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# South Glamorgan Community Health Council

## Transport To Health Services

September 2022



# **Accessible formats**

This report is also available in Welsh.

If you would like this publication in an alternative format and/or language, please contact us.

You can download it from our website or ask for a copy by contacting our office.

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# About the Community Health Councils (CHCs)

CHCs are the independent watchdog of the National Health Service (NHS) within Wales. CHCs encourage and support people to have a voice in the design and delivery of NHS services.

CHCs work with the NHS, inspection and regulatory bodies. CHCs provide an important link between those who plan and deliver NHS services, those who inspect and regulate it and those who use it.

CHCs hear from the public in many different ways. Before the coronavirus pandemic, CHCs regularly visited NHS services to hear from people while they were receiving care and treatment. CHCs also heard from people at local community events, and through community representatives and groups.

Since the coronavirus pandemic, CHCs have focused on engaging with people in different ways.

This includes surveys, apps, videoconferencing and social media to hear from people directly about their views and experiences of NHS services as well as through community groups.

There are 7 CHCs in Wales. Each one represents the “patient and public” voice in a different part of Wales.

# Executive Summary

The CHC recognises the difficulties some patients face with regards to transport to health services.

The Older Persons Commissioner for Wales published a survey in 2019 on the subject of transport to health services. If you would like to read the Older Persons Commissioners for Wales Report, you can do so via this link:

[https://olderpeople.wales/library/Accessing\\_Health\\_Services\\_in\\_Wales\\_-\\_Transport\\_Issues\\_and\\_Barriers.pdf](https://olderpeople.wales/library/Accessing_Health_Services_in_Wales_-_Transport_Issues_and_Barriers.pdf)

The Older Persons Commissioner for Wales kindly granted the CHC permission to reproduce this survey in order to gain feedback and insight from a local perspective regarding to access to health services in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, on their experiences with transport, as this is often raised as an issue.

The CHC received a number of surveys which asked respondents to provide feedback on transport to Primary services and Secondary / Tertiary services. In addition we received a number of comments through social media and direct contact with the CHC.

The survey questions were focused surrounding these areas;

*Primary health: Those health services which provide the first point of care within or close to your community, including general practice, pharmacy, dentistry, and opticians.*

*Secondary / tertiary health: Those health services which provide care in hospitals (including community hospitals) and treat particular types of illness, such as cancer.*

Overall, there were mixed responses from the public around transport to health services with some experiencing no difficulties at all, while others have missed or been late to health service appointments due to transport issues.

When asked about transport to health services, respondents provided feedback on the following areas:

## **Types of Transport Used**

The majority of respondents informed us that they use their own car, or someone else's car to travel to both Primary and Secondary / Tertiary health services.

## **Frequency of Travel to Health Services**

The majority of respondents visit Primary services every 2-3 months and visit Secondary / Tertiary services less than once a year.

## **Travel Time to Health Services**

The majority of respondents spend on average 15 minutes or less travelling to Primary services and 20 – 30 minutes travelling to Secondary / Tertiary services.

## **Assistance When Travelling**

The majority of respondents reported not requiring any assistance when travelling to Primary or Secondary / Tertiary health services, but for those who do the majority of respondents would receive help from a family member.

## **Transport Difficulties**

The majority of respondents reported experiencing no difficulties when travelling to Primary services, but for those who do, they listed it being too far to walk, and not having access to a car as the main issues.

A high percentage of respondents reported difficulties when travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services, the main reasons given for this shows it is too far too walk, and there is inadequate parking available at the location they are travelling to.

## **The Impact of Transport**

The majority of respondents reported that transport issues rarely or never prevents them from accessing Primary health services, and therefore has not caused them to be late to or miss a Primary service appointment.

Respondents also reported that transport issues rarely or never prevents them from accessing Secondary / Tertiary health services, although a high percentage report that they have missed or been late to a Secondary / Tertiary health service appointment due to transport issues. With approximately 1/3 of respondents reporting that transport issues have affected their ability to visit someone in Hospital.

## **Transport Information**

The majority of respondents informed us that they would contact the transport provider or the health service in order to access transport information, and the majority of respondents would do this online.

# Introduction & Background

The South Glamorgan Community Health Council strives to hear from patients and the public across all demographics, communities, and groups within Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

As well as requesting general feedback from the public on matters concerning their healthcare, the CHC also run specific, targeted campaigns for information and feedback from patients with specific health conditions or disabilities, or on specific services within the NHS. In order to ensure we hear from all groups of society with regards to their healthcare provision.

Many people across Wales face challenges when travelling to health services such as their GP or Hospital appointments.



In this instance, the CHC wanted to hear directly from patients about their experiences of travelling to health services in Cardiff and Vale of Glamorgan, in order to identify the types of transport people use, and how transport to health services could be improved.

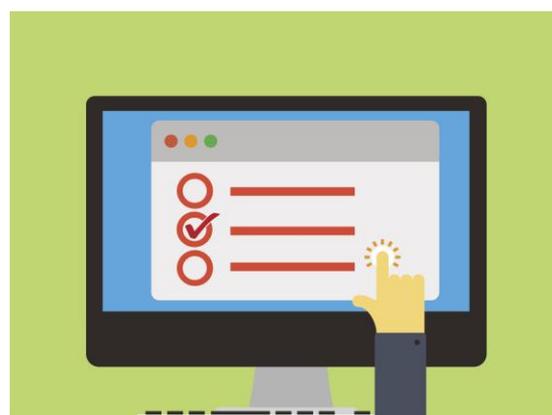
The CHC recognises the importance of gaining insight into what travelling to Health Services is like for patients in Cardiff & Vale of Glamorgan, with the intention of making recommendations to Cardiff & Vale University Health Board on how to improve the experience from a patient point of view, if appropriate to do so.

## What we did

The South Glamorgan CHC published a survey to gain feedback from patients around their experiences of travelling to health services in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

The survey was originally devised and published by the Older People's Commissioner for Wales, and the CHC would like to extend thanks to the commissioner for their permission to use this survey. If you would like to read the Older Persons Commissioners for Wales Report, you can do so via this link: [https://olderpeople.wales/library/Accessing\\_Health\\_Services\\_in\\_Wales\\_-\\_Transport\\_Issues\\_and\\_Barriers.pdf](https://olderpeople.wales/library/Accessing_Health_Services_in_Wales_-_Transport_Issues_and_Barriers.pdf)

The survey was listed on our website and publicised through our Facebook and Twitter social media channels. Details of the survey were also included within our regular stakeholder briefings.



The South Glamorgan CHC also distributed paper copies of the survey at the Festival of Transport in Barry Island on 12<sup>th</sup> June 2022, the Minority Communities Ethnic Health Fair in Cardiff City Hall on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and the St Athan Village Party in St Athan on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2022.

The survey was available for completion in both English and Welsh.

The survey refers to different types of health services:

Primary health: Those health services which provide the first point of care within or close to your community, including general practice, pharmacy, dentistry, and opticians.

Secondary / tertiary health: Those health services which provide care in hospitals (including community hospitals) and treat particular types of illness, such as cancer.

The survey was available online for completion from 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022 to 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022 and asked respondents to provide information around the following:

- ❖ How patients travel to Primary and Secondary / Tertiary health services
- ❖ How often patients travel to Primary and Secondary / Tertiary health services
- ❖ How long it takes patients to travel to Primary and Secondary / Tertiary health services
- ❖ If patients require assistance to travel to Primary and Secondary / Tertiary health services and who assists them.
- ❖ How easy or difficult it is for patients to travel to Primary and Secondary / Tertiary health services.
- ❖ The impact of transport on patients' ability to access Primary and Secondary / Tertiary health services.
- ❖ How patients access information about travel options to any health service.

# Who we are hearing from

The CHC survey was open to patients who had any experience of travelling to health services in Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan.

The CHC received a number of online and paper surveys, although not all respondents answered all questions. In addition we received comments vi social media and direct calls into the CHC Office.

100% of respondents chose to complete the English language version of our survey.	45% of respondents use their own car to travel to Primary health services	82% of respondents do not usually need someone to help them travel to Primary health services
33% of respondents have had their ability to visit someone in Hospital affected due to transport issues.	49% of respondents use their own car to travel to Secondary / Tertiary health services	74% of respondents do not usually need someone to help them travel to Secondary / Tertiary health services



# What we heard

The findings of the survey have been split into two sections; Transport to Primary Health Services, and Transport to Secondary/Tertiary Health Services.

## Transport to Primary Health Services

**Primary health: Those health services which provide the first point of care within or close to your community, including general practice, pharmacy, dentistry, and opticians.**

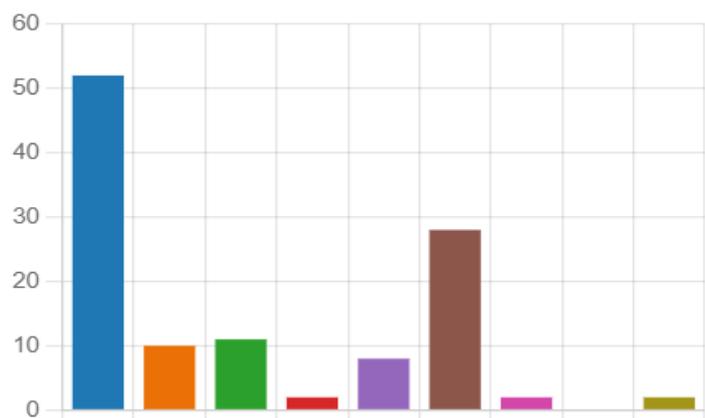
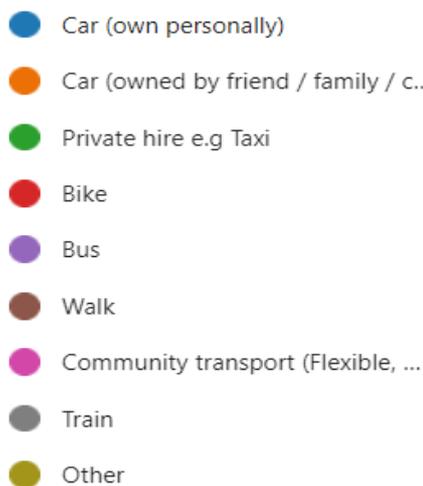


24% respondents walk to their Primary health services	16% respondents visit Primary health services monthly	20% respondents say that travelling to Primary health services is difficult
67% respondents rely on a family member, partner or spouse to help them travel to Primary health services	23% respondents report that transport sometimes or often prevents them accessing Primary health services.	32% respondents have been late to, or missed a Primary health service appointment due to transport issues

## Type of Transport Used

In order to get an idea of how patients currently travel, the CHC first asked respondents to provide information on the type of transport they normally use to travel to Primary health services. The results show that the majority of respondents either travel by car or they walk.

1. What mode of transport do you usually use to travel to primary health services (e.g. the GP)?



For those respondents who answered 'other' only one provided any further detail:

*'No public transport availability'*

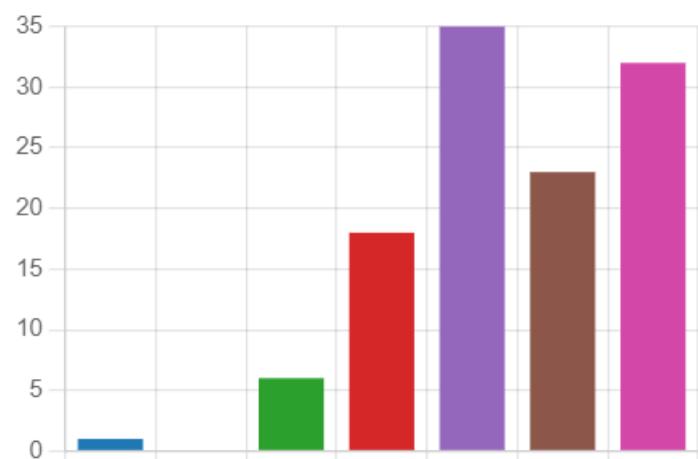
## Frequency of Travel to Health Services

The CHC then asked respondents about the frequency with which they visit Primary health services.



2. How often do you visit primary health services?

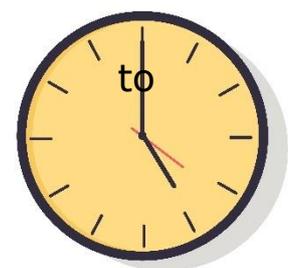
- Several times a week
- Weekly
- Every 2 weeks
- Monthly
- Every 2-3 months
- Every 6 months
- Less than once a year



Although responses varied, the results did show that the majority of respondents attend Primary Health Services either every 2-3 months (30%), or less than once a year (28%).

## Travel time to Health Services

The CHC questioned respondents on how long on average they spent travelling Primary health services.



57% respondents spend 15 minutes or less travelling to Primary health services.

30% respondents spend 20 – 30 minutes on average travelling to Primary health services.

9% respondents spend 40 – 60 minutes travelling to Primary health services.

2% respondents spend over 60 minutes travelling to Primary health services.

## **Assistance when travelling**



The CHC then asked respondents whether they usually needed someone to help them travel to Primary health services.

As indicated in the results below, 82% respondents stated they did not need help from anyone to travel to Primary health services.

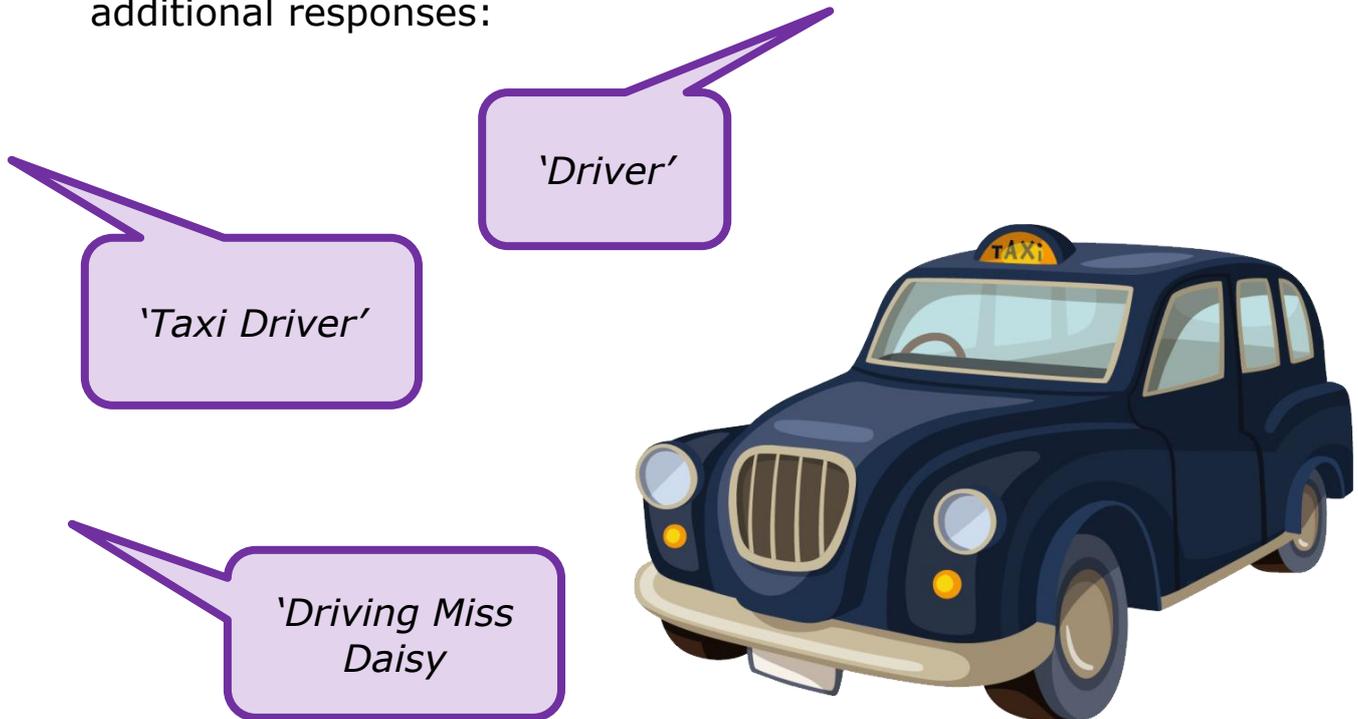
For those respondents, who answered 'yes' to needing assistance, CHC also asked respondents to provide information on who would usually help them travel to Primary health services. The majority of respondents stated they would normally receive help from a family member, partner or spouse.

4. Do you usually need someone to help you travel to primary health services?

- Yes
- No



For those who selected 'other', they gave the following additional responses:



## Transport Difficulties

The CHC wanted to understand any difficulties with transport that patients may be encountering, when travelling to Primary health services.



We asked respondents to rate how easy it is for them to travel to their Primary health services.

72% respondents informed the CHC it was usually or sometimes easy to travel to their Primary health service.

20% respondents reported it was usually or sometimes difficult to travel to Primary health services.

8% respondents confirmed it was neither easy nor difficult to travel to their Primary health service.



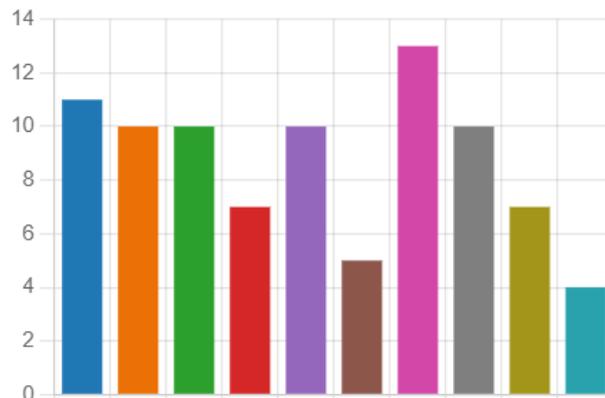
For those respondents who found travelling to their Primary health service difficult, we asked them to provide more detail on these difficulties.

Respondents were permitted to select all answer options that applied to their circumstances for this question. As shown in the graph below, the most common difficulties we were told

- didn't have access to their own car, or a friend, family member or carers car.
- public transport was not available.
- community transport was either unavailable or not convenient.
- it was too far for them to walk.
- difficult to access or arrange transport for their appointments.

7. If you answered 'Sometimes difficult' or 'Usually difficult' to question 6, what are the reasons for this? Please select ALL options that apply

- I don't have access to my own car
- I don't have access to someone ...
- Public transport isn't available
- There are accessibility barriers t...
- Community transport is not avai...
- It costs too much
- It's too far for me to walk
- It's difficult to access / arrange t...
- Parking is limited / unavailable a...
- Other



Other responses selected in feedback include:

*'Takes two people to offer my husband sufficient support due to his mobility difficulties'*

*'Public transport isn't available; I am able to walk at the moment but due to aging this won't always be the case'*

*'I don't have access to my own car; I don't have access to someone else's car (friend, family or carer); It's too far for me to walk; I use community transport because public transport is multiple buses each way and I need to leave extra time because of poor reliability of buses, taken off service, running late it can take over 1- 1/2 hrs to go one way for a hospital appointment'*

*'Public transport isn't available; Dinas Powys GP is walkable (3-4 km) but part of the ash-path is substandard in width with brambles protruding from the hedge, despite being the direct and only route from St Cyres to DP-The Murch. The Vale Council consulted and were again told it was bad 18 months ago, but did nothing. There should be an obligation on the GP/Health Centre in their 'active travel' plan to assess and press the Council over such obstacles to walking and cycling access routes'*



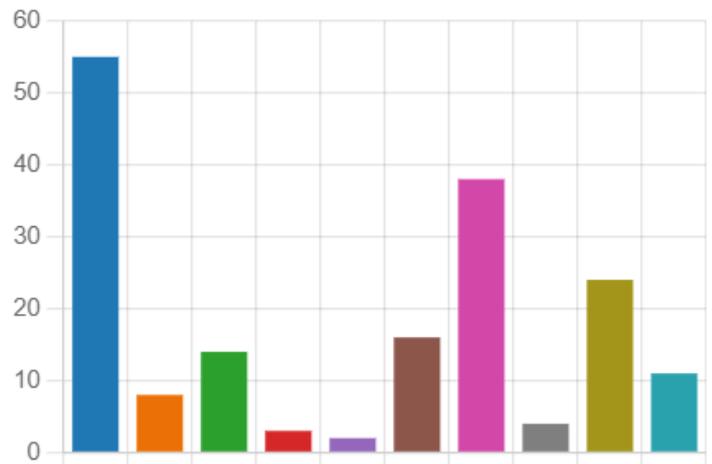
The CHC wanted to further understand the transport circumstances of those patients who answered that they found travelling to Primary health services 'usually easy' or 'sometimes easy' and so asked them to provide more information on why they had answered in that manner.

Respondents were permitted to select all answer options that applied to their circumstances for this question. The most selected answers included

- respondents having access to their own car, or the car of a friend, family member or carer.
- respondents confirming it is close enough for them to walk.
- respondents stating that parking is available at or near to their Primary health service.

8. If you answered 'Sometimes easy' or 'Usually easy' to question 6, what are the reasons for this? Please select ALL options that apply

- I have access to my own car
- I have access to someone else's ...
- Public transport is available
- There are no accessibility barrier...
- Community transport is availabl...
- I can afford it
- It's close enough for me to walk
- It's easy to access / arrange tran...
- Parking is available at or near to...
- Other



For those who selected 'other' only one respondent provided the following additional information:

*'No public transport availability'*

## The Impact of Transport on healthcare

The CHC asked respondents to provide information on the impact that transport has on their ability to access Primary health services.

The results showed that the vast majority of respondents confirmed that transport rarely or never prevents them from accessing Primary health services.



9. What impact does transport have on your ability to access primary health services?

- Often prevents me accessing pri...
- Sometimes prevents me accessi...
- Rarely prevents me accessing pr...
- Never prevents me accessing pr...



For those respondents who answered 'often prevents' or 'sometimes prevents' them from accessing Primary health services, we asked them to provide further explanation on their response.



The most common reasons we were advised of included.

- respondents stated they didn't have access to their own, or someone else's car.
- respondents stated that community transport is not available or convenient.
- respondents stated it's too far for them to walk.
- respondents confirmed it is difficult to access or arrange transport for their appointments.

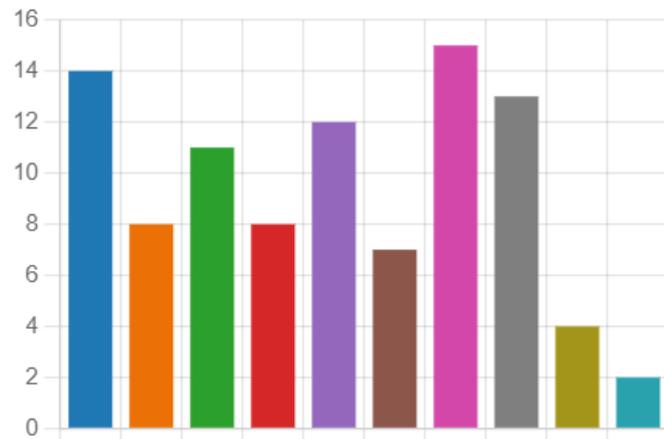
For those who selected 'other' only one respondent provided the following additional information:



*'Family availability to take me – they work'*

10. If you answered 'Often prevents' or 'Sometimes prevents' to question 9, what are the reasons for this? Please select ALL options that apply

- I don't have access to my own car
- I don't have access to someone ...
- Public transport isn't available
- There are accessibility barriers t...
- Community transport is not avai...
- It costs too much
- It's too far for me to walk
- It's difficult to access / arrange t...
- Parking is limited / unavailable a...
- Other



## Late or Missed Appointment

The CHC asked respondents to inform us as to whether they had ever been late to or missed an appointment at a Primary health service, as a result of issues with transport. We often hear about parking as a key issue ... It is pleasing to note that 68% respondents responded that they had not been late to or missed an appointment due to transport issues, whilst 32% respondents confirmed they had been late to or missed an appointment due to transport issues.

The CHC then asked those respondents who answered 'yes' to provide the reasons for this. The most common reasons were,

- respondents stating they don't have access to their own, or someone else's car.

- respondents stating that public transport was late or cancelled.
- respondents stated that they couldn't find parking.
- respondents chose to answer 'other' to this question.

For those who answered 'other', they gave the following reasons:

*'Taxi very late'*

*'Taxi unavailable'*

*'9am appointment travelling from Newport side of Cardiff to Llandough OPD during peak traffic unacceptable appointment times should be based on areas the patients have to travel from & OPD should be moving with times as in outside of 9-5 hrs flexibility'*

*'heavy traffic'*

*'Tyre blew'*

*'Both times I was pregnant (including past my due date), I was too uncomfortable to walk (waddled) or drive my car. Thus I cycled everywhere. Without this form of transport, probably couldn't have faced a second pregnancy. Problem is that bike parking at UHW didn't look very secure. Plus people smoked nearby. This put me off attending appointments'*

*'bad/slow traffic'*

*'Ambulance cancelled on the day'*

*'traffic congestion'*

## Transport to Secondary / Tertiary Health Services

**Secondary / tertiary health: Those health services which provide care in hospitals (including community hospitals) and treat particular types of illness, such as cancer.**



<p>49% respondents use their own car to travel to Secondary / Tertiary health services</p>	<p>3% respondents visit Secondary / Tertiary health services several times a week</p>	<p>70% respondents rely on a family member, partner or spouse to help them travel to Secondary / Tertiary health services</p>
<p>43% respondents state that travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services is difficult</p>	<p>31% respondents state that transport sometimes or often prevents them accessing Secondary / Tertiary health services</p>	<p>41% respondents have been late to or missed a Secondary / Tertiary health services appointment due to transport issues</p>

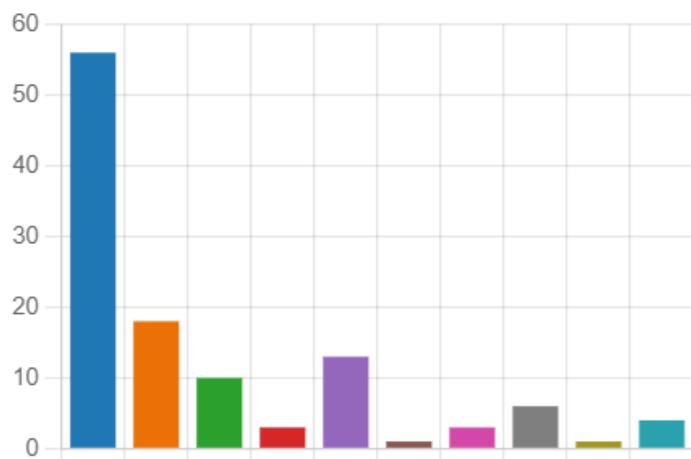
The CHC then repeated each question asked in respect of transport to Primary health services, for transport to Secondary / Tertiary health services.

## Types of Transport Used

The CHC requested information from respondents on the mode of transport they usually use to travel to Secondary / Tertiary health services. The majority of respondents said they usually travel by car.

13. What mode of transport do you usually use to travel to secondary / tertiary health services (e.g. the hospital)?

- Car (own personally)
- Car (owned by friend / family / c..)
- Private hire e.g Taxi
- Bike
- Bus
- Walk
- Community transport (Flexible, ...)
- Non-Emergency patient transpo...
- Train
- Other



For those respondents who answered 'other' they provided the following additional comments:

*'Family or friend'*

*'Park & Ride Bus'*

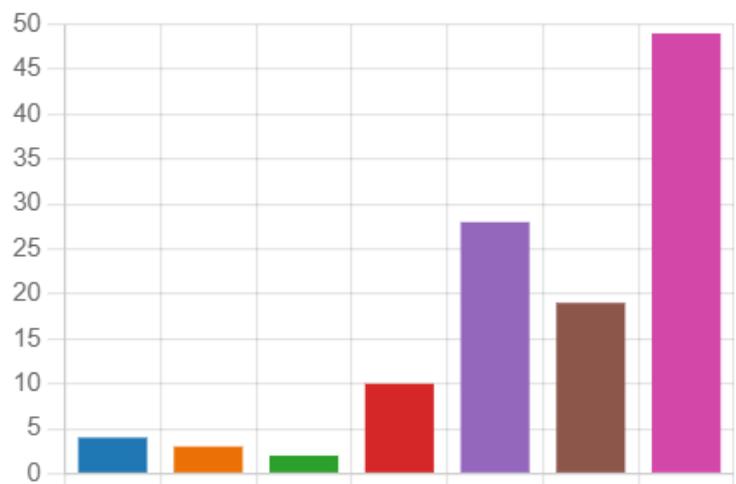
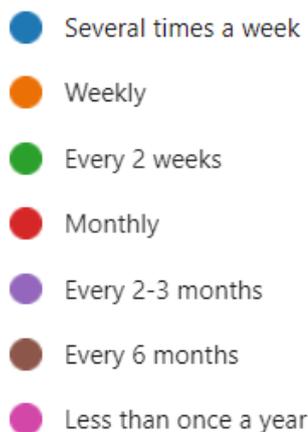
*'not applicable'*

*'Drive to roath park then walk'*

## Frequency of Travel to Health Services

We then requested information on the frequency with which respondents travel to Secondary / Tertiary health services. Whilst the majority of respondents said they attend these services less than once a year, it was also good to see that we are able to get feedback from respondents who attend regularly as this is helpful to get an insight at how patients travel to these services on a regular basis.

14. How often do you visit secondary / tertiary health services?



## Travel Time to Health Services

Our survey then asked respondents to provide information on the average length of time it takes them to travel to Secondary / Tertiary health services.

7% respondents spend 15 minutes or less on average travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services.

44% respondents spend 20 – 30 minutes on average travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services.

33% respondents spend 30 – 60 minutes on average travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services.

7% respondents spend 60 – 90 minutes on average travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services.

3% respondents spend 2 - 4 hours on average travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services.



## Assistance when travelling

The CHC asked respondents to confirm whether they usually needed someone to help them travel to Secondary / Tertiary health services or not.

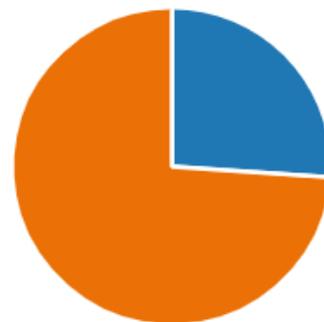


26% respondents confirmed they do usually require help from someone when travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services.

74% respondents confirmed they do not usually require help from someone when travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services.

16. Do you usually need someone to help you travel to secondary / tertiary health services?

- Yes
- No



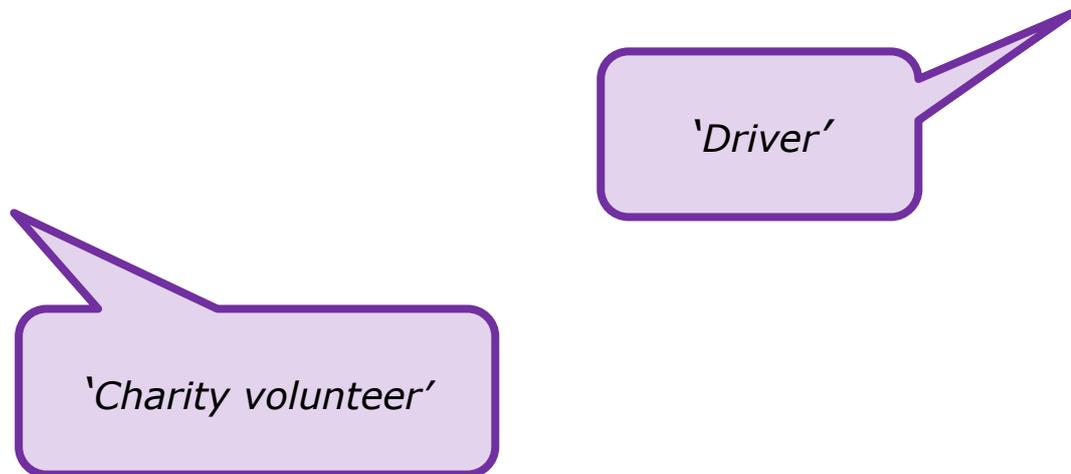
We then asked respondents who they usually receive help from when travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services. The majority of respondents who answered this question said they would receive help from a family member, partner or spouse.

17. If you answered 'Yes' to question 17, who usually helps you travel to secondary / tertiary health services?

- Family member
- Partner or spouse
- Friend
- Care professional
- Other

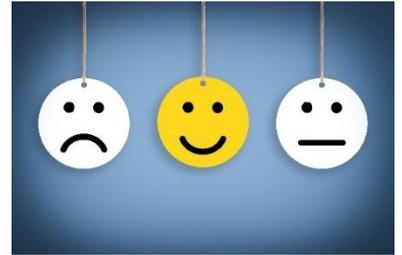


Those who answered 'other' they provided the following additional information:



## Transport Difficulties

The CHC wanted to understand any difficulties with transport that patients may be encountering, when travelling to Secondary / Tertiary health services.



We asked respondents to rate how easy it is for them to travel to Secondary / Tertiary health services.

45% respondents told us it was usually or sometimes easy to travel to their Secondary / Tertiary health service.

43% respondents told us it was usually or sometimes difficult to travel to their Secondary / Tertiary health service.

12% respondents told us it was neither easy nor difficult to travel to their Secondary / Tertiary health service.

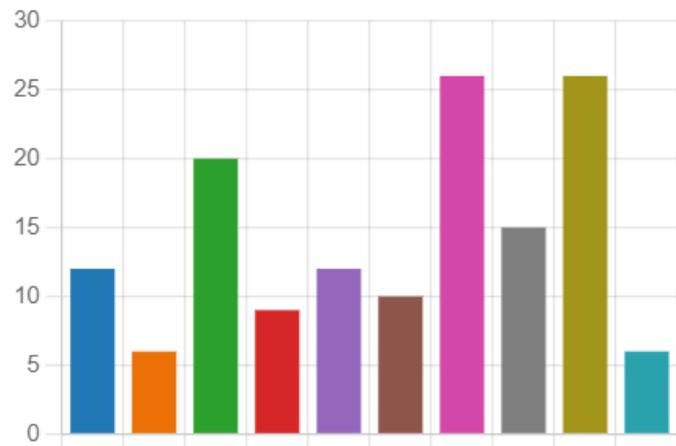
In order to further understand the reasons behind the respondents' difficulties, we asked them to provide additional information on why they had answered 'usually difficult' or 'sometimes difficult'.

Respondents were permitted to select all answer options that applied to their circumstances for this question. The most common answers were

- respondents didn't have access to their own car, or a friend, family member or carers car.
- public transport was not available.
- it was too far for them to walk.
- parking is limited or unavailable near to the health service.

19. If you answered 'Sometimes difficult' or 'Usually difficult' to question 19, what are the reasons for this? Please select ALL options that apply

- I don't have access to my own car
- I don't have access to someone ...
- Public transport isn't available
- There are accessibility barriers t...
- Community transport is not avai...
- It costs too much
- It's too far for me to walk
- It's difficult to access / arrange t...
- Parking is limited / unavailable a...
- Other



Those who responded 'other' provided the following additional comments:

*'Parking'*

*'Long journey along a busy route'*

*'Have to allow a lot of time due to traffic congestion and time to find a parking space'*

*'Family availability to take me'*

*"I don't have access to my own car; I don't have access to someone else's car (friend, family or carer); Community transport is not available / convenient; It's too far for me to walk; Public Transport does not run often enough'*



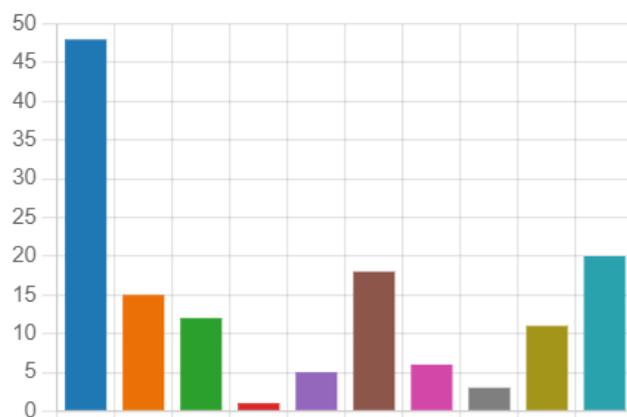
The CHC also wanted to better understand the circumstances of those who answered 'Usually easy' or 'Sometimes easy' and so requested respondents provide additional comments around the reasons for their answer.

Respondents were permitted to select all answer options that applied to their circumstances for this question. The most common responses were,

- having access to their own car, or the car of a friend, family member or carer.
- respondents state they can afford it.
- respondents selected the answer 'other'.

20. If you answered 'Sometimes easy' or 'Usually easy' to question 20, what are the reasons for this? Please select ALL options that apply

- I have access to my own car
- I have access to someone else's ...
- Public transport is available
- There are no accessibility barrier...
- Community transport is availabl...
- I can afford it
- It's close enough for me to walk
- It's easy to access / arrange tran...
- Parking is available at or near to...
- Other



Of those respondents who answered 'other' only two chose to provide additional comments on this:

*'Lack of Motivation to do something on my own'*

*'Cycle there quickly'*

## The Impact of Transport on healthcare

The CHC asked respondents to provide information on the impact that transport has on their ability to access Secondary / Tertiary health services.



10% respondents reported that it often prevents them accessing Secondary / Tertiary health services.

22% respondents reported that it sometimes prevents them from accessing Secondary / Tertiary health services.

28% respondents reported that it rarely prevents them from accessing Secondary / Tertiary health services.

41% respondents reported that it never prevents them from accessing Secondary / Tertiary health services.

We then asked those respondents who had reported that transport 'often' or 'sometimes' affects their ability to access Secondary / Tertiary health services to provide the reasons for this.



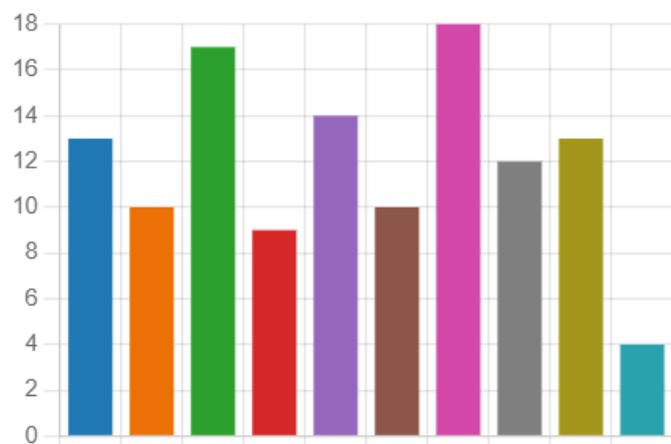
Respondents were permitted to select all answer options that applied to their circumstances for this question. Whilst the number of responses received for each

statement were similar, the most common answers were,

- respondents didn't have access to their own, or someone else's car.
- public transport isn't available.
- community transport is not available or convenient.
- it's too far for them to walk.
- parking is limited or unavailable at or near to the health service.

22. If you answered 'Often prevents' or 'Sometimes prevents' to question 21, what are the reasons for this? Please select ALL options that apply

- I don't have access to my own car
- I don't have access to someone ...
- Public transport isn't available
- There are accessibility barriers t...
- Community transport is not avai...
- It costs too much
- It's too far for me to walk
- It's difficult to access / arrange t...
- Parking is limited / unavailable a...
- Other



For those who answered 'other' they provide the following additional information:

*'traffic is bad'*

*'Crowded roads'*

*'Availability of community transport can be an issue sometimes and buses can be up to 1-1/2hours each way'*



*'Public transport is very limited and does not go near the 1 hospital, the other hospital is completely off public transport from where I live'*

## **Late or Missed Appointment**

The CHC asked respondents to tell us if they had ever been late to or missed an appointment at a Secondary / Tertiary health service due to transport issues.



41% respondents confirmed they had been late to or missed an appointment at a Secondary / Tertiary health service due to transport issues.

59% respondents confirmed they had not been late to or missed an appointment at a Secondary / Tertiary health service due to transport issues.

For those respondents who answered 'yes' to being late to or missing a Secondary / Tertiary health service appointment due to transport issues, we asked them to provide additional information on the reasons for this.

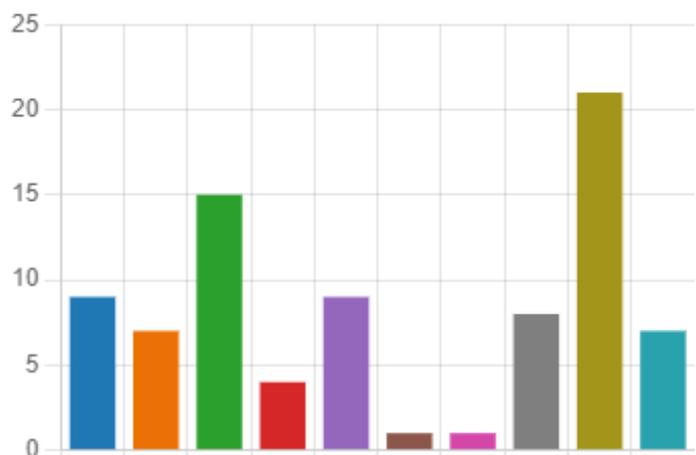


Respondents were permitted to select all answer options that applied to their circumstances for this question. The most common answers were,

- they don't have access to their own, or someone else's car.
- public transport was late or cancelled.
- they couldn't find parking.

24. If you answered 'Yes' to question 23, what were the reasons for this? Please select ALL options that apply

- I didn't have access to my own c...
- I didn't have access to someone...
- Public transport was late or can...
- There were accessibility barriers ...
- Community transport was not a...
- I couldn't afford it
- It took me longer to walk than e...
- I couldn't arrange transport for ...
- I couldn't find parking
- Other



Respondents who answered 'other' to the above question, provided the following additional comments:

*'Taxi often late'*

*'Unexpected traffic or accident'*

*'Delays in being picked up by non emergency ambulance transport'*

*'9am appointment travelling from Newport side of Cardiff during peak traffic hour'*

*'Childcare'*

*'No public transport'*

## Hospital Visiting

The CHC also wanted to identify whether respondents had ever had transport issues affect their ability to visit someone in hospital.

*'Bicycle parking not always secure and free of smokers'*

33% respondents confirmed that transport issues have affected their ability to visit someone in Hospital.

67% respondents confirmed that transport issues have not ever affected their ability to visit someone in Hospital



The CHC then asked those respondents who had answered 'yes' to the above questions, to provide the reasons for their answer.

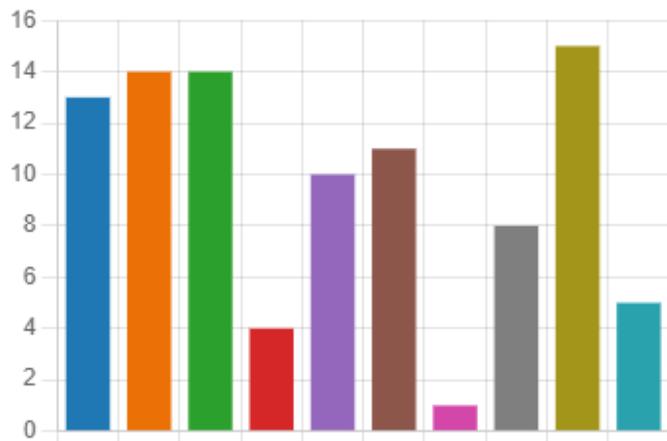
Respondents were permitted to select all answer options that applied to their circumstances for this question. The most common responses are noted below.

- respondents stated they don't have access to their own, or someone else's car.

- respondents stated that public transport was late or cancelled.
- respondents stated that they couldn't find parking.

26. If you answered 'Yes' to question 26, what were the reasons for this? Please select ALL options that apply

- I didn't have access to my own c...
- I didn't have access to someone...
- Public transport was late or can...
- There were accessibility barriers ...
- Community transport was not a...
- I couldn't afford it
- It took me longer to walk than e...
- I couldn't arrange transport for t...
- I couldn't find parking
- Other



We then asked those respondents who answered 'other' to provide further information on this. Only one respondent chose to provide additional comments:

*'Not in a fit state to drive'*

## Transport to Health Services Information

The final section of the CHC survey asked respondents to provide feedback on who they would contact, and how they access information about travel options to any health service.



Respondents were permitted to select all answer options that applied to their circumstances for this question.

29% respondents stated they would contact a transport provider for information about travel options to a health service.

21% respondents indicated they would contact the health service.

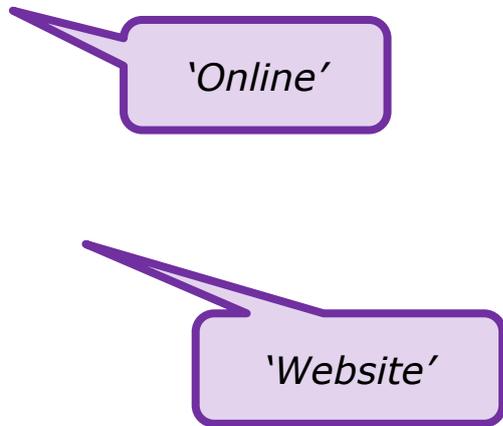
6% respondents confirmed they would contact a local / community group for information.

34% respondents would contact Family / Friend.

10% respondents chose to answer 'other'.

The respondents who answered 'other' were then asked to provide further comments on this.



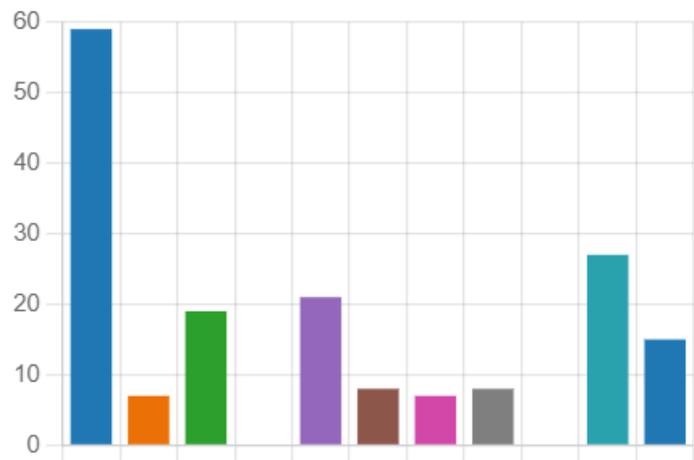


The survey asked respondents how they would normally access information about travel options to any health service, and the vast majority of respondents told us they access this information online. Nevertheless, appointment letters and the telephone were still considered as a popular method to access information also.

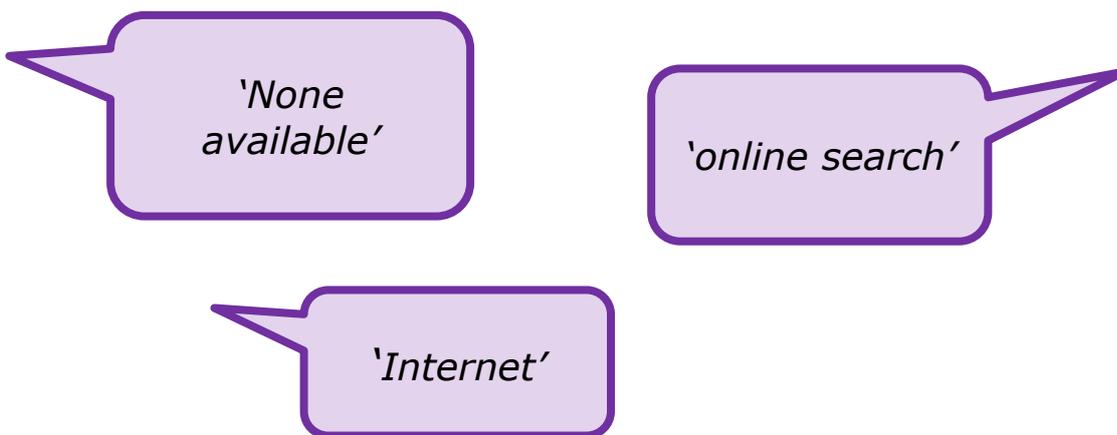


28. How do you access information about travel options to any health service? Please select ALL options that apply to you

- Online
- Social media
- Word of mouth
- Newsletters
- Telephone
- Leaflets
- Notices at health services
- Local / community group
- Newspapers / magazines
- Appointment letters
- Other



The respondents who answered 'other' provided the following additional comments:



The final question asked in this survey, asked respondents to provide any further comments they wished to submit on the subject of Transport to Health services.

The overwhelming majority of respondents cited either the lack of, or unreliability of public transport and availability of parking as the two main issues surrounding transport to health services. Given that the previous answers highlighted car parking and transport as some of the most common difficulties people faced, it is clear this is a big issue.

*'Would use bus if the service was more reliable.'*

*'Bus services from where I live are really poor'*

*'Although Newport Council runs nine journeys a day to the health hospital will not pick up in our area although it has to pass'*

*'Currently, I am fairly mobile in terms of walking so getting to GP is fine, less so to the major hospitals in Cardiff as public transport there does go very close to where I live. However, I worry as to when I am less mobile in the coming years.'*

*'CCC provides very poor public transport and infrastructure links across the majority of Cardiff. Recent speed restriction law changes will make this situation (travel chaos and times) worse.'*

*'I am fortunate enough to be able to afford a taxi if I need to go to hospital for myself or to visit someone. However, for those who are reliant on public transport (as I am) there needs to be an improvement in transport to health services. There are some park and rides in Cardiff but not for all areas and the bus service is good in some areas and really not good in others. Getting across Cardiff from suburb to suburb is very difficult and getting more so. Buses are not as reliable as in the past and traffic is much worse.'*

*'Main issue is distance and the lack of public transport to the facility I have had to use.'*

*'Bus service is appalling in my area.'*

*'Reliability is the key factor when using public transport ie bus. Local bus provider is very unreliable.'*

*'I don't drive neither does my husband therefore every appointment at Hospital requires a taxi to ensure I can get to appointments. If the bus service was reliable I would be able to use a bus sometimes but after treatment and feeling unwell this is not always a viable option.'*

*'I have in the past tried to use public transport to get to University Hospital of Wales, Heath. It resulted in having to plan to catch two buses which was fine as I knew there would be a delay with the connection and I had set out with plenty of time for the delays but on the return journey as it was late afternoon the bus was extremely busy and uncomfortable as it travels along Western Avenue and picks up at the college.'*

*'Avoid parking at Heath. What's happening with bus to Llandough from toys r us?'*

*'Parking needs to be more accessible for everyone'*

*'Several different providers of for example buses to UHW or CRI from Thornhill Cardiff. Stagecoach, Adventure, Cardiff bus. Caerphilly buses run down past Crematorium but who runs them. Hard to quiz all sites to find who goes to UHW and has stops reachable from my home as I have limited mobility. Driving can be a challenge with knee swelling up. Traffic can be very heavy. Caught out by Uni open days. Knee swelled as driving for longer than anticipated. The 86 route keeps changing. Didn't go to Crematorium, now it does. I couldn't walk to Heol Hir where the stop was as nearly a mile. Buses for all routes cancelled frequently. Parking at CRI difficult. Have disability badge for UHW and plenty of parking in multi storey. Llandough hard to access by bus. Drove. Hard to park near unit. Need a unified transport hub to see ALL bus routes available, and trains, and disabled parking.'*

*'I live in a rural area with limited and unreliable travel public transport and appointments with health care is limited and these cause or would cause significant issue and ability for me to access healthcare if I didn't have my own transportation sufficient funds or friends to help me access the healthcare I need I also have a phone and ability finds and means to access online to search for information however without this I couldn't access healthcare if I didn't have parking again this would prevent me accessing healthcare.'*

*'Whilst transport to health providers is not an issue to me, I appreciate the difficulties for those without their own transport and remember meeting a family in the waiting room who had had a very long and complicated bus trip to get to their appointment. I really felt for them.'*

*'When receiving antenatal care, I was regularly late for appointments and presented with elevated blood pressure due to the stress of parking. I regularly worried about where I would be able to park when I went into labour.'*

*'The biggest problem getting to the hospital is access to parking, it can take ages to find space, so there is the worry that you will be late for the appointment. Also it means that I am in an agitated rushed state of mind for the appointment. Now a family member drops me at the hospital and picks me up after, but if I wanted the family member to come in with me, the issues with parking would then be the same.'*

*'More patient parking needs to be provided at hospitals. Disabled people may not be able to use public transport and because of parking issues our family normally has to rely on someone else to take them to a hospital appointment as parking cannot be relied upon. So many people I know tell me the situation with parking makes hospital appointments difficult and stressful.'*

*'Our nearest hospital Llandough is only ten minutes away. However most appointments as well as A and E are located at UHW which is a long drive away and on a busy route so will have to allow a hour travelling time each way. UHL however has very limited parking for patients and visitors . especially with the increase in services at the hospital.'*

Along with the comments on parking received, disabled parking issues were specifically mentioned.



*'I can drive myself but have problems walking from car parks to hospital. Close Hospital parking spaces are limited, so I drive hubby to his appointments and he drives me - if no spaces available, only one goes in for appointments while the other drives several miles away to park until whoever has the appointment comes out and rings for their lift home. Neither of us can manage to use public transport due to health difficulties. Parking at UHW has been reduced - they took away disabled parking spaces to build a new unit, then closed the disabled spaces near 5e entrance for maintenance without warning visitors - leaving about a dozen disabled spaces in the nearest car park. The previous disabled spaces in their permanently closed car park have not been reopened!'*

The Park & Ride system was also specifically mentioned in the feedback we received.

*'Last time I had an appointment at UHW Casualty, it was 6pm September 2021. Was assured would be out by 10pm. So glad I ignored the call handler. Was tempted to use Park and Ride Llanedeyrn. If I had would have been unable to access car as got out of UHW 4am on a Saturday morning. Thus park and ride stopped and no City Circle. Puts me off going to UHW as no public transport out of hours.'*

*'There is considerable pressure on parking at the hospital, so they have a park and ride system which generally works well, except that one waits a long time sometimes for the community bus.'*

Other respondents left feedback on their experiences with Ambulance, Hospital and community transport.

*'Ambulance for what turned out to be broken clavicle and 12 stitches would have taken 12 hours so got lift'*

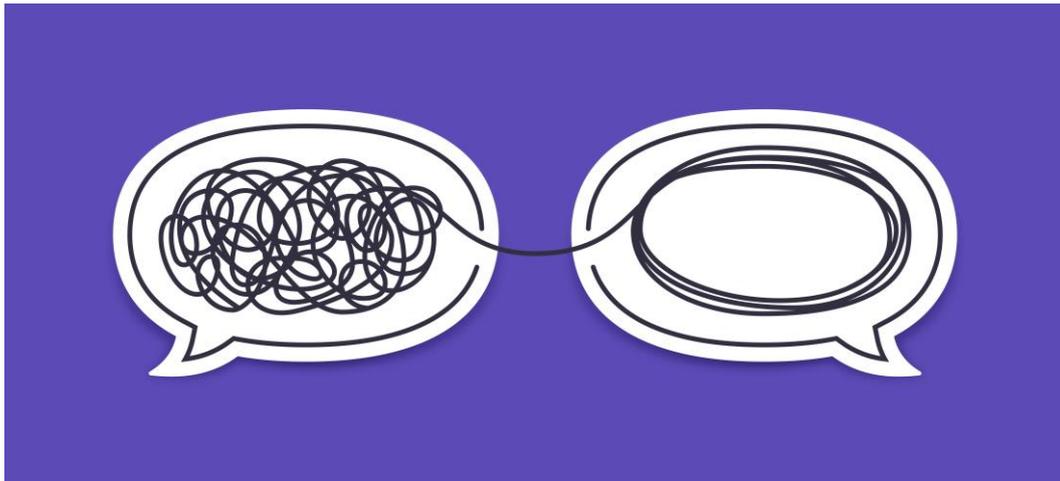
*'I never appear to receive information about transport. I only used it once (arranged by hospital) but had a very long journey back because of other patients being transported.'*

*'Although I have no issues with transport, I work with older people and 99% of them have issues with transport. They are unable to access their community for support, they have to cancel appointments at hospitals and GP's. I work with volunteers who provide specific transport for people to attend appointments. We have some success but unfortunately there are not enough volunteers for the people needing support. Transport is the main reason for carers not being able to access the community to get support.'*

A few respondents took the opportunity to comment on the distance they were required to travel when accessing GP services.

*'Doctors need to go back to usual working practices. Travel to the St Athan clinic is difficult unless you have a car. They need to get back to all clinics and services in all locations.'*

*'Why do I have to travel by car to Church Village when I can walk the 200 yards to my local practice in Creigiau? I thought that emission controls were important, not to mention the cost of fuel. This practice really needs to rethink its working methods. Same with the pharmacy, often takes 2 or 3 visits as prescription drugs are not in stock.'*



## Learning from what we heard

From the survey results gathered by the CHC, it is clear that the primary mode of transport patients utilise when attending Primary and Secondary / Tertiary care appointments is a car, either their own, or someone else's. Although this allows them to reach their destination, parking then becomes an issue, particularly when visiting Secondary / Tertiary health services.

It was concerning to note that unavailability of disabled parking was specifically mentioned within the survey responses, as service providers should ensure there is adequate provision of suitable, accessible car parking spaces for those disabled patients who travel to health services via car.

Survey respondents have informed the CHC that public transport is either too costly, unreliable or completely unavailable depending on their destination. A number of survey respondents stated that they would use public transport if it was more reliable, or more widely available. This is of particular importance when considering patients who do not have access to their own, or someone else's vehicle. The CHC considers the availability of public transport to be an important issue that

service providers must consider when planning the delivery of current and future health services.

It is also important to remember that using public transport may be entirely inappropriate for some patients who may be very unwell, or who experience accessibility barriers when attempting to utilise public transport.

It was also concerning to note that cost was reported to be a barrier to a number of respondents when attempting to access all types of healthcare. This could disproportionately disadvantage those patients on a lower or fixed income, or patients who are currently without employment. This is also a cause for concern for those patients who regularly attend these services.

It was also reported to the CHC that Community Transport provision is poor, with a very low number of respondents using this mode of transport to attend Primary and Secondary / Tertiary health services. A number of respondents stated that Community Transport was completely unavailable to them, which again will disproportionately disadvantage those without access to a car, or for those who cannot use public transport. It is also important to note that there are strict criteria for patients to meet when using Community Transport, social issues such as lack of available finances would not qualify someone to be able to access Community Transport. The CHC would like to see more Community Transport available to a wider cohort of patients.

It was concerning that, a high percentage of patients confirmed they have missed or been late to, a Primary health service appointment (32%), or a Secondary / Tertiary service appointment (41%) as a direct result of issues with transport. There are numerous consequences when patients are late to or miss appointments across the NHS. If a patient misses an appointment entirely, diagnosis or treatment will be delayed with potentially life-threatening consequences. Increased

administration time is required to re-book missed appointments. The need for multiple appointments then creates longer waiting times for everyone in terms of accessing services or receiving treatment. Delays may be caused to other patients with booked appointments if patients arrive late and overrun their allocated appointment slot, along with financial consequences for the health service provider.

For numerous respondents, the distances required to travel to health services is a barrier to accessing health services or contributes to them being late for or completely missing health service appointments. The survey results showed that respondents were happy to walk to healthcare services if they were closer to home, but for some this was a difficulty for them. This must also be noted and considered by the Health Board when planning the provision of future services. Cardiff & Vale University Health Board have produced a strategy document called 'Shaping Our Future Clinical Services' in which they indicate their intention to provide health services closer to patients' homes where appropriate.

The document can be accessed via the link below:

[https://shapingourfuturewellbeing.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/shaping\\_our\\_clinical\\_services\\_brochure\\_v3.pdf](https://shapingourfuturewellbeing.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/shaping_our_clinical_services_brochure_v3.pdf)

It is also concerning from those who commented that transport issues affect 33% of respondents' ability to visit someone in Hospital. This is of particular concern for those patients who may be required to stay in Hospital for a prolonged period of time, as this may contribute to feelings of isolation and loneliness which do not lend themselves to a patients' speedy recovery. It is also of concern if the patient in question is in any way considered to be vulnerable or is unable to advocate for themselves. The inability of friends and family members to visit and advocate on behalf of the patients is concerning.

Finally, survey respondents informed us that the most popular two options for who they would contact in order to find out about transport services would be the transport provider (29%) and the health service (21%), with the majority of respondents informing us they would access transport information either online or via their appointment letter. The CHC believes that the UHB should ensure that all transport information is included on their website and is kept up to date, it may also be useful to patients to provide links to the various transport providers on the Health Board website. The CHC would also like to see transport information included in all appointment letters.

The CHC has taken learning from this exercise with regards to survey development. Whilst we are grateful to have been given permission from the Older Persons Commissioner for Wales to use their survey, the CHC will devise and publish surveys which include more 'open text' response boxes; allowing respondents to write in their own words and provide more detail in response to questions. Although gathering statistical data allows the CHC to compare the response figures across each question, the main focus for the CHC is the individual feedback gathered from patients regarding their experiences, in their own words.

# Thanks

We thank everyone who took the time to share their views and experiences with us about their health and care services and to share their ideas.

We hope the feedback people have taken time to share influences healthcare services to recognise and value what they do well – and take action where they need to as quickly as they can to make things better.

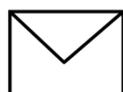
# Feedback

We'd love to hear what you think about this publication, and any suggestions about how we could have improved it, so we can use this to make our future work better.

This report is available in Welsh and English.



## Contact details



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If you write to us in Welsh, we will answer in Welsh. This will not lead to a delay in responding to your correspondence.

We welcome telephone calls in Welsh.

# **South Glamorgan Community Health Council**