

# You Told Us

October 2024



# You told us...

---

Based on October 2024, we've analysed the feedback we received to get an overview of the most common themes within health and social care in Westmorland and Furness. By encouraging people to share their experiences, it informs our future focus of engagement as well as highlighting any issues that we may need to escalate directly to the provider.

We also offer information and signposting if people need further support or want to make a complaint.



**148**

People were signposted to further assistance and help



We engaged with **398** members of the public, patients and charity sector

We reached **3,311** people through our social media and newsletter



We had the most feedback about...



- **Accessibility and reasonable adjustments**
  - **Access to services**
  - **Communication with patients**
-

# You told us...

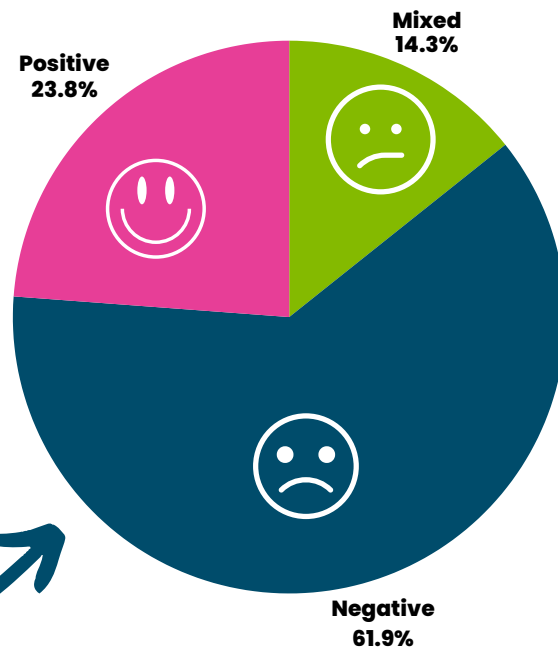
- Access to services
- Accessibility and reasonable adjustments
- Booking appointments
- Caring, kindness, respect and dignity
- Quality of treatment
- Service organisation, delivery, change and closure
- Waiting for appointments or treatment; waiting lists



- Caring, kindness, respect and dignity
- Lifestyle and wellbeing; wider determinants of health
- Medication, prescriptions and dispensing
- Patient/resident safety
- Referrals
- Service organisation, delivery, change and closure



**Feedback sentiment**



- Access to services
- Accessibility and reasonable adjustments
- Administration (records, letters, results)
- Booking appointments



- Building, decor and Facilities, including health and safety
- Caring, kindness, respect and dignity
- Communication with patients; treatment explanation; advice

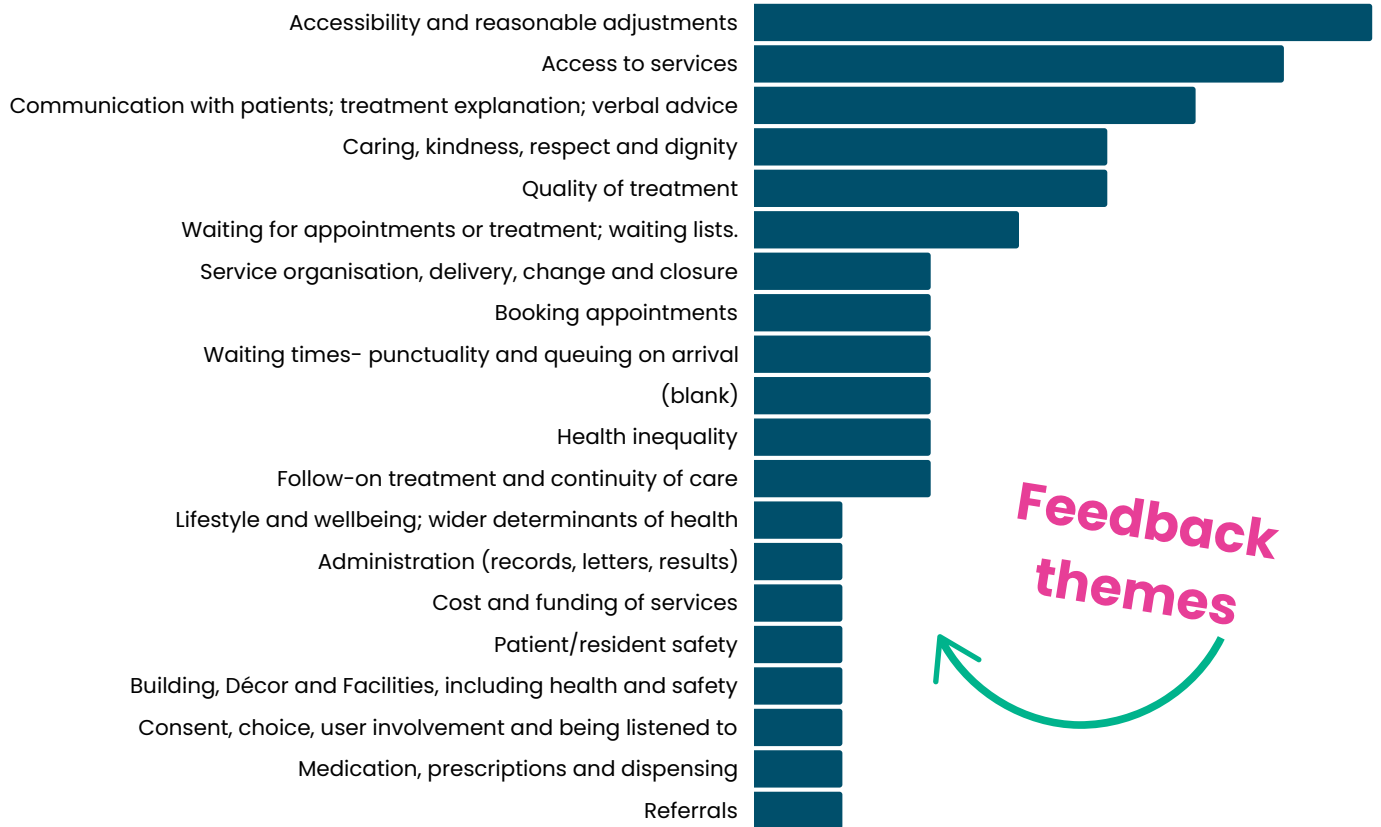
- Quality of treatment
- Service organisation, delivery, change and closure
- Waiting for appointments or treatment; waiting lists

## Domiciliary care

Member of the public has domiciliary care for one hour per day, six days per week and a two hour call on Tuesday. On Tuesday the carer helps with shopping and remainder of wmpany for me'. They have regular carers and they know each other well now. They help with form filling and other things if needed.

# You told us...

## We also heard about



**Feedback themes**

The Healthwatch Westmorland and Furness team are available to talk between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday. We're here to listen to your views and experiences, and we can help you find the health and care services you are looking for.

There are multiple ways you can share your feedback with us. If you have an inquiry, or want to share your general experiences, you can call the office on 300 373 2820 or email [info@healthwatchwestfurn.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchwestfurn.co.uk).

If you would like to leave feedback about a specific service, such as your GP Practice, care home or hospital the best place to do this is on our independent Feedback Centre at [www.healthwatchwestfurn.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchwestfurn.co.uk)



# We did...

---

## Where we've been

**This month the team have been out and about across Westmorland and Furness, along with volunteers, attending a variety of health and wellbeing events, drop-ins, and meeting groups. We've also met with decision-makers on health and social care to share what we're hearing from patients and the public.**

We kicked off the month with a busy weekend, with Kate at GLL's Sunday Fun Day at Penrith Leisure Centre, and Lisa and volunteers at GLL's Age Friendly Festival at Kendal Leisure Centre. These were both great opportunities to chat to local people about the issues around health care there. In Penrith Kate heard about concerns for how the increased numbers of new homes will affect the availability of already limited NHS dental appointments.

We kicked off the month with a busy weekend, with Kate at GLL's Sunday Fun Day at Penrith Leisure Centre, and Lisa and volunteers at GLL's Age Friendly Festival at Kendal Leisure Centre. These were both great opportunities to chat to local people about the issues around health care there. In Penrith Kate heard about concerns for how the increased numbers of new homes will affect the availability of already limited NHS dental appointments.



Lisa and Sophie, our new Communication and Administration Co-ordinator, went to University of Morecambe Bay Hospital's Listening Event in Barrow. They facilitated the tables at the event, and heard about A&E, specialist dentistry and theatre departments and how they make accommodations for people with learning disabilities and autism.

---

# We did...

---

## Where we've been

We met up with Vision Support Barrow & District to discuss an exciting project for November (you'll have to wait until next month to read about that!), and attended their AGM at Ostley House in Barrow, which also included a tour of their specialist dementia wing, Bradbury Village.

We met up with Vision Support Barrow & District to discuss an exciting project for November (you'll have to wait until next month to read about that!), and attended their AGM at Ostley House in Barrow, which also included a tour of their specialist dementia wing, Bradbury Village.

Kate and Director Lindsay caught up with other local Healthwatch in the North East North Cumbria network to talk about projects and opportunities which affect the Eden area of Westmorland and Furness.

Lindsay visited Cumbria Health open day in Carlisle to hear about the organisation formerly known as CHoC's operations across Cumbria, including in Eden.

Lisa and volunteers ended the month with The Bay Health Festivals Family Fun Day in Kendal, and Kirkby Lonsdale Wellbeing Day, which was organised in partnership with East Integrated Care Community (ICC) at Lunesdale Hall. Both events were great places to provide information and signposting, as well as promote our women's health survey.



# We did...

## A trip to hear about transport in the Pennines

Kate joined 10 local people at The Chat Room in Alston to find out about health and social care up at England's highest market town.

She was warmly welcomed and the discussion ranged from the difficulty of getting to appointments elsewhere in Cumbria, to how great the GP practice is, how long a wait there was for NHS dental appointments, and the town's emergency response vehicle.

Kate was able to do some signposting and we have forwarded the group's comments on public transport to the Enhanced Partnership Forum on public transport provision, which is a joint initiative between Westmorland and Furness and Cumberland Councils.



## Team members Laura and Lisa know their PLACE

Both Lisa and our new Research and Data officer, Laura, went on PLACE visits (Patient-Led Assessment of the Clinical Environment), to Furness General Hospital and Westmorland General Hospital respectively.

Laura said afterwards: 'The competence and knowledge of the team was obvious ... I would struggle to find anything negative to write about the day. On the other hand, something worth highlighting was the quality of the food, for which we all agreed we would return the day after!'

# We did...

## Adult Autism Pathways report

Kate joined 10 local people at The Chat Room in Alston to find out about health and social care up at England's highest market town.

She was warmly welcomed and the discussion ranged from the difficulty of getting to appointments elsewhere in Cumbria, to how great the GP practice is, how long a wait there was for NHS dental appointments, and the town's emergency response vehicle.

Kate was able to do some signposting and we have forwarded the group's comments on public transport to the Enhanced Partnership Forum on public transport provision, which is a joint initiative between Westmorland and Furness and Cumberland Councils.



## Team members Laura and Lisa know their PLACE

Both Lisa and our new Research and Data officer, Laura, went on PLACE visits (Patient-Led Assessment of the Clinical Environment), to Furness General Hospital and Westmorland General Hospital respectively.

Laura said afterwards: 'The competence and knowledge of the team was obvious ... I would struggle to find anything negative to write about the day. On the other hand, something worth highlighting was the quality of the food, for which we all agreed we would return the day after!'

# Personal story

---

dfghf hfhg fghfgh fghf hfg ffhgfh fghfhgfh

**Lorem ipsum odor amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Hac tortor vestibulum nisl class gravida donec integer conubia. Potenti velit rutrum potenti dis habitasse lacus. Potenti vel auctor adipiscing primis ligula. Sapien feugiat torquent nostra erat pretium sodales penatibus ut? Adipiscing habitant enim elementum maecenas odio tempor. Natoque aenean mollis in.**

Please note, for anonymity purposes, names have been changed.

Recently I met up with Susan who wanted to share her experiences of accessing healthcare whilst living with a sensory impairment. Susan was officially diagnosed with hearing loss 10 years ago and now navigates the world with a set of Bluetooth hearing aids. Her hearing aids generally work well and are adaptable for use with lots of modern equipment, they can be tuned to work with various modern appliances including radios, smart TVs, computers, and mobile phones but in practice, problems can arise when using telephones.



When it comes to booking non-urgent appointments with her GP, Susan's best option is to speak to the receptionist face to face. "I'll try to put it off as much as possible as I don't fancy the process – it's hard work. The whole process of booking appointments highlights my disability to me."

Generally, she waits till she is having "a good day" with better mobility and reduced arthritic knee pain to visit her nearest surgery (her practice has three locations). "On a good day, I'll Walk to the surgery so I can talk to the receptionist face to face." She will try to do this on a "good day" as her mobility is a little better and the arthritis in her knee isn't as painful as usual. Even though booking an appointment face-to-face is the best option sometimes this can still be difficult.

---

# Personal story continued

---

She has learned to adapt to her hearing loss by watching people's faces and partly lip reading to assist with her hearing aids. However, when booking appointments, often receptionists will look down at their keyboard which is not the best for Susan. She does ask for them to look up so she can look at their mouths too and explains that she is hard of hearing. If she requires an urgent appointment with her GP, the face-to-face option is removed.

Her GP practice requires patients to telephone for urgent appointments and this creates a barrier to accessing health care. For her to hear the receptionists, Susan needs to alter her Bluetooth settings on her hearing aids. By doing this, the receptionists can't hear her properly. For the receptionists to hear Susan properly, her Bluetooth settings need to be lower and Susan, then can't hear properly.



Add to this the possibility of poor reception due to adverse weather conditions and background noise from the surgery, resulting in increased stress and anxiety with the process. When she phones, she always asks, "Can I ask you to get nearer to your headset" and "Can I ask for a little patience as I am hard of hearing." Yet "It's like climbing Mount Everest to me. They can't hear me, or I can't hear them."

I asked Susan what things needed to change to make booking appointments more accessible for her. "Make sure I can see the person face to face." Trying to speak over the phone ... is tiring and takes more out of your brain. It can really exhaust you; your brain works twice as hard, and it is harder to process."

Following on from this conversation our Healthwatch representative gave Susan information regarding reasonable adjustments within health and social care settings to remove the barriers faced by people with a disability.

---