



April-June 2022

About us

About Healthwatch Wiltshire

Healthwatch Wiltshire is your local health and social care champion. As an independent statutory body, we have the power to make sure NHS leaders and other decision makers listen to local feedback and improve standards of care. We also help people to find reliable and trustworthy information and advice.

Our priorities

For 2022/23 are:

Primary care

- Following on from our work on accessing GP services and how they are recovering post-pandemic.

Mental health

- Monitoring services in light of increasing demand, with a particular focus on learning disabilities and autism.

Children and young people

- Young Healthwatch volunteers will focus on sexual health.

Hospital discharge

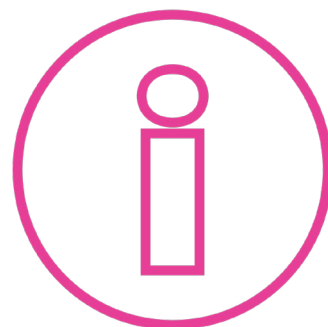
- Exploring the links between discharge and social care.

Highlights

Launched our Continuing Healthcare survey



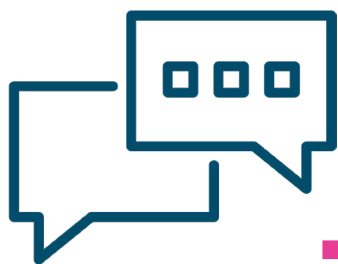
Published our Annual Report 2021-22



Designed a project to hear from Nepalese and Fijian military families



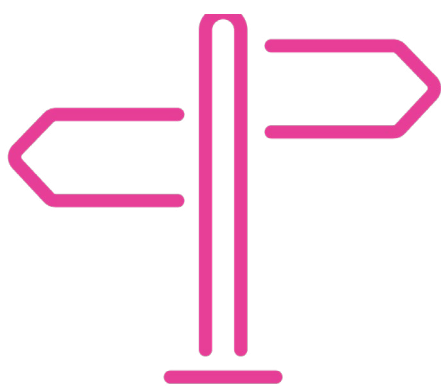
Talking and listening



97

people shared their experience of services with us

We attended **72** meetings, forums and events



19

contacts were given information and signposted through our Helpdesk Hub Team...

...with an average call time of **20** minutes

26

volunteers were involved...

...and volunteered over **149** hours



161

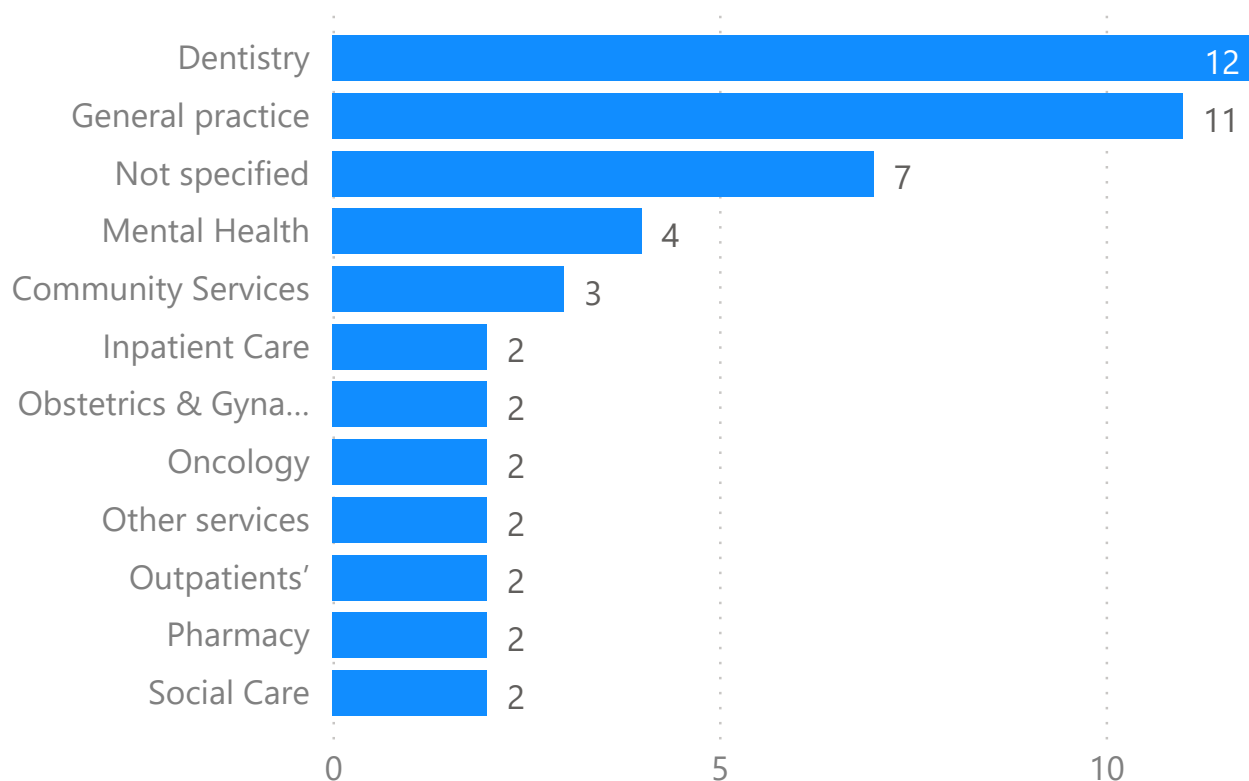
social media posts...

...reached **15,353** people

...and our website received **7,699** page views

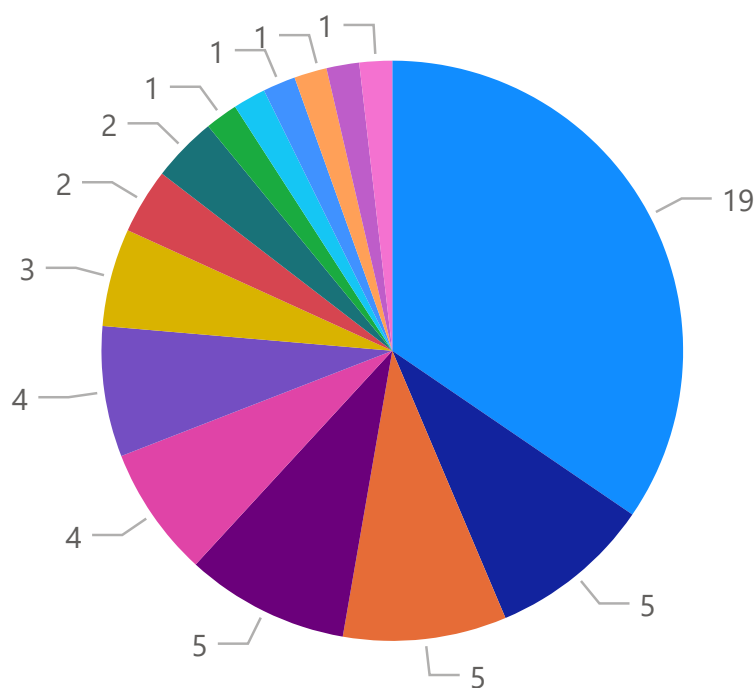
Experiences you shared

Top 10 Services

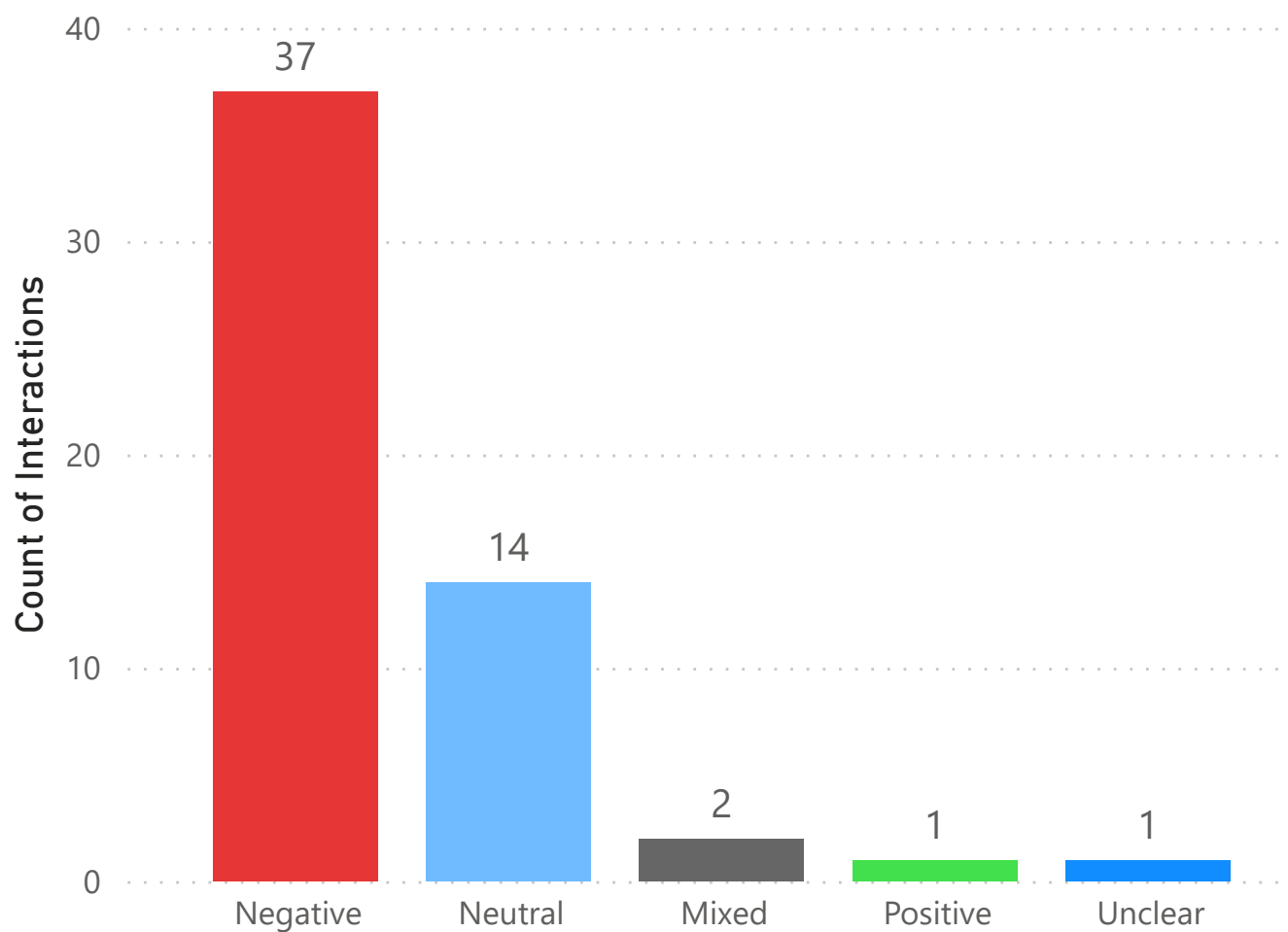


Top 10 Themes

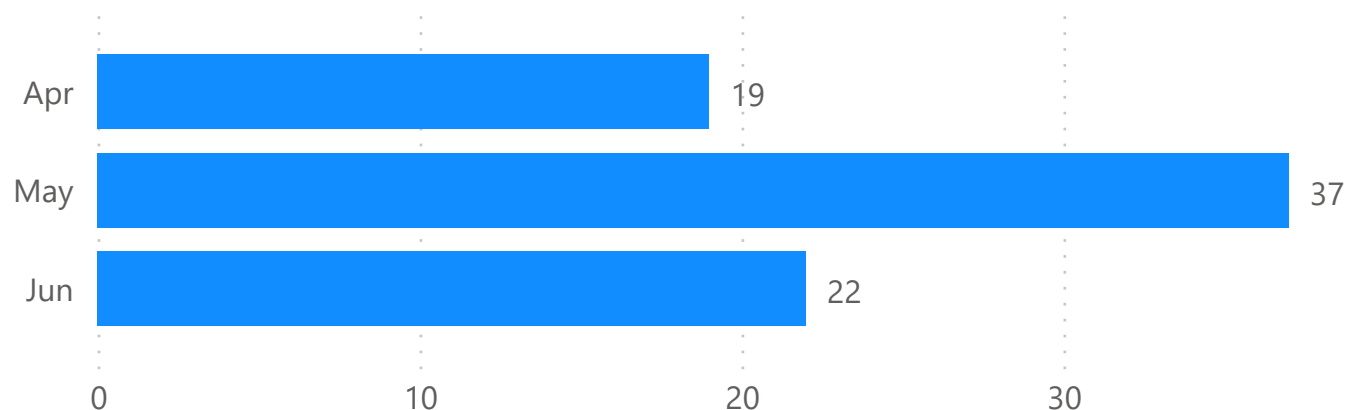
- Access and Choice
- Not specified
- Treatment/Care
- Waiting times
- Medication
- Support available
- Communication
- Funding available
- Screening and Immu...
- Care planning
- Death of patient
- Diagnosis
- Equality



Story Sentiment



Number of people who shared their feedback/raised issues about health and care services



Our work

Volunteers lead on GP website review

Our Healthwatch Wiltshire volunteers have done a review of Wiltshire GP websites as they noted a wide variation in the information provided and format used by GP practices across the county.

Good communication is becoming ever more important as more services become digital and access is often via online links.

Our volunteers' aim is to identify what looks good and is easily accessible to patients and the public so that they can develop a set

of recommendations to be shared with GP practices which they can consider including in their websites.

A review was carried out by 6 experienced volunteers over April and May and the results were analysed in June. A report summarising their findings and recommendations is due to be published in September. We will be following up over the autumn to understand what action GP practices have taken to incorporate Healthwatch Wiltshire's recommendations.

Project to focus on military communities

In May we started a new project with Wiltshire Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service (EMTAS, part of Wiltshire Council), to hear the experience of Fijian and Nepalese military families on accessing health and care services. We will be delivering two sessions

to these communities in September to hear feedback on services and provide information about Healthwatch.

This project is funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust.

Our response to Covid-19 continues

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, our focus has been on ensuring that people can find the information that they need easily.

We continue to provide information, publishing news and guidance on our website and social media. Over the last quarter we have published information on:

- What is Long Covid?
- Support and treatment for Long Covid

We've also been sharing more information about Covid boosters ahead of the autumn.

[Visit our website](#) to find out more.

New forum for Medequip clients

Since publishing our report on people's experiences of using the Wiltshire Community Equipment Service, we have helped Medequip to set up an open forum for anyone who uses, provides, or supports someone using the service – which provides items such as walking frames, wheelchairs or hoists.

We will be hosting this quarterly forum from September 2022, aiming to provide a direct voice to Wiltshire Council and Medequip on what people would like to see from the service in the future and how the service could be enhanced.

[Visit our website](#) to read the report.

Making a difference

Plans updated after thousands share views on new health centre

The new Devizes Health Centre, which is due to open later in 2022, has been broadly welcomed by local people, although some were disappointed there won't be a Minor Injury Unit (MIU) and are confused over which services will be provided there.

These are the key findings of Healthwatch Wiltshire's survey, which asked local residents how they would like to access services at the new centre. The facility, on Marshall Road, will replace Devizes Community Hospital and provide a range of services all under one roof.

More than 2,500 people responded to our survey, which we ran on behalf of Bath and North East Somerset, Swindon and Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BSW CCG) and local health and care organisations.

[Our report](#) highlights how the public's response to the new health centre is largely positive, with many looking forward to being able to access a wide range of services at a time to suit them.

But others told us of their disappointment that Devizes would not be getting a MIU and were



also concerned about how they would get an appointment at the new centre. Other comments included:

- The need for ample free parking and a fast, frequent bus service to and from the town centre.
- Suggestions for accessibility and signage.
- Requests for more women's services, such as a menopause clinic.
- Concerns over a lack of x-ray and scanning facilities and an on-site pharmacy.

Since sharing this feedback with the CCG (now the Integrated Care Board), they have updated information about the centre and revised their public engagement plan, which now includes:

- A leaflet detailing the services the new centre will provide.
- Public Q&A sessions.
- Guided tours for the public.

We will continue to work with the Integrated Care Board so people will have a better understanding of what services will be offered, and how people's ideas could be used to inform the project.

You Said We Did outlines changes at GWH

In July 2021, Healthwatch Wiltshire, Swindon, and West Berkshire heard the experiences of patients that had used the Emergency Department (ED), Urgent Care, and four inpatient wards at Great Western Hospital in Swindon.

In April 2022, we outlined [the changes that have since been made](#) by Great Western Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, based on your feedback.



Feedback from GP patients and staff puts focus on improvements

In late 2021, we worked with Healthwatch teams across the south of England to gather the views of patients and staff on access to GP services during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The project was carried out with the support of an advisory group which included GPs and practice managers, the CQC and the CCG (now the Integrated Care Board). In Wiltshire, we heard from 509 patients and 113 staff.

The key themes that emerged from patients' responses were limited availability of appointments, difficulty contacting practices especially by telephone, challenges of using online services, triaging, and barriers to access, such as working hours.

In the staff survey, GP practice staff told us about how they had adapted to new ways of

working, what could be done better and the need for patient engagement to highlight the way in which triaging works and why this is necessary.

[Our report](#) has been shared with the CCG and clinical directors of Primary Care Networks and will feed into an overarching report, with the results from all Healthwatch teams, to be published later in 2022.

There are plans to update and improve telephony systems and engagement with patients. Staff training in engaging with patients, particularly communicating with people with autism and neurodivergence, has also been recommended.

We will be following up on GP surgeries' responses to recommendations we've made.



Let me thank you for shining a specific, objective and helpful light on primary care and going through things in a systematic way which is very likely to be helpful to anyone who reads the [GP access] report. It is gratifying that there is understanding, and appreciation of what staff do for patients day in and day out in very difficult circumstances [and] it is helpful to see in black and white the main concerns that patients raise about general practice.



Dr Michele Giorgi, Clinical Director of Sarum Trinity Primary Care Network

What people said

No support available on NHS whatsoever. Told there is a 2 year minimum wait for appointments and this would only be 6 sessions then back to the bottom of the list.... Currently struggling with 4 severe mental health problems and been waiting for years - not even a plan of action in place apart from 6 sessions every 2 years which isn't even worth it. Disgusting.

I'm currently pregnant and I'm really struggling to find a dentist that will take an NHS patient on. I've been trying for weeks and months. If I had the money I would 100% go private I just unfortunately do not have the funds for that. I was wondering if there's a direction you could point me in or give me any advice on this situation please.

Signposting story – seeking carer support

A person called to ask for signposting regarding their elderly relative who is currently in hospital. The relative lives in assisted accommodation but may need carers or to go to a nursing home after a recent fall. They wanted information on how to start enquiring about placements through

an organisation that can offer support and advice.

Our Hub team called back as the person had no access to email and signposted them to Age UK and Carers Support Wiltshire, providing contact details for each.

Signposting story – complaint handling

A caller said they are housebound and has a nurse attending to administer injections. For the last 4-5 months she has had great difficulty obtaining her prescription of needles.

She reported that she keeps being passed from her GP surgery to the pharmacist and for the last couple of months has ended up calling 111. When she has tried to speak to the practice

they appear not to listen and won't acknowledge the problems this is causing for her.

Our Hub team advised that her feedback would be recorded and signposted her to The Advocacy People for further support. Thanks were exchanged and the caller said "It makes such a difference, people listening."

Coming up



Project looking at discharge pathways from the Royal United Hospital, Trust



Review of how mental health services are accessed and managed for people with autism, learning disabilities or neurodivergence



Survey to review the complaints handling process at Salisbury Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Find out more about our work at healthwatchwiltshire.co.uk



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