

The NHS at 70 Report

Experiences of the
NHS in Trafford
over the last 70 years
and suggestions for
the future



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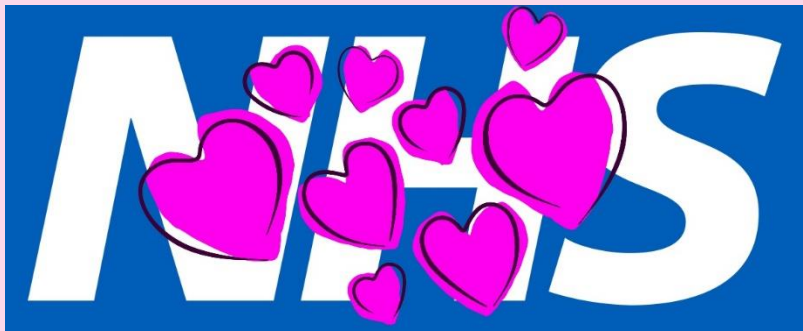
We would also like to give thanks to those that made it possible for us to run our drop-ins at events around the borough.

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121 people
told us what
the NHS had
done for them

28% said that the NHS had helped with
the birth of their children or helped look
after them.



27% said that
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always been
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them or their
family.



More than one in ten
said the NHS had
saved their life

Introduction to Healthwatch Trafford

This report has been produced by Healthwatch Trafford. The Healthwatch network consists of 152 Healthwatch organisations across each of the local authority areas in England. It also has a national body called Healthwatch England based in London. We are all independent organisations who aim to help people get the best out of their local health and social care services; whether it's improving them today or helping to shape them for tomorrow.

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people and our expertise is grounded in their experience. We are the only body looking solely at people's experience across all health and social care in Trafford. As a statutory watchdog, our role is to ensure that local decision makers put the experiences of people at the heart of their care so that those who buy (commissioners) and provide our services (NHS Trusts, GPs, the voluntary sector and independent providers) can benefit from what Trafford people tell us.

We have produced several reports in the past covering many elements of health and social care in Trafford. These can be found on our website at <https://healthwatchtrafford.co.uk/our-reports/> or by contacting us directly using the details on the back cover.



Executive summary

In the summer of 2018, the National Health Service in Trafford celebrated its 70th birthday. Healthwatch Trafford felt that to mark the occasion it would be a perfect time to find out what people in the borough thought about what the NHS had done for them in those years, and to find out what they would like to see change in the coming years.

121 people responded to our survey, which consisted of two questions:

1. What has the NHS in Trafford done for you?
2. If you could change one thing about the NHS in Trafford, what would it be?

Key findings

It is positive to note that the vast majority of comments record people's gratitude to the NHS. This must be regarded as a great testament to the huge breadth of care provided by the NHS.

Positives:

- 🌱 28% said that the NHS had helped with the birth of their children or helped look after them.
- 🌱 27% said that the NHS had always been there for them or their family.
- 🌱 12% said the NHS had saved their life.

Negatives:

- 🌱 A third want to see waiting times for services reduced, particularly for their GP (33%).
- 🌱 18% want services brought back to Trafford General Hospital.
- 🌱 One in five feel the NHS should be better funded, particularly to pay for more health staff (20%).

Many responses reflect the real strength of feeling for the NHS and how protective people are of it, shown by the number of people that showed concern for its future funding, staffing and in particular, local services.

The concern around the status of Trafford General hospital is clear, with many wanting to see departments that have closed to be reinstated - maternity and accident and emergency. There also seems to be a feeling amongst some that the hospital is in danger of closing, suggesting more needs to be done to educate the local populace on what the future of the hospital is.

Recommendations

- Improve awareness of services available at Trafford General Hospital and its role in the future.
- Look at ways of improving waiting times, but also improve communication with patients during waiting times.

Background

In the summer of 2018 the National Health Service in England celebrated it's 70th birthday. In fact, the birth of the NHS was located at Park hospital (now known as Trafford General Hospital) in what is now Trafford, giving the anniversary a strong connection with the area.

To mark this occasion, Healthwatch Trafford decided it would be a perfect opportunity to take stock of some of the achievements of the NHS for Trafford's people and to look ahead at how those people would like the NHS to change.

We decided to create a simple two-question survey, which we made the subject of our Trafford Healthwatch 100 project, and also decided to take it to NHS birthday events that we attended.

What is the Trafford Healthwatch 100?

The Trafford Healthwatch 100 is a programme of regular surveys that we run, made up of quick-to-complete questionnaires on differing subjects that can be completed by anyone. These are sent out by email to a growing database of people that have signed up to receive them. These surveys are available online and publicised via our website and social media. They provide us with information that we can use to decide on whether to investigate further or if there is any action needed. Our report on NHS dentistry is a case in point*.



In this case, we ran the Healthwatch 100 survey about the NHS at 70 online, but we also felt it important to carry out these surveys in person at various events over the summer in order to hear first-hand from people.

This report is the result of this survey.

For more information about the Trafford Healthwatch 100 project, please visit <https://healthwatchtrafford.co.uk/the100/>.

**You can find our reports at <https://healthwatchtrafford.co.uk/our-reports/>.*

Methodology

Our survey comprised two questions containing a free text box asking if there was anything that people wanted to mention. The questions were:

1. What has the NHS in Trafford done for you?
2. If you could change one thing about the NHS in Trafford, what would it be?

[The survey can be found in appendix 1.](#)

This was carried out online using SurveyMonkey (an online survey tool), with links sent to people via email, social media or it could be found on our website. In addition to this, we took printed copies out with us to events we attended.

At events, our volunteers and staff spoke to people about health and social care in the area and encouraged them to fill a survey out with them.

All the paper copies of the surveys were collected and painstakingly transferred on to SurveyMonkey to allow us to analyse the results.

Analysis was qualitative analysis of the free-text responses, categorised and summarised manually.



Results and findings

Question 1 - "What has the NHS in Trafford done for you?"

In the first question in our survey of **The NHS @ 70**, our respondents were asked "What has the NHS in Trafford done for you?"

There were a large range of responses, some people responded with just one subject as their comment, while others mentioned two, three or more subjects.

Typically most of the responses depend on people's memories of interactions with the NHS in their past, some being general or emotional responses and others being recollections of specific treatments or parts of the NHS that they had had help from.

In the survey 114 people had given answers to the question and this report records the most significant groups of responses given, but as many people gave several threads in their response the number of subjects recorded is necessarily greater than the number of people sampled.

It is positive to note that the vast majority of comments record people's gratitude to the NHS, with a very small number of neutral comments and only one which seemed, on balance, to be negative.

The NHS has always been there for me or my family.

By far the greatest number of themes (31 comments) related to the feeling that the NHS had always been there for me or my family, some typical comments being:

"The NHS in Trafford has kept me alive and really provided me with fantastic GPs and nurses"

"Always there when I needed it."

"Given me re-assurance that help is there when needed."

"It has made me better - It has made me safe - Dedicated wonderful staff, so professional and understanding."

"Provided regular checks on my general health since middle age, which has helped to prevent serious problems arising."

"Has been a major part of my life. It has been my career since I was 17 I was born at Trafford Hospital and my son (18) and daughter (14) were born there. It has been my life, keeping me and all my family in good health. Life would be much worse without it."

The NHS helped with the birth of my children or helped look after my children.

About the same number of people (32 comments) recorded that the NHS had helped with the birth of their children or had helped to look after their children with various complaints, some typical comments being:

"Has enabled me to raise a healthy family and saved my son at birth."

"Assisted in the safe delivery of my children"

"5 successful deliveries including an emergency section on Christmas Day and a difficult birth with a 10lb 10 oz son"

"Looked after me through maternity and delivered my babies and supported me through post-natal depression"

"Two children born in Trafford General, one by emergency Caesarean Section- my daughter born with dislocated hips. NHS sorted that out too"

"NHS Trafford saved my life due to pregnancy related health conditions on two separate occasions. They also saved my son's life. At 3 weeks he had liver problems and at 7 weeks old he had severe lung problems and was in the High Dependency unit for 9 days."

"Health visitor team cared for my son. Trafford General outpatients great"

"Helped children get better, and supported my son with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder diagnosis."

"The health visitors team helped with advice that helped us to quickly sort out our son's sleep and kick started the referral process that ultimately led to his diagnosis of dyspraxia. It is rare for it to be diagnosed so young, but such an advantage for all of us that it has....."

The NHS helped look after my family or helped care for my parent(s)

In a similar vein there were nearly as many comments (22 comments) noting that the NHS in Trafford had helped maintain the health of or care for their family or one or more parents, with comments like:

"NHS has always been there for me and my family."

"Taken care of immediate family when they required medical treatment or after care."

"The NHS in Trafford has done a lot for our family, helping to keep us well and offer good advice too"

"Many of my family members and friends have accessed NHS Trafford and doctors surgeries and hospitals"

"Looked after my mum very well, both in intensive care and respite...."

"Trafford General Hospital were great - they looked after my mother with dementia and all the services were put in place so mother could be looked after at home."

"Given us support with parents' illnesses - stroke and dementia."

The NHS saved my life.

The next most numerous general themes related to comments that incorporated statements like the NHS saved my life, (14 comments), some of the comments being:

"NHS Trafford saved my mum's life when she was diagnosed with cancer..... "

"Saved my life by giving me two stents..... "

"Saved my life when I had surgery on a growth in my stomach.... "

"Saved my life. I had an urgent operation in November 2009 at Trafford General to remove a cancerous tumour."

" I'm thankful to NHS for saving my life when I was a baby."

" I was viciously attacked and stabbed and the NHS saved my life!"

Trafford General Hospital

A further 10 comments specifically recorded the part that Trafford General Hospital played in their care, some typical comments being:

"Health visitor team cared for my son. Trafford General Outpatients great."

"I have had five strokes and Trafford General Hospital looked after me exceedingly well."

"Drop-In service is excellent at local hospitals like Trafford General. Saturday opening is excellent for both work & children....."

"- Fantastic Walk-In Centre at Trafford General - invaluable....."

My GP Practice

A further 9 comments specifically recorded their gratitude for the help or support that their GP had given to them, with typical comments as:

"On the whole I have been well looked after by the NHS in Trafford. From the General Practitioners to Trafford General Hospital, which I have always found to be extremely efficient."

"I've lived in Trafford 22 years. It has provided a GP service for my family and me plus dentistry."

"It has given me a good GP practice."

Specific parts of the NHS.

Finally, lots of the people surveyed mentioned specific parts of the NHS which had helped them. The largest set in these people (8 comments) recorded their thanks for cancer treatment they had received with comments like:

"..... Diagnosed with breast cancer after mammogram at Trafford General. 5 years on I'm cancer free."

"Helped me through breast cancer treatment. Helped me have 2 children."

"Excellent cancer care for a friend"

A further significant set of people (5 comments) remembered their treatment for broken bones with comments like:

"Looked after me when I fractured my ankle"

"They fixed my arm."

"Looked after me when I broke my heel. - Helped me recover well and be able to run again."

Lots of other people mentioned other specific treatments - listed alphabetically:

Allergies, Arthritis, Audiology, Dental treatment, Diet, Epilepsy, Heart Problems, Hepatology, Health Advice, Mental health problems, Midwifery, Optometry, Podiatry, Pulmonary care, Psoriasis, and Rheumatology.

Question 2 - "If you could change one thing about the NHS in Trafford, what would it be?"

In response to the question "If you could change one thing about the NHS in Trafford, what would it be?" there were, unsurprisingly, a huge range of responses, both in relation to the level of detail and the subject matter.

Looking more carefully a number of common strands link many of the comments, and three major themes relate to the majority of comments made, as described below.

Waiting time complaints.

The largest theme relates to complaints about long waiting times in relation to various NHS services. Of a total of 109 responses to the question, 36 (or 33%) can be described as complaints about long waiting times.

The largest number of these (19 (17% of all comments)) are complaints about the length of time patients have to wait for a GP appointment, some typical comments being:

" Make it easier to get appointment with GP when required."

"Not having to get up before eight o'clock in the morning and hanging on the phone for ages to get an appointment to see my GP."

"Waiting times for GP appointments. Being able to see a GP and not a different trainee/locum every visit."

"Make more appointments available - usually have to wait 2 weeks for an appointment."

"Better doctors appointments - sometimes they can't fit you in."

The second largest number of waiting time complaints (8 (7% of all comments)) are complaints about the length of time patients have to wait for a appointment for a consultation or treatment at a hospital, some typical comments being:

"Reduce waiting times for A&E."

"More staff in A&E - they are always pushed as there are too many patients and not enough staff."

"Shorter waiting times for operations. More awareness by medical staff of people living with Alzheimer's and their carers and family."

"Shorter waiting lists - Too many delayed or cancelled appointments - I waited 8 months to see gynaecologist."

There were also 4 complaints (4% of all comments) about excessive waiting times at phlebotomy clinics, with comments such as:

"Waiting times at the Phlebotomy clinic at Altrincham General."

"I know this is down to resources but something needs to be done about the phlebotomy service. Queuing in a corridor for two hours is not acceptable when you need bloods done. The girls are obviously doing the best they can but it is hard work and unfortunately they have to listen to a lot of moaning about it."

(It should be noted in relation to complaints concerning Phlebotomy clinics that a new appointment system for these clinics was introduced in November 2018, following recommendations in a Healthwatch report ("The Phlebruary Report, published July 2018"). This system has been introduced since the NHS @ 70 survey was carried out).

Finally there were a small number (7, 6% of all comments) of general complaints about lengths of waiting times, or individual specific services, such as:

"That the clinics let you know about delays when you arrive for appointments. We all know that delays for one reason or another happen but to just sit there with no information is not acceptable."

"Less waiting time for ADHD service for my son."

"Quicker support through some services such as child physio as 18 weeks waiting list means further damage can be caused whilst waiting for"

treatment, Even a triage appointment might be good so they can assess rather than just working on a referral."

"I could complain about lots of things but it's really just understaffed."

Politically Motivated Comments.

The second highest collection of comments are what might be described as politically motivated comments, these comprising a total of 22 comments (20% of all comments). 10 of these comments (9% of all comments) directly called for additional funding for the NHS, with some typical comments being:

"Better funding from Government."

"Pay the staff what they are worth."

"Give Nurses fairer pay."

"More funding for mental health, especially in children and adolescents."

A further set of 5 comments (=4.5% of all comments) indicate a perception that too much emphasis on management reduces the effectiveness of NHS services with comments like:

"That we have more services, not less - Better administration and less waste."

" Stop the waste - More medical staff rather than management."

" Less levels of management - Stop closing important wards."

Finally there are a further 7 comments which refer to a range of issues, such as:

"They have a blinkered vision assuming we're a predominantly wealthy borough and they lack the impetus to get the best care for Trafford residents."

With an ageing population they do nothing to engage with the Ageing Well Strategy developed by GM. We lag behind in all aspects of public health prevention. What are Trafford doing to address issues around obesity and mental health?

Do they not have a strategy to address the issues impacting on delayed hospital transfer...the list is endless...come on Trafford NHS get a move on?"

"I would alter the pay grades so that the gap between senior staff and junior staff was not so great."

"Suggest you charge those patients who do not attend their appointments."

"Bring Back Trafford GH" comments.

The third major set of comments, with 20 comments (18% of all comments) relate to re-instating the former services that were provided at Trafford General Hospital. Trafford Hospital was the only hospital within the boundaries of Trafford with a 24hr A&E department, which a number of Trafford residents appear acutely aware of.

Following the setting up of the University Hospital of South Manchester NHS Foundation Trust, recently succeeded by amalgamating this trust in October 2017 into the new Manchester University NHS Health Foundation Trust, the previous 24hr A&E department at Trafford has been remodelled as a 12hr Urgent Care department, with other, more major or "out-of-hours" care being provided at Manchester Royal Infirmary, Manchester Children's Hospital, Wythenshawe and Salford Royal A&E departments. The maternity service formally available at Trafford General Hospital is also being gradually changed as part of rationalisation of childcare in the new NHS Trust.

With 13 comments (12% of all comments) relating to A&E provision showing that these issues remain a concern to a significant proportion of respondents. Typical comments referring to A&E include:

"Keep Trafford General as a fully operational hospital with A and E rather than specialist in certain areas."

"Change Trafford General back to 24 hours A&E."

"Stop centralising services in ever larger areas - Need local A&E & local maternity - Go back to local services."

"Re open a full 24-hour hospital to include emergency department, full children services and the maternity unit. These services after centralization do not work for patients in Trafford we have ended up with a second-rate NHS."

In addition to these comments there were a further 3 comments (3% of all comments) suggesting that the level of Maternity services should be re-instated to the previous level, with comments like:

"Bring back vital hospital services within Trafford such as maternity - why should my grandchildren have to be born in an area outside Trafford when the parents live in Trafford."

"To have the maternity unit in Trafford we once had."

Finally, there were a further 4 comments (4% of all comments) referring to Trafford General Hospital generally, such as:

"I would just like to keep Trafford General open, it is our local hospital and the staff are dedicated and loyal."

"Keep Trafford General open for the local people - after all it was the very first NHS hospital - and the locals still live here and pay into the system to enable them to receive treatment locally."

Considering the number and detail of comments concerning the status of Trafford Hospital suggests that this is still a significant local issue and that a number of people may not be aware of the scope of remaining services at Trafford and the aims of re-balancing services locally to attempt to improve overall quality of services within the available budget. It also suggests that a further continuation of a local public education campaign might be beneficial.

Other comments.

As well as the three major sets of comments there were a number of significant themes that were brought up in minority collections of comments, in particular:

4 comments relating to **the integration of NHS care and Social Care**, with comments like:

"Social care as part of the service."

"Create more centres like Limelight with multiple services on site."

4 people said that they wanted greater emphasis on **the promotion of health life-styles to reduce the need for NHS care interventions**, with comments like:

"Prevention has to be a good way of keeping people well and saving money at the same time - Investing in encouraging people to stay healthy must be a positive step forward."

"Less use of prescriptions during treatments - More help with preventative health care - More use of public sports and leisure facilities to promote healthy lifestyles - GPs to give people alternatives to prescriptions to use local parks for sport and wellbeing."

"Diet and nutrition should be incorporated not just dishing out drugs that benefit pharmacists."

3 people were concerned about getting **better continuity of staff during courses of treatment**, with these comments:

"More continuity of care - for example, same midwife throughout if possible."

"I wish I could see the same GP and feel that they know me and have a good relationship."

"Continuity of care - so that you are seen by the same consultant/doctor when you have regular check-ups or follow-up appointments. It isn't a good feeling for the patient to be seen by a different doctor each time, who is unfamiliar with you/your case and you have to spend time explaining your circumstances/condition all over again to someone new, especially when time allowed for each appointment slot is so short."

....."

A further 3 people recorded that they wanted the **level of communication between NHS staff and patients improved**, with the following comments:

"Keeping patients more informed of what is happening, what is going to happen next, and timescales, during hospital and A&E visits."

"Better communication during waiting times."

"I want to see standardised effective healthcare communication across the borough and region. And across the whole of Greater Manchester when all systems are integrated. Have everyone singing from the same hymn sheet. The poor, fragmented communication we have currently engenders little confidence that our professionals know what they are doing and that they will provide a quality health service."

And 3 other people wanted to see **the improvements in aspects of their GP practice improved**, with the following comments:

"I would like full time GPs in our surgery and blood tests to be carried out in surgeries again."

"Our GP surgery is terrible, the GPs are often fine but the reception and organisation is dreadful [Name supplied]. Better access to mental health support, especially for the young."

"Having a service and/or GPs that can prescribe hormones to trans people without waiting several years."

A further 2 people identified that they wanted **improvements to "out of hours" access for working patients** with these comments:

"More access to NHS dentistry and extended surgery hour at clinics."

"Sort out appointment system for those who work."

Finally, there were a further 12 issues (11% of all comments) identified as **individual issues**, some more significant of which were:

"Carers in Trafford - Poor time keeping. Changes in carers. More training needed."

"Engage all communities in all areas of Trafford."

"Somewhere appropriate for my elderly mum - she is too poorly for respite at Ascot House, too well for Trafford General. Ended up at Salford Royal."

"To provide more community rehabilitation therapy support in the community for stroke survivors, to enhance recovery "

"Give more time for nurses to care. More staff who work with a smile, not exhaustion."

An overview of the answers to the question “If you could change one thing about the NHS in Trafford, what would it be?”

Analysis based on 113 separate responses.

Theme 1: Access to current health services.

34.5% (39) of responses highlighted that a change they would make is access to current health services. This can be broken down into two sub-themes.

Waiting times to access current services.

- 20.3% (23) of responses highlighted that this was an issue.
- Services: GPs, A&E, Hospital Out-patients, Blood tests and operations.

Availability of current services.

- 14.2% (16) of responses highlighted that this was an issue.
- The availability and flexibility to access GP services was the most common issue. Others included more locations for blood tests, a local A&E and more respite services for older people.

Theme 2: Improvement or changes needed to current health provision services.

29% (33) of responses highlighted that this was an issue regarding the current health services.

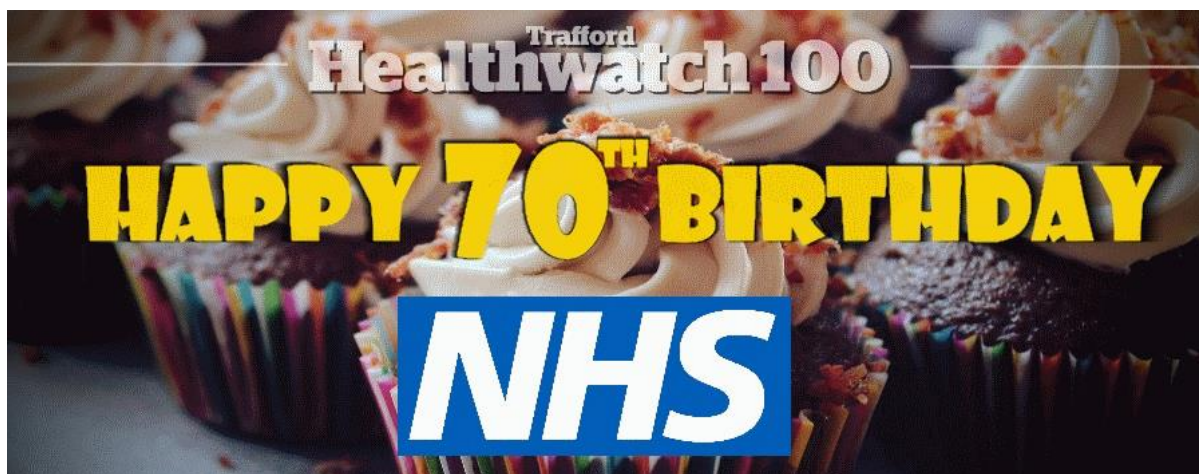
Specific health provision

- 26.5% (30) of all responses highlighted this was an issue. A wide range of services were commented upon (in order of responses). A&E, Trafford General, Maternity, community health and social care, blood testing, mental health, children, older people, dentistry and carers.

Theme 3: Resources available for health provision.

19.5% (22) of responses highlighted that this could be viewed through the issues of the need for more funding for more services and increased pay for health staff.

Appendix 1. The Survey:



The Trafford Healthwatch 100 - The NHS in Trafford at 70

Welcome to the Trafford Healthwatch 100

#healthwatch100

This is a project called the Trafford Healthwatch 100*. The aim is to get as many local people as possible to sign up and give their views on various topics to do with health and social care. We are doing this to capture as much information from people that use (or could use) services in the area so that we can use it to direct our work to the issues that matter. We want to improve the services in Trafford for the people that use them, but to enable us to do that we need to hear from them.

These surveys will be quick to fill in and relatively simple, so you will never have to spend a long time filling them in.

The information collected will always be anonymised, so you won't be identifiable by your answers, meaning you can be completely open and honest. The demographic and contact information are used only by Healthwatch Trafford to send out surveys to the right people and to make sure that our information is as representative of the people in the borough as possible. Your details will never be passed on or supplied to any other organisation and we will only ever use it for the purposes of the Trafford Healthwatch 100 project. You can unsubscribe at any time and we will remove all details upon request.

By giving us your details, we can send you the next appropriate survey when it is available, and you can ensure your experiences and views matter.

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback really is important and will help us make health and social care in Trafford better.

** The Trafford Healthwatch 100 is not limited to 100 people*

About you

To take part in the Trafford Healthwatch 100, we need to know a little bit about you. You will only have to fill this information in once.

You don't have to answer any questions you feel uncomfortable with but the more information you give the more helpful it will be for us. All surveys after this page will be anonymised so you cannot be identified by your answers.

3. What is your email address?

4. What name would you like us to know you by?

5. What has the NHS in Trafford done for you?

6. If you could change one thing about the NHS in Trafford, what would it be?

Thank you for taking part in the Trafford Healthwatch 100!

We will let you know when the next survey appropriate to you is available.

Your voice really does matter.



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