

You Said, We Did

October 2025

Healthwatch East Sussex is your local health and social care champion. We make sure NHS leaders and local council decision-makers hear your voice and use your feedback to improve care.

We can help you to find reliable information about health and social care services and guidance if you have concerns or want to make a complaint.

This report:

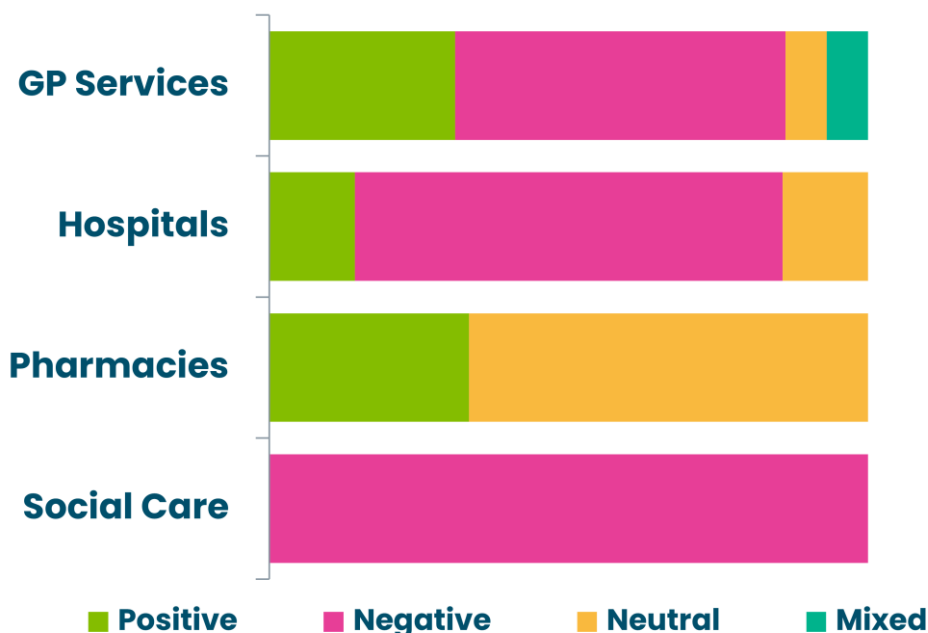
- Summarises what we have heard via our [Information and Signposting](#) service and from our engagement work this month
- Explains how we've used your feedback about services to make a difference
- Outlines some of the activities we have been involved in

This month, we received **53** enquiries to our Information and Signposting service and engaged with **137** people through our engagement work.

We continued to hear about: Long waiting times for operations, difficulties making a GP appointment, problems with repeat prescriptions, and delayed cancer diagnoses.

New issues this month included: Poor breastfeeding support for new mothers, difficulty accessing vaccinations for those eligible, issues booking blood tests requested via Right to Choose, and concerns around the use of Artificial Intelligence (A.I) in primary care.

Your views about key services this month



Your experiences

We regularly review the experiences you share with us through public events, surveys, [Feedback Centre](#) and [Information & Signposting](#) enquiries.

Some feedback we've heard this month:

Positive

Negative



GP Services

- Very quick response via Engage Consult"
- "They were really empathetic and supportive. I felt really valued."
- "My surgery is consistently excellent."

- "I received no sympathy, empathy or a private space in which to discuss"
- "I am continuously refused my ongoing medication"
- "Trying to get an appointment with a GP is now a very complicated procedure"



Hospitals

- "The care I've received has been outstanding. I felt listened to at all stages; I was seen quickly and received the outcome from my tests quickly as well."

- "I don't feel the sufficient care and attention was given, given the severity of my injury"



Pharmacies

- "The pharmacist was very friendly and considerate, and I was seen very quickly."
- "Really happy with the service I received."



NHS 111

- "I connected with someone quickly and the person I spoke with was excellent. She asked clear questions, gave clear advice and told me what would happen next."

Your views help us understand what works well and what needs to change.

We want to hear positive stories, as well as mixed experiences, and where things need to improve.

Please share your feedback here: [Feedback Centre](#).

Information & Signposting

We can help you navigate health and care services and provide relevant information to support you. Here are some enquiries we've received this month:

You said

I'm having difficulty accessing a referral for a second opinion from my GP

We provided resources about getting a second opinion from [The Patient's Association](#) and [Healthwatch England](#). We discussed the option of speaking with a different practitioner at the surgery. We shared information about [Jess's Rule](#) which aims to improve patient safety and prevent misdiagnosis in primary care.

I'm concerned about my hospital care but don't want to make a complaint

We shared their feedback with the relevant Patient Experience team for their insight and learning. We ensured the enquirer was aware that the Patient Advice and Liaison Service ([PALS](#)) were available for support or if they wanted to share feedback informally.

Case study: Patient Rights

We were contacted by an individual concerned about the long waiting time for a planned operation at their local hospital. They asked if they had a right to change provider due to the long wait and if so, how they could request to be transferred to a different hospital.

- We explained that patients have a legal 'right to choose' where they receive consultant-led services and clarified this includes asking to move to a different provider, when the wait is longer than the maximum waiting times specified for that treatment.
- We shared the [NHS Choice Framework](#) and [NHS England Patient choice guidance](#) and advised them to discuss options with their GP, and if appropriate, ask to refer them to a different hospital.

Testimonials

"Thank you. That's really helpful."

"Thank you - we very much appreciate your help and support"

"That's really clear information, thank you."

Our activity

Activity

Outcome

We heard from two patients who received a text message inviting them to book a Covid vaccination, only to attend the appointment and be turned away for not meeting national eligibility criteria.



We shared their experiences with [NHS Sussex ICB](#) to escalate the potential flaw in the system and for it to be investigated and addressed, to prevent the same thing happening to others.

We attended two student fairs and an Age Friendly marketplace, open to the public, engaging with 137 people. We provided information about local health and social care services and sought people's views on their experiences of accessing health and care.



We raised awareness of [the role of Healthwatch](#), how it can support local people and recruited 3 new [volunteers](#) to support our work.

Alongside a team of dedicated volunteers, we carried out 11 [Patient Led Assessments of the Care Environment \(PLACE\)](#) to review the environments of inpatient settings of our local NHS providers. We will carry out four more visits during November.



We assessed privacy and dignity, food, cleanliness and general building maintenance as well as accessibility for those with disabilities or dementia. We highlighted where the environment was working well and where improvements could be made.

Alongside [Healthwatch Brighton & Hove](#) and [Healthwatch West Sussex](#), we launched a [survey](#) to engage with users of [Non-Emergency Patient Transport \(NEPTs\)](#) and understand their experiences of the service.



Views and ideas for improvement will be collated and shared anonymously with the service provider and commissioner. We welcome more perspectives, so please [complete the survey](#) before it closes on 30th November.

Share your experiences: [Feedback Centre](#).

Information and Signposting: enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk or 0333 101 4007

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