



What we heard - January 2024:

In January, we spoke to **61** 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, Pharmacies 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 **10** people in January regarding their hospital care in Rotherham, and received a fairly equal mix of both positive and negative feedback. The majority of the positive feedback related to the staff working at the hospital and how caring and professional they are. The negative feedback centred around waiting times and unsatisfactory communication.



General Positive comments:

- “I have been attending the hospital for many years now regarding different health issues and it's always been fantastic care. The staff are great and very caring”
- “I had a hip replacement in Rotherham hospital and everything went so well, the operation, the aftercare, everything. I was up walking after 2 days, I can't thank the staff and hospital enough”
- “Rotherham hospital sexual health clinic booked me in straight away for my smear, lovely staff confirmed the appointment and was so straight forward it makes you wonder why it was so so difficult at my local GP surgery. I could not give a higher rating for this great team. Professional and 'normal'. I felt very at ease with the friendly staff, given advice and I await test results”

General Negative Comments:

- “I won't use Rotherham Hospital, my partner was treated there and I don't feel his care was good enough, from staff attitudes and the actual care he received”
- “No information or follow up from hospital outpatients appointments months after heart tests. Left to worry and no end in sight”
- “I had a hospital appointment booked for a few months, so I rang on the week before to check that it was still going ahead. When I got there, it was explained that my appointment had been cancelled. I had no correspondence at all. How can you cancel someone's appointment that morning and not let them know! I was very angry and it was a huge inconvenience”

Hospital Waiting Times:

- “I went to A&E recently with my daughter and her 3 year old, we were waiting to be seen for 7 hours!! I think that's unacceptable with such a young child and obviously we were extremely concerned about what was wrong with her, so it left us waiting very anxiously”



GP Services:

We spoke to **20** people about GP services in Rotherham this month and heard from registered patients from several practices. It is clear that some of our community receive a fantastic service from their practices but of those who don't, the biggest concerns centre around getting appointments and follow up care.



General positive comments:

- “The nurse practitioners at my practice are excellent. I have ongoing health issues and they are warm, personal and extremely caring and thorough in their work and care”
- “Wonderful experience at my medical centre. Very good access to help and support, good level of care”
- “My GP practice is great! They're keeping me alive!”
- “My doctor is excellent, he's a wonderful, caring doctor”

General Negative Comments:

- “After 5 failed attempts at my GP to honour the smear test appointments booked over a period of months and try to re arrange around family and work I gave up”
- “My daughter has been really ill recently. She has recovered but there has been no follow up on her illness from the GP and she needs to be taking medication”
- “I'd like to see more appointments available on a daily basis”
- “My GP is refusing to refer me to anywhere other than Rotherham Hospital even though their current waiting times are 63 weeks and Sheffield's are 2-3 months”
- “I rang my GP practice a few weeks ago to get an appointment and could not get through. I held on the line and then I got a message that all appointments for that day were gone. I didn't know what to do so I went to A&E. I was so disappointed with my GP practice and annoyed that I'd had to end up going to the hospital”
- “The GP's are still not offering face to face appointments and I don't feel that I should have to be assertive and almost make a fuss because I want to be seen face to face”

- “I was asked to have some blood tests in relation to ongoing health conditions, so had them done and was asked to go back to my practice to discuss results with the GP. When I went in he asked me why I was there. It didn't fill me with confidence. It was a locum Doctor”

Communication issues:

- “I got a call in the last few weeks by my GP saying that I was being re-referred back for a further scan but they haven't stated why. Sometimes I get a bit confused and I feel that things aren't communicated well enough so that I can understand concerns and reasons for things being decided”
- “I had an eye appointment made at the old walk in centre but it's been cancelled 3 times, I've no idea why. Sometimes I think if you had an explanation as to why, we could be more understanding”

Waiting times/appointments:

- “I'm waiting for a cataracts appointment and was told my referral would take 4 months, which I was quite surprised at and don't think that's too bad with everything that's been going on in the NHS recently e.g strikes etc.”



Pharmacies:

- “I have a Nomad because I have Parkinsons. This is a great service that the pharmacy supplies, it really helps me be organised with taking my medication”
- “They are really good at organising lots of my medication.”
- “The opening hours are very good”
- “Recently they didn't have my medication”



Mental Health Services:

- “We were offered a 6 week course of support, maybe CAMHS but unsure and then nothing else. Mental Health issues aren't fixed after a 6 week course of therapeutic work. Disappointing service for children's mental health”

General comments regarding the NHS:

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

- “The NHS is a wonderful service!!”
- “My husband had a heart attack a few years ago but there doesn't seem to be much support or on-going advice in this area and he isn't called for regular check-ups regarding his heart?”

- “I have had cancer and got the all clear last year. I don't think there's anyone monitoring my health and haven't been called for a check up/rescan. I think cancer patients should be offered more post treatment support even if they have been given the all-clear”

Technology:

- “I am worried about technology - everything is going digital, with apps and emails and texts and I feel that I'm going to miss out as I don't understand all this new technology. I have to get my daughter to help me out with certain things. Not all older people have a network of support and I worry about the speed that things are moving into these ways. ”



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

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