

Access to GP Appointments Review of data

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Access to GP Appointments

Review of Data

Introduction

Healthwatch North Somerset collects information from the public about their experiences of local health and social care services. We call this information 'Intelligence'. Intelligence is gathered through a wide range of methods including letters, website, emails, surveys, telephone calls, meetings, social media, Enter and View visits, talking face to face and from partner organisations.




We also gather information on specific issues through surveys, meetings or by working with a specific group of people. Healthwatch North Somerset takes great care to treat all information objectively.

Once gathered, the intelligence is collated onto our information database, we analyse the data each month to ascertain trends. This information is shared with health and social care service providers, local commissioners and all other relevant bodies. All intelligence is shared with Healthwatch England.




Healthwatch North Somerset would like to thank to everyone who contributed and provided information for this report.

Healthwatch North Somerset's statutory duty and remit, which is laid out in The Health and Social Care Act 2012, is to provide a voice for people who use health and adult social care services, by:







Influencing

-  Giving people an opportunity to have a say about their local health and social care services, including those whose voice isn't usually heard.
-  Taking public views to the people who make decisions - including having a representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board.
-  Feeding issues back to government via Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Signposting

-  Providing information about health and social care services in the local area. Advising people on where to go for specialist help or information (signposting).
-  Helping people make choices and decisions about their care.
-  Working closely with other groups and organisations in the local area.

Under the Health and Social Care Act (2012) Healthwatch North Somerset has the following powers and functions.

-  A duty on service providers and commissioners to respond to requests of information within 20 working days.
-  A duty on service providers and commissioners to respond to recommendations made by Healthwatch North Somerset within 20 working days.
-  Make reports and recommendations about services known to commissioners, providers and regulators of health and social care services in North Somerset
-  A duty on service providers to allow entry to authorised Healthwatch North Somerset members to conduct announced or unannounced ‘enter and view’ visits to assess services.
-  A seat on North Somerset’s Health and Wellbeing Board (People and Communities Board), to promote health improvements and tackle health inequalities.
-  A mechanism to make recommendations to Healthwatch England, which may include advising the Care Quality Commission about special reviews or investigations to conduct.

Our Mission:

*By offering all people of North Somerset a strong voice
we will improve the quality of local health and social
care today and for the future.*

Background

This report has been prompted by a number of statements made by the general public with regard to the delays experienced when trying to book appointments.

Anecdotal comments have also been made regarding the impact of on-line access in that it has caused a reduction in the number of appointments available on the day. A review of the data and numbers of patient using Patient Online is shown in Appendix 1. This shows by Practice the number of patients who have the ability to book on-line appointments as a percentage of the Practice list¹.





The October 2016 Missed GP Appointments report from Healthwatch North Somerset outlined concerns that missed appointments impacted on the number of appointments being available at the respective GP Practices. The report recommended best Practice to minimise the number of missed appointments.

¹ NHS Digital – Month 5 (2016/2017). <https://indicators.hscic.gov.uk/webview/> Patient Online Management Information

Building on this report and incorporating feedback received on accessing Practices the decision was made to review the intelligence gathered by Healthwatch North Somerset. In this report, we will look further into the issues around general Practice.





Aims and Objectives

The aim of this report was to review a number of data sources in relation to General Practice. The data reviewed, in addition to the intelligence/feedback held by Healthwatch North Somerset, includes:

-  GP National Survey
-  NHS Digital
-  Health and Social Care Information Centre
-  North Somerset JNAS

The information available allows us to understand the issues of accessing appointments for patients in North Somerset.

Examples of best Practice and ideas to understand demand were also sought from:

-  Practice Management Network
-  GP One Care Consortium
-  Media
-  Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire - Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP) - Digital Road Map²

The report will also provide information on the number of patients registered by GP Practice, with a summary of the age range of patients³ (Appendix 2). This is data published by the Health and Social Care Information Centre, demonstrates that the North Somerset JNAS population projection is near the alignment of the actual Practice population as at July 2016.

Methods

The Healthwatch North Somerset data reviewed for this report was from the period October 2015 to October 2016. On analysing the intelligence, a number of steps were undertaken to understand the comments made by the general public. These










² https://www.northsomersetccg.nhs.uk/media/medialibrary/2016/11/stp_annex_c_06-2016_iKu1r2n.pdf

³ https://data.gov.uk/dataset/numbers_of_patients_registered_at_a_gp_Practice July 2016

Numbers of Patients Registered at a GP Practice

Published by Health and Social Care Information Centre. Licensed under Open Government Licence.

entailed reviewing each of the stories to reflect the impact on the contact; i.e. was their story a negative or positive experience. In addition to this each story was assigned a category/theme, and were allocated to reflect the following:

-  **Appointment**
 - accessing the Practices to obtain an appointment, by telephone or visiting the Practice
-  **Communication**
 - attitude of staff, lack of communication, errors in communications
-  **Delay**
 - delays whilst in the Practice, length of time waiting to be seen
-  **Medication**
 - prescriptions, errors, missing medication
-  **On-line services**
 - using elements of Patient Online services (*Patient Access for EMIS Web Practices*)
-  **Organisation**
 - comments about the whole experience at the Practice
-  **Referral**
 - onward referrals made for treatment at a hospital or community service
-  **Transport/Access**
 - travelling to the Practices, car parking
-  **Treatment**
 - diagnosis, treatment (by GP or Nursing staff)

The data analysed includes data previously reported in the respective Healthwatch North Somerset Diabetes (July 2016) and Maternity (February 2016) reports, as this report is looking specifically at the impact of the stories and accessing GP services.

Further information, to understand the question of GP appointments, was obtained from GP National Patient Survey, NHS Digital and Health and Social Care Information Centre. The North Somerset JSNA (2012), was used to look at the projections for the age range of the population in North Somerset as a comparison against the number of patients registered with GPs in North Somerset (see Appendix 2). In using the information accessible from these organisations, we can show the range of patient ages by Practice, in North Somerset (see Appendix 3).

Results and Findings

The reason for this study of the Healthwatch North Somerset data, was in response to the concerns raised and anecdotal comments regarding the access to appointments. As the issue of GP appointments is a standing item of the Healthwatch North Somerset Prioritisation Panel, the decision was made to further investigate this specific area.

This report has captured feedback from contacts made to Healthwatch North Somerset for the period October 2015 to October 2016.

The data has shown that treatment (36%) and appointment (24%) provides Healthwatch North Somerset with the highest number of comments in relation to GP services. Figure 1 provides a breakdown of the total number of categories. The total number of comments recorded is 603.

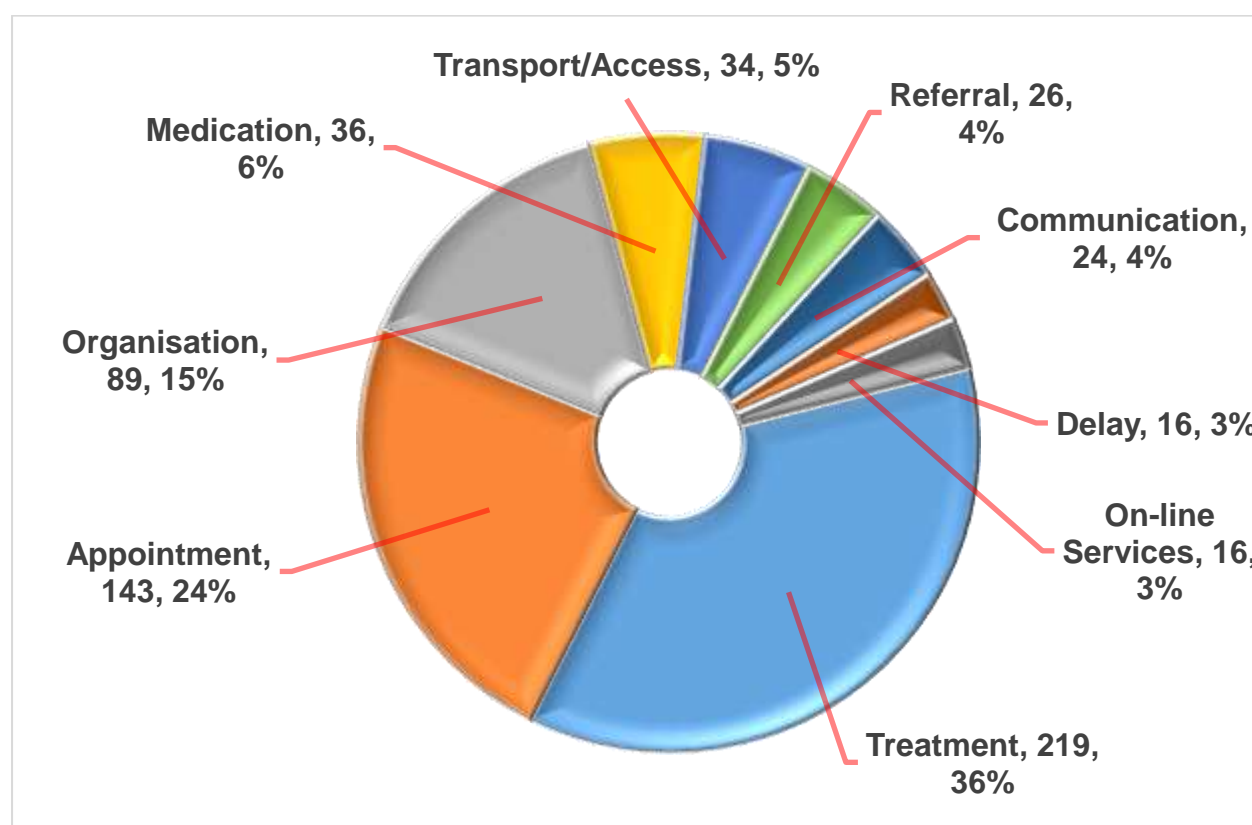


Figure 1 Breakdown of the categories

In relation to the impact of the issue, 309 (51%) positive comments were received against 276 (46%) negative comments.

In addition, 11 (2%) comments were classified as 'not applicable' as these related to general observations made about primary care.

Seven comments (1%) were defined as positive/negative.

When reviewing treatment and appointments 165 contacts felt positive about Treatment, however feedback about appointments received 95 negative comments.

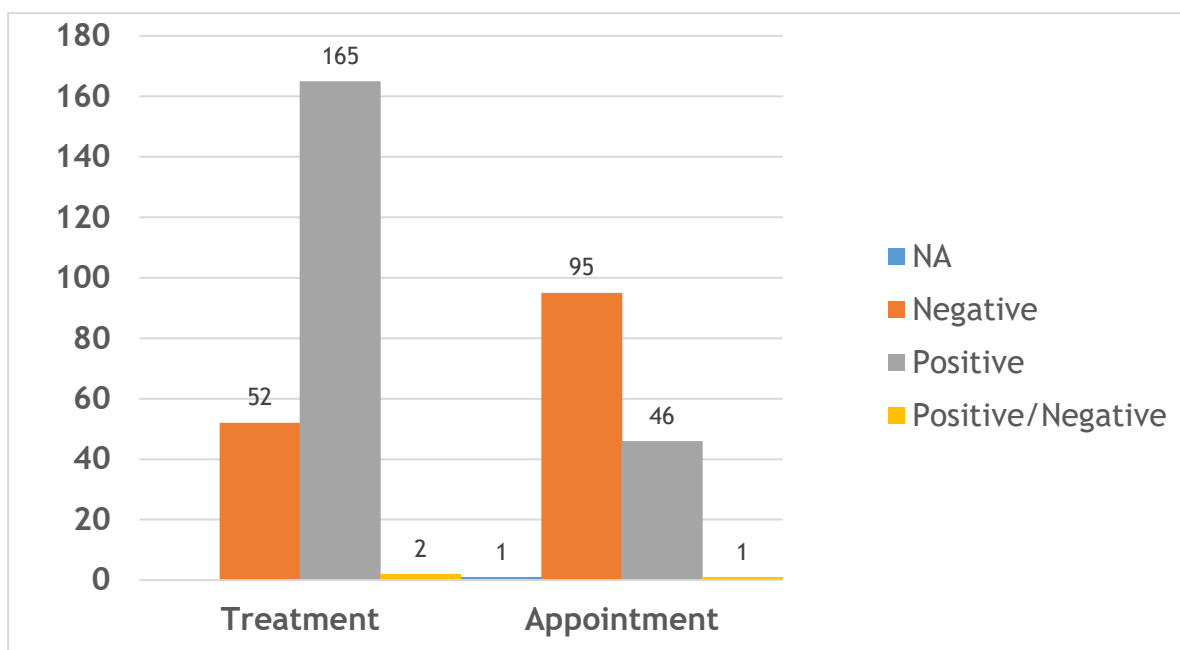


Figure 2 Analysis of Treatment and Appointment Categories

Category/theme	NA	Negative	Positive	Positive/Negative	Grand Total
Treatment		52	165	2	219
Appointment	1	95	46	1	143
Organisation	3	17	68	1	89
Medication	1	31	4		36
Transport/Access	1	31	2		34
Referral		14	12		26
Communication	1	16	6	1	24
Delay		16			16
On-line Services	4	4	6	2	16
Grand Total	11	276	309	7	603

Figure 3 Categories/themes

Of the remaining categories 68 contacts felt positive about the Practice (organisation); whereas 31 had negative feedback relating to medication. Figure 3 shows the total breakdown of the categories/themes.

Some observers state that they consider there are too many patients for too few appointments.

Others comment that access to on-line booking ensures that the appointments for the day are already booked before they even get through on the telephone.

To understand this statement, analysis was undertaken of the GP National Survey and data from NHS Digital to see if there was any correlation with the number of on-

line accounts and the perception that it is the on-line activity that is “blocking” appointments.

The majority of North Somerset’s GP Practices offer on-line services. This includes appointment booking, ordering of repeat prescription, and access to summary information in records.

By 31st March 2016, GP Practices had to ensure the patient also had access to their on-line patient records. These records use coded information on medication, allergies, illnesses, immunisations and test results which the patient can view. For patients, this is accessible by registering at their Practice; when registering they are provided with a user ID and password to start using Patient Access.

From the GP National Survey and NHS Digital data, the conclusion is there is minimal activity across North Somerset in relation to booking and cancelling appointments on-line.

A review of the national GP Patient Survey was undertaken on two specific questions with regard to access. This was to gauge the responses to see if there were any difficulties experienced by those who completed the survey.



When patients were asked the question about the ease of getting through to someone to speak to at the surgery⁴, the patients were asked to reply to very easy, fairly easy, not very easy, not at all easy and haven’t tried.

North Somerset as a whole, in comparison with the national results, show that on the ‘not very easy’ response (19%) is 2% higher than the national average (17%) and the same with ‘not at all easy’ response (9%).

Patients who completed the survey were asked how they would normally book their appointments.

In North Somerset 28% said ‘in person’, 86% ‘by phone’ and ‘on-line’ 9%. 1% stated that this question did not apply. From this data, it appears that there is only a small number who use Patient Online to manage their appointments.

The following tables provide a comparison of the survey questions for the North Somerset Clinical Commissioning Group by Practice.

-  Figure 4 provides the percentage of the number of respondents in reply to the question on getting through to a Practice by phone.
-  Figure 5 shows the percentage of respondents, by Practice, who use elements of Patient Online.

A note should be made that the field work and reporting for the survey may not have taken account of several of the recent Practice changes. The latest data reported

⁴ GP National Survey Data: July 2016 publication, collected during July-September 2015 and January-March 2016
IPSOS/MORI

for the July 2016 publication, was collected during July-September 2015 and January-March 2016.

Q3. Ease of getting through to someone at GP surgery on the phone.
Weighted data⁵

% of respondents					
Practice	Very easy	Fairly easy	Not very easy	Not at all easy	Haven't tried
Mendip Vale Medical Practice	20	65	10		
Portishead Medical Group	5	52	27	9	6
Backwell & Nailsea Medical Group	36	54	7		
Clevedon Medical Centre	13	46	25	13	
Nailsea Family Practice	33	53	6		
Sunnyside Surgery	32	52			
Graham Road Surgery	8	32	18		
The Milton Surgery	26	39	19	14	
Harbourside Family Practice		38	27	24	
Stafford Medical Group	9	48	26	17	
New Court Surgery	23	46	22		
Clarence Park Surgery	28	40	21		
Riverbank Medical Centre		35	35	22	
Winscombe and Banwell Family Practice	28	57	9		
Long Ashton Surgery		62	17		
Tudor Lodge Surgery	12	23	37	21	7
The Cedars Surgery	27	42	23		
The Village Surgery		49			
Worle Medical Practice		58			
Yeo Vale Medical Practice	29	61			
Longton Grove Surgery	51	43			
Locality Health Centre	18	46	16		
St Georges Surgery	27	54			
Heywood Family Practice	36	60			

Figure 4: Response to GP Patient Survey (national) by the percentage of patients responding to getting through to Practice

⁵ <http://gp-survey-production.s3.amazonaws.com/archive/2016/July/July2016NationalTechnicalReport.pdf>

Q7. Use of on-line services
Weighted data⁶

% of respondents				
Practice	Booking Appointments on-line	Ordering repeat prescriptions on-line	Accessing my medical records on-line	None of these
Mendip Vale Medical Practice	10	20		76
Portishead Medical Group	26	9		73
Backwell & Nailsea Medical Group	5	13		84
Clevedon Medical Centre		19		81
Nailsea Family Practice Tower House	10	32		63
Sunnyside Surgery	9			89
Graham Road Surgery				94
The Milton Surgery				98
Harbourside Family Practice	21	10		76
Stafford Medical Group		15		83
New Court Surgery		12		86
Clarence Park Surgery		18		81
Riverbank Medical Centre				93
Winscombe and Banwell Family Practice		27		71
Long Ashton Surgery	15	17		73
Tudor Lodge Surgery	17	23		70
The Cedars Surgery		24		74
The Village Surgery				93
Worle Medical Practice				85
Yeo Vale Medical Practice		26		73
Longton Grove Surgery	12	15		79
Locality Health Centre				95
St Georges Surgery				91
Heywood Family Practice		18		80

Figure 5 Response to GP Patient Survey (national) by the percentage of patients responding to the use of on-line GP services

⁶ <http://gp-survey-production.s3.amazonaws.com/archive/2016/July/July2016NationalTechnicalReport.pdf>

Feedback

From the intelligence gathered by Healthwatch North Somerset, the following provides examples of the positive and negative experiences under the respective categories/themes.

Appointments

In relation to appointments there are several themes emerging, which is reflected nationally. Below are examples of the feedback received by Healthwatch North Somerset:

Often difficult to get through at certain times of the day	Easier to go to the Practice and wait for reception to open
Not answering the phone	Appointments gone by 8.05 am
Not able to get appointments at a reasonable time	Difficult to get an appointment, even for children
Unable to book in advance	A GP will say 'see me in two weeks' and when I go to reception there is nothing for five weeks for that GP
Very hard to make routine GP appointments	Had to walk two miles to get an appointment, all phone appointments gone by 8.45 am
Advised to make an urgent appointment with the Practice nurse to review results of tests, in this case the receptionist was very unhelpful	The impossibility of getting an appointment, if you work, with either a doctor or nurse when the surgery operates on day appointments only.

Positive feedback has also been received and these were attributed to 13 of the Practices. Below are examples of this feedback:

Surgery is very good. can always get an appointment and the staff are very good	Happy with quality of care and ease of getting appointments
Can usually get an appointment if needed. She has no complaints at all about the surgery	All aspects of care and service have been fine and appointment system has improved
Prompt treatment and can get appointments quickly	Can usually get appointments on the same day.

In the feedback, it should be noted that some contacts took the decision to seek help from other services. The decision was made as they were unable to get an

appointment on the day with their GP. Services used were walk in units and Emergency Departments.

Treatment

Of the comments made in relation to treatment (219), 165 of these were positive. Fifty-two (25%) comments were negative, 90 of the total number of comments related specifically to Diabetes or Maternity.

Below are examples of the positive and negative comments made about treatment (excluding Diabetes and Maternity as they have been reported on previously).

Doctor making early diagnosis	Felt listened to when visited the doctor, felt treated with respect and that the treatment was explained properly
Surgery provides excellent care	GP looks after patient very well and was very complimentary about the service
It is good to have a health check service available for people with learning disabilities	Quality of care was excellent
Given an appointment to see the Nursing Practitioner who was very patronising and did not listen or take seriously what patient was telling her about the health condition. Sent patient home with no treatment, 2 weeks later needed to go back to see a GP and go on antibiotics	Had health check and did not feel any different from before the check. GP did not cover all the questions in the guidance and no result were given for blood glucose level test. Received self-help leaflets but has not felt had to change lifestyle because of the check or information given. Was not referred to a GP as a result of the health visit
According to NHS website should receive appointment annually at surgery which is not happening. Asked Practice nurse but was told that service was not available at the surgery	Treatment not usually explained to at GP surgery.

Transport/Access

There have been a number of issues raised by contacts regarding transport and physical access to their GP. The number of changes to General Practice has and will continue as Practices combine to maintain services for patients.

Looking at correlation of those needing appointments, commentaries have suggested that there was some evidence of a perception that older people took the appointments. Others have expressed concerns that a greater number of older patients do not have access to transport to enable them to attend appointments. See Appendix 3 for an overview of the age ranges by Practice.

The following are comments made to Healthwatch North Somerset about the transport/access issues faced.

The transport links are 2 buses a week to Weston-super-Mare. GP surgery has moved now so whereas I used to be able to get the bus and then walk half a mile to the surgery in Churchill, I cannot get to the Langford surgery now. They have appointments available but I cannot get to them	There are lots of older people in Congresbury who don't drive so would not be able to get to appointments elsewhere, yet the available appointments in the Congresbury surgery are often given away to people who live in Yatton
Parking difficult and takes too long to find a space	Closed down. Not seen Dr since. Too far away. Offered Worle
Had been discharged from hospital after having stent fitted. Change of dressing needed on the weekend. Surgery not open and no provision at Clevedon Hospital or through community nurses. Only place which changes dressings at weekends is Newcourt Surgery in Weston Super Mare	A long way from home now. Gave me an out of area Dr while I lived in Worle. My Practice relocated to Locking Road, much better for parking.

Medication

The feedback received under the category on medication was varied. The following provides examples of the comments received, the majority of the patient experience was negative:

Medication making patient dizzy/sick but doctor doesn't seem to be able to offer any alternatives	GP advised at a check-up that medication not working so not to take anymore. Patient phone surgery to ask for tablet to be removed from repeat prescription. Informed by Receptionist that GP was only one to authorise and arranged a call back. GP called back and agreed to get patient's GP to take the tablet of repeat prescriptions, straightaway. Nothing happened tablet still on prescription so wasted.
Surgery did not send prescription to the pharmacy electronically as they said they would. Prescription not ready when expected. Had to return to surgery to collect paper prescription and take it to the pharmacy	Prescription sent to wrong pharmacy
Errors in prescriptions at Practice, under prescribing and not prescribing causing patient to run out of important medication	Surgery now say patients have to give 3 days' notice to get prescription made up. Used to be 48 hours
List of meds and what they are prescribed for delivered with the dosset box. Pharmacy fantastic. Can ring for meds one day and delivered the next day.	Mental health patients sometime struggle to pick up prescriptions
When prescription sent to other surgery in group it was changed and do not work in this particular device. Gas to go back to GP and get them reordered	

Referrals

Several patients had a positive experience in that there was a quick referral made for onward treatment with acute or community care.

However, many questioned the delays in their referrals and steps they have to take to chase them up. Those patients in their feedback to Healthwatch North Somerset appear not to have been given reasons for the delays.

The following provides some examples of the patient experience:

How long does it take to send a referral letter to the hospital? It has been a month since the request and the letter has not yet been sent	Doctor informed being referred and would get a referral letter for an operation. But nothing arrived. Rang to remind the GP to set up the referral
Had in-growing toenail but surgery could not treat this as no longer provides minor treatment clinic. Told to contact "foot clinic" but not given referral	GPs have been very good with referral, writing letters and making calls
Very good service and referral to hospital	Many delays getting referral. Waited 3 weeks after seeing GP, had to make three phone calls about it. Signed off sick at work but they didn't put an urgent message on case notes about that. Finally, now given an appointment, 3 months away. I would go anywhere they could get an appointment Bristol, Bath, Weston. Annoyed about that.

Delay

The patient's concerns relate to time keeping, it is understandable if there is a minimum delay.

However, some of the patients are reporting delays of over an hour and no explanation as to where the delay has occurred i.e. emergency call or emergency within the Practice.

As the examples below demonstrate the experience of individual appointment and also when providing high volume clinics such as a flu clinic.

Often have to wait for a long time to see GP even though arrive at the time given. No explanation as why have had to wait	Attended a flu clinic and was given a time to attend. On arrival found there were dozens of people waiting in the queue. There was nowhere to sit during the 40-minute wait and as a consequence had backache when leaving after the injection.
If come in at 8am then have to wait for an hour at least to see a Doctor	Waited over 10 minutes for her appointment
Always to wait ages to get an appointment, and then had to wait for a long time to see the doctor when did get the appointment.	Appointment at 2.10pm - not seen until 3pm. Another appointment with same Doctor was also very late and changed at last minute to nurse - not happy. Doctor took a personal call during the appointment also.

Communication

In the area of communication, Healthwatch North Somerset has recorded examples indicating a lack of communication; i.e. patient unaware of GP retirement, patient's reregistering due to Practice moves mergers and rudeness of staff.

These are the negative experiences, however there are positive communications such as informing patients that they are eligible for certain type of vaccine and being treated with respect/listened to.

Patient at the Boulevard reported that never reregistered with a GP when it closed and is now not registered with any GP. Was not worried about it and did not seek to register with another GP	GPs did not give info to patients newly diagnosed as a rule but refer patients on. It would be good if GPs could give information at time of diagnosis
It is difficult to see own doctor. Own doctor retired and no one informed patient of this	Patient visited surgery to book an appointment- the receptionist was quite rude and said there are no bookable appointments. Was told to ring at 8am and couldn't get see a doctor today. Patient registered online to book appointments instead and that is how will do it in future. Otherwise the surgery is really good, can walk here from house.
Feels listened to and respected when visits GP. Treatment is explained properly.	Surgery had phoned patient to advise could have a vaccination.

On-line Services

With regard to on-line services the feedback has differed from using only to book appointments, to problems with using the EPS (Electronic Prescription Service).

The following provides a flavour of the feedback received by Healthwatch North Somerset:

Uses on-line service to book appointments only. Finds it very helpful	On-line service at GP said could have access to records but each time applied for it they said they were not offering that service after all. It took months for them to finally let patient see them. Felt like they were trying to avoid it.
Have used EPS for a while. It saves having to go to surgery to collect prescription so cutting out the middle man and presumably takes pressure off receptionist. It does seem to take longer than the forty-eight hours which it took to collect prescription before. This could be because surgery takes longer to get prescription to pharmacy or slow dispensing by pharmacist. Not a problem, but have to allow at least three days after prescription request. Generally, an improvement.	Uses EPS but not impressed. Been delays in getting prescription authorised and often when goes to collect they have to find it and locate paper copy. Most of the time has to wait whilst prepared and checked so it is not a streamlined service. Under the impression that using technology would be paperless and medicines would be ready to collect.
Does not use on-line services. Did not know could access patient records on-line	Uses on-line service for repeat prescriptions only.

Organisation

Eighty-nine comments were attributed to the “organisation”. The positive experience of the Practice covered from the organisation as a whole to the individual staff groups who provide the services.

The following provides examples of both the positive and negative experiences of the Practices:

Receptionists, nurses and doctors are "wonderful and brilliant"	Satisfactory service but variable success at getting to see named doctor
GP did all the blood tests at the surgery so they were ready for treatment at Hospital. Told not all GP's provide this Service very grateful and happy with Service	Surgery very good, very positive, no complaints.
A group of young people considered that they did not get the best service from their GP's, because they considered GP's prioritised the high number of older people in their community and did not have a lot of time for the younger members of their Practice	Really good service and care provided for all the family.

Key Points

- 🌱 Healthwatch North Somerset intelligence has shown that the two main areas of negative patient experience are treatment and appointments. With regard to appointments the greatest concerns are not able to have follow up appointments at the time interval the GP has said, the time taking to get through to a Practice only to find that all appointments have gone.
- 🌱 Transport is becoming an issue for rural and urban patients. There is some evidence that the increasing number of Practice mergers has contributed to difficulties for some patients accessing transport to their GP Practice.
- 🌱 Based on the data from the Healthwatch North Somerset GP Patient Survey, in North Somerset making an appointment on-line does not present a problem for a large number of patients.
- 🌱 Patient survey (National GP Survey) data at the point of time of the fieldwork that the majority of patients using on-line services in North Somerset use it to request medication.
- 🌱 In relation to the use of Patient Online⁷, and the specific use of booking and cancellation of appointments:
 - 🌱 Only 21% of the total number of patients registered in North Somerset have signed up for Patient Online - booking and cancelling appointments.
 - 🌱 From the data available, there are examples in North Somerset where over half a Practice list (52%) is signed up to Patient Online; at the lower end the sign up is only 4% and one Practice has 0% sign up. This raises a question of whether there could be greater promotion of the service in North Somerset.
 - 🌱 Research and studies show that the expectation of Patient Online is to release pressure on Practice telephone lines. There is potential to reduce the need for patients to physically go to their Practice to book an appointment when they cannot get through on the phone. There is potential to improve access for those who work and are unable to get to a phone at 8.00am.
 - 🌱 Feedback shows that where patients have access to on-line appointment booking they use it.

⁷ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/patient-online/> See also Appendix 6

- The number of on-line appointments made available each day for patients is decided by each Practice. The data of how many on-line appointments are made available by each Practice is not publically available.
- For patients not using on-line services, there may be a reduction in the numbers trying to get through to the surgery at peak times, releasing pressure on receptionists. See examples in the case studies from a Practice Manager⁸ and Patient⁹ perspective.
- An increase of patients using on-line for booking and cancellation of appointments could minimise the risk of did not attend appointments (DNA) for Practices, releasing additional appointment slots for other patients.

Conclusion

This report provides an analysis of the feedback received from the public in North Somerset and correlates it with data provided from NHS sources. The number of patients using on-line access to appointments varies from Practice to Practice.

The data provides examples ranging from 52% to 0% of a Practice list. This may change in light of publicity specific to Patient Online and may mirror NHS England expectations that on-line will reduce the difficulties for patients contacting their Practices for an appointment.

The intelligence from Healthwatch North Somerset has provided a view of the feelings of local people. It should be noted that Healthwatch North Somerset receives feedback from patients and Patient Participation Groups expressing concerns about the increasing demands in primary care and changes to Practices.

Transport is starting to become another issue for our contacts when they need to get to appointment. Traditionally it was getting to hospital, however we are now seeing increasingly, concerns expressed about the rural and urban communities accessing their local services as the face of primary care changes.

⁸ http://www.Practicemanagement.org.uk/uploads/PatientOnline/case_study_pm.pdf

⁹ http://www.Practicemanagement.org.uk/uploads/PatientOnline/case_study_patient.pdf

Recommendations

Healthwatch regulations stipulate that service providers and commissioners have a duty to respond to local Healthwatch reports and recommendations within 20 working days, in writing, to acknowledge receipt and to explain what action they intend to take or if they do not intend to take action they must explain why. (Health and Social Care Act 2012: Addendum to summary report: issues relating to local Healthwatch regulations).

Healthwatch North Somerset recommends the following based on the information and feedback received:

1. A joint approach of monitoring and sharing patient feedback by Practices, Patient Participation Groups and Healthwatch North Somerset. Practices have proposed a number of changes to reduce the number of missed appointments¹⁰. These changes need to be embedded to ensure there is an improvement in accessing appointments.
2. To ensure that any on-line appointments that are not used on the day are released in a timely fashion to allow booking for those visiting or telephoning the surgery.
3. Practices to review telephone access for patients. Examples of good practice and support documentation can be found on the Practice Management Network¹¹ and GP OneCare Consortium¹².
4. Wider promotion of on-line services at Practices may reduce the number of calls to Practice as outlined by NHS England in their summary of learning from the pilot sites for Patient Online

“GP Practices who offer a higher proportion of their appointments on-line find the systems work more easily and effectively.”

On-line services are an extra option for those who wish to use them and will not replace other ways of contacting your Practice, such as by phone or in person. By freeing up phone lines and reducing the need for people to visit in person, it is hoped that patients who do not have a computer will find it easier to contact their Practice.”

¹⁰ Healthwatch North Somerset – Missed GP Appointments October 2016

¹¹ Practice Management Network

<http://www.Practicemanagement.org.uk/understanding-your-current-telephone-infrastructure>

¹² <http://onecareconsortium.co.uk/>

Appendix 1 - Number of patients in North Somerset using Patient Online - Appointments

For Book/Cancel Appointments On-line Functionality: (i) whether GP Practices provide functionality for Patients, (ii) the number of patients enabled to use the functionality and (iii) the number of occasions that the functionality is used.	Month 5 (2016/17)
---	------------------------------

Practice Name	Registered Patients	GP Practices provide functionality for Patients to Book/Cancel Appointments Electronically?	Number of patients enabled to electronically book or cancel an appointment (ii)	Total number of times that a patient has electronically booked or cancelled an appointment (iii)	The average number of times each enabled patient has accessed this online service (iii) / (ii)	Percentage of patients with access to online appointments
Portishead Medical Group	18,330	Yes	9,492	1,772	0.2	52%
Harbourside Family Practice	9,726	Yes	4,925	383	0.1	51%
Nailsea Family Practice	11,314	Yes	4,029	182	0.0	36%
Tudor Lodge Surgery	10,268	Yes	3,562	235	0.1	35%
Long Ashton Surgery	6,916	Yes	1,843	237	0.1	27%
Heywood Family Practice	6,744	Yes	1,786	55	0.0	26%
Sunnyside Surgery	7,245	Yes	1,787	92	0.1	25%
Longton Grove Surgery	6,811	Yes	1,584	163	0.1	23%
Backwell Medical Centre	13,645	Yes	3,196	265	0.1	23%
Mendip Vale Medical Practice	21,587	Yes	4,970	748	0.2	23%
Riverbank Medical Centre	9,795	Yes	2,095	100	0.0	21%
St Georges Surgery	3,630	Yes	552	3	0.0	15%
Stafford Medical Group	11,727	Yes	1,426	155	0.1	12%
New Court Surgery	11,344	Yes	1,179	37	0.0	10%
Graham Road Surgery	9,199	Yes	712	9	0.0	8%
The Cedars Surgery	14,644	Yes	1,119	28	0.0	8%
Winscombe Surgery	9,167	Yes	679	61	0.1	7%
Clevedon Medical Centre	16,119	Yes	1,016	70	0.1	6%
Clarence Park Surgery	5,107	Yes	250	28	0.1	5%
Locality Health Centre	5,160	Yes	202	34	0.2	4%
The Milton Surgery	9,158	No	0	0	0	0%

https://data.gov.uk/dataset/numbers_of_patients_registered_at_a_gp_Practice July

Appendix 2 - Population projection v Number of patients registered with General Practice in North Somerset

Figure 4: Population projections for North Somerset, by age categories, 2015-2035.

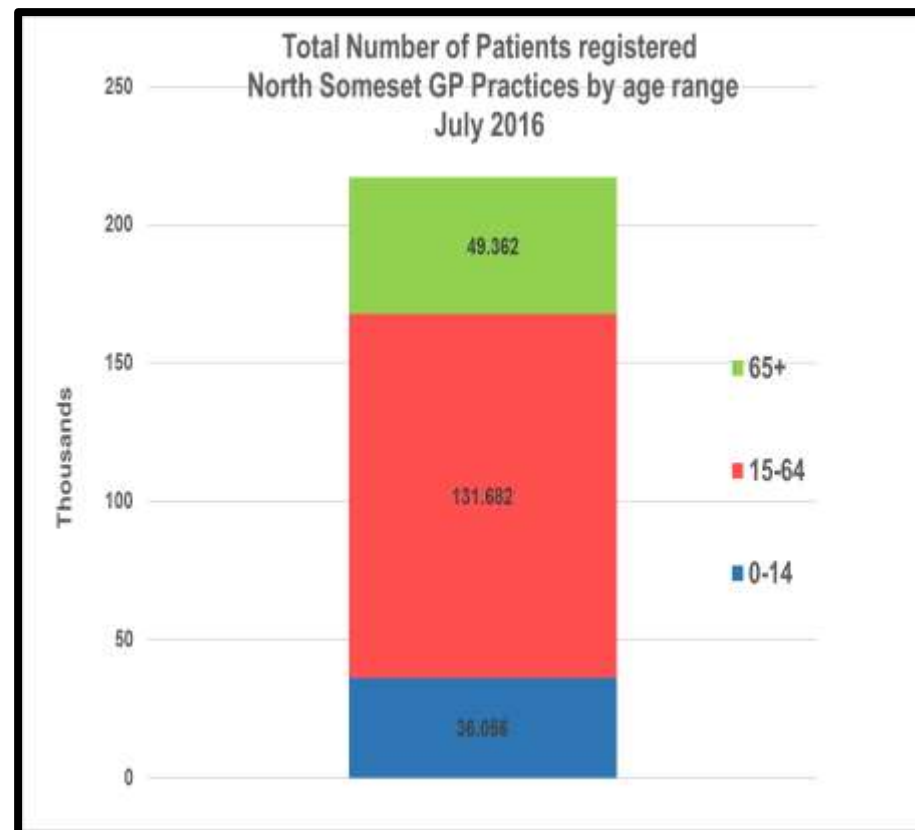
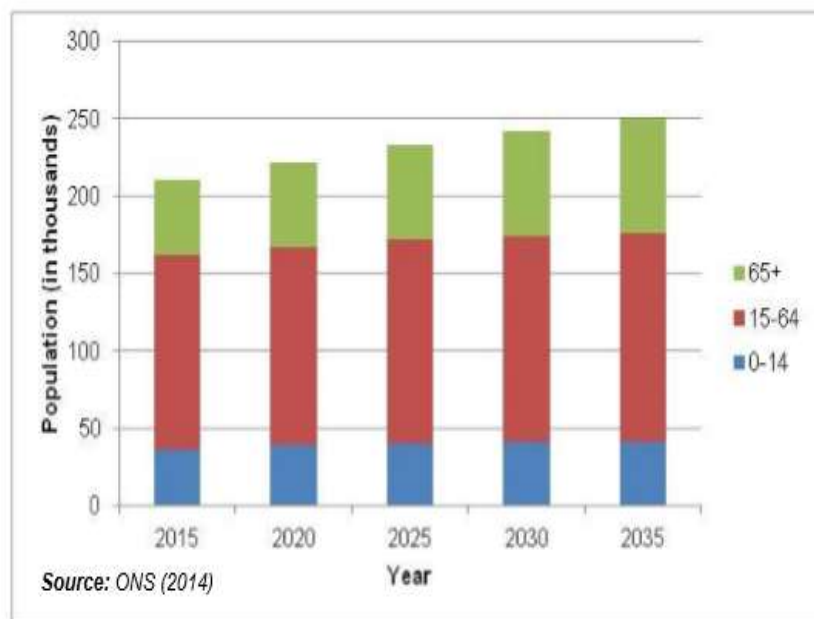
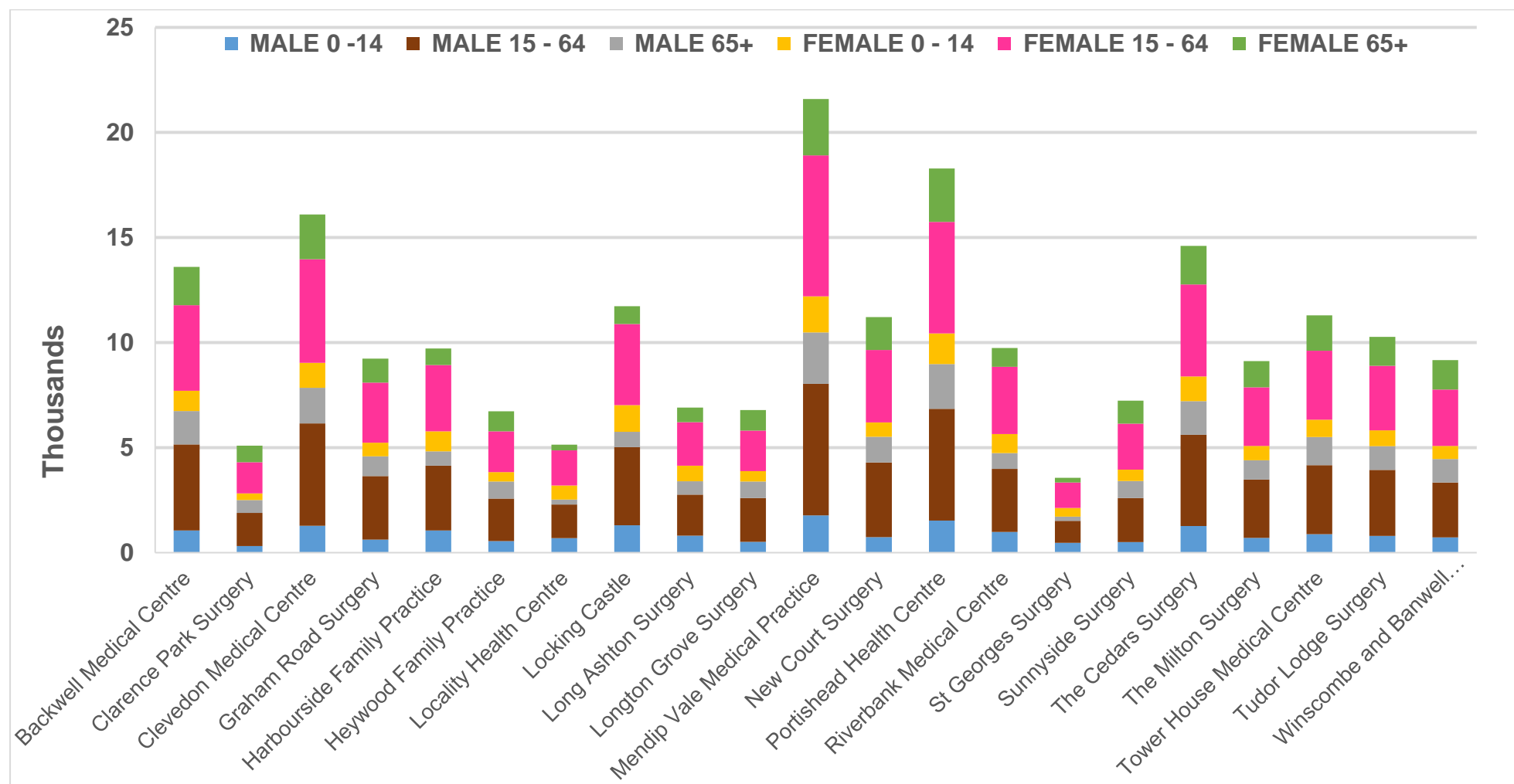


Figure 6: Extracts from Executive Summary - North Somerset Council JNSA 2012

www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-council/statistics-data/jsna/joint-strategic-needs-assessment/

Appendix 3 - GP Practice Profiles by age and gender (July 2016)



https://data.gov.uk/dataset/numbers_of_patients_registered_at_a_gp_Practice July

Appendix 4 - Categories / Themes and Impact by Practice - Healthwatch North Somerset Intelligence

	Treatment	Appointment	Organisation	Medication	Transport/ Access	Referral	Communication	Delay	On-line Services	Grand Total
Practice Not Identified	24	22	11	8	9		6	6	4	90
NA		1	3	1	1		1			7
Negative	9	21	5	7	8		4	6	3	63
Positive	15		2				1		1	19
Positive/Negative			1							1
Mendip Vale Medical Practice	31	20	3	5	10	7	1	3		80
Negative	8	15	1	5	10	6	1	3		49
Positive	22	4	2			1				29
Positive/Negative	1	1								2
Clevedon Medical Centre	18	21	7	6	2	3	1	1	5	64
NA									4	4
Negative	4	15		5	2	1	1	1		29
Positive	14	6	7	1		2			1	31
Sunnyside Surgery	13	17	8			4			4	46
Negative	2	5				2				9
Positive	11	12	8			2			2	35
Positive/Negative									2	2
Portishead Medical Group	26	10	2	1		1	1	2		43
Negative	2	4	1	1			1	2		11
Positive	24	6	1			1				32
Backwell & Nailsea Medical Group	22	5	3	1	1	1	2	1		36
Negative	2				1		1	1		5
Positive	19	5	3	1		1	1			30
Positive/Negative	1									1

	Treatment	Appointment	Organisation	Medication	Transport/ Access	Referral	Communication	Delay	On-line Services	Grand Total
Nailsea Family Practice Tower House	17	1	9	1		1	2	1		32
Negative	1			1			1	1		4
Positive	16	1	9			1				27
Positive/Negative							1			1
Stafford Medical Group	7	7	5	2	5	2	2			30
Negative	2	7	3	2	5	2	1			22
Positive	5		2				1			8
Graham Road Surgery	9	7	4	2	1	3		1	1	28
Negative	4	6	3	2	1			1		17
Positive	5	1	1			3			1	11
Harbourside Family Practice	8	8	3			2	1			22
Negative	1	7	1			1	1			11
Positive	7	1	2			1				11
Winscombe and Banwell Family Practice	5	2	8	2		1	1			19
Negative	3	1				1				5
Positive	2	1	8	2			1			14
New Court Surgery	6		6		1	1	3		1	18
Negative	4		1		1	1	3			10
Positive	2		5						1	8
The Milton Surgery	8	2	2	2			1		1	16
Negative	2	1		2					1	6
Positive	6	1	2				1			10
The Cedars Surgery	2	4	3	4	1					14
Negative	1	3	1	4						9
Positive	1	1	2		1					5

	Treatment	Appointment	Organisation	Medication	Transport/ Access	Referral	Communication	Delay	On-line Services	Grand Total
Tudor Lodge Surgery	4	4	3		1			1		13
Negative	1	4			1			1		7
Positive	3		3							6
Longton Grove Surgery	1	5	4		3					13
Negative	1				2					3
Positive		5	4		1					10
Riverbank Medical Centre	6	2	3	1			1			13
Negative	1	2		1			1			5
Positive	5		3							8
Clarence Park Surgery	6	4	1							11
Negative	3	2								5
Positive	3	2	1							6
Long Ashton Surgery	5	1		1						7
Negative	1	1		1						3
Positive	4									4
Locality Health Centre	1	1	2				2			6
Negative		1	1				1			3
Positive	1		1				1			3
Heywood Family Practice			2							2
Positive			2							2
Grand Total	219	143	89	36	34	26	24	16	16	603

Appendix 5 - Examples of good practice and support



GP practice saves up to 40 days a year with online test results for patients

A practice in Buckingham is saving up to 40 days a year* on calls and appointments to discuss test results with patients, thanks to digital access.


Since offering patients online results via Patient Access a year ago, The Swan Practice in Buckingham has calculated it has halved the number of these calls a day with patients. They are now able to log on to view test results after their GP has checked them. Previously, patients would ring reception five days after a test to get results, or book an appointment.

Latest news

- 21 NOV 2016
EMIS Health and EMIS Care at #DPC2016
- 10 NOV 2016
Online consultation: more convenient for

Appendix 6 - Patient Online

To Register for Patient Online - visit your GP Practice and ask about Patient Access or check out your GP Practice website. You will need to produce some form of identification. Find out more at www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/pe/patient-online/



<https://patient.emisaccess.co.uk/account/login?ReturnUrl=%2F>

Home Help


Welcome to Patient Access

Patient Access lets you use the online services of your local practice. These may include arranging appointments, repeat medication, secure messages, medical record and updating your details.

Register

Have a letter from your practice?
Click "Register" and enter the details.

No letter but would like an account?
Click "Register" to see if Patient Access is available to you.



Register

Sign in

[? Help](#)




User ID [Get my user ID](#)

Password

[I forgot my user ID or password.](#)

☐ Remember my user ID [?](#)

Sign in



This report was researched and compiled by

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