

## ENTER AND VIEW VISIT REPORT

### ***Grove Surgery 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019***

Part of Healthwatch Solihull's remit is to carry out Enter and View visits. Healthwatch Solihull's 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's 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 – Grove Road Surgery

**Service Address:** Grove Surgery, 3 Grove Road, Solihull, B91 2AG

### Acknowledgements

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

### Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings during our visit made on Tuesday 26th March, 2019. The report does not claim to be representative of all patients, only of those who contributed within the restricted time available.

### Who we share the report with

This report and its findings will be shared with Grove Surgery, 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](http://www.healthwatchsolihull.org.uk)).

### Background

In October 2018, Grove Surgery, formerly a Surgery within the Bernays Whitehouse partnership, 'merged' with a number of other Solihull GP surgeries to form the 'Solihull Healthcare Partnership'. Surgeries within the partnership include Monkspath Surgery, the Jacey Practice, Haslucks Green Medical Centre and other Surgeries that were formerly part of the Bernays & Whitehouse Partnership including Blossomfield Surgery and Shirley Medical Centre. The Healthcare Partnership has a practice list of 23,576 patients (Source: <https://www.nhs.uk/Services/gp/Overview/DefaultView.aspx?id=37831>).

Grove Road Surgery's consulting times are:

<b>Monday</b>	08:00 - 18:30
<b>Tuesday</b>	08:00 - 18:30
<b>Wednesday</b>	08:00 - 14:00      15:00 - 18:30
<b>Thursday</b>	08:00 - 18:30
<b>Friday</b>	08:00 - 18:30
<b>Saturday</b>	<b>Closed</b>
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Closed</b>

The Surgery also offers extended opening hours for appointments. Extended opening hours appointments are offered to all patients of the Surgeries within the Healthcare Partnership and appointments are held at the Blossomfield Surgery between 6.30pm - 8.00pm each

weekday and 8.00am -11.00am on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays. GPs and other staff within the partnership work on a rota basis to manage the extended opening hours.

### **Purpose of our visit**

In keeping with Healthwatch Solihull's role of sharing 'good practice' in service delivery within the Solihull Borough, we visited Grove Surgery following a desk top review of CQC reports. The most recent CQC report, based on an inspection undertaken in May 2016, rated the Surgery as 'good' across areas of 'safety', 'caring' and being 'well-led' and outstanding for being 'effective' and 'responsive' and with an overall rating of outstanding ([https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new\\_reports/AAAF6843.pdf](https://www.cqc.org.uk/sites/default/files/new_reports/AAAF6843.pdf)). The purpose of our visit was to explore first hand with patients present on the day of our visit, their experiences of the Surgery.

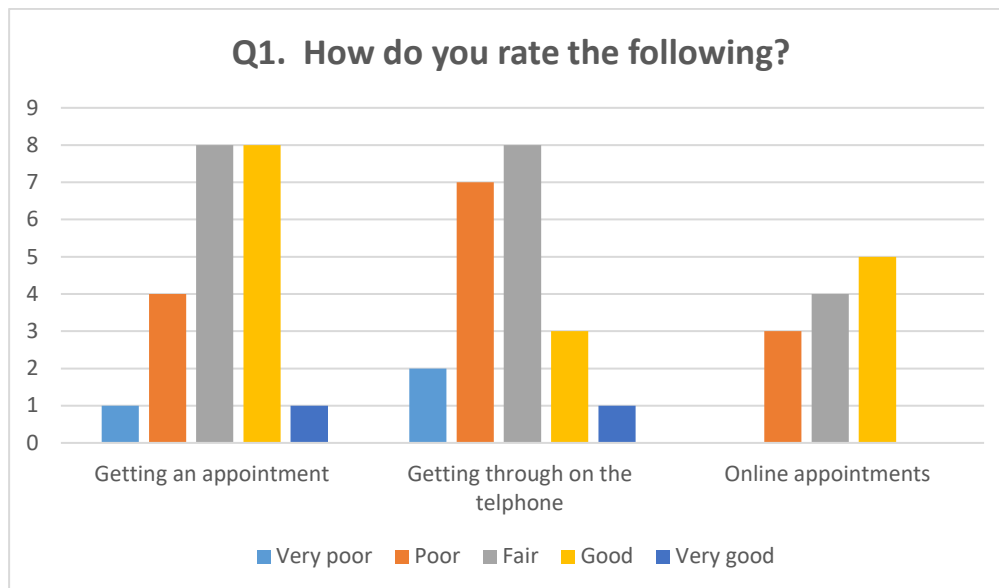
### **What we did**

We visited the Surgery from 9:45 am to 12.30pm on 26<sup>th</sup> March, 2019. During our visit, we administered 22 surveys with patients, observed the environment and at the end of our visit, talked with the Practice Manager. The visit was unescorted and at no time during the visit did we enter consulting rooms.

This report will detail, where appropriate, 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.

## Findings:

- Please note not all patients answered all questions



### ***'Ease of getting an appointment' and 'Getting through on the telephone'***

Overall, 'ease of getting an appointment' received largely positive responses with 40% (N=9 of the 22 respondents who completed our survey) rating ease of getting an appointment as 'good' to 'very good' and a further 36% of survey respondents rating this as 'fair'. However, when asked about 'getting through on the telephone' respondents reported slightly more negative experiences with 43% (N= 9 of the 21 respondents who completed this question) giving a rating of 'poor' to very 'poor', 38% (N=8) as 'fair' and only 19% (N=4) rating this as 'good' or 'very good'. Patients that we spoke to on the day of our visit further elaborated on the difficulties they experienced in getting through on the telephone:

*'Lengthy to get through on phone - quicker to come to surgery.'*

*'In the last 12 months, trying to reach my GP is incredibly difficult. Wait on phone of over 40 minutes one time, always over 10 minutes.'*

For one respondent, difficulties with getting through on the telephone was attributed to the installation of a new telephone system:

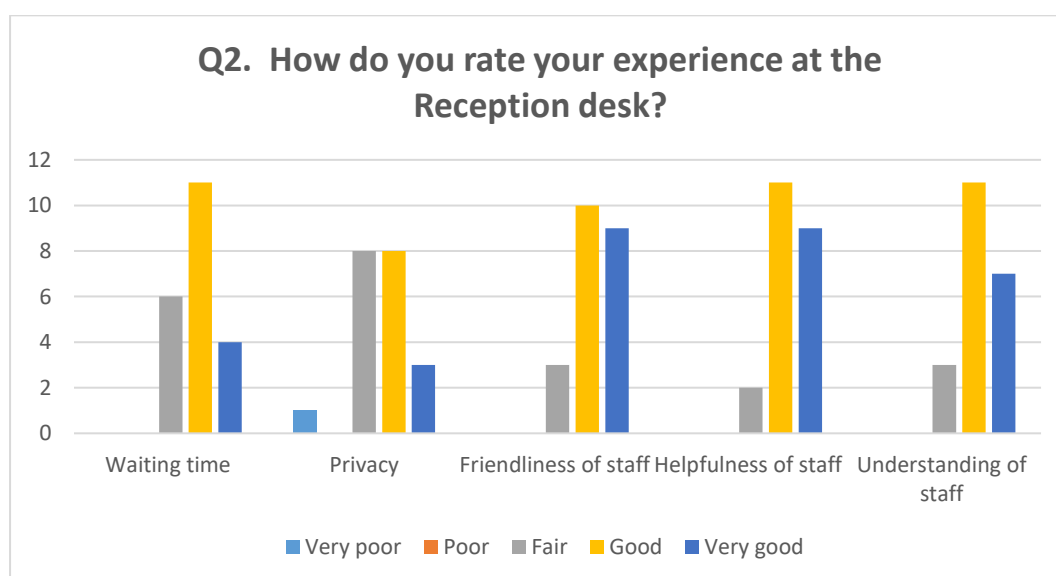
*'Since the new system came into place, on the phone is difficult. You got through so easy before. Now you wait then get put in a queue which can be for 45 mins which, when you are an elderly patient, it can be very difficult. You put the phone down and just don't bother which is not right.'*

At the end of our visit, we spoke with the Practice Manager who confirmed that the Surgery has recently had a new telephone system installed that informs patients of where they are in the queue. However, given that some patients are still experiencing difficulties in getting through on the telephone, we would recommend that the Surgery reviews telephone access for appointments to identify the key concerns of patients.

### ***'On-line appointment booking'***

The survey further asked patients to rate their experiences of booking an appointment on-line. In response to this question, five respondents rated this as 'good', four as 'fair' and three as 'poor'. However, only 12 of a possible 22 survey respondents answered this question. That fewer respondents answered this question may be indicative that fewer patients make use of the on-line booking system. This is to some extent supported by our findings, where a number of respondents told us that they do not book appointments on-line. For one respondent, their use of the on-line booking facility was related to what they perceived as appointments – *'Surprised that sometimes on-line there are no appts available - even for say 2 to 3 weeks ahead.'* For another respondent, this was related to their use of computers and the internet - *'I don't go on-line.'* One respondent further told us that *'on-line appointments are only for 18 and above but children are not allowed. This is very inconvenient for children.'*

Given these findings, we would recommend that consideration is given to promoting on-line booking which may increase usage and uptake and in turn, reduce pressure on the telephone booking system. This could perhaps take the form of a 'promotional stand' in the waiting area that provides information about on-line booking and guidance on how patients can register for the service. However, given that some patients do not or choose not to use computers, it is important that a range of ways of booking appointments remains available for these patients.



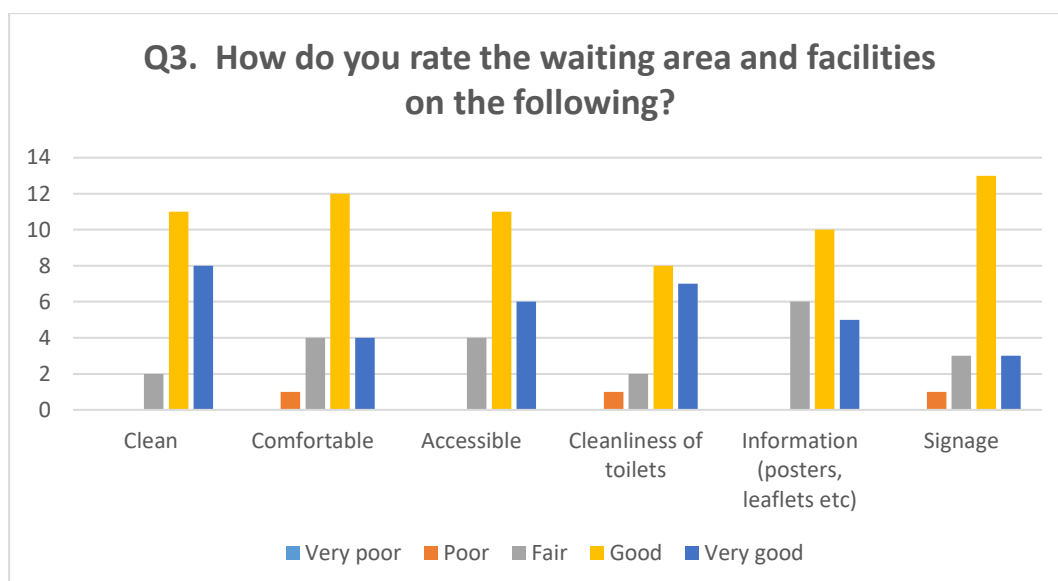
Having explored patients' experiences of accessing appointments, we were also interested in finding out more about patients' experiences once they were at the Surgery. As first point of contact for patients is usually with Receptionists, we asked patients about their experience of waiting times and privacy once at the reception desk and the friendliness, helpfulness and understanding of Receptionists.

Overall, respondents who completed our survey reported positive experiences with 76% (N=15 of the 21 respondents who completed this question of the survey) rating waiting times at the reception desk as 'good' or 'very good' and no respondents rating this as less than 'fair'. During our visit, we observed that there was an electronic booking-in system available for patients to use and we noted patients making use of this. On the whole, patients did not appear to be waiting in the Reception queue for excessive periods of time during our visit. Similarly, respondents reported positive experiences when rating the friendliness, helpfulness and understanding of Reception staff with 86% (N=19) rating the friendliness of Reception staff as 'good' or 'very good', 90% (N=20) rating the helpfulness of Reception staff as 'good' or 'very good' and 82% (N=18) rating the understanding of Reception staff as 'good' or 'very good' with no respondents giving a rating of less than fair. These positive findings are echoed in the some of the further comments received from some of the respondents who answered this question:

*'Reception desk is friendly.'*

*'They listen to what I have to say.'*

Our Survey further asked respondents how they rated the privacy of the Reception area and 55% (N=11 of the 20 respondents who answered this question) rated this as 'good' to 'very good' and a further 40% (N=8) as 'fair.' During our visit, we noted that due to the open plan nature of the Reception area, those in the queues and waiting areas are able overhear conversations between Reception staff and patients. However, one respondent told us that a 'room is available for patients if they want to speak privately'.



The responses relating to the waiting area and facilities were again positive with 90% (N=19 of the 21 respondents) rating the cleanliness of the waiting area as 'good' or 'very good' and 76% (16 of the 21 respondents who answered this question) rating the comfort of the waiting area as 'good' or 'very good'. There is one main waiting area in the Surgery and a smaller waiting area for nursing appointments and we observed that the waiting area was clean and fairly comfortable, although we noted that at times the waiting areas seemed 'crowded' and that chairs were placed fairly close together, adding to this feeling of being 'crowded'. One respondent also told us that *'more chairs with arms to aid patients to stand'* would be helpful in meeting the needs of those with mobility issues.

We further asked patients about the information available in the waiting areas. Fifteen (71%) of the 21 respondents who answered this question rated this as 'good' or 'very good' and no respondents rated this as less than 'fair.' We observed a number of notice boards in the waiting area displaying a range of information including details of community activities and support groups, condition-related health awareness and health promotion information. We also observed information about the Patient Participation Group (PPG), activities that they have been involved in and a poster advertising for new PPG members. There was also an electronic screen in the waiting area informed patients of when the GP was ready to see them for their appointment and which room to go to. We further noted that all consulting and other rooms were clearly signposted.

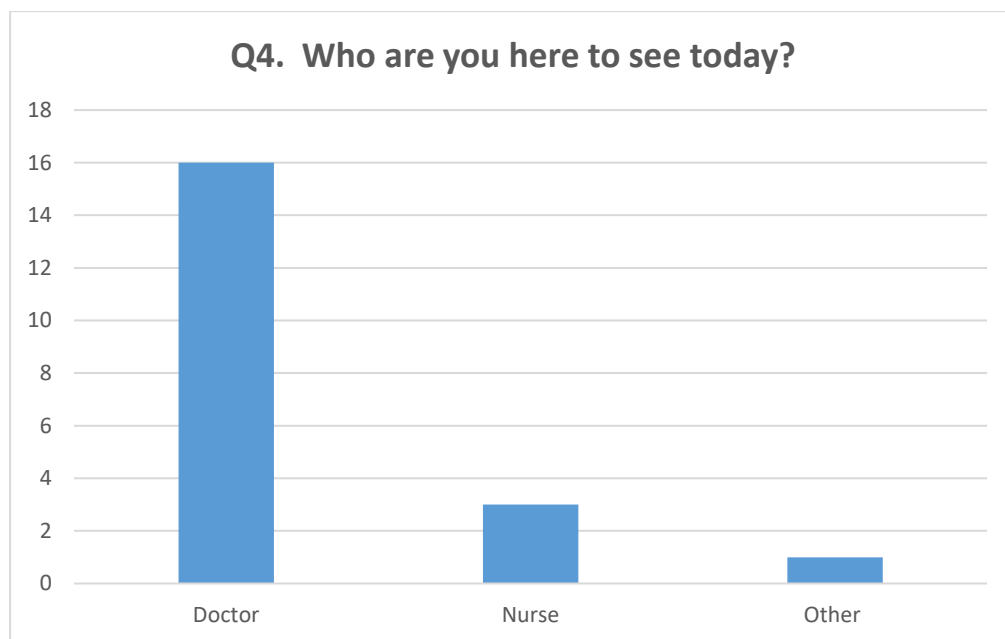
The Surgery is all on one level and all of our respondents rated accessibility into the building and once within the building as 'fair' to 'very good'. We observed that the toilet facilities were well stocked and clean and that there were accessible toilets for Disabled people. Baby changing facilities were also available on site. The Surgery itself is located in central Solihull alongside Solihull Hospital and has a small car park to the rear of the building and, during our visit, we observed that parking times were limited to one hour on the roads

around the Surgery and some of our respondents told us that parking at the Surgery was problematic:

*'Parking is an issue...car park was full. Hour parking on road so worry about getting back to car on time.'*

*'Parking is an issue - car park fills up very quickly.'*

At the end of our visit, we also spoke to the Practice Manager who told us that they were aware that there are limited parking spaces but that the Surgery is not able to address this given the location of the Surgery.



We asked patients who they were there to see at the Surgery that day and 16 of the 21 respondents who answered this question were there for appointments with their GP, a further three for an appointment with the Nurse and one for an appointment with another, unspecified, clinician.



Respondents reported mixed experiences of waiting times for appointments. Of the 14 respondents who answered this question, four had been waiting for less than five minutes to be called for their appointment, one respondent for between six and ten minutes, five respondents between 11 and 20 minutes, one respondent between 21-30 minutes and three respondents for over 30 minutes. Further comments provided by respondents to this question also indicated mixed experiences with waiting times:

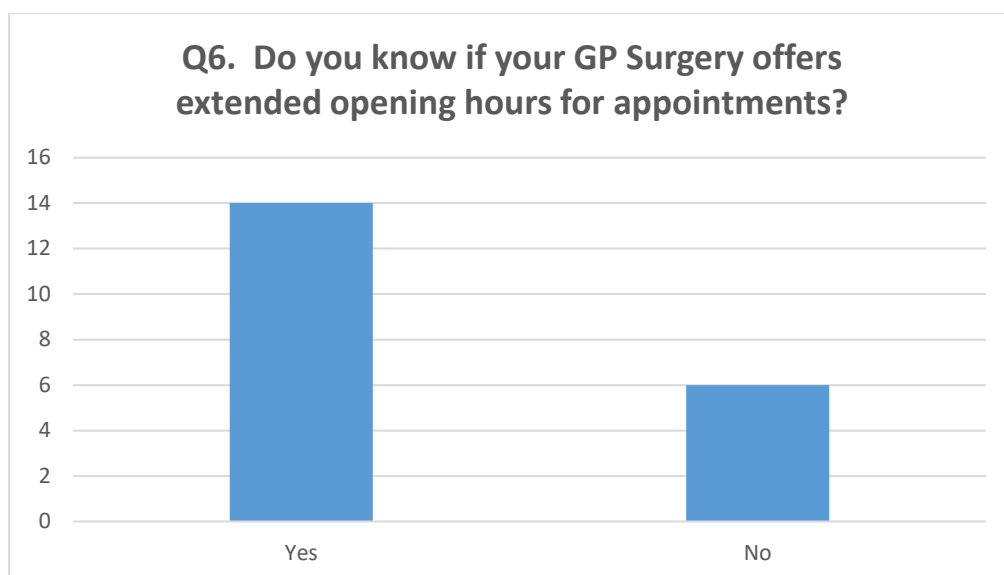
*'Usually on time.'*

*'...some days seen quickly, sometimes little longer.'*

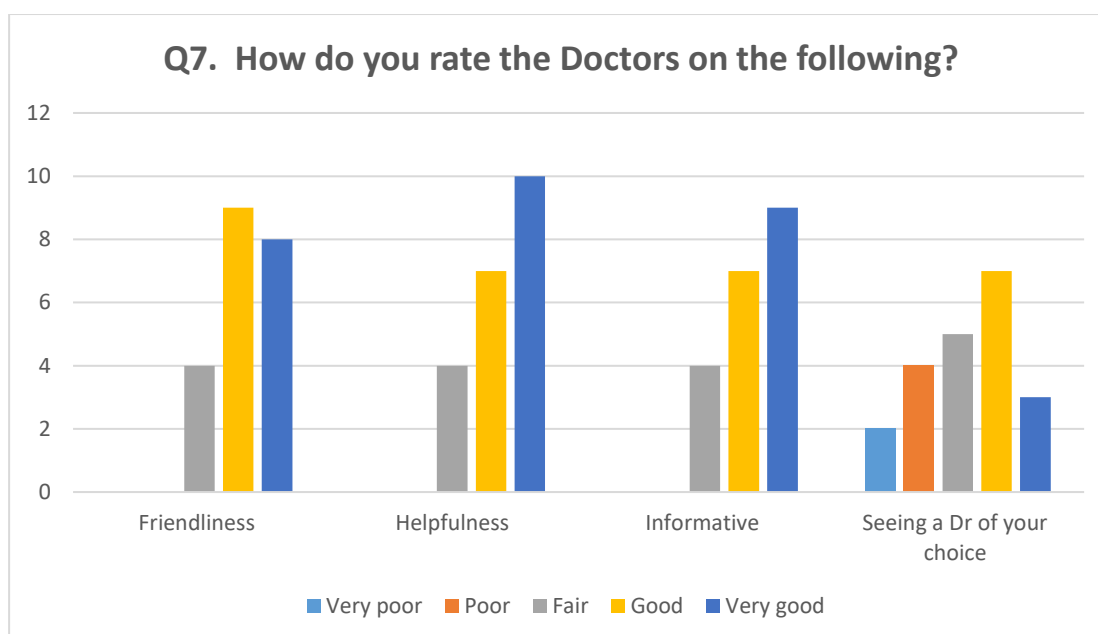
*'Sometimes feel that the waiting times are a bit long.'*

*'Usually half hour minimum - usually 30/40 mins - never seen on time.'*

At the end of our visit, we spoke with the Practice Manager about waiting times and asked whether the Surgery had any procedures in place for informing patients if appointments were running late. The Practice Manager told us that, if appointments are running late, Receptionists usually inform patients of this on their arrival and advertise this on information screens in the waiting areas. One respondent confirmed that, as patients, they were informed if GPs or other staff were running late – *'Dr has put on board to say that running 10 minutes late.'*



A recent initiative within Primary Care services has been the introduction of 'extended' opening hours to accommodate appointments for patients to fit in with their work, family and other commitments. We asked the Practice Manager how Grove Surgery was managing 'extended' opening hours. As discussed earlier in the report, the Practice Manager told us that patients registered with the Surgery can access extended opening hours appointments at Blossomfield Surgery between 6.30pm and 8pm Monday to Friday, 9am to 11am on Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays. We asked respondents if they knew that extended opening hours appointments were available for patients of the Surgery and the majority (N=14 of the 20 respondents who answered this question) told us that they were aware of extended opening hours.



Overall, the Doctors were ranked positively by patients with 17 of the 21 respondents who answered this question, rating the Medical Centre's GPs as 'good' or 'very good' for being friendly and helpful and 16 of the 20 respondents who answered this question rating GPs as 'good' or 'very good' for being informative. Again, positive responses were provided by respondents when rating their experiences of 'seeing a Doctor of your choice' with ten of the 21 respondents who answered this question rating this as 'good' or 'very good', five respondents as 'fair' and six as 'poor' or 'very poor'. However, further comments received from respondents to this question were less positive than the survey data suggests:

*'Difficult to see Doctor of choice - need to book appointments far ahead.'*

*'Can't usually see Doctor of choice. If ask for appointment with Doctor of choice - have to wait longer.'*

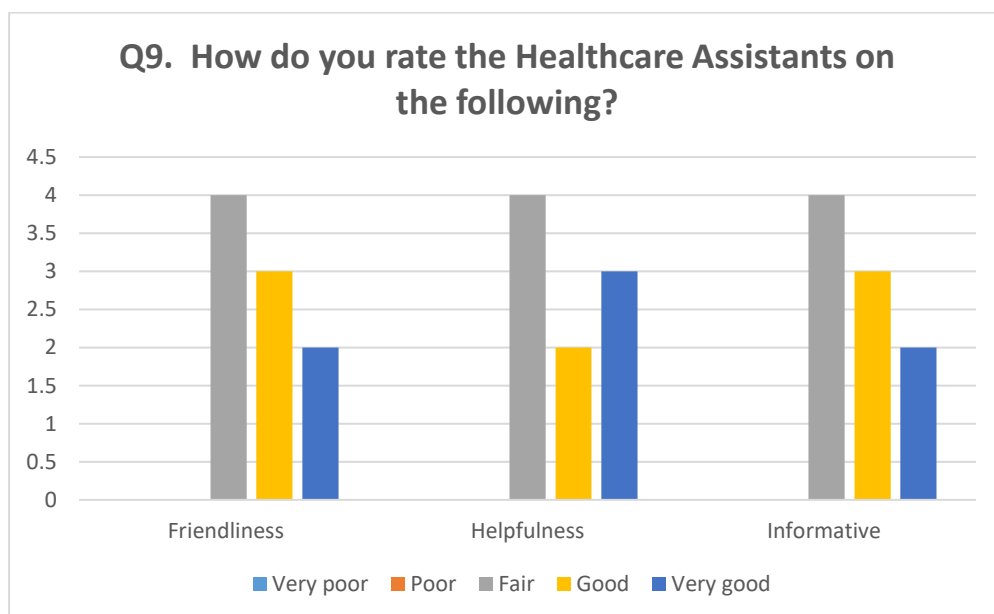
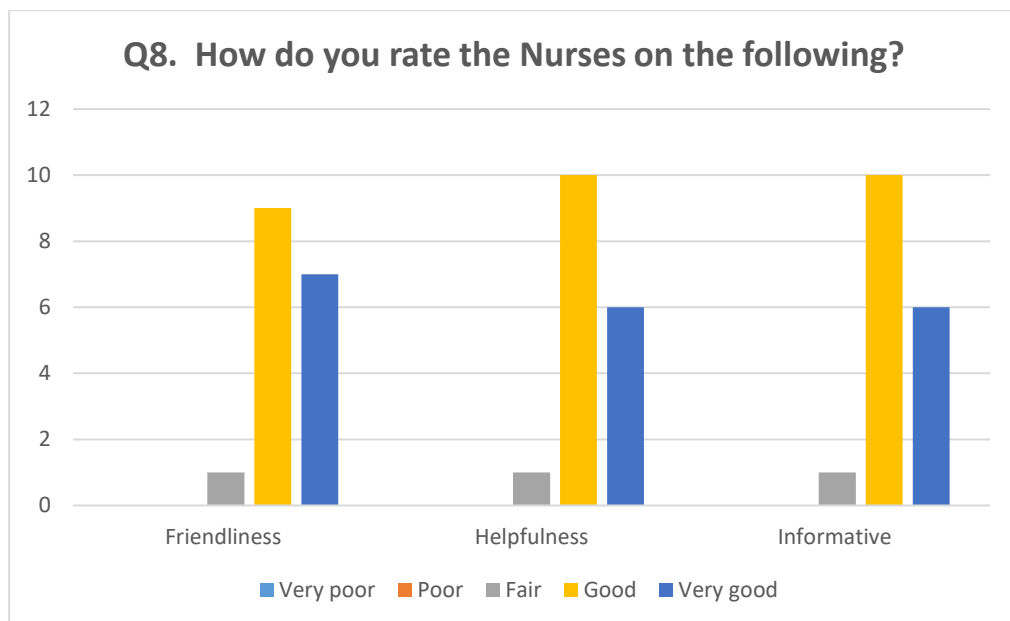
*'Very hard to get Doctors of your choice.'*

*'It is very hard to get appt with specific doctors you want. You are asked to wait till nearer date, however, when you call on nearer date, all appts already booked.'*

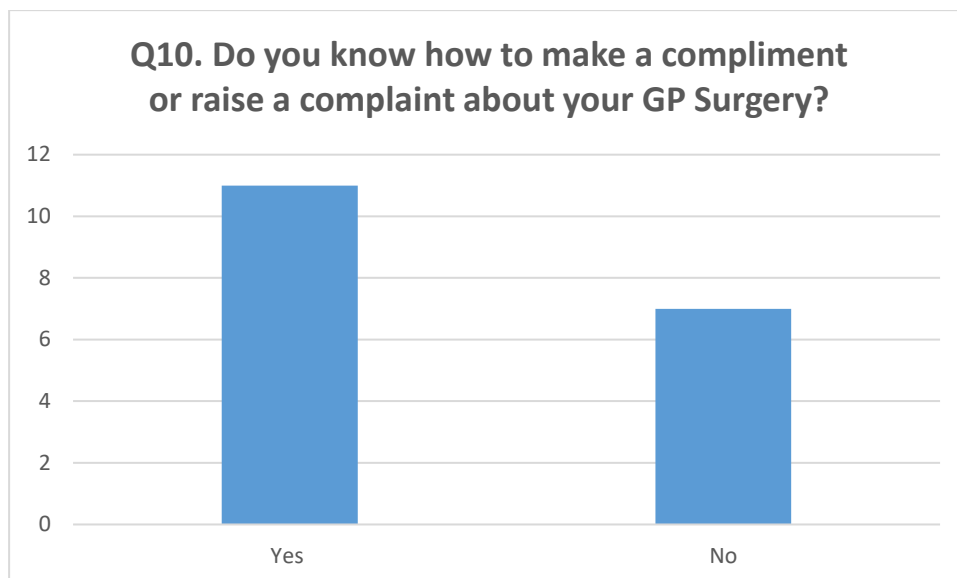
One respondent commented that seeing a Doctor of your choice was important to them because of familiarity and rapport:

*'Have to wait a long time to see doctor of choice - important to have a doctor who knows you and familiar with you.'*

These further comments received from some of our respondents are indicative that satisfaction with seeing a Dr of choice is fairly low and we would recommend that, where this can be accommodated, appointments are arranged with patients' GPs of choice.

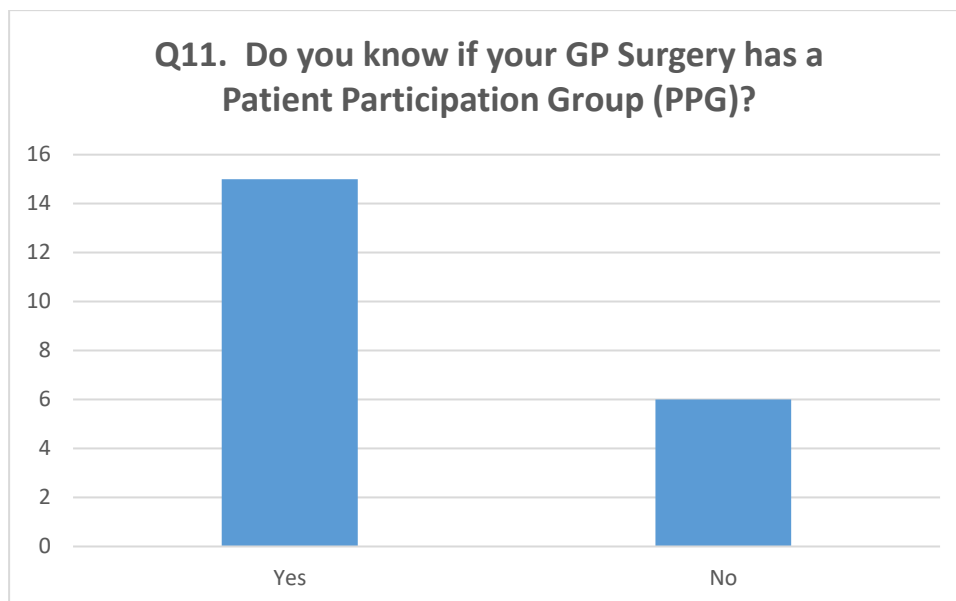


As with GPs, overall the Nurses were ranked positively by patients with all respondents rating the nursing staff as 'fair to very good'. Healthcare Assistants also received positive ratings from patients for being friendly, helpful and informative with no respondents rating them as less than fair. It is perhaps worth noting that slightly fewer respondents completed the question about Healthcare Assistants than for GPs and Nurses (N=9) as presumably not all of respondents had have contact with a Healthcare Assistant.



Question 10 of our survey asked respondents if they were aware of how to make a compliment or how to raise a complaint within the Medical Centre should they wish to do so. Of the 18 respondents who answered this question, 11 were aware of how to do so and seven told us that they were not aware of the process. During our visit, we observed that information on how to make a complaint was included on the notice boards.

We asked the Practice Manager how patient feedback is shared within the Surgery. We were informed that all forms of feedback are discussed with staff via Practice meetings. We would recommend that the Surgery continues to encourage patient feedback and continues to share this feedback with staff within the Surgery. It may also be good practice to share this feedback with other patients and outline what actions the Medical Centre may have taken in response to the feedback received. This could be shared through Surgery newsletters or included on noticeboards and could take the format of 'You Said, We Did'.



We asked respondents if they knew whether the Practice had a Patient Participation Group (PPG). Of the 21 respondents who answered this question, 15 were aware that the Practice did have a PPG with six respondents stating that they did not know if the Practice had a PPG.

We asked the Practice Manager about the Practice’s PPG and were informed that they do have an active and supportive Patient Participation Group (PPG) of around 20 members across Grove Surgery and Shirley Medical Centre. The PPG have been involved in a range of activities, including being used as a ‘Sounding Board’ for the Surgeries to explore patients’ perspectives on proposed changes and new initiatives within the Surgeries, and that the PPG is planning a health information event for patients of the Solihull Healthcare Partnership, bringing a number of providers together ‘Under One Roof’ for information sharing.



At the end of the survey, we asked patients to rate their overall experience of their visit that day. In keeping with many of the findings discussed within this report, patients reported a positive experience with 15 respondents rating their overall experience as 'good' or 'very good', four as 'fair' with only one respondent rating their overall experience as less than fair.

**Recommendations and Follow-Up Actions:**

At this stage of our report we usually detail a range of recommendations identified through surveys completed by patients and our observations. Overall, our perceptions of the Surgery and the findings of the survey were, for the most part, positive throughout as reflected in the limited numbers of recommendations we have made:

- That the Surgery undertakes a review of patients' experiences of getting through on the telephone to identify the key concerns of patients;
- That the Surgery continues to promote on-line booking;
- That the Surgery provides more chairs with arms in the waiting area in meeting the needs of those with mobility issues;
- Where this can be accommodated, appointments are made with patients' GPs of choice;
- That the Medical Centre continues to encourage patient feedback and shares this feedback with staff at the Medical Centre and that patient feedback and any actions taken in relation to this feedback are also communicated to patients.