

NHS Long Term Plan

The Peoples'

Perspective

whot
would you do?

It's your NHS. Have your say.

Executive Summary

A key role of a local Healthwatch is to listen to its residents and to hear about their experiences of using local services, what works well for them and what doesn't work so well.

In Barking and Dagenham there is an estimated 210,000 residents from a broad spectrum of social and cultural backgrounds. 337 people gave us their views on the NHS Long Term Plan. From this work we were able to capture the thoughts and ideas that relate to three elements of the NHS Long Term Plan.

Prevention

When looking at their own current level of health 83% of people said it was fair to very good. 80% attributed exercise and physical activity as the way they support their health and stay well. 44% of people said that they actively took part in sports or went to the gym.

Eating healthily and maintaining a good diet is something that 69% said they are aware helped to maintain and promote good health. 60% participated in some form of holistic activity such as Yoga or Pilates, to support their health and wellbeing, citing mindfulness, self-awareness and inner wellbeing as important.

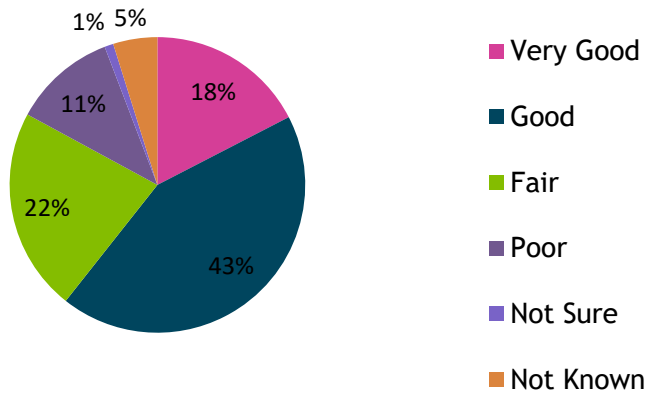
Keeping healthy in the local area is fairly easy or easy for 71% of respondents. It was indicated by 98% that local health and care services could be improved or provided in different ways.

Main themes that emerged were:

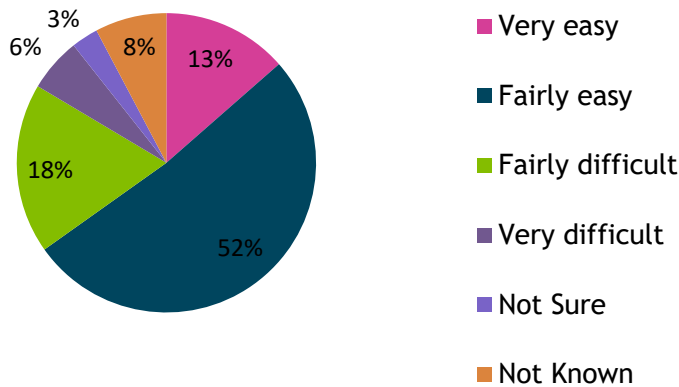
1. Timely appointments and access to GP services.
2. Easy to understand access and signposting through clear communication.
3. Extending care and support into the local community.
4. Encouraging and incentivising people to take part in physical activity by providing free or low cost activity to sports or exercise centres.
5. Supporting access to services for mental health and wellbeing by actively referring people to different services prescribed in the community.

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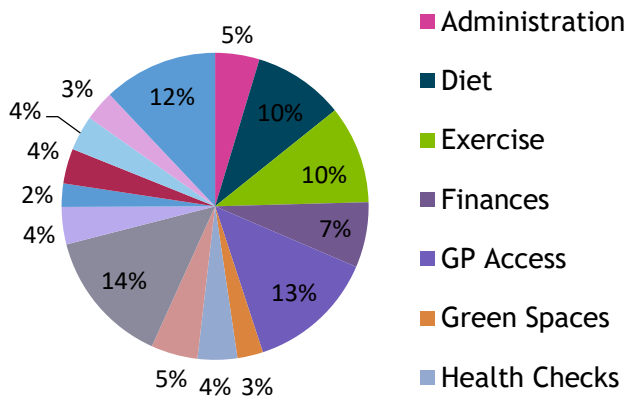
How would you rate your current level of health and wellbeing?



For someone like you, living in your local area, staying healthy is...



Tell us up to three things the NHS and its partners could do differently to help you stay healthy and well?

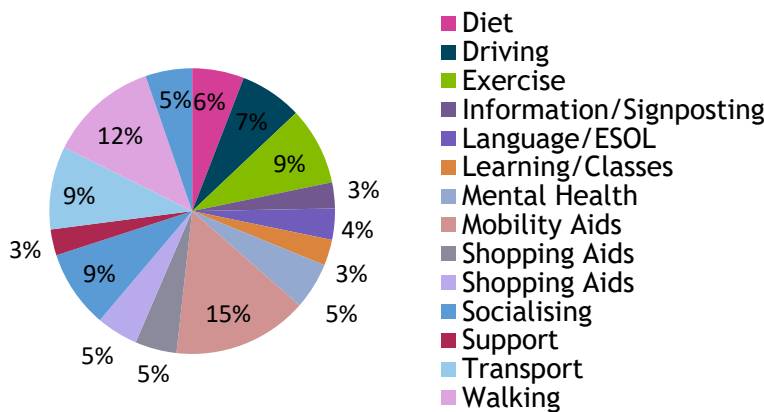


Personalisation

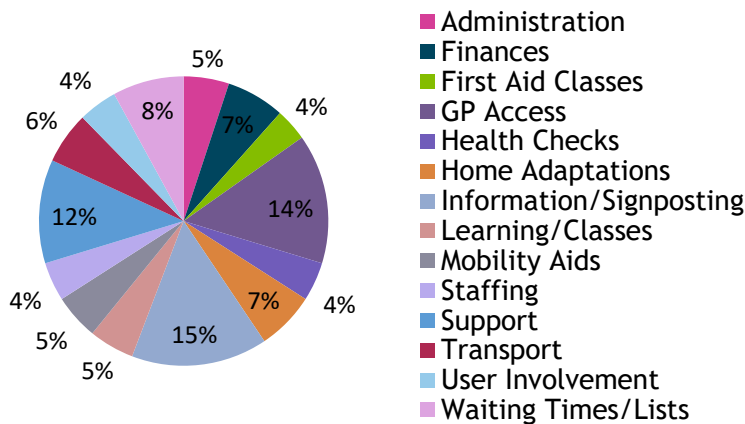
Living aids and supportive equipment is used by 55% of the people that responded to the survey. For 68%, being able to participate in physical and social activities helps them to stay healthy and well. Local people said the following things were most important to them:

1. Being able to stay in their own home so long as it is safe.
2. Living their life, the way they want as long as their community is able to support them.
3. Family and friends who can help and support them when needed, provided they have the knowledge to do so.
4. To get to and from health and care services in the most convenient ways.
5. Making sure they have the right after care and support at home when discharged from hospital.
6. Support for themselves and their family in end of life care.

Tell us up to three things that you already do to stay independent...



Tell us up to three things the NHS and its partners could do to help you stay independent...



Primary Care

Thinking about accessing services over the past 12 months, 82% of local people said they had been to a GP surgery; 76% had gone to a Pharmacy and 59% had visited a Dentist.

For routine GP appointments, 89% felt that it was reasonable to wait for 2 weeks or less - 60% of those it was reasonable to have an appointment within 1 week.

If it was available as an additional service at their GP surgery, 55% of respondents said they would want a blood test service and 25% said they wanted health check services there too. 37% also indicated they wanted this as an additional service along with health checks at their local Pharmacy.

Being able to access counselling services and other alternative forms of therapy were also additional services people wanted from their GP.

Local people said the following was most important to them in staying healthy and well when using Primary Care Services;

1. Being able to see a preferred GP or nurse.
2. The availability of out-of-hours appointments during evenings, weekends and bank holidays.
3. Booking appointments online, but recognising that it is not the most appropriate way for all residents and taking that into account.
4. Having an option of telephone or online consultations, as well as being able to access test results and medical records online.

Booking GP appointments online or through an app was a considered or preferred option for 66% of respondents, whereas 34% indicated they would not use that option.

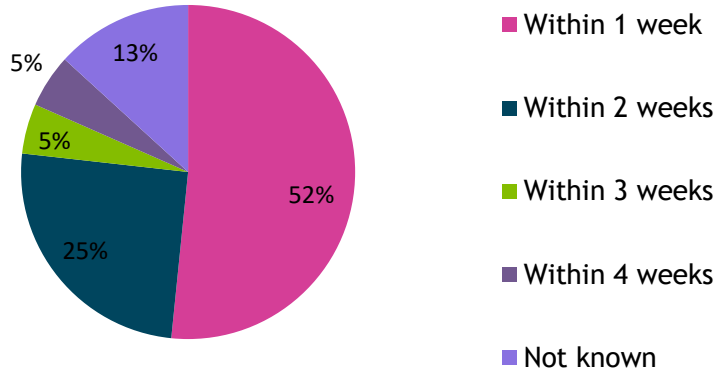
Online consultation, rather than seeing a GP face to face was either a considered or preferred option for 46%. For Dental appointments the same options were either considered or preferred by 67% of people that responded.

The key themes that emerged as solutions for young people needing to access help and support through local mental health services are:

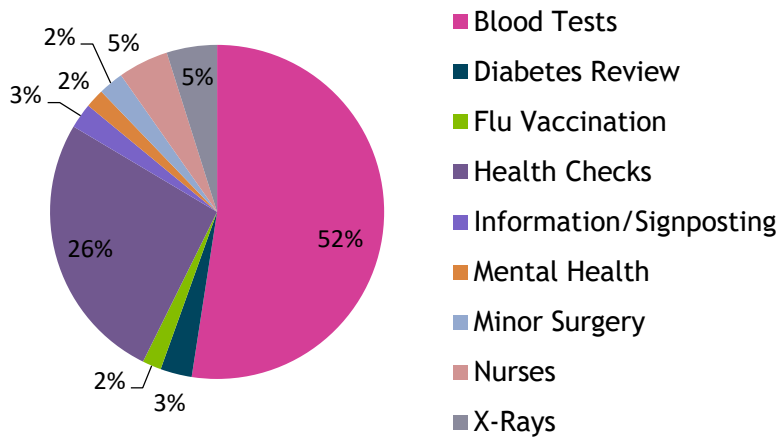
1. Having an adviser, mentor or someone who they trust to support them to keep mentally well for a consistent period of time when they need it - be it someone from the community or an individual's faith group.
2. Local NHS services that assess and provide support quickly.
3. Organised group activities to improve self - esteem, reduce loneliness and help young people to realise their potential.

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For routine (non-urgent) appointments, what do you consider a reasonable waiting time to see a GP or Practice Nurse?



Which additional services do you already use at your GP?



Background

Working in partnership with Healthwatch England, Healthwatch organisations across the country were commissioned to ascertain the views of local people, in order to help inform the local allocation and emphasis of services resulting from the NHS Long Term Plan. Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham sought the views of people from our borough, about local health and care services.

Collecting this information will help to inform the commissioners of local services, about what local people view as important; the kind of services they want to see put in place in the future, what works well and what doesn't work so well for individuals.

A survey was used to gather this information along with two focus groups undertaken with people from the borough. Healthwatch reached out into the community to speak with and listen to people from a variety of backgrounds.

The focus of the questions was asking people to comment about three elements of the Long Term Plan;

1. Prevention
2. Personalisation
3. Primary care

310 people completed the survey and along with 27 people from two focus groups, gave their views on specific services relating to **Chemotherapy Treatment** at the local hospital trust and **Mental Health affecting Young People** from local schools and colleges.

This summary report is the outcome from our engagement with local people at

- Leftley Residents Association in Barking
- Secondary School students at Heathway Library
- Students from Barking and Dagenham College in Rush Green
- Silver Net Older Peoples' Network Forums
- Somali Women's Association
- Cancer Patients and carers from Queens and King George Hospitals
- Online through Facebook Groups and Twitter

Healthwatch Barking and Dagenham extend our thanks to all the local people who gave their time to participate, giving their views about services. We also appreciate the hard work from our team and volunteers; for their support reaching out to the community.

Summary of findings

What matters most to the people of Barking and Dagenham?

1 Prevention

In assessing their current level of health, **64%** said that it was good or very good - **23%** said it was fair and **13%** either poor or very poor.

- **Exercise and physical activity** - **80%** said that they currently participate in some form of exercise to support their health and to stay well.
- **Diet & Healthy eating** - **69%** said that they are aware of the need to eat healthily to help maintain and promote good health.
- **Community sports and Gym facilities** - **44%** said they actively participated in local sports or went to the gym for their health and wellbeing.
- **Mindfulness, wellbeing and self-awareness** - **60%** of people that gave us this feedback said they took part in holistic activities such as Yoga and Meditation; others conveyed that they were aware of the need to rest and sleep well, to spend time with other people and go outdoors into local parks and other amenities.
- **For people living in the local area,**
 - **71%** said that it was easy or fairly easy to keep healthy
 - **26%** found it difficult to stay healthy
 - **3%** were not sure.

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Local people gave a variety of reasons for why it was easy or difficult to stay healthy and living in the local area.

Responses from **38%** of people referred to being able to access local sport centre facilities; local parks and open spaces; and being able to buy healthy food locally.

Living in the environment and the sense of wellbeing in local people was reflected in **35%** of respondents.

15% of people that responded, indicated there are too many fast food outlets and a lack of good shopping facilities in some areas of the borough. Recognising that this doesn't support and give incentive to people to eat healthily.

When looking to NHS services and their partners to do things differently to support people in the borough, the views of **98.5%** indicated that **health and care services could be better provided in different ways or improved**. There are various reasons that people gave, these include;

- **Giving more resources to local GPs to expand services and reduce waiting times for appointments was raised by 23% of respondents.**
- **Social prescribing and providing health care differently in the community was conveyed by 46% of respondents.**
- **Improve communication, provide better information in accessible formats that everyone in the community can access when they need to - for example, providing information that is printed into other languages and make information more readily available and accessible to blind and deaf people - 39% of respondents raised these points.**
- **Encourage and incentivise people to take part in physical activity by providing free or low cost access to sports and exercise centres. Also, look to providing access to services that promote mindfulness and mental health wellbeing. 43% of people that responded raised these points.**

When asked how important they thought the following were to staying healthy;

- **A healthy diet is important for 99%** of respondents.
- **Physical activity is important for 98%.**
- **For 92%, having friends and taking part in social activities is important.**
- **Dealing well with stress is important to 96.5%.**
- **Feeling safe in their local community is important to 98%.**
- **It's important to 97% to access reliable information about health.**
- **Enabling access to healthcare people need; when they need it, is important to 98%.**
- **Help with funding costs to prevent ill-health is important to 93% and not important to 7%.**

2 Personalisation

People told us what they already do to stay independent;

- **Living aids and equipment is used by 55%** of respondents.
- **For 68%, participating in physical and social activities helps them.**

To help them stay independent, the NHS and its partners;

- **Could, according to 42% of responses, support them by providing alternative and healthier options to meet their individual needs.**
- **For 55%, improving services in a variety of ways is something they need to stay independent.**

Some examples people said about this;

‘Provide services on your doorstep or in your home’

‘Having NHS access to holistic and alternative therapies such as Pilates, Yoga and Reflexology. Also provide the option of Podiatry services for incapacitated people stuck at home’

‘More connection with people so they are not alone’

‘Improve mental health support to families with children experiencing mental health distress’

What was most important to them;

- **For as long as it was safe to do so, staying in their own home is important for 98% of people.**
- **Their community to be able to support them to live their life the way they want is important for 94% of people.**
- **For their family and friends to have the knowledge to help and support them when needed is important for 95%.**
- **To have convenient ways for 96% of people to travel to health and care services when they need to, is important.**
- **For their family and them to be supported around the end of their life is important for 97% of people.**

3 Primary Care

Over the last 12 months, local people told Healthwatch that they used these services;

- GP Surgeries - 82%.
- Dentists - 59%.
- Pharmacies - 76%.

When considering what a reasonable time to wait for a routine GP appointment is, people told us;

- Within 1 Week - 60%.
- Within 2 Weeks - 29%.
- Within 3 Weeks - 6%.
- Within 4 Weeks - 6%.

If other additional services were made available at their GP surgery of the people that gave Healthwatch their views;

- 55% said they want to have a blood test service at their GP practice.
- 25% said they want to access health check services at their GP.
- 17% said they wanted counselling and other alternative forms of therapy to be available.

If it was made available at their local Pharmacy as an additional service, of the people that gave Healthwatch their views;

- 37% indicated that they wanted to have access to a blood testing service and health checks.
- 9% wanted access to more vaccinations

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- **51%** gave a variety of other suggestions that could be made available; e.g. having specialists available to give advice about long term conditions; providing clearer and simple information about medications.

How important do you think each of the following are for staying healthy and well?

- **Being able to see a preferred GP/ nurse/ professional** is important or very important to **92%** of respondents.
- **Availability of out-of-hours (weekend or evening) appointments** was indicated by **91%** to be important or very important.
- **Being able to book appointments online** is considered not important or not important at all by **32%** of respondents; **68%** said it is important or very important.
- **Having the option of telephone or online consultations** is not important or not important at all for **22%** of people that replied; for **78%** however, it is important or very important.
- **Being able to see test results online** is important or very important for **67%** and not important for **33%** of people.
- **Being able to manage their medical records through an online portal** is not important for **38%** of people, whereas **62%** considered it important or very important.

When considering digital access to Primary Care;

- **Booking GP appointments online or through an app** is a preferred option wherever possible for **41%** of people.
Although a consideration for **25%** of people, it wouldn't be their first option. For **34%**, they wouldn't use that option and **13%** think it is a bad idea.

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- **Booking dentist appointments online or through an app** is, wherever possible, the preferred option for **37%** of respondents; whereas for **30%** it's an option they would consider but it wouldn't be their preferred option.
- **Having an online consultation rather than seeing a GP face-to-face** is the preferred option for **14%** of people who responded.

It is not a preferred option for **54%** of people. **32%** would consider it, but not as a preferred option.

- **Accessing their medical records and test results through an online portal** is a preferred option where possible for **31%** and an option that **27%** of people would consider, but not as a preference. For **42%**, it's not an option they would choose and of those, **17%** also indicated it is a bad idea.

What did they tell Healthwatch?

The views from local people are important for helping to shape local NHS services.

Booking Appointments Online

'There are many people who cannot use online services, so face to face has to remain for people that cannot use English or use internet.'

'Just because you haven't got a computer why should you be ignored?'

'Booking an appointment and seeing a GP should be made very easy. Prevention measures should also be emphasised to avoid having too many people at the GP.'

'Just consider the wider population so no one is excluded in this drive to use technology'

'I don't have a computer or know how to use one. I want to take responsibility of my own health as much as I can. I am disabled from an accident and try to be independent.'

'There are people who wouldn't know how to access booking appointments online so they still need to phone or make appointments in the surgery.'

‘Services should be “deaf friendly” to encourage people to use them. The telephone is no use to them e.g. NHS 111 - we need to use online services.’

Resources for Services

‘I think too much money is spent on bureaucracy and management and not enough of things like nurses, Occupational Therapists & Counsellors to help people in the community.’

‘I am very concerned about mental health support in the community and people living with chronic pain affecting their quality of life. We need more specialist practitioners for conditions like Arthritis.’

‘Help more people who suffer from emotional abuse, anxiety and stress!’

‘The NHS needs staff who can become multi-functional in their knowledge and responsive to individual needs. No “one size fits all” approach. Good care must mean good caring staff providing good standards of support. See people, not numbers!’

‘More funding is key but organisation is absolutely vital. I do not the NHS on a regular basis, I am generally in good health. When I do, waiting to see a GP is excessive - I work and can spend an hour waiting for a pre-booked appointment I was removed from!’

Accessing Services

‘Less waiting times for blood tests and more staff needed in hospitals.’

‘Waiting times for specialist/consultant appointments are appalling. My daughter waited 8 months for an Optician appointment after being referred by an Optician.’

‘It is rather challenging to get an appointment at my doctor’s surgery, the problem is usually at the reception desk where the manner of the receptionist I have encountered is awful! I hope they don’t represent the norm.’

‘For older people doctors should do home calls for people who are bed bound. My neighbour never sees their doctor; they have only had phone conversations.’

‘Older people prefer face to face or telephone contact.’

‘Waiting times at GP services and hospitals are unreasonable - more needs to be done to ensure that appointments are readily available when you need them.’

‘As a health and social care student I think it is important for everyone to see a doctor when they need it as soon as possible. As the technology is developing, digital access to primary care would help the NHS to have a faster service.’

‘Availability of mental health services is patchy!’

Focus Group 1

Healthwatch Barking & Dagenham, along with two other local Healthwatch, held a joint focus group with patients and carers who had recent experience of using chemotherapy services at the local hospital trust.

The service was changed in October without consultation and now provides chemotherapy from the Queens Hospital site in Romford. Local people gave their views about the service.

About Staff - ‘really welcoming, nurses were great, amazing, caring, wonderful volunteers, professional and brilliant.’

Treatment Area -

‘We’re packed in like sardines.’

‘Personalised care and support at all times would be good.’

Oncology Appointments -

‘If you’re not assertive, you would be overlooked.’

‘Cancer patients don’t know how long they have to live; our time is precious.’

Blood Tests -

‘The blood test department is sometimes too slow depending on the phlebotomist you have on. One in particular can take 20 minutes out of your time!’

Going to A&E -

‘The ‘Red Card’ is useless and doesn’t give (chemo) patients priority.’

‘I went to A&E after my third (chemotherapy) treatment as my temperature had soared. I had to explain the issue to four doctors! They had no knowledge of the risk to oncology patients.’

‘The staff at A&E didn’t know how to take blood from the PICC line. They were about to take it from my toe but my wife had to stop them and pointed out that a chemotherapy patient can’t have blood taken from their toe.’

Focus Group 2

Engaging with local college students in a focus group listening about mental health and wellbeing highlighted Anxiety and Depression as the main causes affecting young people.

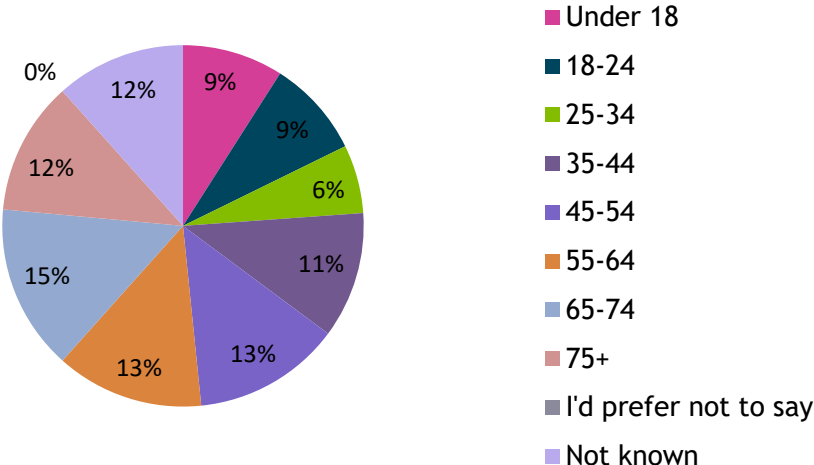
More than half the students revealed how they lack confidence and get nervous in new situations, with some indicating that they have many fears and concerns.

These are the main themes of the things they told us that could benefit and help them;

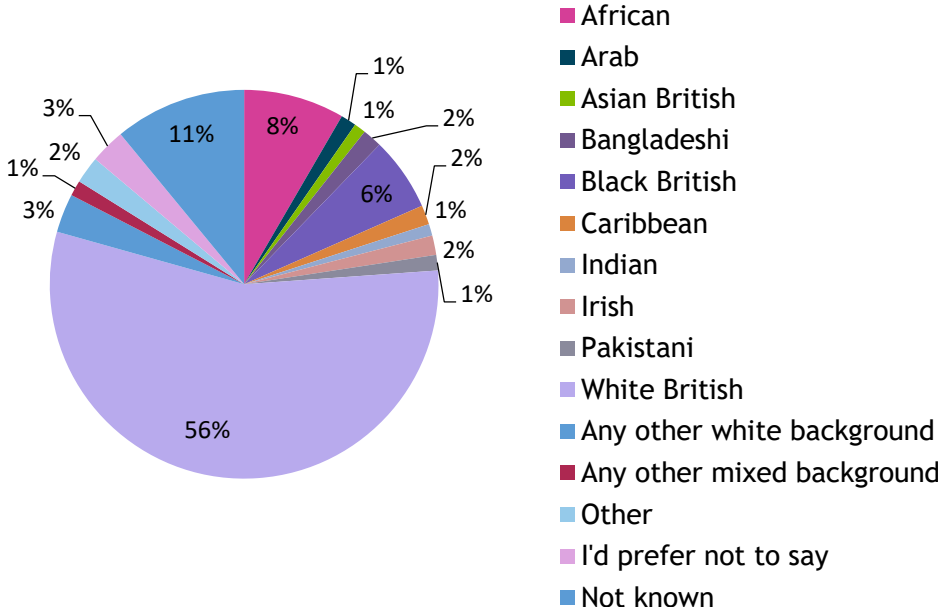
- **‘Having an adviser or mentor, someone I can trust who could support me to keep mentally well...if not my parents, someone from my community or faith group.’**
- **‘Local NHS services that can assess and provide support quickly.’**
- **‘Organised group activities to help young people to realise their potential, reduce loneliness and improve self-esteem.’**
- **‘Better education about mental health - make it easier for boys and younger lads to be more open with how they feel in their own groups.’**
- **‘One to one opportunities to support mental health and confront barriers through access to a services that offer specialist counselling’**

Demography

Age

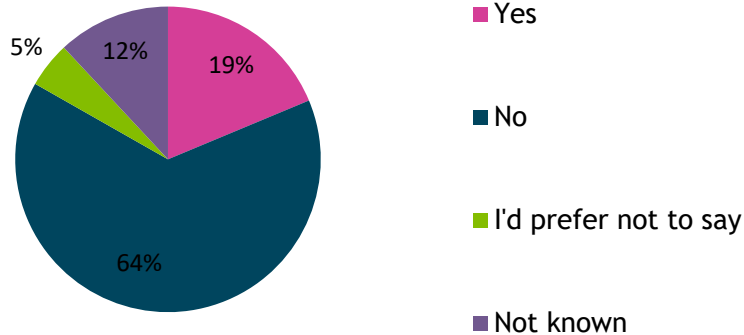


Ethnicity

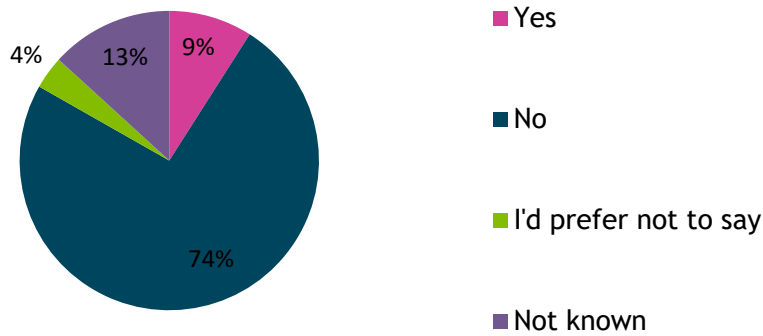


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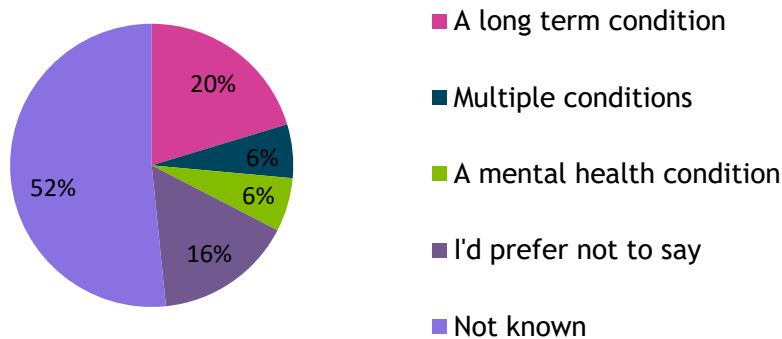
Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



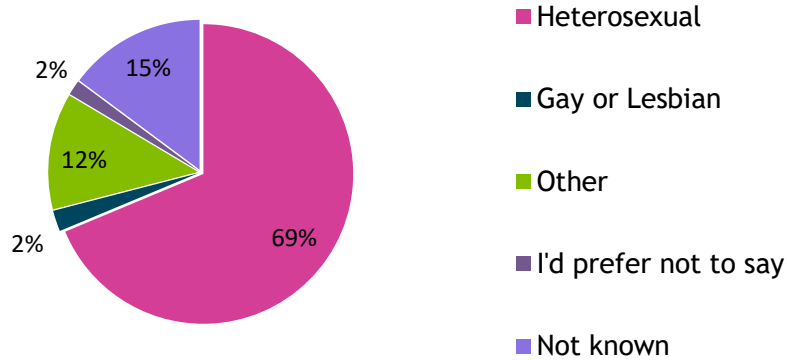
Are you a Carer?



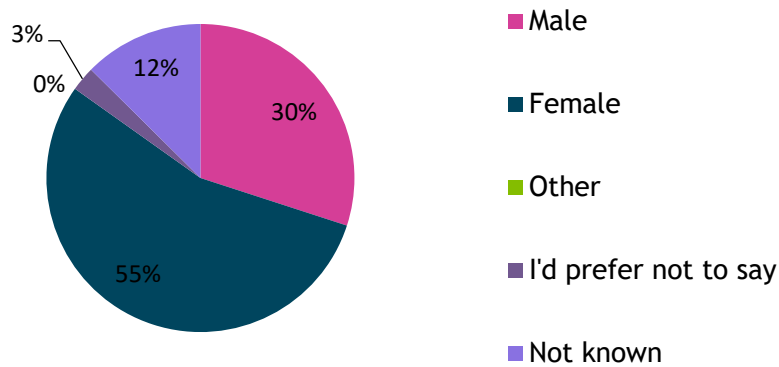
Do you have...



Which of the following best describes you?



Your Gender



Your Religion

