



# Quick Poll Survey:

---

Your views about  
GP Services 2017



## Introduction

**With the ongoing pressure on the NHS and GP's we wanted to understand patient perspective regarding issues surrounding being seen by a Nurse instead of a GP and the support is available for Carers in GP practices.**

We framed our questions around three areas in order to gather patient perspectives:

1. Online services for registered patients
2. Referrals for support and treatment
3. Support for Carers

The findings presented in this report reflect the feedback we received.

## Our Aim

**The aim of the Quick Poll Survey is to allow local people to share their opinions about and experiences of health and social care services across Leicestershire.**

## Methodology

**The survey was promoted during August and September 2017 via our newsletters, E-news, website and social media channels. We also made the survey available face-to-face at general engagement events.**

In total, we received 240 responses to the survey. However, not all respondents answered all the questions. Additionally, some questions allowed individuals to select more than one option. In order to provide clarity, we have provided a number of how many respondents answered each question.



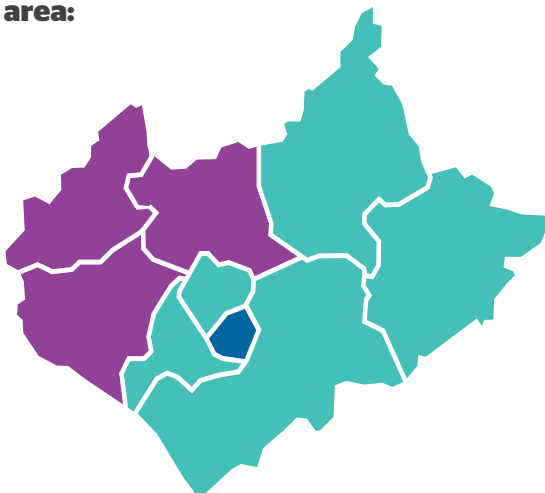


# Breakdown by Clinical Commissioning Group area

We asked respondents to tell us where they lived in Leicestershire.

230 respondents answered this question and we initially broke down the responses by CCG area. However, there were no significant differences between CCG areas and we therefore combined the analyses. The findings presented are across all areas.

## Number of respondents from each CCG area:



- 102 West Leicestershire CCG
- 88 East Leicestershire & Rutland CCG
- 38 Leicester City CCG
- 2 Out of area

 230

222 respondents provided us with the name of their GP practice and qualitative feedback. There were some practices that were mentioned more than others. The following GP practices were mentioned more than 5 times:

### West Leicestershire CCG

- Woodbrook Medical Practice
- Bridge Street Medical Centre
- Barrow Health Centre
- Pinfold Gate Surgery

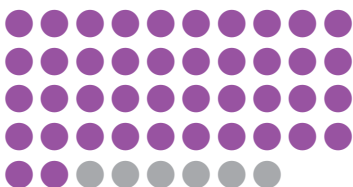
### East Leicestershire CCG

- Latham House Medical Practice
- Two Steeples Medical Centre
- Market Harborough Medical Centre

Overall, we received feedback on 91 GP practices across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland.

 91 GP practices

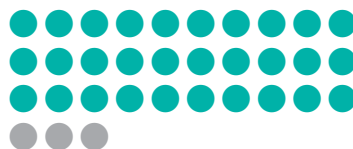
### West Leicestershire CCG



42/48

Feedback heard from GP practices in the WLCCG area

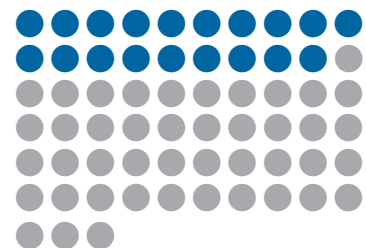
### East Leicestershire CCG



30/33

Feedback heard from GP practices in the ELCCG area

### Leicester CCG



19/63

Feedback heard from GP practices in the LCCCG area



## Online Services

We asked respondents to tell us if they were aware that their GP surgery offered online services and if they had used the services how did they find it. We also wanted to know whether respondents would be happy to see a Specialist Nurse instead of a GP.

### Does your GP offer the following options for booking appointments?

Nearly all (237) respondents answered this question and were allowed to select more than one option.

 237

The majority of respondents reported that their GP surgery offers same day appointments (153) and emergency appointments (152). A total of 74 respondents reported that their surgery offers stay-and-wait appointments. A few respondents were not aware of the full range of options available at their practice.

“...You have to ring at 8am - usually cannot get through and people start to queue from 7:30am so there is no chance for working people or mothers”

(Female, 45-54, Harborough)

“Appointments always fill up, very lucky to get in at all”

(Female, 65-74, Harborough)

### Are you aware that your GP practice offers an online booking service for all registered patients?

239 respondents answered this question. 197 respondents said that they were aware that their GP practice offers an online booking service for registered patients. However, nearly a quarter (42) reported that they were not aware of this being provided at their practice.

 239

“Difficult to register though”

(Female, 45-54, North West Leicestershire)

### Have you used the online service for any of the following?

100 respondents answered this question and were able to select all options that applied.

 100

Of the respondents who were aware that their GP practice offered an online booking service, 77 respondents said they had used the online service to book a GP appointment, 64 respondents had ordered a repeat prescription and 23 had accessed their GP records.

### How did you find the process?

Nearly half (115) of the overall number of respondents answered this question.

 115

The majority (67) of respondents who have used online services reported that they found the process easy. Those who reported that they found it difficult did so because they experienced login failure or the website did not work properly. Others said there was a lack of online appointments and they could not find their GP records.

“I use it so infrequently, I forget my password and therefore tend to end up phoning for an appointment”

(Female, 55-64, Harborough)

“Tried to book an appointment but couldn't, all appointments were booked. I feel as though I am in a competition to try and get an appointment... I feel like having my own pot of money (not insurance) to use for myself and my family and relatives because I do not get anything in return”

(Female, 45-54, Harborough)



“The difficult part is being given a PIN that works on a time delay meant mine ‘timed out’ on three occasions, but now I have access I use it rather than telephone bookings”

(Female, 35-44, Charnwood)

“I am very IT savvy but locating my records was not an obvious process at all. The website is not intuitive and is skewed mainly towards making an appointment”

(Female, 55-64, Hinckley & Bosworth)

## Based on your symptoms, if offered the option to see a specialist nurse instead of a GP, would you mind?

232 respondents answered this question.

 232

The majority (185) of respondents reported that if offered the option to see a specialist nurse instead of a GP, they would not mind. However, 47 of respondents said that they would mind and preferred to be seen by a GP.

“Having met a specialist nurse, I would prefer to be a regular patient with them”

(Female, 75-84, Oadby & Wigston)

“As long as I am treated properly”

(Male, 35-44 Leicester City)

“I find the nurses very knowledgeable and appointments tend to be more on time”

(Female, 75-84, Oadby & Wigston)

“As long as the process is quick”

(Male, Oadby & Wigston)

“My experience with a specialist nurse has not been good. I was treated like a silly patient”

(Female, 75-84, Oadby & Wigston)

“I have found this to be very useful and the nurse will pass you on to a doctor if it’s necessary”

(Female, 85 or over, Melton)

“I once saw a nurse that just told me to take paracetamol, 4 weeks later after seeing a GP, they sent me to the hospital for an x-ray which showed a fracture to my foot”

(Female, 75-84, Hinckley & Bosworth)

“Most of my long-term conditions are reviewed by specialist nurses at my practice”

(Female, 35-44, Charnwood)

## What have we learnt about online GP services?

Majority of the respondents reported that they were aware that their GP practice offers an online booking service for registered patients and most of them had used the service to book an appointment or order a repeat prescription. Most of the respondents found the process easy and straight forward, however some experienced login failure and at times the website would not work properly. All but a small minority of respondents said they would not mind seeing a Specialist Nurse instead of a GP.



# Referrals

We asked respondents to tell us about any referrals they may have had from their GP and whether the referral went to plan or if they experienced any difficulties.

## Has your GP ever referred you to a voluntary or community organisation to get support? For example, a mental health support group, a day centre or a walking group?

237 respondents answered this question.



The overwhelming majority had never been referred to a voluntary or community organisation by their GP in order to get support; this could however be because the respondent did not need a referral. Only 35 respondents said that their GP had referred them for support.

“I was referred to the local Bipolar group and now I help to run the group”

(Female, 65-74, Harborough)

“My GP advised me to self-refer to a voluntary and community sector service and I have been waiting for 5 weeks to get help with my anxiety and depression.””

(Male, 55-64, Charnwood)

“I was referred to Talking Therapies and from there to Mindfulness sessions both of which I found very supportive and helpful”

(Female, 55-64, Charnwood)

“GP directed me to self-refer to bridge housing”

(Female, 35-44, Charnwood)

## Has your GP ever referred you to another service? For example, a foot specialist or physio.

238 respondents answered this question.



137 respondents said that their GP has referred them to other services such as a foot specialist (Podiatry) or Physiotherapy. 101 respondents said that they have not been referred to any services by their GP. These patients may not have needed a referral.

## Did the referral go as planned?

134 respondents answered this question.



Of those individuals who said that they had been referred to services via their GP, 108 respondents said the referral went to plan and 26 said that it did not.

“Had to wait months for a referral, then the organisation rang to tell me they would make an appointment...still waiting”

(Female, 35-44, Leicester City)

“Appointment was rearranged, I was seen on time when I attended and then completely fobbed off”

(Female, 45-54, Blaby)

“Not always. Sometimes self-referrals encouraged and then service not available. Other times physio only available for 4 x 20 minutes sessions”

(Female, 65-74, Oadby & Wigston)

“Yes, physio service went as planned”

(Male, 65-74, Hinckley & Bosworth)





“I was just given a telephone number and told to contact. the service provider was based outside of Leicestershire”

(Female, 25-34, Oadby & Wigston)

“Excellent experience of physiotherapist following broken humerus”

(Female, 55-64, Oadby & Wigston)

“Waited 6 weeks for physio appointment, ended up going private”

(Female, 45-54, Charnwood)

“Very long delay, of almost a year, for talking therapy in the first instance. A second referral, a few years later, was much quicker, about one month”

(Female, 45-54, Charnwood)

## What have we learnt about GP referrals?

A small minority of respondents said they had been referred to a voluntary or community organisation such as a mental health support group, a day centre or a walking group by their GP, in order to get support. In comparison however, over half of the respondents said they had been referred to services such as podiatry or physiotherapy by their GP. Of those who had been referred, most of them said their referral went to plan. However, many respondents reported that the waits for treatment, etc. were very long.





# Carers

We asked respondents to tell us if they were a Carer. We also wanted to know whether any Carer’s had informed their GP of their caring role, had accessed any useful information and whether they were currently accessing any support for being a Carer.

## Are you a Carer?

A total of 235 respondents answered this question, out of which 46 identified themselves as a Carer.



“At age 96, I must be one of the oldest carers around. However, I do care for my 64-year-old son who has suffered 2 strokes and is paralysed on the left side. He is also been a diabetic for 55 years. I do not claim carers allowance. Carrying on gets more difficult as my age increases. He refuses to go into more suitable care and I promised my wife who passed away 20 years that I would look after him, no matter how hard it got”

(Male, 85 or over, Harborough)

“I am a Carer for my husband who is disabled. He has had 7 strokes and has a pacemaker”

(Female, 75-84, Oadby & Wigston)

## Have you made your GP aware that you are a Carer?

44 respondents answered this question.



Of those who identified themselves as a Carer; 29 respondents said that they have made their GP aware that they are a Carer. 15 have not notified their GP.

## Have you been able to access useful information about support for carers from your GP?

Only 16 respondents from the 42 that answered said that they had been able to access useful information about support for carers from their GP. 26 respondents said they had not. One of the respondents said that she was not offered any support from her GP, even though they were aware she was a Carer.



It is concerning that a majority of Carers who responded to this survey have not been able to access useful information about support from their GP.

“No support offered”  
(Female, Oadby & Wigston)

“I was a Carer, firstly for my father, then mother and finally my uncle; my health did suffer during those times but I didn’t receive any particular help from my surgery”  
(Female, 65-74, Hinckley & Bosworth)

## Do you currently access any support for being a Carer?

A very small minority (6) of respondents said that they were currently accessing support for being a Carer. The majority (39) said that they were not accessing any support.



“Yes, and we learn from each other’s experiences. It took me a while to locate the groups; I feel information could be handed out at GP surgeries and someone could get support quicker”  
(Female, 65-74, Charnwood)





## Carers Demographics

The majority of Carers who completed the survey were between the ages of 45-74, female and lived in Charnwood. The survey respondents reflect the age and gender profile of Healthwatch Leicestershire membership, with more members from the Charnwood area.

### Age profile of Carers

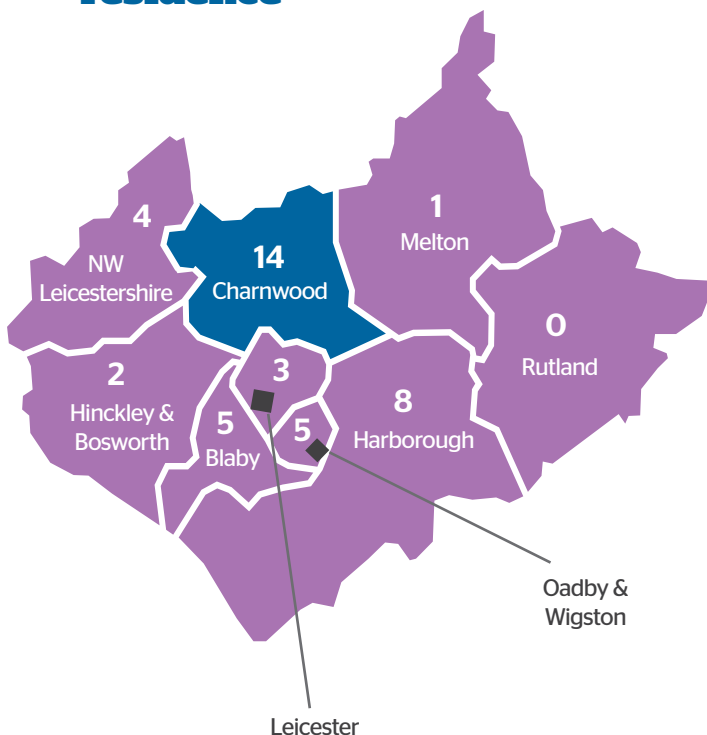
18-24	2	
25-34	1	
35-44	3	
45-54	11	
55-64	6	
65-74	11	
75-84	5	
85 or over	4	

### Gender profile of Carers



1 person stated they prefer not to say  
1 person skipped this question

### Carers breakdown by area of residence



### What have we learnt about support for Carers?

A fifth of respondents identified themselves as a Carer and just over half of those respondents said they have made their GP aware of their caring role. The remainder, however, had not notified their GP.

Less than half of the Carers said they had been able to access useful information about support for Carers from their GP, the majority said they had not had any support. A very small minority of Carers said that they were accessing support for being a Carer. The majority were not.

Notwithstanding the sample size, we are concerned that the majority of Carers who responded to our survey were not accessing information about support or support to help with their caring role.



“Horrendous to get an appointment. You have to ring on the day, then wait for a phone call, then possibly see the doctor. It can take considerable time to get through as the phone is always engaged, and having to constantly redial. Receptionist’s often quite rude and abrupt. Almost impossible to see doctor if illness starts in pm (despite being a toddler with asthma like issues). Doctors are great when you finally speak to them, although this can be extremely difficult for the hard of hearing. Overall doctors lovely but system appalling”

- Female, 25-34, North West Leicestershire



# Satisfaction with GP Practice

**We asked respondents to tell us how satisfied they were with their GP practice. Respondents were also allowed to give qualitative feedback regarding their surgery.**

233 respondents answered this question. We wanted to know how satisfied respondents are with their GP practices. 42 respondents said that they were not at all satisfied or slightly satisfied. Nearly a quarter said that they were moderately satisfied with their GP surgery. The majority, 134 respondents, said that they were very or extremely satisfied with their surgery.

**“The reception staff at my surgery are rude and unhelpful”**

Female, 35-44,

**“I have found them to be poor in offering support; they have not offered any support to me or any physical health checks for my husband, which they are supposed to do if someone has a diagnosis of dementia”**

Female, 55-64, Charnwood

**“My doctor is never available. In the past, the hospitals have been more helpful. I do think that with long term conditions it would be better to see the same doctor”**

Female, 85 or over, Blaby

**“Nice new building, receptionists are friendly and helpful. Can book online to ensure you see the same GP if you’re going back for the same reason”**

Female, 45-54, Oadby & Wigston

**“Excellent online booking service. Much quicker than calling. Need to be able to book nurse appointments online. Insufficient same day or week appointments”**

Female, 45-54, Hinckley & Bosworth

**“Very difficult to get an appointment, even if it’s an emergency. Surgery often changes how to book/when to book appointments. My daughter recently saw a specialist nurse who gave her medication. She finally saw a Doctor 3 weeks later as medication was having no effect. Doctor immediately quadrupled the dose and said the previous dose was little more than a placebo. 3 weeks of pain could have been prevented. Surgery has our email addresses but does not update us with any changes. Tried to change surgeries, but no luck.”**

Female, 55-64, Blaby

**“My GP is wonderful. He never fails to fully explain signs and symptoms that we may have as an elderly person. Other services fall short of this. Being over 80 years of age, hospitals make you feel like a waste of space.”**

Female, 75-84, Oadby & Wigston

**“Rarely any appointments available to book. Attempt to book appointment and am advised that no pre-bookable appointments available at all for any date in the future. Online service rarely has appointments to book. Finally, able to book an appointment to see a doctor in 5 weeks’ time, to then be contacted by the surgery stating that it needed to be changed, a week before the appointment.”**

Female, 65-74, Charnwood

**“Nurse triage appointments are great”**

Female, 25-34, Blaby

**“Have found the service useful at times. Doctors look at the patient rather than the computer”**

Female, 25-34, Blaby



# Experiences of using services relating to GP services

**We provided respondents with an opportunity to give any additional feedback regarding GP services and anything else they wanted to share. We received a range of positive and negative comments from respondents.**

“Would appreciate it if I could access online services without having to register via reception; there is always a long que and I work full time”

Female, 45-54, Oadby & Wigston

“Appointments sometimes difficult to get. Complex medical history, so difficult to get holistic support”

Female, Oadby & Wigston

“A little unsettled that we now have to take a repeat prescription form into the surgery instead of just going to our local Pharmacy, who used to be able to reorder online for us. Both of us are pensioners and have monthly repeat prescriptions. Now we have to take the form to the doctors and it takes two days for the form to be received and picked up from the Pharmacy”

Male, 75-84, Oadby & Wigston

“I rarely visit; it's too difficult to get an appointment that fits with my work schedule. I've not visited for over two and a half years”

Male, 55-64, North West Leicestershire

“I should like to emphasise the excellent service given at Woodbrook Medical Centre. A group of doctors and supporting staff trained to give care to patients.”

Male, 65-74, Charnwood

“Waiting a long time to get an appointment on the phone, only to find that, when you get through, they have all gone. You then have to try again... Everyone usually has to ring at least 3 times and spend a long time on the phone to get an appointment. Only being allowed 10 minutes isn't always long enough... important symptoms are missed because you're rushed, even if you have sat and waited 40 minutes to see the doctor.”

Female, 65-79, Harborough

“Our medical practice is one of the best in North West Leicestershire and my doctor has seen me and my husband for over 8 years. She is thorough, professional and easy to talk with. She tells me it as it is, in the most diplomatic way.”

Female, 55-64, North West Leicestershire

“It's fastest finger first every time for appointment, starting at 8am. One doctor wants you out asap, and he's new! Another has no bedside manner whatsoever and the new partner has changed very much, asks what can they can do for you today! That's if you've been down few times before with same complaint... But that doctor is still far better than the other two!”

Female, 55-64, North West Leicestershire

“When ringing for blood test results, I was told by the receptionist that the doctor wanted to see me. I asked for an appointment to see that particular doctor and was told that I would need to ring in the morning at 8am and also no guarantee that I would get the doctor I wanted. I was told that I could not book a pre-bookable appointment which I thought was unacceptable as it was the doctor who requested to see me!...”

Female, 65-74, Hinckley & Bosworth



# Recommendations

**We heard from 240 respondents living across the City and County of Leicestershire. Based on the experiences that they shared with us, and from our analysis, we would like to suggest that service providers and commissioners, in particular, consider the following:**

- 1.** More promotion of online GP services especially how to book appointments.
- 2.** Consider providing more appointments with a health care professionals as all but a small minority of respondents said they would not mind seeing a Specialist Nurse instead of a GP.
- 3.** When making referrals it would be helpful to provide information on expected waiting times to manage patient expectations and support the patient on what to do if it takes longer.
- 4.** Publicise and make information about support for Carers more accessible in GP practices and encourage patients to inform their GP if they are a Carer.







# Demographics

233  
responses

## Age

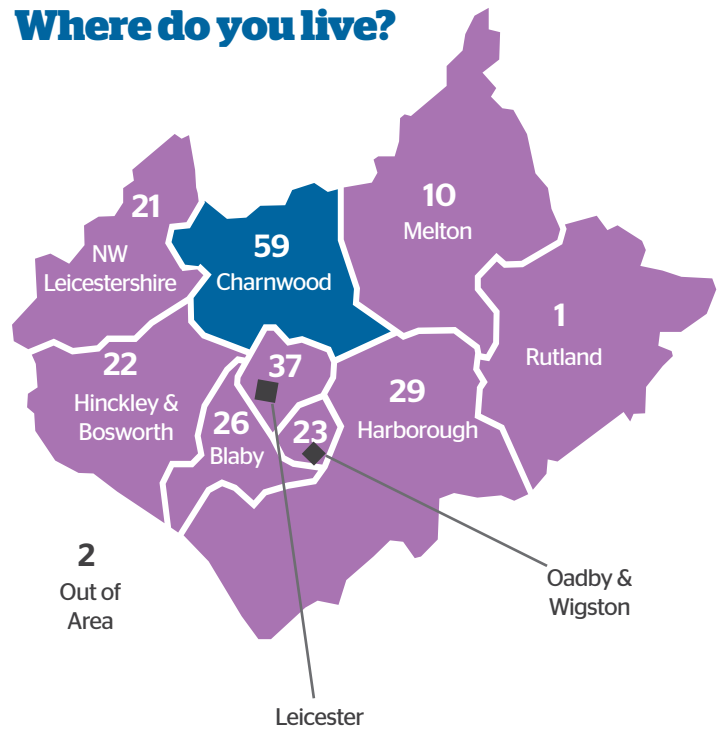
18-24	3	
25-34	25	
35-44	25	
45-54	34	
55-64	44	
65-74	56	
75-84	29	
85 or over	10	

## Gender



1 person stated they prefer not to say  
1 person skipped this question

## Where do you live?



## Ethnicity

English/ Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/ British	180
Irish	1
Other White Background	3
White & Black Caribbean	1
Indian	31
Bangladeshi	1
Other Asian Background	3
Other Black/ African/ Caribbean Background	1
Prefer not to say	5



Whenever you need to book an appointment the telephone lines are heavily engaged and you wait for a long period of time and eventually when you get through there are no appointments left. So, you try again the next day. It is very frustrating and annoying. I am not happy about it. I have been thinking about changing my GP. I often wonder what other GP's are like.

- **Female, 65-74, Leicester City**

# Contact us

## Healthwatch Leicestershire

Voluntary Action LeicesterShire  
9 Newarke Street,  
Leicester, LE1 5SN

**0116 2574 999**

[info@healthwatchleics.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchleics.co.uk)

[www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk](http://www.healthwatchleicestershire.co.uk)

November 2017