
What we're hearing about services commissioned by the Public Health team

March 2025



"The thing that is working well is the 0-19 advice line; I hear time and time again that this is helpful to both staff and patients."



If you would like a paper copy of this document or require it in an alternative format, please get in touch with us.

Contents

Report overview	3
Insight summary and recommendations	4
What we've heard	4
Children and families	4
Nutrition and activity	9
Cross border issues impacting access to mental wellbeing and weight loss services.....	11
Healthy hearts.....	12
Sexual health.....	12
Domestic abuse.....	13
Seasonal advice	13
Drugs and alcohol.....	13
Stop smoking	15
Thank you.....	15
About Healthwatch Surrey	15
Contact us.....	16

Report overview

This report provides insights into local people's views on, and experiences of Public Health services across Surrey. It is based on what people have told us at our agenda free listening engagement events, and via our Helpdesk, Independent Health Complaints Advocacy service, Giving Carers a Voice engagement, Combating Drugs Partnership Public Involvement, online Feedback Centre, postal submissions and Healthwatch England's website.

Our report focusses on 3 key areas:

- Children and families (specifically Health Visitors and the 0-19 service)
- Nutrition and activity
- Healthy hearts.

We have also included a small amount of feedback on stop smoking and sexual health.

We have referenced other Luminus/Healthwatch Surrey work in relation to domestic abuse, seasonal advice, and drugs and alcohol.

Please note: Any urgent or concerning experiences within this report have been escalated to the appropriate teams. All appropriate information and signposting has already been given.

If you would like more information or examples of what people have shared, please get in touch.

Insight summary and recommendations

Theme	What would be helpful?
Communication about 0-19 service /drop-in clinics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to raise awareness of the 0-19 service particularly amongst those who are not first-time parents. 2. Remind parents that the service is not just for babies.
Importance of 6-week check, and access to Tongue-tie service	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Remind parents of the importance of the 6-week check. 4. Work towards meeting the 2-week target for tongue-tie referrals.
Expand the offer of drop- in clinics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Incorporate safety in the home talks, talks about developmental milestones, and safe sleep.
0-19 years Single Point of Access triage (SPA). Waiting time and criteria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Review process for SPA - waiting list and criteria for acceptance

What we've heard

Children and families

We visited the health visitor drop-in clinic at Loseley Fields Family Centre and the Leatherhead health visitor drop-in clinic in May 2024. We also visited Orchard House in East Surrey in January 2025. We tried to visit Farnham hospital in February and Camberley health visitor drop-in in February and March 2025, but we did not get a positive response from the people we contacted.

0-19 service Loseley Fields Family Centre

A staff member told us how useful the 0-19 line is:

"The thing that is working well is the 0-19 advice line, I hear time and time again that this is helpful to both staff and patients."

They also told us:

- Staffing levels meant they weren't able to offer the same level of support as previously.
- They would need more staff to deliver any extension to the service.
- They believed that not all parents realise how much information is in the red book.
- The drop-in clinic is difficult for some people to get to if they don't drive.
- Most of their work is with babies aged 0-16 weeks, they described the support they give, particularly with anxious mums, for example signposting to baby massage classes to promote bonding with the baby. They also watch out for mental health issues.

"We see a lot of anxiety, especially in young mums and where a mum has a lack of support at home or ongoing problems. This is when we must figure out if any further intervention is required. We have good links with GPs and strong referral pathways for peri natal mental health. We work with people around bonding and attachment and if they require further support, we refer to baby massage, encouraging positive 1:1 time for mother and baby. If there is a lot of anxiety and other contributing factors such as mental health or issues at home, then we would refer to the peri mental health team or talk plus/ mind matters. We may also suggest seeing a GP who can help with medication."

214111 May 2024

They told us that they hear more positive feedback when the 6-8 week check has been done by a dedicated GP at the practice who does all the checks. If someone hasn't attended the 6-8 week check, they try to follow up, but they don't have the resource to follow up with everyone.

They also suggested service improvements: such as safety in the home talks, talks about developmental milestones, and safe sleep.

At Loseley Fields we heard from parents that the drop-in clinic is really useful, parents appreciate the drop-in aspect and not having to make an appointment. We heard that the 0-19 helpline is well used, however we also heard that there was a lack of awareness of the clinic, and also a lack of awareness that the clinic dealt with older children and not just babies (this was from 1 person who had been reminded of the clinic and attended with someone who had a younger child).

We heard that people use the clinic for weighing the babies, breastfeeding advice and checking tongue tie.

"I didn't know about this clinic with my first but there was a sticker on my red book with my second. I would ring the 0-19 advice line if I needed advice and have been using that more recently, I talk to friends and family or go to the GP.Getting a GP appointment there is sometimes hard,...the care is good once you are there. I didn't think to go the health visitors first. **Now I've found this clinic it's really handy**, I can drop in as and when which has helped me. I missed the 6-week appointment for me and my daughter, I just forgot to follow up on everything and now I think that means I've missed the window for tongue tie, she is finding eating solids really hard, I'll be asking them here today about this."

214092 May 2024

We asked where people would go for information and advice about their children. Most people said they would use Google, or NHS websites. but if they needed more specific advice, such as about tongue tie, hitting developmental milestones or a squint, they would go to the drop-in clinic.

Leatherhead health visitor drop-in clinic May 2024

We heard very positive feedback about the health visitor service and, in particular, the transfer of care from midwives to health visitors.

"The service was seamless with a midwife home visit on day 2 and 5. They gave me information on the support that's available and advised on the transfer to community health

visitor services. I then received a telephone call, home visit and another telephone call.

I am very happy with the health visitor drop-in clinic."

215138 May 2024

Again, people told us about issues with tongue tie.

"When my son was born, he had a tongue tie. I was advised the waiting list was 1 month so needed to go privately which cost £200.

[The Health Visitor in the clinic said this is not unusual and is a stressful time for new parents as it means baby cannot feed properly and will lose/not gain weight]"

215133 May 2024

Orchard House 0-19 service January 2025

We visited Orchard House in Salfords where there were several clinics running. People attending for an appointment with their children were very positive about their experience and about the accessibility of Orchard House.

"My son is a few months old...The Brompton gave us lots of information and support then **made referrals to more local services. We have felt very well supported and looked after here** [Orchard House]."

227690 May 2024

People told us that booking an appointment was quick and easy and that there was good availability:

"I am here for the 27-month check. I was phoned for the appointment and was given lots of different options. I came here for my antenatal appointments and check-ups once my baby was born."

227716 May 2024

"We have come for the 2-year check. I phoned for an appointment and was given one straightaway. I did a

questionnaire beforehand. The advice line is very useful. The venue is easy to get to and the parking is good.”

227726 May 2024

Referrals

We spoke to 1 parent who had been referred for physiotherapy through the Single Point of Access, but the referral was declined after a 4 week wait. The family sought private support, who recommended that the original referral had been made appropriately. The time it takes to get issues like this resolved are often stressful to families who are concerned about the wellbeing of their child. It can also erode confidence in services and processes when given conflicting information:

“We have come for physiotherapy today. We saw the GP who said they would refer to physiotherapy. We waited for 4 weeks and were then declined. We then went to a private physio who said we should be re-referred.”

227700 May 2024

Parental mental health

We also asked about mums’ own mental health:

“For mental health advice I would look online, and I would probably also speak to the health visitor at this stage. I think there is a lot of anxiety when you first have a child, and I think giving parents advice early or access to some kind of app early so people can look up concerns as and when would be helpful. I shared a leaflet with my NCT group I had found from a London children’s hospital, it was like a booklet with common concerns addressed. I thought that was excellent and they’ve all said they’ve referred to it too. NCT helped me with information and advice about birthing and my health, it’s also been a good way to meet people locally.”

214098 May 2024

We heard positive feedback about the Jasmine team (dedicated maternity mental health team) at Royal Surrey County hospital.

"I am on a priority list as I did utilise the Jasmine service whilst pregnant. Mainly due to anxiety around pregnancy and so I was referred to Mind Matters. It was essential timing for me and really reframed my mental health during the pregnancy. I had consultant led pregnancy care due to a risk of blood clotting. For me, it suited me and I felt well looked after, it was the consultant who referred me to Jasmine team. It was helpful and reassuring to my high levels of anxiety at the time to have the consultant led care.....

It was a traumatic birth. I've been having flashbacks, and I have been referred to the reflections service.

For my own mental health now, I'm not needing to seek further info or advice. I was given a wealth of information through the therapy, and they gave me info about the silver cloud portal. I have been working through the portal; it's been great and really helpful."

214091 May 2024

Nutrition and activity

Nutrition and activity is also a Public Health topic area. We reviewed our database for experiences about this area. This is the first feedback we have heard about weight loss medication, previously we have heard accounts from people using the bariatric service at St Peter's. We heard the first experience which is about St Peter's weight loss service via Healthwatch England.

The second example is about the NHS weight management programme, which was a disappointing experience.

The third example is about diet advice given by a Physician Associate, due to raised cholesterol. This was also a negative experience.

"After years of asking my GP for help with weight management I found through my own research that I could request referral to a level 3 programme which didn't seem to have occurred to any of my GPs. When I finally got an appointment, it was like a factory, dozens of people being processed by nurses taking blood and asking you to choose between "weight management" - essentially the same as

level 2 – or surgery. No individual conversation about personal circumstances or needs. I was told that the medical pathway (i.e. Wegovy) had been discontinued due to supply issues. I reluctantly signed up for surgery and haven't heard anything since (3 months ago). I decided to use my savings to buy Mounjaro and have lost 2 stone. It's insane that these drugs can't be provided on the NHS but you are happy to spend £1000s on slicing people up and permanently altering their bodies. I have no dietician or medical support while taking this drug and am having to make it up as I go along. The NHS is letting us all down and storing up problems for the future. Treating obesity should be the no.1 priority and providing these extremely effective drugs is the best option we have. We should be investing in the manufacturers and getting them to build factories in the UK to supply the NHS. In the meantime, we suffer."

220794 August 2024

"I had a referral for NHS weight management from my endocrine consultant via a GP referral. Complete waste of time... I got offered Slimming World (already doing that!) or an online service. I opted for that then had conflicting phone calls about being eligible as my BMI wasn't high enough, then told off for not registering online. I don't know where they got my weight from, nobody asked for it. Eventually a human spoke to me, and I could register after all. The online service was hopeless, they told me to read about healthy eating, which I knew about, and to take exercise!! All I wanted to do was to speak to a dietician for advice."

221946 September 2024

"Because of my heart test and slightly high cholesterol, I was asked to see the Physician Associate about diet. I expected her to ask about my diet, what I eat and maybe suggest a diet sheet as that's what I had heard happens from other people. But she just said 'cut out butter' – which I don't have on anything anyway. She then said 'cut out cake, cut out biscuits' which I only eat maybe once a week. She told me to

'up the nuts, fruit and veg and have lots of dried fruits. I eat all of those things anyway, and seeds. I have an allotment; I even eat dandelion leaves as these were introduced by European settlers as good for nutrition. I left the practice thinking 'well, I don't think that was very helpful to me at all'. I have upped the fruit and nuts, and now don't eat cake or biscuits at all, but I do think she should have asked me first about what I eat and then based her assessment on that. I just feel they didn't ask the right questions; they're just staring at a screen and reading from that."

215538 May 2024

We also heard from carers about the struggle of fitting in self-care and exercise.

"I have found being a carer very overwhelming, but I do try to take care of myself with exercise, but I do feel guilty about leaving him alone."

221744 September 2024

Cross border issues impacting access to mental wellbeing and weight loss services

We have heard about issues arising from a person's GP being in Hampshire and the person living in Surrey. This has had implications in terms of accessing mental health support.

They also shared difficulties in accessing weight loss services, again because their GP is in Hampshire.

"I have been to my GP about contraception, and they have told me I have to lose weight, which I get, but it's so difficult to find places to exercise as a single mum. I don't have anyone to help me with my daughter, so I can't even exercise.

My GP is based in Farnborough, but I live in Guildford. That causes a lot of issues with accessing primary care support. For example, I would like some mental health support, but I am not eligible for help in Surrey because I don't have a

Surrey GP. It is written as an agreement that I will stay at my current GP, due to some past events that have happened. I was also told that I could access support through “Healthy You” to help me lose weight, but again I can't access it because my GP is not in Surrey.”

223370 October 2024

Healthy hearts

We held an engagement event at Woking Leisure centre, to speak to the over 50's club. Here we heard from some people who attend the Braveheart classes for heart health. Not only did we hear positives about the classes themselves, but we also heard that they work as a peer support group.

“I come along to the Braveheart class twice per week. It is vital for people with heart problems. I am at Southview surgery, I have had excellent service from there and from Guy's & St Thomas'. I meet my friend at Braveheart and we go for a coffee afterwards.”

226607 December 2024

We also asked generally about how people look after themselves.

“I am here for an aerobics class, I do some activity every day, I come for the social aspect. I go to Zumba, ballet, and I go to Holme Farm in Addlestone, (a community project) where I grow vegetables, and I garden at home.”

226606 December 2024

Sexual health

At an engagement event we had an in-depth conversation with a youth worker who shared the following feedback about sexual health outreach services.

“I would like to see more activities on offer in the southeast quadrant as I think this targeted youth work really benefits young people in an area. Outreach is a really important part

of prevention for young people, going to where they will be breaks down barriers to using services. For instance, there used to be an outreach service at the youth centre for sexual health. Young people understand and like the 1:1 appointment aspect of the sexual health service but it's often about knowing about it and having someone tell them it exists, and they can use it. Young people meeting people from sexual health, mental health services and being able to access free counselling would really benefit them. It's really important to have services regularly coming out. More staff would help us to share the work as we are a small service."

220742 August 2024 Youth Worker SE Quadrant

Domestic abuse

Healthwatch Surrey is currently undertaking research to better understand access to, and experience of, GP practices for people who have experienced or are experiencing domestic abuse.

Seasonal advice

Luminus was commissioned to undertake research around Covid vaccination uptake.

[Covid-vaccination-uptake-1-page-summary.pdf](#)

Luminus are currently working with Surrey Heartlands to explore motivations to having/not having the seasonal flu vaccine and understand any reasons why eligible care home workers chose not to take up the vaccine when offered. This insight will help inform their future seasonal flu vaccine drive strategy and communications.

An online survey through Smart Survey was sent to 100+ care homes. We are conducting some telephone and some face to face interviews with care home workers across Surrey.

Drugs and alcohol

In June 2023 Luminus were commissioned by Surrey County Council to deliver a bespoke and independent public engagement service for those in Surrey who may be affected by substance use. This includes people with lived experience, their families and networks, individuals impacted by the

effect of substance use through their communities and those that have been the victims of drug-related crime. We also engage with people with lived experience who choose not to access treatment services.

Our role as Public Involvement lead supports the 4 objectives of Surrey's Combating Drugs Partnership:

1. Breaking drug supply
2. Drug and Alcohol Treatment and Recovery
3. Achieve a shift in the demand for drugs
4. Reduce alcohol related harm.

In order to gain an independent and accurate review of the public's experience in relation to drugs and alcohol, and to advise on the future planning of Surrey's Combating Drugs Partnership, Luminus conduct a programme of engagement through 1-1 opportunities and targeted focus groups. Working closely with the Combating Drugs Partnership as to the focus of the engagement, we feed back our findings and insight from engagement to the Partnership on a regular basis. Whilst delivering our engagement plan, we ensure the people we speak to are provided with appropriate signposting and support and we engage with existing local networks and support organisations.

"I saw a drug deal the other day on our estate, I thought it was going to be the older man selling to the kid but it was the other way round, I was shocked. Living here all my kids know what cannabis smells like, we wish they didn't. Our neighbour lets the kids smoke in the back garden and sometimes it feels like the whole estate stinks of it. In the summer we have to keep the back door closed due to the neighbours, the teenage brother and sister smoke in the garden with their mates, the saddest thing is the little one who is only 8 goes out to sit with them, she likes the company. I wouldn't report it I feel sorry for them."

226275 December 2024

Stop smoking

Luminus CDPPI colleagues visited the Probation group meeting in Redhill in May. They heard from a pregnant woman about her reluctance to stop smoking, as it alleviates her stress.

"I am aware smoking is bad because I am pregnant, but it is worse mentally for me if I don't smoke. The midwives have accepted now that I can't give up at the moment. I am too stressed with everything. I will cut down, I know this is a poison and although my baby is small for its gestation, as long as it is healthy then I am not worried. I can't afford it either.

I've had extra scans at the hospital because she is measuring small. They are really nice there."

21/175 May 2024 (CDPPI Redhill probation group)

Thank you

We would like to thank everyone who gave their time and shared their experiences with us.

We would also like to thank our volunteers who supported us on these visits/during our engagement session and to the staff teams who welcomed us.

About Healthwatch Surrey

Healthwatch Surrey champions the voice of local people to shape, improve and get the best from NHS, health and social care services. We are independent and have statutory powers to make sure decision makers listen to the experiences of local people.

We passionately believe that listening and responding to local people's experiences is vital to create health and social care services that meet the needs of people in Surrey. We seek out people's experiences of health and care services, particularly from people whose voices are seldom heard, who might be at risk of health inequalities and whose needs are not met by current services. We share our findings publicly and with service providers

and commissioners to influence and challenge current provision and future plans.

We also provide reliable and trustworthy information and signposting about local health and social care services to help people get the support they need.

Contact us

Website: www.healthwatchsurrey.co.uk

Phone: 0303 303 0023

Text/SMS: 07592 787533

WhatsApp: 07592 787533

Email: enquiries@healthwatchsurrey.co.uk

Address: Freepost RSYX-ETRE-CXBY, Healthwatch Surrey, Astolat, Coniers Way, Burpham, Guildford, Surrey, GU4 7HL.

 [healthwatchsurrey](https://www.facebook.com/healthwatchsurrey)

 [healthwatch_surrey](https://www.instagram.com/healthwatch_surrey)

 [Healthwatch Surrey](https://www.linkedin.com/company/Healthwatch Surrey)



We are proud to be commended in the National Healthwatch Impact Awards, recognising our work helping to improve local NHS and social care. You can view [our video](#) highlighting how feedback has enabled us to make positive changes to health and social care services.



We are committed to the quality of our information. Every three years we perform an audit so that we can be certain of this.

Luminus

The Healthwatch Surrey service is run by Luminus Insight CIC, known as Luminus.

Registered office: GF21, Astolat, Coniers Way, Burpham, Surrey, GU4 7HL.