

GP Alliance Medical Practice Telephone System

Patient Feedback

July 2018

(Pennywell, Barmston & The Galleries)





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Introduction

Following some mixed feedback received by Healthwatch Sunderland about the Sunderland GP Alliance Medical Practice telephone system over a period of several months, the Healthwatch Sunderland Board agreed that further engagement work would be carried out with patients. This would involve using a specifically designed survey (see appendix 1) to be used with patients from 3 practices (Barmston Medical Centre, Pennywell Medical centre, The Galleries) to find out specific information on what was working well and what wasn't working so well.

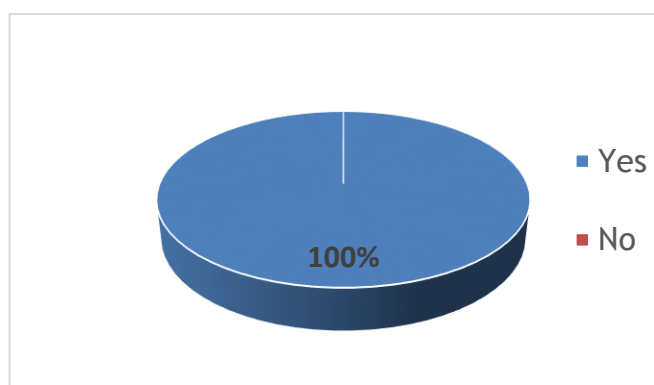
This was carried out across all 3 GP practices during the month of July. The results of which can be found below:

Survey findings

Barmston Medical Centre

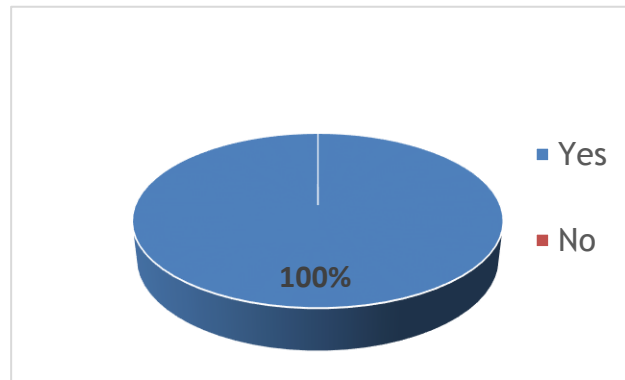
During our visit on Monday 16th July 2018 we engaged with 13 patients.

Q1. When calling the surgery do you find the initial instructions clear and easy to follow?

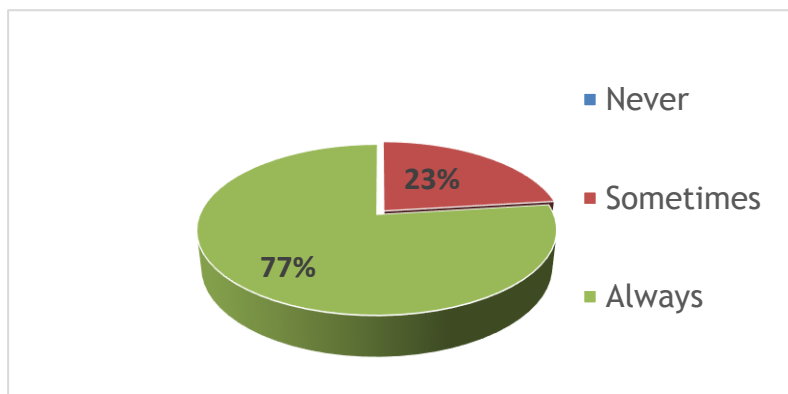




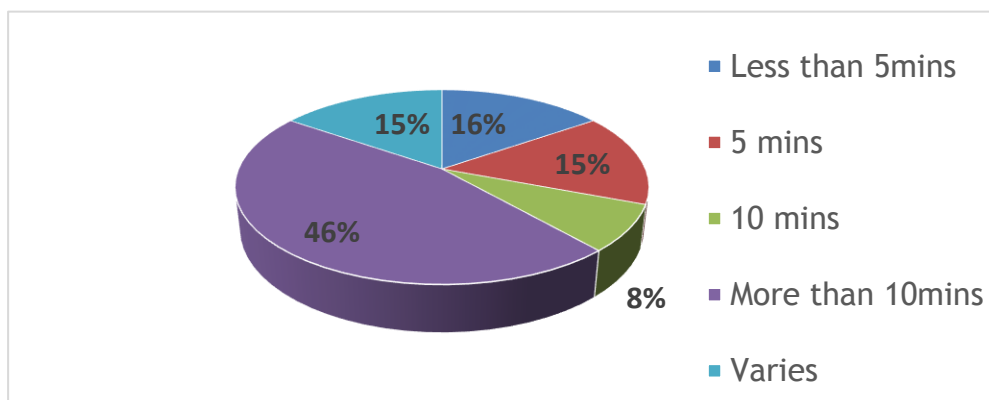
Q2. Are you then given further instructions, do you find these easy and clear to follow?



Q3. How often do you have to wait on hold to get through to a member of the surgery staff?

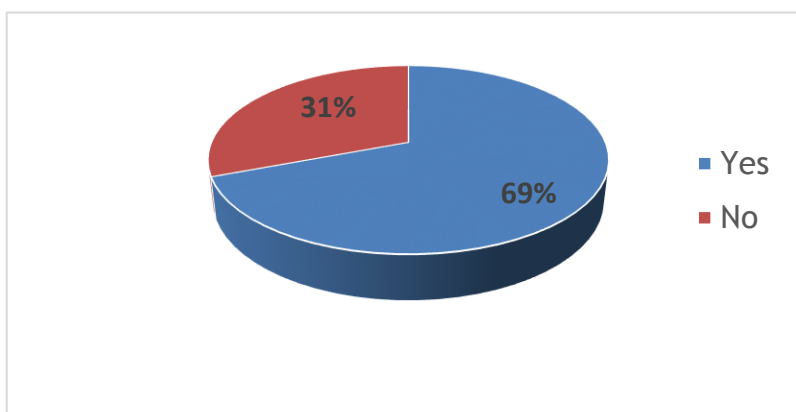


Q4. On average how long are you on hold?





Q5a. Do you find the recorded message played whilst on hold useful?



Q5b. If you don't find it useful, please explain

- Irritating information is repeated continually.
- Repetitive when waiting 20-30mins gets on your nerves, same message time after time. No need for this.
- Repeated message.

Q5c. What information would you find interesting and useful to listen to while you are waiting?

- Music could be better, I'd rather get through quickly to speak to a person.
- Not bothered want to hear a human voice.
- Music included would be useful.
- None - already know procedure.
- I find the information given while I wait helpful enough.

Q6. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the telephone system at the surgery?

- Information for reasons for delay.
- There are times to ring - but it's not a great service. I rang at 8.00am and was 12th in the queue.
- I am not keen on having to tell the receptionist what is wrong so that I can assess the right GP. It worries me as I would have thought all GPs have the same experience and training when at college/university.
- The waiting time is terrible as nearly always 15 minutes and often more. Which when you are kept on hold is expensive.

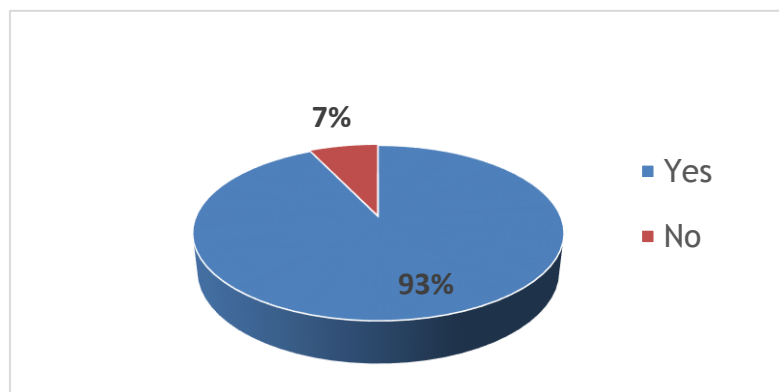


- If you forget the official times for appointments and prescriptions you can miss getting it sorted. Very annoying when you're told your 15th in the queue.
- The waiting time seems to be quite long - would be good to book online also.
- Difficulty to get through. Sometimes ring up at opening time to find 14th or 16th in queue. Not sure how this can happen. Sometimes told number in queue then wait 15 mins before you move up. When eventually get through no appointments or only one GP on today, so full.

Pennywell Medical Centre

During our visit on Thursday 19th July 2018 we engaged with 14 patients.

Q1. When calling the surgery do you find the initial instruction easy and clear to follow?

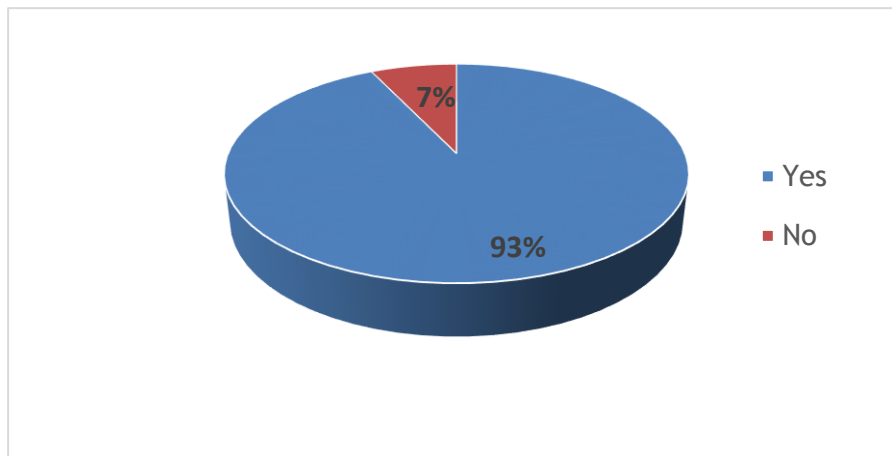


Additional comment to question 1 included:

- No you have to wait through six different options, it takes a minute before you press the button you need.



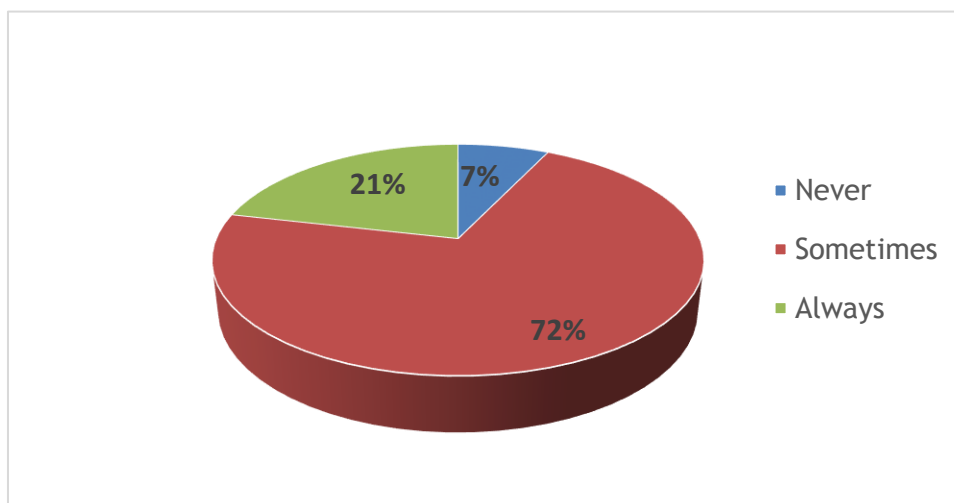
Q2. You are then given further instructions, do you find these clear and easy to follow?



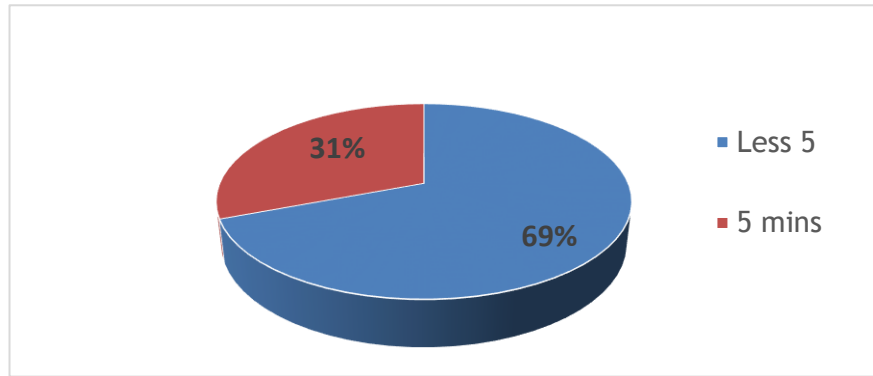
Additional comment to question 2 included:

- No, it's too long to go through.
- Yes, you know you are getting through to the right people.

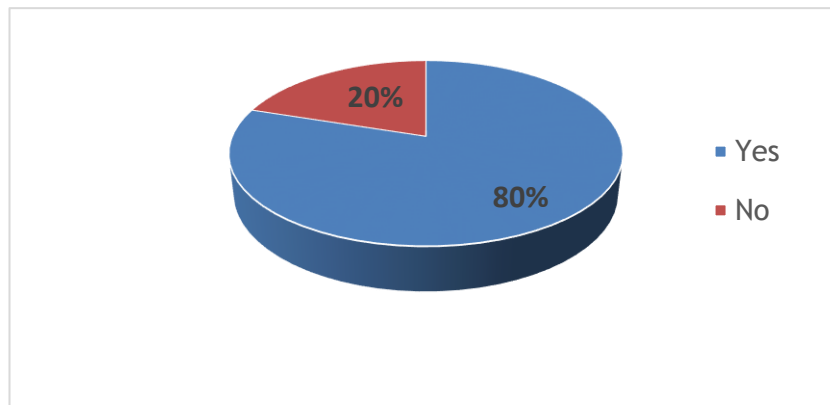
Q3. How often do you have to wait on hold to get through to a member of the surgery staff?



Q4. On average how long are you on hold?



Q5a. Do you find the recorded message played whilst on hold useful?



Additional comment to question 5a included:

- Two patients said “Yes - tells you where you are in queue”.

Q5b. If you don't find it useful please explain

- Boring and repetitive.
- It is annoying if just repeats itself. Why can't we have music? We don't even need the advice in the message.
- Repetitive.
- It's not relevant.



Q5c. What information would you find interesting and useful to listen to while you are waiting?

- Music
- Bit music
- Alternative ways to access healthcare if needed. What to do if it's urgent but not life threatening.
- List of services available if you need help with mental health.

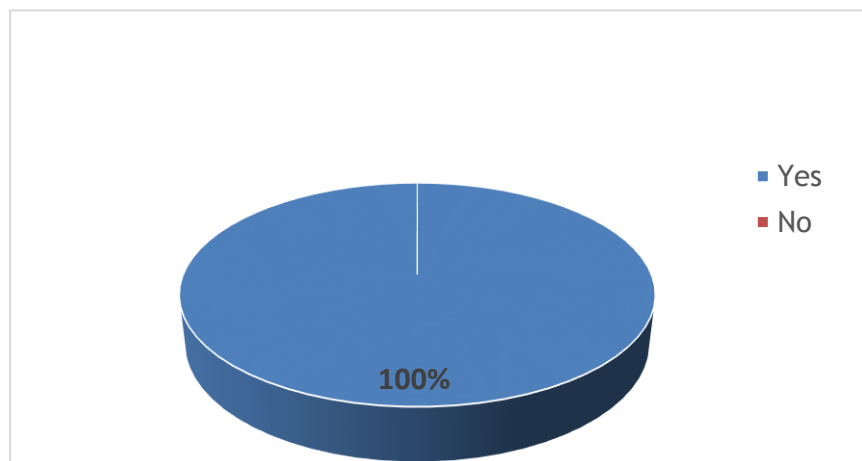
Q6. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the telephone system at the surgery?

- Make the questions to get through shorter
- Quite happy
- I'm satisfied

The Galleries Health Centre

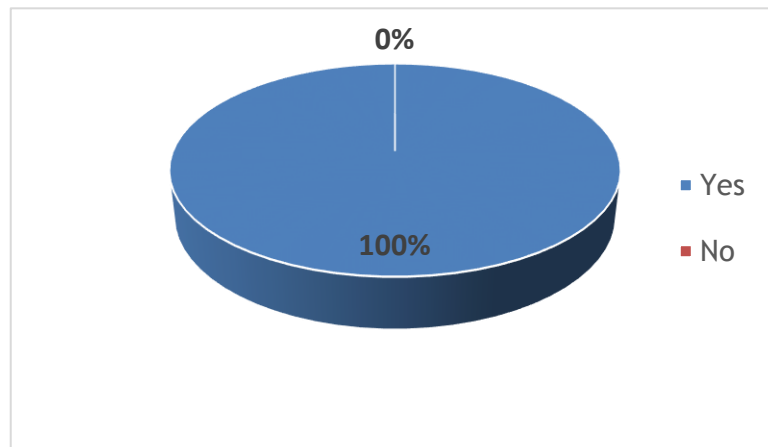
During our visit on Monday 9th July 2018 we engaged with 19 patients.

Q1. When calling the surgery do you find the initial instruction easy and clear to follow?

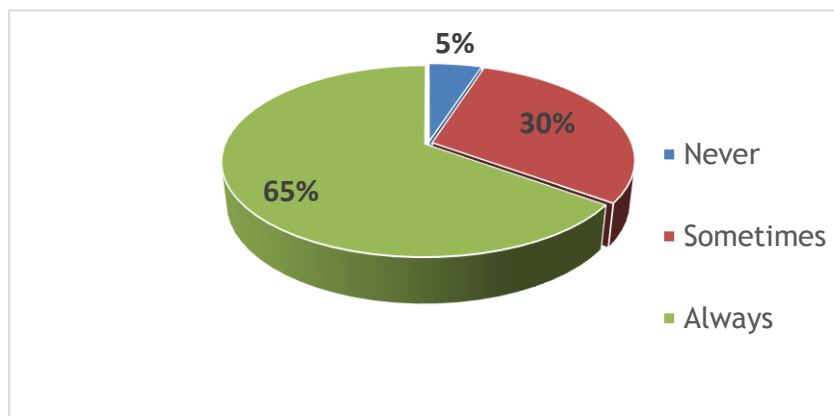




Q2. You are then given further instructions, do you find these easy and clear to follow?

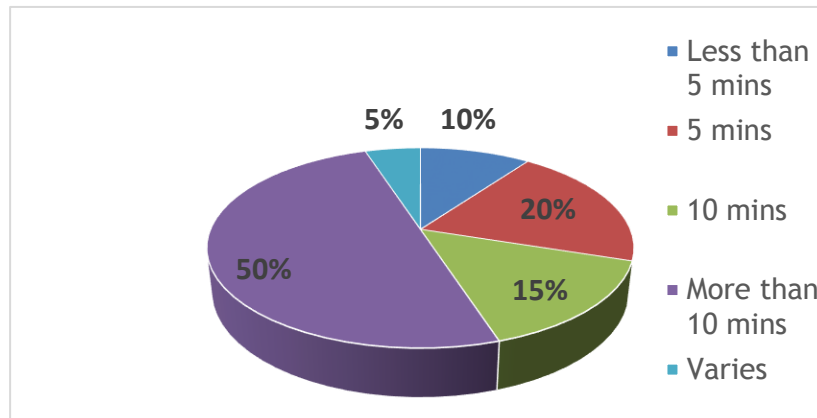


Q3. How often do you have to wait on hold to get through to surgery staff?

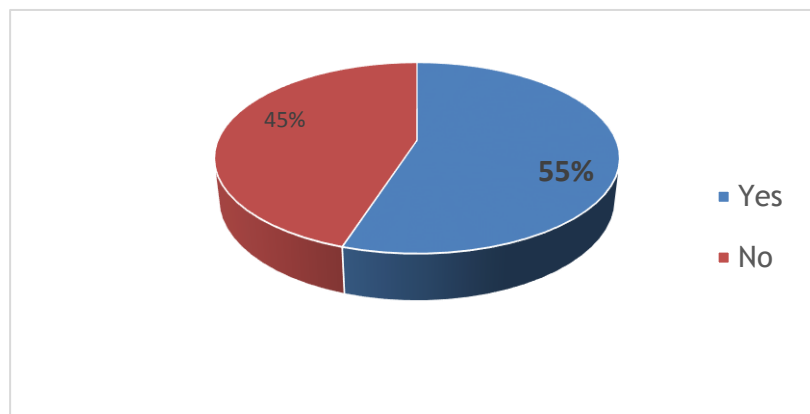




Q4. On average how long are you on hold?



Q5a. Do you find the recorded message played whilst on hold useful?



Q5b. If you don't find it useful please explain

- Not interested.
- It repeats itself too much also there's a bleep in between her conversation
- Repeating time after time.
- Continuous repetition is irritating especially after waiting over 20 minutes.
- You only have to listen to it once, it goes on and on.
- More than one message at a time.
- Annoying.
- Message is repeated, no important information.
- It's the same recorded message other than we will be asked questions to get to the correct medical person.
- Stopped listening to it.
- Message repeats numerous times and is very annoying.



Q5c. What information would you find interesting and useful to listen to while you are waiting?

- I'd rather not wait, it would be better to have automatic call back, in fact I'd rather come into the surgery but I am told I cannot make appointment at the counter.
- All of it but not over and over.
- Would rather have music.
- Two respondents said 'Music'.
- Music or information on important things like missed appointment, how long the waiting time is.
- None just want to get through.

Q6. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the telephone system at the surgery?

- My daughter rings on my behalf. My hearing aid interferes with the phone. If I really need a doctor I walk in book appointment at the desk and walk out. I've waited a week for this one.
- You can only order prescriptions between 2-4pm, Mon- Fri. It is not suitable for daytime workers. No continuity of care. Most old staff have left. Doctors have expressed their concern and left. Surgery uses emergency out of hours for non-emergency to. Surgery uses telephone service as triage, not enough doctors to patients, only the people most desperate are seen. Vulnerable are ignored.
- Never known it so hard to get an appointment to see a doctor.
- Wait too long to get through for an appointment or repeat prescriptions.
- Had half an hour wait on the phone- 5 times had to come back getting nowhere, being passed about. Classified "not urgent", despite history of cancer and worries of recurrence. Telephone service is ok, it's the response after that. I sit on the phone before surgery opens and try to catch it when the line opens, frustrating.
- No I understand that the service is busy.
- Not good.



Appendix 1 - Patient Survey

Sunderland GP Alliance Telephone System - Patient survey

Healthwatch Sunderland is an independent watchdog for Health and Social Care services across the city of Sunderland.

We have recently received feedback about the Sunderland GP Alliance telephone systems and would like to learn more about the system and how it is working for the patients of the surgeries involved.

Name of surgery:

- 1 When you call the surgery you are given initial options to choose from to get you through to the correct surgery. Do you find the instructions clear and easy to follow? YES / NO

If no, please explain.

- 2 You are then given further options to access the correct department of the surgery. These instructions include details of when you can assess the different services eg. test results. Do you find these instructions to be clear and easy to follow? YES / NO

If no, please explain.

- 3 How often do you have to wait on hold to get through to a member of the surgery staff?

Never Sometimes Always



4 If you have had to wait on the telephone line to speak to a member of surgery staff, on average, how long has your waiting time been?

- Less than 5 minutes 5 minutes
10 minutes More than 10 minutes

Other (please explain)

5 When you are waiting on the telephone line, a recorded message is played to you. Do you find this message helpful? YES / NO

If no, please explain

What information would you find interesting and useful to listen to while you are waiting?

6 Is there anything else you would like to tell us about the telephone system at the surgery?

Thank you for your time!

The results of this survey will be shared with the GP Alliance and published in our monthly e-bulletin. If you would like to receive a copy of the e-bulletin, please visit our website to sign up: www.healthwatchesunderland.org.uk or ask a member of our team for a sign-up form.



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