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# Delays to hospital care and treatment Template survey questions

August 2021

# About this resource

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted almost every aspect of society, including people’s experience of health and social care services.

Recent figures have shown that the current wait for hospital care and treatment is one of the longest in history, and in April 2021, the NHS reported that 5,122,017 people were waiting for treatment in England.

To find out more, we are running a national survey, focusing on what kinds of treatment people are experiencing delays to, the impact on people’s lives and how the NHS is communicating to these patients. We will also be looking at whether providers meet the NHS/Healthwatch produced guidelines on ‘Good communications with patients waiting for care.’

We’ve focussed these template questions on experience of access and communications around elective care for two reasons:

* Due to the pandemic, there have been record-breaking delays to hospital care and treatment. We must know what kinds of treatment people are experiencing delays to and the impact on people’s everyday lives.
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This survey is for anyone who has experienced delays to their treatment during the pandemic, including now.

# How to use this survey

You can find the questions we recommend asking on the next page. We have also marked in **pink** where you should use your chosen survey software’s ‘logic’ functionality to enable people to skip any non-relevant questions. Analysing the data may be difficult without the use of skip logic.

The following systems have this logic function: Healthwatch website template, SurveyMonkey, SmartSurvey and Google Forms.

Recording demographics for this survey is important. By recording demographics, you can draw out any trends by analysing the findings against particular tends. If your online survey tool collects people’s IP addresses, you will need a strong affirmative statement noting this in line with GDPR regulation.

# Survey questions

## Are you waiting for NHS treatment or care? Share your story with us

Are you one of the five million people waiting for hospital treatment or care because of COVID-19? We want to know your experience waiting for the care you need, and what advice, information, or support the NHS has given you while you wait.

We want to know:

* Whether you have experienced delays to your hospital treatment
* Whether you have been given a choice about your treatment
* What you think about the communication you have received during delays to your treatment.

Please tell us about your most recent experience. Or, if you have been waiting for multiple treatments, or received one and you're waiting for another to take place, you can complete the survey more than once.

Everything you tell us is confidential and will help the NHS understand how it can better support people like you waiting for treatment. So, whether your experience is good or bad – we want to hear it.

## Your experiences of delays

Q1. Please select the following statement that applies to you:

I am currently waiting to have hospital care/treatment [Skip to Q2]

I have had hospital care/treatment in the last 18 months [Skip to Q3]

I have not had or needed planned hospital care/treatment in the last 18 months [Exit survey]

Q2. If you are currently waiting for hospital care/treatment, how long have you been waiting?

0-2 months  
3-4 months  
5-6 months  
7-12 months  
Over a year  
Over two years  
Don’t know  
  
[Skip to Q4]

Q3. If you have received hospital care/treatment in the last 18 months, how long did you have to wait for treatment?

0-2 months  
3-4 months  
5-6 months  
7-12 months  
Over a year  
Over two years  
Don’t know

Q4. What type of treatment are you waiting to receive?   
  
Operation (for example, surgery, biopsy or other procedure)  
Consultation (for example, an outpatients appointment without an intervention or procedure)  
Ongoing treatment (for example a pre-planned review of a long-term condition)  
Rehabilitation  
Don’t know  
Other [please specify]

Q5. What condition/problem did you need treatment for?   
  
[free text box]

Q6. Was your treatment cancelled at any point?

No [Skip to Q9]

Don’t know [Skip to Q9]

Yes, once

Yes, more than once [please specify – free text box]

Q7. How much notice were you given before the most recent time your treatment was either delayed or cancelation?

On the day of my treatment

The week before my treatment [Skip to Q9]

The month before my treatment [Skip to Q9]

Two to three months before my treatment [Skip to Q9]

Over three months before my treatment [Skip to Q9]

Don’t know [Skip to Q9]

Q8. If your treatment was cancelled at the last minute (on or after the day of admission) were you given a new date, at the same or a different hospital, within 28 days of the original date?   
  
Yes   
No    
Don’t know

Q9. "I have the right to have treatment at another hospital of my choice if my local hospital cannot treat me within 26 weeks." Is this statement:

True

False

Don't know

## Your experiences of communications during the delays

Q10. Were you kept informed by the NHS while you were waiting for treatment, including treatment details, timelines and any delays?    
   
I was given too much information whilst I was waiting for my treatment   
I was given a good amount of information whilst I was waiting for my treatment   
I was given an adequate amount of information whilst I was waiting for my treatment   
I was not given enough information whilst I was waiting for my treatment   
I was given no information whilst I was waiting for my treatment   
Don’t know

Q11. To what extent do you agree with the statement “The communications I received from the NHS about my treatment were clear, accessible and easy to understand.”

Strongly agree

Somewhat agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Somewhat disagree

Strongly disagree

Don’t know  
  
Q12. Have you received support from the NHS whilst waiting for treatment?   
  
Yes  
No [Skip to Q14]  
Don’t know [Skip to Q14]  
  
Q13. What support have you received which you found helpful during your waiting time?   
  
[Select multiple]  
  
Information about my condition

Information about my treatment  
Information about delays  
Support with pain relief

Mental health support

Access to physiotherapy  
Access to groups who provide social and emotional support  
Additional help from social care services with day to day tasks

Support to help me get ready for surgery

Don’t know

I didn’t find any of the support offered helpful

Other [please specify]

Q14. If your treatment was subject to delay were you given supporting information on how to manage your condition whilst waiting for care?

I was given adequate supporting information to manage my condition including a clear point of contact in case my condition deteriorated  
I was given adequate supporting information to manage my condition but no clear point of contact in case my condition deteriorated  
I was given some information, but it wasn't sufficient to manage my condition in the meantime  
I wasn't given any information to manage my condition in the meantime  
My treatment was not subject to delay

## The impacts on your quality of life

Q15. Have you considered paying for private treatment, in order to receive treatment sooner?

Yes, I have paid for private treatment

Yes, I can afford private treatment and am considering using it

No, I cannot afford private treatment

No, I am ok with waiting to be treated on the NHS

Don’t know

Q16. Would you be willing to travel to receive treatment at another hospital to reduce your waiting time?   
  
[select multiple]  
  
Yes, I would be happy to receive treatment at any hospital in England  
Yes, I would be happy to receive treatment at any local hospital  
Yes, if the NHS gave me help to travel   
Yes, if the NHS helped me and my friends/family with other support, such as accommodation  
Yes, if I got help to look after the person/children I am caring for

Yes, if my family were able to visit me  
No   
Don’t know

Q17. To what extent do you agree a delay to your treatment has impacted the following aspects of your life?

[Strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither disagree nor agree, somewhat agree, strongly agree, don’t know/prefer not to say]

Ability to work

Ability to carry out daily household tasks

Ability to care for someone else or children

Increased the level of pain experienced  
My mental health and wellbeing

Q18. If there is anything else you’d like to tell us about your experience of waiting for hospital treatment, please use this box:    
   
[free text box]

## Tell us a bit more about you

By telling us more information about yourself, you can help us better understand how people's experiences may differ depending on their personal characteristics. However, if you do not wish to answer these questions you do not have to.  
  
We will share the data with our local Healthwatch network, but we will remove any data that will identify you beforehand

Q19. Please tell us which age category you fall into:

* 13 – 17 years
* 18 – 24 years
* 25 – 34 years
* 35 – 44 years
* 45 – 54 years
* 55 – 64 years
* 65 – 74 years
* 75+ years
* I’d prefer not to say

Q20. Please tell us which gender you identify with:

* Woman
* Man
* Intersex
* Non-binary
* Other
* I’d prefer not to say

Q21. Is your gender different to the sex that was assigned to you at birth?

* Yes
* No
* I’d prefer not to say

Q22. Which of the following best describes your current financial status?

* I have more than enough for basic necessities, and a large amount of disposable income, that I can save or spend on extras or leisure.
* I have more than enough for basic necessities, and a small amount of disposable income, that I can save or spend on extras or leisure.
* I have just enough for basic necessities and little else.
* I don’t have enough for basic necessities and sometimes run out of money.
* Don’t know/prefer not to say.

Q23. Please select your ethnic background:

* Arab
* Asian / Asian British: Bangladeshi
* Asian / Asian British: Chinese
* Asian / Asian British: Indian
* Asian / Asian British: Pakistani
* Asian / Asian British: Any other Asian / Asian British background
* Black / Black British: African
* Black / Black British: Caribbean
* Black / Black British: Any other Black / Black British background
* Gypsy, Roma or Traveller
* Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: Asian and White
* Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: Black African and White
* Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: Black Caribbean and White
* Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background
* White: British / English / Northern Irish / Scottish / Welsh
* White: Irish
* White: Any other White background
* Another ethnic background
* I’d prefer not to say

Q24. Please tell us which sexual orientation you identify with:

* Asexual
* Bisexual
* Gay
* Heterosexual / Straight
* Lesbian
* Pansexual
* Other
* I’d prefer not to say

Q25. Do you consider yourself to be a carer, have a disability or a long-term health condition? (Please select all that apply):

* Yes, I consider myself to be a carer
* Yes, I consider myself to have a disability
* Yes, I consider myself to have a long-term condition
* None of the above
* I’d prefer not to say