

Hackney Downs: Neighbourhood Insight Report 2025

Healthwatch Hackney
Author: Fabien Decodts

Introduction

This presentation summarises the [2025 Hackney Downs Insight Report](#) by [Healthwatch Hackney](#). It highlights demographics, health outcomes, service access and community assets, outlining strengths and challenges to guide services in reducing inequalities for local residents. For detailed data, analysis and links to local services, please use above link to full report.

Neighbourhoods Way of Working

Building Better Local Systems

Collaborative Approach

Residents, services, local authorities and community groups work together to improve health and well-being, placing residents at the heart of decisions so services meet local needs and priorities.

The Three Pillars

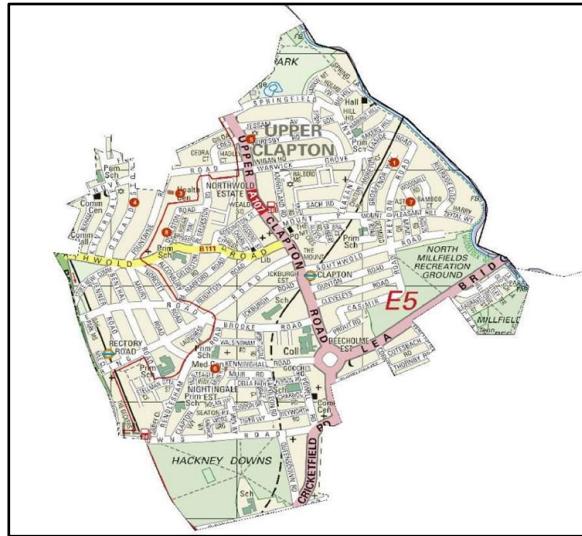
The 2025 [Neighbourhoods Staff Handbook](#) supports staff in adopting place-based approaches through the pillars:

1. Resident at the Centre
2. Working Together
3. Knowing Your Neighbourhood.



About Hackney Downs:

Demographics & Context



Population & Diversity

- 62% of residents are under 40
- 25% are under 18 (highest % of children in Hackney)
- 7% are 65+
- 74% live in rented housing; 26% own their home

Diversity

- White: 52%
- Black: 23%
- Asian: 12%
- Mixed: 6%
- Other: 7%

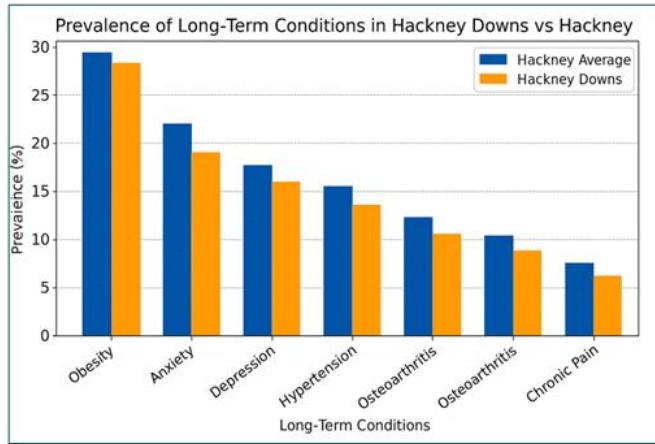
Language & Digital Exclusion

- 8% speak little or no English
- 14% never used the internet
- 31% rare or infrequent users

Housing pressures, poverty and language barriers drive health inequalities.

Key Health Outcomes & Conditions

Physical & Mental Health Landscape



Source: NHS NEL Intelligence & Insights Team (Dec 2024)

Long-Term Health Conditions (LTCs)

Long-term conditions (LTCs) are common, especially in older and more deprived groups

Most prevalent (QOF 2024–25):

- Obesity: 26.5%
- Anxiety: 13.7%
- Depression: 13.3%
- Hypertension: 12.5%
- Asthma: 9.2%
- Osteoarthritis: 8.4%
- Diabetes: 7.1%
- Chronic Pain: 4%

Rates for anxiety and depression are slightly below the Hackney average but remain significant.

High-Intensity GP Users

2,470 residents are high-intensity users:

- 27.4% have 3+ LTCs
- 55.3% live in the most deprived areas
- 6.3% are housebound

Voices from Hackney Downs: Resident Experiences

Combining Data with Lived Experience

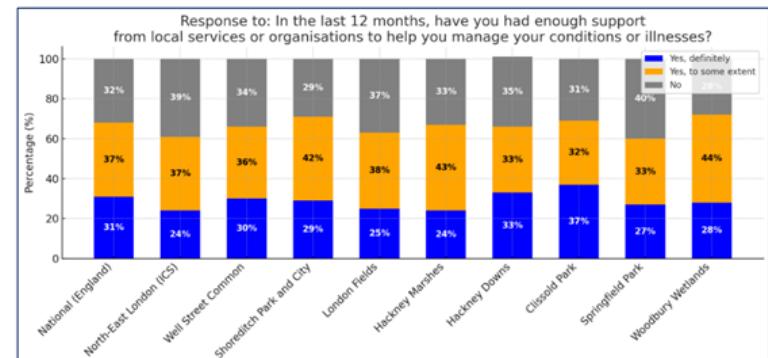
Experience with Health Services

- 77% feel confident managing their health (above local average of 71%)
- 44% have discussed “what matters most” with a healthcare professional
- 35% feel they have not received enough support.

Case Study: John's Story

John, in his 50s, lives with multiple LTCs including diabetes, arthritis and chronic pain. He describes poor continuity of care, lack of personalised support and struggles with pain management.

Through the [Together Better](#) programme, he found peer groups and community craft sessions, helping him reconnect and reduce isolation.



Source: *Support with Long-term Conditions by Neighbourhood (IPSO Survey 2024)*

Health Inequalities

Addressing Disparities

Children & Young People

- 25.3% of registered patients are under 18
- Immunisation rates below borough average and national targets
- Developmental milestones lag behind averages
- Obesity at Year 6: 25% (slightly above borough average)
- Youth unemployment: 23 per 1,000 (Vs Hackney average 17)
- 17% of children in absolute low-income households
- Rising neurodiversity needs; supported through Targeted Health Outreach service

Case Study: Vera's story

Vera, a single parent, cares for her 11-year-old son who experiences separation anxiety and social difficulties. She faces long CAMHS waits, cost-of-living barriers and limited local provision for youth activities. She stresses the need for trusted support, affordable activities and better information on services.



Health Inequalities

Addressing Disparities

Older People & Digital Exclusion

- 9.1% of residents are 65+
- Higher proportion live alone and in deprived areas
- 45% of residents are rare or infrequent internet users
- Older adults face barriers to GP booking, NHS App and online health services

"I haven't been able to get a follow-up appointment for nearly 2 months... e-consult isn't user friendly for most patients, especially when they're older."



Local digital inclusion projects at the [Marie Lloyd Centre](#), provide vital IT classes, covering online safety, NHS App use and banking.

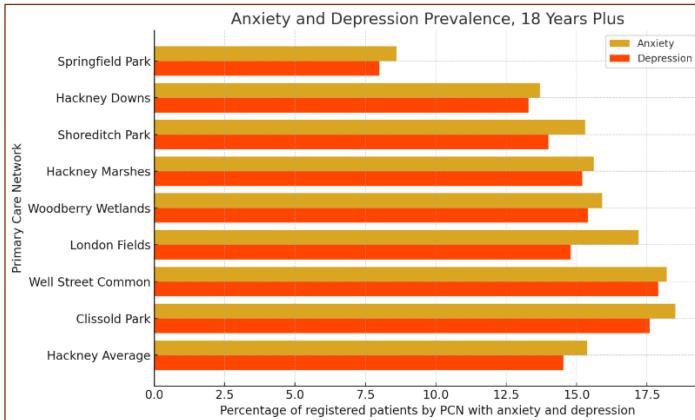
Access to Mental Health Services

High Prevalence and Demand

- Anxiety and depression rank among the top 3 LTCs
- 61 new referrals/month in 2024; caseload peaked at 298 (3rd lowest across Hackney)
- Common barriers: long waits, GP referral delays, digital exclusion, stigma

“Holding out for a referral just made my son worse.”

“I felt like I knew about everything too late – only after a crisis did I find out what services were available.”



Source: [NHS Quality and outcomes Framework \(QOF - Dec 2024\)](#)

Alternative Access Routes

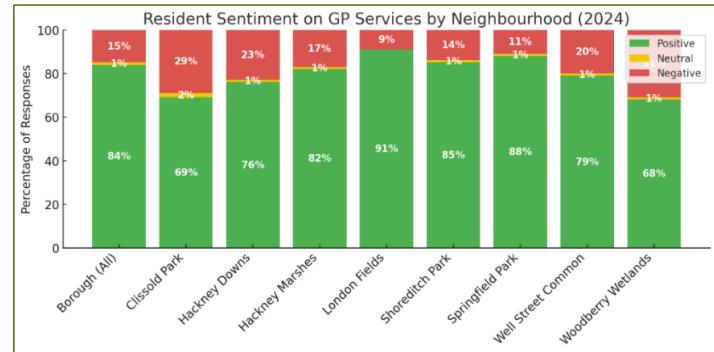
- NHS 111 ‘Option 2’ crisis line
- Hackney Talking Therapies (IAPT)
- Crisis Assessment Hub walk-in
- VCS support via Wellbeing Network and Together Better groups

Access to GP & Pharmacy Services

Primary and Community Care

GP Access

- 68% say it's easy by phone
- 65% via website
- 65% via NHS App
- 56% positive experiences overall, 42% negative
- **Barriers:** long waits, digital exclusion, confusing booking



Source: Overall Patient Sentiment: Healthwatch Hackney GP Experience Report (2024)

Pharmacy Services

4 community pharmacies in Hackney Downs

Vital for prescriptions, contraception and health advice

Barriers: shortages, closures, language issues

"I had to bring my teenage son to translate, which was embarrassing."

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)

Hackney, including , has among the country's highest STI and HIV rates, particularly in young adults. Local SRH services (online home testing, walk-in clinics, pharmacy EHC) aim to be inclusive and accessible.

Barriers for Young People

Young people face confidentiality, awareness & convenience concerns. Targeted youth clinics, digital mapping tools and participatory education aim to address SRH barriers and improve access.

Young people commented:

"I wouldn't go to my GP for stuff like that – it's too awkward, especially if your parents go there too."

"It's hard to know what's out there – no one talks about it..."

"Some places just feel off – like you're being judged...."

Support:

- **Local services:** [Health Spot Clinic](#), [Clifden Centre](#), [Positive East](#), [36 pharmacies](#) with condom/EHC provision
- [Interactive SRH map](#) launched in 2025



Neighbourhood Assets and Community Services

Voluntary & Community Sector (vcs)

Local VCS organisations address:

- Mental health
- Social isolation
- Physical activity
- Youth support
- Food insecurity
- Housing advice

Examples: [Hackney Foodbank](#), [Shelter Hackney](#), [Hackney Playbus](#), [Hackney Quest](#), [Nightingale Luncheon Club](#), [North London Muslim Community Centre](#).

Social Prescribing

Service users report significant improvements in wellbeing, confidence and social connection.

In 2024, 629 residents were referred, mainly for:

- Mental health
- Social isolation
- Financial challenges.



Challenges & Opportunities



Challenges

- High prevalence of LTCs (obesity, hypertension, diabetes)
- Long waits for mental health support
- Poor housing conditions linked to ill health
- Child obesity, low immunisation, youth unemployment
- Financial hardship and food insecurity
- Digital exclusion, especially among older people
- Language barriers limiting access

Opportunities for Improvement

- Promote NHS Talking Therapies & 111 'Option 2' crisis line
- Expand digital inclusion (Marie Lloyd Centre IT classes, GP digital champions)
- Strengthen early years and school-based interventions
- Align housing, health and advice services through Neighbourhoods model
- Build on social prescribing & community navigation
- Promote awareness tools like interactive service maps

Conclusion & Next Steps

- Young, diverse Neighbourhood with high deprivation and health inequalities.
- Poor housing, poverty and digital exclusion drive long-term health challenges.
- High rates of obesity, hypertension, diabetes and mental health needs.
- Children face low immunisation, obesity and youth unemployment; older people face isolation and digital exclusion.
- Strong community and social prescribing networks exist but awareness and access remain uneven.

