



Community Health Ambassadors

NHS Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees
Clinical Commissioning Group



HEALTH SERVICES SURVEY RESULTS 2016

**SPECIAL THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO TOOK PART IN OUR
HEALTH SERVICES SURVEY WHICH RECEIVED OVER 500
RESPONSES – READ THE RESULTS INSIDE!**

Community Health Ambassadors (CHA)

November 2016 – Health Services Survey Results

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**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS & PARTNERS FOR PROMOTING AND COLLECTING
RESPONSES TO THE HEALTH SERVICES SURVEY.**

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1. Introduction

1.1 This report provides an overview of the themes and findings from the Health Services Survey carried out by the Community Health Ambassadors (CHA) programme from June to August 2016 including methodology and recommendations.

2. Background

2.1 Hartlepool & Stockton-on-Tees CCG (HAST CCG) has developed the Community Health Ambassador (CHA) programme to help it effectively engage and involve local people in the planning, development and commissioning of health services - with a particular focus on engaging people from disadvantaged groups and communities.

2.2 HAST CCG are working in partnership with Catalyst and Xivvi to recruit and manage a team of CHA volunteers who represent a wide range of communities from across all areas of the Hartlepool and Stockton-on-Tees localities including those with learning difficulties/disabilities and their carers, BME community, deaf community, blind community, homeless community, over 50's/ageing population, ex-offenders, faith groups, mental health and more.

2.3 Ambassadors are encouraged to provide feedback and recommendations that are solution focussed, allowing the CCG to provide a practical response to concerns and issues; whilst also providing a real opportunity to improve patient experience when accessing health services. The programme has already ensured the needs of our communities are appropriately considered with public involvement in the Urgent Care Consultation, Primary Care Consultation, Stay Well This Winter Campaign, Better Health Programme public engagement, Commissioning Intentions Events and Clinical Reference Groups.

2.4 In addition to ongoing feedback and attendance at consultation events, HAST CCG and the CHA volunteers agreed it would be useful to carry out a comprehensive Health Services survey with the local community to gain an overview of public opinions and experiences of key health services that the CCG currently commission – including GP services as of April 2016.

3. Method

3.1 The Health Services Survey was co-designed by the CHA volunteers and the CCG to ensure content was effectively and appropriately pitched to suit the needs of local residents (E.g less jargon/clinical language) – whilst still remaining relevant to current and future consultation/commissioning plans of the CCG.

3.2 All responses to the survey were anonymous however participants were also able to provide an email address if they wanted to receive further information on the CHA programme/role.

3.3 The survey was available to complete both online and as a printed survey from **9th June to 31st July**. A range of engagement activities were used to promote the survey with particular emphasis around Health Information Week:

- Attendance at public networking/stall events
 - Health Information Day – Hartlepool
 - Stockton Central Library Stall
 - Thornaby Library Stall
 - North Tees Hospital Stall
 - Billingham Community Centre Good Mood Food Café
 - SUFC Information Day
- Promotion at community forums
 - Stockton-on-Tees Locality Forums
 - Voice Forum
 - LGBT Stockton Voices
- Social media (Streetlife, Facebook and Twitter).
- Slot on Ignition Radio (Stockton) and Hartlepool Radio

- Catalyst mailing lists including weekly e-bulletin (500+ VCSE members)
- CHA Volunteers' networks, friends/family and community groups

3.4 Overall, 20 CHA volunteers were involved in promoting the survey (of which 11 are based in Stockton-on-Tees and 9 based in Hartlepool) representing a range of organisations/groups:

Stockton-on-Tees:

- Stockton United for Change (SUFC)
- Thornaby Community Partnership
- Healthwatch Stockton
- Little Sprouts
- LGBT Matters Stockton Voices
- Over 50's Assembly
- Christians Against Poverty
- Big Life Families
- NHS North Tees and Hartlepool Hospitals
- Patient Participant Group – Norton Medical Centre

Hartlepool:

- Hartlepool Blind Welfare Centre
- The Heart Community Centre
- Epilepsy Outlook
- Hartlepool Families First
- Home Group
- Hartlepool Deaf Centre

3.5 A huge majority of survey responses were gained from face-to-face, time intensive public engagement from the CHA volunteers with a presence at the above events.

4. Overview

4.1 A total of **505 participants** completed the survey including 223 online responses and 282 hard copy responses – however the number of responses to individual questions varies throughout. 58 participants provided an email address and opted to find out more about the CHA role.

4.2 Primary Care

97% of participants are currently registered with a GP practice with 57% attending a GP appointment within the last 3 months. Overall 57% of participants rated their experience of GP services as 'Good' or 'Very Good' with a further 31% rating their experience as 'Average'.

"Give doctors and walk in centres sufficient funding and more time to provide improved person focussed care. Improve communication between primary, secondary, hospital and social care."

4.3 Urgent Care

89% of participants have heard of the 111 number service including 39% who have also used it. 82% of users of 111 rated the service as either 'Average', 'Helpful' or 'Very Helpful'.

"Fast response times meant I was taken to hospital quickly when in fact I had initially only rang for advice. This probably saved my life."

Only 33% of participants have used a walk-in centre within the past 12 months with 85% of all users (including over 12 months ago) rating walk-in centres as 'Average', 'Good' or 'Very Good'.

"I feel that this sort of service including 111 and out of hours would be much more efficient and better use of resources if included in the GP practices."

49% of participants have used the ambulance service with 86% of users rating their experience as either 'Good' or 'Very good'.

"Excellent service. Fast and efficient. Overworked and under-appreciated"

79% of participants have used a pharmacy within the past 3 months with 92% of all users (including over 3 months ago) visiting for a prescription. 95% of participants rated their experience of pharmacies as 'Average', 'Good' or 'Very Good'.

"Often pharmacies only stock half of the drugs on my prescription which means I often have to go back multiple times. This has resulted in me going without my diabetic medication for a few days at a time".

4.4 Planned Care

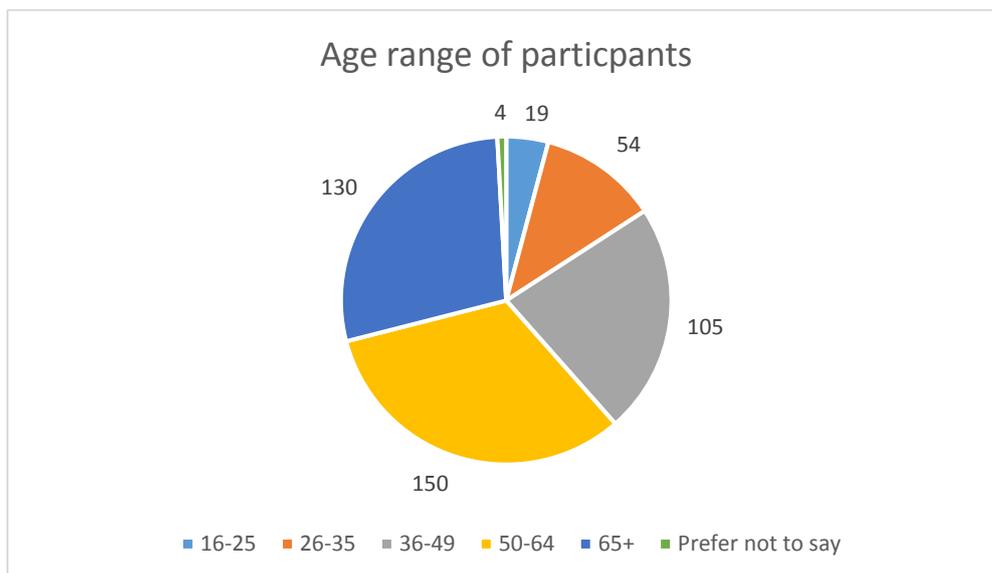
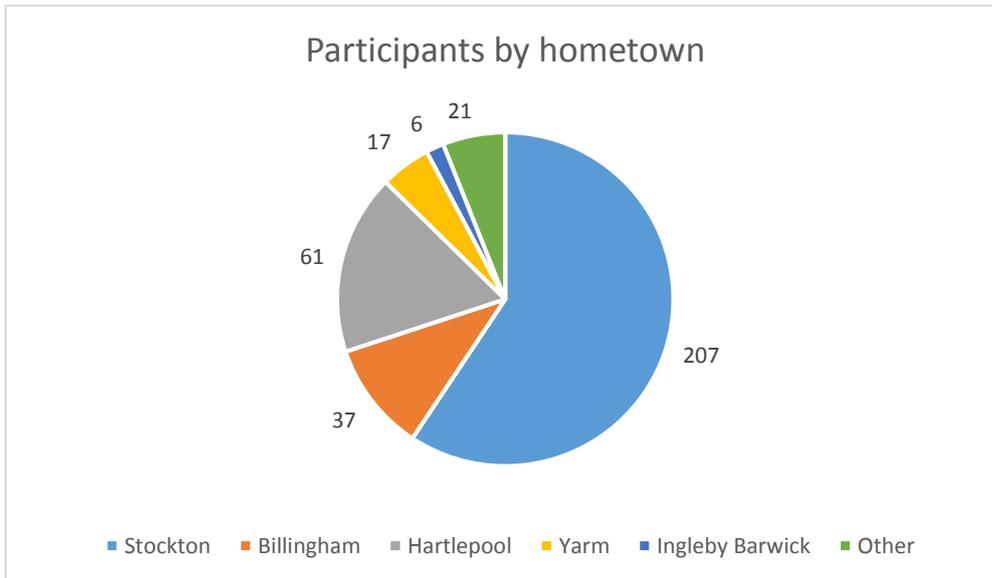
Out of 393 responses, 73% rated their experience of hospital services as 'Good' or 'Very Good'.

"Whenever I have attended the doctors or hospital I have received excellent service and treatment and the staff are always pleasant and helpful even though they're very busy all the time - I really appreciate having the National Health Service".

4.5 Demographics

The majority of responses were from females (67%) and older residents aged 50-64/65+ (60% cumulatively) with Stockton being the most represented geographic area (59%).

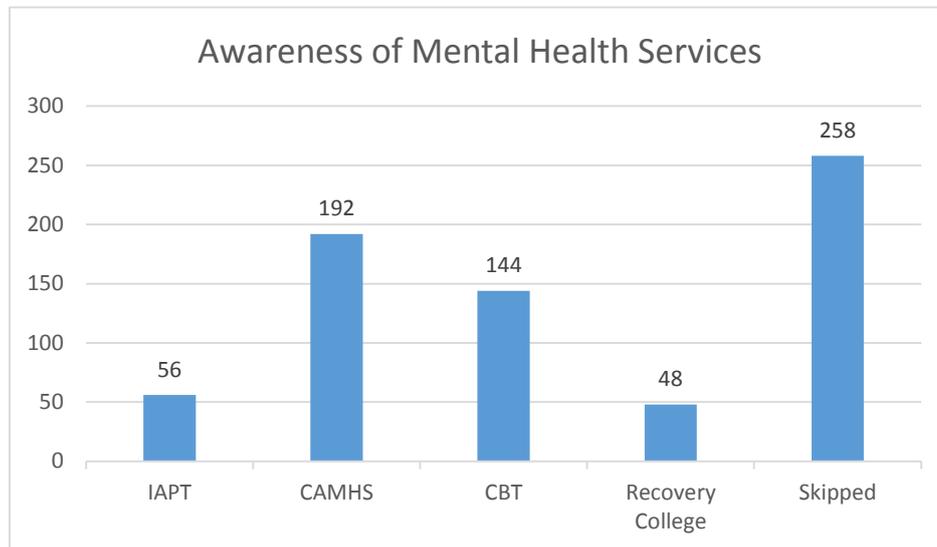
4.6 72% of participants rated their general health as either 'average' or 'good' and 89% of participants rated their mental health as either 'average', 'good' or 'very good' with 49% stating that they exercise at least twice a week. In total 211 participants disclosed brief details of health conditions they currently have.



5. Health Service Areas

5.1 Mental Health

The chart below shows participant response to “Are you aware of any of the following Mental Health services?” The number of participants who skipped this question is significantly higher than others (roughly 200 higher on average) however it is difficult to identify how many participants truly skipped the question or left it blank in absence of a ‘none of the above’ option.



5.2 Out of 505 participants, roughly 10% have heard of IAPT or Recovery College services compared to CAMHS and CBT services which were much more well known.

5.3 Although participants were not specifically asked about their experience of mental health services, a number of comments were made regarding patient mental health in response to other service areas with key themes:

- Patients feel that mental health can decline as a result of poor experience of other health care services (related to anxiety and helplessness) and worsen their condition.
- Some preference towards treatment such as counselling, therapy etc. “as opposed to antidepressants.”
- Easier/quicker access to long term mental health support is essential for those dealing with deep rooted “lifetime” issues – long waiting times can be harmful.
- Some patients felt that they would like to see more questions on Mental Health services covered in this survey.

“Lack of consideration of the impact physical health has on emotional health. Proactive approach is required - improving people's mental health will lead to reduced physical health symptoms thus less strain on resources.”

5.4 Primary Care

Participants were asked a range of questions about their experience of Primary Care (GP) services in relation to waiting times, location, access to a regular/named GP and how recent their last appointment was held.

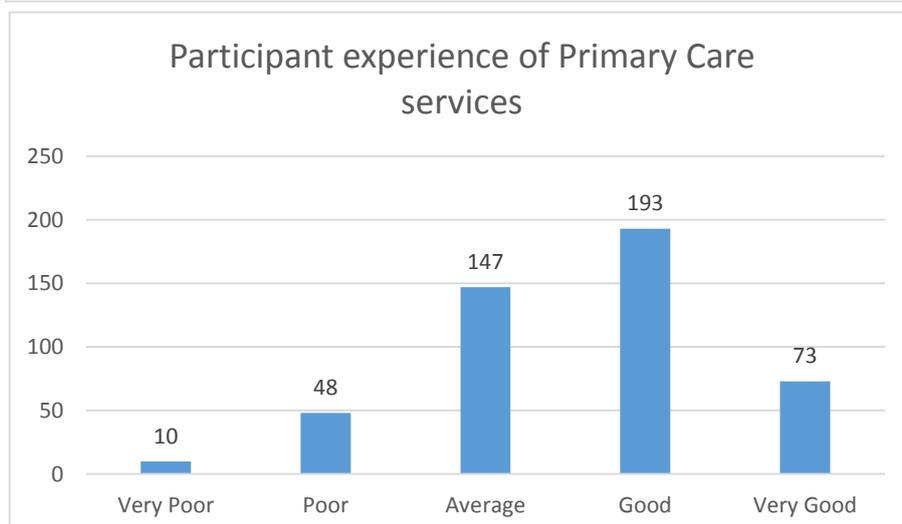
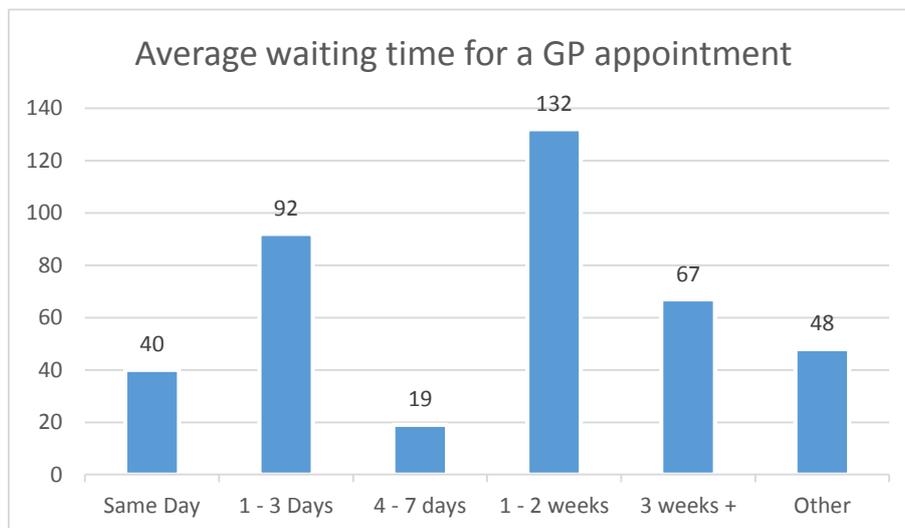
5.5 Patients registered with Norton Medical Centre (50), Queens Park (47), Thornaby & Barwick (45) and Woodbridge (51) were mostly represented within this survey however a full breakdown of which GP practices participants are registered with can be found in Appendix 1.

5.6 69% of participants felt they have access to a regular/named GP and 92% of participants agreed that their GP practice is appropriately/conveniently located.

5.7 The following themes were most prominent when participants were asked about improving their experience of GP services:

- Some patients expressed sympathy and understanding of the workload/funding pressures placed on GP services particularly regarding low number of GP’s compared to number of patients. (Short appointment times were often referenced where patients felt they couldn’t fully explain symptoms/conditions for effective treatment and diagnosis – especially when multiple health conditions are present).
- 57 comments were made about booking a GP appointment being difficult with long waiting times before attending an initial appointment, including long phone line waiting times (phone engaged or busy) – some patients strongly felt an online booking system would be helpful. Generally phone appointments can be booked for the same day. Some patients also perceived that GP’s working ‘part-time’ contributed to long waiting times.
- Mixed feelings regarding telephone appointments – some patients prefer face to face conversation with a GP however some find it very helpful. Overall patients valued good communication and listening skills with less jargon/clinical language. Patients felt that initial contact with receptionists could be improved.
- In terms of quality, patient experience seems inconsistent across different GP practices and can vary significantly (very good to very bad) from doctor to doctor. Some patients said their experience lacked ‘continuity’ and commented on high turnover of GP’s in some cases.

“Give doctors and walk in centres sufficient funding and more time to provide improved person focussed care. Improve communication between primary, secondary, hospital and social care.”



5.8 Urgent Care

Participants were asked a range of questions about their experience of Urgent Care services including the 111 number, walk-in centres, ambulances and pharmacies. The following themes were most prominent when participants were asked about improving Urgent Care services overall.

- Some patients feel that services would benefit from more staff (as a result of more funding) and increased communication/integration between services. Some patients mentioned ‘sharing notes’ between professionals to avoid repeating medical history. Re-training receptionists was also recommended. Patients stated that it is important for staff to show empathy for patients and have good ‘people skills’.
- Better flexibility and understanding of children with additional/complex needs accessing health services – including communication with parents/carers.
- Increased awareness and education of NHS health services for general public to reduce inappropriate use of urgent and emergency care services.

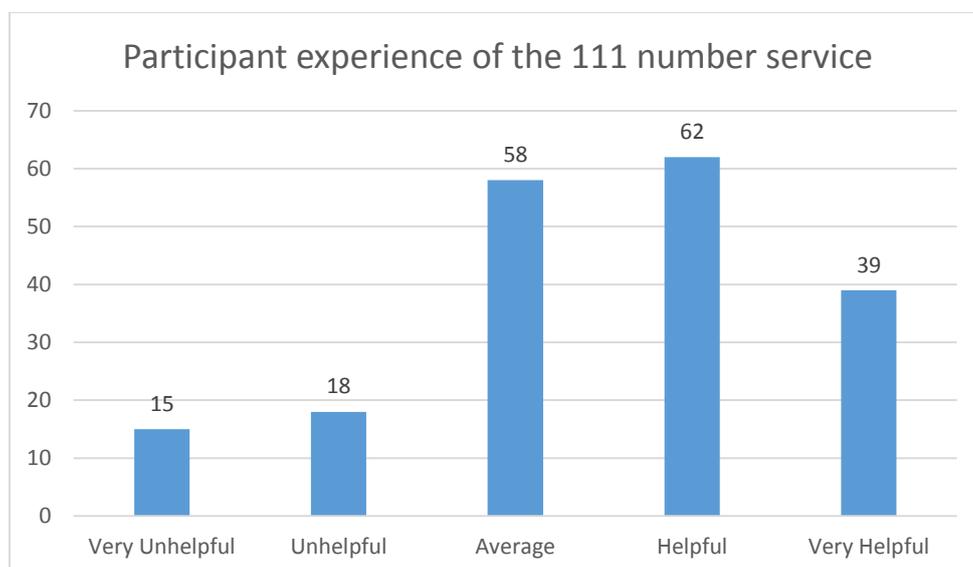
“As much information as possible should be given to every patient/ the general public regarding every aspect of the NHS. Help them to understand why NHS services cannot be on their doorstep; the best treatment for their particular problems and why they have to travel to get the best service”

5.9 Urgent Care – 111 Number Service

82% of 192 participants rated their experience of the 111 Number service as either ‘Average’, ‘Helpful’ or ‘Very Helpful’. The following themes were most prominent when participants were asked about their experience of the 111 service:

- Often patients were referred to A&E or told to call 999 – in some cases they were not ‘welcomed’ by A&E staff and advised an alternative might be more appropriate.
- Some patients were asked to wait for a call back and their condition worsened during that time. In these cases patients felt they should have been dealt with more urgently.
- Patients have mixed experiences of people responding to the 111 call. Some found them extremely efficient and helpful – whilst others found them rude, uncompassionate or obstructive.
- Some patients received no follow-up communication when their situation changed (ambulance cancelled without notice) which meant casualty didn’t receive timely treatment.

“Fast response times meant I was taken to hospital quickly when in fact I had initially only rang for advice. This probably saved my life.”

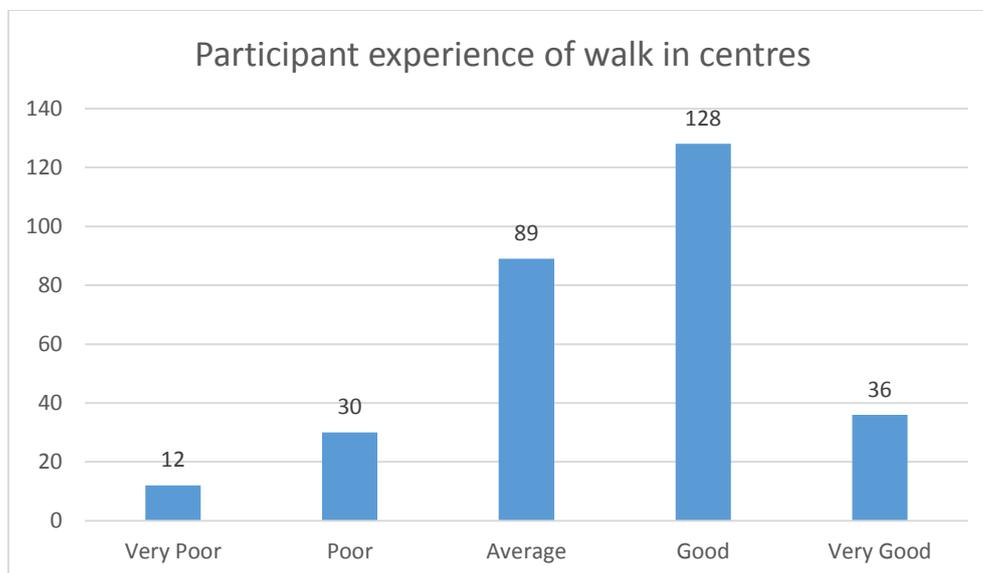


5.10 Urgent Care – Walk In Centres

62% of participants have visited a walk-in centre before, half of which were over 12 months ago. Patients’ main reasons for visiting a walk in centre included infections, broken/injured limbs, tonsillitis (and other viruses/illnesses), rashes, abdominal/chest/back pain, breathing difficulties and minor bleeds. The following themes were most prominent when participants were asked about their experience of walk-in centres:

- Many patients described poor waiting times of at least 1-2 hours after arriving at a walk-in centre due to busy/overcrowded waiting areas but were overall complimentary of the service they received by staff once treated. Overall patients stated that they preferred the treatment received at a walk-in centre compared to their GP.
- Some patients noticed a decline in the quality of service in terms of communication/behaviour during high demand/peak times.
- Some patients were refused treatment due to complex needs or complicated health issues.

“I feel that this sort of service including 111 and out of hours would be much more efficient and better use of resources if included in the GP practices.”

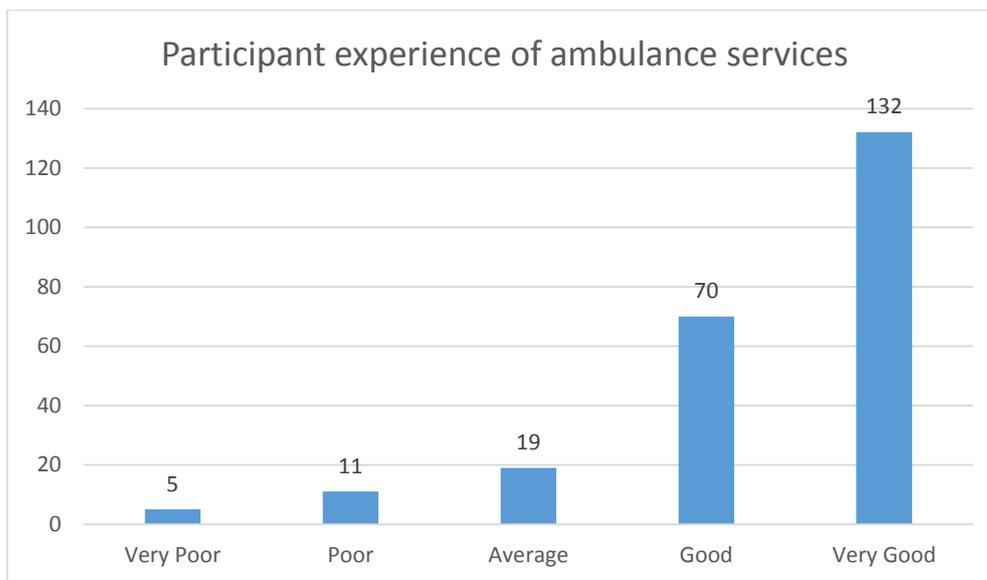


5.11 Urgent Care – Ambulance Service

Only 15% of participants have used the ambulance service within the past 12 months, with a further 34% using the service over 12 months ago. Patients’ main reasons for using the ambulance service included suspected stroke/heart attack and severe chest pains; fall/collapse induced injuries of elderly relatives; seizures; severe road accidents; broken limbs; and severe breathing difficulties. The following themes were most prominent when participants were asked about their experience of the ambulance service:

- Majority of comments were very complimentary of the service provided by ambulance staff in terms of behaviour/communication and clinical treatment.
- Patients generally found the service very responsive however there are some cases where patients waited over 3 hours for an ambulance to arrive.

“Excellent service. Fast and efficient. Overworked and under-appreciated”

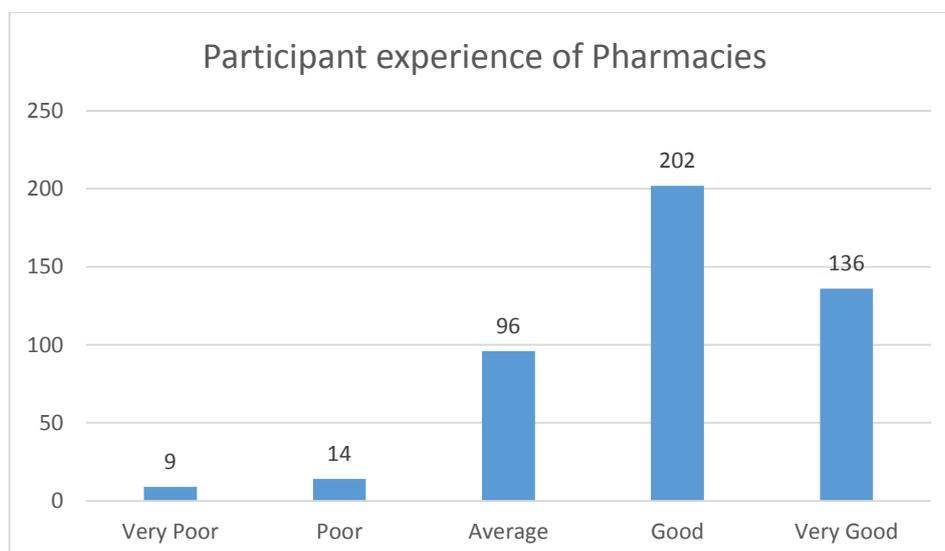


5.12 Urgent Care – Pharmacies

The following themes were most prominent when participants were asked about their experience of pharmacies:

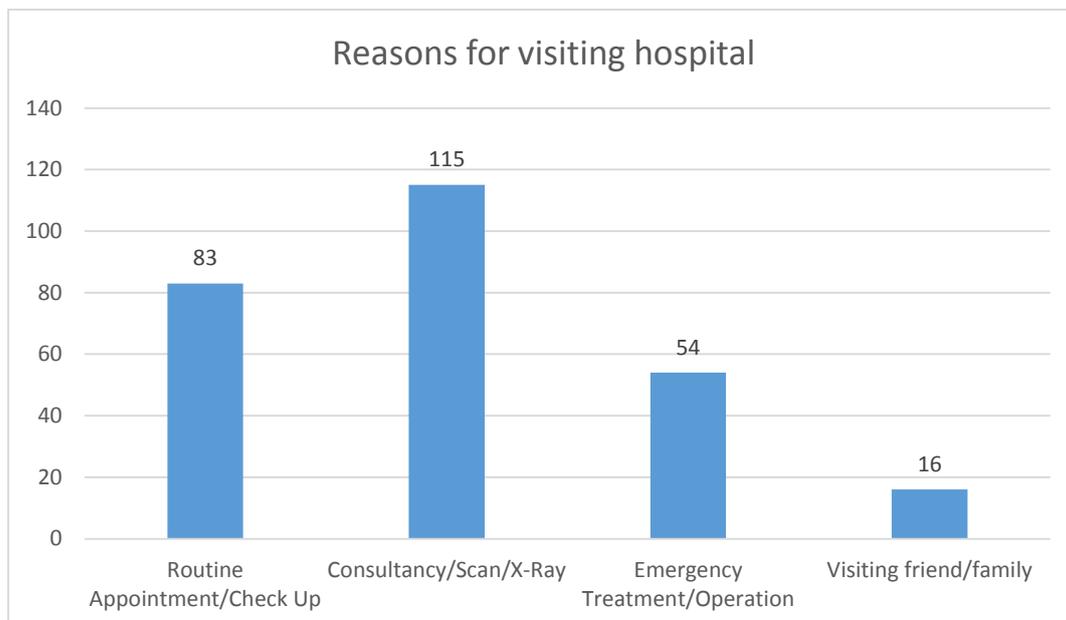
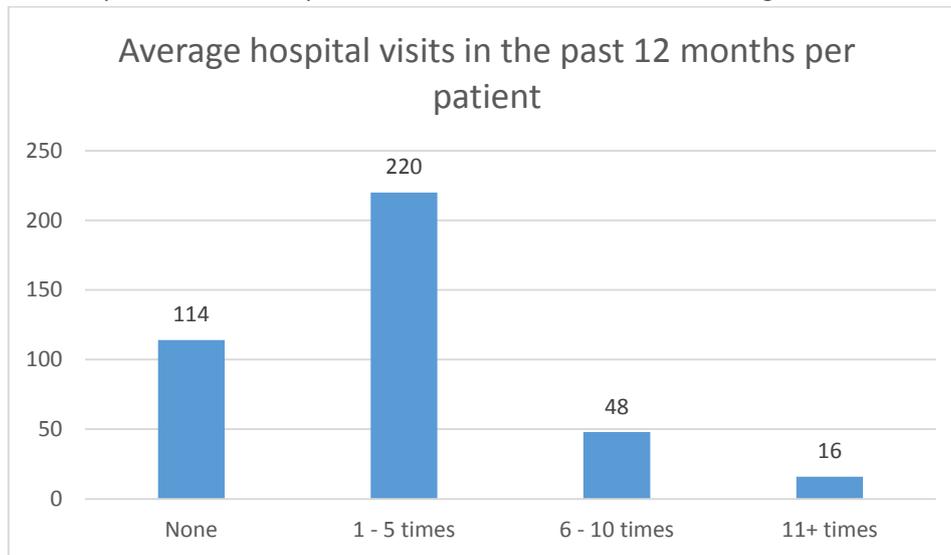
- Some patients expressed concern over long waiting times to pick up a prescription.
- Some patients have repeated experiences of their medication being unavailable/out of stock/delayed when visiting a pharmacy which can make some conditions more difficult to manage.
- In terms of quality, patient experience seems inconsistent across different pharmacies and can vary significantly (very good to very bad) in terms of medication deliveries; providing correct medication; general advice/triage; and general 'customer service'. Some patients said their experience lacked 'consistency'.
- Some patients recalled being referred back to their GP to authorize specific/alternative prescription (E.g a particular brand) and instead given only what is left in stock (even if know as harmful by the patient from past experience).

“Often pharmacies only stock half of the drugs on my prescription which means I often have to go back multiple times. This has resulted in me going without my diabetic medication for a few days at a time”



5.13 Planned Care

When asked which hospital participants usually visit for their planned care, 313 stated North Tees Hospital, 50 stated Hartlepool Hospital and 71 stated James Cook Hospital. Patients' average number of hospital visits in the past 12 months and reasons for visiting are below.



The following themes were most prominent when participants were asked about improving their experience of planned care services:

- Some patients commented on long waiting times to see a consultant or the length of time between a referral and initial appointment. Some patients have also stayed in the waiting room for roughly 1 hour after their arranged appointment time before being seen to.
- Some patients expressed sympathy and understanding of the capacity/funding pressures placed on hospital services and felt having more staff in place would improve their experience of hospital services.
- Some patients felt that staff could communicate or empathize with them more effectively to gain a better understanding of their condition/symptoms and how they're feeling.
- Some patients were given conflicting diagnoses from different doctors which led to inappropriate treatment/medication and prolonged or deteriorating health conditions.

- Some patients felt that different departments/services were not fully joined up or consistent which can make the 'patient journey' confusing, frustrating and take longer to treat conditions.

“Whenever I have attended the doctors or hospital I have received excellent service and treatment and the staff are always pleasant and helpful even though they're very busy all the time - I really appreciate having the National Health Service”.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1** The Health Services Survey carried out by the CHA programme has provided an honest insight into the experiences of Stockton-on-Tees and Hartlepool residents accessing local health services – clearly showing examples of excellent patient engagement and quality care services, however there are key areas where patients feel improvements can be made.
- 6.2** Throughout promoting the survey, it was clear that both CHA volunteers and participants are very keen to receive follow up feedback from both Catalyst and the CCG in response to the comments and information disclosed within this report via follow up public events/engagement.
- 6.3** In general, participants welcomed the opportunity to comment on our local Health Services in this way and would be keen to engage in similar engagement/consultation methods in the future.
- 6.4** The success of the Health Survey has encouraged Catalyst and the CHA volunteers to continue using surveys and similar engagement tools in the future to gain public opinions and feedback on health topics relevant to current commissioning intentions of the CCG.
- 6.5** The survey has also provided a platform to recruit further CHA volunteers via those who wished to find out more about the role (both verbally and as stated at the end of the survey).
- 6.6** Participants' comments in response to the survey covered the following key themes across all health service areas:
- Patients are very keen to access health services which are person centred; consistent in quality and continuity of service with an overall improvement in waiting times and correct/appropriate diagnosis of health conditions on first presentation to a health professional.
 - Increased public education in self-management of physical/ mental health and understanding of appropriate use of NHS health services will help to relieve unnecessary staff burden and improve patient experience.
 - Some patients are aware of the financial and workload pressures placed upon funded health services/staff and felt this affects their quality of services and overall interaction with patients due to low morale/capacity.
- 6.7** It is recommended that the details of this report be presented to the CCG Governing Body and Health & Wellbeing Boards for both Stockton-on-Tees and Hartlepool for comments and advice on next steps.

7. Next Steps

- 7.1** This report has been taken to the CCG's planning group for 2017's Commissioning Intentions and will continue to influence the way they plan, develop and commission local health services with more detailed plans/feedback on how the survey has been used to be confirmed and shared with the public in March 2017.
- 7.2** Significant themes and experiences detailed in this report will be shared with relevant service area teams to acknowledge and address issues where possible.
- 7.3** Catalyst and Hartlepool & Stockton-on-Tees CCG will identify other service areas which could benefit from further public feedback (E.g Mental Health) and progress with CHA volunteers.

Appendix 1 – Participant Registered GP Practices

(As described by participants – inconsistencies may occur where patients have used conflicting names for the same practice).

GP Practice	Number Registered
Eaglescliffe	9
Queens Park	47
Norton Medical Centre	50
Havelock Grange	9
Hartfields Medical Centre	7
Bank House/One Life	8
Chadwick Practice	10
McKenzie House	6
Abbey Health Centre	6
Marsh House	3
Thornaby & Barwick	45
Woodbridge	51
Yarm Medical Centre	11
Tennant Street Stockton	15
Woodlands Centre	17
Alma Riverside Practice	17
Lawson Street	11
Millenium Surgery	1
Surgery Lane	3
Victoria Road	3
Roseberry	8
Harbinson House	1
Park Lane	8
Fens	1
Gladstone House	1
Kingsway	5
Skerne Medical	2
Elmtree	8
Felix House Surgery	2
Aldsey Health Centre	1
Tithebarn Road	1
Other	53