

Hampshire County Council Website Review

Introduction

About Healthwatch

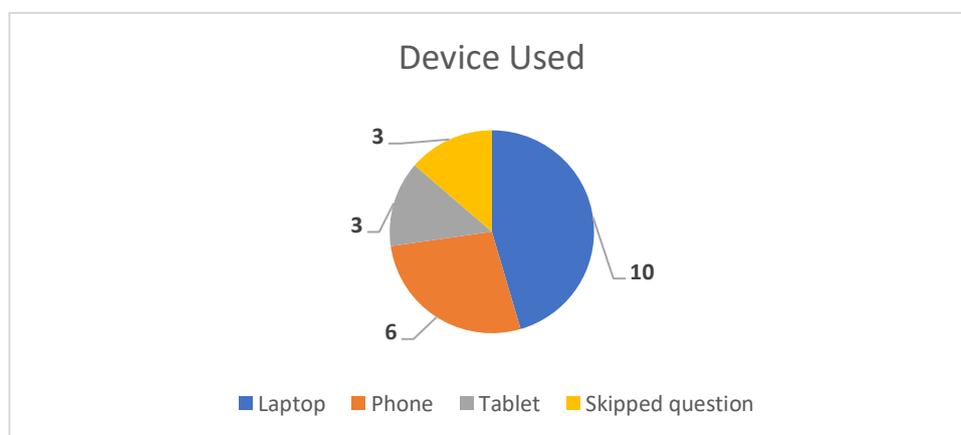
Local Healthwatch organisations are independent champions for people who use health and social care services. We are here to find out what matters to people and help make sure their views shape the support they receive.

Project background

Late last year we released a report titled Caring During Covid, and we made a number of recommendations that we are currently addressing. Carers reported that they found it difficult to access information on how to get a Carer's Assessment, and as a result of this we carried out a Mystery Shopping exercise of the Hampshire County Council website - (www.hants.gov.uk/). Our volunteers and partner organisations were invited to complete a questionnaire based on how easy/difficult they found the website to access information about questions that had been raised around Carers' Assessments. We received 22 responses which have been collated and anonymised.

Feedback From using the Hampshire County Council Website

Q1 Please indicate if you are using a laptop, phone, or tablet.

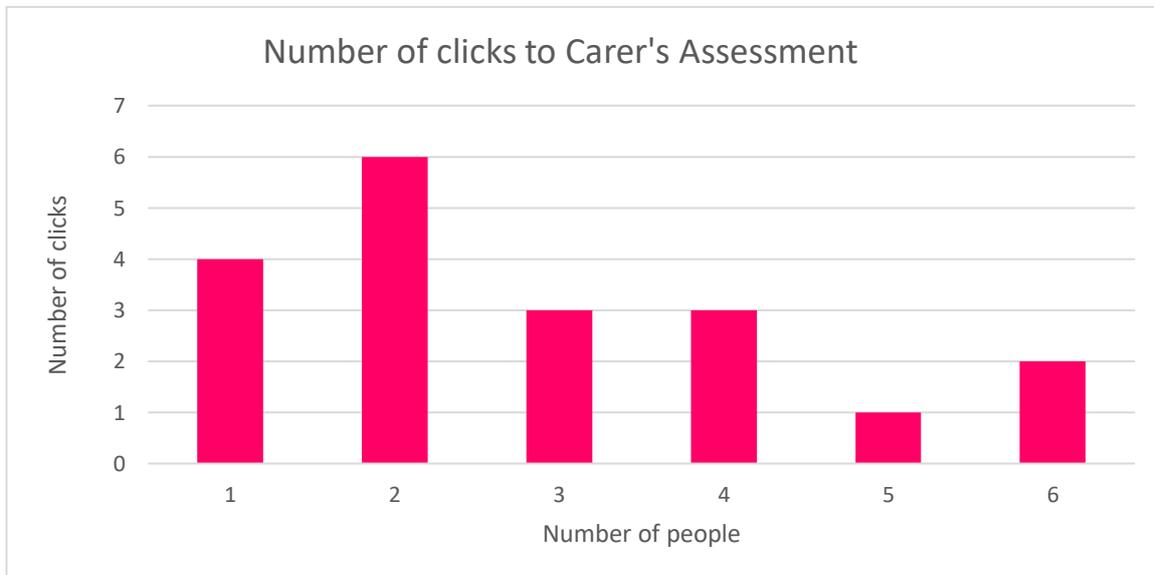


Q2 Can you navigate from the homepage to find information about carers' assessments?

Yes
91%

No
9%

Q3 If yes, how many clicks (from the homepage) did it take you to get to the information about carers' assessments?



Q4 Can you find out what a carer's assessment is from the information provided on the website?

Yes
82%

No
18%

Q5 If yes, how easy/difficult was the information to understand?

Not too difficult but the text was faint and in very small font.

Easy to understand but could have been more detailed.

Quite easy with a good range of info provided.

The information is informative however there isn't clear details on who to contact to speak about further information.

Fairly easy and straightforward

Simple

Not too difficult

It was easy but I know what I am looking for as a health professional, I appreciate that it could be difficult for someone else. It is true to say that it does not jump out at you.

Ok, once page found. Needs to enter 'carer's assessment' in the search.

The thing wrong with it is that it leads you to believe you will get a proper carer's assessment when in Hampshire you only get a carer's assessment as part of a section 17 assessment.

The basics were easy, other matters, such as what qualifies carers for support, requires browsing through lengthy documents that could be difficult to understand and would take a long time to go through.

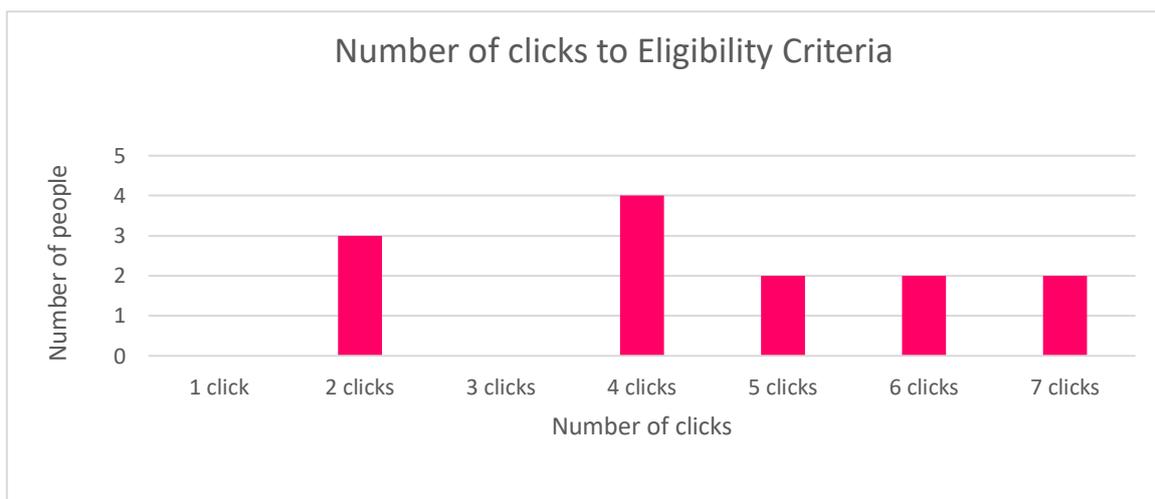
It is assumptive. It tells you that it is an 'opportunity to', and it lists those opportunities, so you can assume this is the loose criteria. It does not state how long it would take.

Q6 Can you find out what the eligibility criteria is for a carer's assessment?

Yes
55%

No
45%

Q7 If yes, how many clicks (from the home page) did it take you to get to the information?



Comments

- Too many. Should be on the main page, not on another site.
- Too complicated for most carers under stress.

Q8 How easy/difficult was it to navigate to the information?

OK Easy Not difficult Fairly easy Straightforward

Easy, but I have done it before.

Ok, but should be in the same site, or a shortened version shown for simplicity.

Easy, once I found that 'community support' (with a carer suggestive icon) was the wrong link, and that social care & health was the right one.

Not accessible. Especially for some who may not be fairly confident with technology. Very hidden - a blue link is found in what happens after the assessment section. You have to go through each section. There is 5 in total, and the eligibility criteria link was found in the 5th section.

Ok - if you know to click onto the highlighted underlined section 'eligibility criteria set by the government', and then to click the various criteria for more info.

Not obvious where to find the information. I had to click through the all the option. The 'what happens after assessment' section had a link to a government website.

Difficult. It is a long document with many subsections, and it is not clear what information is key. It would take a very long time to go through the whole thing, and there is no available summary.

Q9 How easy/difficult was the information to understand?

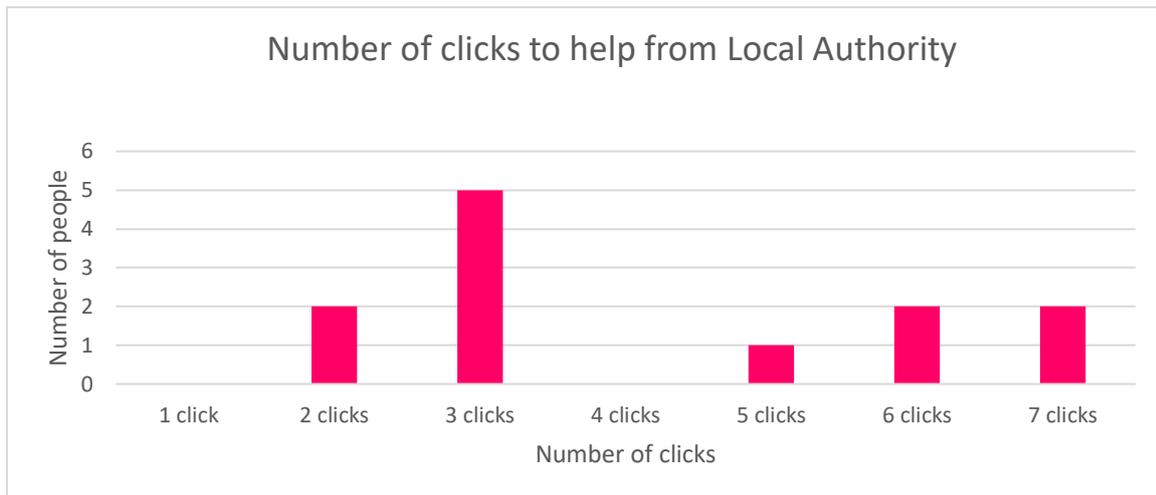
- Easy.
- Fairly easy.
- Reasonably easy.
- Not difficult.
- OK. The information was very detailed, so if you had the time it would be fine, but best viewed on a computer or printed off.
- Gov.uk info very un-user friendly.
- The link was to Care Act 2014. Not straightforward to understand.
- It is not too hard to understand, but there is so much of it that it would be inconvenient for most to go through it all. Summarised key points would be very helpful.
- The blue link takes you to the gov.uk website. There is a lot of information to look through may be very confusing, time consuming, and not self-explanatory.
- Ok but it was not under an obvious heading ("what happens after assessment?") then linked to an external gov website detailing eligibility criteria.
- Too involved for average carer.

Q10 You want to find out what potential help the Local Authority could provide. Can you navigate to information relating to support you could be entitled to following an assessment?

Yes
57%

No
43%

Q12 If yes, how many clicks did it take you to get to the information?



Q12 How easy/difficult was it to navigate to the information?

Straightforward

Easy

Moderately
easy

Ok, once page
was accessed.

It was in the 'what happens after an assessment' section with a link to support options. Not really visible

I found it fairly easy, however this may not be the case for everyone as there is a lot of information to look for. Everyone has individual needs.

It was ok. Could be harder for people who are not used to trawling through various agency waffle, and who may not be used to computers. If you were an older person with memory issues for example it would be very complicated.

Not Very

Confusing due to the amount of information

Not entirely clear, has tabs called 'Assessment opportunities' and 'what happens after the assessment'.

Tedious. Getting out of the 'Selection Criteria' I was sent back to the 'Accept Cookies' page, which I had to click to get back to where I started. Clicked 'Support Options', might be more useful to say, 'Support Available'. It took 3 clicks. This was after 'accepting cookies' again, then 'Connect to Support Hampshire', then scrolling down after passed a 'search menu option'. The latter again filling the screen and making you think you had to click one of these options. Clicked 'Support and Advice' got sent to same 'search menu' option as before so scrolled down again to get the list of options.

Q13 How easy/difficult was the information to understand?

- It's pretty easy to understand.
- Easy.
- Fairly easy.
- Ok once found.
- It was easy for me, but I know what to look for and what the information means.
- There is a lot of information, and it's not specific.
- Confusing due to amount of information.
- The support option was a link to 'Connect to Support Hampshire' which was very easy to understand.
- Not that great, too bitty. As the website's operation is so clumsy, with it constantly taking you back to a home page and coronavirus message, you really don't want it sectioned so much. It felt like reading typical civil service manual.

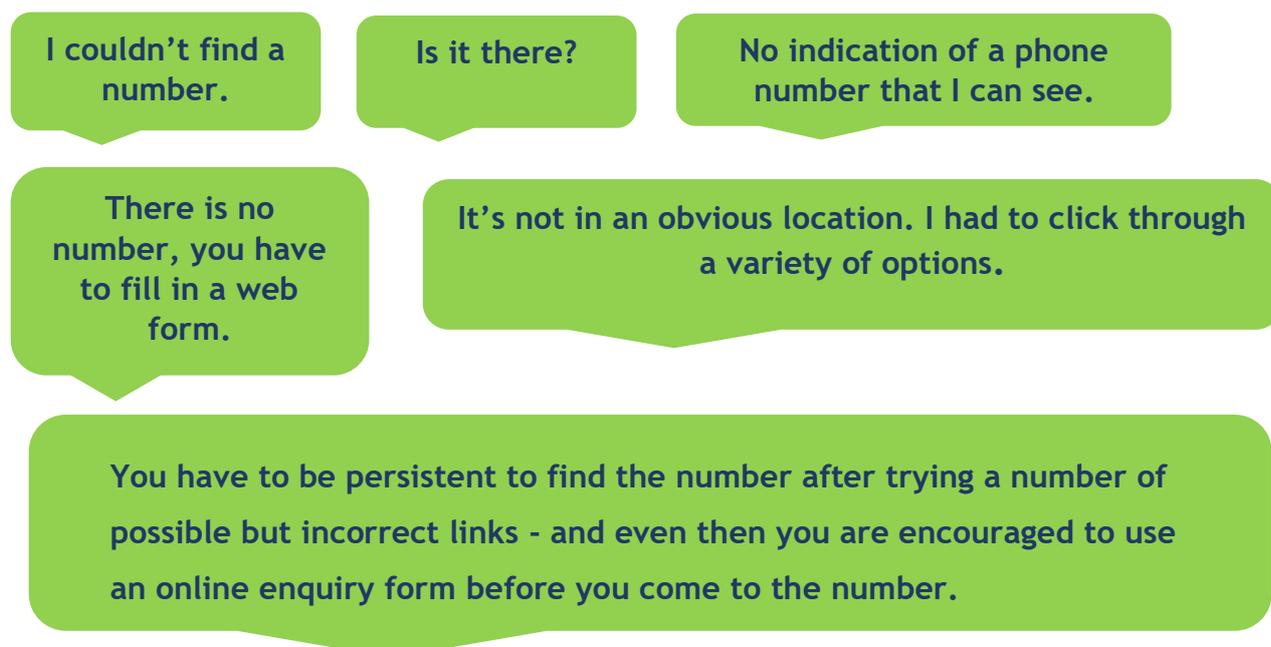
Q14 You would like to go ahead and organise a carer's assessment. Can you find a telephone number to contact the correct department to get this organised?



Q15 If yes, how many clicks did it take you to get to the information?

- Between 2-7 clicks to find a phone number (5 respondents)

Q16 Any other comments on finding a phone number to book a carer's assessment?



Had to come out and then go into adult services web page which kept telling me to send an email. Found a number in the end but if you were a carer I would think you would have giving up by now.

A click takes you to frequently asked questions which offers an email opportunity. Icon for 'chat now' appears on screen but no telephone number.

The number is seemingly not available. The only number I could easily find was a number that it was for "urgent requests", which would likely put some off.

The website is designed to encourage people to look online or use online form to get in touch. You had to scroll down to find the phone option.

Never found a phone number went round in circles.

It took quite some time looking round for the right department before finding a link to another site, then to find that didn't work. Could find a phone number, but it wasn't clear if it was the right one.

After 6 clicks and finding myself in another loop I lost the will to live.

Q17 Due to your caring responsibilities, you find it easier to send an email to book a carer's assessment. Can you find an email address to contact the correct department to get this organised?

Yes
18%

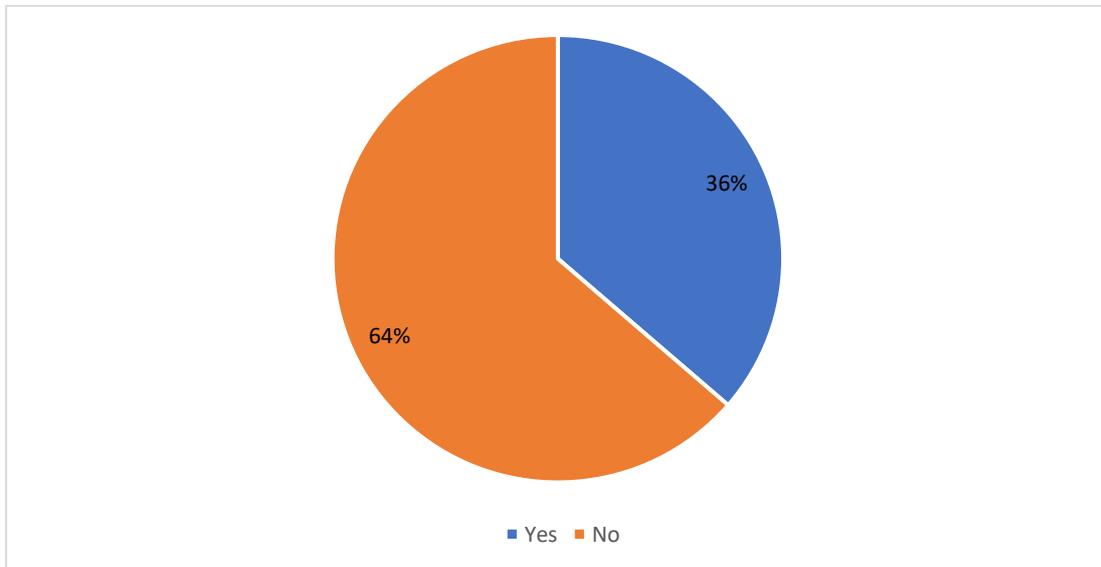
No
82%

Q18 Any comments on accessing an email address?

- Is there one?
- The only information they had to get in contact was Facebook and Twitter.
- The email address is a generic one. You would have to make sure you put in the right heading to get it to the correct department.
- No - it is not readily apparent.
- I couldn't find a phone number or an email address.
- Information on practicalities very scant or non-existent.
- There's a web form. It takes ages for someone to respond though.
- Came out of the Carers Section and tried using the search several ways. No joy.
- I was referred to the online form which required a lot of details. There wasn't an option to book an assessment so would need to use the 'other' field.
- Again, it was clicking and looking through a variety of options to get to a contact link. Then a choice between various online forms (depending on who was making the request) or a phone number.
- After going round in circles and becoming frustrated I gave up!
- There is literally no way to find an appropriate email address. Looking for

one is like navigating a labyrinth, the closest thing I could find was a long, generalised form where you give all your details and reasons for getting in contact and wait to be contacted by the council.

Q19 From the information available on the website, are you confident you have the knowledge to go ahead and apply for a carer's assessment?



Overall Feedback About Hants.Gov Website

Lots of options and it could be very easy to make a wrong navigation on the website.

I was able to find the information, although some was through links to other organisations which could have been more obvious to find.

Info on carers' assessments is accessible and quite good but there is a lack of examples of the types of help available, and the linked gov.uk info on eligibility is pretty impenetrable. The contact info is also rather inaccessible and off-putting.

*It is very stressful to find all the information online that you would need to apply for carer's assessment. There are examples of * not a direct contact number * no email address * overwhelming information. Carers are busy and tired. This service is meant to alleviate the pressure, so they can minimise the stress and anxiety. There needs to be clear contact details to access.*

I am no wiser than when I started. A telephone contact point should be readily visible. The colour and contrast of the wording on the web pages need to recognise the needs of users with poor eyesight. Black would be much better than light grey. Red is very difficult to read.

When I deliberately mis-spelt 'carer assessment' I could not find the right information. Basically, the system only works well if you are literate.

Too involved, nothing on main page, emails and phone numbers should be there not scattered over other sites. Too many links go round in circles.

I don't know where to contact for a carer's assessment. The site needs simplifications in its use.

The options lean towards elderly people's carers or children's services rather than carers that support adults with learning disabilities.

Basic information is easy to navigate too but could be clearer on eligibility criteria. Very difficult to find a contact number/email address to begin the process of a carer's assessment.

Lots of links to different websites and going around in circles. Eventually I found a long enquiry form and general number to fill out on the 'Adults' Health and Care help and support' page, but this was not linked to the carer's assessment page so not easy to find.

Includes a link to the Care Act, but this information is not clear.

You would give up looking. They forget in the long run that by being an unpaid carer you are saving them a lot of money.

Recommendations

1. **Information on Carers' Assessments** - respondents reported that the text was faint, and the font was very small, making it inaccessible to some. They also reported there was not much detail in the explanation. We have not noted any specific trends in the feedback that would suggest how the information can be improved upon. We recommend

consulting with carer groups to evidence what information carers would find helpful. We also recommend that the text/font be made clearer.

- 2. Eligibility Criteria** - This was reported as hard to find (currently located within the section on What Happens After Assessment). Many reported that access to the eligibility criteria was 'too complicated', 'very hidden', 'led to a very long document made of 5 sections, and the criteria was in section 5.

Feedback suggested that a simplified criteria should be available on the same page, for ease of access and understanding, and we recommend this is reviewed and implemented on the website.

- 3. Help Available** - Some respondents were unclear about what practical help could potentially be offered and commented that although there was some information, it was not specific. Could this section be made clearer, and contain some practical examples/case studies?
- 4. Information About Arranging an Assessment** - Our volunteers found it difficult to navigate to the section explaining how to arrange an assessment. Can this be on the Carer's Assessment page itself?
- 5. Ways to Arrange an Assessment** - The only option to arrange an assessment appears to be via a web form. Are there other methods available such as an email address, or appropriate phone number that can be displayed on the main page? Having a phone number easily available would assist those who have limited access to technology.