



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

**Wykebeck Court Care Home**

**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 5 residents and 9 relatives/friends
- 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 (43%) or very good (50%). One person rated it as poor. This was mainly due to dissatisfaction with visiting earlier on in the pandemic.

- The majority of relatives (78%) understood the role of essential care giver but around a third (33%) didn't know whether the home was enabling this role.
- One survey response from a relative implied that they had not been informed that every resident can have an essential care giver, who can visit during outbreaks and periods of isolation. The response indicated that the relative was being told they couldn't visit the resident during the 14-day isolation period following a hospital admission. This was despite the person being very unwell and someone who would have clearly benefited from one of their family members being an essential care giver.
- The majority of relatives (88%) were aware that they could take their loved one out to low risk outdoor places.
- All respondents were aware that there were alternative visiting options (e.g. screened and outdoor visits) for people who weren't nominated visitors.
- Most people said they were able to have a visit once a week or once a fortnight, with a mix of responses as to how long they could stay for, varying from 25 minutes to an hour.
- All relatives who responded were aware that visits could be booked during the day both in the week and at weekends. There was less clarity about whether visits could be booked on evenings, with the majority saying this wasn't possible or that they weren't sure.
- Only two out of the nine relatives said they'd seen a copy of the individualised risk assessment/visiting plan for their loved one.
- The majority of relatives who said their loved one had mental capacity to make decisions around visiting, said that the resident had had their needs and wishes considered in the development of a risk assessment or visiting plan. For residents who didn't have capacity, only 38% said that a family member was involved in developing the risk assessment/visiting plan to express their wishes and needs on their behalf. 50% said they didn't know whether or not this had happened.

- The majority (79%) of residents and relatives responding to the survey, felt that the visiting options available met their needs. One respondent said it didn't meet their needs and the remaining two said they didn't know. One person said, "once a week is not enough". Another person said that their relative had to isolate after a hospital stay and was not allowed any visitors during this time, despite not having long left to live.
- People said that they felt that visits and testing were very well organised, and that pod and room visits worked well. One person commented that they feel that their privacy is respected during visits.

## 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. Consider using the above messaging around essential care giver on your website. The bupa website states, *“In exceptional cases, residents are able to have an essential care giver”*. The guidance has now changed to enable ALL residents to nominate an essential care giver, not just in exceptional cases.
3. Continue to make sure that residents’ needs and wishes are 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:
  - 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.
6. Consider providing more seating in the garden area so that people can meet outside.

## Service Provider Response

During this unprecedented time, we have followed Government guidelines to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our residents and staff.

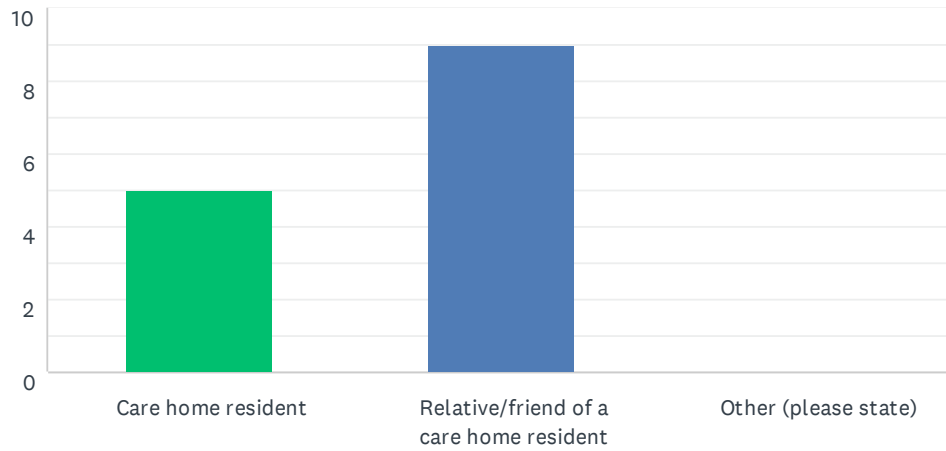
## Next Steps

The report will be shared with Wykebeck Court 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: 14 Skipped: 0

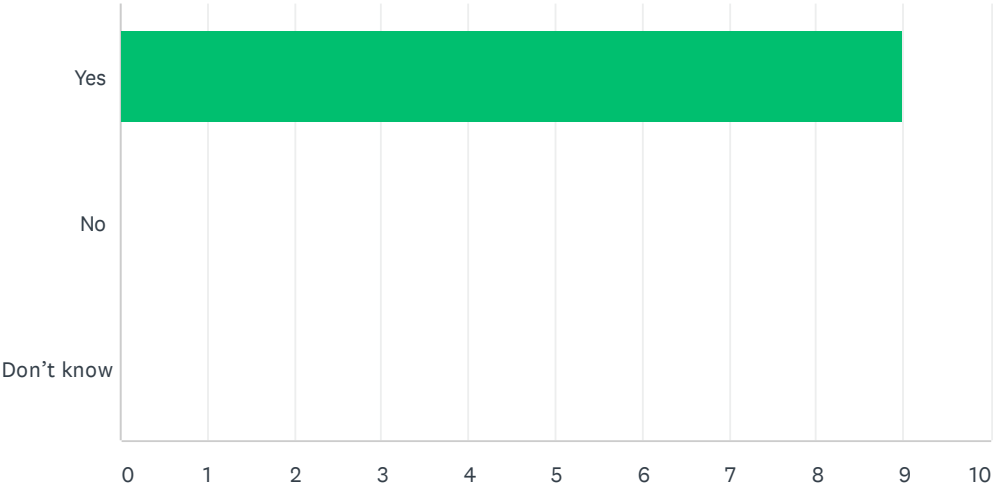


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Care home resident	36%	5
Relative/friend of a care home resident	64%	9
Other (please state)	0%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>14</b>

#	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: 9 Skipped: 5

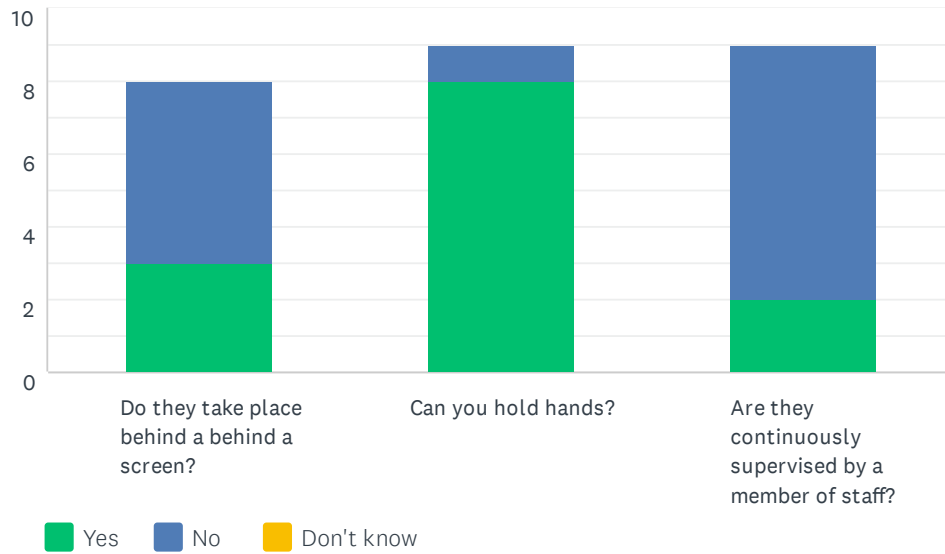


ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		100%	9
No		0%	0
Don't know		0%	0
TOTAL			9



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

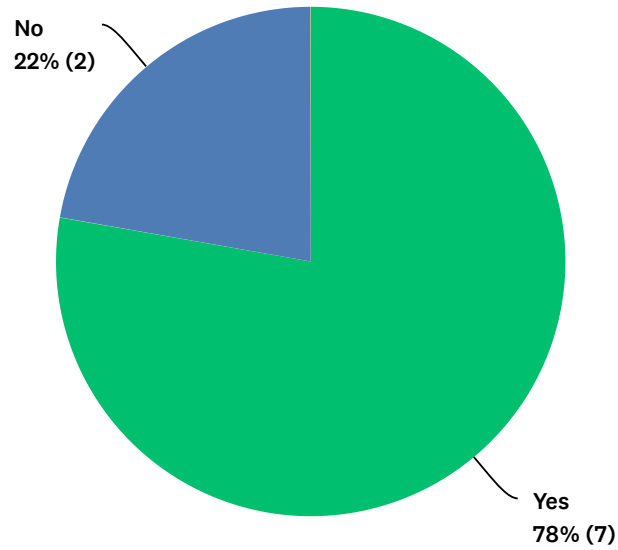
Answered: 9 Skipped: 5



	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Do they take place behind a behind a screen?	38% 3	63% 5	0% 0	8	1.63
Can you hold hands?	89% 8	11% 1	0% 0	9	1.11
Are they continuously supervised by a member of staff?	22% 2	78% 7	0% 0	9	1.78

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

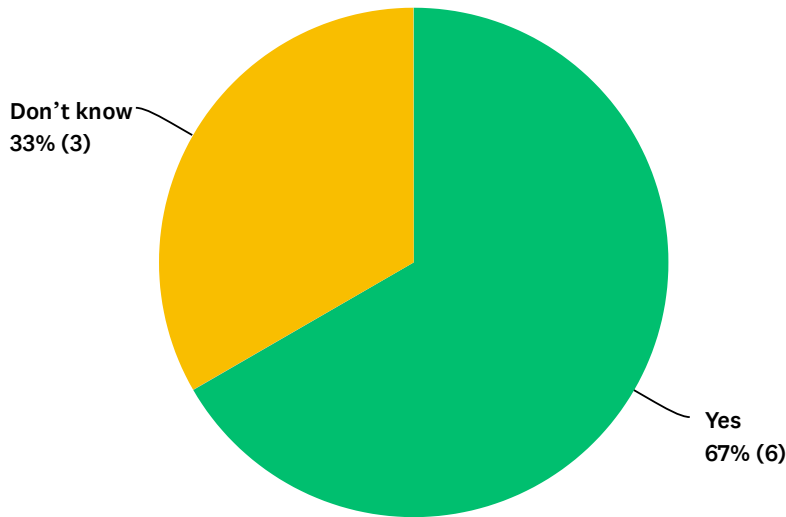
Answered: 9 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	78%	7
No	22%	2
Not sure	0%	0
TOTAL		9

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: 9 Skipped: 5

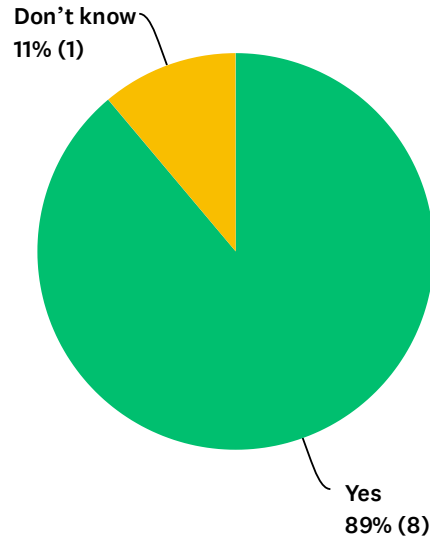


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	67%	6
No	0%	0
Don't know	33%	3
TOTAL		9

#	PLEASE TELL US MORE ABOUT THAT HERE	DATE
1	They are very good at keeping to government guidelines so sure they will be	7/6/2021 1:18 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: 9 Skipped: 5

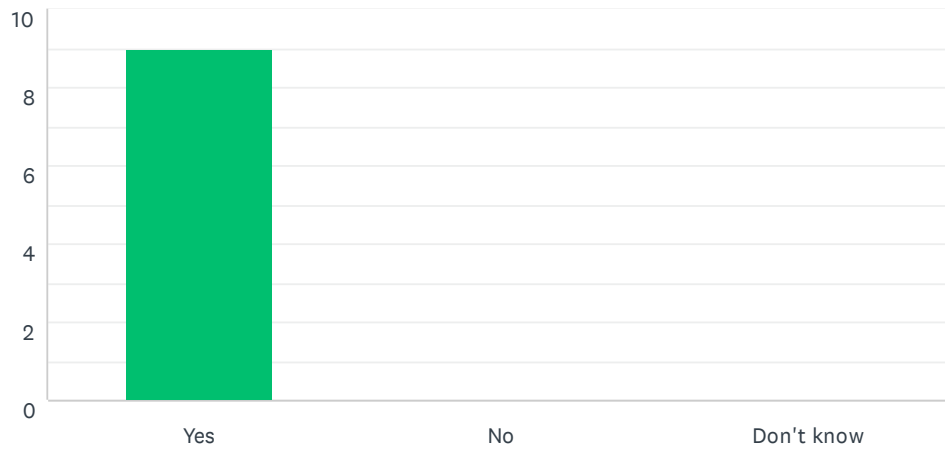


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	89%	8
No	0%	0
Don't know	11%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9</b>

#	PLEASE TELL US MORE ABOUT THAT HERE	DATE
1	N/A as my Mum is unable to leave her room as she is over 101	7/6/2021 1:18 PM

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

Answered: 9 Skipped: 5

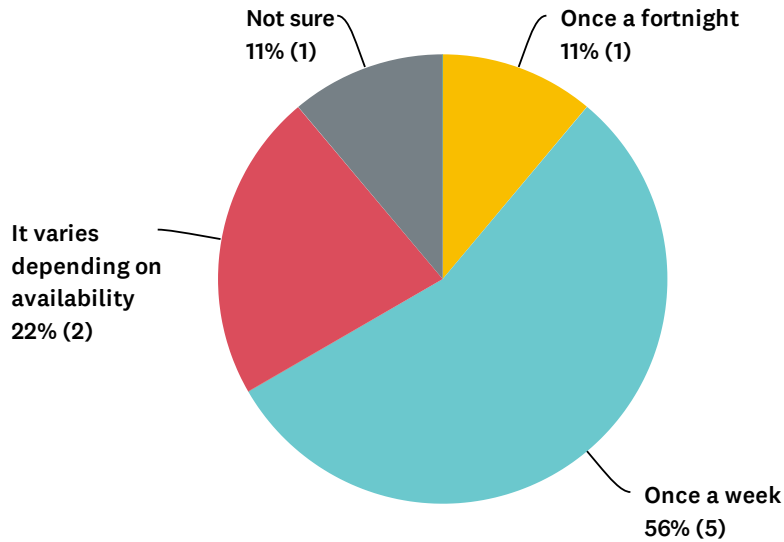


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	100% 9
No	0% 0
Don't know	0% 0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9</b>

#	PLEASE TELL US MORE ABOUT THAT HERE	DATE
1	Yes screened visits but not sure of anything else as not applicable to my family member.	7/6/2021 1:18 PM

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

Answered: 9 Skipped: 5

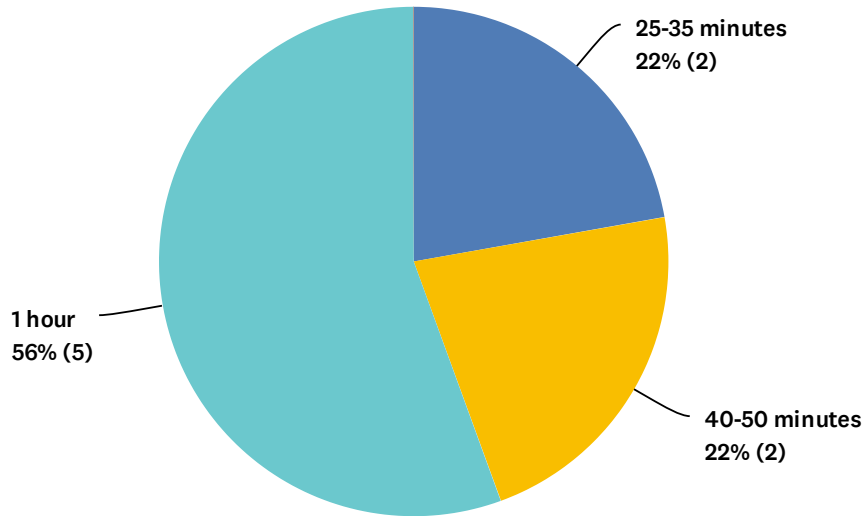


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Once a month	0%	0
Once every three weeks	0%	0
Once a fortnight	11%	1
Once a week	56%	5
Twice a week	0%	0
Three times a week	0%	0
Four times a week or more	0%	0
As many times as I want	0%	0
It varies depending on availability	22%	2
Not sure	11%	1
Not applicable	0%	0
Other (please specify)	0%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9</b>

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

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

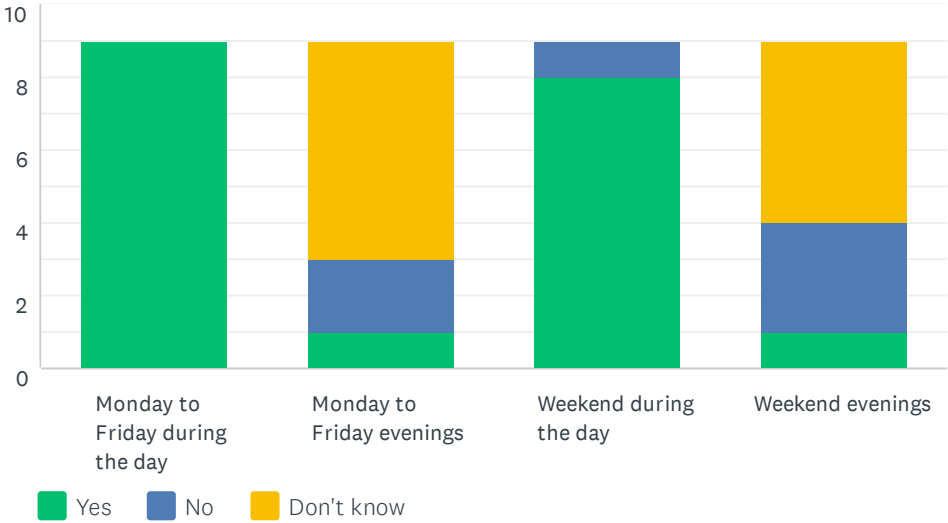
Answered: 9 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
15-20 minutes	0%	0
25-35 minutes	22%	2
40-50 minutes	22%	2
1 hour	56%	5
1.5-2 hours	0%	0
more than 2 hours	0%	0
There is no time limit	0%	0
Not sure	0%	0
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>9</b>

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

Answered: 9 Skipped: 5

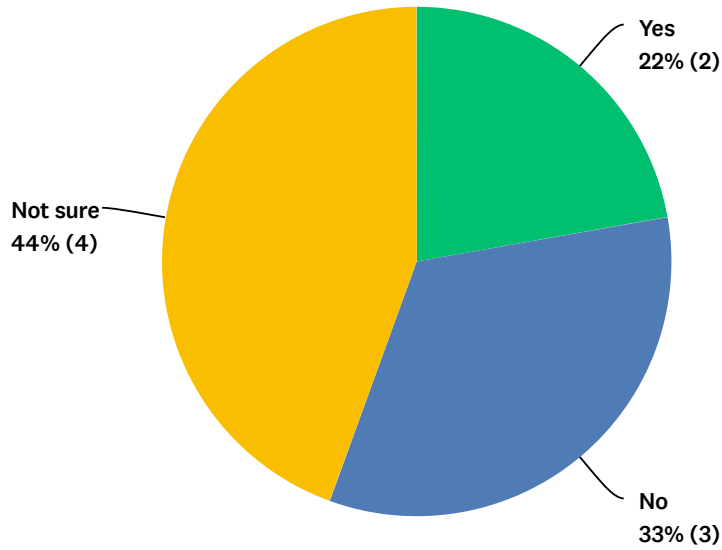


	YES	NO	DON'T KNOW	TOTAL
Monday to Friday during the day	100% 9	0% 0	0% 0	9
Monday to Friday evenings	11% 1	22% 2	67% 6	9
Weekend during the day	89% 8	11% 1	0% 0	9
Weekend evenings	11% 1	33% 3	56% 5	9



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

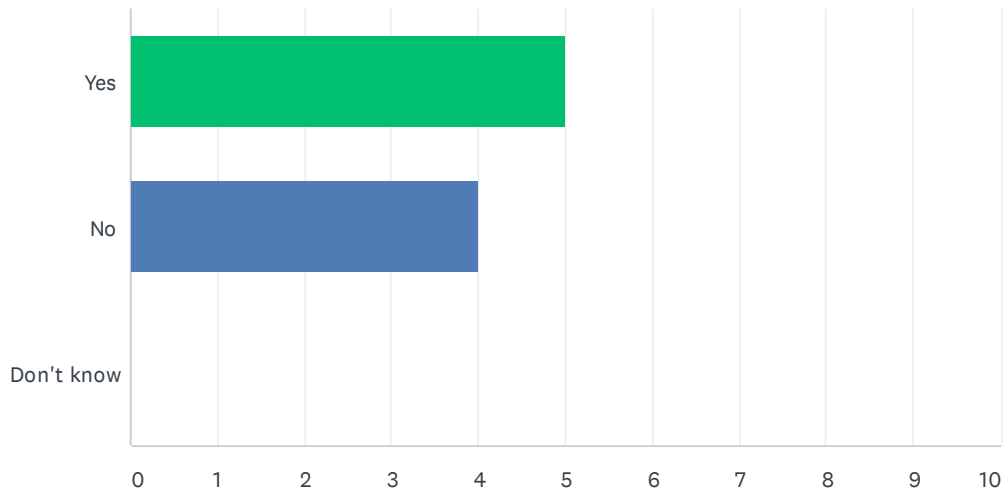
Answered: 9 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	22%	2
No	33%	3
Not sure	44%	4
TOTAL		9

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

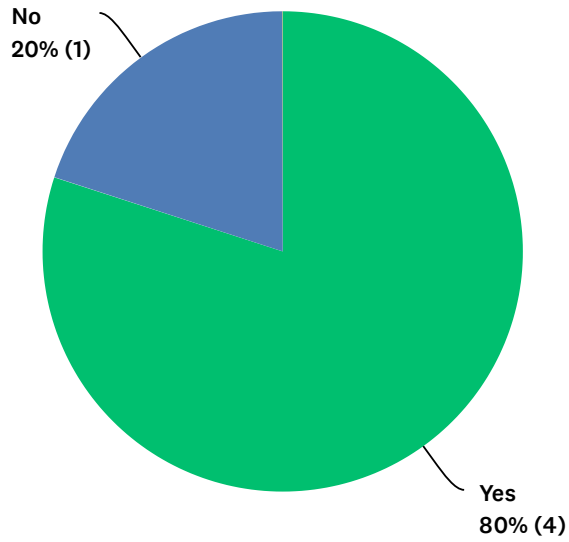
Answered: 9 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES		RESPONSES	
Yes		56%	5
No		44%	4
Don't know		0%	0
TOTAL			9

# 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?

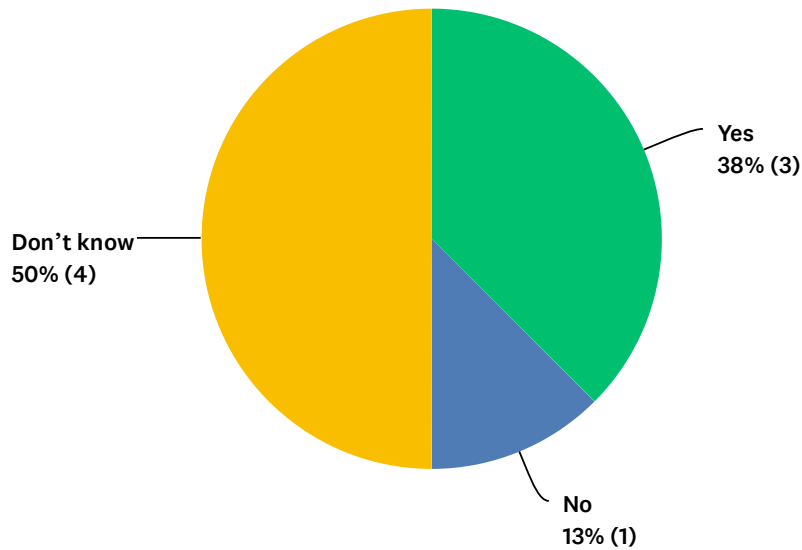
Answered: 5 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	80%	4
No	20%	1
Don't know	0%	0
TOTAL		5

**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?**

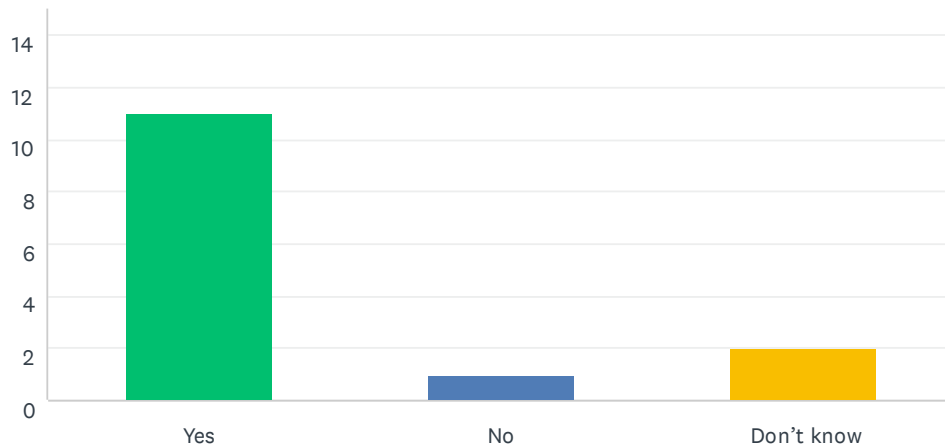
Answered: 8 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	38%	3
No	13%	1
Don't know	50%	4
TOTAL		8

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

Answered: 14 Skipped: 0

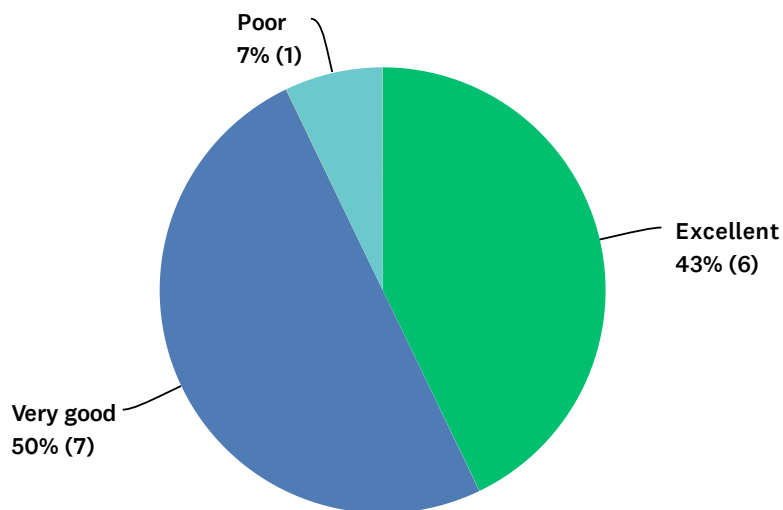


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	79%	11
No	7%	1
Don't know	14%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>14</b>

#	TELL US MORE ABOUT WHY YOU CHOSE YOUR ANSWER HERE	DATE
1	Resident isolating after a hospital stay and not being able to visit doesn't make sense. Maximum 1 hour after a LFT doesn't make sense - I'm in the resident's room so why does it matter?	7/7/2021 3:53 PM
2	Occasionally once a week is not always possible because of number of flow tests required but they do try now for a weekly one.	7/6/2021 1:21 PM
3	but once a week is not enough	7/5/2021 10:21 AM
4	As we are still in pandemic I think the home staff are doing all they can to enable visits. Of course I would rather see my Mum more but everyone needs to stay safe.	6/21/2021 12:28 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: 14 Skipped: 0



	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	AVERAGE	POOR	VERY POOR	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
(no label)	43%	50%	0%	7%	0%	14	1.71
	6	7	0	1	0		

#	COMMENTS	DATE
1	My relative has dementia and is deaf and we were only allowed window visits with window shut for last summer and all through winter. Other homes had garden safe distance visits but not bupa homes. Pod visits were only set up when government said it was essential.	7/7/2021 3:53 PM

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: 5 Skipped: 9

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Very well organised!	7/6/2021 1:46 PM
2	Staff are helpful, on time and organised with flow tests etc and we can ring anytime.	7/6/2021 1:21 PM
3	Keeping to the guidelines.	6/21/2021 1:11 PM
4	Pod visits and room visits work well	6/21/2021 12:45 PM
5	Testing is very organised and I am given privacy. I don't think they could do more. Perhaps some more garden seating would be good so we could sit outside sometimes.	6/21/2021 12:28 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: 6 Skipped: 8

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Guidelines are not law, and if the guidelines don't make sense as they don't at present, use common sense.	7/7/2021 3:53 PM
2	Doing their best under the circumstances	7/6/2021 1:21 PM
3	Maybe have another venue other than room. Outside or cafe area	7/5/2021 10:21 AM
4	It is alright as it is	6/21/2021 1:11 PM
5	Always room for improvement.	6/21/2021 12:45 PM
6	More outdoor seating.	6/21/2021 12:28 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: 9

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The care home staff are great and my relative seems happy, but no-one can explain to me why my relative has to isolate for 14 days on discharge from hospital with a negative PCR test. During this time my relative is deprived of seeing their family despite not having long left to live.	7/7/2021 3:53 PM
2	Letters are sent regularly about current visiting status but not sure about individual risk assessments.	7/6/2021 1:21 PM
3	Happy overall.	7/5/2021 10:21 AM
4	Good testing. No improvement.	6/21/2021 12:45 PM
5	It's an incredible home; the staff are so caring and professional and warm. They can't do enough for my Mum and they have just carried on everyday providing brilliant care through the stress and fear of COVID. I can't thank them enough or praise them highly enough.	6/21/2021 12:28 PM