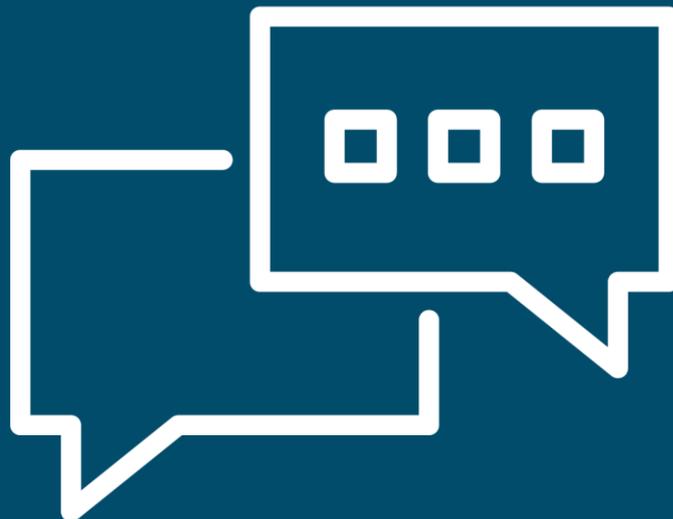


# Healthwatch Gateshead 2026 Annual Survey Results



## About Us

Healthwatch Gateshead is one of 153 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 to help establish our priorities 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 six weeks whilst the survey was active.

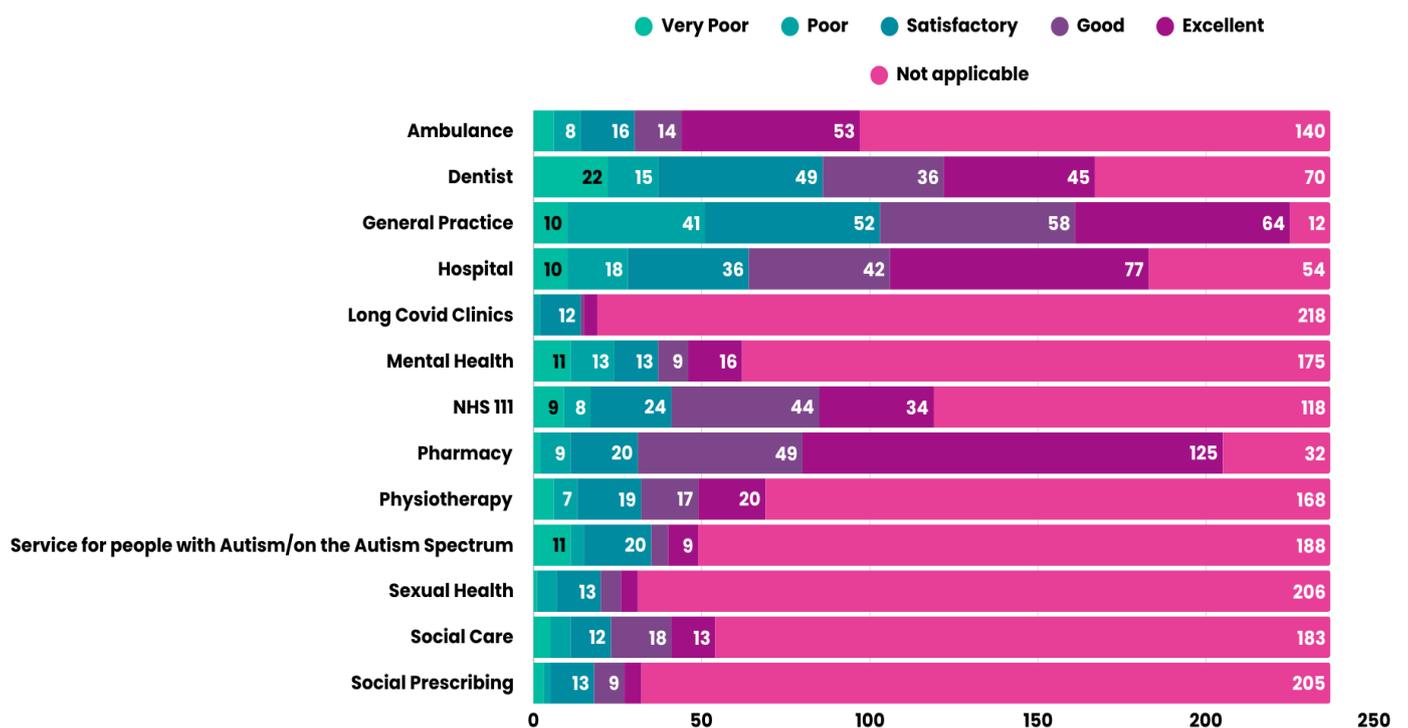
We received **237** responses in total which provides insights and experiences on a range of health and/or social care services which were accessed by the community in Gateshead over the past 12 months.

## 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'.

The chart shows how many people rated each service as excellent, good, satisfactory, poor or very poor. It also shows how many people didn't use each service in the last 12 months ('Not applicable'). This helps us compare how happy people are with different health and care services, and see which services are used more or less by the public.



Number of ratings in the Annual Survey are summarised in the table below:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Number of ratings for 'Excellent' or 'Good' or 'Satisfactory'</b>	<b>Number of ratings for 'Poor' or 'Very poor'</b>	<b>Number of ratings for 'Not Applicable'</b>
Ambulance	83	14	140
Dentist	130	37	70
General Practice	174	51	12
Hospital	155	28	54
Long Covid Clinic	17	2	218
Mental Health	38	24	175
NHS 111	102	17	118
Pharmacy	194	11	32
Physiotherapy	56	13	168
Services for people with Autism/ADHD	34	15	188
Sexual Health	24	7	206
Social Care	43	11	183
Social Prescribing	27	5	205

The most chosen topics for respondents to share their experience **both positive and negative** were:

1. General Practice (64 responses)
2. Dentist (38 responses)
3. Hospital (36 responses)

The topics respondents gave the greatest number of **positive** feedback to were:

1. Hospital (18 responses)
2. General Practice (13 responses)
3. Pharmacy (13 responses)

The topics respondents gave the greatest number of **negative** feedback to were:

1. General Practice (48 responses)
2. Dentist (30 responses)
3. Hospital (15 responses)

Also, we asked for additional comments and information so that respondents could tell us about their experience(s) on the care that they have received. 82 (34%) respondents did not provide any additional comments.

**Ambulance: 7 respondents chose this topic – 2 were positive and 5 were negative**

- A large majority of 53 respondents rated having had an 'excellent' experience of ambulance services compared to eight respondents rating a 'poor' experience.
- Seven (7) respondents provided additional comments regarding a recent experience with the ambulance service.
- Four (4) of these respondents expressed concern around the long waiting times for ambulance services.
- One respondent expressed concern that they were told that by their GP that they can ask the ambulance service to go to the hospital of their choice. However, they weren't permitted this by the ambulance service as they only go to the nearest hospital.
- One respondent said that they have had positive experiences using ambulance services but did not expand on their answer.

**Dentist: 38 respondents chose this topic – 6 were positive and 30 were negative (2 were mixed responses)**

- 38 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. A couple of respondents said that they have got treated privately due to this issue and some respondents shared that they find dental care very expensive, and prices seem to go higher.
- Two respondents shared that they were not satisfied with the professional care that they received by their dentist due to the poor quality of treatment.
- One respondent, who is a wheelchair user, shared that they find it difficult to get registered to a dentist which is also wheelchair friendly, as many have their facilities located upstairs which makes it difficult to access their services.
- Two respondents shared that they receive excellent service from their local dentist and that their dentist clearly explains any treatment that they receive.

**General Practice (GP): 64 respondents chose this topic – 13 were positive and 48 were negative (3 were mixed responses)**

- A large majority of respondents found it difficult to get an appointment to see a GP or they find the GP inaccessible due to difficulties in understanding the system of how to get an appointment.
- Nine (9) respondents said that they are happy with their GP surgery and can get appointments when needed.
- Other issues which were raised by respondents included delays by administration team, poor menopause information provided by GP and symptoms dismissed or not taken seriously.
- One respondent said that they feel very neglected by the GP as they are an asylum seeker. They also said that some GP practices have refugee

clinics, but the staff there don't have enough information to tell people how to get help.

- Another respondent mentioned that they prefer to go to the GP after being advised by a pharmacist.

**Hospital: 36 respondents chose this topic – 18 were positive and 15 were negative (four were mixed responses)**

- There was a mix of positive and negative experiences at hospitals within Gateshead.
- 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 or in Accident and Emergency (A&E).
- One respondent said that there are delays in communication between hospital and GPs.
- Another respondent said that the letters they received from the hospital come late by post, so they missed appointments.

**Long Covid Clinics: zero respondents chose this topic – zero were positive and zero were negative**

- 19 respondents rated Long Covid Clinics as a service they have used in the past 12 months with 218 respondents who said that this service was not applicable to them.
- Twelve respondents rated their experience as 'satisfactory' with four rating it as 'excellent'. However, no respondent provided additional information as to how their experience using a Long Covid Clinic had been.

**Mental health: 11 respondents chose this topic – zero were positive and 11 were negative**

- Eleven respondents provided feedback on mental health services which were all negative. There were varied experiences that respondents shared including long waiting times for assessment/appointments, little to no communication from the service (reported by two respondents) and no single point of contact (too much signposting or referrals to other services).

**NHS 111: Two respondents chose this topic – zero were positive and two were negative**

- 44 respondents rated having a 'poor' experience using NHS 111. Only two respondents provided additional information about their experiences about the service. They found the advice unhelpful as they were advised to book an appointment or go to a pharmacy/hospital for means of treatment which respondents felt was not the appropriate action to take in their circumstances.

**Pharmacies: 15 respondents chose this topic – 13 were positive and 2 were negative**

- This service had the highest rating of 'excellent' (125 ratings).
- 15 respondents provided additional comments on their pharmacy experience(s).
  - Positive experiences included that respondents feel informed by their pharmacy such as free illness schemes available, good communication around prescription availability and good advice by pharmacists.
  - The only negative experiences (noted by two respondents) included long wait times to receive prescriptions.

**Physiotherapy: Four respondents chose this topic – zero were positive and four were negative**

- Four (4) additional comments were provided which all indicated a negative experience. These experiences included long waiting times; not being listened to by professionals or not being physically checked and no medical record details which causes a delay in potential treatment.

**Services for people with Autism/ on the autism spectrum: Six respondents chose this topic – one was positive and five were negative**

- Six respondents provided comments about this service where only one positive experience was shared. This was regarding receiving excellent support and care from the Adult Community Learning Disability team.
- Five negative responses were shared which included long waiting lists for Autism assessments and poor support and guidance including within schools.

**Sexual health: Three respondents chose this topic – one was positive and two were negative**

- One respondent shared that they received excellent counselling service at a sexual health facility.
- Two other respondents who shared additional comments regarding this service had negative experiences which were lack of communication around after-care and no hormone testing offered.

**Social care: Two respondents chose this topic – zero were positive and two were negative**

- Two respondents provided additional comments regarding social care services which were negative. These included a lack of social care provision and inadequate support to vulnerable clients as well as safeguarding concerns being rejected.

**Social prescribing: Four respondents chose this topic – One was positive and zero were negative**

- Four respondents provided additional comments.
- Similarly to the last Annual Survey (2025), results show that those who provided additional comments were questioning what social prescribing is and how it can be offered (reported by three out of four respondents).
- One respondent said that they have seen the benefits of social prescribing services in the local community but have not used the service themselves.

# Demographics

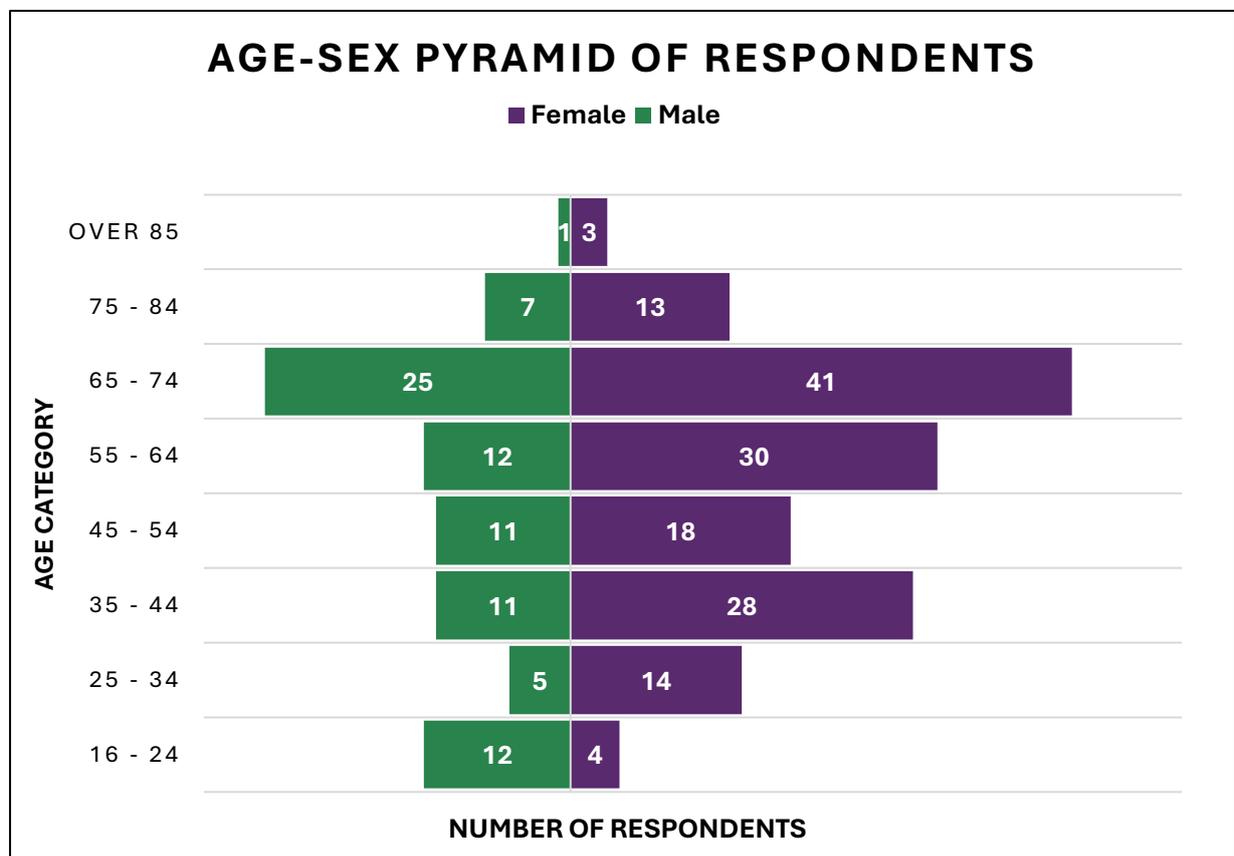
## Gender and Age

We had a significantly high number of females who responded to the survey (151 female respondents compared to 84 male respondents).

We had a higher number of females aged 65-74 (41 female respondents).

As for males, we had a high value of male respondents aged 65-74 (25 male respondents).

Three (3) respondents preferred not to share their gender.



## Ethnicity

A high proportion of respondents were of a White ethnicity (English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British – 193 respondents).

Nine respondents were of an Asian ethnicity.

The table below shows the results of ethnic background:

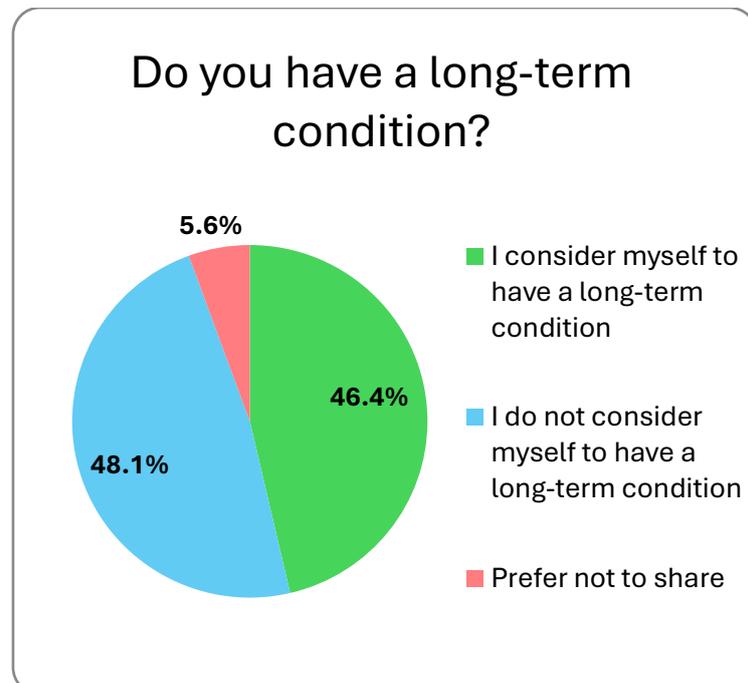
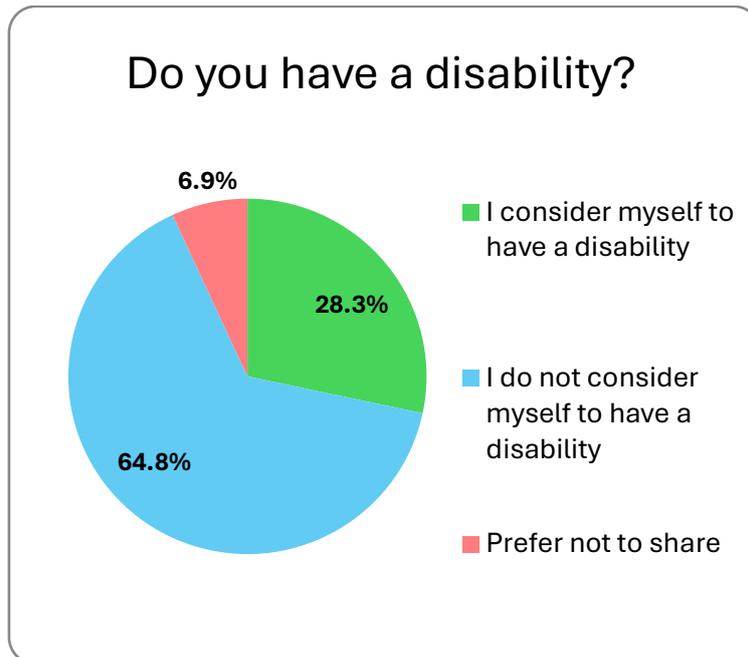
<b>Answer Choice</b>		<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
1	Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, any other Asian background)	3.9%	9
2	Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	0.4%	1
3	Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background	2.2%	5
4	White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	83.2%	193
5	White: Irish	0.0%	0
6	White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller, Roma or Other White	3.9%	9
7	Arab	0.0%	0
8	Prefer not to share	3.0%	7
9	Other	3.4%	8

## Disability/ Long- term condition

We asked respondents if they considered themselves having a disability or a long-term condition.

66 (28.3%) said that they consider themselves having a disability.

108 (46.4%) said they consider themselves having a long-term condition.



## Carer

We also asked respondents if they were a carer/caregiver. Most respondents said they are 'not a carer' (71.8%). Of those that were carers, a majority were unpaid (43 respondents).

<b>Answer Choice</b>		<b>Response Percent</b>	<b>Response Total</b>
1	I am a paid carer	3.4%	8
2	I am an unpaid carer	18.4%	43
3	I am not a carer	71.8%	168
4	Prefer not to share	6.4%	15

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