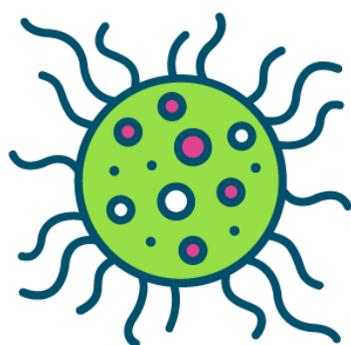




New report: What Somerset residents told us about health and care during Covid-19



Thanks to everyone who shared their experiences of health and social care during the first six months of Covid-19 (April to September 2020). Our new report highlights common issues people have faced and how these changed over time, identifying the challenges and achievements of a health and social care sector turned upside down by the pandemic. We have shared our findings with local health and social care professionals to help them adapt and to deliver the care people need.

The majority of feedback received was about GPs, followed by pharmacies, hospitals, dentists and mental health services. Several key themes emerged:

- The public understand the challenges faced by care providers.
- Virtual healthcare suits some people but does not work for everyone.
- Pharmacies were praised for maintaining medication services, but long waits were an issue at the start of lockdown.
- Information about emergency dental care was lacking and there is uncertainty about when dental treatment will resume.
- People were happy to continue using hospital services and to attend face to face appointments.
- Voluntary and community services have been a lifeline for those isolating at home and needing support.

Read our full report: [Accessing health and social care during Covid-19: A Somerset perspective](#)

Making health and care better for young people

We want to make sure that children and young people from across the Somerset can directly influence the health and social care services that they use. In the new year we will be recruiting young people to help us design and deliver an exciting new youth project. If you work with young people or know someone who might be interested in working with us on this project, we'd love to hear from you.



For more information contact Max Popham, our Youth Engagement Officer, on 01278 264405 or email: max.popham@healthwatchesomerset.co.uk

Become a Covid Community Champion



Some of our volunteers and staff have recently signed up to the Covid Community Champions network. They are completing a short online training course to keep up with the latest guidance around Covid-19, so that they can support others and direct people to local health and wellbeing services.

If you want to get involved, you can find out more here:

<https://sparksomerset.org.uk/projects/covid-community-champions>

NHS 111 Service

Thanks to everyone who shared their experiences of using the local NHS 111 service – our survey closed on 20 November. We are analysing your feedback and will publish our report and recommendations in January.



See more from us on social media



We regularly share useful information on social media about health and wellbeing services, issues and resources, along with news about our work in the local community. Follow us to find out more and to share your thoughts and feedback (links are below).

**Speak up and help make health and social care better
for you and your community**

Healthwatch Somerset is the county's independent health and social care champion. We exist to ensure that people are at the heart of care. Our dedicated team of staff and volunteers listen to what people like about local health and care services, and what could be improved. These views are then shared with the decision-making organisations in the county, so together we can make a real difference.



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