This publication is a summary of the main topics included in the 2016/17 Health Survey. Following on from this summary report, the Department of Health intends to produce a number of more detailed topic specific bulletins throughout 2017/18. These bulletins will be made available on the Health Survey page on the Departmental website.


Any material used must be acknowledged and sourced to the Health Survey Northern Ireland, Department of Health.
**General Health**

73% reported their general health to be Good or Very Good

Longstanding Illness - 42% reported a longstanding illness (30% limiting and 12% non-limiting longstanding illness)

The majority of respondents (91%) believe they can influence their own health by the way they choose to live their life

**Mental Health & Wellbeing**

17% of respondents had a high GHQ12 score which could indicate a mental health problem

The proportion of females with a high GHQ12 score fell to 18% (from 21% in 2015/16). Males remained unchanged

45% of those who had mental health concerns felt that their normal activities were affected

22% missed time at work / school / university

68% would feel comfortable talking to a friend or family member about their mental health, however a similar proportion (62%) would feel uncomfortable speaking to an employer

**Opinion on Mental Health**

- Virtually anyone can become mentally ill
- Mental illness is an illness like any other
- People with mental health problems should not be given any responsibility
- I would not want to live next door to someone who has been mentally ill
- People with mental illness don’t deserve our sympathy

![Survey Results](image)

56% sought help

- Of these: 84% sought help from GP
- 43% from family
- 30% from a friend

Of those who did not seek help

- The main reason given by 80% of males and 65% of females was...
  
  "I thought I could handle things on my own"

**Nearly a third (30%) had concerns about their own mental health in the past year**
Social Support

Four-fifths answered “Certainly true” when asked if they had family or a friend who...

...can be relied on no matter what
...would see that I was taken care of if I needed to
...make me feel an important part of their lives
...give me support and encouragement

73% of respondents have 3 or more people they can count on

Wellbeing

Around two-fifths of respondents reported very high levels of...

life satisfaction
feeling that the things they do in life are worthwhile
happiness

While around half of respondents report very low anxiety, one in five report high levels.

Loneliness

Signs of loneliness by rurality

Respondents living in urban areas and those in the most deprived areas were more likely to report signs of loneliness than those in rural areas and the least deprived areas respectively.

There was no discernible trend when considering sex or age-group.
Smoking and Alcohol Prevalence

A fifth (20%) of adults smoke cigarettes
This fell from 22% in 2015/16

Prevalence of cigarette smoking 1983 - 2016/17

Smoking prevalence has shown a downward trend since 1983 falling from a third to a fifth of adults

6% use e-cigarettes

No change on previous years

Three-quarters do not plan to stop within the next six months

Alcohol prevalence
• Four-fifths (80%) of adults aged 18 and over drink alcohol
(Up from 74% in 2015/16)

5-a-day / BMI / Physical Activity

43% reported eating 5 or more portions of fruit and vegetables every day
(Up from 37% in 2015/16)

36% of respondents were overweight and 27% were obese
(No increase on 2015/16, but general upward trend in obesity over the last decade)

A quarter of children aged 2-15 years were overweight or obese

55% reported meeting the Chief Medical Officer’s physical activity recommendations

Females (51%) less likely than males (61%) to meet recommendation
Caring Responsibility

13% of respondents have caring responsibilities

Around 70% received no monetary reward for giving this care

Almost half (48%) received help from other family members, however 38% received no support from others

Planning for Social Care

Females (47%) were more likely than males (38%) to have thought about who would look after them in the future should they need any help

Proportion considering how to pay for things needed when older

Care in the sun

The most popular sun protection method was to use a sunscreen (71%) with the majority (83%) using one with a sun protection factor of 15 or more

A fifth of respondents (21%) had sunburn in the last year

A third (33%) never check their skin for changes that might indicate skin cancer

Complaints & Compliments

Of respondents who had been in contact with the health & social care system in the last year:

- Nearly half had given a compliment
- 7% written compliment and/or gift
- 3% had made a complaint about their care or treatment

Antibiotics

83% knew that it was FALSE that...

Antibiotics work on colds and flus

High proportion of respondents recognised that it was TRUE that...

- If you take an antibiotic when you don’t need it then you can become resistant to the antibiotic (85%)
- Diseases such as pneumonia and meningitis are becoming more difficult to treat because of drug-resistant bacteria (74%)
- Antibiotics are used to treat bacterial infections (85%)
- It is generally expected that you will be assessed by your doctor prior to commencing your course of antibiotics (91%)