

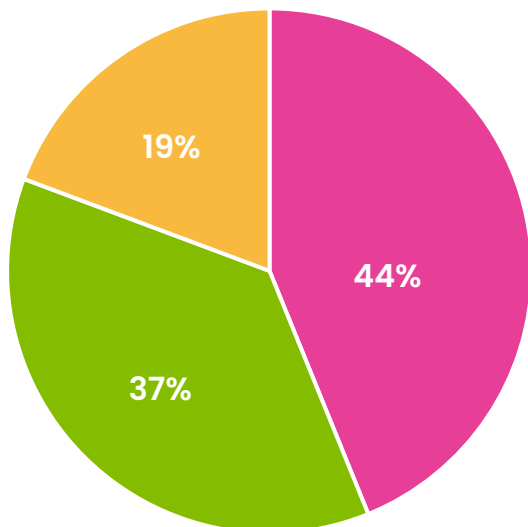
# Poll Results: Experience of being seen by a Physician Associate

In May 2024, Healthwatch in Sussex sought experiences of being seen by a Physician's Associate. A Physician associate supports doctors in the diagnosis and management of patients. A detailed explanation of a Physician Associate is available on the [NHS website](#).

**65 people from across Sussex shared their views with us. We heard:**

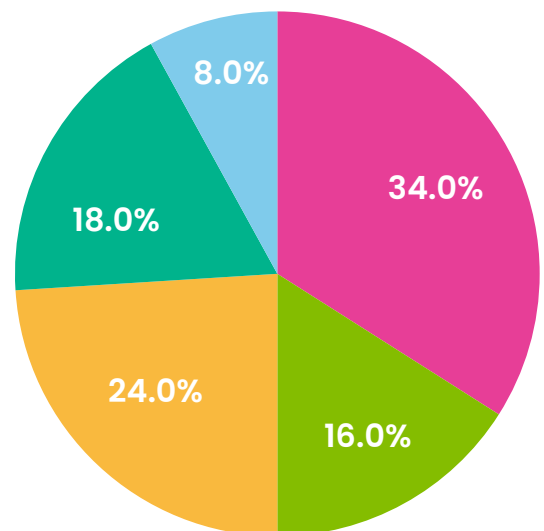
- Majority of responses (71.9%) understands the difference between a Physician Associate and a Doctor.
- Just over half of responses (53.8%) had been seen or treated by a Physician Associate at a GP Surgery

**Was it explained / did you understand why you were seeing a Physician Associate rather than a GP?**



■ Yes ■ No ■ Unsure

**How satisfied were you with the experience or outcome of seeing a Physician Associate?**



■ Extremely Satisfied  
■ Satisfied  
■ Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied  
■ Dissatisfied  
■ Extremely Dissatisfied

## Respondents to our poll told us they would like to see:

### Making patients aware of the role of a Physician Associate

*"I can't say because I don't know if I have seen one"*

*"I am not always clear who I am meeting, whether it's a doctor or a PA."*

*"I was aware that my surgery at Ship St had at one point a Physician Associate, but I think I was less well informed at that time, so didn't see them."*

### Lack of confidence

*"The consultation didn't seem thorough, the PA didn't seem confident, and I left not really knowing what was wrong with me and not confident in the advice given. I was then later contacted by my GP surgery and asked to go in the day after to be reviewed by a GP as well. There was nothing particularly different in the diagnosis or treatment, but the GP was confident and reassured me. I would ask next time if it was a PA or GP!"*

### Physician Associate checking with Doctor

"I have been trying to get an appointment with my sons GP for some weeks now and although we have had a phone call this was not what we wanted. Previously the appointments were with 2 different nurses and then after the GP phone call we saw Ed the physician associate.

He was very thorough, but he still needed us to wait for 15 minutes as he needed to consult someone (probably the GP) before he could make final recommendations"

### Would rather see a GP

*"I needed antibiotics, so the prescription wasn't issued at the time. Would far rather see a GP when I know what the problem is, but I do understand they can speed things up for the practice sometimes."*

*"Not clear at explanation, didn't seem confident about what (they were) saying, increased my meds but then didn't follow through and prescribe."*

*Didn't fill me with confidence at all, would always ask for GP in future."*

### Tell us your experience

We always want to hear more about people's experiences of health and care services.

Share your story with your local Healthwatch:

#### Healthwatch Brighton & Hove

[info@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchbrightonandhove.co.uk) or 01273 234 040

#### Healthwatch East Sussex

[enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatcheastsussex.co.uk) or 0333 101 4007

#### Healthwatch West Sussex

[helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk](mailto:helpdesk@healthwatchwestsussex.co.uk) or 0300 012 0122