

Healthwatch England – Waiting Times – Datasets from Derby City

Reporting to:	Stakeholders
Sector:	Acute Care
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Date periods covered in the report:	2020/21 - Covid-19 pandemic

Overview of the Report

For one week during August 2021 and one week during October 2021, Healthwatch England and YouGov conducted a survey regarding waiting times for hospital treatment, and the feelings of those who had received or are waiting to receive hospital treatment around the service they were provided.

The full Healthwatch England report is available online on their website, but this report is a breakdown of responses from those who identified their nearest Healthwatch team to be within the Derby City area.

Highlights for Derby City:

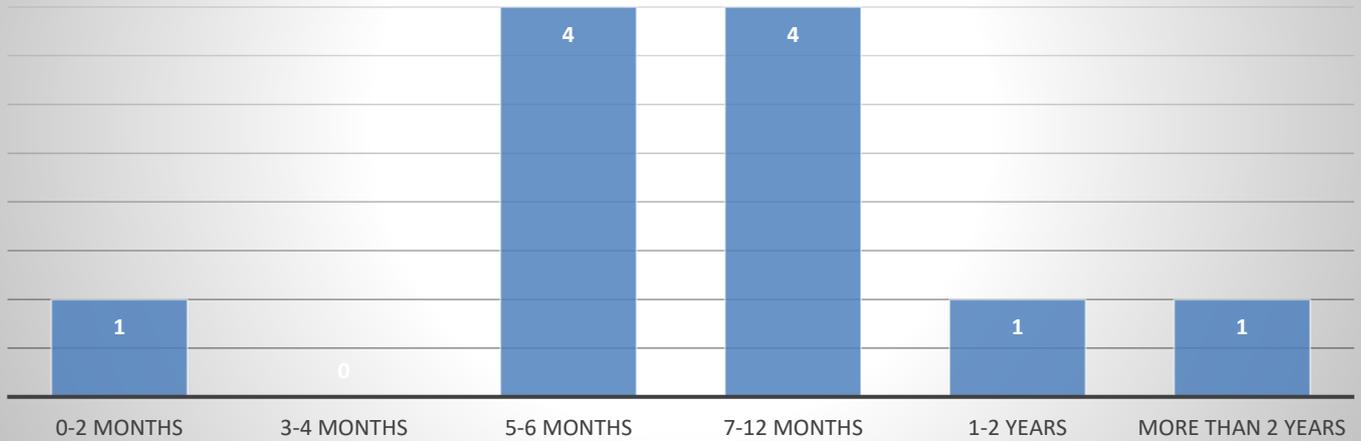
- The majority of local respondents have been waiting between 5-12 months for treatment and the majority of the waits are for operations or consultations.
- The majority of local respondents did not feel that they received sufficient information around managing their condition whilst waiting for treatment, and those who did receive information did not feel it was sufficient to support them.
- There have been marked effects on those who have been waiting for treatment, notably around mental health and increased pain levels, and this has affected these people's abilities to live their lives as they normally would.
- 50% of respondents stated that they couldn't afford to pay for private treatment, however 75% would be happy to travel locally or nationally to an alternative hospital if this would reduce their waiting times.

Your experience of delays

Healthwatch England received 2516 responses over the two weeks of surveys, and 16 of those respondents identified themselves as based within Derby City.

31% of 16 respondents stated that they had received hospital care within the last 18 months, and 69% of respondents stated that they were waiting for hospital care.

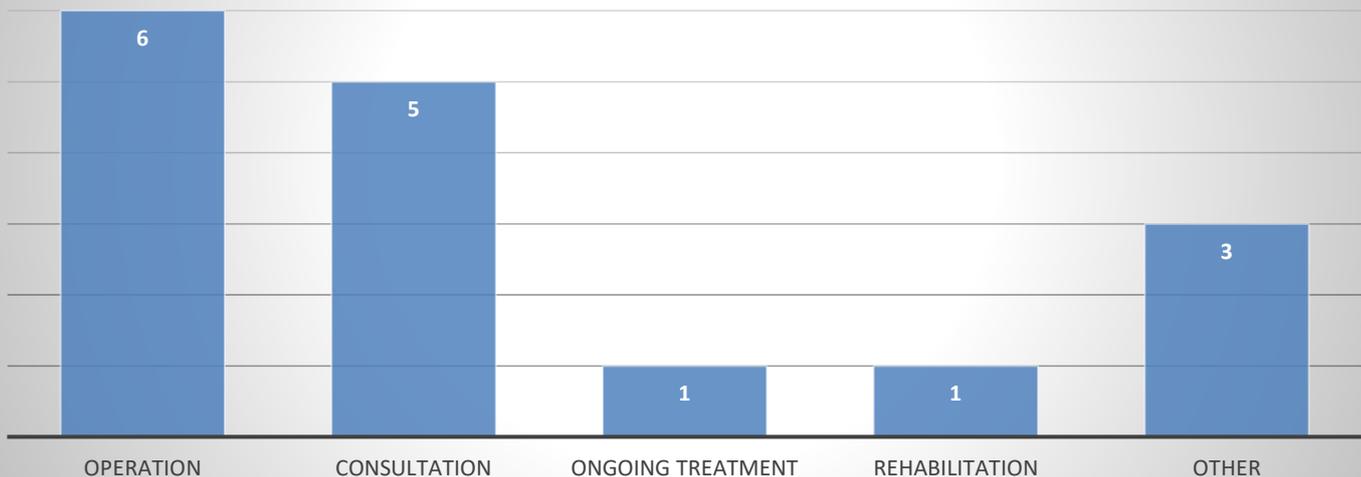
If you are waiting for hospital care, for how long have you been waiting?



Of the 11 respondents who were waiting for hospital care, the majority had been waiting between 5-12 months for their appointment.

Nationally, the largest group of respondents - 29% - had been waiting between 0-2 months, however 16% of respondents had been waiting for over 1 year, and 8% had been waiting for over 2 years.

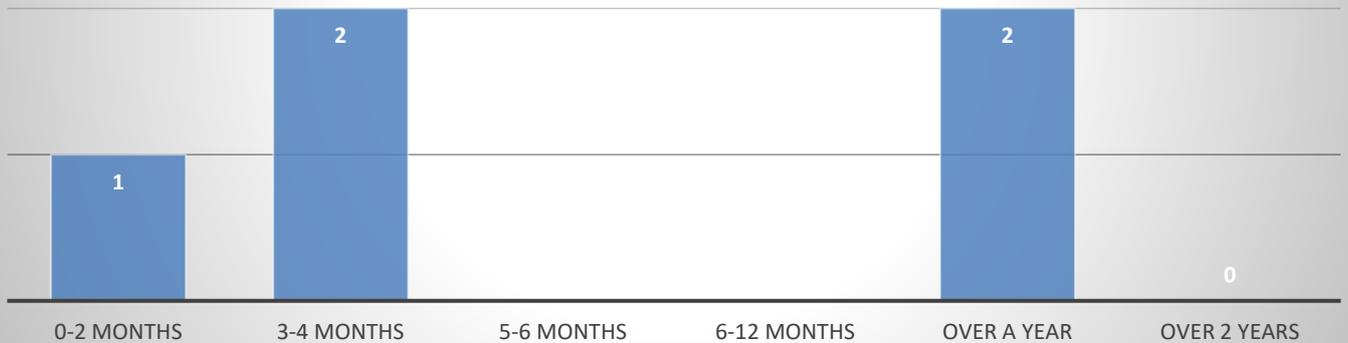
What type of treatment are you waiting for?



The majority of local respondents are waiting for an operation (37%) or a consultation (31%). Other treatments mentioned are MRI scan and nuclear medicine investigations.

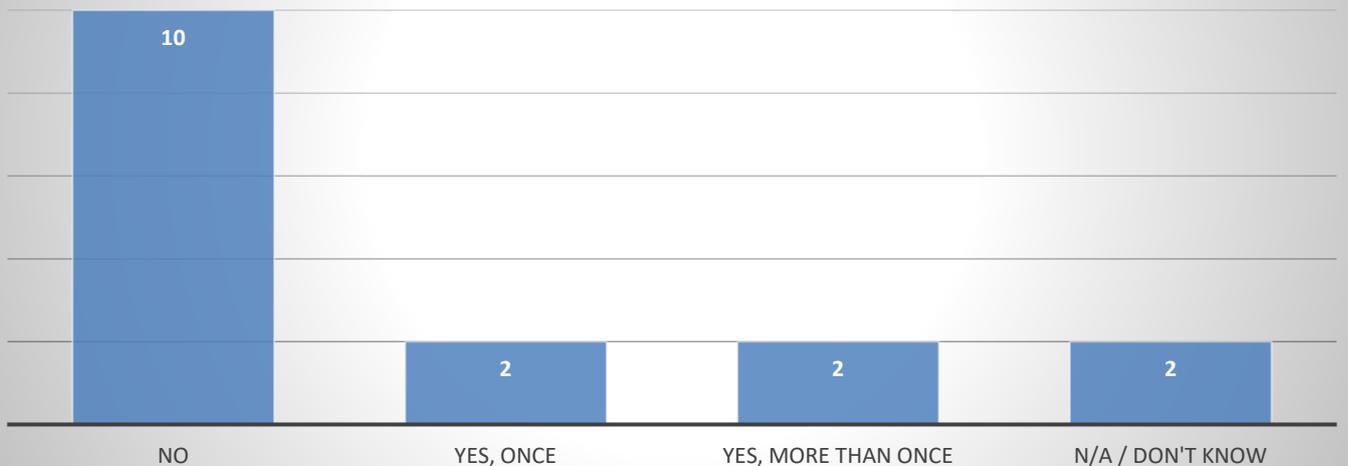
Nationally, the largest group of respondents - 41% - stated they were waiting for an operation and 21% were waiting for a consultation.

If you have received hospital care, for how long had you been waiting?



The responses were split between short and long waiting times.

Was your treatment cancelled at any point?



The majority of these responses stated their treatment had not been cancelled, but are still waiting to hear regarding an appointment date. Of those who's appointments had been cancelled, 50% of these were given one week notice of the cancellation and 50% were given one month's notice of the cancellation.

Here are some examples of respondents' own words:

"Appointment cancelled and left struggling, rang various other medical professionals seeking help but was left struggling for 9 weeks before another doctor scheduled appointment."

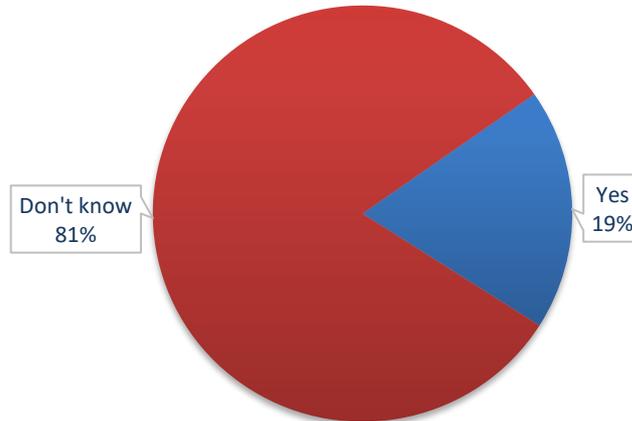
"Was told my appointment would be in June still waiting to have this appointment it's now October"

"My optician referred me & said I was a priority case because if I was treated within a year they could cure my eye convergence issues. However when I called the hospital 7 months later as I hadn't received an appointment I was told by the receptionist that the consultant had downgraded the Opticians referral to non urgent... I was told I should have

an appointment letter by August, but nothing has appeared yet (mid September). I'm unable to work due to the neurofatigue I have from the eye issues so I'm keen to get the correct treatment ASAP."

Nationally, 32% had had a procedure cancelled once or more (29% for Derby City figures), with 47% of those with a week's notice or less (50% for Derby City figures).

I have the right to have treatment at another hospital of my choice if I cannot be seen within 26 weeks

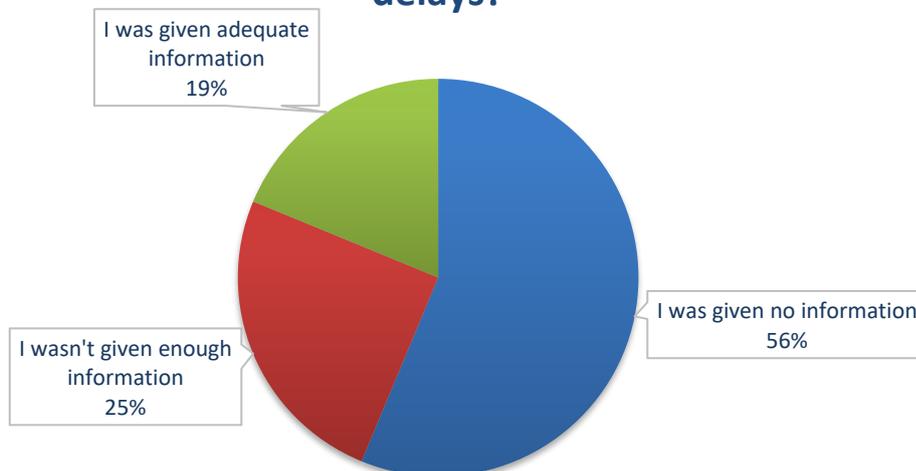


81% of respondents were not sure whether or not the statement was true, as to whether they were able to seek treatment elsewhere if their local hospital couldn't treat them within 26 weeks. This shows that people are not necessarily aware of what treatment is available to them.

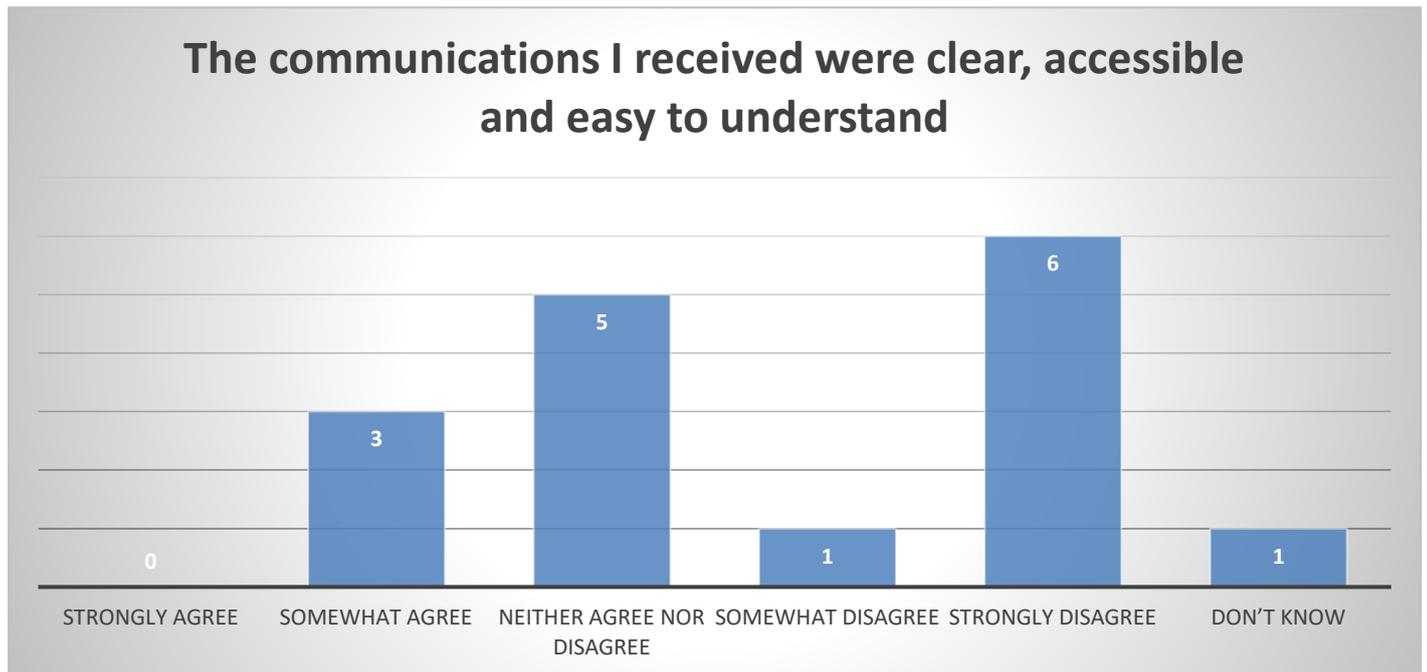
Nationally 70% of respondents answered that they did not know, and 23% correctly knew that the answer was yes this statement is true.

Were you kept informed while you were waiting for treatment?

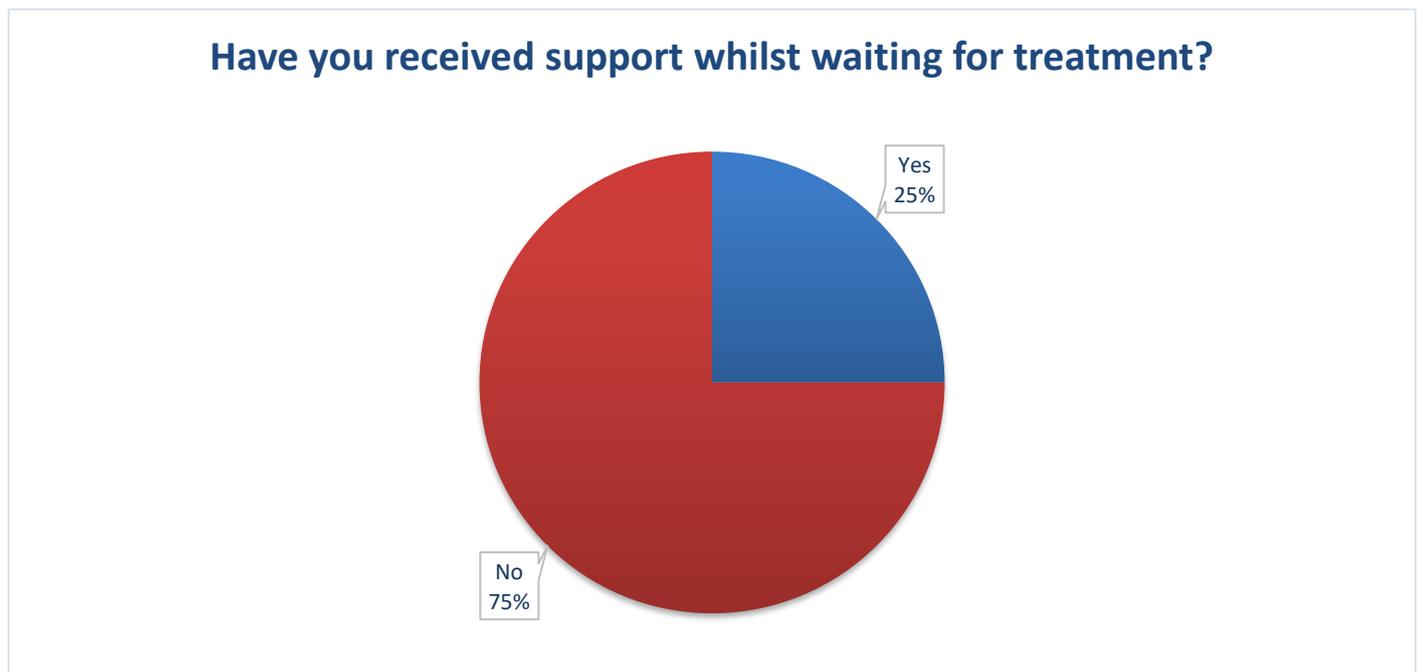
Were you kept informed by the NHS while you were waiting for treatment, including treatment details, timelines and any delays?



56% of respondents felt that they were given no information whilst they were waiting for care regarding treatment details, causes of delays or a timeline, and a further 25% felt that the information they had received was not enough. Combining these figures equates to 81% of respondents, which compares to a combined 62% average over national responses.



Although sentiments were split, over 37% of respondents strongly disagreed that the communications they received from the NHS about their treatment were clear, accessible and easy to understand. Nationally, 59% disagreed somewhat or strongly, that the communications they received were clear, accessible and easy to understand.

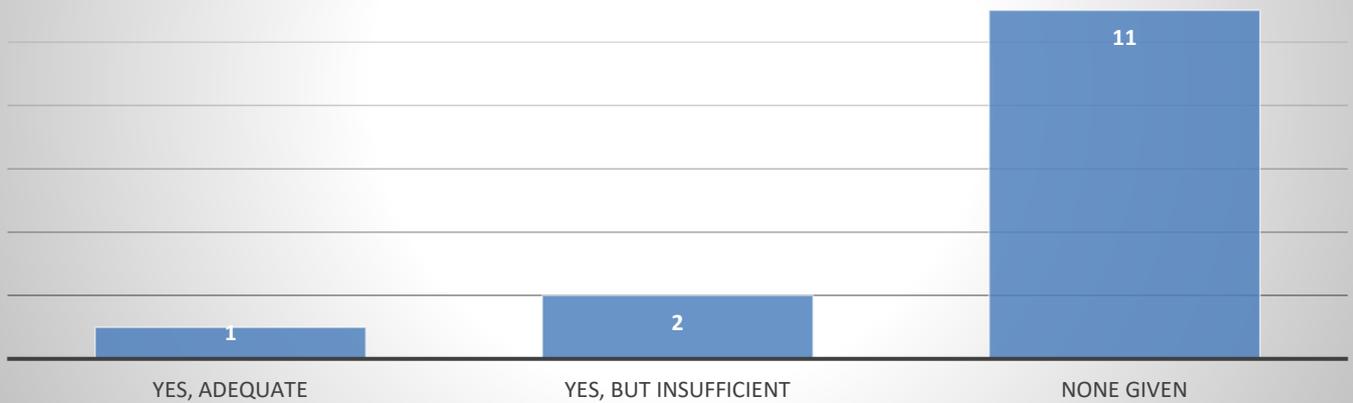


Of the 4 respondents who had received support whilst waiting for their treatment:

- 2 respondents received support with Mental Health
- 1 respondent received information about delays
- 1 respondent received support with Pain Relief
- 1 respondent stated "Other" and the support they received was around Steroid Injections for pain relief

Nationally only 15% of respondents stated that they had received any kind of support whilst waiting.

If your treatment was delayed, were you given supporting information on how to manage your condition whilst waiting?



The majority of local respondents (79%) stated that they received no supporting information on how to manage their condition whilst waiting for their cancelled or delayed treatment.

Nationally, 62% stated that they received no supporting information, 17% that they received some information and only 6% were given adequate enough information to support them with their condition whilst waiting for treatment.

To what extent do you agree a delay in treatment has impacted the following aspects of your life?



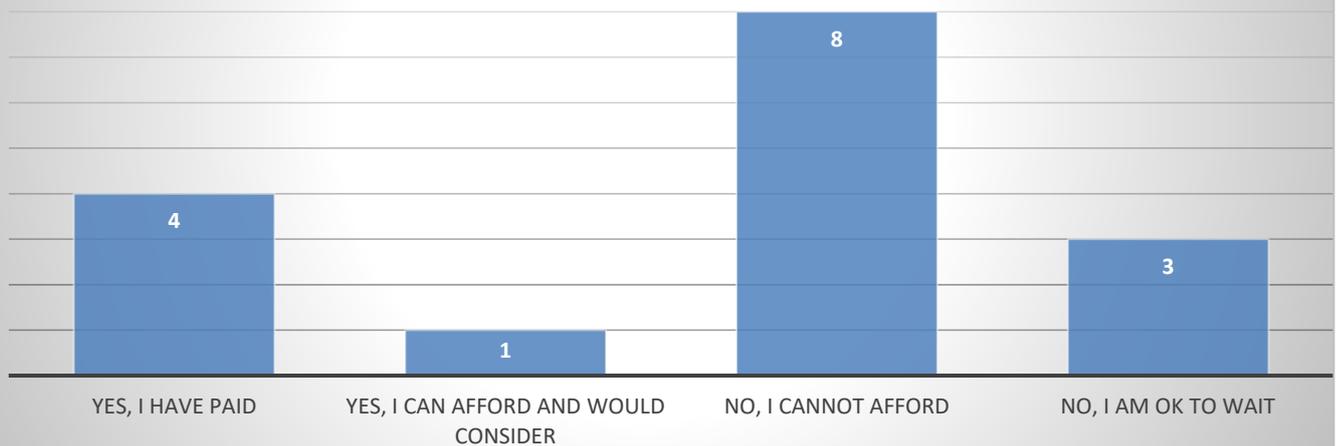
Respondents have felt strongly about the effects that treatment delays have had on aspects of their life. Over 80% of respondents agreed slightly or more, that their mental health or levels of pain had become worse due to their treatment being delayed. 60% of respondents were less able to carry out daily household tasks, and 50% felt their ability to work or care for someone else or their children had been impacted.

National figures echo the local responses, with 80% of respondents feeling the effects on their mental health and 73% suffering more with increased pain levels. This was followed by 68% of respondents who's ability to carry out daily household tasks had been affected, 55% on their ability to work, and 40% with their ability to care for someone else.

Inequalities surrounding waiting times for treatment

Healthwatch England have recognised that there is an inequality surrounding those in deprivation having longer waiting times, stating “The Government and NHS must consider how deprivation and income affect people’s experience of waiting and use this to design solutions to tackle the backlog that improve, not worsen inequalities.”

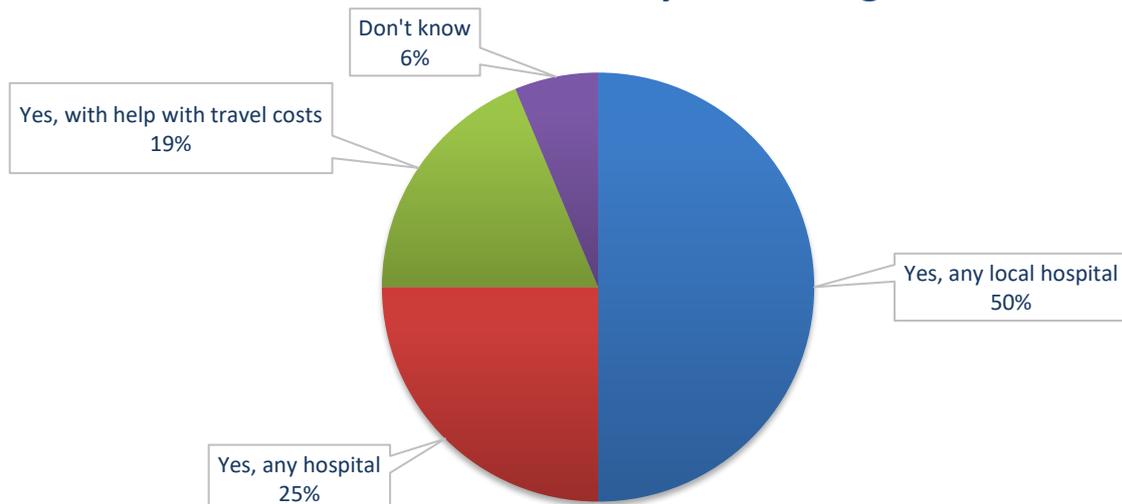
Have you considered paying for private treatment in order to receive treatment sooner?



50% of local respondents cannot afford to pay for private treatment. 25% have paid for quicker treatment however it’s not clear whether this was affordable to them or not.

Nationally, 65% of respondents stated they would not be able to afford private treatment, and only 8% had gone ahead with paying. 14% stated that they can afford it and are currently considering it, and 10% were ok with waiting.

Would you be willing to travel to another hospital to receive treatment if this reduced your waiting time?



The majority of respondents (75%) would be happy to travel to another hospital to receive quicker care, either locally or anywhere within England. 19% of respondents would be willing but only with support towards the travel costs. Nationally, 74% would be happy to travel locally or nationally for treatment but 13% of respondents stated they would only be willing if there was help with travel costs. A further 6% would be willing if a friend or family member could accompany them and they would get accommodation. This shows that locally and nationally there is an overwhelming willingness to travel if that could reduce a respondent’s waiting time.

Any other comments?



"I've had no communication about the delay to my eye department referral from the hospital. I had to phone them myself after to find out what was going on. It's very disappointing because living with my brain injury is exhausting enough by itself."

"I accept that my operation has been delayed due to Covid-19 but am concerned that my limited mobility is causing me to gain weight which is further impacting upon the pressure on my hip joint and causing increased pain."

"I been waiting for 3 months to be seen in the lung fibrosis clinic at the royal derby hospital. Every day I am gasping for breath and fear if I'm not seen soon I will be dead. My wife who is my carer rings every week and is told it won't be long now. I had an mri scan 3 weeks ago and have not had any results no one seems to care."

"I appreciate the pandemic has affected many operations taking place but I cannot understand how and why telephone/video appointments like mine should be affected. The idea that there is only one mental health consultant available to help someone in crisis is ridiculous, but that is what I was told."

"I can't get into see my GP & hospital seems to have forgotten me"

