healthwatch Worcestershire

Your View

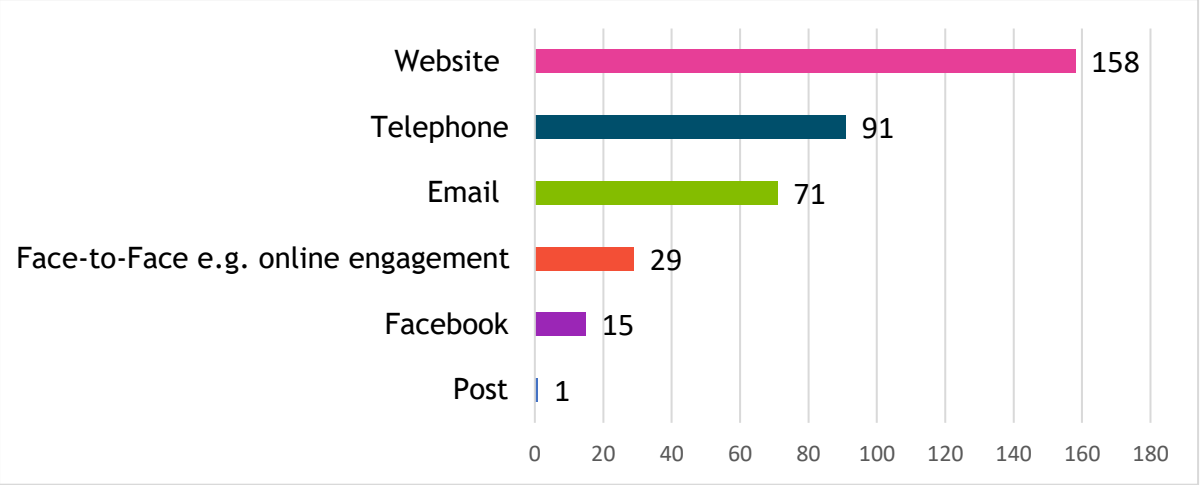
Summary of feedback 2020 - 2021

Healthwatch Worcestershire gathers feedback from those who use local health and social care services. This helps us to identify issues and concerns, decide what to focus on and tell those who run the services how they can improve.

In addition to our targeted surveys and engagement, people contact us to share their experiences. We can help people to find out more about local health and care services, signpost to other information, services and support available and explain how to raise the issue as a complaint if they wish to.

366 people contacted us to share their feedback and experiences of local health and social care services, from the beginning of April 2020 to end of March 2021.

How people contacted us



What people told us about

		Number of people
1	GP Practices	118
2	Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust	74
3	Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust	45
4	Dentists	44
5	Social Care services	23
6	Covid-19, including testing and vaccination	23
7	NHS 111	11
8	Commissioning	5
9	Advocacy	5
10	Hospital services - other	4
11	Transport to hospital	3
12	West Midlands Ambulance Service	3
13	Investigation of cause of death	2

Other issues raised by an individual included – concern about lack of smoking cessation service, the response to a complaint from the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman, care of individual with a brain injury, diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Condition for adults, concerns about healthcare at HMP Hewell and three issues relating to services used by relatives out of Worcestershire.

1. GP Practices

118 people gave us feedback about their GP practice.

- 28 people gave positive feedback, including praise for how practices had managed restrictions due to Covid-19
- 90 people raised issues and concerns

Issues and concerns

- **Appointments, communication and general dissatisfaction** - 33 people

  Most of these concerns related to difficulty in getting appointments and contacting practice by phone. People also mentioned issues with obtaining test results and getting an appointment with a specific GP rather than a nurse.

- **Lack of face-to-face appointments / telephone consultations** – 27 people

  People reported not being able to request a face-to-face appointment, concern about the effectiveness of telephone consultations, lack of specific timing or time slot for telephone appointments and frustrations that face-to-face appointments were still not possible once safety measures were in place following lifting of initial lockdown.

  Specific concerns were raised about the effectiveness of remote consultations for those with limited access or experience using digital technology, such as the elderly and for those with sensory impairment. This includes an example of telephone appointment being offered to patient who is profoundly deaf.

- **Treatment and Diagnosis**– 20 people

  Most of these concerns were about delays to and lack of diagnosis and treatment or misdiagnosis due to the use of telephone consultations and disruption to appointments such as blood test for PSA check, due to Covid-19. Concerns were also raised about the impact of lack of check-ups for long terms health conditions and reviews of medication as a result of the pandemic.

  Other issues raised include failure to carry out further investigations, including making referrals, to obtain diagnosis.

- **Covid-19 restrictions** – 8 people

  Concerns related to how practices had managed issues such as arrangements for arriving at the practice and waiting for appointments, guidance about wearing

of masks, social distancing and lack of communication from GP practice about changes implemented as a result of Covid-19.

- **Support for mental health** – 2 people

  Two people told us that they were unhappy about the lack of support or onward referral they had received from their GP in relation to mental health, in one case for a child.

Other issues raised include –

- Failure to address issues raised in an official complaint
- Concerns about changes to medication
- Difficulties with online ordering of prescriptions
- Dissatisfaction with Learning Disability Annual Health Check
- Being unable to change GP practice
- Lack of BSL interpreter
- Administration procedure for Covid-19 vaccination

2. Worcestershire Acute Hospital NHS Trust

74 people gave us feedback about their experiences of Acute Hospital services.

- 14 people gave us positive feedback
- 60 people raised issues and concerns

Issues and concerns

- **Discharge from hospital** – 14 people

  Concerns about the process for discharge, communication with patients and relatives and feeling that patients had been discharged from hospital too soon. In some cases, people felt this had happened as a result of pressures of Covid-19 on the hospital.

- **Quality of inpatient care** – 12 people

  These included general dissatisfaction with the level of care provided, poor communication with patients and carers, lack of responsiveness of staff, poor experience of end of life care, patient having a fall, concerns about care for patient with Dementia, delays to treatment and admission following arrival by ambulance.

- **Delays to surgery or treatment** – 8 people

  Concerns about the delays and length of waiting time for operations and delays to Cancer treatment due to impact of Covid-19.

- **Covid-19 – testing and infection control** – 8 people

  Concerns about lack of Covid-19 testing before discharge, communication following testing while inpatient and on discharge, being discharged prior to being given positive test result and risk of catching Covid while an inpatient.

- **Diagnosis** – 8 people

  Delays to gaining a diagnosis and in having procedures including endoscopy and MRI scan, being unhappy with diagnosis given, lack of diagnosis and misdiagnosis.

- **Outpatient appointments** – 5 people

  Delays to and lack of outpatient appointments due to Covid-19, lack of communication regarding this and replacement of appointment with telephone call for eye check.

- **Accident and Emergency** – 5 people

  Unhappy with quality of care, waiting times, waiting following arrival by ambulance and lack of support for individual experiencing mental health crisis.

- **Visiting restrictions** – 3 people
  Impact of being unable to visit relatives due to Covid-19 on patient, communication with carers and in end of life situation.

- **Learning Disabilities** – 2 people

  Concern about lack of support for individual in hospital with learning disabilities due to Covid-19 restrictions and about inappropriate use of Do Not Resuscitate orders.

Other issues included – concerns about hygiene and cleanliness, lack of availability of tongue tie procedure, criteria to access Long Covid service, difficulty parking and lack of information about public transport.

3. Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust

45 people gave us feedback about services provided by Herefordshire and Worcestershire Health and Care Trust.

- 4 people gave us positive feedback
- 41 people raised issues or concerns

Issues and concerns

- **Mental Health services** – 27 people

Breakdown of issues relating to Mental Health services:

- **Quality of service** - 11 people

  Dissatisfaction with the quality of the service received, including specific feedback relating to the Community Rehabilitation and Assessment Service, Worcestershire Healthy Minds, Dementia inpatient care and being discharged from inpatient care too soon.

- **Access to support** - 6 people

  Difficulties accessing support, either due to waiting times, lack of service or ongoing support.

- **Autism Spectrum Conditions** – 5 people

  Lack of appropriate mental health support for adults and children with Autism Spectrum Conditions and individuals having difficulties engaging with support available.

- **Crisis support** - 4 people

  Concerns about the lack of support received in a mental health crisis.

Concerns were also raised about the impact of restrictions on visitors to inpatient wards due to Covid-19 restrictions.

- **Community Hospitals** – 4 people

  Issues relating to the quality of inpatient care and communication with Acute Trust re follow on care

- **Occupational Therapy** – 3 people

  Dissatisfaction with quality of service, decision about equipment provision and capacity to provide support required following hospital discharge.

- **Community Nursing** - 2 people

  Concerns relating to poor quality of care and communication.

Other issues raised included – withdrawal of Community Stoke service support, lack of information about reinstatement of Podiatry service, long waiting time at Minor Injuries to be told unable to treat and someone unhappy with ongoing care from Paediatricians.

4. Dentists

44 people gave us feedback about Dentists.

- 4 people gave us positive feedback
- 40 people raised issues or concerns

Issues and concerns

- **Unable to register with NHS Dental practice** – 19 people

  These individuals contacted us as they had been unable to find a Dentist that was currently taking on new NHS patients. Many had tried contacting several practices and were in need of routine checks and treatment.

- **Access to urgent treatment** – 11 people

  Experiences of being unable to access treatment at their Dentist due to Covid-19 restrictions, limitations of the service available when they did reopen, delays to extraction for child with special needs and being advised treatment would need to be done privately.

- **Routine check-ups** – 11 people

  Concerns about the lack of availability routine check ups following the reopening of Dental practices.

5. Social Care Services

23 people gave us feedback about Social Care Services

- 3 people gave positive feedback
- 20 people raised issues or concerns

Issues and concerns

- **Care Homes** – 9 people

  Concerns raised included lack of communication with care home staff and loved ones and the impact of restricted visiting as a result of Covid-19. Other issues raised related to the quality of care provided in the home, two reports of property not being returned following death of a relative and concerns about staffing levels and access to PPE in the first wave of the pandemic.

- **Dementia** – 2 people

  Concerns about the quality of assessment and level of social care support being received.

- **Domiciliary Care** – 2 people

  Dissatisfaction with quality of care provided

- **Children's Social Care** – 2 people

  Unhappy about decisions made regarding care of their children

Other issues raised include – lack of appropriate residential support for adult with Autism, unhappy with organisation making home adaptations, concerns about the pressure on social care staff during the pandemic, lack of communication from social services and general dissatisfaction with social services.

6. Covid-19

23 people gave us feedback relating to Covid-19

- 1 person gave us positive feedback
- 22 people raised concerns or issues

Issues and concerns

- **Covid-19 testing** – 7 people

  Feedback related to difficulty accessing community testing and waiting times for test results when this initially became available. Issue of lack of availability of testing for carers who are employed by people received Personal Health Budgets was also raised at a time when regular testing had been introduced in residential care home staff and for domiciliary care providers.

- **Covid-19 Vaccination** – 7 people

  Difficulties with transport to get to vaccination centre and GP practice for vaccination, the need for people with a learning disability to be prioritised for the vaccine, concerns about scam email vaccine invitation, lack of communication from GP about vaccination programme and experience of different vaccine administered for second dose.

- **Shielding** – 3 people
  Concern that individuals had not be identified as needing to shield and circumstance and lack of support leading to difficulties shielding.

Other feedback relating to Covid-19 included –

- People in need of support with shopping / daily tasks

- Criteria to access Long Covid service

- Discussion via telephone about Do Not Resuscitate wishes

- Concerns about increase in heart attacks and other serious health issues amongst ethnic minority community

- Impact of Covid-19 on different communities including the deaf community due to wearing of masks and social distancing.

7. NHS 111

11 people gave us feedback about NHS 111.

- 5 people gave us positive feedback about using the service
- 6 people raised issues or concerns

Issues raised included difficulty getting through to NHS 111, finding the service unhelpful, concern about the advice given for a child, being asked too many questions, being sent out of area and not being informed that they could book a slot at Accident and Emergency.

8. Pharmacy

7 people gave us feedback about pharmacy services.

- 2 people gave positive feedback about using pharmacy services
- 5 people raised issues or concerns

Issues raised included dissatisfaction with the service provided by a local pharmacy, changes to medication without clear communication and the need to promote pharmacy services in order to reduce pressure on urgent care services.

9. Commissioning

5 people gave us feedback about local commissioning including – feedback about plans for new online patient portal, dissatisfaction with the MSK referral pathway to access a scan, lack of availability of knee procedure and ear syringing.

10. Advocacy services

5 people contacted us about advocacy services, because they required advocacy support and were unsure how to access this and in one case because they had been unable to access advocacy support.

11. Hospital services – other

4 people gave us feedback about their experiences of other hospitals. Including a positive comment about care at the Queen Elizabeth, poor experience of discharge from the Queen Elizabeth and delays to surgery and poor care at Spire Hospital.

12. Transport to hospital

3 people raised concerns about transport to hospital. Two of these related to the need to attend hospital out of county.

13. West Midlands Ambulance Service

2 people raised concerns relating to an Ambulance going to the wrong house and a delay in arrival of an Ambulance car.

14. Investigation of cause of death

2 people wanted further investigation about the death of a relative.