



## What we heard - February 2024:

In February, we spoke to 43 people regarding their experiences with health and social care services in Rotherham. This information was gathered from in-person engagement, events and telephone/email enquiries. We spoke to people from a variety of backgrounds and ages. You can view our most spoken about topics and services below (Rotherham Hospital, GP services, Dental services and Mental health services). All feedback is fed back to services at various opportunities throughout the month to highlight any areas that need to be improved to help the patient experience.

### About us:

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Rotherham. We are here to make sure that those running services put people at the heart of care.

Our sole purpose is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf. We focus on ensuring that peoples' worries and concerns about current services are addressed and work to get services right for the future.

### **Hospital feedback:**

We spoke to 14 people in February regarding their hospital care in Rotherham, covering a range of topics including waiting times, cancellations and general levels of care. Waiting times continue to be raised as an issue in A&E with 2 people telling us about waits in excess of 7 hours.



### General Positive comments:

- “Excellent service”
- “I had a stroke a few months ago and Rotherham Hospital was fabulous. Following treatment I was signposted to a stroke support group which really helped my recovery.”
- “The Outpatients department at the hospital (Dermatology) is wonderful”

### General Negative Comments:

- “I’ve had a couple of procedures cancelled, when I’ve asked why they have mentioned staff shortages. I understand this can’t be helped but it doesn’t help with my health and treatment.”
- “Long wait for test results and had to keep calling and calling to chase them up. Could more realistic timescales be given?”
- “Wheelchairs should be accessed easily. There should be stations for wheelchairs on each floor.”
- “I’d like to see care the way it used to be, a personal touch from medics, everything feels so business-like.”

- “The paediatrics department always gives the impression that you’re being listened to but the follow up letters tell a different story. They just referred us back to services that we’d already been referred to”
- “My daughter had some dental work done at the hospital and had some painful after effects. She struggled to get in contact with anyone who could help with aftercare”

### Hospital Waiting Times:

- “I attended A&E with a family member overnight, it was a 12 hour stay - 4 hour wait to see a doctor, 4 more hours for a scan and then a wait for a bed that wasn’t available. The staff were kind.”
- “I waited 7 hours in A&E, at 11pm I was sent home and asked to come back in at 9am the following morning for a scan. I wasn’t scanned until the afternoon and I got the results at 2pm. I thought that was a long time to wait.”



### **GP Services:**

We spoke to **10** people about GP services in Rotherham this month and heard from registered patients from several practices. The biggest areas of concern remain the ability to get appointments and test results with **4** people raising this as an issue. Praise continues to be based on the care received from both GP’s and nursing staff.



### General positive comments:

- “My GP practice is brilliant for getting appointments for my children. If I have called I have always been given a satisfactory appointment relating to the problem. They take children’s health seriously and even when all appointments have been taken for that day they will endeavour to either squeeze me on an appointment that day if urgent or a call”
- “My GP and nursing staff are amazing!”
- “Our GP practice is great. The nurses we see about my dementia are just lovely, very caring”

### General Negative Comments:

- “GP refused my right to choose request and won’t prescribed the medication I need for my child”
- “I requested access to my GP record 2 months ago and I’ve still not had a response. Previous surgery allowed complete access to health records via online platform”
- “It can be hard to get appointments outside of working hours and I don’t like to have to ask for time off work”
- “I’d like to see a better system for making GP appointments as I can’t bear being on the phone such a long time, I find it stressful”
- “I find it hard to get a doctors appointment”
- “I’m concerned that we’ve not had contact from a GP since my wife was diagnosed with dementia 3 years ago. I would’ve expected a GP to call”
- “Delay in receiving test results due to having to have an appointment with a specific doctor who wasn’t available”

## Dental services:

- “My dental practice has changed their way of working since COVID and will no longer clean teeth as part of the check up service. A separate appointment with the hygienist has to be made which isn’t convenient”



## Mental Health Services:

We spoke to 2 people this month regarding the care they have received from mental health services with both raising concerns regarding the treatment they/or their family member has received.

- “I waited 4 years from initial assessment to actually receiving any treatment (partly due to the pandemic, but not entirely) because I didn’t have the technology and suffered from high anxiety when using Zoom. When I finally got the treatment it was a group setting with minimal individual attention/support and I didn’t feel it had helped me. After some discussion I was offered a few additional sessions 1-2-1”
- “The crisis team’s tone towards my sister when she was in hospital was very uncaring and unsympathetic”

## Other services:

We had some feedback this month about a number of other services. In general the comments centred around concerns about appointment availability but there was positive praise for the Audiology team and the care that they provided.

- “The audiology team in Rotherham (Primary ear care centre and Audiology). The staff are so friendly and communicate everything really well and clearly”
- “My pharmacy is generally efficient but a couple of times recently, my medication has been out of stock”
- “I’m not very happy with podiatry services. I have an appointment every 6 months but if I need one sooner, I’m simply told no, even if I’m in pain and uncomfortable. I’ve had to go private in the past but I can’t afford to do that regularly”
- “I’m struggling to get an appointment with Audiology (Ear care centre)”

## General comments regarding the NHS:

We also heard some general comments from a number of patients regarding the NHS.

- “Prices for chiropody care/treatment is becoming so expensive, it should be available more on the NHS”
- “The NHS is wonderful! We’re lucky to have this service available to us in this country, we should all be grateful”
- “I think there should be a points system within the NHS. People who have worked and paid taxes gain points and this would mean people could be prioritised when it comes to general waiting lists for procedures”
- “I have a daughter with cerebral palsy and she’s had to fight over the years to get the care she needs. Everything has felt like a battle for her to be listened to properly”
- “Dental prices are going up all the time, even if you are an NHS patient. The worry is that people soon won’t be able to afford to get any work done. Even people who are employed are struggling to pay for treatment”

Want to share your own experiences with us? Get in touch:

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