

healthwatch Cornwall

A Report into the Quality of Mental Health
Services Provided by General Practitioners
and their Surgeries.



Written by Debbie Pritchard and James Buist

Subject: Quality of mental health services provided by general practitioners and their surgeries.

Prepared by: James Buist, Research and Evidence Officer, Healthwatch Cornwall

Approved by: Debbie Pritchard, CEO Healthwatch Cornwall

Date: August 22, 2014

1.0	Introduction
	<p>This research project was initiated by a response to feedback from people that have consulted their GP regarding a mental health issue. Healthwatch Cornwall (HC) has received patient feedback to show that people with a current, or previous, mental health issue had experienced a number of problems with their GP, including empathy and understanding of their feelings, suitable signposting and ease of booking an appointment.</p> <p>Hypothesis:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are issues in relation to GP consultations for people with mental health issues. <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To collect patient experience and views through a targeted survey. • To compare service quality issues between locations across the whole of Cornwall. • To identify potential gaps in services.
2.0	Executive Summary
	<p>Between January and April 2014, a Survey Monkey and printed questionnaire was circulated to individuals who have experienced mental health conditions. The objective was to gather their experiences of primary care.</p> <p>244 responses were received. A significant proportion of responses (25% - 75% in some cases) from people of aged under 17 and up to 75, showed dissatisfaction with the service from the GP, the choice of treatment offered, the interest and attention of the GP and the information given on the condition to the patient.</p> <p>Those aged 24 and under provided most negative feedback, particularly in respect to GP attitude and communication, but the older age group of 65 - 74 showed similar results. Most negative feedback was received from Truro, St Austell, Penzance and Newquay, and the most positive feedback came from the Falmouth area. When considering the ease of booking appointments, more than 32% (and up to 50%) thought this process difficult. Conversely, in this respect, Falmouth showed most negative feedback. Due to the nature of this type of survey, the responses obtained were wholly based on the perception of the participants. The attitudes and day-to-day practice of health professionals do not form part of this piece of work. A recent report, Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Mental Health Programme Stakeholder</p>

Surveys - Report has been published by NHS Kernow that looks at the view of service users, carers, doctors, mental health staff and volunteers around the current mental health service in Cornwall. This report mirrors a number of issues that have been shown in Healthwatch Cornwall's research. For example, service users mentioned they would like to see better signposting, GPs stated that the referral process is dreadful and the volunteer sector said there needs to be better guidance on waiting times for appointments. All these points are echoed in the report below. The full NHS Kernow report is available via Healthwatch Cornwall website at <http://www.healthwatchcornwall.co.uk/health-and-social-care-reports/>

3.0 Recommendations

1. Consideration needs to be given to how patients with pre-existing mental health conditions make appointments, to make the process easier. This could be a system of flagging patient records and improved training for receptionists. Service users should be informed that they are able to book double appointments with a doctor in order to discuss issues in detail.
2. The results suggest that current training for GPs who work with young people (including those with mental health conditions) should be reviewed by NHS England with recommendations for a master class in this topic within the curriculum, and as part of continued personal development (CPD) so that young people get parity of access to GP support.
3. Healthwatch Cornwall to arrange a meeting with GP locality leads and Young People Cornwall to determine how the use of technology, such as Doc Ready (a digital tool that helps young people to prepare and make the most out of mental health related GP visits), and lessons learned from the GP champions' project, which created new links between GPs and local voluntary organisations and promoted young people's health needs within the commissioning agenda, could improve communication with young people in Cornwall.
4. The Education, Health and Social Care directorate of Cornwall Council to consider influencing the expansion of pastoral education in secondary schools and colleges regarding the subject of mental health and how to get the most out of a GP appointment.
5. Healthwatch Cornwall to contact commended GP practices to determine if they have any specific approaches to mental health and training which might be disseminated as good practice via NHS Kernow GP locality leads.
6. Healthwatch Cornwall will be routinely responding to any publicly funded health and social care services where negative feedback has been received in significant quantity

as a matter of course. No further response will be taken here.

7. Healthwatch Cornwall to request a response from Cornwall Partnership Foundation Trust about specific feedback received on their services and how they will use it to improve practice.
8. Healthwatch Cornwall to suggest to Healthwatch England and NHS England the idea of a named GP for patients with a diagnosed mental health condition.

4.0 Method

- a. Authority for this project was given by the Healthwatch Cornwall Steering Group on the November 19, 2013. A number of themes were raised from patient feedback and these were addressed in the research.
- b. A task group was set up to determine the methodology. Patients' feedback in regards to mental health had been received from across the county and therefore the primary research encompassed all areas of Cornwall.

A questionnaire was seen as the most suitable way of collecting the primary data that would be used to address the hypothesis (**see appendix 1**). This questionnaire was distributed electronically via Survey Monkey. The link was available through the Healthwatch Cornwall website, Facebook page, Twitter account and its monthly newsletter. A number of partners and external organisations also promoted the link including Young People Cornwall, Outlook Southwest LTD and Invictus Trust. A hard copy of the questionnaire was distributed at mental health events that either Healthwatch Cornwall or partners attended.
- c. The target sample was 250 people that have had a mental health problem recently, across the Duchy. Data collection aimed to achieve a mix of population demographics such as age, gender and ethnicity. There was an opportunity for free comment on the questionnaire and any received were entered on Healthwatch Cornwall's database.
- d. The survey was relevant to all people who have, or have had, mental health problems and opportunity sampling was also available to target this group of service users.
- e. The questionnaire asked 6 questions (**see appendix 1.a**) all focusing around the treatment provide by the GP and surgery. Quantitative data was collected so that comparisons could be made between localities. A rating scale was used to gauge respondents' feelings to a positive statement.
- f. Primary research was conducted between January 13, 2014 and April 30, 2014.

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5.0 Results

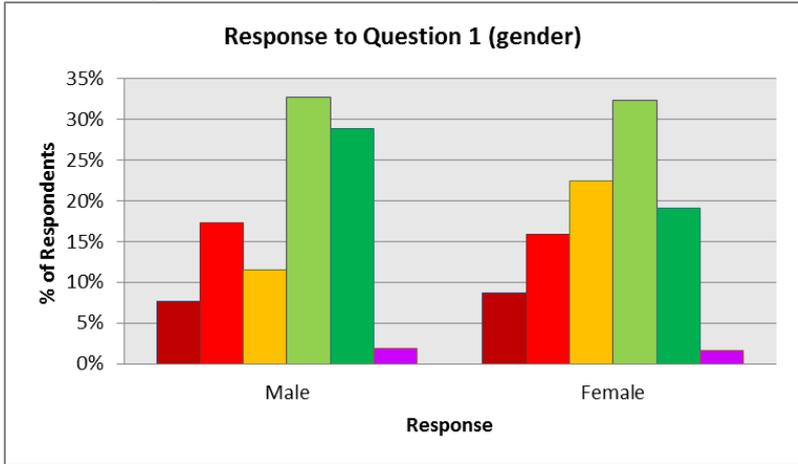
244 questionnaires were received. The detailed analysis of the results is shown below, with all charts shown in the appendix.

5.1 Demographics and Locality

An analysis of the demographics is shown in Appendix 2. Women surveyed exceeded men surveyed (78% and 22% respectively) while the age range of 25-49 was most represented (52%). All age groups up to 75 were covered. Nobody in the age range of 75 and above responded to this questionnaire. There was good spread of responses from across the county, as shown in the postcode analysis. Responses were received for 37 postcode areas with a graph and table showing the top 10 areas that had the most responses. (see appendix 2.c-2.d).

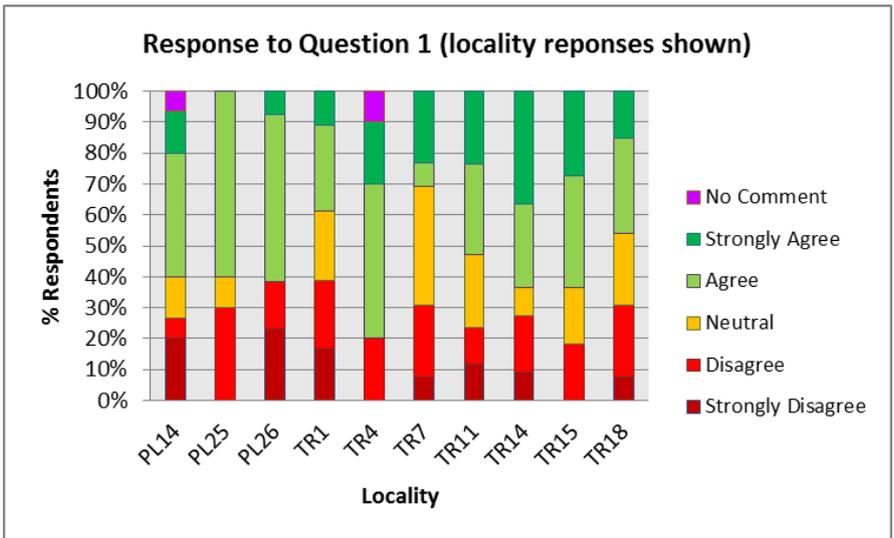
5.2 Statement 1: I am satisfied with the service I get from my doctor.

The first statement was used to gauge the general feeling people had towards the service they had received from their doctor. The responses are broken down to look at age, gender and locality.



24% of people that responded expressed dissatisfaction with the service they get from their doctor. There were no differences between gender, with 25% of both males and females disagreeing with the statement (see appendix 3.b). There were some noticeable

differences by age. Respondents aged 24 or under were more dissatisfied with the service they get from their doctor in comparison to the age group of 50-64 who were more content (33% dissatisfaction compared to 18%). (see appendix 3.c)



There were regional differences noted to the responses received. The bar chart shows the response for the top 10 commented on locations (see appendix 2.d for postcode localities). TR4 (Shortlanesend) has had the most positive response to statement 1. TR1 (Truro) and

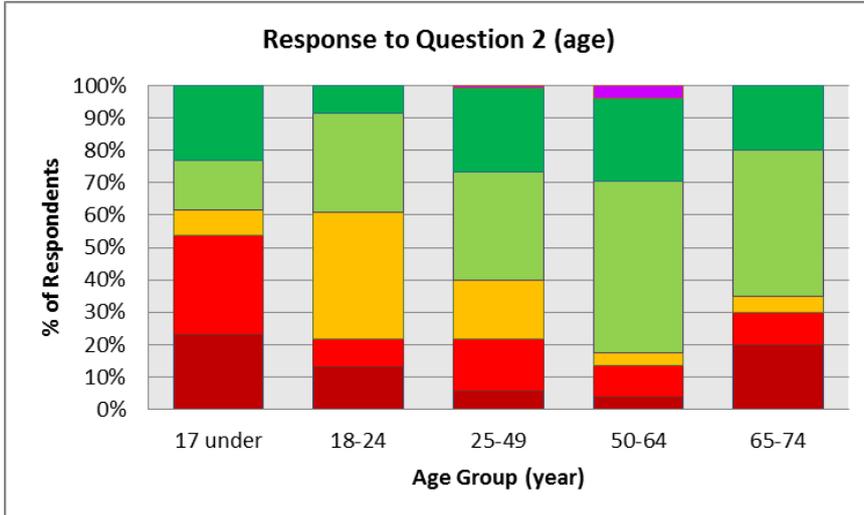
PL26 (St Austell area) had the least positive responses with almost 40% not agreeing with the statement, with TR18 (Penzance), TR7 (Newquay) and PL25 (St Austell town) not far behind.

Summary:

At least 25% of people surveyed were not satisfied with the service they got from their GP.

5.3 Statement 2: My doctor seemed interested in my condition and listened to what I had to say.

This statement looked at whether respondents felt they had been listened to and that they felt they had been understood or that the doctor had been empathetic towards to them. This statement was responded to in a more positive way than the other 5 statements with only 24% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this statement. Again, there is little difference between the gender viewpoints (see appendix 4.b).



disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with this statement. Again, there is little difference between the gender viewpoints (see appendix 4.b).

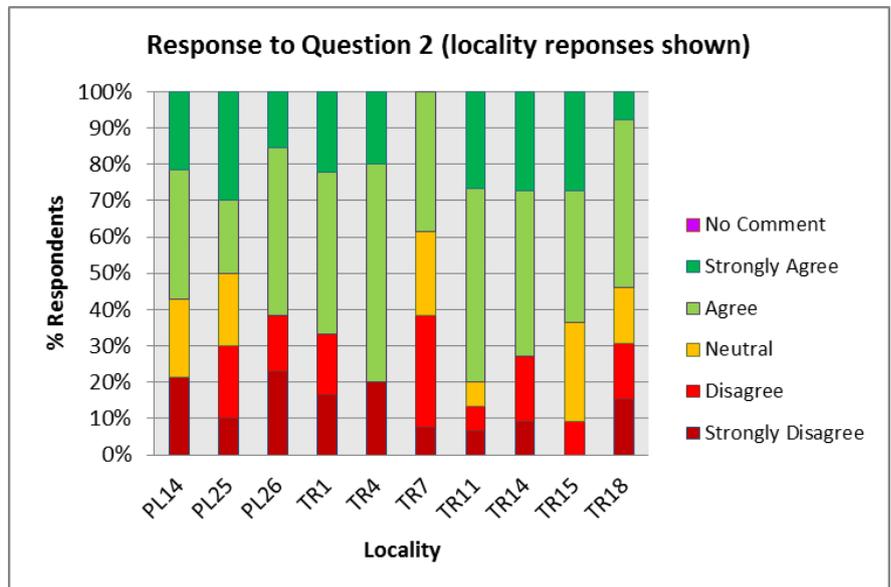
There are large differences when looking at the differing age groups. The under 17s age group had more than 50%

disagreeing or strongly disagreeing to this statement, which is almost three times higher than the other age groups, excluding the 65-74 age group. The age group of 50-64 were the most positive with more than 80% agreeing with the statement.

Location wise, TR11 and TR15 (Falmouth and Redruth) had very positive responses while PL26, TR1 and TR7 (St Austell area, Truro and Newquay) were three times more negative.

Summary:

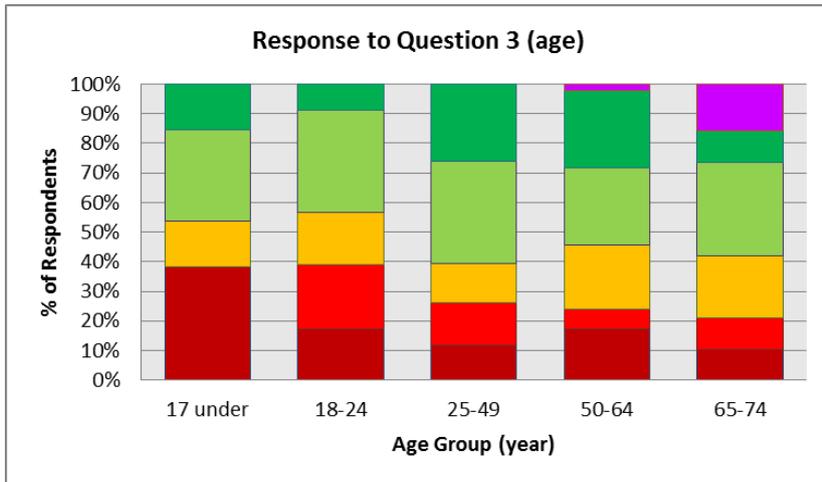
Approximately 25% of people surveyed disagreed that their doctor seemed



interested in their condition and listened to what they said. This rose to 50% in the age group '17 and under'. People who responded were more satisfied with their service from their GP in Falmouth and Redruth and less satisfied in Newquay.

5.4 Statement 3: My doctor referred me to mental health services and/or gave me a list of support organisations.

Healthwatch Cornwall had received a number of comments that showed people had been left



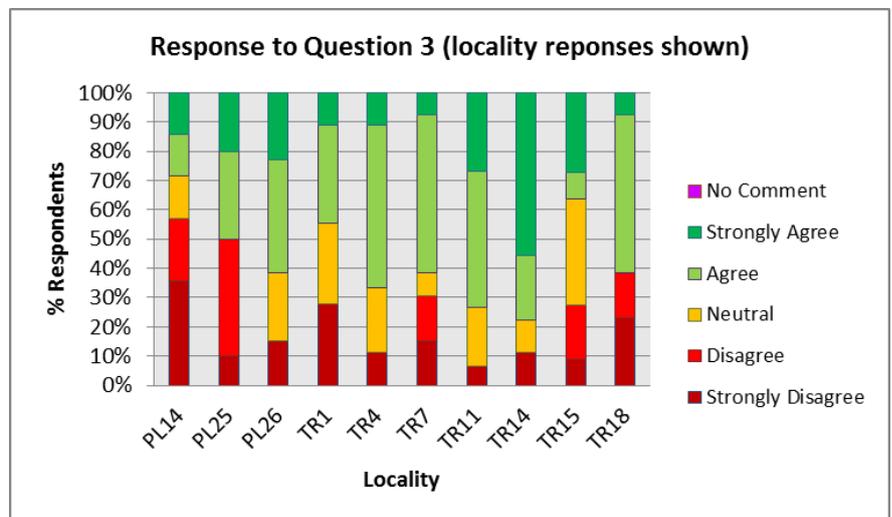
without a service as they had been incorrectly signposted. The results showed a strong disagreement toward this statement with between 20 - 40% of respondents responding negatively. This statement also shows a difference in gender responses, with twice as many

females disagreeing than males (see appendix 5.b). There is a more negative feeling about this statement from the two younger age groups (17 and under/18-24).

When looking at the response by location, PL14 and PL25 (Liskeard and St Austell) are the two areas with a very negative response to this statement (50% or over). TR11 (Falmouth), TR4 (Shortlanesend) and TR14 (Camborne) had the most positive feedback.

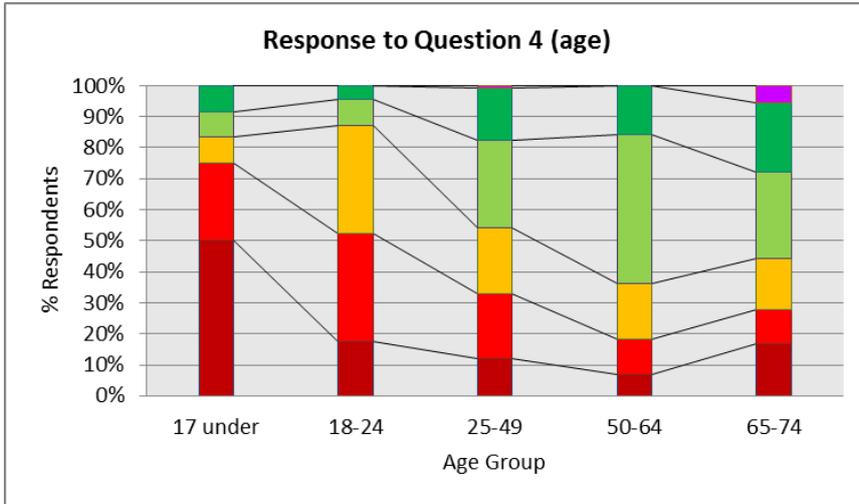
Summary:

More than 25% of people disagreed that their doctor referred them suitably to an organisation for support. Responses from St Austell were the most negative, Falmouth responses the most positive and females showed greater dissatisfaction.



5.5 Statement 4: My doctor spoke to me clearly about my condition and treatment.

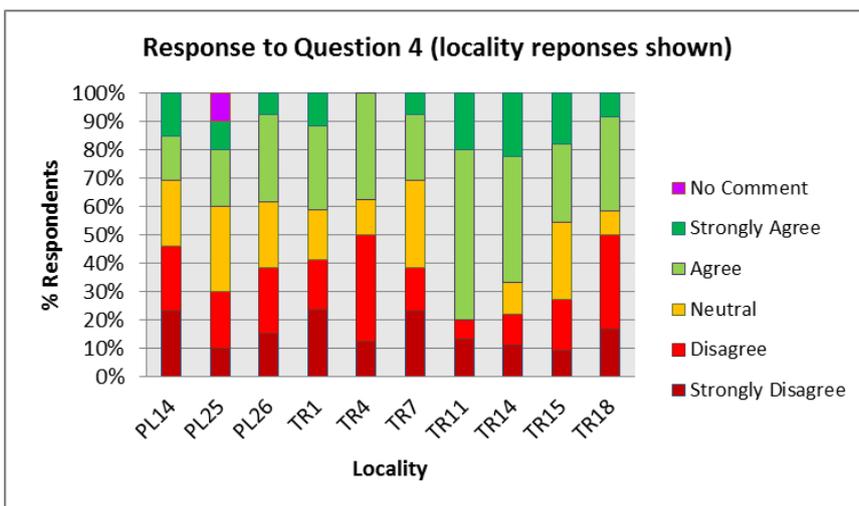
People had submitted comments to Healthwatch Cornwall saying that their doctor didn't understand their condition and in some cases ignored the condition when treating the patient.



This statement was one of the most negatively responded to in the questionnaire, with 34% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing with the statement (see appendix 6). 20% more females responded in a negative fashion in comparison to males. There are significant differences in response by age.

There is a huge negative response from the 17 and under age bracket which shows 75% disagree or strongly disagree with this statement, with 50% disagreeing in 18-24 age range. This is the strongest negative theme that has emerged from this research.

In responses to this statement by locality, six of the 10 locations had more than 39% negative responses to this statement. TR11 (Falmouth) and TR14 (Camborne) got far more positive responses in comparison to the other localities but still recorded 20% negative response.



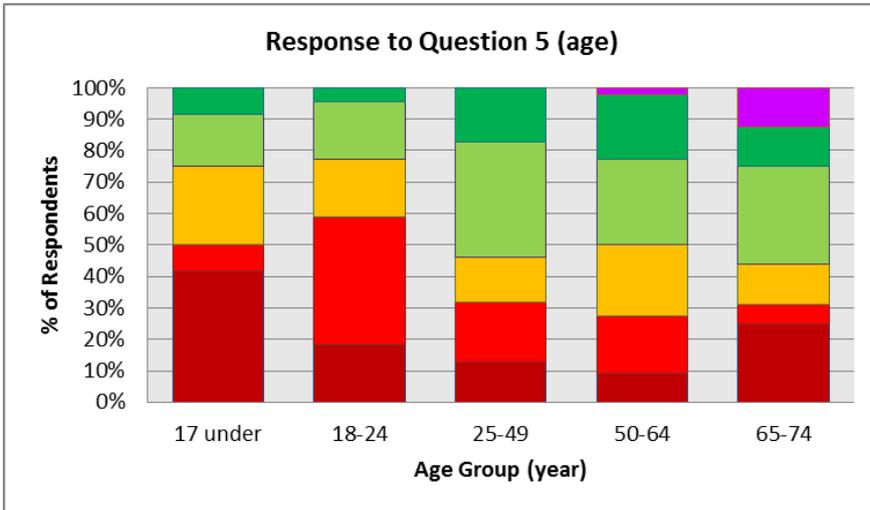
Summary:

There was a large amount of negative feeling from respondents about the way the doctor spoken to them about their condition or treatment. Females responded more negatively and the under 17's age group particularly felt that

their doctor didn't speak to them clearly about their condition. Falmouth and Camborne areas generated the most positive feedback.

5.6 Statement 5: I was offered a choice of treatment options (medication, counselling, etc.).

35% of respondents reported that they were not offered a choice of treatment options. Females responded more negatively than males with almost 40% disagreeing.



The 18-24 had the most negative response with more than 50% of replies being negative. All age groups showed a 27% or more negative response.

There are six localities with 39% or more negative response

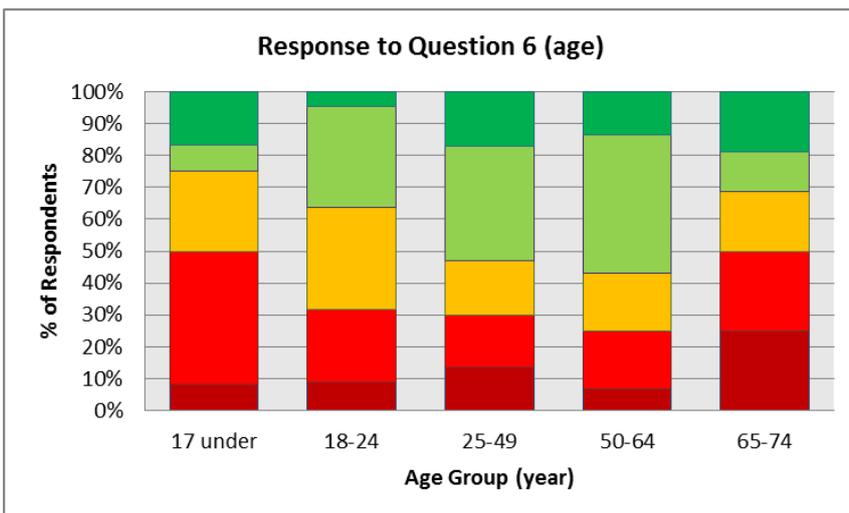
to this statement with all localities having at least a 22% negative response. TR14 (Camborne) received the best feedback out of all the localities.

Summary:

Statement 5 received the most negative feedback in this questionnaire. People commented on the questionnaire that they weren't offered a choice of treatment. They felt they were offered medication as it was the easiest option for the doctor.

5.7 Statement 6: It was easy for me to make an appointment.

This statement had 32% negative responses. There was little difference in response due to gender. The age ranges 17 and under and 65-74 showed a 50% rate of disagreement with this statement.



By location, best responses came from TR1, TR7 and TR15 (Truro, Newquay and Redruth). The location with the most negative response is TR11 (Falmouth) with 50% disagreeing that it's easy to book an appointment with their GP. This

does go against other statements for TR11, which was one of the more positively commented on locations.

Summary:

The youngest and oldest age brackets responded very negatively to this statement. Comments were received about the difficulty of booking an appointment for the same day when having to call by 8am. The younger age group stated that having to explain their problems to the receptionist deterred them from making an appointment.

We have received many additional comments from respondents. These have been both positive and negative about specific GP practices and mental health services such as Outlook Southwest Ltd, BeMe, CAMHS, and transition services. These have been entered on the Healthwatch Cornwall database to analyse for trends.

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

Questionnaire on Understanding Mental Health Experiences in Cornwall.

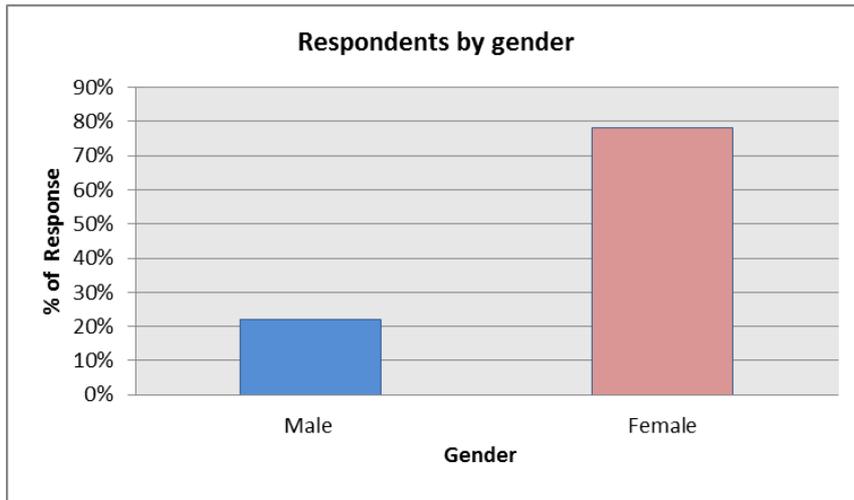
Healthwatch Cornwall is the independent people's champion for health and social care in the county.

We are carrying out research across Cornwall and, in particular, want to speak to people who suffer with any of the following conditions: depression, anxiety, alcohol and/or drug misuse, and any other mental health problem. If you are / have been affected by any of the above, please complete this quick six question survey. Your view counts.

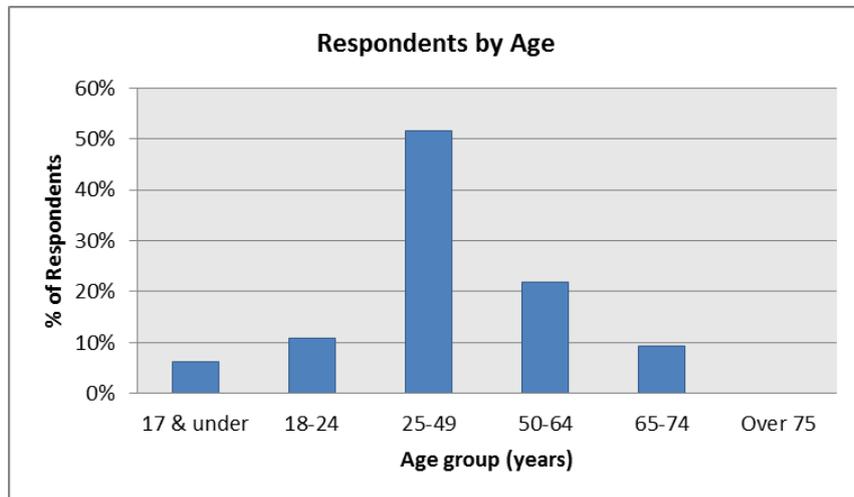
Age:	Under 18	18-24	25 - 49	50 - 64	65 - 74	Over 75			
Gender:	Male	Female	Trans-gender	Location (first part of postcode only):	Example:PL12				
If you could place a tick in the appropriate boxes.				Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	I prefer not to comment
I am satisfied with the service I get from my doctor.									
My doctor seemed interested in my condition and listened to what I had to say.									
My doctor referred me to mental health services and / or gave me a list of support organisations.									
My doctor spoke to me clearly about my condition and treatment.									
I was offered a choice of treatment options (medication, counselling, etc.).									
It was easy for me to make an appointment.									
Additional feedback (PTO if needed):				Healthwatch Cornwall, Mansion House, Truro, TR1 2RF					
				Tel: 0800 0381 281 www.healthwatchcornwall.co.uk Email: enquires@healthwatchcornwall.co.uk					

Appendix 2: Demographics and Locality

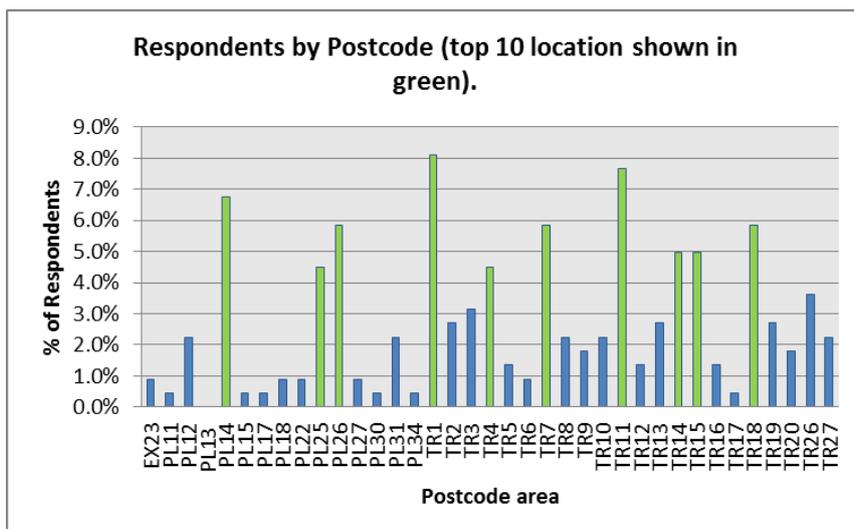
Appendix 2.a



Appendix 2.b



Appendix 2.c

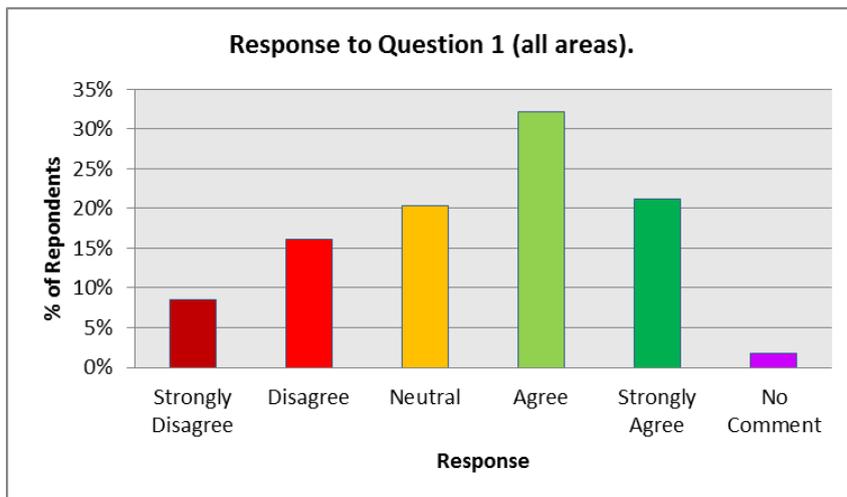


Appendix 2.d

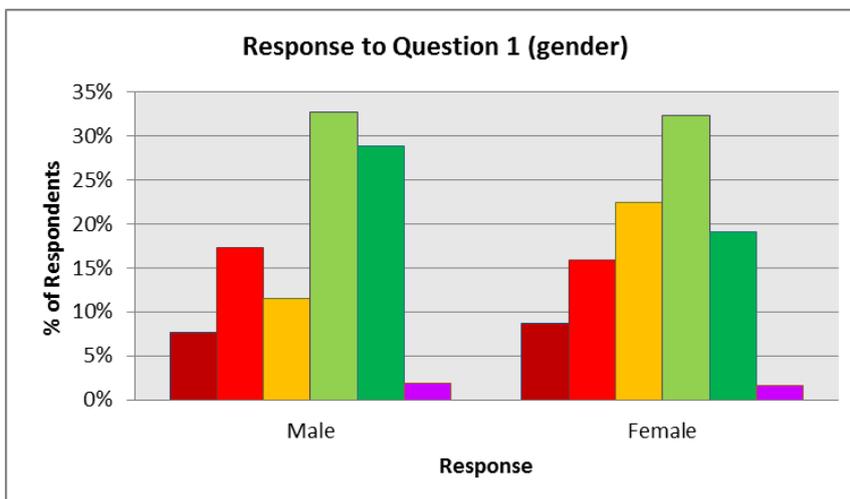
EX23	Bude	2	0.9%
PL11	Torpoint	1	0.4%
PL12	Saltash	5	2.2%
PL13	Looe	1	0.4%
PL14	Liskeard	15	6.7%
PL15	Launceston	1	0.4%
PL17	Callington	1	0.4%
PL18	Gunnislake	2	0.9%
PL22	Lostwithiel	2	0.9%
PL25	St Austell	10	4.5%
PL26	Clay	13	5.8%
PL27	Wadebridge	2	0.9%
PL30	Bodmin	1	0.4%
PL31	Bodmin	5	2.2%
PL34	Tintagel	1	0.4%
TR1	Truro	18	8.1%
TR2	Probus	6	2.7%
TR3	Devoran	7	3.1%
TR4	Shortlanesend	10	4.5%
TR5	St Agnes	3	1.3%
TR6	Perranporth	2	0.9%
TR7	Newquay	13	5.8%
TR8	Summercourt	5	2.2%
	St Columb	4	1.8%
TR9	Major		
TR10	Penryn	5	2.2%
TR11	Falmouth	17	7.6%
TR12	Lizard	3	1.3%
TR13	Helston	6	2.7%
TR14	Camborne	11	4.9%
TR15	Redruth	11	4.9%
TR16	Carharrack	3	1.3%
TR17	Marazion	1	0.4%
TR18	Penzance	13	5.8%
TR19	St Just	6	2.7%
TR20	Crowlas	4	1.8%
TR26	St Ives	8	3.6%
TR27	Hayle	5	2.2%

Appendix 3: Response to question 1 - I am satisfied with the service I get from my doctor.

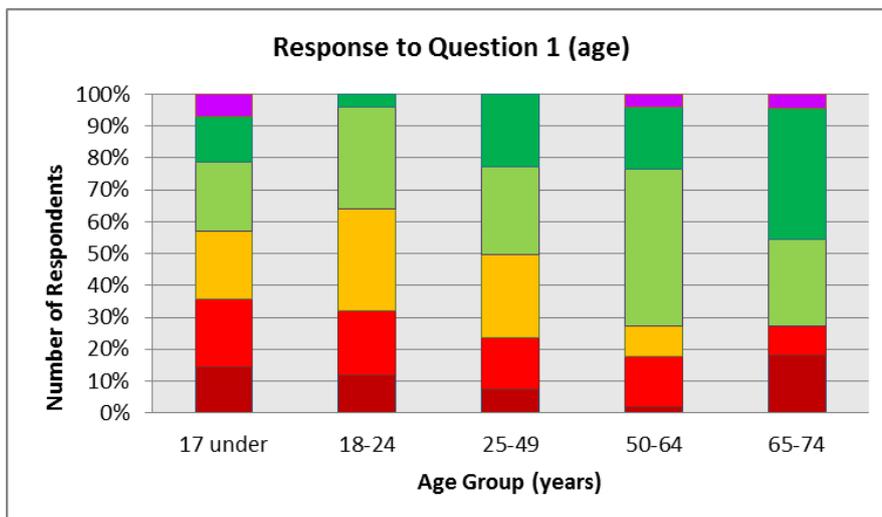
Appendix 3.a



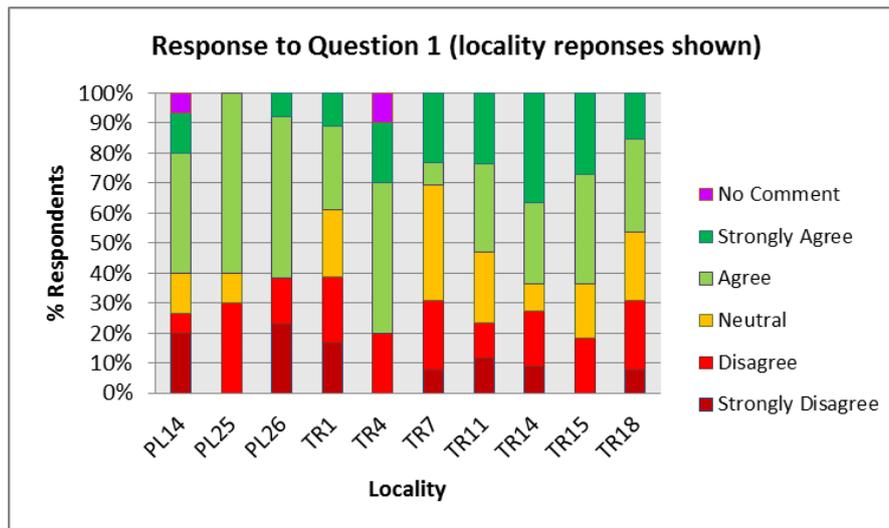
Appendix 3.b



Appendix 3.c

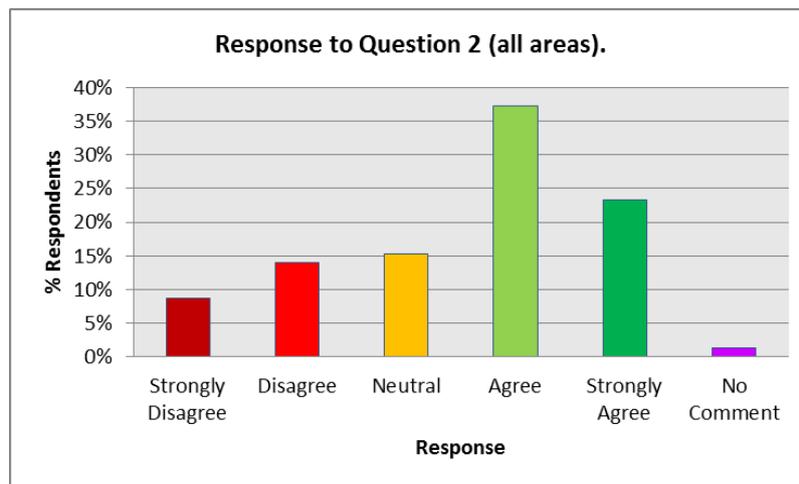


Appendix 3.d

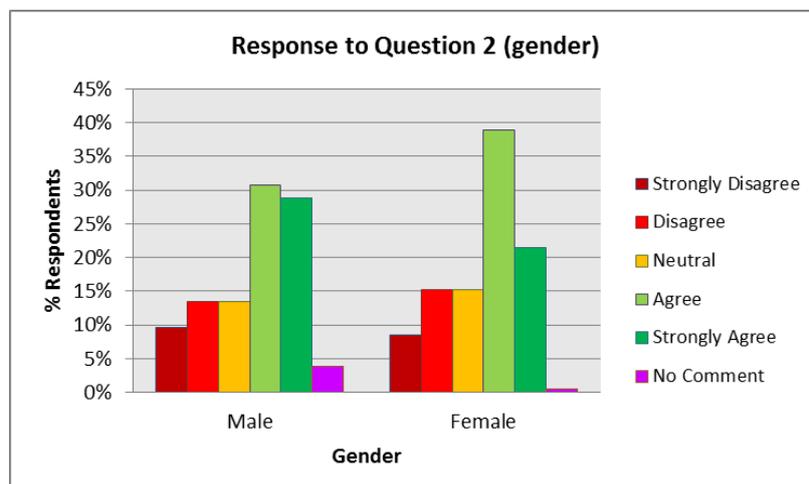


Appendix 4: Response to question 2 - my doctor seemed interested in my condition and listened to what I had to say.

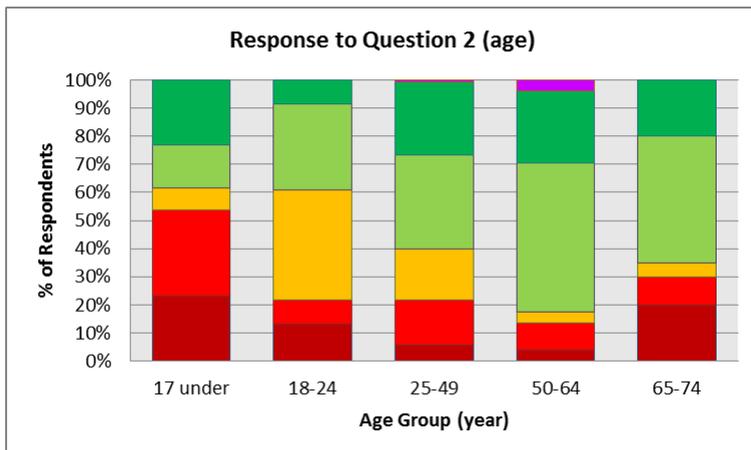
Appendix 4.a



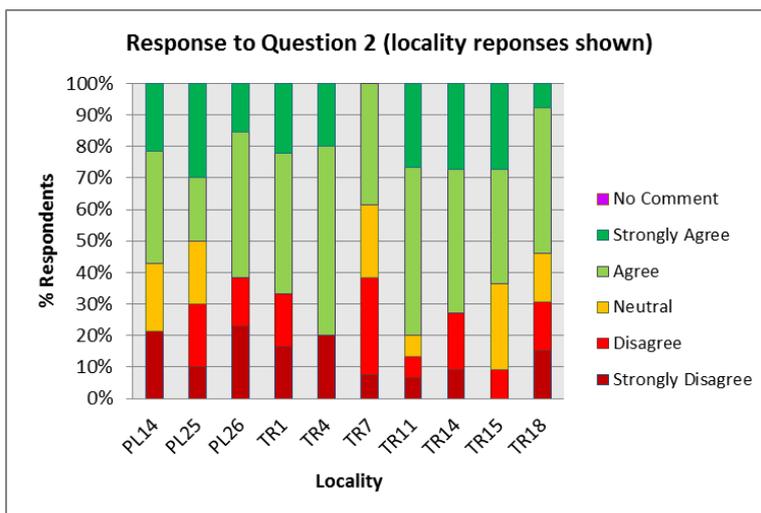
Appendix 4.b



Appendix 4.c

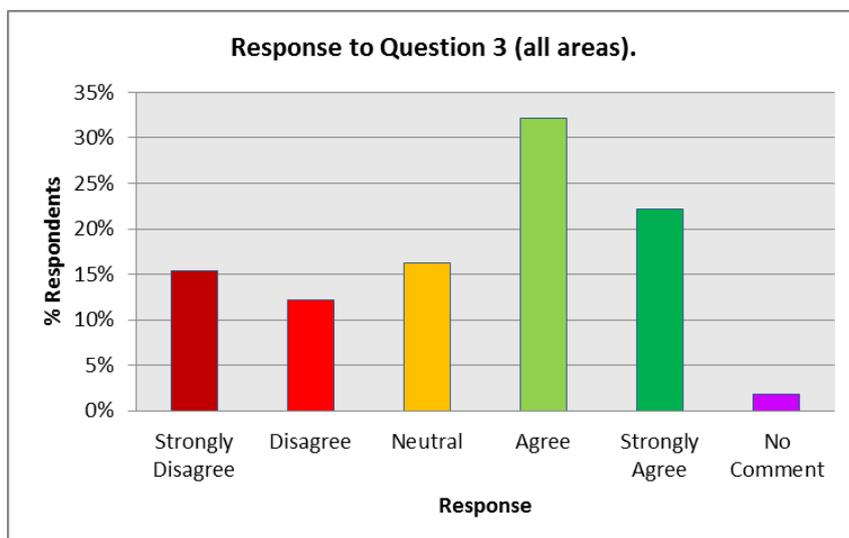


Appendix 4.d

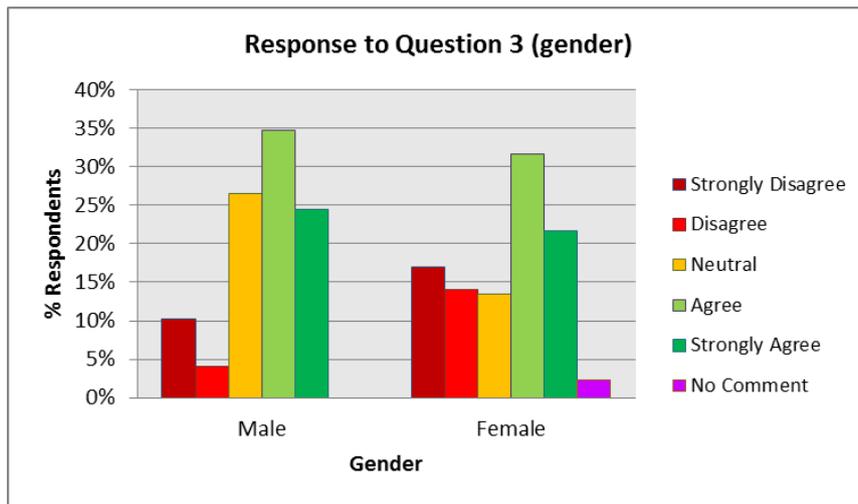


Appendix 5: Response to question 3 - my doctor referred me to mental health services and or gave me a list of support organisations.

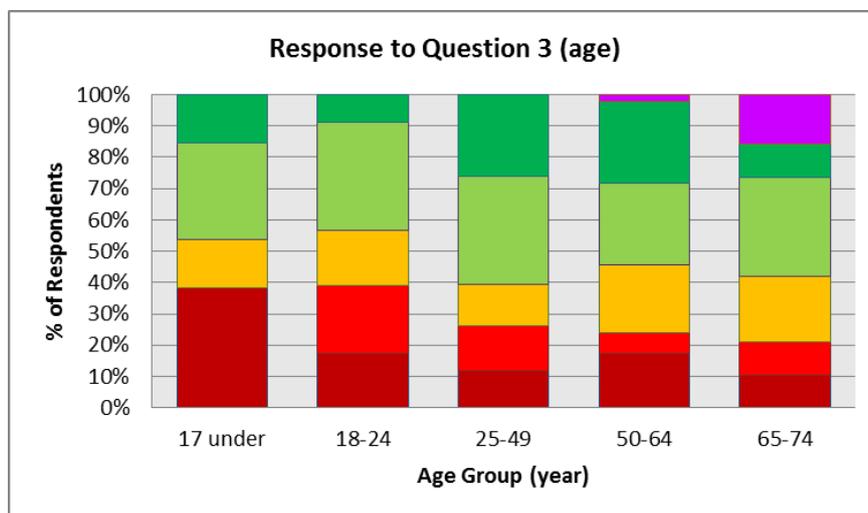
Appendix 5.a



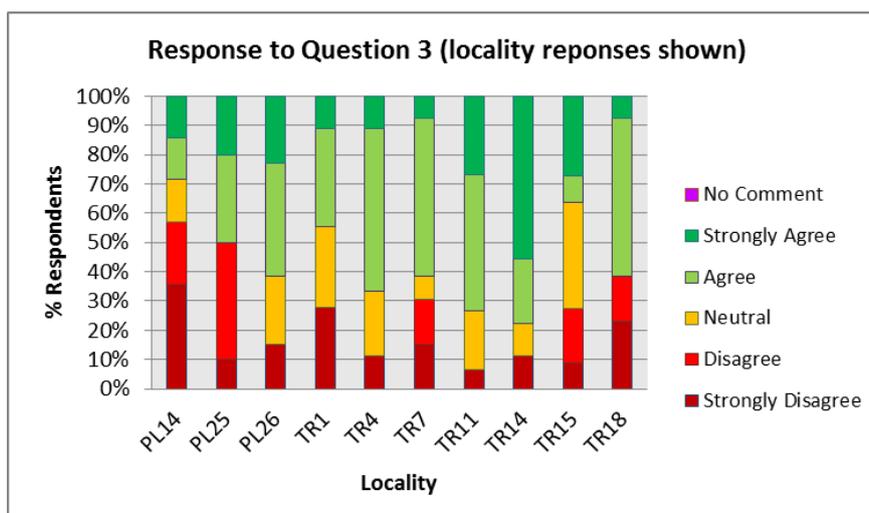
Appendix 5.b



Appendix 5.c

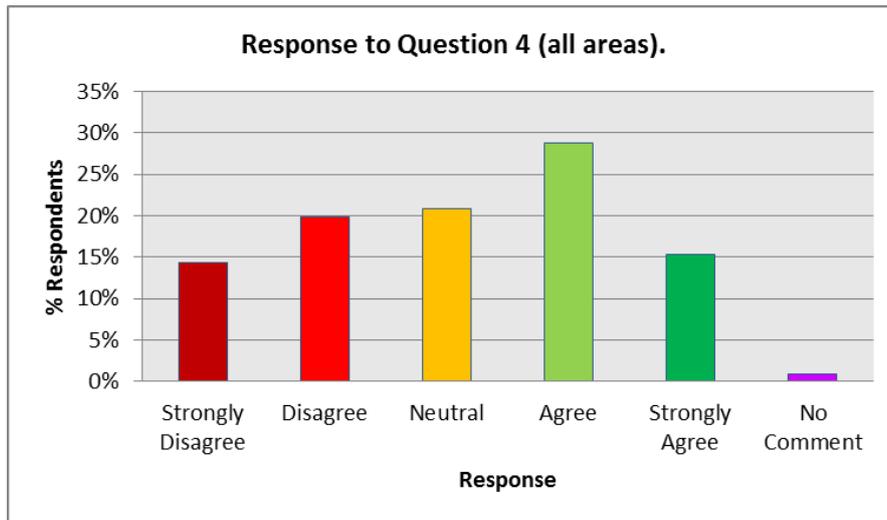


Appendix 5.d

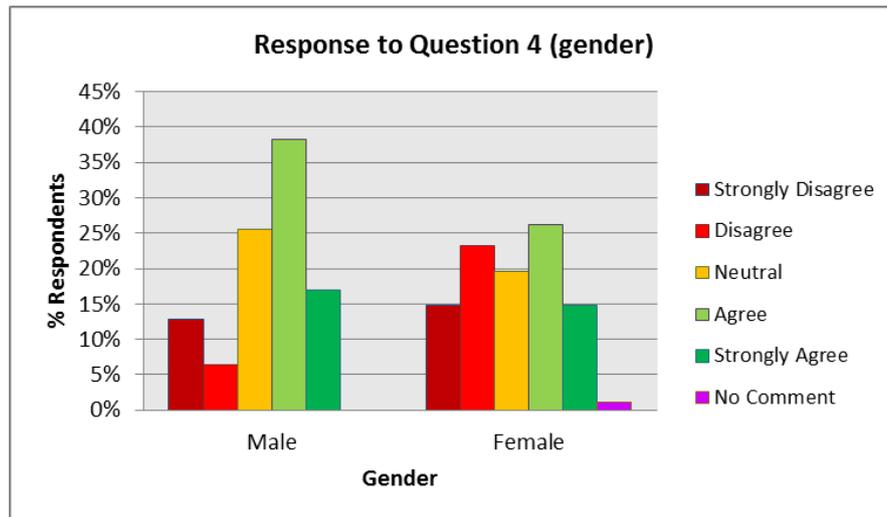


Appendix 6: Response to question 4 - my doctor spoke to me clearly about my condition and treatment.

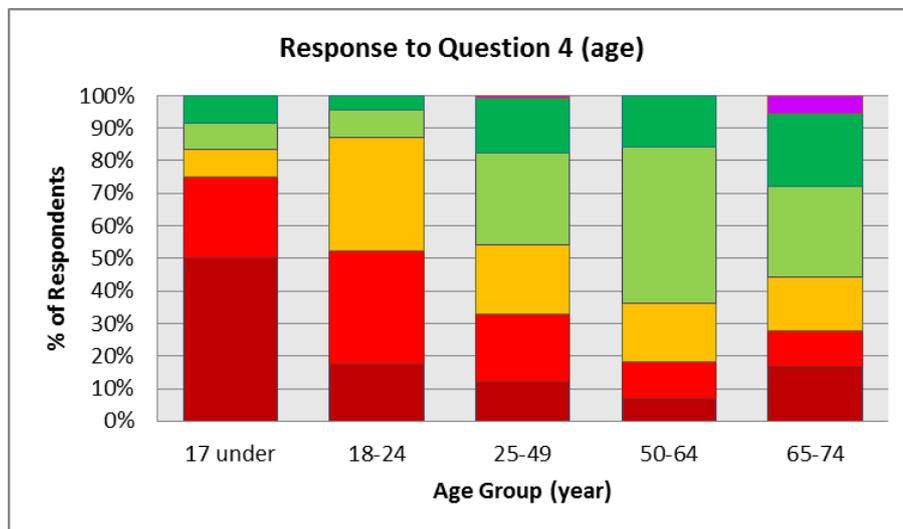
Appendix 6.a



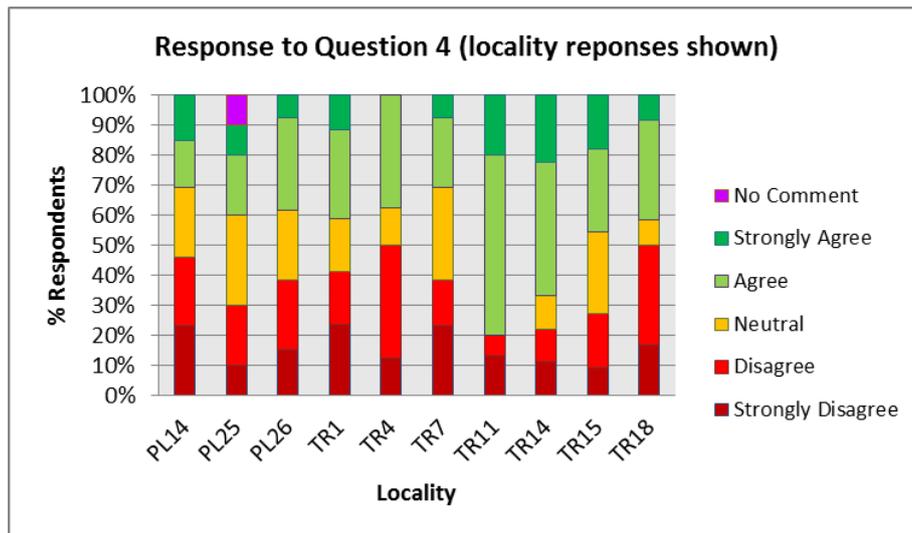
Appendix 6.b



Appendix 6.c

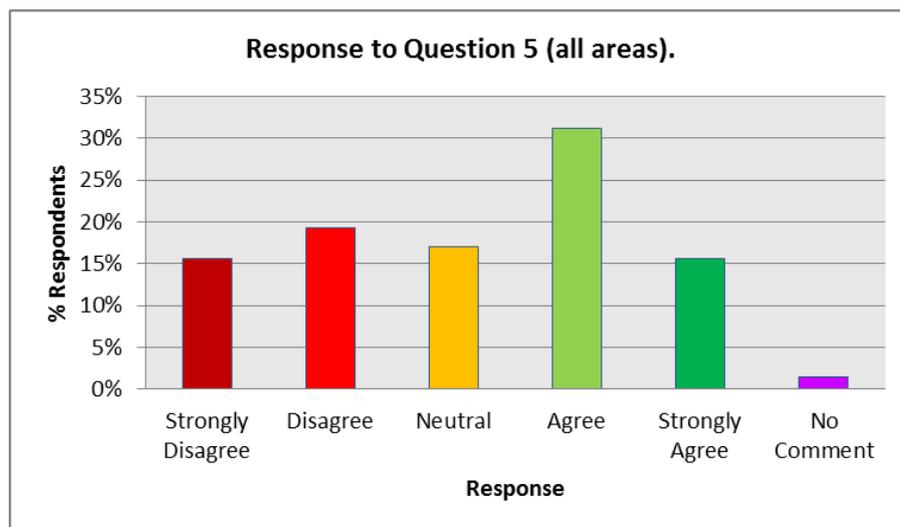


Appendix 6.d

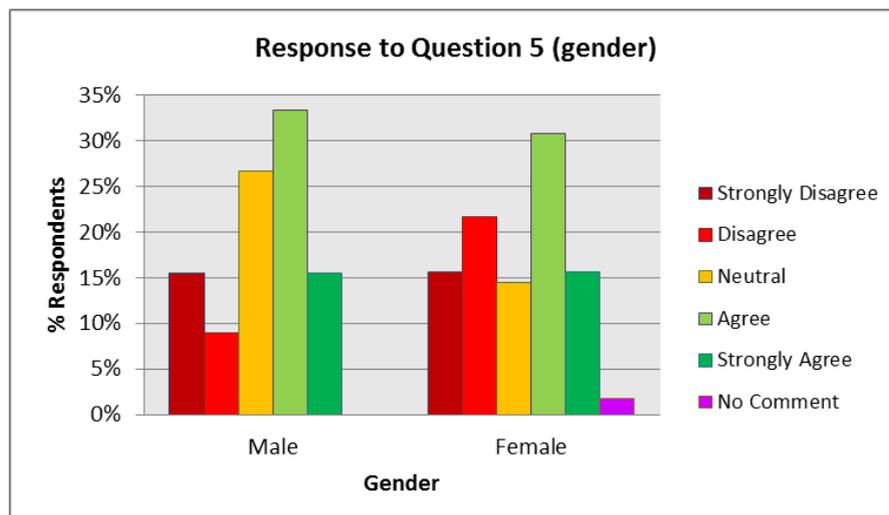


Appendix 7: Response to question 5 - I was offered a choice of treatment options (medication, counselling, etc.).

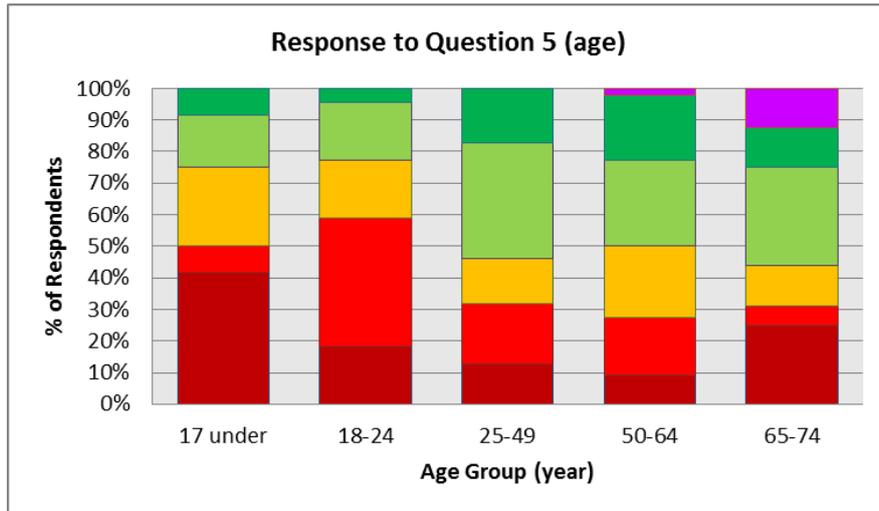
Appendix 7.a



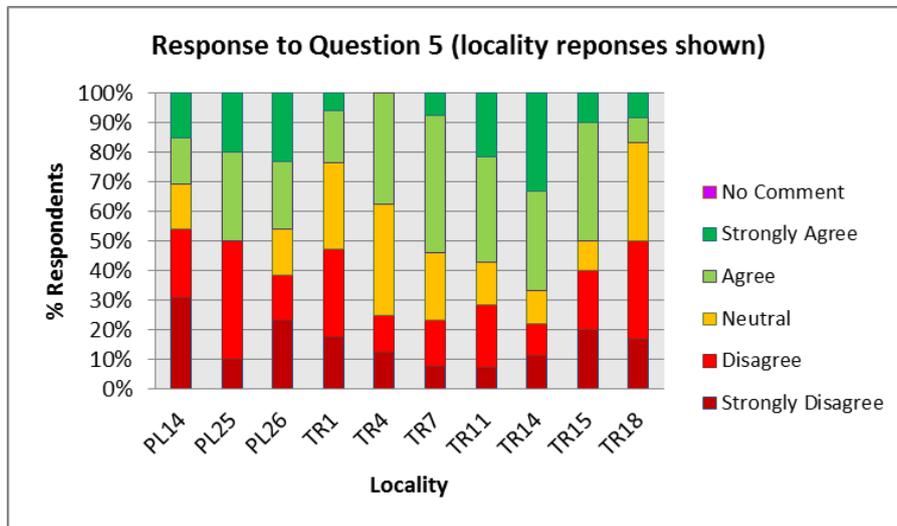
Appendix 7.b



Appendix 7.c

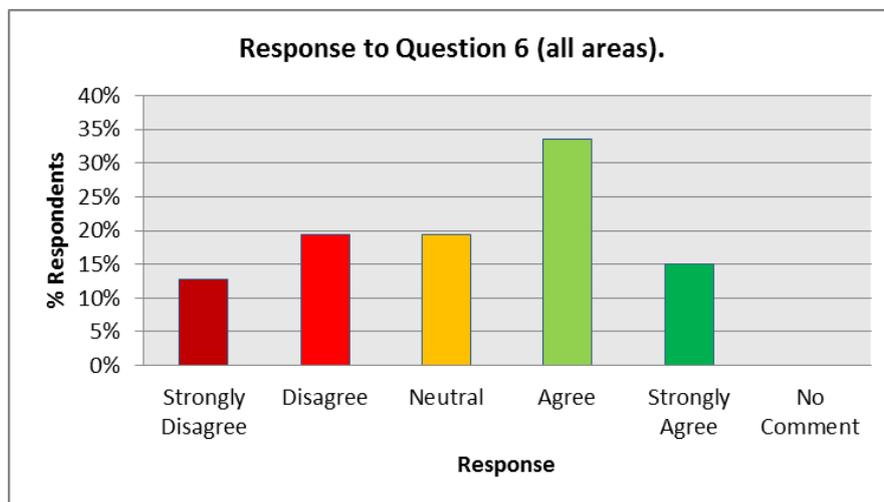


Appendix 7.d

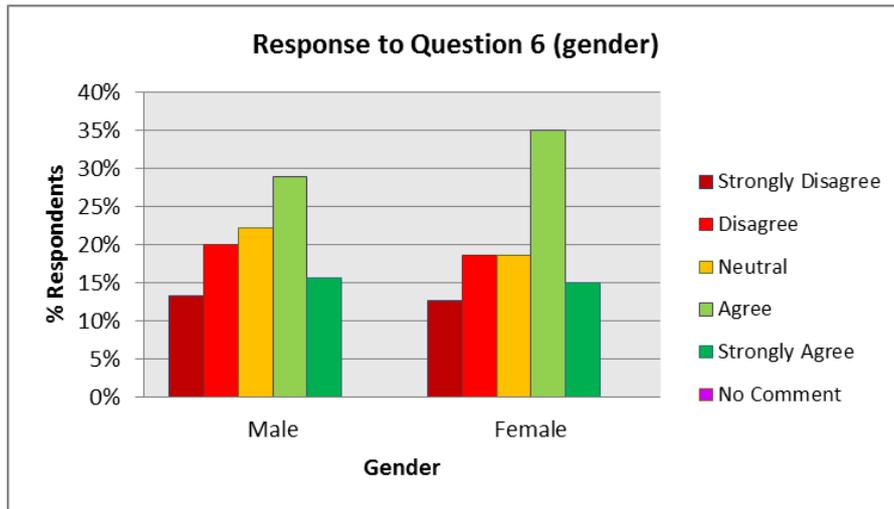


Appendix 8: Response to question 6 - it was easy for me to make an appointment.

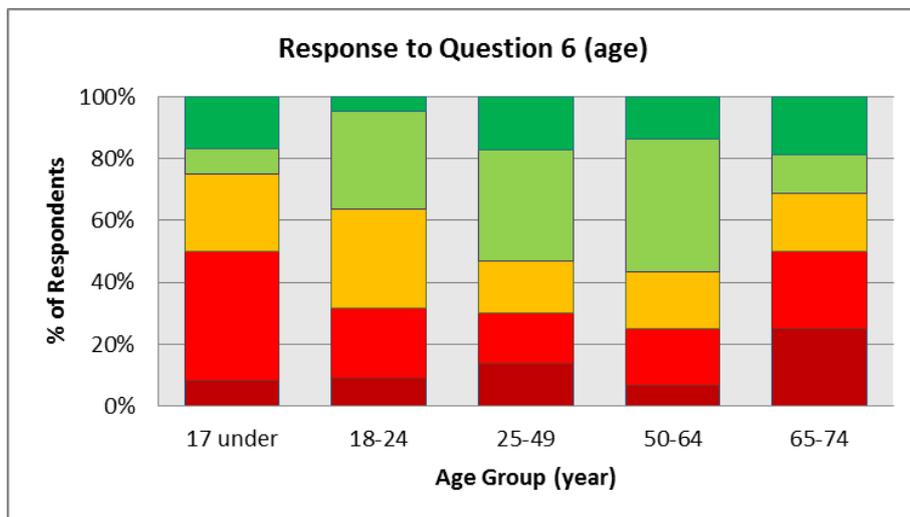
Appendix 8.a



Appendix 8.b



Appendix 8.c



Appendix 8.d

