

Your feedback and what we're doing



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What was the “We’re All Ears” project?

In September 2008 NHS Hull began one of the largest listening exercises ever carried out with the residents of Hull.

We wanted to find out what people wanted from their local health services and how they felt NHS Hull could help them improve their health and well-being.

We started off by speaking to 1500 people in Hull through a telephone survey, which asked about their health, their understanding of NHS Hull, whether they thought NHS Hull was listening to them and what they would like NHS Hull to provide if they had endless money. We then went on to hold a number of events to find out more information about what the people wanted for health and healthcare services now and in the future.

During this process we spoke to many different groups of people including young people, blind people, deaf people, Eastern European migrant workers, gypsies and travellers, people who work with people with mental health problems, black and minority ethnic groups and people from the voluntary and community sector.

This special We’re All Ears: The Result report tells you just some of what we found out during the six month long listening exercise and some of the actions being taken to act on what you told us.

What did it tell us?

Feedback suggested that people welcomed the opportunity to be heard by the NHS. We gained a lot of valuable information, including

- The majority of people described their health as very good, good or fair.
- 32% of people have a long-term illness, health problem or disability that limits their everyday activities; a few of the examples given were arthritis, diabetes, asthma and high blood pressure.
- Over 70% of people agreed or strongly agreed that they felt that the local NHS was improving services for people like them.
- Over 80% of people agreed or strongly agreed that the local NHS works well with GPs and hospitals to provide a good service for them and their family.
- Two thirds of people think that NHS Hull listens to the local community a great deal, or a fair amount.

People were also asked what they feel they can do to improve their own health. Responses included:

- Having a healthy, balanced diet
- Reducing stress levels, for example from work or from living in a busy city
- Doing more exercise
- Quitting smoking

Your priorities

Feedback also told us that some of the most important priorities for Hull residents were:

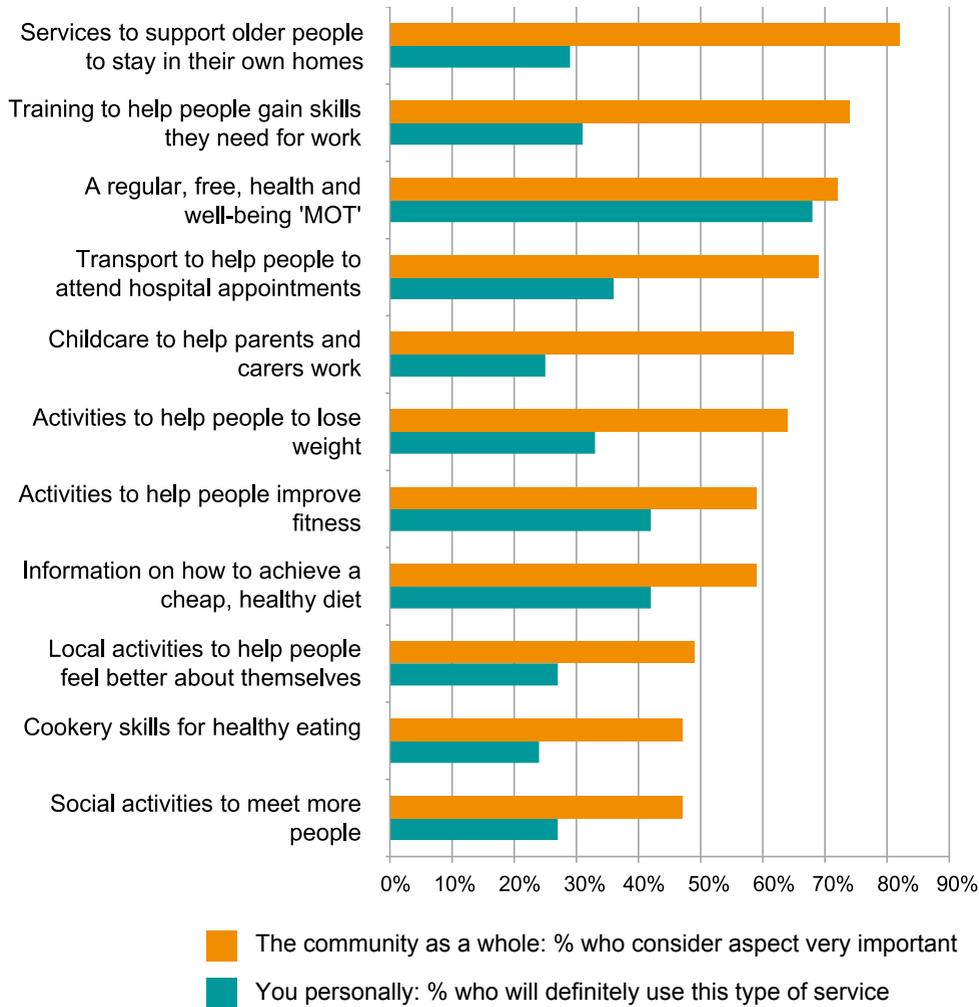
- access to an NHS dentist
- more GP appointments at more convenient times
- clean hospitals
- free health “MOTs”
- better information and communication about services generally
- planning and supporting the elderly
- better education for people of all ages about keeping healthy and fit, both physically and mentally.
- better and more suitable facilities/buildings
- more support in areas which have an impact on peoples’ health, such as better housing, transport and childcare and access to training.
- improved staff attitudes

The huge amount of information gathered covered areas where action was already in hand – such as increased access to GPs and dentists. It also covered areas currently in progress, such as improved facilities and health education and promotion, and pointed to areas where more needs to be done in the future. We then decided to look at several specific topics where we wanted to know a little more detail.

So we went back out to survey 10,000 Hull residents – one in ten households about their aspirations. This was done by meeting people in shopping centres, in community centres, schools and colleges, on doorsteps, by telephone, though local voluntary and community organisations, and online.

Aspirations for health

People were asked about their aspirations for health, by asking them to say how important eleven different statements were for the community as a whole, and which of these they personally would use. These were put into order of importance.



The top three priorities for the community as a whole were:

- Services to support older people to stay in their own homes,
- Training to help people gain skills they need for work
- A regular, free health and well-being 'MOT'

Services to support older people to stay in their own homes

A very high proportion (82% of residents) indicated that providing services to support older people to stay in their own homes was very important. The proportion with this view is high across all 18+ age groups, with a gradual increase as age increases.

We have done a huge amount of work to support people stay living in their homes, working with local voluntary organisations. We have set up new community rehabilitation services so that people are discharged from hospital earlier but have the support they need to stay living at home. We have also piloted the use of telehealth monitoring for people following a hospital admission with heart failure. This means that their vital signs can be actively monitored while they are living at home and a community specialist nurse can identify any problems and arrange treatment before a hospital admission becomes necessary.

We are now working to develop our stroke service. We are planning to set up a dedicated Stroke Early Supported Discharge team so that people can transfer back home sooner following a hospital admission with stroke, as well as long term community rehabilitation services so people recovering from a stroke have the support they need to stay living at home. We are also planning to expand the number of people with a choice to use telemonitoring systems in their home.

NHS Hull realises that many people would not be able to stay in their own homes without the hard work and dedication of the people caring for them. Carers need support too, and NHS Hull is now offering FREE Caring with Confidence sessions to carers aged 18 and over. If you are providing support to a friend or relative, Caring with Confidence offers practical help and advice to help you build on your skills and knowledge and can help you to make a positive difference to your life and that of the person you care for. Contact The Carers Centre on (01482) 225078.



Training to help people gain skills they need for work

Almost three-quarters (74%) of residents said training to help people gain skills they need to work was very important. With the exception of people under 18, there was a consistently high proportion of residents in all age groups who thought that training was very important.

Whilst you may not have thought that an NHS organisation would be able to help people in this way, you would be surprised at what we are doing to support people wanting to get into employment. We know unemployment has a negative impact on people's health, and we are determined to help make a difference.

For young people we have increased capacity in work experience opportunities in the NHS. We have also created a Health Award. The award is aimed at young people but can also be used by school leavers who want evidence of working on health and social care projects while learning simultaneously about the NHS its roles and functions. And to help encourage people of all ages to appreciate the huge variety of jobs available within the NHS we have set up a system for our staff to give classes on subjects such as becoming a nurse or medical secretary.

Other ways we are helping include:

- a mentoring programme to give young people guidance, support and advice on how to achieve their aims of working in the NHS. We hope to extend this to adults in the future.
- Apprenticeships in health and social care in addition to business administration, finance and more traditional trade related occupations.
- A job shop set up jointly between the NHS in Hull and Hull City Council, based in the ground floor of the BBC building in Queens Gardens, to give information, advice and guidance on NHS careers.
- Drop in career surgery sessions
- Employability schemes offering training followed by a job interview.

We will be sharing our findings with partner organisations so they are aware of the importance the people of Hull place on training and skills.

A regular, free health and well-being 'MOT'

72% of people said that providing a regular, free health and well-being MOT to the community as a whole is very important and 68% of residents said they would definitely use a regular, free health and well-being MOT in the next five years.

Did you know that GPs, as well as 30 pharmacies across Hull, currently offer free 'Healthy Heart' checks to Hull residents aged between 40 and 64 as long as they are not already being treated for cardiovascular disease. The checks are designed to act as a quick health 'MOT' to determine a person's risk of developing heart disease, having a stroke or developing other heart problems. We are also taking these checks into the community so look out for the Healthy Heart stands in your local shopping centre.

From April next year this will be called the NHS Health Check and the upper age limit will be raised to 74.

The test takes into consideration lifestyle factors such as smoking, diet, and levels of physical activity, as well as blood pressure, cholesterol level and body mass index (BMI).

Each person receives a free booklet which contains their own individual results, along with tips on how to improve their heart health and potentially increase their life expectancy.

NHS Hull is currently looking into other option, such as using special state of the art health kiosks, allowing individuals to measure their weight, body mass index, body fat content, blood pressure and heart rate.



Your family doctor

You told us it's difficult getting an appointment with a GP within 48 hours

Our response:

All GP practices in Hull have been working to improve their appointment systems. Patients should be able to book an appointment with a GP within 48 hours, or for more than two days in advance. It is up to each individual practice how they achieve this.

Over half the GP practices in the city are now offering appointments outside of normal working hours (8am-6.30pm), such as earlier in the morning, in the evening or on a Saturday morning.

NHS Hull is working to increase the number of practices providing an additional choice of appointment times. Check if your practice is opening longer by visiting: www.nhs.uk or speak to your practice direct.

Extra GP practices

To help improve access to GP services, NHS Hull, over the next 6 months, will create 30,000 extra places for residents, with the opening of five additional GP practices across the city. All of these new practices will offer extended opening hours and access to a female GP if required.

What to do if you are not happy

If you are not happy with any service you receive from your GP practice you should speak to your Practice Manager or to our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on (01482) 335409. We will always try to resolve concerns if people bring them to our attention.

If you are still not happy, you may want to think about moving to another practice. It is easy to change practices. You can find information on how to find a new practice and what you need to do from www.nhs.uk or from PALS.

You told us you would like to see the same doctor every time

This is not always practical or possible. Patients are registered with the practice rather than an individual GP and it is not possible to guarantee access to a named GP, although most practices will do their best to accommodate a request where this is important to the patient. If seeing the same doctor every

time is important to you then you should talk to someone at the practice about this. If you are considering moving to a new practice ask if you will normally be able to see the same GP.

For many illnesses it is not normally necessary to see a specific health professional as all GPs and nurses involved in any patient's care can have access to the relevant information needed to treat them

You told us you had problems with telephone access

Our response:

NHS Hull has been working with practices with low patient satisfaction with telephone access, to help them make improvements. This work includes looking at the number of appointments available and staff training to help them respond to patients in the most appropriate way.

In addition, new telephone systems and use of the internet to book or cancel appointments are being introduced and these will help to relieve pressure on the telephones first thing in the morning.

You told us that you were not happy with the attitude of some reception staff

It is the job of the receptionist to try to gather enough information from patients to enable them to direct patients to the most appropriate person to respond to their needs.

Many reception staff in practices in Hull have undertaken customer care skills training over the last two years and further training will be available this year.

Getting the right treatment

NHS Hull will be working to increase the public's awareness of the range of treatment options. This will help patients and carers choose the most appropriate person to see. This may not always be a GP, but could be a practice nurse or other health professional, thus freeing up GP time to deal with those patients who do need to be seen by a GP.

For many minor ailments, have you thought about asking your local pharmacist? Pharmacies are open throughout the day, information and advice are confidential, and no appointment is necessary.

In addition, a GP-led health centre will be opening in the city centre later this year. This will be open 8am-8pm, 365 days a year and you won't even have to make an appointment if you don't want to – you can just walk in, even if you're not registered with the practice.

You said....
We listened.

Prescriptions

You told us it was unfair that people who need ongoing medication have to pay for their prescriptions

For example, people with diabetes do not pay prescription charges, yet people with asthma do pay, unless exempt for other reasons, such as age.

Our response:

This is something which NHS Hull cannot influence, as decisions on exemptions are taken by the Department of Health and cover the whole of England. However, if you have to pay for more than four prescription items in three months or 14 items in 12 months, you may find it cheaper to buy a pre-payment certificate (PPC).

The charge for a single prescription item is £7.20, whereas a 3-month PPC will cost you £28.25 and a 12-month PPC £104.00. The most convenient way to pay for your 12 month PPC is by Direct Debit, meaning you can spread the yearly cost evenly over 10 monthly instalments.

You can buy a PPC on line, by post or by phone.

Call 0845 850 0030 to buy one over the phone using your credit or debit card or visit: www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk and follow the link from the home page.

You said....
We listened.

Sight or hearing difficulties?

You told us the NHS needs to find a better way of ensuring that the NHS can identify people who are visually impaired or have hearing difficulties

Our response:

This may be help such as sign language, interpretation, and assistance in crowded waiting rooms. NHS Hull understands that it can do a lot better to make sure it knows which patients have special communication or other needs because of their disability. NHS Hull is asking all local providers of health services how they will respond to the needs of blind and partially sighted and hearing impaired users and record special requirements on their patient records.

Your local hospital Trust is now running a pilot scheme in their Ophthalmology Department. Larger size print is being used on appointment letters for the general eye and visually impaired clinics. Patients have responded positively and the Trust is now looking at “flagging” patients who need larger size print on their patient administration system.

Finding an NHS Dentist

You said you couldn't find an NHS Dentist

Our response:

Contrary to local people's perceptions, NHS dentistry in the city of Hull is alive and well and getting better all the time.

Around 21,200 NHS dental places have been created in 2008/09, with up to 20,000 additional places being created over the next couple of years.

A brand new practice, ADP Longhill, opened in Longhill Health Care Centre in July with 6,600 places for NHS patients. A second new practice, Bransholme's Northpoint Shopping Centre, opened in August, with places for approximately 8,500 patients, whilst Oasis Healthcare, in Kingston Shopping Park, Holderness Road, has increased capacity to provide an additional 6,100 places for NHS patients.

There are always several practices in Hull accepting new patients. We are also looking to recruit further new dentists, which could provide up to 20,000 additional places for NHS patients in 2010/11.

People wishing to access an NHS dentist can find out which practices are currently accepting new patients by contacting NHS Hull's Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on (01482) 335409.



You said....
We listened.



You said....
We listened.

Looking after your mental wellbeing

You told us it is important that we make it easier for people with mental health problems to access help

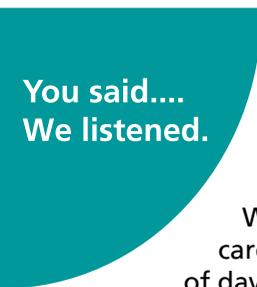
Our response:

From October 2009 people will have one single number to call for all emotional/mental health enquiries. This will put them through to a specialist assessment service and one-stop shop, without needing to go to their GP. People should wait no more than 7 days for an assessment. This will reduce the time spent on multiple assessments and speed up access to the right support and treatment

You told us we need to reduce stigma associated with mental health problems

Our response:

We are working on a two year programme to tackle stigma in the workplace called the Mindful Employer. Linked to this we have produced a pack to help businesses to better support their staff. We have produced a film about stigma in the workplace featuring Alastair Campbell, who has experienced mental health problems himself, which will shortly be available on local business websites. In addition, we are raising awareness of the need for positive attitudes in the workplace through our mental health first aid training programme, with an aim of training 600 people by the end of next March.



You said....
We listened.

Parking

You told us parking was a major concern

Our response:

We accept that parking is a great problem for patients and carers, due to cost and problems in finding a space at certain times of day.

We do not believe the public would be happy for money to be diverted from patient care to cover the costs of running the car parks, so charges have to be made. But the hospital trust is doing what it can to help. They have made around 400 new parking spaces available at Castle Hill this year, as part

of the development of the new oncology department.

At Castle Hill Hospital, the trust has increased access to the site for buses. The 154 runs from the transport interchange to Castle Hill and now enters the site, with five drop-offs, offering three services an hour during weekdays. The number 64 bus also runs hourly, with bus stops on Castle Road.

Visitors with patients who visit hospital regularly can obtain monthly passes at a cost of £12.

NHS employers in Hull are encouraging staff to use cycles or public transport rather than take cars to work to relieve pressure on parking as well as to reduce their carbon footprint and get fitter.

Did you know that some patients, for example those who receive benefits, such as Income Support, are entitled to help with the cost of travel under the Government's Healthcare Travel Costs Scheme.

Obesity

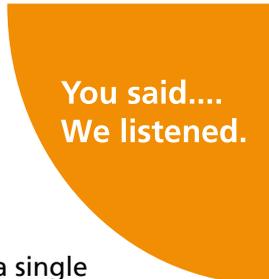
You told us one of the biggest issues you need help with is weight loss.

What is happening:

Adults who live within the city of Hull boundary can now use a single point of access to obtain advice on what options are available locally to help them lose weight or get fitter. As part of this free and confidential service, they will be invited to join an existing weight management service within the city that suits their needs, most of which are free. They could instead have a more detailed one-to-one consultation with a trained advisor to discuss aims and goals in more detail before joining one of the available weight loss/fitness programmes.

A new free weight management service specifically targeted at men aged 40 plus (though not exclusively) called Fit Fans is also now available. This is based on increasing levels of physical activity and getting fitter but also includes elements of good nutrition.

If you want to take advantage of this new NHS Hull weight management services single point of access or the Fit Fans programme then just call: (01482) 224545 or call into the Fit Fans shop located at 66, King Edward Street (opposite the old Woolworths shop) in the city centre to have a chat about managing your weight.



You said....
We listened.

Clean hospitals

You told us you were worried about hospital cleanliness and the risk of acquiring infection while staying in hospital

Our response:

Already, your local hospitals trust has achieved a great deal. It takes hospital cleanliness and the prevention and control of infections very seriously.

It has

- Increased the cleaning hours and frequencies on the wards
- Introduced new cleaning initiatives
- Increased the members of the deep cleaning team and input hours
- Introduced a rapid response team and night service
- Developed questionnaires to keep checking what patients think

This means

- Reduced levels of MRSA and C difficile
- Faster response times
- A higher profile for cleaning and public perception of cleanliness

What the trust will continue to do

- Commit to raising standards even further
- Listen to patients, staff and public

Don't forget - there's one simple way everyone can help. Hand washing with soap and water is the most effective way to prevent the spread of infections both in hospital and at home.

Help the NHS. Wash your hands... and give soap a chance.



What happens next?

The huge amount of information we got from the We're All Ears project will be used to influence the decisions made by NHS Hull over the next five years.

We are still working through all the comments we received from local people and are drawing up a detailed action plan setting out what we are doing to act on what the people of Hull have told us. We will be sharing the findings with local partner organisations such as the local hospital Trust, Hull City Council and the voluntary and community sector to see how we can work together to respond to your comments.

Of course, we can't do everything people want us to do – like everyone, we have a budget to keep to. And we can't do everything now – we have to plan properly and we have to decide what our priorities are. But the key themes you have told us are important to you are ones which are important to us as well and if there are reasons why we can't respond to some of your requests we will tell you.

Once developed, our action plan will be revised on a regular basis. Some of the actions will include:

- Improving accessibility
- Improving the physical presence of NHS Hull and communicating those improvements
- Improving communications and marketing to ensure people know what services are available and how to access them
- Engaging with and empowering harder-to-reach groups
- Encouraging people to manage their illnesses
- Recognising the needs of different groups in the City
- Helping people to maintain good health and wellbeing
- Considering ways of improving the service given by doctors
- Utilising membership of NHS Hull in developing services
- Using the benefits of technology
- Monitoring the impact of the listening exercise on an on-going basis

Finding out more...

See our We're All Ears report, action plan and other information by logging on to our special We're All Ears website at www.nhshullears.net, call the Patient and Public Involvement team on: (01482) 344739 or email: ppi@hullpct.nhs.uk

For information on local health care services visit the NHS Choices website on www.nhs.uk

What
happens
next

*And don't forget.....
..we're still listening.*

Have your say at any time through:

PALS – the Patient Advice and Liaison Service – on (01482) 335409 9 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday.

Patient Opinion is a free, confidential and independent website where you can see what other patients are saying about your local health services. Share your story and you'll be helping others choose the service that's right for them. Stories like yours are already helping to improve the NHS. Visit www.patientopinion.org.uk website. Or if you would like to speak to someone you can contact them on: 0845 113 0012 (local call rate) during working hours.

The Patient and Public Involvement team on: (01482) 344739 or email: ppi@hullpct.nhs.uk

You can also pick up an **NHS comment card**. Cards are available in a number of public places, including libraries, Customer Care Centres, pharmacies and health centres. You can also comment online at www.hullpct.nhs.uk

Membership of NHS Hull

As part of the campaign, Hull residents aged over 14 were encouraged to join NHS Hull and become members. Members have the opportunity to influence local health services and are invited to events held by NHS Hull and to take part in surveys and consultations. Membership is free and each individual member decides how much he/she wishes to be involved. They can also take advantage of discounts available in a number of shops, restaurants and gyms.

For more information about membership, please call: (01482) 344739, visit: www.hullpct.nhs.uk or email your name and address to: membership@hullpct.nhs.uk

In the region of 3,500 people signed up to become members of NHS Hull as a result of completing the survey and are now helping us to ensure that we continue to listen to local people when developing health care services in Hull.