

Occupational Therapy Services Project

Introduction

We heard that some local residents had not been able to access Occupational Therapy (OT) appointments, or equipment related to their care. We wanted to find out more, so we ran a Healthwatch 100 survey on the topic from November 2021 to February 2022.

What did people say?

People that had an appointment within 18 months

Reasons for seeing an OT:

- Sensory processing (how your brain interprets and reacts to sensory input)
- Child requiring OT support
- Hip replacement
- General physical health
- Sore shoulder and arm
- A mix of reasons

Support provided by OT:

- Mobility aids (e.g. walking stick, frame)
- Adaptations (e.g. changes to home)
- Exercises
- Advice

How could communication be improved?

- "[Faster] access in first place – waited a long time and issues got worse then had to wait for forms to be completed before any input."
- "Private OT commissioned by Trafford LA due to no availability within Trafford"
- "An appointment would be better."

The impact of seeing an OT was...

- "[Promising] but they don't know everything necessarily specialist re sensory clothing in our local service which is frustrating so far and they need to link into camhs too." CAHMS = Child Adolescent Mental Health Services
- "Support required in school identified and put in place."
- "Extremely beneficial."



People that had an appointment more than 18 months ago or not seen an OT

Benefits of seeing an OT included:

- "My children have both had input from occupational therapy for their sensory processing dysfunction"
- "OT was very useful for my wife after her hip replacement operation"

Challenges for getting OT appointments included:

- "[There] is a national shortage of Occupational Therapists"
- "OT services in Trafford are very under resourced and under staffed"
- "People need more support from their employers"
- "I ended up paying for a physio myself as I was told there was no chance of seeing one for months."



Background

Healthwatch Trafford is your local health and social care champion. If you use GPs and hospitals, dentists, pharmacies, care homes or other support services in your area, we want to hear about your experiences.

The Trafford Healthwatch 100 aims to get as many local people as possible to sign up and give their views on topics to do with health and social care via regular surveys. We want to gain as much information as possible so that we can direct our work to the issues that matter.

Full details for signing up can be found at:
<https://healthwatchtrafford.co.uk/the100/>

What we did

The survey was opened on the 29th November 2021 and closed on the 7th February 2022. It was sent out to our Healthwatch 100 subscriber list, promoted on our website, and shared across social media. We also contacted two local groups that work with people likely to be affected by the issues around OT appointments.

We want to thank all the members of the public that took part as well as our volunteers who assisted in the design stages of the project.

Who we spoke to

- We heard from 22 people in this project
- Almost all identified as White British
- People were aged 35-80+
- Almost all identified as heterosexual/Straight
- About 30% identified themselves as having a disability
- About 50% said they were a carer
- Almost all had children
- About 30% identified as male and 70% as female
- We had respondents from all Trafford localities



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