

Walk in Centre Survey

Interim Summary Report

April 2016

Use of GP Walk-in Centres in Sandwell – Interim Summary Report:

Healthwatch Sandwell 2016

This is based on Healthwatch Sandwell's survey to address the question, 'Why do people use Walk-in Centres'. 164 patients were surveyed during November 2015 to January 2016 at Malling Health and Summerfield Walk-in Centres. 15 visits were undertaken.

Findings

Reason for Patients Using Walk in Centres from those surveyed	No	%
Patients were referred to a Walk-in Centre by GP reception staff, as there were no available appointments.	99	60%
Self-referred patients who couldn't get through to the surgery on that occasion.	43	26%
Patients who have lost confidence in their General Practice due to previous experiences of not being able to get an appointment.	17	10%
Turned up at their GP Practice but there were no appointment available	2	1%
Called 111 and were advised to visit the Walk-In Centre	1	< 1%
GP Practice had cancelled their appointment	1	< 1%

42% of all walk-in visits were by patients registered at 6 GP Practices. Patients surveyed were registered with 39 different GP practices. There are 110 GP practices within Sandwell and West Birmingham CCG*.

How many times surveyed patients and their immediate family had used Walk in Centres:

Once: **44** 2 – 4 times: **65** 5 – 9 times: **43** 10+times: **12**

Comments from Patients

- "I have self-referred as there are no appointments for a week and I called yesterday".
- "I always self-refer to walk in centres with my 18 month old. I don't even bother trying to get an appointment".
- "I have self-referred as I was told yesterday to wait another week".
- "I have self-referred 4 times as I can't get an appointment at my practice".
- "I have 2 poorly daughters but my GP practice only had one appointment. I can't understand why the Doctor couldn't see them both".

Other notable observations made by the researchers

- Significant difference in waiting times at different walk in centres.
- Significant variance in appointment booking arrangements between GPs.
- There are a number of other ways in which patients can get an appointment out of hours using 111 and Primecare, but many patients are not aware of this service.

*Some patients will cross CCG borders in order to access walk-in centres.