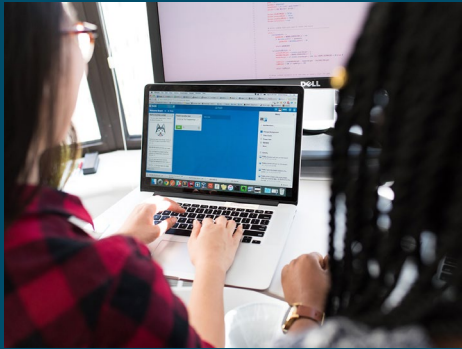


Survey of GP Websites in Central Bedfordshire

May 2020

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Background



Background

The Chair of Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire, Dave Simpson, is also a valued member of The East of England Cancer Alliance Patient Advisory Board.

Dave joined the Board given his wealth of experience previously accessing local cancer services and his involvement with Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire.



Dave Simpson

The Patient Advisory Board provides patient and carer leadership and insight to the Cancer Alliance Board. It ensures the views and experiences of cancer patients, carers and families inform all aspects of the Cancer Alliance work programme and its' delivery, taking a special interest in patient experience and equity of access.

The Patient Advisory Board (PAB) held a virtual meeting, via MS Teams, in mid-April to discuss the availability of current advice for cancer patients in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic.

East of England
Cancer Alliance 



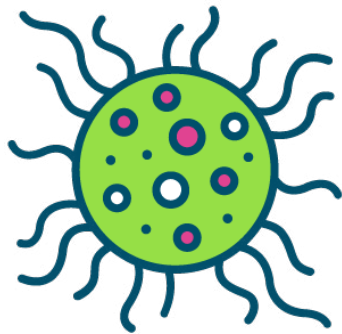


Introduction



Introduction

It has been widely reported in national media that the current pandemic is placing cancer patients at an enormous disadvantage with the possibility of delayed or inadequate treatment, which is likely to result in poor short, and long term, outcomes due to the re-direction of hospital resources to the management of COVID-19 infected patients.



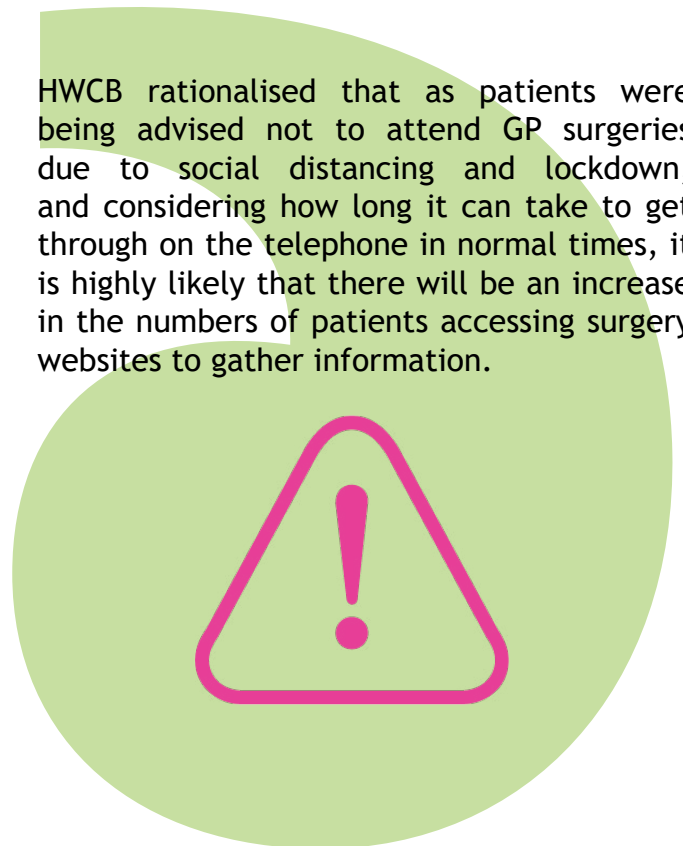
Elective treatments, including cancer surgery, have been cancelled or postponed due to a reduction in intensive care units (ICU) and staffing capacity.

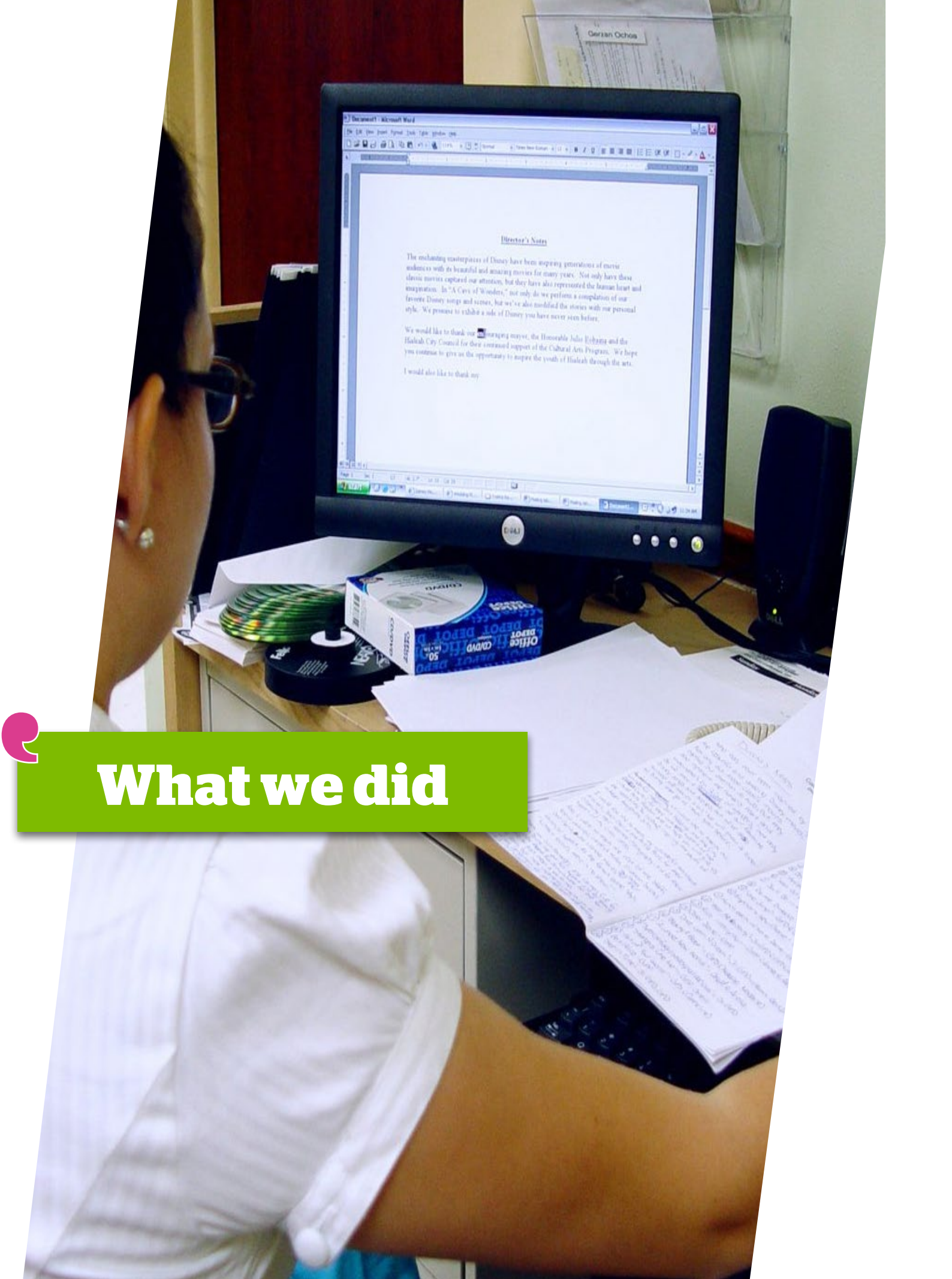
At the Patient Advisory Board meeting on the 15th April 2020 concerns were raised with regard to accessible and available advice for cancer patients, who are currently undergoing cancer treatment, whose treatment may be suspended, and for those patients who would normally consult their GP if they were worried about particular symptoms relating to cancer.

To initially address these concerns the Chair of Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire suggested that a survey be undertaken to investigate the extent of current information and advice provided on local GP surgery websites.



HWCB rationalised that as patients were being advised not to attend GP surgeries due to social distancing and lockdown, and considering how long it can take to get through on the telephone in normal times, it is highly likely that there will be an increase in the numbers of patients accessing surgery websites to gather information.





What we did



What we did

An online survey was designed using the questions detailed below.

Research was undertaken to view each GP Practice website and a spreadsheet was used to record data.

The full results, initially targeting the Central Bedfordshire area (see paragraph below), are shown in Appendix A.

1. Is the website up to date?
2. Is there current Covid-19 advice?
3. Is there a link to the NHS Covid-19 advice site?
4. Is there advice for Cancer Patients?
5. Is there a link to the Macmillan Covid-19 web page?
6. Are there any links to Cancer Support Groups?
7. Is there information/links to the local Healthwatch?

At a subsequent East of England Regional Healthwatch meeting, held via MS Teams in mid-May, colleagues were advised of the survey and asked to join the project and progress the survey in their local areas.

Healthwatch in Bedford, Hertfordshire, Suffolk, Southend and Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, have agreed to do so. Other local Healthwatch in Luton and Milton Keynes, who are currently running a survey relating to general information and advice offered at GP Practices, have agreed to incorporate the questions highlighted above into their current survey.

Results from additional local Healthwatch surveys will be shared at a later date.





Summary of Results



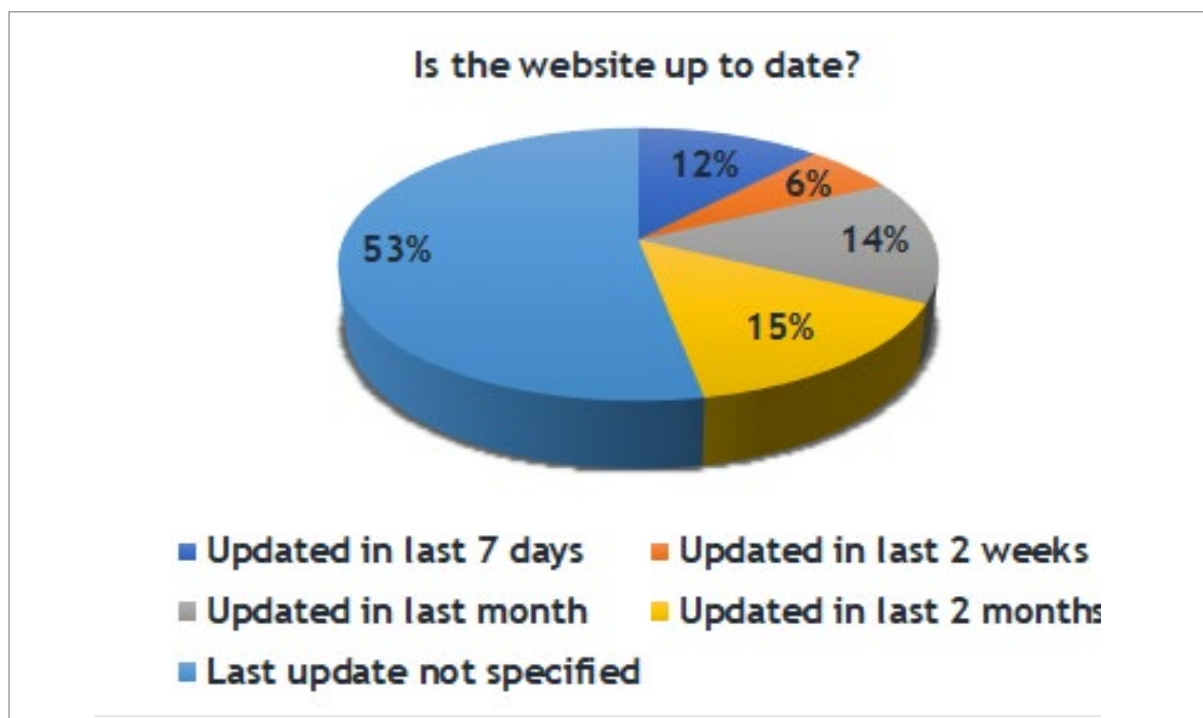
Summary of Results

The full survey results are shown in Appendix A, and at present relate to Central Bedfordshire only.

Of the 34 GP Surgeries in Central Bedfordshire (including two satellite surgeries in Luton and Gamlingay):

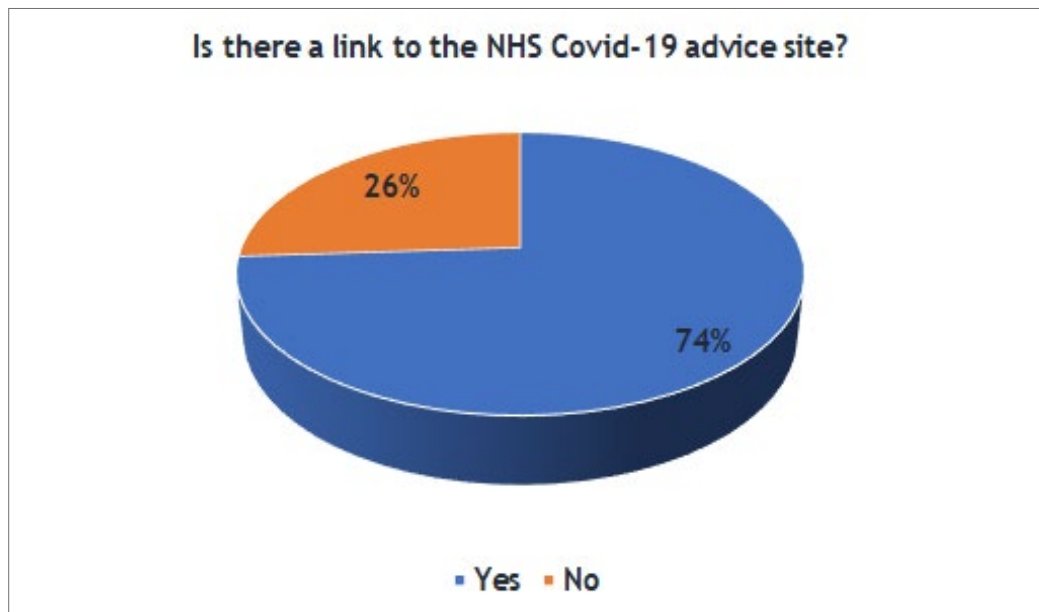
1. 16 showed 'updated' dates, but this seemed only to apply to the front page.
2. All 34 sites carried at least a pop-up of current NHS Covid-19 advice
3. 25 sites carried a link to the NHS Covid-19 site
4. 14 had advice for cancer patients.
5. 16 had a link to the Macmillan Covid-19 information page.
6. Five had links to cancer patient support groups.
7. Six had links to the Local Healthwatch in their area.

Data relating to the question 'Is the website up to date?' indicated that in many instances there was, for example, the latest NHS Covid-19 information on the front page of the website. However researchers found that when delving deeper into the website, there was a significant amount of out of date information still being displayed, including more than one instance of referral to the 'Primary Care Trust' (PCT) which were replaced nationally by Clinical Commissioning Groups in April 2013.

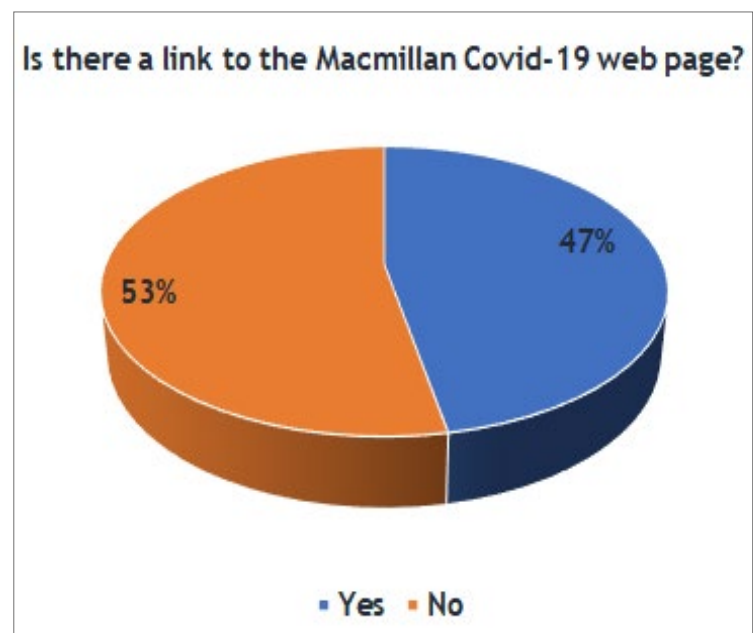
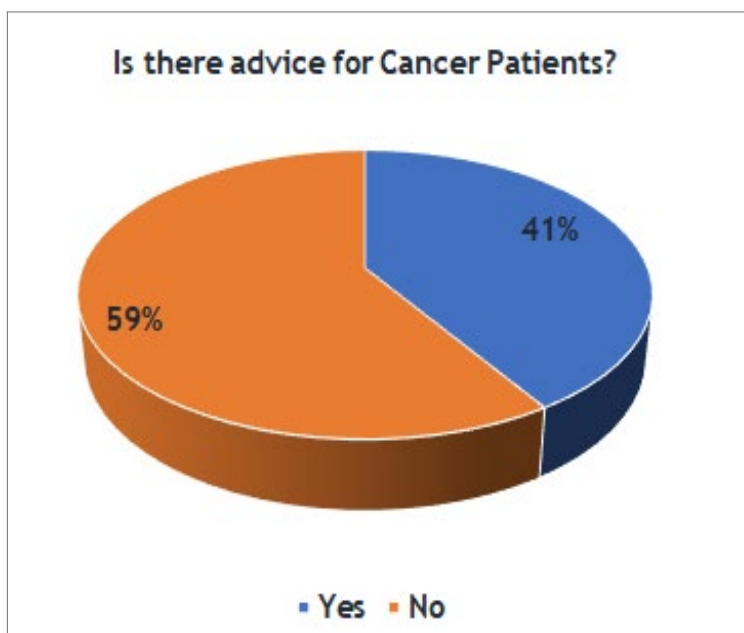


HWCB would be concerned at the extent of 'out of date' information given on a website which may lead us, and visitors to the website, to question the validity of the remainder of the information. This could potentially lead to a loss of confidence on behalf of the visitor to the website. No information is better than wrong information!

All the websites reviewed displayed some form of current Covid-19 advice and 74% demonstrated a link to the NHS Covid-19 site which indicates that the majority of GP Practices are ensuring that patient information is updated with regard to the current pandemic.

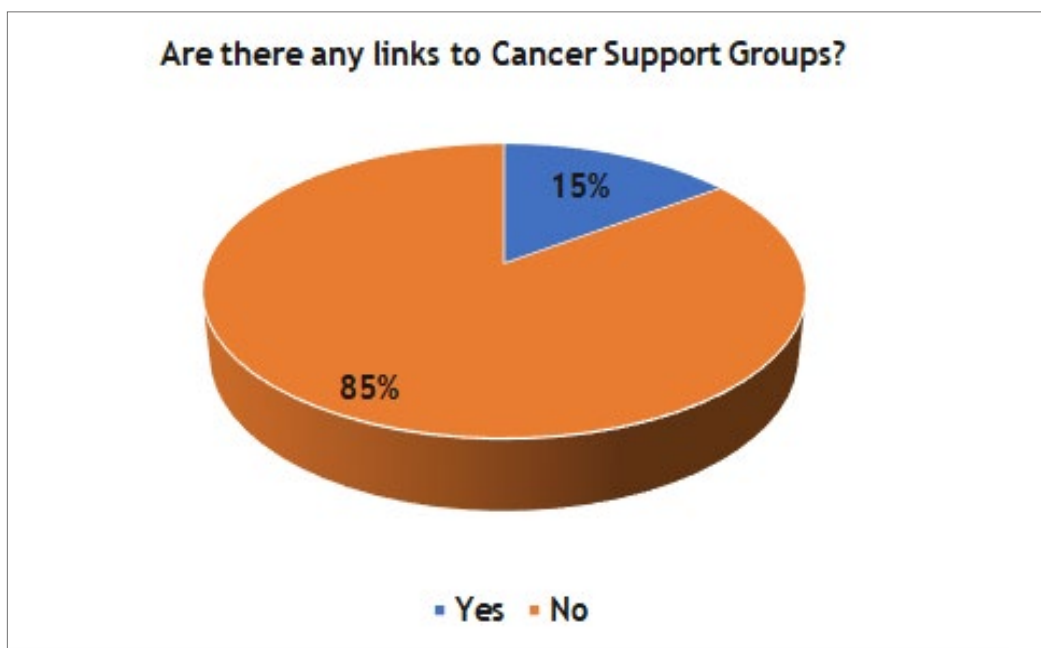


However, less than half the websites reviewed (41%) had advice for cancer patients with only 47% providing a link to the Macmillan Covid-19 web pages.

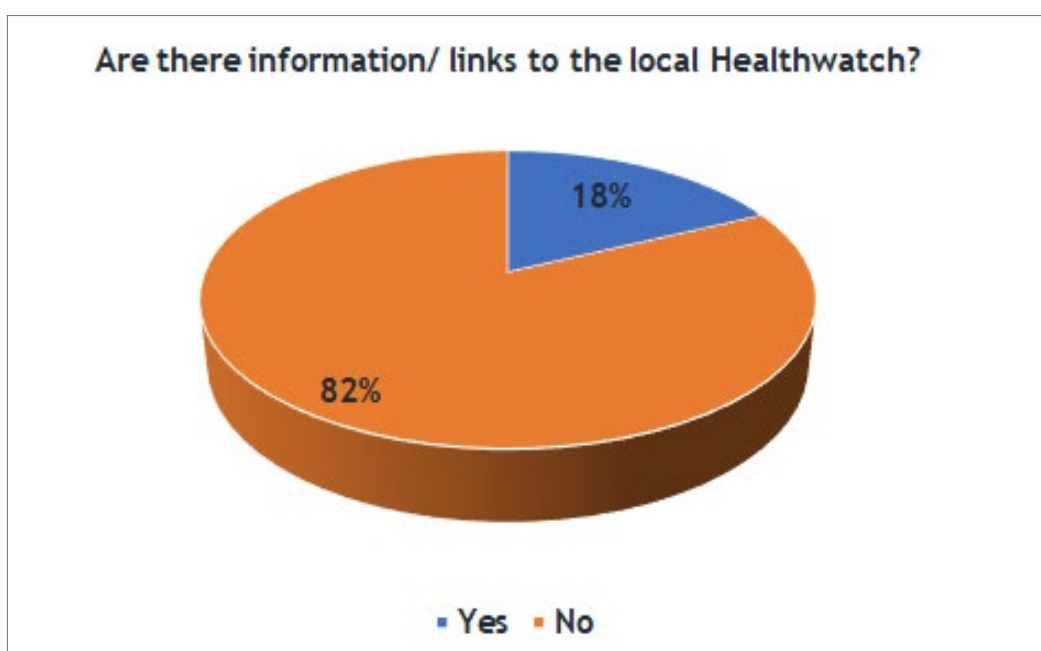




Disappointingly, only 15% of GP Practice websites displayed [links to Cancer Support Groups](#), either locally or nationally.



It was also disappointing to note that only 18% of GP Practice websites reviewed held information or [links to Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire or Healthwatch England](#).



A few of the GP websites visited displayed 'Useful Links' pages which gave links to other websites; however, it is clearly important that these links are current and functioning which was not always the case. At least one GP Practice website visited had a 'Useful Links' page which contained no actual links to other websites, only telephone numbers.

From the data collected it is clear there is a vast difference in the quality of the websites visited, which also seems to correlate to the quality of information contained in them, including which organisation hosts the website.



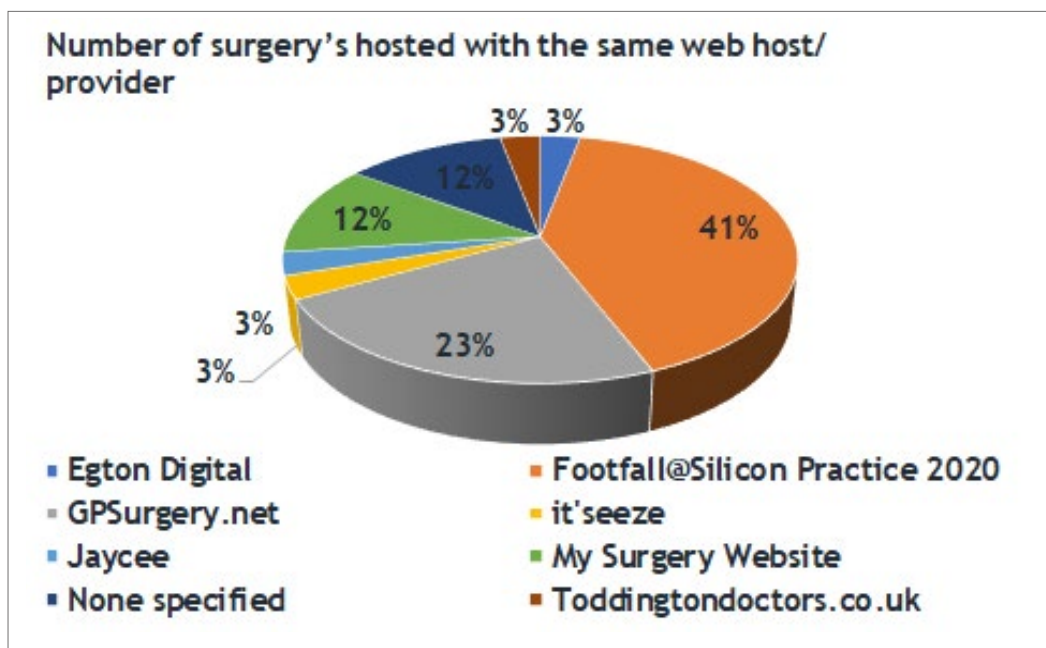
Conclusion



Conclusion

Through research conducted it is understood that currently three organisations are hosting 26 of the 34 GP practice websites in Central Bedfordshire. The remaining eight are hosted by single enterprises or, in some cases, possibly 'in-house' designed and operated.

It is not clear who is responsible for updating information and content of GP websites without conducting further in depth research. In some instances, the responsibility for maintaining and updating GP Practice websites may be that of an IT member of staff, however we believe that for many GP Practices, the responsibility lies with the Practice Manager.



What is clear however is that many GP Practice websites in Central Bedfordshire are lacking vital up to date information and advice for their patients and visitors to the website, with many specifically lacking information relating to what to do about cancer treatment during the pandemic, and signposting to cancer support groups.

The data gathered also highlighted several other areas which HWCB felt could, and should, lead to a much more in-depth survey of GP Practice websites across Central Bedfordshire.



Recommendations



Recommendations

HWCB recommends that all GP Practice's in Central Bedfordshire review their websites to ensure that patients and visitors to the site have the most up to date information and advice, which is particularly important during these uncertain times. More patients are likely to rely on GP Surgery websites for information in this current climate and HWCB considers it imperative that accurate, timely, and up to date information is made available.

HWCB would recommend that with the recent introduction of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) nationally, GP Practices within each PCN jointly consider urgently appointing an individual IT person, or persons, to have direct responsibility for maintaining and regularly updating all the GP Practice websites within their local PCN area.

HWCB would also recommend that the Bedfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (BCCG) review HWCB's survey results and encourage all GP Practices within Bedfordshire to update and maintain their websites at this crucial time.





Appendix

Survey Results

View Date	GP Surgery	Locality	Area	Website	Web Host/Provider	Is the website up to date?	Covid-19 info	Covid-19 NHS link?	Cancer Patient advice?	Macmillan Link?	Support Groups Link?	Local Healthwatch Info?
11-May	Priory Gardens Surgery	Chiltern Vale	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.priorygardensurgery.co.uk/	My Surgery Website	12-May	Y	Y	Y	N	N	N
11-May	Kirby Road Surgery	Chiltern Vale	Central Bedfordshire	http://www.kirbyroadsurgery.co.uk/	Jaycee	last update not specified	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
11-May	Wheatfield Road Surgery	Chiltern Vale	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.wheatfieldsurgery.co.uk/	My Surgery Website	04-May	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
11-May	West Street Surgery	Chiltern Vale	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.weststreetsurgery.org.uk/	it'seeze	03-Apr	Y	N	N	N	N	N
11-May	Caddington Surgery	Chiltern Vale	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.caddingtonurgery.co.uk/	My Surgery Website	08-May	Y	N	N	N	N	N
11-May	Toddington Medical Centre Houghton	Chiltern Vale	Central Bedfordshire	http://www.toddingtondoctors.co.uk/	Toddingtondoctors.co.uk	29-Apr	Y	Y	N	N	N	Y
11-May	Regis Medical Centre	Chiltern Vale	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.houghtonregismedicalcentre.co.uk/	None specified	11-Mar	Y	N	Y	Y	N	N
11-May	Eastgate Surgery	Chiltern Vale	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.eastgatesurgery.co.uk/	GPSurgery.net	01-Mar	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
11-May	Kingsbury Court Surgery	Chiltern Vale	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.kingsburycourtsurgery.nhs.uk/	None specified	last update not specified	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
11-May	Biggleswade Health Centre	Ivel Valley	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.saffronhealthpartnership.nhs.uk/	GPSurgery.net	26-Mar	Y	N	N	N	N	N
11-May	Langford Surgery	Ivel Valley	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.saffronhealthpartnership.nhs.uk/	GPSurgery.net	26-Mar	Y	N	N	N	N	N
11-May	Dr Cakelbread and Partners, Dr Kapur and Partners, Sandy	Ivel Valley	Central Bedfordshire	https://sheffordhealthcentre.gpsurgery.net/	GPSurgery.net	01-Apr	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
11-May	Larksfield Surgery, Stotfold	Ivel Valley	Central Bedfordshire	https://larksfieldsurgery.gpsurgery.net/	GPSurgery.net	16-Apr	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
11-May	Arlesey Medical Centre	Ivel Valley	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.arleseymedicalcentre.nhs.uk/	Egton Digital	last update not specified	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
11-May	Greensands Medical Practice, Potton	Ivel Valley	Central Bedfordshire	http://www.greensands.org.uk/	None specified	28-Apr	Y	N	N	N	N	N
11-May	Greensands Medical Practice, Gamlingay	Ivel Valley	Central Bedfordshire	http://www.greensands.org.uk/	None specified	28-Apr	Y	N	N	N	N	N
11-May	Dr Collins and Partners, Lower Ivel Medical Centre, Biggleswade	Ivel Valley	Central Bedfordshire	https://lowerstondon.gpsurgery.net/	GPSurgery.net	last update not specified	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
11-May	Ivel Medical Centre, Biggleswade	Ivel Valley	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.ivelmedicalcentre.co.uk/	My Surgery Website	08-May	Y	Y	N	N	N	N
11-May	Shannon Court Surgery	Ivel Valley	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.saffronhealthpartnership.nhs.uk/	GPSurgery.net	26-Mar	Y	N	N	N	N	N
11-May	Bassett Road Surgery	Leighton Buzzard	Central Bedfordshire	https://bassetroadsurgery.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
11-May	Salisbury House Surgery	Leighton Buzzard	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.salisburyhousesurgery.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

View Date	GP Surgery	Locality	Area	Website	Web Host/Provider	Is the website up to date?	Covid-19 info	Covid-19 NHS link?	Cancer Patient advice?	Macmillan Link?	Support Groups Link?	Local Healthwatch Info?
11-May	Leighton Road Surgery	Leighton Buzzard	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.leightonroadsurgery.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
11-May	Leighton Road Surgery	Leighton Buzzard	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.leightonroadsurgery.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
11-May	Asplands Medical Centre	West Mid Beds	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.asplandsmedicalcentre.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
11-May	Woburn Surgery	West Mid Beds	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.asplandsmedicalcentre.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
11-May	Flitwick Surgery	West Mid Beds	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.flitwicksurgery.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
11-May	Greensand Surgery	West Mid Beds	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.greensandsurgery.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
11-May	Dr Hughes and Partners, The Surgery	West Mid Beds	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.bartongroupsurgeries.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N
11-May	Dr Hughes and Partners, Gooseberry	West Mid Beds	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.bartongroupsurgeries.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	N	Y	N	N
11-May	Houghton Close Surgery	West Mid Beds	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.houghtonclosesurgery.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
11-May	Cranfield Surgery	West Mid Beds	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.cranfieldandmarstonsurgery.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
11-May	Marston Surgery	West Mid Beds	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.cranfieldandmarstonsurgery.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N
11-May	Oliver Street Surgery	West Mid Beds	Central Bedfordshire	https://www.oliverstreetsurgery.co.uk/	Footfall@Silicon Practice 2020	last update not specified	Y	Y	Y	Y	N	N



About Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire is the local consumer champion promoting choice and influencing the provision of high quality health, social care and wellbeing services for all across Central Bedfordshire.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire (HWCB) has significant statutory powers to ensure that the voice of the consumer is strengthened and heard by those who commission, deliver and regulate health and care services. HWCB engages and consults with all sections of the local population so that a wide cross-section of views are heard, understood and acted upon. Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people and our expertise is grounded in their experience.

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire is one of three local Healthwatch in the County of Bedfordshire and belong to a network of local Healthwatch. Healthwatch England leads, supports and guides the Healthwatch network which is made up of the national body and local Healthwatch across each of the 152 local authority areas in England.

Healthwatch is the only body looking solely at people's experience across all health and social care. As a statutory watchdog our role is to ensure that local health and social care services, and the local decision-makers put the experiences of people at the heart of their care.

healthwatch
Central Bedfordshire



healthwatch

Central Bedfordshire

Healthwatch Central Bedfordshire
Capability House Wrest Park
Silsoe
Beds MK45 4HR

www.healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk

tel: 0300 303 8554

e: info@healthwatch-centralbedfordshire.org.uk
