



SEL Insights

November 25 – January 26

healthwatch
Lambeth

Common themes

1. Access to timely appointments and care
2. Digital systems
3. Communication gaps about referrals, waiting times and next steps
4. Appointments not always allowing enough time for complex needs
5. Variation in access and experience across different communities

Positive feedback

Weekly GP and psychiatrist visits at **Martha Jones House**: “*The GP and psychiatrist come here once a week... it's easy to get care.*”

Respectful communication from clinicians at **GSTT** and **King's**.

Staff attitudes: **85% positive** (GPs), **87% positive** (hospitals) in Lewisham.

Specialist and cancer care at **King's College Hospital** – “*The care at King's has been amazing.*”

Individual clinicians at **PRUH** and **King's** praised for respectful care – “*The doctor at PRUH was very kind and explained everything.*”

Park Avenue Care Home (Bromley) - Residents generally felt safe and well cared for.

Positive feedback highlighted that peer-led, community and school-based sessions helped young people feel more informed and confident about HPV vaccination through honest, age-appropriate discussions (**Greenwich**).

Access to timely appointments and care

Lambeth – GP services (multiple practices, incl. Herne Hill Road Medical Practice & Minet Green Health Practice): Patients reported waiting several days for GP appointments, even after completing online triage forms. Some felt appointment availability did not reflect the urgency of ongoing or worsening symptoms.

Lewisham – GP practices: 63% of reviews relating to appointment availability were negative; 91% of reviews mentioning waiting times to be seen described negative experiences, including long waits in surgery waiting rooms.

Greenwich – Sexual health and vaccination services (HPV project): Young people described difficulty booking appointments that fitted around school, college, or work

Digital systems

Lambeth – Minet Green Health Practice: Patients with low digital confidence or language barriers found Accurx forms difficult to complete without support.

Lambeth – Homeless But Not Voiceless project: Digital inclusion was a significant barrier for people experiencing homelessness; many lacked devices, and consistent internet access. Many services now rely on digital access. Only 65.5% of people sleeping rough are registered with a GP, compared with 98% of the general population.

Lewisham – GP services: 60% of reviews about online appointment booking were negative; People described being directed online even when systems were unavailable or confusing.

Greenwich – HPV youth engagement: Young people reported that digital information about HPV vaccination was unclear or hard to trust, affecting confidence and informed consent.

Communication gaps about referrals, waiting times and next steps

Lambeth – Hospital services: Patients reported long waits for diagnostic tests and limited updates while on waiting lists. Some were unsure who to contact for progress updates

Lewisham – Hospital services: Hospital services received 39% negative feedback overall. Communication about waiting lists and appointment changes was a recurring concern.

Bromley – Care homes: Care staff described delays and unclear communication when chasing GP or community health input for residents.

Greenwich – HPV programme: Young people said they did not always know where to go with follow-up questions after receiving information sessions, affecting confidence in decision-making.

Appointments not always allowing enough time for complex needs

People with multiple or long-term conditions felt standard appointment models did not always reflect the complexity of their situations.

Lambeth – GP services: Patients reported being asked to focus on one issue per appointment, requiring multiple visits for related concerns. This was particularly difficult for people with long-term conditions or neurodivergence.

Lambeth – Homeless But Not Voiceless: Participants described short GP appointments and lack of continuity, which reduced trust and engagement. Mental health and substance-misuse support were often delivered separately, leaving gaps.

Lewisham – GP services: 63% of reviews referencing appointment availability and 91% referencing waiting times highlighted challenges in receiving timely, adequate consultations.

Bromley – Care home residents: Staff noted that residents with complex needs required longer appointments than were routinely available.

Variation in access and experience across different communities

Lambeth – Minet Green Health Practice: Most patients spoken to did not have English as a first language, increasing reliance on interpretation or family support.

Greenwich – HPV youth project: Young people from some communities reported lower trust in services and limited culturally relevant information, affecting vaccine uptake.

Lambeth – Homeless But Not Voiceless: Participants reported feeling dismissed or not taken seriously – some participants felt that staff assumptions about homelessness affected how their symptoms were understood, e.g. where pain was attributed to substance use rather than investigated and mental health needs were seen as behavioral rather than clinical.

Southwark & Lewisham – Community feedback: People raised concerns about access for disabled residents, older people, and those facing financial or housing insecurity.

Reports referenced

Oak Lodge Care Home – Enter and View Report and Provider Response (Bromley)

Park Avenue Care Home – Enter and View Report and Provider Response (Bromley)

Bromley Health and Wellbeing Board – Patient Experience Report Q2 2025

Together We Prevent: Youth Participatory Action on HPV – Provider Response (Greenwich) Lambeth Herne Hill Road Medical Practice – Enter and View Report

Lambeth Minet Green Health Practice – Enter and View Report

Homeless But Not Voiceless: Improving Access to Care for People Experiencing Homelessness and Dual Diagnosis (Lambeth)

Lambeth Patient Feedback Report (July–September 2025)

Reports referenced

Healthwatch Lewisham Patient Experience Report – Q2 (July–September 2025)

Healthwatch Southwark Strategy 2023–2026 Monitoring Report – Quarter 2 (July–September 2025)

For more information

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