



Accessing care over the Christmas period

Why did we ask this?

Healthwatch Nottingham and Nottinghamshire (HWNN) is an independent organisation that helps people get the best from their local health and care services.

The question we asked was 'How would you access care over the Christmas period' this had not been the subject of a previous evidence collection by HWNN.

The aim of the question was to explore awareness of opening times for health services, how services could be accessed and what people would do if these were not available.

The actual opening times were:

NHS 111 - 365 days a year - 24 hours per day

Walk-in Centre - most centres open 365 days a year although hours can vary

Pharmacy - at least one pharmacy open all days in all districts




Doctor/GP - closed Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day. Call 111 or emergency number outside of these hours.

Dentist - for an emergency dentist call 111

The data we collected also highlights potential awareness gaps for certain communities in our area.

How we collected responses...

We gathered views from local people across Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire County in the following ways:

-  Face to face with local people at public events and community groups and organisations, including Talk 2 Us Points in public venues across Nottingham City and at various community support groups in the County.
-  Through an online question linked to our website. The link was also included in our newsletters to our mailing list.
-  By sending postcard questions to community groups we have worked with before and who have agreed to give them out to local people on our behalf.

When we didn't give them the question card in person we provided freepost envelopes so that people could return their completed questions back to us directly.

We engaged in 15 Talk to Us sessions across 10 city and county locations. As the idea behind the QOTM was to gather information from the public in general, we did not feel it was a suitable survey to target any specific groups.

What people said...

| Service | 24-Dec | 25-Dec | 26-Dec | 31-Dec | 01-Jan |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| NHS 111 | 84.7% | 73.4% | 74.0% | 78.2% | 75.3% |
| Walk-in centre | 75.6% | 47.1% | 56.2% | 68.5% | 55.2% |
| Pharmacy | 67.9% | 23.4% | 40.6% | 58.4% | 31.5% |
| Doctor/GP | 55.8% | 16.2% | 27.3% | 51.0% | 20.8% |
| Dentist | 45.1% | 8.1% | 20.8% | 40.9% | 13.3% |

Source: respondents who thought a particular service would be open on a specified date (n = 308)

The total number of responses received was 308 with the most common response that 84.7% (n=261) of respondents thought that NHS 111 would be open on Christmas Eve. For those who disclosed their gender, just over twice as many women 67.2% (n=166) than men 32.8% (n=81) thought this.

The least common response, 8.1% (n=25), was that a dentist would be open on Christmas Day. For those who disclosed their gender, almost three times as many women 79.2% (n=19) than men 20.8% (n=5) thought this.

Both of these responses are highlighted in yellow in the table.

District

Respondents from all districts thought that dentists were least likely to open over the Christmas period.

Respondents from Ashfield (5.1%) were the least likely to think that a Doctor-GP would be open on Christmas Day with Broxtowe having the highest percentage, 26.4%.

More respondents from Gedling thought that NHS 111 and Walk-in Centres would be open on all days compared to Nottingham City residents who appear to be least informed.

| NHS 111 | 24-Dec | 25-Dec | 26-Dec | 31-Dec | 01-Jan |
|------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Gedling | 96.4% | 92.9% | 89.3% | 92.9% | 82.1% |
| Nottingham | 72.7% | 60.0% | 60.9% | 64.5% | 62.7% |

| Walk-in Centre | 24-Dec | 25-Dec | 26-Dec | 31-Dec | 01-Jan |
|----------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Gedling | 92.9% | 53.6% | 64.3% | 89.3% | 64.3% |
| Nottingham | 75.5% | 42.7% | 51.8% | 67.3% | 52.7% |

In Rushcliffe, none of the respondents thought that a Doctor-GP would be open on 25 Dec, 26 Dec and 01 Jan.

Age

The youngest age groups, 1 - 15 and 16-17 were the most likely to think a Doctor-GP would be open on Christmas Day (34.3% and 36.4% respectively). Additionally, the 16-17 age group were the best informed for NHS 111 opening. 72.7% of the 16-17 year age group thought a GP would be open on 31 Dec in comparison to 28.6% of over 85 year olds. The least informed about the opening of NHS 111, Walk-in Centres and Doctor-GP were the 85+ age group.

Disability

Respondents who indicated they had a Mental Health issue appeared to have a more informed view of opening times across the period with none of that group thinking that a Doctor/GP would be open on Christmas Day. They were also more likely to think NHS 111 and Walk-in Centres were not open.

Generally, respondents who had indicated they had a disability were less likely to think a pharmacy Would be open on New Year's Eve.

Respondents with a Hearing Impairment were least likely to think that NHS 111 and Walk-in Centres were open on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day (50% for each day). However, they were most likely to think that Doctors-GP were open on Christmas Day (30.8%) and New Year's Day (23.1%). For Mental Health and Physical impairments the figures were 0% and 5.6% respectively.

Do you know how you could access these services on the dates above?

Yes, I would know how to access these services on the dates above

| Service | Number | Percent |
|----------------------|--------|---------|
| Yes - NHS 111 | 239 | 77.6% |
| Yes - Walk in Centre | 202 | 65.6% |
| Yes - Doctor/GP | 195 | 63.3% |
| Yes - Pharmacy | 178 | 57.8% |
| Yes - Dentist | 153 | 49.7% |

Most people 77.6% (n=239) were aware of how to access NHS111 with this also being reflected as the lowest rated answer for not knowing how to access a service 13.6% (n=42).

More males than females thought that they would know how to access a Doctor/GP, Pharmacy and Dentist over this period.

No, I would not know how to access these services on the dates above

| Service | Number | Percent |
|---------------------|--------|---------|
| No - Dentist | 113 | 36.7% |
| No - Pharmacy | 87 | 28.2% |
| No - Doctor GP | 75 | 24.4% |
| No - Walk In Centre | 72 | 23.4% |
| No - NHS 111 | 42 | 13.6% |

36.7% (n=113) of respondents were least likely to know how to access a dentist and most likely to know how to access NHS 111. Again, this appeared to be reflected with pharmacies.

If you couldn't access any of these what would you do?

| Response | Number | Percent |
|---|--------|---------|
| Search online | 170 | 55.2% |
| Go to Accident & Emergency | 97 | 31.5% |
| Ask a friend/relative | 96 | 31.2% |
| Wait until they were open | 63 | 20.5% |
| Phone an ambulance | 56 | 18.2% |
| Check local newspaper | 25 | 8.1% |
| Use my personal alarm system (e.g. On-Call) | 11 | 3.6% |

Over half of responders 55.2% (n=170) indicated that they would search online.

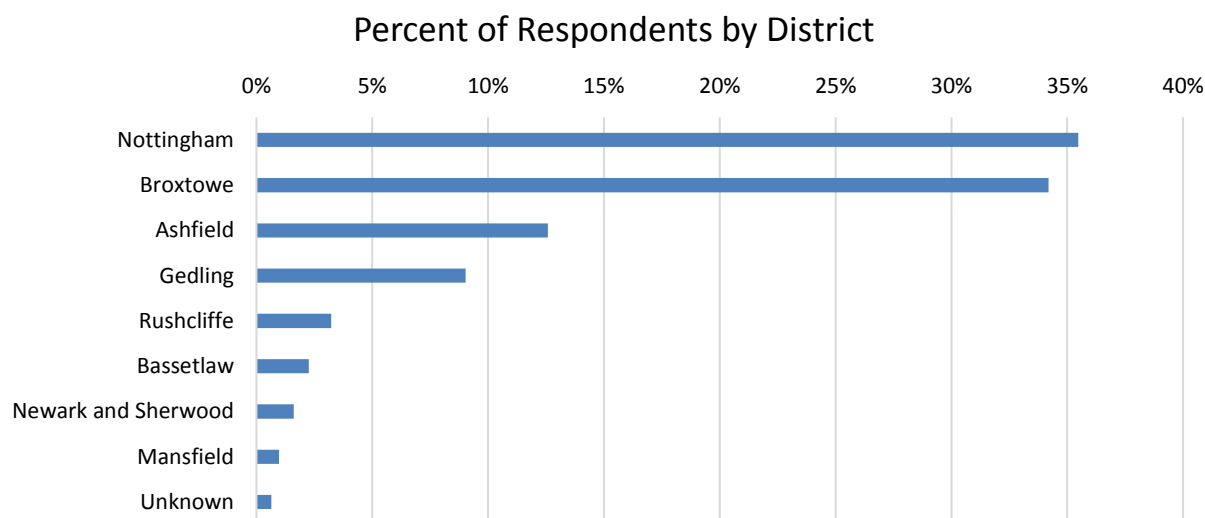
Interestingly, it was the 25 - 64 and 64 - 85 age groups who indicated that this would be their first preference. This was also true for attend A&E, ask a friend and phone an ambulance. However, the 25 - 64 age group was also the most likely to wait until the services were open or check a newspaper.

Less males (28.4%) responded that they would ask a friend/relative or check a local newspaper (5.3%) than females, 32% and 9.3% respectively.

The respondents from the 'Under 18s' age group are the most likely age group to ask a friend/relative 54.4% (n=31).

Who answered our Question of the Month?

We received 308 responses from local people. Our respondents were 110 from Nottingham City and 198 from Nottinghamshire County. The table below shows the percentage of respondents by District.



Source: all respondents (n=308)

More females (n = 194, 63%) than males (n = 95, 30.8%) answered our question, 19 (6.2%) did not tell us their gender.

The age of respondents ranged from 11 years to 95 years of age. 45.2% (n = 140) were aged 64 years and under, 24.5% (n = 76) were aged 65 and over, 30.3% (n = 94) did not answer this question.

122 (39.6%) people identified as having one or more types of disability. 93 (30.2%) people stated they had a long term health condition.

60 (19.5%) of respondents indicated that they were a carer for someone else along with 63 (20.5%) who indicated that they were cared for by another person

The respondents were 75.5% (n = 234) white people, 2.6% (n = 8) Black and 2.3% (n = 7) Asian, 12.6% of people didn't tell us their ethnic background.

Figure 1 Gender of respondents



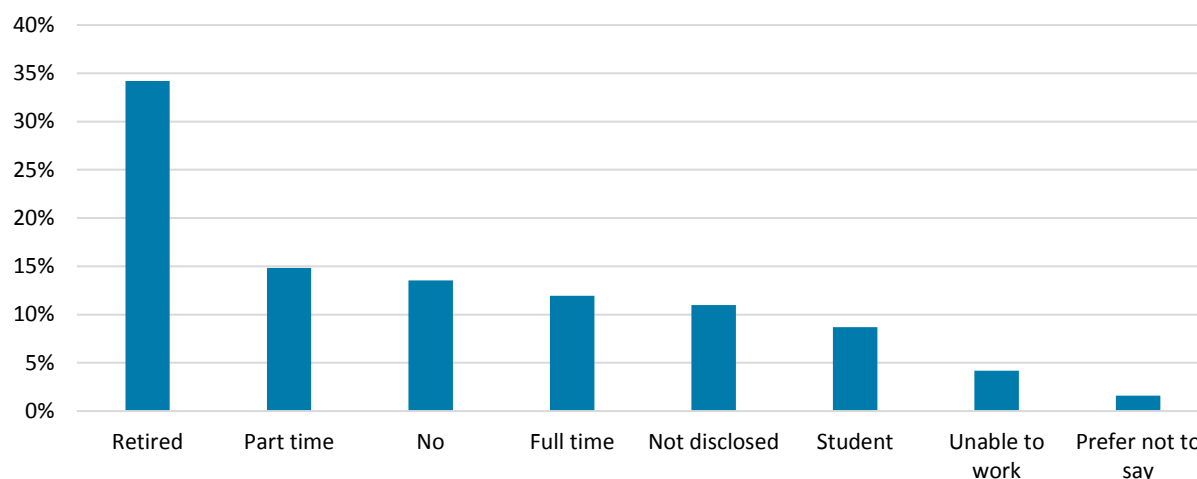
Note: 6.2% did not provide information
Source: all respondents (n=308)

| Ethnic Background of respondents | Count | % |
|----------------------------------|------------|-------------|
| White | 234 | 75.5% |
| Not disclosed | 37 | 12.6% |
| Prefer not to say | 11 | 3.5% |
| Black | 8 | 2.6% |
| Asian | 7 | 2.3% |
| Mixed/multiple ethnic group | 6 | 1.9% |
| South Asian | 3 | 1.0% |
| Arab | 2 | 0.6% |
| Total | 308 | 100% |

Source: all respondents (n=308)

The table below shows the employment status of all respondents who completed this QOTM. Just under a third of all respondents 26.9% (n = 83) were in either full or part-time work, with 106 (34.2%) being retired.

Percentage of Employment Status



Source: all respondents (n=308)

Conclusions and Recommendations

The aim of the question was to explore awareness of opening times for health services, how services could be accessed and what people would do if these were not available.

The data we collected also highlights potential awareness gaps for certain communities in our area.

Generally, it provided an indication of the effectiveness of NHS England's publicity campaign for holiday opening hours.

More than 70% of respondents thought that the NHS 111 service would be open on all of the specified holiday dates which shows a greater awareness of access to this service.

However, the least informed about the opening of NHS 111, Walk-in Centres and Doctor-GP were the 85+ age group indicating that this group may need specific targeting to raise their awareness.

Recommendation 1

Healthwatch to share this report with staff, volunteers and groups who answered this QOTM.

Recommendation 2

Partners to use findings to inform how service providers and commissioners communicate opening times and information to people dependent on their gender, age, ethnic group and where they live.