

Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services



In September 2020, local Healthwatch collected the views of 130 people from across Sussex. We have provided NHS Commissioners with a detailed report that lets them know what you think is good about the current service, and what could be improved. A new contract will be awarded in 2022.

We have also provided them with your views and ideas about how you would like the service to change or improve in the future. This will help shape the new contract.

Location of respondents where known:



Using your feedback, and our research, we:

Have made 14 recommendations, shared with NHS Commissioners responsible for designing the new service. ✓

Have already shared your ideas and feedback with potential bidders for the new contract at a market engagement event held in October. ✓

Have secured changes to the draft specification for the new contract, including stronger targets around timeliness, and better patient communications. ✓

We will:

Issue a joint briefing with NHS Commissioners to city-leaders and decision-makers to raise awareness of the issues.

Will continue to work with NHS Commissioners in 2021 as they develop the new contract to ensure that your views are reflected.

Will review the draft specification for the new contract. We will also help set and evaluate the questions which potential bidders need to answer and fulfil.

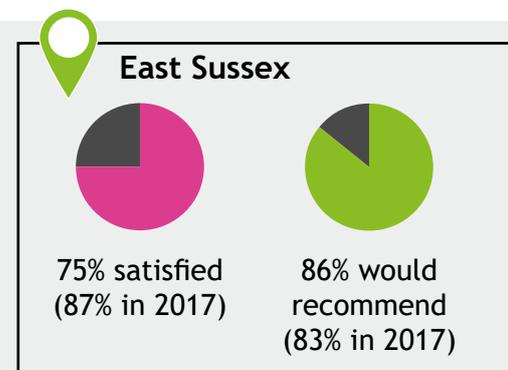
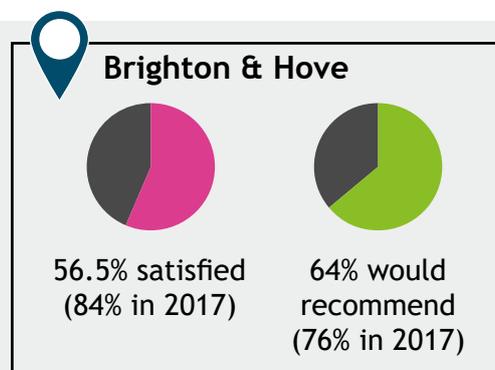
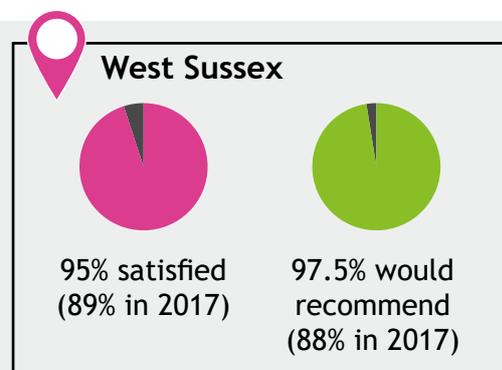
You recorded high satisfaction levels with the service, but there are variations across Sussex:



Overall, 78.5% of people said they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the service (lower than in 2017, 85%).



86% of people said they were 'very likely' or 'likely' to recommend family and friends to apply for the service (higher than in 2017, 80%).



Satisfaction levels during the first COVID lockdown period were high at 84%, but again varied by Healthwatch area:

During lockdown, you liked:



More reliable and consistent pick up

What you told is good about the service:



Large numbers of you told us that you had 'never' or 'rarely' experienced:

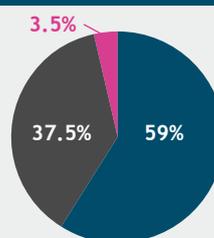
- Having to make your own way to hospital due to transport delays (91%)
- Having to travel alone without your carer/ other support (88.5%)
- Transport being inappropriate for your needs (87%)
- Same day cancellation of your journey (86%)
- Missing your appointment due to transport delays or changes (81.5%)



The service that I have received has been excellent. Friendly, caring people who make my time with them feel special.



What problems you experienced:



59% of you told us that you had experienced delays, changes, or problems with your transport or journeys. Only 37.5% had not. 3.5% could not recall or did not know.

- 68% of you had experienced delays being picked up on time from hospital
- 38.5% of you said were unhappy with the notifications you had received about delays or changes to your journeys

Renal patients reported experiencing more issues with their transport than any other patient group.



Returned transport from hospital to home could be improved; a two hour wait sometimes is too long after 4 hours on dialysis.



The future: changes you want to see made to Non-emergency Patient Transport Services:

You said a Patient Transport Service should:

- ✓ Notify you of any changes or delays to your journeys (95%)
- ✓ Give you an exact time for when your vehicle will be arriving (91%)
- ✓ Make it easy for you to speak with someone at any time to check where your vehicle is (85%)
- ✓ Create a dedicated service specifically for renal patients (83%)



You want the future service to provide you with:

- A text or call telling you when your vehicle is 30 minutes away (79%)
- A telephone call centre service with extended operating hours (open longer than 9am-5pm) (75%)
- An online account facility which allows you (or a person you nominate) to amend/cancel your bookings (63%)
- A mobile phone app which allows you to track the whereabouts of your vehicle (61.5%)

Conclusion:

Most people told us that they are generally satisfied with the current service which is good news. There remain areas where improvement is needed, notably passengers should not be experiencing poorer pick-up times when being collected from hospital, and they should be routinely notified of any changes or delays to their transport. You have said very clearly what features of a Non-emergency Patient Transport Service are important to you, and what future changes you would like to see.

NHS Commissioners are actively listening, and we will pursue changes with them as the new contract for the service is drawn up.

For research or data clarification please contact Alan Boyd, Project Coordinator, alan@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk 01273 234 041

To contribute personal experience to our evidence base:

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