



Quality Account 2023



Statement from Lisa Hollins, Executive director of UK operations

This report sets out the approach we took to improve the quality of our services during 2023. Our vision is for everybody to get the help they need in a crisis. Our volunteers and staff have dedicated their time so that individuals in the UK have the capacity to prepare for, deal with and recover from crisis.

We work with public and civil society partners to support people leaving hospital, help individuals to live safely at home, support displaced families arriving in the UK, and respond to crises, such as fires, floods and storms. We help people in need, no matter who or where they are.

Our teams performed with great skill and kindness last year. The number of people in need of our help grew significantly during the year and continues to do so. Our teams focused on people and communities experiencing the greatest health inequalities to ensure they received the help they needed.

Health and social care services in the UK were put under severe strain in 2023 due to increasing demand and struggles to recruit the workforce needed to provide the comprehensive services that people require. The rising cost of living made life much harder for people who were already struggling, and they had to make difficult choices about the food they bought, and how to heat their homes with costs for essential items rising.

The economic environment also made our services much more expensive to run. However, our teams worked hard to meet growing needs, reaching thousands of people over the course of the year.

Our hospital discharge teams helped more than 57,900 people get home after a stay in hospital, ensured they settled well and helped them avoid readmission. They made sure people felt safe and comfortable, and that no one had to return to a cold, empty home.

We supported tens of thousands of vulnerable people in their homes to help them live life well and prevent unnecessary stays in care homes and hospitals. We built people's confidence through personalised care, and connected people to activities, groups, and services in their community to meet the practical, social and emotional needs affecting their health and wellbeing.



British Red Cross emergency response officer, Cyrus, delivers food and provisions to local communities affected by storms in Aberdeenshire.

And we provided over 48,600 wheelchairs and other pieces of mobility equipment – as well as more than 196,100 toilet aids, specialist beds, bath lifts, walking frames and other specialist tools – to help people maintain their independence and dignity.

Our High Intensity Use (HIU) Programme supported over 1,700 people who had accessed urgent care services more than expected to improve their long-term health outcomes and relieve pressure on the system. Last year, 89% of the people reached by the programme saw their wellbeing improve from the beginning to the end of our support.

We continued to innovate over the year. Initiatives such as our discharge to assess service in Dundee, which helped make sure people leaving hospital had their ongoing care needs assessed and determined at home, promoted greater independence, and improved recovery. Our new virtual ward support service in Cumbria enabled clinicians to monitor patients remotely and safely at home, while relieving pressure on inpatient services.

Our emergency department wellbeing and home safe service in Wales continued its excellent work to support patients and their families. The service was intended as a three-month initiative in 2018 to relieve the pressure on Welsh hospitals during the winter months, but has had such a positive impact for patients, staff, and the running of emergency departments that it has been continually extended.

The number of people we reached with our crisis and emergency response work to support people through flooding, house fires and accidents has increased from over 8,500 in 2022 to more than 19,800 in 2023. Last year our teams were deployed to help those hit by flooding after Storm Otto in February, Storms Babet and Ciarán in October and November, and Storm Gerrit in late December. We helped people who had been cut off from power, flooded or displaced to a rest centre. We listened to what they needed and found the right local and personal support to meet their specific needs, with the help of our partners in the Voluntary and Community Sector Emergencies Partnership.

Knowledge of basic first aid can make all the difference in an emergency. The more trained first aiders who have the skill and confidence to help someone in an emergency, the more people will be kept safe. Our in-person Red Cross Training courses trained over 97,000 people in first aid in 2023.

Our psychosocial support teams were deployed to three emergencies last year. In Cairo, Cyprus, and Tel Aviv, they supported people escaping conflicts in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and Sudan. In Rhodes, they helped people evacuated after devastating wildfires there. Our teams provided humanitarian aid and welfare to people in crisis, including unaccompanied children, mothers and babies.

We supported over 40,200 refugees and people seeking asylum here in the UK last year, and more than 13,200 people who were experiencing destitution. We provided cash support, mobile phones, SIM cards, case work, and practical and emotional support.

We also helped more than 8,400 people to look for, find, or keep in touch with loved ones. We helped to reunite and integrate family members by providing travel



Cheryl, a British Red Cross patient transport driver in Kent, UK.

assistance, help to navigate local authority paperwork and support to access housing, healthcare, and schools.

We continued to support people fleeing from the crisis in Ukraine last year to the UK. We responded to almost 15,000 calls through our dedicated Ukraine support line, helping new arrivals get used to life in the UK and access further support. We provided cash assistance to more than 9,300 people who left Ukraine, and provided over 5,000 pre-paid SIM cards to help people stay connected with their loved ones.

I'd like to say thank you to all our volunteers and staff for their dedication, expertise, and kindness, and for their continued commitment to improve the quality of all our services.

I am very pleased to present our Quality Account for 2023. It sets out the progress we've made in improving our services and outlines how we will continue to work towards providing quality care and support to those who need us.

PLAY

The Aneurin Bevan Health Board in Wales highlight the work our health teams do to support A&E departments and explain how much this support means to NHS staff and patients.

Who we are

It is our role as the British Red Cross to connect people's kindness with those in crisis.

For more than 150 years, we have mobilised the power of humanity so that people can prepare for, respond to, and recover from disasters – both here in the UK and around the world.

We provide impartial support to people based on their need, and nothing else. Our offer of support covers three areas: disasters and emergencies, health inequalities, and displacement and migration. We also work to develop the capacities of our National Societies and communities overseas.

We are powered by more than 10,500 regular volunteers in the UK, over 17,600 community reserve volunteers and nearly 4,000 staff. It is their determination to help others, along with the generosity of our supporters, that allows us to reach people in crisis when they need us most.

We are part of the world's largest humanitarian network, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, which has 16 million volunteers across 191 countries. This gives us a unique ability to respond to humanitarian crises around the globe.

We are guided by the seven fundamental principles of the Movement: humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.

These commit us to putting people first in everything we do.



Janet, a support worker for the British Red Cross with Ian, a young man with Down Syndrome. Thanks to the support of the British Red Cross Ian has been able to learn valuable life skills, become more independent and much less lonely.

Progress against our 2023 priorities



Pete, a British Red Cross patient transport driver in Kent, with patient Charlie.

Our quality priority	Our objectives	How we did
<p>Developing a new quality framework for our UK operations</p>	<p>We will:</p> <p>Have a quality framework with a comprehensive set of standards aligned to external regulations and sector best practice.</p>	<p>We engaged with key stakeholders across our UK services to develop the new framework.</p> <p>Our new quality framework was approved at the end of 2023 for implementation during 2024.</p>
<p>Refreshing our quality and safety assurance processes</p>	<p>We will:</p> <p>Have a 'self-assessment' process to enable services to assure themselves that the quality standards are being met.</p> <p>Undertake a programme of 'second line' assurance activities.</p>	<p>We engaged with key stakeholders across our UK services to develop a set of key indicators for each quality standard to underpin self-assessment.</p> <p>We planned and agreed our approach to 'mock' Care Quality Commission inspections in our regulated services.</p> <p>We will build on this work in 2024.</p>
<p>Supporting services through a new continuous improvement programme</p>	<p>We will:</p> <p>Use evidence-based methodologies to embed continuous improvement across our services.</p>	<p>We have collaborated across our services and with colleagues in supporting functions to map and define our service activities and specifications. We have reviewed, updated, and improved some of our processes, including our referral and assessment tools.</p>
<p>Evaluation and data priorities</p>	<p>We will:</p> <p>Launch the outcomes framework we have developed to support more consistent data on outcomes across more of our services.</p> <p>Review feedback from people we support as part of this rollout.</p> <p>Start collecting more feedback from commissioners and partners.</p>	<p>Our outcomes framework has been launched in some of our services.</p> <p>We are trialling a feedback questionnaire with some of our commissioners. We will continue to build on this work in 2024.</p>

Our quality priority	Our objectives	How we did
<p>Safeguarding</p>	<p>We will:</p> <p>Embed and use our increased safeguarding development capacity.</p> <p>Refine and implement our safeguarding framework.</p> <p>Develop knowledge-building tools and guidance for our teams in UK operations.</p>	<p>We introduced new key performance indicators for our safeguarding advice team to ensure concerns are managed, escalated, and closed in a timely manner.</p> <p>We created a new safeguarding framework focusing on incident recognition and prevention, reporting, response, and learning.</p> <p>We revised our organisation-wide safeguarding policy for its launch in January 2024.</p> <p>We introduced a safeguarding-specific risk register and 2023/24 action plan to strengthen and improve safeguarding across the organisation.</p> <p>The British Red Cross safeguarding team visited over 50 teams in our UK operations to offer virtual and in-person safeguarding training and support. Self-service tools have been piloted to support staff to manage incidents that do not meet safeguarding thresholds.</p>
<p>Standardising complaint handling</p>	<p>We will:</p> <p>Have a new platform for recording and tracking unsolicited feedback, enabling the centralised collection of information on complaints, compliments and comments, and the identification of any trends for learning.</p>	<p>We launched the new platform for recording and tracking unsolicited feedback.</p> <p>We reviewed and consolidated existing guidance provided on the British Red Cross website to simplify the process for submitting feedback.</p> <p>We developed training to support staff and volunteers in managing unsolicited feedback.</p> <p>We created a new complaints manager role to provide central oversight.</p>



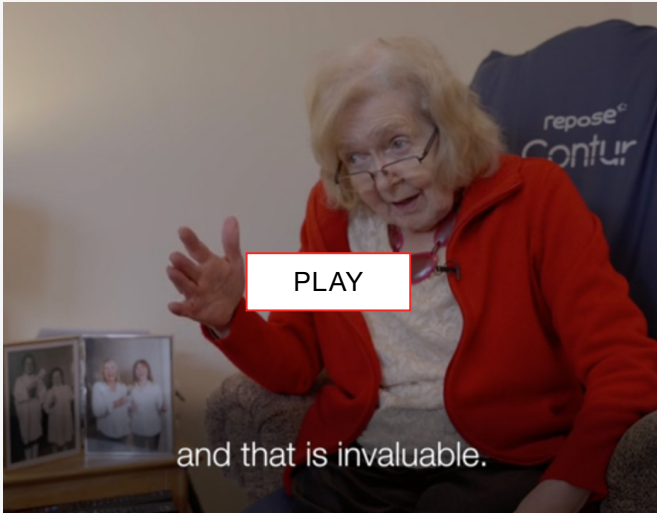
Val, a volunteer with the British Red Cross oncology transport service in Somerset, taking cancer patients to and from hospitals for their appointments.

Our services:

In focus

In this section we take a closer look at some of the services our teams provide.

Discharge to assess service in Dundee



Jean talks about her experience of the discharge to assess service.

Delivered in partnership with the local council and the NHS, our discharge to assess service takes pressure off hospitals. It helps patients recover at home safely after a stay in hospital and prevents unnecessary re-admissions.

Jean from Dundee was supported by the service last year while recovering from a double pelvic fracture at home. She says: "It's amazing what you need when you don't have the capability, and I think that's where the Red Cross comes in. They come twice a day. In the morning, they wash and dress me, open the blinds, make me a coffee, put some breakfast flakes in a bowl. And what I really like is that they always say, 'Is there anything else you need?'" The care is excellent – I can't fault it. The standard of the staff is marvellous."

If the British Red Cross hadn't been ready to help her, Jean believes she would have been waiting for the right kind of support for some time. She says: "With this, you don't have to go round looking for packages of care. It's a streamlined service connected to the hospital, and that is invaluable. I think you'd be lost without it. Even when I was younger, the Red Cross meant help where it was needed. It's dependable – it's always there. I've always thought highly of the Red Cross."

The Hospital and Community Navigation Service in Hertfordshire

The Hospital and Community Navigation Service in Hertfordshire involves local voluntary organisations and the NHS working together to provide a single point of access and to link people to appropriate support with a 'no wrong door' ethos. The service is delivered through a number of different projects including:

Enhanced hospital discharge support in partnership with a range of organisations providing meals on wheels, equipment, mobility aids, shopping, prescription collections and home safety checks prior to discharge.

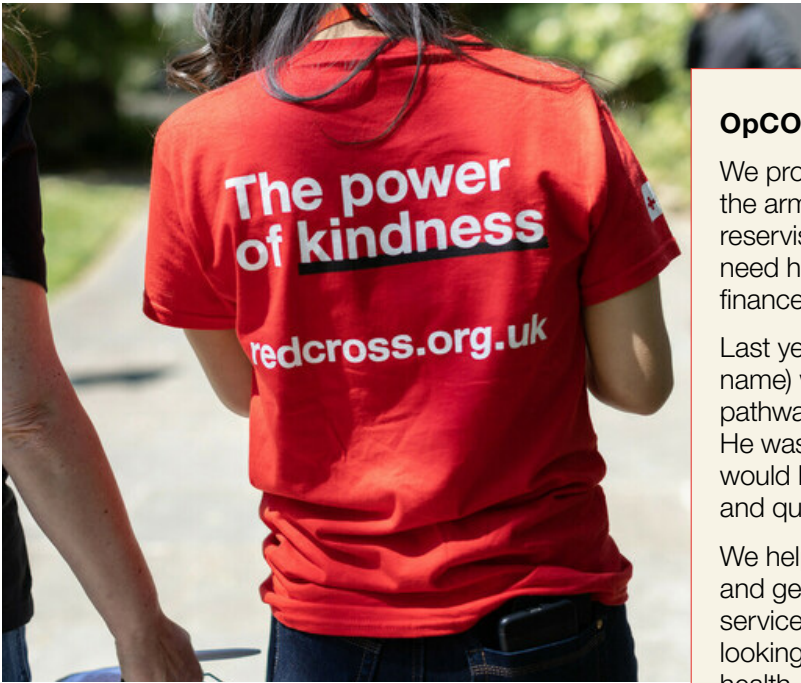
Our waiting well services, which consist of better at-home support for those enduring long waits for operations and treatments.

Our Macmillan project, which sees us working alongside Macmillan nurses to support people with cancer.

Pathway 0, which connects people over 65 on day one and day five after a hospital discharge to offer support to help them stay safe at home and reduce the risk of readmission.

Our Ukraine project, which provides information and support to help refugees from Ukraine navigate different organisations and ensure they are aware of all their options and entitlements.

Our sensory project in partnership with Hertfordshire Hearing Advisory Service and Hertfordshire County Council Sensory Board to support people with sensory needs.



OpCOMMUNITY project

We provide specialised support for members of the armed forces community – serving members, reservists, veterans, carers, and their families – who need help with housing issues, grants, debt, benefits, finance and isolation, and access to other services.

Last year, one of our referrals involved Alan (not his real name) who needed help accessing the correct NHS pathways, transport assistance and gardening support. He was anxious that, if accepted for treatment, he would be unable to get to the hospital. His symptoms and quality of life had drastically deteriorated.

We helped him attend his hospital appointments and get the information he needed about gardening services. He is now positive about the future, and looking forward to improved physical and mental health, and being able to resume his normal, everyday activities. He told the British Red Cross: “I cannot believe how quickly you worked and how caring and compassionate you are. I was worried I would never receive any help for my condition after waiting eight months. However, you managed to do it in one week. I will be forever grateful.”

Trusted assessor service, Barking, Havering and Redbridge

The trusted assessor service works closely with the NHS community treatment team to assess people who may need support to enable them to live independently. Assessors carry out a welfare check to identify needs and refer or signpost people to relevant community services and voluntary organisations. Assessors are trained to identify risks and reduce them with the use of relevant equipment and adaptations.

Last year, one of our paramedics referred Alice (not her real name) to the NHS community treatment team. They felt she would benefit from a small ‘rollator frame’ to improve her mobility. Our trusted assessor carried out a home visit with the frame and arranged for further necessary equipment to be delivered later that day. As a result, Alice’s mobility has improved, and she has regained some independence. She says: “Thank you, I really appreciate your help and for being so quick to arrange additional equipment.”



Our services: Quality data and insight

We collect feedback from people who use our services, so we can understand their experiences and outcomes.

98% of people supported through our health services had a positive experience, with 90% providing the highest rating of very good.

Figure 1 shows how our health services* are helping the majority of people to better manage their health and reduce their anxiety.

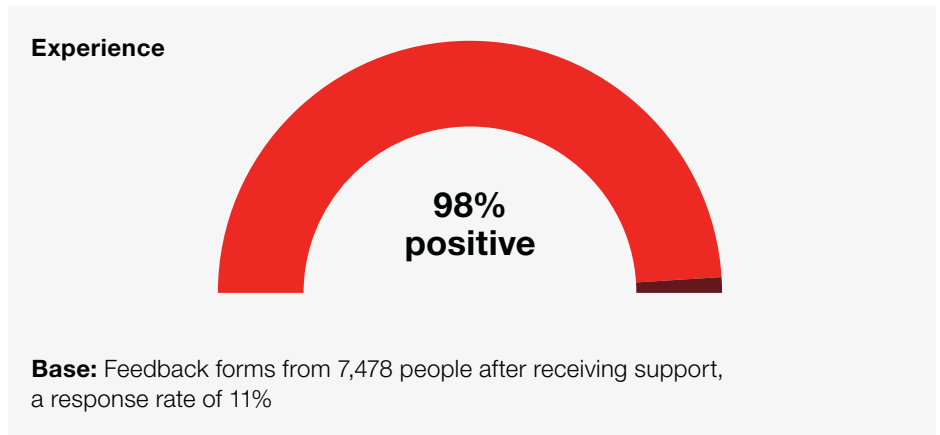
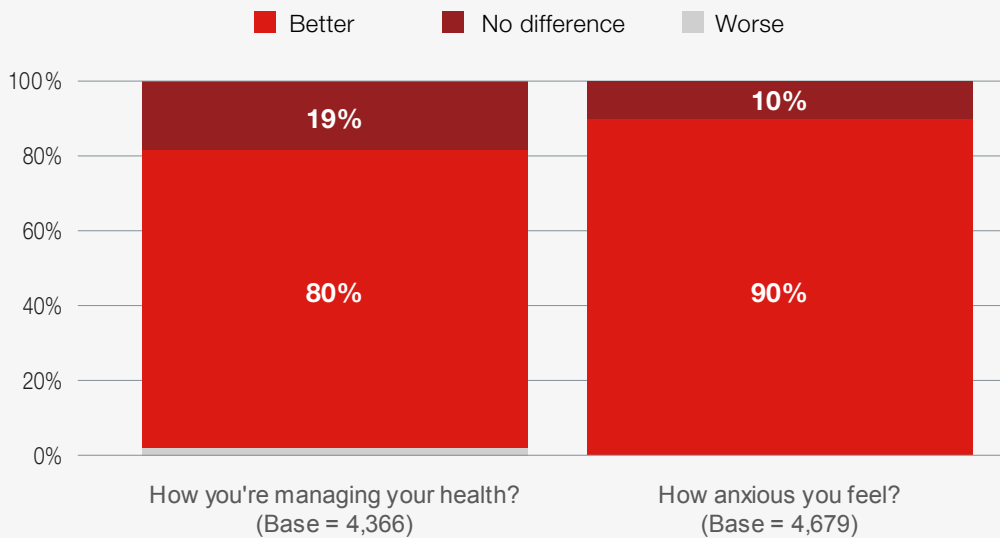
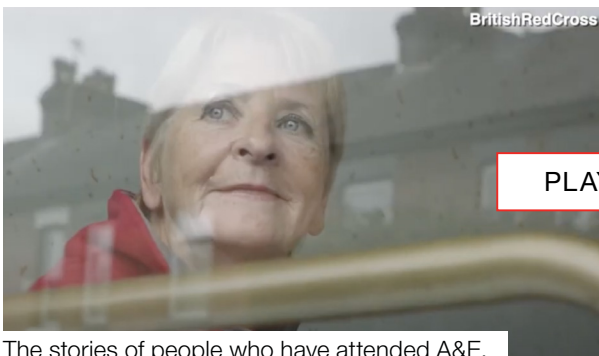


Figure 1

Has the support you received made a difference to the following...

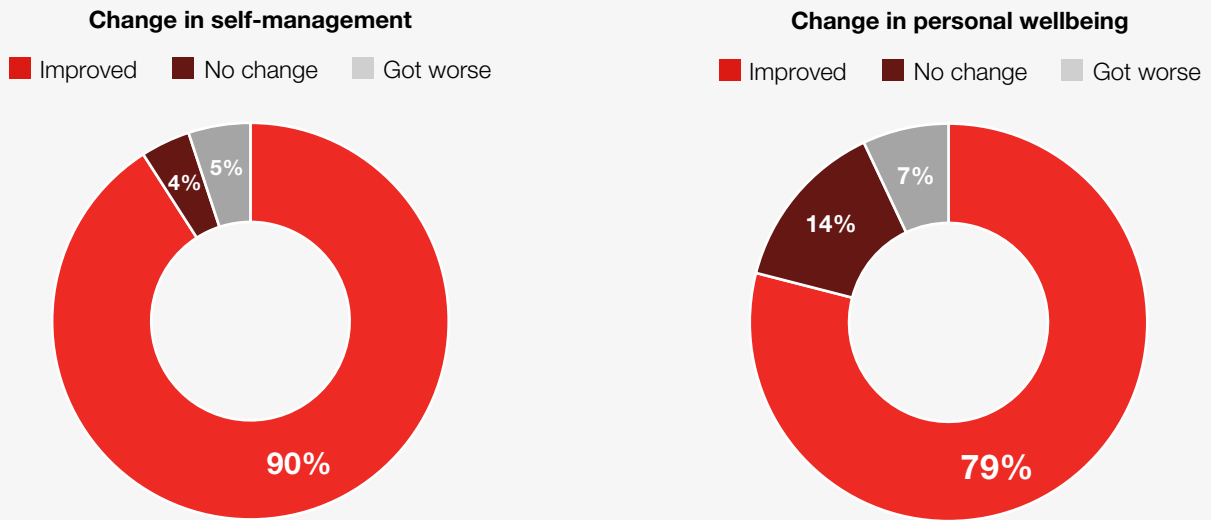


Source: Feedback forms received in 2023. Not applicable and no response removed. Excludes high-intensity use services.



During 2023, our high-intensity use services continued to measure their progress against health-related outcomes, using a validated set of questions. As seen by figure 2, these services (including one local co-ordination service) helped 90% of people supported to improve their ability to self-manage their health and 79% to improve their personal wellbeing. A social return on investment analysis also showed how we created £1,443,042 of social value in total in 2023 through these services, averaging at £4,596 per person supported.

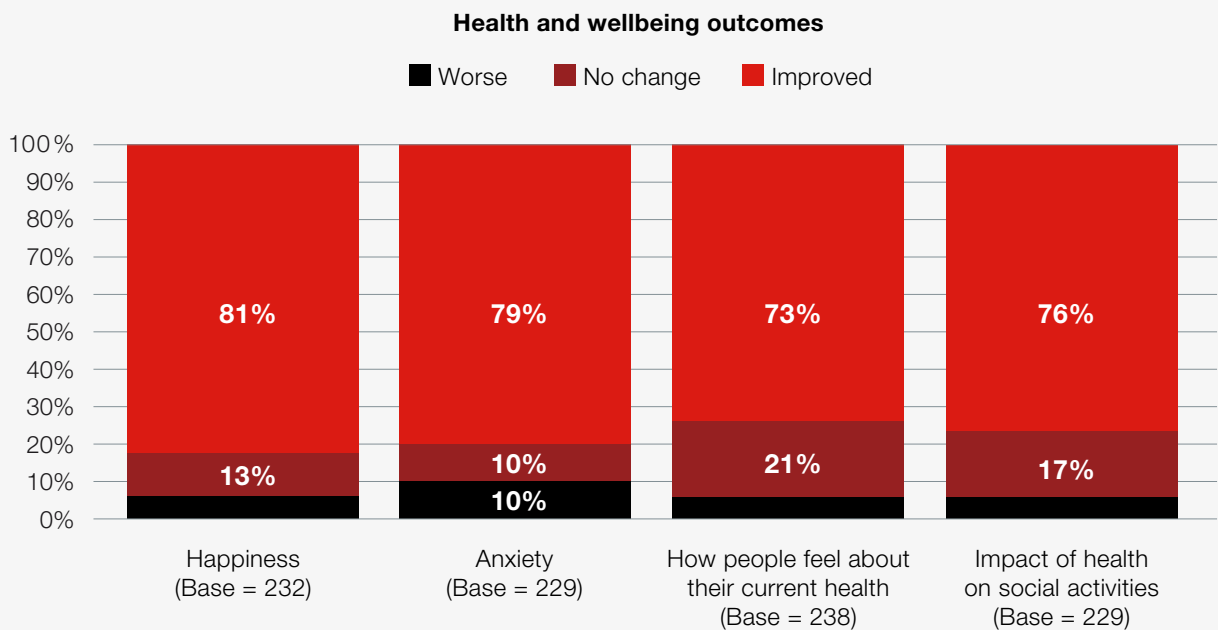
Figure 2
High-intensity use self-management outcomes



Base: 73 (self-management) and 264 (wellbeing) people with start and end of support scores.

As seen in figure 3, we helped the majority of people to feel more happy and less anxious, increased their satisfaction with their health and reduced the impact of their health on social activities.

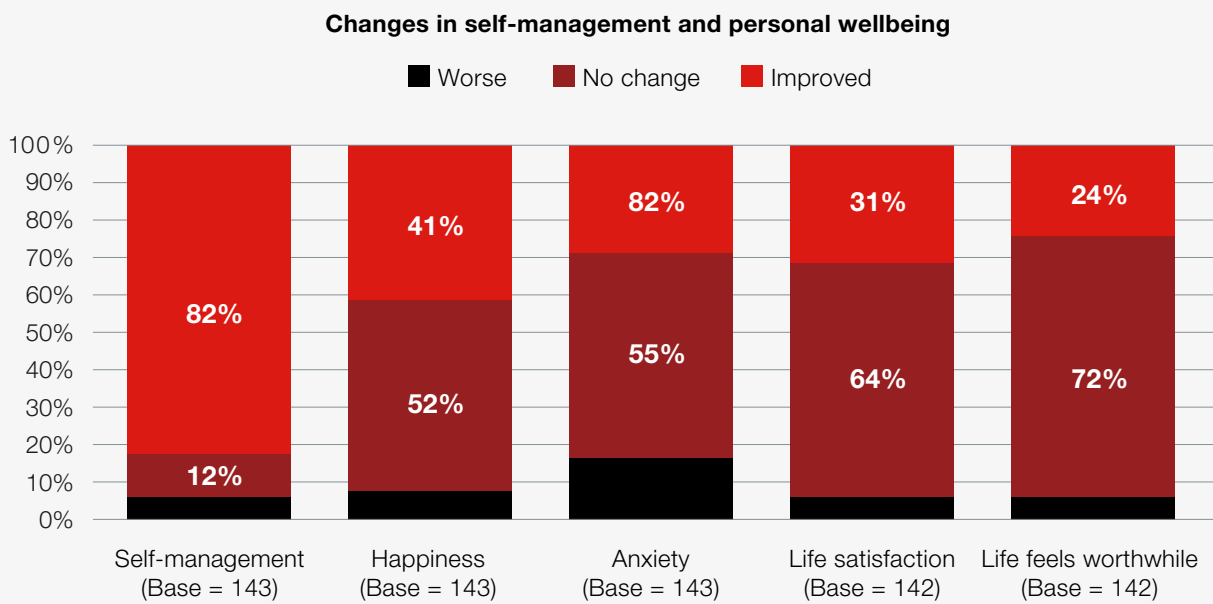
Figure 3
High-intensity use health and wellbeing outcomes



We started rolling out our new health outcomes framework across some other health services in 2023. This framework offers a standardised set of outcomes to improve care pathways and quality of care for people within the NHS, in addition to supporting our monitoring and reporting against Strategy 2030. Both our high-intensity use services and waiting well services have started implementing a sub-framework for measuring self-management outcomes to assess our strategic goal to empower people to improve their wellbeing.

For those on long-term NHS waiting lists supported by the waiting well services, we helped around 8 in 10 people improve their ability to self-manage their health and helped most people to keep their wellbeing levels stable, while around 30% to 40% of people saw an improvement in their wellbeing (see figure 4).

Figure 4
Waiting well self-management outcomes



Base: 143 people with start and end of support scores, out of 158 people whose support came to an end in 2023

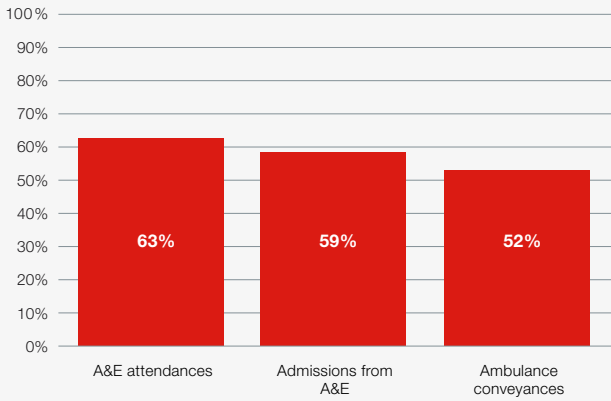
Our systems also deliver value to the health and social care system. Our assisted discharge schemes delivered £5.7 million in cost efficiencies in 2023. This came from saving an estimated 13,723 bed days, preventing 20 hospital admissions and 305 readmissions, facilitating the attendance of 137 outpatient and 4 GP appointments, and freeing up 1,508 hours of NHS staff time.

Our high-intensity use services support the health and care system in a variety of ways. Data available from one of our services supporting an A&E department in Sandwell, Birmingham shows that we're reducing ambulance conveyances, non-elective admissions and A&E attendances by 52% or more (see figure 5). Our six services in north-west London support those with high intensity use of mental health support. Our impact data for these services shows we're reducing psychiatric liaison referrals, mental health admissions and mental health bed days by more than 60% (see figure 6).



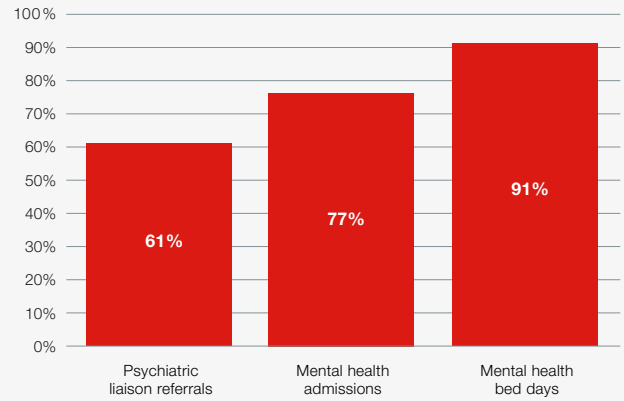
Pete, a British Red Cross patient transport driver in Kent.

Figure 5
Post-intervention reductions in Sandwell



Base: 62 people supported (94% of people supported)

Figure 6
Post-intervention reductions in North West London



Base: 187 people supported (89% of people supported)

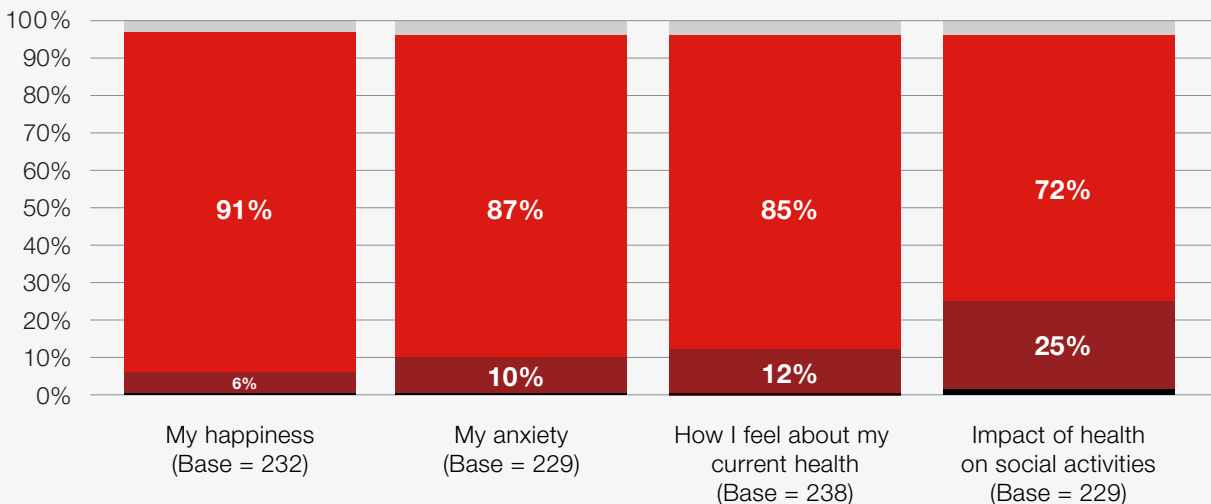
Our mobility aids service collects feedback to monitor outcomes. Figure 7 shows how we helped most people to better manage their day-to-day activities and feel better able to cope, more safe and secure, and more socially connected.



Figure 7
Mobility aids outcomes

The support I received helped...

Disagree
 Neither
 Agree
 No response

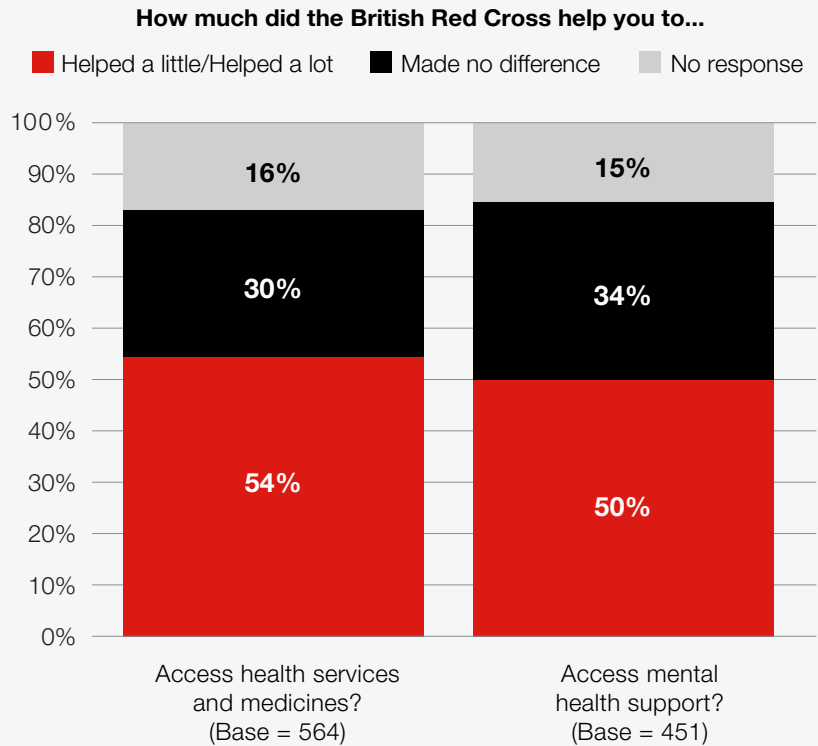


Base: Feedback forms from 5,439 people after receiving support, a response rate of 16%

Our refugee support feedback survey allows us to report on the effectiveness of our services in meeting the needs of refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants. 52% of people needed help with accessing health services and medicines and

41% needed help with accessing mental health support. Figure 8 shows how we helped around half of people with these needs.

Figure 8
Effectiveness of refugee support in addressing health needs



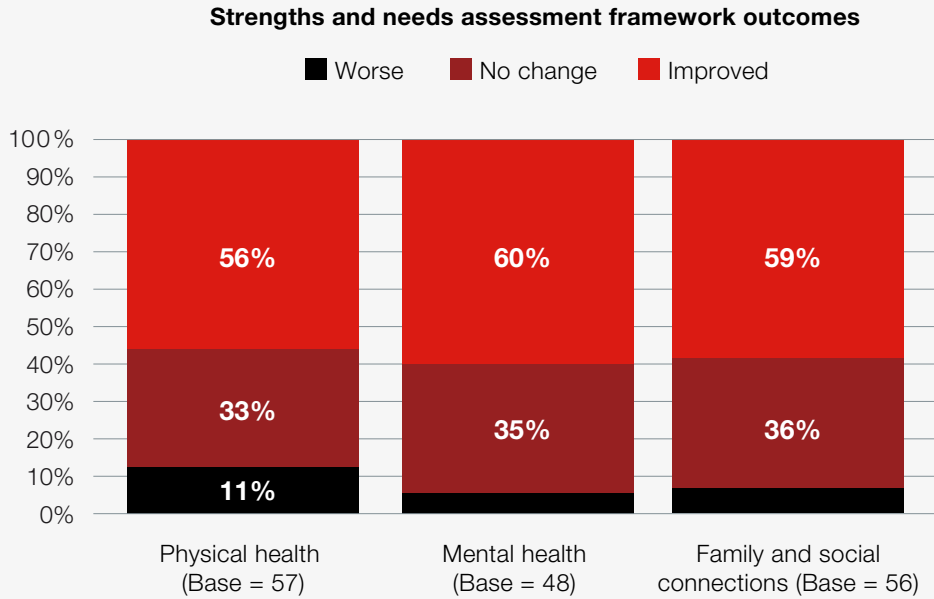
Base: 1,091 responses from people supported Oct 2022 to Sep 2023



We have been testing and piloting our strengths and needs assessment framework in the south-east of England. This framework allows us to evaluate the strengths and needs that are relevant to individual people requiring casework support and to track their progress, informing levels of support required and evidencing outcomes. As can be seen in figure 9, for those whose support came to an end in 2023, over half saw an improvement in their physical health, mental health, and social connections (where these needs were a priority for them).

Eliab, a British Red Cross Volunteer at the refugee services in Leicester talks to a refugee.

Figure 9
Strengths and needs assessment framework outcomes across south-east England refugee support services



4.5 Experience data

We continue to offer the ability for the people we support to submit their feedback across our health, mobility aids and refugee support services. Our ambulance support and crisis response teams continue to explore ways in which more feedback can be gathered in a sensitive and trauma informed way.

Service	No. of people supported	No. of feedback responses	Response rate
Health	68,307	7,478	11%
Mobility aids service	33,369	5,439	16%
Refugees, people seeking asylum and vulnerable migrants	9835*	1,091	11%

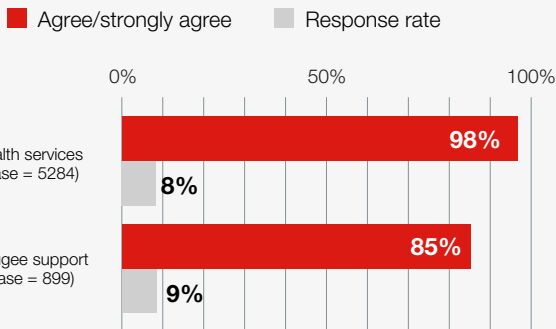
*Response rate for refugee support service is based on people with the opportunity to answer questions. Support periods are longer in these services than others, often with no fixed end date. A sampling exercise is undertaken to ensure we do not over-survey people.

According to feedback about the experience across our services where applicable, most people felt they were involved in decision-making about the support received, were treated with dignity and respect, felt safe and secure through our support, and the support met their needs (see figure 10).

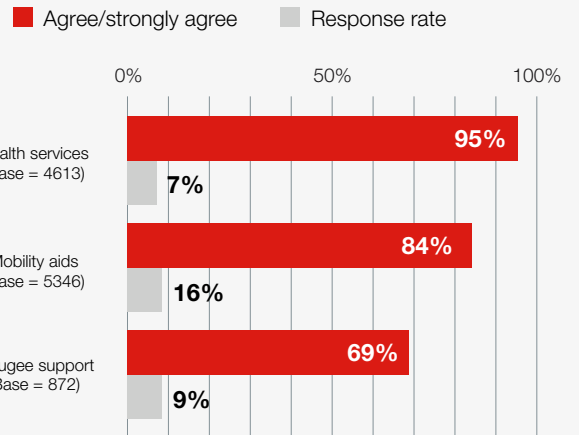


Figure 10
Experience of health, mobility aids, and refugee support services

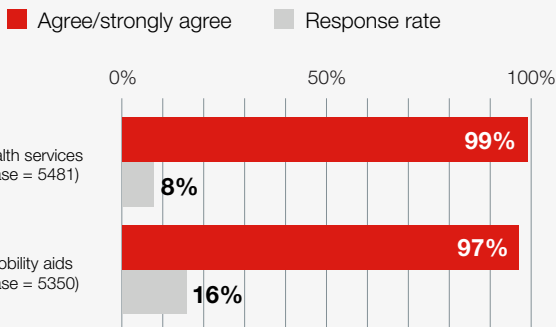
I felt safe and reassured/secure through our support



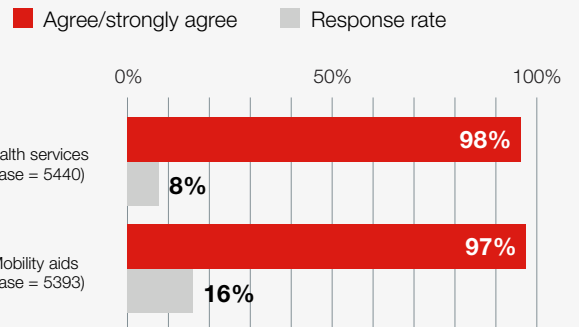
I felt involved in making decisions about support received



I felt treated with dignity and respect



The support met my needs*



*Health services were asked if they got the support needed and mobility aids services were asked whether equipment was suitable to their needs.



Christine, a British Red Cross emergency response volunteer, Scotland.

Our quality priority	What success will look like
<p>We will embed the new national Patient Safety Incident Response Framework (PSIRF) and the British Red Cross Patient Safety Incident Response Plan (PSIRP).</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage with health and care networks to help inform the Patient Safety Incident Profile. Seek approval from the Integrated Care Board (NHS Nottingham and Nottinghamshire) to sign off our PSIRP. Create a transition plan to embed the PSIRF, and associated incident-management procedures. Implement new ways of working to support the PSIRF. Set up quality improvement processes to proactively respond to areas where change is required, based on our patient safety incident profile. Monitor quality improvement actions. Monitor the changing data surrounding patient safety across the health and care system to identify any changes that are needed. Analyse the safety culture survey results to inform any improvement work.
<p>We will complete quality self-assessment, measuring ourselves against the new British Red Cross quality domains and standards.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a quality self-assessment in every service. Identify key themes and trends and develop improvement plans in response to identified gaps.
<p>We will roll out and embed the new British Red Cross outcomes framework.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start using the framework during 2024 to collect more outcomes data. Integrate the framework into day-to-day practice. Run workshops and training to support the rollout.
<p>We will embed the new British Red Cross complaints, compliments, and comments policy and processes.</p>	<p>We will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to roll out the new platform and processes. Use the training and support available to embed these processes.

Regulatory compliance statement

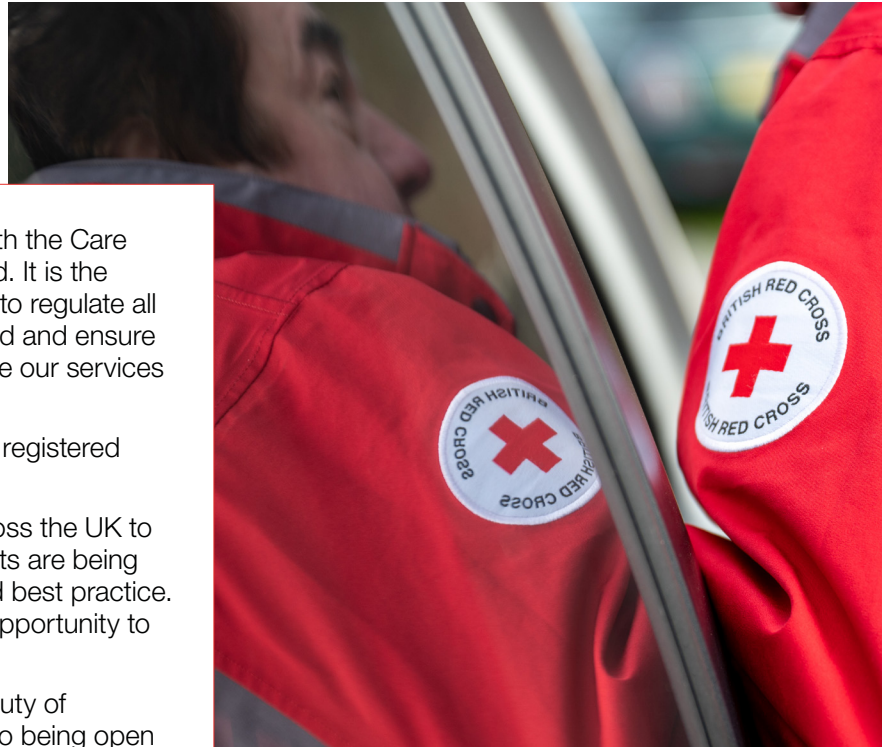
Our services in England are registered with the Care Quality Commission where this is required. It is the Care Quality Commission's responsibility to regulate all health and social care provision in England and ensure the quality and safety that people who use our services have a right to expect.

In 2023, there were no inspections of our registered services in England.

We are in contact with our regulators across the UK to ensure that all our mandatory requirements are being met. We are committed to excellence and best practice. We see inspection and regulation as an opportunity to improve the quality of our services.

As an organisation, we are clear on our Duty of Candour obligations. We are committed to being open and honest with the people we help and their families and their families when something goes wrong that appears to have caused significant harm or could lead to such harm in the future. No incidents met the legal requirement to exercise our duty of candour in 2023.

During 2023, we completed a comprehensive review of our Duty of Candour procedures and guidance to ensure they remain fit for purpose.



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Where we are

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