

Total number of contacts this month:
210, of which 78 gave more detailed feedback

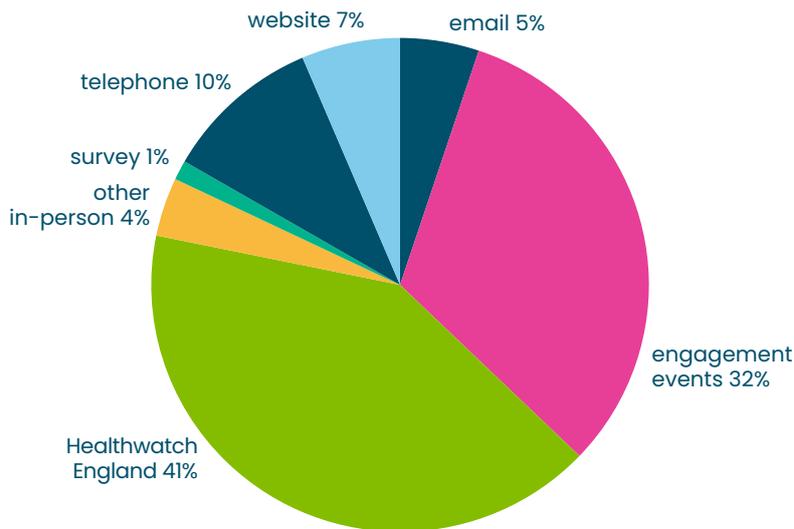
Top issues

The difficulty in getting a GP appointment featured the most in this month's feedback, although there was a notable number of comments praising the service patients had received from their GP.

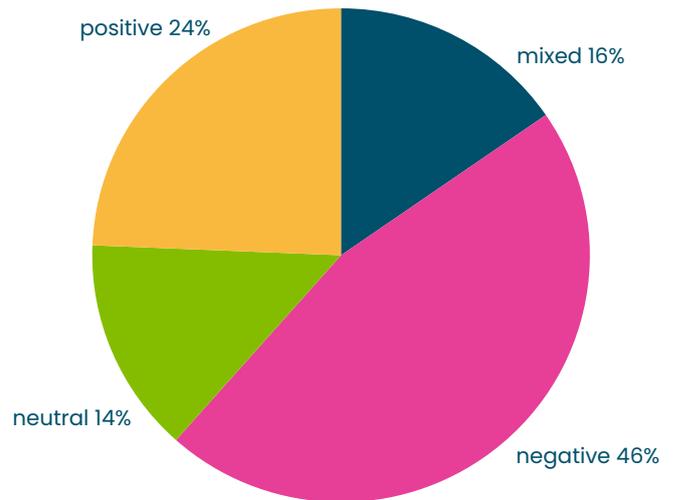
The distance to travel was raised as a concern around hospitals but again, there was a sizeable number of positive comments praising the quality of care received in hospital.

The third most common issue raised was accessing NHS dentists, with complaints around getting an appointment being the most common.

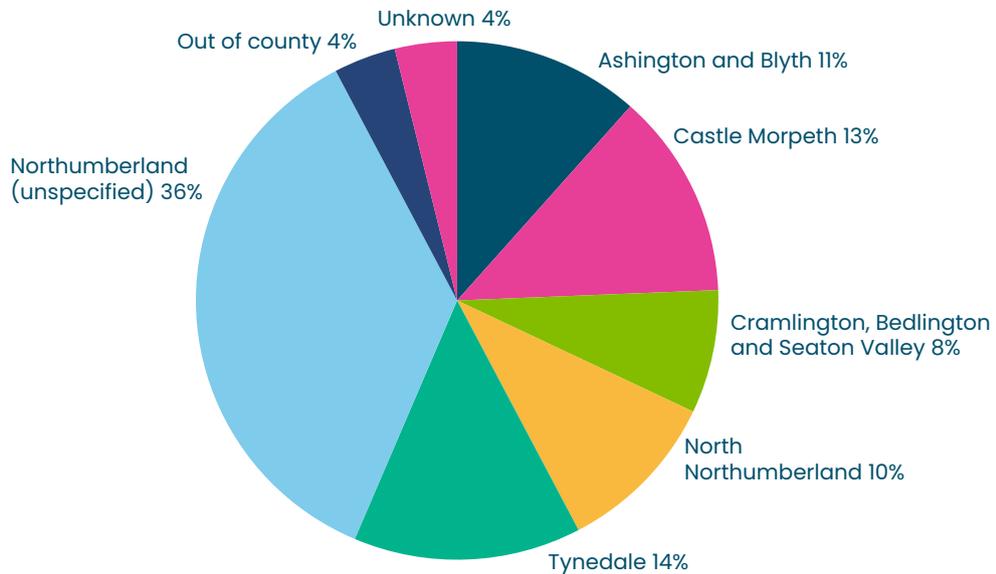
How we heard from people



How they were feeling



Where they were from

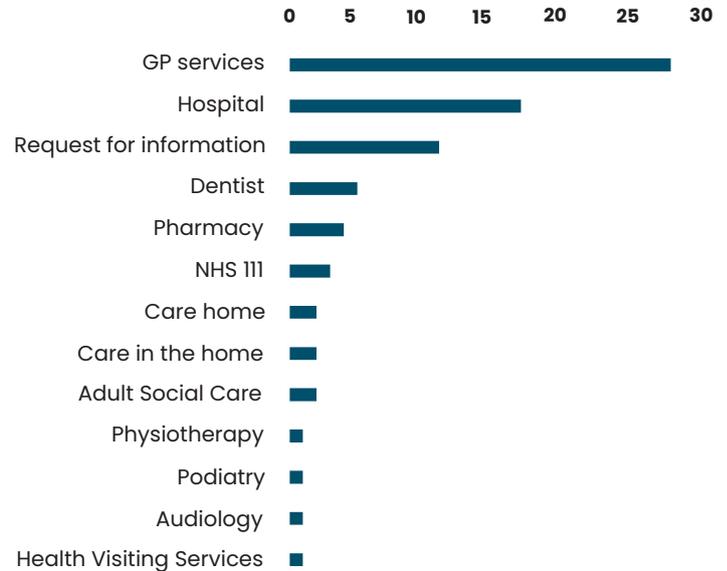


Service providers and number of enquiries

Northumbria Emergency Care Specialist Hospital	5
Alnwick Medical Group	5
Wellway Medical Group	4
Adult Social Care	3
The Freeman Hospital	3
Haydon Bridge and Allendale Medical Group	3
NHS 111	2
The Rothbury Practice	2
Haltwhistle Medical Group	2
Hexham General Hospital	2

These are the service providers we heard about two or more times. There were also 21 other service providers we heard about once each.

Feedback and enquiry issues



This month's focus

January got off to a busy start with many one-off sessions in the community, over and above our regular Here to Hear sessions. These helped us to gather feedback about Health Visiting Services. This a major piece of work looking into what's working well and not so well in order to feedback to the NHS.

We analysed what we heard from service users about experiences of getting dentistry work completed, which is our contribution to research into the state of dentistry across the whole of the North East and North Cumbria (NENC). This is a joint project with the other Local Healthwatch in the NENC.

We launched a recruitment campaign for board members and volunteers to join our team.

Negative feedback

It is impossible to make an appointment to see a GP. Telephone lines are open at 8am and appointments are all gone by 8.15am. You are told to complete an eConsult form to receive a telephone appointment but these are limited too and usually close mid-morning meaning that you have to try again. Nurse services have restricted hours that don't fit with my working day. I work in a school and can't leave during the day for routine appointments and check-ups.

I am eligible for a flu vaccine, but I missed out as there were no appointments when I called, and I was advised to try 'in a couple of weeks'. When I telephoned again, I spent my lunch break waiting on hold but could not get through. Nothing is good about this.

(North Northumberland resident)

Positive feedback

A patient needed to attend Wellway Surgery as they were feeling unwell. They were able to get a same day appointment which they were pleased about. They were told that they would need an X-ray at Wansbeck General Hospital. Surgery staff treated them well and dealt with the referral swiftly.

On arrival at the hospital, they were told that the X-ray hadn't been booked in, however, the nurses were reassuring and very quickly rectified the problem so that the X-ray could go ahead.

This patient told us that vaccinations at Wellway Surgery are always well organised too. They moved from London to Morpeth a few years ago and say that healthcare is notably better up here compared to the south east.

(Castle Morpeth resident)