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 some 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
- Test future versions of the App with people who have health inequalities to improve usability.
- Maintain traditional communication options for those without smartphones or digital skills.

## 4) Use Data to Guide Decisions

The report emphasises 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:
  - prioritise 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 (see recommendation 5) to ensure consistent messaging across all channels.

# Recommendations

## 5) Work with Partner Organisations to Communicate With 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.
- Strategies to improve digital inclusion should be adopted this could include; providing supported workshops and device-loan schemes to improve digital inclusion.
- Co-production is essential to ensure relevance and clarity (e.g., easy-read guides, videos with subtitles).

# Conclusion

Access to NHS information is essential for health outcomes, patient safety, and effective service delivery. The findings of this report indicate the majority of survey participants access NHS information digitally; however a small proportion of the general public and people experiencing health inequalities either have limited access and/or knowledge to digital communication methods, meaning traditional print communication remains necessary.

To strengthen public confidence and empower individuals to manage their health, its important for the ICB to provide information via trusted communication channels and continue to promote the NHS App in an accessible way.

Improving communication reduces pressure on frontline services and contributes to a more resilient, efficient healthcare system, meeting the diverse needs of Worcestershire's population while aligning with national digital transformation priorities.

# Acknowledgements

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

- Speakeasy NOW
- Survey Participants across Worcestershire

Please note AI has not been used in the collection or data analysis. This report has been reviewed using digital tools to support accuracy and clarity.

## 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,  
Persore,  
Worcestershire,  
WR10 1PT

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# Appendix Section

**Appendix 1 – Page 30** – Main Survey Questions

**Appendix 2 –Page 31** – Main Survey Demographics

**Appendix 3 –Page 34** – Main Survey Analysis

**Appendix 4 –Page 42** – SpeakEasy Results

# Appendix 1: Main 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 2: Main Survey Demographics

## Demographics of participants:

### 99% first language is English

- 7 participants indicated that their first language was not English.

### 93% have white British ethnic background

- 40 participants reported their ethnicity as "Other."

### 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

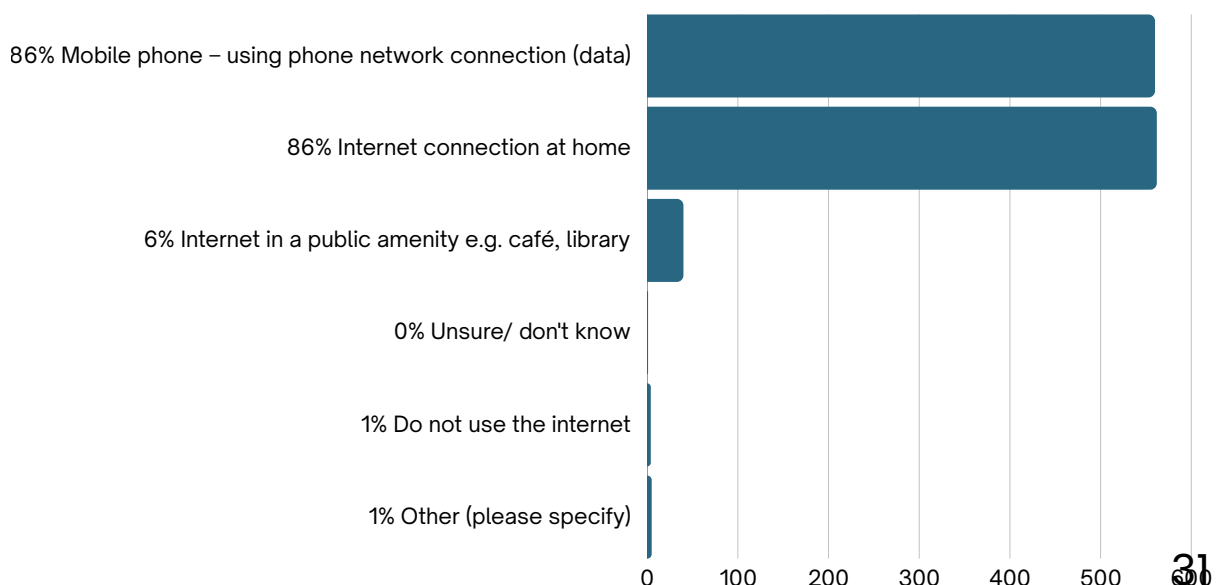
### 3% member of armed forces

- 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

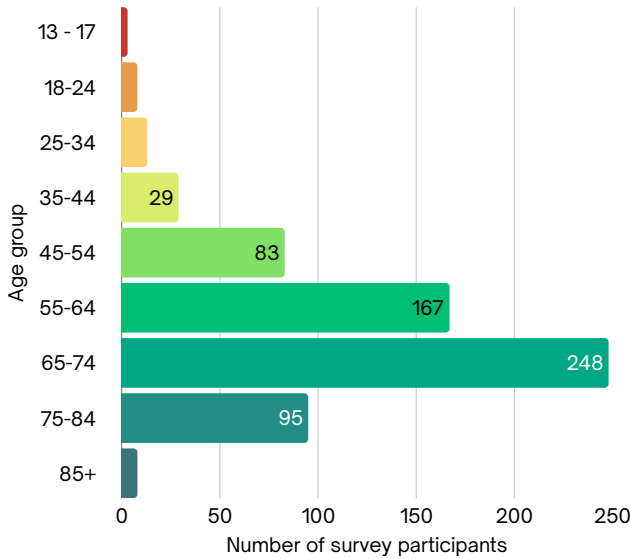
- 653 participants answered the question & gave multiple responses.
- 86% used home internet 562 responses
- 86% used mobile phone data 560 responses
- 6% used public amenity eg café, library internet 40 responses
- 1% unsure/ dont know how to use internet 10 responses

Table 4: Percentage of participants with internet access



# Appendix 2: Main Survey Demographics

Table 1: Percentage of participants in each age group

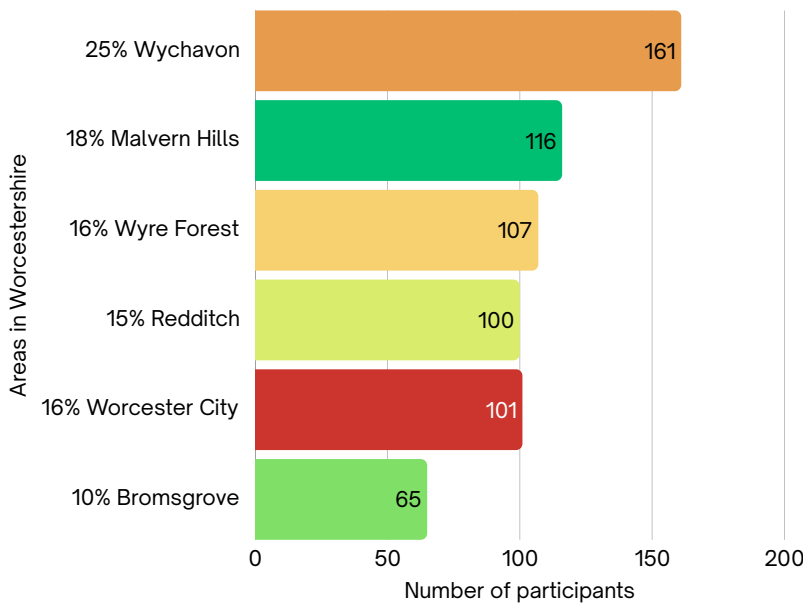


## Age of participants

- 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 2: Percentage of participants from each area



## Location of participants

- Evenly covers the county, the city and towns in rural areas, however misses Kidderminster no response from people living in Kidderminster.

Answered 650  
Skipped 161

# Appendix 2: Main Survey Demographics

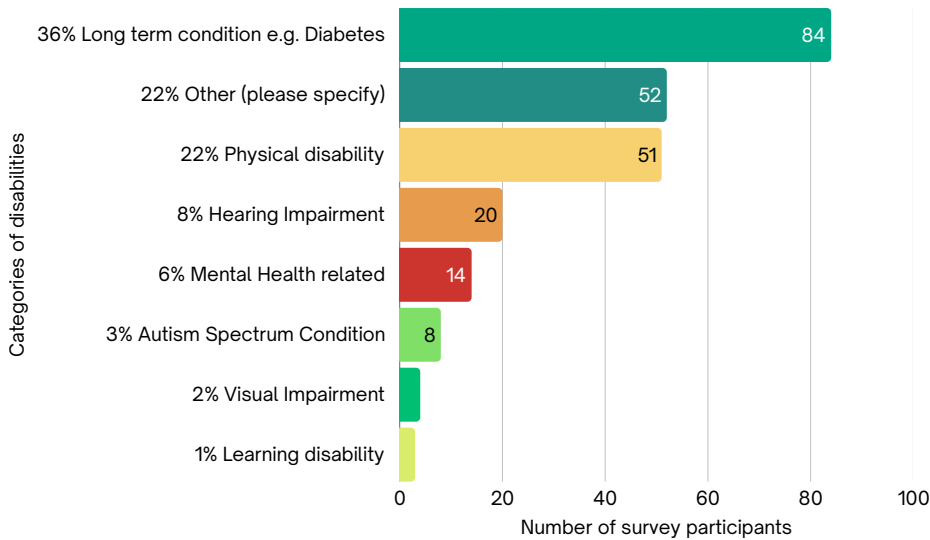
## Disabilities

Answered 648  
Skipped 163

- 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 of 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

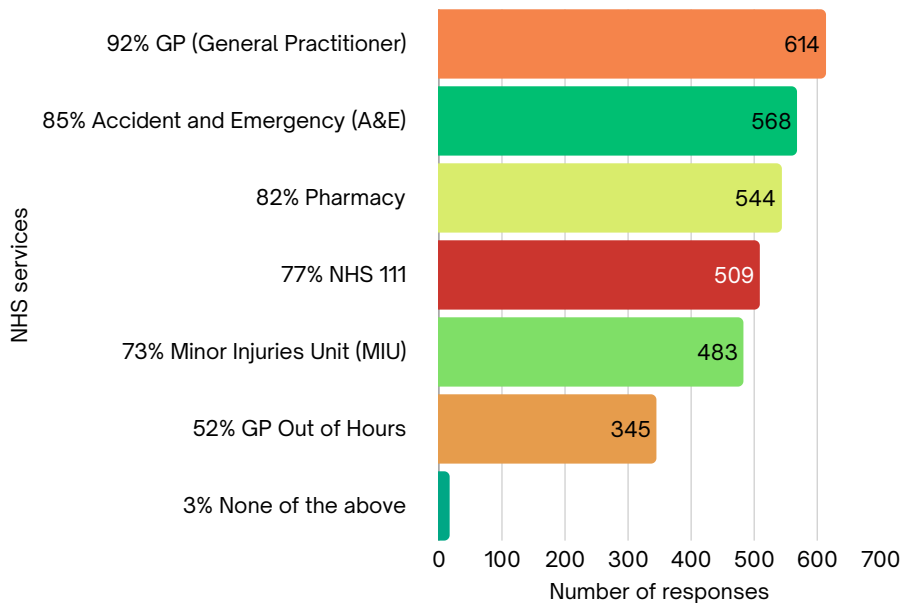


# Appendix 2: Main Survey Analysis

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

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

Table 1: Level of confidence in understanding purpose of NHS services by participants



## Summary

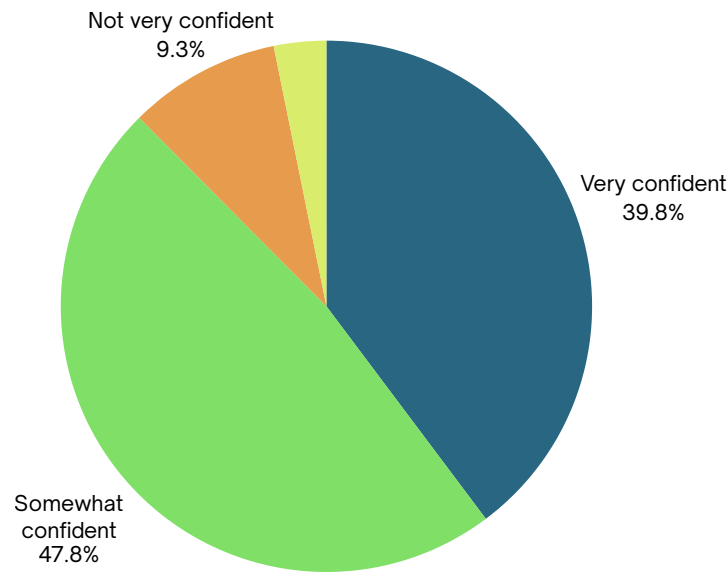
- The majority of respondents, over 70%, said they understood the purpose of core NHS services such as GPs, A&E, pharmacy, NHS 111 and MIU.
- Confidence was notably lower for the GP Out of Hours service, suggesting uncertainty about its role or when it should be used.
- A very small number indicated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

Note: This question was asked, but we did not verify whether respondents genuinely knew what the terms referred to.

# Appendix 2: Main Survey Analysis

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.
- 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.

# Appendix 2: Main Survey Analysis

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.

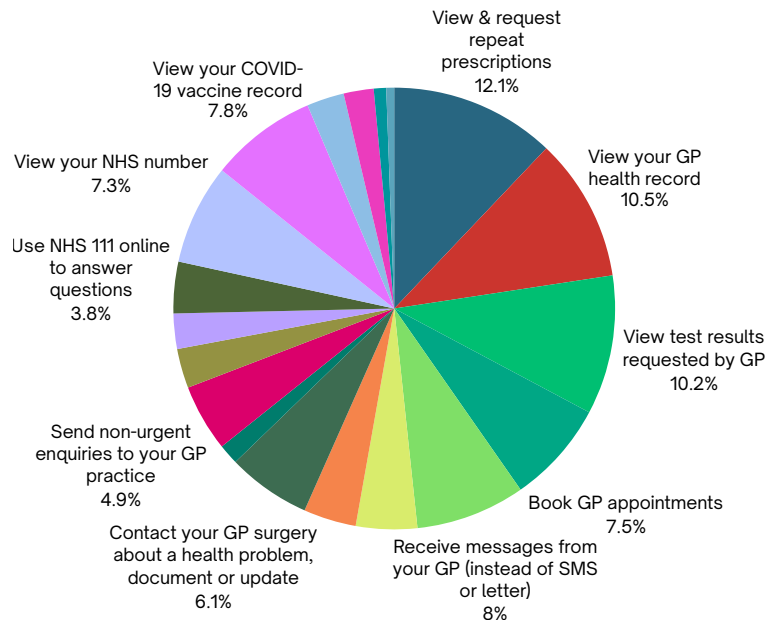
## Recommendation

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

# Appendix 2: Main Survey Analysis

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

- 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.

# Appendix 2: Main Survey Analysis

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 on following page.

## 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

# Appendix 2: Main Survey Results

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

|                                  | 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 2: Main Survey Analysis

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

## 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.

# Appendix 2: Main Survey Analysis

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

- 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.

## 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..

# 1 Appendix 2: SpeakEasy Survey Results

healthwatch  
Worcestershire



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."*

## 2 Appendix 2: SpeakEasy Survey Results



### 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  |

## 3 Appendix 2: SpeakEasy Survey Results



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 yellow'

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 | 24 | \_\_\_\_\_
- Council websites | 2 | \_\_\_\_\_
- Healthwatch Worcestershire website | 5 | \_\_\_\_\_
- GP practice websites | 30 | \_\_\_\_\_
- NHS App | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_
- NHS 111 | 20 | \_\_\_\_\_
- NHS professionals (face-to-face) | 31 | \_\_\_\_\_
- NHS leaflets | 13 | \_\_\_\_\_
- NHS posters | 18 | \_\_\_\_\_
- Newspapers | 4 | \_\_\_\_\_
- Radio | 8 | \_\_\_\_\_
- Television | 12 | \_\_\_\_\_

Anywhere else?

## 6 Appendix 2: SpeakEasy Survey Results



### 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