

Audiology Transformation Programme (adults) Patient Engagement Report

Report of Findings v.1.4

September 2022



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Introduction

Audiology services help people with hearing impairments, including tinnitus and balance disorders.

The impact of poor hearing in adults can be great both at a personal and a societal level, leading to social isolation, depression, loss of independence and employment challenges. Assessing the hearing needs of adults with hearing loss, developing an individual management plan, and providing appropriate interventions can reduce isolation, facilitate continued integration with society and promote independent living.

Currently across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin, adult and paediatric (children's) audiology services are delivered by a number of providers.

NHS Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin undertook public engagement to gather the experiences and views of people and carers who have accessed local audiology care, to inform a review of the audiology service currently provided by SaTH and shape its future design.

Reasons for change

The ageing population means that demand for both hearing assessments and associated interventions is set to rise substantially over the coming years, both nationally and within Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin.

Most adults with poor hearing can benefit from direct referral from their GP to hearing services, often based in the community, and do not require referral to an Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) outpatient appointment prior to assessment. This supports timely diagnosis and access to support for adults with poor hearing.

However, at present the NHS is under significant pressure across the country and is experiencing unprecedented demand for planned (elective) care across all treatment pathways.

Methodology and system research

The NHS STW communications and engagement team undertook a patient engagement exercise through May and June 2022 to understand the views and experiences of adult audiology patients across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. Primarily, a patient survey was conducted, gathering quantitative and qualitative feedback from 130 people. Of which, we identified five people had referenced paediatric care in the free text comments so these

have been discounted from the analysis. Therefore, the analysis relates to the responses of 125 individuals to the survey.

This was distributed amongst partners who make up the Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Integrated Care System (ICS), including the Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust (SaTH), Healthwatch, the voluntary and community sector, and both local patient representative groups, along with promotion through the ICS communications channels. The survey was scripted with feedback from Healthwatch and patient representatives, with large text and paper copies made available, as well as an opportunity to complete the survey over the phone.

50% of respondents were female, 49% male, with a significant majority over the age of 45 (97%). This report covers just patients aged over 18, with the responses received from those aged 18 and under included in a separate report. Despite significant work to capture views and experiences from across our diverse communities, including outreach into audiology clinics, the demographic data suggests very few responses were received from people of different ethnicities other than White British and White European. This would suggest that further work is needed to reach individuals within their respective communities with support of community leaders.

Included in the above data is face to face engagement completed on site at several audiology clinics across the system by members of the NHS STW communications team. Further context for this report has been gathered from the Any Qualified Provider (AQP) Patient Satisfaction Report (2021); Healthwatch Shropshire Ear-irrigation Report (2018); NHS Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and NHS Telford & Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group Patient Survey (2021); along with insight captured by the CCG's Patient Liaison and Advice Service (January 2020 to May 2022).

Patient engagement key headlines

- Patients across Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin show warm sentiment towards treatment for audiology within the system. Clinicians and support staff receive almost universal praise, with patients telling us that they feel valued and receive a professional and caring service. This sentiment is reflected in the patient feedback gathered by SaTH (Appendix 2) and feedback to the CCG survey (Appendix 4) in 2021.

“The service and follow-ups are EXCELLENT. I may have been fortunate but cannot praise this service highly enough. From speaking with others outside Shropshire, this county has always provided a good service and I have, on several occasions, put this in writing to the RSH CEO”



“(At RSH) the staff and service is excellent, on the day of the assessment(s) and aftercare - they are always there to help and support and this is so reassuring and this has helped me come to terms with my hearing loss and take a positive attitude.”

- Location and convenience drive our patients’ choices and satisfaction with their care. Patients expect to be able to access services and treatment at a location local to them, particularly given that audiology services are generally accessed by older age groups, who often live remotely from Shrewsbury or Telford. When we spoke to patients at clinics in the community, they were passionate that this high-quality local provision is retained, explaining that due to ongoing cuts to public transport, they would often struggle to access services offered solely at the acute trust sites. Local provision also is often more accessible once a patient has arrived on site, with many telling us that having a straightforward journey from the car park is important.

“At the moment they are consulting on changing the buses between here (Market Drayton) and Shrewsbury, so it would really be an inconvenience if anything moved away. I come here because it’s only 5 minutes from my house, and I struggle to travel much further”

- For those who are more independently mobile, and often coincide appointments with work in the local area, the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH) and the Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) are seen as the preferred sites for treatment. Overall, around 27% of respondents indicated that RSH and PRH would be their preferred site. For these, the quality of care was the main reason with around 72% of respondents citing this (vs 29% of respondents visiting other more local sites). Patients who preferred RSH and PRH were more likely to have fewer additional motivations and had a younger age profile than other sites.
- Whilst not a part of this audiology review or the audiology service, our respondents also took the opportunity to provide feedback on ear irrigation services. Our patients tell us that locality to home decides where people would like to attend to have their ears irrigated. Many cite the short procedure time vs potentially longer wait times at the acute hospitals as not a sensible payoff, with a majority preferring their GP or a local community site. The Healthwatch Shropshire report in 2018 (Appendix 3) highlights the inequity of ear irrigation provision. This is reinforced in feedback received to a survey undertaken by both CCGs in 2021 (Appendix 4) and feedback received by the CCG’s Patient Liaison and Advice Service (PALs) between January 2020 and May 2022. During this time, the PALs team received 24 contacts from patients relating to audiology, 14 were specifically in relation to difficulties accessing ear irrigation. However, it should be noted that some patients specifically referenced services having stopped due to Covid-19.

Findings

Where do patients go for treatment, and why do they choose this location?

The patient engagement activity through May and June 2022 heard from 130 patients. Of which, we identified five people had referenced paediatric care in the free text comments so these have been discounted from the analysis. Therefore, the analysis relates to the responses of 125 individuals to the survey.

- Of these, around three quarters of respondents accessed audiology services through a NHS community clinic or GP practice, and around a quarter visited either Princess Royal or Royal Shrewsbury Hospital.
- Of the five factors presented to patients as potential drivers behind the decision of where to seek treatment¹, comfortable environment and parking are evidently secondary factors, scoring relatively low and consistent across both main location groupings. Patients attending PRH or RSH are predominantly driven by the quality of care they receive, have a slightly younger age profile, and are more likely to be independently mobile, often combining a visit with work or travel in the town. Conversely patients visiting clinics in the community are mostly motivated by location (84% vs 51% for others). When we engaged at clinics with these patients, we were often told about how they were able to travel on foot or via a single form of accessible transport to their appointment.
- Patients are concerned that if appointments were centralised or moved to Telford or Shrewsbury, they would struggle to access them, particularly in an affordable manner. In Market Drayton, most patients we spoke to told us about cuts to bus services locally, specifically citing reduced service to Shrewsbury. Several of these patients had co-morbidities that already required them to travel to RSH, and they were concerned that this repeated travel would become unsustainable if bus services were reduced and audiology was moved.
- Whilst patients noted that waiting times had increased since before the Covid-19 pandemic, most were happy with the amount of time they had to wait for appointments, eased by the fact that it was felt to be easy to book and arrange a suitable appointment time and location.

Aftercare and support

- Around 40% of patients told us that they had no preference as to whether new hearing aids were fitted on the same day as their assessment. However, of those who did have

¹ The quality of care, Comfortable environment, The location, Good transport links, Parking available

a preference, 89% would choose to have it fitted on the same day. Our patients tell us that this is for convenience, avoiding difficulty in traveling to site because of mobility problems, and the minimising the increased cost associated with multiple appointments. This is also reflected in SaTH's patient experience survey findings in 2021. When we spoke to patients at clinics, they were keen to highlight that delays in the process can have a large impact on their quality of life, and so avoiding any unnecessary delays was a key consideration.

"What's the point of waiting any longer, and why make two visits causing extra inconvenience and time for me and the hearing specialist? Stupid"

- Face to face aftercare support is by far the most desired format across all age groups, but particularly amongst the over 45s (92% vs 75% under 45), and slightly more amongst men (97% vs 85% of women). All 59 patients that we spoke to over the age of 75 told us they preferred face to face support. Patients that we spoke to at clinics told us about their hesitancy towards technology and challenges with hearing and understanding voices over the telephone and video link. This is again reflected in the survey undertaken by both CCGs in 2021. **There is little desire across any patient group for aftercare to move away from face-to-face delivery.**
- Around 80% of patients would like to receive batteries and other equipment either by post, or from their local GP practice. Location remains the primary driver here, although several respondents do raise that retaining locally accessible provision for this is important in instances where further support is needed (e.g. to fit a battery). At present, given the range of options for access across the service, no patients we engaged with reported issues accessing or obtaining spares or parts.



Appendix 1: STW NHS Patient Survey Data 2022

Q1. When thinking about going for a hearing assessment, where would you prefer this to be?

Answer Choices	Responses	
The Royal Shrewsbury Hospital or Princess Royal Hospital in Telford	27.27%	33
An NHS community clinic e.g. at a GP practice	36.36%	44
An NHS funded independent provider in the 'High Street'	2.47%	3
Other (please specify)	33.88%	41

Q2. What is your reason for this choice? (please tick all that apply)

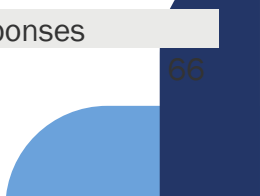
Answer Choices	Responses	
The quality of care	48.76%	59
Comfortable environment	38.02%	46
The location	77.69%	94
Close to home	0.00%	0
Close to work	0.00%	0
Good transport links	19.01%	23
Parking available	34.71%	42
Other (please specify)	19.01%	23

Q4. Thinking about the service you receive, please rank the elements below in order of their importance to you, where 1 is more important.

		The type of hearing aid	Access to advice and support	Supportive and caring staff	Short waiting times	Quality of information provided	After care support including repairs and maintenance.
Priority Choice	1st	46	23	16	10	6	19
	2nd	13	29	22	14	13	19
	3rd	12	10	22	22	19	23
	4th	12	21	22	14	14	19
	5th	10	16	14	13	27	17
	6th	13	8	10	30	23	15
Average Score		2.7	3.1	3.3	4.0	4.1	3.5

Q5. Should you require a hearing aid, when would you prefer this to be fitted?

Answer Choices	Responses
On the day of the assessment	54.09% 66



On a different day to the assessment	6.55%	8
No preference	39.34%	48

Q6. Thinking about your answer to the previous question, if you indicated a preference what influenced this choice?

- Only need to attend once
- Parking charges and time having to wait between appointments
- Already on site
- One visit would be good if possible.
- Resources best used by this.
- Convenience
- Convenience
- I would prefer to have a mould that would fit rather than a standard one size fits all
- Nice to have fitted at same time as assessment
- Save travelling several times
- Just require hearing aid
- To avoid the need to wait for another appointment
- Save on transport and making extra appointment
- Get it all done in 1 visit
- Saving travel
- Due to type of hearing aids
- Save travel
- Travel non driver
- Over no preference depends on mould fitting
- Save travel have sight problems and relying on wife to drive
- Partially sighted and difficult to travel
- Cut travel
- Save travel as daughter has to take me
- I am partially sighted, and travel is difficult
- What's the point of waiting and why make 2 visits with extra inconvenience and time for me and the hearing specialist? Stupid.
- When you are already struggling to hear you want, if its confirmed, to have help asap
- Sooner the better
- Single journey and no further waiting, but is it possible if an impression necessary for a mould?
- Appointments around working days.
- to be able to sort out the hearing aids in the day saves time
- Gives opportunity to try out and discuss the aid and how to make best use while still with the audiologist
- My experience tells me the hearing aid mould would not be available the same day and a dome is not the answer for everyone even if less time consuming, cheaper and easier
- Reduced time at clinic, can ask questions about the "new" sudden gain in hearing.



Can't hear without it!

Where possible, same day. If not, e.g. need to wait for moulds to be made, on a different day.

able to try new hearing aid in front of audiologist while my case is fresh in their mind

Need and less travel

Transport links. One visit instead of two saves a lot of time etc.

Saves 2 visits, however I would expect to have to come back for fitting if for example I needed to have a mould made.

Reduced cost of transport and parking when visiting only once.

Difficult for my father in law to come out I have to help him. He doesn't really understand so better to get it over and done with

I had difficulty travelling

Depends on what help I need at the moment they need fixing

Easier travel

Depending on where it is. Saw specialist in PRH that is a long way but Oswestry is easy

Depends on where I have to go. This time I had to go to RSH for the assessment, but they gave me the choice to go there or come here for the fitting. I chose to come here today. Good to get the choice.

Cut down travel now I am order

I know you don't have to wait long, and I can walk here

we all know there are waiting lists for services

When the moulds were taken last time, they did them on the same day.

Saving time

Time efficiency for everybody

Logistics of making appointments

If the ha is available, it is more efficient, what's the point of waiting?!

Urgent need for hearing aid without having to wait for another appointment.

parking at PRH very difficult

saves travel, worried about petrol

I need re-modelling of earpiece and can't be done in a day

travelling difficulties, no family

Distance of travel

If one my hearing aids isn't working it means I can't cope

I am retired so do not have to worry about work or children's school hours

Get it done husband drives me but he's 86

Travel difficult

Have to have moulded fitting

Mobility problems

Only second visit and still trying to find something that works for me

It's what happened last time

Get it done

Disabled with back and daughter who takes me around is having cancer treatment therefore get it done in one go

Time constraints

Travel expenses

reduced number of trips, cost of parking etc

Less trips to appointments.

To minimise missing time from school

Get everything done at the same appointment would need to think over the outcome of my assessment. Having the two appointments together probably would be too tiresome for me and I would not remember the instructions given to me re hearing aid use/fitting/aftercare etc.

Q7. In the event that you experience difficulties with your hearing aid and need support, would you prefer this to be

Answer Choices	Responses	
Face to face	90.98%	111
Over the telephone	3.29%	4
Online via a video call	5.74%	7

Q8. How would you prefer to receive batteries and other equipment?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Attend my assessment clinic	11.38%	14
Attend my GP Practice	30.08%	37
By post	50.40%	62
Other (please specify)	8.13%	10

Q9. If you need your ears clearing of wax, sometimes referred to as ear irrigation or microsuction, before going for a hearing assessment, would you prefer this to happen at: Please choose up to two answers

Answer Choices	Responses	
An NHS community clinic or GP practice	75.57%	99
Princess Royal Hospital	12.21%	16
Royal Shrewsbury Hospital	14.50%	19
A local NHS funded private provider	9.92%	13
Other (please specify)	8.40%	11

Q11. How did you find out about this survey?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS social media	5.60%	7
NHS ICS social media or website	7.20%	9

Healthwatch	4.00%	5
Telford Patients First or Shropshire Patients Group	4.00%	5
My clinician or GP	4.80%	6
Other (please specify)	75.20%	91

Q12. Which Local Authority do you live within?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Telford & Wrekin	30.40%	38
Shropshire	69.60%	87
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0

Q13. What is your gender?

Answer Choices	Responses	
Male	48.80%	61
Female	50.40%	63
Prefer not to answer	0.80%	1
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0

Q14. What is your age group?

Answer Choices	Responses	
18-24	0.00%	0
25-34	0.00%	0
35-44	3.28%	4
45-54	9.84%	12
55-64	11.48%	14
65-74	25.41%	31
75+	50.00%	61

Q15. What is your race or ethnicity?

Answer Choices	Responses	
White/English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	92.80%	116
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.80%	1
White and Black Caribbean	0.00%	0
White and Black African	0.00%	0
White and Asian	0.00%	0
White European	5.60%	7

Asian/Asian British	0.00%	0
Indian	0.00%	0
Pakistani	0.00%	0
Bangladeshi	0.00%	0
Chinese	0.00%	0
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	0.00%	0
African	0.00%	0
Prefer not to say	0.80%	1
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0



Open Text Feedback

Lovely staff available at Princess Royal hearing department just difficulty in getting appointments now and car parking charges are a real drain to tight budgets
Everyone I've dealt with has been helpful and pleasant.
The only negative comment is that I've had my hearing aids 13 years and I believe there are far better aids available.
Whilst the aids do help I had to buy a Phonak Smartlink to make better use of the Opticon Spirit Synergy aids
The staff and service is excellent, on the day of the assesment(s) and aftercare - they are always there to help and support and this is so reassuring and this has helped me come to terms with my hearing loss and take a positive attitude.
I sent an email to the department some two(2) months ago in forming them that I required a new hearing aid and asked for an appointment. NO REPLY AS OF YET
Follow up assesment would be good. Personally my ears now seem super sensitive to loud sounds and high pitched noise. Is this normal? I'm led to believe that no follows are done after initial fitting?
Excellent staff provided professional and caring service
Service is already excellent for both myself and my elderly Father.
Told about the bus services being reduced in the near future so important that local provision is retained.
Patient has no access to reliable transport to Shrewsbury, and would like to flag that the local bus company are consulting on reducing services.
I presently receive excellent service and have no complaints
The people I have seen have always been very good
No
The service and follow-ups are EXCELLENT.
I may have been fortunate but cannot praise this service highly enough. Speaking with others outside county, this county provides has always provided a good service and I have , on several occasions, put this in writing to the RSH CEO, and reiterate my comments that we are very fortunate in the provision of such good facilities and service in this county/area
Retesting for hearing aids to update.
Would like quicker appointments pls
Important you see someone who knows what they are doing so I don't mind if Ludlow hospital or GP practice to have my ears waxed but I don't trust private providers. Ranking question- all are important and have been perfect in the service I have received.
I couldn't travel to the RSH or PRH they are too far on

Ranking question-all-important. Think audiology is the best department of the NHS. Ring to rearrange appointments is very good, even when it was my fault and forgot they were understanding. Mostly problems with ear wax removal. I've not had micro suction, but I'd like to try it because I think it is safer.

Last time for wax removal I was told to put olive oil in my ear for 14 days then go to my GP which I did. They didn't do it because they said it wasn't completely blocked. That was at Cleobury mortimer medical practice and I wasn't pleased.

Will not go to Shrewsbury hospital for hearing aids.

Hearing aids that have to be used from behind ears I can not use. No place at back of ears due to glasses being used full time

I find it really hard wearing masks, glasses and hearing aids. I paid for replacement £100 for 2 replacements, but since I can hear quite well without I didn't notice when they fell out, one by one. Perhaps I'll wait till I really need them

Ranking question -everything important to me and all have been good. You can't have a better service than at Ludlow hospital. I would not mind over the phone depending on the problem. I would not mind batteries from my GP practice. Important that I don't have to travel to get good service.

I lost my left hearing aid and need another one. I phoned up yesterday and have an appointment for June 21st. They were really good about it even though it was my fault.

Happy, helpful if batteries lasted longer

Diagnosed 6years ago with problems in Liverpool. But aids didn't work so gave up. Went privately still no luck, no effective for me. Came here 8 weeks ago audiologist recommended moulds, I didn't even know about them. Since having them fitted it has changed my life. Totally comfortable and good. I wear the hearing aids everyday. Completely happy with all aspects of the service.

Had private hearing test and different results to hospital so don't trust private providers. Impressive help so far, easy to call for help, gave date for fitting on day of assessment which was helpful

Been deaf since childhood need specialist help and don't trust high Street provider's expertise. Had hearing therapy counselling when first came to Shropshire excellent. Audiology service really good better than ophthalmology in Shropshire. Also better than other Audiology services in other areas.

Hospitals in Shrewsbury and Telford too far for me. Happy with service here. Don't understand ranking question important not to wait long. Everything else important and good with current service

I have had both private and NHS consultations

Use to have tubes from drop in at Cleobury mortimer but now have to get GP or Ludlow hospital as I can't fit them myself. I need help to hear the phone need better phone and waiting to try one.

I need specialist help because of my sight loss. I don't trust high street providers to have the level of expertise. I have been deaf since childhood. When I first moved I had a hearing therapy counselling service.

I need easy of location and expertise so I choose RSH for the help I need. I feel the hospital is easier

I need face to face help due to hearing and sight loss
The practitioners I have seen (3 different ones) were all excellent in every way. I had to travel 20 miles to Craven Arms for my first one (I live in Ludlow)- this was time consuming and inconvenient - I had to get someone to drive me. I understand we do not have access to the latest hearing aids which are significantly better. As our hearing deteriorates it is so so so important to get the best possible assistance to allow us to participate in normal life and remain connected as well and as long as possible.
I have received amazing support from the Royal Shrewsbury audiology dept
I have attended Audiology for 4 years and always found the service excellent. Sadly too many users or their family or carers understand the need for daily cleaning or a return visit if causing soreness, or how to use settings if provided, especially for volume. Then they say the hearing work is 'no good', doesn't work properly etc and stop wearing them. I find MANY only use them intermittently so never adjust properly. Eventually stop using ... such a huge waste of NHS money. Good aftercare instructions needed, often too much to absorb on day of visit, or forgotten, leaflets can be too difficult to read. Simple written instructions for the individual need often useful. I try to help people where possible as I believe so passionately in the benefits of hearing aids and am constantly frustrated for and by others who just can't hear when they could, causes so many difficulties for all. Don't allow enough time for the brain to adjust to the change in hearing and give up. I have seen fittings encrusted with wax so of course won't work properly!!
Being relatively new to wearing a hearing aid, I really appreciated the follow up questionnaire to see how I was getting on, which then resulted in another appointment to sort out the problems I had.
Royal Shrewsbury Hospital Audiology have looked after my hearing for 25 years. First Hearing aid fitted when 29. I have attended their clinics at Ludlow hospital, RSH and The Wellbeing Centre in Church Stretton. I hope we can continue to have a local presence for batteries, tubes, repairs. I don't mind travelling to RSH annually or every couple of years for hearing assessments.
The access to batteries and spares for some is a huge problem as they are house bound, they may also have other problems that are not obvious at first assessment.
As my hearing loss is severe I value the service that I have had over the years and have confidence in the audiologist that I see.
The service is brilliant. I have had excellent and generally prompt care.
GPs will not remove earwax, so making patients pay for private treatment. This service should be provided by NHS
I am an audiology support volunteer and service hearing aids for patients and i am profoundly hard of hearing. I think our audiology dept do a great job. Feedback from patients we see is tgat tge biggest problem is wax removal as GPs are unwilling to carry this out. As for myself, due to my profound hearing loss i would welcome bluetooth hearing aids as i cannot use any phone for verbal conversation
I think the service is fabulous. Very knowledgeable and caring staff. I am one of their volunteers and having nothing but pride and respect for the service.

They provide a great service, including their support volunteers.
I was recommended by a friend to go to Shrewsbury boots. Specsavers was terrible. Private is so expensive £3000
Really good my father in law needs a lot of help and they have been really helpful with him.
Good knowledgeable staff. Today agreed options to make it easier to access hearing aids quicker.
Grateful batteries sent by post so I don't have to mix too much. I just ring RSH.
Wonderful today I've been shown what to do and more information will come through the post.
Ranking all important. I had to wait a bit longer this time but once here they are very good. I forget things I've just lost my wife so not at my best
Always had good service and short waiting times
I come to this clinic every 4 months and the batteries last me. Ear wax removal have particular problems and need specialist help with this.
Very good service, can't find fault, very informative
I think you need to think specifically about people with LD & Autism and access to audiology
I have had to go to PRH for ear wax removal but it is a long way and I would prefer my GP.
Ranking is hard definitely pleased with hearing aids this time much better than old ones.
So this is number 1. Quality of information good he explained about the position to hold the phone.
Face to face or phone appointments depending on problem. It is so difficult for me to get around and walk.
Can't fault it excellent
Think service is excellent I tell everyone how marvellous it is
Yes - I'd like bluetooth hearing aids. I have arthritis of the hands which means that trying to click on a particular setting on my present hearing aids is almost impossible; I'd like to be able to click on a permanently hand held device instead. If the NHS cannot provide this, then what I'd like is a completely independent (i.e. no commercial pressures) NHS audiology assessment to tell me what might be the most cost-effective and appropriate private purchase for me.
would love to get back to wem library for the audiology hearing re tubin where u can just walk in



I have Parkinsons and Dementia my wife needs to help me with my hearing aids. I have been 3 times to PRH audiology and still not sorted out. I have had moulds taken 3 times but I can't tolerate them for more than an hour, they irritate my ears. I struggle to get them in myself. I haven't been offered an alternative. I am not sure if there is an alternative. Given that I have been struggling no one has phoned to check up on me.

Ranked question had to answer. I dont' think I have had good service yet. I'm considering going private but before I do that I will ring them up again. I last visited PRH before Christmas and have been struggling ever since. I am currently trying to decrease the amount of wax in my ears with drops and hope to get my wax removed shortly.

RSH audiology staff are brilliant! Please do not reduce the service!

feel the service is not too bad. The ranking -happy with all elements and all important at different times. My main problem is not hearing in a crowded room or watching the telly

ranking - everything important it's because it all works as a package that it is so good

Good service, if I do need to come waiting time is relatively short

difficult with the length of time you have to wait when you can't hear properly

I have found since moving to the adult services that the hearing aids are working better for me, they have great clarity.

Happy with children and adult services and the move between them.

Current service is really good, please don't reduce it

Very good

Grateful everything here. Very pleasant, answer my questions well

Couldn't rank all important

Post most convenient but long time on phone

I thought when I went to the hospital it was more thorough in a sound proof room

I've been here 2 or 3 times because of whistling today seems sorted. I think I didn't do it correctly and today they said they would send instructions through the post.

Oswestry clinic is excellent although shorter waiting time would be helpful

Could do with smaller hearing aids and something for at night

Still trying to find something that works. Nice staff

Brilliant in Newport, means a lot that I don't have to travel far because of my health

Prefer face to face as hopeless on the phone if you have a problem because you can't hear.

Happy to receive batteries by POS or GP practice.

Prefer wax removal atGP practice hospitals are too far.

Service here good. Second time I have completed in 4 years. Better here than where it was before

Couldn't rank earlier question as all important to me. Staff very helpful, no faults
Taken 2 months for this appointment. But easy to phone and make appointment
Had 5 weeks wait longer this time and I would have liked faster as whistling so much. Easy to make appointment. Been excellent
Don't mine receiving batteries by post or at GP practice.
Always very pleased, no problems with appointments, good staff
Hard to rank elements as kind of a package all important. Found every thing very good had no problems. When I ring I always get an appointment. Good staff
Close
Been very good impressed at the speed of the first appointment
Excellent at Newport I can walk here. Today changing hearing aid
Faster appointments and follow on appointments
The audiology care I receive at PRH is generally very good but the appointment service needs to be more efficient as we get back to normal.
I would like provision by my GP for wax clearance to be available as having hearing loss and wax buildup has massive implications to my wellbeing. When there is wax, I cannot hear, watch TV or communicate with people, including family and carers and hospital appointments. I become cut off from society, this affects my mental and physical health, and causes me to shut down and on the long run my memory. I feel very upset that I have to pay for my wax removal, it is not affordable, it is also unethical for my GP to give out private wax removal providers' details instead of themselves providing the service. There is a complete lack of understanding of the effect of wax on my hearing, social and emotional wellbeing and on how much time and money is wasted on the long run as Audiology cannot function efficiently if patients keep turning up and turned away due to wax (they cannot do their job with wax in the ear). it would be great if Audiology could provide wax removal as well, so there is a chance to attend appointments and if wax in ear, they can deal with this and progress with the appointment. I suspect this is due to lack of funding. Also if this is not possible, to do it in primary care with someone who has Audiology skills so they could do some of the work required as well as wax removal
The audiologist at Church Stretton was extremely efficient, on time and very pleasant. He assessed me using equipment and the hearing aids are very good.
The audiology service have been fantastic to me over the years, and have provided some of the best care I've accessed with the NHS
Brilliant care from Shrewsbury for many years
Always a good experience, i naturally want the best hearing aid available as I am very deaf
Original Audio ear flushing in hospital caused prolonged serious loss of balance.
My regular micro suction at Princess Royal is of great benefit to my overall hearing ability
No, Apart from during Lockdowns and knock-on effect service has been excellent.

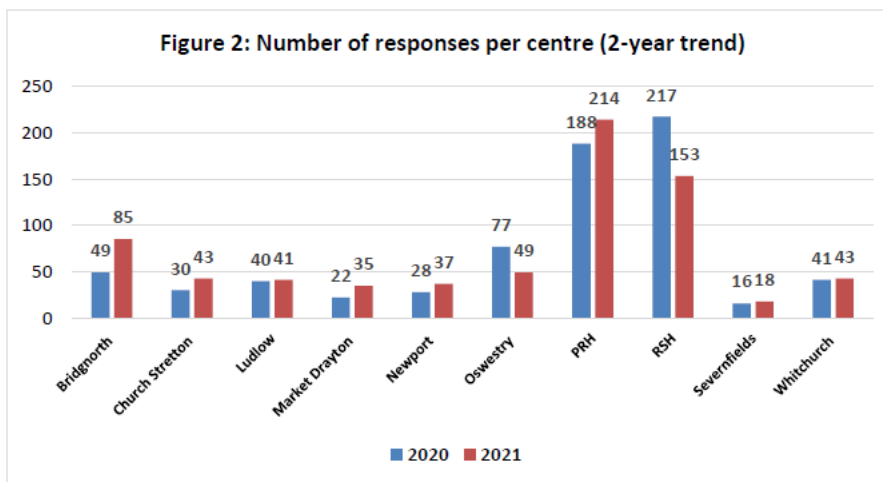
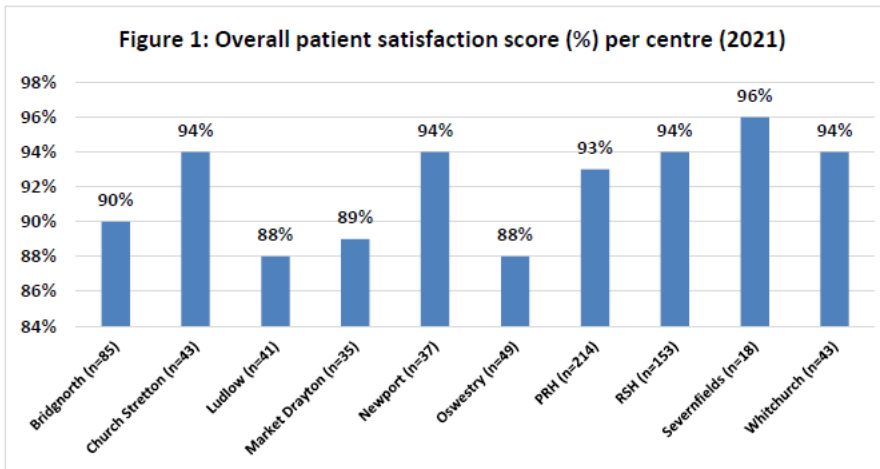
attended hearing re-assessment at Church Stretton health & well being centre, because my ear had wax I needed to go to get this done at my GP practice in Craven Arms. The letter I received from the clinic should have said get your ears cleared first. Apparently the audiologist requested this be included in the letter to avoid time wasting. However that instruction is not in the letter. Having the clearing done at my GP practice worked well, shame I didn't know to do this first and not waste audiology time. My next appointment 10th June and will have my hearing re-assessed and hopefully have 2 new hearing aids and have them set up.

Appendix 2: Any Qualified Provider (AQP) Patient Satisfaction Report 2021

Key Findings

- The number of responses across each centre varied between 88-96% (see figure 1), however as seen in figure 2, all centres except for Oswestry and the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH) had an increase in the number of respondents compared to the previous year which was when clinics were either reduced or cancelled due to COVID-19. Due to the variation in number of respondents per centre this is likely to affect the validity of results.

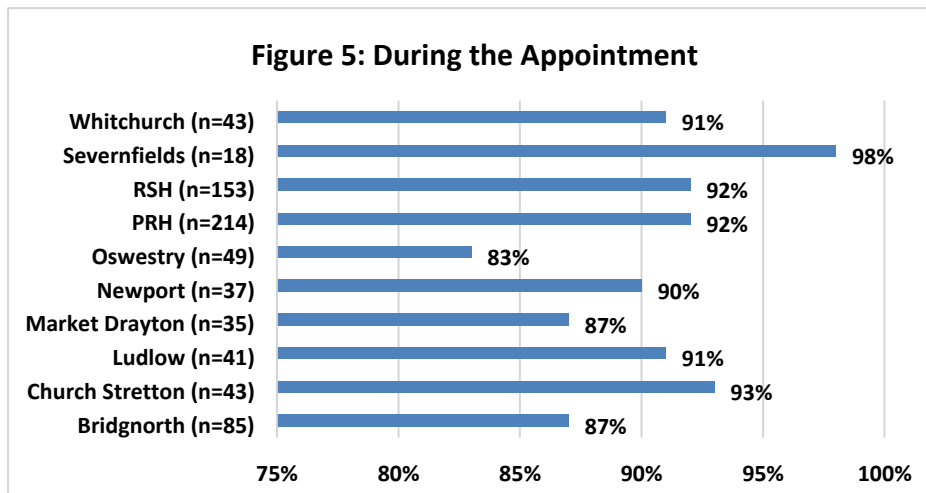




- Centres which did not achieve $\geq 90\%$ were Ludlow, Market Drayton, and Oswestry. The greatest decrease in percentile change for patient satisfaction score from 2020 to 2021 was reported for Bridgnorth and Market Drayton clinics with 7% and 9% change respectively. However, this remains a low percentage change.

During the Appointment





- Figure 5 details the average patient satisfaction score across all three questions within the 'During the Appointment' scale for each centre which ranged from 83%-98%. This scale consists of three questions and refers to patient's satisfaction with being seen promptly at the scheduled appointment time, being aware of support services available and for patients to feel that they are able to discuss their concerns in confidence.
- Looking at percentage scores to individual questions, a high percentage score was reported across all centres for patients being seen promptly at their scheduled appointment time (92%-100%), which is excellent (see Appendix 1). This shows good time management skills amongst staff and results could be further attributed to the fact that appointment letters remind patients to turn up promptly to their appointment. Furthermore, the additional cleaning/donning/doffing gaps introduced since 2020 as part of Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) after each patient provides additional time if clinics run over. It is also important to note that assessment and fitting appointments were booked for an hour throughout 2021 but reduced back to 45 minutes from September 2021.
- Patients' perceived satisfaction relating to being made aware of support services available i.e., lip reading, useful courses, and equipment across all centres ranged from 67%-98% (see Appendix 1). The reasons for this could be due to external agencies and the Sensory Impairment Team were not fully accessible and/or undergoing developments throughout 2021. It was not until May 2021 that the Telford Independent Living Centre was launched with equipment drop-ins and their service redesigned. For Shropshire council, equipment drop-ins were changed to pre-booked appointments only and local services including The Lantern, Helena Lane, and The Meres Community Centre no longer accessible. The Shropshire Deaf and Hard of Hearing Forum was dissolved due to lack of interest, and the volunteer support hubs for Shropshire community resource was not reinstated until September 2021. Taster courses for lipreading and BSL are only available online due to COVID-19 therefore not accessible to all patients. Informing staff of changes to support services has been communicated through various channels including MS Teams, Audiology huddles, and adult update meetings.

- For the question *‘The Audiologist made me feel at ease and listened to my needs’*, the overall percentage remained high (96%-100%) across all centres (see Appendix 1). This can be supported by patient comments for what they found most helpful in the appointment, i.e., *‘Everything was explained very clearly, I was made to feel at ease and everyone in the Audiology team are very polite’*, *‘Not made to feel rushed’*, *‘The attention & help from the Audiologist’*, and *‘The Audiologist’s clear voice & taking time to explain everything’*.
- The Market Drayton and Oswestry clinics scored 94% and 96% respectively for this scale, whilst all other clinics achieved 98% and above. Patient feedback for improvements at the Market Drayton clinic included *‘Explanation of outcome at the hearing aid fitting appointment. I wasn’t aware that was the purpose of the appointment & thought it was for results of the hearing test’* and for Oswestry, comments for improvements included *‘I don’t like being rushed. I have always been happy with the service, but I didn’t like being rushed and told it was due to being late for a meeting’* and *‘my first assessment was great but on having the aids fitted with a different Audiologist I felt rushed’*.
- Looking at percentage scores for the Environment individual questions, across all centres, patient satisfaction for cleanliness and tidiness of the waiting area ranged from 98%-100% and cleanliness and tidiness of clinical rooms ranged from 89%-100% (see Appendix 1). This high satisfaction is likely to be reflected in the Infection Prevention and Control (IPC) measures and cleaning practices put into place after each appointment throughout COVID-19. The question relating to the usefulness of information in the waiting room scored the lowest across all centres (72%-90%) except for Severnfields which scored 96% (see Appendix 1). All centres have noticeboard information, however throughout COVID-19, leaflets, and resourceful information has been kept to a minimum in clinical rooms and waiting areas to mitigate the risk of cross contamination that could arise by patients touching leaflets etc. The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) and SIT information remained as main sources of information and for other forms of information, print outs were made available within the appointment and/or patient signposted to websites.

‘What Did You Find Most Helpful in The Appointment?’

- When looking at the specific comments patients have written under the question: *‘What did you find most helpful in the appointment?’* there were a range of comments regarding the Audiologist and the service. Common themes regarding the Audiologist were *‘Helpful Attitude of All Staff’*, *‘The Audiologist Was Efficient’*, *‘Friendliness & Professionalism of The Audiologist’*, *‘The Attention & Help from The Audiologist’*, *‘Pleasant Manner & Courtesy, Very Supportive’*, And *‘The Audiologist Was Most Helpful with Everything’*.
- Likewise with the service there were common themes such as: *‘Free Access to The Department As & When Needed’*, *‘Brilliant Service’*, *‘Quite Satisfied with My*

Treatment”, “ Excellent Service - No Complaints”, “I Was Quite Happy with The Service & Availability at Newport”.

‘What Could We Improve On?’

- When looking at the common themes related the question, ‘What could we improve on?’, patients reported “ *Hearing aids to be fitted on the same day*”, “*bit less of a wait for appointments*”, “*telephones lines are always busy*”, and some patients reported that they struggled with their hearing aids when sent in the post but hearing aid fitting clinics have now resumed back to face to face appointments.

Conclusion

- Despite the challenges faced throughout COVID-19, findings from this report provide evidence to suggest patient satisfaction remains high for AQP patients. It will be useful to look patient satisfaction data from remote fittings in 2021 and also moving forward, also looking at the option of investigating the use of the online patient satisfaction form alongside the postal questionnaire.

Appendix 3: Healthwatch Shropshire - Earwax removal services spotlight report

Report – 1 November 2018

We heard that people were finding it increasingly difficult to access ear wax removal services, even though they had previously received treatment. We decided to focus on patient experience of audiology and hearing loss services.

Summary

The feedback we received confirmed that patients were experiencing issues with accessing ear wax removal services in primary care but that these were not uniform across the county. To try and establish the equity of provision we followed up with a patient experience survey of contacting all the GP practices in Shropshire.

Key findings:

- Primary service commissioning is reviewed where services are not being provided to ensure patients in these areas have access to equitable services.
- Levels of service accessibility are standardised across the county.
- Audiology staff are included in the development of guidance notes on suitable methods of self-treatment.

To read the full report, please click on the following link
<https://www.healthwatchshropshire.co.uk/report/2018-11-01/earwax-removal-services-spotlight-report>

Appendix 4: Audiology Patient Survey 2021

NHS Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS Telford and Wrekin Clinical Commissioning Group

Key findings:

Positive response with a total of **157** surveys completed:

Question 2: **67%** of respondents were over the age of 65

Question 4: **52%** of respondents had received care in the last 12 months

Question 5: **67%** of respondents had accessed care at SaTH

Question 8: **66%** of respondents felt that patients should be expected to pay for a replacement NHS funded hearing aid if mislaid.

Question 9: **87%** of respondents registered their satisfaction with the overall service

Respondents were invited to share their further comments aligned to two open questions:

Question 10: In your opinion what works well?

Positive Themes: **87%** of respondents recorded their level of satisfaction with the service aligned to the following key areas:

Access: Timely : Good online support : Good access to replacement batteries: Good local drop in clinics : Minimal waiting time

Staffing: Excellent, friendly, cheerful, knowledgeable and supportive staff : Audiologist is clearly spoken : Personalised, responsive and professional service

Hearing Aids : Very high quality : Given time and clear instructions

Care: Brilliant outcomes

Access: Impact of C-19 on appointment accessibility : Poor appointment service as have to ring

Staffing: Basic sign language would be helpful

Question 11/12: What could be improved?

187 Improvement comments were received, which can be themed as follows:

Access : Long wait on the telephone : Unable to hear when patients' names are called out in waiting room : Newsletter for patients : Email to be used rather than phone for making appointments ; Potential domiciliary service

Care: Implementation of annual reviews ; Patient care plan : Repeat tests at intervals to identify any further deterioration : Follow up appointment if aid does not fit well : Poor access to ear syringing service via the GP

Staffing: More staff to do the Tests in APCS

Hearing Aids: Improve colour and choice ; Replacement tubing which does not steam up ; More places to get batteries: Aid which fits in the ear : Patients being able to upgrade hearing aid by making a financial contribution

Action Plan aligned to methodology of what is: **Reasonable, Realistic and Achievable**

Patients Said:	What Do We Hear: Action to be Taken	Improvements to be Considered:
Access: Difficulties in contacting the service by telephone	Share concern with Service Provider	Answer phone message with responses to be provided at defined times of the day Standard for telephones to be answered within a certain number of rings Consideration to be given to the use of emails/texts for confirmation of appointments
Access: Poor Communication in Waiting room	Share concern with Service Provider	Alternative options such as hand held buzzer system/visual aids/patient handed a number on arrival
Care: Lack of follow up care/Introduction of Annual Reviews/Care Plan		Care Model to be reviewed
Staffing: Skill set		Staff to be trained in Basic Sign Language