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# Engagement report

2020-21

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# A summary of our year

**786**

people we have  
talked and listened to  
in our communities



**912**

PALs enquires  
dealt with



**7**

Patient  
Participation Group  
Chairs network meetings



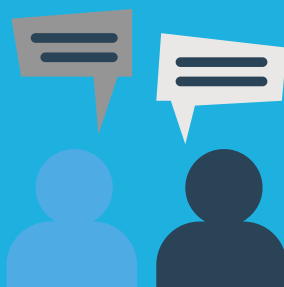
**68**

engagement events  
and stakeholder  
meetings



**367**

people joined  
our online  
Citizens' Panel



**3**

primary care  
networks supported  
involve their  
communities



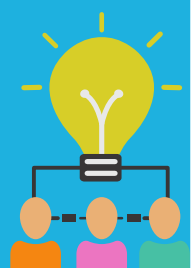
**1**

independent  
consultation  
report



**7**

Somerset Engagement  
and Advisory Group  
meetings



# Involving the public in our work

We want the people of Somerset to be able to live healthy and independent lives, within thriving communities. We can only do this if we work together with our partners in the health and care system and with our patients and public.

We are committed to making sure that the patient and public voice is at the heart of everything we do as move forward together. This year we launched our communications and engagement strategy that sets out how we will achieve this.

Our objectives are:

- to build trusted relationships with groups and individuals in Somerset
- to encourage the public to have their say by making it as easy as possible for them to talk to us
- to make sure everyone can access information about what we are doing and why we are doing it
- to support our staff to hear the public voice in the commissioning of services.

Our objectives were produced following engagement with, and feedback from patients, staff and partners.





# Our duty to involve

We have a legal obligation to involve the public both in how we plan services and in any changes to current services. But this is not why we do it. We do it because we passionately believe it is the right thing to do. We are your NHS.

Key highlights in 2020-21 include:

- We completed formal public consultation on the proposed relocation of acute inpatient mental health services
- We developed a Citizens' Panel hosted on the online engagement platform Bang the Table
- We coproduced a stakeholder database with a lead VCSE infrastructure organisation, Spark Somerset, that helps us reach communities we don't hear from enough
- We heard from 307 Children and Young People about their views of emotional health and wellbeing services in Somerset and will be using this information to inform our commissioning decisions going forward
- We worked with Somerset Diverse Communities and Diversity Voice to ensure our communications meet the needs of our Ethnic Minority communities.



DIVERSITY  
VOICE

healthwatch  
Somerset

mind  
for better mental health  
in Somerset



SPARK  
SOMERSET  
INSPIRING COMMUNITIES

HEALTH  
CONNECTIONS  
MENDIP

SOMERSET  
Maternity  
Voices  
Working in partnership to improve maternity services



citizens  
advice  
Somerset

sasp  
Somerset Activity & Sports Partnership

swanadvocacy  
changing lives



# Our approach to engagement

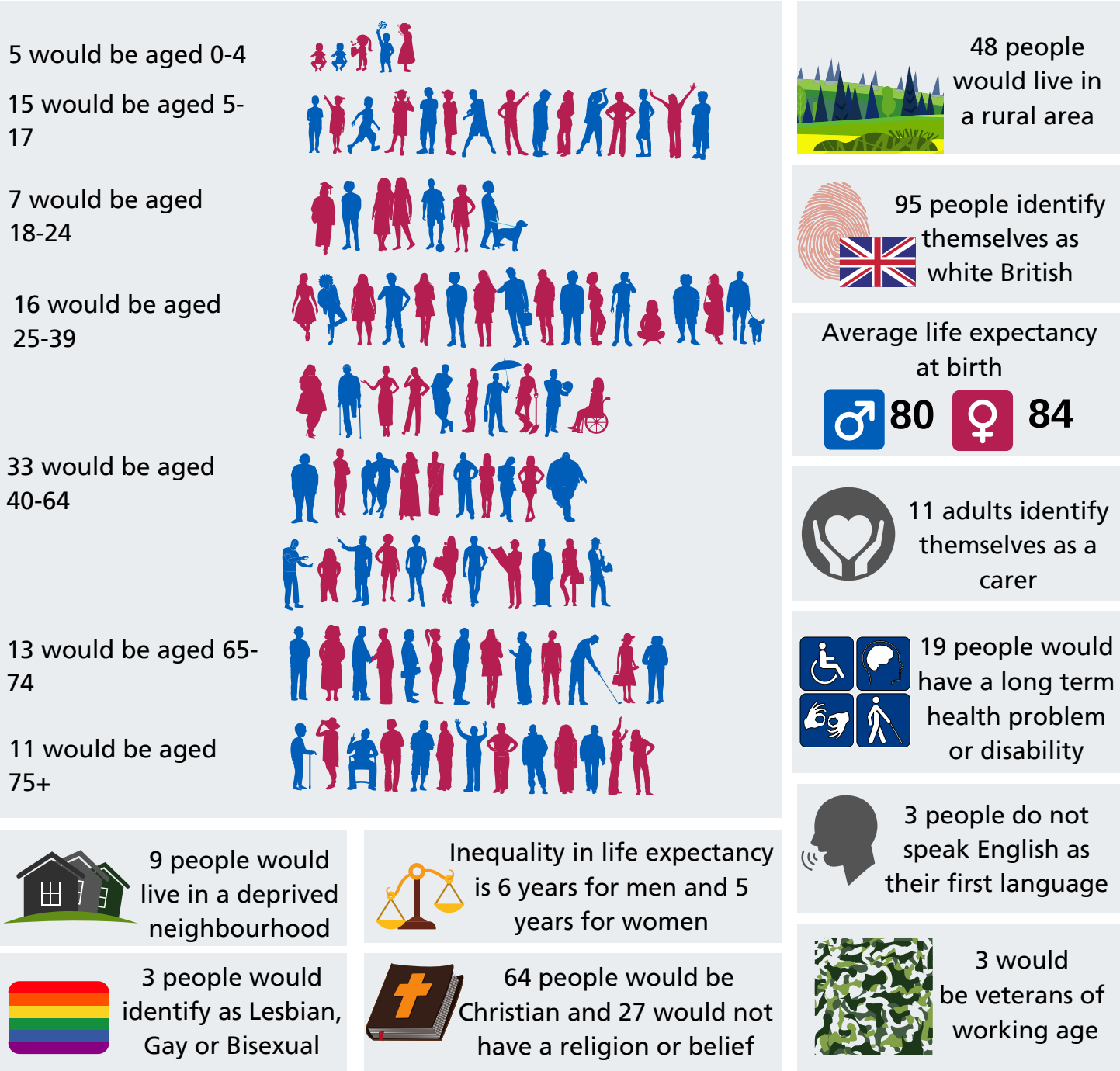
We know that our patient and public involvement needs to be as diverse as our population is.

We have committed to communicating and working with people in lots of different ways and have visually displayed how we plan to do this below. We hope this will help us hear more views going forward.



# Our people in Somerset

We also know that we need to be fair in our patient and public involvement making sure that we are hearing from everyone. To ensure we understand our population, we have clearly set out our demographics as if Somerset were a village of 100 people.



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# How we have listened

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## Somerset Engagement and Advisory Group

Somerset Engagement and Advisory Group (SEAG) is a representative group of community stakeholders that check and challenge our work.

32 organisations that represent a wide variety of communities in Somerset attended seven meetings in 2020-21.

Members were asked for their views on the following:

- Our response to Coronavirus
- Online access to healthcare services
- Winter flu campaign
- Think NHS 111 first
- NHS 111 first communications
- Covid-19 vaccination programme
- NHS GP community pharmacy consultation service

We asked members for their views on our Think NHS 111 First communication messages. They told us that:

- We should use Accident and Emergency (A&E) rather than Emergency Department (ED).
- Medical Professional is the preferred term when talking about clinically trained staff.
- "Get medical advice quickly" was the clearest message.
- As was "Get the right care, in the right place, at the right time."

During the pandemic we have been able to work with our SEAG members to better understand the impact that the pandemic is having on our communities and work in partnership to address inequalities. This has included partnership working to promote and deliver the Covid-19 vaccination programme and reaching out with support to our homeless community.



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# How we have listened

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## Covid-19 pandemic



During the Summer 2020 we pulled together feedback from our Citizens' Panel, Healthwatch Somerset survey, Somerset Engagement and Advisory members and our Patient Advice and Liaison Service to make sure we were able to include public and patient feedback into our planning.

The key findings from the report were shared across the organisation and highlighted some concerns that we were then able to address including:

- Communications regarding cancelled appointments. We worked with Somerset and Yeovil & District NHS Foundation Trusts to ensure websites contained as much information as possible about when appointments would be rescheduled.
- Accessing NHS services digitally. We worked with partners across many organisations to ensure that people unable to access services digitally were not disadvantaged.
- The importance of voluntary and community sector (VCS) organisations during the pandemic. As a result of this we continue to work closely with our VCS organisations to reach our communities.

## Covid-19 vaccination programme



From December 2020 to March 2021 we acted as the main point of contact for Somerset Covid-19 vaccination queries and during this time we spoke to around 400 people. We used this feedback to improve our vaccination programme including:

- Developing public communications including our website and social media accounts including sharing the latest guidance.
- "Frequently asked questions" that are under constant review and development
- Passing key feedback to leaders of vaccination sites (e.g. areas for improvement and positive feedback).
- Developing and improving our procedures with our health and social care partners.
- Sharing information with Somerset's Incident Control Centre and other key meetings involved in the organisation of Somerset's response to Covid-19.



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# How we have listened

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## Children and young people emotional health and wellbeing

**YOUR VIEWS MATTER**

We worked with Young Somerset to gather children and young people's feedback on their Mental Health services in Somerset. We created survey ran that from 06 July to 09 August 2020. 307 people completed the survey, mostly children and young people.

We were told that:

- People liked services that helped, listened, supported and were friendly towards them.
- People did not like that some services had long waiting lists and were hard to access.
- People would like to see easier access, increased availability, more suitable services and better communication about the services on offer.
- Friends, family, hobbies, listening to music and a good sleeping pattern are very important in helping to maintain or improve mental health.
- Loneliness, difficult relationships with friends and family, school/college and poor sleep pattern makes it harder to maintain good mental health.
- Of the total participants 60% felt okay, only 28.5% felt happy and 8.5% felt angry. Other identified emotions were 12 feeling anxious, 4 feeling lonely and 4 feeling mixed emotions.
- 12% of respondents said they hadn't accessed services but said that they would like to.

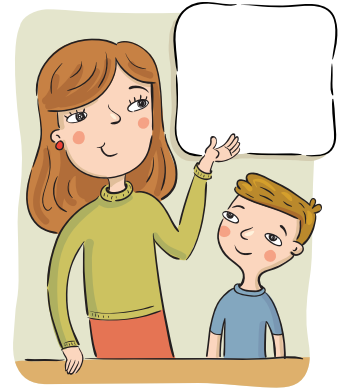
Based on the findings of the report we agreed that commissioners of children and young people mental health services in Somerset should always check if the service will:

1. Help and support young people improve their mental health
2. Put the young person's voice at the heart of it so they are listened to
3. Be friendly
4. Reduce waiting times and waiting lists
5. Be easy to access
6. Be suitable and appropriate
7. Be well communicated



## How we have listened

Healthwatch Somerset's readers panel have helped us to create our Patient information leaflet "Planning ahead: your Somerset treatment escalation plan".



We have worked alongside NHS England, Healthwatch Somerset and Somerset County Council to bring together key agencies delivering unpaid carers support and information in Somerset. The aim of the workshops will be to ensure the voice of the unpaid carer is being captured and then used in the commissioning and delivery of support.

Our Citizens' Panel have told us their thoughts on "Our response to the Covid-19 pandemic", "Accessing services digitally" and "Think NHS 111 First". Following each survey we let panel members know the difference that their feedback has made.





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## How we have listened

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### Patient Advice and Liaison Service

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offers advice and support to patients, their families and carers. We listen and respond to concerns, suggestions or queries.

This year we received 912 PALS enquiries. Learning from PALS is used to inform our wider engagement, commissioning decisions and improve the patient experience.

The main themes arising from PALS are:

- Access to Services
- Access to appointments
- Waiting times
- Patient transport
- Data Protection
- Medicines
- Treatment
- Communication

## Making a difference

Our Patient Advice and Liaison service provides advice and guidance to patients on a daily basis. We also record all feedback and use this in our engagement work. We have used PALS data in the following engagement projects this year:

- Our Covid-19 response
- Children and Young People Emotional health and wellbeing
- Community equipment and wheelchair service procurement
- Our Covid-19 vaccination messaging



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# How you can get involved

We want the people of Somerset to help us develop their local health care services and have real involvement in decision making.

There are lots of ways that you can get involved, have your say and help us shape our services:

- join our citizen's panel
- become a people champion
- sign up for our weekly engagement newsletter
- join your GP practice's patient participation group
- share your patient story with us
- get involved with Fit for My Future
- follow us on Twitter @somersetccg or Facebook @SomersetCCG
- attend a Governing Body meeting
- join our Somerset Engagement and Advisory Group
- attend our annual general meeting
- join Healthwatch Somerset

To sign up or find out more about other ways to get involved, visit our website:



[www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/  
get-involved/](http://www.somersetccg.nhs.uk/get-involved/)

