



## What we heard - July 2023:

In July, we spoke to **106** people regarding their experiences with health and social care services in Rotherham. This information was gathered from in-person engagement, events and telephone/e-mail 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, mental health support, dentists and pharmacies). 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 **29** people in July regarding their hospital care in Rotherham, covering a variety of topics including waiting times, parking and funding.



### General Positive comments:

- "I had a knee operation and my care was really good"
- "Rotherham is a great hospital. I have been under their care for 16 years now. The staff really care about you. A tumour was found and they told me this news sensitively and ensured my husband was with me to support me"
- "I had a heart attack a few months ago and the hospital has been amazing with me. Very caring"
- "The hospital is good and the facilities in the reception area are so good (M&S, Boots, Costa Coffee etc)
- "A6 and A7 wards - fantastic treatment. I have cancer and can only praise the staff for looking after me"

### General Negative Comments:

- No wheelchairs available for patients attending outpatient appointments

- Wastage of equipment at Rotherham Hospital which could be re-used, such as crutches and blankets.
- Hospital appointment cancelled twice due to no interpreter
- Haematology cancelled my appointment without letting me know

### Hospital Parking/Transport:

5 people spoke to us about hospital parking. All of these experiences were negative, with patients saying it takes a long time to find parking, and if you can, it is usually a long walk to the hospital entrance. This is not ideal if you are in ill-health and cannot walk very far. Disabled spaces are always full and it can sometimes take up to an hour to find a parking space, which leaves patients feeling stressed and anxious that they will miss their appointment.

2 people spoke to us about hospital transport. They said Door to Door was a good service but it was not available enough. Another said a taxi was offered but with a 2 hour wait, however it was good that the hospital were offering to cover the cost.

### Hospital Waiting Times:

We spoke to 10 people regarding waiting times at Rotherham Hospital. This was a mixture of positive and negative experiences.



5 people had **positive** comments about wait times at Rotherham Hospital.

- “Staff at the hospital don’t treat me like a number, I feel cared for. The staffs at the hospital are amazing”
- “I haven’t had to wait a long time for my hospital appointment. Staff is friendly”
- “I’m under the hospital for a badly broken arm. I was informed that I needed an operation. This happened quickly and I am now having physio regularly. The whole process has been very swift as this happened in June”
- “I had an x-ray recently, it was very quick”
- “I have only waited 5 weeks for an Ultrasound, which is good”

5 people had **negative** comments about the wait times at Rotherham Hospital.

- A&E wait times are too long
- Waiting too long for a consultation
- Been waiting for an operation for 6 months and I have now gone private as the wait was too long
- I was waiting for an appointment for a hernia which was then cancelled. The hernia then turned into a strangled hernia which was very painful. This could have been avoided
- Waiting for long times between appointments to different departments in Rotherham Hospital. One department can’t find anything wrong in their investigations so we are transferred to another department, and then have to wait months to be seen by then. This is delaying the diagnosis

## GP Services:

We spoke to **18** people about GP services in Rotherham this month and heard from registered patients from several practices.



### General positive comments:

- Brinsworth Nurses Team are amazing. They go above and beyond what you would expect
- York Road Surgery is fantastic.

### Waiting times/appointments:

There were **7 negative** comments about wait times for GP appointments

- Can still only talk with my doctor over the phone and not a face to face appointment
- Trying to get a GP appointment is terrible. I can't tell the receptionist if it is an emergency or not as I am not a medical professional.
- I don't want to give my personal health symptoms to a GP receptionist to get an appointment
- You can't get a GP appointment without a huge amount of effort
- Have to wait 3-4 weeks to get a GP appointment
- I am struggling to register at a GP to get an appointment
- Told to wait until 2024 to get monthly blood pressure appointments for high blood pressure

There was **1 positive** comment about wait times.

- I was able to get a face to face GP appointment no problem at Treeton Surgery

### Treatment:

There was **1 positive** experience and **5 negative** experiences about treatment received at GP surgeries

#### Positive:

- I am getting better with my anxiety because I get good help at the doctors. I know what is going on with my health.

#### Negative:

- GP's don't care about my HRT. I won't be going back
- I have bad arthritis and I struggle to walk but my GP will not give me anything to help this. I assume it is because I am old, so I just try and get by.
- I have had mental health symptoms for many years and multiple GP visits where nothing was done. Ended up under the Crisis Team care but it shouldn't have reached that stage and there should have been early intervention

- Difference in care between physical disabilities and disabilities that are hidden (poor mental health)
- I don't like needles - I would like the school nurses to be more supportive and explain what they are doing and why and help me not to feel scared

## Mental Health Services:

### Lack of support:

We spoke to 9 people regarding mental health services/support in Rotherham.

All 9 of these comments were negative and expressed a lack of support from mental health services in Rotherham.

- Young people are not getting the mental health support they need. My daughter died through alcohol addiction
- No mental health support. Cannot get the help and support I need
- Crisis Team are useless, they don't see you straight away and it can take 2-3 days to get an appointment if you are lucky.
- There needs to be preventative mental health support in Rotherham. There seems to be a huge gap and ultimately if crisis care can be avoided, this would save on expensive resources
- I don't know where to go for mental health support or what is on offer



## Dentists:

We spoke to 5 people about dentist issues in July. All 5 people expressed difficulties in finding a dentist in the Rotherham area that was accepting new NHS patients. Patients reported that they were in pain and discomfort, with some people needing urgent treatment that was requiring them to ring NHS 111. Patients reported dentist waits of up to 4 years.



## Pharmacists:

We spoke to 4 people regarding pharmacies and prescriptions in July. The main issue was people receiving incorrect prescriptions and therefore the wrong amounts of medication

- Repeated incorrect prescriptions - poor communication between GP and pharmacy
- Prescriptions are given in excess to people, which is a waste of NHS money.
- Pharmacists have been getting my prescriptions wrong for several months now (not sending enough medication)
- The pharmacy has started to get my prescription incorrect. They are saying they only follow what the computer says, however it is the wrong amount



## General comments regarding the

### NHS:

We also heard some general comments from a number of patients regarding issues such as funding, technology and accessibility.

#### Accessible information:

- I'm partially sighted and my friend has to read my letters for me as no adjustments are made by services
- Technology is not always helpful. We need bespoke letters with relevant information on, so services are not just sending out generic letters with information that is incorrect/does not apply to me
- My doctor talks to my Mum. I sign Makaton to the doctor as I can't speak very well. All doctors and nurses should be able to use Makaton. They should all be trained when they get a job with the NHS.



#### Funding/Running of Services:

- There is not enough funding for the NHS to provide a decent service
- Organisations need to listen and be more understanding, including NHS services
- There are too many hospitals under one umbrella and the services do not run well
- Funding for the NHS is critical. If we can get this right, services will improve. If NHS workers are looked after more, there will be an increase in staff

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

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