



Information & Signposting and Feedback Centre

What we heard in August 2022

What we heard this month

Each month we collate and analyse what we have heard from the public and patients about health and care services.

We use experiences captured by enquiries to our [Information & Signposting service](#) (I&S) and on our web-based [Feedback Centre](#).

This report summarises what Healthwatch East Sussex have heard this month.

It includes:

- A summary of key themes
- A breakdown of I&S enquiries
- A breakdown of Feedback reviews
- How we have used this information



For further details on our Information & Signposting service or Feedback Centre – see slides 12 and 13

Key health and care themes this month

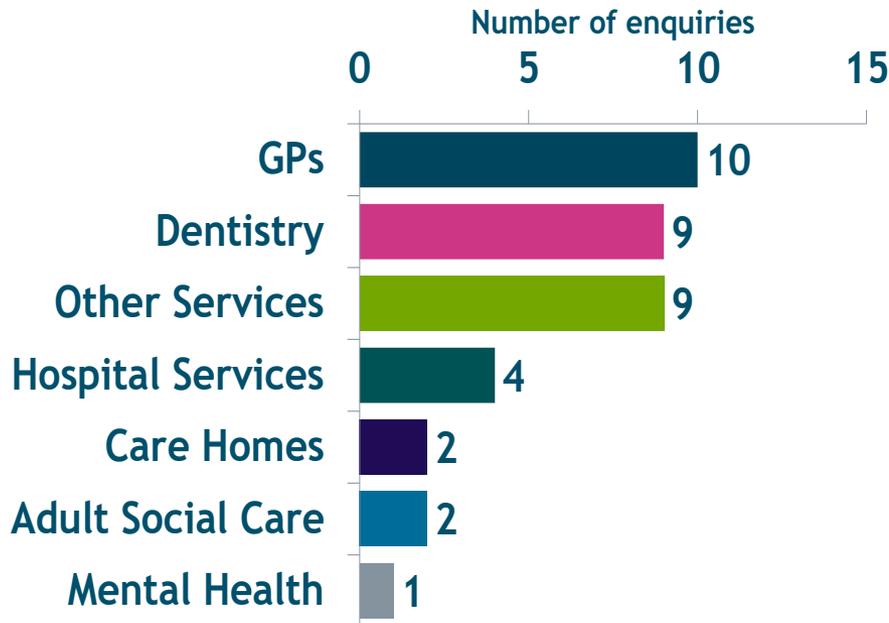
Service/Theme	Themes and issues identified
GP Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most contacts expressed frustration with the limited accessibility of appointments and long waiting times to contact GP surgeries.• Issues included: appointments all being allocated by the time they phone; lengthy phone queues; and being expected to discuss medical issues with receptionists.• Concerns over the withdrawal of some digital services (e.g. E-Consult) and advance booking mechanisms.• Dissatisfaction with the lack of timely communications from practices in relation to follow-up appointments, results and referrals.• Positive experiences of prompt and efficient treatment were also received.
Dentists and dental services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many people were unable to find an NHS dentist in East Sussex accepting new patients, despite extensive searching. <i>This continues to be our most common form of dental enquiry.</i>• Some enquirers required urgent treatment, as well as check-ups to help manage health conditions, but were struggling to find dentists.• Positive experiences were received, but primarily related to patients already registered with dentists, especially private dental practices.

Key health and care themes this month

Service/Theme	Themes and issues identified
Hospital services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• People contacted us for support with complaints about their experiences of using local Hospital Services. These focused on delays and cancellations, a lack of communication as well as the quality of care and treatment.• One enquirer made contact to praise their hospital experience.• One person told us their treatment was excellent, but the delays were not.
Pharmacies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We received mixed feedback on Pharmacies this month.• Positive examples highlighted staff giving prompt, friendly and useful advice.• Negative examples referred to delays for prescriptions, long queues and limited opening hours making access to medication challenging.
Other Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Challenges in contacting Adult Social Care and dissatisfaction with the assessment process.• Concerns over the appropriateness of the care received in care homes, including challenges in making contact and monitoring the wellbeing of residents.• Issues in receiving appropriate NHS support for mental health concerns.

Information & Signposting enquiries this month

What you told us



Enquiry numbers

We received 37 enquiries to our I&S service during August 2022, a decrease from 47 in July.

Enquiry themes

The most common enquiry theme during August was GP services, but we also received 9 dentistry enquiries this month and these have featured strongly throughout 2022.

We also heard about hospital services, care homes and adult social care as well as more enquires related to multiple themes.

Complaints about health and care services

Our Information and Signposting service engages with people who may be unhappy with the health or care services they have used.

We advise people on how they can raise their concerns with providers and, where appropriate, refer them for support from a complaint advocate.

Ten enquiries received during August related to complaints about health or care services, which is a slight increase from four in July. Four of these were referred to The Advocacy People for support with the NHS Independent Health Complaints process.

Topics of complaints this month included:

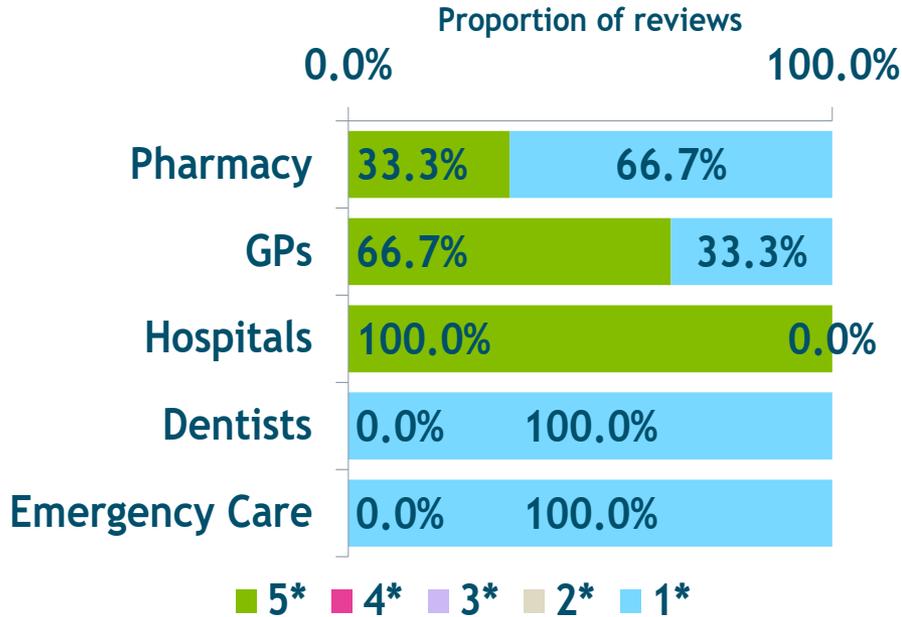
- Lack of access to appointments and poor treatment from GPs
- Challenges in obtaining appropriate diagnosis and treatment
- Delays to treatment and diagnostic results
- Poor quality care during treatment at hospitals

Support with complaints about NHS services

If you need help to make a complaint about an NHS service, please contact The Advocacy People: **Tel:** 0300 440 9000 or **email:** info@theadvocacypeople.org.uk or visit their website: <https://www.theadvocacypeople.org.uk/>

Feedback Centre reviews this month

What you told us



Review ratings

The graph above shows the breakdown of the ratings given to reviewed services.

These range from 5* (Excellent) to 1* (Poor.)

Review numbers

We received 10 reviews on our Feedback Centre during August 2022, a decrease from 11 in July.

Review themes

The services reviewed during August were:

- Pharmacies (3)
- GPs (3)
- Hospitals (2)
- Dentists (1)
- Emergency Care (1)



Positive feedback this month

Hospitals

“Attended for an Xray. Arrived 15 mins early. Friendly and helpful receptionist. Was called after being in the waiting area for about a minute. Left the hospital 8 mins before my appointment was scheduled to start. Very fast and easy.”

GPs

“Online consultation submitted late Tuesday evening. Surgery rang early the following morning. Prescription rung through to my nominated pharmacy, collected and treatment started the same day.”

Dentists

“Really good seen within the hour. Going on holiday that day and they fitted me in. Brilliant service.”

Pharmacists

“The staff are always happy to help and provide advice. Lovely staff and always a great service.”





Negative feedback this month

Hospitals

“No personal touch or indicator of how long my wait would be. Only a few wearing masks and some obviously very sick people. When I finally saw doctor response was excellent.”

GPs

“For many years it has been virtually impossible to get a face-to-face appointment, in the first step is a phone consultation which can be within a 4 hour slot, next when talking to a member of staff they informed me that the doctors usually only work 2 or 3 days a week, despite having a lot of names on the notice board clearly at least half aren't there.

On a positive note the nursing staff are great and have always been so.”

Pharmacists

“I get a text to tell me my prescription is ready, I get up the high street and the pharmacy is closed again, or my prescription isn't ready.”





To see copies of our published reports please visit our website [here](#).

‘You Said – We Did’

Healthwatch champions people’s views and experiences of health and social care services in the county to make sure they are heard by the people in charge.

We:

- Gather and publish robust evidence on key health and care themes.
- Provide insight to the East Sussex [Health & Wellbeing Board](#), Scrutiny Committee and other decision-making groups.
- Share patient and public views with NHS and Care commissioners and providers.
- Use case-studies to illustrate people’s direct experiences.
- Promote public engagement in decision-making.

‘You Said – We Did’

The table below shows how we have used your experiences recently:

You Said...	We...
GP Services in East Sussex were challenging to access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared experiences at our monthly meeting with Sussex Health and Care commissioners, requesting updates on action being taken. • Highlighted experiences to the Healthwatch Advisory Group.
NHS Dentists were challenging to access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicised our previous reports on dentistry to service commissioners, councillors, MPs and shared findings with the Local Dental Committee. • Fed our evidence into the Healthwatch England campaign calling for improvements in NHS dentistry provision. • Engaged with Integrated Care System(ICS) colleagues about this body taking responsibility for NHS dental commissioning in Sussex. • Worked to distribute our Healthwatch developed: a guide to accessing dentistry.
You experienced delays in Hospital, especially A&E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared patient feedback at our regular meeting with East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) who operate our local hospitals in East Sussex.
You experienced delays at Pharmacies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produced guidance on how to order repeat prescriptions to minimise the risk of being without medication.
You were not always clear how and when to contact Adult Social Care services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Began the process of engaging with Adult Social Care and others to explore how the understanding about Adult Social Care's role could be improved amongst the public and with partners.

Our Information & Signposting Service

Healthwatch East Sussex's Information and Signposting service is a confidential service that is independent of the NHS and East Sussex County Council.

We can help the public and patients:

- Navigate health and social care services and support groups near you
- Get information about what you can do when you have concerns or a complaint
- Find out about support and signposting to advocacy services, safeguarding and patient rights
- Share feedback about services

Contact Us

Email: enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk

Telephone: 0333 101 4007 Monday - Friday (10am-2pm)

Our Feedback Centre

Our [Feedback Centre](#) allows people who have used local health and care services to leave a review of each experience, including an overall 'star' rating.

Reviews for each service are published on the website, so that the public and other users can see them.

They can also be viewed by service commissioners and providers to help them understand people's experiences, both positive and where changes are needed. Providers can also respond to reviews.

How to leave a review:

- Go to our [Feedback Centre](#), find the service you wish to review (or add it), and click on 'Leave your feedback'
- Follow our [step-by-step guide](#) to leaving a review

Please note that all reviews are validated before publication.

For more information

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