

## Snapshot of Healthwatch Tameside COVID-19 survey responses as at 12.6.20

This survey went live in early May, and at the time of writing this summary, there have been 166 responses (112 completed online, 9 by phone call, and 45 on paper).

We need to bear in mind that for the first month, completion online or by phone have been the only options, whilst we waited for the paper copies to be printed during lockdown. Responses in this snapshot regarding technology may be biased towards people who are familiar with using computers and smartphones. Future monthly snapshots should redress the balance - we have had 1250 paper copies printed so far, of which approximately 750 are already in the community. We want to thank local community groups, foodbanks, volunteers, and others for including the surveys with their home deliveries and food parcels. We are continuing distribution around Tameside during the coming weeks.

We would appreciate any publicity that organisations can offer to widen the audience, and so increase the number of responses across all the demographics. The link for the online survey is <http://www.healthwatchtameside.co.uk/covid-19-survey>.

There is also a post pinned to the top of our Facebook page which can be shared <https://www.facebook.com/HealthwatchTameside/>

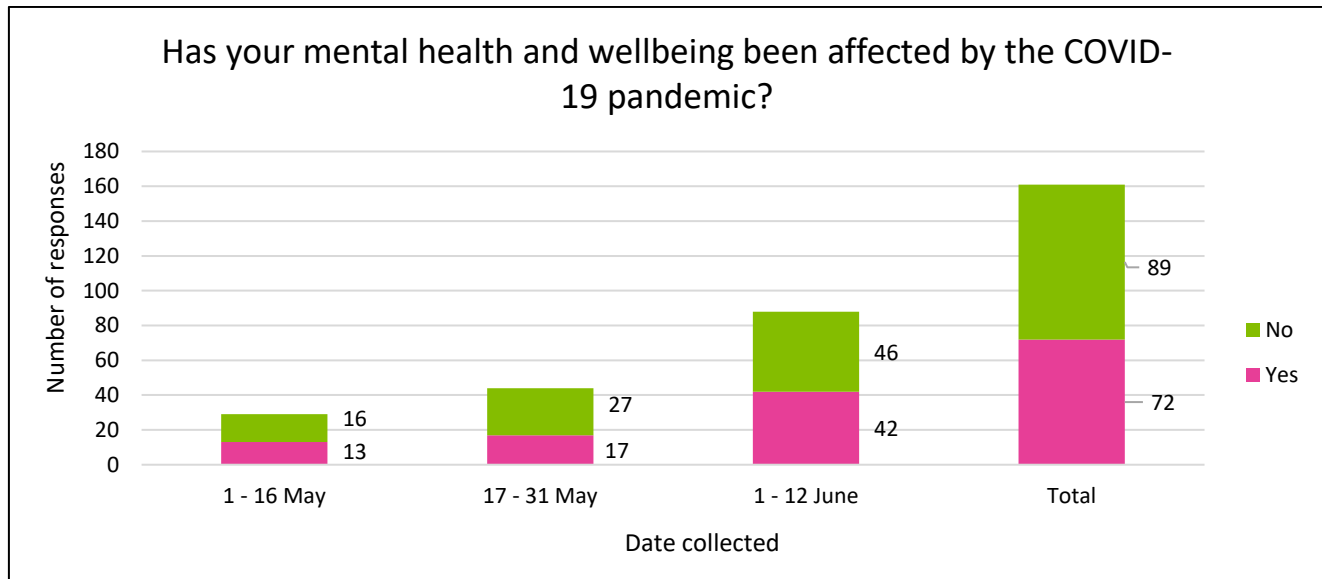
People can give us a call on **0161 667 2526** to request a paper copy and FREEPOST envelope, or a call-back from us to fill it in over the phone with them.

This monthly snapshot will show a selection of data from the survey question responses so far, and summaries of the comments for different areas. Anonymous quotations will not appear yet, but will be used in a final report later in the year. If any commissioner or service provider would like more information about a particular topic or theme at any time, to assist with planning of future services, please get in touch.

We have looked at the responses as a whole, and also in periods of time (1 - 16 May, 17 - 31 May, and 1 - 12 June), to see whether the types of answers have changed as the lockdown continues. Not everyone answered every question.

## Mental health

This graph shows how people responded to Question 3).

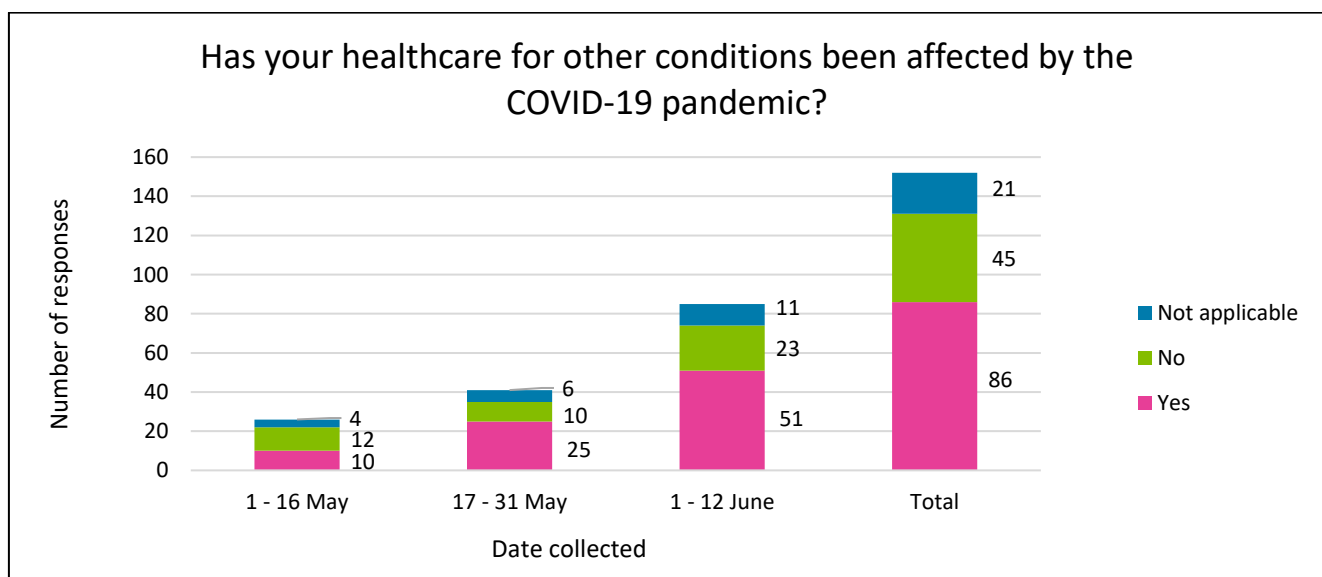


People had the opportunity to provide more information in a free-write part to the question. This qualitative data gives an interesting insight into a number of areas, including:

- How many people are feeling anxious, worried, etc. who do not normally feel like this.
- How people who already have depression, anxiety or other mental health diagnosis are coping.
- What things people are missing that they would normally do, and cannot do at the moment.
- The effects of isolation, and loneliness.

## Physical health

From this question we wanted to find out how people are managing their existing conditions, and what effect changes to care during the pandemic is having. For example, through cancelled operations or appointments, difficulty obtaining prescriptions or medication, difficulty making GP appointments, or accessing mental health care.



Here is a list of some of the areas where people have not been able to access care:

- Hearing appointment cancelled
- Diabetic eye screening appointment cancelled
- Counselling appointment still awaited, or cancelled
- Ear syringing appointment cancelled
- B12 injections cancelled (tablets instead)
- Podiatry appointments cancelled
- Medication review awaited
- Orthopaedic surgery cancelled or delayed
- Physiotherapy
- Dental care
- Monitoring of blood pressure
- Heart investigation appointment cancelled
- Diabetic annual review cancelled
- Chiropractic appointment cancelled
- Pain relief injections not available
- Told to shield, but difficulties trying to sort medication out for the period
- Breast reconstruction not completed after mastectomy
- Scan not available
- Eye clinic appointment cancelled
- Prostate injection not received
- Not seen GP, including about various new issues
- Eye injections not received
- IVF treatment suspended
- Post cancer check-ups cancelled
- Eye surgery cancelled

These are areas where care was provided, although in a different way:

- Speaking to GP on phone
- Clinical appointments by phone
- Prescriptions collected by friend
- Hospital appointments by phone
- X-ray - waited weeks
- Some B12 injections

### **Social care**

We do not have many comments about this area yet. A few of the areas mentioned are:

- Not able to visit family and friends in residential care homes - some mention of use of technology to keep in touch
- Care workers not visiting - e.g sitting service, personal care
- Care package put in place after hospital discharge
- Closure of day services

## The new 'normal'

We asked whether people would like to see any of the changes that were introduced at speed, after lockdown, being continued as part of the future 'normal' service. There is a mixture of responses, with some people keen to continue with technology, where appropriate, and others wanting to go back to face-to-face appointments, etc.

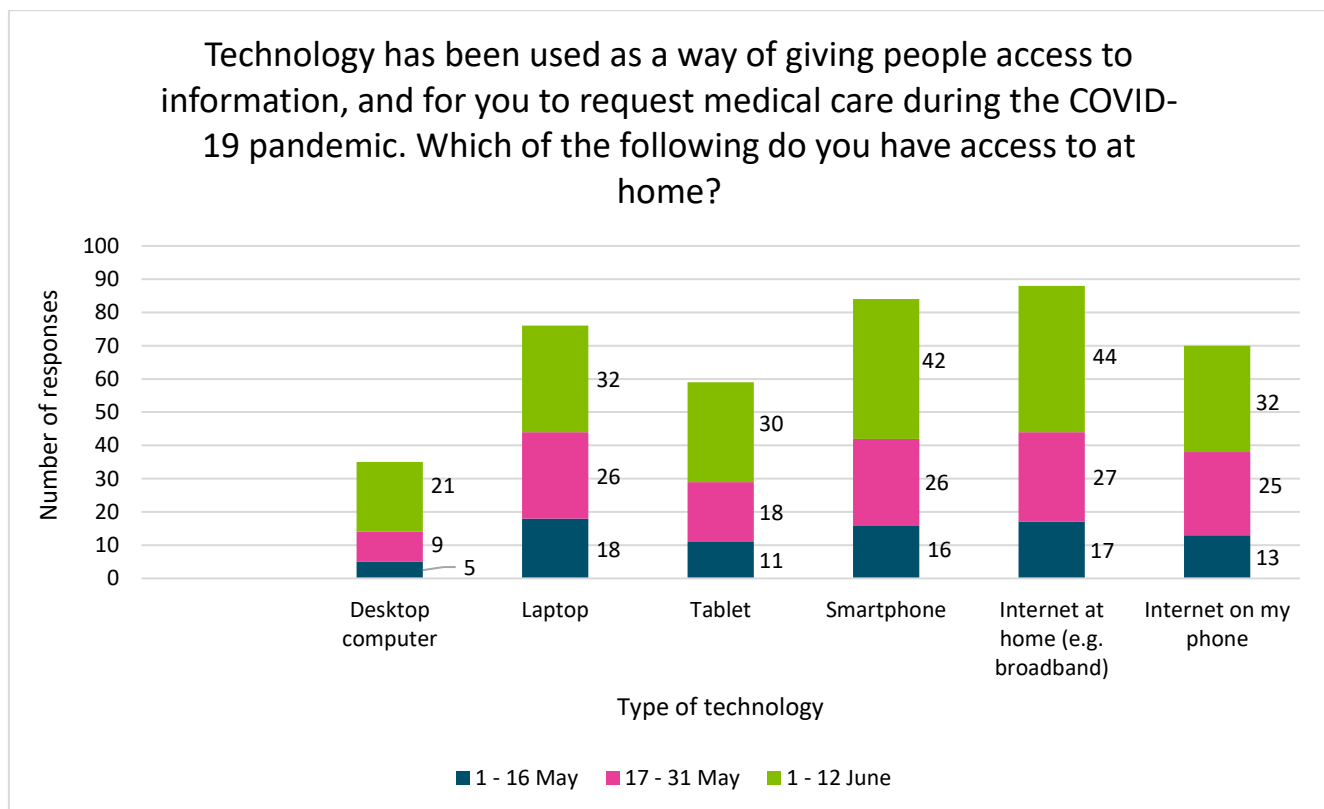
Not everyone has access to technology to be able to use these options, and some people have access requirements to take into consideration. Flexibility has been suggested, with options to suit the different ways people would prefer to access care.

Many people said they thought it saved time for both the clinician and themselves as a patient, to not have a face-to-face appointment. They were also able to stay away from any infections which they said could be picked up sitting in a waiting room.

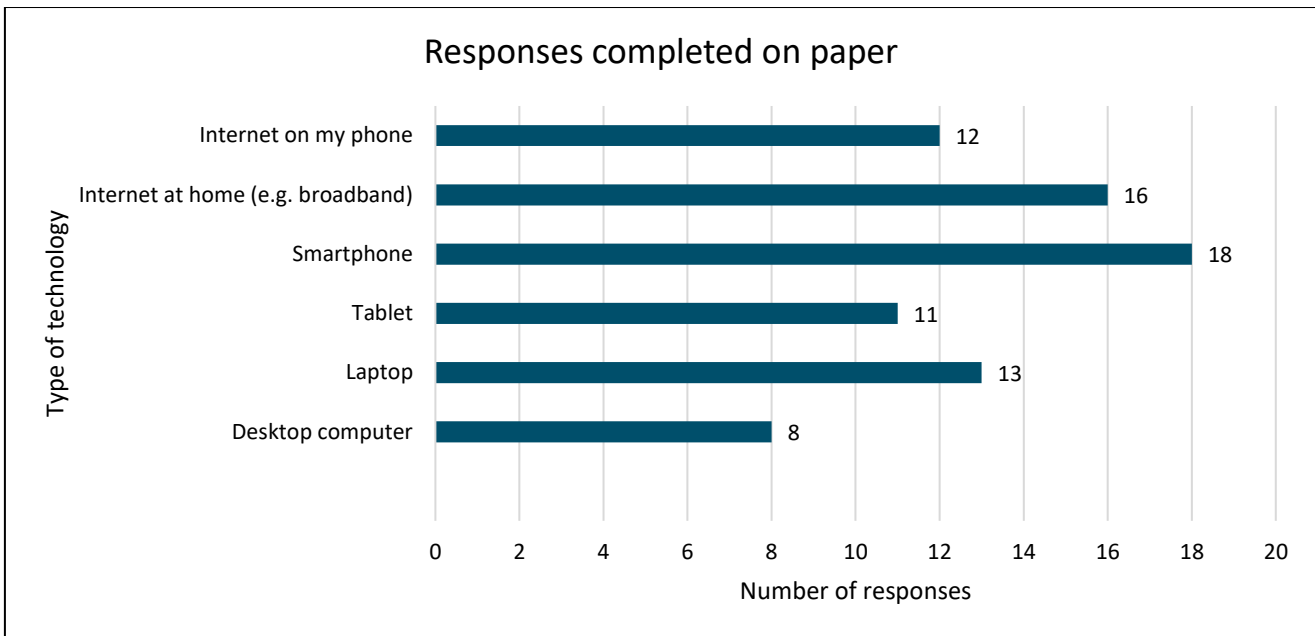
Here is a list of areas where some people would like the new-style services to continue as they are currently:

- GP phone consultations
- Video consultations for GP
- Some hospital appointments by phone or video call

## Technology



We have also looked at how the 45 people who have completed the survey on paper so far have answered this question. Only 40% own a smartphone, for example. 19 people did not answer this question or said they did not have access to any of these types of technology. There are some people with one item of equipment, and others with several.

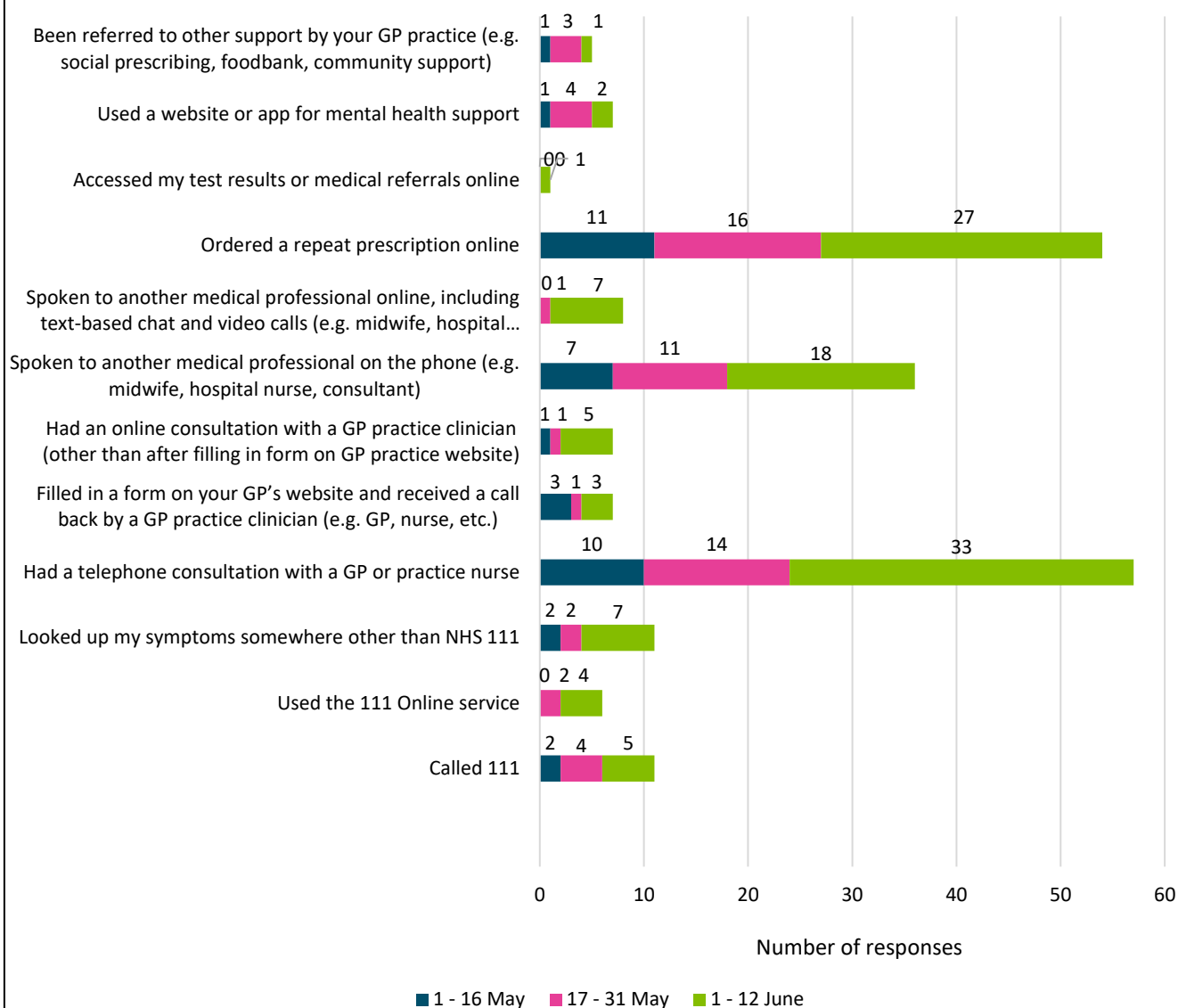


We asked people about using any of these devices for the first time during the pandemic. So far, people were already using the devices, if they had them, although they are now using them more for:

- Keeping in contact with people, including video calls
- Work

There are a few comments about people having (or wanting) equipment but they need help to learn how to use it. One person mentioned the extra cost of using technology and how it affected the household budget. Also, for people needing specialist equipment to be able to use technology, there is additional cost.

## Since the beginning of the pandemic, have you done any of the following?



We asked people what it was like if they had used one of these services for the first time. There was a mixed response - some positive and some negative.

### Positive comments about:

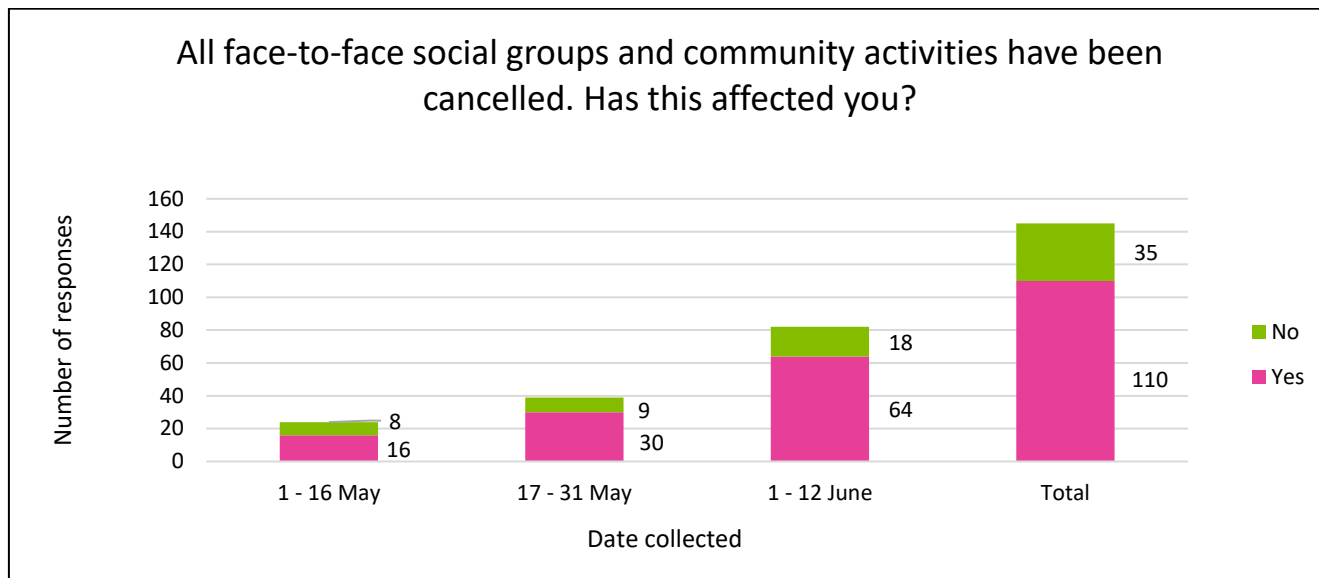
- Asked a question by email, and received an answer
- Conversation with GP by phone
- Online mental health support
- Social prescribing
- NHS 111 phone line
- Help by GP practice to set up online prescription ordering

### Negative comments about:

- Struggled to find information on NHS 111
- Tried to contact dentist
- NHS 111 COVID-19 checker - if you don't have classic symptoms

- Video consultation - GP couldn't see well enough to diagnose
- Easy to use but needed tests
- Disliked
- Hard to hear GP on phone

## Social activities



The free-write answers to many of the questions included comments about how not being able to go swimming or to the gym was affecting the physical health of people. A number of people say they rely on daily swimming to ease their arthritis, for example, and are now finding they are far less mobile than before. They say this will increase the level of care they will need in the future.

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