

How is covid-19 impacting on people's access to and experience of health and social care services in Sheffield?

These emerging issues are based on feedback that we have received from individuals, as well as issues that have been brought to us via voluntary and community sector partners. This briefing is intended to be a snapshot of what we are hearing about; we hope that it is of use to services, and commissioners of services, in indicating potential areas of focus.

Background: [See previous briefings here](#)

Key issues from the two weeks commencing 18th May and 25th May 2020

- **GPs** - One person told us about a positive experience of an asthma review at their GP practice. They were sent a questionnaire to fill in, and a nurse followed this up with a telephone consultation and discussed medication adjustments. They felt that the telephone appointment worked well for their needs.
- **Pharmacies** – A person reported a negative experience at their pharmacy. There was nowhere to wait for their prescription, and the rest of the shop was still open meaning there were additional customers in the pharmacy. Both of these issues made social distancing very difficult.
- **Dentists** – A person got in touch with us about their ongoing need for dental treatment. Their treatment was paused at the beginning of lockdown and their condition has deteriorated since then. The person has struggled to find clear information about how and when their treatment might continue with adequate safety procedures in place. This builds on what we've heard in previous weeks, with multiple people letting us know that they're finding it hard to access information about changes to dentistry services.
- **Changes to lockdown restrictions** – We have heard from several people who were confused or nervous about the plans to ease lockdown restrictions that were announced this week. Some people do not feel that the plans have been fully explained and would appreciate some local guidance that they can more easily apply to their own situations. Additionally, we spoke to someone who was shielding who felt that they were being left out of government plans – social isolation is having an increasingly negative effect on their mental health.
- **People with learning disabilities** – We continue to hear particular concerns that people with learning disabilities can find it hard to understand the lockdown rules and restrictions. This has meant some people are going back to their normal lifestyles, which may be unsafe for them.
- **Sheffield City Council** – We have heard reports of people being unable to get through to First Contact. They are able to leave voicemails but say they do not get a response to these.
- **City Wide Care Alarms** – They are running a reduced service and not fitting door alarms currently. This is a concern for some people as the alarms are a less restrictive way of reminding people of lockdown restrictions when they forget and choose to go out.
- **Care homes** – We've heard a report about a lack of communication with care home residents when there is a case of covid-19 within a home.