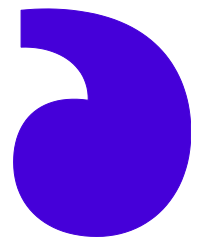




# “Going to the Doctors” Survey Report

Results at March 2017



Healthwatch Worcestershire,  
Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive,  
Pershore,  
Worcestershire,  
WR10 1PT  
Tel. 01386 550 264  
Email: [info@healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk)



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>CONTENT</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
1. About Healthwatch Worcestershire	1
2. Why Did We Undertake Our “Going To The Doctors” Survey?	1
3. How Did We Undertake The Survey?	2
4. Survey Results	
4.1 Making An Appointment	4
4.2 GP “Triage” / Call Back system	8
4.3 Seeing a Preferred GP	13
4.4 Willingness To See A GP In Another Surgery	14
4.5 Seven Day Access to GP Appointments	17
4.6 Experience of GP Surgery	19
4.7 Knowledge of The Complaints System	21
4.8 Additional Comments	23
5. Points for Consideration by Worcestershire’s CCGs	25
<b>APPENDICES</b>	
Appendix One - “Going to the Doctors” Survey	26

## 1. ABOUT HEALTHWATCH WORCESTERSHIRE

Healthwatch Worcestershire provides an independent voice for people who use publicly funded health and social care services. Our role is to ensure that people's views are listened to and fed back to service providers and commissioners in order to improve services.

## 2. WHY DID WE UNDERTAKE OUR “GOING TO THE DOCTORS” SURVEY?

We are aware that there is a National GP Survey, the latest results of which were published in July 2016 following field work carried out in July - September 2015 and January - March 2016. This national survey is on a much larger scale, covers a broader scope of questions and was collected over a different timeframe to the results presented here.

HWW undertook our “Going to the Doctors” survey as primary care, and in particular GP services, are the issue that we hear about most often when we are speaking with people at engagement events. The survey was designed to be a quick, structured way to capture this feedback either face to face or online. It provides a recent snapshot of patient views. After initial discussion about content with Worcestershire Local Medical Committee the Survey included questions to test public response to the following issues which are relevant to the NHS locally:

- Patients opinion of telephone “triage” / call back process - whereby same day appointments are offered following a telephone consultation with a medical professional
- The importance placed by patients on seeing their preferred GP for same day and routine appointments
- Willingness by patients to see a GP in their local area if a same day appointment is not available at their own GP surgery

### 2.1 Reporting the Results of our Survey

HWW produced a Report which set out the results of our Survey up to September 2016. This Report was produced to inform the patient engagement process on primary care priorities in Worcestershire.

The [Report and the CCGs response](#) to it can be found on our website:

<http://www.healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk/going-to-the-doctors/>

HWW continued to run the “Going to the Doctors” survey for the remainder of the financial year. This Report sets out findings since October 2016, and where relevant draws comparisons between the two sets of results.

### 3. HOW DID WE UNDERTAKE THE SURVEY?

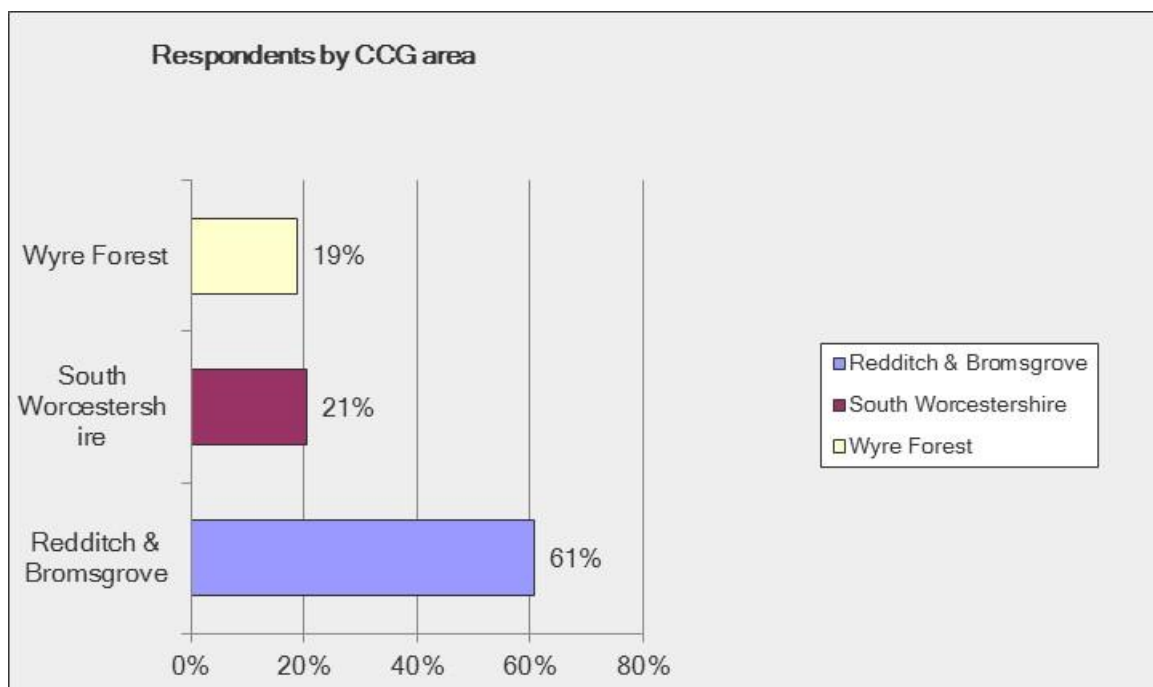
#### 3.1 Total Respondents

459 people completed Healthwatch Worcestershire’s “Going to the Doctors” survey between October 2016 - March 2017

The majority of responses, 70% were completed face to face by HWW at engagement events, 13% were completed online, 17% through “Other” sources (GP Surgery, CCG, Facebook, District Council).

81% of respondents had seen their GP in the last 6 months, 11% in the last 6 - 12 months and 8% more than 12 months ago. The majority of responses therefore represent people’s views based on their recent experience/s.

#### 3.2 Respondents by CCG area



The chart shows that 61% (261) of respondents are from the Redditch and Bromsgrove CCG area, 20% (88) are from the South Worcestershire CCG area and 19% (81) respondents are from the Wyre Forest CCG area.

In our previous Report 47% (142) of respondents were from the Wyre Forest CCG area, 43% (130) were from the South Worcestershire CCG area and 11% (32) respondents were from the Redditch and Bromsgrove area.

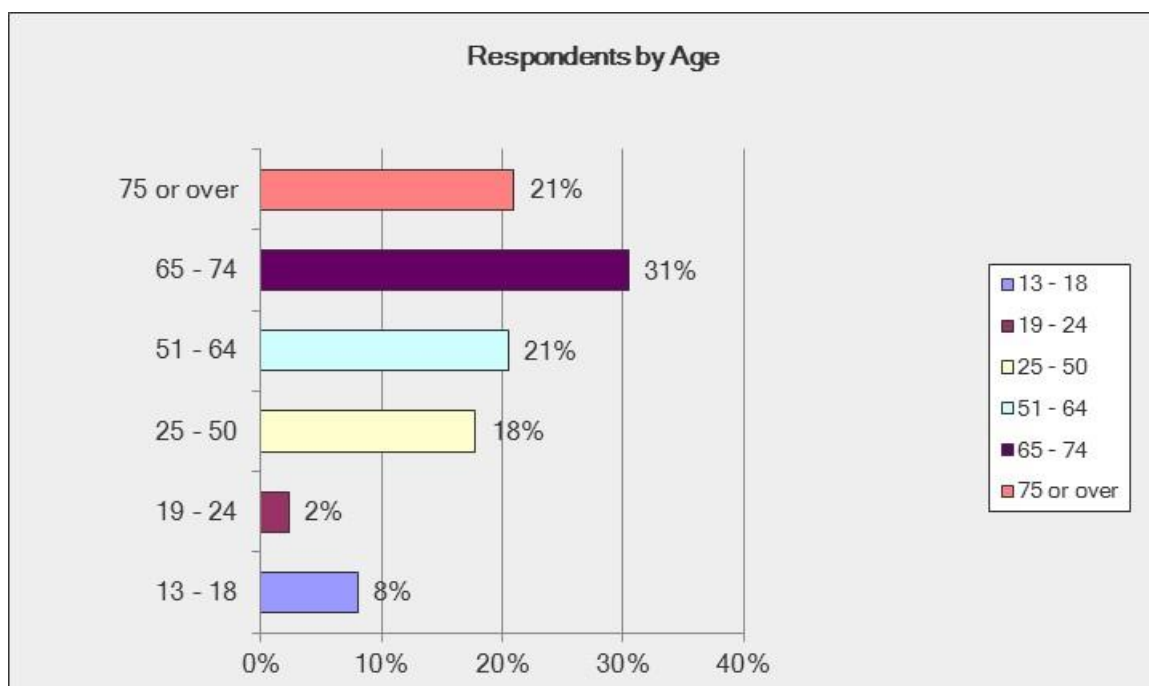
#### 3.3 Respondents by gender

Of the people who answered this question

- 73% are female
- 27% are male

In our previous report 77% were female and 23% male.

### 3.4 Respondents by Age



The chart shows that of the people who answered this question 52% are aged 65+, 39% are aged 25 - 64, and 10% are aged between 13-24.

In our previous report 38% were aged 65+, 52% were aged 25 - 64, and 10% were aged between 13-24.

### 3.5 Respondents by Ethnicity

98% of the people who answered this question identified themselves as White British. The 2% of respondents who gave a different response identified themselves as White Irish; Asian/Asian British - Indian; Black/Black British - African; Black/Black British - Caribbean or "Other" ethnic group using Census categories.

This is very similar to our previous report when 98% of respondents identified themselves as White.

#### **NOTE**

Not all questions were answered by all respondents. When non-response is present, percentages are reported based on the numbers answering the question. The number of respondents to each question can be found at Appendix One.

Results have been rounded to the nearest whole number, therefore will not always sum to 100%.

## 4. “GOING TO THE DOCTORS” SURVEY RESULTS

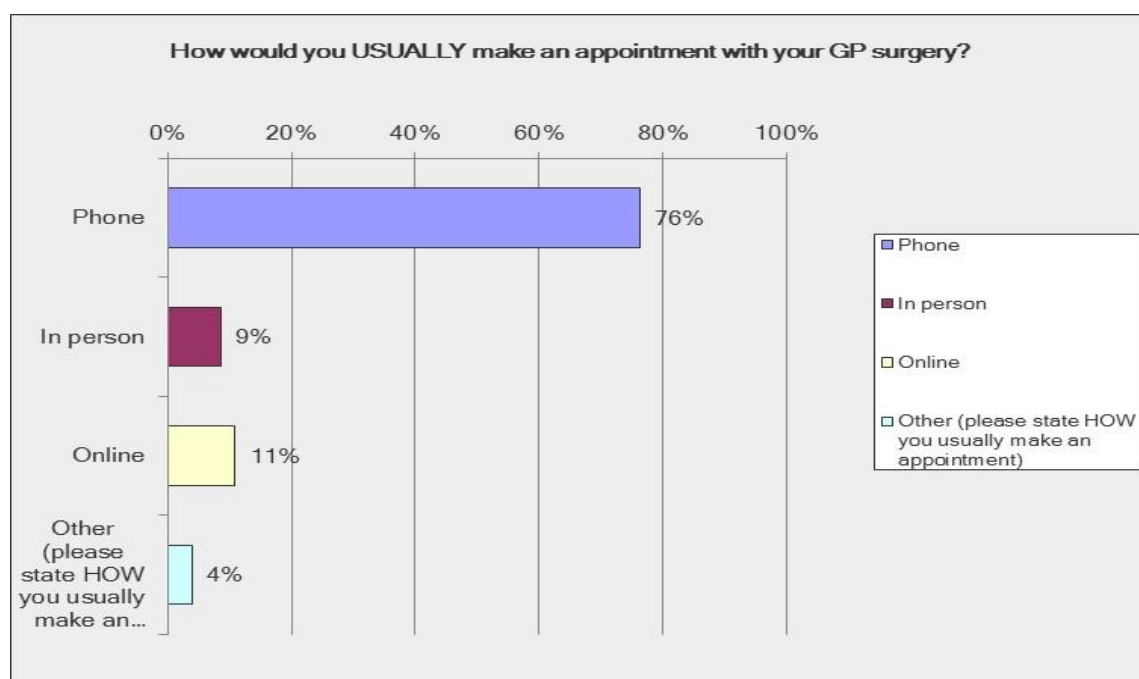
### 4.1 MAKING AN APPOINTMENT

#### 4.1. a. How would you USUALLY make an appointment at your GP surgery?

The chart below shows that the telephone is the most popular option for making a GP appointment, with 76% of respondents choosing this option.

Online booking was used by 11% of respondents. The proportion booking online is slightly higher than that reported in the results to the July 2016 National GP Survey.

9% of respondents usually make an appointment in person. The “Other” option was selected by 4% of respondents who made appointments both by phone and in person, or had other people make an appointment on their behalf.



Whilst caution should be exercised in directly comparing results from our previous survey and the findings in this Report as the sample sizes and spread of respondents across the CCG areas is different it is interesting to note patterns in responses.

This pattern of responses is similar to our earlier findings, when 73% of respondents chose telephone, 12% in person and 9% online and 7% “other”.

It should be noted that 2 respondents reported that the option to book GP appointments online had been withdrawn due to the introduction of telephone triage system.

*“Would like to have more routine appointments such as asthma checks available online”*

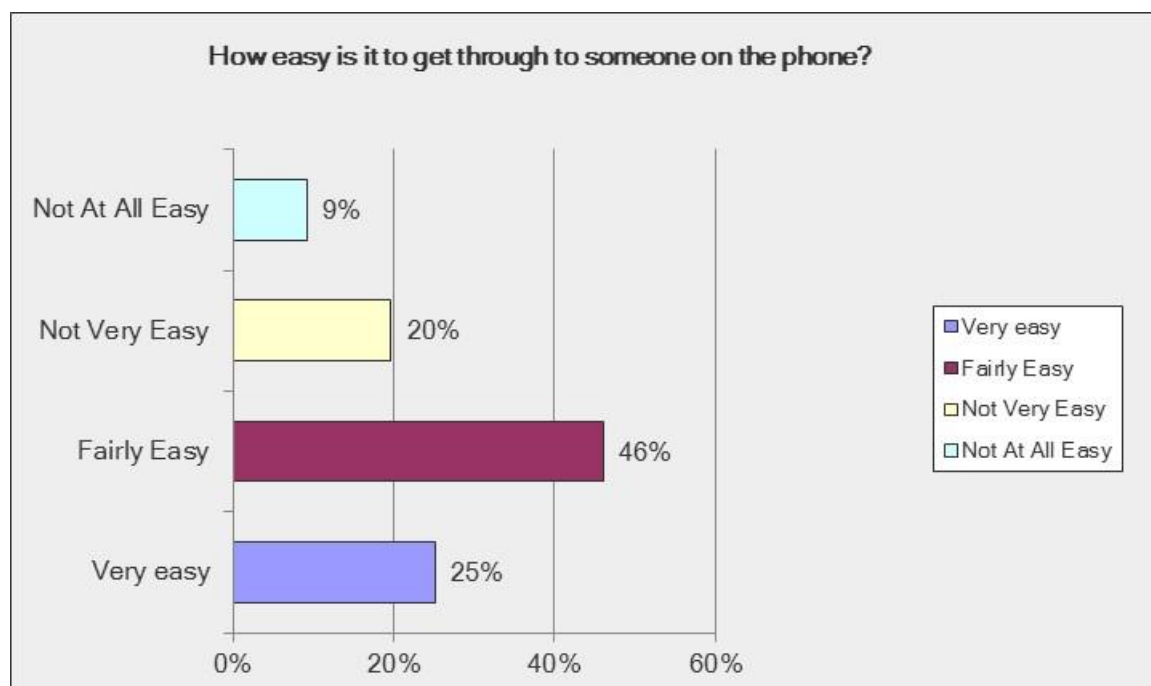
## Points for Consideration:

- i. In our previous Report we recommended that GP surgeries could consider how they will further promote and develop the online appointment booking system. There has been a slight increase in respondents reporting that they use the online service (from 9% to 11%), however online options could still be further promoted to increase take up.

### 4.1. b. Ease of getting through to someone on the phone

We asked people how easy they found it to get through to their GP Surgery.

The Chart shows that the majority of the respondents found it very easy or fairly easy to get through on the phone (71%). However 29% of respondents found it not very easy, or not at all easy to get through on the phone.



The table below shows responses across the 3 CCG area. The figures in brackets are the findings from our previous Report. The table shows that there are some variations in the responses across CCG areas:

HWW Survey Results	Redditch & Bromsgrove (previous result in brackets)	South Worcestershire (previous result in brackets)	Wyre Forest (previous result in brackets)
Very Easy	<b>28%</b> (19%)	<b>13%</b> (20%)	<b>25%</b> (33%)
Fairly Easy	<b>49%</b> (44%)	<b>40%</b> (38%)	<b>42%</b> (44%)
Not Very Easy	<b>16%</b> (16%)	<b>29%</b> (25%)	<b>25%</b> (18%)
Not At All Easy	<b>7%</b> (22%)	<b>18%</b> (17%)	<b>8%</b> (5%)

The pattern of results show that, as in the previous Report, HWW respondents in the South Worcestershire CCG area 47% found it “not very or not at all easy” to get through to someone on the phone. This is a higher percentage than in other CCG

areas, although it is noted that more respondents in the Wyre Forest area, 33%, are reporting this compared to 23% in the previous Report.

Although sample size and response rates are clearly different this pattern is repeated in the results of the July 2016 National GP Survey shown below, with more patients reporting it is not very or not at all easy to get through to someone on the phone in the South Worcestershire CCG area.

July 2016 National GP Survey Results	Redditch & Bromsgrove (%)	South Worcestershire	Wyre Forest
Very Easy	24%	25%	29%
Fairly Easy	52%	47%	50%
Not Very Easy	14%	16%	13%
Not At All Easy	6%	8%	5%
Have Not Tried	3%	3%	3%

*“Difficult to get through, must ring first thing. Very busy”*

*“I would like them to improve their phone directing system, at present you get stuck in a queue without knowing where you are in the system”*

*“It can be a real pain to get an appointment, engaged then a queue”*

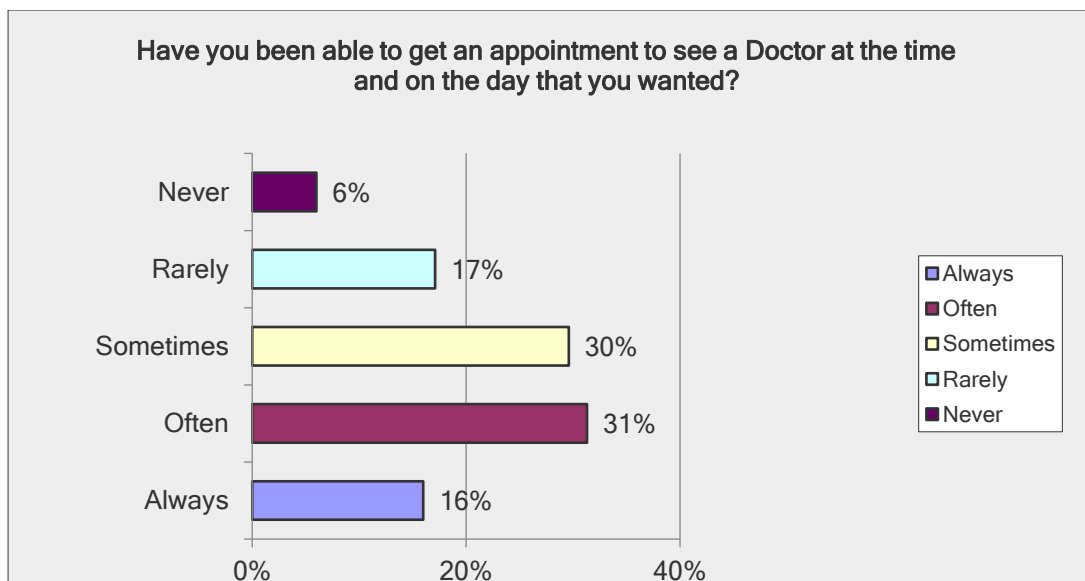
*“Four times in one day I rang. NO answer! I finally got through the following day and had to wait TWO WEEKS for an appointment”*

#### Points for Consideration

- i. CCGs to further consider how telephone access to GP surgeries, particularly in the South Worcestershire CCG area, could be improved.

#### 4.1. c. Getting an appointment at the time and on the day that you wanted

We asked if people had been able to get an appointment at the time and on the day that they wanted.





The Chart shows that 47% of respondents could Always or Often get an appointment, 30% could Sometimes get an appointment, and 23% of respondents could Rarely or Never get an appointment to see a doctor at a time and on the day they wanted.

The table below shows the results across the 3 CCG areas. The figures in brackets are the findings in our previous Report.

	<b>All CCGs</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>Redditch &amp; Bromsgrove</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>South Worcs.</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>Wyre Forest</b> (previous result in brackets)
Always	<b>16%</b> (25%)	<b>18%</b> (16%)	<b>11%</b> (18%)	<b>14%</b> (34%)
Often	<b>31%</b> (25%)	<b>28%</b> (22%)	<b>35%</b> (21%)	<b>36%</b> (30%)
Sometimes	<b>30%</b> (26%)	<b>28%</b> (16%)	<b>34%</b> (32%)	<b>30%</b> (22%)
Rarely	<b>17%</b> (18%)	<b>19%</b> (25%)	<b>13%</b> (24%)	<b>18%</b> (11%)
Never	<b>6%</b> (6%)	<b>7%</b> (22%)	<b>7%</b> (5%)	<b>3%</b> (4%)

There are variations in the results across the 3 Worcestershire CCG's.

The table shows that 46% of respondents in Redditch & Bromsgrove and South Worcestershire could Always or Often get an appointment in comparison to 50% in the Wyre Forest.

In Redditch and Bromsgrove 28% could Sometimes get an appointment as compared to 34% in South Worcestershire and 30% in Wyre Forest.

Across all of the CCG areas more people reported that they could Sometimes get an appointment than in our previous Report.

26% of respondents in Redditch and Bromsgrove could Rarely or Never get an appointment to see a doctor at a time or day they wanted compared to 20% in South Worcestershire and 21% in Wyre Forest.

This shows that fewer people than previously in Redditch & Bromsgrove and South Worcestershire reported rarely or never being able to get an appointment than in our previous Report, whilst the percentage reporting this in the Wyre Forest has gone up. However we are mindful of variations in sample size across the 3 CCG areas.

*“I am impressed with our surgery, given the demands on the system. I have not always been able to see my preferred doctor but we have always had appointments when needed. This is particularly reassuring when it comes to booking appointments for our children”*

*“They are obviously busy and getting a non-urgent appointment can be impossible at the first attempt. For urgent needs the response is always very good.”*

*“Really difficult to get a routine appointment - three to four weeks wait. Phoning in is hopeless”*

*“Getting an appointment is very hard, also as a carer for someone this is never considered”*

*“Never able to get a non-same day appointment within a reasonable timescale...it seems to be same day or four weeks wait. I often don’t need an emergency appointment, just a medication review following a blood test and have to do it same day, although I’d be happy to wait. I feel really guilty when someone else really needs same day”*

*“Very hard to get an appointment and if I do it’s always weeks away”*

### Points for Consideration

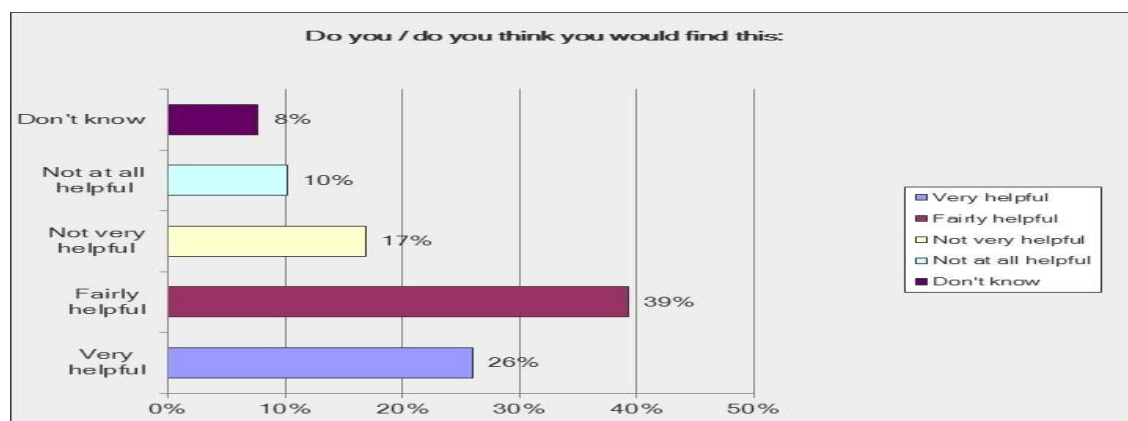
- i. Bearing in mind our previous caution about the difficulties of making direct comparisons between the two Reports and recognising the demographic profile of our respondents CCGs to further consider the implications of variations in respondents getting an appointment at the time and on the day that they wanted.

### 4.2 GP “TRIAGE” / CALL BACK SYSTEMS

We asked whether the respondents GP surgery offered a consultation with a healthcare professional over the telephone before offering a SAME DAY appointment.

45% of our respondents said that their GP used this system, 26% did not and 29% did not know.

**We asked people do you / do you think you would find this helpful?**



65% of respondents do / would find this system very or fairly helpful, 27% would find this not very or not at all helpful and 8% did not know. The figures in brackets are the findings in our previous Report.

### Response across the 3 CCG areas

	<b>Redditch &amp; Bromsgrove (%)</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>South Worcestershire</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>Wyre Forest</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>ALL CCG areas</b> (previous result in brackets)
<b>Very Helpful</b>	<b>29%</b> (13%)	<b>22%</b> (27%)	<b>23%</b> (42%)	<b>26%</b> (32%)
<b>Fairly Helpful</b>	<b>39%</b> (48%)	<b>45%</b> (33%)	<b>39%</b> (27%)	<b>39%</b> (32%)
<b>Not Very Helpful</b>	<b>14%</b> (19%)	<b>22%</b> (23%)	<b>20%</b> (6%)	<b>17%</b> (15%)
<b>Not At All Helpful</b>	<b>9%</b> (16%)	<b>8%</b> (7%)	<b>13%</b> (12%)	<b>10%</b> (10%)
<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>10%</b> (3%)	<b>4%</b> (10%)	<b>6%</b> (13%)	<b>8%</b> (10%)

Looking at the responses by CCG area there are variations across the 3 CCG's. This system is seen as being most helpful in the Redditch & Bromsgrove area (68%), and least helpful in Wyre Forest (33%).

The percentage of people finding the system Very or Fairly helpful has increased in both Redditch and Bromsgrove and South Worcestershire, but declined in Wyre Forest. This may reflect changes in sample size, however the change of response in the Wyre Forest area may reflect that the system is most widely used in this CCG area and results are reflecting people's actual experience over time, rather than what people think might be the case.

### Response by age of respondent (the figures in brackets are the findings in our previous Report)

<b>Age</b>	<b>Very Helpful</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>Fairly Helpful</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>Not Very Helpful</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>Not At All Helpful</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>Don't Know</b> (previous result in brackets)
<b>Under 25 yrs.</b>	<b>12%</b> (13%)	<b>56%</b> (43%)	<b>7%</b> (17%)	<b>17%</b> (13%)	<b>7%</b> (13%)
<b>25 - 64 yrs.</b>	<b>27%</b> (34%)	<b>39%</b> (30%)	<b>15%</b> (19%)	<b>9%</b> (8%)	<b>11%</b> (9%)
<b>65 + yrs.</b>	<b>28%</b> (29%)	<b>37%</b> (37%)	<b>19%</b> (12%)	<b>10%</b> (12%)	<b>6%</b> (10%)

Looking at responses by age of respondent the table below shows that across all age ranges the majority of respondents do / would find the system very or fairly helpful.

## Respondents' reasons for the answer given

We asked people to briefly give a reason for their answer.

We received 245 comments in total. We have analysed the comments by CCG area in order to ascertain whether there are any variations between those CCG's where the system is in wide use (e.g. Wyre Forest) in comparison to areas where it is less established (e.g. Redditch & Bromsgrove).

The comments were coded as positive or negative and then themed.

### Redditch & Bromsgrove

There were 161 comments from respondents in Redditch & Bromsgrove.

76 of the comments were positive, 44 were negative, 17 comments related to people who said it would depend on the circumstances/problem and 24 were neutral or not relevant. The theme's identified are reported in order of frequency below.

#### Positive comments

- Phone convenient and time saving - better than waiting for an appointment
- Working well / reassured
- Can have problems resolved faster

#### Negative comments

- Would rather see Doctor face to face
- Delay in face to face appointments being offered
- Difficulty in diagnosis over the phone (not suitable for serious complaints)
- Time delay in ringing back

*“Have had a couple of telephone consultations. I found it saved both the doctor and myself time at the surgery. My question was speedily dealt with, a test was organised and I felt totally reassured by my consultation”*

*“I was suspicious of the phone consultation at first, but having had more experience of it I feel it works very well. I feel that the doctors have more time for you ..... since the advent of the phone first system I have either been booked in for required rests before seeing the GP (thus saving a GP appointment), just been reassured or been offered an immediate appointment.”*

*“You ring at 8.00 a.m. but do not receive a call back until late afternoon. If you are in need of an urgent appointment you can't see anyone until the next day”*

*“If you want to speak to your GP personally about something it is a matter of trust, about the relationship i.e. doctor patient confidentiality, not the receptionist, nurses etc.”*

### South Worcestershire

There were 27 comments from respondents in South Worcestershire.

18 of the comments were positive, 7 were negative and 2 were neutral or not relevant. The theme's identified are reported in order of frequency below.

### Positive Comments

- Phone convenient and time saving - better than waiting for an appointment
- Can have problems resolved faster
- Working well / reassured

### Negative comments

- Would rather speak with own GP
- Results in information being discussed twice
- Patient believe they need to see a GP face to face

*“I work full time so this would be more convenient and a better use of time”*

*“Saves time, gives peace of mind”*

*“Not always my doctor who rings back, it feels like a call centre”*

*“Wastes everyone’s time, double up telling information”*

### **Wyre Forest**

There were 57 comments from respondents in Wyre Forest. 21 of the comments were positive, 25 were negative, 11 were neutral or not relevant. The theme’s identified are reported in order of frequency below.

### Positive comments

- Working well / reassured
- Phone convenient and time saving - better than waiting for an appointment
- Can have problems resolved faster

### Negative comments

- Issues with call back system (time delay; not knowing when the call back would happen; inconvenient to receive call back (e.g. at work)
- Would rather see Doctor face to face
- Difficulty in diagnosis over the phone / patient not comfortable discussing condition over phone

*“I feel this is a good system because it saves the doctor’s time and if a visit is not necessary and advice only is needed it would save the patient a journey”*

*“Would allay personal concerns, giving doctors more consulting time”*

*“Have to wait for a call back, very inconvenient. I cannot go to work as I do not know when they are going to call back or if I am going to get an appointment that day”*

*“I care for my Mum who has dementia. I took a bus to the doctors to make an appointment, they said they would have to call me back on the phone. I missed the call because I was on the bus getting home. I rang back and eventually got an appointment for 5 p.m. so then had to take Mum on the bus to the doctors, basically it took the whole day to sort this out”*

## Commentary<sup>1</sup>

In our previous report we raised concerns about how well the telephone triage system works for:

- People whose first language is not English
- People who are deaf or hearing impaired
- Young people, particularly those in educational settings, who may have difficulty receiving a telephone call back
- People who cannot receive phone calls at work
- People who may have difficulties in describing their symptoms over the phone - this could be for a variety of reasons ( e.g. learning disabilities)
- People who rely on others to make appointments for them and their carers

In their response to our previous report the CCG's response said:

“We appreciate the some patient groups may have difficulty using telephone appointments. One would hope that this would be evident when people contact the surgery, or that the surgery would know particular patients well enough to make appropriate arrangements. If there are specific difficulties we would welcome further information to take this up with the practices concerned.”

We also raised the issue of where patients who may have had a number of telephone consultations over a defined period (e.g. a month) could be flagged by the system so that this could be reviewed.

The CCGs responded:

“The EMIS IT system is not designed to run a type of regular report that would indicate a range of patients have had a set number of telephone calls in a particular period. However, with telephone consultations being recorded as clinical consultations on the system, anyone accessing these, would be able to see that a specific patient had had frequent consultations and if clinically indicated would invite them to come in. For example, an Advanced Nurse practitioner at the Clinical Contact Centre would triage patients and then offer clinical advice/treatment as appropriate i.e. a consultation, and if necessary send back to their practice for a face-to-face appointment. This ‘consultation’ would be recorded on EMIS and they have full access to the records, so they can be more direct and specific than say a 111 call. The ANPs can, and do, directly book appointments for patients with their GP via their practice system, as a result of the telephone consultation.”

We will be widely publicising these responses and asking patients and carers to let us know if they are experiencing difficulties.

---

<sup>1</sup> See reports on Engagement with BAME communities 2015 & 2016, Access to GP services for Deaf People, Young People's GP Survey, Young People and Parental Engagement Services Report, Making sure that people with Learning Disabilities are able to make a complaint about GP services. Reports available on HWW website [“Our Work”](#)

## Points for Consideration

- i. GP surgeries should continue to review telephone triage systems to ensure that:
  - a. the system is accessible for those patients for whom telephone access is difficult
  - b. there is flexibility in the implementation of the system for patients that require this.
- ii. GP surgeries should ensure that staff are alert to identifying patients who receive advice and treatment over the phone on a number of occasions within a defined time frame without having seeing a GP face to face. This would enable the patient's information to be reviewed

### 4.3 SEEING A PREFERRED GP

#### Preferred Doctor at your GP Surgery

We asked people if they had a preferred doctor at their GP surgery. 64% of respondents had a preferred GP, whilst 36% did not. In our previous Report 79% of respondents had a preferred doctor at their GP surgery, whilst 21% did not.

We asked people how important is it to see your preferred doctor when you need a SAME DAY appointment. 49% of respondents said that this was either very important or important, compared to 56% in our previous Report. 51% of respondents felt this was not very important or not at all important, compared to 44% in our previous Report.

We asked how important it is to see your preferred doctor for appointments that were NON EMERGENCY/ ROUTINE. 66% of respondents said that this was either very important or important, compared with 80% in our previous Report. 33% felt this was not very important or not at all important, compared with 20% in our previous Report.

Respondents who have a preferred GP and think that it is important to see them for a SAME DAY or urgent appointment are fewer in this Report than previously. This could indicate that there is more acceptance from patients about seeing an available GP rather than a preferred GP.

However although the percentage of people has decreased findings still indicate that it is more important to patients to see their preferred Doctor for non- urgent, routine appointments. This finding reflects answers what patients tell HWW anecdotally about the importance of continuity of care and seeing a GP who is aware of their medical history.

*“Seeing the same doctor helps everyone, the doctor knows you. It saves your time and theirs”*

*“Continuity of care is important because you don’t have to repeat the same thing again if you have continuity”*

*“Can’t forward book with your preferred doctor”*

*“If I try to book an appointment with the GP I prefer it is usually 3 - 4 weeks in the future!”*

*“I have given up seeing the same doctor each time though I would prefer to work with such a system”*

In their response to our previous Report the CCG said:

“We think continuity of care for those who have complex health needs is really important so we are encouraged to see that 44% felt this was not important to see a preferred doctor if urgent. Continuity of care is important, but managed in line with risk and urgency. It may be that in future we have to see other health professionals other than a GP to manage our needs, for example an advanced nurse practitioner for diabetes care, or paramedic to review an urgent home visit case. Unfortunately to consider enabling patients to access preferred GPs for non-emergency appointments may not be in line with current direction of the GP Forward View and the difficulties General Practice faces.”

#### **Points for Consideration**

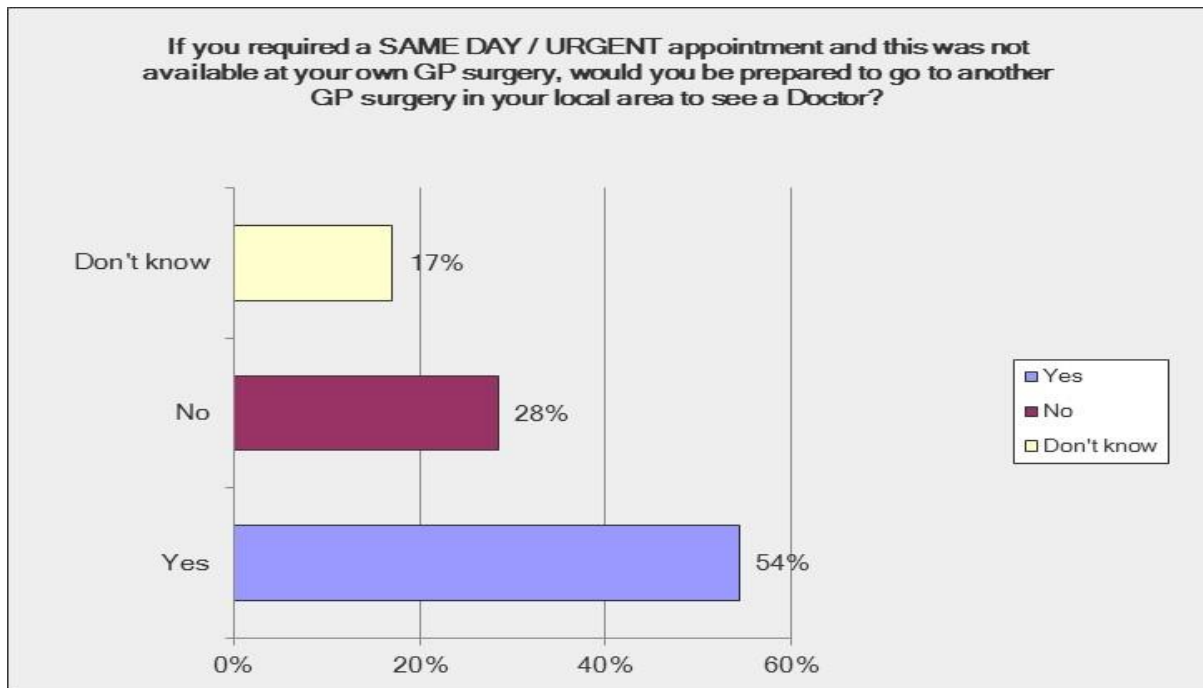
- i. CCG to consider how patient’s preference for continuity of care for non-urgent medical issues can be safely and effectively managed within GP surgeries

#### **4.4 WILLINGNESS TO SEE A GP IN ANOTHER SURGERY**

We asked people whether they would be prepared to go to another GP Surgery in the local area if a same day appointment was not available at their own surgery.

We included this question following liaison with the Worcestershire Local Medical Committee.





The Chart shows that 54% of our respondents said Yes to this question, 28% said No and 17% did not know. These findings are very similar to those in our previous Report.

We asked people to briefly give the reason for their answer. We received 254 comments in total, 15 of which did not relate to this question.

129 of these comments were made by people who answered YES to this question. The themes that were identified are presented in order of frequency below:

- If a same day appointment required / if it was urgent / or an emergency person would be prepared to see a different doctor at another surgery
- Alternative GP should have electronic access to the persons medical records
- Willing to do this if able to easily travel to the alternative
- Would be willing, but don't think this would apply to their surgery
- Used to seeing a variety of doctors

*“If something is urgent, then it is urgent. If one surgery is at capacity it is not unreasonable to expect people to travel to another for most situations, there will always be some exceptions”*

*“If other surgeries have free appointments others could use everyone could benefit”*

*“Your notes should go with you and file sharing should be part of the experience. There should also be times that are reserved for those people who work”*

*“I just need access to a medical professional as soon as possible so I will travel to get that. I would even be prepared to go to a different part of Worcestershire”*

*“I don't think this would happen at our GP surgery due to the “phone first” consultation”*

*“I always see different doctors every time I go so it wouldn't matter to me”*

72 comments were made by people who answered NO. The themes that were identified are presented in order of frequency below:

- Continuity of care - wanting to see a doctor who knows the persons history
- Transport or travel difficulties
- No other surgery in the local area / distance
- Access to notes at an alternative practice - not wanting to repeat medical history
- Would use NHS 111 or A&E rather than a different surgery
- Don't think would need to

*“They would have no knowledge of your long term history, problems & long term conditions”*

*“My surgery is in walking distance. No means of transport if further afield”*

*“Health Centre is very local. If you are ill you don't want to travel”*

*“Health records or previous history is vitally important for diagnosis. If you see another doctor they wouldn't have access to your records”*

*“Nothing would be that urgent that it wouldn't wait unless it was an emergency and if that was the case I would go to A&E”*

A further 48 comments were made by people who answered Don't Know. The themes identified are presented in order of frequency below:

- Dependent on circumstances / issue
- Lack of confidence in GP not known to the person
- Difficult to make a judgement when the option is not available
- Distance
- Access to notes at an alternative practice - not wanting to repeat medical history

In response to our previous Report where we recommended that CCGs further test public acceptance and the practical implications of same day appointments at another GP in the local area the CCG replied:

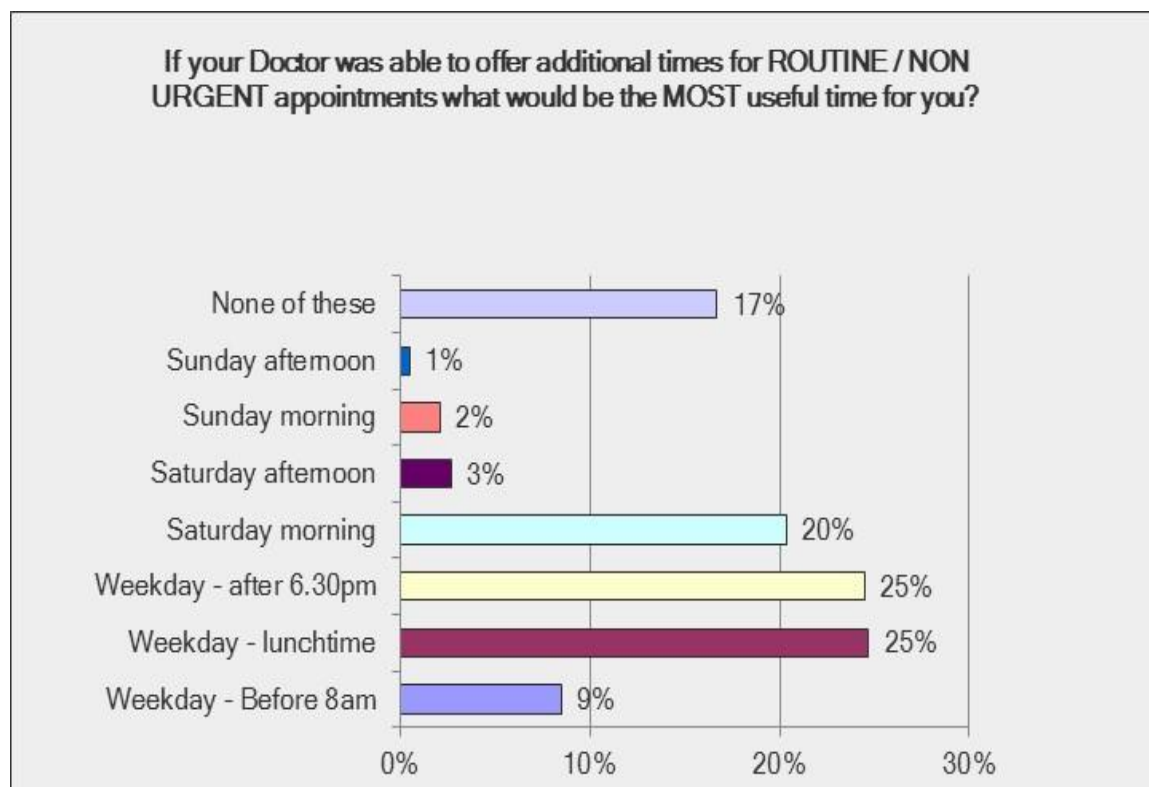
“This is already being formally researched with the University as part of South Worcestershire's involvement with alternative GP access schemes for the GP Access Fund (formerly the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund). This includes detailed, qualitative patient feedback, and the learning can be shared in other parts of the patch when we develop different service models. It also includes feedback on telephone consultations, which so far have come back with positive responses.”

#### Points to Consider

- ii. CCGs to widely publicise findings and learning from the University of Worcester research.
- iii. Further consider public acceptance and the practical implications of enabling SAME DAY appointments at another GP in the local area in areas other than South Worcestershire.

## 4.5 SEVEN DAY ACCESS TO GP APPOINTMENTS

We asked people “If your doctor was able to offer additional times for ROUTINE (NOT “Same Day” Emergency) appointments what would be the most useful time for you?”



The results show that across all respondents there is an equal division between those who would prefer weekday lunchtime (25%) and weekday after 6.30 p.m. (25%). A further 20% would find Saturday morning appointments the most useful time, whilst 9% would find weekday before 08:00 a.m. most useful. Saturday afternoon is preferred by 3% of respondents, 2% Sunday morning and 1% Sunday afternoon. 17% of respondents reported that none of these would be most useful to them. This may be because of the age profile of our respondents, with most people who responded being aged 65+ and presumably able to be more flexible about when they can visit the GP.

In our previous Report the top three responses were the same, but differently ordered with 31% preferring Saturday morning appointments followed by an equal division between weekday lunchtime (27%) and weekday after 6.30 p.m. (27%). It is worth noting that we did not offer a “None of These” option in our previous Report.

## Results by CCG Area

CCG	Weekday			Saturday		Sunday		None of these
	Before 8am	Lunch	After 6.30 pm	A.M	P.M	A.M	P.M	
Redditch & Bromsgrove	7%	27%	24%	18%	4%	1%	0%	18%
S. Worcs.	12%	23%	18%	19%	4%	6%	1%	17%
Wyre Forest	7%	21%	24%	31%	0%	0%	1%	16%
<b>ALL</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>17%</b>

The table shows that there is a slight variance in preferences across the 3 CCG areas.

The figures show a slightly higher preference for lunchtime appointments (27%) and a slightly lower preference for Saturday morning appointments (18%) in Redditch & Bromsgrove; a slightly higher preference for before 8am appointments (12%) and a slightly lower preference for weekday after 6.30 p.m. appointments (18%) in South Worcestershire; and a higher preference for Saturday morning appointments (31%) and a slightly lower preference for weekday lunchtime (21%) appointments in Wyre Forest.

It is interesting to note that there is little interest in Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon appointments across all CCG areas.

## Results by age of respondent

The figures in brackets are the findings in our previous Report.

Age	Weekday			Saturday		Sunday		None of these
	Before 8am (previous result in brackets)	Lunch (previous result in brackets)	After 6.30pm (previous result in brackets)	A.M (previous result in brackets)	P.M (previous result in brackets)	A.M (previous result in brackets)	P.M (previous result in brackets)	
<b>Under 25 yrs.</b>	<b>7%</b> (23%)	<b>27%</b> (23%)	<b>46%</b> (27%)	<b>7%</b> (18%)	<b>2%</b> (5%)	<b>0%</b> (5%)	<b>2%</b> (0%)	<b>7%</b>
<b>25 - 64 yrs.</b>	<b>11%</b> (12%)	<b>15%</b> (20%)	<b>39%</b> (35%)	<b>24%</b> (28%)	<b>1%</b> (3%)	<b>3%</b> (2%)	<b>0%</b> (0%)	<b>7%</b>
<b>65 + yrs.</b>	<b>6%</b> (14%)	<b>31%</b> (39%)	<b>12%</b> (17%)	<b>20%</b> (30%)	<b>4%</b> (0%)	<b>0%</b> (0%)	<b>1%</b> (0%)	<b>26%</b>
<b>ALL</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>3%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>17%</b>

Looking at the age range of respondents some variations can be seen. Under 25s prefer weekday appointments after 6.30 p.m. (46%) followed by weekday lunchtime (27%). Those aged 25 - 64 yrs. prefer weekday appointments after 6.30 p.m. (39%) and Saturday mornings (24%), whilst those aged 65+ prefer weekday lunchtime (31%) and Saturday mornings (20%).

It is interesting to note that there is little interest in Saturday afternoon, Sunday morning and Sunday afternoon appointments across all age ranges.

*“Don’t think doctor’s surgery should open on a Sunday, doctors need a day off!”*

*“I can already get appointments before 8.00 a.m. and after 6.30 p.m. if needed and my surgery also opens Saturday mornings, so I think they offer a great range of appointments”*

*“My doctors already offers appointments before 8am and after 6.30 p.m. but I would like to leave these for people who work. They also do Saturday morning appointments which I have used but again try to leave for workers”*

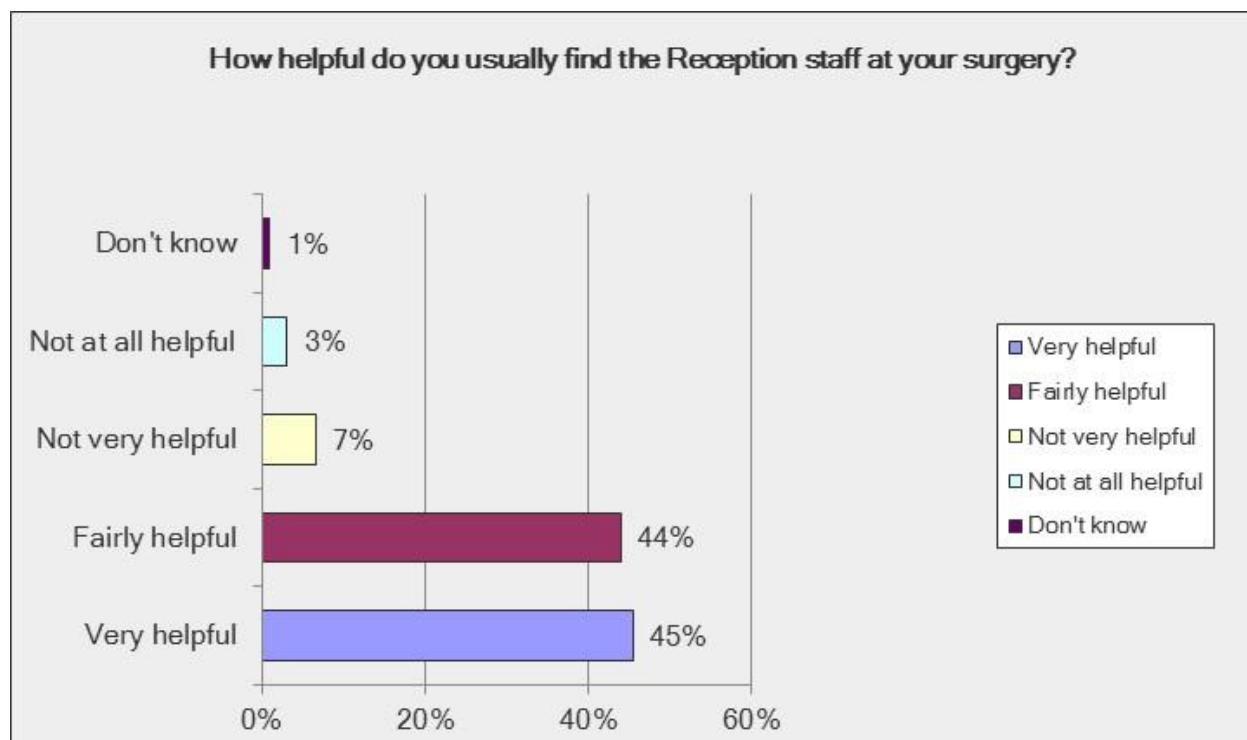
*“Appointments in the evening should be reserved for those of us who work”*

*“Appointments should be available at evenings and weekends, full time workers are disadvantaged, which may leave issues untreated and lead to further complications”*

*“I would like this area to have weekend appointments available”*

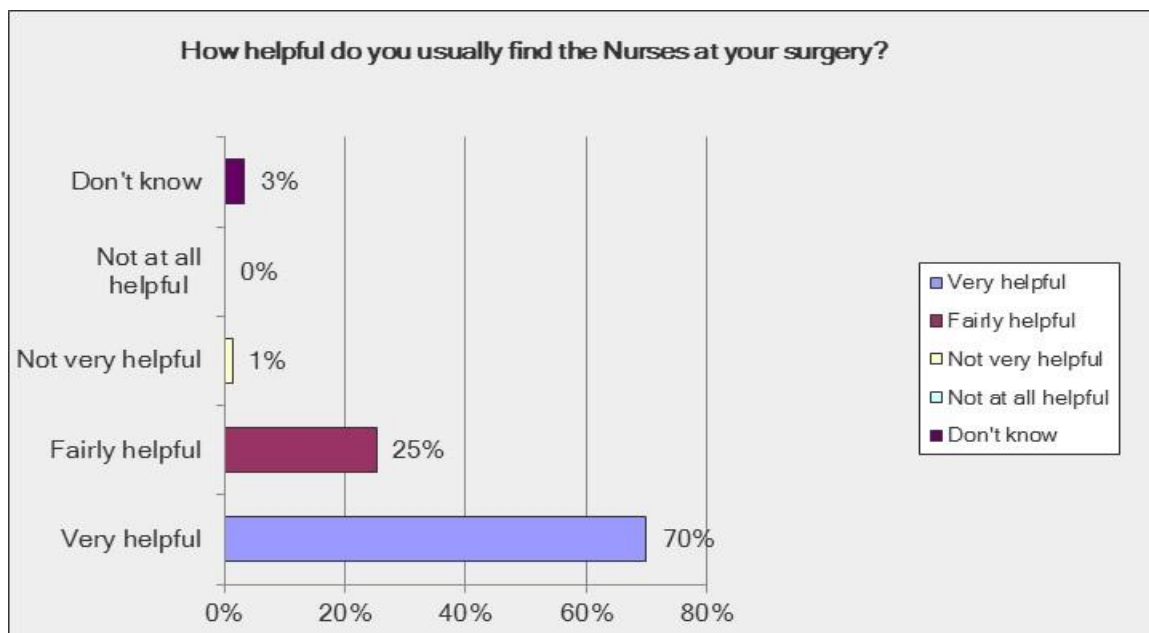
## 4.6 EXPERIENCE OF GP SURGERY

### 4.6.1. How helpful do you usually find the reception staff at your GP surgery?



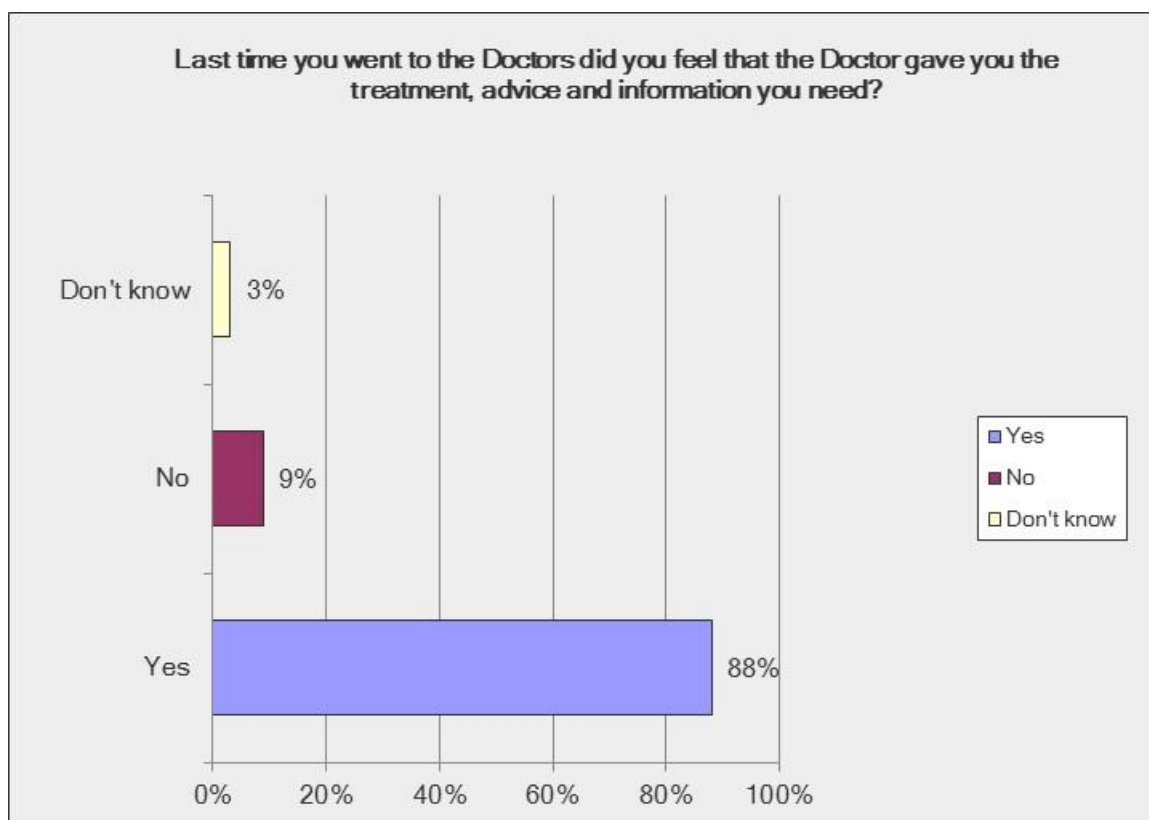
The chart shows that 89% of respondents find the reception staff very or fairly helpful.

#### 4.6.2. How helpful do you usually find the nurses at your GP surgery?



The chart shows that 95% of respondents find the nurses are very or fairly helpful.

#### 4.6.3 Last time you went to the Doctors did you feel that the doctor gave you the treatment, advice and information you need?



The chart shows that 88% of respondents said that they got the treatment, advice and information that they needed last time they went to the doctor, whilst 9% of respondents disagreed with this (No) and 3% did not know.

We asked respondents to briefly explain the reason for their answer. We received 207 comments. Of these 154 were positive and 38 were negative and 15 were neutral

The positive comments were themed as:

- Doctors professional, caring, listened with explanations given
- Gave information, diagnosed and discussed results
- Referred for further tests and treatment
- Treatment was successful
- Knowledge of the individual

The negative comments were themed as:

- Did not feel listened to / felt rushed
- Believe they have been misdiagnosed or given incorrect information
- Did not get the response / reassurance hoped for
- Problem not resolved
- Administrative issues
- Speed of referral to further tests and treatment

#### 4.7 KNOWLEDGE OF THE COMPLAINTS SYSTEM

We asked “Do you know how to make a complaint about your Doctors Surgery”?

Overall 53% of respondents did know how to make a complaint, whilst 47% did not

The table below sets out the response by CCG area

	<b>Redditch and Bromsgrove</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>South Worcestershire</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>Wyre Forest</b> (previous result in brackets)	<b>All</b>
<b>YES</b>	<b>55%</b> (42%)	<b>52%</b> (58%)	<b>54%</b> (48%)	<b>53%</b>
<b>NO</b>	<b>46%</b> (58%)	<b>48%</b> (43%)	<b>46%</b> (52%)	<b>47%</b>

This shows that there is still some variation across CCG areas.

*“If you had a complaint about the surgery it would be difficult to complain in case it made your care less available (i.e. flagged up that you had made a complaint)”*

*“My doctor spoke to me very rudely when I was feeling very ill but I didn’t have the energy to complain”*

In response to our previous Report CCGs stated:

“We have put reminders in our practice bulletin to publicise the complaints process, including links to your “patient friendly” leaflet on your website”

## Points to Consider

- i. CCGs and GP surgeries to further consider:
  - a. how patients can be better informed about how to use the complaints process should they need to
  - b. how patients can be provided with reassurance that feedback and complaints will not impact on patient care



## 4.8 ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

We asked respondents if they had any other comments that they would like to make about Going to the Doctors.

We received 168 additional comments. 86 of these were positive, 73 were negative and 9 were neutral. Comments have been themed and are presented in order of frequency below:

### Positive Comments

- Satisfied with GP surgery
- Excellent GP Surgery
- Staff helpful / understanding / kind
- Sufficient appointments available

*“I have always received excellent service, diagnosis and treatment”*

*“The best. Always caring and helpful”*

*“I think they are great. Professional and supportive and, like most professionals in the healthcare field, do an excellent job despite the pressure they are under”*

*“Given the competing demands on the surgery’s resources, I think it provides a very good service. I have always been able to book an appointment for my children to be seen when necessary which is the most important thing to me. My husband and I have both received good support with longer-term conditions”*

*“Always kind and considerate to all patients needs*

*“I feel the doctor is listening”*

*“Always very helpful. They know I have a problem being deaf”*

*“The premises are inadequate however the care is second to none”*

*“Great facility, clean, modern. I have never had to wait more than 10 minutes for my appointment”*

*“Always a long wait at the surgery for your appointment but it is because doctors take the time needed to treat each patient. Very happy with the service”*

*“They do a good job under a lot of pressure”*

*“I would certainly not like to be a GP in today’s culture of often unreasonable expectations. So that’s got that off my chest! I feel better already”*

## Negative comments

- Difficulty making or getting an appointment
- Unhappy with care
- Unhappy with staff
- Premises unsuitable / issue with interior furnishings
- Lack of accessibility
- Parking / Transport
- Appointments running late

*“Very hard to get an appointment and if I do it is always weeks away and rarely with my own doctor”*

*“I think the doctors could use their IT systems better to flag up reminders or about your situation, such as I am a carer”*

*“I am concerned that annual checks for patients with specific conditions don’t seem to happen”*

*“They do not have enough time to listen”*

*“Good open communication is the key to a successful surgery visit. Monosyllabic replies and brush off due to age ... not appreciated”*

*“Environmental issues are important, no high backed chairs in waiting room”*

*“Need some higher seating in waiting room as chairs too low for some patients”*

*“Please remove some of the notices on the wall. Often the same subject, making the information hard to pinpoint”*

*“Have been having a discussion re their need to help people with dementia”*

*“As I am blind I can’t see the screen when my name comes up and rely on reception staff. Screen to check in on is not accessible for blind / visually impaired. Also appointment and repeat prescription reminders need to be in an accessible format”*

*“The one thing that really frustrates me is there is always a sign up saying so many missed appointments but no apologies for running late or making you wait past your appointment time.”*

*“Parking difficult, especially for elderly”*

## Points for Consideration by Worcestershire's CCGs

### MAKING AN APPOINTMENT (4.1)

- ii. GP surgeries could consider how they will further promote and develop the online appointment booking system.
- iii. CCGs to further consider how telephone access to GP surgeries, particularly in the South Worcestershire CCG area could be improved.
- iv. CCGs to further consider the implications of variations in respondents getting an appointment at the time and on the day that they wanted.

### GP "TRIAGE" / CALL BACK SYSTEMS (4.2)

- v. GP surgeries should continue to review telephone triage systems to ensure that:
  - a. the system is accessible for those patients for whom telephone access is difficult
  - b. there is flexibility in the implementation of the system for patients that require this.
- vi. GP surgeries should ensure that staff are alert to identifying patients who receive advice and treatment over the phone on a number of occasions within a defined time frame without having seeing a GP face to face. This would enable the patient's information to be reviewed.

### SEEING A PREFERRED GP (4.3)

- vii. CCG to consider how patient's preference for continuity of care for non-urgent medical issues can be safely and effectively managed within GP surgeries

### WILLINGNESS TO SEE A GP IN ANOTHER SURGERY (4.4)

- viii. CCGs to widely publicise findings and learning from the University of Worcester research.
- ix. Further consider public acceptance and the practical implications of enabling SAME DAY appointments at another GP in the local area in areas other than South Worcestershire.

### KNOWLEDGE OF THE COMPLAINTS SYSTEM (4.7)

- x. CCGs and GP surgeries to further consider:
  - a. how patients can be better informed about how to use the complaints process should they need to
  - b. how patients can be provided with reassurance that feedback and complaints will not impact on patient care

## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX ONE - Survey Questions and Number of Respondents (n =)

1. What is the Name of your GP surgery (n = 392 )
2. When did you last see or speak to your GP (n = 454)  
**In the past 3 months    Between 3-6 months ago    Between 6-12 months ago**  
**More than 12mths**
3. How would you **USUALLY** make an appointment with your GP surgery? (n = 458)  
**PHONE                      IN PERSON                      ONLINE**  
**OTHER (PLEASE STATE HOW) \_\_\_\_\_**
4. How easy is it to get through to someone on the phone? (n = 447)  
**VERY EASY    FAIRLY EASY    NOT VERY EASY    NOT AT ALL EASY**
5. Some doctor's surgeries offer you a consultation with a healthcare professional over the telephone before offering you a SAME DAY appointment. (n = 456)  
Does your GP Surgery operate this system    **YES    NO**  
Do you / do you think you would find this: (n = 443)  
**VERY HELPFUL    FAIRLY HELPFUL    NOT VERY HELPFUL    NOT AT ALL HELPFUL**  
**DONT KNOW**  
Please briefly give the reasons for this answer (n = 278)
6. Have you been able to get an appointment to see a doctor at the time and on the day that you wanted? (n 450)  
**ALWAYS    OFTEN    SOMETIMES    RARELY    NEVER**
7. Do you have a preferred doctor at your GP surgery? (n = 454)  
**YES                      NO**
8. How important is it to you see your preferred doctor when you need a SAME DAY appointment? (N = 448)  
**VERY IMPORTANT    IMPORTANT    NOT VERY IMPORTANT    NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT**
9. How important is it to you to see your preferred doctor for ROUTINE / NON-URGENT appointment e.g. for a long term condition? (n = 446)  
**VERY IMPORTANT                      FAIRLY IMPORTANT                      NOT VERY IMPORTANT                      NOT AT ALL IMPORTANT**
10. If you required a SAME DAY appointment and this was not available at your own GP surgery would you be prepared to go to another GP surgery in your local area to see a doctor? (n = 450)  
**YES                      NO                      DON'T KNOW**  
Please briefly give the reason for your answer (n =254)
11. If your doctor was able to offer additional times for ROUTINE appointments (NOT "SAME DAY" EMERGENCY) what would be the MOST useful time for you? (please only circle one) (n = 437)

