

Healthwatch Newcastle Annual Survey Results

About Us

Healthwatch Newcastle is one of 152 independent not-for-profit Healthwatch services established in England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

We help children, young people and adults have a say about social care and health services in Newcastle. This includes every part of the community, including people who sometimes struggle to be heard.

We work to ensure that those who plan and run social care and health services listen to the people using their services and use this information to make improvements.

Healthwatch Newcastle would like to thank everyone who generously gave their time and expertise to assist with this report.

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Methodology:

Healthwatch Newcastle released their annual survey for public engagement in order to establish our priorities to work on for the upcoming financial year 2026-2027. The survey was advertised on Healthwatch Newcastle social media pages and public engagement took place in localities throughout the period of eight weeks as the survey was active.

We received **297** responses in total which provided insights and experiences on a range of health and/or social care services which were accessed in Newcastle in the past 12 months.

Experience:

We asked respondents to rate their experiences on a range of health and/or social care services which they have used in the past 12 months. Experiences were ranked on a scale from 'Excellent' to 'Very poor'. As well as this, we asked for additional comments and information that respondents could tell us about their experience(s) on the care that they have received. 72 respondents did not provide any additional comments.

Ambulance: Nine (9) respondents provided additional comments regarding a recent experience with the ambulance service. There were a mix of responses where the ambulance came very quickly and a couple of responses where the ambulance took over an hour to reach the location of emergency.

Dentist: 59 respondents provided insights to their dental experiences. A large majority said that they are unable to register with a dentist or able to get an appointment as an NHS patient. Many respondents said that they have registered with a private dentist and have received excellent care. No interpreters available was another issue that was highlighted by a respondent.

GP: A large majority of respondents found it difficult to get an appointment to see a GP. Many also found the appointment system confusing as they are directed to either call, use the NHS app or use their GP's online system to book appointments as well as there not being any appointment availability making the process to book an appointment very confusing. A lack of communication between hospitals and GPs was also highlighted.

Hospital: There was a mix of positive and negative experiences at hospitals within Newcastle. Those who had good experiences said that the staff were kind and caring and received excellent service. Majority of respondents said that they had to wait for a long time to attend an appointment, but some said that there was a short time to wait,

however this was dependent on the treatment they were receiving in various departments.

Long Covid Clinics: 25 respondents rated Long Covid Clinics as a service they have used in the past 12 months with 272 respondents who said that this service was not applicable to them. However, only one (1) respondent provided a comment on Long Covid Clinics which was that they suffer from long covid but have not been referred to one before.

Mental health: 13 respondents provided feedback on mental health services which were all negative. Majority of respondents said that the waiting list is too long to seen for mental health. Other respondents highlighted that there is not enough support that is available and there is not enough resources or support to actually end any risk-taking activity that an individual feels and thinks about.

NHS 111: Eight (8) respondents provided feedback on NHS 111 which were mostly negative. Reasons for this are due to long wait times on the call, always being told to go to the walk-in centre and sometimes the advice is not helpful to them.

Pharmacies: This service had the highest rating of 'Excellent' (120 ratings). 36 respondents provided additional comments on their pharmacy experience(s). a majority were very positive as they were receiving their medication, friendly staff and good communication. In terms of negative responses, there have been a couple of cases where there has not been any communication via text message or email to say that prescriptions are ready to be picked up. For a couple of respondents, their local pharmacies have been closed, making it harder for them to travel to receive medication.

Physiotherapy: Ten (10) additional comments were provided where nine (9) of these responses indicated a negative experience. These experiences included long waiting times; not being listened to by professionals; told to do exercises by a website after a phone appointment. One (1) positive comment was provided regarding physiotherapy where all needs of the patient were met.

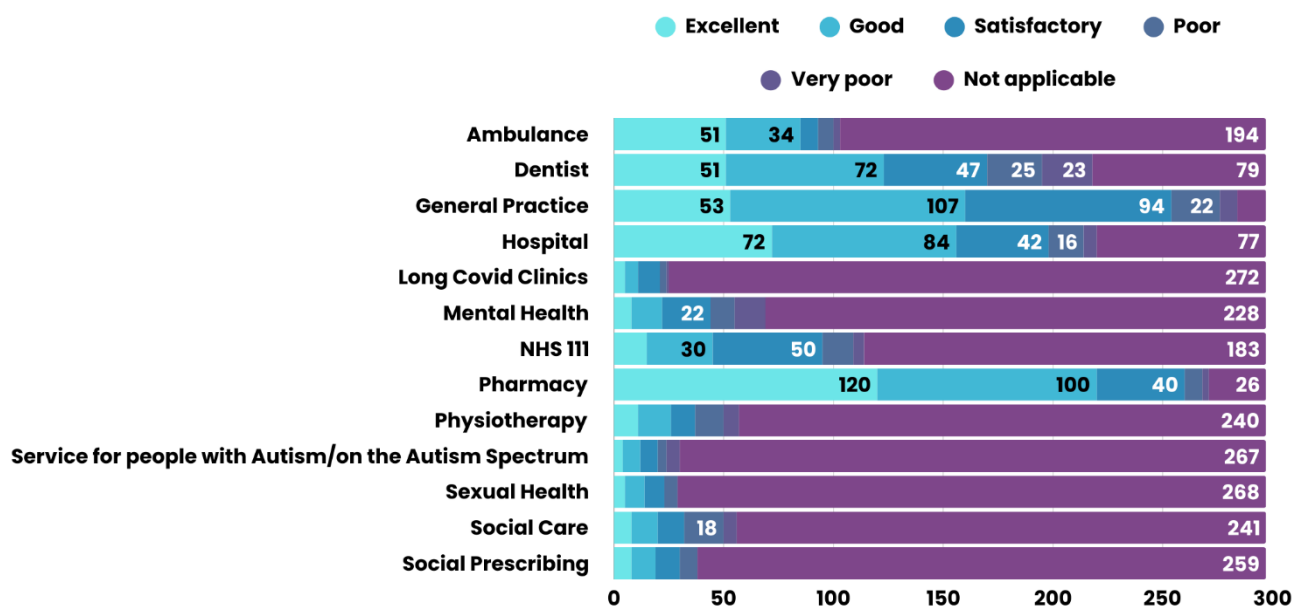
Services for people with Autism/ on the autism spectrum: Three (3) comments were provided regarding Autism care. One (1) comment said that it has been over a year since waiting for an autism assessment. The other two (2) comment highlighted that there needs to be more pre and post diagnosis support. *"e.g. keeping the patient informed of what will be and is happening throughout the whole process and follow up appointments post diagnosis to make sure the patient is coping with the new diagnosis."*

Sexual health: No comments were provided regarding the sexual health service. However, 29 respondents indicated a rating that they have used a sexual health service

in the past 12 months. Five (5) respondents rated it as an 'excellent' experience whereas six (6) rated it as a 'poor' experience.

Social care: Seven (7) additional comments were provided regarding social care which were all negative. There were a variety of reasons for this including: being lied to, feeling as though professional are try to 'get rid' of service users, unfriendly staff at Newcastle City Council, no support that is available to actively help. Many respondents had the opinion that the social care system needs to be revamped to make the services more accessible and understandable for many residents of Newcastle.

Social prescribing: Two (2) additional comments were provided regarding social prescribing which were positive where needs were met appropriately where both physical and mental support provided by social prescribers in Newcastle.

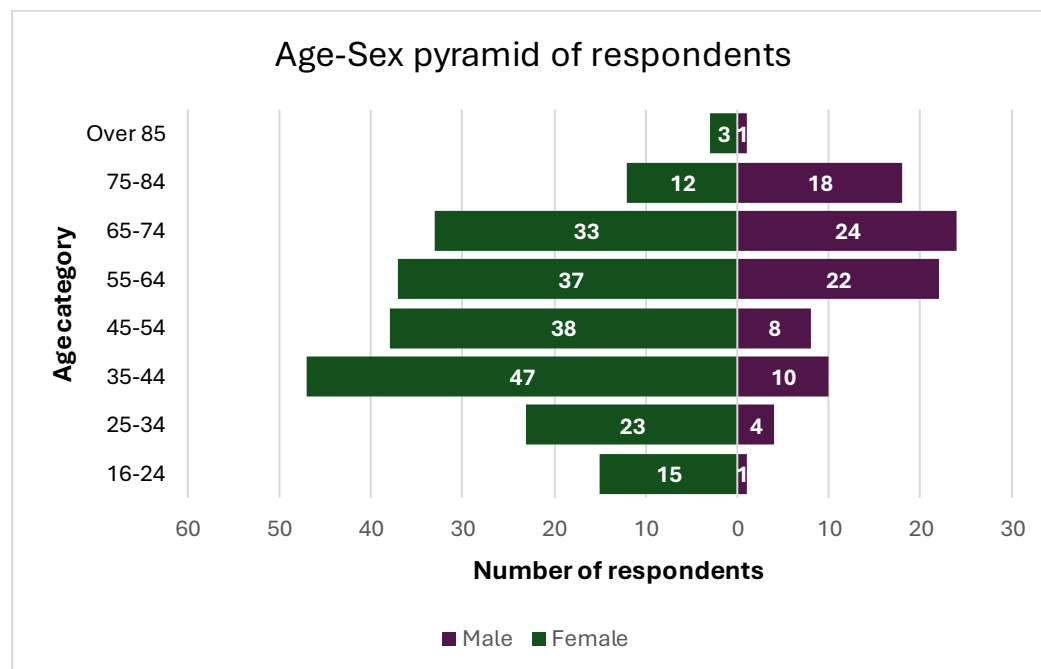


Demographics:

Gender and age:

We had a significantly high number of females who responded to the survey (208 female respondents compared to 88 male respondents). We had a higher number of females aged 35-44 (47 female respondents). As for males, we had a high value of male respondents aged 65-74 (22).

One (1) respondent preferred not to share their gender.



Ethnicity:

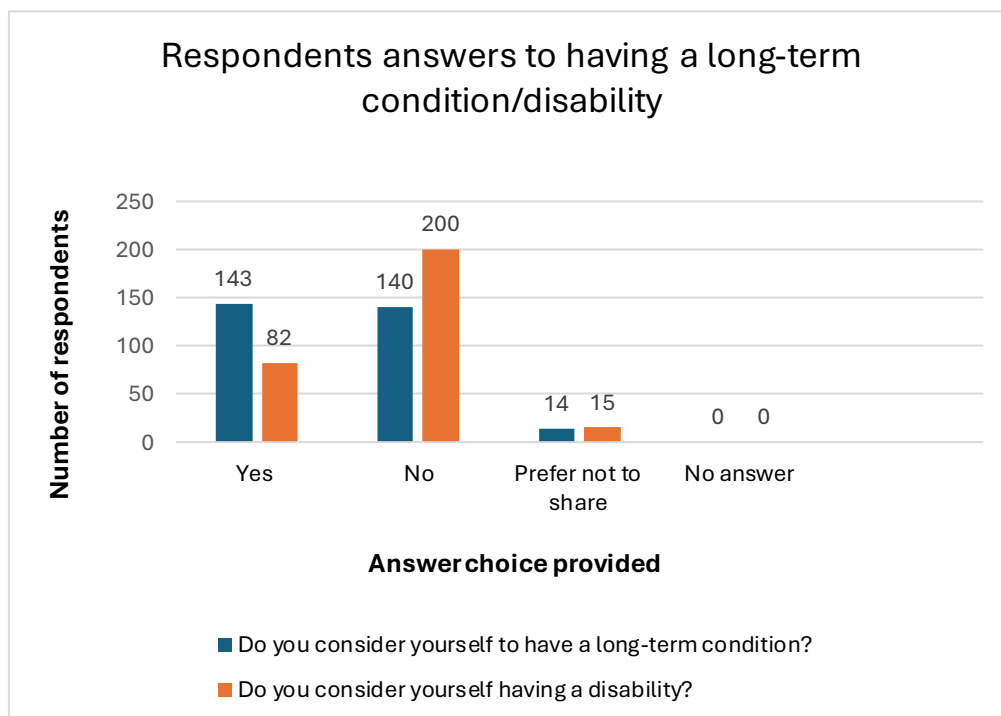
In terms of ethnicity, a high proportion of respondents were of a White ethnicity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British (197 respondents)). 81 respondents were of an Asian ethnicity. The table below shows the results of ethnic background:

Ethnicity	Count
Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background	0
Arab	4
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, any other Asian background)	81
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	10

White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	197
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White	2
White: Irish	6
Prefer not to share	6
Other	11

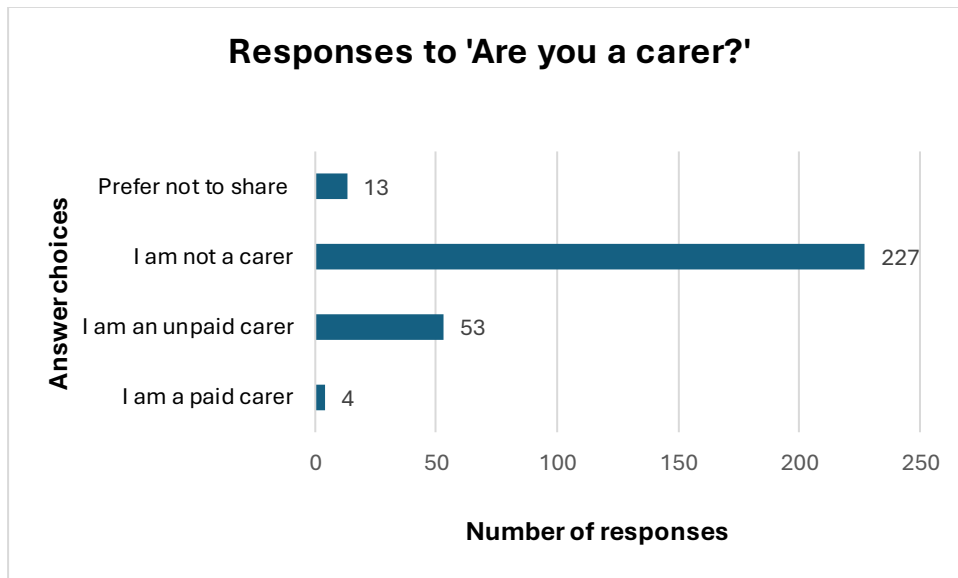
Disability/ Long- term condition:

We asked respondents if they considered themselves having a disability or a long-term condition. 143 (48.1%) said that they consider themselves having a long-term condition. 123 (47.1%) said they consider themselves having a disability.



Carer:

We also asked respondents if they were a carer. The majority of respondents said they are 'not a carer'. Those that were carers, a majority were unpaid (53 respondents).





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