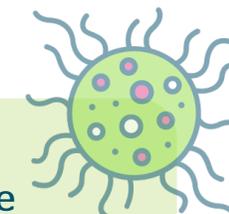


## We are Healthwatch Central West London (HWCWL),

an independent organisation for people who use health and social care services. We have been speaking to NHS service users in **Westminster** about how COVID-19 has affected them and their families.



### Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on Westminster

Since March 2020, we have been asking our local communities in Westminster and Kensington and Chelsea about how they have been affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, and the measures responding to them.

The COVID-19: Your Experience Matters survey was developed to capture the broadest range of experiences, from general wellbeing to the direct impact, and many other changes to your experiences of health and social care. This survey will be an ongoing project for us, with the results shared regularly, to reflect the changing face of the pandemic and its response in Westminster.



### Understanding the impact of COVID-19 on BAME communities

14 people completing the survey (14%) identified their ethnicity as BAME. This document is a short summary of the key themes and issues that have been raised by this group so far, and precedes a more detailed summary and analysis, which will be shared over the coming weeks.

As a charity that works in two of the most diverse boroughs in the country, we take seriously the importance of representing the full spectrum of views from our communities. We remain committed to engaging directly with local BAME and migrant groups, in addition to gathering their experiences through this survey, so that their voices are central to discussions about improving local health and social care.

## Health and Services

Around 80% of those who consider themselves to be vulnerable have not registered with the Council for support.

**21% of people from BAME backgrounds have used food banks**, compared with just 3% of White or White British respondents.



The pharmacy and GP were the most utilised services. Half of people's appointments were cancelled by services. Levels of support for care needs were severely reduced.



**50%**

Over half of the people who needed treatment delayed it.

## Information

**Just a quarter (28%) of respondents found it easy to understand the available information** about the COVID-19 outbreak. This compares with 78% of White respondents.

## Mental wellbeing and relationships



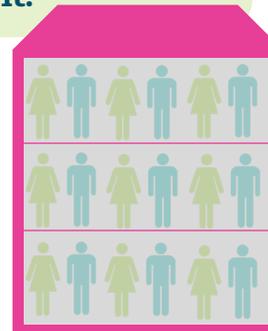
Half of people reported impact on their emotional and mental wellbeing.

Parents with vulnerable children found it especially difficult to cope.

Those with hobbies or strong social networks were notably more resilient.

## Wider determinants

Unsanitary and 'cramped' living conditions increased risk and discomfort for participants in this survey.



## When compared to their White British counterparts, BAME respondents in Westminster were :



More likely to be on the shielding list, and to be overlooked or missed.



36% received a shielding letter, compared to 26% of White or White British respondents. 29% of those who were anticipating one did not receive it, in contrast to 5% of people from White or White British backgrounds.



Twice as likely to use the GP and more likely to use the pharmacy.



More likely to experience cancelled appointments or service change and to delay seeking treatment.

50% of people's appointments were cancelled by the service, more than twice the proportion of those from White or White British backgrounds (21%).

57% of people have delayed seeking treatment, compared to 19% of White or White British respondents. Reasons given include fears about the risk of infection at hospital.



Two respondents said that cancelled dental appointments were causing distress.



More likely to experience mental health difficulties.

The proportion of BAME respondents (50%) who said their mental wellbeing had been impacted "a lot" or "a great deal" was almost twice that of the White or White British responses (21%).

BAME respondents were **also more likely to have used mental health services since lockdown began**: 29% compared to 13% of White respondents.



Less able to 'easily' understand information.



Less able to remain indoors, and to socially distance when out.

43% of people described their ability to maintain social distancing when making 'essential trips' outside as 'easy' or 'very easy'.

35% consider it 'difficult' or 'very difficult', compared with 13% of White or White British respondents.

# Healthwatch Central West London (HWCWL)

**Healthwatch was established under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services.**

We deliver the statutory Healthwatch provision for Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster, and we previously delivered this work for Hammersmith & Fulham. Our research and local engagement puts local people's views at the centre of decision making about health and social care.

## We make this happen by:



Helping to improve the quality of local health by sharing what people need from their care with those who commission, run, and make decisions about NHS and social care services.



Listening to what people like about services and what could be improved.



Monitoring how changes in the healthcare system affect local people.

## Contact us

If you would like to contact HWCWL about this report, or about our other research and local engagement in Westminster, you can get in touch with us here:

**Write:**

5.22 Grand Union Studios,  
332 Ladbroke Grove,  
W10 5AD

**Phone:**

020 89687049

**Email:**

[info@healthwatchcentralwestlondon.org](mailto:info@healthwatchcentralwestlondon.org)

You can add your voice to this ongoing survey here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/YourExpMatters>

You can request a paper version of the survey via any of the contact details above.