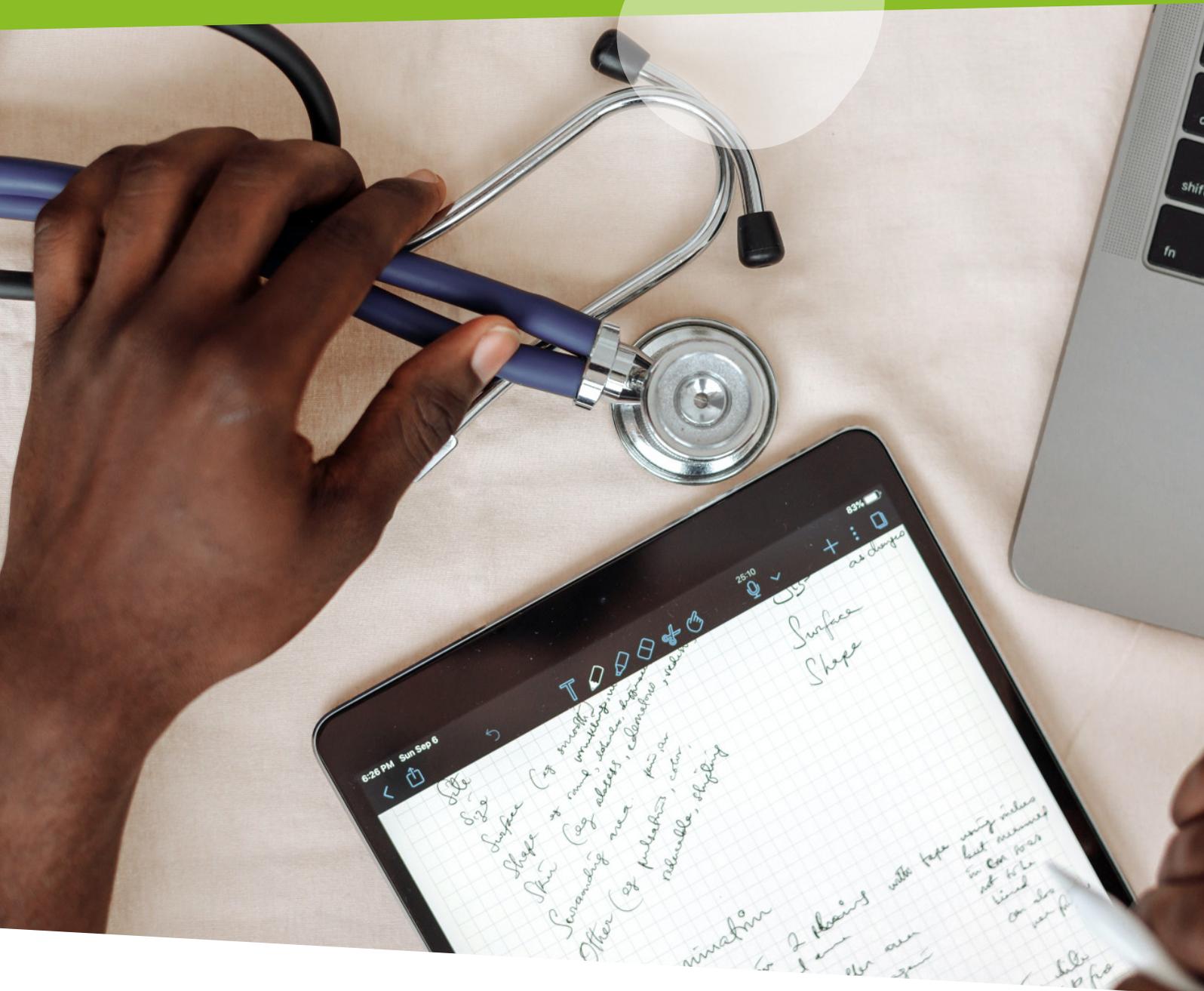


Access to Health and Social Care Services in Birmingham



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Summary

This report summarises feedback heard by Healthwatch Birmingham between April 2021 and March 2022, from people who live and work in Birmingham, about their experiences of health and social care. It covers four quarters.

The feedback covered various services across the city and reflected people's care experiences during this period. Feedback was collected using a variety of different routes including engagement, community events and research.

- In this report we find that access to services, care and treatment has been variable across Birmingham with significant concerns in some services such as mental health, dentistry, and GP services
- Except for the first quarter, all subsequent quarters had much higher negative feedback for GP services, at 43% in Q1 to 74% in Q4 and as high as 80% in Q3
- Dentistry has seen a 21% increase in negative feedback over the year
- Negative feedback for mental health services has increased across the quarters standing at 73% in Q1 and 94% in Q4
- Feedback concerning hospitals has been variable over the year with slight differences between negative and positive feedback in Q1 (50% positive and 47% negative) and Q4 (43% positive and 42% negative); more negative feedback in Q2 (63%) and more positive feedback in Q3 (56%)
- Feedback for social care services has been variable ranging from 59% negative in Q1, 77% negative in Q2, and positive in the Q3 (46%) and Q4 (64%)
- Overall feedback on pharmacies is positive with 83% in Q1 and 56% in Q4.

Healthwatch Birmingham would like to thank all patients, service users, carers and relatives of people using these services for providing their feedback.

Total Reviews by service sector based on Quarterly feedback

A total of seven service type categories were recorded across the four different quarters, as shown in Figure 1 below. In Q1, Healthwatch Birmingham received 1587 pieces of feedback, 887 in Q2, 920 in Q3, and 474 in Q4.

In Q1 and Q2, GP services received the highest feedback (832 and 445 respectively). In Q3 and Q4 Hospital services received the most feedback (387 and 161 respectively). We received the most feedback through social media in quarter 1 and 2, owing to covid-19 restrictions (see Table1) and through engagement (Q3) and email and website (Q4).

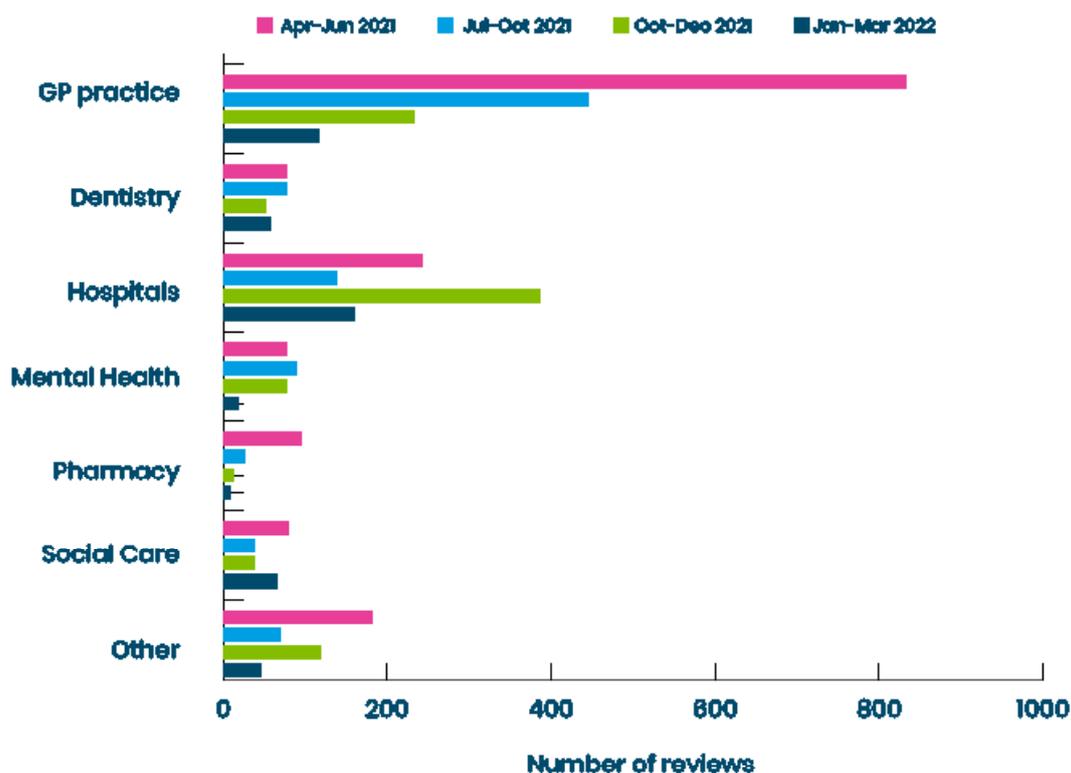


Figure 1: Reviews count for 7 service categories across 4 quarters





Sources of Quarterly feedback

The table below shows the sources of feedback for this report:

Table 1: Sources of feedback

Feedback sources	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Email	78	122	88	70
Email, Website Feedback	1	1	1	125
Engagement Event	6	160	395	116
Research	2	1	0	5
Social Media	1233	322	142	61
Telephone	116	108	87	44
Telephone, Email	12	17	9	4
Third-Party	10	8	0	0
Website Feedback	129	148	0	0
Feedback Centre	0	0	180	0
Letters	0	0	14	29
Meeting	0	0	2	0

GP Services themes

The first quarter had the most significant percentage of favorable feedback, at 46%. However, the number of positive ratings decreased significantly in the second quarter (25%), third quarter (15%), and fourth quarter (17%). As a result, except for the first quarter, all subsequent quarters had much higher negative feedback. The trend for the last three quarters shows possibilities for a potential decline in negative feedback. By comparing the third and fourth quarter feedbacks, there is a 6% decrease in negative comments and a 2% increase in positive feedback.

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Administration

The theme of Administration was noted to be shared across the four different quarters. In Q1, 455 reviews were related to Administration; 243, 119, and 42 were related to Administration in Q2, Q3, and Q4, respectively. The theme appointment was subcategorized into three sub-themes: appointment availability, booking appointments, and getting through on the telephone.

Most of the reviews in Q1 for Appointment availability, 55 % (N=127), were positive. In Q2, 77 % (N=87) of the feedback received was negative regarding appointment availability. 85 % (N=47) of the feedback relating to Appointment availability in Q3 was negative. For Q4, the feedback on appointment availability had a majority of 75 % (N=15) as negative.

Most of the reviews in Q1 for Booking appointments, 55 % (N=72), were positive. In Q2, 63 % (N=50) of the feedback received was negative regarding booking appointments. 66 % (N=19) of the feedback relating to Booking appointments in Q3 was negative. For Q4, the feedback on Booking appointments had a majority of 94 % (N=15) as negative.

Most of the reviews in Q1 for getting through on the telephone, 52 % (N=48), were positive. In Q2, 80 % (N=41) of the feedback received was negative regarding getting through on the telephone. 97 % (N=34) of the feedback relating to getting through on the telephone in Q3 was negative. For Q4, the feedback on getting through on the telephone had a majority of 75 % (N=12) as negative

Positive Feedback

"Calls are answered promptly, waiting time for an appointment to a phone call from GP is prompt"

"It used to be tricky to get swift appointments, but since the pandemic it is now easy to get feedback from a GP, whether by phone, or electronically, within the day"

Negative feedback

"Called at 8am (several mornings, same thing). There was one caller before me... for 45 minutes. Called back, 17 callers before me"

"Waiting 20 min+ caller 10 to 2 then hung up wanted to make an appointment for my wife she had a lump on her back suddenly appear very important to see the doctor, been phoning since morning time no answer only waiting in a queue"

Quality of treatment

The quality of treatment is noted as a common theme across all four quarters. The total reviews relating to the quality of treatment were 103 in Q1, 77 in Q2, 38 in Q3, and 11 in Q4. The quality of treatment refers to how well the patients were satisfied with the treatment provided by their GP.

53 % (N=55) were positive in Q1, representing the majority. In Q2, the majority 55 % (N=42), were negative feedbacks. 82 % (N=31) of the feedback in Q3 was negative, and 82 % (N=9) of the feedback in Q4 was negative. Overall, the quality of treatment is noted to have declined from the first to the fourth quarter.

Positive Feedback

"They have looked after me and my family for the last 30 years"

"My experience of populars surgery has been amazing could not ask for a better doctors"

Negative feedback

"trying to get a treatment for a fungal on the nail of my now 10-year-old son since the beginning of 2019, but the NHS failed to complete this four times"

"Caller had 2 atrial fibrillation operations year ago, and is now suffering as problems are reoccurring. She said she felt the same symptoms coming on so raised them with doctor months ago. However, nothing happened because of this, they said her ECG was okay"

Staff

The theme "Staff" was the same across the four different quarters. In Q1, 188 reviews were related to staff, while 112, 84, and 46 were related to the staff theme in Q2, Q3, and Q4, respectively. The theme of staff was subcategorized into two sub-themes: Attitude and Professionalism.

Most of the reviews in Q1 for Attitude, 60 % (N=81), were negative. In Q2, 83 % (N=63) of the feedback received was negative regarding attitude. 72 % (N=33) of the feedback relating to Attitude in Q3 was negative. For Q4, the feedback on attitude had a majority of 74 % (N=28) as negative. Thus, overall, the attitude of staff is negative in all quarters.

Most of the reviews in Q1 for Professionalism 52 % (N=27) were negative. In Q2, 86 % (N=31) of the feedback received was negative as regards professionalism. 74 % (N=28) of the feedback on Professionalism in Q3 was negative. For Q4, the feedback on professionalism had a majority of 74 % (N=28) as negative. Overall, the staff professionalism is noted to be negative in all quarters.

Positive Feedback

"Friendly staff who have helped me with my own mental health as well as my daughter's even during lockdowns. My asthma review was never forgotten about and when phoning for appointments the staff are always so friendly and understanding so I don't feel I am wasting time"

"I find the staff very friendly and helpful and especially all through lockdown and the pandemic"

Negative feedback

"Can never get an appointment, receptionists are quite rude and unprofessional"

"I went here after a minor car accident the doctor accused me of trying to commit insurance fraud. Must humiliating experience of my life"

Dentistry themes

The first quarter had the most significant percentage of positive feedback, at 54%. However, the number of positive ratings decreased in the second quarter (42%), third quarter (14%), and fourth quarter (14%). Except for the first and second quarters, all subsequent quarters had much higher negative feedback. The trend for the last three quarters shows possibilities for a potential increase in negative feedback. Comparing the third and fourth quarter feedback shows a 21% increase in negative comments.

Quality of Treatment

The quality of treatment is noted as a standard dental theme across all four quarters. The total reviews relating to the quality of treatment were 29 in Q1, 15 in Q2, 16 in Q3, and 11 in Q4. The quality of treatment refers to how well the patients were satisfied with the treatment provided by their dentist.

55 % (N=16) were positive in Q1, representing the majority. In Q2, the majority 53 % (N=8), were also positive feedbacks. 50 % (N=8) of the feedback in Q3 was negative, and 82 % (N=9) of the feedback in Q4 was negative. Overall, the dental quality of treatment is noted to have declined in Q3 and Q4.

Positive Feedback

"Good treatment with lots of advice for aftercare"

"Absolutely fantastic I had a severe tooth infection during the pandemic but was a bit apprehensive about going the dentist actually told me off for not calling (in a nice way) gave antibiotics and arranged a safe environment to have tooth removed can't fault any of the staff"

Negative feedback

"The caller has had dentures since last year. They implanted mesh gauze and the dentures started to crack. The caller is very unhappy with the treatment"

"Requested to have a different dentist as was so upset with first one. Second one even worse. Was told I needed a filling second dentist said I didn't. Referred me to Hospital to have a tooth out without even having an xray to check if the tooth needed to come out"

Staff

The theme Staff was considered standard across the four different quarters. In Q1, 33 reviews were related to staff, while 35, 15, and 23 were related to the staff theme in Q2, Q3, and Q4, respectively. The theme staff was subcategorized into two sub-themes: attitudes and professionalism.

Most of the reviews in Q1 for Attitude 60 % (N=9) were positive. In Q2, 39 % (N=7) of the feedback received was positive regarding attitude. On the other hand, 63 % (N=5) of the feedback relating to Attitude in Q3 was neutral. For Q4, the feedback on attitude had 42 % (N=5) as negative. Thus, overall staff attitude is majorly positive in Q1 – Q3 but for Q4 negative feedback on attitude were more. Thus, indicating that the dental staff attitude has worsened in Q4.

Most of the reviews in Q1 for dental staff Professionalism, 61 % (N=11), are favorable. In Q2, 41 % (N=7) of the feedback received was negative regarding dental staff Professionalism. 57 % (N=4) of the feedback relating to dental staff Professionalism in Q3 was neutral. For Q4, the feedback on professionalism had a majority of 55 % (N=6) as negative. Overall, the dental staff's professionalism worsened after the first quarter.

Positive Feedback

"Great customer service and 1-2-1 dentist patient's care. Great follow-up advice"

"My dentist he's a very nice person very careful with his patience"

Negative feedback

"I will not be taking my daughter back there. It's outrageous that they think they can just act on minors without consent"

"I went here after a minor car accident the doctor accused me of trying to commit insurance fraud. Must humiliating experience of my life"

Treatment and Care

The theme of treatment and care was common in the four different quarters. In Q1, 13 reviews were related to treatment and care, while 28, 21, and 24 were recorded in Q2, Q3, and Q4, respectively. The theme of treatment and care was subcategorized into two sub-themes, including Experience and Effectiveness.

The reviews in Q1 for treatment experience were equal in both positive and negative, 44% (N=4). In Q2, 44 % (N=8) of the feedback received was positive regarding treatment experience. On the other hand, 67 % (N=6) of the feedback relating to experience in Q3 was neutral. For Q4, 38 % (N=5) was negative. Thus, overall staff attitude is majorly positive in Q1-Q2 but for Q3-Q4 negative feedback on attitude were more. Thus, it Indicates that the dental treatment attitude has worsened in Q3 and Q4.

The reviews in Q1 for dental care effectiveness are 50% (N=2) positive and 50% (N=2) negative. In Q2, 50 % (N=7) of the feedback received was neutral regarding dental care effectiveness. 58 % (N=7) of the feedback in Q3 was also neutral. For Q4, the feedback had a majority of 45 % (N=5) as negative. Overall, the dental care effectiveness worsened after the third and fourth quarters.

Positive Feedback

"Dentist took the time to discuss (before the appointment) as my son has disabilities different options for treatment and on the day was kind and efficient"

"Wasn't looking forward to the experience. All carried out with the greatest of consideration for my comfort. Absolutely painless procedure. Simply a GREAT SERVICE"

Negative feedback

"They implanted mesh gauze and the dentures started to crack"

"It took 5 visits and 2 months for a check up with x-rays denture adjustment and a filling. I did not get a dental plan or advice"

Hospital themes

The first quarter had a significant percentage of positive feedback, at 50%. However, positive ratings decreased in the second quarter (31%) and had the highest positive feedback in the third quarter (56%). The fourth quarter (43%) also had high positive feedback. Overall, the feedback on the Hospital is positive, given that the last two quarters have been positive.

Quality of treatment

The quality of treatment is noted as a common hospital theme across all four quarters. The total reviews relating to the quality of treatment were recorded as 68 in Q1, 39 in Q2, 72 in Q3, and 36 in Q4. The quality of treatment refers to how well the patients were satisfied with the quality of treatment provided by their hospital.

51 % (N= 35) were positive in Q1, representing the majority. In Q2, the majority 59 % (N= 23), were negative feedbacks. 65 % (N=47) of the feedback in Q3 was positive, and 56 % (N=20) of the feedback in Q4 was also positive. Overall, the hospital quality of treatment is positive.

Positive Feedback

"Last year I had Kidney Cancer during lockdown without the hospitals in the Trust I would have been in dire straits"

"I gave birth here few days ago the support help and advice given were very good"

Negative feedback

"The caller has had two failed hip replacements. She ideally wants compensation"

"Mother in Hospital and unable to speak any English. She has underlying health conditions. There has been no interpreter offered and she is scared and heavily sedated"

Staff

The Staff theme was seen as standard across the four quarters. For example, in Q1, 91 reviews were recorded, while 52, 123, and 80 were related to the staff theme in Q2, Q3, and Q4, respectively. The theme staff was subcategorized into three sub-themes: attitudes, professionalism, and general.

Most of the reviews in Q1 for Attitude 50 % (N=17) were Negative. In Q2, 77 % (N=24) of the feedback received was negative as regards attitude. On the other hand, 66 % (N=53) of the feedback relating to Attitude in Q3 was positive. For Q4, the feedback on attitude had 50 % (N=9) as unfavorable. Thus, overall, the attitude of hospital staff improved in Q3-Q4.

The majority of the reviews in Q1 for hospital staff Professionalism 53 % (N=24) are positive. In Q2, 61 % (N=11) of the feedback received was negative regarding dental staff Professionalism. 63 % (N=12) of the feedback on dental staff Professionalism in Q3 was neutral. For Q4, the feedback on professionalism had a majority of 55 % (N=26) as unfavorable. Overall, the hospital staff's professionalism worsened after the third quarter.

Most of the reviews in Q1 for hospital staff General are positive at 62 % (N=8). In Q2, 100 % (N=3) of the feedback was pessimistic regarding the hospital staff's General sub-theme. On the other hand, 58 % (N=25) of the feedback in Q3 was positive. For Q4, the feedback on the General sub-theme had a majority of 40 % (N=6) as positive. Overall, the hospital staff general worsened after the first quarter.

Positive Feedback

*"Brilliant staff and good communication.
First time in the Hospital and felt very relaxed"*

*"Good friendly and informative staff.
Good customer service provided"*

Negative feedback

*"Reception staff should let the patients know if the
previous appointments are running overtime"*

*"Elderly people and people who can't read English
need support of volunteers and reception staff
which is missing here"*

Treatment and Care

The theme of treatment and care was common across the four different quarters. In Q1, 40 reviews related to the treatment and care theme, while 26, 41, and 16 reviews related to the treatment and care theme in Q2, Q3, and Q4, respectively. The theme of treatment and care was subcategorized into two sub-themes, including Experience and Effectiveness.

The reviews in Q1 for treatment experience were positive at 55% (N=12). In Q2, 76 % (N=16) of the feedback received was negative regarding treatment experience. On the other hand, 84 % (N=27) of the feedback relating to experience in Q3 was positive. For Q4, the feedback on experience had 58 % (N=7) as positive. Thus, overall, the experience of the patients is positive, given that significant feedback in Q1, Q3, and Q4 is positive.

The reviews in Q1 for hospital treatment effectiveness are 50% (N=2) positive and 50% (N=2) negative. In Q2, 50 % (N=7) of the feedback received was neutral regarding hospital care effectiveness. Likewise, 58 % (N=7) of the feedback on hospital care effectiveness in Q3 was neutral. For Q4, the feedback on hospital care effectiveness had a majority of 45 % (N=5) as unfavorable. Overall, the hospital care effectiveness worsened after the third and fourth quarters.

Positive Feedback

"Full support given with lots of information"

"This hospital is far more better with helpful staff and good facilities"

Negative feedback

"Yesterday I had a baby boy and after the birth they send me back home because of Covid. I wanted to stay with my wife and son. I think its unfair. Ward 3"

"We're waiting for an appointment to discuss what went wrong throughout my daughter's pregnancy. She wasn't diagnosed with preeclampsia until she had an emergency C section"

Waiting times to be seen at appointment

The Waiting times to be seen at appointments are a common hospital theme across all four quarters. The total reviews on waiting time were seen as 36 in Q1, 17 in Q2, 71 in Q3, and 25 in Q4.

58 % (N=21) were negative in Q1, representing the majority. In Q2, the majority 71 % (N=12), were also negative feedbacks. 66 % (N=47) of the feedback in Q3 was positive, and 44 % (N=11) of the feedback in Q4 was negative. Overall, the waiting time to be seen treatment is poor, given that the feedback in Q1, Q2, and Q4 is negative.

Positive Feedback

"Was seen very quickly. So made the whole experience nice. Baby Clinic"

"Very good quick and efficient service provided all the time"

Negative feedback

"I had to wait over 12 months to be seen by a consultant who couldn't examine me because of the pain I was in who then sent me an appointment 8 weeks if I hadn't phoned up and said I couldn't wait that long I would be in more pain"

"appointment was at 11am and wasn't seen until after 12pm. They said the reason for being late was due to covid and parking"

Pharmacy themes

The first quarter had the most significant percentage of favorable feedback, at 83%. However, positive ratings decreased in the second quarter (52%). Higher positive feedback was noted in the third quarter (54%). The fourth quarter (56%) also had high positive feedback. Overall, the feedback on Pharmacy is positive, given that all the quarters had positive feedback.

Staff Attitude

The theme staff attitude was seen as standard across the four different quarters. For instance, in Q1, 30 reviews related to staff attitude, while 10, 8, and 3 related to the staff attitude in Q2, Q3, and Q4, respectively.

The reviews in Q1 for staff attitude were positive 83 % (N=25). In Q2, 50 % (N=5) of the feedback was positive regarding staff attitude. Likewise, 50.00 % (N=4) of the feedback on staff attitude in Q3 was positive. Finally, for Q4, the feedback on experience had 67 % (N=2) as positive. Thus, overall, the experience of patients is positive, given that most feedbacks in Q1, Q2 and Q3 are positive, and Q4 has non-significant feedback.

Positive Feedback

"Always gone out of their way to ensure my and my patient's medication is correct and available"

"Always happy to give support and advice. Nothing is too much trouble"

Negative feedback

"Useless ignorant staff. Left buying nothing as couldn't find any of the 4 staff willing to pay attention to people waiting"

"It's unorganized, staff very impatient, Pharmacist not helpful, the older man is extremely ignorant"

The reviews in Q1 for staff professionalism were positive at 73 % (N=11). In Q2, there was only one piece of feedback regarding pharmacy staff professionalism, and this was negative. On the other hand, 44 % (N=4) of the feedback relating to staff professionalism in Q3 was positive. For Q4, the feedback on staff professionalism had 67 % (N=2) as positive. Thus, overall, the experience of staff professionalism is positive, given that the significant feedbacks in Q1, Q3, and Q4 are positive.

The reviews in Q1 for General feedback were positive 93 % (N=26). In Q2, 55 % (N 6) of the feedback received was positive as regards general. On the other hand, 63 % (N=5) of the feedback relating to the General feedback sub-theme in Q3 was Negative. For Q4, the one piece of feedback on the General feedback sub-theme was negative. Thus, the overall perception of the general subtheme is deteriorating, given that most feedback from Q3 and Q4 is negative.

Positive Feedback

"My pharmacy have offered an excellent service during the whole of last year and this year"

"This place is polite, professional and very helpful in need for the medicine, home delivery and advice"

Negative feedback

"The individual went to his pharmacy to collect his prescription, but it wasn't open when he arrived - despite the opening times stating it should be on the window"

"They don't give the right medicine and they don't keep you informed of the follow up of the medicine"

Mental health themes

The first quarter had the most significant percentage of favorable feedback, at 83%. However, positive ratings decreased in the second quarter (52%). Higher positive feedback was noted in the third quarter (54%). The fourth quarter (56%) also had high positive feedback. Overall, the feedback on Pharmacy is positive, given that all the quarters had positive feedback.

Quality of service

The quality of service is noted as a common mental health theme across all four quarters. The total reviews relating to the quality-of-service was noted as 19 in Q1, 21 in Q2, 32 in Q3, and 7 in Q4. The quality of service refers to how well the patients were satisfied with the services provided in their mental health facilities.

74 % (N=14) were negative in Q1, representing the majority. In Q2, the majority 95 % (N=20), were negative feedbacks. 91 % (N=29) of the feedback in Q3 was negative, and 100 % (N=7) of the feedback in Q4 was also negative. Overall, the mental quality of service is negative.

Positive Feedback

"I have had a very good experience with FTB. When I need support they are always there"

"It is a wonderful service that strives to break the stigma and reinforce confidence and compassion within its service users"

Negative feedback

"The crisis team were supposed to contact me every day, but didn't this made me more anxious because I felt on my own"

"Very poor service was told to go have a cup of tea and everything will be alright"

Staff

The theme staff was seen to be standard across the four different quarters. For example, in Q1, 55 reviews were related to the staff sub-theme, while 67, 45, and 11 were related in Q2, Q3, and Q4, respectively. The theme of staff was subcategorized into two sub-themes: staff Attitude and professionalism.

The reviews in Q1 for mental health staff attitudes were negative 87% (N=26). In Q2, it was noted that 95 % (N=38) of the feedback received was also damaging regarding staff attitude. In addition, 100 % (N=23) of the feedback relating to staff attitude in Q3 was negative. Finally, for Q4, the feedback on staff attitude had 100 % (N=6) as negative. Thus, overall, the staff attitude is poor, given that the significant feedbacks in all the quarters are negative.

The reviews in Q1 for staff professionalism in mental health services were negative 68 % (N=17). In Q2, 100 % (N=27) of the feedback was also negative regarding staff professionalism in mental services. 100 % (N=27) of the feedback in Q3 was negative. For Q4, the feedback on professionalism had 80 % (N=4) as unfavorable. Thus, overall, the perception of mental health staff professionalism is negative, given that the significant feedbacks in all the quarters are negative.

Positive Feedback

"Whenever you struggled. There was a range of staff you could go too. The grounds are kept tidy. Staff also keep you entertained as well as working with you."

"Very helpful and caring staff"

Negative feedback

"Ignorant staff no time for patients. My daughter has been ringing every day this week for help every day asking for someone to ring her back and nothing my youngest daughter killed herself 2 years ago do they ever learn"

"Poor support for service users. Consistently blaming staff shortage for not meeting patient's needs"

Social care themes

The first quarter had a highly significant percentage of negative feedback, at 59%. However, negative ratings increased in the second quarter (77%). In the third quarter, a positive rating was noted (46%). The fourth quarter (64%) also had high positive feedback. Overall, the feedback on social care services has improved, given that Q1-Q2 were mostly negative and Q3-Q4 were mostly positive.

Quality of service

The quality of service is noted as a sub-theme that is common across all four quarters. The total reviews relating to the quality of service were seen as 40 in Q1, 22 in Q2, 19 in Q3, and 31 in Q4. The theme of quality of service refers to how well the patients were satisfied with the social care services provided.

63 % (N=25) were negative in Q1, representing the majority. In Q2, the majority 82 % (N=18), was negative feedback. The negative and positive feedback were equal in Q3 with 42 % (N=8) each. In Q4, 71 % (N=22) of the feedback was positive. Overall, the quality of service in social care has improved, given the major feedback in Q4 is positive, while Q1-Q2 were negative.

Positive Feedback

"Home care delivered was supportive it was very much person-centered and need-based"

"My mother who is disabled has a package of care in place, with carers attending twice daily"

Negative feedback

"This care home is a hopeless place they don't really care for the patients"

"They left extremely vulnerable person without food and drink"

Staff attitude

The theme of staff attitude was the same across the four different quarters. For example, in Q1, 39 reviews related to staff attitude, while 17, 19, and 31 were related to the staff attitude in Q2, Q3, and Q4, respectively.

The reviews in Q1 for social care staff attitudes are majorly negative, 56 % (N=22). In Q2, 71 % (N=12) of the feedback received was also negative as regards staff attitude. On the other hand, 53 % (N=10) of the feedback on staff attitude in Q3 was positive. For Q4, the feedback on staff attitude had 65 % (N=20) as positive. Thus, overall, the staff attitude has improved, given that the most feedback in Q3-Q4 was positive, while Q1-Q2 was negative.

Positive Feedback

"All of the staff have been courteous, kind, friendly, compassionate and caring. Nothing was ever too much trouble"

"Brilliant. They really care and go out of their way to provide a professional service"

Negative feedback

"Mother passed away on the 10th April, 2021 and she wasn't informed until 19 days later"

"The individual feels they are being discriminated against by Adult Social Care/Birmingham City Council due to her disabilities and diseases"

"The caller's mother has been at this care home for ten years. She explained that communication is bad and when she calls, the messages are often not passed along to her mother"

Other services

The first quarter had a highly significant percentage of positive feedback, at 51%. However, negative ratings increased in the second quarter (59%). The majority of Positive feedback was seen in the third quarter (42 %). The fourth quarter had high negative feedback (39%). Overall, the current status for other services is negative, given that Q4 has the majority of the feedback as unfavorable.

Negative feedback:

After Care

"The caller has seen a video on Facebook, which shows a wheelchair user being abused by a member of staff in a rehabilitation centre"

Ambulance Services

"My mother in collapsed and fell yesterday she is 91 years old with health issues we phoned a ambulance at around 5 pm and it arrived at 4am next day all this time she was on the floor unable to move in pain"

Care at Home

"She is unhappy with the level of care her daughter is receiving. She has a camera in her house and says that the carers do not like this. She has seen the carers make mistakes which has worried her"

Children Services

"The caller would like to make a complaint about social services. She was abused as a child, and doesn't think enough was done to protect her and help her afterwards"

Community Based

"Every time I call I can never get through to anyone I have to leave a voicemail message this is an absolute disgrace that they can't answer a telephone"

"I had to wait 2 hours just to be seen. This is unacceptable"

Community based services for people with a learning disability

"Absolutely disgusting services! Every time I call, I can never get through to anyone I have to leave a voicemail message, this is an absolute disgrace that they can't answer a telephone"

"The caller's son was assessed for autism in June 2020 and since then she has been waiting for a formal diagnosis of autism for her son"

Community healthcare and nursing services

"The caller feels the district nurse does not listen to him. He feels he needs adult nappies from the district nurse. He had got some from chemist and had shown them to district nurse. He did not feel listened to"

"The caller would like to make a complaint about her husband being neglected by a district health nurse"

Dentist (non-hospital)

"We have been told by a member of your staff at the Birmingham branch that we must go on your web, go to travel and book the appointments we need for the covid tests as required for travel"

Emergency Care

"Very slow with advice / help"

"999 took 20 mins to answer phone 6hr wait for ambulance"

Equipment Service

"The caller has a heart condition that greatly affects her health and mobility. She has several areas she needs assistance with: She isn't receiving as much support as she should for her health"

condition. Her GP closed and she's been assigned to one much further away which she finds hard to travel to"

GP practice

"It is hard when making a referral to keep in touch with the officer dealing with the case"

"Lots of people seem to be getting ill after having Covid vaccine. Making me hesitate about having mine"

Health Visitor

"When trying to book booster there was a concentration of certain areas available not a good mix of areas across the city. Also, GP surgery only gave one date and the text message came the afternoon before so no time given to plan to go on that day"

Hospice services

"family arrived to visit him in his room and they were disappointed with his room, undecorated, next to the office"

Hospice services at home

"Aunt been very sick this week and GP has given her pills for under her tongue and offered a video call if needed. She has arranged with the hospital to take her aunt there for regular blood tests. It has been hard to arrange these with her GP practice"

Learning disability service

"Diagnosed my son with adhd 18months ago refusing to trial medication still to this day also had an autism assessment months ago still no feedback blaming covid no ones ever able to be contacted and never reply to answerphone messages"

Mental health crisis service

"Caller was experiencing a mental health crisis and called 999 for help. They advised it would be at least 5 hours before an ambulance could attend her"

NHS 111

"Requesting information about making a complaint after an issue with emergency prescription"

"NHS 111 are clueless, we get so many referrals to pharmacy that should be referred to GP's"

NHS choices

"Client had two jabs at a venue then the NHS website didn't have it listed for Booster vaccines, and client can't currently get a vaccine"

Opticians

"They have refused me an eye test because its not urgent despite not having had one for 2 years"

Other

"After almost 2 years of waiting to get the appointment, I finally had it only to find out I am not fit for their research that was a bit disappointing but they do pay the travelling cost and will also book you a taxi if you want/need one"

Other (Community services)

"My daughter has had no physiotherapy for over 18 months despite having very serious medical conditions. Consultant appointments cancelled less than 2 hours before the time of appointment....."

"...Very poor responses from secretary"

Patient Transport

"She has a 4.30 pm weekday appointment and a Sunday appointment but cannot get to them as the NHS transport service only operates 9-5 weekdays"

Sexual Health

"Very poor service I had to wait 2 hours just to be seen. This is unacceptable"

Social Care

"Nearly 3 years I have been waiting for a diagnosis for my 10-year-old daughter she struggles daily which is hugely affecting her mental health and education"

Positive feedback:

Community Based

"This service helped me stop using drugs. They are very good with the Asian community and understand our difficulties"

"I came here today to get my 2nd jab and being extremely needle phobic I really struggle with getting vaccinations"

GP practice

"It's been a nightmare to book one close to home, but I've just saw my Drs are doing it tomorrow so I'm going over there first thing in morning"

"I called my GP and was offered an appointment the following day and given a few different time slots"

Opticians

"Good service very helpful friendly clean & bright"

"Good helpful and professional staff"

Other

"Most impressed extremely experienced young lady. Made a lovely job of my husband's nails"

"Had my booster here booked appointment online but think they do walk in days too. Was very easy and quick with friendly staff"

Pharmacies

"Service was very good"



Conclusion

This report presents feedback we have heard between April 2021 and March 2022. We find that access to services, care and treatment has been variable across Birmingham with significant concerns in some services such as mental health, dentistry and GP services.

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GP Practice

The quality of treatment that the GP provides was seen to have deteriorated in the last three quarters. The main issues noted were getting through to the GP via telephone and administrative issues such as appointment booking. Many have noted a poor service from receptionists. Even though some patients noted that the digitalization of GP services has made it easier to access the GP, for others, it has become a barrier.

Dentist

The quality of care from dentists was seen to have deteriorated in the last two quarters. Many noted that the quality of treatment has become very poor, and in some instances, a remedy is provided without diagnostic tests. The patients also expressed dissatisfaction with staff attitudes and professionalism. There are significant issues affecting dentistry services with many saying they are unable to register or access treatment as NHS patients.

Hospital

Overall, the hospital treatment quality is noted to have improved significantly in the last two quarters. In addition, the patients were generally happy with their encounter with the medical staff. The staff attitude was recorded to be great. The patients were pleased with the communication of health experts. However, some noted a lack of support for vulnerable people and waiting time is noted as a significant challenge.

Pharmacy

Pharmacy staff are rated positively in all the quarters. The service users commended the services they provided, and the support provided by the staff in these services. The main issues raised were regarding staff professionalism. In addition, some complained about delivery delays and lack of check-ups.

Mental health

The quality of service provided in mental health services was seen to be poor in all quarters. In addition, many complained about the lack of regular contact worsening patients' situation. Issues raised related to the staff's attitude and professionalism. Patients' issues are often trivialized, and no support is provided.

Social care

The quality of service is noted to have improved significantly in the last two quarters. The care was noted to now be more person-centred and need-based. The attitude of staff was also recorded to have improved. The issues noted were mainly based on the staff attitude. In addition, discrimination was noted as the main reason for sharing negative feedback.

Next Steps

These experiences were used to drive positive changes such as:

- Better support for children and young people with mental health conditions
- Improvements to visual rehabilitation services
- Increasing Covid-19 vaccine uptake in the city's most deprived communities
- Working with the NHS and service users to produce health information materials and videos in different languages
- Helping NHS services design and implement strategies to reach groups experiencing health inequalities

This feedback has also been used to inform our recent investigations and consultation responses. These can be found on our website.

In addition, feedback is shared quarterly with the Clinical Quality Commission and the commissioners of health and social care services in Birmingham. It is also shared at a national level with Healthwatch England,

An impact report will be produced within six-months of the publication of this report, providing details of how the feedback included in this report has been used to improve health and care services in Birmingham.



Appendix: About Healthwatch Birmingham

Local Healthwatch were established in every local authority area across England following the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Our key role is to ensure those who commission, design and deliver health and social care services hear, and take into account, the public voice. Healthwatch Birmingham listens to and gathers public and patient experiences of using local health and social care services such as general practices, pharmacists, hospitals, dentists, opticians, care homes and community-based care. We hear these experiences via our Information and Signposting Line, our online Feedback Centre, and through our community engagement activity led by staff and volunteers. You can read more about the work of Healthwatch Birmingham here: <https://healthwatchbirmingham.co.uk/about-us/>

How do we select the issues we collect evidence about?

Some of the issues we hear about from patients and the public may require deeper exploration in order to present a comprehensive report to those who commission, design and deliver health and social care services in Birmingham. Members of the public select these issues as part of our Topic Identification and Prioritisation System. By involving members of the public in decisions about our future activities, we ensure we are operating in an open and transparent way. It also ensures that we understand the public's priorities.

Who contributes to our evidence collection?

We explore selected issues with the help of our volunteers, Healthwatch Birmingham board members, patients, members of the public, service users and carers. They share relevant experiences, knowledge, skills and support. Healthwatch Birmingham also talks to key professionals providing or commissioning the service we are investigating. This helps us to form a deeper understanding of the issue from the perspective of these professionals, and encourages them to take prompt action to implement positive changes for patients and the public.

What difference do our reports make?

We follow up our reports to see if our findings have made services better for patients and service users. We hold service providers and/or commissioners to account for changes they stated they would make in response to the report. If Healthwatch Birmingham finds no improvement, we may decide to escalate the issue to Healthwatch England and local regulators. We also monitor the changes to see if people experience sustained improvements.

How to share your feedback about the issues heard in this study

If you are a service user, patient or carer, please do share your experiences with us via our:

- Online [Feedback Centre here](#).
- Information and Signposting line on 0800 652 5278 or by [emailing us](#).

healthwatch Birmingham

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