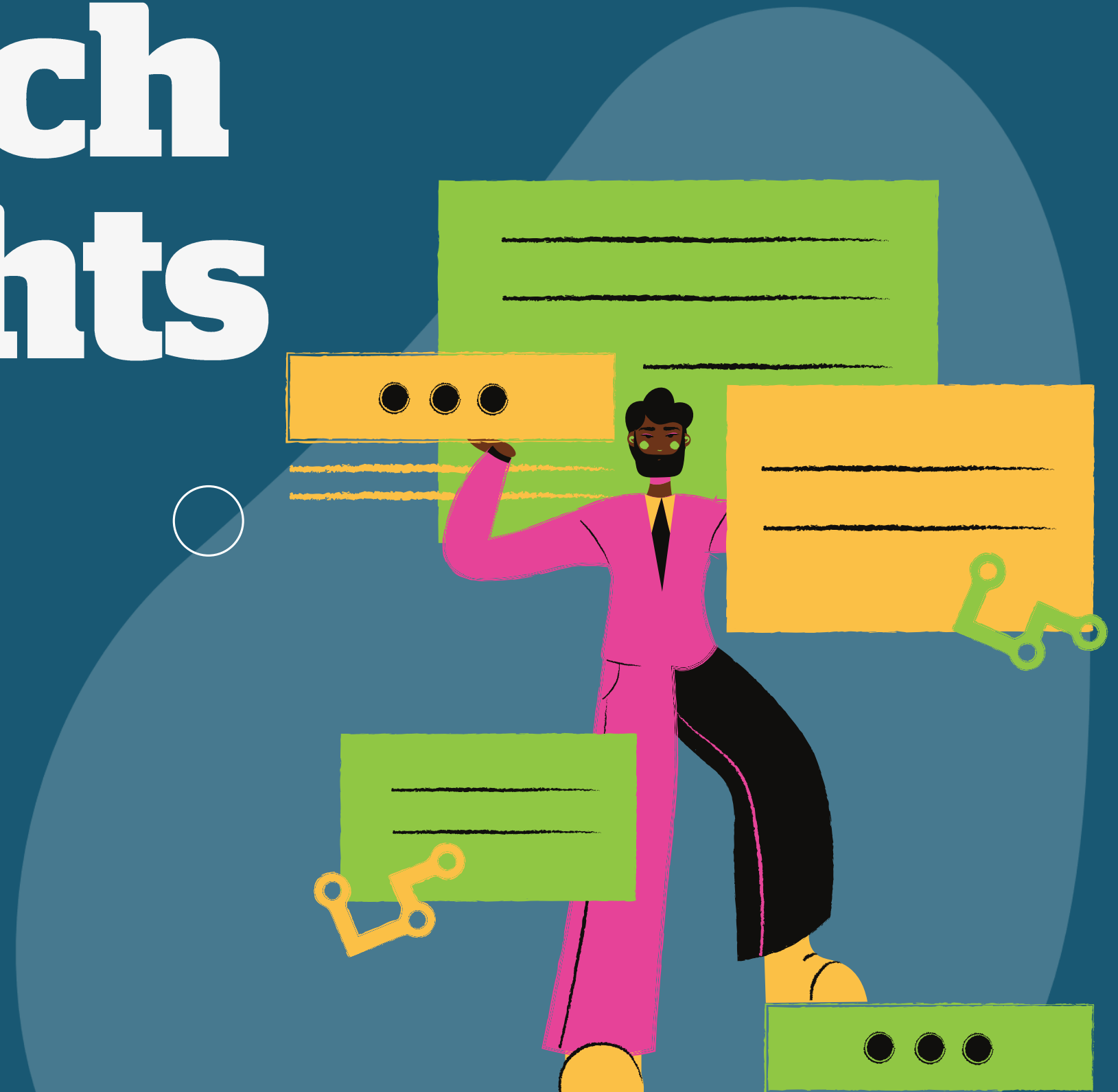


Healthwatch Kent Insights

April 2022



**Every day we are hearing feedback from people in
Kent about their experience of health and social
care services.**

**This report summarises the feedback we've heard
in
April 2022.**

**If you would like more details, we can supply that.
Just drop us a line**

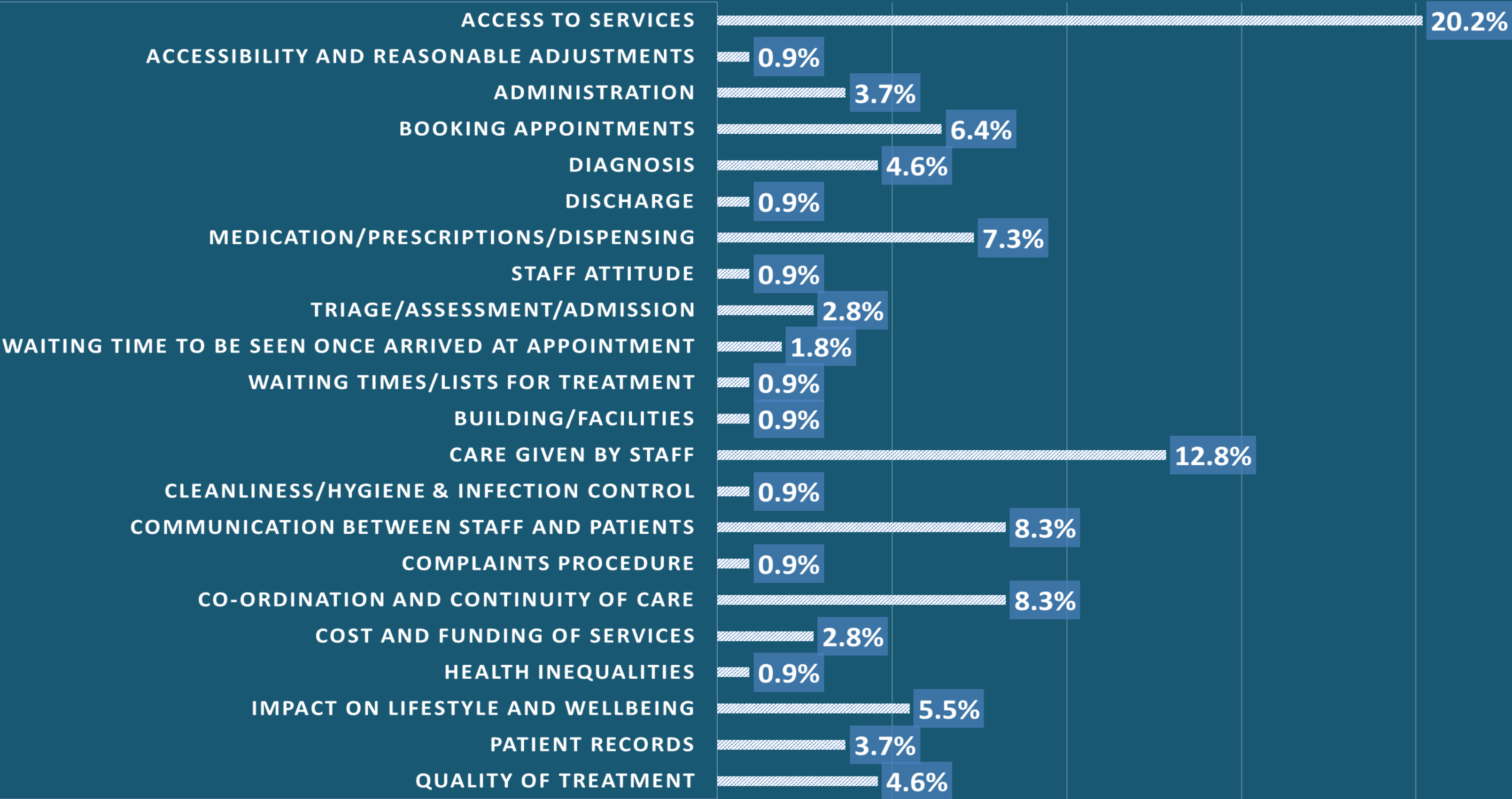
feedback@healthwatchkent.co.uk



What have we heard about this month?

2022
APR

HEALTHWATCH KENT CATEGORIES



What have we heard?

Access to Services – 20.2% of the feedback

Dentists

- 48% of the feedback in this category this month was about dental services.
- As seen in other months, the majority of calls are from people who are unable to register with an NHS dentist.

GPs

- The second majority in this category was, again GPs, which made up 33%.
- We heard from a handful of people reporting frustration at the telephone queuing system and the length of time spent waiting to get through.

Mental Health

- We also heard feedback about mental health services with people contacting us about their adult children and being unable to access the support that they need.

What have we heard?

Care given by staff – 12.8% of the feedback

- 25% of the feedback in this category was **positive**
- One person told us they had received screening results back quickly and wanted to give praise to the breast screening service. Another person praised the triage nurse in A&E who was 'very friendly and reassuring'.

Most of the feedback within this category was about **GP services**.

- People told us their care was having a negative impact on their wellbeing and overall quality of life. A handful of people told us that they were unsure whether their GP had requested scans, and this was worrying them.

A number of people told us that **doctors and consultants** were speaking to them in a negative way.

- One person told us their doctors were 'condescending'.



What have we heard?

Communication between staff and patients – 8.3% of the feedback

- Half the feedback in this category was about **GP services**. The majority from people who had not been given information after test results, or been given incorrect information.
- One person found out that they'd been diagnosed with a health condition a while ago but had not been formally been told by any medical professional, nor have they had any treatment or check ups.

Co-ordination and continuity of care – 8.3% of the feedback

Feedback about **GP services** made up the majority of this category.

- 45% of the feedback was from people telling us about how their notes held incorrect information, or important information, for example test results, had been omitted from the files.
- 20% of the feedback was about community **mental health services** and inpatient mental health. We heard about the lack of care and support provided to families and hidden carers.

What's new this month? An Overview

Although 5% of the feedback this month was positive, 80% was negative.

As in previous months, a large proportion of the feedback was from people unable to register with a **dentist**, or people having difficulty in accessing their **GP**.

We heard from several people about at **home carers** and the lack of continuity. A number of people have reported that they feel let down or 'failed by social services' because of the care packaged they have been given.

Again, **eConsult** has been a recurring theme. All of the feedback about eConsult was negative, with people reporting it is only open for an hour each day and this was not long enough. People also told us it took a long time to hear back from their GP after completing an eConsult form. Some people never heard back from the GP at all.

5% of the feedback this month was negative comments about **PALS** services and the amount of time it takes to hear back from them. Over the past few months, we have continually been hearing from people about PALS and people often tell us that it has taken months to hear back after the initial query is submitted.

18% of the feedback this month was from people with **mental health** difficulties talking about the problems they were facing in their care, or difficulties in accessing care in the first place. When slicing this 18% we can see that 36% of people had had issues with inpatient psychiatric care, 18% with the Crisis Team, 27% with GPs and being unable to access their medications or physical health care, people told us about the negative impact this was having on their mental health. The rest of the feedback were about community mental health services.

What have we done with the feedback?



We share the detailed feedback directly with the relevant organisations so that it can inform and influence their own plans.

We will always escalate any safeguarding or urgent cases for immediate action.

**This month we have escalated 5 cases.
3 of them have been responded to.**

Needing the NHS while out at sea: what prevents fishermen from using the NHS?

We spoke to fishermen in Ramsgate. They told us how the demands of their job make it hard to use healthcare services.

- **Commercial fishing poses physical and mental risks including kidney problems, cancer, injuries and suicide**
“Three men we know have killed themselves – three fishermen. There are so many rules about what we can and can’t catch and how much. It’s hard to make a living and pay the bills. I think it got too much for them.”
- **Fishermen delay making health appointments because they are concerned about losing money while onshore**
“I need both my knees replacing, I can tell. They are so painful but I can’t be off my boat for long. I wouldn’t earn any money. I have a family to support.”
- **Fishermen struggle to be able to call GPs on the day to secure an appointment**
“GPs want you to call at 8.30 in the morning on the day you want an appointment. I just can’t call at that time. By the time I’m back onshore, all the appointments have been taken.”
- **“Drop in” health events based within the harbour were popular with the fishermen and their families**
“I’ve been fishing for 40 years and this is the first health event that I’ve ever seen. Something like this, more often, would be great. It encourages all of us to take responsibility for our health together.”

To read our report in full, please visit our [website](#).

What has the Mental Health User Voice Network heard?

138 people shared their experience of mental health services in April



27% of the feedback was about Community Mental Health Teams (CMHTs), 19% GP practices and 14% Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

The main themes were:

CMHT

- **Positive themes:** weekly calls while waiting for support, listening, explaining, delivering on promises
- **Negative Themes:** “a waste of time”, “made me feel worthless”, bounce between services or inappropriate referrals, lack of continuity, discharged after one phone conversation, lack of support after diagnosis

GP Practices

- **Positive Themes:** listening, a person-centered service
- **Negative Themes:** availability of appointments, bounce between services or inappropriate referrals, accessing surgeries for information or repeat prescriptions

Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service

- Waiting times for a second appointment or 'the hidden waiting list', lack of communication while waiting for years, Autism and discharge for not engaging, the impact on families waiting for support, reaching adulthood while waiting

You can find more information about the Kent Mental Health User Voice network [here](#)

What have we done with the feedback?

Here are just a few examples of how we've been able to help people this month.

- A Carer contacted us because she was unable to access funding because she had been living abroad. She returned to Kent to care for her Mum. We helped her to understand what she was entitled to. We also shared her story with Healthwatch England so that carers in other areas could benefit from the information.
- Several people shared their stories about being discharged from QEQM hospital in Margate. process at QEQM, through another organisation. We shared the stories directly with the discharge team at QEQM. They have used the feedback to discuss what can be improved.
- Kent County Council got in touch to let us know that Ukrainian refugees across Kent were struggling to register with GPs. We translated documents explaining the GP registration process into Ukrainian. Ukrainian refugees are now better informed about how to register with a GP and know what their rights are.

You can read more about what we did with your feedback in April [here](#)

We hear feedback via a range of routes including:



calls, texts and emails to our Information & Signposting service



social media and our online feedback form



we proactively reach out to voluntary groups to hear about issues facing their clients

This month we've reached 1,465 people

“Thank you for taking the time to listen to me.”

“Thank you for calling and giving me suggestions.”

Want more details?

Let us know. We can review our data for specific topics and organisations, just let us know what you want.

Email:

feedback@healthwatchkent.co.uk

