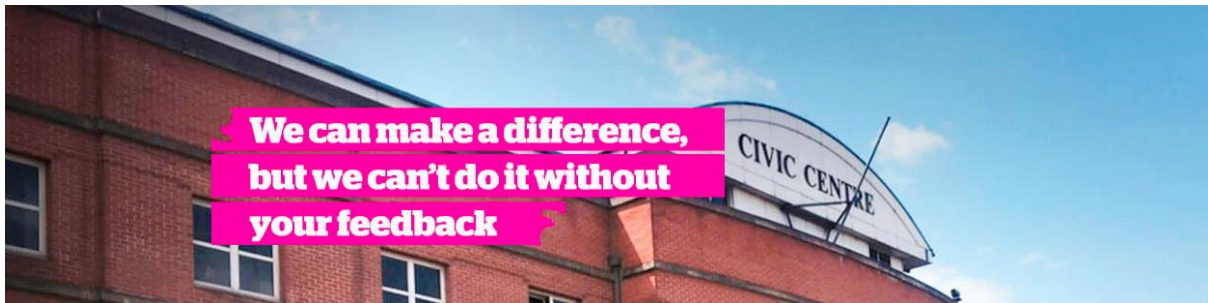


# Public Experience of Online Phlebotomy Appointments



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December 2020



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# Share your health and social care experience

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent is the independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share the views of the public with those with the power to make change happen. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services available locally.

Our sole purpose is to help make health and social care better for people.

Please contact us if you have an experience or opinion on health and social care services that you would like to share. To share an experience with us you can do so online through our website Feedback Centre, email, telephone or via our active social media platforms; Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

[WWW.HEALTHWATCHSTOKE.CO.UK](http://WWW.HEALTHWATCHSTOKE.CO.UK)

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**What you're saying** *quality public*  
*helping A&E ease support doctors*  
*friendly waiting health long-term*  
*improvements good Happy patient* 

# Recommendations

- A proportion of patients remain digitally excluded and are unable to engage or communicate with a member of staff via the telephone booking system, due to limited digital knowledge and internet access. Therefore, consider how digital exclusion and inaccessibility of telephone communications can be addressed to provide systematic inclusion.
  - Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent continue to receive regular support requests to book a blood test online, due to a lack of familiarity and awareness of how to use the online system. Can a communications strategy be considered for residents to explain and showcase a step by step 'how to book' process for patient ease of access.
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# Background

There are 21 Phlebotomy Centres across Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire; 14 are in Stoke-on-Trent:

- Bentilee Health Centre
- Cobridge Community Health Centre
- Meir Primary Care Centre
- Tunstall Health Centre
- Stoke Health Centre
- Kidsgrove Health Centre
- Blurton Health Centre
- Burslem Health Centre
- Fenton Health Centre
- Hanley Health Centre
- Longton Cottage Hospital
- Longton Health Centre
- Shelton Primary Care Centre
- Smallthorne Health Centre
- Children under 10 are seen at the Paediatric Clinic at Royal Stoke University Hospital





## What we did

In August 2020 we published a Patient Experience of Blood Tests Report during wave one of the coronavirus pandemic. [To review report one, click here.](#)

Following our Patient Experience of Blood Tests Report, a qualitative research design was formed to collect public feedback items around accessing and booking online phlebotomy appointments.

From 21 September 2020 to 5 October 2020 we completed a two-week callout across our social media platforms and our website to collect patient experiences of the newly registered online phlebotomy appointment booking system, in anticipation of helping us to understand how the online booking system has influenced the booking process.

To access the online phlebotomy appointment booking system, [click here.](#)

The virtual callout post addressed the following area and was structured as follows:

As part of our mini callouts for evidence for anonymous evidence, which we will be undertaking throughout the year. We are asking residents in Stoke-on-Trent *what has been your experience when booking a phlebotomy appointment with University Hospitals of North Midlands NHS Trust's online system.*

Was the system accessible or did you have any difficulties?  
Did you have to cancel or change an appointment, if so, could this be done via the website?

You can let us know by:

- Commenting on this post
- Phoning 01782 683080
- Emailing [info@healthwatchstoke.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchstoke.co.uk)

We appreciate your feedback and the time that you spend sharing your experiences with us, all for the good of the future of health and social care.

## University Hospitals of North Midlands (UHNM)

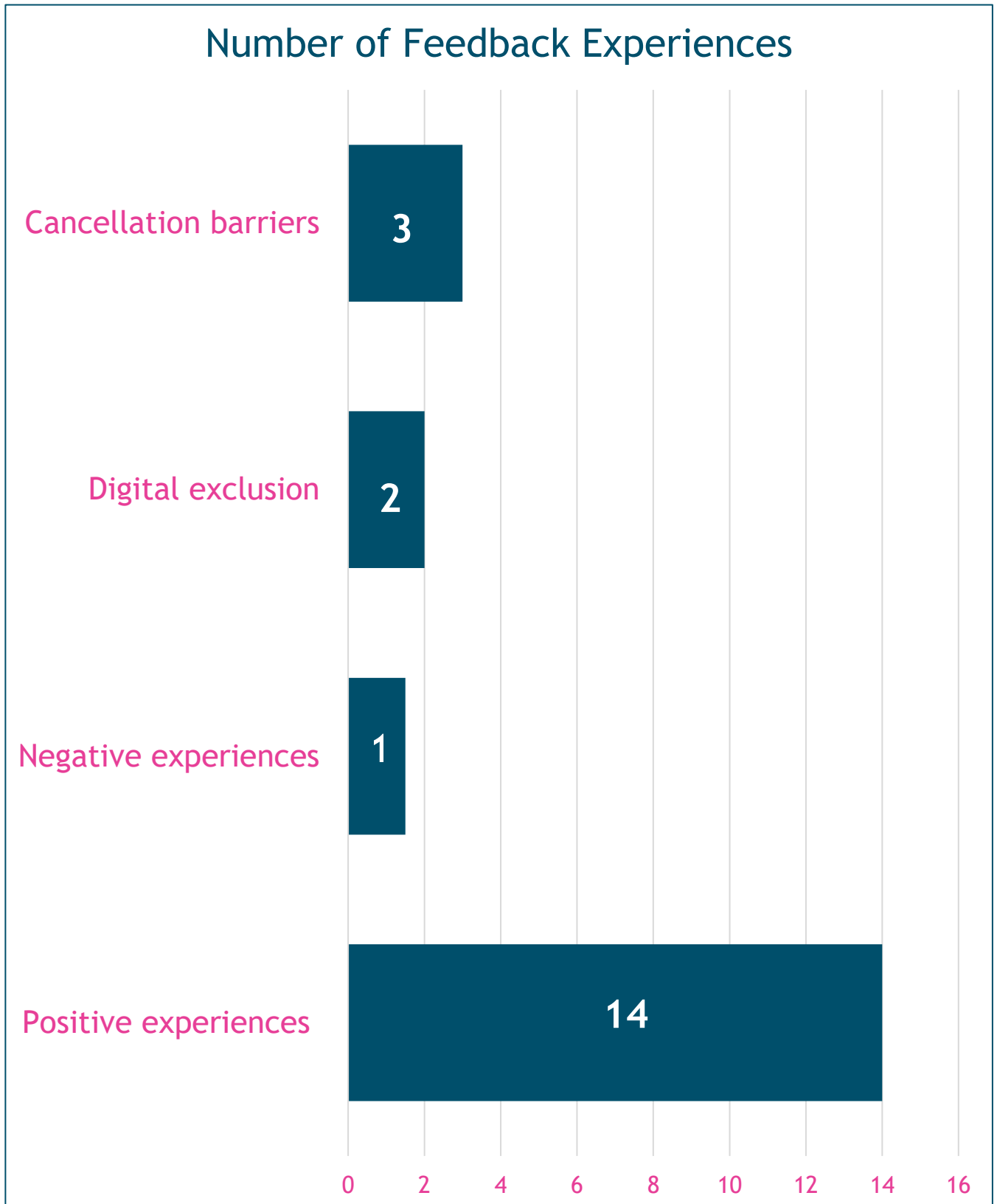
On 12 October 2020 UHNM presented our Public Experience of Blood Tests during the Coronavirus Pandemic Report at their Quality Meeting. UHNM asked attendees about their experiences and if they have improved. We were in attendance and provided further information about the report background and contents to advocate our findings and recommendations.

We informed UHNM that we have received a growing amount of feedback about there being no online option to cancel phlebotomy appointments. This was a significant issue as some patients were finding it difficult to get through to a staff member by telephone, and therefore, were unable to cancel or amend a booking appointment.

**As a result of our intervention, a cancellation option was added to the online booking system which enables patients to amend at ease without delay.**



## Feedback experiences in themes





# Appendix 1 - Feedback received

## Positive experiences

1. I had to book a blood test through the new system. I am a shielding healthcare worker. I found it very simple.
2. This service it is far more convenient than ringing. I hope it is not scrapped post COVID.
3. I used your on-line blood test service this morning. It took a fraction of the time of telephone service. Please, once COVID-19 is over, keep this on-line service.
4. If you can now book online for blood tests that is a positive step in the right direction.
5. Booking a blood test online is much better as it saves you waiting a long time for someone to answer the telephone.
6. Booking a blood test online is a better process and I like the fact you receive a text message once you book which includes the details.
7. It was easy to book a blood test online but quite a wait for the app it is self.
8. Booking a blood test online - I thought it was brilliant. It took a while to get an appointment but well worth it because I was in and out in two minutes, it is rather than potluck with how long you'll have to wait. I have got 2 kids under 3 so you can imagine what a nightmare it is for me to get a test done in the week with the usual queues. I hope they keep this current system to be honest.
9. Booking a blood test online - It was easy and how to wait about 2 weeks.
10. I booked an online blood test and the system is great I had an appointment the following week and it only took 5 minutes to book and when I arrived, they were waiting for me and I was in and out in 60 seconds.
11. Easy to book blood test. Very efficient - bear in mind they only allow you into the building 1 minute before your appointment. SO - either wrap up warm or get cold (in winter!).

12. This service is much better, and you do not have wait when you arrive.

13. It is quicker than ringing up.

14. I hope the website stays after Covid.

## Negative experiences

15. I did try to book online when I tried it would not let me book. Tried every centre but no joy - would only show available appointments but would not let me book.

## Digital exclusion

16. A man phoned the office phone and said he has been given our number by his friend as he has got no internet access and he need to book a blood test. Healthwatch assisted the man with booking a blood test online and the man was very grateful.

17. A man rang and said he would like to book a blood test as he has been having difficulty getting through on the number he was provided. He mentioned that he must have a blood test every 3 months before going to an appointment as he has got prostate cancer. He then informed staff that he wasn't got no access to the internet.

## Cancellation barriers

18. I have been trying to cancel my appointment and there is no option online and no one is answering the telephone.

19. My GP did my blood test for me and I tried to cancel my appointment but with no luck.

20. It would be better if you could cancel your appointment.