healthwatch
Westminster

ARNEWAY
STREET SW1

**Patient feedback report
April – June 2024**

Reaching our local community

129 Local people have contributed to this report.

10 Events visited or hosted by Healthwatch Westminster to collect feedback.

230 People have been supported with advice and signposting.

1,110 People accessed our website, with the most popular content being access to our news articles and reports.

Patient feedback: GP access

Access to GP appointments continues to be the most common theme. Whilst some residents were satisfied with the speed of obtaining same-day appointments and navigating the online booking systems, common issues included difficulties in securing same-day appointments, challenges with the online booking system, long waiting times, and delays in GPs sending prescription.

"I don't know how to book an appointment online and I heard it would be easier to book an appointment."

"Getting a same-day appointment is smooth because I can call my GP in the morning and get an appointment in the afternoon."

Patient feedback: Intermediate care

Healthwatch teams have partnered with the Network Data Lab at Imperial to explore the experiences of older populations using intermediate care services, complementing the NHS's ongoing efforts to optimise acute resources.

Residents raised **key concerns** including a desire for greater patient and carer involvement in decision-making, improved communication between service providers, better integration with specialist service, clearer information about the discharge and care process, and increased support for family carers, especially those facing mental health and physical challenges. Please see published report available here.

"There was no discharge meeting held. The family network was never invited to any meetings, so I took my son by car but after that I was not included by [mental health] teams or by Westminster council."

Service provider feedback: mental health

As part of Healthwatch Westminster's project exploring the mental health needs and experiences of homeless communities accessing primary mental health care, key service providers **identified gaps in services** for individuals with dual diagnoses, women, young people, migrant communities – particularly those worried about their migration status or facing language and cultural barriers.

Additional **key issues** include a lack of sustainable funding, long waiting times, lack of awareness of mental health and mental health services, and the absence of trauma-informed approach to care. Please see published report available [here](#).

"Some immigrant communities are less likely to access support than a native community. Sometimes you may not even have recourse to public funds. So, you're less likely to go and seek services, but then also, you're more likely to keep have more pressures on you."

"The mental health has to be addressed along with [the] alcohol usage."

Patient feedback: digital inclusion

As part of the digital inclusion project, elderly residents reported **challenges** in accessing and using online health services, including the NHS app for managing appointments. **Key concerns** include the need for enhanced language support for migrant communities, online security training, alternative support for individuals who cannot afford the cost to access the internet, simplified language, and additional support for individuals with learning and physical disabilities.

One resident expressed worries about the possibility of hackers stealing his personal information stored on the App.

Another resident reported not having the means to afford a broadband service or a laptop/tablet.

Services we heard feedback from:

o General Practice (GP)

o Dentist

o Inpatient care/ General inpatients

o General outpatients and hospital-based consultants

o Children's social care services

o Assisted living/Extra Care housing services/Supported housing

o Critical care, acute care or High Dependency Unit

Feedback from the services we've heard from has helped strengthen our relationship with strategic stakeholders and partners. This collaboration ensures we can effectively monitor existing gaps and improvements in service provision, particularly in meeting the needs of diverse communities.

Overall themes:

o Requests for information about the complaints process

o   Support and resources for carers

o   Difficulty accessing services

o   Quality of treatment or services,

o   Administrative issues (records, letters, results)

Overall themes have guided Healthwatch teams in setting project priorities and enhancing our advice and signposting services in Westminster. This tailored outreach has strengthened strategic connections and built residents' trust, enabling us to better support them, even beyond our direct capacity.

Impact and outcomes

★ 15 recommendations published to improve the accessibility of local GP practices, through **Enter & View** reports.

★ The **North West London Integrated Care Board (ICB)** has committed to delaying changes to same-day access until further engagement with patients and residents is conducted.

★ An evaluation report was published in collaboration with **the Imperial College London Network Data Lab**, focusing on **patient experiences with intermediary care**. We are currently planning the next steps for sharing this report with members of the ICB team to discuss the way forward.

★ A report was also released capturing residents' views on changes to **acute mental health services**, with findings included in an evaluation report by the Integrated Care Board. We are actively involved in reviewing the proposed changes to mental health inpatient care.

Spotlight: signposting pop-ups at local community centres

People at local community centres and healthcare services can now access our support in person, through our regular series of advice and signposting pop-ups. Throughout April, May and June we regularly attended the Citizen Advice Bureau drop-in sessions at the Stowe Centre, Ebury Edge community, and the Beethoven Centre. We also routinely attend sessions at Chelsea & Westminster Hospital and AgeUK. We provided immediate advice on staying well during winter, information on local mental health services, and guidance on making and escalating complaints, as well as seeking advocacy services. Additionally, we collected detailed feedback from the staff at the community centres and hospital.

Signposting & advice: support for people with mental health issues

We were contacted by Mr Adeyemi* because he wanted to find support to improve his mental health impacted by the day-to-day responsibilities of caring for his grandmother outside of the working hours of approved carers. In response, Healthwatch staff provided him with information about a range of local mental health resources in Westminster to help improve his mental health and self-management techniques.

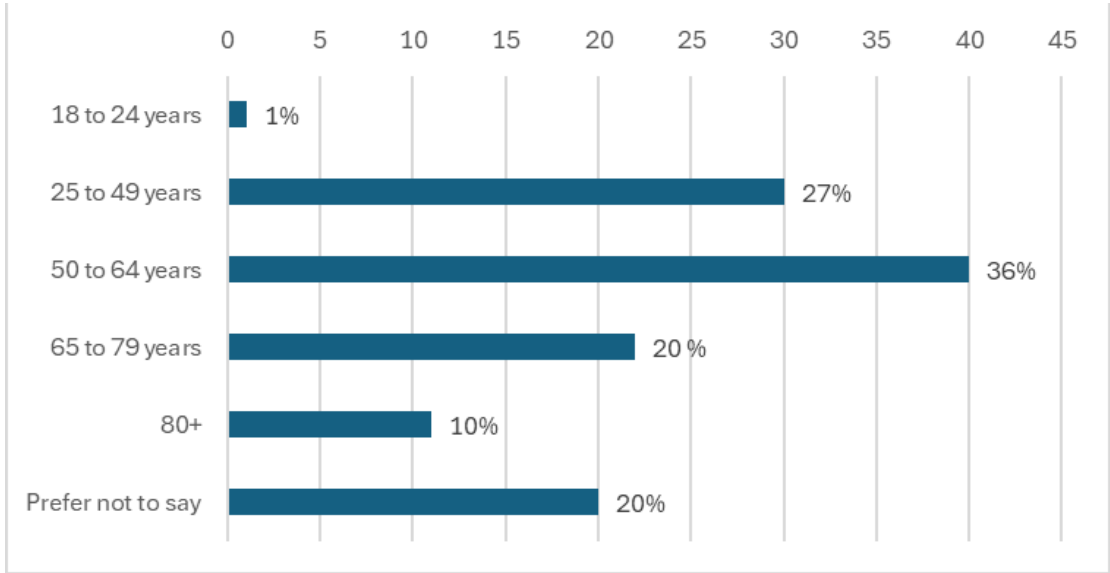By strengthening our connections with mental health services in Westminster, we are expanding our ability to support individuals seeking mental health assistance for themselves or their loved ones. Additionally, we are enhancing our drop-in sessions with more information and advice, allowing us to better reach and support vulnerable communities facing mental health challenges.

* Name changed for privacy

Who we reached

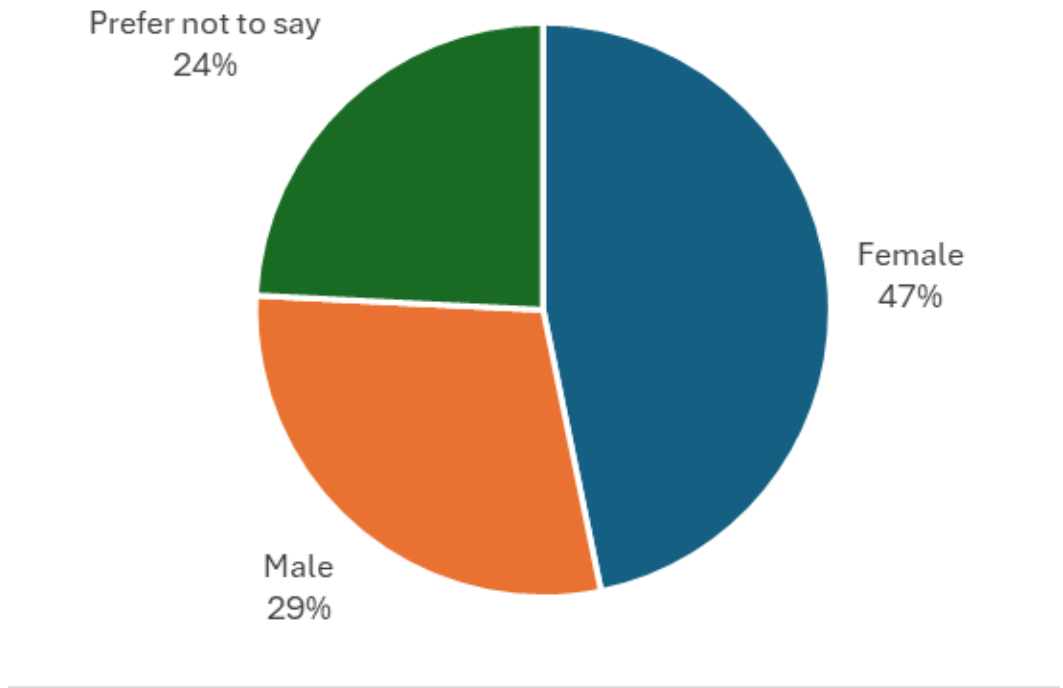This quarter we have focused on improving the response rate to our demographic questions, and reaching a higher proportion of male residents through our outreach. These charts show the age, gender and ethnicity of people we have reached. In the next quarter, we will continue to focus on reaching more men. We would also like to include more people from global majority backgrounds in our research.
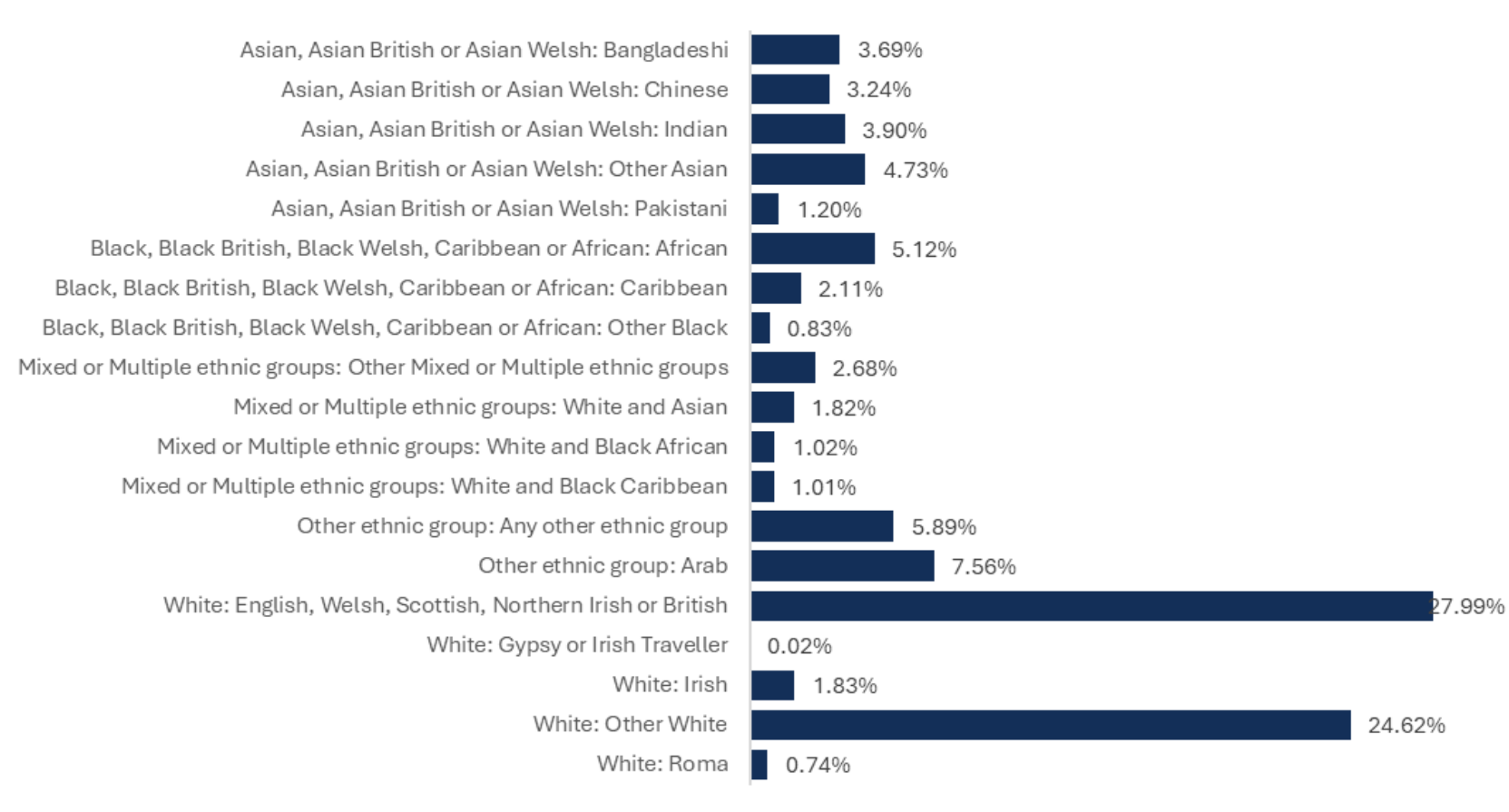
Gender

Age

Who we reached

Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Percentage
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Bangladeshi	3.69%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Chinese	3.24%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Indian	3.90%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Other Asian	4.73%
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh: Pakistani	1.20%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: African	5.12%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Caribbean	2.11%
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African: Other Black	0.83%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: Other Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	2.68%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Asian	1.82%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black African	1.02%
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups: White and Black Caribbean	1.01%
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	5.89%
Other ethnic group: Arab	7.56%
White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British	27.99%
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.02%
White: Irish	1.83%
White: Other White	24.62%
White: Roma	0.74%

What to expect next?

In response to the recent rise in the cost of living and its impact on health, as identified through community outreach and engagement, Healthwatch teams in the Bi-Borough are focusing on understanding how these changes affect residents' health and wellbeing, access to services, and the quality of care, including dentistry and pharmacy services.

Additionally, Healthwatch Westminster have secured funding from Healthwatch England to explore people's experience with eye care, particularly those waiting for secondary eye care services. Due to evident long waits and high costs, this project will specifically engage residents at higher risk of eye disease, including those from Black Afro-Caribbean and South Asian backgrounds. The goal is to ensure timely and affordable access to eye care for those who need it most.

Any questions or comments? Get in touch to find out more

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