



## What we heard - September 2023:

In September, we spoke to **60** 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 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 **16** people in September regarding their hospital care in Rotherham, covering a variety of topics including appointment waiting times and staff shortages.



### General Positive comments:

- “I am a cancer patient and I cannot fault the cancer nurses at Rotherham. They are fantastic and very caring. I am now not afraid of my illness but feel like I've built up a huge resilience to fight against it”
- “I've had good treatment at Rotherham Hospital - no concerns at all”
- “All the staff I've come into contact with at the hospital are very friendly, from admin staff to nurses and doctors I've had dealings with”
- “Rotherham Hospital is awesome - they helped fix a bad gash on my head”

### General Negative Comments:

- “Sometimes I think communication could be better between departments and services. I'm not always sure what's going on with my care - I can start to feel a bit lost and out of the loop”
- “I have regular appointments and I always leave myself enough time to try and find a car parking space - it's a real issue here”
- “I don't trust Rotherham Hospital”
- “I had issues with my medication in hospital because it needed 2 medical staff to give this to me. I was often very late taking it and had to remind them regularly as there were never 2 available at the same time. They're not valued enough and people's care is suffering”

## Hospital Waiting Times:

- “I recently went to A&E as I fell and hurt my leg - I was waiting for 12 hours overnight”
- “I have had 3 fractures within the last year. I went to A&E and was waiting 6 hours to be seen. 3 hours in the first waiting room for children and then 2 hours after the x-rays were taken. I think they are short staffed”
- “The queues are way too long in A&E; this needs to be better!”
- “I’ve been waiting for 3 years for an ear operation!”



## **GP Services:**

We spoke to 17 people about GP services in Rotherham this month and heard from registered patients from several practices.

## General positive comments:

- “I’m registered at Rosehill medical centre - I’m never waiting long for an appt. I love my surgery and the staffs are really nice too”
- “I’m at Broom medical centre - its great 10/10”
- “I go to the doctors often and I have a consistently good experience”



## Communication issues:

- “Communication by some GP’s isn’t great. My practice has taken me off all my medication with no explanation; I had to find out from the pharmacist”.



## Waiting times/appointments:

### Negative:

- “My doctors are awful - you ring for an appointment and you can be 25 in the queue. Sometimes my Mum just gives up!”
- “Rawmarsh Health Centre is terrible - you can’t get an appointment”
- “I can’t get through to Treeton GP surgery. If I am anything above number 2 in the queue I will hang up because I know that the wait will be too long. So I just don’t bother. I am a bit worried about my health but the frustration of getting through to speak to someone overrides my symptoms”
- “I can’t get in to see my doctor. I’ve always been in good health and I know there is something wrong with me. It’s starting to worry me as I know my body very well - I’m 84 and it’s upsetting me that I can’t get an appointment. They ask you to ring at 8am and you can be holding on for an hour and then the lines cut off at 9am”
- “I am registered at Woodstock Bower and I cannot get an appointment at all. I keep ringing and get placed in a queue and when the numbers go down, I get cut off. I give up most of the time and then try again a few weeks later”
- “I recently had a problem with my sinuses and it caused me so much pain I was crying. I went to the dentist first as my teeth were affected and they said I needed to see a doctor but I couldn’t get an appointment for about 2 weeks. The pain was getting worse so my Dad had to go into the doctors and he ended up shouting to get me an appointment. I then had to wait over a week for the antibiotics to arrive at the pharmacy. I felt like I was in pain for such a long time”

## Mental Health Services:

- “I have had a good experience with the Crisis Service. They called me back straight away on the same day and were able to signpost me for support”
- “I am an unpaid carer for my partner and I don't feel that support in Rotherham is what it should be. I'd like more opportunities to just "talk" to someone, a little bit like counselling, that I wouldn't have to pay for”
- “It's been hard to get the mental health support I need - if it wasn't for my family I don't know where I'd be but services have let me down. I now have a link worker who is amazing but it's been a long time coming and I've had many issues over the years”

## General comments regarding the NHS:

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

- “A brilliant service to have, unfortunately underfunded”
- “NHS staffs do not get enough rewards, they work really hard”
- “The NHS is underfunded and I feel sorry for the staff who work very hard”
- “I think the NHS is a good service but they don't seem to have enough money and seem short staffed”

## Technology:

- “I'm really unsure of the IT systems that the NHS use and can't see why 1 system isn't used between different authorities/areas of the country - surely this would benefit continuity of care. I have been transferred between Rotherham and Sheffield for my care (I have several health issues) but there doesn't seem to be a system that both authorities use to be able to see all my medical notes, so I find I'm repeating myself and almost starting all over again with explaining the care I need. It's strange and not convenient”



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

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