

Community Engagement

Men's Health

A survey

March 2025



What is Healthwatch Havering?

Healthwatch Havering is the local consumer champion for both health and social care in the London Borough of Havering. Our aim is to give local citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided for all individuals locally.

We are an independent organisation, established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and employ our own staff and involve lay people/volunteers so that we can become the influential and effective voice of the public.

Healthwatch Havering is a Community Interest Company Limited by Guarantee, managed by three part-time directors, including the Chairman and the Company Secretary, supported by two part-time staff, and by volunteers, both from professional health and social care backgrounds and lay people who have an interest in health or social care issues.

Why is this important to you and your family and friends?

Healthwatch England is the national organisation which enables the collective views of the people who use NHS and social services to influence national policy, advice and guidance.

Healthwatch Havering is your voice, enabling you on behalf of yourself, your family and your friends to ensure views and concerns about the local health and social services are understood.

Your contribution is vital in helping to build a picture of where services are doing well and where they need to be improved. This will help and support the Clinical Commissioning Groups, NHS Services and contractors, and the Local Authority to make sure their services really are designed to meet citizens' needs.

*'You make a living by what you get,
but you make a life by what you give.'*

Winston Churchill

Community engagement

Under Section 221 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Healthwatch Havering has a statutory duty to ascertain the views of health and social care services and to make them known to the commissioners and providers of those services so that they can be taken into account in the development, commissioning and delivery of services.

We do this in a variety of ways, such as surveys, interviews and focus groups.

We also participate, with other Healthwatch organisations across North East London, in the Community Insights System, which gathers views and comments on health and social care from people across the area.

Intelligence gained from Community Insights is used directly in, or to inform, many of the surveys and other public engagement events that we carry out.

The results of our community engagement are shared with Havering Council, NHS North East London, NHS and other provider organisations and Healthwatch England.

Introduction

In November 2025, the government published a strategy designed to encourage men to take charge of their physical health and mental wellbeing by expanding access to support services, second, by helping them to take better care of themselves, and third, by ensuring stigma is challenged and every man feels empowered to reach out for help.¹

In response to that Strategy, we thought it would be useful to undertake a survey of a small number of men's groups' members to gain an initial insight into men's thinking about health issues.

As Havering moves to a Neighbourhood-based model of primary care delivery, a focus on addressing the ways in which men can achieve and improve – better health outcomes, knowledge and behaviours.

¹ See **Men's health: a strategic vision for England**, Department for Health and Social Care, November 2025 - <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/69400f3b5cc812f50aa421df/mens-health-a-strategic-vision-for-england.pdf>

The Neighbourhood Health Service

Neighbourhood health reinforces a new way of working for the NHS, local government, social care and their partners, where integrated working is the norm and not the exception. Some places have already made progress in developing an integrated local approach to NHS and social care delivery.

Modern General Practice model

Modern general practice is the foundation of a transformation journey to better align capacity with need and improve patient experience.

- We recognised that any survey that we undertook, needed to be useful for GPs.
- It also had to align with the new vision being launched by Government on Men's health
- To help to provide consistency and equity for men in the delivery of their primary care

How we conducted the Men's survey

Our approach/aim has been to help to create a healthier and accessible Men's health service in Havering.

We have been amazed and are very grateful to the four organisations that supported our survey. They have been very helpful, and their members have positively embraced and supported this work.

Method

Our method has been to create the opportunity for face-to-face communication/discussion with established groups of men in the borough. These groups are:

- BHRUT's Men's Health Network/Andys Man Club
- Men attending a Live Well Havering Event
- Havering Over Fifties Forum (HOFF)
- Havering Indoor Bowls Club

We chose to work in this way because we wanted the men who responded to be in a safe space with male friends and colleagues.

This is important because some men may not have a private space at home in which they can comfortably share personal information. If we had chosen the video call method, it might

have been difficult for them to find somewhere private away from family or friends hearing.

We did not consider using on-line surveys as we wanted this report to be as close and meaningful as possible for the men taking part, which is particularly important for Primary Care and Public health colleagues, so as to have a sound base on which to develop further work.

How we conducted the Men's survey

Our approach has been:

- To work in partnership with local Men's clubs and BHRUT's Experience Facilitator
- To design a simple questionnaire with 14 basic and relevant questions
- To not require any personal information - it is entirely anonymous.
- Promoting and encouraging the various groups to undertake the survey in an environment with colleagues and friends that they are comfortable with.

What is the aim of the survey

The aim has been to explore, if groups of men who meet

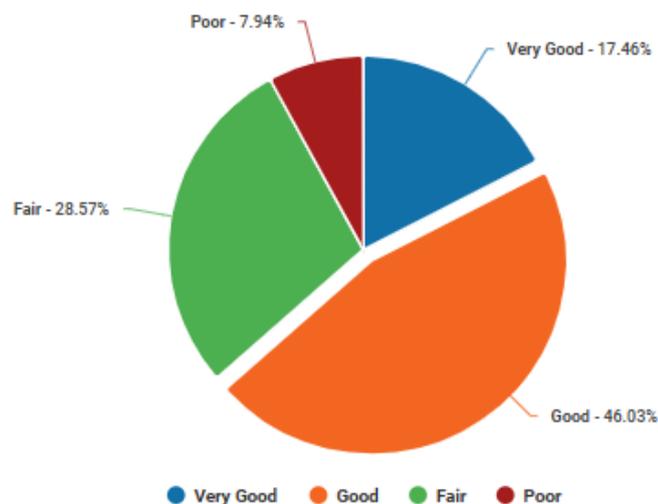
- Foster a sharing, supportive and confident approach between men

- Enable men to be confident about seeking advice
- Recognise to persuade men that their GP is a source of help and guidance
- Importantly, be an ambassador for the younger generation

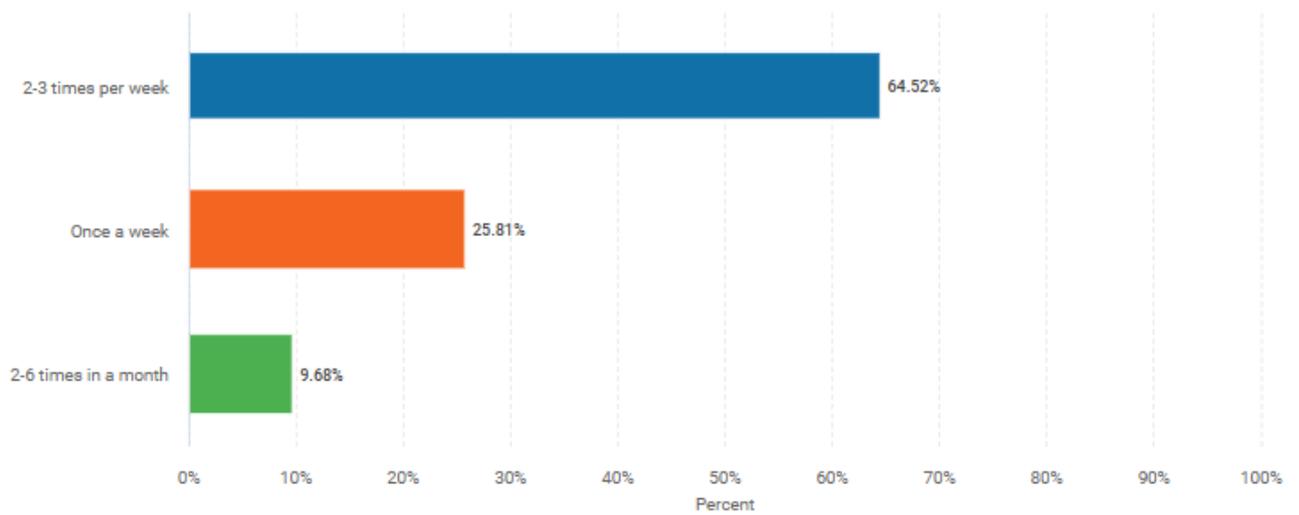
Questionnaire and responses

We devised a short questionnaire aimed at eliciting some basic but very important views from participants. In all, we received 63 responses (although not all participants answered every question). The questions and responses we received were as follows:

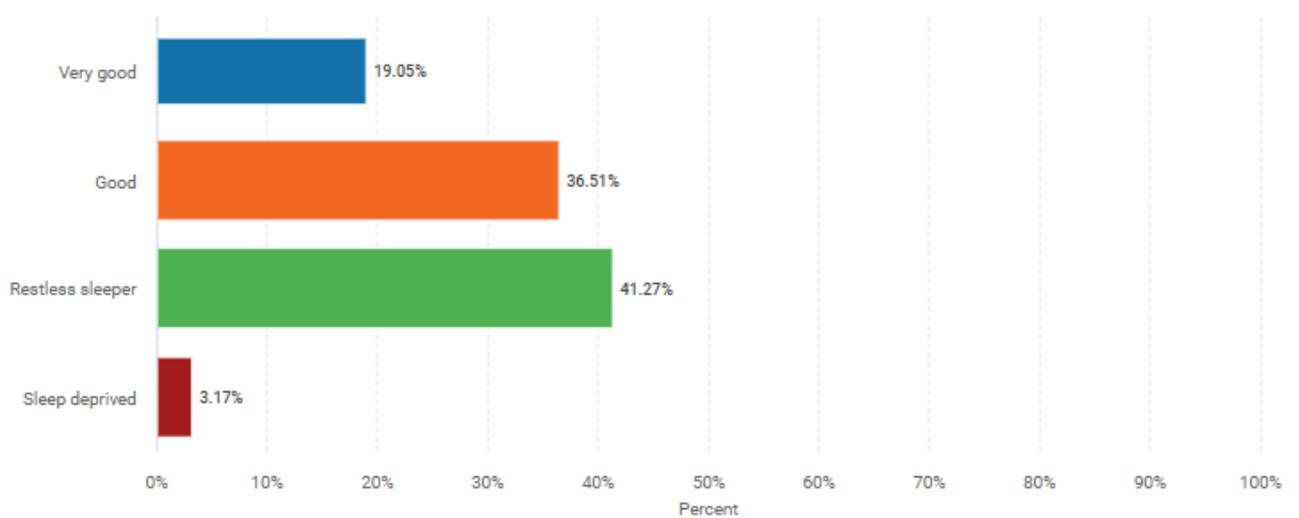
How would you rate your overall physical health?



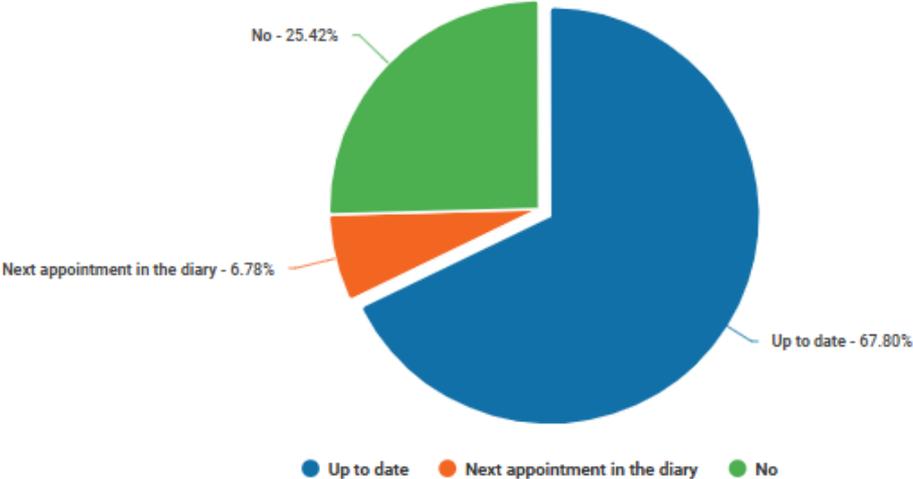
How often do you exercise per week?



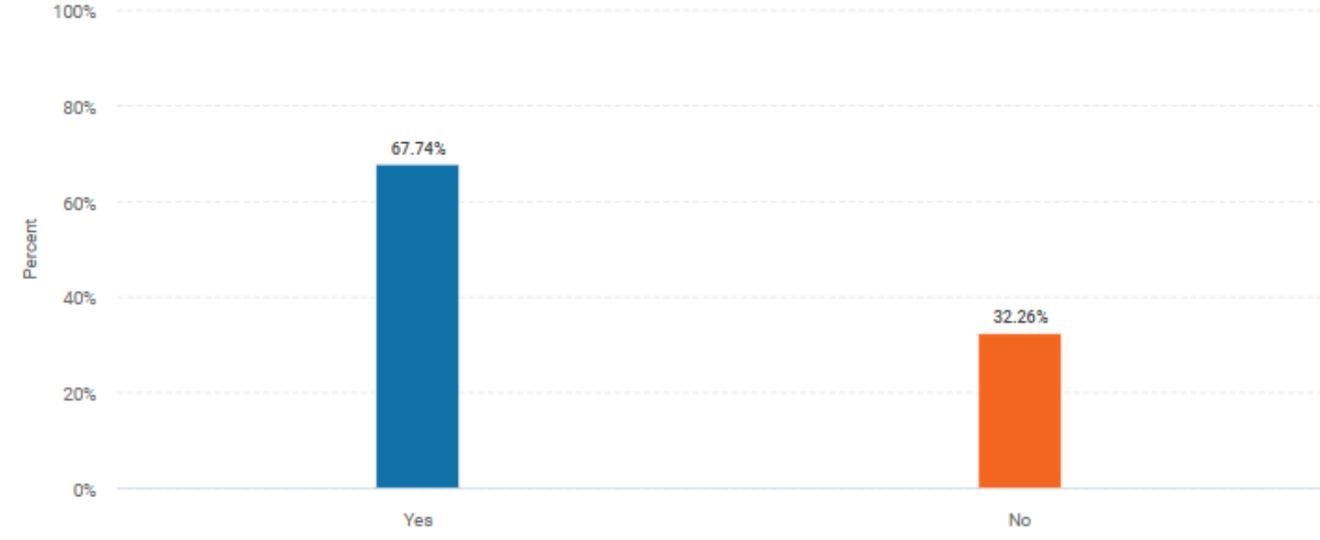
How would you rate your sleep quality?



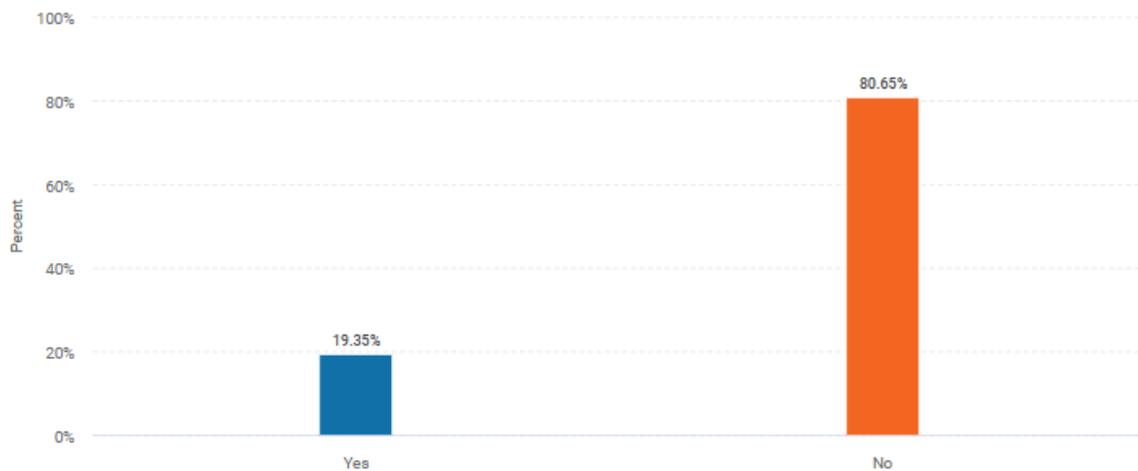
Prostate cancer screening should begin at age 50 and Colorectal Cancer screening starts age 45. Are you up to date with your recommended health screenings - prostate and colon cancer screenings?



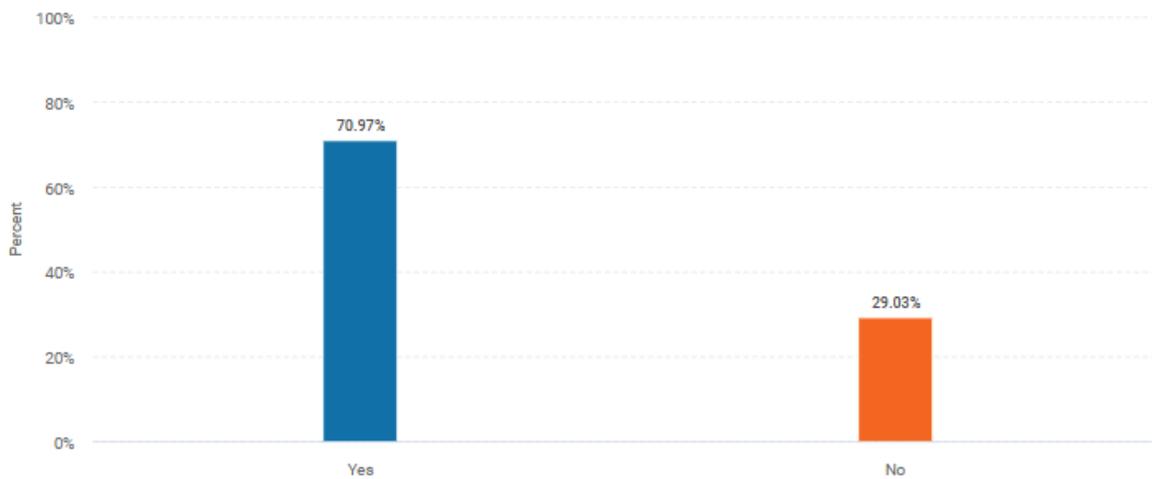
Do you check your own blood pressure?



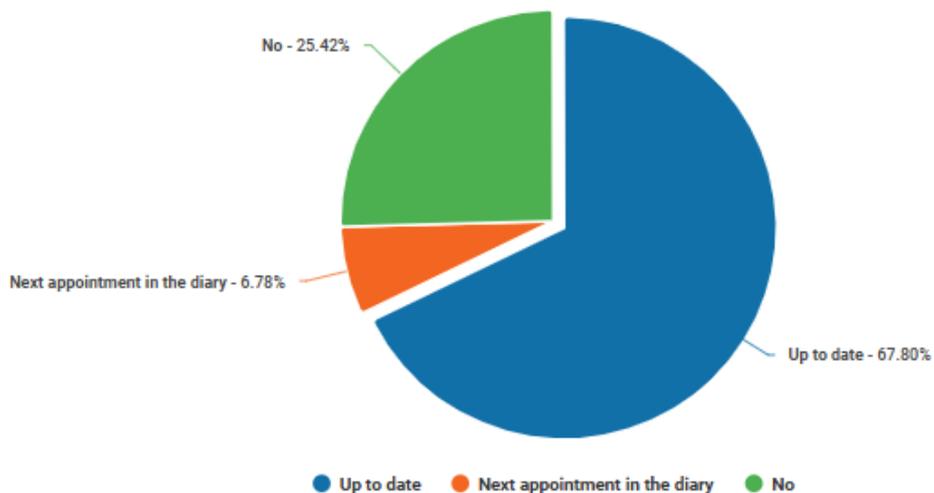
Have you used the blood pressure machines available in e.g. the Library or Pharmacy?



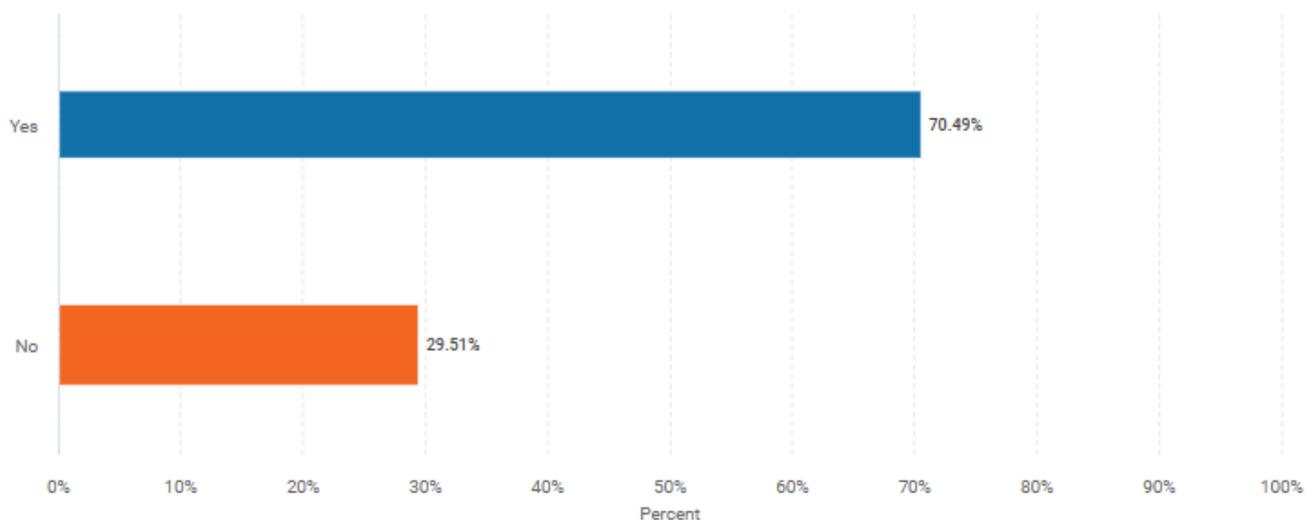
Did you know aged 50 – 74 everyone is offered a home screening kit for bowel cancer?



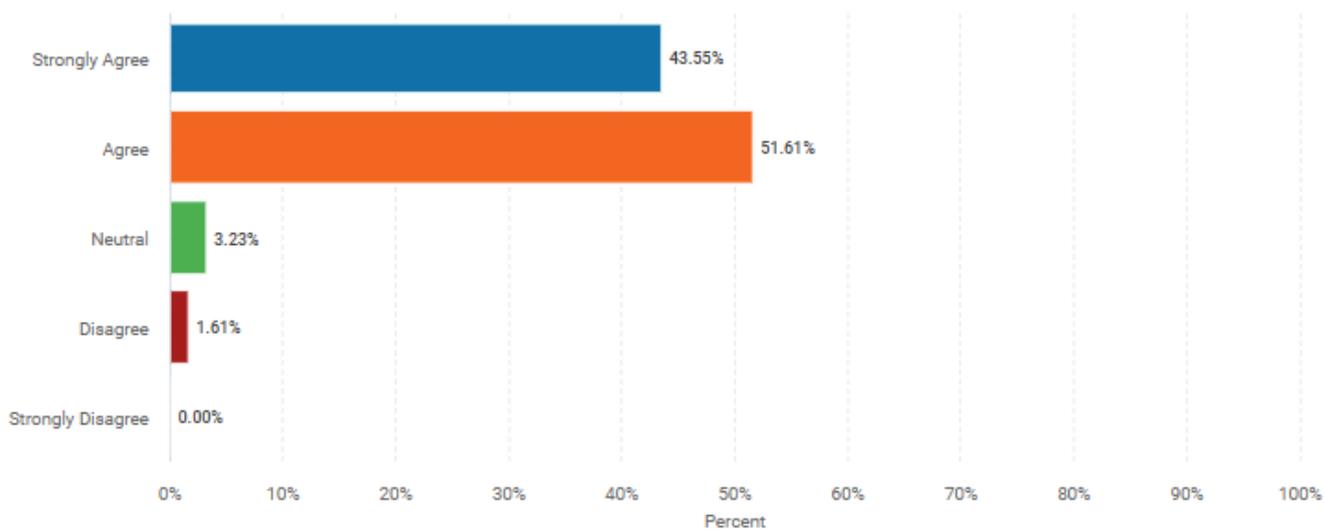
Prostate cancer screening should begin at age 50 and Colorectal Cancer screening starts age 45. Are you up to date with your recommended health screenings - prostate and colon cancer screenings?



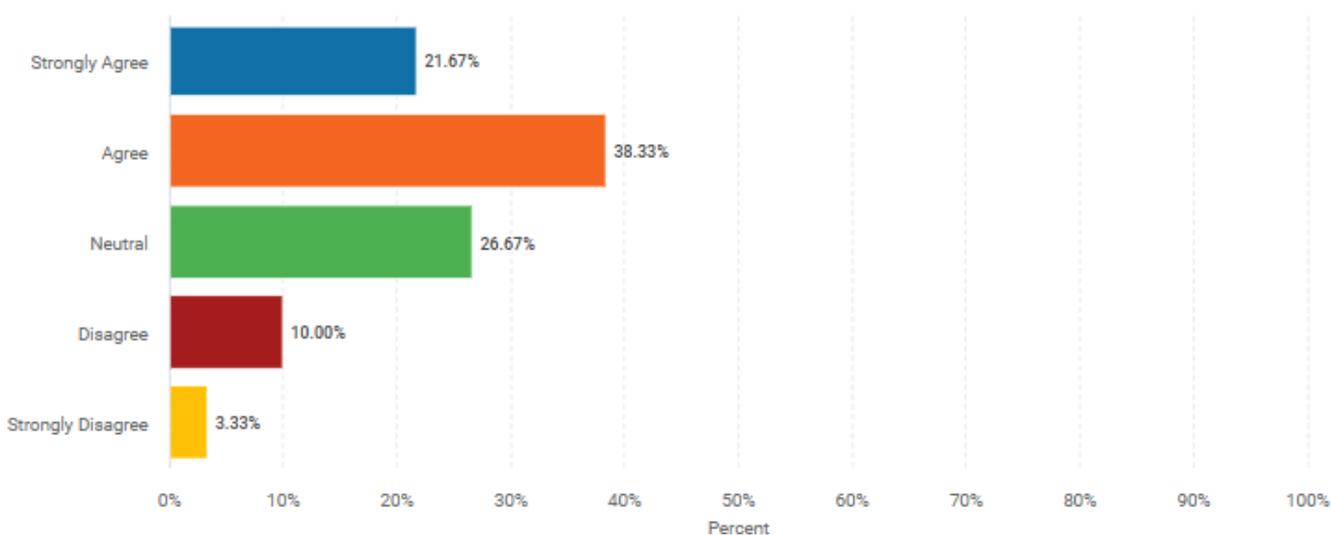
Do you have a flu jab every year?



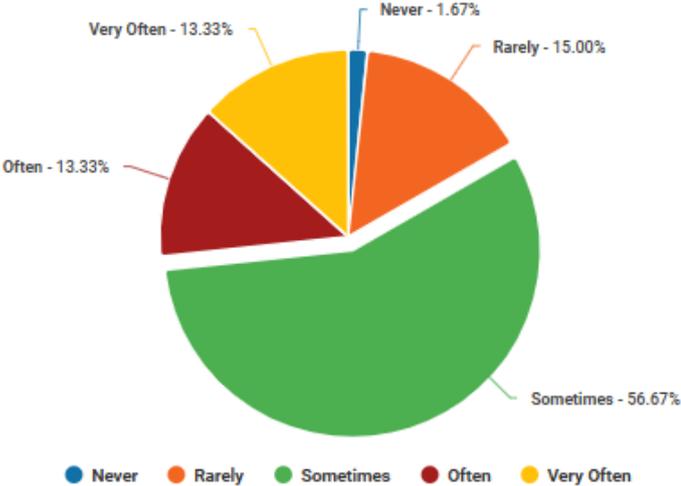
How much do you agree with the statement "I feel comfortable discussing my physical health concerns with my doctor"?



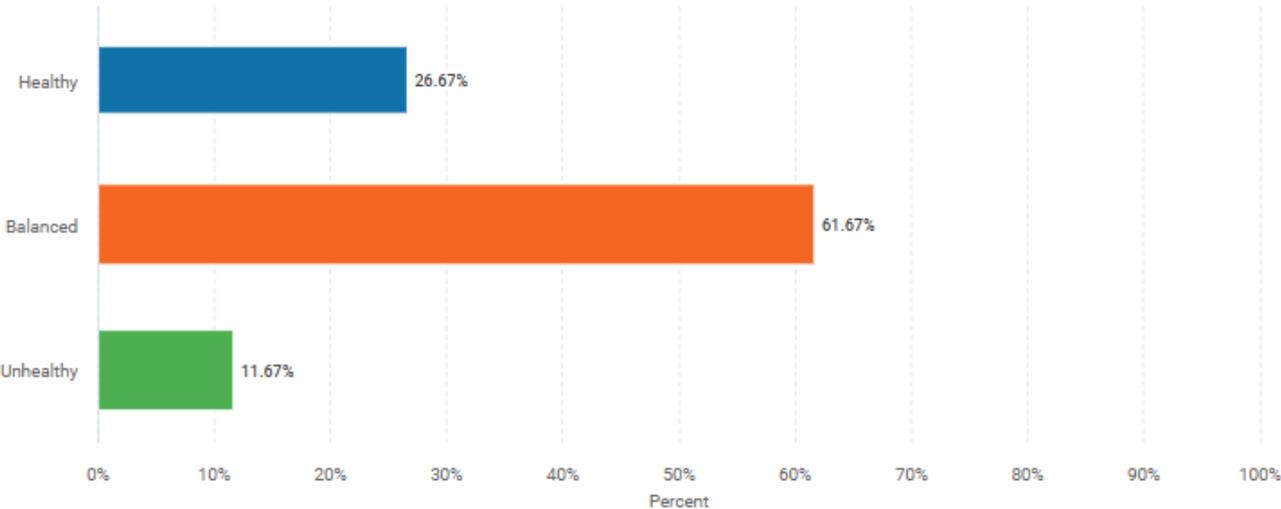
How much do you agree with the statement "I feel comfortable discussing my sexual health concerns with my doctor"?



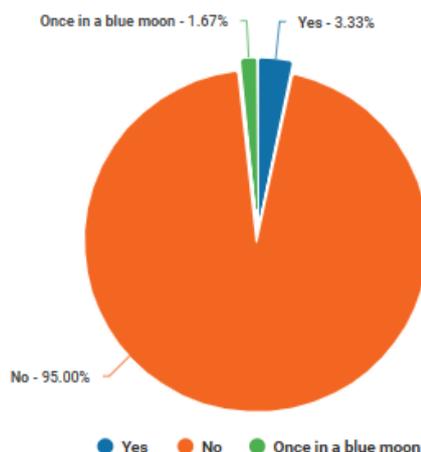
How often do you feel stressed?



How would you describe your diet?



Do you smoke?



Conclusion

This survey, was carried out as an exercise to explore if there was a significant difference in those men who: -

- meet regularly as a supportive group e.g. *Men's Health Network/Andys Man Club*
- share the same hobby e.g. *Havering Indoor Bowles club*
- take a demonstrative interest in the town they live in e.g. *Havering Over Fifties Forum (HOFF)*
- want to contribute to better opportunities for families and individuals e.g. *Men attending a Live Well Havering Event*

Our survey demonstrates that the men taking part in these four groups had a much higher positive score regarding their own health and wellbeing than the national average.

This is borne out by

“One unexpected result was the large number of men claiming not to smoke, given Havering’s known high proportion of the population who are smokers.”

Our survey indicates that men are generally more health-conscious than is often assumed, especially, if they can be part of, for example, the four social groups identified in this report.

We hope that this data will help general practitioners and public health staff identify areas on men’s health on which to concentrate research as part of the response to the Government’s agenda for men’s health.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Havering would like to thank all of the men who responded to the survey, and the clubs to which they belong for facilitating the distribution of the survey among their members.

We would also like to thank Councillor Gillian Ford of Havering Council, who strongly supported us in undertaking the survey.

Participation in Healthwatch Havering

Local people who have time to spare are welcome to join us as volunteers. We need both people who work in health or social care services, and those who are simply interested in getting the best possible health and social care services for the people of Havering.

Our aim is to develop wide, comprehensive and inclusive involvement in Healthwatch Havering, to allow every individual and organisation of the Havering Community to have a role and a voice at a level they feel appropriate to their personal circumstances.

Members

This is the key working role. For some, this role will provide an opportunity to help improve an area of health and social care where they, their families or friends have experienced problems or difficulties. Very often a life experience has encouraged people to think about giving something back to the local community or simply personal circumstances now allow individuals to have time to develop themselves. This role will enable people to extend their networks, and can help prepare for college, university or a change in the working life. There is no need for any prior experience in health or social care for this role.

The role provides the face-to-face contact with the community, listening, helping, signposting, providing advice. It also is part of ensuring the most isolated people within our community have a voice.

Healthwatch Havering Friends' Network

Join our Friends' Network for regular updates and other information about health and social care in Havering and North East London. It cost nothing to join and there is no ongoing commitment.

To find out more, visit our website at

<https://www.healthwatchhaverling.co.uk/advice-and-information/2022-06-06/our-friends-network-archive>



Healthwatch Havering is the operating name of

Havering Healthwatch C.I.C

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