

**Waiting for an assessment or treatment with a**

**health service in Newcastle?**

In July 2023, the Newcastle Children and Families Team developed a short survey to establish what support parents/carers and families were receiving whilst waiting for an assessment or treatment from a health service in Newcastle upon Tyne. The survey was developed in consultation with the local authority SEND team and the parent carer forum.

The survey was shared to the following:

* Children and Families Hubs across Newcastle
* A&E / Walk in Centres / Minor Injury Units across Newcastle
* Skills for People
* North East Autism Society
* Therapy services across Newcastle
* Community paediatrics
* 0-19 service
* CYPS service
* Parent Carer Forum
* Newcastle Local Offer
* Parent Carer Newsletter
* Information Now

The survey was open from 19 July 2023 up to the 10 September 2023.

Services (ie CYPS, OT, SALT etc) were asked to share the link to the survey with parents/carers on their waiting list as well as displaying the poster in their waiting rooms etc.

We received a total of 65 responses to our survey and have outlined the results below.

**What we found out**

We asked parents/carers to advise us of which service their child/young person was waiting to see and whether they had received a confirmation letter, email or phone call to let them know that they were currently on a waiting list. As you can see from the results above the top four services were neurodevelopmental, CYPS, occupational therapy and speech and language services. However, not all parents/carers have received a confirmation that their child/young person is on a waiting list to be seen.

We wanted to establish whether parents/carers had been offered any support whilst they were waiting to be seen as well as asking them what support they would like whilst waiting. It was clear from the results that very little support was made available. Parents/carers expressed an interest in receiving support in many different ways, the most popular choices being 1:1 sessions, parent support groups, drop in sessions and even follow up phone calls.

It is apparent that parents/carers are unsure as to where to go to get additional support/advice whilst waiting to be seen, although nearly a third of those that completed the survey did seek independent advice whilst waiting.

**Actions**

Based on the responses we have received to the survey we have agreed the following actions:

* Sharing the results of the survey with the relevant children’s services and the therapies re-design working group
* Working with the relevant children’s services to ensure they are providing patients on the waiting lists with resources to support them whilst they wait to be seen
* Developing a dedicated resource for families on the local offer that points them to different resources, support groups etc
* Linking with the families that had left their details following completion of the survey.
* To re-run the survey in another 12 months.

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