



**Healthwatch Cornwall Report on
Primary Care Services, GP Surgery/
Health Centre from March 2014 to
September 2014**

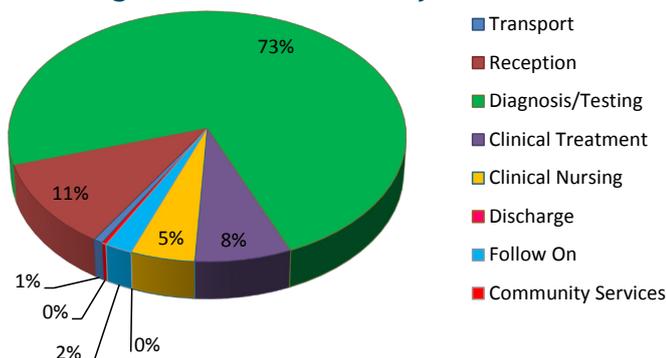


Healthwatch Cornwall (HC) collects patients' experiences of publicly funded health and social care that the Cornish population uses. Over the past 7 months HC has received 343 feedback comments that relate to **Primary Care Service: GP Surgery/ Health Centre**. These feedback comments are a mix of positive, neutral and negative experiences. This report breaks down all of those comments into a summary of trends. Once a trend has been highlighted, further database analysis can be carried out to look at that trend in more detail. For example, if there had been a lot of feedback about Newquay Health Centre HC could look at that issue in more detail.

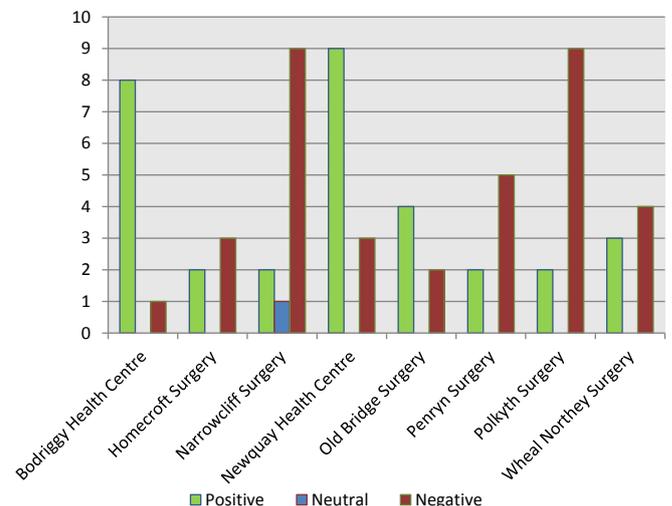
Due to the amount of feedback comments received for this topic, the data shown below is broken down to highlight the top trends for each care stage. Every feedback comment that HC receives is coded onto the database and all of the codes (288) are broken down into 8 care stages shown below:

1. Transport
2. Reception
3. Diagnosis/ Testing
4. Clinical Treatment
5. Clinical Nursing
6. Discharge
7. Follow On
8. Community/ Social Care

The chart below shows that the **Diagnosis/ Testing** care stage received the most feedback, while community services and discharge did not receive any.



Top services - looks at all of the feedback comments across the 8 care stages (shown opposite) and displays the top 8 commented on GP or Health Practices. The graph below shows these practices with positive, neutral and negative data. Its important to consider that patients fed back comments about 69 GP or Health practices across the county. The top 8 of



these (shown in the graph above) account for 28% of all feedback comments.

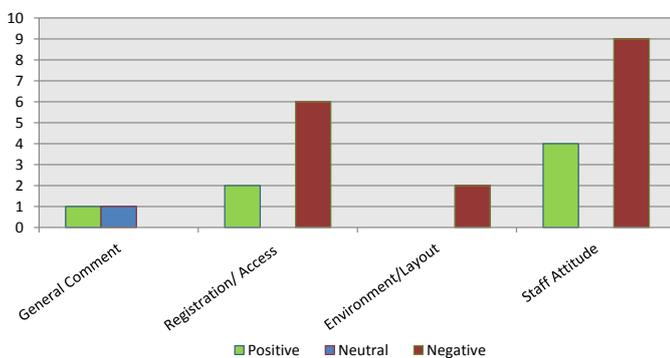
Care Stage - looks at where the feedback comment relates to, in relation to the patient's journey (transport through to Community/ Social Care). **Diagnosis/ Testing** and **Reception** are the most commented on part of the patient's journey accounting for 73% and 11% respectively of overall comments (see pie chart on the left). These 8 stages are now broken down in the rest of this report, also including feedback comments.

Transport - only accounting for 1% of all comments. Patient feedback related to the lack of parking at Bude and Launceston Health Centres:

“GP in Launceston - can’t get appointments. Very difficult to park at Launceston Medical Centre. Have to always get an emergency appointment due to over 2 week waiting list.”

Reception - 11% of patient feedback about GP or Health practices is about the reception. This does not include feedback about booking an appointment.

The chart below shows that there are a couple of stand out issues in relation to this care stage. The receptionist’s negative attitude towards patients was the most commented on issue accounting for 56% of all comments for this care stage and



the word gatekeeper was commonly used. Example of feedback shown below:

“Receptionist busy. Felt she was dismissive. Hard to get appointments. Had to call back. GP then had to phone me to say I could be seen. Had to stay at home waiting on phone call from GP. Got to see GP that day but all day wasted waiting.”

In relation to Registration and Access patients found it difficult to access a GP in person and had to be triaged by the GP over the phone before a face-to-face conversation occurred, see example below: *“When I was at my worst with my mental health, I couldn’t face a phone call - guess what, can only deal with Dr by phone.”*

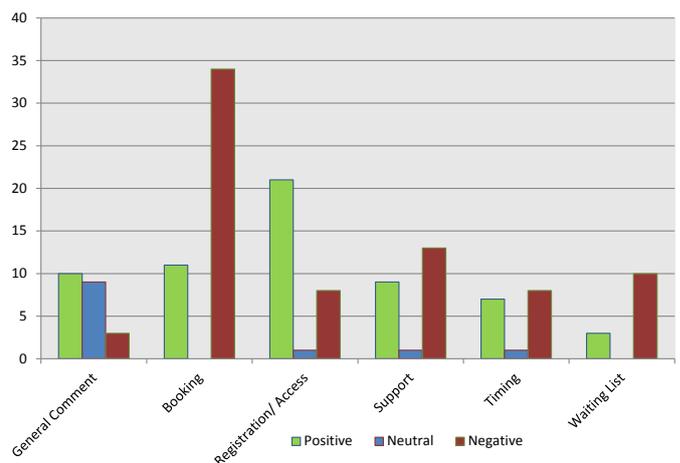
Diagnosis/ Testing - As mentioned previously this care stage is the most commented part of the patient’s journey. One can see from the graph on the opposite page that the most commented on issue is ‘Booking’. This issue relates directly to booking an appointment with a GP or health professional and accounts for 33% of feedback for this care stage and 13%



of all comments made about GP or Health practices.

Due to the variance of booking an appointment with a GP from practice to practice there are a large variance of dissatisfaction. Some examples of feedback are shown below:

“Oaktree surgery - difficult to get appointment. Have to ring before 08:30. Very difficult to get in touch. Can’t arrange appointment at reception have to go outside and phone. Not helpful with carers.”



“GP - annoying that you can only book appointments at Wheal Northey Surgery on the morning of your sickness - often can’t get an appointment unless I ring dead on the dot of 8:30 am - difficult if you work!!”

“Wheal Northey Surgery. You need appointment, receptionist asks what problem is and doctor has to ring you back and if they decide at that point you need appointment they will book you one. I was prescribed meds in this situation and I was over subscribed.”

“Visits Bodriggy Practice regularly - sees Dr Slater. Very happy with practice - Good service in getting appointments. Phone early to get

same day appointment, an aspect which is appreciated. Pleased with prompt service regarding appointments.”

The second most commented on issue in this care stage is ‘Registration and Access’ with more positive feedback than negative. This is in contrast with ‘Booking’, which received 3 times more negative comments than positive. The general feedback is about access to seeing a GP and the large amount of positive feedback has come about due to the focused work HC carried out at Cardrew Health Centre. Patients in general felt that access to this service was excellent, examples shown below:

“At Polkyth Surgery GP, Dr Senior is excellent. Get to see same GP every time.”

“Getting an appointment to see your doctor when you work full time is difficult as surgeries not open pass 6pm and closed on Saturday. Upset about having to take time off to visit a doctor.”

“Registered at Pool HC. But use Cardrew in the evenings or if no appointments available at own surgery. Think this is service excellent.”

“Registered homecroft - Illogan - not open on Saturdays. Used Cardrew before. Excellent service to be able to access a GP and not attend A&E.”

Support from a GP or Health Professional in a GP or Health practice was the third most commented on issue around Diagnosis and Testing. There were more negative than positive comments, see feedback comments below:

“Cares for daughter with learning disabilities - gets no help or support from GP who is unsympathetic.”

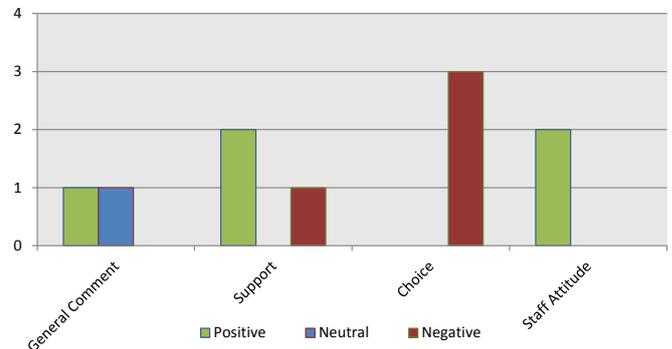
“Lady started to feel ill so just turned up at Mullion surgery. The GP saw her and spent 40 mins with her. GP rang Treliske while lady was there and arranged a brain scan. Was very happy with the service and support.”

“Young woman who had recently found out she was pregnant went to her GP for advice about abortion - she was offered a referral appointment but wanted information about the process, and about some counselling support but this was not offered, she was told she would be



told about the process at the clinic but wanted this information in advance to help her ensure she had made the right decision. She felt the doctor didn't understand this and didn't really have time to talk to her.”

Clinical Treatment - The graph below shows that though this care stage didn't receive much feedback there are a couple of issues raised, ‘Choice & Support’. Choice received only negative feedback and this relates to choice of treatment after the GP had given a diagnosis, see feedback comments below:



“GP completely disinterested in my mental health conditions. They up my medication rather than offer therapy. Referred me to a service which is unable to help.”

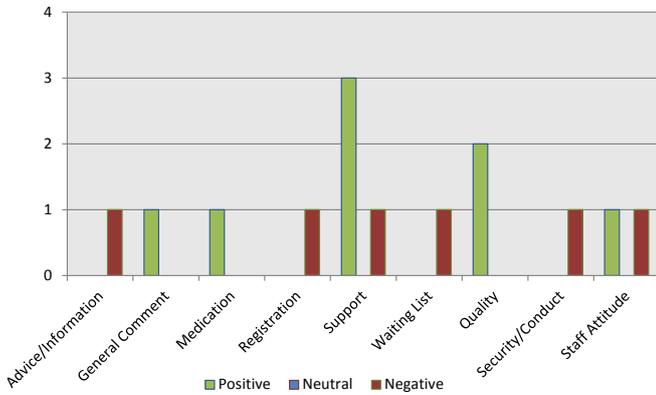
“I feel that GPs are too quick to reach for the prescription pad and hand out medication as an easy option. I think that the provision of more counsellors/ therapists based in GP surgeries would be much more conducive to individuals recovery.”

Support received more positive than negative comments with a feedback comment shown below:

“Newquay Health Centre. Skin complaint, given blood test straight. Very supportive. Keep tests and appointments to find out what is wrong. Confident they will resolve problem.”



Clinical Nursing - received 5% of feedback and there is a 50/50 split between negative and positive comments. Support, Staff Attitude & Quality received the most feedback with them getting more positive or equal feedback in comparison to negative comments. See example of feedback below:



"I went to see my nurse 2 months ago to review my contraception. She was most helpful and informative and answered many of the questions I had. Afterwards I felt reassured and that I was on the right contraception."

"Lady had a very poor service from NHS Direct. She had fluctuating heart rate and numbness sensations. She rang NHS Direct for advice and was on the phone for 30 mins having to give strange details regarding her background only to be told to ring her local surgery or 999. She rang Hayle surgery who provided her with fantastic support, the receptionists, GP and nurses were excellent and gave her everything she needed. The follow up care was excellent too."

Discharge - Healthwatch Cornwall has not received any feedback relating to discharge from a GP or Health practice.

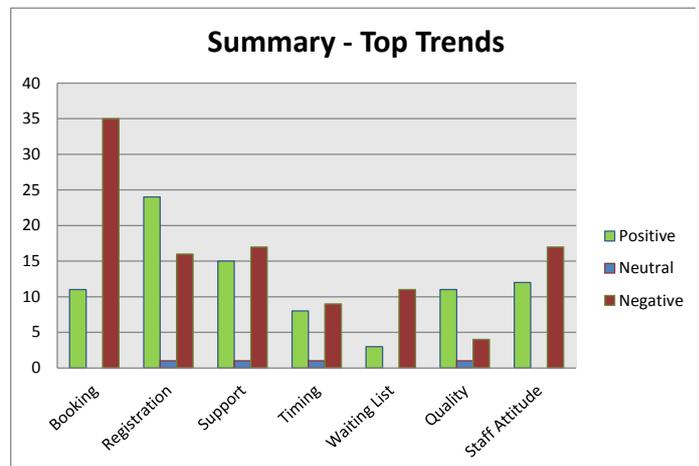
Follow On - The little feedback received for this care stage focused on medication that a GP had prescribed after an appointment.

Community/ Social Care - Healthwatch Cornwall has not received any feedback relating to discharge from a GP or Health practice.

Summary - Healthwatch Cornwall has received lots of individual feedback about GP primary care services across the county. When looking at all feedback HC has collected for all services in Cornwall, 70% is negative. When looking at all the feedback HC has collected for **Primary Care Service: GP Surgery/ Health Centre**, 46% is positive and 46% negative. This shows a general positive feeling towards the service GP/ Health Centres provide.

The stand out issues from this research are shown below as points and in a graph:

- The triage system to book an appointment at many GP practices is not user friendly and prevents patients from being able to book appointments.



- GP telephone triage call back appointments don't happen on time causing distress to patient.
- Negative attitude of reception staff towards patients.
- Positive feedback about patients access of primary care services through the Cardrew Centre.



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