

HPF Patient Survey, November 2022

Below is a brief report on the survey results with headline issues, plus suggestions on how HPF communicates the results to the Practice and the patient population.

1. **Overview:** 754 completed surveys (746 online and eight paper surveys) out of a practice population of 10,000. Although not wholly statistically representative, we gathered a rich source of qualitative information. All responses are treated anonymously. Most respondents were female in the 39 to 65 age group. 690 of the 754 respondents identified as white. There were many positives from the survey but also several negatives.
2. **Quantitative results:** A detailed analysis of the results is given at the end of this document on pages 5-17. These are some key headline issues:
 - Regarding the new appointment system being clear and easy to follow 42% said no
 - 22% did not understand the difference between an urgent and routine appointment
 - 32% of respondents were unable to get an urgent appointment on the same day if this is what they requested
 - The majority of respondents were happy with the service they received from the clinical Practice staff, but less so with the reception staff
3. **Qualitative results:** The huge amount of free text in the survey responses has been analysed by a small group of very committed volunteers! There will be a full report available soon, but again some of the headline issues:
 - Reception staff – some perceived as very friendly, others as unhelpful, unempathetic, giving poor advice, and not fully conversant with the appointments system.
 - Clarification about the role of the reception staff in determining appointments. Some perception they are making clinical decisions and this should not be permitted.
 - Definitions of urgent and non-urgent. Who makes the judgement as cannot always self-diagnose.
 - Widening the early slot for making appointments: 8-9 urgent, 9-10 routine, 10 onwards results and admin, all via phone or online. Extremely difficult for working people/parents/those with mental health issues as time slot is so narrow.
 - Implement a phone queuing system. Patients reported waiting over 40 minutes trying to get through the engaged tone. Some patients feel 'locked out' of accessing the surgery.

HPF Patient Survey, 6 February 2023

At the January meeting to discuss the survey, it was decided that the Survey Group should further review the qualitative results to ensure that nothing was excluded from the headline issues.

There were concerns that the headline issues as per the website were not wholly representative. The overall perception is that the current system is way worse than before. The experience of trying to contact the practice is seen by some patients as inherently stressful and not in the best interests of patients.

Following an additional review of the results, the Survey Group wish to highlight the following:

Appointment System

There were more comments about preferring face-to-face consultations as opposed to telephone consultations. Comments were:

- *seeing a person is part of the consultation & diagnosis;*
- *difficult to assess the look of a person, body language etc; particularly true with mental health issues;*
- *less opportunity for clinician and patient to develop a therapeutic relationship; easy to miss something over the phone...*

For face-to-face vs telephone appointments, there were:

- 135 Positive comments for telephone appointments
- 187 Negative comments for telephone appointments
- 65 Neutral comments for telephone appointments
- 10 Not applicable comments

Most positive comments added '*as long as it is followed up by a face-to-face appointment.*'

Reception staff attitude

There were several concerns relating to the manner and attitude of the reception staff illustrated by several comments and observations below:

- *Sometimes you just don't think it's worth the hassle of phoning the surgery because of how the reception staff treat you over the phone. Or in person*
- *Last time I was at the surgery. I saw one of the reception ladies rolling her eyes at an old patient who just needed some clarification on something. Old people just need reassurance. There was no need to roll them eyes at him especially when another patient is directly behind him and could see your behaviour.*
- *Reception staff should acknowledge your presence if they are talking to someone else behind the desk.*
- *Staff at front of house need empathy training.*
- *Unhelpful, unempathetic, giving poor advice, and not fully conversant with the appointments system.*
- *The reception staff don't introduce themselves by name when answering the phone, and there have been a number of instances when they have been rude, offhand, and difficult to deal with.*

- *Provide training in customer service for reception staff. I can think of no public-facing operation where employees are so high-handed. ALL should be polite and courteous, not just the patients.*
- *Please could the practice managers give some training to the staff in how to handle patients. People are often in pain and worried when they attend the surgery and do not want the added stress of having to deal with rude reception staff. The negative feedback on the NHS page is mainly about the reception staff so there is evidence there that the practice needs to take action on this.*

Reception staff acting as triage and lack of confidentiality

There were a significant number of concerns about the reception staff being perceived to be acting as a triage. This also led to concerns about confidentiality and perceptions that reception staff are making decisions about urgency, which is inappropriate for some. Also, problems around sharing details with the reception staff, which is a breach of confidentiality. Illustrative comments were:

- *I have significant concerns about the demand that patients disclose details of their condition to reception staff before being triaged - it undermines patient confidentiality and raises serious concerns about whether it is compliant with the Data Protection Act (2018). A particular concern might be a condition the patient is embarrassed by no matter how sympathetic the reception staff and decides not to book an appointment.*
- *The triage system is a proven disincentive to contact the practice. It is shocking how after understandably being introduced during COVID, it has now become the norm.*
- *Reception staff asking re clinical condition. I am happy with this as I am a healthcare clinician and would be confident if I really didn't want to share information with anyone other than a doctor that I could share this with reception staff. I think it is really good to be seeking views from all patients about this,*
- *I worry about confidentiality and others in the surgery if calls taken on reception who can overhear the content, also for confidential reasons but content can also be distressing*
- *I understand that it makes the process quicker and more efficient for everyone if patients tell reception about their problem. I'm sure it's all completely confidential but it might be useful if this was reiterated, perhaps on posters in the surgery or online? Just a thought. For patients, the fewer people who know about their embarrassing concerns the better!*
- *I was unaware where that it was the receptionist who decided whether you're having a telephone or face-to-face consultation perhaps they should actually say this.*
- *I understand the practice staff have a formula that they have to stick to but there can be nuances that people do not necessarily want to discuss over the phone with a receptionist, particularly when there is a long-term health condition.*
- *It depends why I am seeing the GP. Sometimes I don't want to discuss my issue with a non clinical person.*

Building issues

Acoustics

The Practice is aware of the ongoing issues with thin walls and consultations being overheard by waiting patients, which clearly makes people feel very uncomfortable and risks confidentiality.

- *The acoustics in the building is really poor which came about since the building was changed (approx 6 years ago). It is possible to hear the GP and patients speak whilst waiting for one's*

appointment. There are radios in the waiting areas that can help a little, but the last x2 visits I noticed that they were switched off.

- *Options to address this could include: changing the doors and changing the partitions that divide the walls that meet acoustic requirements. I assume that whoever carried out the building works did not have previous experience working on healthcare buildings otherwise they would be aware of the HTB and HBN docs that give guidance on this*
- *Would be better if you stopped playing such awful music, the 'classical' especially, in the upstairs waiting room)*

Accessibility

The Reception area is cramped and not private, with both phone and in person conversations being overhead, leading to confidentiality issues. There are also concerns about disabled access and access for those with prams.

- *We attended a 6 week check and postnatal appt at the surgery and this was upstairs, which was very inconvenient with a pram, which meant I had to hold my newborn for over 40 mins and wake her from sleeping in the pram, as the doctor was late. Please consider having these appointments downstairs in the future.*
- *I'd be much happier if telephone receptionists were not located at the front desk.*

Hollies Patient Forum Patient Survey 2022

746

Responses

11:17

Average time to complete

Active

Status

1. Do you find the instructions (e.g. on the website or given by reception staff) about the new appointment system clear and easy to follow?

● Yes 513
● No 220



2. Do you understand the difference between an urgent appointment and a routine appointment, and how to book either online or by telephone?

● Yes 607
● No 132



3. Please leave any further comments regarding instructions for the new appointment system below:

339
Responses

Latest Responses

"Hours for using the online booking system are very restricted"




"I made an online non urgent request. Received a text saying..."

[Update](#)

55 respondents (18%) answered **times** for this question.




4. Have you been able to get through to the Practice by telephone when you have needed to make an appointment?

 Yes	437
 No	225
 Not Applicable	80



5. The Practice deals with a large number of calls each day. Would you prefer a system that lets you know your position in the queue if you have to wait?

 Yes	689
 No	50



6. Please leave any further comments regarding contacting the practice by telephone below:

306
Responses

Latest Responses

"Sometimes it's impossible to get through although I have be...

"In an attempt to make a non urgent appointment the phone...

[Update](#)

49 respondents (17%) answered **appointment** for this question.



7. Have you been satisfied when making an appointment on-line by accuRx, SystemOnline or the Airmid app?

● Yes	308
● No	162
● Not applicable	268



8. If you haven't used the on-line/ digital options to make an appointment, what is the reason for this?

333
Responses

Latest Responses

"I do not own a smartphone so cannot use the links in text m...

[Update](#)

59 respondents (19%) answered **appointment** for this question.



9. Please leave any further comments regarding making appointments online / digitally below:

243
Responses

Latest Responses

"Very restricted hours for doing so"

[Update](#)

66 respondents (29%) answered **appointment** for this question.



10. Have you been able to arrange an urgent appointment on the same day if this is what you requested?

● Yes	304
● No	99
● Not Applicable	336



11. If a **routine (non urgent)** appointment was arranged how long did you have to wait for the appointment?

● Less than 1 week	169
● 2 to 3 weeks	219
● More than 3 weeks	83
● Not applicable	262



12. If seeing the same GP each time has been requested by you, how long has it typically taken to get an appointment with them?

● Less than 1 week	53
● 2 to 3 weeks	75
● More than 3 weeks	75
● Not Applicable	528



13. How satisfied are you with a telephone appointment rather than a face-to-face appointment?

● Very satisfied	182
● Somewhat satisfied	241
● Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	120
● Somewhat dissatisfied	120
● Very dissatisfied	71



14. Please leave any further comments regarding telephone rather than face to face appointments below:

402
Responses

Latest Responses
"Not every an be explained on telephone."

[Update](#)

101 respondents (27%) answered **face to face** for this question.



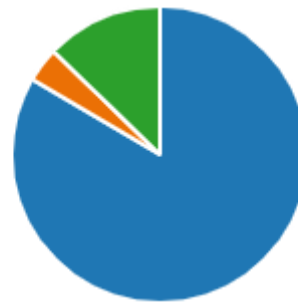
15. Are you happy with the service you have received from the GP staff?

● Yes	618
● No	86
● Not Applicable	36



16. Are you happy with the service you have received from the Nursing/Other Clinical staff?

● Yes	616
● No	28
● Not Applicable	94



17. Are you happy with the service you have received from the Clinical Pharmacy staff?

● Yes	458
● No	28
● Not Applicable	252



18. Are you happy with the service you have received from the Reception / Administrative staff?

● Yes	586
● No	118
● Not Applicable	33



19. Are you happy with the service you have received from the Practice Management staff?

● Yes	243
● No	48
● Not Applicable	440



20. Please leave any further comments regarding the service from the practice staff below:

296

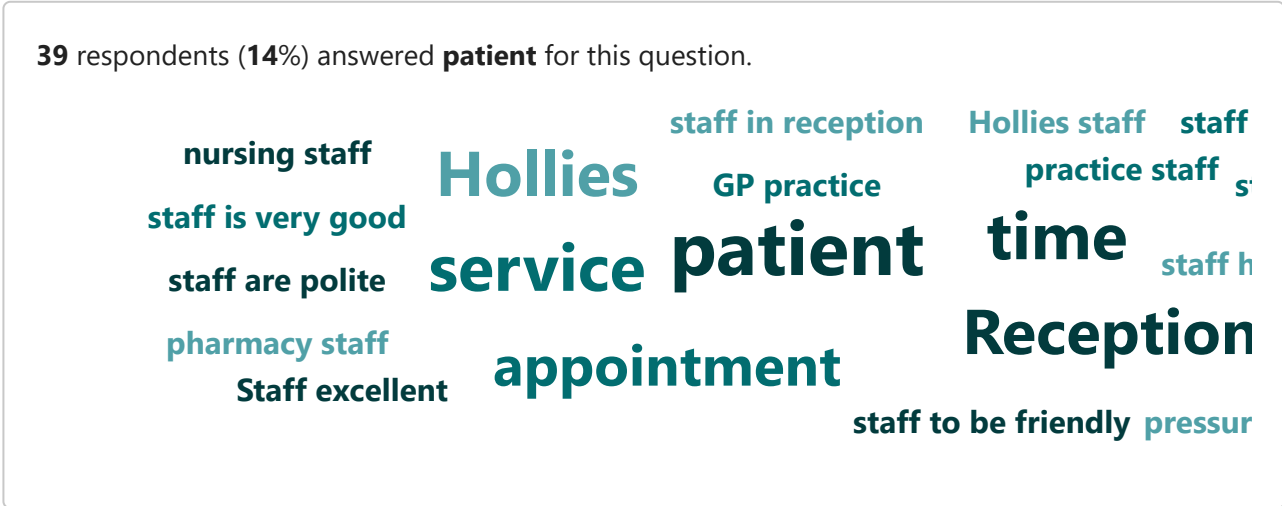
Latest Responses

Responses

"We need more face to face appointments"

[Update](#)

39 respondents (14%) answered **patient** for this question.



21. Currently, the reception staff ask you questions on the phone so that Clinicians can make a decision on how to see you (telephone or face to face) and how quickly. Are you happy with this system?

● Yes	560
● No	169



22. Please feel free to add any other comments you have about the Practice below:

274
Responses

Latest Responses

"They do not understand the urgency of the problem or the p...

[Update](#)

58 respondents (23%) answered **practice** for this question.

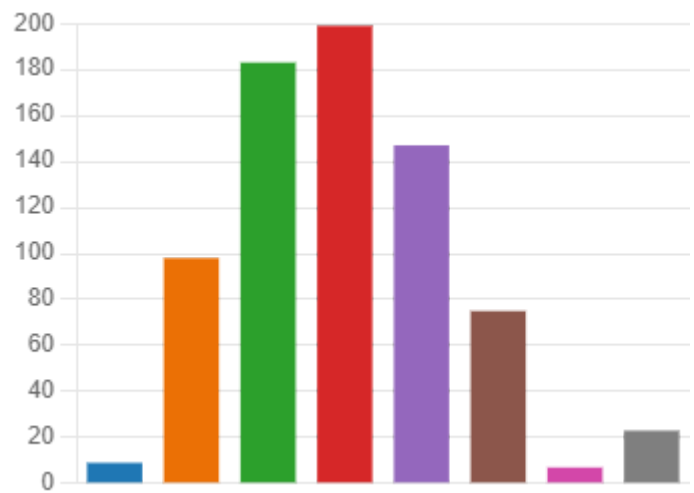
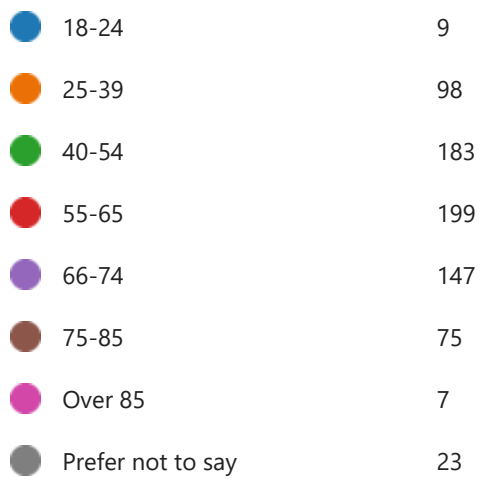


23. How would you describe your gender?

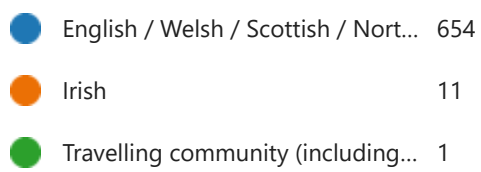
● Male	262
● Female	455
● Prefer Not to Say	18
● Other	4



24. How would you describe your age group?



25. White



26. Any other White background, please describe:

28
Responses

Latest Responses

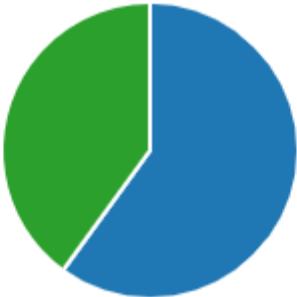
[Update](#)

7 respondents (27%) answered **European** for this question.



27. Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups

- White and Black Caribbean 9
- White and Black African 0
- White and Asian 6



28. Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background, please describe:

7
Responses

Latest Responses

[Update](#)

2 respondents (29%) answered **White** for this question.



29. Asian / Asian British

● Indian	7
● Pakistani	6
● Bangladeshi	2
● Chinese	5



30. Any other Asian background, please describe:

6
Responses

Latest Responses
"Mauritian "

31. Black / African / Caribbean / Black British



32. Any other Black / African / Caribbean background, please describe:

1
Responses

Latest Responses

33. Other ethnic group



34. Any other ethnic group not listed above, please describe:

5
Responses

Latest Responses