

# Insight Bulletin – October 2022

## About Healthwatch Surrey

One of the statutory duties of Healthwatch Surrey is to share residents' experiences of health and social care with the people and organisations who make decisions about those services.

This bulletin highlights a selection of the themes we've heard about recently.

## Praise and thanks

Last month we received 122 reports of people's health and social care experiences. We frequently hear from people who are very happy with the care and support they have received. This month's praise highlights how important the human values of courtesy and kindness are to people:

Whilst in A & E, there was a woman who was becoming distressed. She was waiting with her daughter or maybe carer, and each time someone went passed she called out to ask if they were a doctor. A doctor who was passing stopped and bent down to speak to her. He spoke directly to her, was calm and polite and asked a few questions. He then explained it wasn't his area, but he asked her name and said when he next saw those dealing with her, he would see if they could speed things up a bit. It calmed the person and was a real act of kindness.

**Website/Helpdesk**

Andover MIND are really helpful as are the MH team. They wouldn't let my husband be discharged from them until I was given a Dementia Navigator. I have her email address and she always replies.

**Community Engagement, Dementia Day Centre**

The paediatrician thinks [my son] has global development delay and probably autism...I love coming here. I come most weeks. I feel safe and not judged here. Everyone is very kind and friendly.

**Community Engagement, Nursery**

The insoles which the podiatrist suggested and said would order did not arrive... So in the end I went down there and handed in a letter for the podiatrist at reception. The member of staff that was on duty said, would I mind if she opened it or did I want to explain to her and see if she could help, as the podiatrist is only sporadically there. I explained and the receptionist went back through all the orders but couldn't find one for me. They spent ages and ended up saying go home and we will call you. I made sure I got the phone number before I went. They were true to their word and called me back later on that day. They hadn't been able to find the order but had placed the order for me I thought she went above and beyond, couldn't be more helpful.

**Community Engagement, Hospital**

## **Don't forget to tell the patient...**

People tend to believe the NHS is a single organisation, with centralised knowledge and seamless information sharing across the services such as hospitals, GPs and community healthcare. They also assume that if there is something they need to know or something they need to do, the NHS will tell them. When this doesn't happen problems can occur:

My husband recently went to the GP for his over-55 check up. They asked him how he was managing his diabetes. It turned out that he was diagnosed with diabetes 8 years ago but the consultant didn't tell him... If only he had had his diagnosis 8 years ago, he could have made changes to his lifestyle and diet and possibly reverse it. But now the GP says it's too late and he will be on meds for the rest of his life.

**Community Engagement, Carers Group**

My husband had heart surgery in May...The heart health team suggested that my husband got a review of the medication he was on from his GP. I called the health centre to organise a medication review, it became apparent that they had no idea he had been in hospital and that no information had been passed on to them... Luckily, I had all the notes and got them photocopied and gave them to the surgery ... The GP called, they asked if we had a blood pressure machine at home and to take his blood pressure, his blood pressure was high and so they upped the dose of one his medications but all still without seeing him...no one has looked at his

wound, I thought he would be able to see a nurse but, no one seemed interested, the wound was weeping, and I ended up dealing with it myself I looked on the NHS website for advice. It's all in our hands, I've been the one caring for him these last few weeks and it's just been me following up.

**Community Outreach, Community Café**

I'm a young adult carer for my mum who has mental health issues. She had a cancer scare ... she was sent to hospital [St Peters]. No-one there explained what the tests were for or followed up afterwards to make she understood what was happening. She said that she felt like a test object as all they did was take the blood and do the tests but not talk to ... This all has been going on for 2 month. The stress on us all was awful. As no-one was telling her anything or reassuring her, she was imagining all sorts. At one stage she was talking about her last wishes and funeral arrangements. ... Mum has now seen the consultant and it's not cancer but she will still need bowel surgery. The consultant was very good and as he explained things she feels ok about everything.

Why couldn't she have had this reassurance in the beginning? It would have made such a difference to us all.

**Community Engagement, Nursery**

## Smoothing the path at Hospital Pharmacy

Delays at hospital pharmacy have been a concern for providers since well before the pandemic, but are still a shock and frustration for patients. We have heard reports recently from patients at several hospitals:

I'm just waiting for my medication now, I've been waiting here for a little while. I'm worrying about getting home, I live on my own.

**Community Engagement, Hospital**

When I've been [to hospital] and have been prescribed meds, I can be waiting for up to one hour for a prescription

**Community Engagement, Hospital**

Criticism is not just for the delay itself, but at management and communication:

No system to notify when ready, I ring the bell every 20 min to enquire. These are standard antibiotics. Very frustrating end to my experience here.

**Community Engagement, Hospital**

Collecting from the pharmacy for my sister today, they said it would be 5 minutes I've already been stood here for half an hour.

**Community Engagement, Hospital**

I am a volunteer at the inpatient pharmacy...There can be trouble getting the drugs out on time as the wards don't communicate with the pharmacy when patients move wards. Patients are then left waiting in the discharge lounge. There should be more communication between the wards and the pharmacy.

**Community Engagement, Hospital**

## Unexpected costs of healthcare

With worries about the increases in the cost of living we are hearing more about costs of healthcare that are unexpected and cannot be planned for:

I've been waiting for an hour so far [for pharmacy], it puts up the parking costs which is a worry.

**Community Engagement, Hospital**

I have had a bowel operation ... I am still physically very unwell (diarrhoea 15 times yesterday) .... I was told by my consultant my medication...would be ready, this was not the case so I was told to go home and collect the next day... I received a call today after being home 3 days to say my lansoprazole was there, no they did not have my barrier cream (vital going to the loo so frequently as my bottom is bleeding) and no sick note (in order to try to claim SSP) I am in desperate need of the cream so had to buy this and am currently buying pull up pants, so far spent £40

**Community Engagement, Hospital**

Jane<sup>1</sup> had a baby in August but the baby was born with a heart condition...due to the baby's ill health the baby is in intensive care & won't be out till February 2023 with Jane currently having to pay £20.00 roughly in petrol a day & £8.00 in parking day each time to visit the baby. Jane said she is unable to look for work due to travelling back & forth to see her baby plus looking after her 2 other children. Wanted to know if there was anywhere that would help her with her travel costs.

**Helpdesk (Telephone)**

My Dad has recently had surgery but has also had to go back into hospital twice following the surgery. If I add up the total cost of parking over the last 2 months that this has taken place, it comes to over £50 - who can afford that?! ...although the staff were fab on both occasions and he got seen quickly, it took 8.5 hours the first time and 6.5 hours the second time to get him in a ward so we waited with him until then and had to pay the 24 hour parking rate.

**Helpdesk (Website)**

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<sup>1</sup> All names changed to protect anonymity

## Gathering and sharing our insight

### Who are we hearing from?

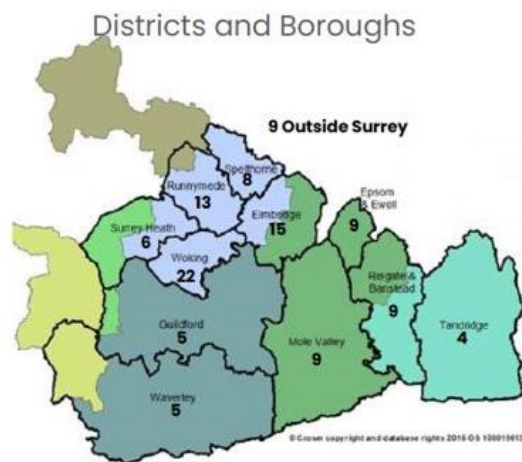
We have heard from 122 people this month.

- 20% of people identify as a carer
- 40% of people told us they have a disability
- 47% of people told us they have a long term health condition.

We receive experiences in a number of ways. The majority of these this month were via our engagement sessions and telephone calls to our Helpline. We also received contacts via email, our website, our Independent Health Complaints Advocacy team, from our volunteers, through Healthwatch England and via our Problem, praise or suggestion leaflets.



Our spotlight for engagement sessions in October was North West Surrey. The map below shows the different areas we received experiences from. The highest numbers this month were from Woking, Elmbridge and Runnymede.





If we hear a case of concern regarding patient safety, we immediately signpost the sharer to the appropriate body and escalate the case with the provider/commissioner.

We share our wider themes with Trusts, ICSs, Surrey County Council, Public Health, CQC, and in various boards and groups across Surrey.

## Our engagement sessions



Our spotlight for engagements in November is Guildford and Waverley. Please note: these dates may be subject to change.

DATE	PLACE	TIME
01.11.22	Royal Surrey County Hospital (Main Entrance)	10.00 – 12.00
09.11.22	Rowley's Community Centre, Cranleigh	10.00-12.00
15.11.22	Merrow Park Surgery, Merrow, Guildford	10.00 – 12.00
22.11.22	The Oak Drop in Café, St Peters shared Church, Stoke, Guildford	10.00 – 12.30
28.11.22	Farnham Centre for Health, Farnham	10.00-12.00
TBC	Brownscombe House Nursing Home, Haslemere (Enter and View Visit)	TBC

To share an experience with us, people can also contact us in the following ways:

Phone our helpdesk: 0303 303 0023

Send an SMS to our helpdesk: 07592 787 533

Email: [enquiries@healthwatchsurrey.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchsurrey.co.uk)

Share your feedback via our website:

<https://www.healthwatchsurrey.co.uk/feedback-centre/>

## Friends and Family Care Home Survey

Please share our survey for friends and family of those living in care homes.

The survey can be accessed via this QR code or found on our website -

[Friends and family care home survey - Healthwatch Surrey.](#)



**Friends and Family  
Care Home Survey**



**healthwatch**  
Surrey

## Our distribution list

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