



Report on the data collected by Healthwatch Oldham at our Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum held in January 2017

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1. Introduction

This report brings together all the data collected by Healthwatch Oldham during our January 2017 Healthwatch Forum which focused on low mood, anxiety and depression. We have collected this data to help identify both positive and negative patterns and trends in relation to people's understanding and feelings on low mood, anxiety and depression.

These patterns and trends help us to understand how people feel about their understanding of their own mental health and understand the support that is available.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings recorded in our own system of collecting data. Our report is not a representative portrayal of all the local geographic area, only an account of what feedback we have received.

2. Background Information

Healthwatch Oldham hold a Forum every quarter and each event focuses on a different health and social care subject to provide information, support and obtain feedback from attendees' experiences of the specific subject.

In January 2017, we held our Forum at Oldham Leisure Centre and focused on low mood, anxiety and depression. The event was designed to be an interactive forum where attendees could visit a range of health and wellbeing information stands and take part in physical activity taster sessions.

In addition, there were guest speakers from Pennine Care - Healthy Minds and Tameside, Oldham and Glossop Mind. They provided information on Mental Health services across the borough for adults, children and young people.

For this Forum, we designed a specific survey for attendees to complete which is where we have collected the data for this report.

3. Methodology

Healthwatch Oldham created a specific survey with regards to low mood, anxiety and depression which people who attended the event completed and others who couldn't attend, completed online.

The survey asked specific questions about people's understanding of their own mood, diagnosis, possible treatments and services they have accessed. The specific questions asked can be accessed in Appendix 1 and analysis of these questions are in Section 5.

The answers to these questions have been collated and analysed to identify any patterns and trends within their experiences and understanding. We have also included a summary of the overall findings in Section 4.

4. Overall Findings

There were 88 questionnaires which were completed in total. These were completed by people who attended the Forum and those who completed the questionnaire online.

People mainly chose to complete the questionnaire online because they may have not been able to attend the Forum or they preferred to do it in their own time.

We have separated the questionnaire into two areas to explain the key findings. From section 5 you can find the analysis on each individual question asked.

Diagnosis

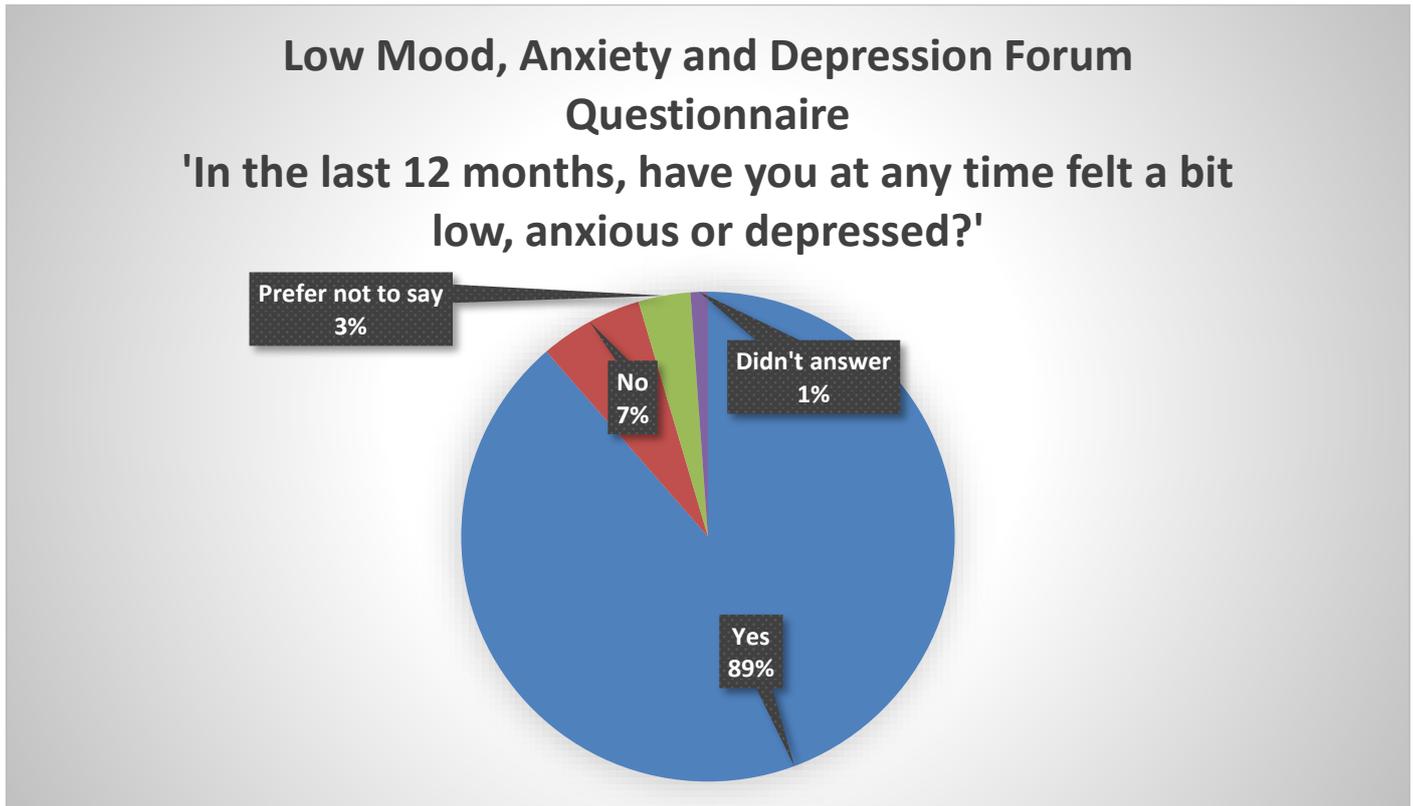
- 87% (78 people) who completed the questionnaire stated that they had in the past 12 months felt either low, anxious or depressed
- 69% (54 people) of those who declared that they had felt anxious or depressed had stated that they had spoken to someone regarding this
- These people had mainly confided in a friend/family member or a GP
- Those that hadn't spoken to anyone regarding their feeling mainly stated it was because they felt they could sort it out themselves
- 35% (31 people) had stated that they had received a formal diagnosis
- 5 people stated that they had received medication even though they stated that they had not received a formal diagnosis - The reason for this is unclear

Treatment

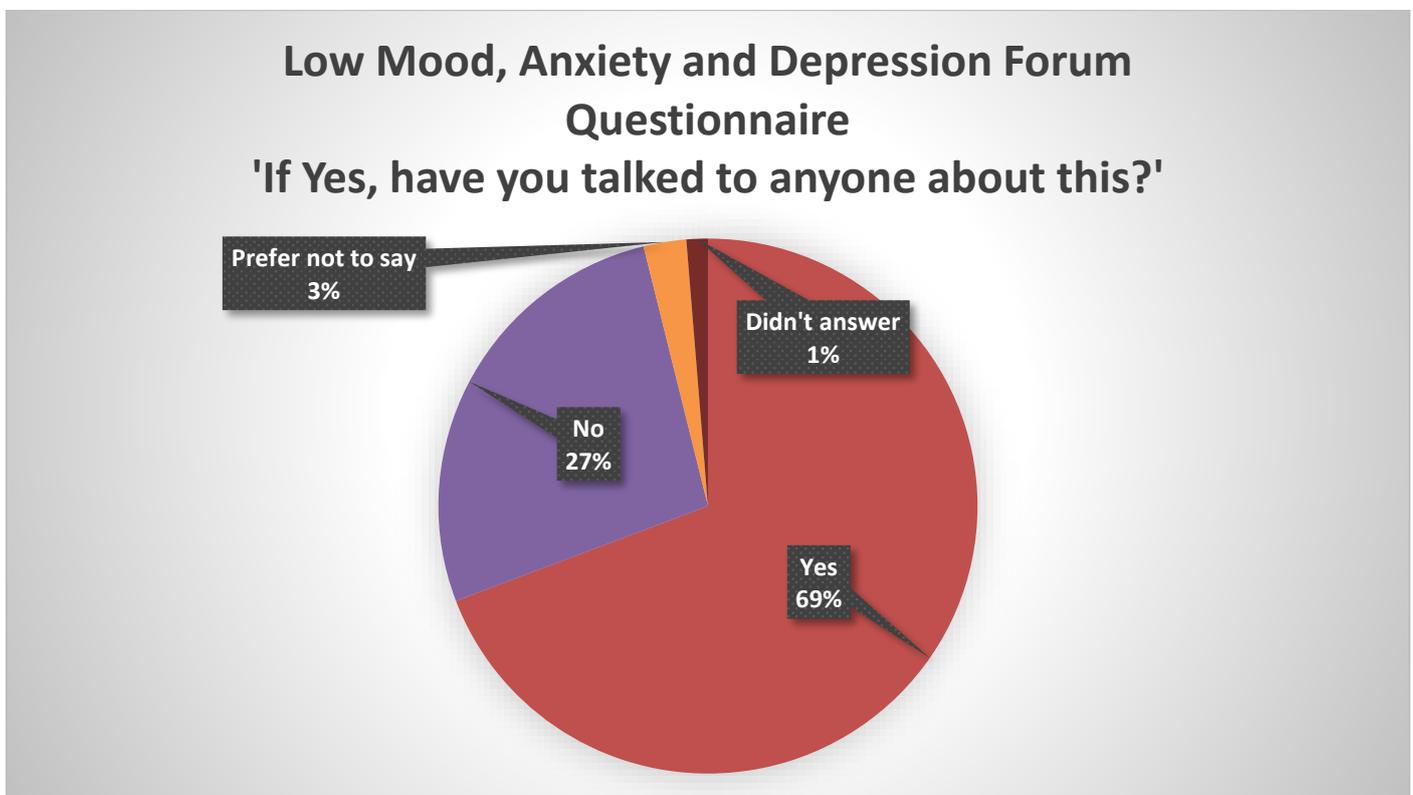
- 42% (37 people) had stated that they had received treatment for their condition
- 31 people stated that their treatment was medication
- People which accessed an agency (in some cases as well as medication) scored the effectiveness of their treatment higher than those which were just on medication
- Most of the information provided regarding how to get help was obtained through a medical professional, internet and through a friend or family member

5. Response to individual questions

Below is an analysis of each separate question from the questionnaire.



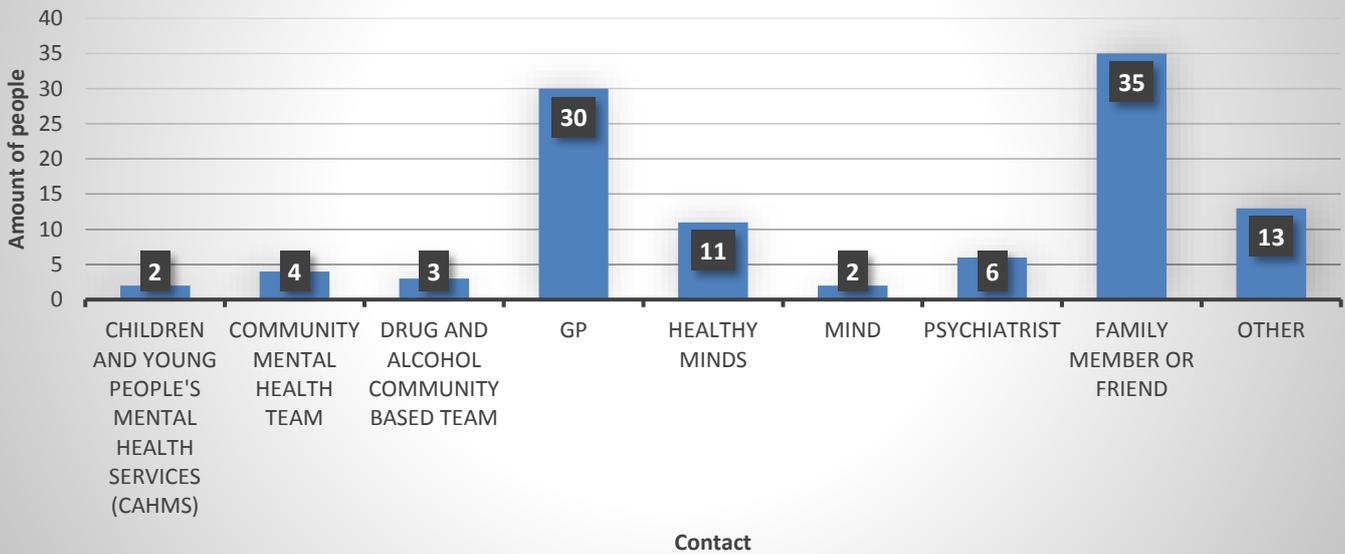
89% (78 people) stated that they had felt either low mood, anxiety or depression in the past 12 months. This is compared to only 7% (6 people) who stated that they hadn't. 3 people stated that they preferred not to answer this question.



We asked those who chose Yes (78 people) for the first question, whether they had spoken to anyone else about their feelings. 69% (54 people) stated that they had spoken to someone else in comparison to the 27% (21 people) who stated that they hadn't.

Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire

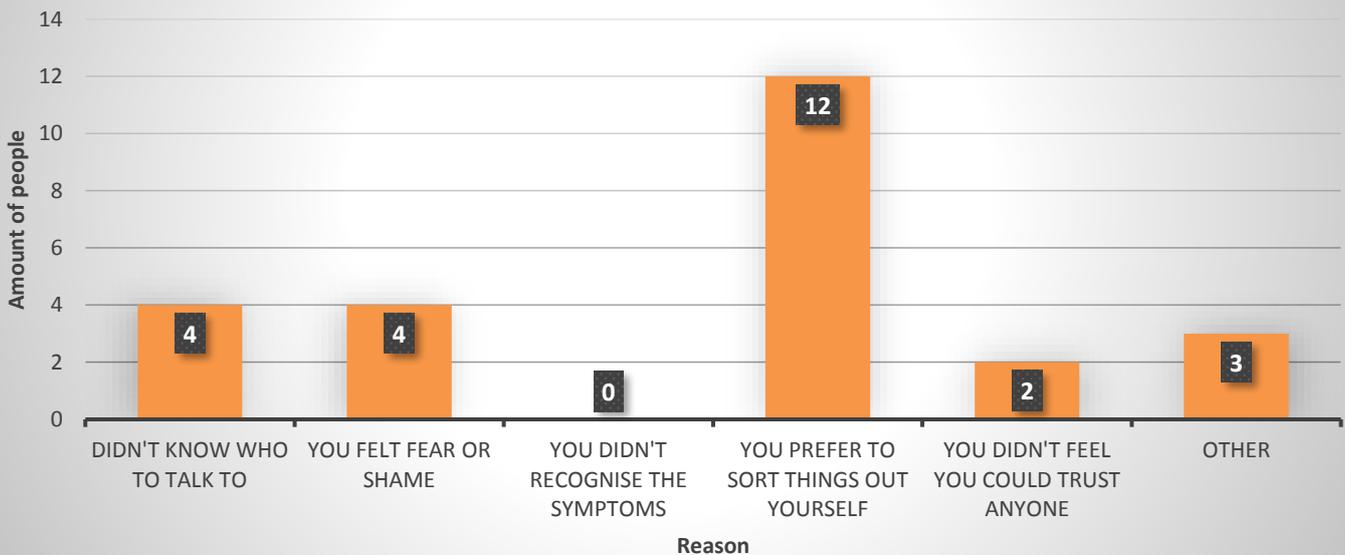
'If Yes, who have you talked to about this?'



We then asked the 78 people who they have spoken to about their feelings. The two most common contacts were family members or friends (35 people) and their GP (30 people). There are a lot of answers for this question as people have spoken to more than one contact.

Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire

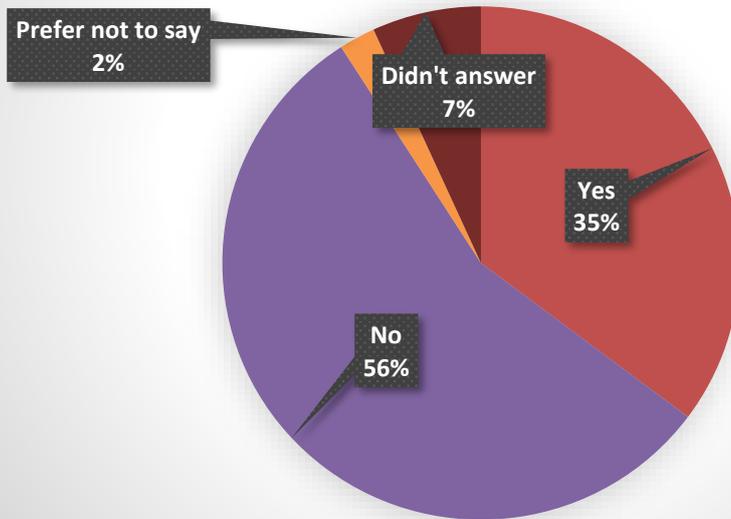
'If No, do you mind telling us why?'



Of those 21 people that didn't feel comfortable talking to someone, we asked if they felt able to tell us why. The most common answer was 'you prefer to sort things out yourself' with 12 answers. Most other options received smaller and similar results.

Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire

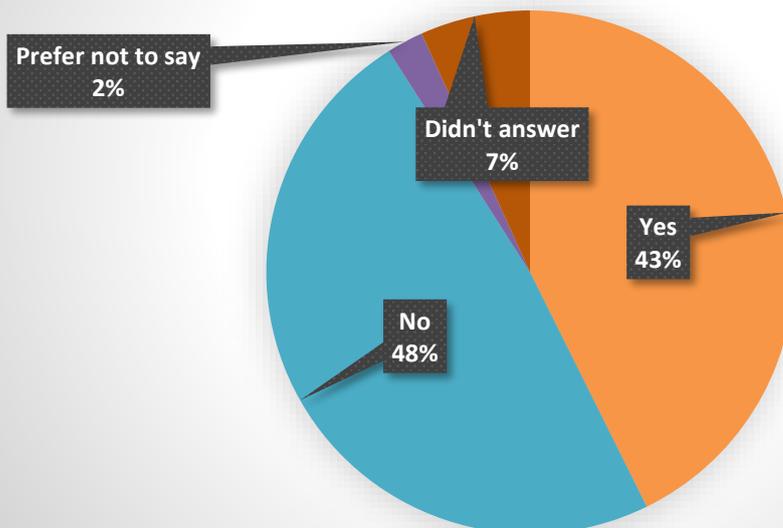
'Did you receive a formal diagnosis?'



We asked if people had received a formal diagnosis of any conditions relating to low mood and anxiety. 35% (31 people) stated that they had in comparison to 56% (49 people) who answered no. Whilst the number of those who answered that they hadn't had a formal diagnosis, it's unclear whether they required a diagnosis.

Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire

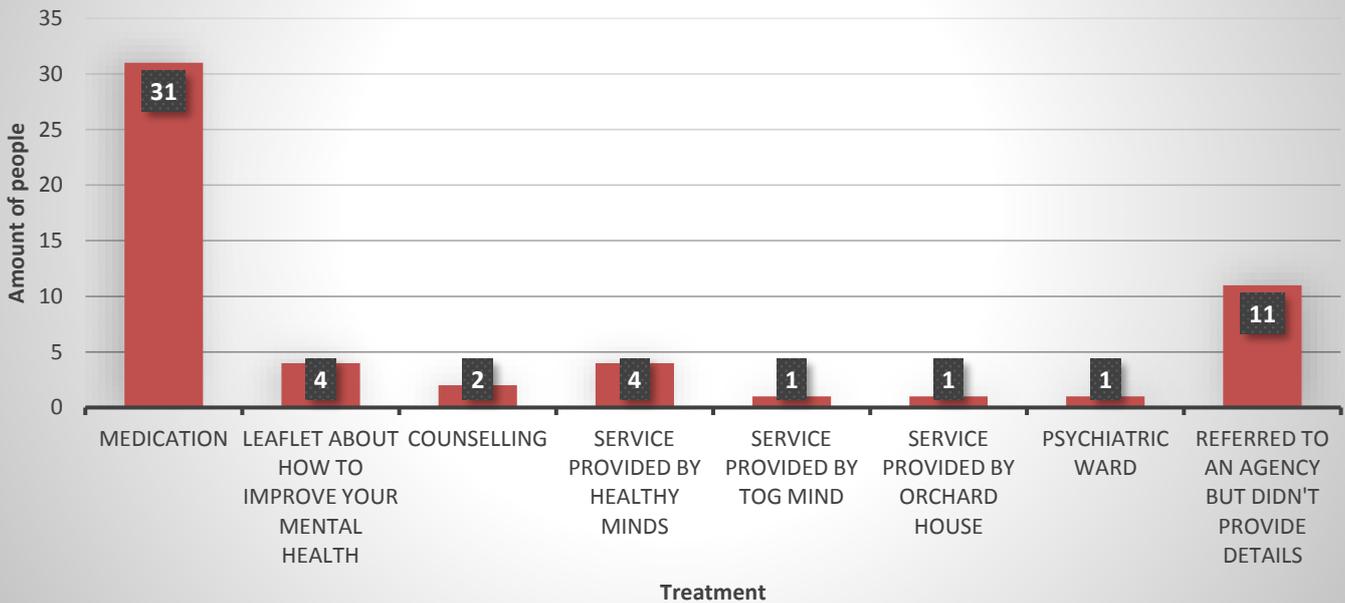
'Did you receive any treatment?'



We asked if people had received any treatment for their condition. 43% (37 people) stated that they had compared to 48% (43 people) who stated that they hadn't. Much like the previous question, it is unclear whether those that answered no required any treatment for their condition.

Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire

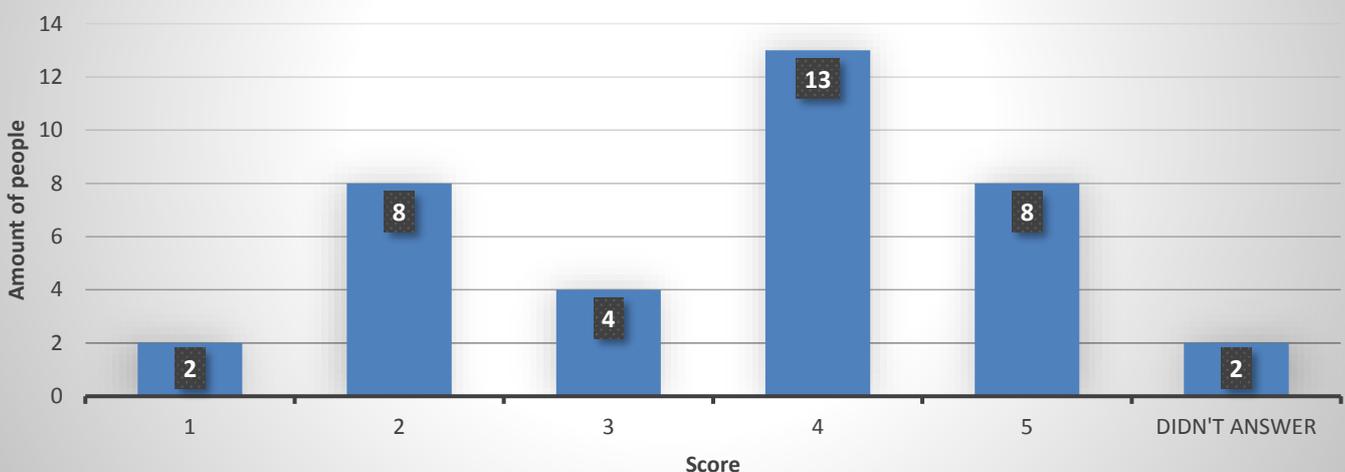
'If Yes, what treatment did you receive?'



Of those that said they accessed treatment, we asked what form of treatment they received. 31 people stated that their treatment was medication and 11 people stated that they had been referred to a service but didn't provide any further details. There are more answers in this question than those that said they received treatment as people could have received more than one option for treatment.

Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire

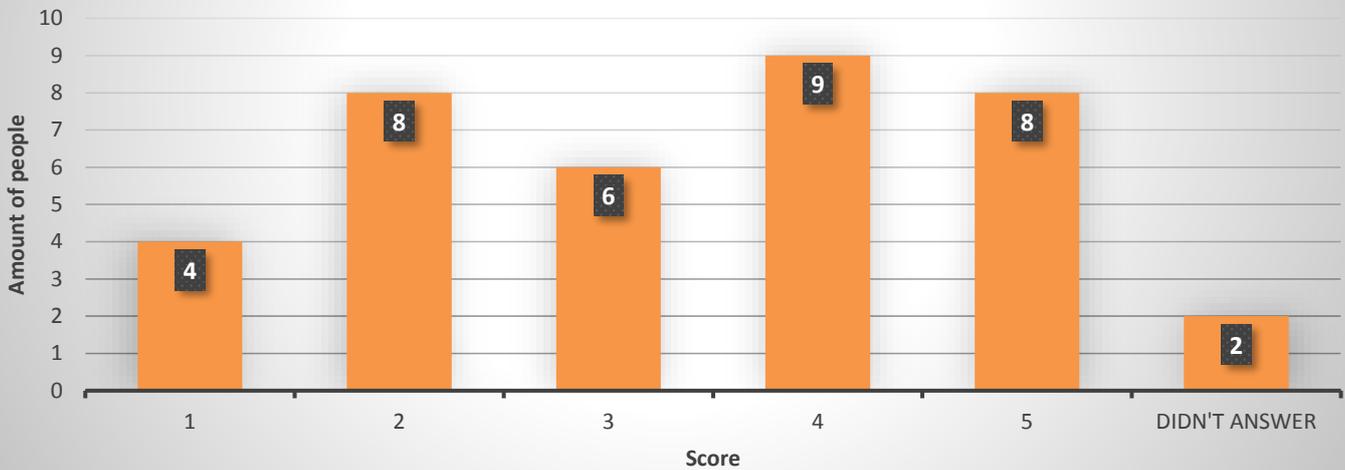
'One a scale of 1 to 5 (where 5 = very good) how beneficial did you find your treatment?'



In this question, we asked people to score the benefit of their treatment. Each scale was represented in this question and the most common answer was scale 4 with 13 answers. Scales 2 and 5 each received 8 answers.

Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire

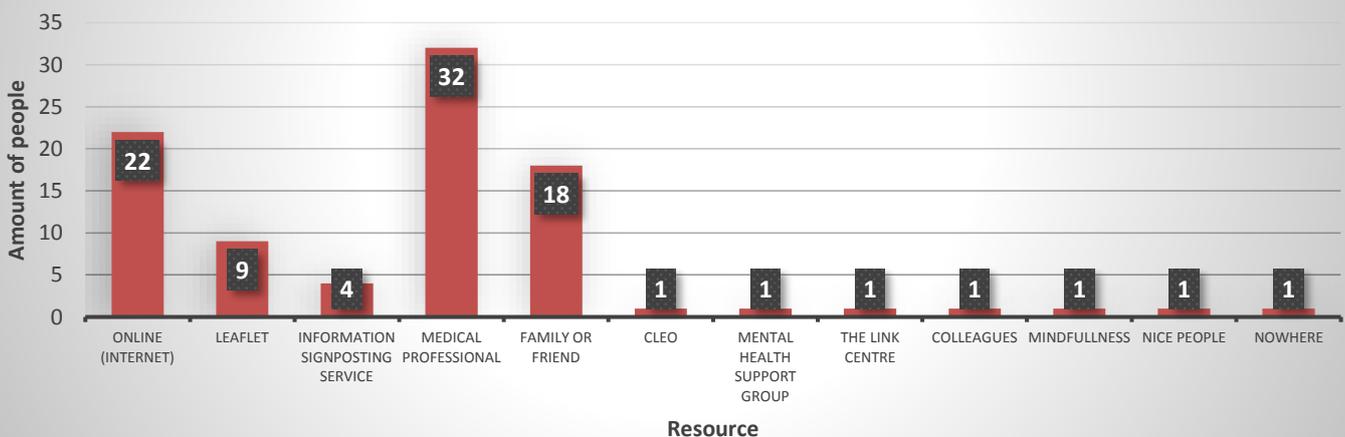
'One a scale of 1 to 5 (where 5 = very good) how easy was it to access the mental health service you used for your treatment?'



In this question, we asked people how easy it was to access the mental health service they used. Each scale was represented in this question and the most common was 4 with 9 answers. Scales 2 and 8 each received 8 answers.

Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire

'Where did you look for information about where to get help?'



In this question, we asked people to inform us of where they access information about where they can receive help for mental health. The most common answer was a medical professional with 32 answers. The second and third most popular responses were 'online' and 'family or friend' with 22 and 18 answers respectively.

6. Conclusions

Based on the above findings, most people that completed the questionnaire from the Forum had, or do suffer from low mood, anxiety, or depression. A positive sign is that nearly 70% of those people have spoken to someone regarding this. Whilst the most popular answer when asked who people had spoken to was family or a friend, the GP service was also well represented.

However, for most of those who said that they hadn't spoken to anyone, their most popular reason for not doing so was that they preferred to try and sort things out themselves. It's unclear whether this is because they didn't feel comfortable to tell someone else or whether they just chose not to. There could be many reasons for this, but from the information we have received it's unclear. This is an area of development for any future questionnaires regarding mental health.

There is a link between the GP service and treatment. There were 30 people who stated that they had spoken to the GP and there were 31 people who stated that their treatment was medication. There were five people who stated that their treatment for low mood, anxiety or depression was medication even though they answered on the form that they hadn't been formally diagnosed. The reasons for this are unclear, it could be a simple input error when completing the questionnaire, or it could be a communication issue where the person involved isn't aware if they have been formally diagnosed with one of these conditions.

Medication was the most common course of treatment for these people, whilst other mental health services were underrepresented in the answers in this survey. 31 people stated that their treatment was medication and 14 of these only scored the benefits of this treatment between the scales of 1-3 out of 5. However, 19 people stated that they had been referred to an agency (11 of these were also given medication) and 13 of these scored the benefits of this treatment between 4-5 out of 5. Whilst medication is obviously the most common form of treatment, it seems to be more popular with people if they have access to a support agency as well.

When questioned whom people had received their information from, the highest answer was a medical professional. This suggests that the GP service is the highest form of influence for people, their treatment and where they can access it.

7. Recommendations

Based on the answers provided within our questionnaire, Healthwatch Oldham would make the following recommendations:

- That this report is shared with local partners and that they feedback actions taken which arise from this information to Healthwatch Oldham.
- Healthcare professionals continue to communicate the benefits of accessing support services (as well as any medication which is deemed necessary) as these seem to be popular with people who have low mood, anxiety and/or depression.
- Healthcare providers and other partners, working in partnership with Healthwatch Oldham, continue to provide people with accurate and up to date information on services which can support people with their mental health.
- Healthcare providers and other partners, working in partnership with Healthwatch Oldham, continue to promote actions for a healthier lifestyle and show the benefits to encourage people to take the required actions to help people's mental wellbeing.
- Healthcare providers and other partners, working in partnership with Healthwatch Oldham, try to improve their understanding about how people can feel more accepted in talking to people about their mental wellbeing to reduce their risk of developing more complex mental health conditions.

Healthwatch Oldham will continue to provide information to empower people to allow them to make an informed choice about their own health and the services they can access. Future questionnaires (on a similar subject to this) will include space for people to explain why they have provided a specific answer to allow us to understand more about their thoughts on their mental health.

Please get in touch with Healthwatch Oldham to discuss these recommendations and the partnership work needed to address them. We look forward to your feedback.

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Appendix 1 - Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Survey Questions

In the last 12 months, have you at any time felt a bit low, anxious or depressed?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

If Yes, have you talked to anyone about this?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

Who have you talked to about this? - Please tick or list all that apply

- Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (CAHMS)
 Community Mental Health Team
 Drug and Alcohol Community Based Team
 GP
 Healthy Minds
 Mind
 Psychiatrist
 Family member or friend
 Other, please state: _____

If No, do you mind telling us why?

- Didn't know who to talk to
 You felt fear or shame
 You didn't recognise the symptoms
 You prefer to sort things out yourself
 You didn't feel you could trust anyone
 Other, please state: _____

Did you receive a formal diagnosis?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

Did you receive any treatment?

- Yes No Prefer not to say

If Yes, what treatment did you receive? - Please tick or list all that apply

- Medication
 Leaflet about how to improve your mental health
 Referral to an agency e.g. Healthy Minds - Please state which agency this was;
 Other, please state: _____

On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 5 = very good) how beneficial did you find the treatment that you received

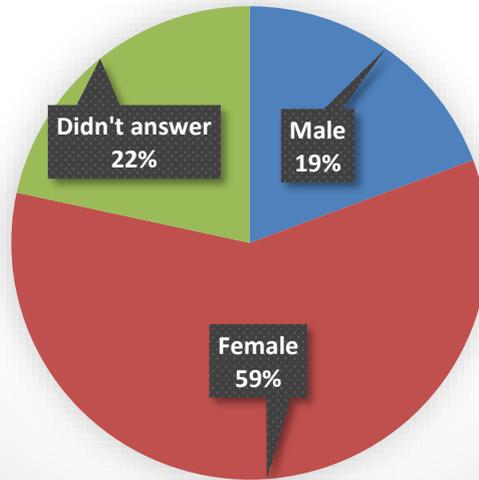
On a scale of 1 to 5 (where 5 = very helpful) how easy was it to access the mental health service you used for your treatment

Where did you look for information about where to get help? - please tick or list all that apply

- Online (internet)
 Leaflet
 Information signposting service
 Medical professional
 Family or friend
 Other, please state: _____

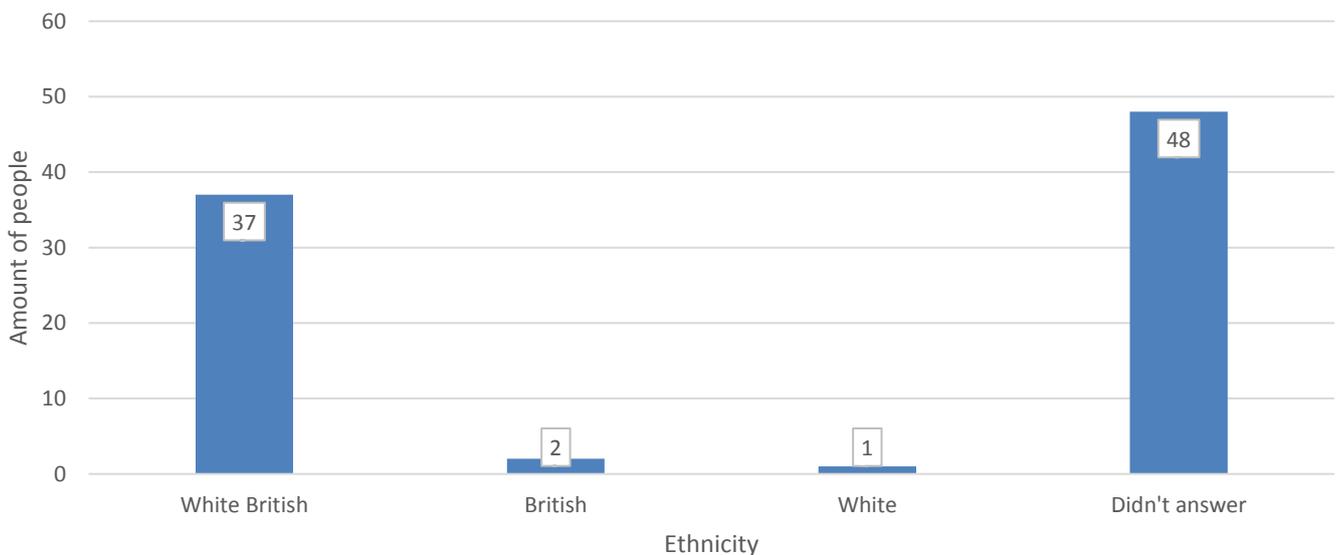
Appendix 2 - Demographic Information

Healthwatch Oldham Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire - 'Gender'



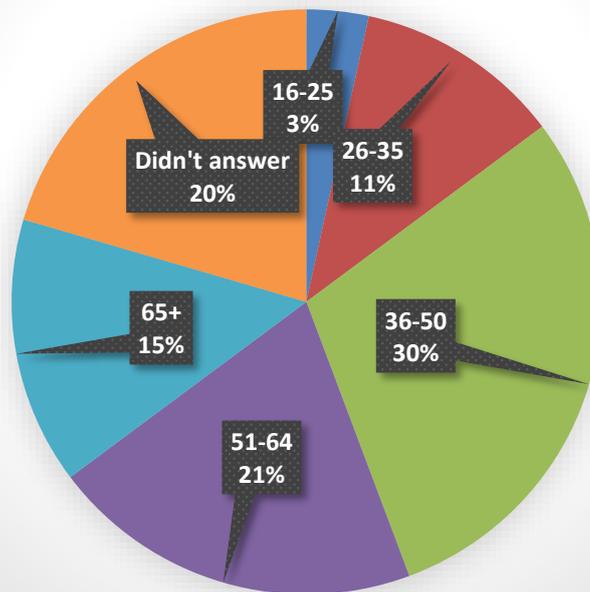
59% (52 people) who completed this questionnaire are female compared to the 19% (17 people) who stated that they are male. 22% (19 people) chose not to answer this question.

Healthwatch Oldham Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire - 'Ethnicity'



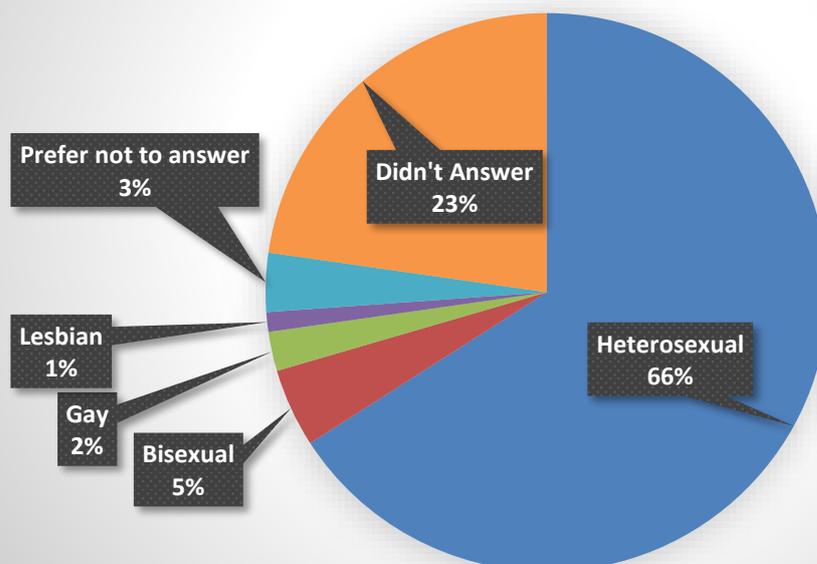
The most common answer provided for this question was 'White British' with 37 people. However, 48 people chose not to answer this question. This question allowed people to declare their own ethnicity. Therefore, you have a few similar responses in 'British' and 'White'.

Healthwatch Oldham Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire - 'Age Groups'



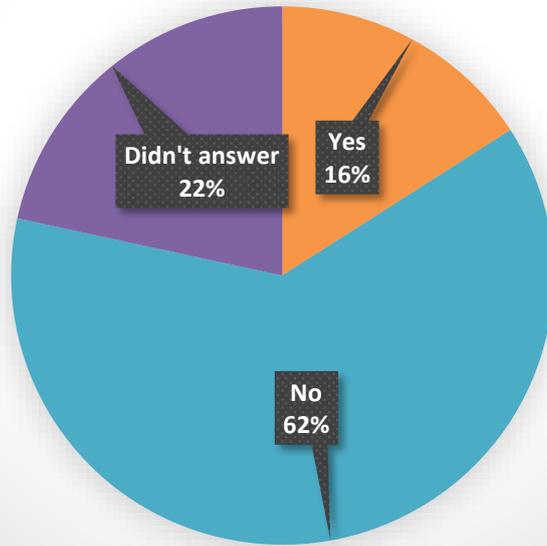
The largest proportion was the age bracket '36-50' with 30% (26 people). All age brackets had representation in this question and 20% (18 people) chose not to answer this question.

Healthwatch Oldham Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire - 'Sexual Orientation'



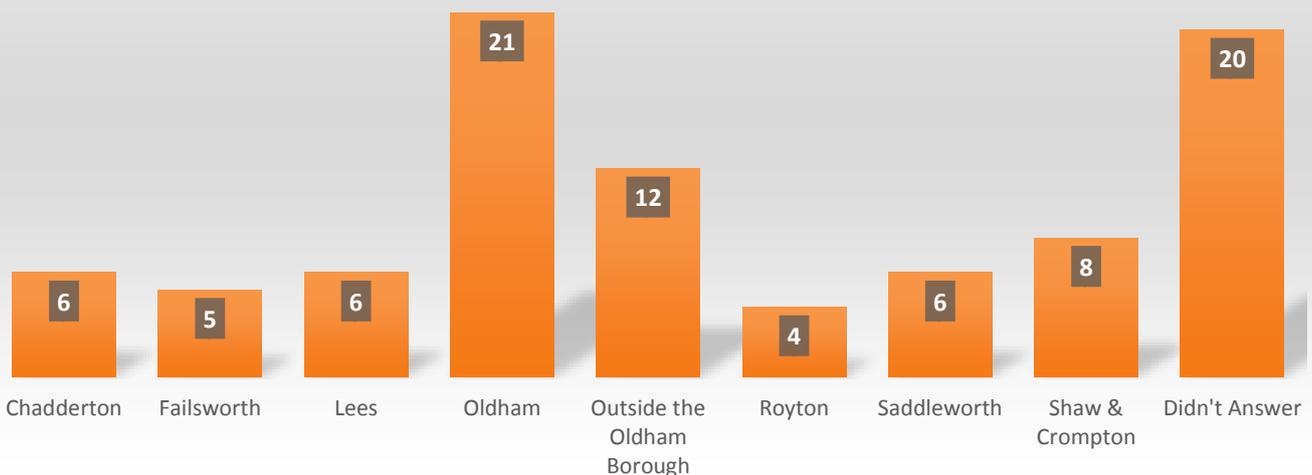
66% (58 people) declared that they were heterosexual and 23% (20 people) chose not to answer this question.

Healthwatch Oldham Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire - 'Are you a disabled person?'



62% (55 people) stated that they weren't disabled compared to the 16% (14 people) who stated that they were. 22% (19 people) chose not to answer this question.

Healthwatch Oldham Low Mood, Anxiety and Depression Forum Questionnaire - 'Town or area you live in'



We asked people what area of Oldham they reside in. All answers within this question were represented but the most common were people who chose to just state Oldham with 21 people. 12 people came from outside the Oldham Borough and 20 people chose not to answer this question.