





Musculo-skeletal services

- the Hillingdon public's view

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Who we are

Healthwatch Hillingdon is a health and social care watchdog. We are here to help our residents get the best out of their health and care services; and give them a voice to influence and challenge how health and care services are provided throughout Hillingdon.

Healthwatch Hillingdon has very strong operational relationships with the local NHS, Council and Voluntary Sector organisations. We are an independent partner and a valued "critical friend" within health and social care.

Membership of the Hillingdon Health and Wellbeing Board and Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group Governing Body enables us to have considerable strategic input into the shaping of local commissioning and the delivery of services.

As a local partner, we are kept well-informed, can challenge and seek assurances on behalf of our residents, ensure that the lived experience of patients and the public are clearly heard, and are influencing decisions and improving health and social care in Hillingdon.

Our reports and recommendations

Healthwatch Hillingdon produces evidence-based reports for commissioners and providers, to inform them of the views and experiences of people who use health and social care services in the London Borough of Hillingdon.

Commissioners and providers must have regard for our views, reports and any recommendations made and respond in writing to explain what actions they will take, or why they have decided not to act. ¹

Healthwatch have a duty to publish reports they share with commissioners and providers, and their responses, in public.

Our reports and recommendations are also shared with:

- Hillingdon Health and Wellbeing Board
- Hillingdon External Services Scrutiny Committee
- Healthwatch England
- The Care Quality Commission

^{1.} Section 221 [3A] and Section 224 of The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and implemented by "The arrangements to be made by Relevant Bodies in Respect of Local Healthwatch Regulations 2013." (28 March 2013)

Introduction

Hillingdon Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is planning to improve care and treatment for patients with muscle and joint problems by providing residents with a more "joined up" service that provides service users with better access to clinically appropriate treatment, in a timelier manner.

They want to provide patients and residents who may be affected by the changes the opportunity to share their views about the plans and how their experience of treatment could have been improved.

Hillingdon CCG commissioned Healthwatch Hillingdon to independently engage with current service users and residents.

Methodology

The project was carried out by the Healthwatch Hillingdon Outreach and Volunteer Officer with the help of a few volunteers. The engagement period ran for approximately 5 weeks, from early April - 14 May 2018.

To capture patients views, a questionnaire was devised by the CCG and was shared across all MSK departments. At the start of the engagement period, Hillingdon CCG also wrote to all patients affected by the planned changes and invited them to share their views.

The letter included a link to the survey and the contact details of the Outreach and Volunteer Office at Healthwatch Hillingdon, should volunteers want to share their views over the telephone, or request a copy of the survey.

The survey was also made available on Survey Monkey and links were made available through the CCG website and was circulated by Healthwatch Hillingdon via email as well as being promoted through the Healthwatch Hillingdon website, Facebook Page, Twitter account and its news bulletin.

To ensure we had a sufficient sample size and covered arrange of MSK services, face-to-face surveys were conducted at a range of MSK clinics including:

- Rheumatology (Mount Vernon Hospital)
- Physiotherapy (Hillingdon Hospital)
- Physiotherapy (Gym Mount Vernon Hospital)
- Orthopedics and Fracture Clinic (Hillingdon Hospital)
- CNWL Eastcote Health Centre
- CNWL Uxbridge Central Surgery
- CNWL The Warren Medical Centre

With the approval of senior managers of these departments, Healthwatch Hillingdon was permitted to approach patients while they waited to be seen for their

appointments, or in some cases afterwards and asked if they would be happy to complete our survey. A FREEPOST envelope was given with a copy of the survey for those preferring to complete the survey at home. This was to encourage as good a response as possible at no extra cost to those who were completing the form.

Reception staff at CNWL clinics and rheumatology at Mount Vernon Hospital were extremely helpful by informing patients waiting for appointments that our survey was being carried out and asked if they'd be happy talking to us.

Acknowledgments

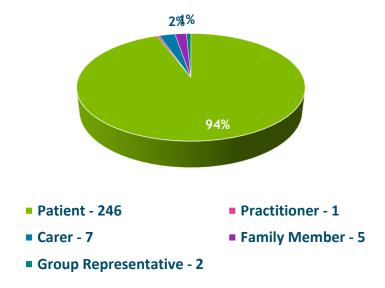
Healthwatch Hillingdon would like to thank all the organisations who helped us to promote the survey to their staff, patients and the wider public; and those who gave us permission to deliver our outreach events on their premises.

We would also express a special thank you to all the people who took the time to complete our survey and give us their views on the 'MSK services'

Evidence

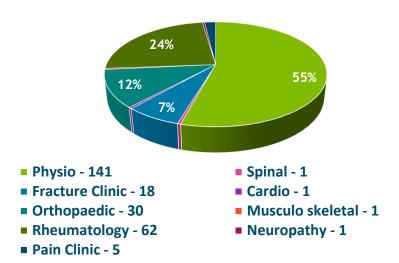
A total of 276 questionnaires were completed and a brief analysis of the results are shown below.

Q1. I am providing a response



The first question was used to identify who was completing the survey. Overall a majority of 94% of surveys were completed by the patients themselves. With a few being completed by a family member or carer.

Q2 Which MSK service are you responding about

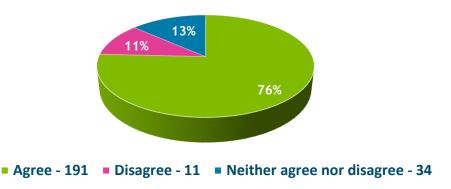


There is a significant variation in the ratio of responses received across MSK services. These figures reflect the time spent at various clinics and the amount of access we had to patients.

More than half (55%) of all feedback gathered during our engagement was obtained from patients receiving physiotherapy at Mount Vernon and The Hillingdon Hospital and at the CNWL clinics at Uxbridge Central Surgery, Eastcote Health Centre, and The Warren Medical Centre in Hayes. This explains the high response rate.

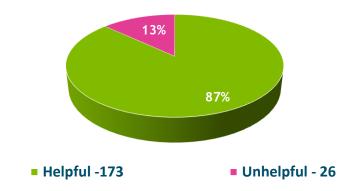
Negligible response were received from patients receiving treatment and support for pain management due to the lack of opportunity to engage with these patients.

Q3. My doctor referred me to the service I need promptly following my health complaint.



Over three-quarters of patients (76%) agree they had been referred to the service they needed promptly following their health complaint compared to 11 who did not. 16 % neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

Q.4. If you could refer yourself to some services such as physiotherapy in the future, how would this be helpful/ unhelpful?

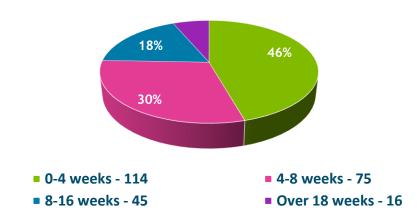


Overall, an overwhelming (87%) of patients felt it would be helpful if they could self-referral with most feeling it would speed up their *treatment "I would have to wait forever for a GP to get a referral"*. Respondents who felt self-referral would be unhelpful (13%) were confident that their GP would make the right referral on their behalf.

"I might not know the most appropriate treatment"

"GP would be better to diagnose condition and make the right referral"

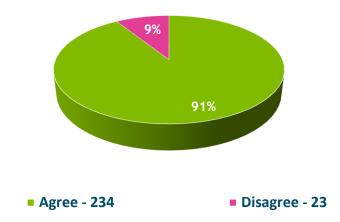
Q5. How long did you have to wait to receive treatment following referral from your doctor?



According to the responses collated just under half of all patients received treatment for their condition in 4 weeks or less. This figure includes patients who presented at A & E with fractures. In such cases, treatment was received immediately.

Overall, 94% of patients received treatment within 16 weeks of referral from their doctor or consultant, with a small percentage (6%) waiting longer than 18 weeks.

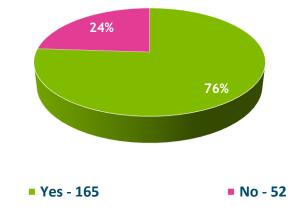
Q6. The location for treatment was easy to get to. Do you...



The majority of respondents (91%) were happy with the location of their treatment and found it easy to get to. If given the opportunity to change the location - some reported they would opt to be treated at their GP practice, local hospital or in the community.

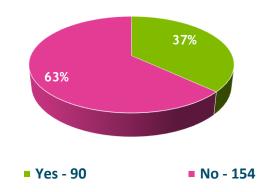
Those who disagreed with this statement offered a similar response and would change the location to Mount Vernon Hospital, Hillingdon Hospital, at their GP practice or in the community.

Q7. Has the treatment you received improved your health?



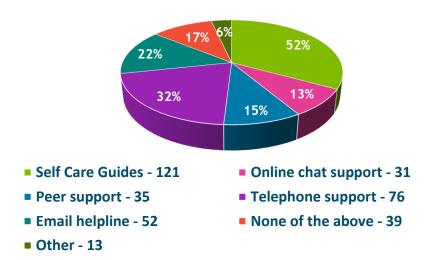
Overall 76% of respondents told us that the treatment they received had improved their condition. However, a significant number (26%) replied 'no' to this question. As this was a closed question which could only elicit a 'yes' or 'no' response, it is important to note that most patients who responded no to this question were either new patients being seen for the first time, or patients who had only recently started treatment

Q.8. Did you need multiple referrals before getting the right treatment?



A significant number of respondents (37%) said they needed multiple referrals before getting the right treatment for their condition. However, almost two thirds (63%) did not.

Q9. Which of the resources would complement your treatment and manage your condition?



Overall, most patients responded positively to having access to resources that might help them to manage their condition. 52% liked the idea of being given a self-care guide with a significant percentage (83%) of those people receiving treatment in the community finding it helpful.

Email helpline and telephone support were also popular options.

Q.10. If you could change anything about the care and treatment of muscle and joint problems for residents of Hillingdon, what would it be?



Comments on this question were received from 131 respondents. The comments revolved around three main themes:

- Increased frequency of appointments
- Appointments to run on time
- Faster referral to treatment times

The frequency of appointments:

16 respondents commented on having to wait too long between treatments and wanted to have their appointments more frequently. "every month is not enough" was the comment made by one respondent. Another suggested "every week"

One respondent suggested having access to specialists who they could talk to should they experience symptoms between appointments.

Appointments to run on time:

11 respondents commented on not being seen on time for their appointment "Waiting time is too long. Even when you have an appointment you need to wait long" commented one respondent. Another commented, "appointment times need to be on point".

Quicker referrals:

20 respondents commented on having to wait too long to be to receive treatment after their referral with several patients citing that if they could change anything it would be faster referrals "Getting things moving more quickly initially". Another said "Far faster appointments - may not be life and death but very painful and matter could get worse in that time hence costing NHS more money and time"

The queues for MRI scans were also commented on a few times in the comments, it may not be considered as a major theme however it is worth noting that long waiting times for MRI scans could potentially result in delays to treatment.

Q.11. Any other comments?

Comments on this question were received from 54 respondents. We separated the comments into positive and negative and looked for possible themes. however there didn't seem to be any obvious ones.



Comments overall were very positive, with the majority of patients seemingly happy with the treatment and care they had received.

Positive comments:

Some respondents were complimentary of the treatment and care they had received from individual staff members "Adam was great", "Have been seen by Lauren, she was amazing".

A high number of respondents commented positively about rheumatology treatment and care at Mount Vernon Hospital and Physiotherapy at Hillingdon Hospital. Staff were also praised for their helpfulness and knowledge.

Negative Comments

Waiting times for treatment and appointments running late relate back to themes we highlighted in the previous question. Long waiting times between referral and treatment can lead to frustration and perhaps sometimes desperation for some patients and their families. Two respondents commented that the opted to seek private physiotherapy in order to get a prompt appointment.

Perhaps in the minority but important nonetheless worth commenting was the perceived lack of emotional support available, particularly to younger patients who are living with MSK conditions. "It would be nice to have the support of patients with long-term chronic diseases. Lack of support leads to depression as it is very hard dealing with chronic pain every day. Also, there should be support for all ages as fairly young suffering people doesn't receive the empathy due to the stereotypical thought that young people cannot suffer because of MSK"

Positive Comments	Negative Comments
Uxbridge physio is quite helpful provided it's given promptly e.g. like a wait of 1-2 weeks and not every 6 weeks	My son needs to go to private physio to get an appointment promptly
Hillingdon physio is very good, and the timing is just right	I was not happy with the treatment from A & E doctor and the complaint was filled
I have received the most excellent care	Staff is very helpful, but this lunch tea/break/dinner break is not helping. Avoid such breaks in the future
Really good physio at Mount Vernon Hospital	There is no joined up thinking. Hospital clinicians /GPs/physiotherapists all seem to act alone. Little appreciation by all on mental effects of life-changing problems
I am very pleased with the treatment I have had. There has been good follow up	Waiting time always long - 1-1.5 hours
Adam was great	Council make it hard to park anywhere
Plaster room staff and receptionist at fracture clinic are excellent	It would be nice to have the support of patients with long-term chronic diseases. Lack of support leads to depression as it is very hard dealing with chronic pain every day. Also, there should be support for all ages as fairly young suffering people doesn't receive the empathy due to the stereotypical thought that young people cannot suffer because of MSK

Staff in physio at Hillingdon Hospital are very good	My GP referred me to rheumatology, but they told me that rheumatology has nothing to do with my problem and I get an x-ray instead. Six months down the line I am here
I'm very happy with the treatment and service	This time I am going private because of the disgusting waiting period to see a specialist but last time a few years back also seemingly uncaring
Mount Vernon Rheumatology was much better than other providers. Waiting times and appointments are much better. Really trying to meet individual needs	Please consider the long waiting time to receive information in relation to scans, blood test results to GP and then to patients. Positive or negative, results can be transferred
My own experience was very positive	Treatment should be for as long as needed not for set amount of sessions
Good physio department at Hillingdon Hospital	
Current service is very good	
Happy with treatment so far	
I found the physio helpful but not the doctors	
Brilliant service - minimum waiting and friendly staff	
Have been seen by Lauren, she is amazing	
Hillingdon Hospital provides high quality and effective physiotherapy. The gym and equipment available allows me to progress more effectively. I have no complaints	
Staff at Hillingdon Hospital Physio department are very good - friendly and knowledgeable	
I am very pleased with the treatment I have received	
The treatment I have received has been excellent	

Really good physios at Mount Vernon Hospital	
I have received the most excellent care	
No change needed	
The consultant was lovely and explained everything and we felt very comfortable	
Care given by Dr Woodham is excellent, but it is very difficult to get an appointment	
I have been very pleased with the ongoing care I have received	
The service I have received has been good	
I would like to say that my treatment and ongoing care and support from the rheumatology team has been excellent	

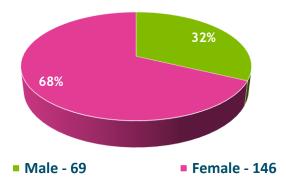
Demographics

Summary of demographic analysis

An analysis of the demographics shows no distinguishing difference in terms of themes. From an age perspective younger people (under 30) and those aged over 60 were all happy with the treatment they were receiving. They also wanted prompt treatments, to be seen on time for appointments and more frequent appointments. When looking at racial background, again there was no real difference.

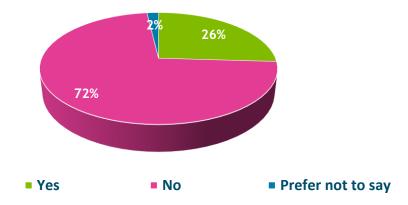
Self-help guides were of benefit to everyone irrespective of age, race or gender with 83% considering it a helpful resource.

Q.12 How would you describe our gender?



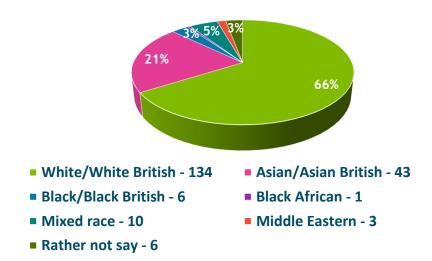
Women surveyed exceeded men surveyed (68% and 32% respectively).

Q.13. Do you consider yourself to have a disability (i.e. a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial effect on your ability to perform everyday activities)?

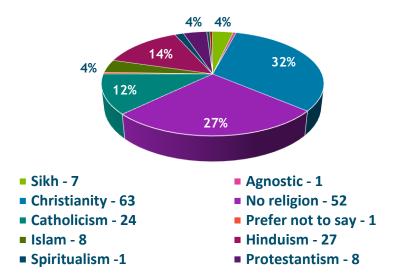


Overall, most respondents (72%) did not consider themselves to have a disability that affected their ability to perform everyday activities.

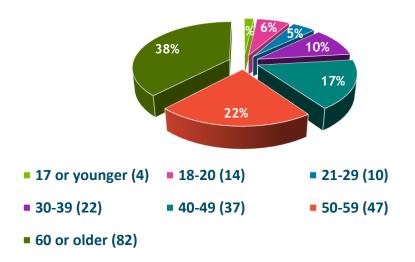
Q.14. What race/ethnicity best describes you?



Q.15. Do you identify with any of the following religions (Please select all that apply?)



Q.16. What age bracket are you in?



All age groups from under 18's (less than 1%) to over 60s (38%) were represented. Older people perhaps make up a larger percentage because some MSK conditions are likely to affect people in later years.

Appendices

Appendix i

If you could change anything about the care and treatment of muscle and joint problems for residents of Hillingdon, what would it be?

"Having enough staff to deal with patients so they can be seen promptly. Staff shortages delays treatment"

[&]quot;Appointments should be more frequent"

[&]quot;More doctors needed for referral and follow-up appointments"

[&]quot;Patients having to telephone for appointments - they need to have working telephone lines"

[&]quot;Open minded about patient's pain thresholds"

[&]quot;Ultrasound is terrible. Please improve that side of the service. The phone is constantly on record and no answer at anytime"

[&]quot;Shorter waiting times"

[&]quot;More detailed explanation of treatment following surgical procedure"

[&]quot;Having access to osteopath services on the NHS would be helpful. Treatment is only available privately and is very expensive"

[&]quot;Be more responsive to patient needs"

[&]quot;Would like to know if I am getting the right treatment or is it about NHS cuts" "Easier access to referrals and hints and tips for the symptoms"

[&]quot;Speaking to someone sooner e.g. via phone"

[&]quot;Ouicker action taken and home visits"

[&]quot;More leaflets regarding the injuries"

[&]quot;Better response from the main people"

[&]quot;To be seen quickly and have physio"

[&]quot;Have the location of the clinics at the main reception so patients can easily get to where they need"

[&]quot;Appointment times need to be on point"

[&]quot;The be referred to a specialist (consultant) rather than go through doctor who does not seem to have time"

[&]quot;Appointments should be booked over the phone rather than by letter"

[&]quot;Do not mix MSK during treatment or therapy"

- "Pain acute service keep missing her calls with no number to call back"
- "Shorter time of waiting for appointment"
- "Improve hospital parking"
- "Waiting times"
- "Waiting time is too long. Even when you have your appointment you have to wait long"
- "Physio treatment scattered and very limited in scope reliance on exercises, long periods between appointments"
- "Get more staff"
- "More disability parking places"
- "Waiting 30 minutes for appointments"
- "Time between appointments is very long" "MRI scan queues"
- "Appointments are not on time"
- "Shorter waiting times"
- "Change a restriction on number of treatments"
- "Increase frequency of treatments"
- "Give more frequent appointments"
- "Being seen on time"
- "Exercise sheets for common complaints"
- "More reduced costs appointments for those not on benefits"
- "More sessions and more frequency. Every month is not enough"
- "It would be a nice option to come to group classes without a GP referral"
- "An option of a swimming pool for knee exercises would be nice"
- "Shorter waiting times for appointments"
- "To be seen auicker"
- "Have access to a specialist who can talk to you if you have symptoms between appointments. Physio session ongoing"
- "Doctors and surgeon are always late and rushed"
- "Some sort of class, even paid, to live with pain"
- "Do home visits"
- "To not have to go through the GP first"
- "Start treatment as soon as possible when we can control other than get more worse"
- "Please speed up the system for scan. Still waiting for appointment more than 16 weeks"
- "Easier access for those unable to travel. More options or early/late afternoon appointments around working"

"To access quicker referrals" "To long waiting. Patients should be treated when they are in pain. 4-8 weeks wait is just a joke"

"To be seen for longer periods by the physio"

"Have the option to continue the classes such as these without GP referral"

"Alternative treatments"

"More frequent appointments and follow up treatments"

"Reduced waiting times" "More treatment without using strong medicine"

"Physio should not be a barrier to effect on-point treatment. It is important to get the right treatment by specialist"

"See a specialist as soon as possible"

"Faster referral and closer intervals for recalls"

"More staff" "Go elsewhere"

"Multi-disciplinary clinic"

"Being able to see the same consultant every time, less waiting times between appointments"

"More locations and more out-of-hours appointment times to make it accessible for a wide range of people"

"Get things moving more quickly initially"

"Faster appointments. May not be life and death but very painful and matter could get worse in that time"

"Listen to patient, they know their bodies"

"More hospital-based appointments rather a doctor's surgeries"

"A dedicated team of specialists to access patients' needs"

"Better pain management"

"On hand therapy"

"Have more support from GPs"

"Have a better system and one that gets the disabled passes you need"

"Reduce waiting times"

"Not to cancel after 4 weeks"

"Being seen more often than 3-4 weeks between appointments as I needed deep massage"

"To wait less time for appointments and not feel rushed when having consultation"

"Have further classes as suggested by my physio that I do not need to pay for"

"Do follow up from GP or physio. More sessions and more frequently. Not every month"

[&]quot;Being seen on time on appointments"

- "To get treatment weekly" "Increase frequency of treatment"
- "No restriction on numbers of treatments or number of times allowed to attend classes"
- "Shorter waiting times"
- "To have an appointment on time" "Shorter MRI scan queues" "Time between appointments is very long"
- "Employ more staff and invest more in the NHS"
- "Waiting time"
- "Eastcote Health Centre"
- "Be able to self-refer rather than waiting for appointments again"
- "Act faster before it's too late"
- "More service on pain management. More access to physio/hydroptherapy/acupuncture"
- "Faster referrals"
- "Not waiting so long in clinic"
- "Less waiting times"
- "Physio at home for older people who struggle with attending hospital appointments"
- "More frequent appointments"
- "More rheumatology doctors/nurses are needed to meet the demand"
- "More for younger clients, I had to go to elderly day services"
- "Cut waiting times and move it away for hospital"
- "Exercise prescription (i.e. long-term access to a gym/class with the initial period at a lower cost and some guidance available from a health professional. Access to hydrotherapy. Integrated pathway between health professionals and community exercise groups/facilities.
- "Quicker service"
- "There are several different consultants dealing with different part of the body (e.g. upper limbs, lower limbs and spine.
- "A more local health centre to see health care professionals say HESA in Hayes"
- "Faster access. Choice of venues. Specialist clinicians. Physio access to other hospital information about me"
- "Just get a quicker appointment with the right specialist. With back pain you try and protect yourself from further pain" "Self-referral"
- "More access and shorter waiting times"
- "Accessible location, reduced travel costs and more availability of services"
- "Discussions with other patients with similar conditions. Chiropractic input"
- "Less waiting ties and quicker access to GP"

"If GP/District nurse/nurse practitioner and OOH's could make referrals directly to the Single Point of Access"

"Prescribed appropriate exercise - e.g. Green Gym type activity, volunteering with a Wildlife Trust or similar organisation"

"Self-referral and quicker response time. Shorter waiting time for procedure to reduce pain"

"To respect that patient knows their condition and what they need"

"More appointments"

Appendix ii

Any other comments?

"Uxbridge physio is quite helpful provided it's given promptly e.g. like a wait of 1-2 weeks and not every 6 weeks"

"Hillingdon physio is very good and the timing is just right"

"My son needs to go private physio to get an appointment"

"I was not happy with the treatment from A & E doctor and a complaint was filed"

"I have received the most excellent care"

"I am very pleased with the treatment I have had. There has been good follow-up"

"Physio support by phone could be very reasoning and help to make the right exercise choices"

"Adam's been great"

"Plaster room staff and receptionist at fracture clinic are excellent"

"There is no joined-up thinking. Hospital clinicians/GPs/physiotherapists all seem to act along. Little appreciation by all on mental effects of life changing problems"

"Staff in physio at Hillingdon are very good"

"I'm very happy with the treatment and service"

'Mount Vernon rheumatology was much better that other providers. Waiting times and appointments are much better"

"My own experience was very positive"

"Waiting times always long - 1-1.h hours"

"Great physio department at Hillingdon Hospital"

"Current service is very good"

"Council make it hard to park anywhere"

"Happy with treatment so far"

"I found the physio very useful but not the doctors"

"Brilliant service - minimum waiting and friendly staff"

"Having been seen by Lauren, she is amazing"

"Staff at Hillingdon physio department are very good - friendly and knowledgeable"

"I am pleased with the treatment I have had"

"Really good physios at Mount Vernon Hospital"

"I have received the most excellent care"

"It would be nice to have support staff to work with patients with long-term/chronic diseases. Lack of support leads to depression as it is very hard dealing with chronic pain

every day. Also, there should be support all age groups as fairly young suffering people don't receive the empathy due to stereotypical thought that young people can't suffer because of MSK"

"Future care at long-term"

"No change needed"

"The consultant was lovely and explained everything and we felt very comfortable"

"My GP referred me to rheumatology, but they told me that rheumatology has nothing to do with my problem and I get an x-ray instead. Now 6 months down the line I am here. Not good."

"The treatment I have received has been excellent"

"More consultants needed"

"Care given by Dr Woodhan is excellent but it's very difficult to get an appointment"

"I have been very pleased with the ongoing care I have received"

"I am very happy with my treatment"

"Waiting times for appointments are too long"

"Creche facilities would be useful for some people - I'm sure there are parents who don't come to appointments as they can't get or can't afford child-care. I regularly use the creche at Hillingdon sports centre for swimming (2 hour max) it is cheap and has concessions for those on benefits. The centre does have a physio but not an NHS one - if the NHS used those facilities parents and carers could use the creche on-site which would allow more to attend their appointments and get well quicker"

"This time I am going private because of the disgusting waiting period to see a specialist but last time a few years back also seemingly uncaring"

"The service I have received has been good"

"Please consider the long waiting time to receive information in relation to scans and blood test results to GP and then to patients, positive or negative results can be transferred internally in 5 minutes. 5 days to GP and weeks to patients!"

"Get the exercise done at clinic"

"Treatment should be for as long as needed not for set amount of sessions"

"I would not like to see all services returned to hospitals or decreased numbers of staff"

"Hillingdon Hospital provides high quality and effective physiotherapy. The gym and equipment available allows me to progress more effectively. I have no complaints"

"My GP did not refer me to physiotherapy. I was referred by the consultant after an emergency admission to Northwick Park"

"I would like to say that my treatment and ongoing care and support from the rheumatology has been excellent"









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