

## December 2023

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### About us

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Royal Borough of Greenwich. We're here to make sure that those running services, put people at the heart of care.



Our volunteers, Rachel and Shukri, at Eltham Community Hospital to hear about your experiences.

### What did we hear in December?

We heard from 384 Greenwich residents about their experience of health and care services.

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**“ ... Queen Elizabeth Hospital should find a way to reduce the waiting list, so you get seen on time... ”**  
Queen Elizabeth Hospital

**“ ... The GP and staff are attentive and supportive of my needs. I am extremely happy here... ”**  
GP Practice

## In this report

<b>About us</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>What did we hear in December?</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>What Greenwich residents are saying...</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Community Pharmacy in Greenwich</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Methodology</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Summary of Findings</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Results of Pharmacy Survey</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Awareness of support services</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>Awareness of testing services</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>10</b>
<b>Next Steps</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Contact Us</b> .....	<b>11</b>

## What Greenwich residents are saying...

- “ Queen Elizabeth Hospital needs more staff and more resources. It is evident every day.**  
Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- “ I am happy..., if I order my pills or medications on Monday, it gets delivered quickly at my home and I am very grateful.**  
Eltham Community Centre
- “ Very long waiting lists both at Queen Elizabeth Hospital and my GP. They should find a way to reduce the waiting list to get seen on time**  
Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- “ I am satisfied with their service here, so far so good.**  
GP Practice
- “ I am both happy and unhappy about QE, some nurses are very nice and good with their work and the way they talk to people, others are not...**  
Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- “ I am not happy with the A&E at QEH. The waiting is too long...**  
Queen Elizabeth Hospital
- “ I am a regular patient who needs kidney dialysis. The GP and staff are attentive and supportive of my needs...**  
GP Practice
- “ I am not happy about their service, they're not responsive... I called and waited for a call back and that normally takes the whole day. You wait the whole day for a callback. They do call back, but your day is all wasted... I understand they are busy, but they could call back earlier.**  
GP Practice

## Community Pharmacy in Greenwich

Community pharmacies are an integral part of the National Health Service (NHS). In addition to dispensing medication, they assist in managing conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, and asthma by providing medication reviews, advising on medication adherence, and suggesting lifestyle changes. Unlike hospital outpatient departments and GP surgeries, community pharmacies have longer opening hours, including weekends and evenings, making it easier for people to access health screening, advice, and medications without the need for an appointment. By offering consultations and treatments for minor ailments, they reduce the pressure on GPs, urgent care, and A&E departments. Furthermore, community pharmacies contribute significantly to public health initiatives by offering a range of services like smoking cessation, weight management advice, and vaccinations.

However, the impact of community pharmacy services can be limited by poor public awareness. If residents don't know what services are available at community pharmacies, they are less likely to use them. Our survey of 300 Greenwich residents was designed to find out the level of awareness of pharmacy services and how this differs across demographic groups.

## Methodology

We surveyed 300 Greenwich residents using face-to-face interviews to understand their awareness of the services offered by pharmacies. Participants were interviewed in a range of venues across the borough including health and care venues, community centres, and libraries.

### Ethnicity

Asian, Asian British	Black, Black British	Mixed ethnic groups	White(any)	Other ethnic groups	Prefer not to say
72	73	11	133	2	9
300					

### Gender

Woman	Man	Non-binary	Prefer not to say
205	88	1	6
300			

### Disability/long term condition (LTC)

Living with disability or LTC	Not living with disability or LTC	Prefer not to say
92	197	11
300		

### Age

Under 24	25-49	50-64	65+	Prefer not to say
47	126	82	40	5
300				

### Carer

Carer	Not a carer	Prefer not to say
66	223	11
300		

## Summary of Findings

Most of the residents we spoke to were not aware of most services offered by community pharmacies. While awareness was high for services such as flu vaccinations and minor illness consultations, all other services had an awareness of less than 50%.

Apart from blood pressure testing, where awareness levels were strongest among 50–64-year-olds, young people under 24 had the highest levels of awareness for most community pharmacy services compared to any other age group. Overall awareness was also strong for residents who identified as living with a disability or long-term condition.

Awareness of most community pharmacy services tended to be higher for Asian/Asian British residents compared to residents from other ethnic groups. Meanwhile, awareness was lowest for Black/Black British residents, who also had the highest percentage of people who said they never use a community pharmacy.

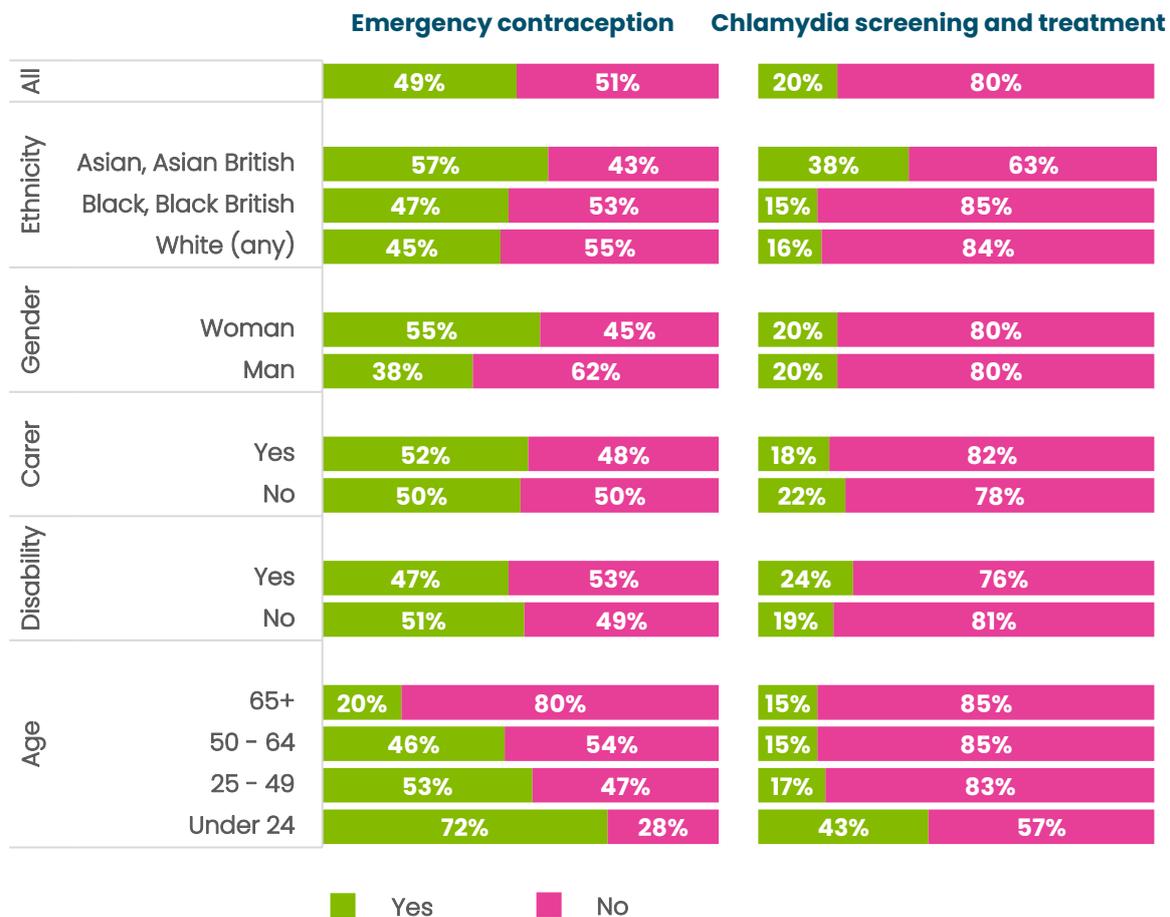
## Results of Pharmacy Survey

### Awareness of sexual health services

There is a much greater awareness of the fact that pharmacies provide emergency contraception than chlamydia screening and treatment (49% vs 20%).

- As age increases, awareness of emergency contraception services decreases. The highest levels of awareness overall are among under 24s at 72%. There also seems to be a divide between men and women, with 17% more of women being aware than men.
- Awareness of chlamydia screening and treatment services remains relatively low for all demographic groups with the exception of under 24s (43%) and Asian/Asian British respondents (38%).

### Awareness of sexual health services



## Awareness of support services

Awareness of the support services such as stop smoking, substance misuse, and weight management that pharmacies offer is low overall, with awareness of stop smoking services being the highest and awareness of substance misuse services being the lowest.

### Awareness of support services

		Stop smoking services	Substance misuse services	Weight management services			
All		36%	64%	14%	86%	20%	80%
Ethnicity	Asian, Asian British	35%	65%	17%	83%	21%	79%
	Black, Black British	29%	71%	8%	92%	19%	81%
	White (any)	41%	59%	17%	83%	22%	78%
Gender	Woman	36%	64%	15%	85%	19%	81%
	Man	34%	66%	13%	88%	23%	77%
Carer	Yes	33%	67%	11%	89%	24%	76%
	No	37%	63%	16%	84%	19%	81%
Disability	Yes	47%	53%	22%	78%	22%	78%
	No	31%	69%	11%	89%	20%	80%
Age	65+	15%	85%	13%	88%	18%	83%
	50 - 64	46%	54%	17%	83%	22%	78%
	25 - 49	31%	69%	9%	91%	19%	81%
	Under 24	47%	53%	23%	77%	21%	79%

## Awareness of testing services

Awareness of blood pressure testing services is much higher than awareness of cholesterol and blood sugar testing services, but still less than 50%.

- Awareness of blood pressure testing is highest for residents aged between 50-64 years old (63%) and lowest for residents that are Black/Black British (38%). There is a similar pattern for awareness of cholesterol testing, but the lowest levels of awareness are among 25-49-year-olds (19%).
- Across all three testing services, awareness tends to be highest among Asian/Asian British residents, men, those living with a disability or long term condition, and those in the 50-64 age category.

### Awareness of testing services

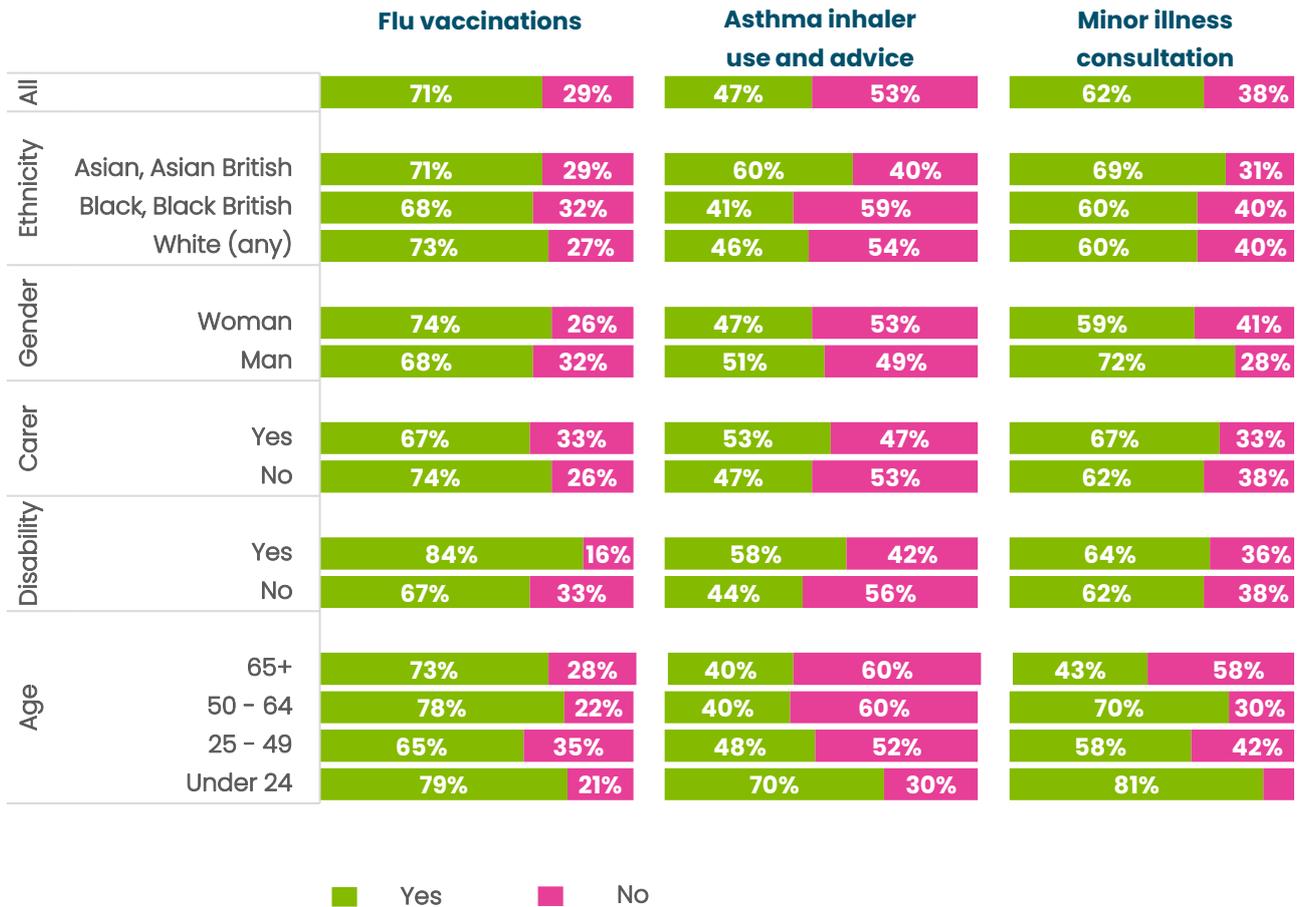
		Blood pressure testing		Cholesterol testing		Blood sugar testing	
All		48%	52%	28%	72%	29%	71%
Ethnicity	Asian, Asian British	56%	44%	35%	65%	40%	60%
	Black, Black British	38%	62%	23%	77%	25%	75%
	White (any)	49%	51%	29%	71%	26%	74%
Gender	Woman	47%	53%	25%	75%	25%	75%
	Man	51%	49%	34%	66%	40%	60%
Carer	Yes	50%	50%	33%	67%	29%	71%
	No	48%	52%	26%	74%	30%	70%
Disability	Yes	54%	46%	38%	62%	40%	60%
	No	45%	55%	23%	77%	24%	76%
Age	65+	43%	58%	23%	78%	23%	78%
	50 - 64	63%	37%	43%	57%	38%	62%
	25 - 49	40%	60%	19%	81%	26%	74%
	Under 24	47%	53%	30%	70%	30%	70%

■ Yes ■ No

### Awareness of other services

Awareness of flu vaccination, asthma inhaler use/advice, and minor illness consultation services is quite high overall, particularly flu vaccination services which 71% of residents said they were aware of.

#### Awareness of other services (uncategorised)



### Conclusion

Awareness of the services offered by community pharmacies varies greatly depending on the service. The majority of residents were aware of flu vaccination and minor illness consultation services, but awareness for most other services was low. If residents don't know that services are available, they are unlikely to use them. They may unnecessarily seek these services from GPs or from urgent care or A&E departments, contributing to longer waiting times for all and potentially adding pressure to these services, which are already facing significant demand. Moreover, a lack of awareness about community pharmacy

services can lead to missed opportunities for early intervention. Pharmacists play a role in identifying early signs of conditions during routine interactions with patients. Without this early detection and subsequent advice to seek appropriate medical services, some conditions may go unnoticed and worsen over time.

It is of note that Black/Black British residents tended to have lower levels of awareness of the services offered by community pharmacies than other ethnic groups suggesting the need for a more nuanced and targeted communication campaign.

## Next Steps

We follow up on all concerns or issues raised.

We work with commissioners, providers, regulators, and service users to understand where services are working well and where further development is needed.

## Contact Us

For more information on our feedback report, or to request it in large print or easy read format, contact:

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