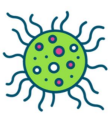


How are you doing?

Gathering feedback from the public and professionals on how they are coping during the COVID 19 pandemic

Monthly project update: October



During March 2020, England was declared in a state of pandemic, and a 'lock down' was ordered by the Prime Minister. This had a knock on effect on all health and care services in Luton.

Healthwatch Luton began a project, to ask the public and professionals in Luton 'How are you doing?'. The word 'How' is in green in the original image.

The purpose of the project is to understand how the pandemic has affected the residents within Luton, their access to health and social care and their experiences since the pandemic began. There will also be an understanding of how this has affected the professionals within Luton, in both statutory and voluntary sectors.

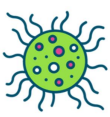
- Gather views to inform the wider health and care system, to improve delivery of care
- Ensure the voice of the public is heard
- Ensure people have an outlet for their voice
- Share current messages from partner organisations
- Promote guidance from the government
- Gather feedback from the seldom heard
- Pass on feedback to shape the system going forward
- Promote Healthwatch Luton

Activities have included a survey, calls to action, emails, case studies and phone calls to ask

- How people are feeling during the pandemic
- What is working well?
- What is not working so well?
- What can be improved and how?

Each month a report will be produced to update on the activities carried out, response rates, emerging themes and the next steps in the project.





The Prime Minister introduced a 'three tier' model for categorising the level of alert in a local authority. Initially Luton was placed in the first tier, which was 'Medium Risk'.

On 21st October, Luton was one of 77 local authorities who requested to be stepped up into the second tier 'High Risk'. On Thursday 29th October Luton was notified it would be advanced to Tier Two 'High Risk'. This brought about different restrictions that came into place just after midnight on Saturday 31st October. Communications for this were shared by Healthwatch Luton from the government and local authority.

However, during a press conference on Saturday 31st October, the Prime Minister declared there would be a second national lockdown, beginning on Thursday 5th November. This would see further restrictions and closures across the country, and changes to some health and social care. Despite this, Luton would remain in Tier Two until the lockdown.

Local COVID alert level: medium

This is for areas where national restrictions continue to be in place.

This means:

- you must not socialise in groups larger than 6, indoors or outdoors (other than where a legal exemption applies)
- businesses and venues can continue to operate, in a COVID-secure manner, other than those that remain closed in law
- certain businesses are required to ensure customers only consume food and drink while seated, and must close between 10pm and 5am
- businesses and venues selling food for consumption off the premises can continue to do so after 10pm as long as this is through delivery service, click-and-collect or drive-through
- schools, colleges and universities remain open
- places of worship remain open, subject to the [rule of 6](#)
- weddings and funerals can go ahead with restrictions on numbers of attendees
- exercise classes and [organised sport](#) can continue to take place outdoors, or indoors if the [rule of 6](#) is followed; there are exceptions for supervised activities for under-18s, and disability sport

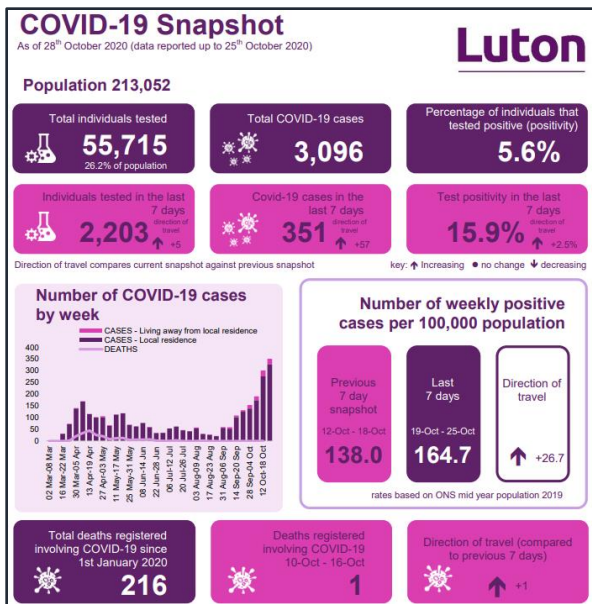
You must:

- [wear a face covering in those areas where this is mandated](#)

You should continue to:

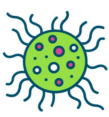
- follow social distancing rules
- work from home where you can effectively do so
- when travelling, plan ahead or avoid busy times and routes; walk or cycle if you can

Information taken from: www.gov.uk



Graph taken from: https://www.luton.gov.uk/Health_and_social_care/coronavirus/community/Pages/COVID-19-cases-and-deaths-in-luton.aspx

Graph taken from: www.gov.uk



What are the overall themes so far?

There has been a total of **128** pieces of feedback this month, **83** of which are directly from surveys or engagement in relation to coronavirus. The feedback can be split in this manner:

Service	Number
Relating to hospital	4
Relating to GPs	14
Relating to mental health	42
Relating to community services	1
Relating to emergency care	1
Relating to pharmacy	2
Relating to social care	6
CV19 General Feedback	13

Positive words included:

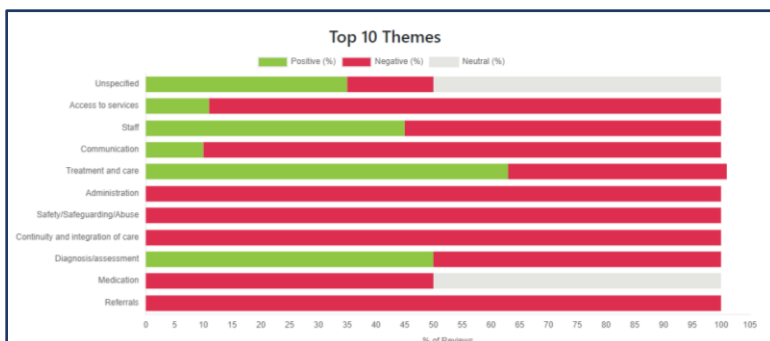
'great' 'good' 'liked' 'be happy' 'be nice'
'appreciates' 'easier' 'first class'

Negative words included:

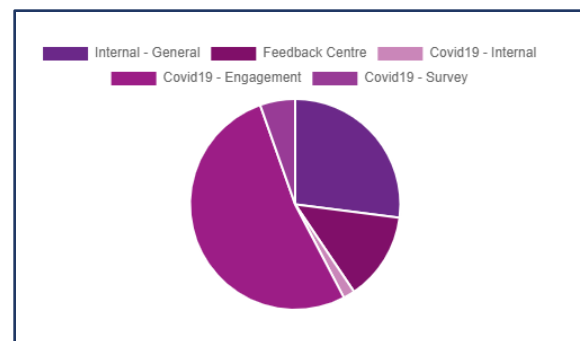
'difficult' 'unhappy' 'crisis' 'bad' 'restricted'
'scared' 'terrible' 'rude' 'useless' 'anxiety'

The main themes emerging were:

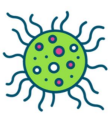
- **Lack of access to GPs**, despite some improvements due to virtual consultations and timing of appointments
- The **hospital** generally was **praised** alongside **pharmacies**
- **Virtual appointments** are working for some as is using a virtual platform for those who are in care homes and seeing loved ones
- **Communications** between health care and patients still needs improving
- Some people mentioned **treatment and care from receptionists** as being a concern for them
- **Mental health** services feedback is still coming through, not just from engagement forums



A chart showing the main themes and whether negative or positive



A chart showing the sources of feedback



Social Media campaign:

Social media has continued to be used to support local communications and organisations, as well as our own actions.

Healthwatch Luton's AGM video was published late October and shorter versions of this will be available over the next month. There were around 16 views in the five days it was live. The video will be broken down into much shorter bitesize videos, which will be more user friendly.

The video can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-X3Wki6tgBY>

Healthwatch Luton have also been sharing the winter flu communications to ensure as many people are aware as possible.

<https://www.facebook.com/healthwatch.luton/videos/692730641344232>

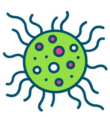


Our social media has reached over 1000 people this month, with an increase of around 35% engagement on Facebook posts alone.

What next?

The focus for November will be supporting the local authority with communications regarding the lockdown, testing and other covid related communications.

We will be sharing our Engagement Forum posters, and our survey links also.



Testing feedback:

There was some concern over the messages shared with local schools about the processes should a child or young person become unwell at school. LBC and in particular, Public Health, ensured that heads of school were reinforced of the procedures and the correct support and communications were shared with parents and carers.

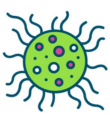
Feedback for testing has continued to be mixed. Some people have been able to access testing quite quickly and at a local and convenient site, however, some people are still having to travel outside of the local authority for testing.

Test results are taking a lot longer than ideal, with some families waiting over 6 days for test results, meaning their children are not at school for that time.



What next?

With the lockdown, we will continue to gather feedback about testing in Luton and also promote and share the routes for testing and reasons why testing is important to be carried out



Survey Monkey:

A general '4Qs' survey was created on Survey Monkey in May 2020.

The general survey has not been completed this month online, however it has been used as the basis for some calls with care homes, with feedback included in this month's overall information and figures.

Healthwatch Luton are working on a more specific survey this quarter to go live in December, which will focus more on carers and how the pandemic has affected those with caring responsibilities of others.

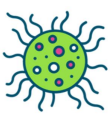
The original survey is still being shared, particularly with organisations who may be able to complete it with their clients.

What next?

A survey is being finalised for carers for the end of Q3, which will be shared far and wide.

This current survey is being shared with more organisations to complete with the digitally excluded members of the community





Engagement

With no longer having an Engagement Officer in post, engagement was taken on by the Admin team who continued to contact local care homes to gather feedback about how they are finding services for their residents during this time.

Targeted Engagement was carried out with the Young People (YP) who are already open to CAMHS via their People Participation group and with a couple of the inpatient wards for adults. Both of these have their own reports which can be found on our website.

The inpatient ward feedback was quite mixed, the only consistent thing across both wards was a change in staff had made for a more positive experience, although getting time with staff was hard as staff were busy.

Activities were mentioned again, due to being cancelled last minute or being a lack of over the weekend, and then on the contrary, as being varied and suited to particular interests. Food was noted as being better than expected also.

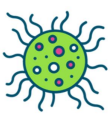
It should be noted that staff supervised all interactions with the patients on the wards which may have influenced feedback shared, however, the staff were responsive to the issues brought up by the patients and gave the impression they would be actioned or considered by staff.

Overall, the **positives** that the YP had found from the pandemic and their treatment and care included:

- Made new friends and met new people from the CAMHS groups merging online
- Virtual art therapy was really good

The **negative** aspects included:

- Lack of face-to-face appointments
- Lack of enforcement of government guidelines in schools, public transport and a clinical setting
- Diagnosis or assessments were not taking place
- An assumption that YP did not care about the virus and its potency



Engagement Forums that will be held in the upcoming weeks have the themes of hospital discharge and mental health. There are speakers confirmed for both of these and booking has begun.

healthwatch
Luton

Online engagement forum: Hospital discharge

Have you had experience with hospital discharge? Join our online engagement forum to share your experiences.
info@healthwatchluton.co.uk
t: 01582817060

Speakers from Hospital and Luton council
Tuesday 1st December
1pm-2pm

healthwatch
Luton

Online engagement forum: Mental Health

Have you recently been in touch with Mental Health services? Join our online engagement forum to share your experiences.
info@healthwatchluton.co.uk
t: 01582817060

Microsoft Teams
Tuesday 24th November
1pm-2pm

healthwatch
Luton

Online engagement forum: Carers

Are you a carer? Join our online engagement forum to share how your experience has been during the pandemic.
info@healthwatchluton.co.uk
t: 01582817060

Microsoft Teams
Tuesday 26th January
1pm-2pm

Dates:

Mental Health:

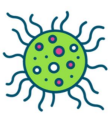
Tuesday 24th November

Hospital Discharge:

Tuesday 1st December

Carers:

Tuesday 26th January



Email

A separate email address was set up for this project covid19@healthwatchluton.co.uk. This email has been used on all our videos, posts and in signatures, to try to encourage people to use it to ensure information about COVID 19 does not get lost. The emails received still seems minimal.

Case studies

Case studies have begun into those who are digitally excluded. The purpose of these is to understand the perspective of those who are digitally excluded and how they have found the pandemic, through accessing service, receiving communication and understanding testing.

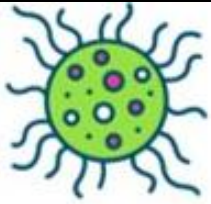
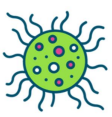
It is worth acknowledging that at times, if a person is digitally excluded, they would not necessarily know what they are missing out on or not receiving the communications for, as they are not in the know.

See next page for an example

What next?

We will endeavour to speak to others who are digitally excluded, whether that is due to digital poverty, capacity or choice and include their views in more case studies.

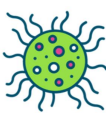




How are you doing?

Gathering feedback from the public and professionals on how they are coping during the COVID 19 pandemic

Being Digitally Excluded



A case study

This is the experience of an older man in Luton, who is retired from work, although volunteers with more than one organisation in Luton and remains active.

Communications:

When it was first in the news in January, there was a lot of news about it. When on holiday in Spain, there was a lot of on BBC world.

The way news and information has been accessed has been mainly from the radio and television. National news has provided an overview, and in the evening Anglian News and London News. Newspapers are not something purchased, however, occasionally a free Metro paper is used. Three Counties radio is listened to in the morning. 'I listen to everything, but I do not seek out news as such'.

'I have been receiving information from the television as well as Healthwatch Luton and from family members who work for the NHS.'

What has worked well?

'Weekly calls from Healthwatch Luton have worked well, calls from other volunteers and from other organisations like U3A and keeping in touch with friends has worked well'

What has not worked so well?

'The government. Prime Minister is giving private enterprise all the contracts and test and trace is not up to the job. The health secretary is ineffective. They think big is beautiful. It is not. There is too much waffling going on and not enough action. They are saying that possibly they'll be checking airports now. Absolute shambles in how they managed it. Prime Minister just talks and lets other people take the can and just waffles. Absolutely no confidence in the Prime Minister and his team at all. They should let local authorities run the testing and manage their area.'

Testing:

The individual had two experiences of testing. One in the community and one in a hospital setting, prior to a procedure.

It was felt that self testing is 'inefficient' and there was not enough information in the leaflet about the expected 'discomfort experienced'. The nurse-led test, whilst also uncomfortable was 'more efficient'.

After having a hospital procedure and being discharged from hospital the individual was surprised there was not a second test carried out and felt there ought to be another test after a stay in hospital or a day admission.

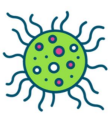
For the self administered test, booking was not available locally, so tried again the following week, calling 119. Results were sent through to a mobile phone, which is usually only used in emergencies. There is some concern over the validity of the self administered test as 'the swab wasn't inserted fully so it could have been a false negative'.

What has worked well?

'I really don't know that anything has really worked well.'

What could've worked better for you?

'The test should always be nurse led.'



What next?

Feedback will be continued to be gathered from all sources.

We will attend meetings we have been invited to, that are held by local organisations who have clients and service users who would like to share feedback with us.

Targeted Engagement will continue in an online format, reflecting the current work plan and also ensuring the voice of the disproportionately affected is heard. This will be using ever evolving methods, such as having one to one conversations with people who would like to talk to us.

Monthly Engagement Forums will continue, with a specific topic or theme as a focus with a speaker, again reflecting the current workplan.

Mental Health services will be continued to be monitored and feedback gathered from inpatients as a priority.

Relationships will be continued to be forged with partner organisations who are able to assist in ensuring the voice of Luton is heard.

Posters that show how we have impacted locally will be created and shared with local organisations to encourage people to share their experiences with Healthwatch Luton.

We will continue to support local communications for the local restrictions and lockdown as well as campaigns such as the flu vaccination programme.

We will continue to include the #becasueweallcare campaign within our work locally, to support the areas of the community to have their voice heard.

