

Insight



April - June 2022

Healthwatch Sandwell is your independent consumer champion for health and social care services in Sandwell. Our job is to champion the consumer interests of those using the services and give local people an opportunity to speak out about their concerns. We listen to views, concerns, and compliments about services to help shape and improve them so that people are accessing the most quality and appropriate care.

April - June at a Glance

We engaged
with 736
people

We had 1378
web site
visits and
4475 web
page views

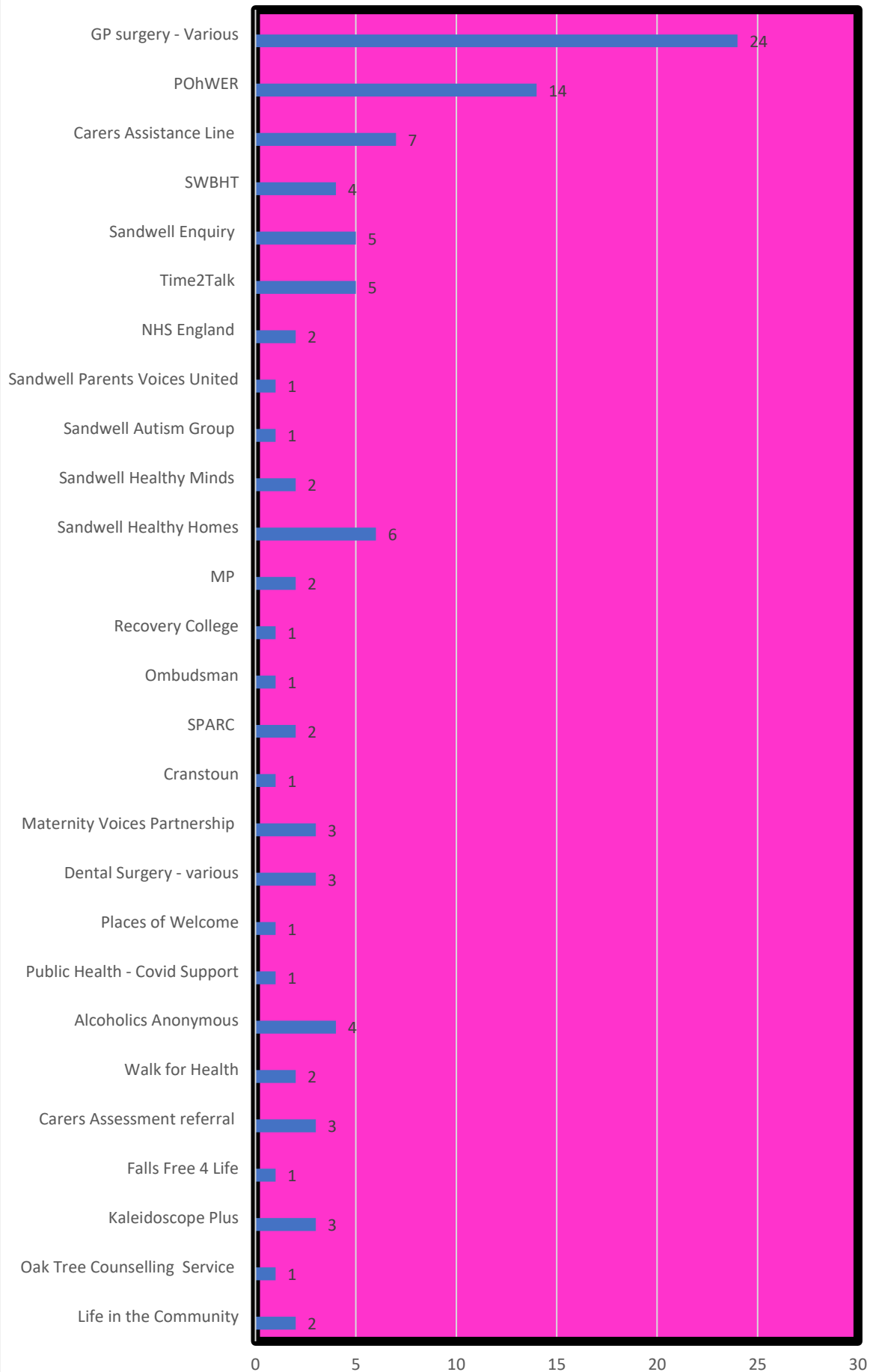
We attended 34
Community Outreach
Events

We have 22 live cases
where we are still
offering support

We had 7
drop in
events

We signposted 102 people to support services

Signposting



Snapshot of what people have told us about

Concern about a care home

A person contacted us as they were unhappy with the care of a relative with a learning disability in a residential care home. The relative lacks the capacity to make decisions concerning his place of residence and his care. The person believes that the care is a deprivation of his liberty as defined in the Supreme Court's judgment in the 'Cheshire West case' (P v Cheshire West & Chester Council [2014] UKSC 19

GP access

A Patient spoke to us as they were having difficulty contacting GP to arrange a consultation. All appointments taken by 8.15 am. Surgery advised patient to attend in person to obtain an appointment, but surgery is not close to home. We were able to send some information about national standards regarding ease of access to GP services

The right to activity

A resident in a care home contacted HWS to find out if residents had a right to activities to encourage social and intellectual development. HWS raised the at Provider Escalation Group and member of staff from the Local Authority Quality Team agreed to visit and assess the situation.

Access to medical information

A carer contacted HWS as they couldn't not gain medical information from the GP practice about a family member. This information was essential for a house move with the local Authority on medical grounds.

We heard from a person who had been waiting for x ray results to be sent to GP. After 8 weeks of waiting thy contacted the GP surgery who said that the x rays had not arrived. They were advised that that they would receive a letter from the GP to book an appointment to discuss x-ray results and any necessary next steps. After another 4 weeks they had received no letter so called the surgery to check. They were told that the x-ray had been seen by GP and sent on to Orthopedics for an appointment. The person was frustrated by this as was not what they had been originally told and were unsure that they wanted any further intervention, depending on the x-ray results

- A person contacted us about concerns regarding their diabetes review - this was long overdue and the person had not received any communication from the GP about this. The person had tried on many occasions to book an appointment and was unable to get through to talk to anyone about the situation.

Support for people with Sickle Cell and Thalassaemia

There is not a consistent offer of care and support services for people with Sickle Cell or Thalassaemia across the Black Country. The conditions and support needs are lifelong, including post hospital treatment discharge. Most people are not connected to adult social care services. Voluntary Community Organisations across the Black Country provide a varying range of support. HWS will be reflecting issues raised in a report and continue to offer guidance patients and supporting organisations.

Post Pregnancy support

There is insufficient information and resources to support women with autism during or post pregnancy. Early links with midwives are vital. HWS have identified and shared some more information resources available and are exploring the issue further.

HWS attended a parenting skills course event at Ileys Community Association and heard from some of the Somalian community. HWS heard that there are language barriers for some of the older community affecting access to health services and that attendance at mainstream English language classes can be low due to the format, timing, and other pressing priorities such as heating bills. Also that some women engage less early and less generally with NHS ante-natal services.

Communication Passports

HWS have heard about hospital treatment experiences of patients with learning disabilities. Links with Learning Disability Liaison Nurses and recognition and use of hospital communication passports is not always occurring. HWS will be reflecting the issues and making recommendations in a future report.

Black Country Children's Mental Health report 2022

Throughout the pandemic, Mental Health in young people has exacerbated due to minimal socialising with the lock down, not attending education and having to support relatives. It was agreed that Black Country Healthwatch would carry out a collaborative project. One of the areas that all four Healthwatch were hearing was around the transition from children's mental health into adult mental health

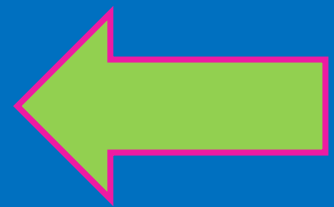


The Black Country Healthwatch partnership welcomes that the region is embarking on a journey of considerable and exciting change for local mental health services. We recognise that plans are already underway to join up service provision across the region, enabling communities previously served by different Trusts, to receive equitable mental health access.

The following recommendations have been drawn from recent experiences captured through this study and we hope that as services develop, the views we have collected will help to influence how services look and feel for children and young adults moving forward.

- Consider more continuity with the staff that children/young people see
- Consider providing a care-coordinator that covers both health and social care.
Monitor the support that children / young people receive when they are placed outside of the Black Country.
- Improve communication and awareness around CAMHS and how it can be accessed
When children / young people are discharged from hospital ensure that follow up calls take place
- Consider the age of the transition from children to adult services as this varies across the Black Country, needs to be more consistent.
- Consider more training in adult services around the conditions that children are diagnosed with
- Consider how health passports used in children's services could follow through into adult services
- Work with partners including education, charities and community organisations and voluntary sector to better understand how physical and mental health services can complement each other to result in more joined up service provision
Build opportunities into new systems to continually listen to children, young people, and families, to learn from their experiences and to co-produce services in ways that are meaningful for them including age-appropriate activities

Case Study

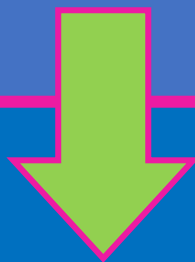


Individual experience of CAMHs

An Individual who is 19 has had episodes of “psychotic, depression and self-harm” and their experience of CAMHs was expressed as “bad”. The individual expressed that they were closed to CAMHs specialist services before they were ready which means their mental health continues to date. The individual expressed that they were left feeling that they could not go back to the services after being discharged at the age of 14. Whilst receiving support from CAMHs they expressed that they were willing to get better and get help, but this never happened, they put a plaster on it. The individual expressed that “people told me.....medical people that I am a moody teenager and was asked if I doing this (self-harming) for attention”. The individual expressed that having poor mental health support in the past they have no confidence using the services now. “If I had a magic wand I would want to be listened, respected and being helped”

Experience from a parent

A parent expressed that their child has Autism, OCD and Depression and has been placed on the crisis team at risk register during lockdown due to the family preventing them from taking their own life, they are now not allowed to be left at home. The parent expressed that when seeking support, it was a “constant fight”, “everything is short term not getting to the route cause”, “someone who has autism takes up to 6 weeks to get used to individuals”. “Crisis team support is dependent on who answers the phone”, “support for carers isn’t really there, its benefits etc but not practical support to give parents a break or even support for our own mental health”. “If I had a magic wand I would like “long term consistent support” and “recognition that someone with autism can also have mental health needs and mental health support meets the autistic needs”



<https://www.healthwatchesandwell.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Black-Country-Childrens-Mental-Health-report-2022-Final-2.pdf>

Work Programme 2022/23 Summary

HWS priority projects for 2022/23

This information will be used to help inform and influence change in health and social care delivery in Sandwell and as part of the wider Black Country health and care system.

- The patient experience of accessing primary care services
- Accessibility for patients - meeting information and communication needs
- Exploring the impact of language barriers in health and care services

Addressing inequalities in health and care services

Healthwatch Sandwell engaged and consulted key stakeholders to set the 2022/23 priority projects.

Feedback helping set the priorities included:

- Sandwell residents - access to G.P. appointments, concerns for elderly, autistic, and learning-disabled people.
- Sandwell Local Authority Commissioners - Health inequalities - impact on families with children/dependants with disabilities, digitally excluded, very elderly people.
- Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust - improving patient care and population health outcomes through the Trust's "Fundamentals of Care" programme. Ensuring service delivery will be what patients want/need - that patients feel **listened to, well informed, and involved in decisions about their care**. Patients' engagement, involvement in Sandwell Place Based Partnership



healthwatch Sandwell

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Visit our Feedback review page:

<https://www.healthwatchsandwell.co.uk/services/>

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