



# What Matters Most?

Your feedback and experiences of health and social care services in Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead.

Spring 2021

## What Matters Most?

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## What Matters Most?

### At a Glance

#### Summary



We heard from **244 residents** in Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead

We asked what they thought of their local services:

**337 positive experiences**

**219 negative experiences**

#### Service Ratings



We asked residents to rate their local services:

**COVID-19 Vaccinations** was the highest rated service  
**Residential Care and Nursing Homes** was the lowest rated service

**50%** of residents found it **difficult to access** services

#### Health and Wellbeing



We heard that:

**Being outdoors** was the biggest support to residents in the past 12 months

**Exercise and fitness** related goals were the most desired for the next 12 months

#### Healthwatch WAM Priorities



We asked what Healthwatch WAM's future focus should be:

**32%** said we should focus on **GP Services**

**17%** said we should focus on **Mental Health Services**

**23%** said to improve **Access to Services**

## What Matters Most?

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### Introduction

#### About Healthwatch

Local Healthwatch organisations are independent champions for people who use health and social care services. We are here to find out what matters to people and help make sure their views shape the support they receive.

#### Project Background

In March 2021, the three local Healthwatch organisations across East Berkshire (Bracknell Forest, Slough, and Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead) worked together to develop their foundation of knowledge about the local communities, including their health and social care needs. The survey ran until May 2021 and collected people's opinions, concerns, and experiences of using, and accessing, health and social care services.



The responses we received focused on a variety of NHS services, ranging from GP surgeries to blood tests, and hospitals to COVID vaccination sites. Responses also gave an insight into the biggest health and wellbeing support across the past 12 months, and health and wellbeing goals for the next 12 months. The same survey was asked across the three Healthwatch localities; this report focuses solely on the responses received from residents in Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead.

#### About the Survey

We asked Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead residents about:

- Health and social care services they had used in the past 12 months
- Any positive or negative experiences with health and social care services
- How easy/difficult they found accessing the services
- Health and wellbeing support used in the past 12 months
- Individual health and wellbeing goals for the next 12 months

Participants were able to tell us their views anonymously via an online survey. This could be accessed privately, via the Healthwatch Hub call centre, and during forum meetings. We engaged with local community forums such as the WAM Get Involved Voluntary Sector Forum and the RBWM One Borough Meeting. The survey was also promoted by a range of stakeholders such as the local councils, voluntary sector organisations and NHS trusts. This was via newsletters, announcements (text, emails, and virtual meetings) and on social media sites.

The total number of responses received for Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead was 244; this does not include any partial responses as these were excluded from analysis.

## What Matters Most?

### Services used in the past year

Participants were asked to select the health and social care services which they had used in the past year and rate these services as 'Excellent', 'Good', 'Ok', or 'Poor'. The number of responses for each service ranged from 2 (Maternity Services) to 215 (GP Services). The most used health and social care services used by the participants in the past year were:

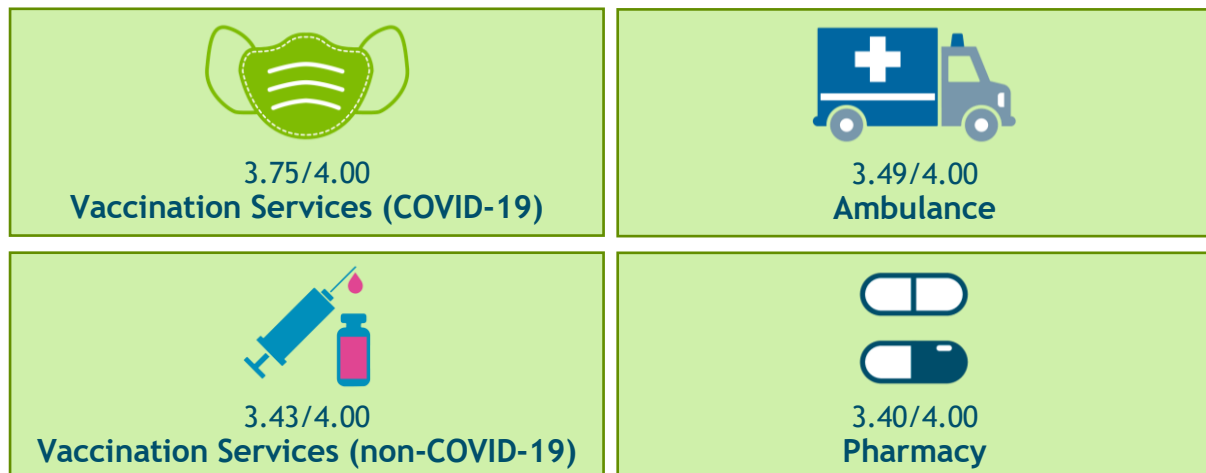
- GP Services - 215 responses
- Vaccination Services (COVID-19) - 211 responses
- Pharmacy - 171 responses
- Blood Tests - 160 responses
- Dental Services - 104 responses

### Service Ratings

The ratings for each service were coded to find the average rating, so that the number of responses would be taken into consideration. 'Excellent' was coded as 4, 'Good' as 3, 'Ok' as 2, 'Poor' as 1; this meant the highest average rating a service could achieve is 4, and the lowest rating could be 1. All the service ratings are shown in the graph on page 6.

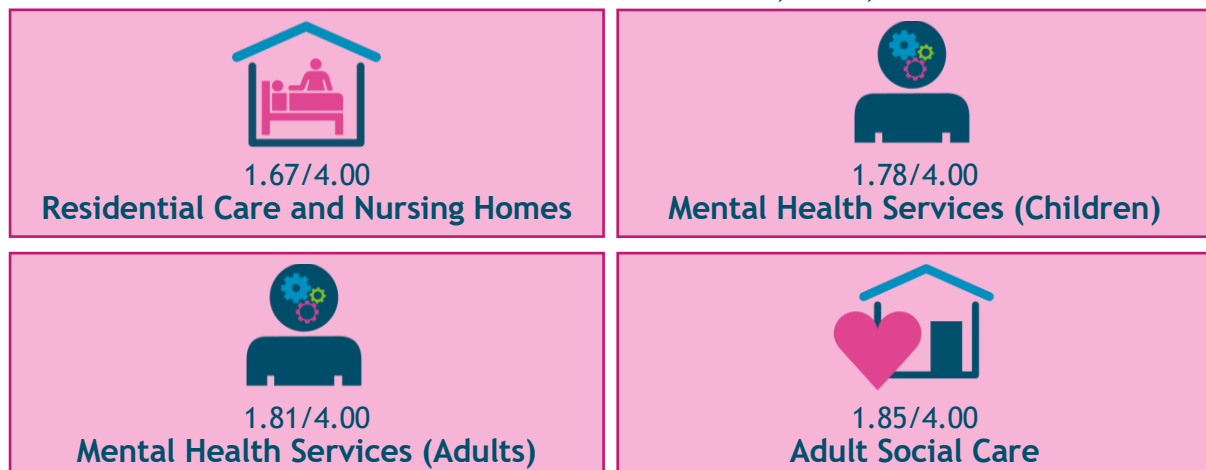
### Highest-rated Services

The highest rated health and social care services in Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead are:

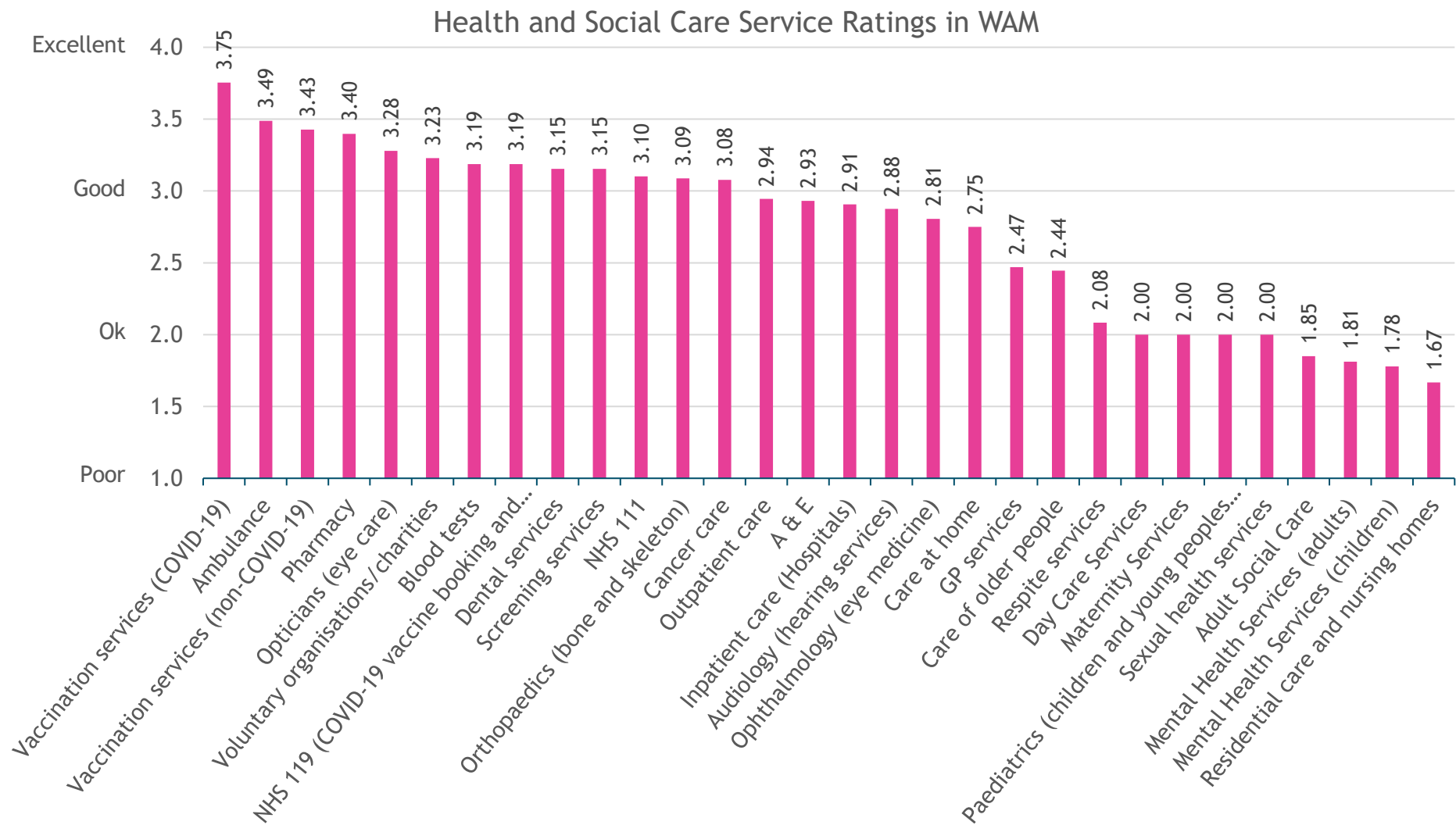


### Lowest-rated Services

The lowest rated health and social care services in Windsor, Ascot, and Maidenhead are:



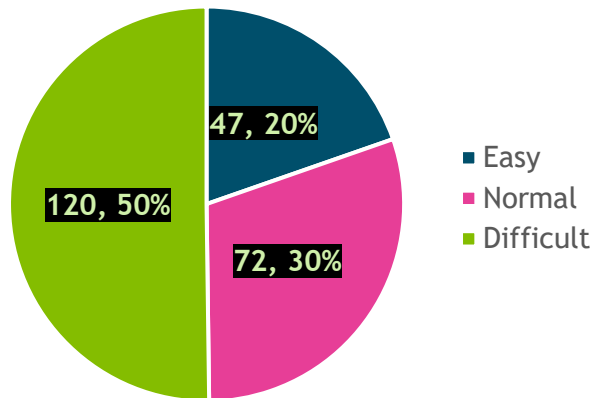
## What Matters Most?



## What Matters Most?

### Access to Services

Participants were asked how easy or difficult they found accessing health and social care services within the past 12 months. There were options of 'Easy', 'Normal', or 'Difficult'. The findings are in the graph below, showing number of participants who selected each option.



### Easy to Access

Services which were described as 'Easy' to access and get help from:

- AJR Crosbie and Associates (Dental)
- King Edward VII Hospital (Phlebotomy)
- Claremont Surgery
- Lee House Surgery
- NHS 111 and A&E Departments
- Wexham Park Hospital (Rheumatology)

Factors which made the services easier to access included:

- Helpful and friendly staff
- 'Simple' booking system
- Receiving a quick response to enquiries about booking appointments, treatment, or diagnosis
- Variation of appointments available from the services:
  - Face-to-face when requiring an examination, rather than relying on technology
  - Telephone or video appointments for those unable to travel to the service location

### Normal to Access

Some who selected 'Normal' described a mixed review of services (some easy to access, some difficult), and some stated that the services were "as expected".

Services which were described as 'Normal' to access and get help from:

- Cookham Medical Centre
- Kings Corner Surgery
- King Edward VII Hospital
- Royal Berkshire Hospital (Eye Unit)
- Wexham Park Hospital (Rheumatology)
- Ross Road Medical Centre
- Thames Hospice

### Difficult to Access

Services which were described as 'Difficult' to access and get help from:

- Social Care Services (poor interactions and social workers' attitudes)
- Birch Hill Medical Centre, Bracknell
- Clarence Medical Centre
- Green Meadows Surgery
- Holyport Surgery
- Kings Corner Surgery
- Linden Medical Centre
- Magnolia House
- Wexham Park Hospital (Oncology)

## What Matters Most?

Factors which made the services more difficult to access:

- Backlog/waiting lists of patients for examinations and treatments
- Reception teams acting as a barrier between the patients and the doctors
- Lack of face-to-face appointments; replaced with technology in various services
  - Patients restricted due to limited technology skills and confidence
  - Language barriers when completing online forms/booking services
- Telephone waiting times with long recorded messages and no update of position in the queue

## Positive Experiences from WAM Residents

We heard **337** positive experiences of using health and social care services

### Summary

COVID-19 services (vaccinations and testing) were mentioned most with 72 people commending the services: specifically at Maidenhead Town Hall, Windsor Racecourse, and Slough Salt Hill Centre.

Some responses stated the factors which contributed to their positive experience but omitted the name of the service provider. Of the responses which did mention the service provider, King Edward VII's Hospital appeared most frequently (18 responses), followed by Wexham Park Hospital (16 responses), Maidenhead Town Hall (14 responses), and St Mark's Hospital (11 responses).

People valued health and social care services which had:

- Efficient and well organised service
- Professional, kind, and friendly staff/volunteers
- Easy to book appointments
- Short waiting times upon arrival
- Parking available and accessible
- Good communication

### GP Services

46 positive experiences concerned GP services; some service providers were not mentioned by name. Positive feedback was given to surgeries who were prompt at answering and returning patient phone calls, supported patients in their diagnostic journey, and offered an effective appointment booking system. Some feedback explained how the appointment booking process had improved by shortening the time spent waiting on the telephone or by being able to book appointments online. Helpful and understanding staff play a large role in providing a positive experience to the patients.

“Quick response from GP surgery when I needed an appointment and blood tests by appointment are excellent. Much better than having to sit for hours waiting for one's number to come up.”

“Access to my GP during the last year has been better ironically. I like the new online service.”



## What Matters Most?

The GP Services mentioned in response to this question were:

- Claremont Surgery (7 mentions)
- Clarence Medical Centre (2 mentions)
- Kings Corner Surgery (2 mentions)
- The Cedars Surgery (2 mentions)
- Boundary House Surgery, Bracknell
- Cippenham Surgery, Slough
- Cordwallis Road Surgery
- Herschel Medical Centre, Slough
- Holyport Surgery
- Lee House Surgery
- Linden Medical Centre
- Runnymede Medical Practice
- The Symons Medical Centre
- Woodlands Park Surgery

### Testing and Screening Services

Testing and Screening Services include phlebotomy, ultrasounds, x-rays, MRI scans, and cancer screening. 34 positive responses mentioned using this service, and phlebotomy was the most frequent. This was expected as 65.6% of participants had used this service in the past 12 months. Booking these types of appointments was commended at St Mark's Hospital and King Edward VII Hospital. Service providers mentioned in the responses included:

- St Mark's Hospital (8 mentions)
- King Edward VII Hospital (7 mentions)
- Heatherwood Hospital (4 mentions)
- Frimley Park Hospital (3 mentions)
- Wexham Park Hospital
- Kings Corner Surgery
- Redwood House Surgery

Several comments were made regarding the improvements seen since introducing the ability to book blood tests rather than a 'walk-in' service.

"Customer Service at the King Edward Breast Screening department exemplary. Flexible, quick, polite, friendly .... couldn't have asked for more"

"Blood tests - online booking was easy to use and informative"

### Pharmacy Services

There were 19 positive mentions of Pharmacy Services which consisted of gratitude towards the staff arranging prescription delivery and offering advice and guidance. People also gave praise for providing an efficient service with minimal waiting times. There were specific pharmacies mentioned:

- Sunningdale Pharmacy (3 mentions)
- Woodland Park Pharmacy
- Eton Pharmacy
- Day Lewis Pharmacy
- Altwood Pharmacy
- Boots Pharmacy (unspecified branch)
- Wessex Pharmacy

### Dental Services

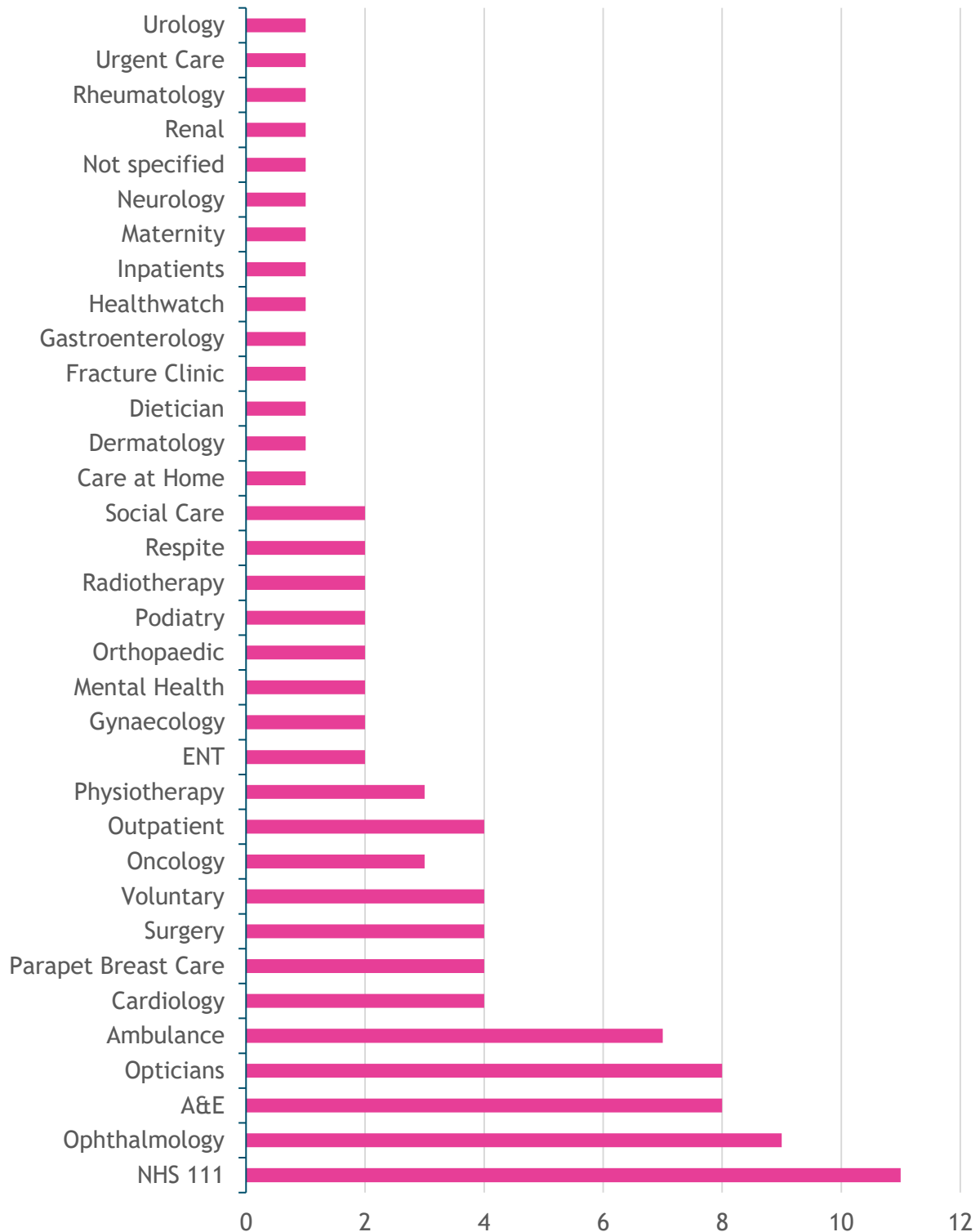
Over half the positive experiences about Dental Services were to treat an emergency diagnosis, e.g. abscess of tooth infection. People valued feeling safe in the appointments (COVID-19 related, or apprehensions about dental visits), friendly staff, and being able to receive advice (sometimes even when the facility itself was closed). The specific dental services mentioned were as follows, these may not have been the usual dentist due to requiring emergency treatment:

- Wexham Park Hospital
- Smile Dental Care, Slough
- Linden Dental Surgery
- Portman Dental Care

## What Matters Most?

### Other Services

There were more positive experiences which mentioned other health and social care services, but these were not mentioned as frequently as the above services. The additional services have been included in the graph below.



## What Matters Most?

### Negative Experiences from WAM Residents

We heard **219** negative experiences of using health and social care services

#### Summary

Some comments were made by those who felt they had received poor care. Over half of the comments did not specify the exact service location but did provide details about what made the experience poor. Factors which contributed to poor experiences with health and social care services:

- Difficulties making appointments
- Waiting times upon arrival at service
- Negative staff attitudes
- Lack of follow up care
- Poor communication
- Heavy reliance on technology
- Impacts due to COVID-19 pandemic
- Long waiting lists to get an appointment

#### GP Services

101 of the negative experiences concerned GP Services, 41 of these omitted the service provider's name. However, from these 41 responses we can see that people's experiences were perceived as poor if there was a poor method of booking appointments, a lack of communication or follow up care, and difficulty seeing a doctor (whether that is because of reception teams acting as "barriers", or there are long waiting lists).

There were several comments concerning the difficulties people had with using technology to either book appointments, have an e-consultation, or to send emails/images/video chat. There is an agreement amongst the residents that they want to have the option of face-to-face appointments returned, but to also have the option of telephone and video available where appropriate.

The GP Services receiving negative responses in this question were:

- Magnolia House Surgery (7 mentions)
- Runnymede Medical Practice (4 mentions)
- Claremont Surgery (3 mentions)
- Green Meadows Surgery (3 mentions)
- Linden Medical Centre (3 mentions)
- The Symons Medical Centre (3 mentions)
- Dedworth Medical Centre (2 mentions)
- Holyport Surgery (2 mentions)
- Kings Corner Surgery (2 mentions)
- Lee House Surgery (2 mentions)
- Ascot Medical Centre
- Clarence Medical Centre
- Cookham Medical Centre
- Radnor House Surgery
- Ross Road Medical Centre
- Runnymede Medical Practice
- Sheet Street Surgery
- The Cedars Surgery

"GP surgery. Impossible to arrange an appointment or even speak to a doctor. Receptionists super blocking and restrictive."

"It is very difficult to get past the GP receptionist for an appointment. Sometimes they do not answer the phone for a very long time, then when they do, they are reluctant to give an appointment. They make you feel very guilty for calling!"

## What Matters Most?

### Testing and Screening Services

There were 26 negative responses concerning Testing and Screening services, such as phlebotomy, CT scans, and x-rays. Factors which led to patients describing their experience as poor included prolonged waiting times to receive the test, certain tests not being available (either due to the COVID-19 pandemic, or no nearby sites offering the test), and delays upon arrival. There were also several instances which described “poor patient care” by staff members leading to dye leakages, test requests being ignored, and feeling ignored during the process.

- Heatherwood Hospital (6 mentions)
- King Edward VII Hospital (4 mentions)
- St Mark’s Hospital (4 mentions)
- Cookham Medical Centre
- Frimley Park Hospital
- Wexham Park Hospital

“Blood test services don't have sufficient capacity. The appointment system is an improvement because it has stopped the two-hour queues, but you sometimes need to wait 4 weeks for an appointment. There is obviously not enough capacity, and something needs to be done about that.”

### Mental Health

Mental Health Services were negatively mentioned 16 times. There were several concerns about the provision and availability of Mental Health services to children and young adults; some haven't been offered a referral appointment for over three years, some had to choose to explore private care, some must travel 40-60 minutes to access the service. Another factor was the communication from staff, specifically: being more understanding with the patients' Mental Health needs and providing a better follow up programme. Services receiving negative comments include:

- CMHT (3 mentions)
- CAMHS (2 mentions)
- HEALIOS
- Talking Therapies
- Wexham Park Hospital

“CMHT poor help when I needed them. Destroying my mental health in the process. They told me there was nothing else they could do for me.”

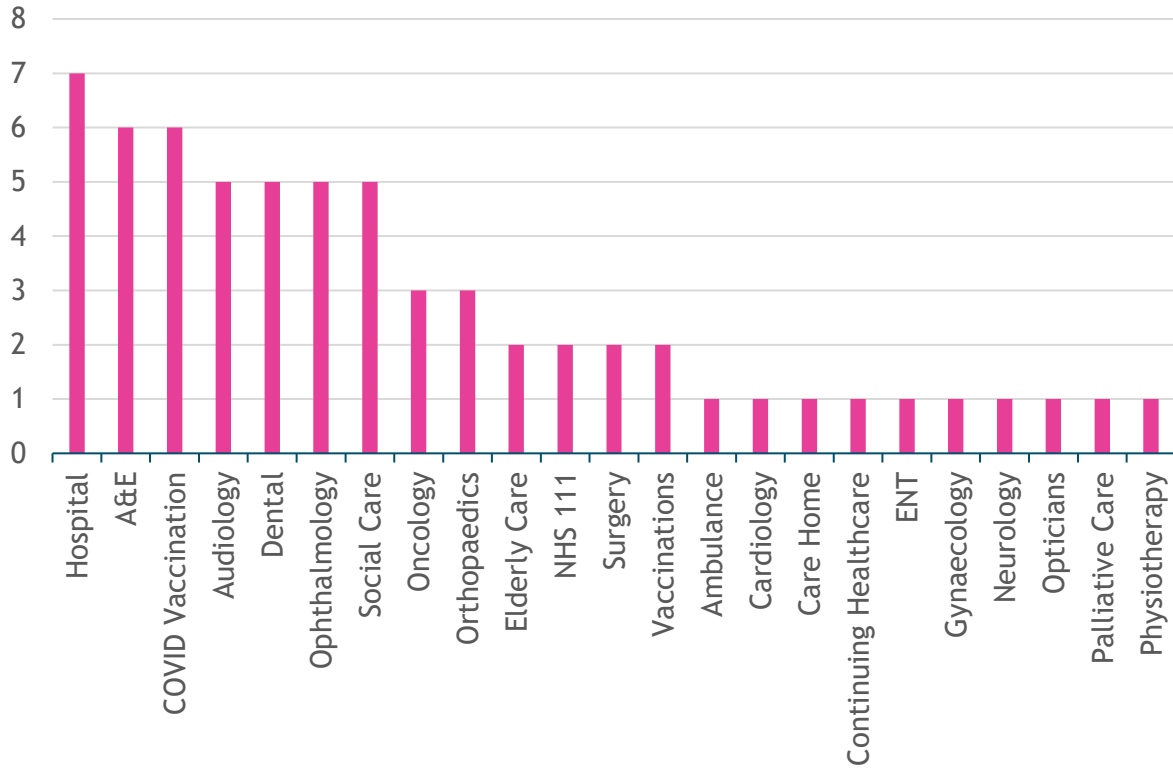
“Had HEALIOS assessment online due to long waiting times for CAMHS but felt it was rushed and was even told that I was pushing for a diagnosis which I found very upsetting and unprofessional.”

“No follow up after discharge from a therapist under WAM CMHT despite chasing several times and still being open to CMHT. No care plans. Even after a suicide attempt that resulted in HMU admission there was no plan put in place.”

## What Matters Most?

### Other Services

There were other negative experiences which mentioned other health and social care services, but these were not mentioned as frequently as the above services. The additional services have been included in the graph below.

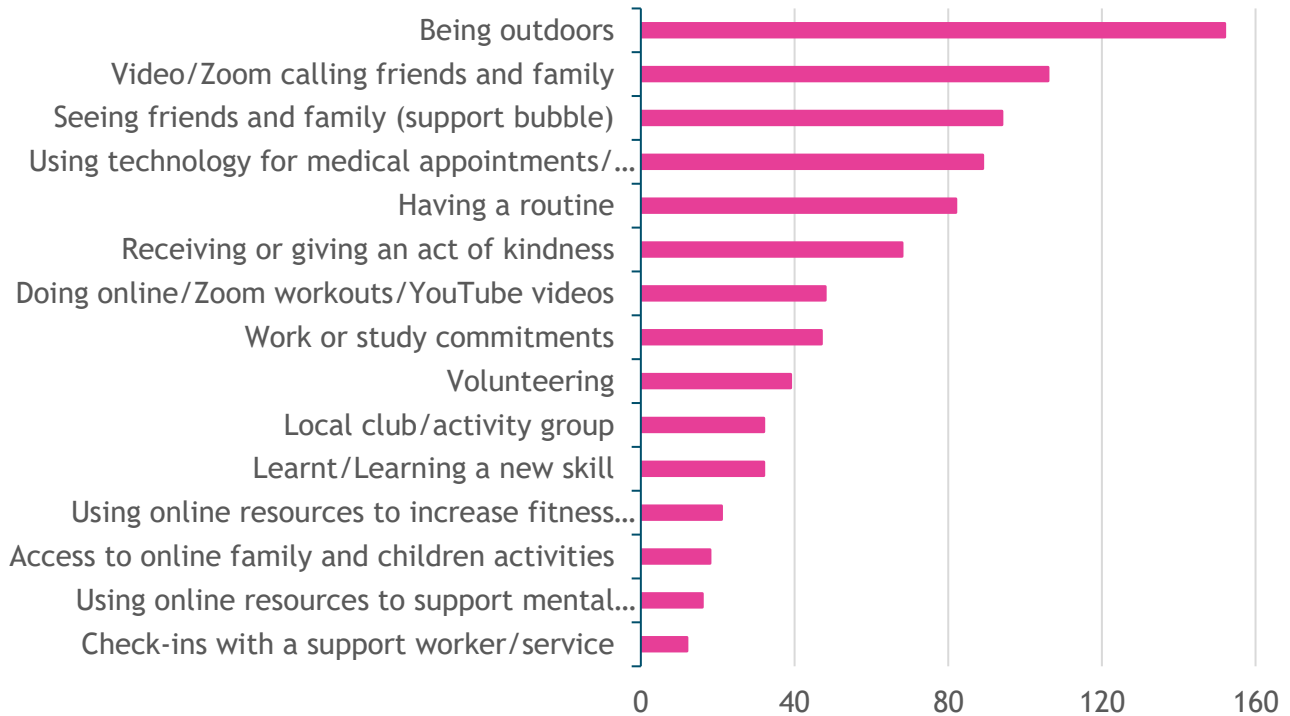


## What Matters Most?

### Health and Wellbeing

#### Looking Back

We asked participants what they felt the biggest support to their health and wellbeing was during the past 12 months.

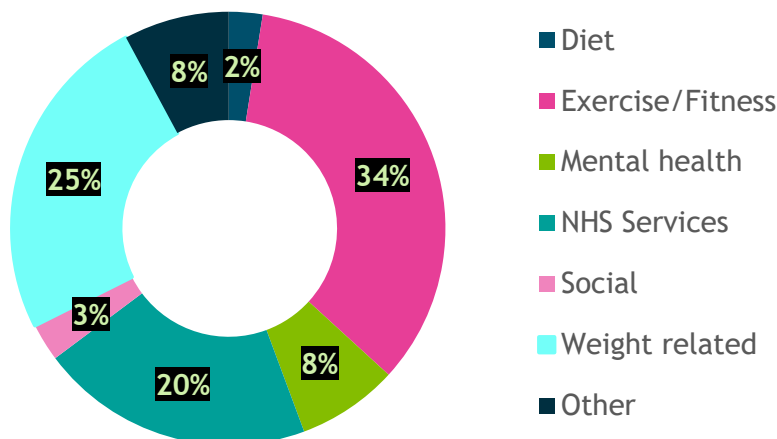


'Other' answers included: walking (with friends, family, and pets), hobbies (art, crafts, reading, gardening, and musical instruments), COVID-19 vaccinations, Church groups, online streaming of lectures and theatre shows, and continued access to healthcare.

Some organisations which were mentioned include: Friends in Need (Bucks Mind), Healthmakers Berkshire, Wraysbury and Horton Voluntary Care, and British Heart Foundation Trust.

#### Looking Forward

We then asked participants what health and wellbeing goals they have for the next 12 months.

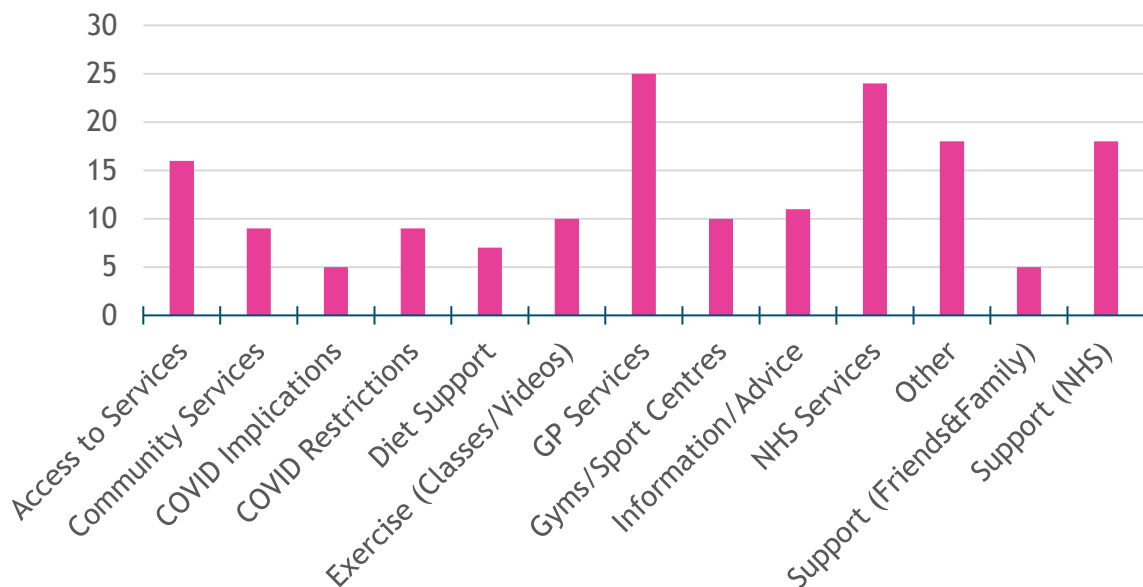


## What Matters Most?

‘Other’ answers included: regulating/improving sleep patterns, increase mobility, stop smoking, find a new home, some answered “all” to the examples given, and some answered that they have no goals.

‘NHS Services’ answers included: managing existing conditions with their required service provider, catching up with postponed treatments and surgeries, getting help and advice from specific services (Oncology, Mental Health, Neurology, Dental, and Opticians), and to find support for long COVID-19 symptoms.

To achieve these health and wellbeing goals, participants asked for the following help and support shown in the graph below. Some responded that they were unsure of what help or support they would need, and some stated that they did not require any help or support.



‘NHS Services’ answers excluded GP services, as this was mentioned enough to warrant its own category. This category included general NHS Services improvements (such as a more efficient information flow between departments), rehabilitation and physiotherapy services, mental health services, and providing regular check-ups.

‘Support (NHS)’ answers did not specify an NHS Service, just that further support, encouragement, and coaching from the NHS would be appreciated to help achieve individual goals.

“Easier accessibility to mental health services, such as therapy, through the NHS.”

“A pro-active (as opposed to reactive) approach from a single healthcare contact to co-ordinate and expedite timely investigations and treatments... seamless record and information flow...”

“Smile exercise class for the over 60s at local venues to help older people keep fit. This has not resumed due to lack of Council funds. This will lead to less healthy oldies.”

“To see a gynae consultant and be able to gain a GP appointment without any difficulty or being made to feel a nuisance.”

## What Matters Most?

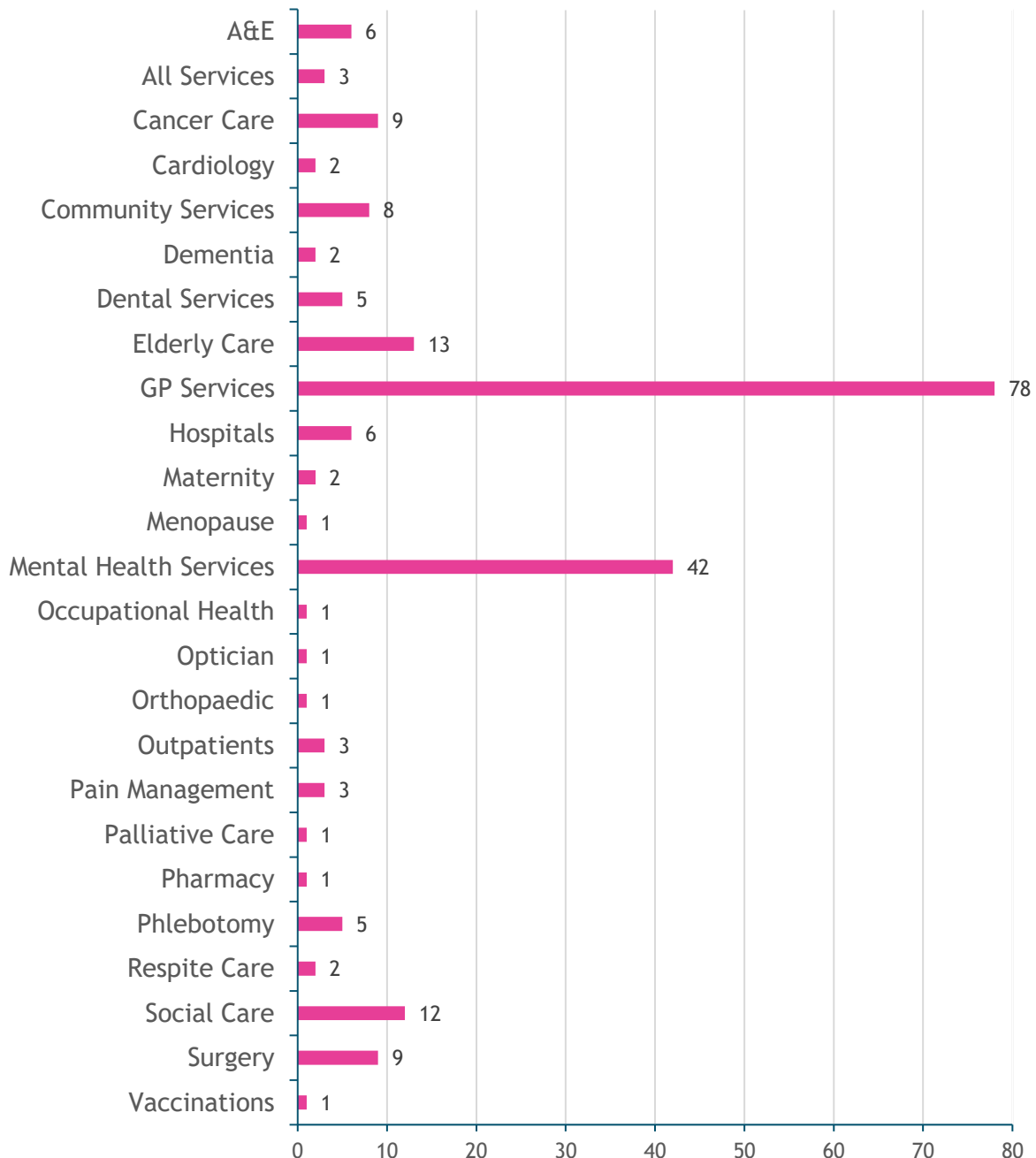
### Healthwatch Priorities

#### Services

We asked participants what they think Healthwatch WAM's priority should be for the next 12 months; the graph below shows the results. The services with the most mentions were:

1. GP Services
2. Mental Health Services
3. Elderly Care
4. Social Care

Services for Healthwatch WAM to prioritise

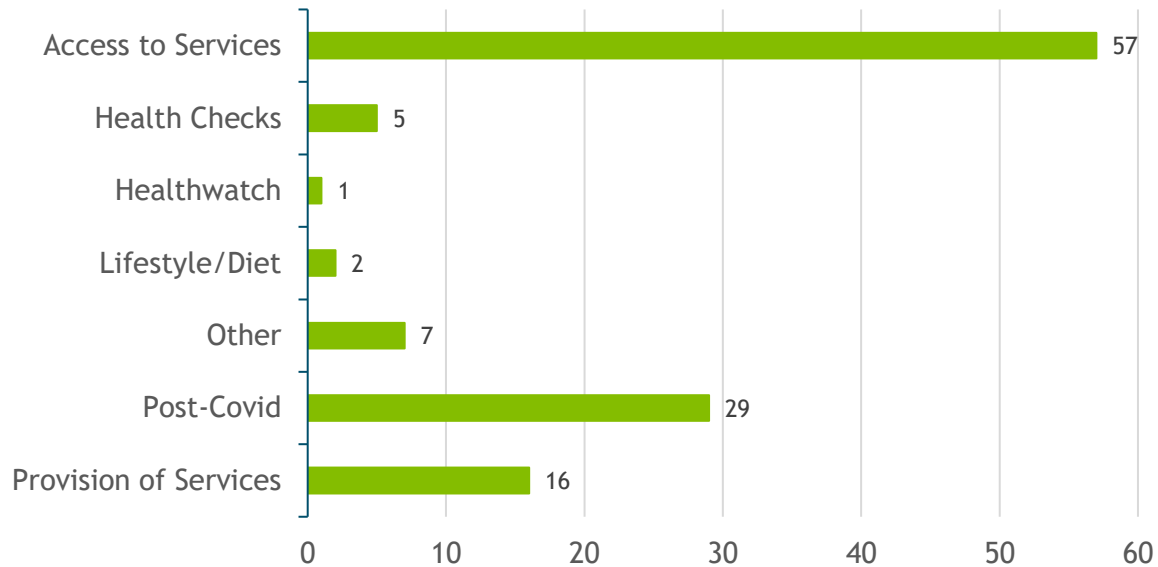




## What Matters Most?

### Themes

Residents also asked Healthwatch WAM to focus on certain themes such as: improving their access to the services, preparing the services for after the COVID-19 pandemic, and improving the provision of services.



There was a specific suggestion for Healthwatch WAM to ensure the delivery of “**effective culturally tailored services to its multicultural residents within the Borough**”. This suggestion included infographics specifically designed for the diverse population within the WAM area, to give more residents confidence to speak to us about their experiences.

The ‘Other’ responses included more focus on children and young people’s healthcare, more focus on the prevention of illnesses rather than the treatment, and campaigns about how to achieve a healthy immune system. ‘Lifestyle/Diet’ responses included initiating campaigns to encourage healthier eating and being more active. Five people suggested offering ‘Health Checks’, especially to those aged over 50 years old, as the COVID-19 pandemic may have had made people want to avoid visiting services.

### Access to Services

The most common theme suggested for Healthwatch WAM to focus on is improving patients’ access to health and social care services, specifically GP Services, Mental Health Services, and Testing/Screening Services. Responses suggested promoting Pharmacy Services more for patients who require advice and self-help remedies. There were a few factors surrounding accessing services which appeared more frequently:

- Improving waiting lists and times for appointments
- Better options for travelling to appointments (for those who don’t drive and rely on other transport methods)
- Extended operating hours for services such as Phlebotomy, GP Services, and Hospitals

Residents’ opinions about the types of appointments varied: some prefer face-to-face contact with doctors and want this reintroduced, but some want more online/video consultations available.

## What Matters Most?

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### *Post-COVID*

Responses regarding health and social care services following the COVID-19 pandemic were focus on the past and future effects. The past effects concerned: catching up on the backlog of treatments which were cancelled, returning services to how they were previously run, and providing a proactive service for people who may have avoided visiting services during the pandemic.

The future effects of COVID-19 pandemic focus on supporting those with long-covid and mental health needs, continuing with the COVID-19 vaccine programme, and continuing to monitor COVID-19 rates.

### *Provision of Services*

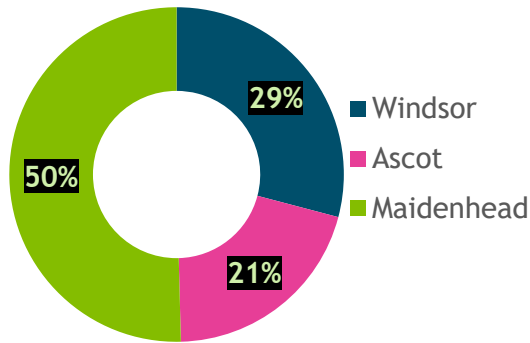
This theme reemphasised the factors valued by patients within their health and social care services:

- Clear communication and information
  - Between different health and social care services when concerning a patient referral
  - Keep the patient informed of progress and treatment plans
  - Keep the patient's family informed if they're unable to visit the patient
  - Information about reasons for delays or difficulties to book appointments
- Providing a caring service, ensuring patients are listened to and their needs are understood
- Better follow up care after appointments and treatments

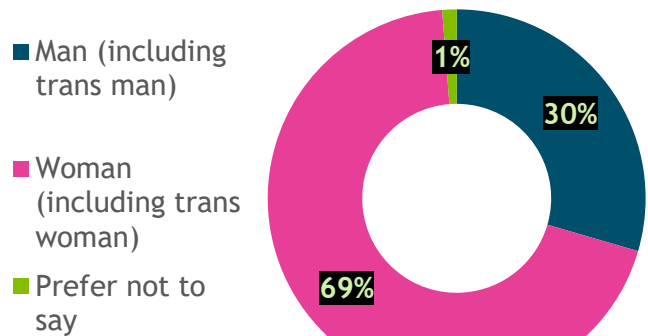
## What Matters Most?

### Survey Demographics

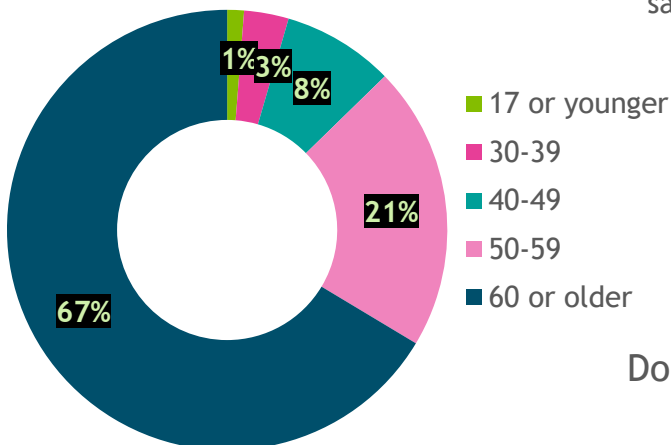
Location



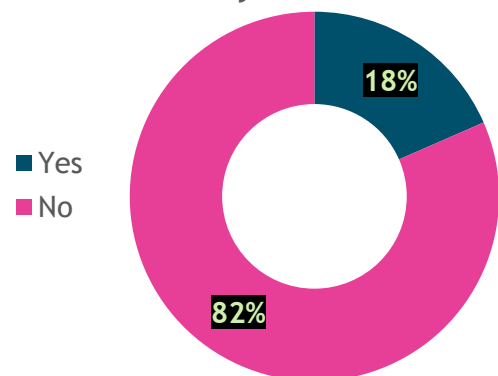
Which gender do you identify as?



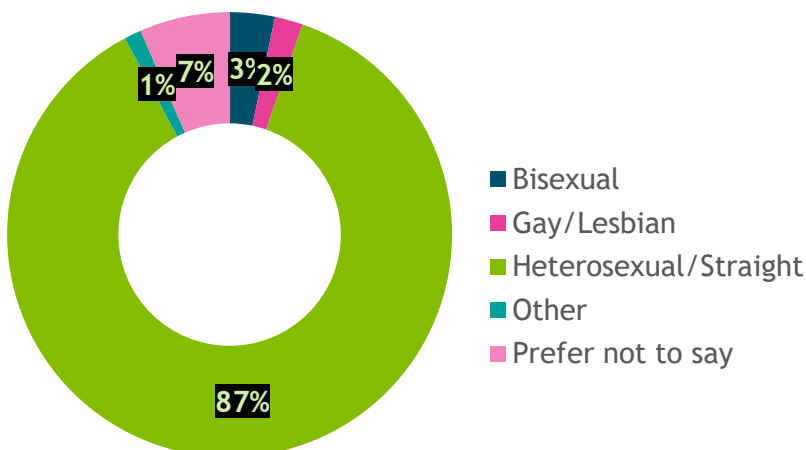
Age



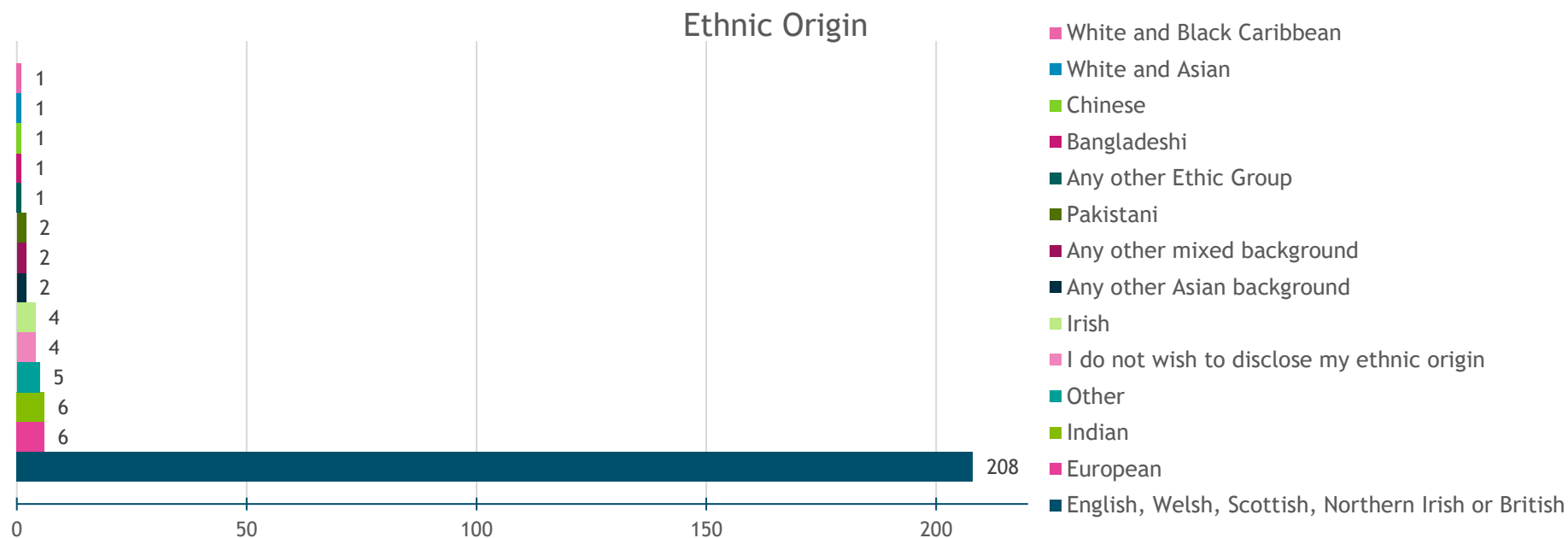
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



Sexual Orientation



## What Matters Most?



Additional answer options were given for all six demographic questions, as well as an 'Other' option. Only the options which were selected by participants were included in the graphs above. The ethnic diversity from this campaign is an accurate reflection of WAM's population (as stated by ONS Census, 2011).

### Thank you

Healthwatch WAM would like to thank all 244 participants who took the time to complete the survey and tell us about their experiences. A big thank you to all our Healthwatch volunteers and partner organisations who helped with the promotion of our survey.

We would also like to thank:

- RBWM Council for supporting this campaign by promoting the survey on their social media, website, and within their newsletter
- Thames Valley Police for circulating information about this Healthwatch campaign via the Thames Valley Alert
- The Advocacy People for advising Healthwatch in the creation of the Easy Read promotion material for this campaign

## What Matters Most?

### Talk to us

If you have questions about the content of this report, please either call **0300 012 0184** or email [ceri.evans@healthwatchwam.co.uk](mailto:ceri.evans@healthwatchwam.co.uk).

### How will this report be used?

This report summarises 244 responses from the What Matters Most survey to highlight common themes, findings, and opinions. This provides the Healthwatch organisations across East Berkshire with a better foundation of information about their local communities, including what their focus should be in the future.

The report will be shared with the relevant service providers, and other external stakeholders, to support local health and social care services in providing improved care to its users. Healthwatch will also conduct further analyses of the data.

## ADVICE AND INFORMATION

We are here to help, advise, give information, and listen to your experiences

Healthwatch are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We're here to find out what matters to people and to help make sure their views are heard.

We also help people find the information they need about health and social care services or support in East Berkshire.

Here to help you on the next step of your health and social care journey.

We have the power to make sure that the government and those in charge of services hear people's voices. As well as seeking the public's views ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them.



Contact Us: **0300 012 0184**



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