

Health needs survey of seasonal and migrant workers in Herefordshire

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Summary

- 229 people responded to a questionnaire assessing health needs of seasonal and migrant workers in Herefordshire. The respondents had a young age profile with nearly three quarters of respondents in the 16-24 year old age group. There were more male respondents than female.
- Polish, Bulgarian and Romanian people formed the majority of respondents (92%). Language was a problem for a number of respondents when accessing health services, with around a fifth of respondents considering themselves fluent English speakers.
- Most respondents (72%) lived in either a static or touring caravan. 55% of respondents were in full time work. Most respondents (82%) had been living in the UK for less than 6 months this is possibly a reflection of the seasonal nature of the respondents' employment.
- 89% of respondents felt their health was good or very good. In addition only 5% of respondents answered 'yes', they have a disability, long term illness or health problem (12 months or more) which limits daily activities or the work they can do. However 28% of respondents said they had back pain.
- The smoking rates of the respondents are relatively high (40%).
- Around two-thirds of respondents had used a dentist in the last 12 months and two-thirds has seen a GP in the last 6 months. In contrast less than half (40%) had used an optician in the last year and only 18% had visited hospital in the last year.
- 20% of respondents felt they faced barriers to health services.

Aim

To assess the health needs of seasonal and migrant workers in Herefordshire. This was done at the same time as two other groups: Gypsies and Travellers and homeless people in the county.

Background

A review is currently underway to assess the health needs of seasonal workers and homeless people in the county. Consultation was therefore deemed necessary to assess what people required, recognising that this would be difficult given the transient nature of such groups. The number of individual seasonal workers from overseas expected by farmers in Herefordshire during 2008 was 6,700¹.

Methodology:

A questionnaire assessing the health needs of seasonal and migrant workers was drafted by staff in public health and the research team in July. The questionnaire was translated into Polish, Russian, Bulgarian and Romanian and versions of these were distributed during August and September. This was done by key workers in the Primary Care Trust and the Council at particular sites, such as the farms where large numbers of seasonal workers were employed. Therefore there is a bias to seasonal and migrant workers employed on farms rather than in other industries such as food processing and construction.

Results

About the respondents

Age

The majority of respondents (74%) were aged 16 – 24. There were no respondents aged 65 or over.

Table 1:

What is your age (at last birthday)		
Age	Number of respondents	Percentage
16-24 years	168	74%
25-44 years	55	24%
45-64 years	5	2%
65-74 years	0	0%
75+ years	0	0%

(Base 228)

Gender

There were more men (58%) than women (42%).

Nationality

¹ Review of information on seasonal and migrant workers in Herefordshire, August 2008, Herefordshire Council Research Team, www.herefordshire.gov.uk/research/

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The most commonly found nationality among respondents was 'Polish' (45%), followed by Bulgarians and Romanians as shown in the table below.

Table 2:

Nationality	Number of respondents	Percentage
Polish	104	45%
Bulgarian	71	31%
Romanian	37	16%
Lithuanian	4	2%
Turkish	3	1%
Ukrainian	3	1%
Latvian	2	1%
Czech	1	0%
Slovak	1	0%
Slovakian	1	0%
No reply	2	1%

(Base 229)

Main spoken language

The main spoken language reflects the nationality of the respondents, mostly Polish, Romanian and Bulgarian speakers as shown in the table below. 6 people had more than one main language.

Table 3:

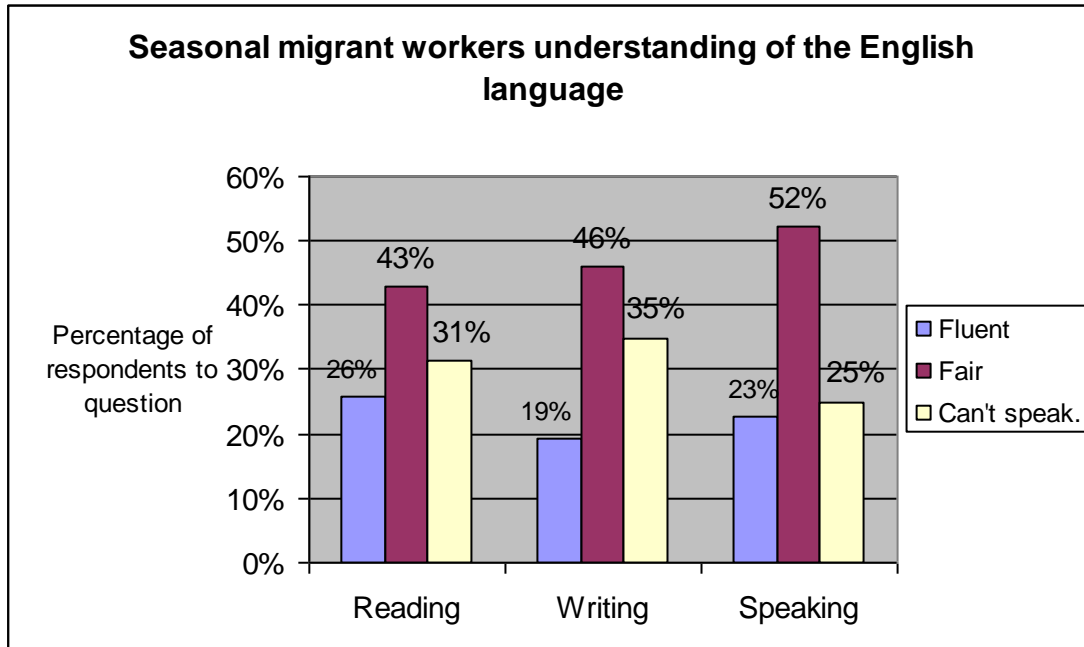
Main spoken language	Number of respondents	Percentage
Polish	102	45%
Bulgarian	69	30%
Romanian	33	14%
Slovakian	2	1%
Lithuanian and Russian	2	1%
Ukrainian, Russian	1	0%
Russian, Latvian and English.	1	0%
Russian	1	0%
Romanian, Hungarian	1	0%
Portuguese	1	0%
Lithuanian, Russian, English	1	0%
Lithuanian	1	0%
English	1	0%
Bulgarian and Turkish	1	0%
No reply	12	5%

(Base 229)

Knowledge of English

75% of the respondents stated that their understanding of spoken English was 'fluent' or 'fair'. The lowest level of understanding was for written English (just under a third). See the chart below.

Chart 1:



Accommodation

The majority of respondents live in a caravan (72%) see the table below for more detail.

Table 4:

House/bungalow	Semi/terraced	Flat/apartment	Caravan (tourer)	Caravan (static)	Pod	No fixed abode	Staying with friends
8%	3%	5%	24%	48%	9%	3%	0%

(Base 223)

Accommodation satisfaction

About three quarters of the respondents were satisfied with their accommodation. The comments relating to unsatisfactory accommodation are listed below:

Cold/damp was a problem for 12 people. 10 people complained about a lack of space in their accommodation. 10 people complained about poor or broken bathroom/toilet/shower. Lack of hot water was also a problem for 10 people. 5 people complained that their accommodation was ugly/dirty. In addition at least one person complained about the way their accommodation smelt or that it was 'old', that there was 'no help if things break', that their bed was too small, that the fridge was too small or that there was no internet.

Employment status

The majority of respondents were in full time employment (55%). 28 people who were categorised as 'other' were students as well as working, 5 people were looking after

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home and family as well as working and 1 person stated they had lost their documents for working. The questionnaire only asked people to tick student or looking after family and home if they weren't working so there may be more people who were a student or looking after their family who were working also.

Table 5:

	Number of respondents	Percentage
Fulltime	125	55%
Part time	69	30%
Unemployed	4	2%
Retired	0	0%
Looking after family or home	3	1%
Long term sick or disabled	2	1%
Student	7	3%
Other	35	15%

(Base 229)

Table6:

For those who were employed they classified their employment as follows:	
Permanent	11%
Temporary	14%
Casual/seasonal	32%
No reply	42%

(Base 194)

Migrant workers and how long they have been living in the UK.

The majority of workers (82%) have lived in the UK for less than 6 months. Only 5 % have been living in the UK over 1 year, as shown in the table below.

Table 7:

If a migrant worker, how long have you been living in the UK		
Less than 6 months	187	82%
6 - 12 months	23	10%
1-2 years	9	4%
3-5 years	2	1%
5+ years	1	0%

(Base 229)

Education

Approximately half of respondents (48%) stated that they have qualifications. Qualifications were specified and shown in the following table, most people stated their profession rather than their qualification.

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Table 8: Qualifications/professions specified:

Accountant	Joiner
administration technician	License (x 3)
administrator	Looking after older people. Cook.
Assistant manager, Eurocor diploma	Manager
Baccalaureate (Equivalent to A level) x 2	Manager of the foreign economy.
Bachelor degree (x 3), including Ecologist	Masters (x 5); (electronics, economics, agriculture, law)
Bricklayer	Mechanic (x 3)
Business	Mechanic, Frigotechnician, bartender, waiter.
Car Mechanic (x 3), including 'zootechnic installation'.	Mechanic/Planer operator/welder
Computer Programmer (Medium Level)	Packaging operator
Construction -concrete operator	Profisional computers
Construction industry qualification.	Programmer, computer assistant.
Cook (x 2)	School of politics
Dietician	Secondary school education (x 9)
Dress maker	Security
Driver	Shop Assistant
Driving licence (x 3)	Social worker
Economist	Student (x 3)
Electromechanic material- rulant	Teacher
engineer (x 3); (agricultural, ecological)	Technician (x 7); (electronics, industrial repairs, warehouse, salesman)
Head chef	Theology Licence
High School	Thermo isolation
high school - economist	Topography (Projecting maps)
Higher education (x 4); (marketing)	University education (x 2)
Hotel and restaurant management	University of finances and banks.
Industrial high school.	Vetinary (x 2); (assistant, technician)
informatics certificate (medium level)	Vetinary technician.
Internal combustion engine	Warehouse man
irrigation	

Health

89% of respondents felt their health was good or very good.

Table 9:

How good is your health in general?		
Very good	89	39%
Good	115	50%
Fair	22	10%
Bad	2	1%
Very Bad	0	0%

(Base 228)

Disability

Only 5% of respondents stated that they have a disability, long term illness or health problem (12 months or more) which limits daily activities or the work they can do.

For those who answered 'yes' their long term health problem, disability or illness was specified as follows. (The 2 respondents who ticked 'other' specified their health problem as an allergy).

Table 10:

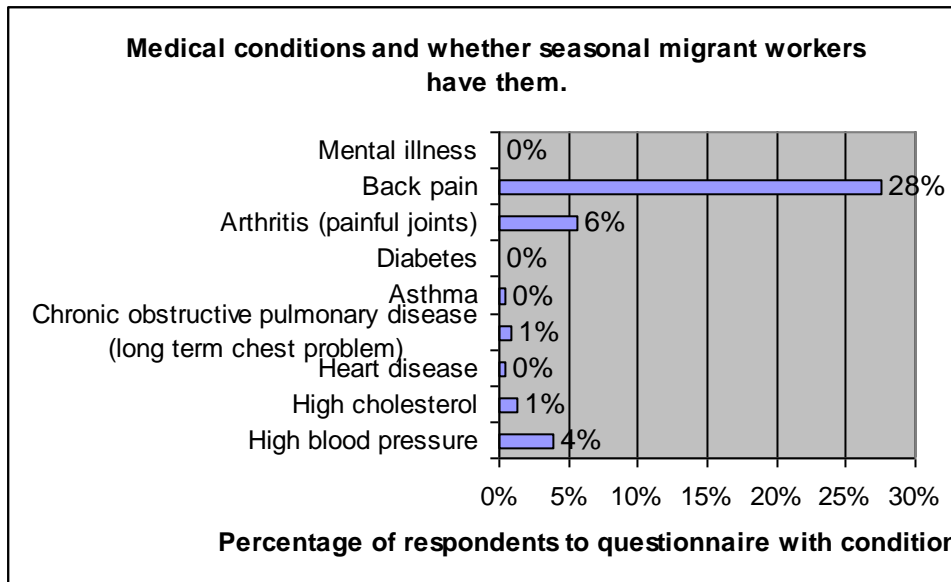
	Number with relevant problem
Deaf/hard of hearing/acute hearing	0
Blind/partially sighted/sensitive to light	1
learning disability or difficulty	1
Mental health	1
Progressive/chronic illness (e.g. MS, cancer)	0
Mobility difficulties	2
Other (please specify)	3

(Base 229)

Medical conditions

Back pain is the most prevalent problem among respondents to this questionnaire. 28% of people suffered from it.

Chart 2:



Lifestyle

Smoking

Compared with Herefordshire as a whole where only 22% of people aged 16 and over smoke (source: Regional lifestyle survey, 2005, WMRO & WMPHO), a high proportion

of the respondents are smokers (40%). A third of respondents said they had tried to quit smoking.

Alcohol consumption

It is interesting to note that although 39% of people who responded drank, different nationalities had quite a varied proportion of drinkers. Only 8% of Romanians who answered this question drank, whereas 35% of Bulgarians did and 53% of Poles. However the size of the sample involved is quite small to draw any firm conclusions. Responses as to how many units people drank per week ranged from 1 unit to 3 litres of vodka, however figures were typically below 10 units. Responses to the maximum daily amount drunk ranged from 1 unit to a litre of vodka.

Weight

The majority of respondents (83%) felt their weight was normal. 8% felt they were over weight and 9% felt they were underweight.

Uptake of services

Flu immunisation

There were no respondents over 65.

Hospital Visitation

18% of respondents to this question answered 'yes' they had visited a hospital in the last 12 months, 82% hadn't. It is interesting to note that although 21% of the Polish respondents and 19% of the Bulgarian respondents had visited hospital in the last 12 months, only 1 Romanian respondent had.

Comments as to why people had visited hospital in the last 12 months were 'x ray', 'hernia operation', 'erythema', and giving birth.

Dentist visitation

66% of respondents to this question had seen a dentist in the last 12 months.

Comments as to why people hadn't visited a dentist in the last 12 months were not having time, being on a waiting list, no need and lack of money.

GP Visitation

67% of respondents had visited a GP in the last 6 months. Comments as to why people hadn't spoken to their GP were almost all to the effect that there was no need to visit. 2 people stated that they didn't have time and one person said it was because they were abroad.

Optician Visitation

40% of respondents to this question had visited an optician in the last 12 months.

Comments as to why people hadn't visited an optician were all to the effect that the respondent did not have a problem with their eyes or they didn't think it was necessary

Cervical screening

There were 73 women who were aged 20-64 and responded to this question. 48% of them had had a cervical screening in the last 3-5 years.

Comments as to why people had not had a cervical screening in the last 3-5 years were 'there was no reason', the doctor did not recommend/carry out the test, lack of time, lack of interest, lack of information and not remembering.

Breast screening

There were only 2 women (aged 50 – 70) from a possible 3, who responded to this question and they had had a breast screening in the last 3 years. Although not within the age range of 50 - 70, one respondent noted they did not have time for a breast screening test.

Use of unconventional medicine

Home treatment had been used by 15% of respondents, complementary medicine by 10% and alternative medicine by 9%.

Barriers to services

Barriers to health services

The majority of respondents to this question (80%) did not feel they faced barriers to health services. For those who specified what the barriers they faced were, language was the most common barrier (10% of respondents). This was closely followed by 'inconvenient hours' (8%) and 'transport problems' (7%). Under barriers to healthcare one respondent wrote: Racial discrimination.

Table 11:

If yes please specify all that apply?		
	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Language	22	10%
Inconvenient hours	18	8%
Choice of doctor	8	3%
Lack of privacy	4	2%
Transport problems	17	7%
Knowledge of service	7	3%
Inapproachable staff	5	2%
Can't get an appointment	4	2%
Other	8	3%

(Base 229)

Importance of service/help/information

Help and advice claiming benefits was the help which was most commonly answered as being important (57%) and special help for people caring for family and friends generated the least number of 'yes' responses (38%). However the lowest level of importance was rated for 'More information on following a healthy lifestyle (e.g. information on nutrition and physical activity)' (15%) and the highest percentage who answered 'no' was for advice on sexual health (24%). See Table 12.

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Table 12:

Service/Help/Information	Yes	No	Don't know
<i>More information on following a healthy lifestyle (e.g. information on nutrition and physical activity)</i>	54%	15%	10%
<i>Advice & guidance for families with young children to encourage healthy lifestyles</i>	43%	23%	12%
<i>Advice on sexual health (contraception etc)</i>	45%	24%	7%
<i>Being kept informed/fully consulted on all aspects of your care</i>	51%	17%	9%
<i>Special help for people caring for family and friends</i>	38%	22%	13%
<i>Joining together health and social care services (a one stop shop approach)</i>	43%	21%	10%
<i>Developing more services that can be provided in your own home or in a local facility.</i>	55%	14%	7%
<i>Help and advice on claiming benefits</i>	57%	16%	7%
<i>Help and advice on housing issues</i>	55%	15%	8%

(Base 229)

Access to services

A shop/supermarket was most commonly found not to be difficult to access. In contrast a cultural/recreational facility (e.g. theatre, cinema) and sports/leisure centre, was most commonly found to be difficult to access; followed by council office. One person also noted 'The working buses are overcrowded'.

Table 13:

Service/Facility	Difficult to access	Not difficult to access
<i>Shop/supermarket</i>	10%	63%
<i>Post office</i>	13%	59%
<i>Chemist/pharmacy</i>	12%	59%
<i>Bank or cash point</i>	11%	59%
<i>public transport (bus/ train)</i>	10%	59%
<i>Library</i>	12%	53%
<i>Council office</i>	15%	49%
<i>Sports/leisure centre</i>	19%	47%
<i>Cultural/recreational facility e.g. theatre, cinema</i>	19%	46%

Importance of services

A council office was most commonly found to be unimportant while a supermarket was most commonly found to be important. One person also noted that a surgery was important to them.

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Table 14:

	Not important	Important
Shop/supermarket	9%	43%
Bank or cash point	12%	38%
public transport (bus/ train)	11%	38%
Chemist/pharmacy	15%	35%
Post office	16%	34%
Sports/leisure centre	19%	29%
Cultural/recreational facility e.g. theatre, cinema	19%	28%
Library	22%	25%
Council office	26%	21%

(Base 229)

Future participation in consultation

The majority of people (68%) would be willing to give their view in the future. 14% were not willing and 17% were unsure. When asked if there was a particular place or activity where people usually get together in their community people suggested 'London', 'friendship centre', 'disco', 'church', and 'at school'. One person also noted everything is far away.

Preferred communication methods

Local websites are the most popular form of communication whereas local radio is the least. Under 'other' 2 people suggested TV and one person would like more leaflets in Polish and more newspapers.

Table 15:

We aim to ensure that people get to hear about how they can have a say and find out how services are developing. Which of the following ways would you like information?		
Articles in official publications and newsletters ('Herefordshire Matters')	54	24%
Local radio	39	17%
On the internet on local websites	104	45%
Local newspapers	51	22%
Local community notice boards	67	29%
Other, please suggest	11	5%

(Base 229)

Appendix – Questionnaire

Questionnaire to assess service needs of seasonal & migrant workers in Herefordshire

Part 1 – About you

1. What is your age (at last birthday)?

16-24 years 25-44 years 45-64 years 65-74 years 75+ years

2. Gender Male Female

3. What nationality are you?

4. What is your main spoken language? (*Please write in*)

5. How would you describe your knowledge of the English language?

Reading	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fluent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Can't speak
Writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fluent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Can't speak
Speaking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fluent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fair	<input type="checkbox"/>	Can't speak

6. What type of accommodation do you currently live in?

Bricks & mortar	<input type="checkbox"/>	House/bungalow	<input type="checkbox"/>	Semi-/terraced	<input type="checkbox"/>	Flat/apartment
Mobile/Temp.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Caravan (tourer)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Caravan (static)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pod
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	No fixed abode	<input type="checkbox"/>	Staying with friends		

7. Are you satisfied with your accommodation?

Yes No *If not, please say why:*

8. Last week were you:

Employed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	Full-time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Part-time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployed
<i>If employed:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Permanent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Temporary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Casual/seasonal
Not working	<input type="checkbox"/>	Retired	<input type="checkbox"/>	Looking after home or family	<input type="checkbox"/>	Long-term sick or disabled
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Retired		

9. *If a migrant worker:*

How long have you been living in the UK?

Less than 6 months 6 – 12 months 1 – 2 years 3-5 years 5+ years

10. Do you have any qualifications? *If YES, please specify the highest qualification eg*

degree:

No Yes

Part 2 – Your health

11. How is your health in general?

Very good Good Fair Bad Very bad

12. Do you have a disability, long-term illness or health problem (12 months or more) which limits daily activities or the work you can do?

Yes No

If 'yes', please specify (tick all that apply):

- Deaf/hard of hearing/acute hearing
- Blind/partially sighted/sensitive to light
- Learning disability or difficulty
- Mental health
- Progressive/chronic illness (e.g. MS, cancer)
- Mobility difficulties
- Other (*please specify*):

13. Do you have any of the following medical conditions?

<i>Condition</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Don't know</i>	<i>Prefer not to say</i>
High blood pressure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
High cholesterol	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heart disease	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (Long-term chest problem)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asthma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Diabetes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arthritis (painful joints)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Back pain	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Mental illness	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Part 3 - Your lifestyle

14. Do you smoke?

Yes No

15. Have you ever tried to quit smoking?

Yes No

16. Do you currently drink alcohol?

Yes No

Per week

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Most in one day If yes, please indicate how much you typically drink:

1 unit = ½ pint of beer/lager/cider, = 1 small glass of wine = 1 small pub measure of spirits e.g. vodka/ brandy = 1 standard pub measure of sherry/port)

17. How would you describe your weight?

Under weight Normal Overweight

Part 4 – Access to health and other services

18. (If respondent is aged 65 or more) Did you have a flu jab last autumn?

Yes No

If not, please say why:

19. Have you been in hospital in the last 12 months?

Yes No If Yes, please say why:

20. Have you visited a dentist in the last 12 months?

Yes No If not, please say why:

21. Have you spoken to a GP about your health in the last 6 months (visit or telephone call)

Yes No If not, please say why:

22. Have you visited an optician in the last 12 months?

Yes No If not, please say why:

23. (If respondent is female and aged 20 – 64)

Have you had a cervical screening test in the last 3 to 5 years?

Yes No If not, please say why:

24. (If respondent is female and aged 50 - 70)

Have you had a breast screening test in the last 3 years?

Yes No If not, please say why:

25. Have you used any of the following for a medical condition?

Complementary medicine Alternative medicine Home treatment (prescription from another country)

26. Do you face any barriers to accessing health services?

Yes No If yes, please specify all that apply:

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Language | <input type="checkbox"/> Inconvenient hours | <input type="checkbox"/> Choice of doctor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of privacy | <input type="checkbox"/> Transport problems | <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge of service |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inapproachable staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Can't get an appointment | <input type="checkbox"/> Other |

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27. Please rate if any of the following is important to you or your family

	Yes	No	Don't know
More information on following a healthy lifestyle (e.g. information on nutrition & physical activity)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice & guidance for families with young children to encourage healthy lifestyles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Advice on sexual health (contraception etc)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being kept informed/fully consulted on all aspects of your care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special help for people caring for family and friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Joining together health and social care services (a one-stop-shop approach)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Developing more services that can be provided in your own home or in a local facility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help and advice on claiming benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Help and advice on housing issues	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. Do you find it difficult to access any other services? (see below, tick all that apply)

	Difficult to access? (yes/no)	Important to you? (yes/no)
Shop/supermarket		
Post office		
Chemist/pharmacy		
Public transport (bus, train)		
Library		
Sports/leisure centre		
Cultural/recreational facility e.g. theatre, cinema		
Bank or cashpoint		
Council office		
Any other? (please specify)		

29. If we visited your community to seek views about services again, would you want to take part/give your view?

Yes No Unsure

If you have any suggestions on a particular place or activity where people usually get together in your community, please tell us here:

30. We aim to ensure that people get to hear about how they can have a say and find out how services are developing. Which of the following ways would you like information

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Articles in official publications and newsletters (e.g. 'Herefordshire Matters') | <input type="checkbox"/> Local radio |
| <input type="checkbox"/> On the internet on local websites | <input type="checkbox"/> Local newspapers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local community noticeboards | <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please suggest: |