



Digital Access to Healthcare Report

January 2022

Easy Read Summary



About Healthwatch Worcestershire

We find out what people think about Health and Social Care Services.



We use the information to tell the people that run the services what they could do better.



What is Digital Access to Healthcare?

Digital means using the internet and technology like computers, phones and tablets.



The NHS Long Term Plan says that health services will use the internet and technology more over the next 10 years.



Because of Covid-19 changes were made very quickly.



More appointments have been by phone or video call.



People have had to use the internet more to find information, book appointments and order medication.



Our Survey

We asked people about using the internet and having appointments on the phone and video call.



712 people completed our survey.



Lots of people filled out paper copies of the survey.

We went to lots of local community groups so we could talk to people face to face.



We wanted to speak to people who may find it more difficult to use the internet and technology.

Including older people, people who are homeless and people with a disability.



Our Way, SpeakEasy N.O.W. and Aspie helped us to speak to 83 people with a learning disability and Autism.



What people told us



Some people thought that using the internet and technology was a good thing.

They thought it was convenient and saved time.



For example -

Not having to go to the Doctors and wait in the waiting room



Being able to order medication and online



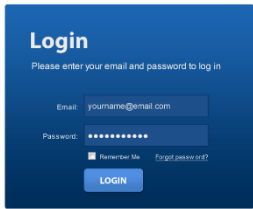
However other people have found it difficult to use the internet and have appointments by phone and video call.



Not everyone has access to the internet



Some people find it difficult to know how to use digital devices like computers, tablets and smart phones.



The computer systems that Doctors use are not always easy to set up and use.



Information on the internet can be difficult to find and understand.



Lots of people said they find it difficult to talk about health issues by phone or video call.



Explaining what is wrong and understanding information can be hard.



Some people were worried about doctors knowing what is wrong if they cannot see you.



Some people did not have somewhere private to talk on the phone or video call.



Others were worried about their personal information being safe when they use the internet.

Using the internet and having appointments by phone or video call was especially difficult for –



Older People



People with a learning disability or Autism



People with a visual impairment



Communicate

People with a hearing impairment



People with long term health conditions



People with mental health difficulties



Those who are homeless or on a low income



Those who English is not their first language



What needs to happen

We have made a list of things we think that doctors and other health services can do.

This includes –



Helping people to use the internet and technology



Making sure computer systems and websites are easy to use



Making sure people can see a doctor or nurse face to face if they need to



Understanding what people can find difficult and what they can do to help



The things we think health and social care services should do specifically for **people with a learning disability and Autism** are –



Make sure staff understand about learning disability and Autism



Make sure they know if patients have a learning disability or Autism



Make sure Annual Health Checks are face-to-face and good quality



What happens next?

We have sent the Report to health and social care services in Worcestershire.



They will tell us what they are going to do about each of the things we have said need to happen.



We will put their response with our report on our website www.healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk