

Care Navigation - Phase 1 Patient Experience

August 2018

What you're saying *quality public*
helping A&E ease support doctors
friendly waiting health long-term
improvements good Happy patient 



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Executive Summary

Simon Stevens, Chief Executive of NHS England recently described how GP's are the largest branch of British Medicine and that, "if general practice fails, the whole NHS fails" (Roland/Everington 2016). Primary Care is under strain. We have a shortfall of practitioners, difficulty recruiting and a growing number of patients with multiple needs.

There has been a steady rise in patient complaints about GP services as well as a fall in the numbers able to get an appointment. Attempts to address these issues have included weekend opening and digital consultations. The General Practice Five Year Forward View (2016) states significant funding is required to support administration and reception staff to take a more active role in their surgeries to lighten the load.

This has resulted in an initiative called Care Navigation whereby GP reception and administration staff use active signposting to direct patients to other sources of help if they have a minor condition. To do this, they have a list of conditions deemed suitable for signposting and a directory of services. When used elsewhere in the country, this has been seen to save a significant amount of GP time that can be used to improve access and treat more vulnerable patients.

Using reception staff in this way has attracted criticism. Some media reports have expressed fears of patients being unwilling to discuss their condition with the receptionist coupled with the fact that administration staff are expected to make a judgement about an illness without clinical training.

This report explores some of these concerns, specifically the interaction between the caller and the receptionist and how willing patients are to accept this interchange.

We found that people are largely comfortable discussing details of their condition with the GP receptionist, even though a significant number expressed disagreement with the practice in principle (see comments section).

The appointment booking process relies on clear communication to be successful. Most patients said they can easily answer questions put to them by reception staff while 8% felt that they did not feel confident that what they told the receptionist was understood. This is reflected in the 7% that felt they were not supported to get the right help.

Overall satisfaction with the appointment-making process appears to be heavily affected by things outside of Care Navigation. Many patients mentioned difficulties reaching the receptionist with one reporting over 80 early morning phone calls. Some patients, including a few who appeared vulnerable, reported having given up during this process (see comments - page 21 onwards).

Care Navigation offers an opportunity to relieve some of the pressures on GP services by filtering out patients who could be treated elsewhere. NHS England evaluation suggests that Care Navigation is effective. However, there is a need for more evidence about patient experience and outcomes.

Based on our observations it may also be helpful for future work in this area to look at whether GP Practices are informing callers of their right of refusal (see care navigation flowchart page 9).

What We Did

The Francis report found that one of the causes of the Mid Staffs crisis was:

“finances and targets were often given priority without considering the impact on the quality of care. This was not helped by a general lack of effective engagement with patients and the public.”

Health and Care services are facing financial pressures and service change. Healthwatch empowers and facilitates the engagement needed to ensure the patient voice is heard before and during proposed service change.

In 2018 Stoke-on-Trent City Council Adult and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee asked Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to evaluate patients’ experience of their initial contact with GP practices’ reception staff when using care navigation.

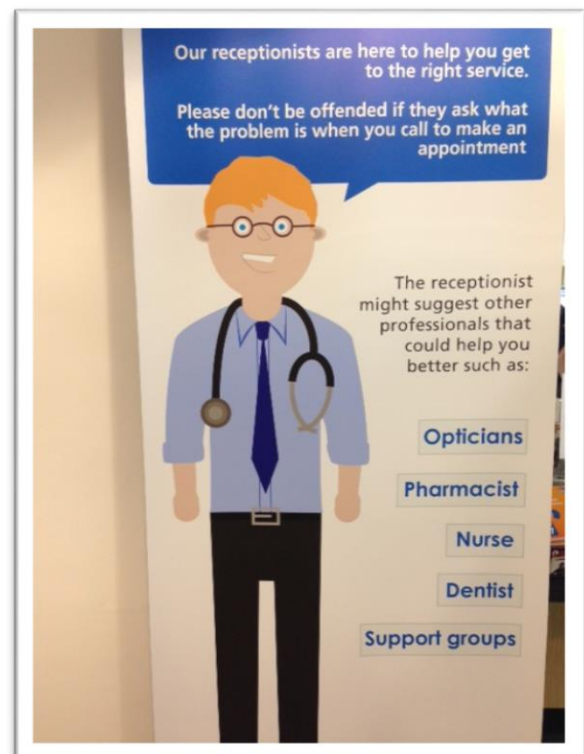
We met with the CCG and co-designed a questionnaire (see appendix). Our volunteers were briefed, and we attended 9 GP practices in Stoke-on-Trent. These practices were identified by the CCG and have all implemented Care Navigation. They are spread geographically across the city. We also spoke to a small number of patients who are not members of these 9 GP practices, including members of a local Stroke Support Group.

We spoke to 340 individuals and 169 comments were received. The results were analysed in statistical software IBM SPSS, Tableau and Microsoft Office applications.

Following this work, we will continue to monitor patient interactions with staff and share relevant learning with the CCG so that services can continue to be improved.

Limitations

- The sample size does not contain enough responses from those who may struggle to access primary care such as the homeless, travellers, those from BME communities and others. New processes that affect access may impact these groups disproportionately.
- The scope of the report was restricted to understanding patient experience of signposting by a GP receptionist. It is not a full evaluation of the Care Navigation program.
- This report does not account for the outcome of the patient journey, for example, if treatment was successful.



A Care Navigation pop-up display in a GP surgery.

Key Findings

- Respondents report being largely comfortable discussing details of their condition with the GP receptionist, even though a significant number expressed disagreement with the practice in principle (see comments section).
- 77% reported being asked questions about their illness when they booked their appointment.
- 4.6% reported difficulty answering questions about their illness when asked by receptionist staff.
- 11.7% of people felt uncomfortable answering questions asked by receptionists about their illness. 78.7% agreed that they were comfortable and the remaining 9.6% neutral about the issue.
- 8.2% of respondents reported not feeling confident that what they explained to reception staff was understood. 81.9% said they were confident and 10% were neutral.
- 7% reported that they did not feel they were supported to get the right help.
- 12.6% reported that they were not satisfied with their experience of making an appointment, although comments suggest that this related to difficulties contacting the GP surgery rather than care navigation.
- Overall satisfaction with the appointment-making process appears to be heavily affected by things outside of Care Navigation. Many patients mentioned difficulties reaching the receptionist with one reporting over 80 early morning phone calls.
- A small number of respondents reported being refused GP appointments once they had explained their symptoms.

"The receptionists are very good, don't encroach, don't pressurise"

"Wanted doctor but they said have to see nurse, did not explain why... just that can't see the doctor"

"They ask about your illness but sometimes I don't know what it is, I just want to see someone."

"No problem, if they think I should go to the pharmacy, I'll go to the pharmacy."

"I wish I could see the same doctor as 9 out of 10 is different doctor."

"Try to phone at 8 to get a quick appointment but can't get through. 62 phone calls this morning. (friend sitting alongside said she got through on the second attempt)"

Sample of comments received

Background

“Dr Steve Fawcett, Stoke-on-Trent Clinical Commissioning Group’s medical director, believes primary care is one of the ‘ticking time bombs’ the NHS is facing. Dr Fawcett, a GP partner at Moorcroft Medical Centre in Hanley, said: “Half of our GPs are due to retire. The average age of a GP at retirement is 58. We are down on GPs by perhaps 20 or 25 per cent short of where we need to be.” (Sentinel April 2018)

This is an important local and national issue which casts doubt on the deliverability of a government pledge of delivering 5000 new doctors by 2020.

A recent study in the south west of England found that the reason for GP’s leaving the profession was largely three-fold:

- professional and personal identity such as the expectations for general practice and morale;
- fear and risk such as that to their own health or of being sued;
- choice and volition with GP’s describing how a cumulation of factors might lead to decisions to leave practice (Sansom et al 2017). For example, the cost of indemnity far exceeds that of a hospital consultant.

This mix of different factors has been growing for some time with “recent research showing levels of stress among general practitioners that are unprecedented since surveys began in 1998” (Gibson et al 2016).

In 2015 the NHS Alliance and Primary Care Foundation produced a report entitled ‘Making Time’. It described how:

“Workload is increasingly driven by an unprecedented rise in the number of patients and growing complexity of their health needs, added to by growing expectations both from politicians and policy makers. Many GPs are working increasingly long hours and an increasing number are looking to leave the profession, while the numbers applying to become trainee GPs and practice nurses has fallen to a worrying level. The overall share of the NHS budget for general practice has reduced by nearly 20% over the last decade, leading commentators to describe it as a ‘perfect storm’.”

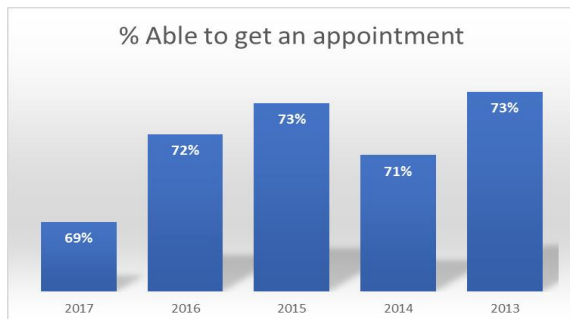
The outcome of this was expected impact upon the “practice team as time pressures grow, systems become more complex and tasks are increasingly likely to be delegated across a broader range of staff groups.” (Moore 2016). This is reflected in the General Practice Five Year Forward View which also suggests £45million of extra funding is needed to help reception and clerical staff to play a greater role. Some of this money has been drawn down to support Care Navigation.

“Wider members of the practice-based team will play an increasing role in providing day-to-day coordination and delivery of care. Greater use of skill mix will be key to releasing capacity, if we are to offer patients with complex or multiple long-term conditions longer GP consultations.”

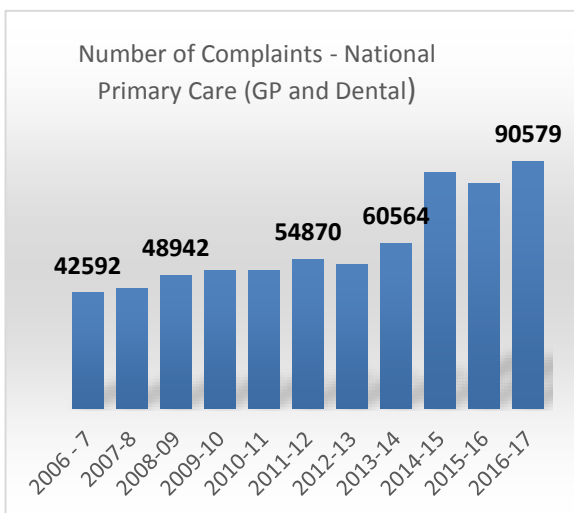
Patient Experience of GP Services

These pressures have coincided with changes to patient experience.

In Stoke-on-Trent, the 2017 national GP Patient Survey shows a fall in the number of people who can get an appointment when they want to. The number of complaints about GP services has also risen considerably. This is set against a policy environment that has focussed upon access, with initiatives to extend opening hours offered as a solution.



National GP Survey Data



National Complaints Numbers (NHS England)

What is Care Navigation?

Care Navigation evolved in the United States as “a strategy to improve outcomes in vulnerable populations by eliminating barriers to timely diagnosis of cancer and other chronic diseases” (Freeman 2012). It did this by providing a personalised approach to guiding patients to relevant information and services. This has been duplicated and developed elsewhere, such as a program focussed on diabetes in Lambeth¹ or another for older people in South Staffordshire².

In Stoke-on-Trent, Care Navigation is described as active signposting. It is not a clinical consultation. It is based upon a model previously rolled out in Wakefield. Its intended targets are those who may automatically see the GP as the first port of call but could receive help elsewhere. In Stoke-on-Trent, patients are signposted elsewhere for a variety of minor ailments, alongside types of urinary tract infections, impetigo, some common mental health conditions and minor cuts and bruises.

When used elsewhere, the reported impacts (NHS Networks 2017) include:

- *Reduced GP Appointments;*
- *Patient Benefits - faster access to the right service;*
- *Staff Satisfaction - receptionists feel they are doing a better job for patients and making a bigger contribution to the practice.*

¹ <http://www.southlondonhealthyhampions.co.uk/images/documents/Final-report-Evaluation-of-the->

Lambeth-Primary-Care-Navigation-(Diabetes)-pilot-final-1.pdf
² <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/southstaffs/our-services/care-navigation/>

Data Provided by the CCG

39 CCGs have signed up to deliver Care Navigation across the country and at least half of them have 'gone live'.

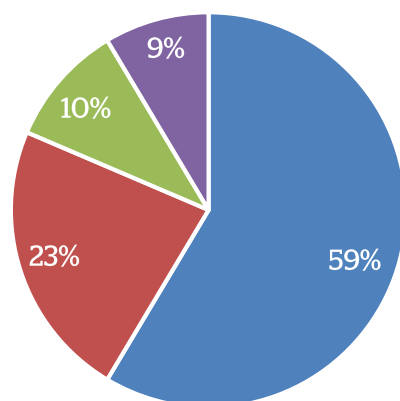
There are currently 44 Stoke-on-Trent practices participating in Care Navigation.

Since the start of the project in September 2017 14,809 signposts have been made with a 95% patient acceptance rate and 2202 GP hours saved.

In June 2018, 1,721 signposts were made with a 92% acceptance rate and an estimated 238 GP hours saved.

Across North Staffordshire over 7,000 signposts have been made between September 2017 - January 2018, of which 97% were accepted by patients. Over 1,000 hours GP time was saved.

Where patients are signposted (Stoke-on-Trent)



- Nurse Practitioner
- Community Pharmacy
- Nurse Triage
- Haywood Walk in Centre

Receptionists

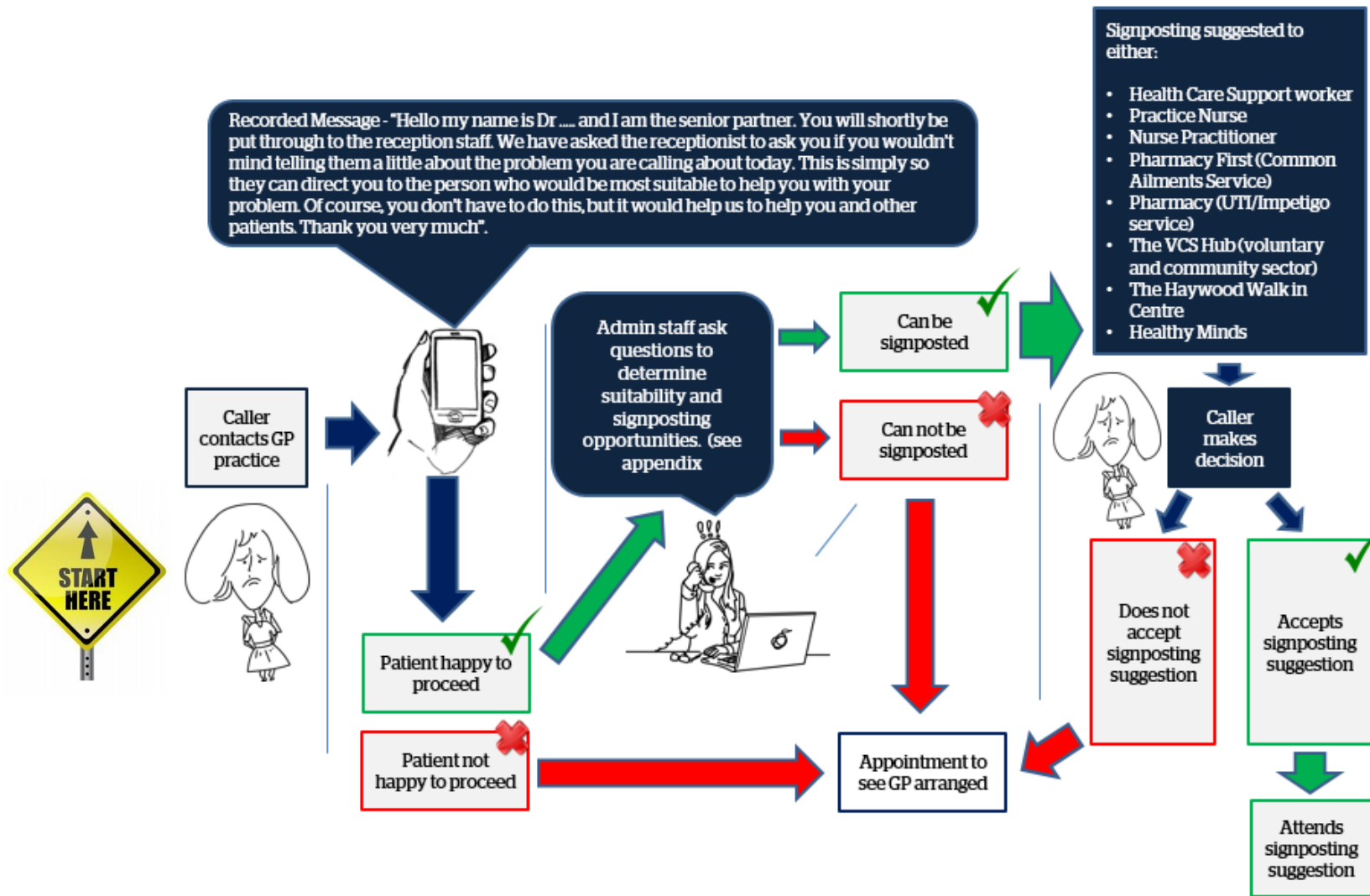
Receptionists play a pivotal role in GP Practices by providing a critical interface between the practice and the patient. They have a range of administration and other duties such as filing, maintaining medical records, communicating test results and managing repeat prescriptions. As well as this, they are responsible for allocating patient appointments. Even before the introduction of Care Navigation, this may have involved making decisions about patient need (Hammond et al 2012).

Previous work carried out has described how,

“in satisfying these various functions, receptionists experience competing pressures from patients and GPs and feeling isolated fulfilling a role with clear responsibility for patient health, often without appropriate support”
(Litchfield et al 2016).

In Stoke-on-Trent and North Staffordshire, the CCG has shared 540 training packages so that online Care Navigation training can be completed. Figures show that 408 individuals have accessed this training. There have been 5 face to face training events where those that have had the online training gained an understanding of the services that they are signposting to. In addition, there have been 4 customer care training events in March 2018.

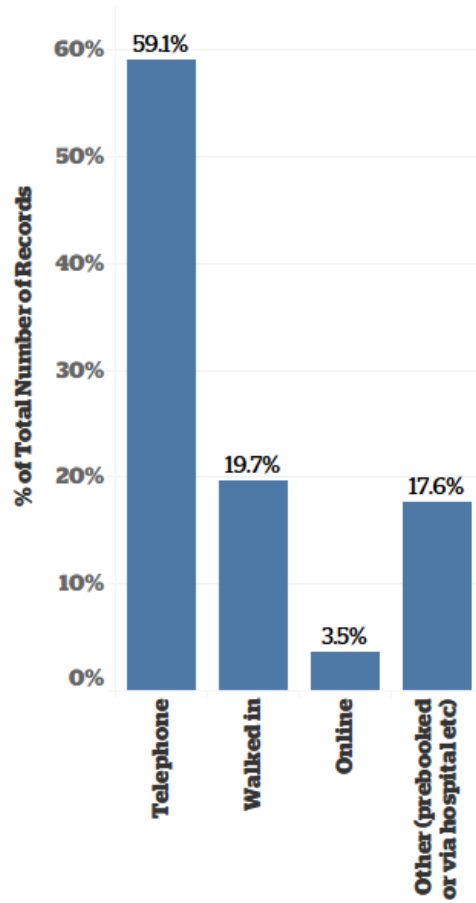
Care Navigation – Flow Chart



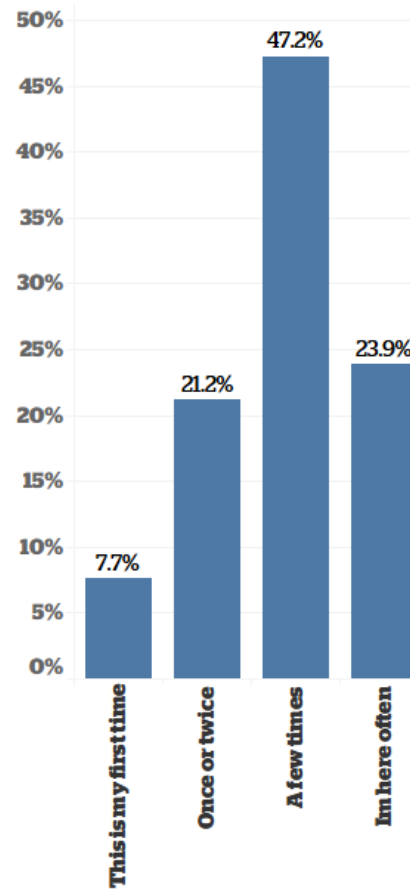
Care Navigation (flow chart)

Findings in Full

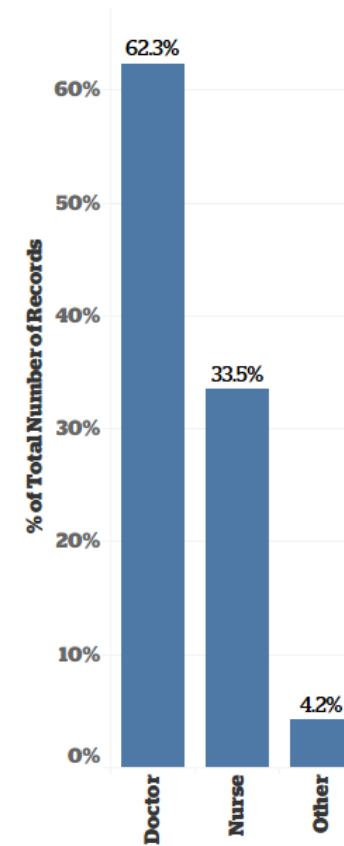
How did you book your appointment for today? – all respondents? (n340)



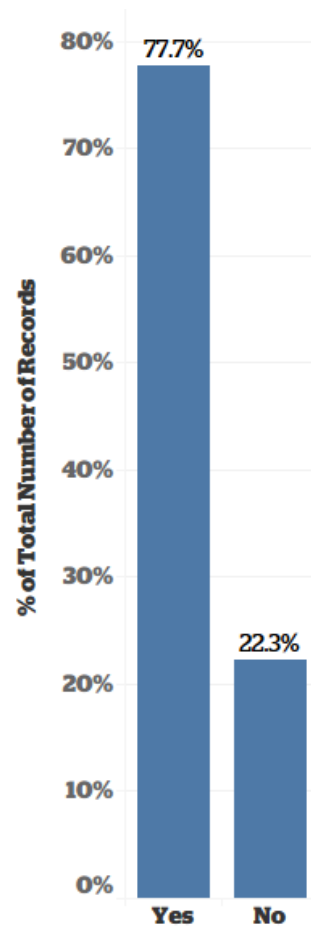
How often have you visited your GP Surgery in the last 12 months? – all respondents (n339)



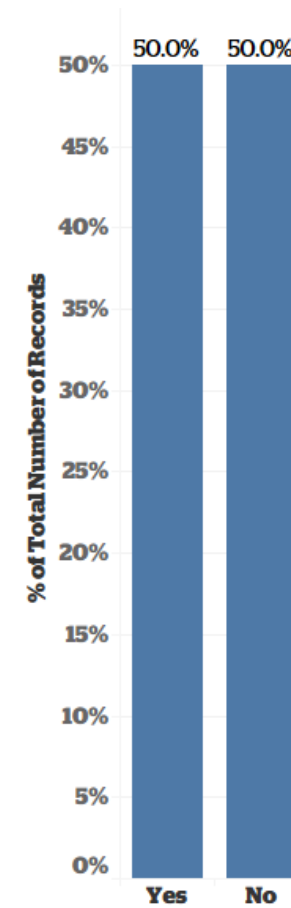
Who are you here to see today? – all respondents (n334)



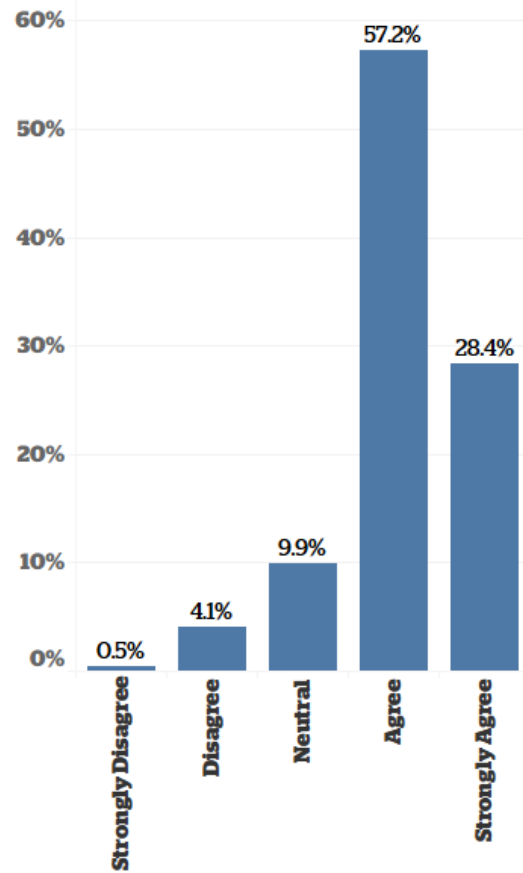
Thinking about when you booked your appointment, were you asked questions about your illness? – Just CCG identified practices delivering Care Navigation (n296)



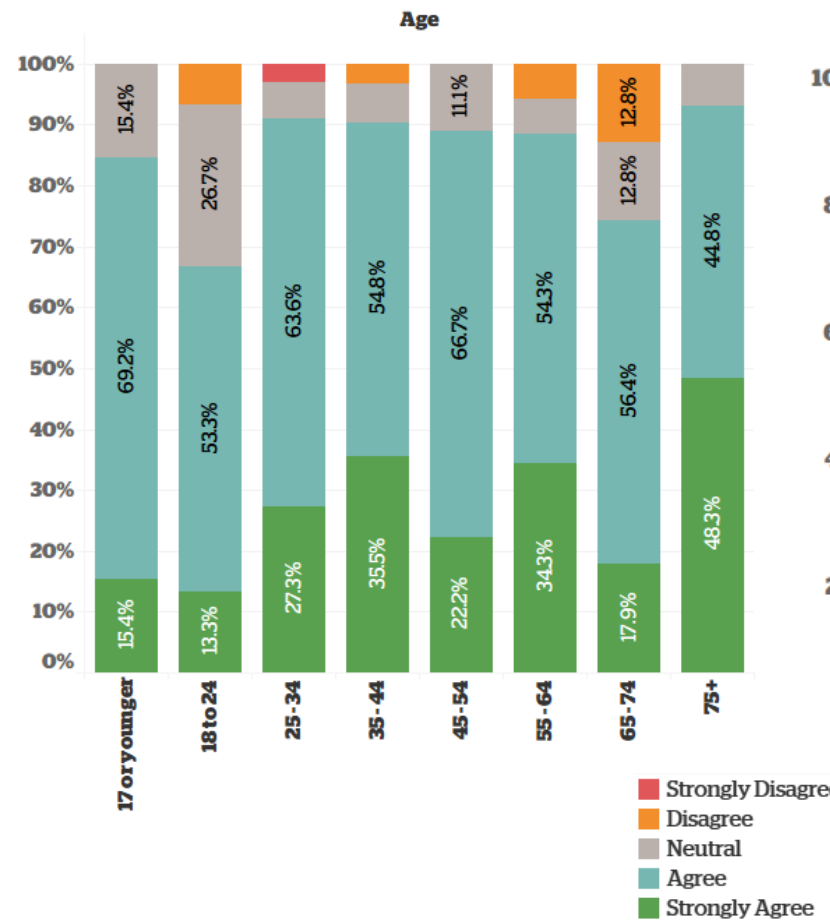
Thinking about when you booked your appointment, were you asked questions about your illness – Other surgeries and Stroke Group (n42)



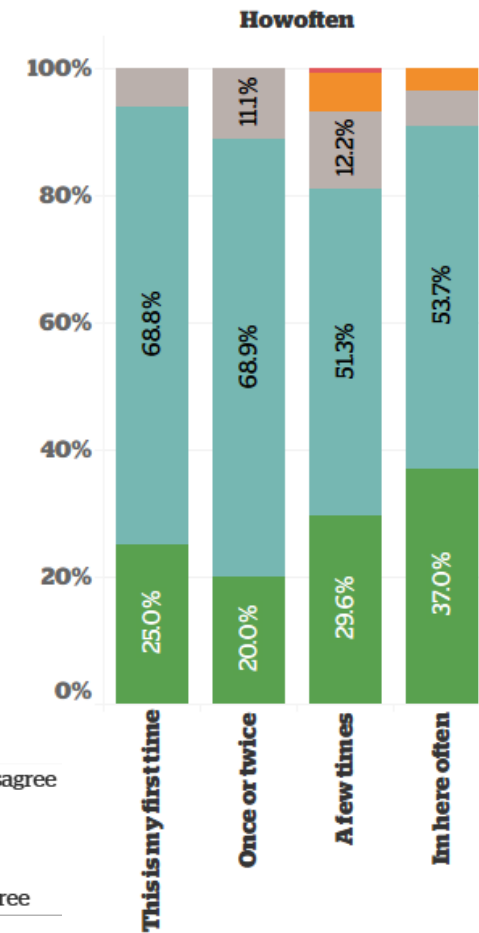
Whilst booking my appointment I was able to easily answer questions asked about my illness – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n230)



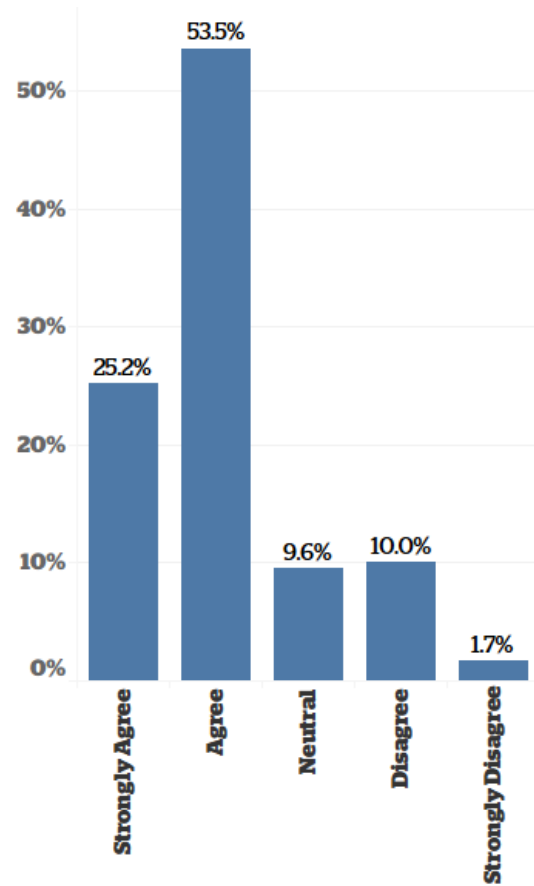
Whilst booking my appointment I was able to easily answer questions asked about my illness – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n230)



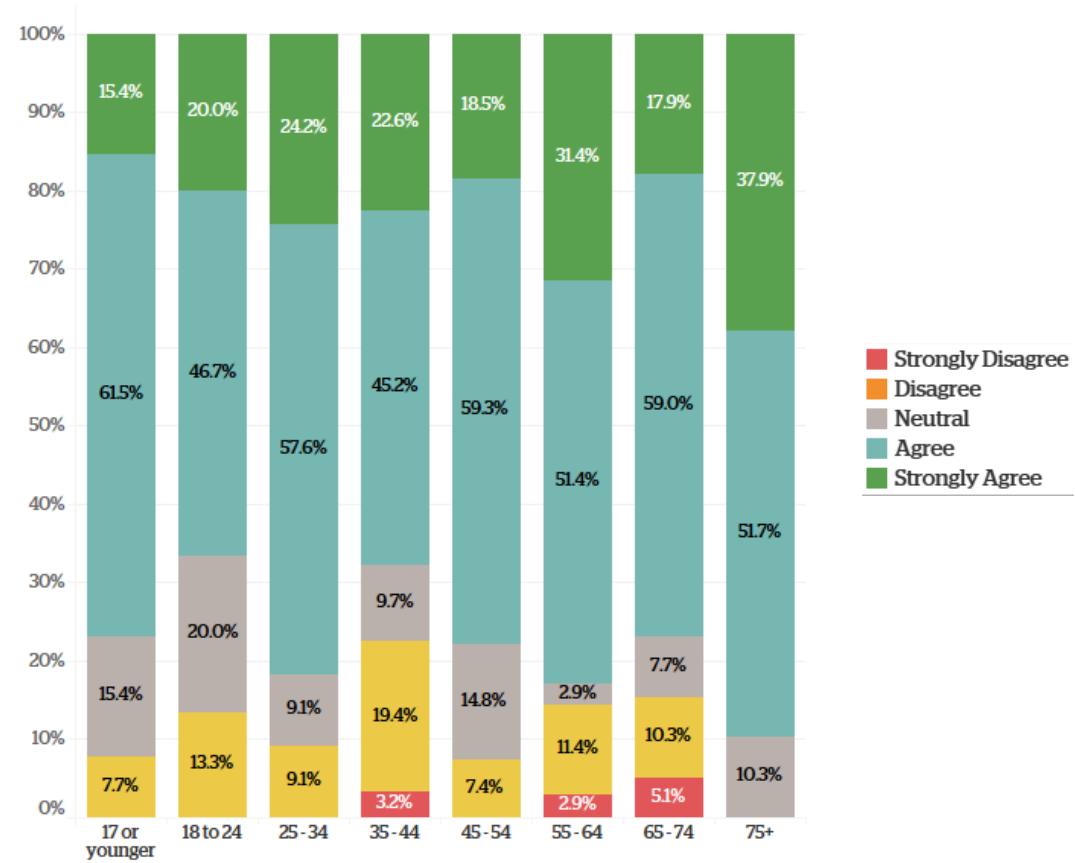
Whilst booking my appointment I was able to easily answer questions asked about my illness – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n230)



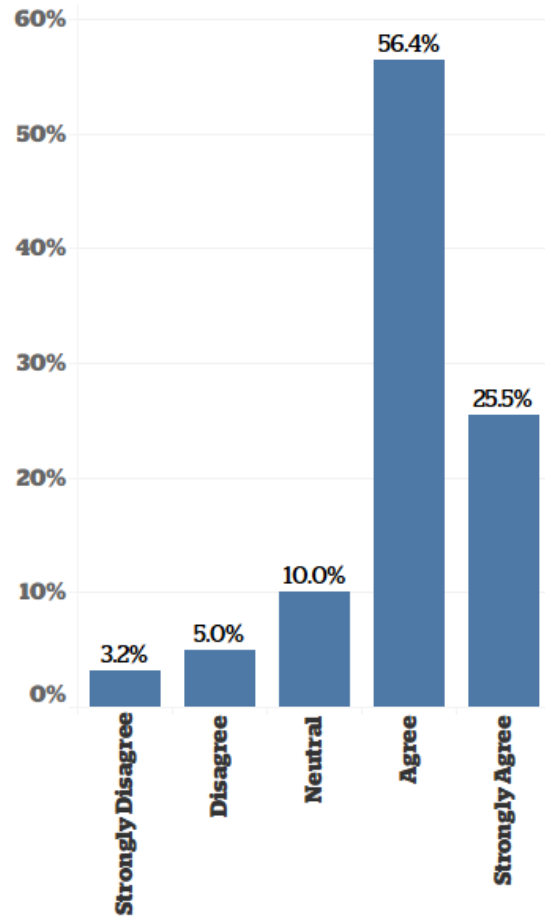
Whilst booking my appointment I was comfortable answering questions asked about my illness – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n230)



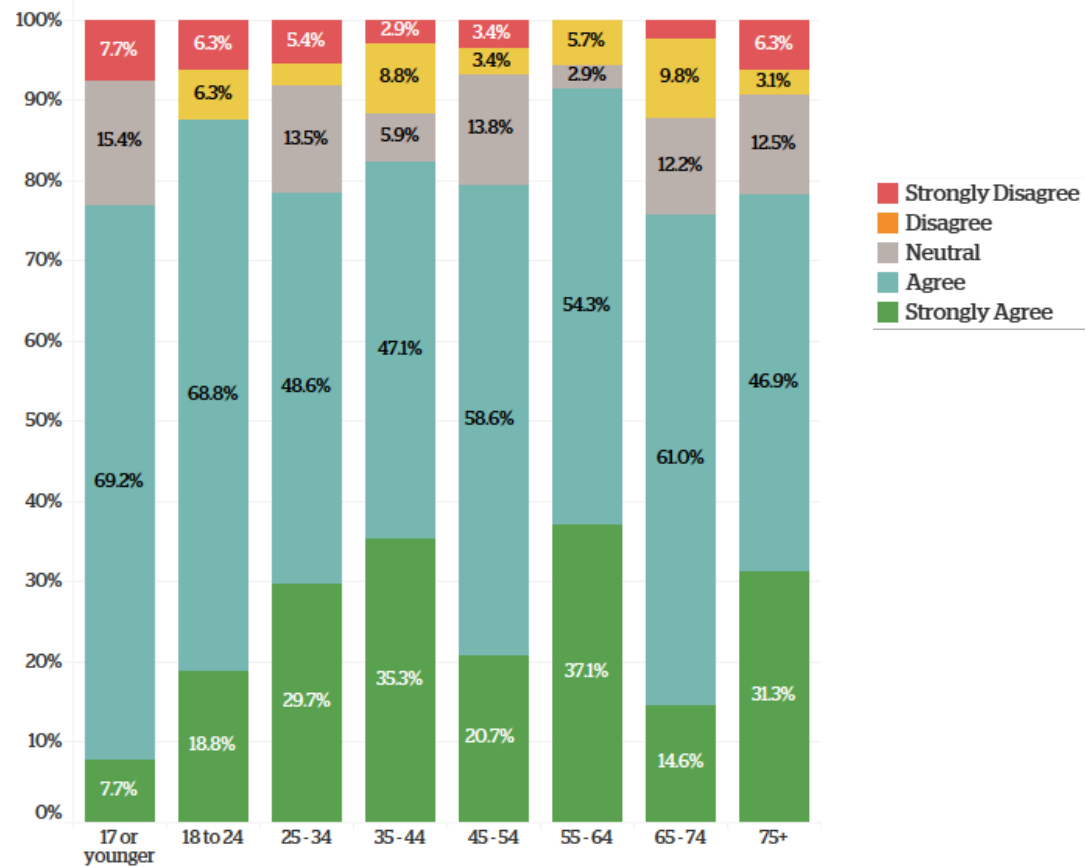
Whilst booking my appointment I was comfortable answering questions asked about my illness – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n222)



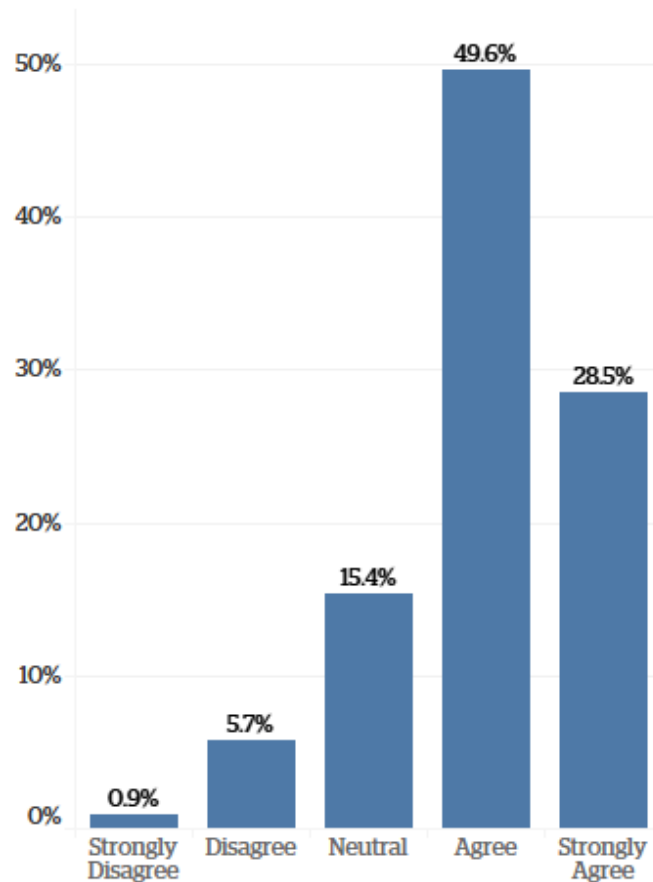
Whilst booking my appointment I was confident that what I explained was properly understood – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n220)



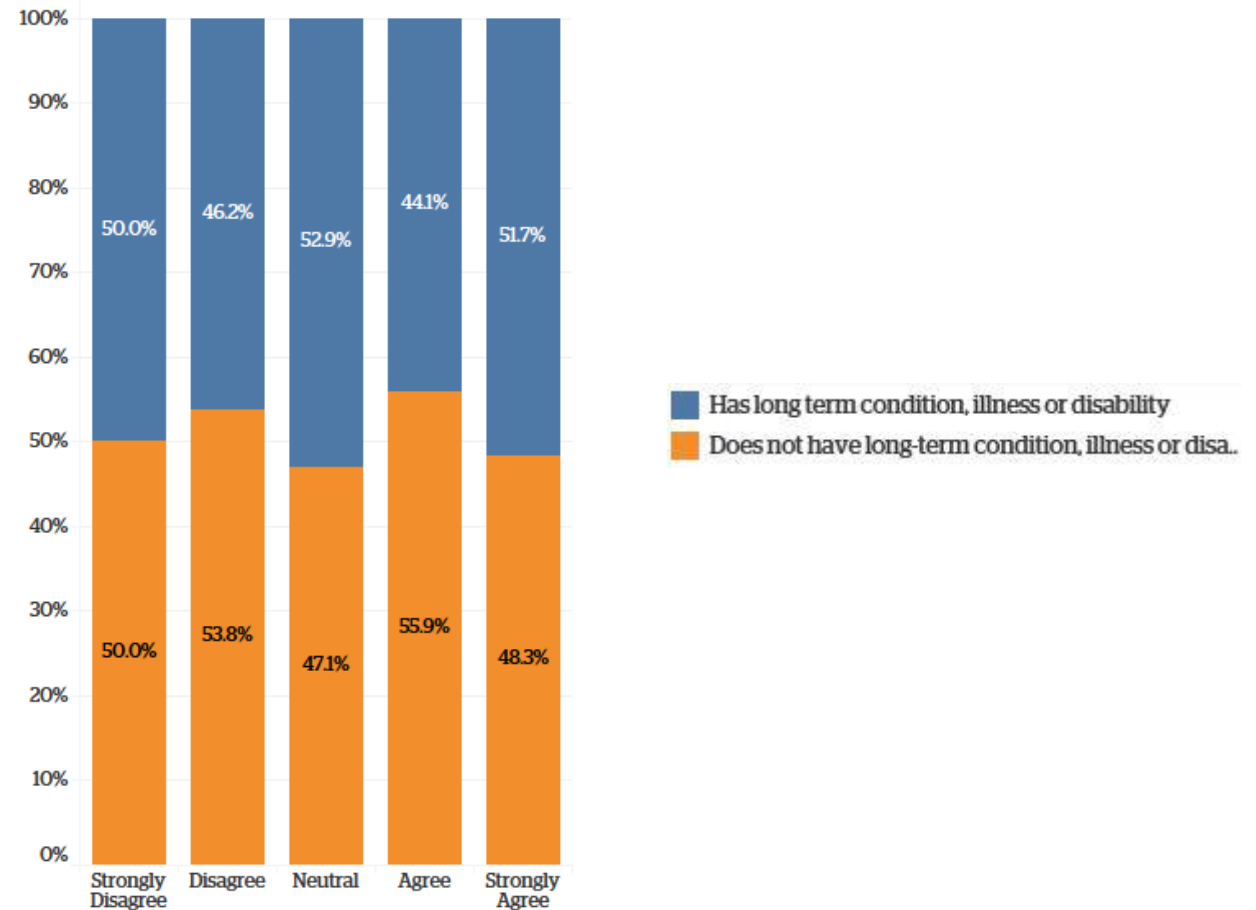
Whilst booking my appointment I was confident that what I explained was properly understood – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n220)



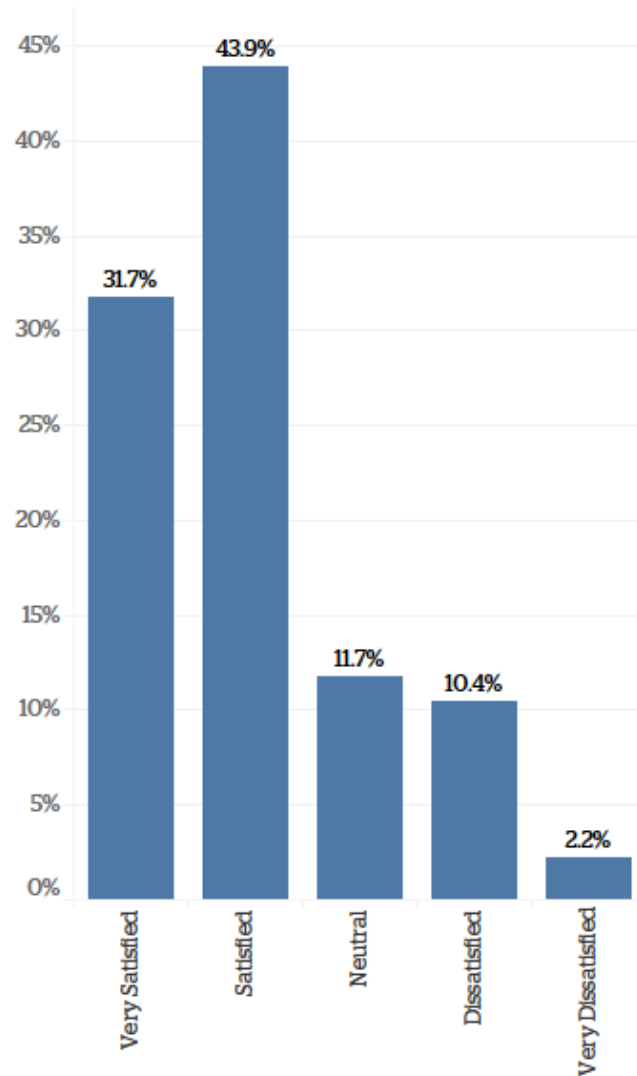
Whilst booking my appointment I felt supported to get the right help – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n228)



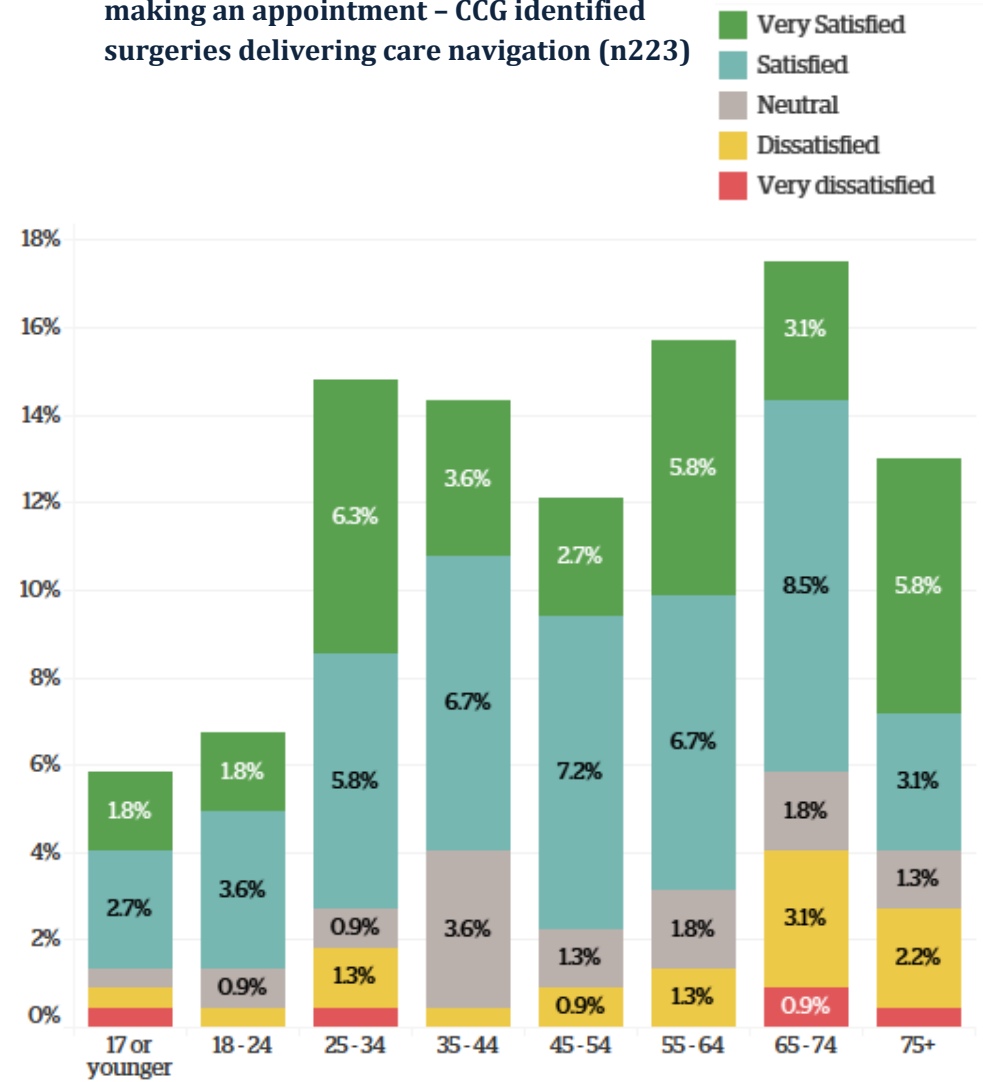
Whilst booking my appointment I felt supported to get the right help – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n220)



Were you satisfied with your experience of making an appointment? – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n223)

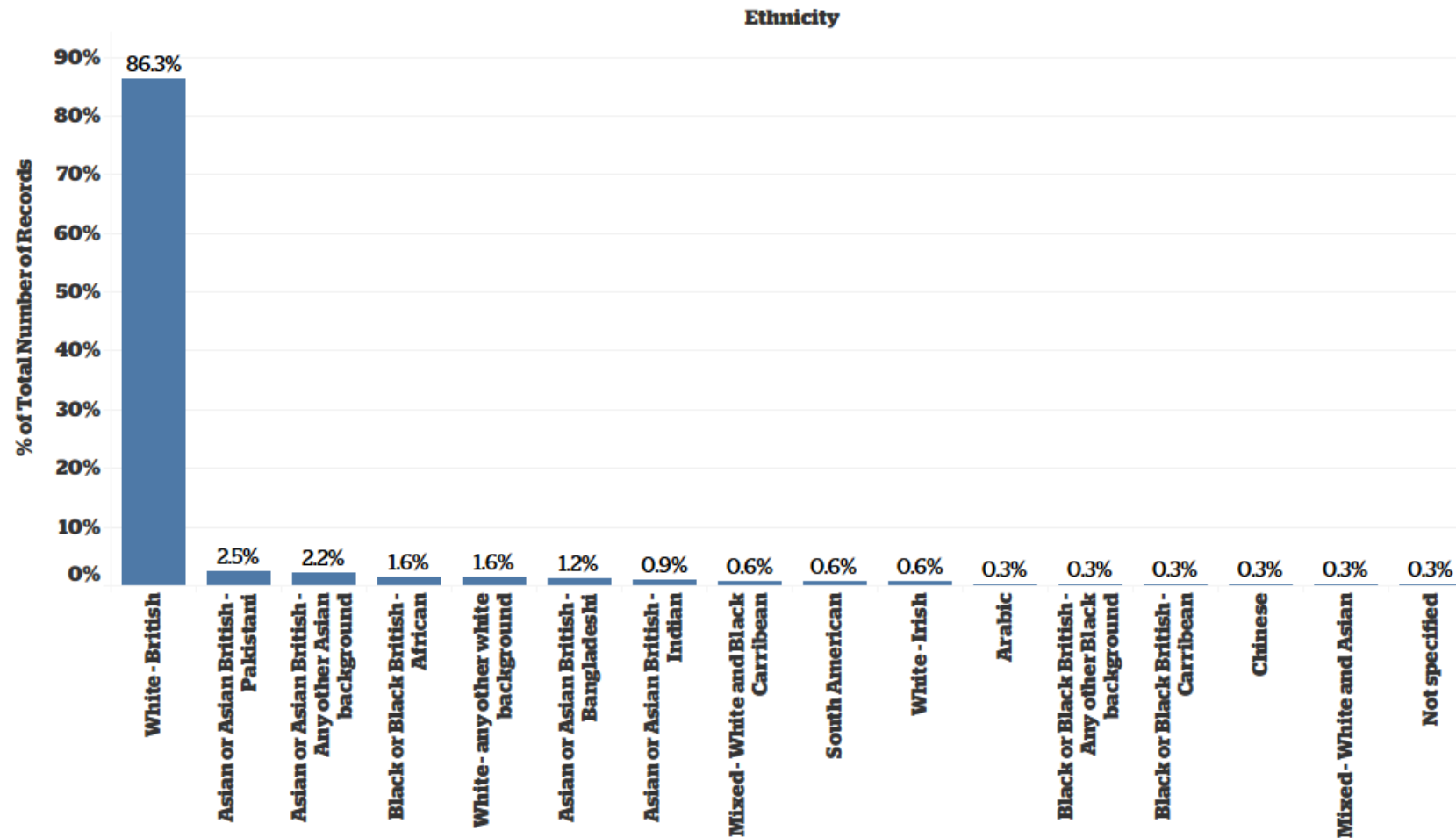


Were you satisfied with your experience of making an appointment – CCG identified surgeries delivering care navigation (n223)



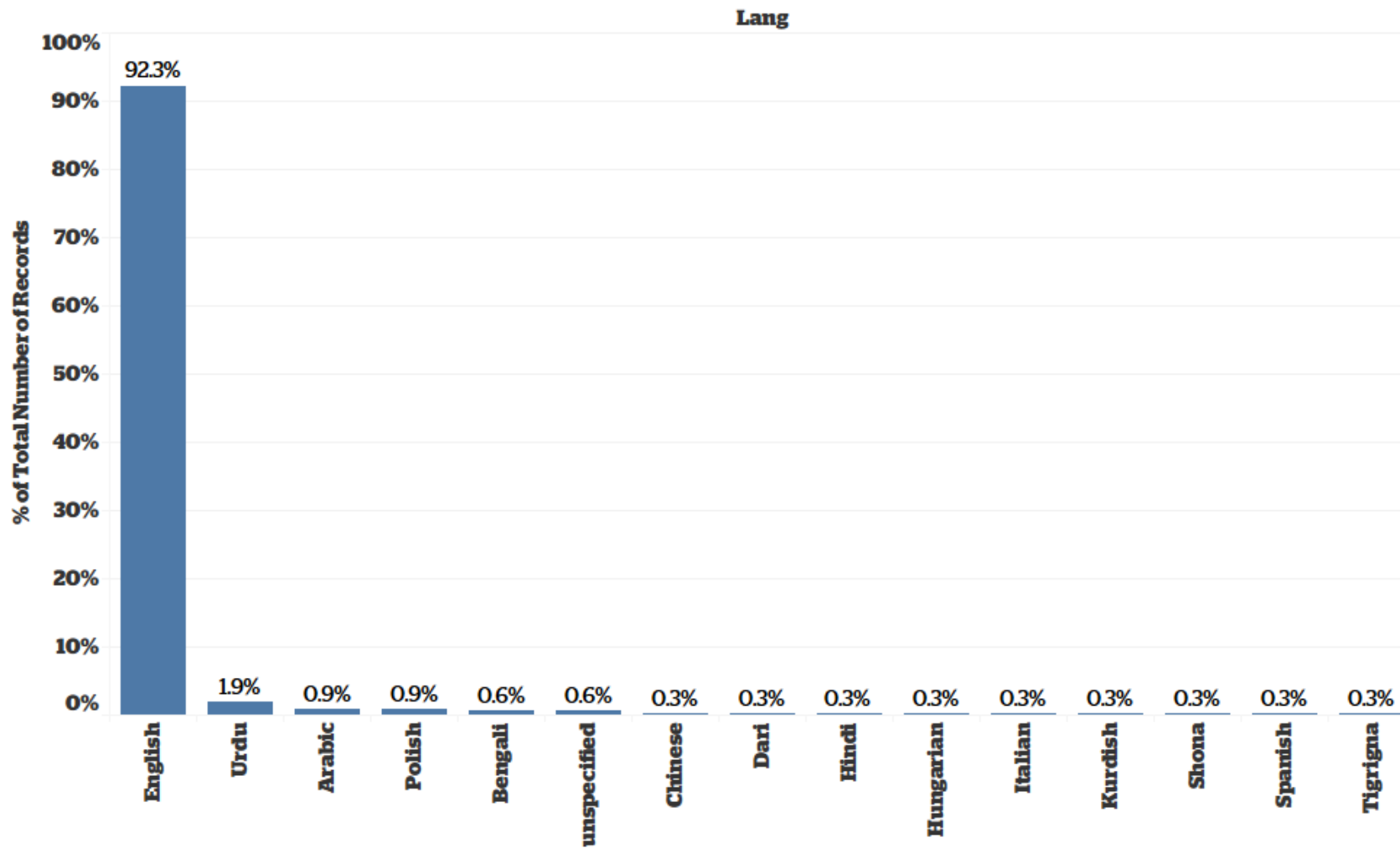
Demographics

Ethnicity - All respondents (n321)

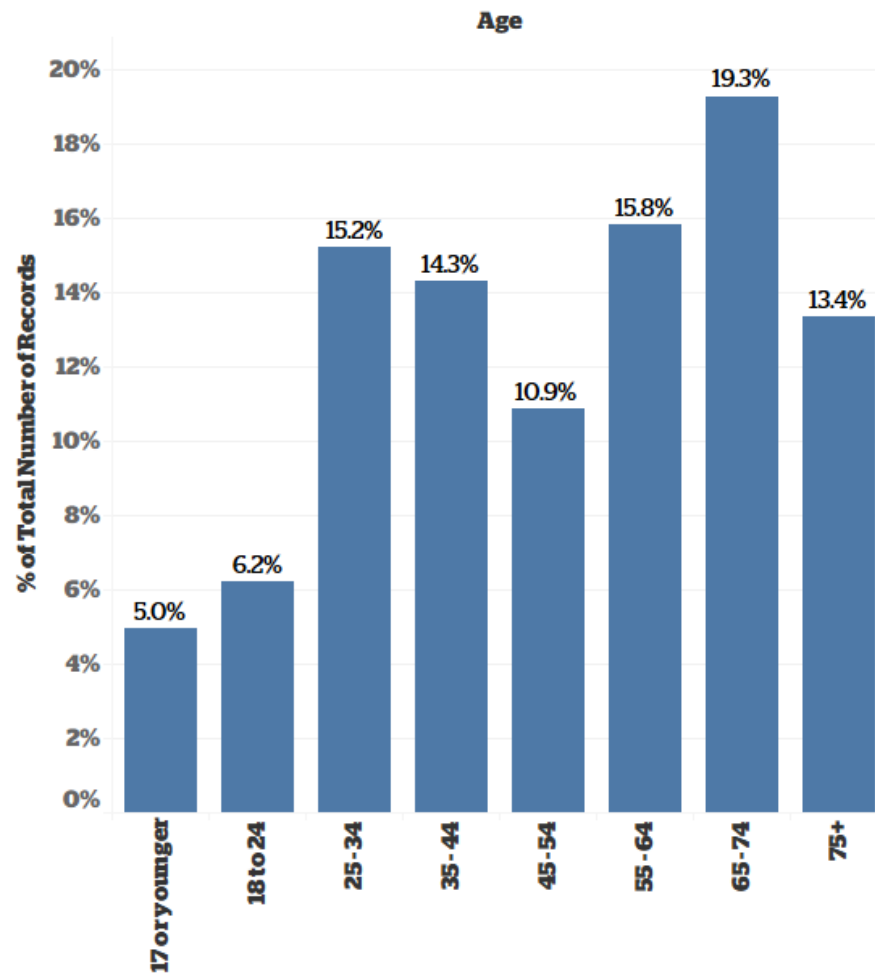


Some patients declined to answer the survey due to language barriers

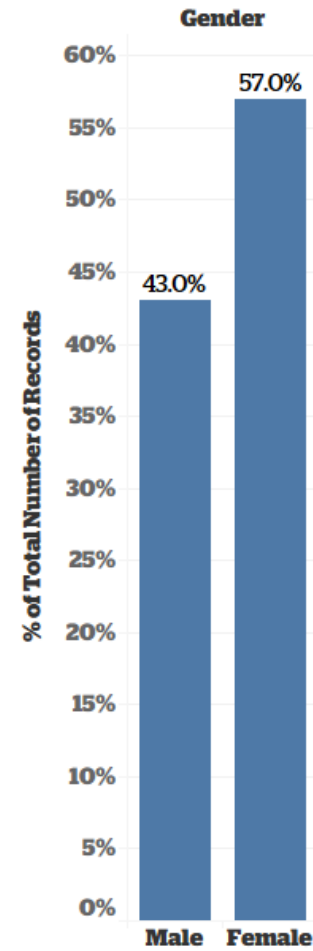
Languages - All respondents (n323)



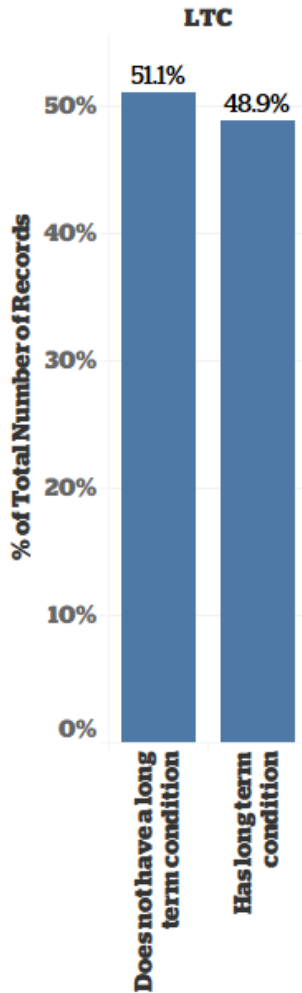
Age - All respondents (n322)



Gender - All respondents - (n323)



Do you have a long-standing illness or, disability? - All respondents (n319)



Comments by Theme

Positive Comments – Care Navigation

Sometimes you don't want to tell the receptionist over the phone your reason for seeing the doctor or nurse. But sometimes it does help as it gets you in quicker to see your doctor/nurse	Negative/Positive - Care Navigation
Reminder on the phone is very useful	Positive - Care Navigation
The receptionists are very good, don't encroach, don't pressurise	Positive - Care Navigation
I'm ok with them asking questions	Positive - Care Navigation
They have the right to know, it's all good	Positive - Care Navigation
I'm satisfied with the way it's done	Positive - Care Navigation
No problem, if they think I should go to the pharmacy, I'll go to the pharmacy	Positive - Care Navigation

Mixed Comments – Care Navigation

My condition changes and it is difficult to describe. Struggling to get a diagnosis. I think they are trying to eliminate people who are coming for not much. They spend a lot of time saying they haven't for enough time.	Mixed - Care Navigation
I found it difficult to speak to the receptionist because of my illness. She went away to speak to a GP and came back to me with an appointment. Sometimes it can take a bit too long. You can get an emergency appointment if you ring between 8 and 9 or walk in. Sometimes two weeks.	Mixed - Care Navigation
Sometimes in the winter, GP is busy so they say I have to go to pharmacy but overall is good friendly service.	Mixed - Care Navigation

Negative Comments – Care Navigation

I tried to book an emergency appointment for a water infection. In the past, when I was pregnant, I would come here for that. When I phoned this morning, I was referred to the chemist. When I got there, there wasn't a pharmacist available to prescribe so now I'm back here again. They are now telling me that I won't get a prescription until this evening, but I have kids and travel is difficult.	Negative - Care Navigation
Wanted doctor but they said have to see nurse, did not explain why . . just that can't see the doctor	Negative - Care Navigation
When you call in. they hardly give you an appointment, hardly even a doctor, usually a nurse.	Negative - Care Navigation
"They ask about your illness but sometimes I don't know what it is, I just want to see someone."	Negative - Care Navigation
When booking an appointment, I do prefer not to be questioned. Sometimes the receptionist tries to diagnose the symptoms being told and I don't think it's appropriate considering they are not qualified doctor	Negative - Care Navigation
It took 3 days to get appointment. I'm only with nurse but want to see a doctor. They told me go to chemist told them been already, got drops but not working, asked to go to the chemists again.	Negative - Care Navigation

Receptionist didn't seem very happy when booking the appointment. Don't know why they need to ask what the appointment is for!	Negative- Care Navigation
Don't feel like the receptionists were taking into account what they were saying	Negative- Care Navigation
Wanted to see the doctor, saw nurse	Negative- Care Navigation
I don't agree with it. Asking why? I don't come to the doctors for fun. She's only a receptionist at the end of the day. You feel that they are deciding whether you need an appointment or not. You can wait a while to see a certain doctor, can ring today, appt in 3 weeks.	Negative- Care Navigation
Sometimes they phone you up - takes a while to get through then you have to speak to reception. she'll talk to doctor and Dr will call you back if its necessary for you to have an appointment. I don't like this system at all, they should just give you appt when you need one! Its rubbish.	Negative- Care Navigation
They said this was for a medical emergency only, in my mind emergency is a&e. Needs to be properly specified	Negative- Care Navigation
I don't think they should be asking questions, its personal. Difficult to get an appt if you need it on the same day	Negative- Care Navigation
Sometimes I don't like discussing. I don't think they should ask. Sometimes you can't get in when you ring at 8. You can be on the phone for half an hour. You can't always get the doctor you want.	Negative- Care Navigation
Felt awkward answering questions on this occasion. Was alright the way it was before this booking system. Even then you had to wait weeks.	Negative- Care Navigation
I don't agree with telling the receptionist, that is what the doctor is for. Disagree with going through a triage nurse because if the nurse disagree that you can't see a GP. I don't want to go through receptionist then nurse then GP. It takes for ever to book on the phone.	Negative- Care Navigation
Don't like being asked questions, rather if I can just get appt with the doctor. In the morning you call on the phone, 30 min and then you get through and no appt is available.	Negative- Care Navigation
I don't think it's very good, can't see the DR (have to see the nurse) it's not like it used to be.	Negative- Care Navigation
I would rather tell the doctors, I don't come very often. (after triage) they said they would ring me back between 9 & 3 which is a big window. They did at 1pm. How come they can have late appointments and I can't be 10 minutes late. My time is mine and that's valuable to me.	Negative- Care Navigation
I don't think they should be asking questions, they are not doctors	Negative- Care Navigation
Speech difficult and partially deaf. Difficulty in understanding (<i>from stroke group</i>)	Negative- Care Navigation
Sometimes it is difficult to get an appointment and I'd rather not reveal symptoms (personal)	Negative- Care Navigation/Booking

Comments – About Staff

They are always efficient when I phone. It is frustrating waiting a week for an appointment	Positive - Staff Negative - Booking
The receptionists are fine	Positive - Staff
Very polite and helpful	Positive - Staff
Really helpful on the phone	Positive - Staff
When I came for my appointment it was booked in a different name. Lady on the desk was very good in sorting it out	Positive - Staff
I've always found staff here polite and useful	Positive - Staff
Dont have a problem. A very nice doctor	Positive - Staff
Surgery is very efficient, welcoming and friendly	Positive - Staff
Very good and very good doctors. I can see my GP if I want to.	Positive - Staff
They are really helpful. They know what they are doing.	Positive - Staff
It does depend who is on reception. There is the odd one who is unapproachable. Bend over backwards to be as helpful as possible.	Positive - Staff
Doctor was very good when I had a blood test and he wasn't happy with the result so sent me for further tests and they picked up that I had prostate cancer that was picked up in time.	Positive - Staff
The staff are all very good.	Positive - Staff
Receptionists very friendly and accommodating.	Positive - Staff

Negative Comments – Booking Appointments³

Wish it was easier to book	Negative- Booking	General Comment
Hard work trying to get an appointment. Don't like the new issues about making one	Negative- Booking	General Comment
Quite difficult sometimes. Shortage of doctors that makes it harder to get an appointment	Negative- Booking	General Comment
It's difficult to get an appointment	Negative- Booking	General Comment
Have to attend clinic to see the doctor	Negative- Booking	General Comment
Really difficult to get an appointment	Negative- Booking	General Comment
Difficult to get an appointment	Negative- Booking	General Comment
If I haven't got internet it is a nightmare	Negative- Booking	Internet
Difficult to get through to GP	Negative- Booking	Phone
Really hard to get an appointment - constantly phoning from 8 onwards. It's difficult having to phone when trying to get ready for work/school	Negative- Booking	Phone
Taken up to 80 times to book appointment to get through, no appointments left. Today was a one off, got through straight away.	Negative- Booking	Phone
In principle, care navigation is good. But it doesn't work in practice. Have to ring at 8am to get appointment, but this coincides with the school run. It's an impossible task.	Negative- Booking	Phone
Difficult to get through on the phone (phoned 63 times) When you did get through, no appointments. Had to get there at 8am but unable to get there at that time	Negative- Booking	Phone
Takes endless phone calls to get an appointment	Negative- Booking	Phone
My son bad (side)- had to come next morning. When you call no one answers the phone.	Negative- Booking	Phone
A very long time to get through on the phone. (and I had a letter to call and make an appointment)	Negative- Booking	Phone

³ Arrangements for booking appointments are decided at surgery level. Care Navigation does not affect this process.

Too hard to book appointments, can only do so over the phone at certain times	Negative - Booking	Phone
Booked in person. Questioning was quite thorough. Found it difficult to book an appointment due to available times (I have to be here by 8am and that's not possible). It's difficult to get through on the phone. Satisfied with the treatment by doctors, service good, difficult to book appointments.	Negative - Booking	Phone
By telephone, can't get appointment. System is stupid	Negative - Booking	Phone
Hard to book my appointment over the phone I have come personally to see the receptionist	Negative - Booking	Phone
Takes a long time to book via the phone	Negative - Booking	Phone
Gets cut when making call	Negative - Booking	Phone
Length of time on the phone to book appointment	Negative - Booking	Phone
Struggle to get appointments when phoning. Last appointment one hour late	Negative - Booking	Phone
Hard to get through on the telephone	Negative - Booking	Phone
Sometimes takes a while to answer the phones	Negative - Booking	Phone
Unable to get through by phone so walked in	Negative - Booking	Phone
Try to phone at 8 to get a quick appointment but can't get through. 62 phone calls this morning. (friend sitting alongside said she got through on the second attempt)	Negative - Booking	Phone
Took 10 minutes to get through to somebody	Negative - Booking	Phone
Please answer the phone. Eventually started ringing after 3rd time and rang 56 times to get this appointment (others have been more than 100). Sometimes you ring at 3 minutes past and it still says the surgery is closed. After all this still wont have an appointment.	Negative - Booking	Phone
Generally, very difficult to book. all appts go so quickly	Negative - Booking	Phone
Annoying when have to ring in. Can't rebook online, can't book two	Negative - Booking	Phone
Recently we couldn't get through. We went to a walk-in centre and they said that we needed to see our GP. I phoned and spoke to the receptionist and then charge nurse who made the appointment. We could have done that in the first place. I'm not comfortable talking to receptionists about women's problems. You have to speak to a receptionist and charge nurse phones you back, so they can put you through to the right doctor	Negative - Booking	Phone
I would be here more, but I can't get in. I waited 8 weeks for an appointment and I have terminal cancer. I have given up on the phone many times. I said I have a red card, the receptionist said, "what does that mean?". I don't know what time you have to ring - I rang at 8 and when I got through they said no appointments.	Negative - Booking	Phone
Get rid of the system they have got, always in a que	Negative - Booking	Phone

Would use the surgery more often but can't get an appointment. Tried to get an appointment but couldn't so ended up using a walk-in centre in Blackpool who said I should see my GP. Rang the GP who sent us to Bentilee, these again said we needed to see the GP.	Negative- Booking	Phone
A few weeks ago I was trying on the phone and gave up. I thought it was training day	Negative- Booking	Phone
Not happy with not being able to book in advance. Mum 83 can't get here on her own, I'm working so it's difficult. Mum had to wait 4 days because of this.	Negative- Booking	Pre-book/Follow up
Can be difficult to make an appointment, booking system needs to be improved. Cant make repeat appts unless with GP.	Negative- Booking	Pre-book/Follow up
I can never pre-book an appointment. I always have to call up on the morning	Negative- Booking	Pre-book/Follow up
Difficult to pre-book follow-up appointments	Negative- Booking	Pre-book/Follow up
Difficult to book follow-up	Negative- Booking	Pre-book/Follow up
Difficult to pre-book follow-up appointments	Negative- Booking	Pre-book/Follow up
Difficult to book follow-up	Negative- Booking	Pre-book/Follow up
Very hard to get appt to see Dr. It would be better if there could be internal referral system - ie, if nurse doesn't know what's wrong, she books appt with Dr for you.	Negative- Booking	Pre-book/Follow up
Hard to get an appointment (have to wait a long time)	Negative- Booking	Wait time
2 weeks to get an appointment	Negative- Booking	Wait time
Take a long time to get an appointment	Negative- Booking	Wait time
Sometimes quick sometimes not. Had to wait over a week for a husband with heart problems.	Negative- Booking	Wait time
Sometimes I have to wait for appt, 3-4 weeks	Negative- Booking	Wait time

Positive Comments – Booking Appointments⁴

It isn't any trouble	Positive - Booking	General Comment
I just come down and make appointments	Positive - Booking	General Comment
Wife booked it for me. Really good	Positive - Booking	General Comment
New website, very useful, can see history of prescriptions	Positive - Booking	Internet
Just asked online for a brief description. Good practice, always happy.	Positive - Booking	Online
Spot on, when you call (for kids) they get up ASAP	Positive - Booking	Phone
I start ringing at 755 and nearly always get through, people leave it too late to get an appointment, they get one eventually but have to wait	Positive - Booking	Phone
2 weeks for non-urgent appt, same day for emergency	Positive - Booking	Wait time
Easy enough to book. If can't get you in same day, can next	Positive - Booking	Wait time
I always get appt when I need one	Positive - Booking	Wait time
They are very good, every time I book I get one. All staff are really nice and kind	Positive - Booking	Wait time
If it's an emergency, can get an appointment on the same day.	Positive - Booking	Wait time
They are always efficient when I phone. It is frustrating waiting a week for an appointment	Positive - Staff Negative - Booking	

Mixed Comments – Booking Appointments⁵

I try and book online - patient access. Can be a bit hit and miss, depends if there are appointments	Mixed - Booking	Online
Always very good, only prob sometimes is the gap (between phone-call and appointment)	Mixed - Booking	Wait time
When I phone, I'm lucky, I get appt the same day	Mixed - Booking	Phone
They are fine, once you get through	Mixed - Booking	Phone
Very hard to get an appointment. When I call they say fully booked, thry the next day, I walk in instead and get a ticket. It's better to come early	Mixed - Booking	General Comment

⁴ Arrangements for booking appointments are decided at surgery level. Care Navigation does not affect this process.

⁵ Arrangements for booking appointments are decided at surgery level. Care Navigation does not affect this process.

Comments - Continuity

Never got to see same doctor. Receptionists always seem to change - No continuity	Negative-Continuity
I wish I could see the same doctor as 9 out of 10 is different doctor.	Negative-Continuity
I always see Dr *omitted*. We have a good relationship. For example, once I admitted to him that I had been using steroids in the gym, rather than simply telling me to stop, I suggested ways that I could do things in a safer way if I wouldnt stop. I feel confident to talk to my GP.	Positive-Continuity
Quite good, I was able to see doctor I wanted	Positive-Continuity

Comments -Waiting



Appointment should be on time	Negative-Waiting
Slow, waiting a long time to see a doctor, never on time.	Negative-Waiting
The sit and wait is a bad idea, waiting can be lengthy, especially when you have work commitments	Negative-Waiting
Wait in surgery	Negative-Waiting
Are likely to get an emergency appointment. Just the waiting	Negative-Waiting

Comments -General

I was surprised. I haven't seen one for over 12 months for my BP check	Mixed - General
Functioning of this place. Fathers diabetes, 6 blood tests done, now they want another. Can they do this in one visit? Quite disjointed.	Negative - General
not happy	Negative - General
Pointless anyway because nothing ever gets done anyway due to a shortage of doctors compared to patients.	Negative - General
We moved from Draycott Road surgery. I could never see my doctor, they hadn't got time for you.	Negative - General
I prefer to speak to a person than a recorded message. After seeing the GP I needed a blood test and Dr Mile's nurse does this.	Positive - General
It's been fine	Positive - General
Haven't had any trouble	Positive - General
Its been ok so far (new surgery, moved)	Positive - General
I think it's a great system they've got. I had 1st class treatment	Positive - General
All of our experience of 40 years plus, we have been 99.9% satisfied	Positive - General
I'm very pleased overall	Positive - General
A good doctor	Positive - General
Happy	Positive - General
Very good	Positive - General
Pretty good	Positive - General
Fine	Positive - General
all went fine	Positive - General
Fine, I got no problem	Positive - General
its good	Positive - General
it's very good	Positive - General
Really good service	Positive - General
They are always good	Positive - General
(im ok - my first time)	Positive - General
Very good. Its excellent here.	Positive - General
Everything has been fine	Positive - General

Appendix

Surgery –

Care Navigation Survey -

This survey is about what happened when you contacted your GP Surgery for an appointment. Your surgery participates something called 'care navigation'. This means that if you phoned the surgery for a GP appointment, administration staff may ask you questions about your illness to understand if another service or professional could be better suited to help. We want to understand what people think about this.

We do not need any of your contact details. The results of this survey will be shared anonymously in a report published by Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent.

1) How did you book your appointment for today?

Telephone
 Walked in
 Online
 Other - Write In: _____

2) Who are you here to see today?

Doctor
 Nurse
 Other - Write In: _____

3) How often have you visited your GP surgery in the last 12 months?

This is my first time
 Once or twice
 A few times
 Im here often.

4) Thinking about when you booked your appointment, were you asked questions about your illness?

Yes
 No (go to question 10)

Please rate these statements:

5) "Whilst booking my appointment, I was able to *easily answer* questions asked about my illness"

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree

6) "Whilst booking my appointment, I was *comfortable* answering questions about my illness"

Strongly agree
 Agree
 Neutral
 Disagree
 Strongly disagree

7) "Whilst booking my appointment, I was *confident that what I explained was properly understood.*"

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree

8) "When making the appointment, I felt *supported to get the right help*"

Strongly disagree
 Disagree
 Neutral
 Agree
 Strongly agree

9) Were you satisfied with your experience of making an appointment?

Very satisfied
 Satisfied
 Neutral
 Dissatisfied
 Very Dissatisfied

10) Are there any additional comments you would like to share about booking your appointment? (continue over)

11) Do you have a long-standing illness or, disability (LTC¹)?

Yes No

12) Your age

- 17 or younger 45 to 54
 18 to 24 55 to 64
 25 to 34 65 to 74
 35 to 44 75 or older

13) Gender

- Male Female
 Transgender Gender Variant / Non-conforming
 Other - Write In: _____
 Prefer not to answer

14) What is your first language?

- English Other - Write In: _____

15) Ethnicity

- White - British
 White - Irish
 White - any other white background
 Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
 Mixed - White and Black African
 Mixed - White and Asian
 Mixed - any other Mixed background
 Black or Black British - Caribbean
 Black or Black British - African
 Black or Black British - Any other Black background
 Asian or Asian British - Indian
 Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
 Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
 Asian or Asian British - Any other Asian background
 Chinese
 Other - Write In: _____

¹ Long-Term Condition

Questionnaire

Care Navigation Survey - Briefing

Locally, primary care is under pressure with roughly 20% less GPs than we need and growing amounts of patients, many with increasingly complex needs.

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent has been approached by the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) who run and fund health services in our area, to find out what people think about Care Navigation. Care Navigation is best described as active signposting. It is not a clinical consultation. Its intended targets are patients who may automatically see the GP as the first port of call, but it is **actually more** appropriate for them to seek help elsewhere. It is hoped that this will lessen the load for GP's who will have more time to see patients who need it.

It works like this:

There should be a recorded message that a patient listens to when they phone to make an appointment. This explains why they will be asked questions, then they are put through to a receptionist. The receptionists should have had some training to help with this. In Stoke, patients are signposted away from the GP for a variety of minor ailments, alongside types of UTI's, impetigo, some common mental health conditions and minor cuts and bruises.

NHS England report impacts including:

- *Reduced GP Appointments*
- *Patient Benefits – faster access to the right service*
- *Staff Satisfaction – receptionists feel they are doing a better job for patients and making a bigger contribution to the practice*

Instructions for The Survey

DO

1. Please be as discrete as possible, we need people to feel free to answer without feeling that staff may be listening.
2. Explain what the survey is about (written on the top of the survey).
3. Tell them that it is anonymous.
4. Explain that it will take a couple of minutes.
5. If they are comfortable to fill it in themselves then let them, this is ok.
6. Use the back page for any additional comments.

DON'T

1. Offer your personal opinions.
2. Present questions in leading ways.
3. Collect personal details.

Briefing for volunteers

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