



Residents' and relatives' experiences of returning to visiting Leeds Care homes

Meadowbrook Manor

June-July 2021

Introduction

Since July 2020, there has been a series of changes in [government guidance on care home visiting during the Covid-19 pandemic](#) which has meant that care homes have gradually been able to welcome families back in to visit their loved ones.

Healthwatch Leeds in partnership with Leeds City Council wanted to find out about residents' and relatives' experience of visiting in care homes as part of our work as a city to enable meaningful visiting across Leeds.

We contacted individual care homes and asked them to post out survey packs to named contacts of all residents. The packs contained surveys for both residents and relatives, and we asked relatives to help residents to complete the survey where appropriate. We provided a freepost envelope so that people could return the completed surveys directly to Healthwatch Leeds.

The survey was also available to complete online via a link that was shared widely with both individual care homes and with the general public via social media and various ebulletins and newsletters.

For each care home that took part, we have produced an individualised report from the surveys that were completed about their care home including a summary of the data for each question.

Since this was an anonymous survey, some of the answers to the questions may have been blanked out so as not to reveal any information that might identify the respondents.

Our Findings

- The survey was completed by 9 residents and 2 relatives/friends
- **It should be noted that all 9 of the residents' surveys were completed by a Senior Care Worker employed by the home which may result in some bias.** The care home said that all these relatives didn't have relatives who had been able to visit but that they were still able to comment on some of the questions and needed assistance to complete the survey. The two responses from relatives were submitted by post.

- The satisfaction from relatives and residents was high with all respondents saying that given that care homes have to follow government guidance on visiting, they would rate their experience of seeing their family or friends as excellent (18%), very good (64%) or average (18%).
- Of the two relatives who responded, one said they understood the role of essential care giver, whilst the other said they didn't and hadn't heard of it before. Neither of the two relatives knew whether the care home was enabling this role.
- Both of the two relatives who responded were aware that they could take their loved one out to low risk outdoor places.
- It was unclear from the two responses from relatives whether there were alternative visiting options (e.g. screened and outdoor visits) for people who weren't nominated visitors.
- One relative said they were able to visit for an hour with the number of weekly visits depending on availability. The other respondent was less sure, saying the visit was for 25-35 minutes, although it wasn't clear whether this was personal choice. Comments indicated that visits could take place once a week.
- One relative said there was good flexibility for visits with visits being able to be booked any time including evenings both during the week and at weekends. The other relative said they didn't know about weekend and evening visits.
- Neither of the two relatives said they'd seen a copy of the individualised risk assessment/visiting plan for their loved one.
- Both relatives said their loved didn't have mental capacity to make decisions around visiting. One of them said that that a family member wasn't involved in developing the risk assessment/visiting plan to express the resident's wishes and needs on their behalf, whilst the other relative said they didn't know whether this had happened or not.
- 100% residents and relatives responding to the survey, felt that the visiting options available met their needs and there were no suggestions for improvements. One relative said that visits took place in the resident's room as they were bedridden. Comments

indicated that the booking system was good, safety precautions were taken, and privacy was respected.

- In terms of suggestions for improvement, one resident said that they would like visits to take place in their room. One relative also said, *“Garden visits were good and also visits in the side room, but not in the hall talking through a glass door as there was too much traffic noise”*

Our recommendations

1. Communicate to all relatives the message that all residents can nominate an ‘essential care giver’ and clearly explain what this is. We know that this term can be confusing for both relatives and staff. Because of this, we’ve created this simple wording to try and help clarify the role. Feel free to use it in your communications to families.

“All residents (or their families/POA if they don’t have mental capacity to make that decision) can now choose one person to be included in their five named visitors as an ‘essential care giver’. This key visitor should be someone who they feel is “key” to their wellbeing (physical or emotional), and who helps them feel “happier and well”.

The key visitor will be able to visit them more often, flexibly and for longer periods, as well as being able to continue visiting even when there is an outbreak, or the resident is in isolation (e.g. following discharge from hospital).

In the government guidance, they call this key visitor an ‘essential care giver’ but this doesn’t mean that they have to provide any type of personal or practical care (although this may be agreed in discussion with the care home).

Because more frequent and flexible visiting carries more risk, the key visitor will need to agree to have the same testing as care home staff (one PCR test and two lateral flow tests a week) and follow the same infection control procedures as them.”

2. In Leeds, there is generally a low awareness amongst relatives that ALL care home residents can nominate an essential care

giver. Consider helping to raise awareness of the role by including information about it on your website.

3. Make sure that residents' needs and wishes are routinely and consistently taken into consideration when drawing up individual risk assessments or visiting care plans. Where residents don't have mental capacity to be involved in these decisions, make sure families are involved in these discussions.
4. Ensure that copies of residents' individualised risk assessments/visiting plans are routinely shared with relatives.
5. Consider ways of enabling residents to have longer visits. Some questions to consider (from <https://www.relres.org/visiting-guide-providers/>):
 - Is your policy based on individual risk assessments for the residents, that takes into account individual needs? individual assessments are needed to consider the impact of a 30-60-minute visit for each resident, including whether such timed visits are appropriate for them and meet their wellbeing needs.
 - If not being done already, have you considered enable visits to take place in residents' own rooms? This would allow the visits to be as long as appropriate for each resident, to better meet their wellbeing needs. It would also create a more natural, relaxing environment for the visit which will be more beneficial for the resident.
 - Are you allowing visitors to take tests at home and bring proof of negativity on their visit (as permitted now in the Government guidance)? This would reduce your admin burden for 'processing' visitors on arrival.

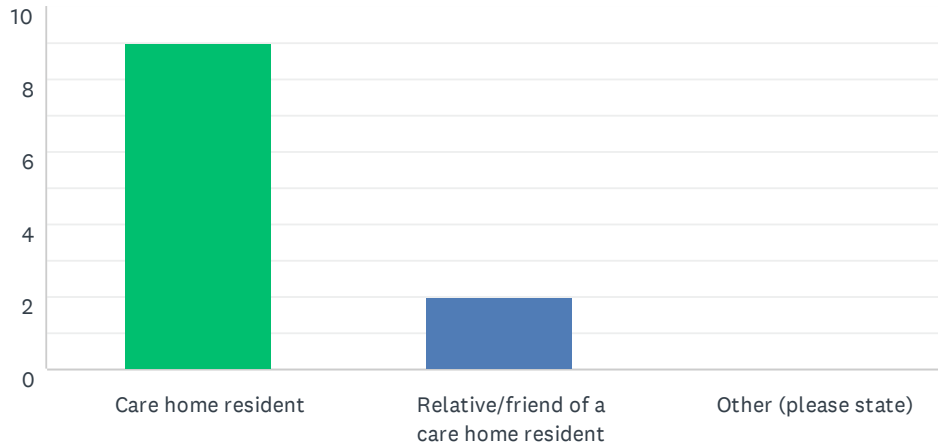
Next Steps

The report will be shared with the care home, and we have asked them to share it with residents and their relatives or friends. It will also be shared with Leeds City Council and be publicly available on the Healthwatch Leeds website.

We will agree with the care home, the next steps to be taken in response to our recommendations and work with them to ensure any agreed actions are followed through and implemented. We will undertake any follow up work required to ensure there are real changes made to the service so that it is a good experience for everyone.

Q2 Are you a...

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

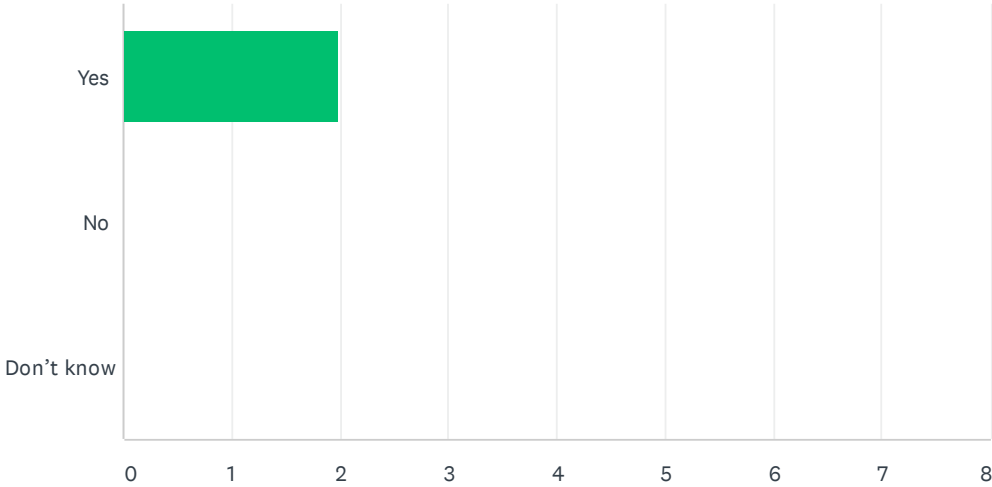


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Care home resident	82%	9
Relative/friend of a care home resident	18%	2
Other (please state)	0%	0
TOTAL		11

#	OTHER (PLEASE STATE)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q3 Is your care home enabling your loved one to have nominated visitors who can visit indoors?

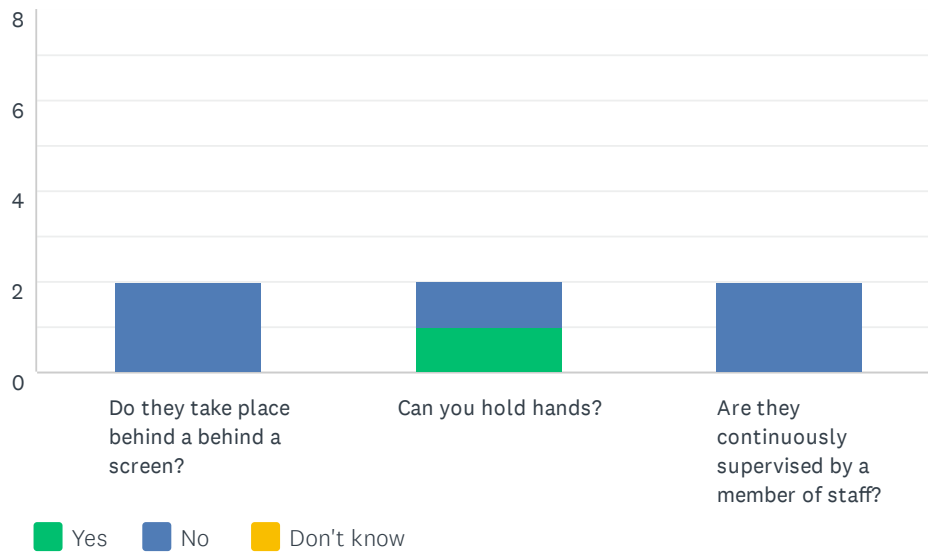
Answered: 2 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100%	2
No	0%	0
Don't know	0%	0
TOTAL		2

Q4 If yes to Q3, please tell us more about the indoor visits:

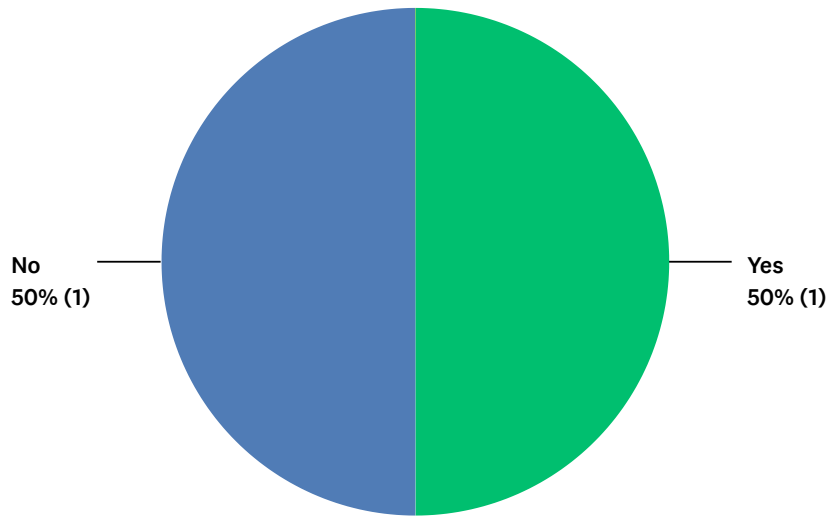
Answered: 2 Skipped: 9



	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Do they take place behind a behind a screen?	0% 0	100% 2	0% 0	2	2.00
Can you hold hands?	50% 1	50% 1	0% 0	2	1.50
Are they continuously supervised by a member of staff?	0% 0	100% 2	0% 0	2	2.00

Q5 Do you understand the role of 'essential care giver' (as outlined in the government guidance on care home visiting)?

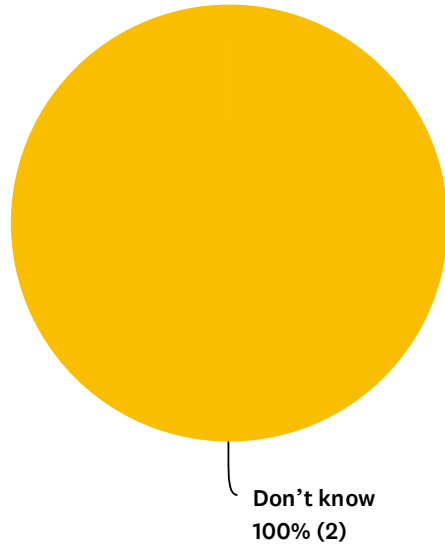
Answered: 2 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	50%	1
No	50%	1
Not sure	0%	0
TOTAL		2

Q6 Is your care home enabling the use of 'essential care givers', nominated by residents, where it is felt that their emotional and practical support is central to a resident's health and wellbeing?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 9

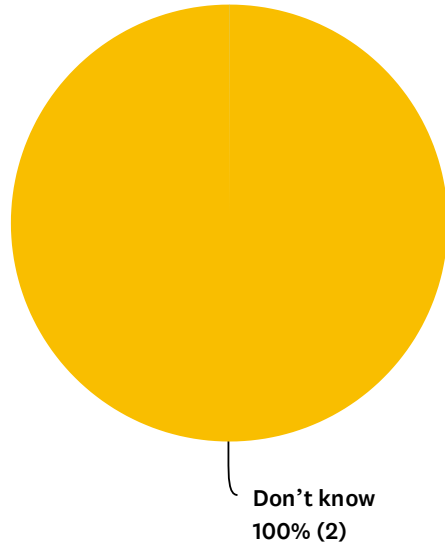


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	0% 0
No	0% 0
Don't know	100% 2
TOTAL	2

#	PLEASE TELL US MORE ABOUT THAT HERE	DATE
1	Never heard of essential care gver	7/22/2021 1:03 PM

Q7 Does the care home enable nominated family members to take loved ones out of the care home to lower risk outdoor places e.g. your garden or a local park?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 9

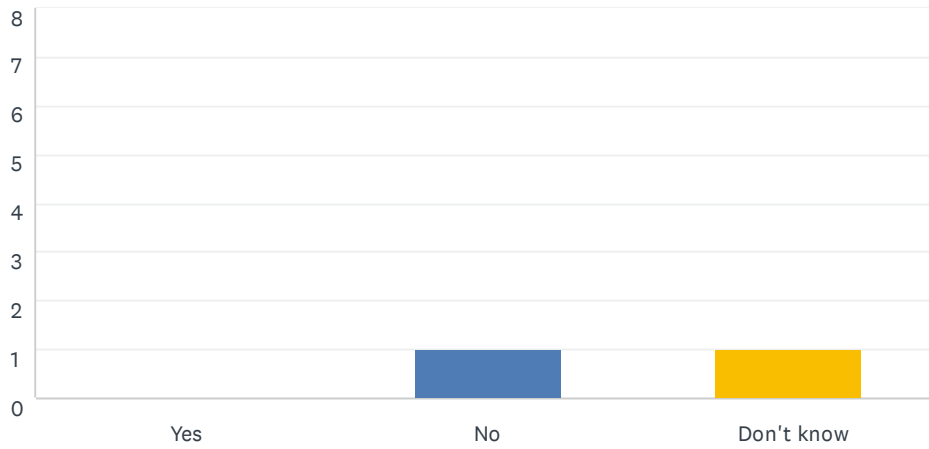


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	0%	0
No	0%	0
Don't know	100%	2
TOTAL		2

#	PLEASE TELL US MORE ABOUT THAT HERE	DATE
1	Not applicable relative bed ridden and only visited in own room	7/22/2021 1:03 PM

Q8 Are other visiting options (eg. screened or outdoor visits) available for other friends and family members who aren't nominated visitors?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 9

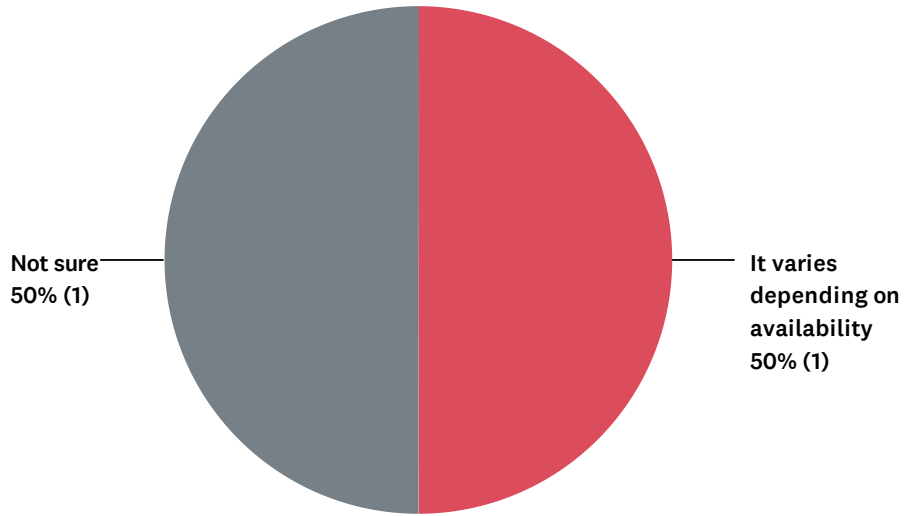


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	0% 0
No	50% 1
Don't know	50% 1
TOTAL	2

#	PLEASE TELL US MORE ABOUT THAT HERE	DATE
1	N/A	7/22/2021 1:03 PM

Q9 How often are you able to have an indoor visit?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 9

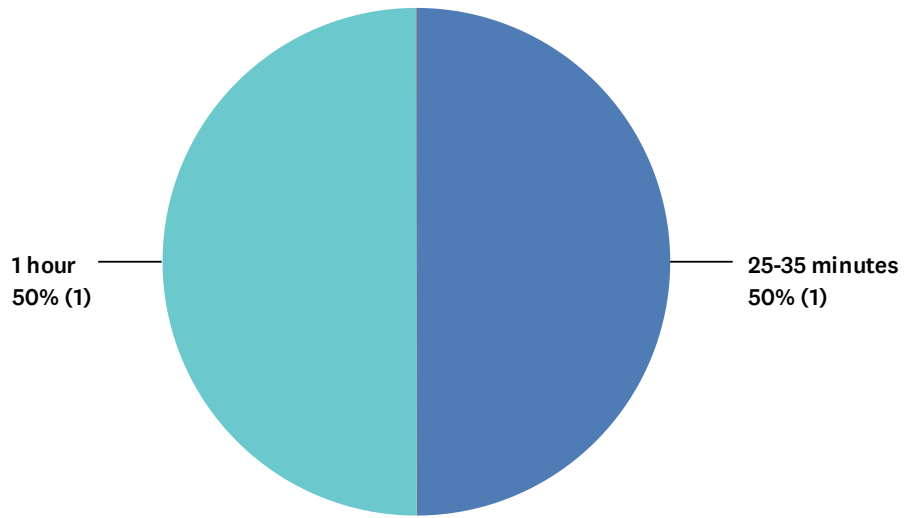


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Once a month	0%	0
Once every three weeks	0%	0
Once a fortnight	0%	0
Once a week	0%	0
Twice a week	0%	0
Three times a week	0%	0
Four times a week or more	0%	0
As many times as I want	0%	0
It varies depending on availability	50%	1
Not sure	50%	1
Not applicable	0%	0
Other (please specify)	0%	0
TOTAL		2

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q10 If your care home is offering indoor visits, how long can you usually visit for?

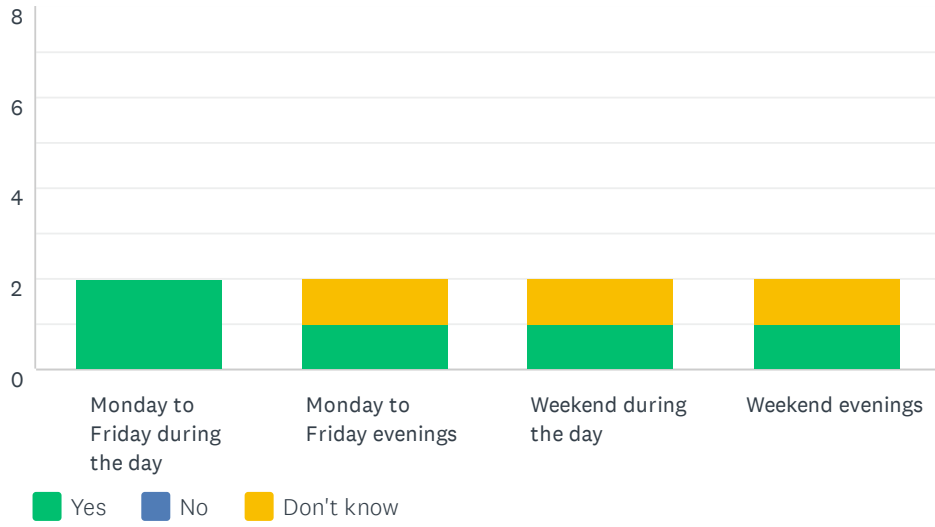
Answered: 2 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
15-20 minutes	0%	0
25-35 minutes	50%	1
40-50 minutes	0%	0
1 hour	50%	1
1.5-2 hours	0%	0
more than 2 hours	0%	0
There is no time limit	0%	0
Not sure	0%	0
TOTAL		2

Q11 Is it possible to book visits at the following times?

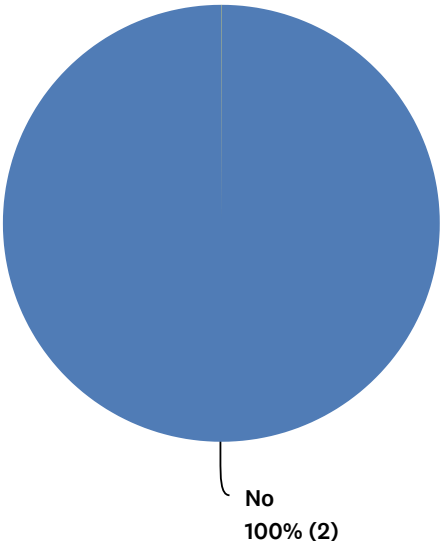
Answered: 2 Skipped: 9



	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Monday to Friday during the day	100% 2	0% 0	0% 0	2
Monday to Friday evenings	50% 1	0% 0	50% 1	2
Weekend during the day	50% 1	0% 0	50% 1	2
Weekend evenings	50% 1	0% 0	50% 1	2

Q12 Have you seen a copy of the individualised risk assessment or visiting plan that the care home has done around visiting?

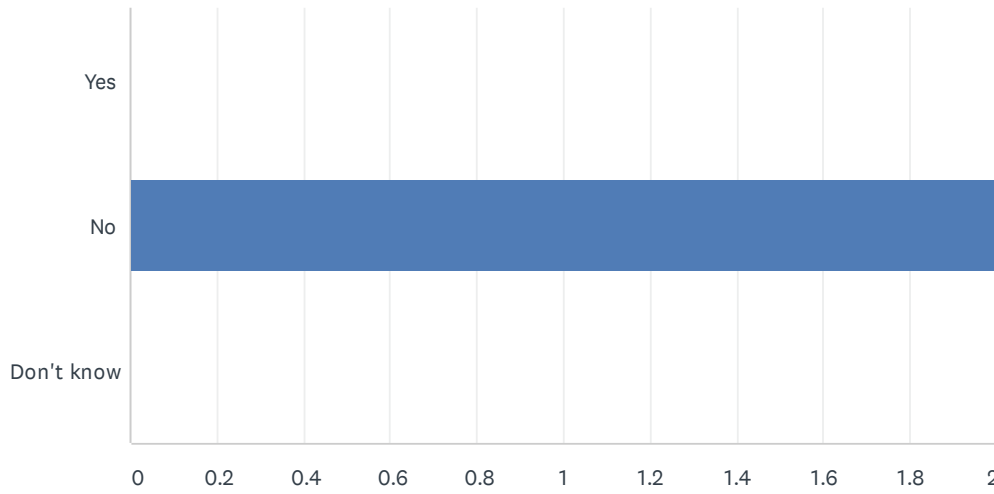
Answered: 2 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	0%	0
No	100%	2
Not sure	0%	0
TOTAL		2

Q13 Does your loved one have mental capacity to be involved in decisions around visiting?

Answered: 2 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	0%	0
No	100%	2
Don't know	0%	0
TOTAL		2

Q14 If they DO have capacity, was your loved one involved in the development of a risk assessment or visiting plan and their needs and wishes considered?

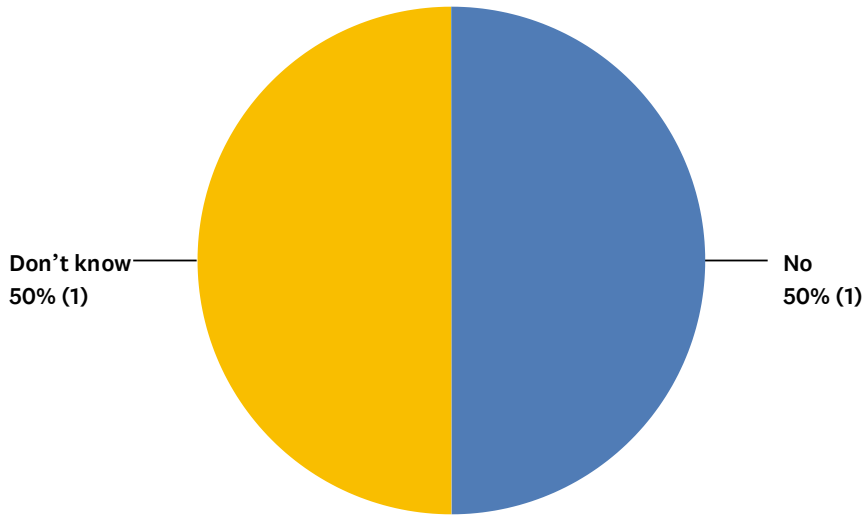
Answered: 0 Skipped: 11

 No matching responses.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	0%
No	0%
Don't know	0%
TOTAL	0

Q15 If they DON'T have capacity, were you or another family member involved in developing the risk assessment/visiting plan to express their needs and wishes on their behalf?

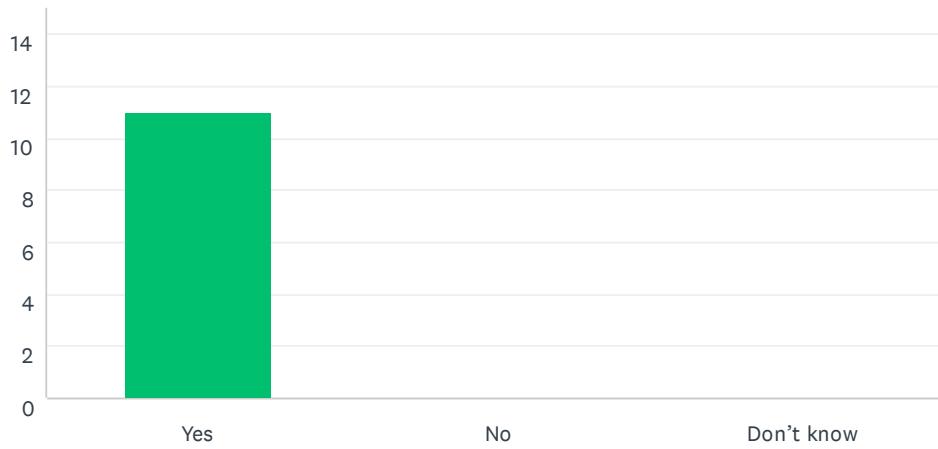
Answered: 2 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	0%	0
No	50%	1
Don't know	50%	1
TOTAL		2

Q16 Do you feel that the current visiting options made available to you meet your / your loved one's needs?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0

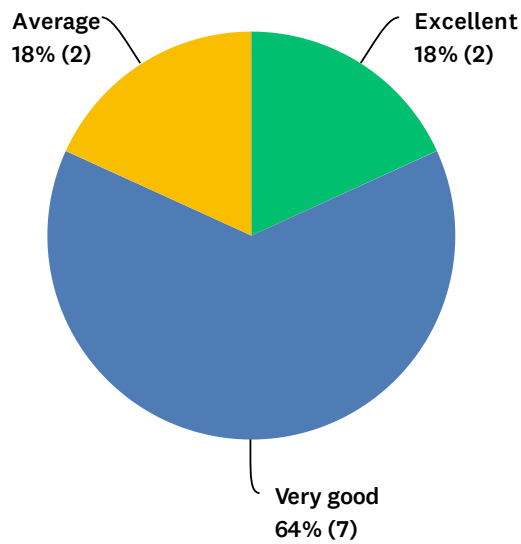


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100%	11
No	0%	0
Don't know	0%	0
TOTAL		11

#	TELL US MORE ABOUT WHY YOU CHOSE YOUR ANSWER HERE	DATE
1	Bedridden relative only visited in own room but all safety precautions tken	7/22/2021 1:08 PM
2	My family can visit anytime by appointment.	7/21/2021 12:44 PM

Q17 Given that care homes have to follow government guidance on visiting, how would you rate your experience of seeing your family or friends in the care home?

Answered: 11 Skipped: 0



	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	VERY POOR	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	18% 2	64% 7	18% 2	0% 0	0% 0	11	2.00

Q18 Please use this space to tell us what works well in relation to the way your care home has organised and enabled visits.

Answered: 6 Skipped: 5

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Booking system is good.	8/17/2021 12:19 PM
2	PPE available plus sanitiser	7/22/2021 1:08 PM
3	We visit in the TV lounge. We are left with our visitors to enjoy a private chat.	7/21/2021 12:44 PM
4	The home has been amazing during lockdown.	7/21/2021 12:38 PM
5	My brother visits and takes me to all my hospital appointments.	7/21/2021 12:28 PM
6	I was able to see my family once a week.	7/21/2021 12:25 PM

Q19 Tell us about any ways that you feel the care home could improve visiting (whilst obviously still following the current government guidance).

Answered: 5 Skipped: 6

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	No improvement needed.	8/17/2021 12:19 PM
2	No comment	7/22/2021 1:08 PM
3	Can't wait for us to get back to normal.	7/21/2021 12:38 PM
4	Visits in my bedroom.	7/21/2021 12:25 PM
5	Don't think we can improve	7/21/2021 12:22 PM

Q20 Finally, please tell us about anything else generally you think the care home does well or any suggestions or ideas for making improvements.

Answered: 5 Skipped: 6

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Garden visits were good and also visits in the side room but not in the hall talking through a glass door as there was too much traffic noise.	8/17/2021 12:19 PM
2	No comment to make	7/22/2021 1:08 PM
3	This is a beautiful care home.	7/21/2021 12:40 PM
4	I'm very happy with the way the care home runs.	7/21/2021 12:25 PM
5	I think the care home does a very good job and has kept us safe during lockdown.	7/21/2021 12:22 PM