

### Staff Update

We would like to welcome a new member of staff to the Team.

**Robert Green** has joined us recently and will replace Emma Ford in the role of Engagement Officer for the North. We also have three students from Keele University joining us for short placements in the next few months

We would also like to say a big Thank You and Good Luck to other members of the Healthwatch team that are moving on.

Christine has moved on to an external role. Emma and Jackie are both working as Locality Development Officers for Support Staffordshire, with Jackie still remaining with Healthwatch for one day a week.



### Dental Report

In October we published our new report explaining Staffordshire NHS Dental Services. This covers the local plan and the recent progress made by the Integrated Care Board.

Do you have an urgent dental problem or need help finding an NHS dentist?



Contact  
Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent  
**Dental Advice Line**  
**0300 123 0981**

It outlines how to find an NHS dentist; how registering with a dentist is different to registering with a GP; what to expect at a dental appointment; how to make an emergency appointment and current charges.

It also explains Community Dental Services, Oral Health Improvement Services and common issues Healthwatch hears about dental services.

The report is now available in four languages: [English](#), [Polish](#), [Punjabi](#) and [Urdu](#) with an Easy-Read version in the pipeline.

Dave Bassett has presented the report to the Staffordshire and Shropshire Dental Network and the Children and Young Person’s Health Communities Group where it was well received.

## Survey at Hazeldene House GP Surgery

Earlier in the year we worked with Holmcroft GP Surgery to get patient feedback on services at the practice.

We are now launching a similar piece of work with Hazeldene House GP Surgery in Great Haywood. If you are a patient at this surgery, we would love to hear your feedback on services to help the surgery identify any common issues.

[Take the Hazeldene survey here.](#)

**healthwatch**  
Staffordshire

Do you use  
Hazeldene House  
GP Surgery?

Please tell us  
about it

We are conducting a survey about

- Access to Appointments and
- Repeat Prescriptions

Please share your experiences!



## Engagement Fund Closure



Thank you to everyone who has now taken part in engaging with us, through our Engagement Fund, we really appreciate your feedback. As well as providing extra responses to our research surveys, we have had more feedback to our general survey.

We are pleased to say that in October we have more than doubled the general feedback received. The feedback gathered as part of the Engagement Fund events will be analysed separately to our usual feedback.

Following the excellent response, we are sorry to report that the Fund is now closed for the 2025 to 2026 financial year. We hope to run the initiative again in the future.

## Last Chance for Research Survey

Our two Deep Dive research surveys are now coming to an end. The Gynaecological survey closed on Sunday December 7<sup>th</sup> and the Mental Health survey will close on Sunday December 14<sup>th</sup>. So please make sure you respond by this date to get your experience included. You can continue to give us your general [feedback on health and social care here](#).

## Volunteers

We now have 16 active volunteers plus the 6 committee members. Activities in October included:

**Engagement:** Giri visited the Circle of Friends group and Clara attended the Tutbury Health Fair with Dave.

**Research:** Giri assisted on Health and Social Care research. Rebecca U. continued with research for the Gynaecological project and Cecilia O. began her research for the same project.

**Other:** Val, Giri and Helena helped by attending PLACE assessments at County Hospital and 2 MPFT services. Helena also attended a Hospital User Group meeting on our behalf.



# Engagement Events

## Tutbury Health and Wellbeing Event

The Tutbury Practice and its Patient Forum held a Health and Wellbeing Event which was attended by Dave and our volunteer Clara. They ran one of the 34 stalls at this health information event and signposted to CAB Mind and Andy's Man Clubs.



## Veterans' Wellbeing Event

Emma attended a Wellbeing event for Veterans at Biddulph Town Hall, where a range of organisations were offering advice and information on: Housing, Benefits, Health and wellbeing, Employment and training, and Community support services.



## Perton Townswomen's Guild

Jackie visited this group to speak about Healthwatch. She shared current work projects and promoted the surveys on Gynaecological Diagnosis and Mental Health.



## Wellies Project

As part of the Engagement Fund, Dave attended the [Wellies Project](#) men's group, to obtain feedback on how they kept well after discharge from mental health services. They had a group discussion and completed some surveys.



## Drawn Together Events

In October we held the first two of our Pen Drawing workshops with [Kate Dawes](#). These were led by Christine and Jackie at Trinity Church in Stafford and at Blythe Bridge Library. A total of eight women attended these relaxing workshops. We got some excellent feedback and insight for our gynaecological work with surveys also completed. One attendee also offered to promote the survey to her friends.



## Mounjaro for Weight Loss – Referrals

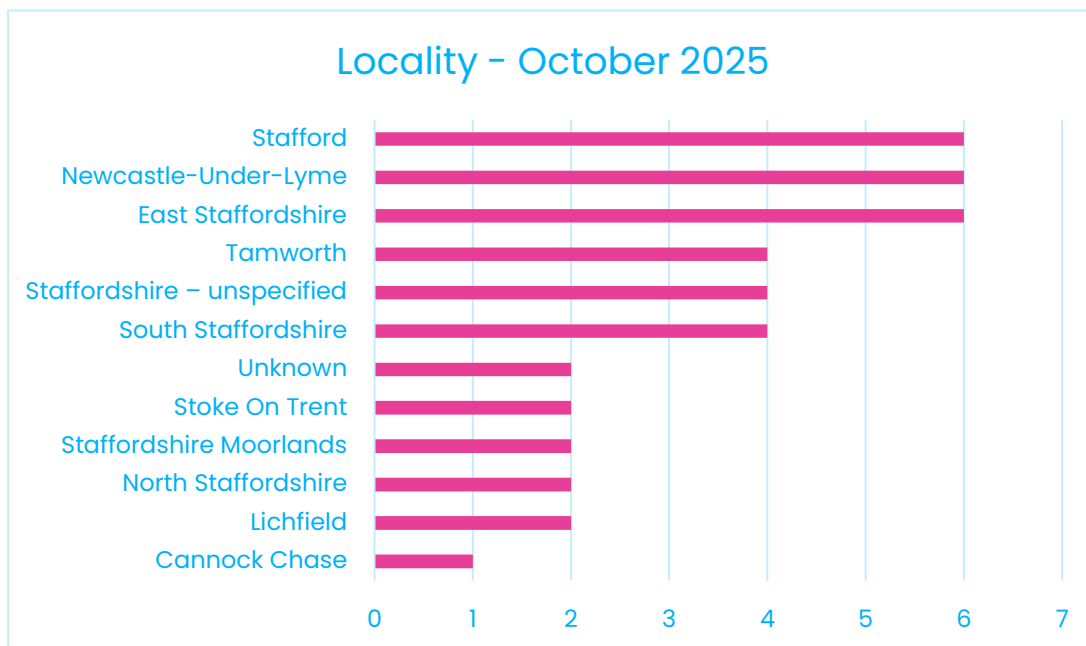
At a recent Communications meeting, we were advised that there has been some confusion about referrals for Mounjaro for Weight Loss. This affects both the public and medical professionals. The Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care System have since provided us with some clarification and there is [further information](#) available on their website.

In summary:

- Mounjaro is **not** available to patients via referral
- Primary Care Hubs are inviting patients in for assessment for eligibility
- Eligible patients will only be prescribed Mounjaro if they meet the NHS England-set criteria at the time of their assessment
- Criteria cannot be changed locally by ICBs or Primary Care Hubs commissioned to deliver the model
- Alternative weight management information is available on the ICS website at [Local Weight Management services – Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent, ICS](#)

## October Feedback

41 responses were collected from across the County as shown below.



Please note that the feedback does NOT cover Enter & View Visits nor responses to Surveys.

We had seven cases this month about post-natal care. Of these, six cases mentioned **inadequate support for breastfeeding**, either at hospital or at home after discharge. Two had been so desperate they paid for private lactation support. Two had babies with tongue-tie that affected their feeding, and this was not recognised until later or at all. Community midwives were praised twice, as well as a midwife on the ward. One person felt that the support offered was mainly through infant feeding groups, but as she couldn't drive after a C-Section, she couldn't access these. One person was referred to a breastfeeding support

worker, but the support didn't last long enough, and she had no way to get back in touch afterwards.

There were two issues with people not being given a choice of **care home near their family**, and another where a care home wished to move a resident to a different floor against her and her family's wishes. Someone else had trouble resolving a debt issue with a dentist as they had no Power of Attorney for a relative with dementia.

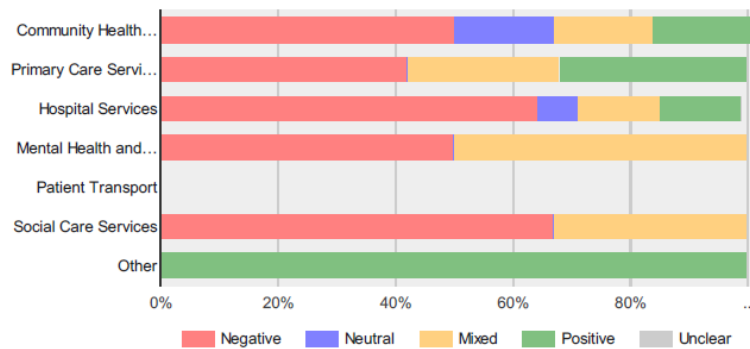
Two issues were reported around Diabetes, one related to the diabetes team not having enough prescribing nurses and the other was about food labelling and choices for diabetics in hospital, which they thought placed too much emphasis on the patient managing their condition.

There were two concerns raised about care for patients in acute mental health wards and follow-up after discharge. There were also the usual comments about accessing GP appointments, continuity of care at GPs and the lack of NHS dentists.

## Service Categories

Primary Care Services had most responses (18) followed by Hospital Services (17). The other responses were for Community Health Services (9), Social Care Services (7), Mental Health and Learning Difficulties (3) and Other (1). In **Primary Care** the responses were mainly about GP services (18) with a couple of comments on Dentists (2).

Satisfaction by Service Type

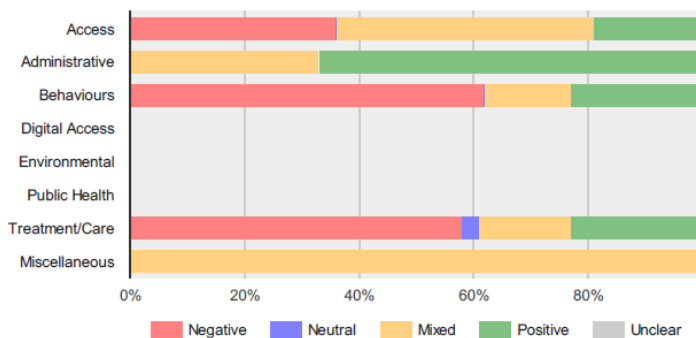


Under **Hospital Services** the responses mainly covered Maternity (4), Inpatient care (2) and Emergency Department including A&E (2).

## Themes

Various **Treatment and Care** themes were mentioned 83 times, and within this area, the topics mentioned most often were:

Satisfaction by Theme



Quality of treatment (18), Person centred care (13), Consent, choice, user involvement and being listened to (10), Follow-on treatment and continuity of care (8), patient/resident safety (8), Health inequality (5), waiting for appointments or treatment /waiting times (4), face to face appointments (4) and communication with patients treatment explanation/ verbal

advice (3).

Access to services was mentioned 14 times, staff attitudes and performance 14, administration 4 (mostly booking appointments, 2)

## Positive Feedback in October

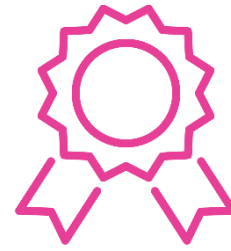
Several GPs received positive feedback including:

**Alton Primary Care** - Always prompt, friendly response, referrals done quickly where needed, easy to get help either online or by phone. Really care about their patients. Can't fault them.

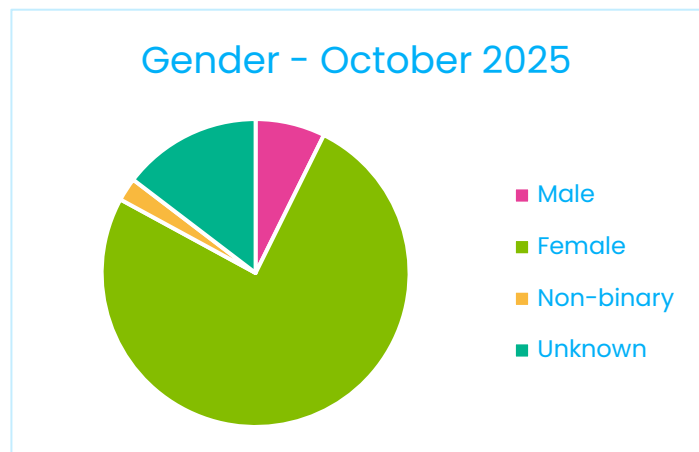
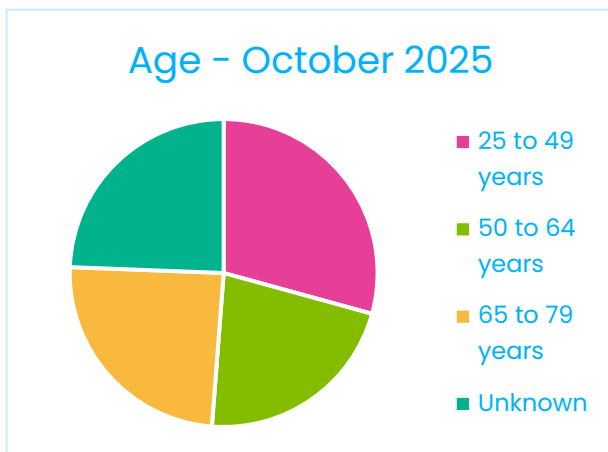
**Wolstanton Medical Centre** - Sent in an online consult form, received an appointment really quickly.

**Parkinson's Care** - complimented GP and Parkinson's Nurse at the **Horsefair Practice** as well as a local community group called **Movers and Shakers**, which is held at Rugeley Town Hall on a Friday at 9.30 am and has been a godsend. It has not only helped him with his coordination but has also improved his mobility and stopped falls. He also said he has made a good group of friends now and meets up with some outside of the group.

**Social Services at Royal Stoke Hospital** were also praised - "The carers are brilliant. They helped with the concern of meds that were in boxes that shouldn't have left the ward. They told me exactly what to do. Could do with coming to everyone at hospital to see if anyone needs help."



## Demographics



We reached 7 carers. We spoke with 2 members of the LGBTIA+ community. Under ethnicity, one respondent was Asian British, and one was mixed Black Caribbean and White. 2 people were currently breastfeeding, and one had given birth in the last 26 weeks. Six people had a sensory impairment.

There were 3 people with an unspecified long-term condition and 1 who considered they had an unspecified disability. Specified conditions included mental health (6) including psychosis and PTSD, autism (3) including ARFID (Avoidant/Restrictive Food Intake Disorder), dementia (3), Parkinson's (2), diabetes (2), babies with tongue-tie (2), diabetes (2), depression (2), anxiety (2).

Other conditions mentioned were: gender dysphoria, asthma, fibromyalgia, cardiovascular disease, obesity, contact dermatitis, tooth decay, Ramsey Hunt syndrome, ADHD, an enlarged uterus, gastric pain and a lung nodule.

## Healthwatch England News

At the end of October our Chief Executive [Louise Ansari stepped down](#) from her current role. Her Deputy Chris McCann will take over leading the organisation from 17 December 2025. During the month Healthwatch England also published the following articles:

- GP practices very rarely remove patients from their list. If you are removed from a GP practice, [you may need to register with a new one](#).
- According to Healthwatch England research, [most men would attend testing](#) if the government introduced a national screening programme for prostate cancer.
- [Continuing Healthcare](#) should provide those eligible with NHS-funded support outside hospital. But how easy is it to get? And how could it be simpler?
- New data shows written complaints in the NHS reached a new high in 2025. Read this [response from Healthwatch England](#) about why it's time to reform the NHS complaints system.
- With someone diagnosed with cancer every 90 seconds, we look at [why more patients need to speak up about their care](#).



## Social Media Catch-up

### Highlights you may have missed:

Advice from the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care Board to [Keep your baby safe](#) including Infant CPR.

Two short animations co-developed and co-produced with people from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities, in partnership with the UK Health Security Agency and Roma Support Group.

- [childhood and maternal vaccinations](#)
- two Irish Traveller women [share their experiences](#) of accessing essential healthcare while on the road



[Applying for information](#) about the Patient and Carer Race Equality Framework (PCREF) Lived Experience Advisory Group LEAG.

**NHS 111 and Mental Health** – It's hard to know who to talk to if you need urgent mental health support. You can now call 111 and select the mental health option to get help 24/7 from a mental health professional in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

## **Awareness campaigns from October with useful links:**

**Stoptober** – a month long [NHS Campaign](#) to encourage people to stop smoking.

[The International Menopause Society](#) ran **World Menopause Day**.

[Heart UK](#) ran **National Cholesterol Month**.

[Winter Health](#) – information from the County Council on keeping warm, protecting yourself against seasonal illnesses, and other helpful tips.

**Dyslexia Awareness Week** from the [British Dyslexia Association](#).

**World Mental Health Day** was supported by Mind – [Download free resources, share the message](#), and help Mind support more people:

On **World Arthritis Day**, Arthritis Action provided [advice on self-management](#).

# **Get in touch**

## **Healthwatch Staffordshire**

**Support Staffordshire, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford ST16 3AQ**

**0800 051 8371**

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