

Billericay Medical Practice

Patient Survey Report

2011 – 2012



Opening Hours

Monday to Friday

8.30am to 6.30pm

Saturday

8.30am to 2.30pm
(Routine appointments only)

Telephone Numbers

Surgery : 01277 658071

Out of Hours Emergency : 01277 658071

Introduction

The Department of Health have for the past few years been looking at ways of ensuring that patients have the opportunity of getting involved in decisions about the range and quality of care they can access at their surgery.

The Department of Health also hope that over time, patients will also become involved in services that will be commissioned by their surgery and colleagues across the locality.

The Practice has therefore been actively engaging with its patients and in 2010 our Patient Participation Group was formed.

This is a “face to face” group that meets regularly throughout the year to discuss any issues the surgery or patients may have.

Although the Practice already had an established Patient Participation Group by 2011, we decided to initiate another drive during the summer of 2011 to encouraged patients to participate by joining our Patient Reference Group.

This is a virtual group where patients have the opportunity to communicate with the Practice or if they would prefer direct with the Patient Participation Group about our services by either email, post or by telephone.

We are delighted by the response we have received and currently we have more then 300 patients participating through one of the two forums mentioned above.

The Report

The report will :

- Provide a profile of the Patient Participation and Reference Groups.
- The steps taken by the Practice to ensure a fair demographic representation of our patients.
- The steps taken to determine the questions that would form part of the practice survey.
- How we worked with the Patient Participation Group and Patient Reference Group to establish and implement our survey.
- Review the survey report.
- How the Patient Participation Group and Patient Reference Group were involved in deciding on the final action plan.
- The action plan that was agreed with our Patient Groups.

Profile of Patient Reference Group

The Practice has a patient list of approximately 12,400 patients and although we have a mix of patient's with different ages, gender, ethnicity and health issues the profile of the group lies entirely in the patients who wish to participate.

In the summer of 2011 the Practice targeted more than 25% of our patients by letter. These patients were selected at random, taking into account :

- Age
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Carers
- Housebound
- Patients with long term conditions
- Patients who very rarely attended the surgery.

In addition to this we publicised the Patient Reference Group in the patient newsletter, in the waiting room, on the website as well as targeting around 750 patients who attended the surgery.

- Out of the 324 patients who asked to join the group, 57% of the patients are Female with the remaining 43% being Male.
- The age of the members range from 18 years to 89 years.

Age Range	Number of patients	%
18 to 30	9	3
31 to 50	29	9
51 to 70	150	46
71 +	136	42

- Although the majority of patients in the Patient Reference Group are recorded as White British, we sought to engage with patients from other ethnic groups and there is a representation from Asian, Chinese and several European ethnic groups.
- 70% of our patients in the group have long term medical conditions such as diabetes, mental health, respiratory or hypertension.

It is our intention to continue to work alongside our patients to help us improve the standard of services we offer and hope to continue to encourage more patients to join either the Patient Participation Group or the Patient Reference Group.

How did we ask you to participate in the Patient Reference Group

In the summer of 2011 we asked you what you felt your priorities were by starting the HAVE YOUR SAY CAMPAIGN.

Dr Clear Hill and Partners Patient Survey

We want to know what your health priorities are. We want your views on how we can improve services to our patients. We want you to look at what the priorities are of other patients. We want you to HAVE YOUR SAY and be part of our patient reference group.

Your Name (Required)

Your Date of Birth (Required)

Your address (Required)

If you wish to participate in our Patient Reference Group, please indicate the best means for us to contact you: e-mail / telephone / post (please delete as appropriate)

If you have selected e-mail or telephone above, please enter the details below.

If you respond positively to this we will be able to contact you for your views. We will also ask you to participate in surveys and you will have an opportunity to respond to our findings. We will give you the results of those surveys and any plans of action we intend to implement from the results will be made available to you. This will really help the practice to develop future services.

For your information:

We have already formed a Patient Participation Group who will work with the Practice to help us contact patients, help with surveys and their analysis and ultimately enhance communication between patients and the practice. In the future they will take forward your views to ensure you are heard.

Please tick the box below if you are willing to let us give them your contact details. If you do not tick the box then only directly employed practice staff will contact you.

I consent to only my contact details being given to the Practice patient Participation Group. (REQUIRED)

Yes / No (please select as appropriate)

HAVE YOUR SAY!

What do you think are the most important issues on which we should consult our patients?

(Please tick as many as you wish)

Indicate below:

- Clinical Care i.e. GP / Nurse consultations
- Getting an appointment
- Opening times
- Premises
- Staff
- Parking
- Communication Services, i.e. Text Reminder / On-line bookings etc

Please complete the following information about yourself before finishing, thank you:

Sex (Required)

Male / female (please select as appropriate)

Please state your age (Required)

Ethnicity (Required)

Do you have a long term condition i.e. Asthma, Diabetes, High Blood Pressure etc, please enter details in the box below.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this information.

Please hand the completed survey to a member of staff

What you told us and how we prioritised the results

Patients were given the opportunity to be involved with the “Have your Say Campaign” by being contacted either by post, on-line or with face to face contact in the surgery by both staff and members of our Patient Participation Group.

Once all of the results had been collated, we met with representatives of our fact to face Patient Participation Group to discuss and decide on the priorities that should form part of a more extensive survey.

The two areas that were clearly a priority for our patients were “Getting an appointment” and “Clinical Care”.

Based on this feedback, a draft survey was produced with the co-operation of the Patient Participation Group and was forwarded to all Patient Reference Group members for their comments or approval.

To ensure we received an agreement from the majority of the Patient Reference Group, those patients who requested not to be contacted by e-mail, were contacted by the Practice by either phone or by post.

Dr Clear Hill and Partners

**Billericay Health Centre
Stock Road
Billericay
Essex
CM12 0BJ**

During the year the surgery and the Patient Participation Group have been engaging with as many patients as possible to join our Patient Reference Group (PRG).

During this time we have been asking patients to tell us what your health priorities were so that we can look into any issues you may have.

We received more than 300 responses with 275 of our patients signing up to the Patient Reference Group (PRG).

The Priorities from your responses are:

<input type="checkbox"/> Getting an appointment	89%
<input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Care	80%
<input type="checkbox"/> Parking	40%
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication	35%
<input type="checkbox"/> Opening Times	33%
<input type="checkbox"/> Staff	25%
<input type="checkbox"/> Premises	13%

On feedback the practice has received from patients and from the Patient Participation Group we have been able to develop our first patient survey based on your two most important priorities, Getting an appointment and Clinical Care.

This will be the first of many surveys we will be looking to produce in conjunction with the PPG and PRG.

To be able to continue to work together to improve our services we would be grateful if you would take sometime to complete the survey and either hand it in at reception or post it to the surgery.

If it is more convenient then the survey can be completed on-line.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Getting an Appointment

<p>(1) How do you normally book an appointment? (Please tick all appropriate boxes)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> At Reception <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone <input type="checkbox"/> On-Line <input type="checkbox"/> Never booked an appointment
<p>(2) Do you know that you can book appointments on line?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>(3) If you answered <u>No</u> to Q2, are you now likely to sign-up to our on-line service?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>(4) Did you know that you can book a telephone consultation instead of coming into the surgery to see the doctor?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>(5) If you answered <u>No</u> to Q4, do you think that you would now consider booking a telephone consultation instead of a face to face appointment?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>(6) If you have booked a telephone consultation before, how do you rate this service?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Very Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Never Used the Service
<p>(7) If telephone consultations were available with a nurse would you use this service?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<p>(8) What type of appointment do you normally book? (Please tick all appropriate boxes)</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> On the day urgent appointment <input type="checkbox"/> On the day routine appointment <input type="checkbox"/> Advance routine appointment <input type="checkbox"/> Telephone consultation
<p>(9) When the surgery is closed do you know that if you dial the surgery telephone number 01277 658071 you would get straight through to the Emergency Out of Hours GP Service?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Never required the OOH Service
<p>(10) Overall, how would you rate our appointment service?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Very Poor
<p>(11) If you have answered Q10 Poor or Very Poor, what could we do better?</p>	

**Clinical Care
(Continuity of Care)**

(1) How often do you attend the surgery to see a Doctor?	<input type="checkbox"/> More than once a month <input type="checkbox"/> More than once a year <input type="checkbox"/> Not very often
(2) Do you usually choose to see a particular Doctor?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I prefer to see the same Doctor <input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not mind who I see
(3) If you answered Yes to Q2, Please give the name of your preferred Doctor	<input type="checkbox"/> Dr
(4) If you answered Yes to Q2, How long do you usually have to wait to be able to book an appointment with your preferred Doctor?	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 week <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 2 weeks <input type="checkbox"/> More than 2 weeks
(5) How far in advance would you be prepared to wait to book an appointment with the Doctor of your choice?	<input type="checkbox"/> One week <input type="checkbox"/> Two weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Three weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Four weeks <input type="checkbox"/> Longer than four weeks
(6) Do you mainly see the Doctor because you have a long term condition, a general condition or both	<input type="checkbox"/> Long Term Condition <input type="checkbox"/> General <input type="checkbox"/> Long Term Condition & General
(7) How long after your appointment times do you normally have to wait to be seen?	<input type="checkbox"/> On time <input type="checkbox"/> 10 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 10 to 20 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> Longer than 20 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> More than 30 minutes
(8) What do you think is an acceptable time to wait before you are seen?	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 10 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 20 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 30 minutes
(9) Do you believe that the surgery provides the range of health services you require?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
(10) If you answered No to Q9, please state what health services you would like the surgery to offer?	
(11) Overall, how would you rate our Clinical Care?	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Poor <input type="checkbox"/> Very Poor
(12) If you have answered Q11, Poor or Very Poor, what could we do better?	

Your Details

Are you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
Your age group?	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 – 29 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 – 49 <input type="checkbox"/> 50- 64 <input type="checkbox"/> 65 -74 <input type="checkbox"/> 75+
Do you have a long term condition?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What is your ethnic group?	<input type="checkbox"/> White <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> Other

Thank you for taking the time to complete the survey.

The results of the survey will be published by 31st March 2012 on our practice website:

www.gps-billericayhealthcentre.co.uk

The Survey Results

To try to capture results from as many patients as possible, during the end of 2011 the Practice distributed the survey to members of the Patient Participation Group and members of the Patient Reference Group.

In addition to this the survey was also available to complete on-line and was also handed-out in the waiting room.

Once the results had been collated the Practice met with the Patient Participation Group to analyse the information that had been received and from this meeting produced a draft report for the Patient Reference Group to review and to seek their agreement on the proposals being made.

Your Support

The Practice would like to thank everyone who supported us in producing this report.

We plan to carry out the actions noted and ensure that we continue to engage your help to continue to improve our standards and services throughout the coming years.

The Survey Results

Billericay Medical Practice

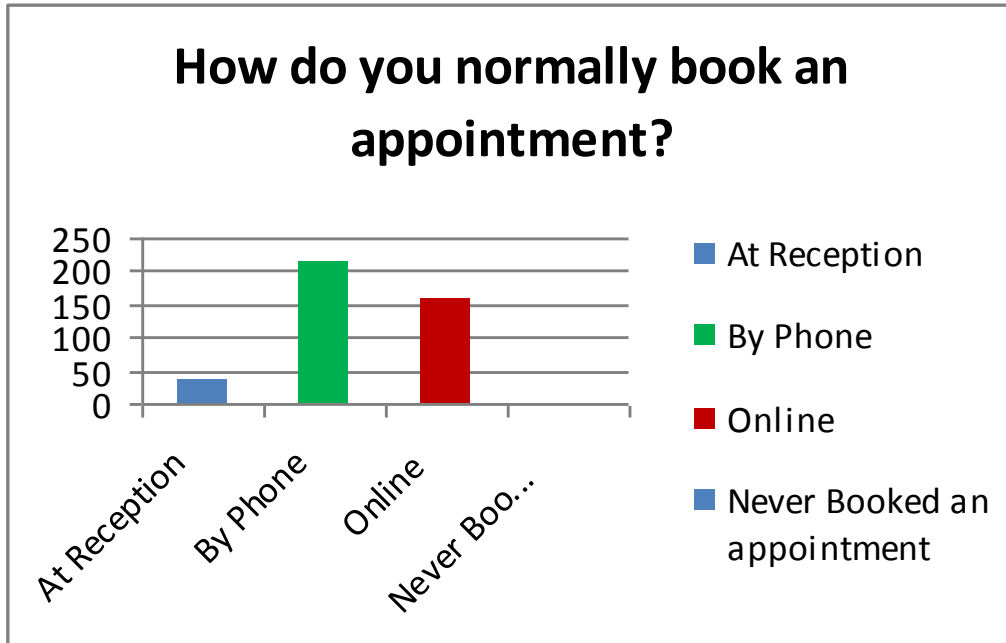
Patient Survey

Results for Patient Reference Group to Review



Part One

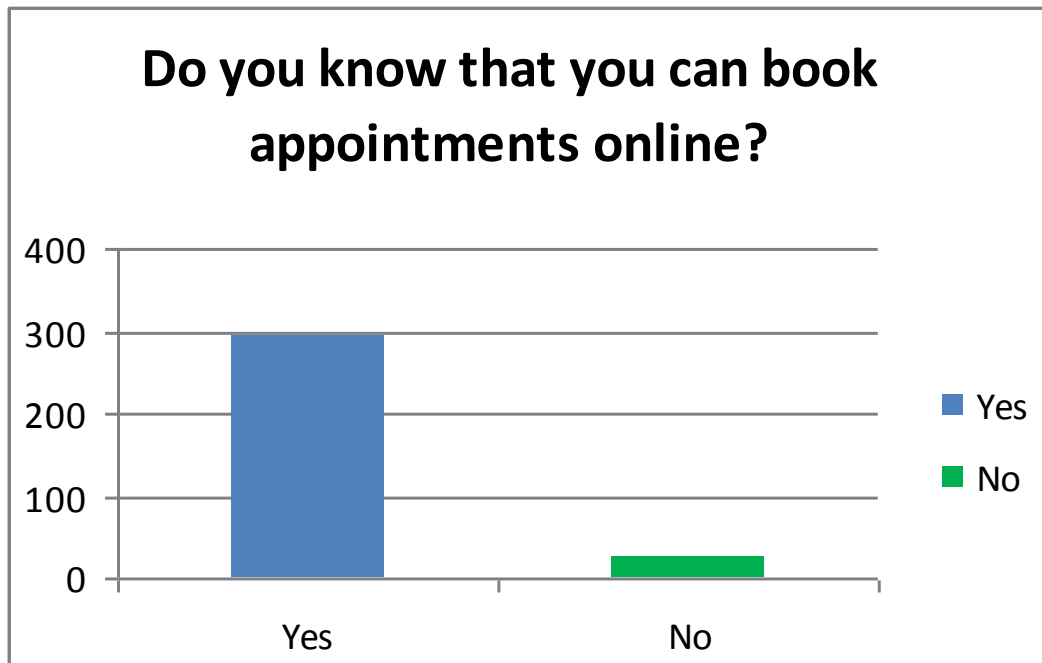
Getting an Appointment



1. How do you normally book an appointment?

Option	Total
	420
At Reception	35 (8.5%)
Telephone	216 (53%)
Online	158 (38.5%)
Never booked an appointment	1 (0%)

Base: 320 out of 321 people answered this question. Total responses: 420

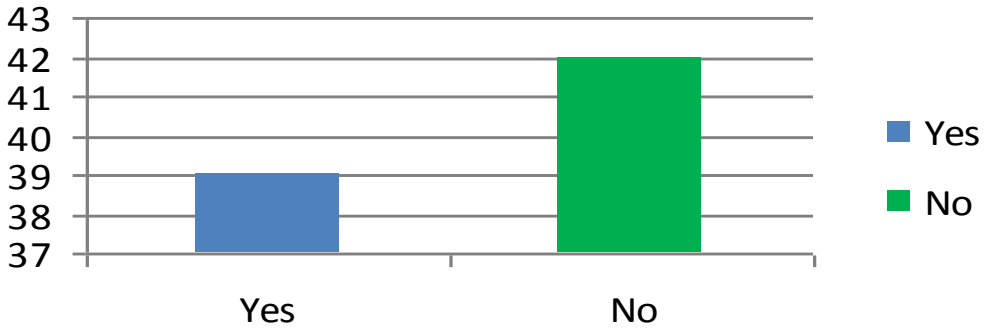


2. Do you know that you can book appointments online?

Option	Total
	320
Yes	296 (92.5%)
No	24 (7.5%)

Base: 320 out of 321 people answered this question

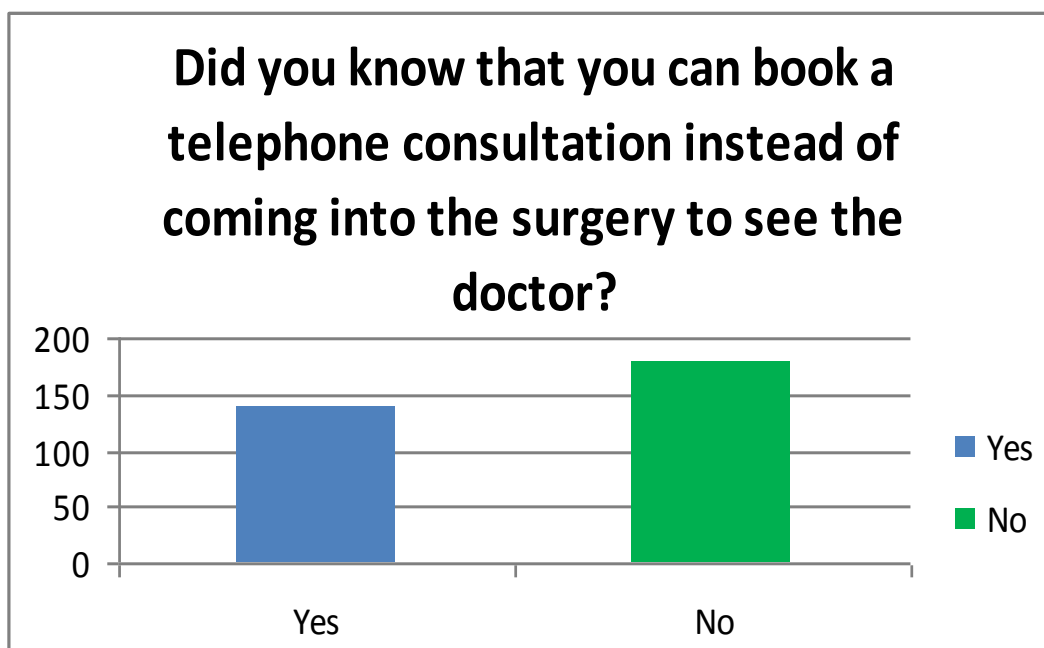
If you answered No to Q2, are you now likely to sign-up to our online service?



3. If you answered No to Q2, are you now likely to sign-up to our online service?

Option	Total
	81
Yes	39 (48%)
No	42 (52%)

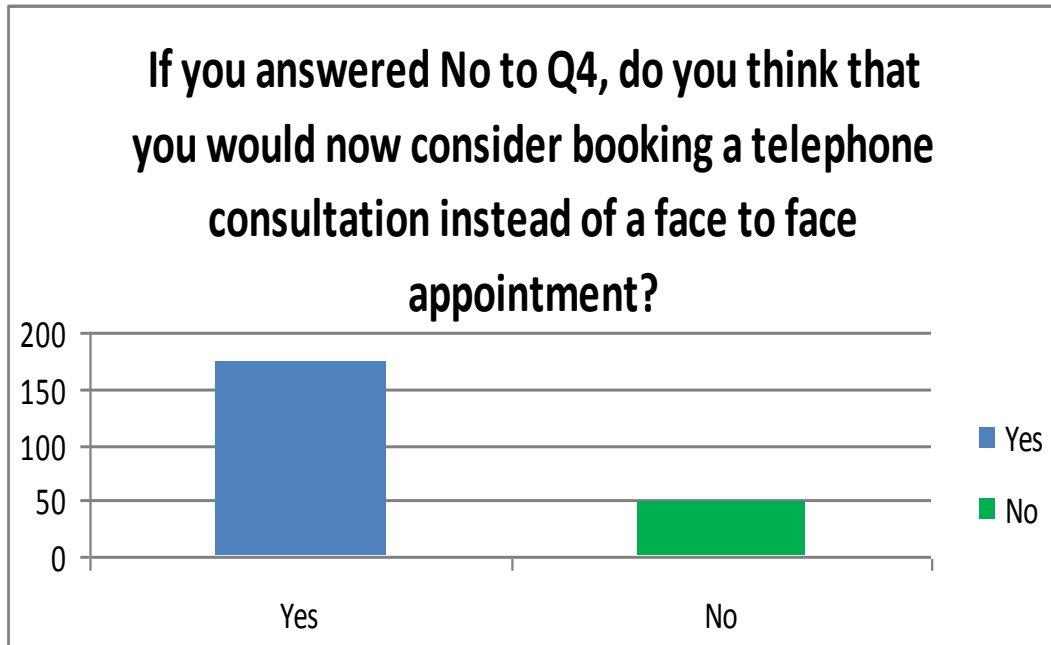
Base: 81 out of 321 people answered this question



4. Did you know that you can book a telephone consultation instead of coming into the surgery to see the doctor?

Option	Total
	320
Yes	140 (44%)
No	180 (56%)

Base: 320 out of 321 people answered this question

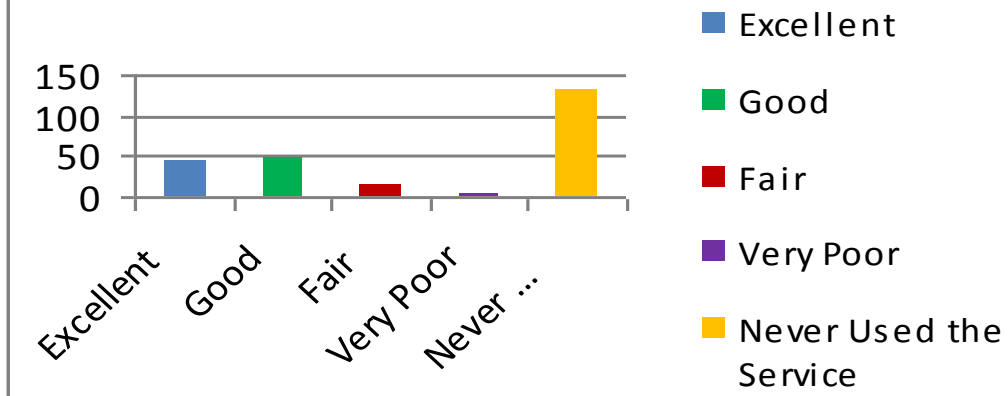


5. If you answered No to Q4, do you think that you would now consider booking a telephone consultation instead of a face to face appointment?

Option	Total
	221
Yes	173 (78%)
No	48 (22%)

Base: 221 out of 321 people answered this question

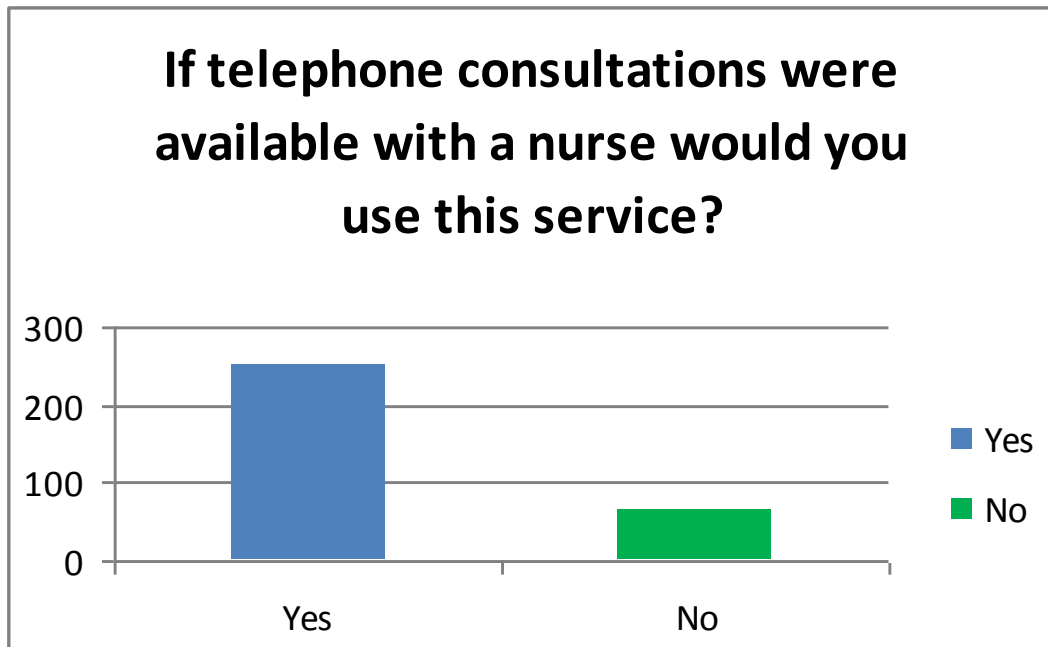
If you have booked a telephone consultation before, how do you rate this service?



6. If you have booked a telephone consultation before, how do you rate this service?

Option	Total
	239
Excellent	44 (18.5%)
Good	46 (19%)
Fair	16 (7%)
Poor	0 (0%)
Very Poor	3 (1%)
Never Used the Service	130 (54.5%)

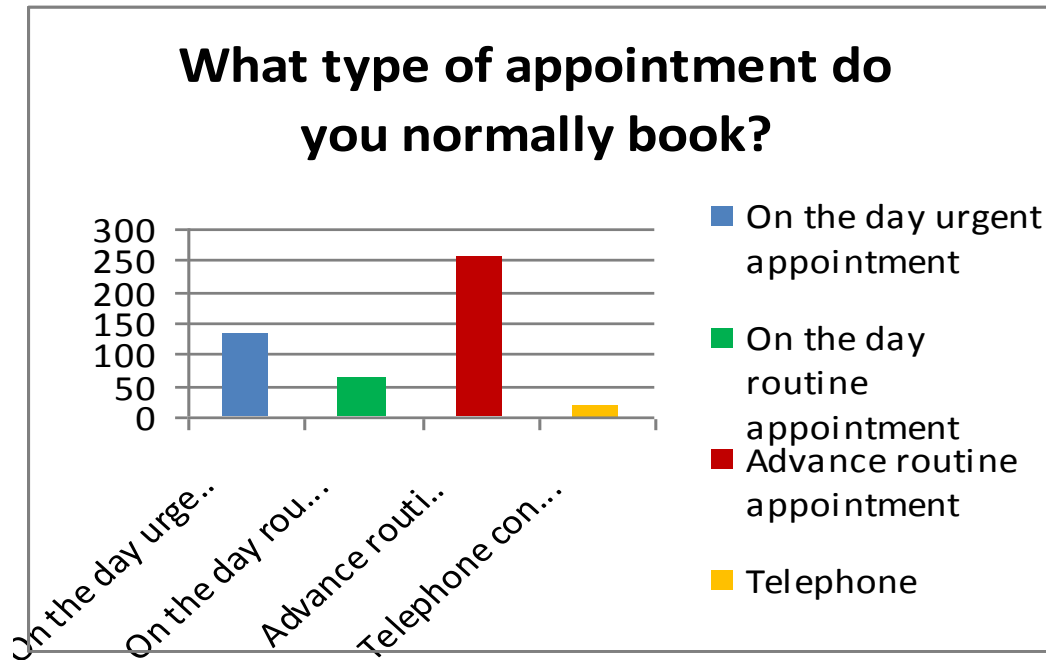
Base: 239 out of 321 people answered this question



7. If telephone consultations were available with a nurse would you use this service?

Option	Total
	312
Yes	250 (80%)
No	62 (20%)

Base: 312 out of 321 people answered this question

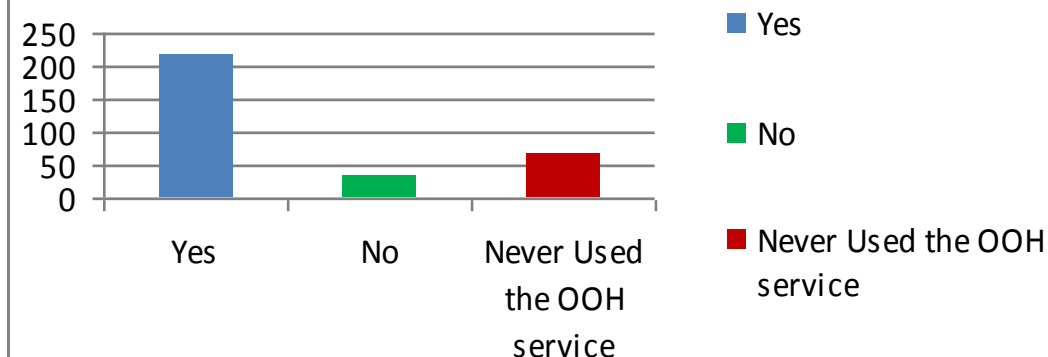


8. What type of appointment do you normally book?

Option	Total
	467
On the day urgent appointment	131 (28%)
On the day routine appointment	63 (13.5%)
Advance routine appointment	254 (54.5%)
Telephone consultation	19 (4%)

Base: 314 out of 321 people answered this question. Total responses: 467

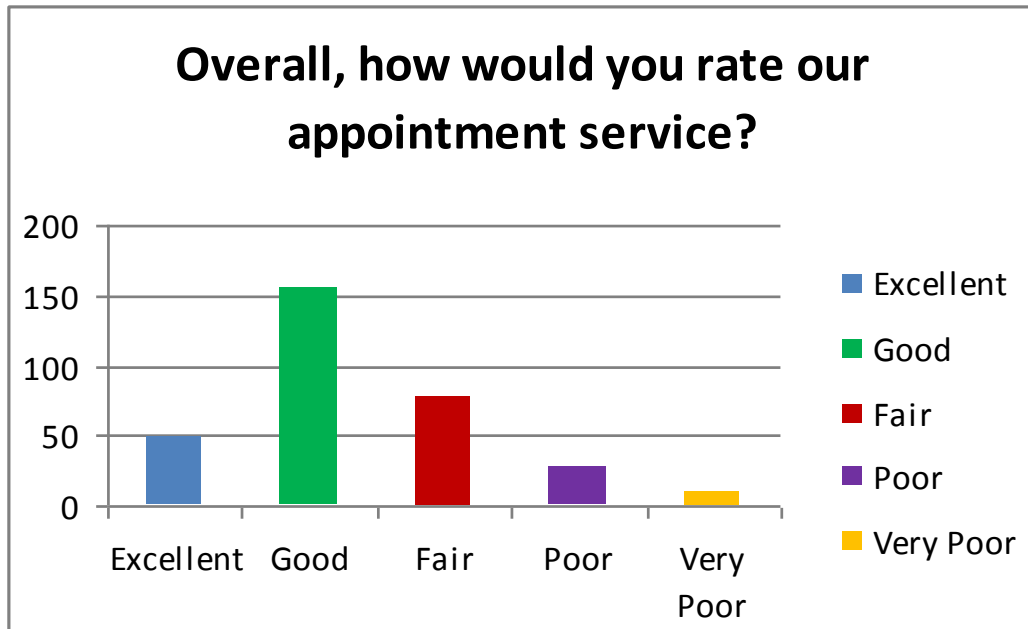
When the surgery is closed do you know that if you dial the surgery telephone number 01277 658071 you would get straight through to the Emergency Out of Hours GP Service?



9. When the surgery is closed do you know that if you dial the surgery telephone number 01277 658071 you would get straight through to the Emergency Out of Hours GP Service?

Option	Total
	320
Yes	217 (68%)
No	34 (10.5%)
Never required the OOH Service	69 (21.5%)

320 out of 321 people answered this question



10. Overall, how would you rate our appointment service?

Option	Total
	320
Excellent	50 (15.5%)
Good	155 (48.5%)
Fair	77 (24%)
Poor	28 (9%)
Very Poor	10 (3%)

Base: 320 out of 321 people answered this question

11. If you have answered Poor or Very Poor for Q10, what could we do better?

The responses to this question are amalgamated at the end of the results section and have been organised in topics including on-line booking, telephones, continuity of care etc.

Billericay Medical Practice

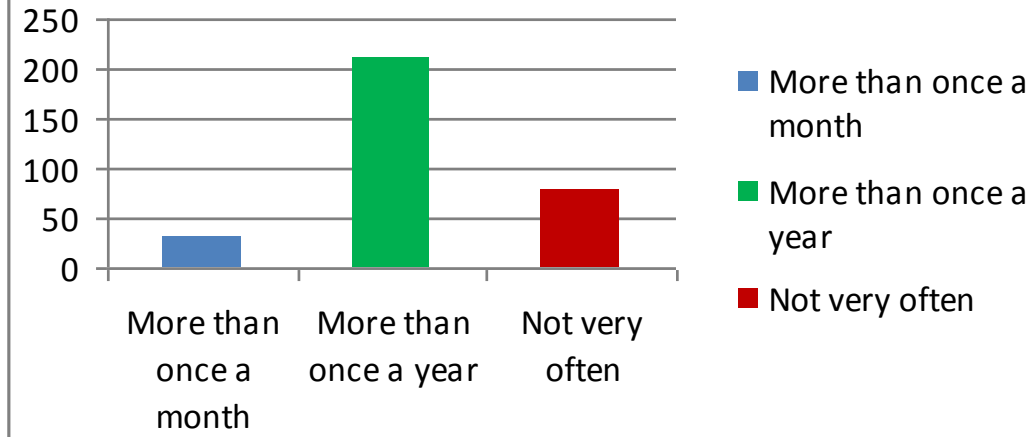
Patient Survey

Results for Patient Reference Group to Review

Part Two

Clinical Care

How often do you attend the surgery to see a Doctor?

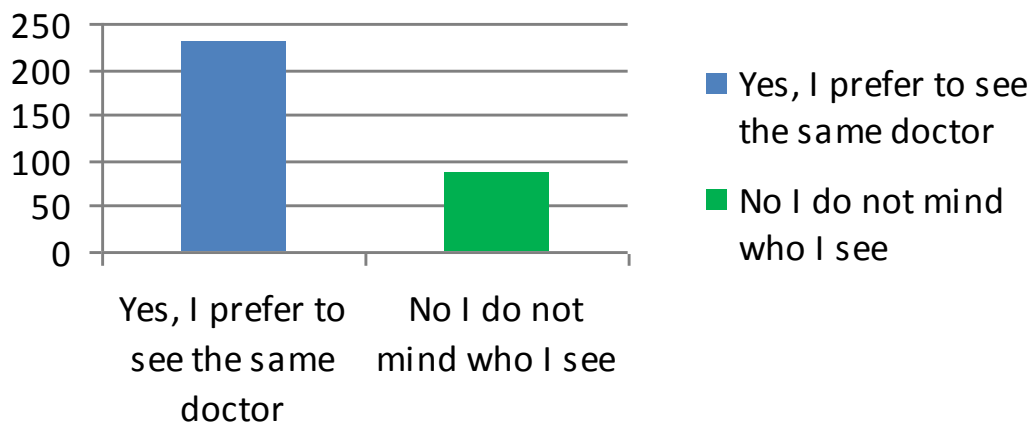


1. How often do you attend the surgery to see a doctor?

Option	Total
	319
More than once a month	32 (10%)
More than once a year	210 (66%)
Not very often	77 (24%)

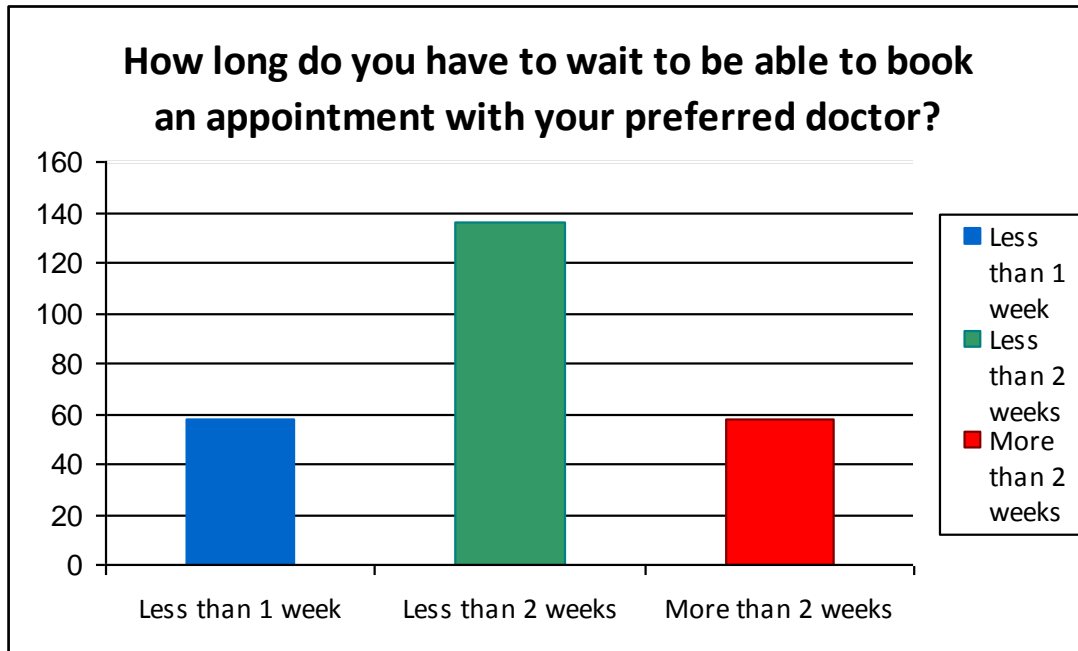
Base: 319 out of 321 people answered this question

Do you usually choose to see a particular Doctor?



2. Do you usually choose to see a particular Doctor?

Option	Total
	320
Yes, I prefer to see the same doctor	232 (72.5%)
No I do not mind who I see	88 (27.5%)

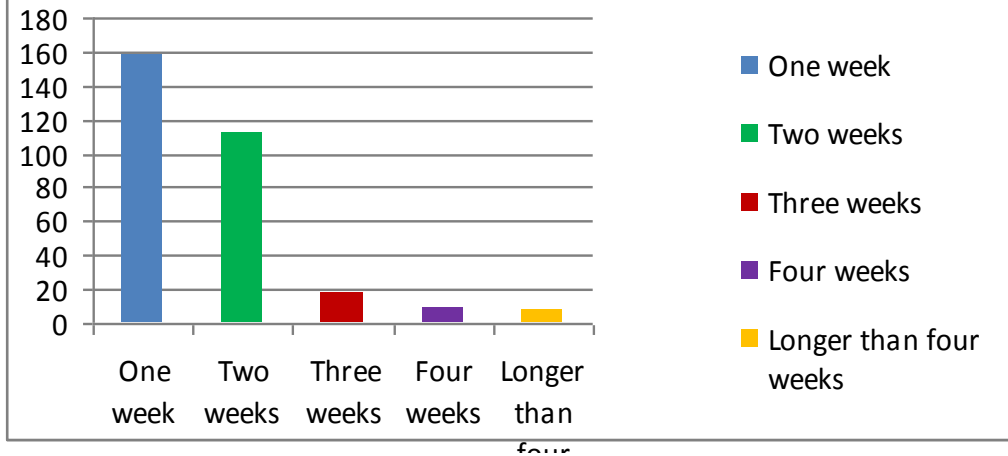


3. If you answered yes to Q2, how long do you usually have to wait to be able to book an appointment with your preferred Doctor?

Option	Total
	252
Less than one week	58 (23%)
Less than two weeks	136 (54%)
More than two weeks	58 (23%)

Base: 252 out of 321 people answered this question

How far in advance would you be prepared to wait to book an appointment with the Doctor of your choice?

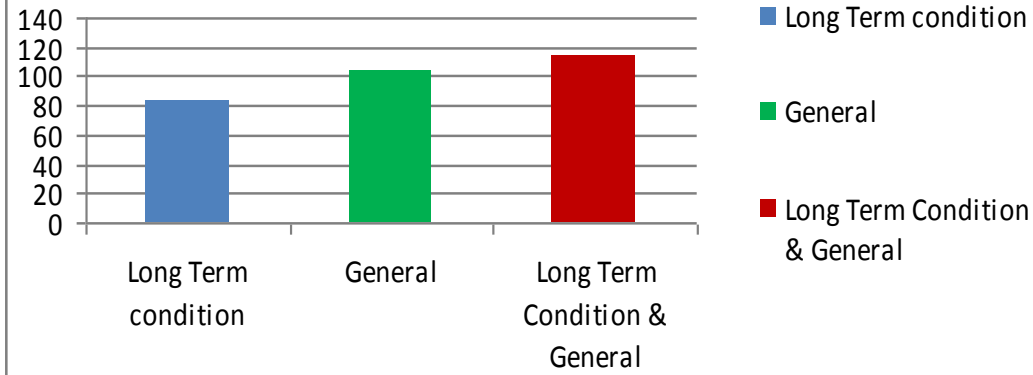


4. How far in advance would you be prepared to wait to book an appointment with the doctor of your choice?

Option	Total
	303
One week	159 (52.5%)
Two weeks	112 (37%)
Three weeks	17 (5.5%)
Four weeks	8 (2.5%)
Longer than four weeks	7 (2.5%)

Base: 303 out of 321 people answered this question

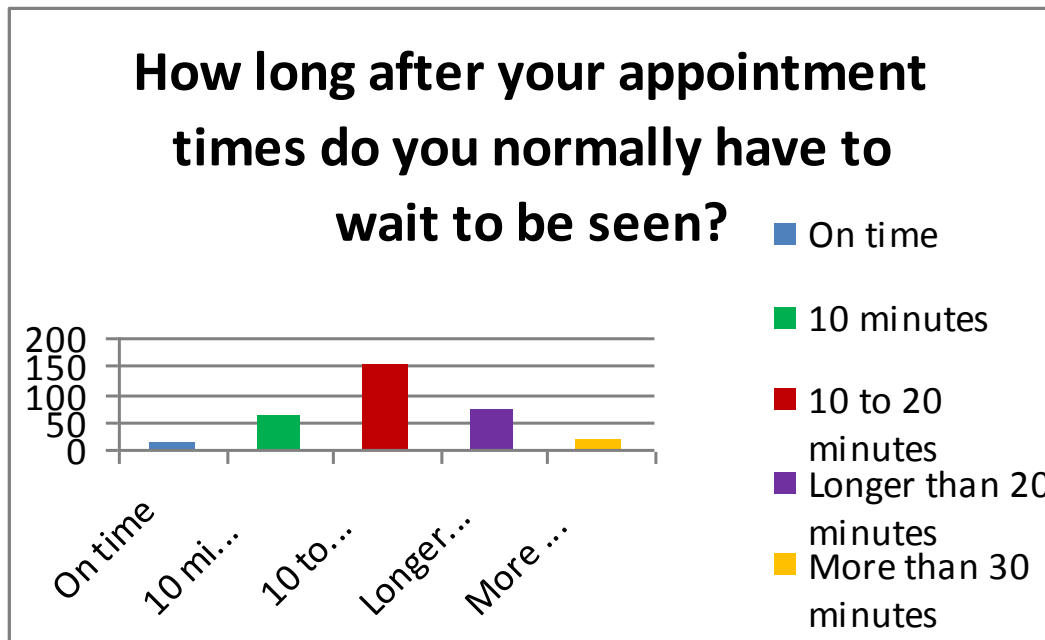
Do you mainly see the Doctor because you have a long term condition, a general condition or both?



5. Do you mainly see the Doctor because you have a long term condition, a general condition or both?

Option	Total
	305
Long term condition	85 (28%)
General	105 (34.5%)
Long term condition and general	115 (37.5%)

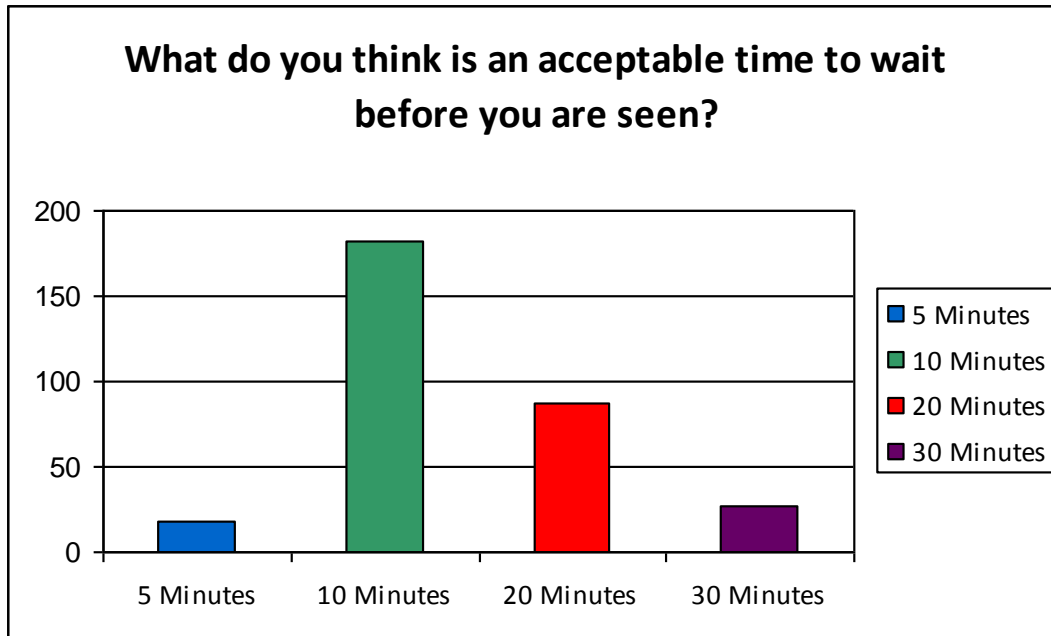
Base: 305 out of 321 people answered this question



6. How long after your appointment times do you normally have to wait to be seen?

Option	Total
	314
On time	13 (4%)
10 minutes	62 (20%)
10 – 20 minutes	155 (49.5%)
Longer than 20 minutes	68 (21.5%)
More than 30 minutes	16 (5%)

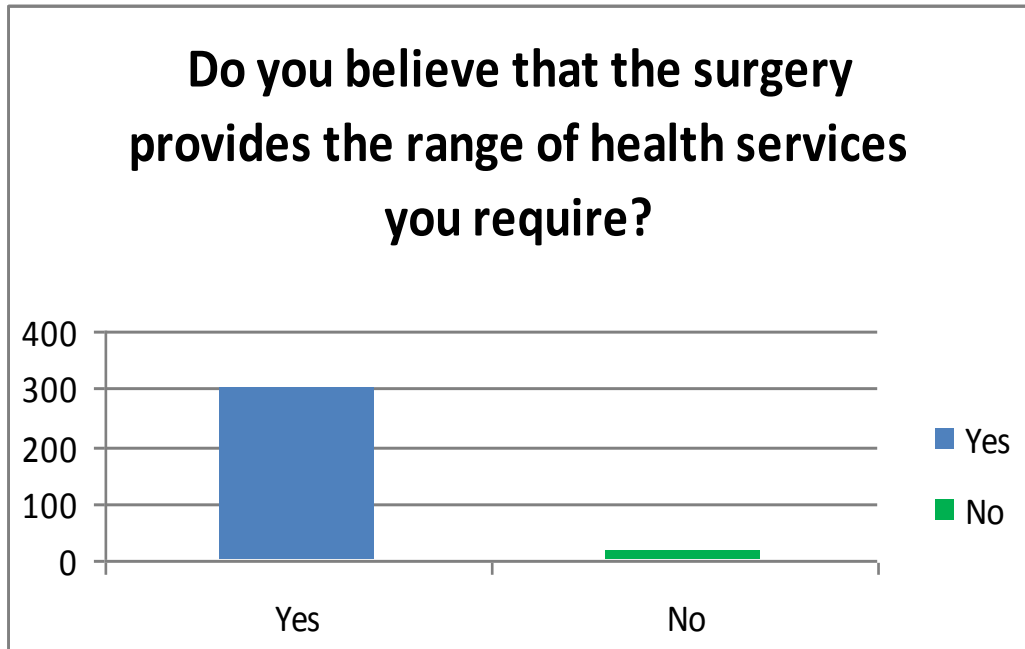
Base: 314 out of 321 people answered this question



7. What do you think is an acceptable time to wait before you are seen?

Option	Total
	314
5 Minutes	18 (5.5%)
10 Minutes	182 (58%)
20 Minutes	87 (28%)
30 Minutes	27 (8.5%)

Base: 314 out of 321 people answered this question.



8. Do you believe that the surgery provides the range of health services you require?

Option	Total
	318
Yes	301 (94.5%)
No	17 (5.5%)

Base: 318 out of 321 people answered this question

9. If you answered No to Q8, please state what health services you would like the surgery to offer?

Less time to wait for physiotherapist.

Overall pretty fair, but there is always room for improvement.

Should offer minor surgery like abscess lancing etc.

Ideally an annual health check particularly on possible prostate problems / Well man i.e. over 50 check

Improved clinical services would be helpful especially from the probationer GPs who are in the main less than caring. These probationers who may well swell the coffers of the practice do little to improve the level of care and competence of the practice.

Better liaison between Parkinsons nurse and consultants.

General online question and answer facility where patients can ask for medical advice which may be of use to other patients.

Scan.

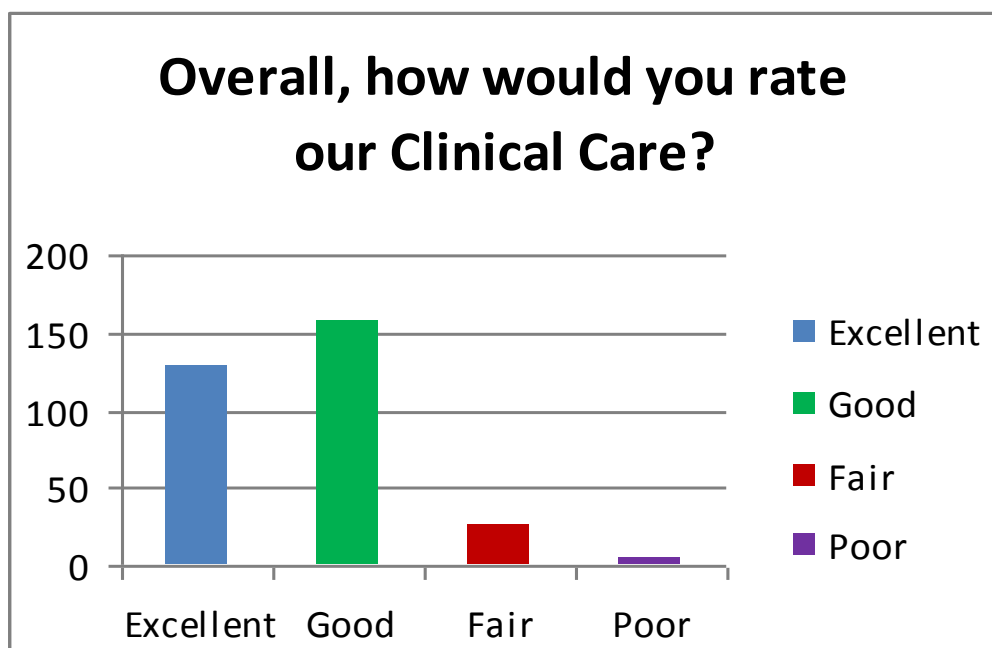
Had to go and spend an afternoon in A&E because the ECG machine is apparently not very good.

Dietician would be beneficial and save GP time.

Diabetic eye check-up for wheelchair users. I have to travel all the way to Orsett hospital just because I use a wheelchair.

Out of house service provision by this practice rather than by a deputising service.

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10. Overall, how would you rate our Clinical Care?

Option	Total
	319
Excellent	129 (40.5%)
Good	160 (50%)
Fair	26 (8%)
Poor	4 (1.5%)
Very poor	0 (0%)

Base: 319 out of 321 people answered this question

11. If you have answered Q10 poor or very poor, what could we do better?

What you told us...

Less emphasis on age, more on care and concern.

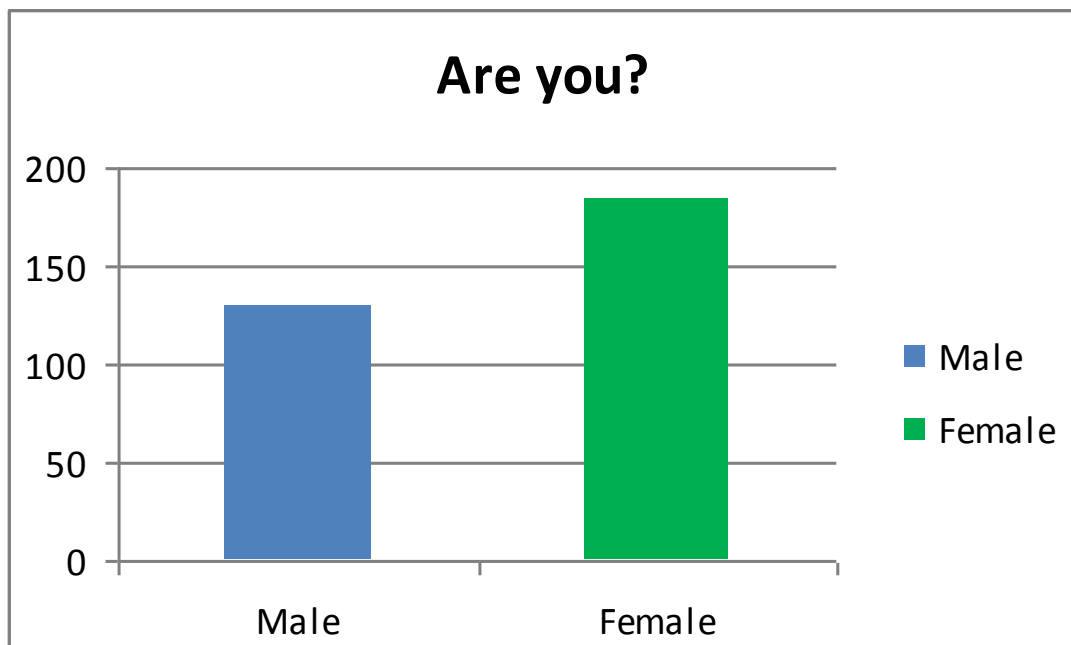
Have rated excellent as basing on Dr Russell. But others would be across all ranges Q10.

You just have to push to get anything done.

I think you should have a standard process for main suspected illnesses to investigate and conclude in a set time period. It should be applied just as other projects which are planned within certain time span. Currently you leave it to each patient to return to the Doctor after the initial consultation, if and when the condition gets worse. I think the Doctor should arrange further appointments until the suspected condition is known and treatment started.

I feel that I have issues to discuss with the Doctor but feel unable to explain all because I am conscious of her time and the next patient waiting outside. I would like to discuss a few health issues I have with the Doctor in one visit and get them sorted out and referred to the relevant people [rather] than having to keep making appointments.

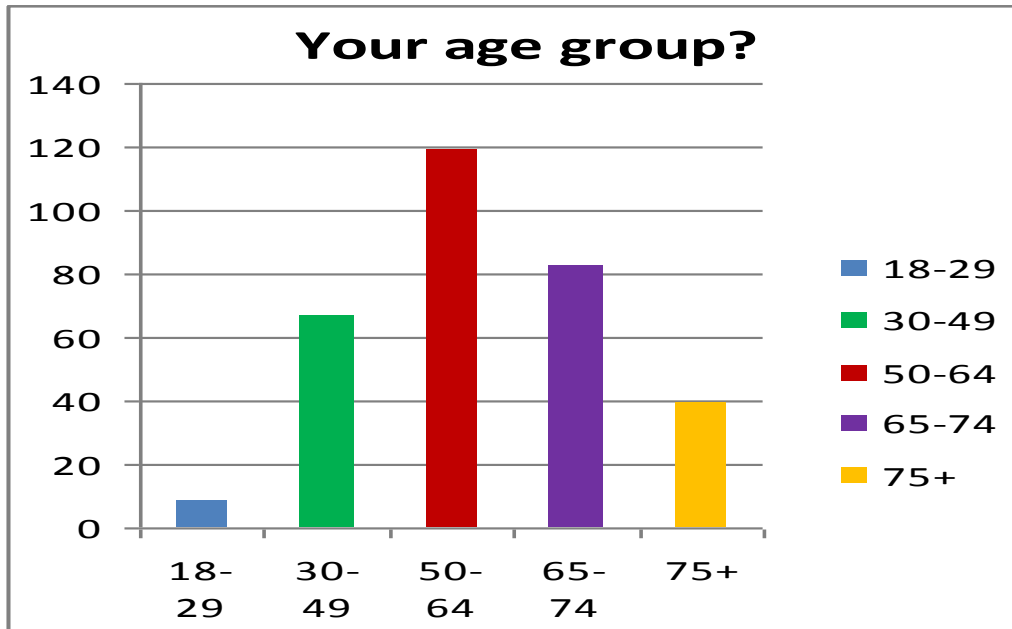
You do not return phone calls or phone to say telephone appointments are running sometimes hours late. Please then communicate do not leave us high and dry when someone comes out of hospital there is no follow up procedure. You pass the buck and say patients must still contact the hospital and vice versa. An utter shambles.



Are you male or female?

Option	Total
	316
Male	129 (41%)
Female	187 (59%)

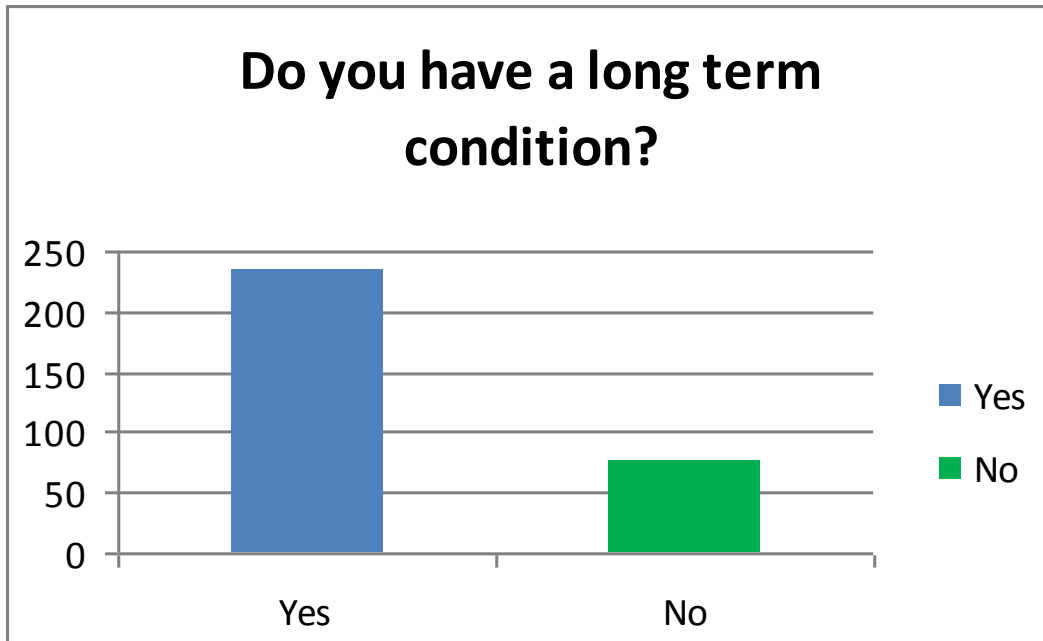
Base: 316 out of 321 people answered this question



What is your age group?

Option	Total
	318
18 – 29	8 (2.5%)
30 – 49	67 (21%)
50 – 64	119 (37.5%)
65 – 74	84 (26.5%)
75+	40 (12.5%)

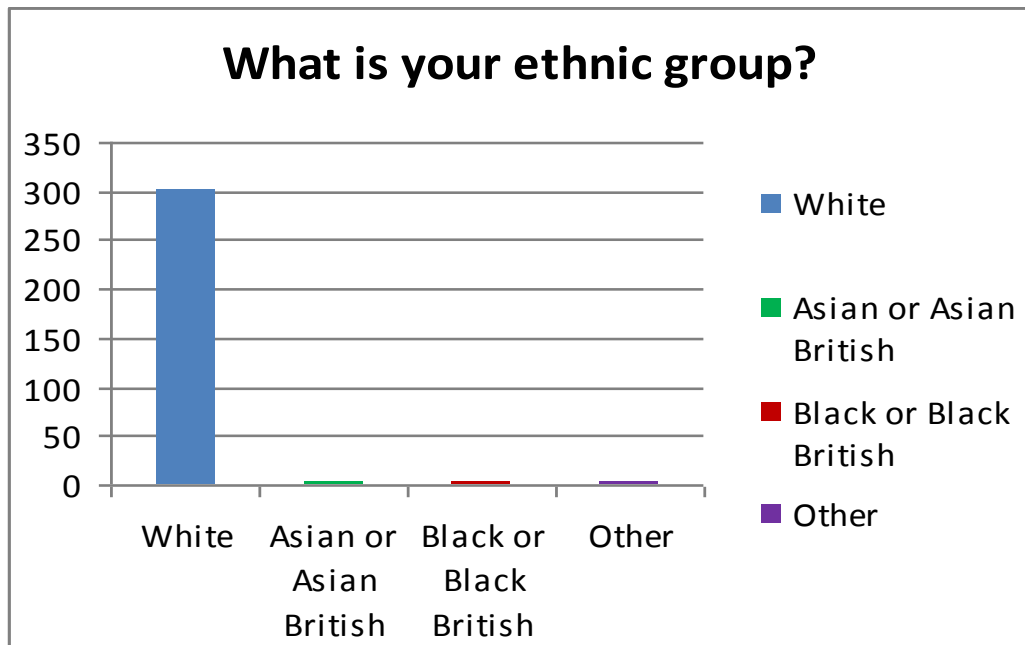
Base: 318 out of 321 people answered this question



Do you have a long term condition?

Option	Total
	313
Yes	236 (75.5 %)
No	77 (24.5%)

Base: 313 out of 321 people answered this question



What is your ethnic group?

Option	Total
	311
White	304 (98%)
Black or Black British	2 (0.5%)
Asian or Asian British	2 (0.5%)
Mixed	0 (0%)
Chinese	0 (0%)
Other	3 (1%)

Base: 311 out of 321 people answered this question

What you told us...

Online Booking

I wanted to book an appointment (it was a Sunday) for Monday evening... and thought, oh great an online live book your own appointment scheme, but you wanted a form filled and this TAKEN to the reception... honestly, this is not exactly hi-tech. What about an online form, picked up by the internet... so no, I could not book an appointment... and as a working person will need to ring around 8.30 to beg for an appointment on the day... so much for progress. Maybe you are thinking this response is rather 'grumpy', well maybe this was part of the reason I needed an appointment...:))

I generally only need to see a doctor when there is something that is suddenly very worrying for me, so on an emergency basis I do not worry about which doctor I see, and I can generally get an appointment with someone on the day. Generally your clinical care is good to excellent, especially the online repeat prescription service, but the system requires improvement if appointments are to be made this way.

Tried to book online but systems showed no appointments available for any doctor for a week. Attended centre at 8.15am and could hear receptionists giving telephone appointments for that day and next days. All appointments should be available online.

Online booking is hopeless, so then I have to telephone.

Good for telephone appointments but only poor for online success it normally shows as 'no appointments available for date selected'.

If the system were extended to include booking an appointment with nurse online it would be better. Furthermore the online booking is very restricted with some doctors being totally unavailable or simply not listed.

Nurse appointments online more doctor's online and less waiting time for doctors of your choice.

Said fair. But feel online dates and times available EXTREMELY restrictive [compared] to those available via telephone appointment.

We are aware of the online facility and have tried to use it but we have never had a good experience in using it, hence we usually phone. It appears only to indicate whether or not an appointment at a prescribed time and with a prescribed doctor is possible. It would be useful to see online the available appointment slots for each doctor so that the choice can be seen from which a decision can be made.

I would use the online service more to book appointments but there are hardly any available.

I wonder whether the online booking is still available because when I have tried it has been suggested that I telephone!

What we could try to do?

The Practice is aware that more patients are signing up to use our on-line service and we currently have nearly 40% of our patients (3.5K) now using the service that allows access to the surgery appointments and ordering of repeat prescriptions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- 1: At present 30% of GP appointments are available to book on line two weeks in advance for a partner or 4 weeks in advance for our GP Registrars.

We will increase this figure so that all GP appointments are available on-line at the same time they become available for patients to book either at reception or on the phone.

- 2: We will also in the Summer pilot booking Nurse appointments on-line.

The main concern with booking an on-line appointment with a nurse is that each Nurse specialises in different clinical areas such as diabetes, asthma, etc and therefore it is important that these appointments are booked with the correct nurse and for the correct length of time, 10 min, 20 min appointment etc depending on the type of appointment you require.

It is very important that we have patients support during the pilot. If too many patients book inappropriate appointments then the pilot will fail.

Telephones

The telephone is often engaged and it takes forever for somebody to answer.

Booking online appointments are excellent but I find telephoning for an appointment the receptionists are extremely unhelpful and it is virtually impossible to get an appointment.

When phoning up for an appointment the automatic system is confusing and difficult to use.

What we could try to do?

At present the surgery tries to minimise the waiting time for patient calling the surgery by ensuring the maximum number of staff possible answer the phone during peak times during the day.

In addition to this over the past year the practice has invested in telephone monitoring software that informs the practice how many patients are waiting in a queue. Based on this information staff can be taken off other tasks and placed on the phones until the back-log has cleared.

- 1: Another way of reducing the waiting time for calls to be answered at peak times may be by stopping patients who phone in the morning booking an afternoon appointment until later in the day.

Before deciding if this would be the best way forward we need to gather data on how many patients phone during the peak time and ask for an afternoon appointment.

To do this we will need to audit the number of calls we are receiving during our peak times where patients are asking to book an appointment.

We plan to start this audit in the summer and the results will be published on our website and in the Practice newsletter that is published by our Patient Participation Group.

Continuity of Care

It is too difficult to get an appointment to see the doctor I want to see. I often find there are no appointments available so I have to resort to ringing at 8.00am on a given day. Although I know I can book online it is rare that my doctor has any appointments for the whole month so I usually ring.

I prefer to see a doctor who knows and understands my background.

Doctors must be available to a greater extent than at present. It is frustrating that the list of GPs seems to be filled with individuals who are only working one or two days a week.

If you have an ongoing illness, it is hard to see the same GP on a regular basis as most only work part of the week which makes continuity difficult. I feel like I am starting off at stage one repeating myself constantly and as a working person who works long hours, I find it impossible to get an appointment with my own GP.

It is very difficult to make an appointment with a doctor I know, i.e. one who has been there for some time. I don't understand why availability is so limited.

I tried today to book to see Dr Fernie and even trying the two months still could not get an appointment with her.

I have not rated poor but it is so difficult to get an appointment to a specific doctor that you feel comfortable with.

It seems quite difficult to get to see the doctor of your choice.

It is very difficult to see the same doctor, especially with some on-going problem.

Two weeks to see your preferred doctor for an urgent appointment does not make sense. For sensitive issues, as a woman, I prefer to see a female doctor but all too often none are available for two weeks. Is this the kind of service we will have to become used to? I also believe that it is important to have a follow up appointment with same doctor. If your GP asks you to see him or her again in say two weeks time this is often impossible, given the current appointment system. Seeing a different, sometimes unknown GP each time is like talking to a stranger in the street.

Be able to see a female doctor at short notice. Most of the Doctors available on the day are men or in my experience not one of the more usual doctors in the surgery. Every time I have made an online appointment I have had to see a male doctor which I am not particularly comfortable with.

What we could try to do?

Although the practice will always were possible offer patients the GP of their choice, this is not always possible.

Many of the GP's do not work full time and routine appointment, especially if they are required at certain times of the day or week with a particular doctor may not always be available and unless patients are willing to wait until they can get an appointment with the doctor of their choice, they will be given the opportunity of making an appointment with another doctor.

In an ideal world it would be nice to be able to book an appointment with the doctor of a patient's choice every time a patient requests an appointment.

However in reality this is not possible as we need to ensure that the doctor works in a safe environment by restricting the number of routine appointments available each day. This way

we can ensure that every patient gets the best possible care and attention when they are seen.

Out of the 9 GP's at the practice, 2 work full time, 5 three quarter time and 2 half time. This means that GP's availability can be limited and demand for a particular doctor can outweigh their capacity.

At present many of the doctor's book their own follow-up appointments while with a patient and one way of looking at creating addition access would be to audit the "regular attendees" to see if their care can be managed in a different way so that their care is not compromised, but would create more appointments for a particular doctor.

We will therefore be auditing all of the doctor follow-up appointments to see if they can be managed differently and thereby create additional appointments.

Booking Ahead/Availability of Appointments

Book appointments further in advance.

Cannot get a convenient appointment. Cannot book ahead – told to try the next day to book ahead.

Allow routine appointments to be booked more than two weeks in advance.

If I need an urgent appointment I am not well and need a kind person helping me to a suitable appointment asap. If I need a non urgent appointment I want one within a few days. I always want help and consideration and should never be made to feel I am wasting time.

Make it easier to book advance appointments. A lot of people find it difficult to phone at 8.30am as they are on their way to, or already at, work and cannot call.

Very few urgent appointments are available, by 9.00am all often taken up and no others offered even for the next day. Advance appointments are offered too far in the future to be of value. No allowance made for the fact that I have never abused your system.

Tried to book an appointment which in my opinion was not serious but needed attention, and had to wait 11 days.

The way appointments are released you end up booking a medical emergency when you are not one. Probably better to go back to phone on the day for all appointments then you wouldn't have all the DNAs of 200 per month.

Quote two weeks for next appointment is absolutely silly, I have phoned for family member and got an appointment in the next 30 minutes as an emergency, is this right?

Find a way to make it possible to book a non-urgent appointment a week or more in advance – even at the risk of a late cancellation by the surgery.

Allow patients to book more than two weeks in advance for routine appointments, especially with Dr Sofoluwe.

I answered good but I don't understand why I cannot ring in the morning and arrange an urgent afternoon appointment, but instead have to ring in the afternoon after 2.00pm.

Increase the late night appointment availability.

I would prefer to receive a booking in advance rather than be asked to phone back later for an appointment.

Invariably appointments are not available for booking in the same week with the doctor of choice, nor are appointments bookable seven days in advance and patients are required to telephone again at a later date when more often than not there are then no available appointments with the Doctor of choice.

Appointments should be available for at least one month ahead not just two weeks in most cases

On calling to book a telephone consultation I was initially told this option was not available. It was only when stating that Saturday staff had advised this route and explaining the full symptoms (when asked) to the receptionist I was then booked a call back for later that day. No time could be specified and due to meetings I missed the first call back from the GP. I know the Doctors are busy but working full time in London an allocated time slot would allow no wasted time by the GP. My previous GP allocated a slot and it worked for the patient and GP as both would be available at a specific time

Appointments should be more freely available and not 'not released' i.e. hidden. Trying to get an appointment with a specific doctor who has asked to see me regularly has proved impossible on each occasion. I have to resort to asking a receptionist to get the doctor to call me so I can arrange an appointment directly with the doctor. This is a waste of everybody's time when there is an online system that is supposed to make things easier.

On every occasion when I ring for a non urgent appointment I am told there are none available. I am advised to try again at 8.30am next day and to keep on the line until I get through. This time of the day should surely be kept clear so acutely ill patients can speak to reception.

I have phoned and been told no appointments available for two weeks with any doctor, I have phoned on Monday morning at 8.30am a couple of times for an emergency appointment and told get here within 20 minutes, marvellous for the patient but very frustrating for me that tried on Friday afternoon and got told two weeks! My husband has cancer my mother is 85 I am quite willing to come and join your patient group. I have had unusual experiences, some good some bad. I also work in the NHS so am aware of what can go wrong. Please contact me if you need some members.

When we call we are invariably told that no appointments for our appointed doctor are available buy to phone back tomorrow. When we call back again we are told that no appointment is available. I believe that an appointment should be made for the first available slot on the first contact or that the receptionist should record the requirement and call back with an appointment. We never have a problem booking appointments with the St Andrews Dental Practice and receive far more sympathetic attention. Regarding question 5 below, I think that we should be able to book an appointment with our appointed Doctor on a non routine matter in less than a week.

I think the receptionist could ask if you consider the appointment urgent or would you be able to wait for a few days. On the occasions I have required a routine appointment I use the online service but if I require an urgent or I call the surgery. I have never been offered an appointment on the day (it is usually 10 to 14 days).

What we could try to do?

We appreciate that our appointment system may not always meet every patient's expectations but they are put in place to help both the patient and the GP and are not there to stop your access to any clinician.

We currently offer routine appointment with all of our 9 partners up to two weeks in advance and up to four weeks for the nurses and GP Registrars.

We feel that we are not in a position to extend the booking period further than two weeks for the GP's as we believe that this would increase the number of appointments that would be booked and then not used by patients. (153 appointments missed in February 2012)

In addition to offering advance appointments with the GP or Nurse the Practice also has same day appointments available for all GP's, although these can at present be booked in advance by the GP if they have patients that need to come back for a follow-up appointment.

The Practice has over the past few years been monitoring the demand and expectation of our patients and has implemented this system to allow patients to contact the surgery on the day if they require to see a GP.

When phoning on the day you can ask to see a doctor of your choice, until their surgery is fully booked when you will be offered an appointment with another GP.

When all of these appointments are booked, you can still be seen by the Duty Doctor, if you believe you have a clinical need to be seen the same day.

One of the problems we find is that many patients who want to be seen the same day put the responsibility on the receptionist by insisting on an afternoon appointment when it is only early morning, when late morning appointments are available.

While we appreciate that this may not always be acceptable to all patients we must ensure that on the day appointments are booked appropriately and if you ask to be seen the same day, then you must appreciate that there is an expectation from the practice that you will accept the appointment time being offered to you.

There will of course be certain times why you cannot make the appointment being offered to you and when this happens you need to explain the reasons to the receptionists who will do her best to help whenever possible.

To try to create access for patients on the day we will :

- 1: Promote GP Telephone Consultations.

Telephone Consultations with a GP have been available to book for over the past couple of years. We however need to advertise these more prominently to give patients the option of speaking to a GP and thereby increasing face to face access for patients.

- 2: Nurse Telephone Consultations

During the Summer we will be running a pilot scheme for Nurse Telephone Consultations.

- 3: Patient audit

To perform an appointment booking audit on regular users of the surgery to identify if their care could possibly be managed in a different way to reduce the number of occasions they need to make an appointment.

Staff

Be open during normal office hours and pretend that you care when you speak to patients. The reception's supercilious and arrogant attitude would not be tolerated in private business.

Efficient but unfriendly with little or no compassion for those who may be worried about their condition. This comment is unfortunately the present culture of our unproductive NHS.

Reception staff are rude and too quick to put the telephone down. However now that you have the online service maybe they will have more time to answer calls.

Receptionists are helpful, but not very polite or friendly.

The issue is not about doctors but that some of the reception staff you have to plead for appointments, I am sorry to say I am chronically ill and in the last year although on many occasions I have made appointments in advance I never see the same doctor twice and then the doctors deal with me for the appointment and say I need to see my regular doctor. A year I say is beyond appalling considering my case is complicated and I nearly died in February from pneumonia. I had tried to make an appointment same as usual. Receptionists who play God. Don't tell me I don't know what I am talking about I worked in the health service for years! Why don't I change doctors because the doctors are good and some of the receptionists are too?

Your appointment service is good but unfortunately some of your receptionists do not have a very pleasant manner.

Telephone technique training for some reception staff. There's a reason why we have two ears and one mouth.

I have never had an experience bad enough to warrant 'poor' or 'very poor' but I find the receptionists can be short on the telephone and somewhat unhelpful – they tend to assume that you know the surgery procedures which as a non-regular to the surgery, I don't. It would be nice to feel you are speaking to someone with some compassion who is prepared to talk you through everything rather than feeling like a nuisance by calling.

Nothing.

What we could try to do?

The Practice needs to support our frontline staff that often bears the brunt of a patient's anger or frustration when patient's expectations cannot be met.

However we are keen to ensure that we continue to develop our staff to enable them to work effectively and empathetically with our patients and we will continue to do this through annual appraisals and training over the coming years.

Other

Waiting times

A quarter of all patients completing the survey stated that they had to wait longer than 20 minutes to be seen after their allotted appointment time.

As the majority of patients felt that this was not an acceptable service and should not have to wait longer than 10 minutes, as a practice we need to look and identify why this is happening.

What we could try to do?

We will perform an audit on clinicians waiting times .

Compliments

In spite of my criticisms I am extremely fortunate to be cared for by the 'old' team with whom I have excellent care and clinical attention. I am unsure if the newer patients feel the same way?

The service given by the receptionists is usually excellent and very helpful.

Helpful reception staff.

Always found doctors, nurses and staff helpful and polite.

I have just booked an appointment on-line for the first time. What a great addition to the surgery this is.

My sincere thanks to all of your staff and doctors at the health centre.

Thank you for all of your comments and for completing the survey.

