



**Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin**  
Integrated Care System

**Eye-care Transformation Programme Patient  
Engagement Report**

May 2022

# Context

- ▶ *Nationally, the NHS is experiencing significant pressure and unprecedented levels of demand for elective care, with around 1.7 million patients referred for elective consultant-led treatment each month. Between 2011/12 and 2016/17, referrals rose annually by an average of 3.7% per year and since 2005/06, total outpatient appointments have nearly doubled from 60.6 million to 118.6 million. Timely access to high quality elective care is a key priority under the NHS Constitution. The redesign of elective care services is a must-do for every local system.*
- ▶ *The eye-care transformation programme in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin will bring together recommendations from the NHSEI Ophthalmology Elective Care Handbook, NHSEI Eyecare Restoration Roadmap and Eyecare Planning Implementation Guidance. Recommendations include better use of technology, risk stratification, shared Patient Tracking Lists (PTLs), optimising the role of optometrists as first contact practitioners, and implementing end-to-end integrated pathways. A combined approach will ensure alignment of ophthalmology transformation, redesign and improvement with recovery of extensive waiting times for services, whilst complementing the broader programme of Outpatients and Elective Care transformation.*
- ▶ *Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin Eye Health Needs Assessment (EHNA 2019) highlights extensive growth in the prevalence of cataract, glaucoma and age-related macular degeneration (AMD) due to an ageing population, with a projected rise in AMD and cataract of over 55% between 2016-2030. This emphasises the need to find system-wide solutions capable of meeting current demand for eye care services and additional capacity to meet increasing demand across high-volume specialities.*



# Our vision

Our vision is to provide timely, safe, effective and sustainable integrated eye-care services at the right time, in the right location by the right person, with excellent patient experience.



# Our approach to engaging with patients

- ▶ Between January and April 2022, we conducted research to understand how our patients currently experience treatment for eye conditions , what works well, and what could be improved.
- ▶ A quantitative and qualitative survey was shared, through system partners, clinical leads, Healthwatch, the voluntary sector, and patient groups, receiving 262 responses. Responses were well-rounded with good representation across a range of treatment pathways and locations.
- ▶ Alongside the survey, we gathered people's experience and insight by attending community groups both face-to-face and virtually, attending eye-care clinics and held a public facing workshop.
- ▶ We also undertook a thematic analysis of the comments and feedback submitted through our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) over the period of January 2019 to January 2022.
- ▶ Healthwatch Shropshire has been active in researching local eye-care services over the last five years, and these findings have informed this report. In 2018 they completed an 'Enter & View Report' at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, and between 2019 and 2021 compiled a report detailing feedback they had received from members of the public.



# Key findings

- ▶ Although niggling frustrations exist along the patient experience journey for eye-care, at an overall level patient satisfaction is good, with high numbers of patients telling us they would recommend the service to friends and family.
- ▶ Patients tell us that they are treated with respect and dignity (81% agree) and gain from warm and valuable interactions with their clinicians. They feel well informed from a medical perspective, and value having their condition explained to them in technical language.
- ▶ Pockets of dissatisfaction however do exist within the system. Glaucoma rates significantly lower than other treatment routes, and through formal patient feedback and complaint channels, along with Healthwatch feedback, we receive negative feedback about cataract surgery, focused largely on delays and appointment cancellations.
- ▶ Patients would like to see a better spread of provision across the county. Through each feedback channel we hear about patients who struggle to travel to their nominated site for treatment, most commonly from those who live remotely from Princess Royal Hospital (PRH) or Royal Shrewsbury Hospital (RSH). Particularly for those in the south-east of the county, it is a source of frustration that there is minimal provision at Telford compared to Shrewsbury, leading to longer journey times. For those in the south of the county, around Ludlow, we heard about the importance of retaining access to out of area options in Hereford.



# Overall satisfaction and sentiment for change

- ▶ **63%** of respondents to the patient survey told us that they were satisfied with their experiences of eye-care treatment in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin. A further **20%** expressed dissatisfaction.
- ▶ Macular disease patients are our most satisfied group, with over 70% of respondents expressing satisfaction, and almost all patients telling us they would recommend the service to a family member or friend. Patients suffering from macular disease are far more likely to tell us they had confidence in the ability of their clinician to meet their needs, and that they were treated with respect and dignity.
- ▶ Glaucoma patients are less likely to recommend the service (57% vs 69% total response base), and more likely to be dissatisfied with their experiences (33% vs 22% total response base). This is likely driven by their reports of inconsistent care and delays.
- ▶ **However, despite the overall higher levels of satisfaction, patients across all treatment pathways in Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin tell us there is a clear need for change to react to the pressures and challenges the system faces.**
- ▶ 67% of survey respondents tell us they agree on the need to make changes to services, including 89% of Urgent Eye Care patients and 81% of glaucoma patients. Whilst the more dissatisfied a patient is with the service the more likely they are to want changes, even amongst our most satisfied patients there are few respondents who disagree.



# What is working well?

- ▶ Many patients are keen to specifically cite the treatment they have received at Royal Shrewsbury Hospital as a key highlight of their experiences. This is true across both Healthwatch research and the patient experience survey, with patients citing the high levels of care they receive from the moment they arrive on site, along with the other factors noted below.
- ▶ The service provided by the High Street Opticians is also called out frequently, with patients regularly being able to identify their local optician by name, having built up a relationship over time. Through this route we also see fewer challenges with delays to appointments, with patients pleased at the simpler method of contacting the clinician.
- ▶ Clinicians and reception staff across the system are valued, and patients recognise the improvement in their outcomes that they provide. Whilst there may be delays in getting access to appointments, the quality of the service provided for many goes some way to making this less of an issue.
- ▶ Patients value the technical language and having their condition explained to them by a subject expert. Multiple respondents told us that their consultant had taken the time to talk them through what their individual complications were, which gave them confidence that they would be promptly and efficiently resolved.
- ▶ Patients in the south of the county, around Ludlow along the A49, were keen to tell us about their positive experiences at Hereford County Hospital and would like the option of travelling out of system retained. They explained that journeys to Hereford are simpler and quicker, and that the hospital is easily accessible by public transport. Notably patients told us that being accessible from the train station is an important consideration for their condition, with many finding trains easier to use, than local buses.

*"The lady at Severn Fields Medical Centre who tests my eyes before the consultant is a caring, professional, polite, friendly person who I have utmost faith in."*

*"Cataract removal was excellent throughout. At the pre-operative assessment it was identified that the person's cataract was very dense and they were recommended for urgent surgery. The surgical procedure was uneventful and the discharge process extremely thorough and well-explained. The post-operative assessment was carried out by a local optician - again, very thorough with lots of helpful information provided."*



# What would you do to improve the service?

- ▶ There is a broad range of feedback surrounding delays throughout the treatment process, and a disjointed communications process. Mostly notably following initial referral, patients can be left waiting with minimal communication or information.
- ▶ Particularly for those in remote corners of the county, patients tell us that travelling long distances provides a challenge for them. This can prohibit the times they are available to attend appointments, which can lead to further delays. Particularly where public transportation is less reliable/non-existent, and for a patient group for whom often driving is not an option, there is a desire for more local options, particularly for those in the south-east of the area, and the addition of provision with the Telford area.
- ▶ People shared experiences of long waiting lists for sensory impairment assessments and limited ability to try equipment within low-vision clinics.
- ▶ For emergency and urgent care, respondents tell us that they can receive a confused route to treatment, with referrals to A&E where no clinicians are available, and a sense of being moved around until they happen to find a suitable clinician. There is also some confusion within the system around what treatments are funded by the NHS, resulting in some respondents pursuing private routes until told otherwise.
- ▶ Through the PALs feedback received by the CCG and SaTH and the responses to Healthwatch, delays to cataract surgery trend heavily and are a source of frustration.





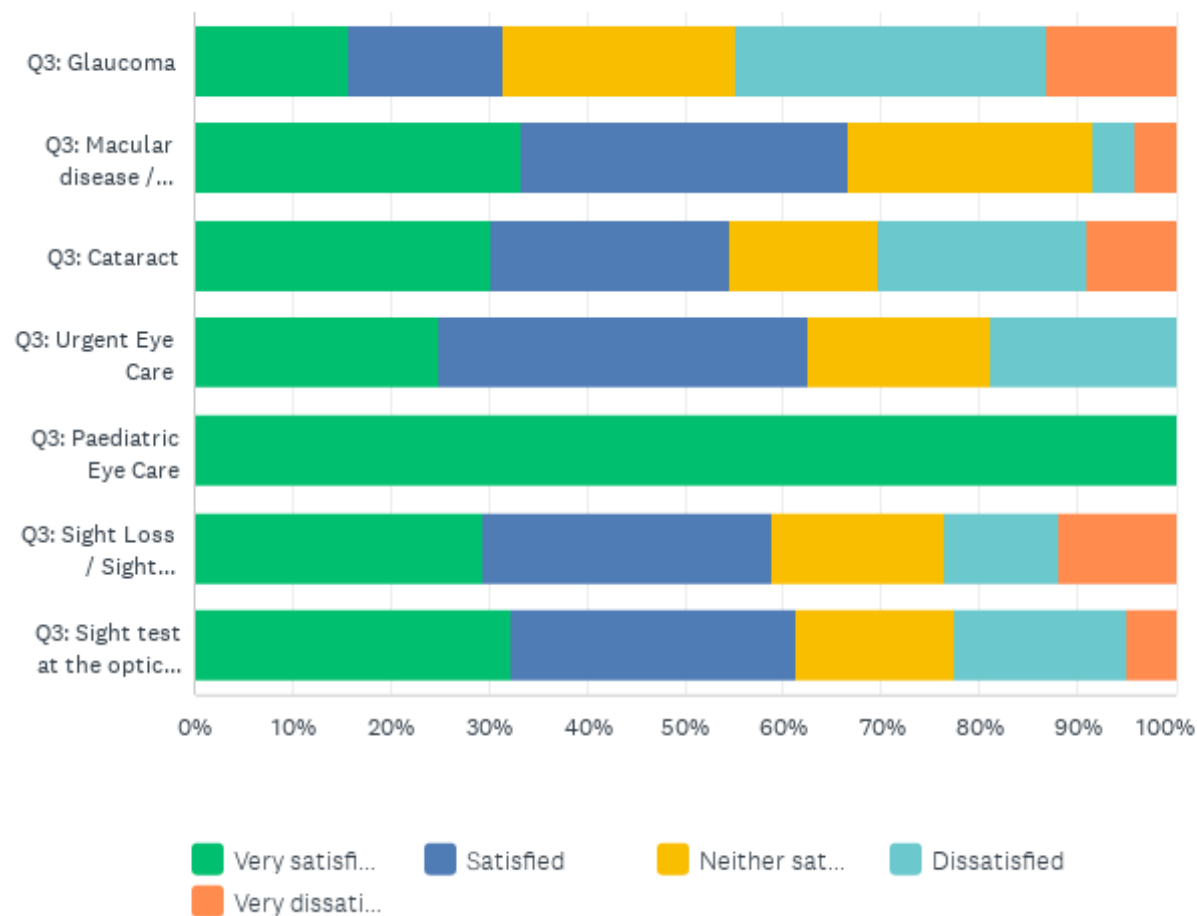
# To what extent do you (or the person you care for) agree or strongly agree with the following statements?

	Overall Response Base	TREATMENT LOCATION				TREATMENT ROUTE			
		High Street Optical Patients	PRH Patients	RSH Patients	CHEC	Glaucoma	Cataracts	Urgent Eye Care	Macular Disease
I was treated with respect and dignity throughout my treatment	<b>81%</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>92%</b>
I received the right care without undue delay	<b>46%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>44%</b>
The care that I received felt joined up and consistent	<b>58%</b>	<b>61%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>63%</b>
I have confidence that the clinician treating me was able to support my needs	<b>71%</b>	<b>85%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>73%</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>88%</b>
I was offered appointments at a time and location that suited me	<b>53%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>43%</b>	<b>42%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>52%</b>
I was able to access the right advice and support when I needed it	<b>53%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>58%</b>
I was supported to learn to live with my eye condition	<b>38%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>35%</b>



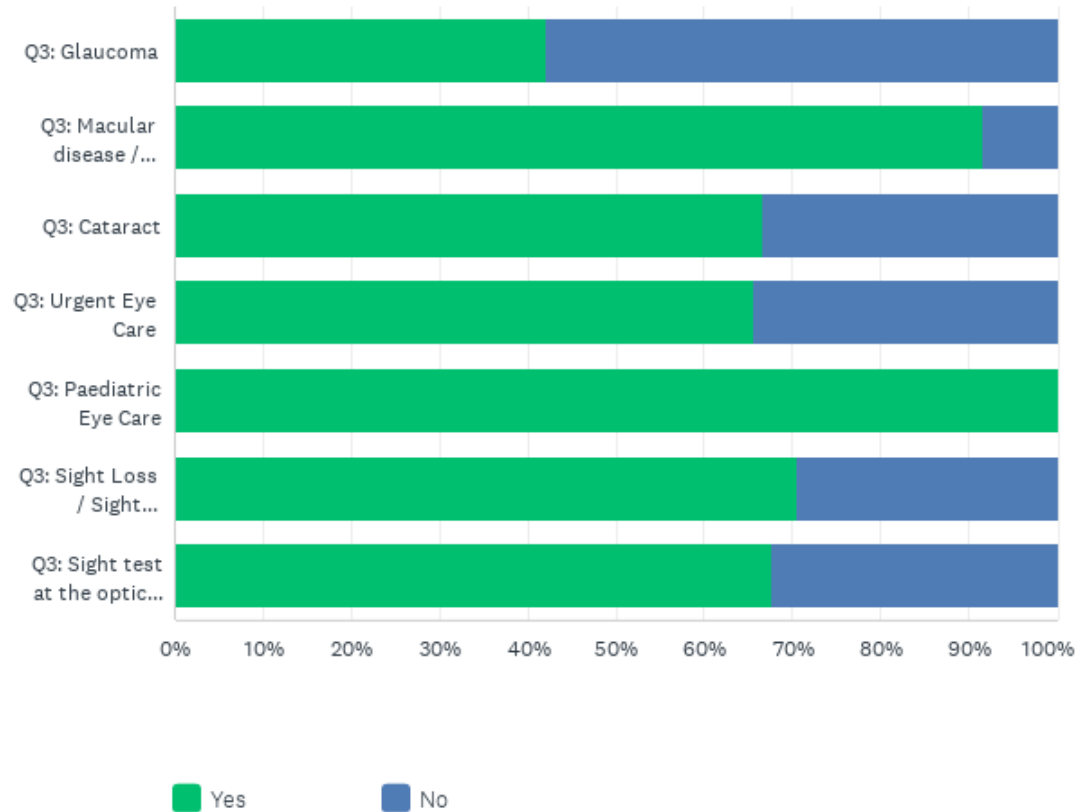
# Patient Satisfaction by Treatment Route

Q8 Overall, how satisfied were you (or the person you care for) with your experience of eye care services within Shropshire, Telford and Wrekin?



# Patient Satisfaction by Treatment Route (cont)

Q9 Would you (or the person you care for) recommend the service to a friend or family member?



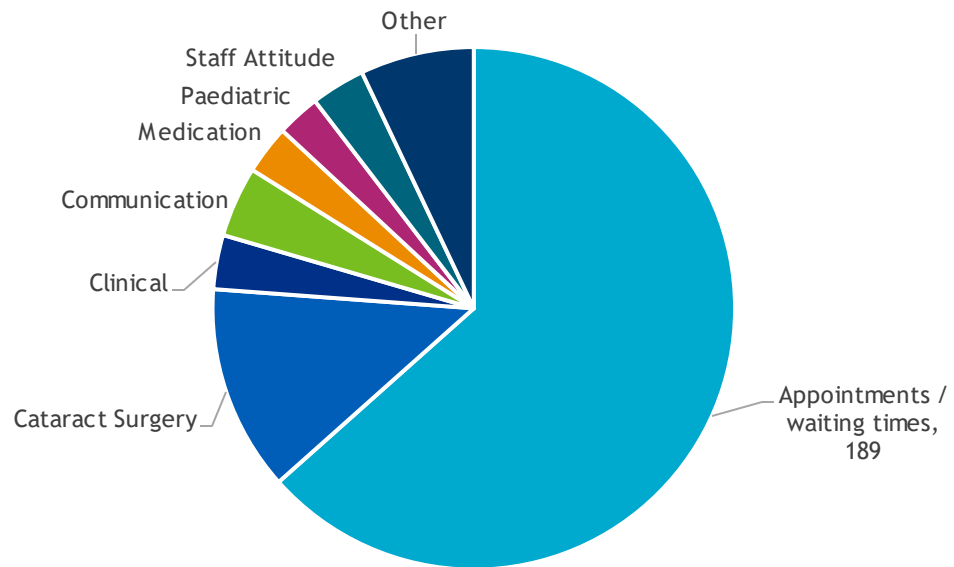
Glaucoma is the only significant outlier where far fewer patients would recommend the service to friends and family. Likely driven by lower scoring for:

- I received the right care without undue delay
- The care that I received felt joined up and consistent
- I have confidence that the clinician treating me was able to support my needs

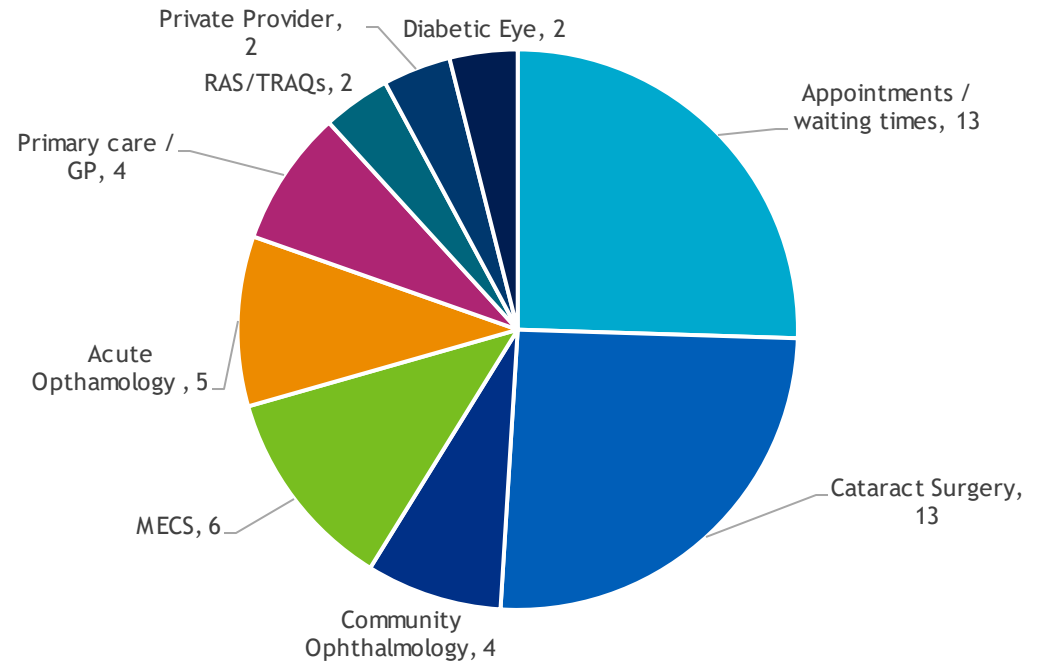


# PALs Feedback – SaTH & CCG

## Negative themes raised in comments to SaTH PALS



## Negative Themes raised in comments to the CCG



# Healthwatch Research

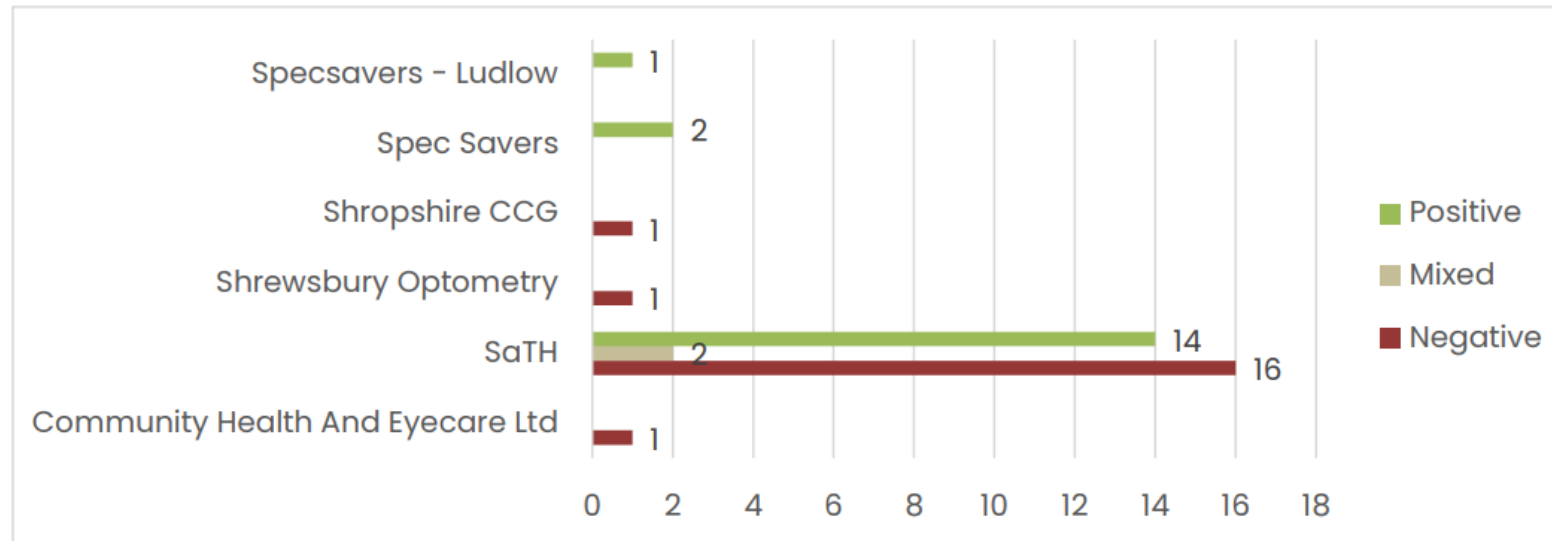
- ▶ Source - Eye Care Services Feedback 2019 - 2021 8 February 2022
- ▶ During their 2018 visit to Royal Shrewsbury Hospital, Healthwatch Shropshire found that although the environment had improved since their previous visit ("*spacious, clean and bright*"), with good service from both the non-clinical teams, and the clinical staff carrying out treatment, delays are prevalent throughout the hospital visiting experience ("*Patients often spend long periods in the waiting areas, both before their consultation with the doctor*"). Equally, Healthwatch identified that communication around this, and proactive information about wait times could be improved as patients can be left in waiting rooms with minimal information.
- ▶ Between 2019 and 2021 Healthwatch again surveyed the patient population, inviting comments from users of ophthalmology services over the time period. They received a mixed view of services, particularly from SaTH, with patients praising the quality of staff and the treatment they provide. It is evident from the qualitative feedback that often once a patient is in a room with a clinician, they are considerate and deliver a high level of care.
- ▶ However, long wait times, frequent cancellations (and the communications surrounding them) and a feeling that communication channels are not clear and reliable emerge as negative themes.



# Healthwatch Raw Data

► Source - Eye Care Services Feedback 2019 - 2021 8 February 2022

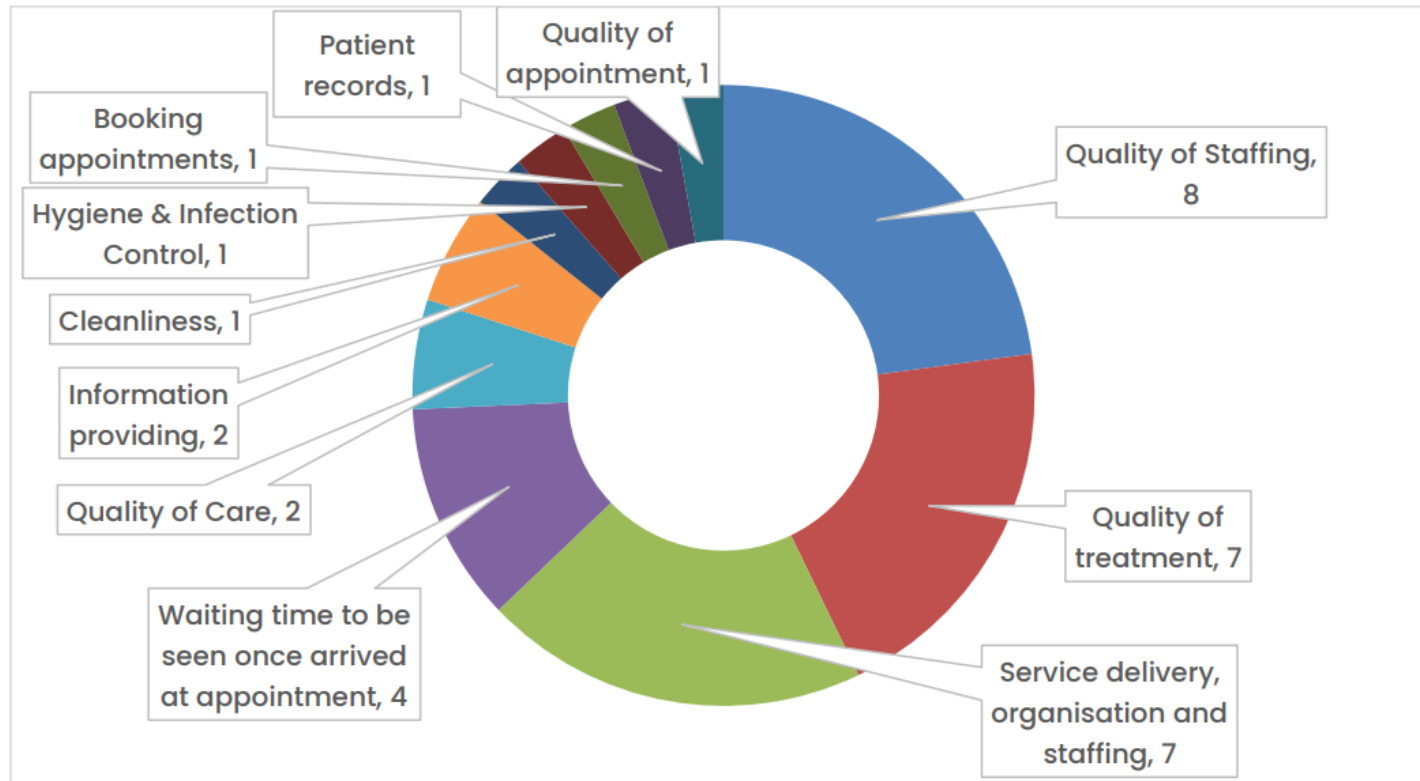
## Sentiment of the experiences 2019 - 2021



# Healthwatch Raw Data

► Source - Eye Care Services Feedback 2019 - 2021 8 February 2022

## SaTH services: positive themes raised in experiences



# Healthwatch Raw Data

► Source - Eye Care Services Feedback 2019 - 2021 8 February 2022

## SaTH services: negative themes raised in comments

