



ENTER AND VIEW VISIT REPORT

Northbrook Group Practice 25th April 2018

Part of Healthwatch Solihull's remit is to carry out Enter and View visits. Healthwatch Solihull Authorised Representatives will carry out these visits to health and social care premises to find out how they are being run and make recommendations where there are areas for improvement.

The Health and Social Care Act allows Authorised Representatives to observe service delivery and talk to service users, their families and carers on premises such as hospitals, residential homes, GP practices, dental surgeries, optometrists and pharmacies. Enter and View visits can happen if people tell us there is a problem with a service but, equally, they can occur when services have a good reputation — so we can learn about and share examples of what they do well from the perspective of people who experience the service first hand.

Healthwatch Solihull Enter and View visits are not intended to specifically identify safeguarding issues. However, if safeguarding concerns arise during a visit, they are reported in accordance with Healthwatch Solihull's safeguarding policy, the service manager will be informed, and the visit will end. The Local Authority Safeguarding team will also be informed.

GP Surgery – Northbrook Group Practice

Registered Patients: 11227

(Source: https://www.nhs.uk/Services/GP/Overview/DefaultView.aspx?id=43007#news-

title)

Service Address: 93 Northbrook Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 3LX

Practice Manager: Emma Frost

The Practice Team consists of:

- 3 GP Partners
- 4 Salaried GPs (part-time)
- 2 ST3 Registrars (Final Year Trainees)
- 3 Band 6 Nurses
- 1 Diabetes Nurse
- 2 Health Care Assistants
- 1 Practice Manager
- 1 Business Manager
- 1 Commissioning Lead
- 1 Finance Officer
- 1 Quality Outcomes Framework Manager
- 2 Medical Secretaries
- 1 Senior Receptionist
- 8-10 Receptionists
- 2 Prescription Clerks

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Solihull would like to thank the Practice staff and the patients for their cooperation during the visit.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed during our visit made on Wednesday 25th April 2018. The report does not claim to be representative of all patients, only of those who contributed within the restricted time available.

Authorised Representatives

Nicola Standen Natalie Travers

Who we share the report with

This report and its findings will be shared with Northbrook Group Practice, the Care Quality Commission (CQC), Solihull MBC, Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group (CGG) and Healthwatch England. The report will also be published on the Healthwatch Solihull website (www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk).

Summary

Healthwatch Solihull visited Northbrook Group Practice on 25 April 2018 following a desktop review of Care Quality Commission (CQC) reports of GP surgeries in the Solihull Borough. The most recent CQC report (December, 2015) rated the Health Centre as: 'Good' for safety; 'Outstanding' for effectiveness; 'Good' for being caring; 'Outstanding' for being responsive to people's needs and 'Good' for services being well led; with an overall rating of 'Outstanding'.

During the visit Authorised Representatives administered surveys with patients, carried out observations and talked with the Practice Manager and the Business Manager.

This report will detail a range of recommendations based on the findings of our Enter and View visit and it is anticipated that these recommendations will contribute to improving service delivery within the Practice and in turn service experience for patients registered with the Practice.

Background

Northbrook Group Practice, located in south Solihull, has 11227 patients registered at the surgery. The Health Centre is located on a shared site with other services including the Jacey Practice, Northbrook Pharmacy and Community Services. The site has a shared car park and the Northbrook GP Practice is all one level.

The Practice's opening times are:

Monday	08:00 – 19:30
Tuesday	08:00 - 18:30
Wednesday	08:00 – 18:30
Thursday	08:00 - 18:30
Friday	07:00 – 18:30
Saturday	Closed
Sunday	Closed

The Practice runs a late surgery on Monday evenings between 18:30 and 19:30 and an early surgery on Friday mornings between 7:00 and 8:00.

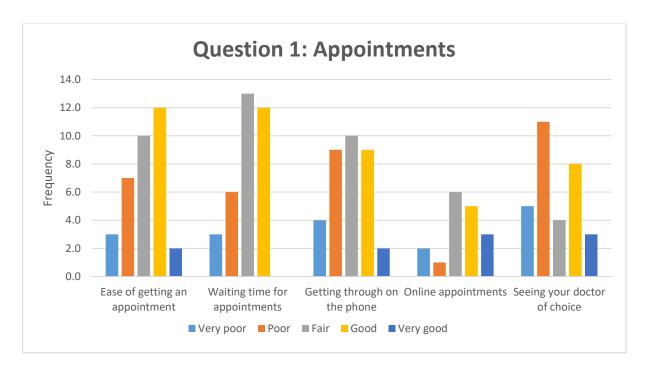
What we did

Two Authorised Representatives visited the Practice from 10.15 am to 12.30pm on 25th April 2018. On arrival we asked for the Practice Manager to discuss the purpose of our visit and how the visit would be conducted. The visit was unescorted and at no time during the visit did we enter consulting rooms.

During our visit we administered 34 surveys with patients and also observed the environment. After we had completed the visit we met with the Practice Manager and the Business Manager to provide initial feedback about the visit and ask any questions for clarification.

Findings:

- Please note not all patients answered all questions
- Not all percentages will add up to 100%, due to rounding up/down of percentages
- For further information, raw data from the survey can be found in Appendix 1.



Overall, Question one of the survey received slightly mixed responses across all ratings.

'Ease of getting an appointment'

'Ease of getting an appointment', was ranked fairly positively with just under half (41%, N=14) of the 34 respondents who completed this question giving a ranking of 'good' to 'very good' and a further 10 (N=29%) giving a ranking of 'fair'. One respondent complimented the Health Centre on their appointment system,

"the surgery is always busy but we never had any problems with getting an appointment...If we can't get an appointment in the morning we can always try in the afternoon and for working people there is a facility of booking an early or late appointment which is really good."

However for others, the experience of getting an appointment was less positive as reflected in the following comments,

"Having to ring at 8.30am and 2pm is ridiculous for an emergency appointment if you work full time – otherwise 3 weeks wait for an appointment".

"Once here good, problem is getting an appointment"

"Getting the appointment – time is four weeks"

We have been informed by the Practice that changes to the appointment system were implemented from the 3rd April 2018. This has included the release of all on the day appointments (morning and afternoon) at 8:30am each day and appointments are available to book on line through the Practice's website or by telephone. In addition, from the 7th March 2018 advance appointments with the Practice's GPs can now only be booked up to 4 weeks in advance. Recent changes to the appointment system the Practice Manager informed us, has led to a reduction of around two-thirds in the Practice's 'Did Not Attend' numbers. One respondent commented that since the introduction of the new appointment system "on the day appointments improved" however, another respondent who rated 'getting an appointment' as 'poor' commented that they were "not sure the new system works".

'Waiting times for appointments'

In relation to the time patients waited for their appointments once they had arrived at the Practice, this section of the survey also received slightly more positive responses with 35% (N=12) of the 34 respondents who answered this question rating this as 'good' and a further 29% (N=10) as 'fair'. However, despite such rankings, during our visit we observed that at times some of the Health Centre's patients had been waiting for 20 minutes or more. The issue of waiting times once at the surgery was further reported by some of the survey respondents,

"Sometimes the waiting times can be a little long. I have waited an hour before..."

"...Doctors – good, thorough, but always running very late"

"Have never been seen on time for GP appointments..."

"Midwife always runs late for appointments".

At the end of our visit we also asked the Practice Manager whether the GP Practice had any procedures in place for informing patients if appointments were running late. We were informed that to some extent this relied on Clinicians informing the Reception staff if appointments were running late and that sometimes this is not reported to Reception staff. The Practice Manager also informed us that blocks of time are slotted in to the appointment schedule Clinicians have for that day which enable Clinicians to 'catch up' should they be running late. Whilst we did not observe this during our visit, the Practice has told us that a message is displayed on the Television Screen in the waiting area advising patients to report to Reception if they have been waiting for a long period of time.

We have subsequently been informed by the Practice that Midwives are employed by Community Services rather than directly by the Practice. However, as the services are provided within the Practice we would recommend that the Practice has systems, such as those discussed above, in place to also inform Patients if appointments with Community Staff are running late.

'Getting through on the telephone'

Slightly more mixed responses were received in relation to 'getting through on the telephone' with 33% (N=11 of the 34 respondents who answered this question) rating this as 'good' or 'very good', 29% (N=10) as 'fair' and 39% (N=13) as 'poor' or 'very poor'. In elaborating on 'getting through on the telephone', some respondents reported that,

"It's a very good surgery once you get to see the Doctor. It feels like services are overstretched as you can never get through on the phone or book an appointment on-line at short notice. Often they forget to switch their phones back on in the mornings and afternoons which is frustrating"

'Impossible to get through on phone, have to repeatedly phone and quite often cut off'

We have subsequently been informed by the Practice that the telephone system is automated and as such cannot be turned off. With this in mind we would ask that the Practice reviews the times that the automated system diverts calls to the answering machine.

Recent changes to the appointment system the Practice has told us, have also included the Reception Desk being unstaffed in the morning between 8:00 and 9:00 to enable the Practice to have additional staff receiving phone calls during their peak time. Whilst we did not observe this during our visit, we have been informed that a poster is displayed in Reception advising patients to use self-check in system during this period and to ring the bell in the event of an emergency.

'On-line booking'

The survey further asked patients to rate their experiences of using the on-line booking service. Of the 50% of respondents (N= 17/34 respondents) who answered this question. Eight (47%) survey respondents rated their experience of the on-line booking service as 'good' to 'very good', six (35%) respondents as 'fair' and three (18%) as 'poor' or very poor'. One respondent commented that using the on-line booking system does not guarantee getting an appointment, "...never able to book on-line as nothing available'.

Other Respondents told us that they have not used the on-line booking system, "Never tried on-line", "Never tried to gain appointment on-line" and one respondent reported to us that on-line booking is mediated by patients' access to the internet,

"My Father is 92 years old with NO computer knowledge. How do you expect older people to make appointments..."

At the end of out visit the Practice Manager informed us that the Practice at one time had the highest number of people booking their appointments on-line in the Solihull Borough and that the Practice had been approached by NHS England to share 'good practice' with other Surgeries.

'Seeing a Doctor of your choice'

Slightly more negative responses were provided by respondents when rating their experiences of 'seeing a Doctor of your choice' with 11 (36%) of those who answered this question (N=31) rating this as 'good' or 'very good', 6 (35%) of respondents rating this as 'fair' and just over half (52%, N=16) as 'poor' or 'very poor' as reflected in the following comments,

"Doctor of choice is very good but don't get to see him often"

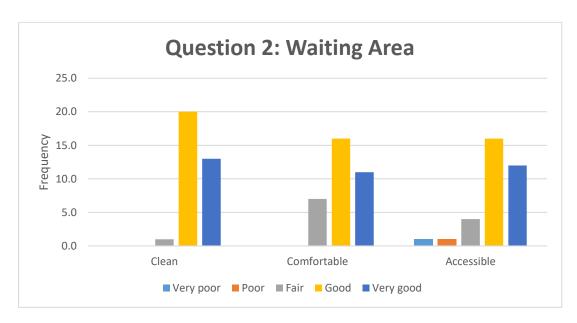
"... Never get to see the same Doctor..."

"Never know who you will see – pot luck really"

"My Doctor is very good but difficult to see him"

Not seeing a Doctor of your choice was also regarded as problematic by one respondent who suggested that this impacted upon the care they received, "Would be nice to be able to see the same Doctor but this never happens so no consistency in care". One respondent further reported that if they wished to see a Doctor of their choice this was possible but often required appointments to be booked in advance and in turn a longer wait for an appointment with a Doctor of their choice,

"I do get to see a Doctor of choice if I manage to get a slot and wait sometimes one to two months"



The responses relating to the waiting area were positive with 97% (N=33 out of 34 respondents who answered this question) rating the cleanliness of the waiting area as 'good' or 'very good' and 79% (N=27) rating the comfort of the waiting rooms as 'good' or 'very good'. During our visit we observed that the waiting room was modern, clean and comfortable and we felt there was a good atmosphere in the waiting area. During our visit we observed a number of notice boards and a television screen in the waiting area displaying a range of information electronically including details of community activities and support groups, information on NHS111, condition-related health awareness and health promotion information including information on health checks, screening and vaccinations, information on the Care Quality Commission's (CQC) rating of the surgery, details of the Surgery's extended opening hours and information on 'named GPs'. The television screen also informed patients of when the GP was ready to see them for their appointment and which room to go to.

In addition, 'Friends and Family' feedback forms and a box for completed forms were present in the waiting area although we did not note any posters informing patients of where the forms could be located or encouraging patients to complete. At the end of our visit we spoke with the Practice Manager and Business Manager about how patient feedback was shared in the Practice and we were informed that any issues arising were discussed in Practice meetings, the Senior Receptionist also shares feedback with the reception team and the Patient Participation Group (PPG) is provided with feedback also. In addition to the Friends and Family test the Surgery also uses feedback from NHS choices.

In relation to the accessibility of the building 28 out of the 34 respondents (82%) rated accessibility as 'fair' to 'very good'. As mentioned earlier in the report, the GP Practice is all on one level and is located on a shared site. That the car park is shared between the services at the site, raised issues relating to limited parking spaces for the Health Centre's patients as reflected in the following comments,

'Car parking requires extending'

'More parking urgently needed'

'Had to park on road - busy'

'Parking is an issue'

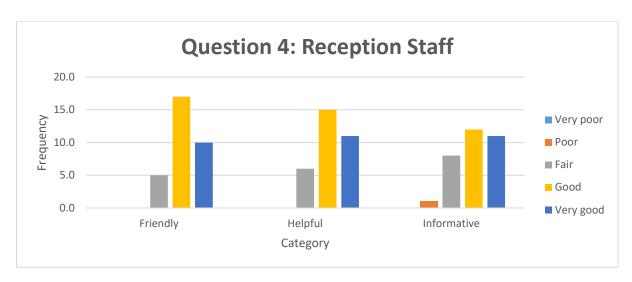
'More parking would be beneficial'

'Parking a nightmare, not enough spaces for number of patients'

The Practice has subsequently informed us that the Car Park is owned by Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council and shared with other services located on site and as such, the Practice has no control over the car parking availability. However, as access to parking has been raised by a number of survey respondents we would recommend that the Practice works alongside other services located on site and Solihull MBC to explore options for utilising car parking space effectively.

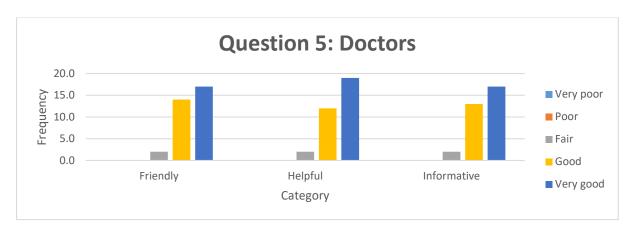


The toilet facilities were regarded as 'good' or 'very good' by two-thirds of respondents for cleanliness (67%, N=20) and 70% of respondents for comfort with one respondent commenting that the toilet facilities were "always clean – never had any problems". We observed during our visit that the toilet facilities were well stocked and clean and that there was an accessible toilet for disabled people. Baby changing facilities were also available.



Thirty-two respondents answered this survey question and overall the attitude of the Reception staff was marked highly by patients with 27 (84%) respondents giving a rating of 'good' or 'very good' for friendliness and 26 (82%) respondents giving a rating of 'good' or 'very good' for helpfulness. One respondent commented that the Reception staff 'always try to help your out'. Reception staff were ranked slightly lower (N=23, 73%) for being informative than friendly and helpful. During our visit, we observed Reception staff being friendly and welcoming.

There was also an electronic self check-in system available for patients in the waiting area in a range of community languages and we observed that the Reception area had a 'screen' to one side which afforded patients a level of privacy from the waiting area when 'booking in' with the Receptionists. Whilst we did not observe this during our visit, the Practice has informed us that there is also a notice on the Television Screen in the waiting area advising patients that should they wish to speak to a member of staff in private, a room will be made available. At the end of our visit, the Practice Manager informed us that the Reception area was to be redesigned in the near future to facilitate more space in the waiting area. Based on our observations we would recommend that any changes made to the Reception area consider patients' privacy in its design.



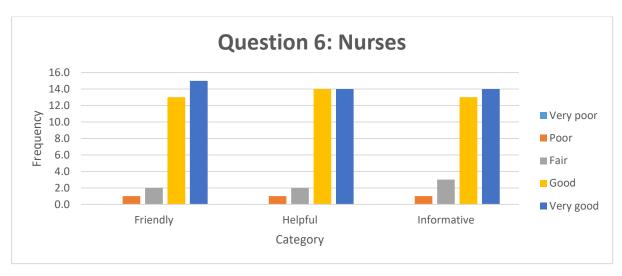
Overall, the Doctors were ranked very positively by patients with 31 out of the 33 (94%) respondents who answered this question ranking the Practice's GPs as 'good' or 'very good' for friendliness and helpfulness and 30 out of 32 (93%) respondents rating Doctors as 'good' or 'very good' for being informative. Such positive responses were reflected in the further comments made by respondents,

"Excellent Doctors at this Surgery"

"All Doctors are good and friendly"

"Been with the Practice for years, excellent GPs"

"Treat my father with care and understanding. Very Good".

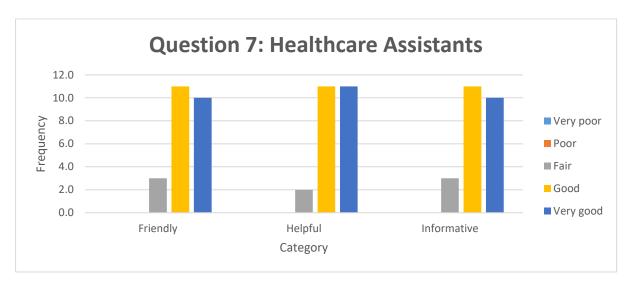


As with GPs, nurses scored highly for patient satisfaction with 90% (N=28 of the 31 respondents who answered this question) rating nursing staff as 'good' or 'very good' for being friendly and helpful and 87% (N=27) for being informative. (n=21), helpful (n=21) and informative (n=20). Again, such positive rating were reflected in respondents' comments,

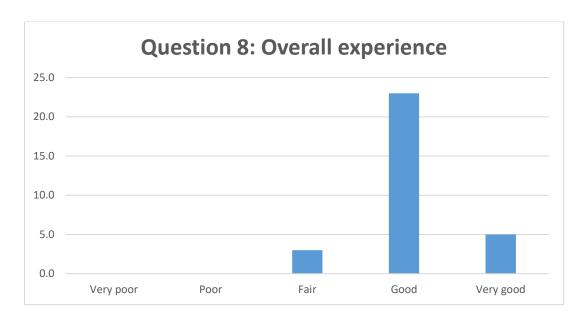
'[Names of two nurses] both lovely'

'I only had appointment with the Nurse once or twice but it was good'

'Very good experience with baby immunisations. Take time to talk/reassure you about what they are doing'.



As with the question about Doctors and nursing staff, Healthcare Assistants also received very positive ratings from patients for being friendly, helpful and informative. They received a rating of 'very good' from 10 respondents for friendliness, 11 for helpfulness and 10 for being informative and no patients rated Healthcare Assistants as less than 'fair'. It is perhaps worth noting that fewer respondents completed the question about Healthcare Assistants than for GPs and Receptionists (N=24).



At the end of the survey we asked patients to rate their overall experience. Thirty-one patients completed this question with five respondents rating their overall experience as 'very good', 23 respondents rating their experience as 'good' and three respondents as 'fair', overall displaying high levels of satisfaction among patients consistent with findings discussed throughout this report. At the end of the survey, we included a further comments box (please see Appendix One for further detail of comments). Some of the comments received also displayed high levels of satisfaction among patients,

'Been with the Practice for years – excellent GPs'

'Been with Northbrook Practice since 2002, very trustworthy and safe environment, always know I can confide in them and always helpful and look after you'.

Staff Training

During our visit we asked the Practice Manager about training received by staff. We were informed that staff received a range of both mandatory and Professional Development training. The range of training undertaken by staff differed across the different staffing groups with Clinical Staff receiving more in the way of clinically based training. Currently much of the training is provided through Birmingham and Solihull Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG) 'Bluestream' on-line training along with other specialised training for Doctors provided by Consultants from Spire Parkway. The Practice Staffs' training is tracked by the Practice Manager which enables staff to be reminded of training when it is due and training also forms part of staff appraisals.

Patient Participation Group

The Practice Manager informed us that they have an active and supportive Patient Participation Group (PPG) of around 20 members who meet every three months and that outside of formal meetings, the Chair of the PPG is in regular contact with the Practice. The

PPG focusses on patient experiences and has been involved in a range of activities including fund raising and Patient Education events. The Practice Manager also informed us that the PPG is not representative of all demographics across the Solihull Borough especially in relation to age and ethnicity and that the Practice recognises this and is working towards addressing the representativeness of the Group's membership.

Recommendations and Follow–Up Actions:

- That patients are encouraged to complete patient feedback forms including the 'Friends and Family' test and that the location of feedback forms is signposted within the waiting areas by for example, posters;
- That, in addition to informing patients if Practice staff are running late, the Reception where possible also informs patients if Community or other staff, such as Midwives, are running late;
- To take into consideration Patients' privacy when designing the 'new' Reception area;
- To review how the car park is utilised to address patients' concerns about parking availability;
- That efforts are made to recruit under-represented groups to the PPG to ensure a diversity of patient perspectives within the Group.

Appendix 1: Data tables

Please note:

- Not all patients answered all questions
- Not all percentages will add up to 100%, due to rounding up/down of percentages

Question 1							
How well would you rate the following at Northbrook Health Centre?							
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good		
Getting an appointment (n=34 responses)	3 (9%)	7 (21%)	10 (29%)	12 (35%)	2 (6%)		
Waiting time for appointments (n=34 responses)	3 (9%)	6 (18%)	13 (38%)	12 (35%)	0		
Getting through on the telephone (n=34 responses)	4 (12%)	9 (27%)	10 (29%)	9 (27%)	2 (6%)		
Online appointments (n=17 responses)	2 (12%)	1 (6%)	6 (35%)	5 (29%)	3 (18%)		
Seeing the Doctor of your choice (n=31 responses)	5 (16%)	11 (36%)	4 (13%)	8 (26%)	3 (10%)		
Further comments	"Long wait for particular Doctor"						
	"My father is 92 years old with NO computer knowledge. How do you expect older people to make appointments. Appointment should be released at both 8.30 am and 2pm"						
	"Have to say visit is for an emergency - Having to ring at 8.30am and 2pm is ridiculous for emergency appointment if you work full time - otherwise 3 weeks wait for appointment"						
	"Not sure new system works"						
	"Dr of choice is very good but I don't get to see him often"						

"Getting appointment is good. If we can't see Dr in the morning, there is facility to book appointment in afternoon"

"Getting the appointment- time is 4 weeks"

"Never tried online, never asked for a specific Doctor"

"All of the above vary depending on days and times, overall a good doctors"

"Impossible to get through on phone, have to repeatedly phone and quite often cut off. Never got to see the same Doctor and never able to book online as nothing available. Doctors good, thorough but always running very late"

"Never tried to gain appointment online"

"Midwife always runs late for appointments"

"I do get to see Dr of my choice if I manage to get a slot and wait sometimes 1/2 months"

Question 2								
How well would you rate the following on the waiting area at Northbrook Health Centre?								
	Very PoorPoorFairGoodVery Good							
Clean (n=34 responses)	0	0	1 (3%)	20 (59%)	13 (38%)			
Comfortable (n=34 responses)	0	0	7 (21%)	16 (47%)	11 (32%)			
Ease of access to the building (n=34 responses)	1 (3%)	1 (3%)	4 (12%)	16 (47%)	12 (35%)			
Further comments	"More parki	"More parking urgently needed"						
	"Had to par	"Had to park on Road - busy"						
	"Parking is a	"Parking is an issue"						
	"Waiting are	ea is good a	ınd clean"					

"More parking would be beneficial"

"Parking a nightmare, not enough spaces for number of patients"

Question 3 How well would you rate the following on the toilet facility at Northbrook Health Centre?							
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good		
Clean (n=30 responses)	0	2 (7%)	8 (27%)	17 (57%)	3 (10%)		
Comfortable (n=30 responses)	0	1 (3%)	8 (27%)	18 (60%)	3 (10%)		
Ease of access (n=30 responses)	0	1 (3%)	2 (7%)	21 (70%)	6 (20%)		
Further comments	"Toilets are always clean - never had any problems" "Have not been to the toilet here"						
	"Have only used it once"						
	"Never used it"						

Question 4 How well would you rate the following on the Receptionists at Northbrook Health Centre? **Very Poor** Poor Fair Good Very Good Friendliness (n=32responses) 0 0 5 (16%) 17 (53%) 10 (31%) 0 Helpfulness (n=32 responses) 0 6 (19%) 15 (47%) 11 (35%) Informative (n=32 responses) 0 1 (3%) 8 (25%) 12 (38%) 11 (35%)

Further comments	"They always try to help you out"
	"Always book in the machine"
	"Appreciate receptionists are very pressured"

Ouestion 5 How well would you rate the following on the Doctors at Northbrook Health Centre? Very Poor Poor Fair Good Very Good Friendliness (n=33 responses) 0 0 2 (6%) 14 (42%) 17 (52%) 0 0 Helpfulness (n=33 responses 12 (36%) 2 (6%) 19 (58%) Informative (n=32 responses) 0 0 2 (6%) 13 (40%) 17 (53%) **Further comments** "Treat my father with care and understanding. Very Good" "Never really know who you will see- pot luck really" "Excellent Drs at this Surgery" My Dr is very good but difficult to see him" "Good" "All Doctors are good and friendly"

Question 6						
How well would you rate the following on the Nurses at Northbrook Health Centre?						
	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	

Friendliness (n=31 responses)	0	1 (3%)	2 (7%)	13 (42%)	15 (48%)		
			, ,	, , ,			
Helpfulness (n=31 responses)	0	1 (3%)	2 (7%)	14 (45%)	14 (45%)		
Informative (n=31 responses)	0	1 (3%)	3 (10%)	13 (42%)	14 (45%)		
Further comments	"Not seen a nurse"						
	"[Names of two nurses] both lovely"						
	"I only had appointment with the Nurse once or twice but it was good"						
	"Don't think I have seen a nurse"						
	"The only negative I have had some blood tests where they were unable to get a result from the sample"						
	"very good experience with baby immunisations. Take time to talk/reassure you about what they are doing"						

Question 7

How well would you rate the following on the Healthcare Assistants at Northbrook Health Centre?

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good		
Friendliness (n=24 responses)	0	0	3 (12%)	11 (46%)	10 (42%)		
Helpfulness (n=24 responses)	0	0	2 (8%)	11 (46%)	11 (46%)		
Informative (n=24 responses)	0	0	3 (13%)	11 (46%)	10 (42%)		
Further comments	"Not seen"						
	"I can't comment as I have not met them"						
	"[name of HCA] lovely"						

"No comment"

"Not seen

"Have not seen a healthcare Assistant"

"Never used them"

"No experience"

Question 8:

What was the overall experience of your visit today?

	Very Poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good
(n=31 responses)	0	0	3 (10%)	23 (74%)	5 (16%)

Further comments:

"Have never been seen on time for GP appointments. Blood test appointments never in the same week, end up keep going to Solihull Hospital"

"Car parking requires extending"

"On the day appointments improved"

"Once here, good - problem is getting an appointment"

"Been with the practice for years. Excellent GPs"

"Twenty years ago used to be excellent - has gone downhill"

"The surgery is always busy but we never had any problems with appointment or any of the Doctors. If we can't get an appointment in the morning we can always try in the afternoon and for working people there is a facility of booking early or late appointment which is really good"

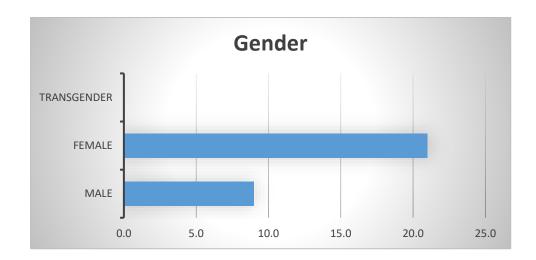
"Been with Northbrook Practice since 2002, very trustworthy and safe environment, always know I can confide in them and always helpful and look after you"

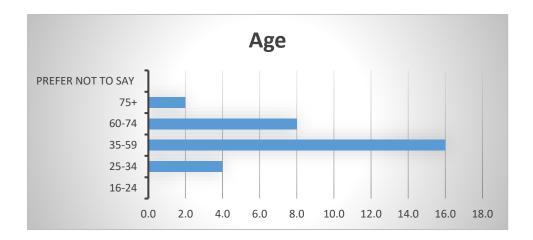
"I would prefer to see more preventative action"

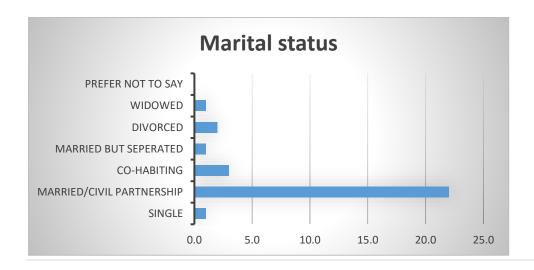
"Sometimes the waiting times can be a little long, I have waited an hour before but apart from that a good doctors"

"It's a very good surgery once you get to see a Doctor. It feels like services are overstretched as you can never get through on the phone or book an appointment online at short notice. Often they forget to switch phones back on in the mornings/afternoons which is frustrating. Would be nice to be able to see the same Doctor but this never happens so no consistency in care".

Appendix 2: Demographic Breakdown of Survey Respondents







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