



Cost of Living Questionnaire

YHCC – 29th September 2022

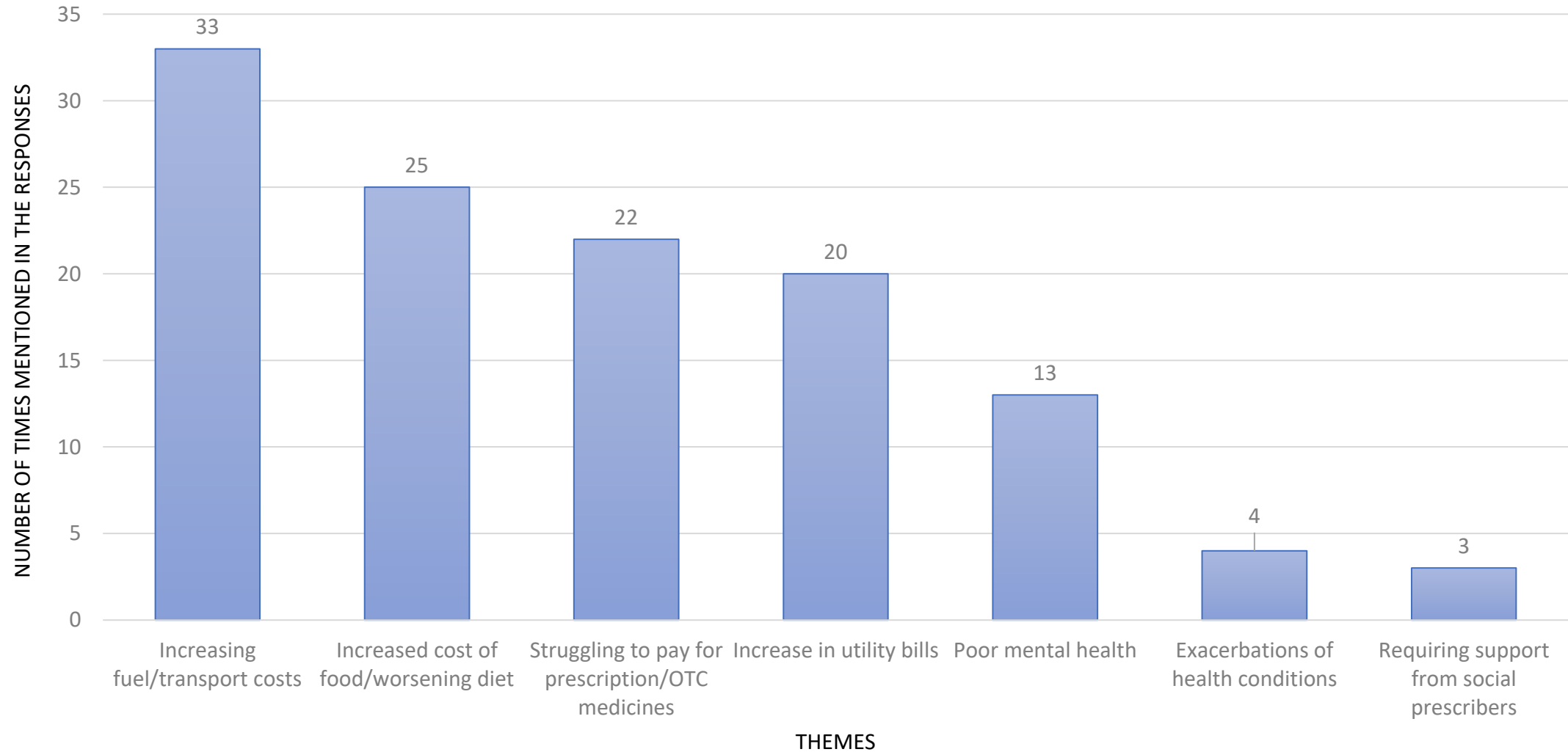


- There were 95 responses to the Cost of Living Questionnaire
- Responses were received from staff working in the following organisations:
 - Primary Care
 - Community Health Care
 - Mental Health Services
 - Hospital Care
 - Social Care
 - Community Pharmacy
 - Public Health
 - Drug and Alcohol Services
- The majority of the responses received were from people working in Primary Care

Question One:

Please share any ways that you have seen the increased cost of living impacting the users of your service.

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Fuel/Transport Costs

“My mum cannot get into any car without assistance or in any car that is not of raised height. We can no longer afford taxi prices when mum needs to get to her appointments.”

“Patients are struggling to afford to travel to other sites for appointments meaning that they are having to wait considerably longer for appointments at their local surgery.”

“Patients are thinking twice about coming to appointments if they have to spend money to travel”

Increased cost of food/worsening diet

“Patients have told me that they only eat once a day as they cannot afford to eat more than this”

“The cost of food is going up and amount of food going down, patients are struggling to get healthy food in, struggling to get 5 portions of fruit and veg in let alone 10 portions a day. They're relying on cheap and less nutritious foods, causing them to put on weight and get less nutritional intake. I can see that this is also having a direct impact on patients with Diabetes to have less controlled blood sugar levels.”

Mental Health

“I've seen more people with depression and anxiety, especially young people. The common small talk between me and my patients used to be the weather, or holidays they were looking forward to. Now most of my patients talk about their worry about heating over winter, or the choice between putting the heating on or being able to afford food”

“There is a massive increase in urgent mental health requests through our online triage tool from our patients and their loved ones (e.g., stress and depression)”

Changes in Prescriptions

“People are choosing which prescription medications to take away as they can't afford them all. Also, cutting tablets in half to last longer (so having half the dose prescribed)”

“People cannot afford over the counter meds, so are asking for these on prescription if already exempt from payment.”

“Pts requesting large quantities of medication on script so that they only have to request every 2-3 months rather than monthly”

Other ways service users are being affected:

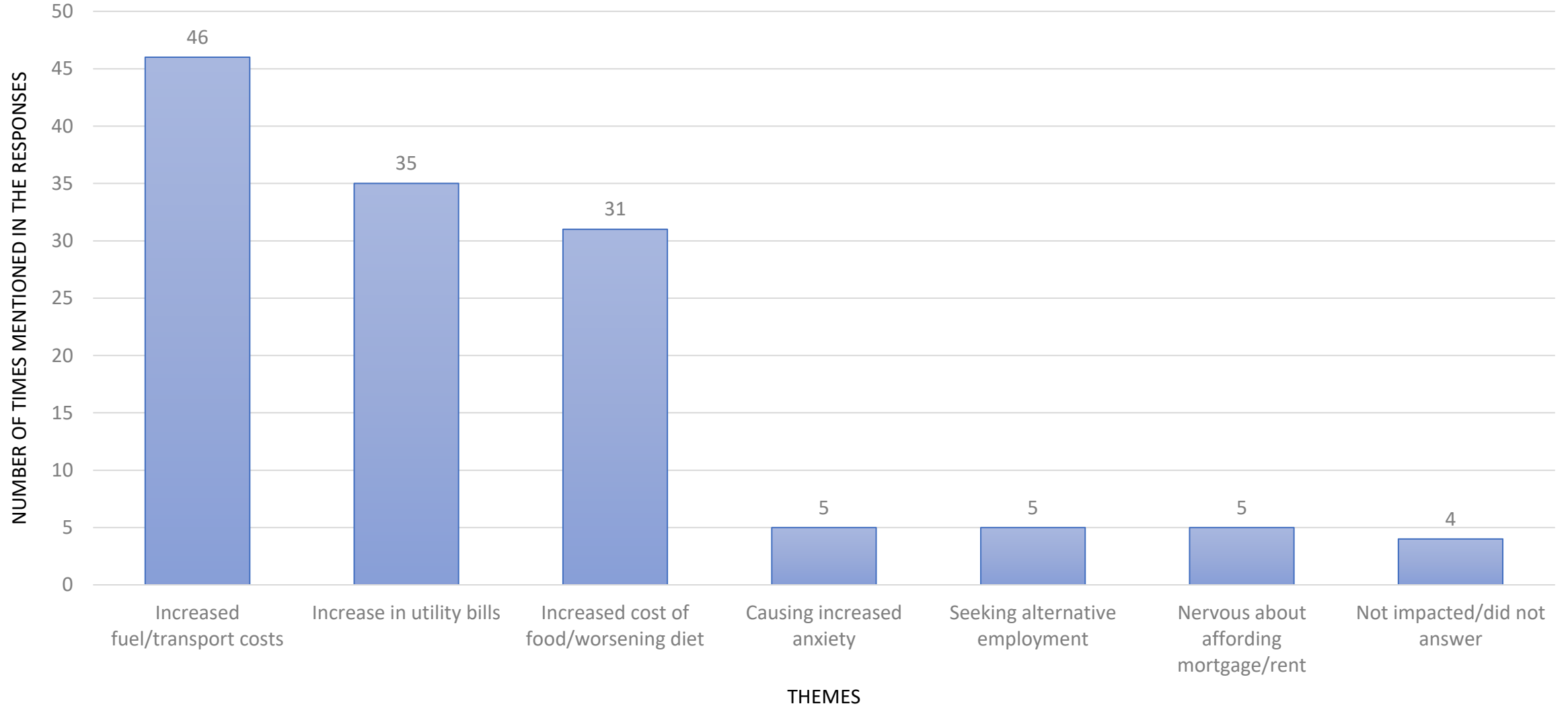
“I work in admin, I can see that patients want to be referred to Community dentists as they cannot find an NHS dentist and cannot afford to go private.”

“I have seen more women advertising unprotected sex on adult sites. The cost of living is forcing women to offer services that guarantee clients; which are more dangerous.”

Question Two:

Please share any ways that the increased cost of living is directly impacting you.

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Staff said...

“My mortgage has risen, meaning I not only wanted to increase my work hours.. but in the end I needed to, to cover my home and family.”

“Increased fuel prices mean I limit going to see elderly family in person as it is a 40 min drive. I cannot afford school uniforms and am worried about the heating this winter.”

“I am struggling to afford petrol and thinking about resigning and working closer to home.”

“Travel to work and general living cost like energy are causing me massive anxiety. I may have to look for work outside of NHS to make ends meet”

“I have to skip meals so I can feed my kids. Some days I have struggled to put fuel in my car to get to work and do my job.”

“I am reluctant to put the heating on in my home, resulting in occasionally wearing damp clothes as they don't dry properly. I have noticed I'm struggling to afford healthy foods too, and that I'm not able to afford the things which used to have a positive impact on my health and mental well being.”

“I travel to work by car, petrol prices make me feel miserable. I live in a village so the option to use a bus service doesn't work”

“I am concerned that I will have to look for another job that pays more, as I will struggle to pay my utility bills over the winter if they continue to increase in price.”

“Everything is rising except wages, £10ph does not make ends meet. I am struggling and now walking to work despite needing surgery. Some days I only eat one meal a day.”

“I keep my lighting and heating off all day and have started using candles to light at night, I can only afford two meals a day, I try not to eat breakfast now. I live 1.5 hours walk away but cant afford to get the bus everyday.”

Question Three:

What could the NHS and the Council do together to help you manage the cost of living crisis?

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Of the 95 responses received, 47 (49.5%) responses suggested an increase in wages.

Some of the other responses received were:

- Comprehensive information in one place about the help and support available.
- Lowering the cost of rent for people living in council properties
- Collaboration on more subsidised transport
- Sharing of data on vulnerable citizens/patients between organisations
- Free on street parking for NHS staff
- Free school meals for kids after KS1
- Providing a hot meal for staff while they are on duty, for some staff it could be their main meal of the day
- Increase in mileage expenses to cover the increasing cost of fuel
- Using volunteer teams to support vulnerable patients to pick up prescriptions/attending appointments
- Releasing land for allotments so that people can grow their own food
- NHS card to qualify staff for discounts rather than having to pay for a Blue Light Card
- Free/discounted gym memberships to improve mental and physical wellbeing