

West and South Yorkshire and Bassetlaw Commissioning Support Unit



Unused Medicines Engagement Report Leeds North CCG

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1. Introduction

NHS Leeds North Clinical Commissioning Group plans to introduce a proactive approach to ensuring people have the best support when taking medicines. People will be encouraged to return their unused medicines and, where appropriate, undertake a medicines review.

2. Background

£300 million per year is wasted in unused medicines in the UK. Within Leeds over £5million is wasted. Even if the packet/bottle is never opened once the medication leaves the pharmacy it cannot be reused and has to be destroyed.

Research has found that 70% of people stop taking medicines within the first 10 weeks but they still collect their repeat prescriptions wasting medicines which could be worth hundreds of pounds.

A pilot is currently being carried out in Otley led by the local pharmacists in conjunction with the GP practices. The CCG is currently recruiting pharmacy technicians to assist with the medicine reviews. The CCG are planning to run a local campaign to help reduce the number of unused medicines being stock piled in people's homes. In order to ensure that the campaign is meaningful, it is important to understand why people have unwanted or unused medication and to what the CCG can do to help prevent it or dispose of it.

3. Engagement

A survey was developed and Leeds Involving People (LIP) was provided with contact details of the GP surgeries, pharmacies, hospital, care homes, and several community groups in the Otley area and made contact with the agencies and arranged to visit them to undertake the survey with patients and /or clients. The percentages quoted in the report have been rounded up to the nearest whole number.

4. Summary of findings

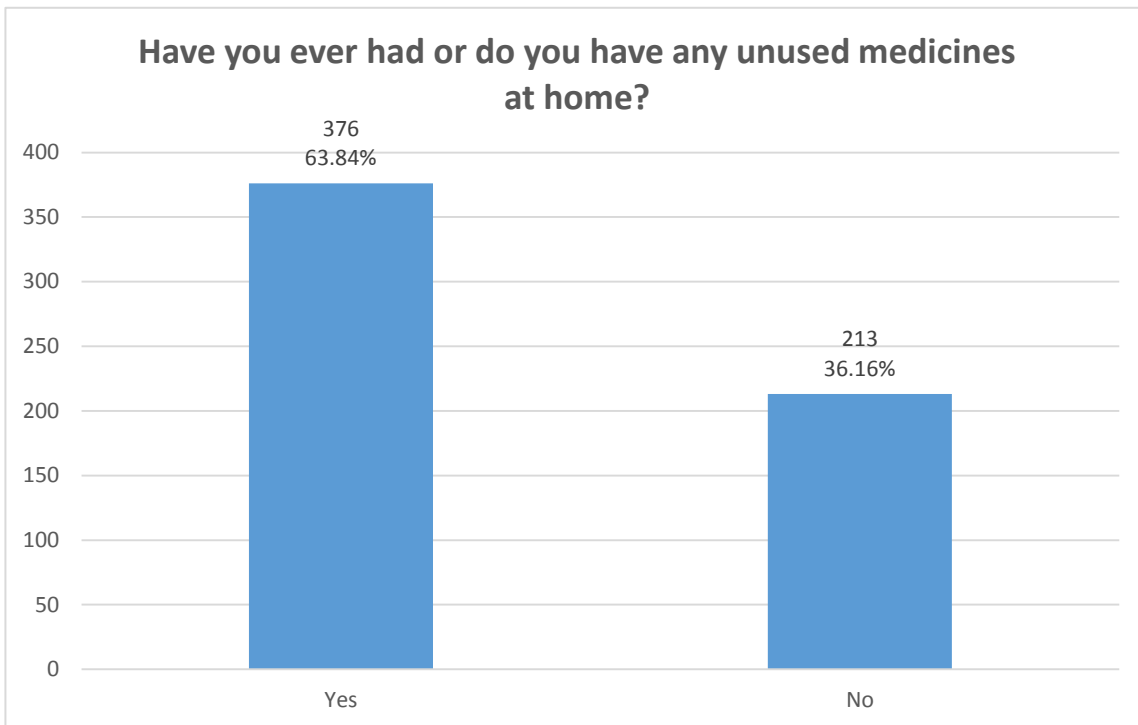
- The majority of respondents (64%) currently had or had had unused medicines in their homes.
- 45 % of respondents said that this was because they got better and no longer needed the medicines. Close behind this, 40% of respondents said that they had unused medicines at home because their medicine was changed by a doctor.
- The majority of respondents (61%) said that they usually take their unused medicines to the pharmacy.
- 76 % of respondents said that they are aware that pharmacies will take unused medicines and dispose of them.
- 78% of respondents said that there is nothing that would make it easier for them to take their unused medicines, as they already do it. From the 22% of respondents who answered that something could make it easier for them, 13% said that a labelled bag given to them at the time of collection would make it easier for them.



5. Survey responses

Respondents were asked if they were completing the survey on behalf of someone that they cared for. Only two of the 591 respondents said that they were completing the survey as a carer.

Have you ever had or do you have any unused medicines at home?

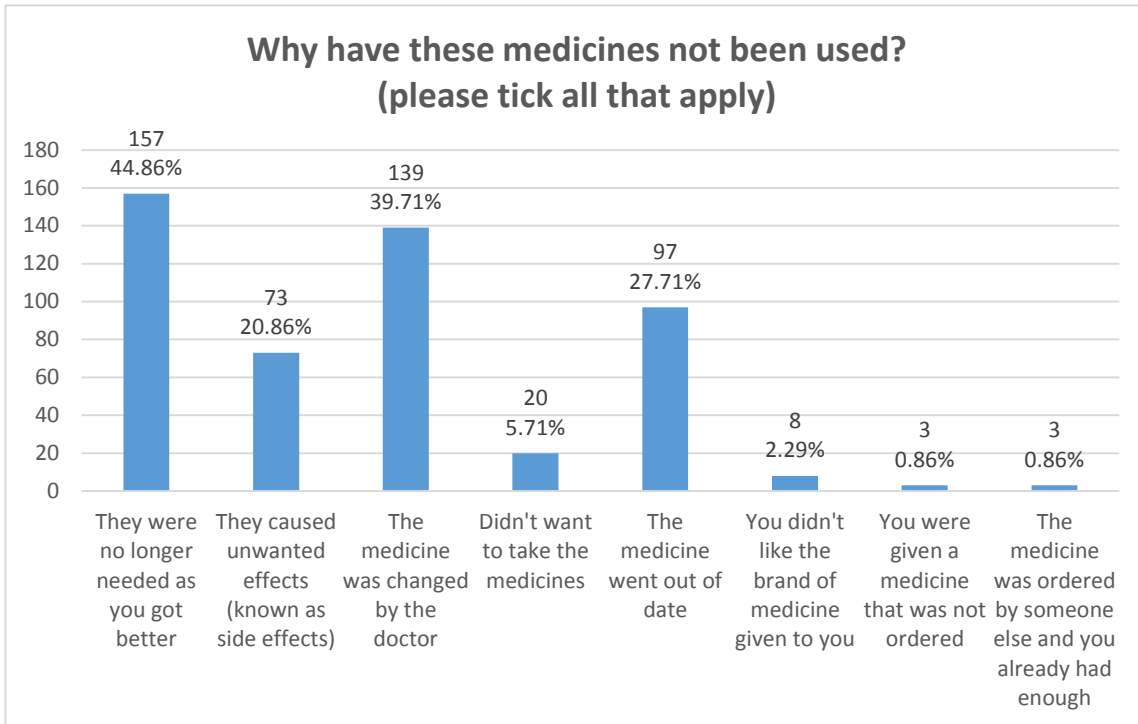


Two respondents didn't answer the question, so they have been omitted from the chart.

376 (64 %) of the 591 respondents who answered the question said that they either had or had had unused medicines at home. 213 (36%) said that they didn't have or hadn't had unused medicines at home.



Why have these medicines not been used (please tick all that apply)?

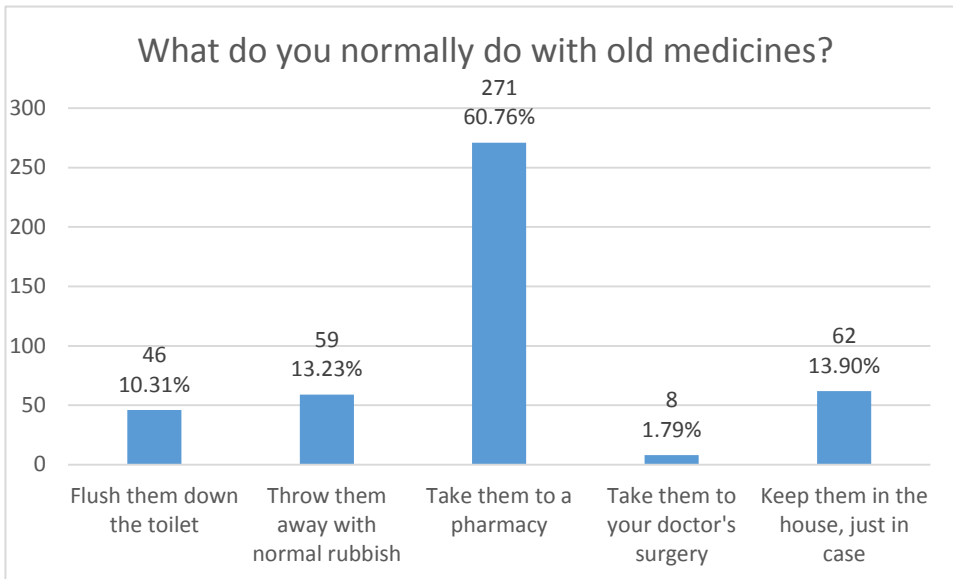


In total 350 respondents answered the question about why their medicines had not been used. 157 (45%) said that they were no longer needed as they got better, close behind this 139 (40%) said that their medicine was changed by the doctor. 97 (28%) respondents said that their medicine went out of date, 73 (21%) said that the medicine caused side effects, 20 (6%) said that they didn't want to take the medicine, eight (2%) said that they didn't like the brand of medicine that the doctor gave to them, three (1%) said that they were given a medicine that was not ordered and three (1%) said that the medicine was ordered by someone else and they already had enough of it.

15 respondents left further comments in response to the above question. Nine said that they had unused medicines due to a bereavement in their family. Four said that their medication was overprescribed, so they didn't use it all. Two respondents said that they have conditions that flare up on occasion, so they use their medication as and when they need to.



What do you normally do with old medicines?



145 respondents didn't answer the question, so they have been omitted from the chart.

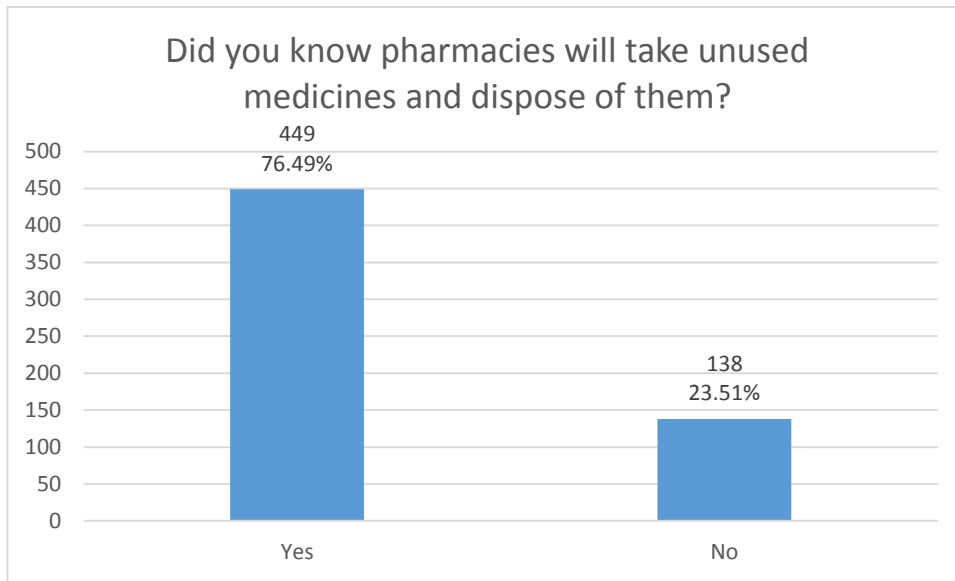
Over half of respondents (271, 61%) said that they take their old medicines back to a pharmacy. 62 (14%) respondents said that they keep them in the house, just in case, 59 (13%) said that they throw them away with their normal rubbish, 46 (10%) said that they flush them down the toilet and eight (2%) said that they take them to their doctor's surgery.

Out of the further comments which were left, six respondents said that they pour their unused liquid medicines down the sink. Two respondents said that they burn their unused medicines. One respondent said that if there is a large amount, he takes them to his doctor's surgery.

Three care homes were contacted to find out what they do with unused medicines, they all said that they return them to the pharmacy that they collect them from. The care homes were Tealbeck House, Spring Gardens and The Thicket.



Did you know pharmacies will take unused medicines and dispose of them?

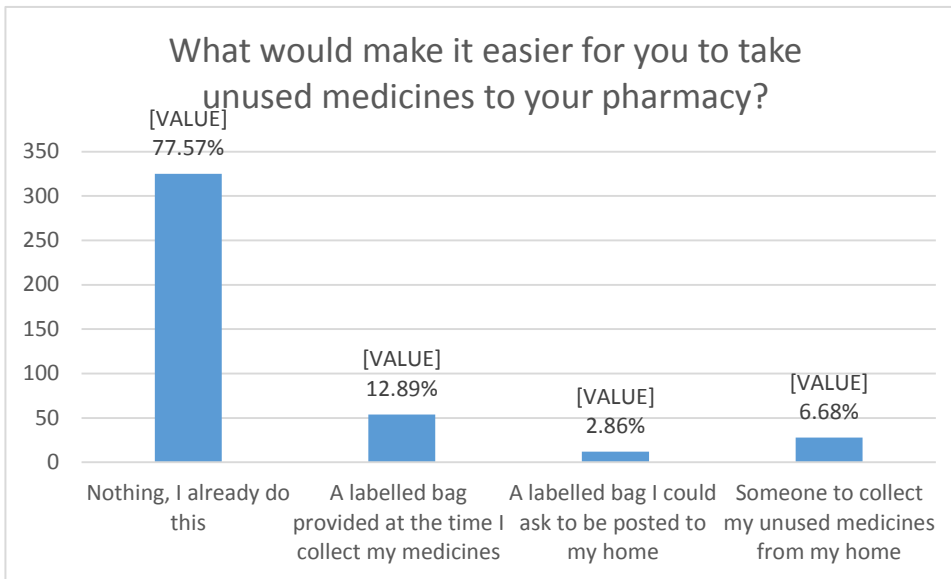


The majority of respondents (449, 76%) said that they were aware that pharmacies will dispose of unused medicines and dispose of them, 138 (3%) said that they weren't aware of this.

Four respondents didn't answer the question, so they have been omitted from the chart.



What would make it easier for you to take unused medicines to your pharmacy?



73 respondents left further comments saying now that they are aware of it, they will take their unused medicines to a pharmacy. 15 respondents said that simply being aware of the fact that they can take unused medicines to the pharmacy is likely to be enough to encourage people to do it. Four respondents suggested a box being provided at pharmacies for people to put unused medicines in would make it easier for them.

6. Conclusion

The majority of respondents (64%) said that they currently have or had had unused medicines at home. The most common reason that respondents gave for this was that they got better and no longer needed the medication (45%). The next common reason that respondents gave was because the doctor changed their medication (40%).

61% of the respondents said that they take their unused medicines to a pharmacy, 2% said that they take them to a doctor's surgery, so in total 63% of respondents are returning their unused medicines. 76% of respondents said that they are aware that pharmacies take unused medicines back, so only 14% of respondents who are aware of this aren't taking their unused medicines to a pharmacy. As so many respondents already take their unused medicines back to the pharmacy, most of them responded that nothing could make it easier for them as they already do it. The most common answer that respondents did give was being given a labelled bag when they are collecting their medicines to return any unused ones in.



The response rate for survey completion in Otley was very high, as was the awareness of returning unused medicines to the pharmacy. The two factors could be related, as the respondent demographic was mainly made up of retired people who are more likely to be actively involved in their local community. Such a high response rate and awareness may not be replicated in areas of Leeds with transient populations.

Examining the equality data, 522 out of the 591 who completed the survey were British, were between the age of 56 – 85 and were women.

In order to achieve a more balanced picture of activity across the Leeds North population, I would recommend further engagement in a less affluent area with a more diverse demographic. As there was also a low uptake in the number of carers responding, Carer Leeds should be contacted to get some additional views.



Appendix a

Unwanted Medicines

Leeds North Clinical Commissioning Group (LNCCG) are responsible for planning and making sure local healthcare services in North Leeds meet local people’s needs. As part of this ongoing work we would like to find out why people have unwanted or unused medication and what we can do to help prevent it or to dispose of it

It is important for us to understand why unused medication is not returned because:

- wasted medicines cost the NHS a lot of money which could be spent on other healthcare needs;
- having lots of unused medicine at home can be dangerous if people who are not prescribed the medication take it;
- stopping taking medicines can have a bad effect on your health and wellbeing; and
- it is not safe to take out of date medicine

To help us learn more, we have put together a short questionnaire and would appreciate your help by completing it. The questionnaire should only take a few minutes and most answers just require you to tick a box. It is anonymous

What will happen to my views?

The information will help us understand why unwanted medicines are stockpiled in homes and how we can support patient’s to dispose of unwanted medicines safely.

You may also be asked to complete this form on behalf of someone you care for, for example a housebound relative. If you are a carer please tick

1)	Have you ever had or do you have any unused medicines at home? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
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2)	<p>Why have these medicines not been used (Please tick as many that apply)?</p> <p>These were no longer needed as you got better <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>They caused unwanted effects (known as side effects) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The medicine was changed by the doctor <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Didn't want to take the medicines <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The medicine went out of date <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>You didn't like the brand of medicine given to you <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>You were given a medicine that was not ordered <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>The medicine was ordered by someone else and you already had enough <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other reason (please write below)</p>
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3)	<p>What do you normally do with old medicines?</p> <p>Flush them down the toilet <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Throw them away with normal rubbish <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Take them to a pharmacy <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Take them to your doctor's surgery <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Keep them in the house, just in case <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other methods (please write below) <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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4)	<p>Did you know that pharmacies will take unused medicines and dispose of them for you?</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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5)	<p>What would make it easier for you to take unused medicines to a pharmacy?</p> <p>Nothing, I already do this <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A labelled bag provided at the time I collect my medicines <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>A labelled bag I could ask to be posted to my home <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Someone to collect my unused medicines from my home <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Other suggestions (please write below) <input type="checkbox"/></p>
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Equality Monitoring Form

So that we provide the best services for all of our communities, and to ensure that we do not knowingly discriminate against any section of our community, it is important for us to gather the following information. No personal information will be released when reporting statistical data and data will be protected and stored securely in line with data protection rules.

Please return the form to:

What is the first part of your postcode? e.g. LS28, LS13

Please enter here:	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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What sex are you?

<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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Transgender - is your gender identity different to the sex you were assumed to be at birth?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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Pregnancy and Maternity

<input type="checkbox"/> I am pregnant	<input type="checkbox"/> I have given birth within the last 26 weeks
<input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

What is your age?

<input type="checkbox"/> Under 16	<input type="checkbox"/> 16 - 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 26 - 35
<input type="checkbox"/> 36 - 45	<input type="checkbox"/> 46 - 55	<input type="checkbox"/> 56 - 65
<input type="checkbox"/> 66 - 75	<input type="checkbox"/> 76 - 85	<input type="checkbox"/> 86 +
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say		

What is your sexual orientation?

<input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual (both sexes)	<input type="checkbox"/> Heterosexual/straight (opposite sex)
<input type="checkbox"/> Gay man (same sex)	<input type="checkbox"/> Lesbian/gay woman (same sex)
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	

Do you consider yourself to belong to any religion?

<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhism	<input type="checkbox"/> Christianity	<input type="checkbox"/> Hinduism
<input type="checkbox"/> Islam	<input type="checkbox"/> Judaism	<input type="checkbox"/> Sikhism
<input type="checkbox"/> No religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	
Other (please state)		

What is your ethnic background?

Asian, or Asian British	Black, or Black British	Mixed/ multiple Ethnic groups	White	Other
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> African	<input type="checkbox"/> Asian & White	<input type="checkbox"/> British	<input type="checkbox"/> Arab
<input type="checkbox"/> Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/> Black African & White	<input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy/Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/> Other



<input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Black Caribbean & White	<input type="checkbox"/> Irish	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other		<input type="checkbox"/> Other	<input type="checkbox"/> Other	
If any other ethnic background, please state here:				
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say				

Do you consider yourself to have a disability? Please tick all that apply

Under the Equality Act 2010 a disability is defined as ‘a physical, sensory or mental impairment which has, or had a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities’.

<input type="checkbox"/> Long-standing illness or health condition e.g. cancer, diabetes, HIV, etc.				
<input type="checkbox"/> Learning disability/difficulty	<input type="checkbox"/> Mental Health condition	<input type="checkbox"/> Physical or mobility Visual		
<input type="checkbox"/> Hearing	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state)		
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say				

Do you look after, or give any help or support to a family member, friend or neighbour because of long term physical disability, mental ill-health or problems related to old age?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
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What is your relationship status?

<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage/civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/> Live with partner	<input type="checkbox"/> Single	<input type="checkbox"/> Widowed
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Please specify:		

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form.

We would like to have all your views by 31 October 2013

Please return this form to:
 Freepost RTEH-ZTXY-HALJ
 Leeds North Clinical Commissioning Group
 Leafield House
 107-109 King Lane
 Leeds
 LS17 5BP



Appendix b**Equality**

Gender	Total
Female	403
Male	170
Prefer not to say	3
Unanswered	15
Grand Total	591

Religion or belief	Total
Christianity	331
Islam	5
Sikh	4
Hindu	1
Judaism	1
Buddhist	1
No religion	178
Prefer not to say	11
Unanswered	59
Grand Total	591

Ethnic Background	Total
British	552
Caribbean	1
Black Caribbean & White	1
Chinese	1
Indian	6
Irish	4
Pakistani	3
Prefer not to say	4
Unanswered	19
Grand Total	591

Sexuality	Total
Heterosexual	530
Gay man	2
Bisexual	1
Prefer not to say	40
Unanswered	18
Grand Total	591

Age group	Total
Under 16	0
16-25	25
26-35	36
36-45	63
46-55	83
56-65	114
66-75	126
76-85	114
86+	27
Prefer not to say	1
Not answered	5
Grand Total	591

Pregnancy/Maternity	Total
I am pregnant	4
Given birth in last 26 weeks	3
N/A	543
Prefer not to say	12
Unanswered	29
Grand Total	591

Transgender	Total
No	521
Yes	16
Prefer not to say	19
Unanswered	35
Grand Total	591

Relationship Status	Total
Marriage/civil partnership	349
Widowed	88
Single	79
Live with partner	38
Prefer not to say	4
Not working	33
Grand Total	591



Type of disability	Total
Long-standing illness or health condition	122
Physical/mobility	35
Hearing	34
Mental health condition	11
Learning disability	4
Visual	6
Prefer not to say	12
Postcode	Total
LS21	351
LS16	62
LS29	40
LS19	23
LS20	13
LS17	11
LS18	10
LS14	4
LS13	3
LS15	3
LS28	3
LS6	3
LS8	3
LS11	2
LS2	2
LS7	2
BD4	2
LS1	1
HD5	1
HD6	1
BD3	1
BD6	1
BD7	1
BD17	1
BD21	1
Unanswered	46
Grand Total	591

Carers for those with long term illness	Total
No	435
Yes	105
Prefer not to say	10
Unanswered	41
Grand Total	550



Appendix 3

GP Surgeries, Pharmacies, Hospital, Care Homes and community groups contacted in the Otley area

Group/Venue	Amount completed
Charles Street Surgery	60
Wharfedale General Infirmary	97
Otley Action for Older People	20
Boots Pharmacy, Otley	38
Lloyds Pharmacy, Otley	33
Stancliffe Pharmacy, Bramhope	12
Cohen's Chemist, Otley	68
Pool Pharmacy	8
Age UK	5
Chevin Medical Practice	61
Senior Citizen's Luncheon Club	15
Otley Pharmacy	27
Westgate Surgery	40
Bramhope Medical Centre	57
Otley Women's Forum	17
Online survey	29
Posted	4
TOTAL	591

