

Healthwatch Gateshead Annual Survey Results

About Us

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

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Methodology:

Healthwatch Gateshead 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 Gateshead social media pages and public engagement took place in localities throughout the period of eight weeks as the survey was active.

We received **278** responses in total which provided insights and experiences on a range of health and/or social care services which were accessed in Gateshead 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. 74 respondents did not provide any additional comments.

Ambulance: There have been mixed experiences around the waiting times for ambulances where in some instances there have been hours of wait for an ambulance in contrast to minutes of arrival. There has also been a case of the ambulance taking the patients to the wrong hospital. A suggestion of an ambulance tracking system was made due to a very poor experience in the past 12 months as well as the respondent having a long-term condition.

Dentist: 25 respondents rated dentists as 'very poor' as they are unable to get an appointment or unable to register with an NHS dentist.

GP: The highest rating of 'poor' experiences was rated for General Practice. The main reasons for this were that it is very difficult to get an appointment and GP's not listening or understanding issue(s) of patients. However, many respondents mentioned that they were able to their GPs online system to talk to a doctor which they have found helpful.

Hospital: There were mixed responses regarding hospital experiences. Many received great care and many said that there was good communication between their GP and the QE hospital. However, many felt that there was poor communication between departments within a hospital and that there is no holistic approach which

consequently means that information is missed out by some professionals. There were also many negative comments regarding the waiting times in accident and emergency.

Long Covid Clinics: No comments were shared regarding experiences at a Long Covid Clinic although nine (9) respondents rated their experiences as 'excellent'.

Mental health: There were varied opinions on Mental Health services. Some comments found their local mental health support team to be very helpful and quick whereas others found it to have a long waiting list and feel that there is a strong focus on non-clinical means of support.

NHS 111: Eleven (11) respondents shared their experiences of NHS 111 which were all positive as they were given relevant and helpful advice.

Pharmacies: 114 respondents rated an 'Excellent' experience with their pharmacies. Reasons provided were that their pharmacies are local, helpful staff and great delivery service provided.

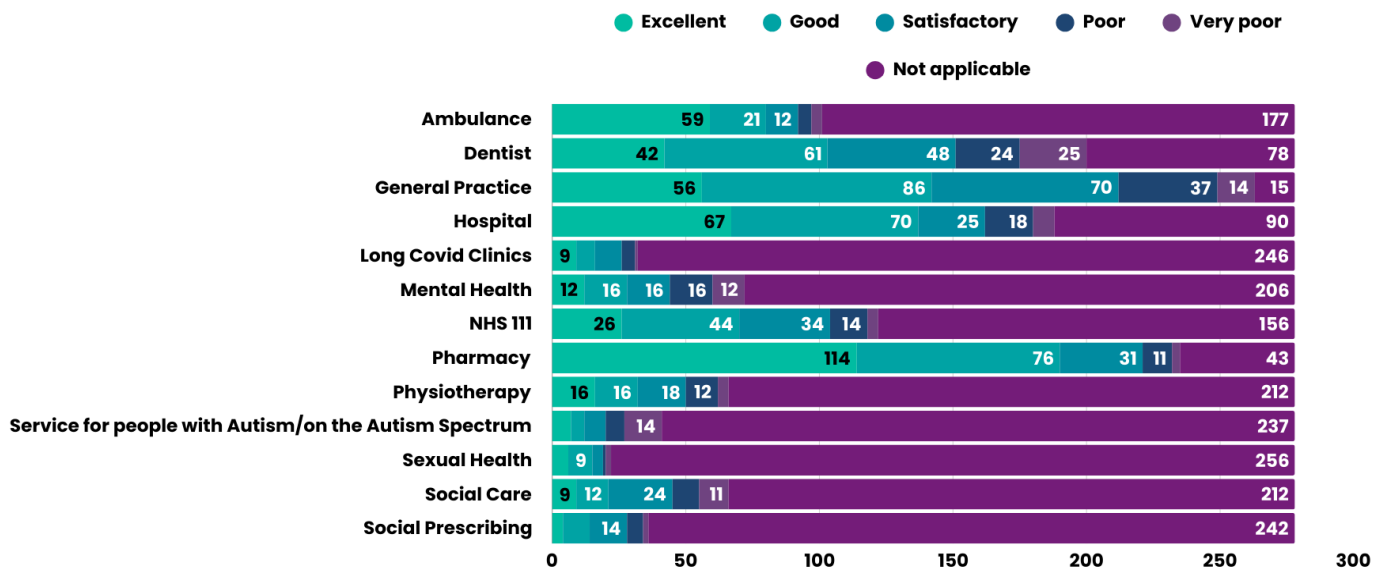
Physiotherapy: Only one (1) comment was provided in regards to physiotherapy which was that it takes too long to get an appointment.

Services for people with Autism/ on the autism spectrum: Three (3) comments were provided regarding experiences. Two (2) said that their experience so far has been good. One (1) said that adult autism services are poor and that it is just a case of being signposted from one organisation to another. *'There is no real support.'*

Sexual health: One (1) comment was provided regarding sexual health, where the issues were overlooked and were told that *'there is nothing wrong.'*

Social care: There were mainly negative comments regarding social care within Gateshead. Some feel that support received from social workers is a *'luck of daw'* as some are very helpful, and some are disinterested in the issues an individual is experiencing. There are staffing issues with social workers at Gateshead Council which slows the process of awaiting care.

Social prescribing: Many comments did not describe experiences with social prescribing, however many respondents were not aware of what social prescribing is and what it offers.

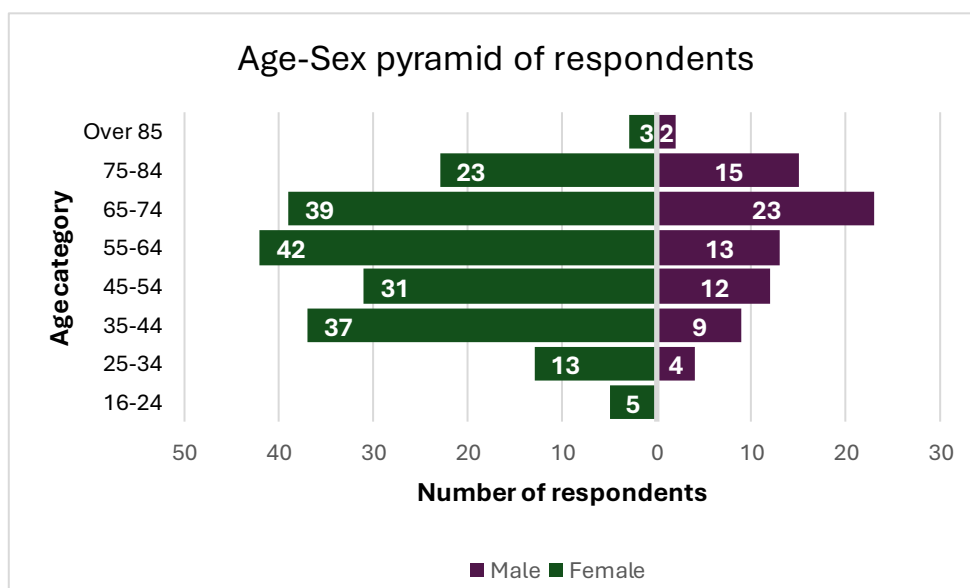


Demographics:

Gender and age:

We had a significantly high number of females who responded to the survey (193 female respondents compared to 78 male respondents). We had a higher number of females aged 55-64 (42 female respondents). As for males, we had a high value of male respondents aged 65-74 (23).

Seven (7) respondents preferred not to share their age and/or gender or described themselves as non-binary.



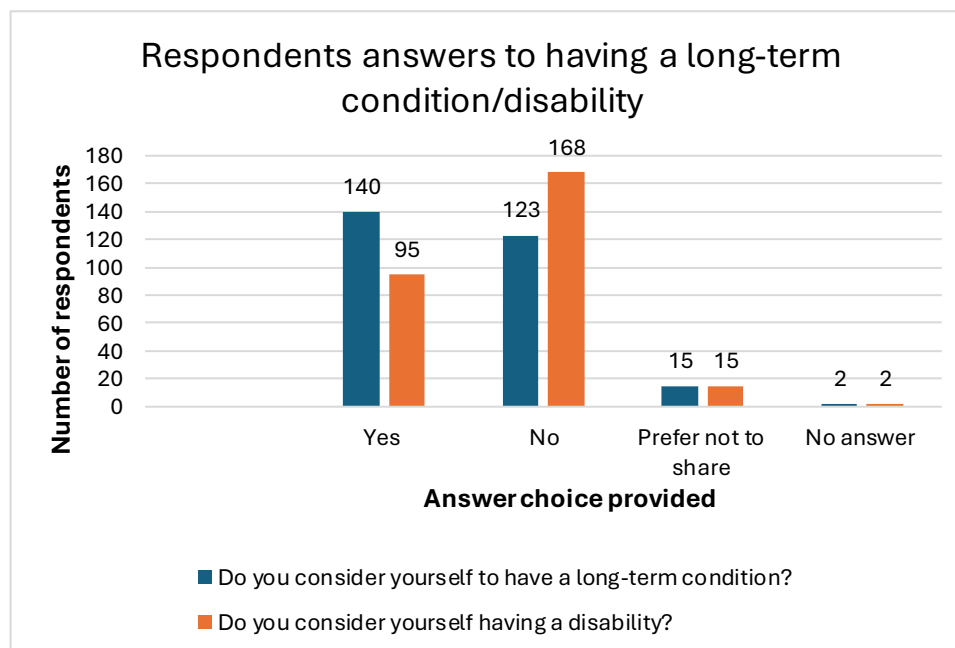
Ethnicity:

In terms of ethnicity, a high proportion of respondents were of a White ethnicity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British (239 respondents)). 18 respondents were of an Asian ethnicity. The table below shows the results of ethnic background:

Ethnicity	Number
Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background	1
Arab	1
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, any other Asian background)	18
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	4
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	240
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White	3
White: Irish	3
Prefer not to share	5
Other	3

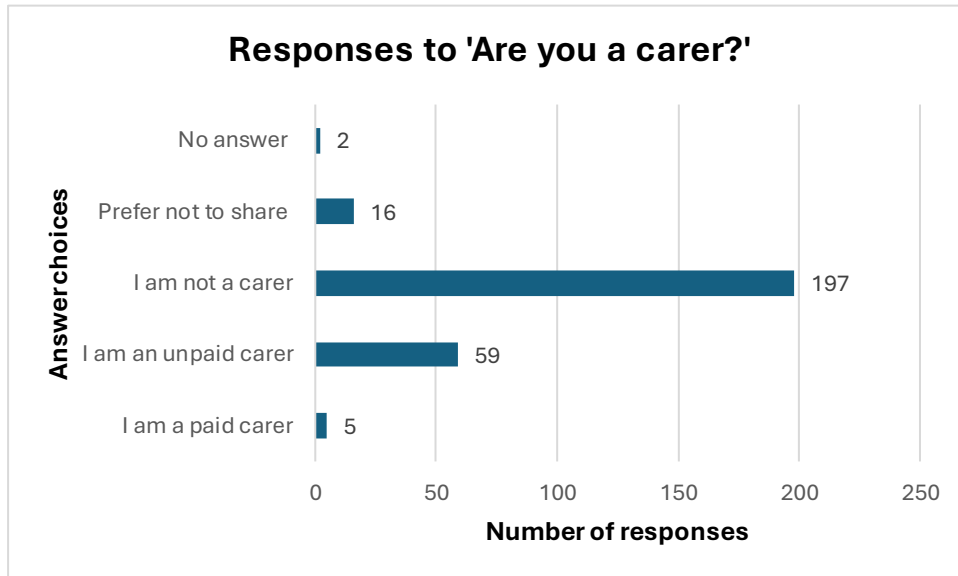
Disability/ Long- term condition:

We asked respondents if they considered themselves having a disability or a long-term condition. 140 (50.4%) said that they consider themselves having a long-term condition. 123 (44.2%) said they consider themselves having a disability.



Carer:

We also asked respondents if they were a carer. The majority of respondents said that they are 'not a carer'. Those that were carers, a majority were unpaid (59 respondents).





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