

# HPCI Parent Carer Survey 2022

## Headline findings



# HPCI SEND Survey - Background

- Herts Parent Carer Involvement ran a survey for all families with a child or young person aged 0-25 with SEND in Hertfordshire, which closed in November 2022.
- Families were asked about their experiences during the previous academic year, to gauge how well local services identify need, help meet that need, and support the improvement of outcomes and life chances for children and young people with SEND.
- Questions were developed in line with the Ofsted / CQC Inspection framework and to help track year-on-year changes.
- The survey was promoted through HPCI membership, on social media and via partners in the voluntary and community sector, by DSPLs and it was sent to every school SENCO.
- 1,140 responses were received from across Hertfordshire, covering all age groups, a range of needs, and a variety of education settings.

# HPCI SEND Survey – Understanding the data

- The following slides set out the key findings from the survey.
- It is important to note that not all respondents answered all questions – the survey skipped sections that were not relevant, e.g., depending on the services experienced by the family. So, when looking at the percentages, it is important to also note the number of responses.
- While these slides set out the headlines, if you want to look at the responses to individual questions, these can be found by clicking [here](#).
- If you have any queries about the data or feedback to inform our next annual survey, please do email [contact@hertsparentcarers.org.uk](mailto:contact@hertsparentcarers.org.uk)

# What did we learn? – findings on one page

- There are clear levels of dissatisfaction with many services and concerns about the outcomes that are delivered for children and young people.
- Families were generally positive about how education settings identify and understand their child or young person's needs.
- The Education, Health and Care Plan process and SEN officers have been identified as key areas for improvement, as have mental health support (CAMHS / PALMS) and Therapies.
- There are consistent themes throughout responses:
  - Concern about waiting times – for both assessment / diagnosis and also support / treatment.
  - Poor communications from services, and between services.
  - Inconsistency in meeting need.
- Many families don't know where to go for support.

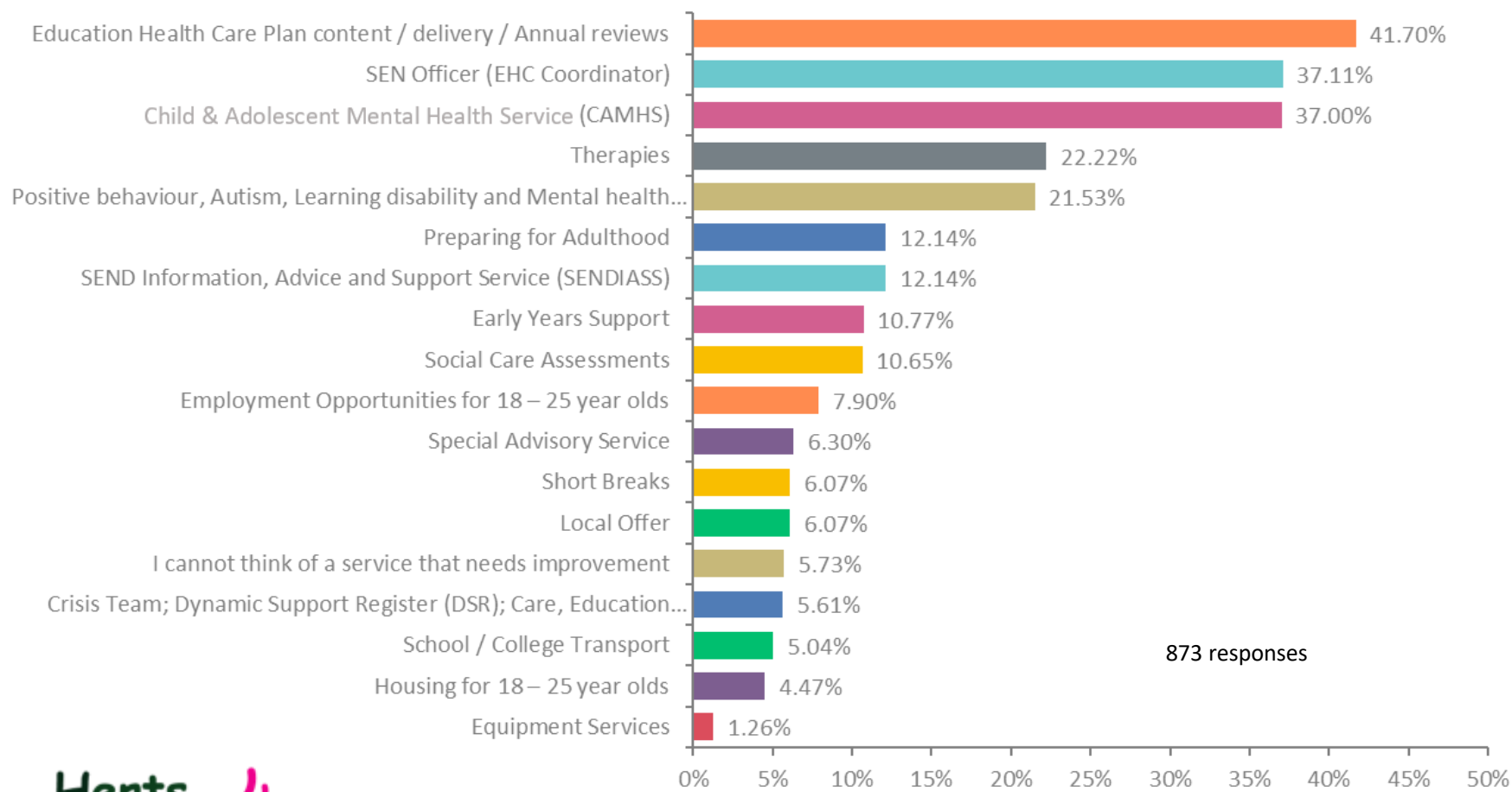
# Services in need of improvement

In order to gauge how services are performing, respondents were asked to identify the top three service areas they believed to be in most need of improvement. 873 responses were received and the top five were:

1. Education Health Care Plan content / delivery / Annual Reviews
2. SEN Officer (EHC Coordinator)
3. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
4. Therapies
5. Positive behaviour, Autism, Learning disability and Mental health Service (PALMS)

# Services in need of improvement – a fuller picture

Families were asked “Which three of the following Services do you feel need the most improvement or are you most worried about?”



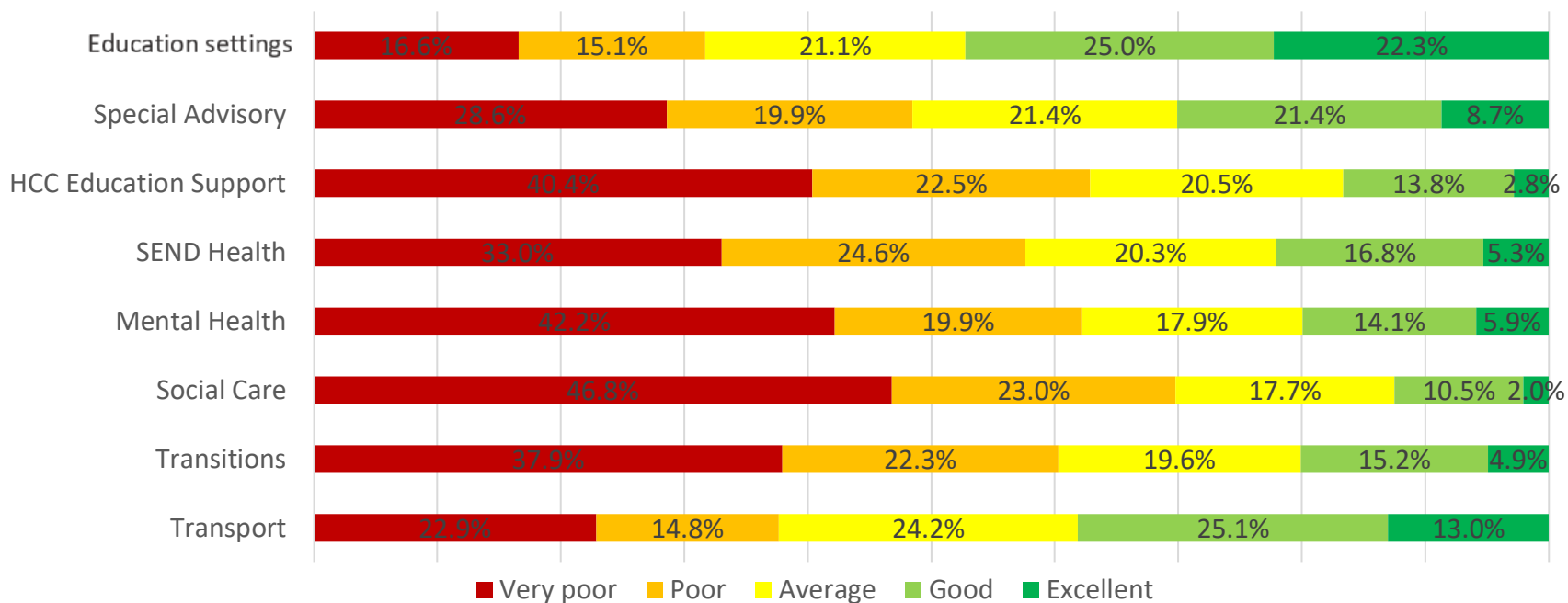
# Rating services

Families were asked to rate a range of Hertfordshire SEND services.

- **Staff in education settings** were scored highest, with nearly half (47%) of responses providing “good” or “excellent” ratings.
- **Herts school/college SEND transport service** - 38% rated “good” or “excellent”
- **Special advisory service** - 30% rated “good” or “excellent”
- **Herts SEND health services (e.g. therapies, special school nurses)** - 22% rated “good” or “excellent”
- **Managing transitions (e.g. to new education/health setting or a change in support)** - 20% rated “good” or “excellent”
- **Herts NHS Mental health practitioners** - 20% rated “good” or “excellent”
- **Other HCC education support services** - 16% rated “good” or “excellent”
- **Social Care 0-25** - 12.5% rated “good” or “excellent”

# Rating services – the data at a glance

Families were asked to rate a range of Hertfordshire SEND services\*.

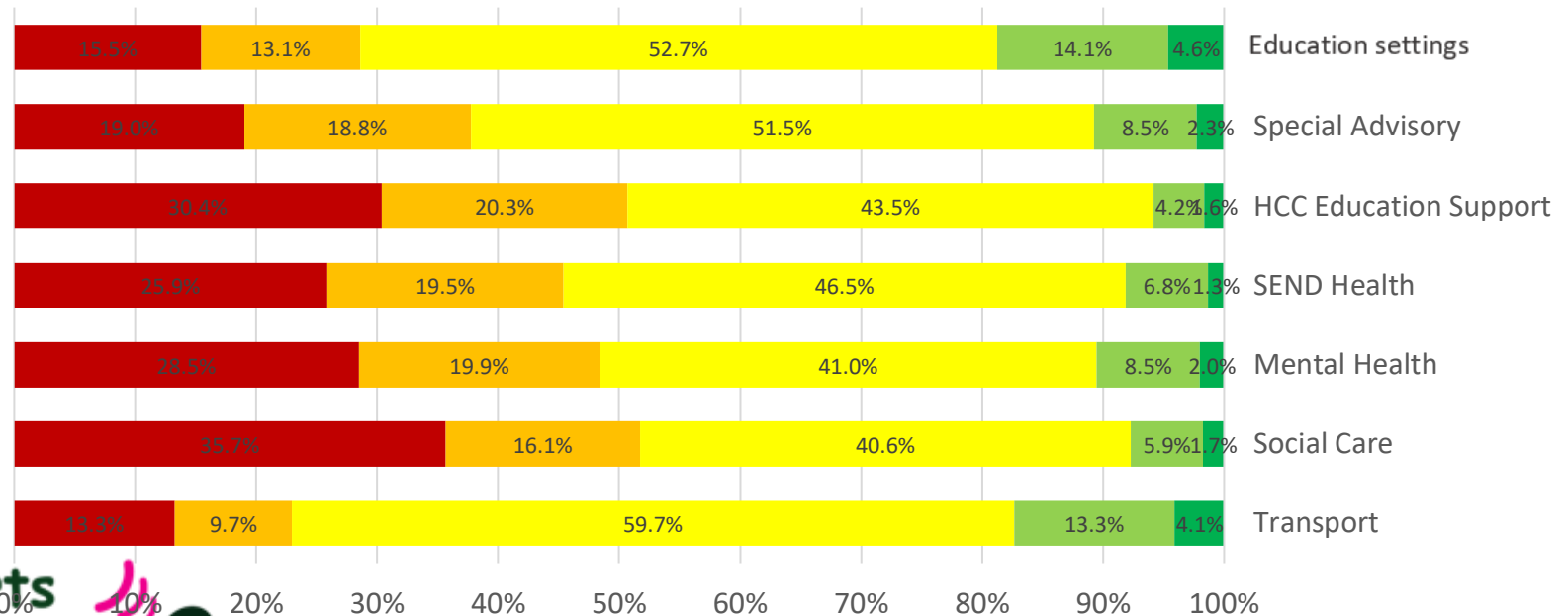


\* Between 876 and 884 responses were received for this section's questions, although many reported that the question was not applicable. 773 responses were received rating staff in education settings. The social care rating is based on 344 responses.



# Service levels – little change for the better

- Respondents were asked if they were aware of any change in service levels over the last academic year. Across all questions, 'no change' received the biggest proportion of responses.
- Education and transport had the most 'improved'/'greatly improved' responses, but were still less than 20% in each case
- Other HCC Education support (50%) and Social Care (52%) were the two services with the most marked change for the worse.



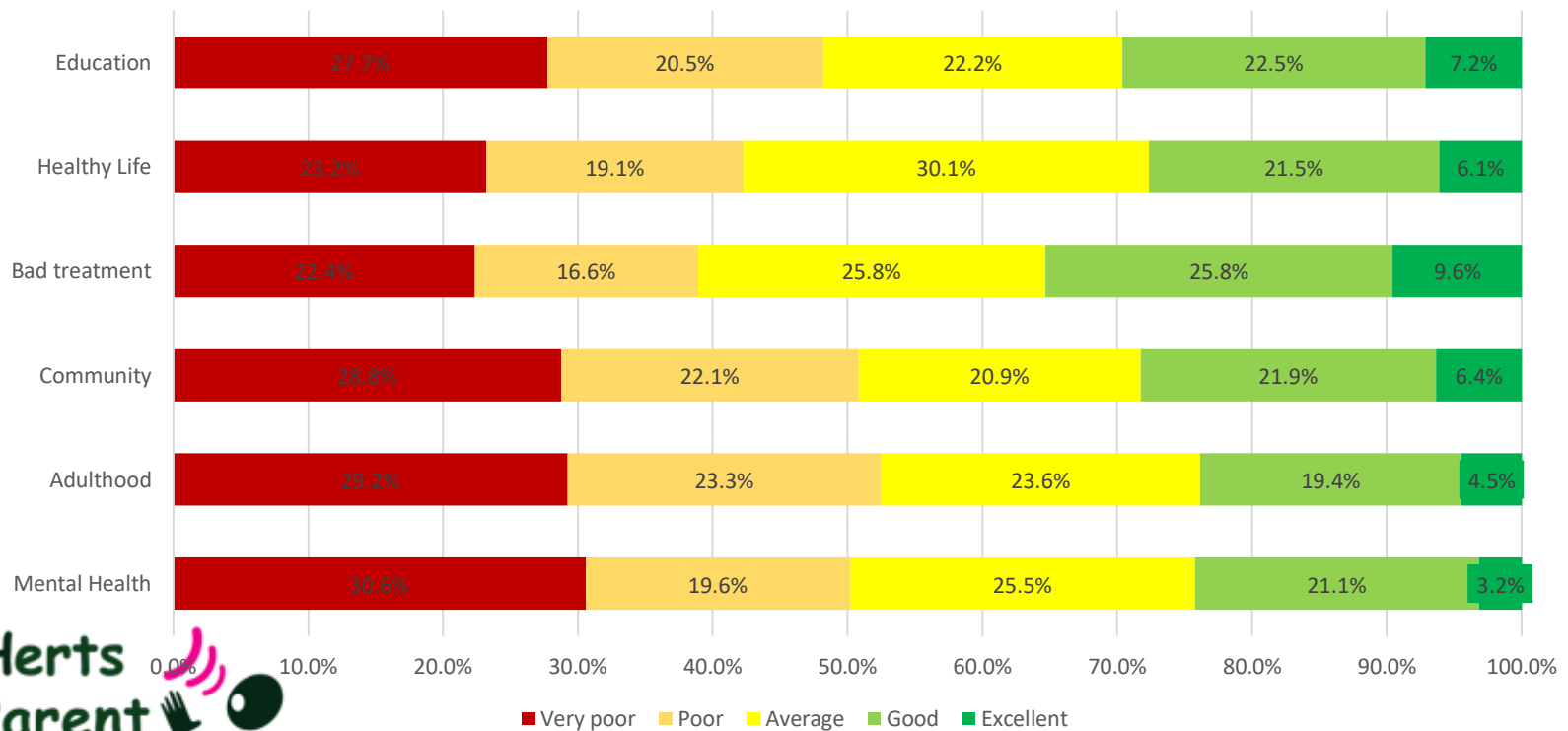
# Working together needs more work

- Respondents were asked about how well they think different Hertfordshire SEND support services were at working together (i.e. Schools, Hertfordshire County Council, Health Services)
- Well over half (59.4%) of respondents rated this as 'Poor' or Very poor' (766 responses).

“The services simply do not work together. There is no link between Health, Education and Social care. As a result of the total lack of appropriate support our entire family’s mental health and physical health has suffered. Our son is out of Education with nothing ahead of him.”

# What does this mean for outcomes?

- Families were asked how good Hertfordshire SEND support services have been at helping their child reach their full potential across a range of issues.
- 35% thought that services were good or excellent at protecting children and young people from bad treatment (e.g. bullying).
- In the areas of community participation, preparing for adulthood and good mental health, each of these were rated 'poor' or 'very poor' by over 50% of respondents.



# School staff often well regarded

- Almost half of respondents regarded schools as good/excellent at **identifying** a child or young person's SEN need(s).
- Over half of respondents rated staff as good/excellent **understanding** the SEN need(s).
- Just under half (47%) believed that staff were good/excellent at **meeting needs**.
- Most encouragingly, 71% felt their views were **listened** to.

“The SENCo at his school is amazing... (but) not all of his secondary school subject teachers understand his needs

The school simply do not have the resources to meet every individual child with special needs

# Education, Health and Care Plans

430 respondents said their child had a current EHCP in place.

## Meeting needs?

- Support is lacking whilst waiting for assessment of needs, 83% said no support was provided whilst waiting for the EHCP to be issued.
- Once a plan had been issued 15% said that provision was being fully met, with a quarter saying that less than half of the plan's provisions had been delivered (11% not at all).

## Meeting Deadlines?

- A third of respondents reported annual reviews not being carried out within statutory deadlines.
- Where amendments were needed, over 60% reported the deadline for a final version was missed. Half of those people then waited over six months for the final version, (in 45 cases the wait was over a year).
- Comments suggest high levels of frustration and concerns about delays to the correct support being in place.

# SEN Officers / EHC Co-ordinators

- Communication with SEN Officers is rated poorly, both in terms of response time and quality of the reply.
- Where a child or young person has an EHCP, 55% of those who received communications from their SEN officer judged it to be poor or very poor.
- The vast majority of respondents rated it difficult or very difficult to contact their SEN Officer across a range of methods.
- 63% said the response time was poor, very poor, or no response received at all

“I had appointments scheduled on two occasions with the call centre for my SEN officer to call, and still no call back.  
Very frustrating!”

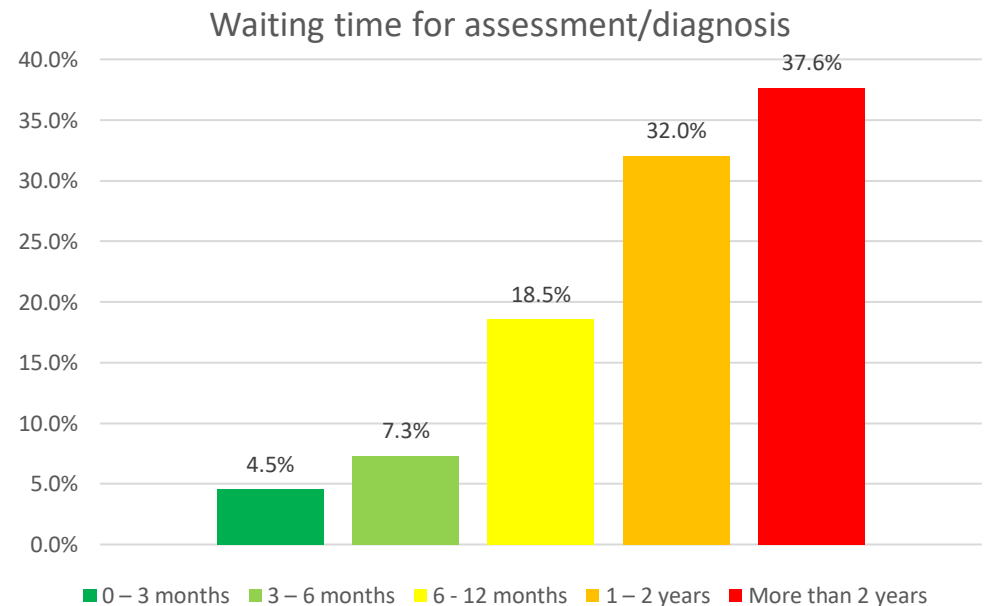
# Health services

The length of time families are waiting for assessment, treatment and services is a significant area of concern for families. Waits of up to and over a year are very common, reducing the chance for early intervention, and leaving families feeling forgotten and frustrated and needs unmet.

- Of the 235 families who said they were waiting for treatment/therapies in the last academic year, almost 50% had been waiting over a year.
- Reports of waiting times for assessment/diagnosis showed close to 70% waiting a year or more.

**Rating Health services** - 58% rated these as “poor” or “very poor”.

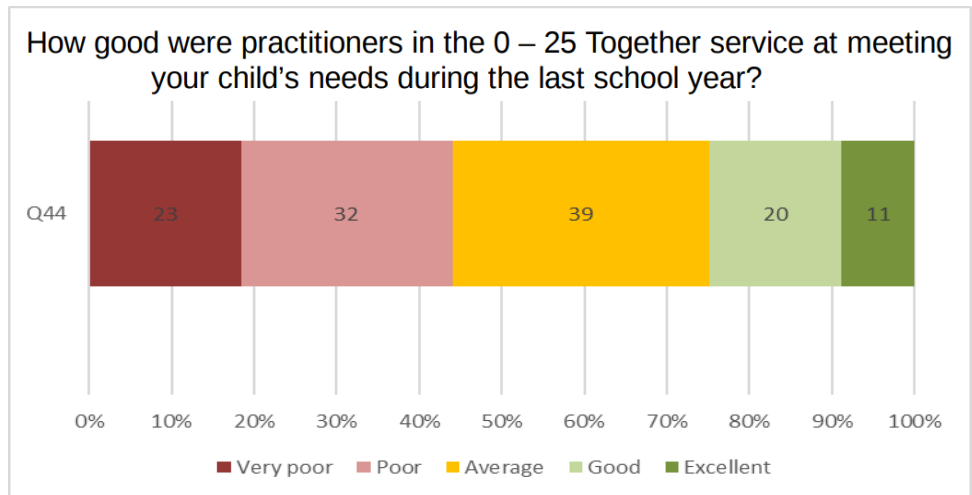
**Mental Health** - CAMHS and PALMS services were both highlighted as being priorities for improvement. Of those who rated the support from Herts NHS Mental Health Practitioners nearly two-thirds said that it was “poor” or “very poor”.



# Social Care (0-25 Together service)

- The 0-25 Together service received the poorest rating of those asked about, with nearly 70% rating the service as “very poor” or “poor” (344 responses).
- Listening: Nearly half (48.2%) reported that the service were “good” or “very good” at listening to parent/carer views when assessing or reassessing the child’s needs (85 responses).
- Waiting times: Over 40% said they waited over 12 months for assessments and only 16% were seen within 3 months (to note: only 31 responses).
- Meeting need: over 40% were “very unsatisfied” or “unsatisfied” at the service meeting their child’s needs in the previous school year (125 responses).

“I applied for a social needs assessment in December 2021 and I am still awaiting for the assessment to be completed...”





# Understanding needs and where to find support

## Understanding

- Parent carers on the whole felt they have a good understanding of their child's needs, with 87% of respondents stating their understanding is good or excellent (1138 responses).
- However respondent comments indicated that they do not feel that the professionals involved have the same level of knowledge. Many said that they felt they have no choice but to learn as much as they can about their child, to be an advocate to compensate for lack of support or understanding.

## Finding Help

- Understanding of where to go for support however is much lower. Only 11% of responders found it “very easy” or “easy” to find information about how to get help and more than 50% reported that it was “difficult” or “very difficult” (796 responses).
- Nearly half said they hadn't heard of the Local Offer and of those who had used it, over a third said that they could not find what they were looking for.

# Quick wins?

- Families were asked if they had any suggestions for quick wins to help drive improvement, however it was clear from the comments that while families had suggestions for improvement, these cannot be delivered quickly.
- Grouping suggestions, perhaps the easiest to address relates to **Advice and information** – improving understanding about what is available and how to access.
- The majority of other suggestions related to:
  - **Staffing** – training, retention, accountability, recruitment in key areas (e.g. Educational Psychology)
  - **Communication** – timely, compassionate, between services as well as with families

# What next?

- We will use the data to inform our ongoing discussions with SEND services across Hertfordshire.
- The responses will help us determine our priorities for co-production work, or where to focus smaller future topic-specific surveys.
- We will use the info provided by families when Hertfordshire is next inspected and we are able to feedback views to Ofsted/CQC inspectors.
- We will also draw on the feedback about HPCI itself, to help us understand how we can best represent Hertfordshire parent/carers of children and young people with SEND.

To find out more about HPCI and apply for free membership, please [visit our website](#).

For any queries, please email [contact@hertsparentcarers.org.uk](mailto:contact@hertsparentcarers.org.uk)