

Derby City GP Access Survey 2024

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Introduction

This report is a snapshot of people's experiences of accessing GP services in Derby City. The report will be shared with Joined Up Care Derbyshire Integrated Care System, which is the NHS organisation responsible for developing a plan for meeting the health needs of the population, to help them plan improvements to GP provision in the City. The report will also be shared with the Derby City Health and Wellbeing board for awareness. The report will be published with Healthwatch England and on our website for public perusal.

Background

Since Healthwatch Derby's inception we have been consistently contacted about access to GP services in the city. In May 2023 the NHS published its 'Delivery Plan to recovering access to primary care' – this plan focuses on access to make it easier for the public to contact practices when they are open and get a timely response. The government has asked the Office of National Statistics (ONS) to monitor the delivery plan and an article published in HSJ November 2023 based on ONS sources reported:

“After a sign of slight improvement in the summer, the latest survey results – for October – show no significant change since May.”

It also found, as did previous rounds, that of those who had tried to contact a GP practice in the past month, 10 per cent said they could not do so. Of those who did make contact, a further 6 per cent reported they were told to try again another day.

According to the ONS figures, this equates to around 2.8 million and 1.5 million people respectively each month.

Healthwatch England's (HWE) 'The public's perspective – the state of health and social care November 2023 report' discusses that whilst satisfaction has fallen in recent years, the latest GP Patient Survey still found that 71% of patients reported a good overall experience of care at their practice. But it also recognised that people can only get high-quality care if they get through the door in the first place. The report highlighted that difficulty accessing GP appointments was one of the most common issues shared last year including:

- long waits in phone queues to book appointments;
- people struggling navigating online GP access tools.

The report discusses that people faced individual barriers, and how they found it hard to get appointments that suited them – and, after struggling to access help in the past, some people shared that they no longer try to book appointments at all.

HWE also discussed that research by others showed that in 2023, people's experience of booking an appointment got worse. They found it harder to contact their GP surgery by phone. And when asked for their top priorities for the NHS, making it easier to get GP appointments was second only to increasing the overall number of NHS staff.

The Healthwatch England report makes these calls for change:

People want to have a choice of appointment type, time, and healthcare professional the first time they contact surgeries, with access to care navigators who can answer their queries. So we must see wholehearted action taken to implement the NHS primary care recovery plan. All patients must benefit from the promised commitments – particularly carers and people living in more deprived areas. We want to see:

1. All GP surgeries move to digital phone systems by the end of March 2024, so patients spend less time waiting on hold.
2. Greater public awareness of, and sign-ups to, the NHS app, through the promised national communications campaign.
3. Most patients able to benefit from full NHS app functionalities by the end of March 2024.
4. Evidence that Integrated Care Boards plan to tackle health inequalities around GP access, especially in deprived areas.
5. All GP practices offering free phone numbers.
6. All GP practices sign up for the Register with a GP Surgery Service, which makes registering with a surgery easier for patients, particularly those with no fixed address or ID.

This report covers the experience of the residents of Derby City when accessing local GP services.

Methodology

A survey consisting of 12 questions and optional demographics was produced and made available through social media platforms, both our own and those of other local partners across the city. The engagement team also had paper copies which they used on a face-to-face basis whilst visiting GP services and at other various outreach locations. The survey was also translated on request into Urdu, Punjabi, and Polish in line with our policy to try and match the Derby City Council commitment to make those and Slovak available on request.

The survey was open October 2023 until January 2024.

403 people started the survey but only 243 people completed, and the results are based on those 243.

Summary

- 39 locations were mentioned in the survey. This includes branch surgeries; some surgeries may have been called another name by the individual completing the survey.
- 73% of those who responded said they found it difficult to make appointments.
- Most people said they were not offered alternative appointments (82%).
- There is a preference (85%) of face-to-face appointments.
- Only 41% of those who took part said reception staff attitude was good.
- Less than half of the people who responded said they were happy with the consultation they received.
- 75% said that their GP practice is worse now than before the Covid 19 pandemic.
- Many people are facing long telephone queues and are still not getting appointments when calling at 8am.

Recommendations

Healthwatch Derby wants assurances that the NHS primary care recovery plan will be fully implemented.

It is recommended that:

- how improvements are going to be made are fully communicated to both professionals and the general public;
- the telephone appointment system is given a complete overhaul at GP practices;
- patients are given more options and times to make appointments; and
- patients are given more choice of appointment times.

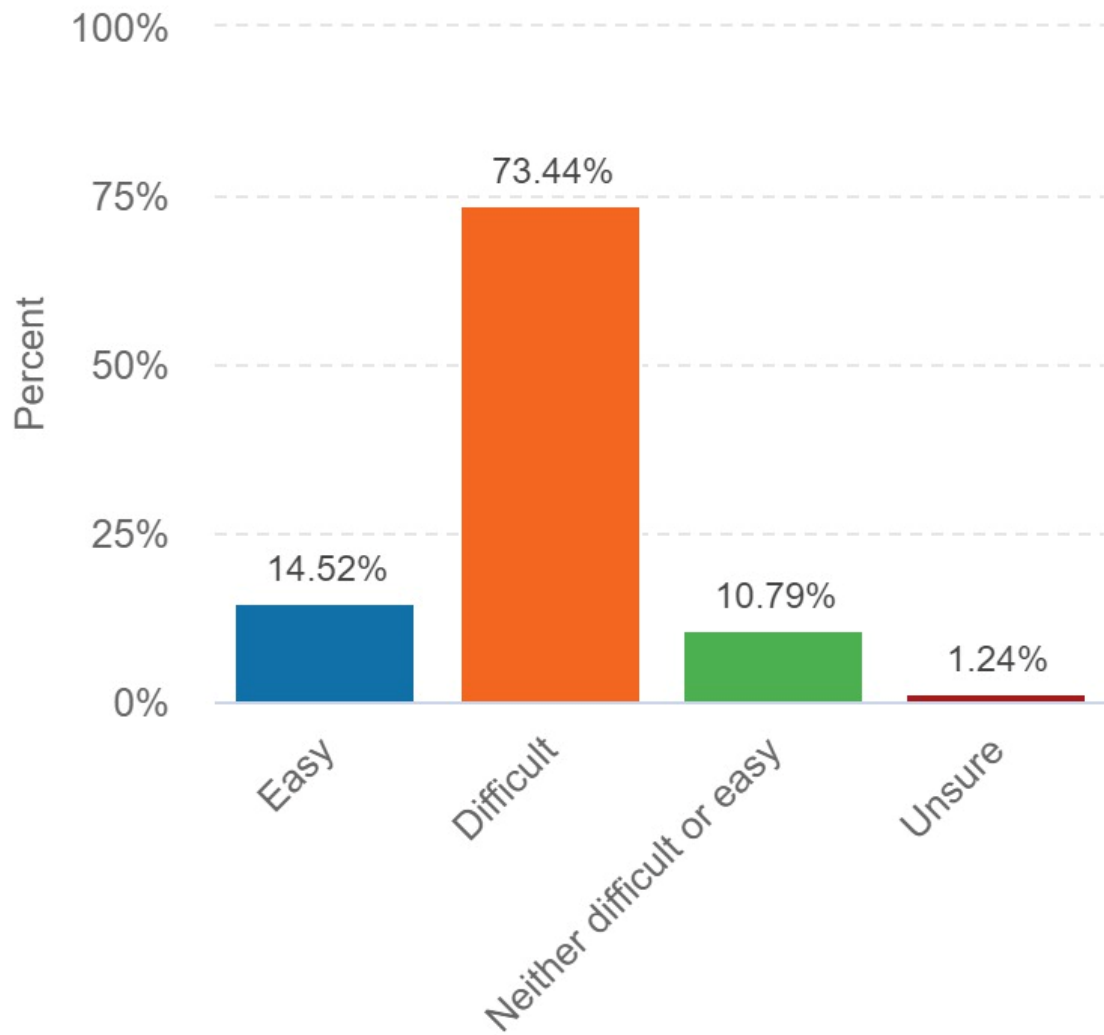
The findings

Q1. Select your GP

Alvaston Medical Centre	4.53%
Brook Medical Centre	1.23%
Chapel Street Medical Centre	2.06%
Chellaston Medical Centre	9.88%
Coleman Street	2.06%
Derby Family Medical Centre	0.82%
Derwent Medical Centre	2.47%
Derwent Valley Medical Chaddesden	2.06%
Derwent Valley Medical Spondon	0.82%
Friargate Surgery	3.29%
Haven Medical Centre	2.06%
Hollybrook Medical Centre	7.41%
Horizon Healthcare	11.93%
Humbleton Drive	0.00%
Lister House Surgery Coleman Street	0.41%
Lister House Surgery Chellaston	6.58%
Lister House Surgery Peartree	0.82%
Macklin Street Surgery	2.47%
Mayfield Medical Centre	0.82%
Mickleover Medical Centre	4.12%
Mickleover Surgery	0.82%
Oakwood Medical Centre	1.23%
Oakwood Surgery	0.82%
Osmaston Surgery	7.00%
Park Farm Medical Centre	4.53%
Park Farm Surgery	0.41%
Park Lane Surgery	0.82%
Park Medical Practice Chaddesden	4.53%
Park Medical Practice University of Derby	0.00%
Parkfields	1.23%
Peartree Medical Centre	0.00%
Sinfin Health Centre	1.23%
St Thomas Road Surgery	0.41%
Taddington Road Surgery	0.00%
The Lanes Medical Centre	0.41%
The Vernon Street Surgery	2.06%
Vernon Street Medical Centre	4.12%
Village Surgery	1.65%
Wilson Street Surgery	2.88%

Question 2

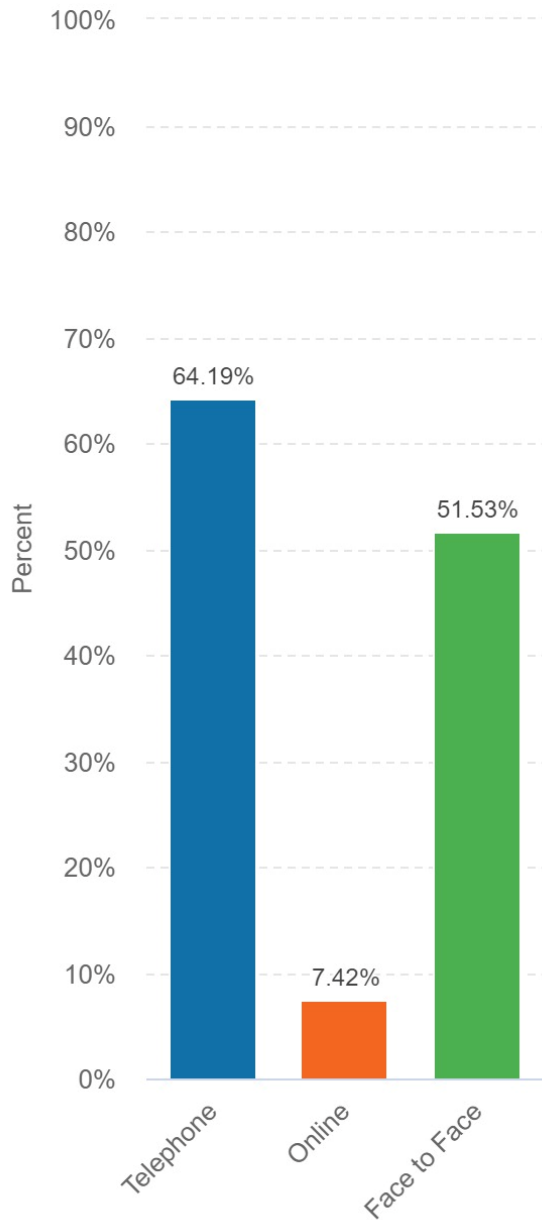
How easy was it to get an appointment?



74% of those that responded said that it was difficult to make an appointment with their GP.

Question 3

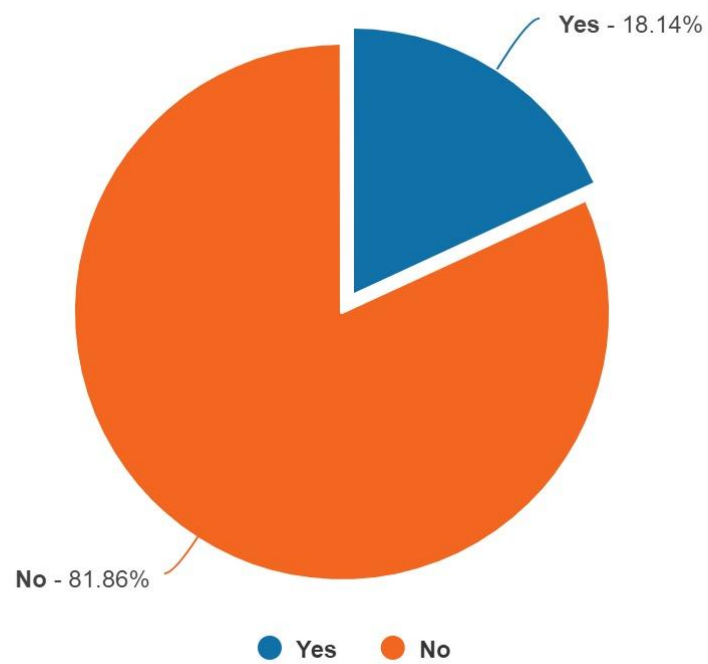
What types of appointments were you offered?



64% of respondents said they were offered telephone appointments, though almost 52% said they were offered face to face appointments – it is unclear whether some of these were after an initial telephone appointment. Only 7% said they had been offered online appointments.

Question 4

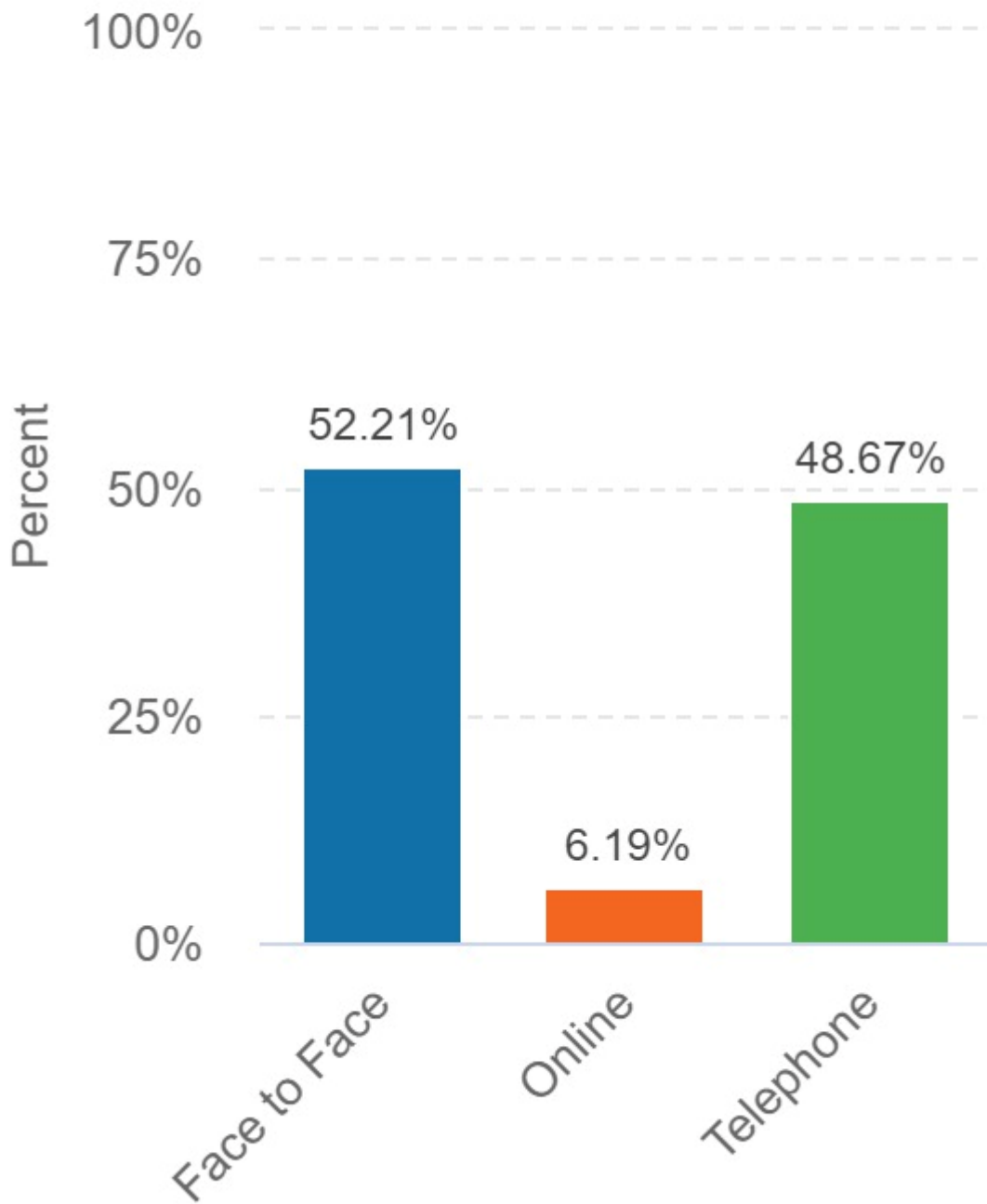
Were you offered alternative appointment types?



Almost 82% said they were not offered alternative appointments.

Question 5

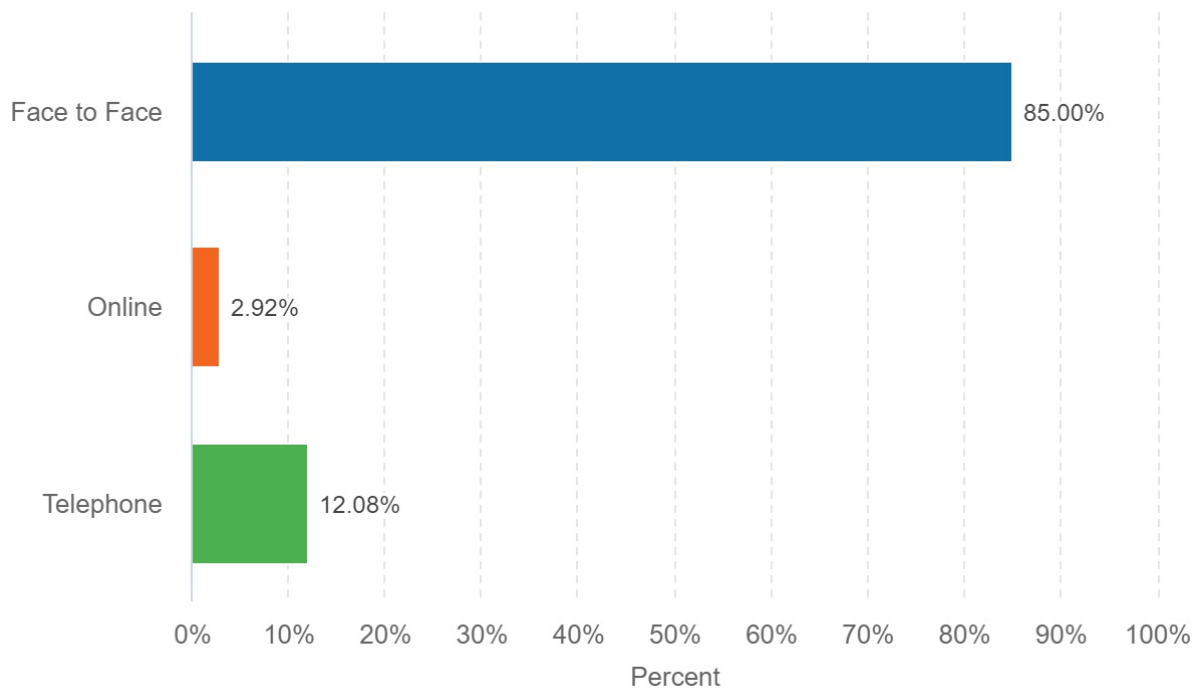
Which type of appointment did you use?



52% said they received face to face appointments, almost 49% said they had telephone appointments, with only 6% saying they had online appointments. Some of the respondents attended face to face after a telephone appointment.

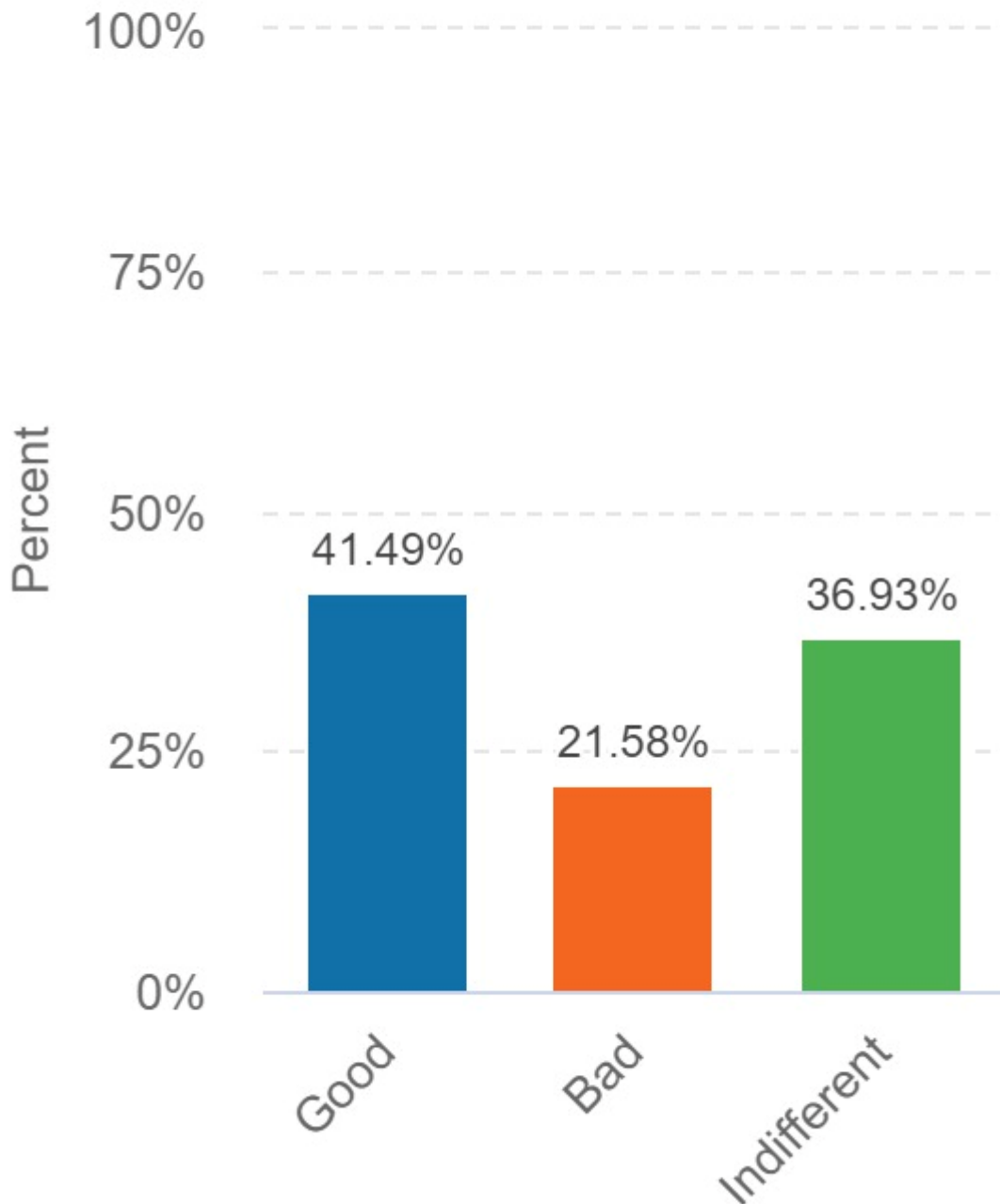
Question 6

Which appointment type do you prefer?



Question 7

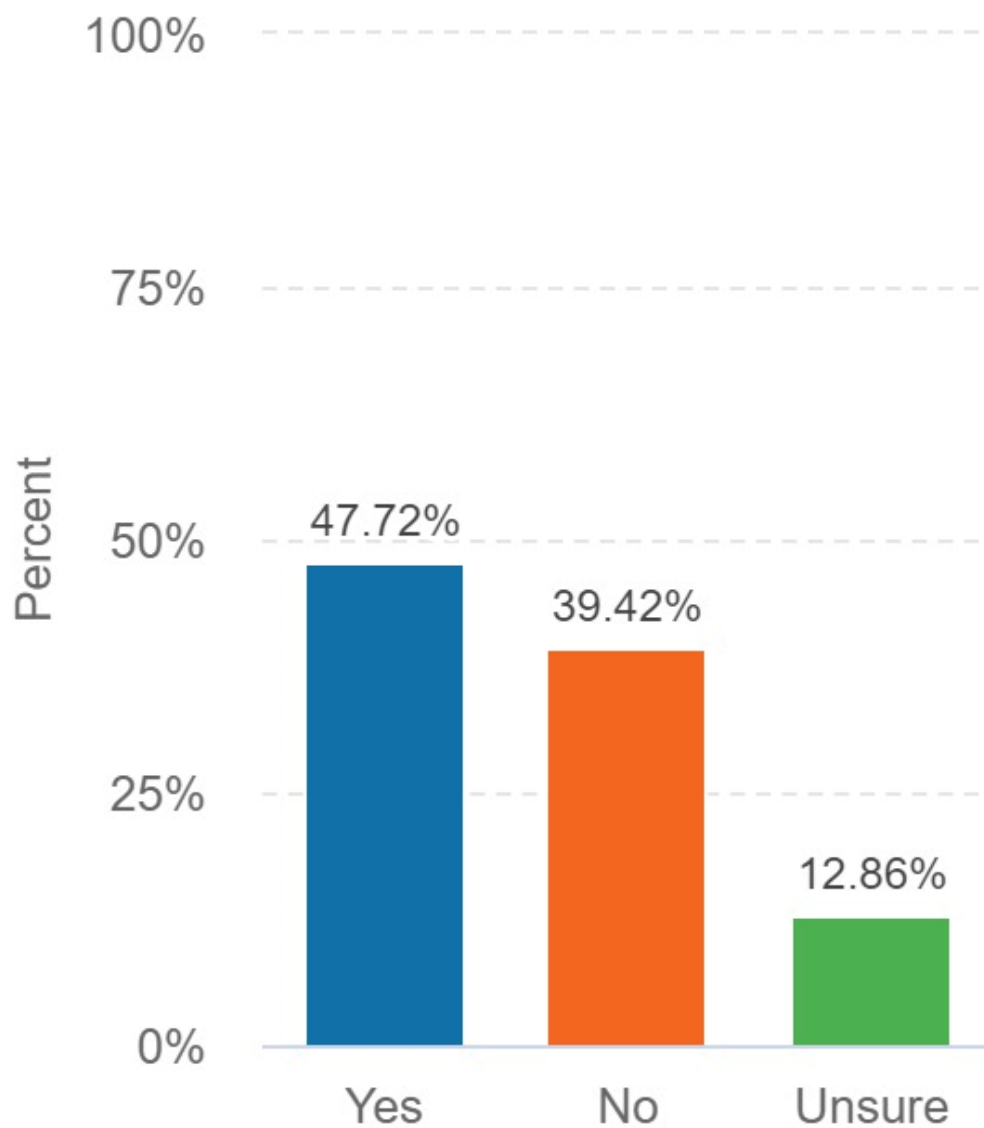
What were the attitudes of the reception staff like?



Only 41% said the attitude of the reception staff was good. Almost 22% said staff attitude was bad and almost 37% said it was neither good nor bad.

Question 8

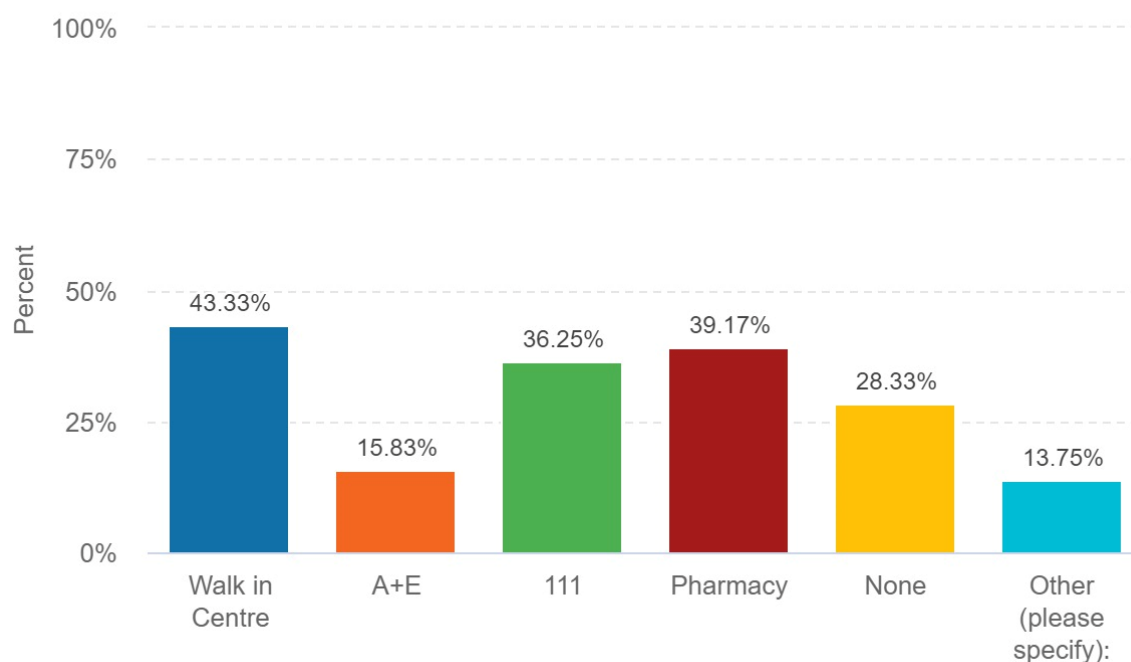
Were you happy with the outcome of your consultation?



Almost 48%, less than half of those asked, said they were happy with their consultation. 39% said they were unhappy with their consultation with almost 13% unsure.

Question 9

Have you used any other services because you had difficulties getting an appointment at your GP?



The others mentioned were

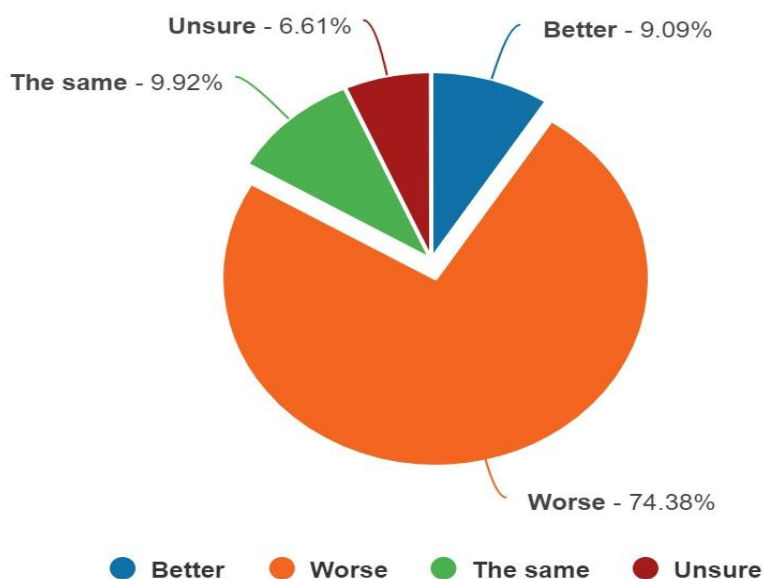
telephone for appointment at doctor surgery.	33
Bupa	32
111 don't phoneback	31
Private	30
Private	29
Private GP	28
Social Media searches	27
Specsavers opticians	26
Private practice	25
Private GP	24
Not since covid	23
Nhs website	22
Private menopause clinic	21
EConsult	20
Refuse to when it's a problem for a doctor	19
Google	18
Had to get a consultant appointment	17
E consult	16
Our life insurance policy has a free medical helpline for advice.	15
Private online	14

Private GP and private Xray. Pharmacist WONDERFUL!!	13
Self manage	12
private doctor	11
Private alternatives	10
Private GP appointment	9
No why shud I thay are all useless 4 to 12 hour waits it's rediculas	8
Private	7
Don't bother as not got the energy to keep ringing	6
Let conditions get worse	5
Private GP	4
CDU hospital	3
email and writing letters to my GP get my health and medicine issues addressed.	2
Online research	1

The walk-in centre (43%), pharmacies (39%) and 111 (36%) were mentioned as the main alternative services when those who responded said they were having difficulties getting a GP appointment. 16% said they went to A&E (Emergency Department at the hospital). Of the 14% who said they used other almost half said they used a private alternative. However, a small number said they let the condition get worse, stopped trying to get an appointment or tried to self-manage their condition.

Question 10

In your opinion, how is the service at your GP compared to pre-Covid?



74% of those who took the survey said that their GP service is worse than before the COVID 19 pandemic.

Question 11

What would improve the service for you?

Improvements to the telephone system was the most mentioned (22%) – the 8am rush seen as inconvenient and many mention long telephone waiting times only to be told there are no appointments left.

Increased appointment availability (20%) – longer hours, more same day appointments.

More face-to-face appointments (15%).

Better customer service by the reception staff (10%).

More Online appointments (8%).

Ability to make advance appointments (8%) – particularly for non-urgent cases who have been told by GP they need to be seen as a routine part of condition management.

More GP'S (5%).

The remaining (12%) mentioned – seeing the same GP, improvements in how hospital results communicated and general admin, improvements and maintenance to some GP facilities, improvements in how GPs and other staff listen to what they are being told, restricting the amount of registrations a surgery can make , ensuring sufficient absentee and holiday cover and specialist knowledge of some conditions.

The full list of unedited comments:

1	being able to get an appointment. 2hours wait is too long.A hip problem done by telephone appointment.
2	Telephone queuing. Being able to get to to speak to the Practice Manager without having to write. And finally, a form for this, a form for that.
3	Availability of appointments to see a GP face to face without having to ring at 8 am
4	Patients need to have Face to face access, prompt solutions with pragmatic prescriptions and less time spent on paperwork of little value. There is no role for receptionists and 'nurse specialists' for clinical problems. Sick and tired of history taking by these individuals who are incompetent to see nuance.
5	More gps seeing patients & being able to make appointments other than @ 8.00 in the morning!!!
6	I very fortunate that I rarely need GP appointments. My husband however, has physical health issues which require daily medication including insulin injections for type 2 diabetes. He also has CKD for which he was referred to

	RDH nephrology dept. During the COVID lock down my husband developed TB. We could not get a GP appt for love nor money, due to his persistent cough he was felt to be a COVID risk. I contacted 111 as there was no other recourse to obtaining medical attention. Paramedics came and firstly felt he had pneumonia. Husband admitted to RDH , diagnosed with TB and put on a 6 months course of powerful antibiotics. I had to be very persistent in my request for medical support at that time due to the pandemic. Surgeries need to listen to patients and their relatives when contact us made. Speaking to a receptionist with limited medical knowledge who will make a decision as to whether GP callback is necessary is not good enough.
7	Ability to book appointment in advance and not be continually told to call again at 8am (when you can't get through because everyone is being told the same thing).
8	To get face to appointment with the GP .
9	Being able to speak to your own surgery rather than a central hub
10	Telephone answering in time, not given feedback for your appointment
11	Receptionists who are not tyrannical
12	Being able to see the same G.P. - I see a stranger every time that I go. Time is wasted as I have to go through old history. Being able to book an appointment online instead of waiting in a telephone queue for hours. Being able to get an appointment within a few days instead of having to wait weeks. Bettter site maintenance - there are cracked and broken flagstones outside making it difficult to manouvre a wheelchair. Corridooors not cluttered up with benches, boxes etc. Space to be able to manouvre in a wheelchair. Face to face appointments - I really struggle to make out what is being said on the phone.
13	a telephone service where you can get an appointment that day and not have to wait weeks that is if you can get through on the first call and not be number 30 and wait for up to an hour just to be told no appointments left
14	More access to Face to Face appointments. Telephone consultations are too impersonal and fail to pick up visual clues. Many patients are intrmidated by talking over the phone and hold back issues. The process of getting through is an arduous one. There is a telephone queue but I have waited on that well over 30 minutes before getting to speak to a receptionist who then decides on the next part of the route, usually a triage call and maybe, just maybe, a call back from a GP (if you are lucky!).
15	Booking appointment in advance
16	Some doctors! More telephone lines More appointments

17	varied booking systems, simple website, phone call backs, phone queues with position in queue information, phone system with wait time information. No need to wait outside surgery with one in/one out.
18	Someone answering the phone and talking to you within 10 minutes. Having appointments available and not being told to call back tomorrow. Reception staff giving an appointment not asking loads of questions.
19	more appointments
20	More availability of appointments
21	Pre bookable appointments instead of calling on the day, waiting in a queue for thirty minutes to be told the days appointments have gone.
22	Allow patients to see drs
23	I can't call to request an emergency appointment, or visit the surgery, in the 30 mins we are told to call. Therefore I am never able to get an urgent/emergency appointment
24	Answering their phone. They cut off the line as there were too many people waiting. Better triaging service- they just want you to do the online consultation but that closes early as they have too many people accessing it.
25	Seeing a doctor on the same day as I ring and not to be on hold for over 3 hours to try and see a doctor then to be told call back tomorrow as there's no one left
26	I would prefer to have a face to face appointment.
27	More available face to face appointments and a shorter wait than 2 weeks when one is in pain or discomfort, or concerned about a problem.
28	No longer able to go in, in person as surgery opens to get an on the day appointment you have to phone. Phone lines are closed, closed, closed then lines are at capacity ring back later when you try. I start work at 7:30am and there is no where private to tell the receptionist what the problem is so I haven't been to the Dr myself for about a year, despite an open wound in my armpit since Christmas 2023.
29	I find the receptionists are great when you can get through but it's so difficult to get even onto the wait list on the phone, let alone actually get through and if you aren't through by about 9 then all the appointments are then gone. I understand why they've combined phone services to ease staffing but it has made it really difficult to get through. I also miss the online system to register issues and make appointments, you used to be able to use this for lots of different things but there isn't much on there anymore.
30	I find it incredibly stressful to ring at 8am for an appointment. Before covid we could book appointments online and this was much better for me. I need to see the available appointments times on the screen to process the information. I find it difficult to communicate by telephone as I'm autistic. When I ring the surgery there is almost 2 minutes of recorded information before you get the option to be put through to request an appointment with the

	receptionist. At that point, if the telephone system is overwhelmed with calls then you get the engaged tone and have to hang up. If you are lucky then it will put you into the queue to speak to reception. It can take numerous attempts at ringing, listening to the 2 minute recorded message before even getting into the queue for an appointment. This is incredibly stressful for anyone in need of a medical appointment, but obviously for a person with any additional needs or disabilities then this is appalling.
31	I have autism and now you can only make appointments by phone (going in is no longer allowed either) it is appalling
32	Have different options for appointments times and have back online appointments booking again
33	It has to be an extremely urgent issue to be seen and there is a very small window to get an appointment, and that's only by phone. I fear for how my profoundly Deaf son, or my Autistic ADHD son will access health care independently in the future. There is little patience or allowance for those who can't 'play the game' of sitting pressing re-dial at 8am on the dot. Making in person appointments with a receptionist has to be used for people like my teenagers.
34	Turn up and wait for a guaranteed appointment rather than book appts for ppl who don't turn up. Improving telephone waiting services.
35	Being able to get a face to face appointment so you can discuss your issues properly
36	More appointments available later in the day. I'm not always poorly 1st thing.
37	Not holding all appointments for an 8am phone call. Let's be honest, we can never get through even if we start trying at 7.59 we are still trying at twenty past. I teach. I need to be in my class room setting up by 8.10. This is the most inappropriate time to call. Can you have a morning selection and an evening one perhaps? Or let me book online?
38	Would be lovely to not get cut of completely after waiting 20 minutes in the queue and having to recall again
39	Being able to get an appointment with my gp the doctor has requested to see me the receptionist said he hasn't put it in his notes, the request came from my diabetic nurse , can't speak to her either, still haven't seen the doctor .
40	Being able to get same day appointments How can you ring at 8am and be told all appointments gone even though they can't be pre booked
41	More online bookable appointments Prescribed drugs being available in local pharmacies (often have to have the prescription changed or chase lots of different pharmacies)
42	Opportunity to book appointments in advance. Often I do not need emergency appointments but am forced to call at 8am when the lines are very busy.

	Better admin in terms of actioning hospital clinic letters - often I have to call regarding something written in a letter to the GP from consultants.
43	Access to pre bookable appointments for long term conditions where it isn't an emergency.
44	More available appointments on the day. The waiting time to speak to a receptionist can be up to an hour and by the time you speak to someone there is never any appointments available.
45	<p>Being able to pre-book non-urgent appointments. I don't want to have to ring for a non,urgent appointment at 8am, when urgent cases are ringing, but if I don't, by the time I get through I was told there were no appointments available.</p> <p>I also rang from A&E at 4.30pm after an X-Ray. I'd been advised to ring the surgery to request referral for an MRI. I was told appointments can't be booked at 4.30 & to ring 1st thing. So, I sat in a huge queue, again with people who urgently needed an appointment, just so I could make the same request I'd made the previous evening.</p> <p>I just feel that urgent appointments should be easier to book and non-urgent take a different phone route.</p>
46	It would be nice to know, if, they are that busy, why our surgery is always empty? I haven't seen a GP in a while. I'm offered a nurse or some other practitioner. I have been at my surgery since I was born 65 years ago and since covid its absolutely dire, you cant even voice your opinion in fear of being told to find another GP! They seem to have forgotten how we worked pre-covid. It may be better for the GP but it's not right for the patient. I worked as a receptionist in 2 Derby hospitals in the 80s and was told by a Consultant that you cant diagnose illness over the phone. You obviously don't see the patient and cannot always go on what that patient tells you!
47	Not assume that we are all good at IT. Get whoever does the triage on the on line form to look at the whole picture. I was sent a utube video to take a photo of my throat. However had they looked at other health factors they would have known that this was impossible. Get an appointment for the things that the nhs tv adverts say you need to see a gap. For example a bad cough .
48	The Doctor seeing patients when & not having to ring up at 8am on the day & because your 20th in the que no appointment left for that day so they ask you to ring the next day at 8am .
49	Being able to book appointments in advance and mot just for that day
50	<p>Less questions from receptionist trying to tell you what you need when asking to see a doctor.</p> <p>Trying to access mental health appointments there's weeks and weeks waits. When it's an emergency appointment needed.</p>
51	Go back to all face to face appointments

52	To be able to see doctor . Better training of receptionists eg when teeing them symptoms of cancer and getting appointment in two weeks
53	A longer on line appointment system and a selectable telephone appointment
54	More appointment availability!
55	More face to face apps with a consistent GP
56	Reinstate online booking appointments as getting through at 8am with children and work is impossible
57	Same day face to face appointments
58	Gp's and receptionists need to listen to your concerns.
59	I can call at 8:35 - 5 minutes after the phone line opened and an automated message tells me there are no appointments. Don't even get a chance to speak to somebody - actually having a chance to speak to somebody
60	More appointments available, the 8am phone situation is a nightmare, can easily make 50+ attempts to get through and finding no appointments left.
61	Being able to pre book an appointment rather than having to call at 8.30 in the morning for a same day when that's not convenient for me nor what I want especially with it not being urgent
62	Ability to book ahead for routine appointments when the GP suggests "come back in four weeks" it would help to be able to book it then and there
63	A telephone system that does not take 30+ minutes to get through to a real person.
64	Offering next day slots.
65	More appointments available!! Also, at my surgery, why can't I book an appointment for the future because the doctor want to see me back in 2 weeks? instead, have to go through the 8 o'clock phone scramble for several days. I haven't gone back sometimes because impossible to get a follow up appointment and get tired of trying.
66	Being able to ring and get through! More appointments.
67	being able to make an appointment at the surgery instead of waiting 45 to 60 minutes at the end of a phone. Seeing a GP face to face
68	To be seen by a docter or even a nurse i am housebound and i hav.nt had a dr out to see me in at least 3yrs possible four
69	Facility to book appointment via online Reception staff not to be difficult

70	If appointments could be made in advance to fit round work for things like health prevention issues
71	Face to face appointments readily available. Doctors want to see their patients but Beaurocratic red tape prevents it. Too much box to king amd form filling instead of good old face to face which tells the Gp more than a 5 minute app
72	Receptionists who are not rude. Receptionists not acting like doctors and thinking they know better than the patient. Doctors who actually listen to you and not fob you off.
73	Better knowledge. Read medical notes prior to phone consults to avoid making assumptions.
74	Have more flexibility for people who work when needing a telephone appt. Twice I have had to wait for a medicine review to only get a message saying your review has been accepted. No GP spoke to me to see how I'm progressing with the medication.
75	Pleasant receptionists, who understand you are in dire need of a GP appointment. Then being able to see your GP before you end up with a full on breakdown!
76	Shorter waiting times and less of a wait for the telephone to be answer.
77	I've gone private in the end; can never get an appointment. Had 3 phones ringing at 8am as my daughter had a UTI; 20 mins later finally answered to be told no appointments. Absolutely cr@p. Ended up at the walk-in centre.
78	Get more doctors in stop taking patients you can't accommodate the services in derby are disgraceful
79	More face to face appointment
80	The system of having to call at 8am to try to get an appointment needs to change. I have children to get ready for school and can never get through at that time. By the time I manage to get through to reception all the appointments are gone and I'm told to try again the next day. Unless it's for a nurse appointment you can't make appointments for a future date
81	Better phone lines when you phone if your not within the number 50 in queue you've got. I chance of speaking or getting app, uou press 0 they ring you back hours later and there is no appointment left
82	Pre bookable face to face slots for future appointments rather than 1hour phone wait for on the day telephone appointments only
83	You need to call at 8 o'clock te get an appointment on the same day, there is no option to book an appointment for the next available day. After being in the telephone queue for 20 minutes despite being number 8 in the telephone queue they said there is no more appointments for the day and the only option it's try again the following day. This is ridiculous system, before COVID you

	could go online and pick an appointment and only if need an appointment for the same day you call in the morning. They also didn't have any nurse in the surgery for a while.
84	There are no appointments available at the surgery unless you ring at 8am or try online. You can not book future date appointments either. My nephew whom has physical and mental health issues gave up. We may as well not have a surgery.
85	Having a GP that listened, showed empathy and understanding and was generally more professional
86	The ability to get routine appointments. I have a backlog of things that I need to discuss with a GP and it is impossible to get an appointment unless I say it is urgent - none of my issues are urgent in my opinion so I don't want to take urgent appointments away from those in need but they could all become urgent if I never get seen.
87	Being able to see a dr face to face easier for an illness that isn't necessarily life threatening.
88	Not having to wait on the phone for nearly 45 minutes to be told all appointments gone and to call back tomorrow.
89	More prebookables on line But understand why not as people don't turn up ☹️
90	Online appointments and medication requests; out of hours options
91	Ease of obtaining appointments
92	Easier access, more respectfulness and consistency in staff quality. 1)reception very variable, some really very poor and and unprofessional making dealing with them not a nice experience. Some are respectful and professional but feels like a minority. 2) Gp again more consistency GP quality, odd poor GP (though believe they've left surgery now) let down the good ones. Less rushed Gps. More Access to female Gps. Easier access to Gps and appointmentsas just too difficult to get an appointments, so results in just trying to just self manage.
93	They need to lesson to patients no rush because they have 10min. Slot as some patients got more the one problem, and they need to do more investigation if problem (pain in my case) not gone away, no mask the problem but find what is causing it and then cure it.
94	Face to Face appointments - increase availability Improve the telephone system
95	Pre Covid - it was possible to book a non-urgent appointment in advance (useful for things like annual prescription reviews) but they removed this option during Covid and have steadfastly refused to reinstate it - despite me asking several times. Instead, for a non-urgent appointment, you have to call at 8am on the dot and join the queue for a same day appt, even though you

	don't NEED a same day appointment. Battling with people who DO need same day appointments and potentially stealing slots from them unnecessarily. It's especially inconvenient for single parents who are supposed to be getting their kids ready for school/nursery - and quite often by the time you get to the front of the queue you are told that all the slots have gone. Absolutely stupid and incredibly stressful for patients. I imagine that Doctors don't want to deliberately cause their patients unnecessary stress yet they do...
96	More people answering phones. I feel that having to wait for over 20 minutes makes patient grumpy and they take this out on the receptionists who then take it out on the next patient. It's a vicious circle of grumpiness.
97	Online appointments even if I have to wait up to two weeks. Currently only on the day appointments available by telephone booking but if you can get through all appointments are gone within 10-20 minutes of the phone lines opening
98	Get rid of ring up at 8 to get an appointment never any appointments left
99	I monitor my own B/P at home--being sensible and with a strong family history of strokes. It was raised, the pharmacist checked it, put me on a 24 hours measure. Took the results to a locum GP--alarmingly high--was told" I don't know what you are worried about!!" Condescending patronising fool
100	A telephone system that works! Having appointments available online and telephone. At the moment you have to ring at 8:00 wait for ages then find all the appointments have gone. No way of booking an appointment in a week or two ahead esp if it's just a routine one.
101	Being able to get a face to face appointment.
102	If it were easier to get an appointment - sometimes if you ring at 8, you can find it is almost impossible to get through as there doesn't seem to be any sort of waiting system and if you do, all the appointments are gone. Would be good to have an easier way to book an appointment - maybe for more scheduled appointments like cervical smear, an online system.
103	The availability of appointments. I was lucky as there had been a cancellation so I had 1(minutes which is fine as I am a 5 minute walk away
104	Same day appointments
105	Although I got through and had a very positive experience with my practice, it had taken me 3 weeks, ringing approximately 3 days a week to even get through.
106	Face to face appointments. Make early morning and evening appointments on available for working people so they don't need to take time off work to attend gp appointments, elderly and none working people do not need to use early appointments
107	Being able to consistently get appointments within reasonable times.

108	Being able to book ahead rather than just from 8am scramble / phone queue.
109	My last 2 appointments (with a nurse) were cancelled by the surgery at short notice obliging me to go to the walk-in centre instead. So having enough staff to be able to cover for absences would be better.
110	Access to face to face appointments. More appointment availability
111	Ability to get an appointment, which is currently unsuccessful.
112	After being told that I needed three months reviews for medication, there were no appointments available. Can't book these in advance. I was not an emergency , nor unwell with symptoms, and unable to use 111 as they do issue routine prescribed medication, unless it is an emergency. Surely there must be a returning patient system when the GP has asked to see you at a given time. Very frustrating and also something that can be pre-planned.
113	Never any appointments. I actually find the staff uncaring and unhelpful. Get better staff. Get more doctors Read the test results and update the information. Get cover when doctors are on leave Change EVERYTHING
114	More face to face appointments Better appointment process
115	Having more appointments available - certainty that you can see someone in 1-3 days. Illness is worrying!
116	Being able to have a face to face appointment. I had to take several photos of my ailment and send it to them. It was all very upsetting and the reception staff were incredibly rude to me.
117	Online booking with visibility of all surgeries. Dead easy.
118	Go back to the way it was before Covid where you could book online
119	Any appointment ever. Even appointments for my baby are impossible. I have two children and neither have had their vaccinations on time despite us phoning well in advance each time
120	For the doctor not to leave u waiting a month for a phone call- and then tell you , you are very hard to get hold of!
121	If I could get an appointment of any type. I am a teacher, can't get through before I start work, can't get a call back so can't get an appt. Can't book in advance and have been forced to see the GP every 3 months just for an hrt prescription which is totally unnecessary. No wonder there are no appt s.
122	Excellent service
123	Later appointments for those who work, accuracy of call back times
124	Have a better practice to cover our community
125	To be consistent like this as it's NEVER this good

126	Ability to book appointments in advance, alternatives to booking by phone (hardly ever get through/100+ calls before can join a queue)
127	In my opinion there has been a decline in the numbers of Doctors working at my surgery. I think that in future doctors should work a certain level in public practice, and be taxed higher at private practice level.
128	Ability to book a future appointment
129	Seeing a doctor face to face. Being offered an appointment. Not waiting ages at 8 am to be cut off. Then being told all appointments are gone and call back another day. Finally getting through and the doctor is ALWAYS on leave!
130	Ring and getting through, continuity and empathetic practitioners. Mostly are but the one or two are not.
131	Dr xxxxxx to take all his ppe of so you can hear him and not sit over the other side of the room
132	For those that miss appointments to be given some sort of fine - so that those that genuinely need one can get one.
133	Opening times at mackworth surgery. As i live in mackworth its 2 buses to get to burton road not what you want when your ill. Blood test available at mackworth to.
134	Being able to book appointments with doctors
135	Being able to book online and being able to choose a telephone appointment. It's impossible for me to phone at 8 am as I'm traveling. If I ring later no appointments left
136	Offering more face to face appointments. Booking appointments instead of call backs from GP, busy enough.
137	If doctors read your notes before contacting or seeing you. They tried to give me hrt when I can't have it due to breast cancer in the family. If I didn't know I couldn't take it my risk of cancer would be 100%
138	Being able to book an appointment online.
139	I would like to be able to contact a GP and be heard. Not everyone is faking illness or health conditions - and some only reach out when they cannot physically continue
140	More doctors
141	Make it online or phone call to get a appointment and maybe back to late ones for those that work
142	The clinical appearance of the surgery now is unwelcoming and lacks any warmth.
143	Face to face and stop the reception staff being so intrusive
144	Get rid if rude receptionists and abusive doctors

145	More appointments on the day
146	More people on hand to answer the phone in the morning. Receiving an unprecedented number of calls can only go on for so long before it becomes the new normal.
147	Actually release appointments online for those who rely on the online portal to book appointments.
148	Better appointment system, you can't wait 55 min on the line to find out that there is no appointments left
149	More appointments available. Appointments available at the Chellaston surgery rather than having to travel to Oakwood or Pear Tree to be seen. All types of treatment available at Chellaston.
150	More appointments being made available
151	Was at somewhere else
152	If you could phone at different times of the day and either get a same day appointment or book for a different day. I have to do the school run then drive to work and so by the time I get to call for an appointment (about 8:30-9am) they are usually all gone for the day.
153	Let people sit and wait to see a gp. Close doors at 11am . Every one in will be seen . Open doors at 2 pm people sit wait to see gp. Close doors 5 pm every one in sees a gp.
154	An acknowledgment that if the surgery is not allowed to turn away new patient registrations, then as the number of patients increases, funding, service provision and facilities for service provision have to increase in line.
155	Actually listening to their patients. Not dismissing parents. Not having a system so heavily weighted against people who work and can't spend all day on the phone. Booking appointments off the back of eConsults not just replying that you need to call(and then there are no appointments. Treating their patients like human being.
156	Appointment availability Them picking up the phone The option to book appointments in advance of just on the day Reduced waiting times Telephone appointments with actual times rather than a 3 hour time frame
157	Actually thoroughly looking through medical records instead of denying critical medication until I email and call multiple times begging them to look at hospital notes. Also very condescending. I asked to have a referral for adhd but they did not give that and I asked for an appointment to discuss an ongoing health issue and they only looked at their records instead of 111 and A&E which contradict what they had told me.
158	Appointment s on the day

159	Being able to prebook appointments for non urgent care/regular care. Trying to book via non existent online appointments or the no available emergency appointments incredibly stressful.
160	Being more transparent about things. Every time I've been to the surgery since lockdown 75% of the time I was the only person in there.
161	I saw an ACP and was given antibiotics, to get a fit note for work I have to have a telephone consultation with a Dr which I can't get. I called at 8am (after 28 unsuccessful attempts) and was 28th in the queue my call wasn't answered until 10am and no appointments left. Being able to pre book appts would help. Not having to wait 2 hrs to have call answered.
162	More appointments for on the day.
163	The male GPs are sexist, dismissive of perimenopause experience. So disappointed. Inadequate
164	Nothing.
165	Too many patients pro rated to actual registered GPs and hours worked. GP surgeries are allowed to register too many patients and numbers need to be restricted
166	More opportunities for face to face and consistency with reception staff.
167	If the receptionist treated you like a human who is aware of their own health issues. If the gp listened rather than trying to fib you off. If there were other ways of accessing appointments.
168	Getting an appointment more easily
169	More GPs and prescribing nurses
170	Being able to get appointments. It's really hard and it's not fair being turned away
171	Not having to be 20th in line.told no appointments available ring at 9 o'clock tomorrow then still no appointments available.
172	I have no issues with the service I've or my children have received.
173	GP staff are doing their very best under immense pressures. More funding from the top would help.
174	It would be improved if the day were split into AM and PM. Ring at 8am for a morning slot and 1:30pm for an afternoon/evening slot.(this happens at the surgery where I work and works very well. Also, they need to open up online consult, whereby allowing patients to contact via email and allow access to online appointment booking. It's 2023 and yet there is hardly any online facilities.
175	I have always had good service at AMC

176	Can't even get an appointment never mind tell you which option I was offered. There are never any available.
177	The ability to make an appointment online, which the surgery says it offers, but does not work.
178	As a working person I'd like to be able to book an appointment in advance. I'd like to be able to make a follow on appointment immediately after seeing my doctor if he or she asks me to... like have a blood test, wait for results see me two weeks time... kind of situation.
179	For more appointments to be available on the day and at your local surgery not have to travel some miles away.
180	I have recently been unable to book an appointment - I call at 8am and wait for a long time and then I am told there are no appointments left. When I have been offered an appointment in the past it is very limited - I have been offered one or two times and it is very difficult to get time off work. Telephone appointments have no time slot and I'm unable to be available all day to take a call.
181	More doctors, more face to face appointments, being able to call in the afternoon for an afternoon/evening appointment as opposed to the mad rush of everyone calling at 8am
182	At least a chance to discuss the issue and a possible appointment
183	Easier access to receptionist on the phone...they do offer a ring back service, which works well but can take a long time.
184	Being able to book appointments in advance would help instead of the ridiculous ring at 8, leaten to 1 min 16 seconds of recorded messages to then be told there are too many people in the queue and it cuts me off. Also, don't send me a text to say I need to ring the doctors to get the results of blood tests etc.... RING ME!!
185	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Email triage, with 72 hours call back from GP (system at Park Farm Surgery) - Available appointments online, there are rarely any when I check - Bookable telephone/video appointments - Ability to request a named GP when appropriate/available - Staff wearing masks, especially when coughing - Hand sanitiser next to touch screen at check in - Hand sanitiser stations to be full - Ventilation in waiting area
186	Being able to ring anytime of day for an appointment, not st 8am because i work
187	More face to face appointments available and easier to access
188	Availability of appointments. Phone system.
189	More GP's.

190	More GPs on-site to manage all the appts. Fully understand the telephone triage system but receptionists need to listen to the patients complaint and offer face t
191	The surgery has too many patients and not enough staff. Stop taking on new patients! Also the call centre is appalling, it's near impossible to get through and when you do the staff are rude and 9 times out of 10 don't have any appointments to offer. They just tell you to go to the walk in center or call back tomorrow and the cycle continues.
192	Someone answering the phone at 08:00 and not telling you all the appointments for today have gone but you can have an out of hour's telephone call between 5pm and 7pm
193	<p>In order to get an appointment, we now have to physically go to the Surgery first thing at half-past seven the morning to be able to book an appointment (for the same day). It is impossible to book an appointment via telephone, *even if we called first thing in the morning*, because they were already all booked up by literally two minutes past eight. We had to try several times before my father was told to physically go to the surgery. And we could not book an appointment for anything other than the same day. It is patently *ridiculous*, and ensures that the disabled and vulnerable are entirely incapable of booking their own appointments.</p> <p>It has been getting worse to book appointments for some time, but it had now reached the absolute nadir. In any other arena, customer service this bad would ensure the organisation straight-up went out of business.</p> <p>My mother has been with that surgery for about fifty - to - sixty years, and I have been all my life (44); if it was possible to change surgeries and expect better operations, we would have already done it.</p>
194	Appointments online
195	Online booking system reinstated
196	Make appointments online
197	The ability to make an appointment with your GP on a future date , not same day appointments ,only if available.
198	Appalling system to book appointments. Incredibly limited availability. Lack of continuity of care
199	Gp's seeing patients again.
200	Being able to book routine appointments far in advance.
201	get more face to face appointments would be helpful
202	To get an appointment with your own registered GP doctor instead of other different doctors or health care staff.
203	More accessible appointments face to face.

Question 12

Any other comments?

A further 116 offered the following unedited comments.

1	The staff always show empathy, are helpful and seem to go out of their way to achieve the result that is most beneficial to the patient.
2	One thing that my surgery does do that is good is, if you manage to get in the queue to talk to a receptionist, they offer a ring back service so you don't have to keep hanging on. Another issue that has recently happened is that I have been told that I have to purchase some medication over the counter because it is cheaper for the NHS, however, there are restrictions on how many tablets you can buy at a time and I have been advised by one pharmacy that I cannot purchase any more of the constipation relief tablets without a prescription because of the amount I need but the GP have refused to give me a prescription.
3	If GP services do not pull up their socks they will be lost. The community cannot afford to lose good GPs because of poor substitutes like specialist nurses and receptionists. The public confidence in GP services is at its lowest.
4	Need to be able to make appointments any time of the day!!
5	It was terrible pre covid and post covid. Does not appear to be any genuine plan to improve and covid has provided a smokescreen for this.
6	At present it is possible. It take long time to get appointment over the phone it cost more
7	The new staff seem really well equipped to ask questions and help you out. I think we the patients need to take responsibility for our own health and before calling a GP or going to A&E ask the question have I tried other things first. Look on line at the NHS website or ask the pharmacist for advice.
8	Appointment was booked on-line not face to face or over phone.
9	None
10	More reception staff with better attitudes towards patients, particularly patients with a history of mental health challenges
11	The "service" is dire - impossible to get a same week appointment much less a same day appointment. The long narrow corridor at the surgery is difficult for a wheelchair user especially as it is nearly always cluttered with benches, boxes etc. The toilet is impossible to get to - I have no idea if it is suitable for a disabled person as I can't get to the door!. When I am ill I need to see a doctor, I can't plan in advance when I am going to be ill. If you are asked to come back it is impossible to book an appointment. The staff expect patients to go to any of the practices in the group - with no car it is impossible to get

	there - we registered with a local surgery because we wanted somewhere we could walk to. You always have to wait a long time as the doctors and nurses are always running late.
12	Preferred type of appointment- not answered this as it depends on the issue, happy to do whatever is most appropriate for the issue.
13	I have given up a number of times and just managed. This is a risk as I have a heart condition. I know I can go to A&E if I feel my issues are critical but it is so busy and chaotic there I have little confidence that I would be dealt with promptly. More access to GPs would, without a shadow of a doubt, reduce the pressure on A&E
14	Never had any issues getting an appointment. I try not to book on a Monday
15	Reception staff can be rude both on phone and at surgery. Like you should not be bothering them
16	And when you do go into the surgery there is only a couple of people waiting but still they run behind schedule
17	I would like to be able to book appointments online or go on a waiting list
18	Way too many patients on their lists and they are advertising for more! I was told to go to walk in as they couldn't help. Walk in are fed up of being Lister House overflow center. Also, when I do go to the surgery the waiting rooms are nearly empty, and yet they can't see people because they are too busy?!
19	Most of the time when you call at 8am you get a busy tone. Then you keep calling waiting as there other callers on the line so gets busy. When you get through all the appointments are gone.
20	You feel like you are taking up their valuable time, even if really concerned about your SEND child's health. It's horrible.
21	The majority of GPs have been really helpful and useful during appointments, on most occasions I have felt well listened to and my issues have been solved.
22	I wish the staff at the doctors surgery would reconsider the recorded message that you have to listen to (almost 2 minutes long), and consider putting this information eg the email address for the medicine order line, at a later option. This would mean that if you were ringing for an appointment you wouldn't have to listen to such a long message before you had the option to speak to reception.
23	It is discriminatory in access
24	There needs to be more investment. The service is not fit for purpose. That's not just my practice, but commonplace
25	It's been over four years since I had a face to face appointment
26	I do like that at Spondon you don't have to stay on the phone in the queue as they do a call back service. This helps. I have office hours one day a week

	which means I can join the queue. However far too many times I'm told "the appointments are gone - try tomorrow" I can't. It's another week.
27	I've got a few things wrong as haven't been able to see gp,so asked if I could have a double appointment as they will only deal with one problem,they said no. I've given up
28	Horizon are terrible
29	When you get an appointment the doctors have been brilliant. It can just be a huge battle to get an appointment. It puts you off trying.
30	Overall I think the majority staff are doing their best in difficult circumstances. Thank you 😊
31	We need information on their ways of working. Why are the phones taking over 40 minutes to get through, why can you not make an appointment with a receptionist when you are stood facing them, why are they wandering around in scrubs, why is the surgery empty, where do the GP's go when they are not at the practice etc etc? I have always found that if you tell people what is going on they will be more understanding, where as if you keep them in the dark they become more and more disgruntled and more likely to react!
32	Make it feel like you are dealing with a person and not "artificial intelligence " when the form to request for appointments are looked T.
33	Definitely need's improving before patients die Mickleover has a large elderly community & they don't want to wait in a que for an hour & a half.
34	Unless I call at 08.00 I am unable to get an appointment
35	Lack of help for mental health patients. Still hiding behind covid restrictions.
36	How is it that when you call at 8am in the morning, as advised, there's always 20+ people ahead of you in the queue? And IF you are lucky enough to get through to the reception, all of the appointments have been taken for that day, by 8.10am???
37	Apps with the GP of your choice to maintain continuity
38	I see a hospital consultant and have shared care, my go surgery won't do anything as they can only do what hospital says, they can't treat migraines, they sent me to consultant who was rather cross. I should be offered flu vaccines but I'm not , I should be seen at the well women's clinic but "you have to invited and you're not" . I haven't had blood pressure checked in years, no cholesterol checks etc although I have inflammatory arthritis.
39	Calling at 8.30 to be on the phone in a que for over an hour especially when you are feeling unwell not really the best way
40	They state you can book on line but I have never found any available slots when I have tried

41	Some practise reception staff need retraining in how to treat patients. There are certain ones that have an appalling attitude, if they don't really want to be there then do the honorable thing and leave.
42	When you do eventually get to see someone you cannot fault the treatment
43	Way worse since covid
44	not that woud be polite
45	It has been an absolute nightmare getting an appointment or being seen face to face
46	Had to use UTC for dressing change for leg wound as couldn't offer appoint for at least a week and needed changing after 48hrs
47	The dr that spoke to me knew less about the health issues than I did (well gave that impression) and appeared to not really be that interested when I pointed out the thing we were talking about was life or death (potential heart issues) however I think they may have been a locum permanent staff are usually very good
48	Go back 15 years as our service was first class back then with another surgery. 45 yrs of exemplary care. Take over and voter the worst surgery - now horizon healthcare which I reluctantly moved from to The Osmaston Surgery which has gone downhill since Covid too
49	My medical history is complex, I've had no support from my gp following extensive treatment.
50	N/ A
51	Don't bother with them.
52	Only way you will get seen is to go to the survey at 8 which is difficult for me walking there with arthritis shocking really they say try online after midnight which I have done numerous times yet no app at all come on
53	The Osmaston surgery it's a joke, no idea how they are still open
54	It is shocking, I am not sure even if we have GP service at our surgery anymore. I really think the appointment system currently run is a way to stop people actually accessing the service. My 78yr mother has also decided it's not worth the bother and has given up trying to get appointments after multiple attempts.
55	Dr DEVAGIRI is awful. All he wants to do is get you out of his room. His advice to me was to 'stop exercising' - not great when you consider that a huge percentage of our population are told to exercise more. He refuses to acknowledge most female health issues, including the menopause.
56	Quite frankly the GP system is no longer fit for purpose.
57	There is only so many appts in the system and when used up that's it there is not a never ending supply Also annoying as it is we have never not got a

	appt if you follow the surgeries procedure for on the day sometimes it's a bit inconvenient but you need to prioritise
58	Before covid NHS in general wasn't perfect but was good , now is like patients are only numbers , and gp only follow a script
59	Receptionists need better training
60	Really like some of the GPs at the practice but feel the practice isn't equipped to cope with the large number of patients and the need for appointments. Disappointed to read a sign in the surgery when I went for my flu jab to read that 58 appointments had been missed the previous week which suggests people are making appointments when they don't need them leaving no availability for people that do
61	Leave some of the late afternoon or early evening for the people who work full time
62	The call-back service means not having to hang on the phone for ages listening to the same awful music!
63	My husband attended the same surgery last week and it was deserted with only one doctor and a nurse and two receptionists . During covid this Oakwood surgery closed and has never recovered. The other surgeries in the practice are not on bus routes so difficult for anyone without a car. Very disappointing and don't see it ever improving
64	I was offered a telephone appointment to talk about a dodgy mole on my back. Ridiculous. How can they tell if a mole needs checking out over the phone??
65	I am a nurse and worked through the whole of Covid,touching patients and ensuring they were cared for, gps and practice nurses are still not seeing patients face to face and are using Covid as an excuse. I am also type 1 diabetic which put me in the vulnerable category but received less care for this during and since Covid. Poor!!
66	I think our GPS and their support staff work well together and provide a good service despite this year's extra pressures. I am very happy not to sit in waiting areas with many other ill people!
67	While introduction of a call-back system has improved things the 8:00 am fight to get an appointment is stressful and means that rather than get something checked out it never seems worth the trouble. In addition, as I am quite hard of hearing I hate these telephone systems which invariably have unclear pre-recorded messages.
68	They are crap, money grabbing GP's
69	Generally, Chellaston are very helpful and do try to accommodate but the system is inefficient.
70	Was offered a phone appointment with another doctors surgery- outsourced Hard to not be affected by failed calls, and taking ages to get through.

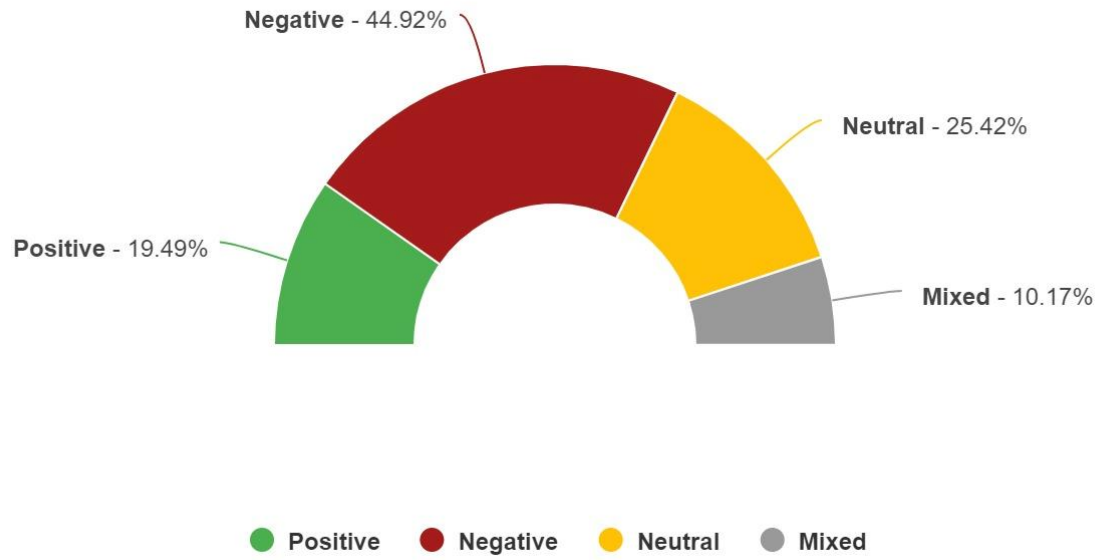
	Have tried the call you back option. I didn't get a call back Phone options are ok but not for the receptionist to decide
71	The phone system doesn't work- basically need more doctors available and more appointments - very difficult - tend to just not go and get things checked out as I wont get an appointment if I tried. Throw out people who miss appointments and allow others the opportunity to have one!
72	Surgery is shockingly bad now which is a shame as it used to be very good, I got told by the receptionist that the doctors were very busy (are we not all very busy?) ,and they have an enormous caseload. We'll if they can't find the time to phone me back in a month why are they taking on new patients as advertised by a big banner outside?.
73	The staff at the surgery are generally very nice and helpful although there has been the odd time I've felt brushed off
74	The service is usually appalling, can never normally get through or get an appointment. Staff usually don't care and give a poor service and I've been considering leaving this practice today I have no bad words to say. Easy to get booked in and the GP was top notch and believed my concerns
75	Make it easier, quicker and less costly for people to study to become GP's, if they work in public practice. Please please do something about Charnwood Surgery in Derby. It is a disaster of a practice now.
76	How can all the appointments be gone at 8.02. Bearing in mind there are 2 receptionists, it's impossible for them to have answered enough calls in 2 minutes for all appointments to be gone. They say you can't book a future appointment now so someone is lying about how appointments are allocated. My wife ended up critically ill because the receptionists refused an appointment as they didn't believe her symptoms. If the receptionists are so good at diagnosis to prevent people from having appointments maybe we need them to also have slots to see patients and reduce doctor workloads.
77	Really fed up with the NHS plus not happy with all the negative posters in GPs and waiting rooms. Telling patients to not do this, how many hours are wasted, not be abusive, don't come with more than one problem etc.
78	Just to get mackworth doctors back to how it was before covid
79	Almost killed my husband with serotonin syndrome. Upped venoflaxine with out monitoring no ecg, no blood pressure check. Just kept upping. Nearly killed him and it ruined our relationship
80	Question 5 asked what type of appointment I actually used. There wasn't an option for 'didn't use any' which is what happened because none of the other options were available or suitable. Question 6 the answer is it depends on what my appointment is for. Sometimes I'd prefer face to face, if it's a follow up or something simple then I'm happy with telephone.

81	If people didn't Turn up with non appointment and then be abusive to the poor receptionist as it isn't there fault there is a shortage. Should be phone up online or nothing as some patients have to actually wait a long time for a a appointment and then you see someone come in shout and get one instantly
82	The dismantling of the service has made me feel uneasy about making appointments. The service I have received has always been positive.
83	I felt suicidal after being spoken to like rubbish by the recand doctor. I will never bother again and I am still very unwell
84	We joined the Meadowfields practice as we could walk to the surgery and all clinics and treatments were available there. Now it has been taken over by Lister House, we are expected to travel to other surgeries for appointments, I can't remember the last time I was seen there. We're not even offered Coleman Street, it's Pear Tree or Oakwood.
85	Sometime my needs are not 'urgent' an HRT review for example so it would be good if these could be done at a weekend or could be booked in advance like you can for say a smear test or asthma review. I like the call back option to save you waiting on the end of a phone for a very long time. I also like the fact that some appointments type are online and pre-bookable.
86	In years gone by, getting an appointment with an appropriate clinician was never a problem. The DoH should identify what has changed to cause today's problems and fix it.
87	The system is set up for so many patients to be unable to engage properly. Not neurodivergent friendly, no continuity of care.
88	Told me to "google your symptoms" because I "seemed nervous" and wrote the name of the condition on a piece of paper. Can never get through and the econsult usually leads to them asking you to call anyway
89	I thought that the government had told GP's to remove the 8am appointment rush? Yet that doesn't seem to have happened.
90	The mental health practitioner at one of our surgeries was fabulous.
91	Unlike most GP practices I seem to only be able to get face to face appts but I would consider telephone but cannot get these offered. However, it is refreshing to have a GP practice who value face to face and time. My previous practice made things extremely difficult and that was why I moved.
92	I am impressed with the variety of people you can see depending on the problem. GP, nurse, practitioner, physiotherapist.
93	It seems at times to be that if you have a long term illness anything else is put down to being because of your illness you already have, without looking any further

94	Trying to talk to a doctor and not having to explain things to a receptionist who has no medical training. And keep making excuses so you can not see a doctor eg. No appointments available. Try to ring in the morning. The surgery is closed for training. And now no appointments because of the doctors strike. I am beginning to wonder if there are any doctors at Parkfields surgery.
95	I have never struggled to get an appointment when needed. I tend to use the econsult or for more urgent care I tend to use 111 where they can advise the best place to be seen. When I have used 111 I have gotten same day appointments (1 with GP, 1 at walk in centre).
96	Keep up the good work Derby City GP workforce.
97	I think all the staff are doing an amazing job in challenging times. The new ring back service instead of waiting on hold is a much better idea and all the reception staff try their best to fit everyone in.
98	Poor. Can't access any healthcare at all through this surgery, numerous times we've ended up needing urgent treatment due to being unable to access GP services
99	Getting an appointment with this surgery is a painful process, even for a routine diabetes review.
100	Being able to plan my health care needs is essential . Happy to have links to book online etc, happy for telephone calls or video link calls.
101	Four GP practises and only an appointment available at the one furthest away.
102	I haven't been able to get an appointment recently at all - that wasn't an option on the tick boxes for questions 3-5
103	Worst GP practice I've had to deal with
104	Most of the receptionist are really nice, however there are one or 2 that are rude.
105	I have a long term disability and feel that my level of support and medical care has decreased significantly since moving to the Hollybrook Medical Centre catchment area. Booking appointments is stressful and difficult and I have no continuity of care between the different doctors that I see. I often feel rushed out of the room.
106	The staff at the surgery are amazing. Every single one of them
107	I feel very let down by the NHS in general - having paid into the scheme for many years I have now reached an age where I need to have confidence that I can access it when I need it and sadly, I don't have that confidence - I feel disregarded!
108	Some good improvements to phone system recently, but still little chance of getting an appointment unless you can get through at 8.30 in the morning.

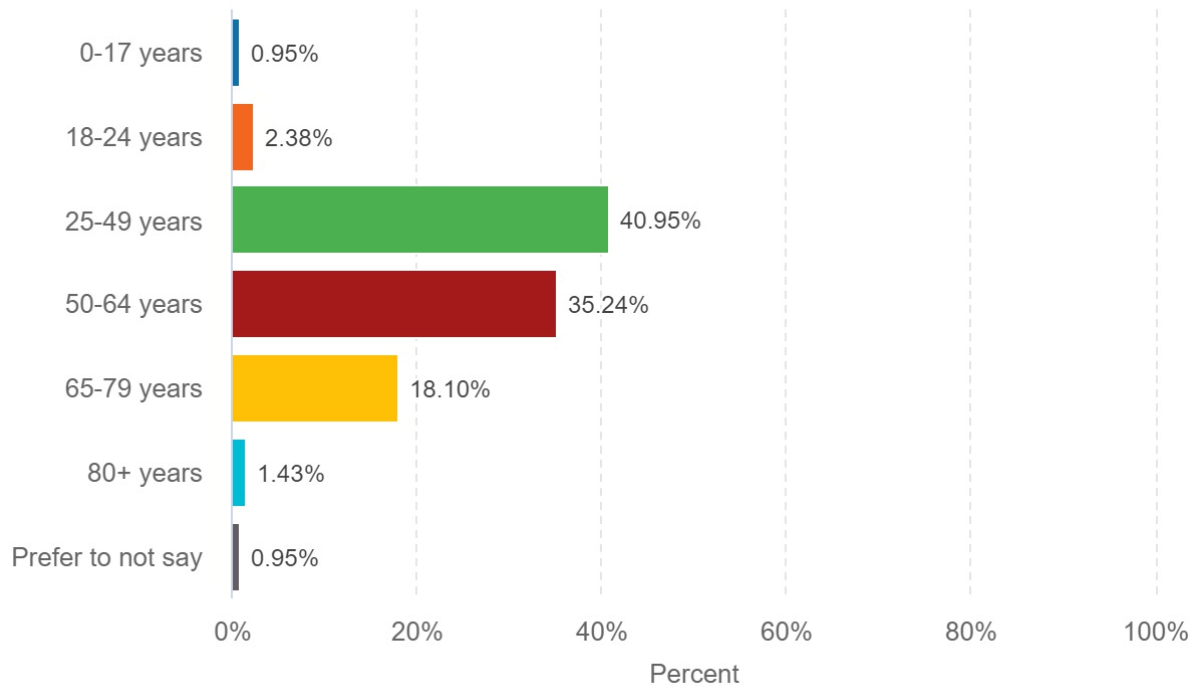
109	Thank you Wilson Street team. Highly skilled, professional and so incredibly hard-working. Brilliant, much appreciated +++
110	Econsult is good if you can get past the gate keepers and it actually gets passed on to a clinician. Trying to get an appointment with that surgery is so stressful, I have health conditions that are just getting worse because I feel like there is no point in even trying to get an appointment. There is only so many times you can sit there at 8am dialling the surgery, sometimes 50+ times, before actually getting put in the queue. To then be told, try again tomorrow no appointments left!
111	I personally Visited surgery reception recently regarding medication and prescription issues. Was told by receptionist we can't help you ring the medicine order line. I went home and did this and the MOL operative apologised and said that I had been given the wrong information by the surgery reception and said I need to contact the surgery she said that she would send a note on my issue to the surgery to validate this. That evening I received a call from the surgery reception saying I could have an appointment that evening I didn't want that but I went again to explain my needs which the doctor satisfied. Waste of my time and doctors
112	The current state of affairs is 100% unacceptable. The whole health service is becoming slow and reponsive. In additional to my aging parents, I am increasingly concerned about the speed and response to my friends (I am in my 40s and some of them have health issues). I should also note that four of my immediate family (including my mother before she was disabled by fibromyalgia) have and in two cases, still currently work for the NHS - my sisters both work at the hospital - so I am very much aware of the strain on the system. However, that does not excuse the fact the system IS under strain and failing to provide responsive healthcare; it is the responsibility of the the people at the top (both of the NHS and the government) to ensure that it is being properly provided with resources and personnel to function properly. Things NEED to be improved, lest any reduction in the strain comes from dint of having significant chunks of the population die off from undiagnosed problems while waiting to be seen for treatment.
113	Been trying 3 weeks to get appointments went private
114	Make appointments online then I could plan my working day
115	to have appointment with own doctor and not different doctors all the time
116	More time allocated with a Gp , ten mins isn't always long enough.

Any other comments

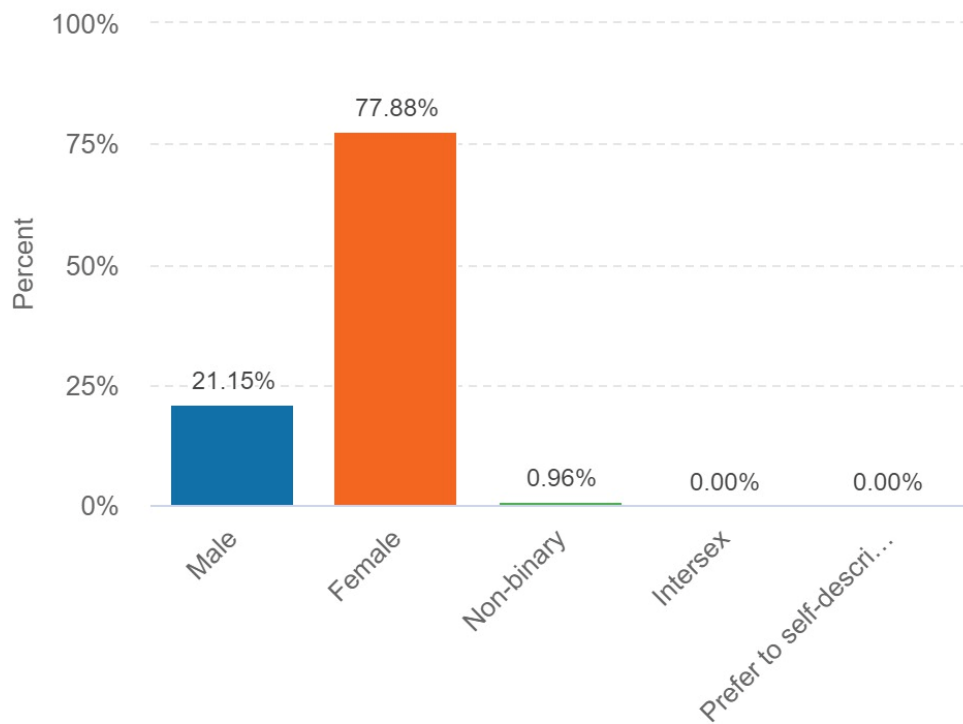


Who we spoke to

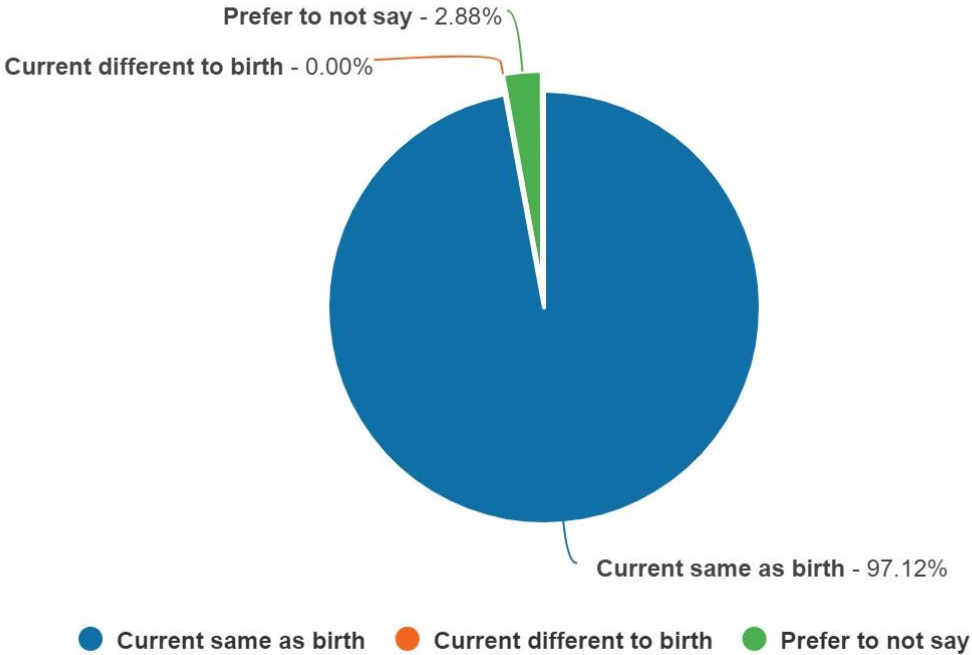
Age



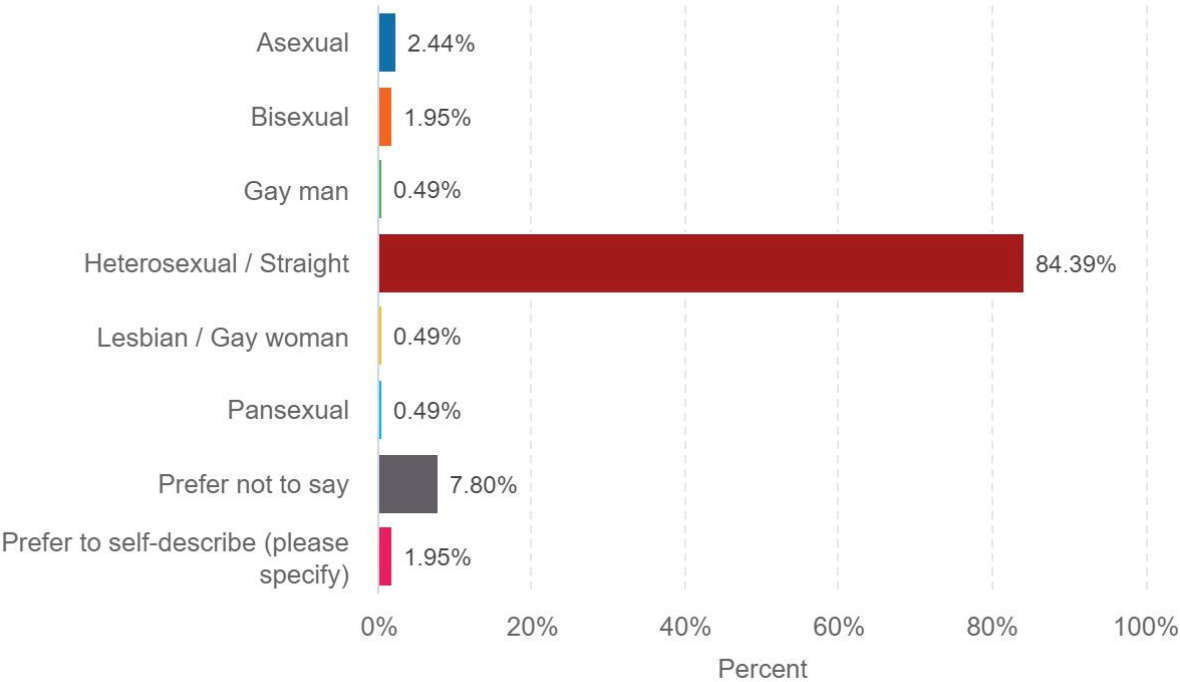
Gender



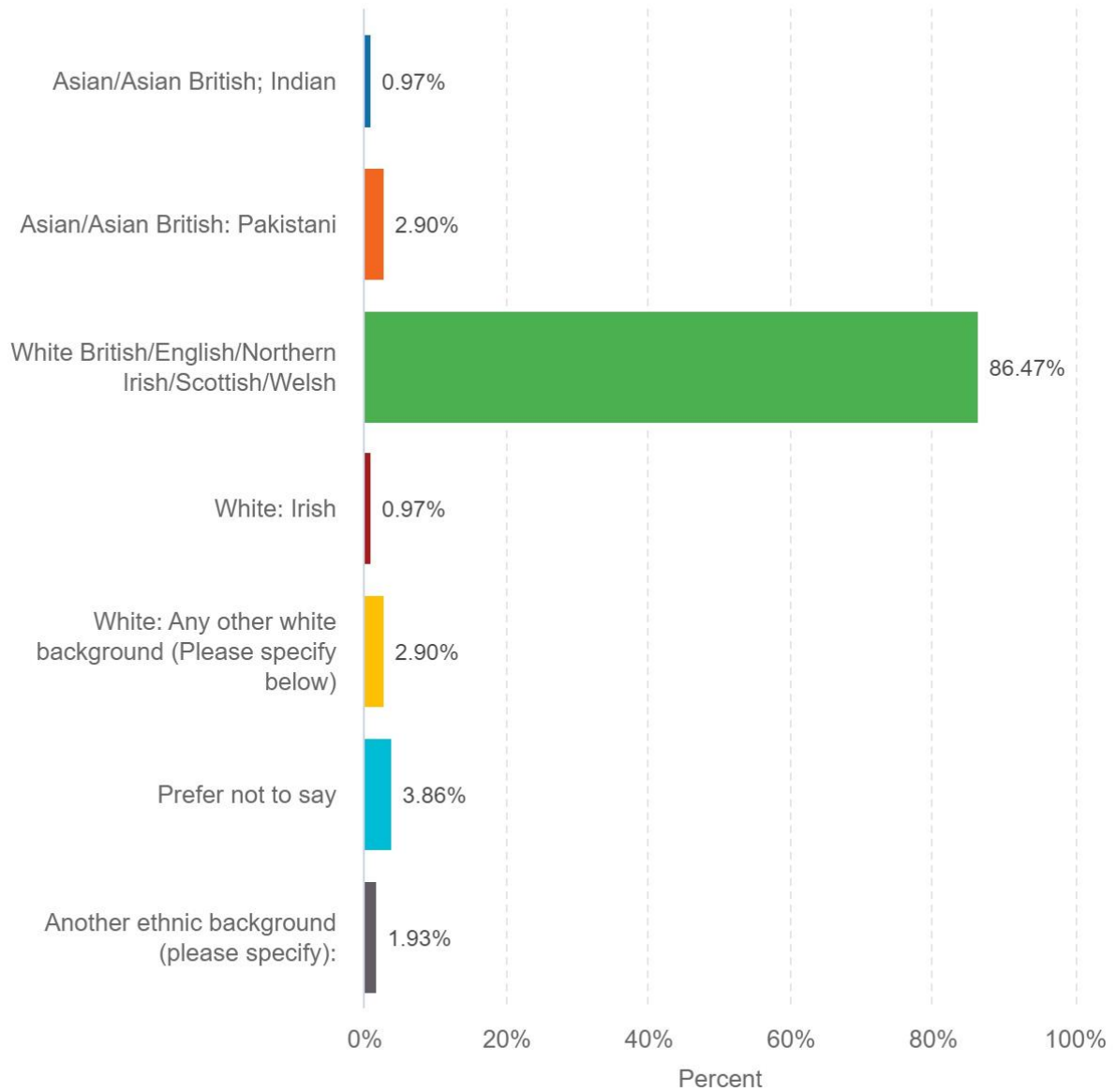
Birth sex



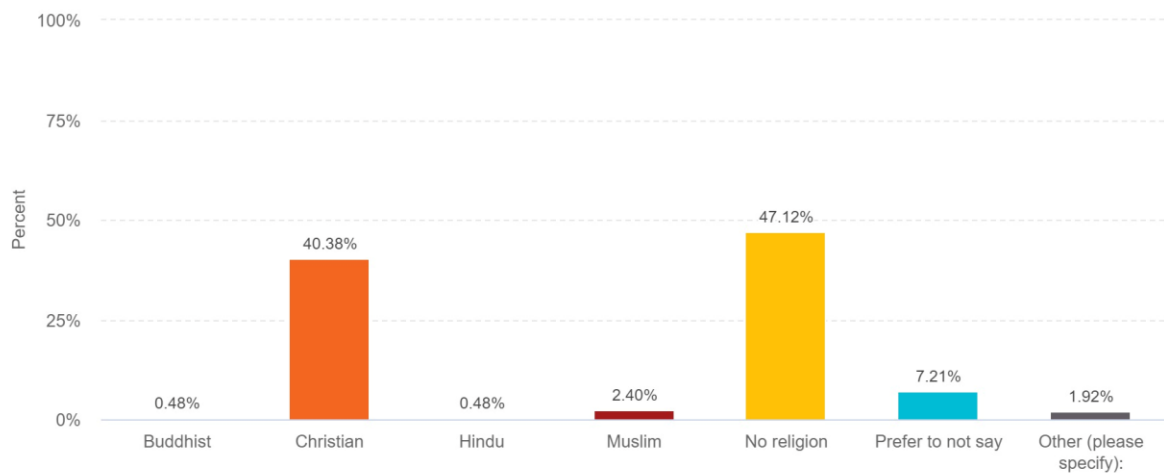
Sexual orientation



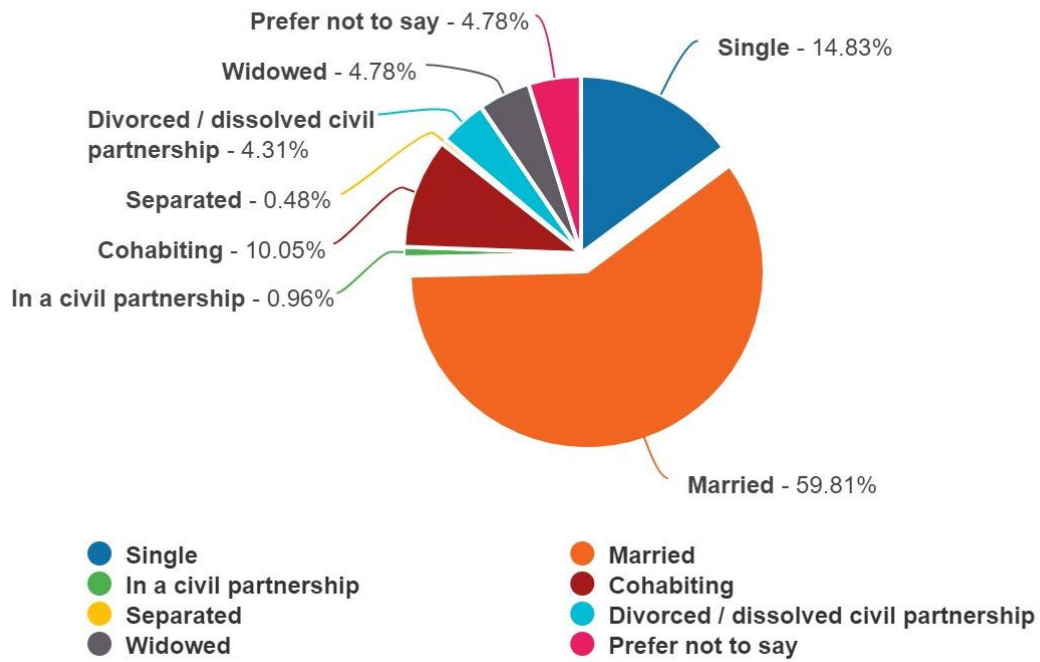
Ethnic background



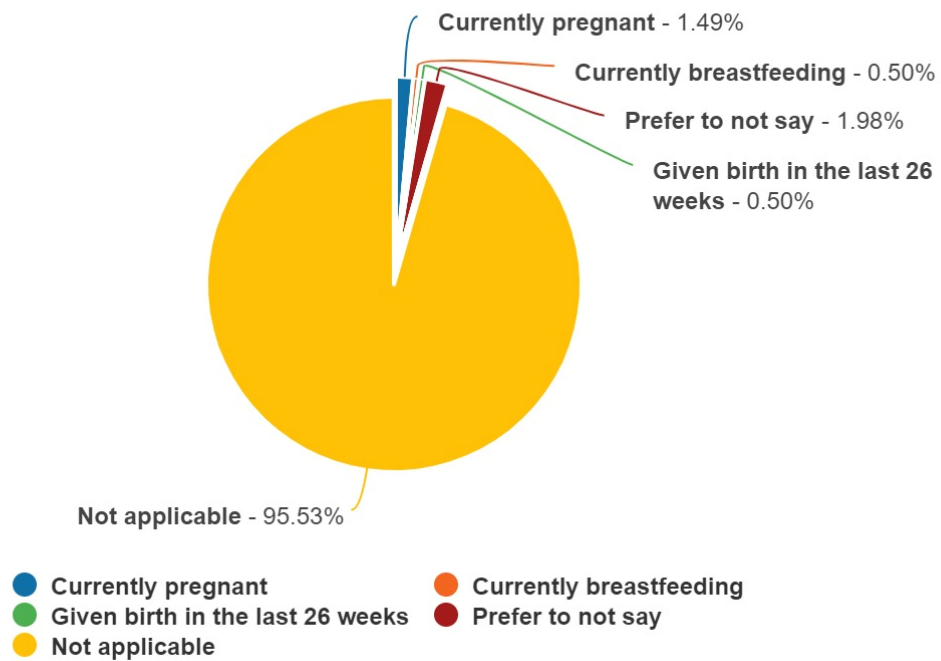
Religious belief



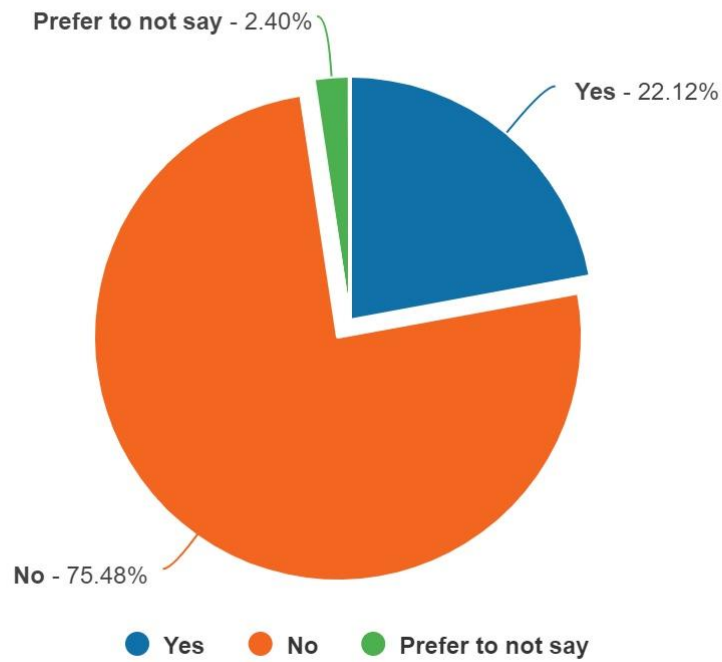
Marital status



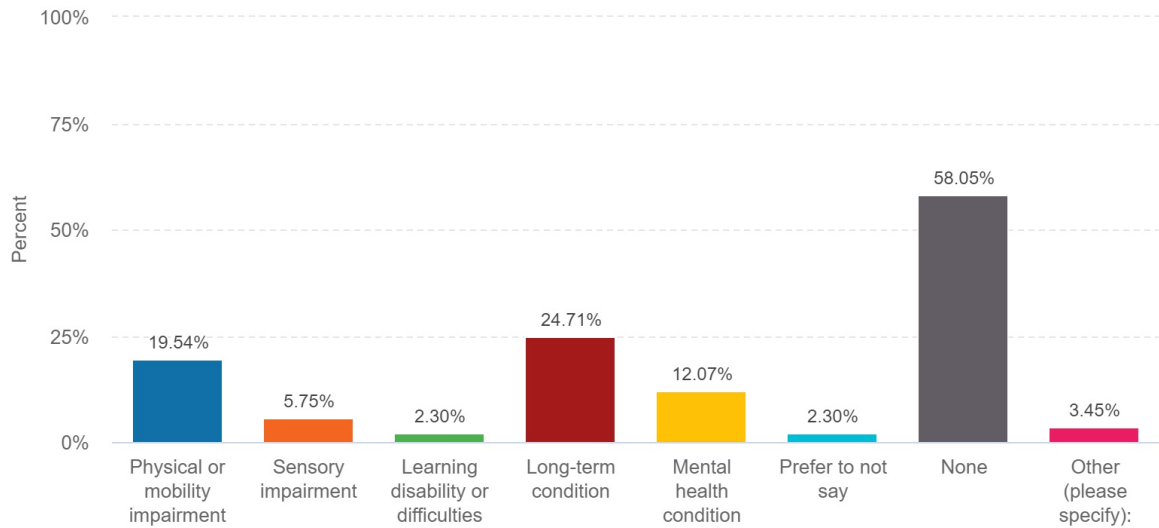
Pregnancy / maternity status



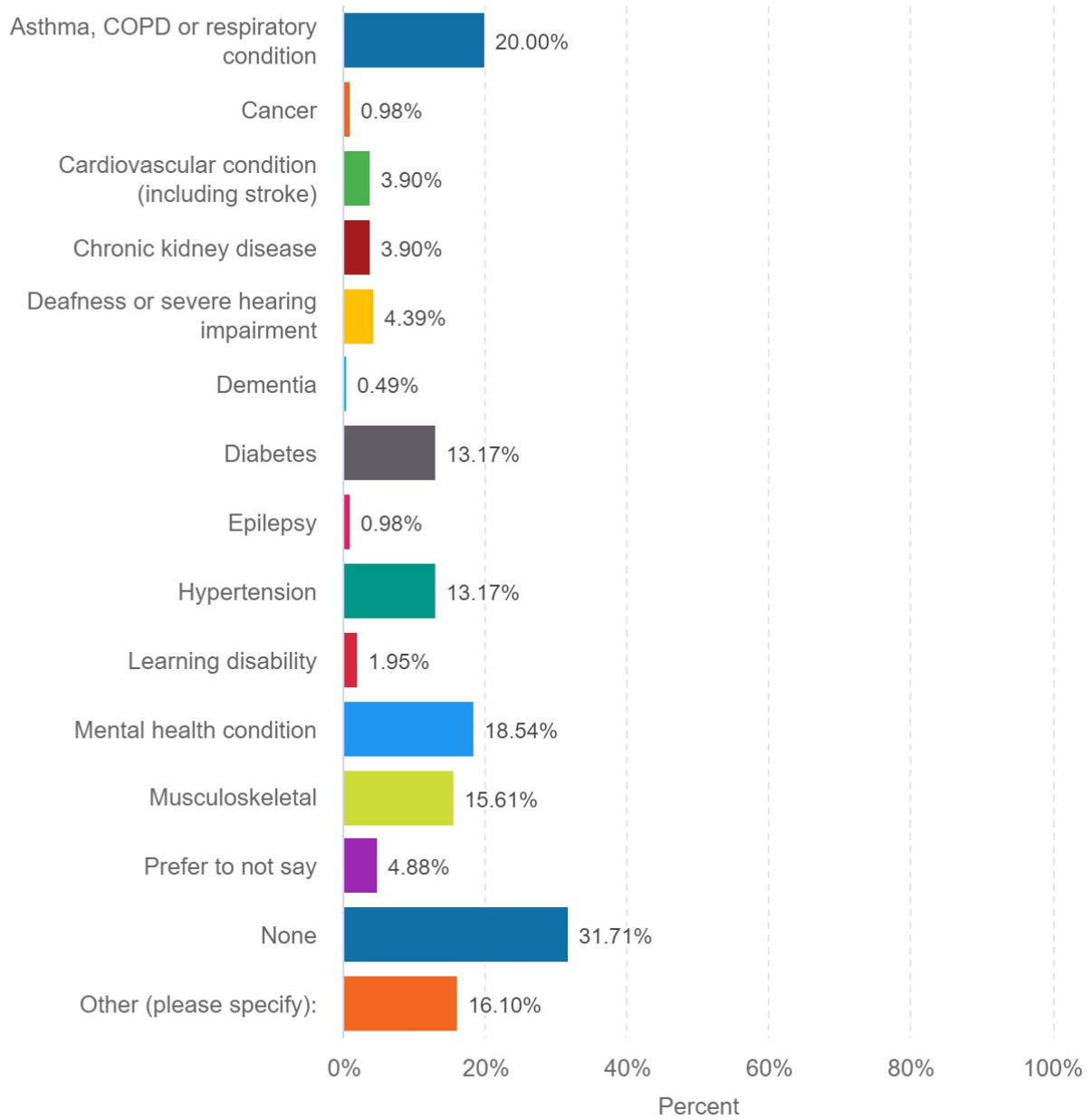
Do you consider yourself to be a carer?



Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



Do you consider yourself to have a long-term condition?



Derby and Derbyshire ICB Response to Healthwatch Survey of patient satisfaction with GP access in Derby City (January 2024)

Introduction

This paper responds to the survey that Healthwatch undertook of patient satisfaction with GP access in Derby City in January 2024, and to the recommendations set out in its national and local reports.

We would like to thank Healthwatch for its excellent work in supporting patients and for this insightful report and for giving us the opportunity to respond.

We are sorry that so many people have a poor experience when trying to access General Practice. This is not the service we want, nor is it the service that GPs want to provide. General Practices are working hard to improve their access and we are working to support them. We are in the middle of implementing the national Primary Care Access Recovery Plan in Derby and we will continue this work so that it is implemented in full.

General Practices in Derby work hard under great pressure to provide high quality services. This response briefly sets out the current situation, why things are so challenging at the moment, what we are doing about it and, specifically, our response to the specific recommendations set out in Healthwatch's paper.

The current situation: are General Practices offering fewer appointments?

As the Healthwatch survey highlights many patients currently struggle to access General Practice.

Although we appreciate that it may not feel like it if you can't get an appointment, the number of appointments offered by GP practices across Derby and Derbyshire has increased by c7% since 2019.

In Derby City 70% are face to face, and 43% are offered within 24 hours of being requested. These are in line with national and county wide figures. Approximately 85% of people are seen within 2 weeks and we are working hard with practices to understand and improve this figure.

Overall General Practice offers over 520,000 appointments per month across Derby and Derbyshire.

Why is access difficult for patients?

Access is difficult not because General Practice are offering a worse service or fewer appointments, but because demand is rising quicker than capacity.

According to national NHS England data there has been a 20-40% increase in contacts with General Practice since before the pandemic. This is made worse by waiting list backlogs which have increased the number of people contacting their General Practice to find out waiting list information or because their condition has worsened whilst they have been waiting. One practice in Derby audited the impact of these care backlogs and estimated they accounted for over 20% of their work.

As well as this the number of older people in our population has increased. Since 2010 the number of people over 70 has increased by 30%. As we are likely to need more healthcare as we age this has a significant impact on the demand on General Practice.

In addition, technology, training and developments in clinical practice have meant that we are able to offer a wider range of services in General Practice and the community. Many services are offered in General Practice now which you would have had to go to hospital for in the past. However, these all take time and staff to deliver safely.

Although the NHS has invested in additional staff in General Practice the number of doctors (General Practitioners) has not increased as quickly as the demand. Nationally there has been an increase of c7% in doctors working in general practice since before the pandemic. This figure includes doctors in training. Overall the number of experienced doctors and GP partners (those who run their own practices) has decreased as they retire and leave, with other GPs unwilling to take on these roles.

What is the NHS doing about GP access nationally?

In May 2023 the NHS launched a national 'Primary Care Access Recovery Plan'. Derby and Derbyshire ICB and GP practices are taking wholehearted action to implement this plan. This action is in line with the request made by Healthwatch.

The recovery plan aims to address two key issues:

- Tackle the 8am rush and reduce the number of people struggling to contact their practice
- For patients to know on the day they contact their practice how their request will be managed.

In October the Derby and Derbyshire ICB Public Board agreed a plan to deliver this locally. The full plan is available on the Derby and Derbyshire ICB website (16 November 2023 board meeting pages, page 183 to 208) but the section below summarises the four key elements:

1. Empowering patients: support patients to manage their own health including using the NHS App, self-referral pathways and through more services offered from community pharmacy.

2. Implement the Modern General Practice Access programme: move all practices from analogue 'copper' telephone lines to digital telephony including call back functionality. Offer 'care navigation training' for staff and deliver training and transformation support to practices through a new National General Practice Improvement Programme.

3. Build capacity: employ more direct patient care staff and deliver more appointments by March 2024 (compared to 2019), expand GP specialty training, encourage experienced GPs to stay in practice and change local authority planning guidance to raise the priority of primary care facilities when considering how funds from new housing developments are allocated.

4. Cut Bureaucracy: reduce the workload across the interface between primary and secondary care so practices have more time to meet the clinical needs of their patients, including reducing the time spent liaising with hospitals, reducing requests to GPs to verify medical evidence and streamlining GP targets.

What does this mean in Derby, and how will we respond to the recommendations set out in the Healthwatch report?

The Healthwatch report sets out recommendations from its national report, and a further four local recommendations. These overlap with the work we are doing or planning to do as part of implementing the national Primary Care Access Recovery Plan , and this section sets out our response to the recommendations as follows:

Recommendation

ICB response

Take wholehearted action to implement the NHS primary care recovery plan.

As set out above DDICB is fully committed to implementing the NHS primary care recovery plan in full and set out its plan at the public Board meeting in November 2023 (ICB website 16 November 2023 board meeting page, pages 183 to 208). The plan was additionally presented to Derby City Council's Adults and Health Scrutiny Review Board on 30 January 2024 (item 6).

All GP surgeries move to digital phone systems by the end of March 2024, so patients spend less time waiting on hold

We will move all Derby practices to digital phone systems by the end of March 2024. We are going further than this and are upgrading practices who are already on digital but don't have all the functions that they might need. We aim to ensure that all practices will have digital systems with all the functionality that they need. We can provide further detail on what has been done practice by practice if required. Further detail on exactly what we have done is set out below.

Greater public awareness of, and sign-ups to, the NHS app, through the promised national communications campaign.

We are working hard to ensure patient sign up to the NHS app. In February 2024 there were 935 monthly registrations for the NHS app in Derby City with a running total of 157,993.

The ICB has supported the national communications campaign to encourage people to sign up to the app. Materials have also been provided to GP practices, so they can explain to their patients how to use it.

Most patients able to benefit from full NHS app functionalities by the end of March 2024.

The ICB is working closely with practices to ensure that they offer the four key functionalities through to patients through the app. These are:

- View prospective clinical records including test results.
- See messages from the practice.
- Manage routine (non-triage) appointments.
- Order repeat prescriptions.

Evidence that Integrated Care Boards plan to tackle health inequalities around GP access, especially in deprived areas.

The national plan sets out a blanket approach to cover all practices. DDICB focuses local support and funding when available on the areas of greatest need. One example of this is that we allocated funding for extra GP appointments over winter based on the deprivation of the area that the practice served, with practices serving the most deprived populations getting a larger share of the funding. Eleven of the 20 practices who received this additional funding were in Derby City.

All GP practices offering free phone numbers.

As set out above the NHS has invested to improve GP telephone systems, and has for some years, ensured that all practices phone systems are at local call rates.

The national plan does not include funding for free phone numbers and this is not part of our local plan. However we would be happy to discuss this further with Healthwatch and to support them to lobby for this funding nationally.

All GP practices sign up for the Register with a GP Surgery Service, which makes registering with a surgery easier for patients, particularly those with no fixed address or ID

The ICB is working with practices in Derby to improve registration. As part of this some practices have signed up to the GP Surgery Service or purchased alternative systems that allow patients to register more easily.

Fully communicate how improvements are going to be made to both professionals and the general public. We have run a communications campaign over the busy winter period to inform people of the improvements already made in general practice. This has particularly focused on explaining now staff who are not a doctor are able to provide support and care, often on the same day. A bank of communications materials including film, graphics, and text specifically for Derby and Derbyshire was developed by the ICB for all GP practices to use in their communications with their patients. Materials were developed in partnership with local GP practices and their representatives.

A complete overhaul of telephone appointment systems at GP practices. As set out above the ICB has worked with GP practices to overhaul and upgrade GP telephone systems across Derby and Derbyshire in line with the national plan and to the deadline of March 2024

Patients are given more options and times to make appointments. The ICB has commissioned practices (working in groups called primary care networks) to provide additional appointments between 6.30am and 8pm Monday to Friday and between 9am and 5pm on Saturday.

Over the last five years practices (again working in Primary Care Networks) have been funded to employ a wider range of staff including clinical pharmacists, social prescribers, mental health workers, physiotherapists and nursing associates. In Derby 198 (whole time equivalent) staff have been employed. These extra people mean that practices can offer more appointments to a wider range of staff.

As set out above practices are also offering different kinds of appointments: face to face, telephone and online

However, it must be noted that practices can only offer appointments if they have the staff. It is not sensible to offer appointment times that mean that practices have to spread staff too thinly. They would end up having to work longer and longer hours in a way that would reduce the quality of care they can offer and put their own health and wellbeing at risk.

Patients are given more choice of appointment times.

Next steps

We hope that this response sets out the work we are doing and plan to do to respond to Healthwatch's report.

We'd like to work with them to further discuss their findings and our plans, and to continue to keep them and the Health and Wellbeing Board and Oversight Committees informed of work in this area.