

**Herstmonceux Integrative Health Centre (IHHC) – the Practice
Patient Participation Group (PPG) Survey Results – May 2022**

This is the second report of a patient survey undertaken by a sub-group of the Patient Participation Group and a member of IHHC Practice, with input from the Practice staff.

The questions were compiled primarily to see what patients thought of access to treatment at the Practice, both during the height of covid and since, with the intention of learning what the Practice did best and how the staff can improve services and access moving forward.

Patients were asked to complete forms available to download from the website, from email alerts and whilst waiting in the surgery. Many patients were also asked to complete forms whilst arriving at one of the many covid vaccination clinics held by the Practice.

Previously it was found to be very effective when a member of the PPG sat with patients in the waiting room and helped them to complete the forms, but this was not possible this time, due to a conscious awareness of many people still feeling vulnerable in a post-covid environment.

The Practice population has grown from 4,216 registered patients in 2017 to 5,4674 currently. A total of 124 surveys were completed and this reflects similar percentage returns to when we last undertook a Practice Survey.

Patient Participation Group

62 people were aware of the PPG
62 were not aware of the PPG

24 would be interested in finding out more or joining the PPG
100 would not be

The PPG is not exclusive and every patient is welcome to become an active member.

About the respondent

Male 43
Female 75
Non binary 1

Age of respondent:

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75-84	>85
2017 survey	2	13	5	16	24	29	16	10
2022 survey	1	7	5	2	29	32	42	6

There has been a greater representation this time from the older age groups of 75-84

Within the Practice, actual ages of registered patients on 19th May as follows:

Under 17:	964
18-49:	1,872
50-64:	1,231
65+:	1,400

Ethnicity: 100 respondents said they were white
4 mixed or multiple ethnicity
The rest were blank

Present circumstances:

In work:	27
Unemployed:	5
Retired:	88
A carer:	4
Caring for children:	2

Access to the internet and/or a smart phone:

Yes:	111
No:	10
Via someone else:	3

Do they have the NHS app?

Yes:	75
No:	27

When asked if respondents would be interested in learning more about digital access to the NHS, including about the NHS app, 30 people said YES and 28 email addresses were given. 89 respondents said NO.

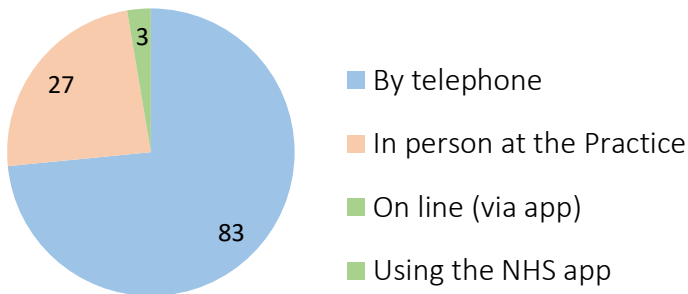
The PPG will be contacting those people who left their email addresses.

Respondents – comments from PPG

- Disappointed by the low response (1 in 440) – maybe next time the survey can be completed on line in addition to paper copies
- Majority of respondents are female (60%; n=75 women, 43 men)
- A significant majority reported themselves to be white (80%)
- The majority of respondents said they were 65 or over (63.5%). This compares to the practices in which 25% are 65 and over
- 70% of respondents are retired

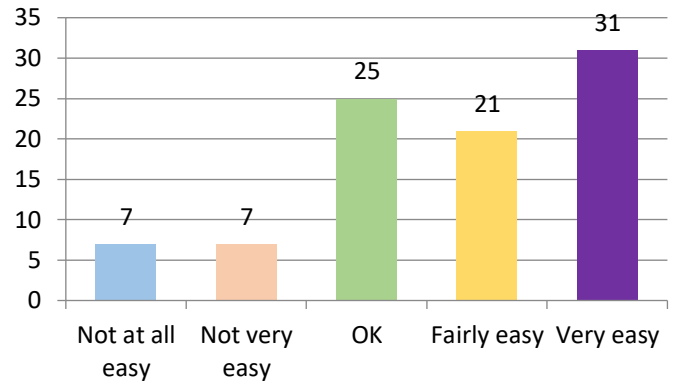
About the services accessed this year

Number of people who booked a face-to-face appointment



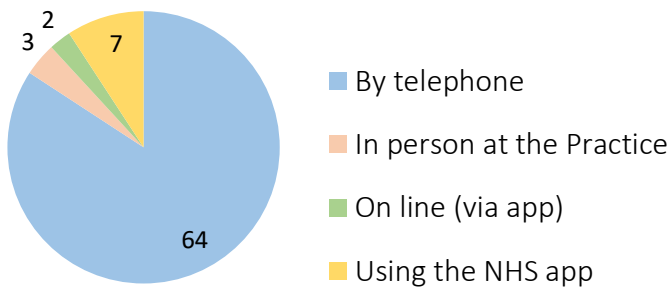
n = 113

How easy was it?



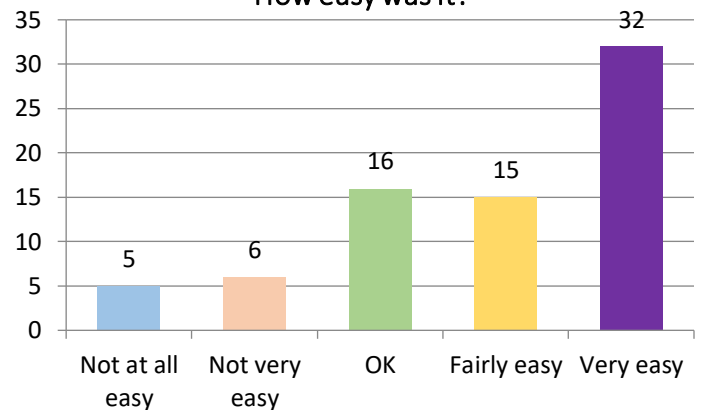
n = 60

Number of people who booked a telephone GP appointment



n = 79

How easy was it?

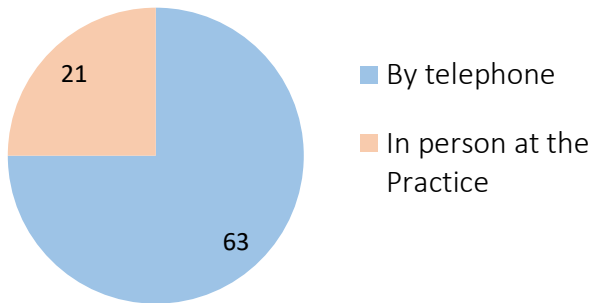


n = 42

2 people used a video consultation and only 1 used Livi – the respondents found it OK, neither difficult or easy

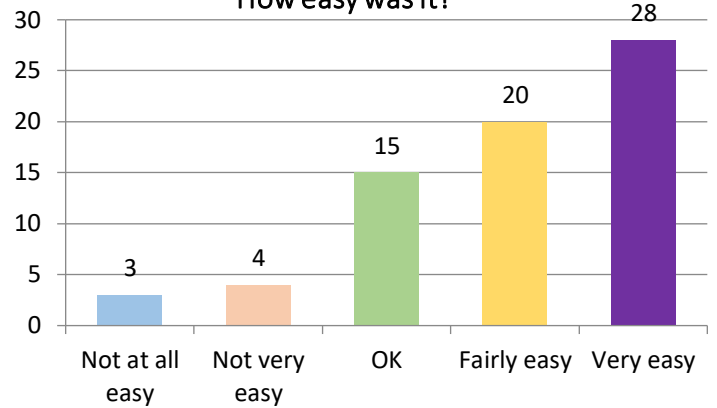
Only 3 people booked an on-line consultation via the app. They found it very easy to use.

Number of people who booked a nurse or other clinical appointment



n = 84

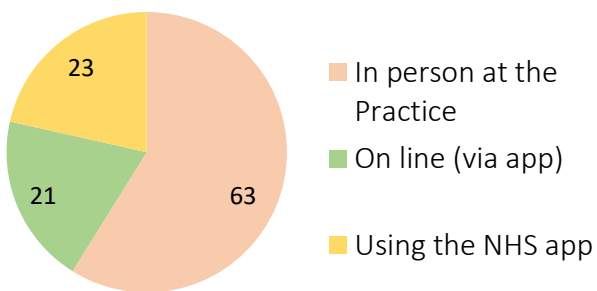
How easy was it?



n = 70

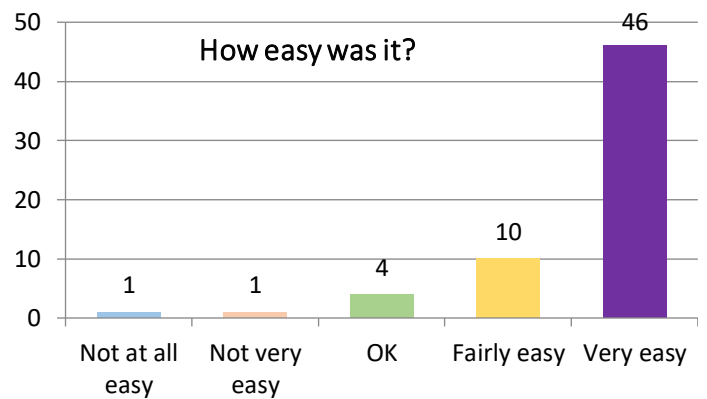
6 people phoned to book a Practice pharmacist appointment and 1 person went into the practice to book a pharmacist appointment. They all found this fairly easy to very easy.

Number of people who ordered a repeat prescription from the Practice



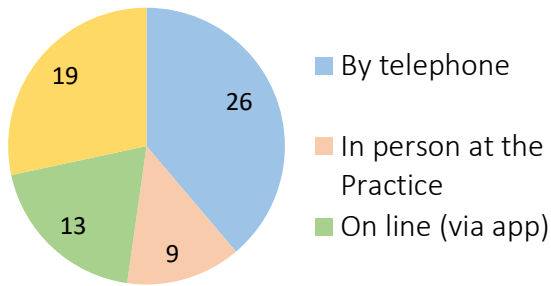
n = 106

How easy was it?

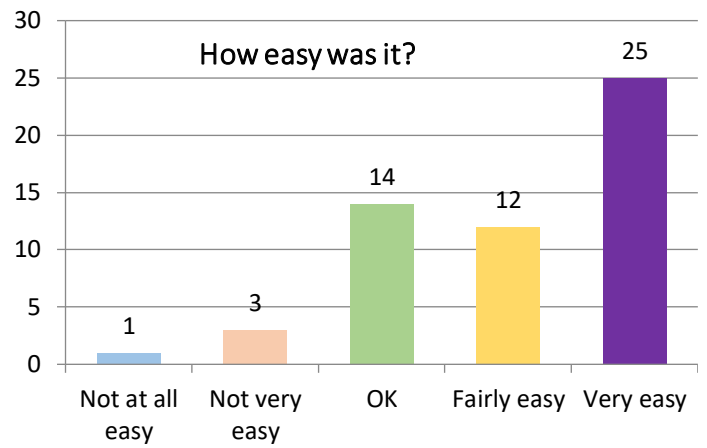


n = 62

Number of people who reviewed/requested test results

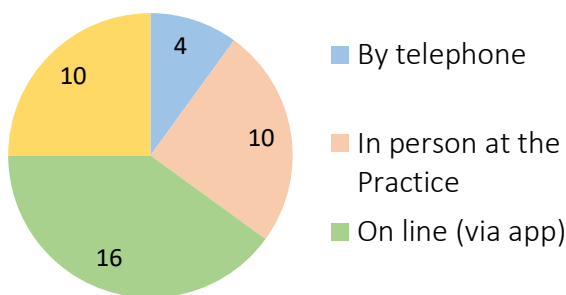


n = 67

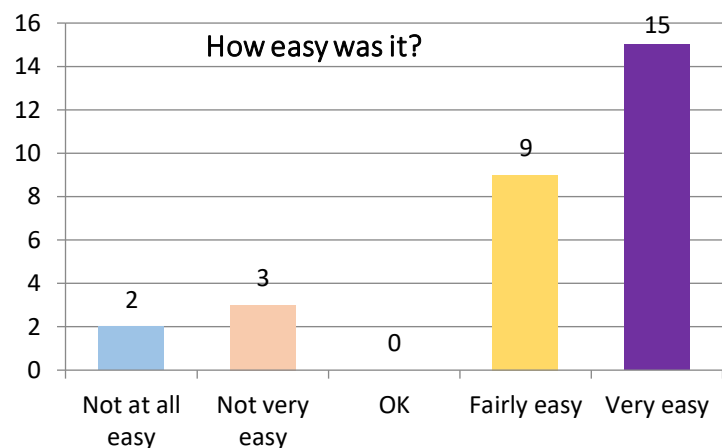


n = 55

Number of people who reviewed/requested their personal medical records

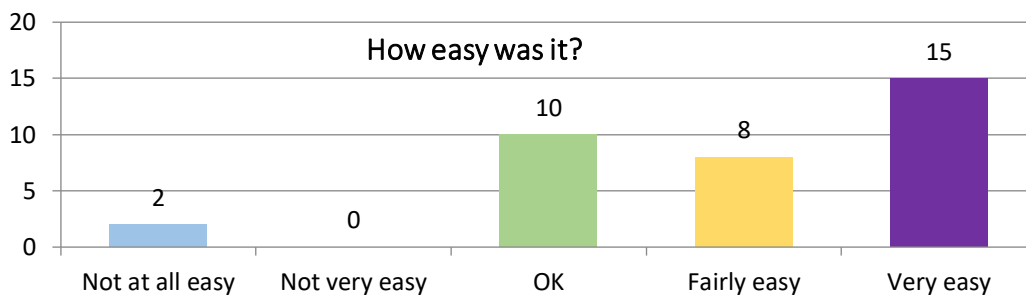


n = 40



n = 29

35 people responded to the question regarding use of the Practice website



12 people left comments:

- Of the comments, 9 complained that the telephone waits were too long
- 6 remarked that the receptionists and staff in general were very helpful
- 2 were unsure of LIVI
- 1 was not aware of the NHS app and how it differed from other digital access routes
- 2 comments referred to complaints about waiting times for test results and other routine appointments

Telephone appointments

The Practice offers patients the option to request a telephone appointment, which is a positive service arising out of covid.

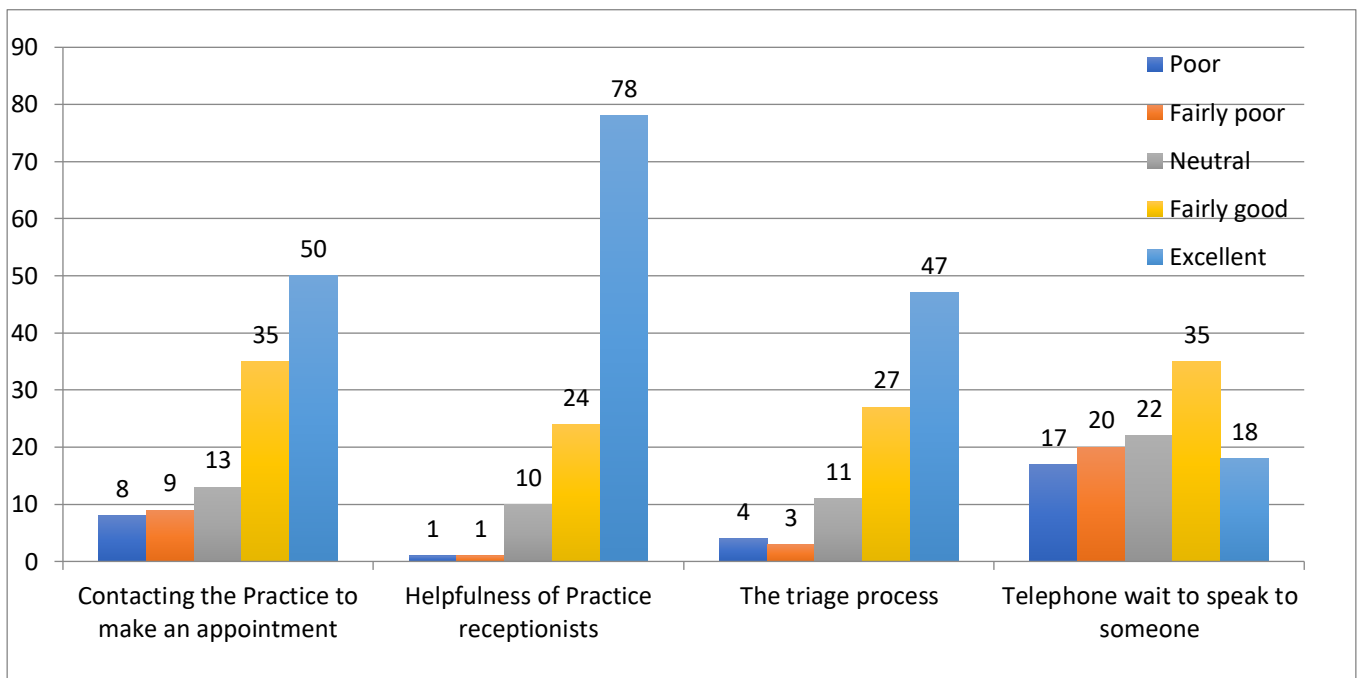
- 36 people do use this option
- 15 do not
- 46 do sometimes depending on the reason
- 27 have not used it but would if they needed to

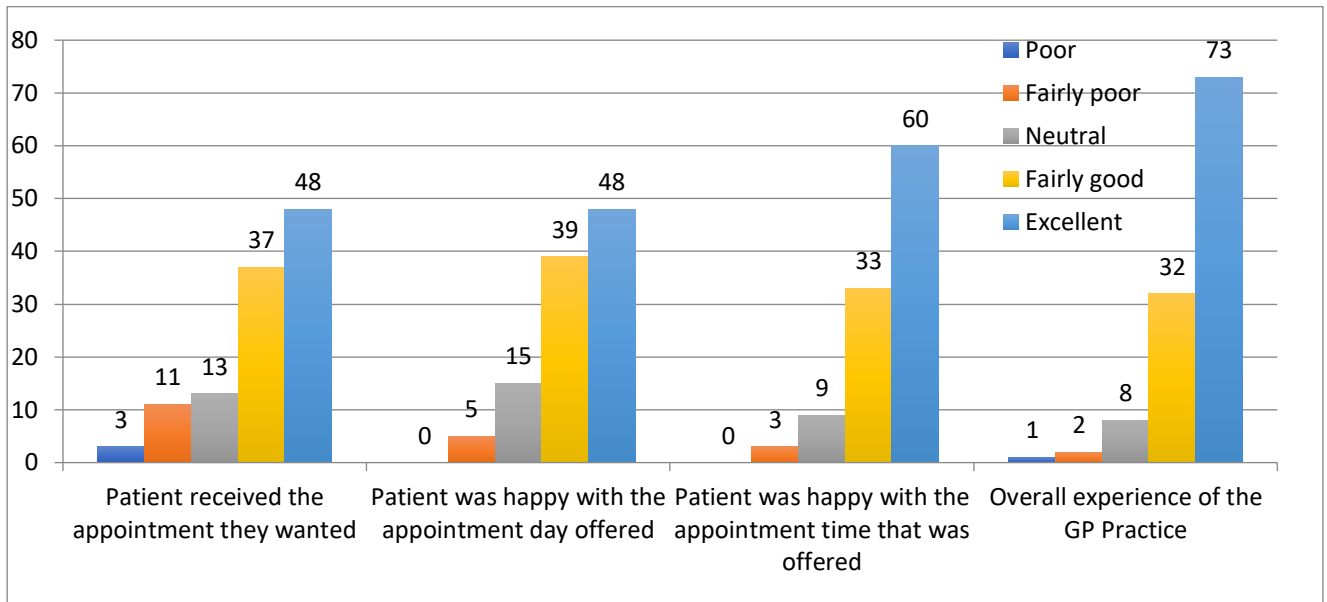
Appointments – comments from PPG

- The appointment process was most commonly felt to be fairly or very easy
- 86% of patient said they either always use, sometimes use or would use telephone appointments
- 67% of respondents felt it was fairly good or excellent in booking an appointment they wanted, 67% were happy with appointment day offered (fairly good or excellent), 78% were happy with the time that was offered (fairly good or excellent)

Patient Satisfaction

Triage – this is where the reception staff ask a little bit of information about a patient's reasons to see a clinician. The Practice has to do this to ensure that they book the individual in with the best and most appropriate clinician, e.g., gynaecology/paediatrics/sexual health of cardiology





14 people commented on this section

- 23 responses did not like the triage system and indicated how they felt about it was usually dependent on the receptionist
- 12 comments praised the practice with an extra comment saying it was easy to book in advance
- One person did not feel there was enough understanding for parents who worked when they needed a time after school/work if the appointment was not urgent
- Finally, one comment indicated a slow pathway to be seen by the GP – this has largely been rectified post covid: “When requesting to see a GP, the service fell apart. 1st-receptionist would give advice? 2nd – Telephone appointment with nurse. 3rd – face to face appointment with nurse. 4th – Telephone appointment with GP. 5th – face to face appointment with GP. This was time-consuming and very frustrating. In the end I did get to see a GP.”

Contacting and interacting with the Practice – comments from PPG

- The majority of respondents felt that contacting the practice, the helpfulness of the receptionists and the triage processes were either fairly good or excellent (68%, 81% and 59%, respectively)
- Telephone waiting times were only felt to be fairly good or excellent by 42%. The most popular feeling about telephone waiting times is that they are fairly good (28%)
- There are notable exceptions to the generally very positive view about staff and most are linked to the length of time respondents are caused to wait on the telephone.
- The vast majority of free form comments of respondents regarding staff are positive and very complimentary. Albeit there are occasions when patients have not felt they are best responded to by staff.

Prescriptions, tests and records – comments from the PPG

- The processes for getting a repeat prescription, test results and reviewing records was most commonly felt to be very easy.

Specific permission from patients

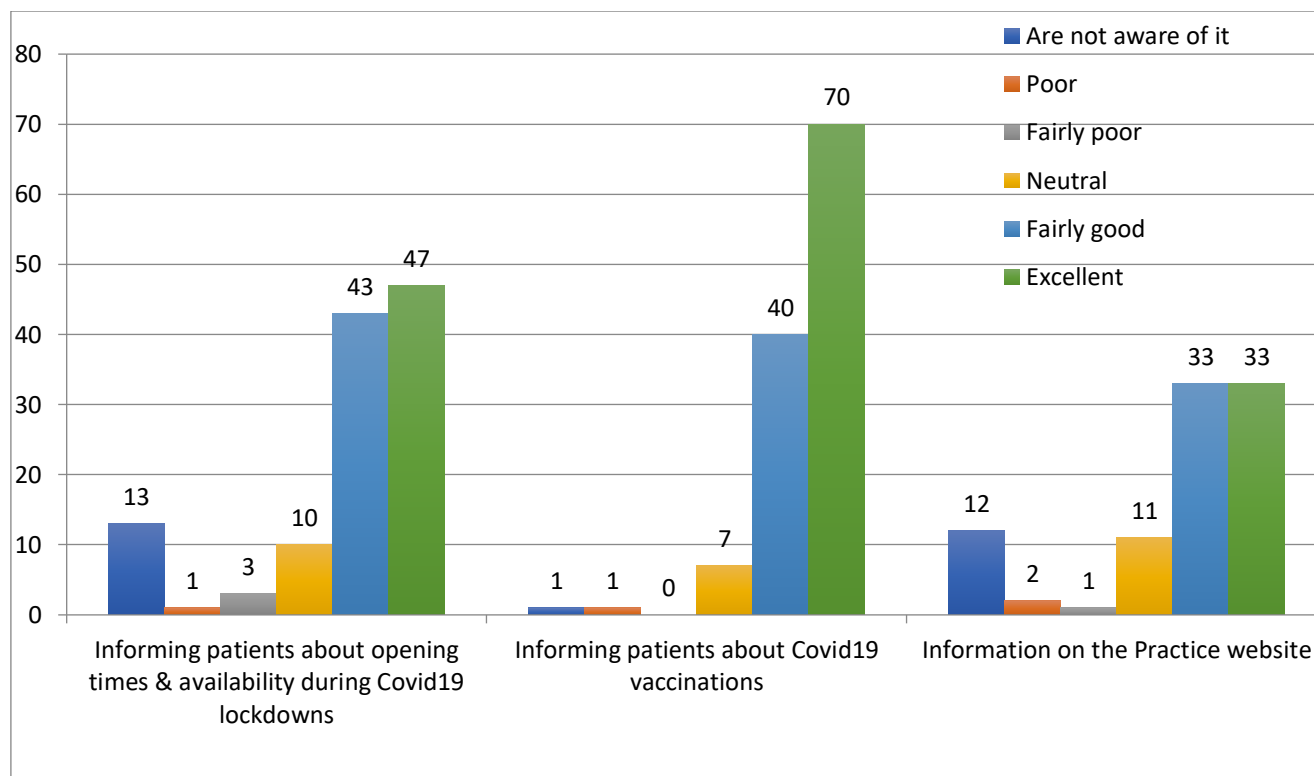
For several of the services managed by the Practice, specific patient permission is required.

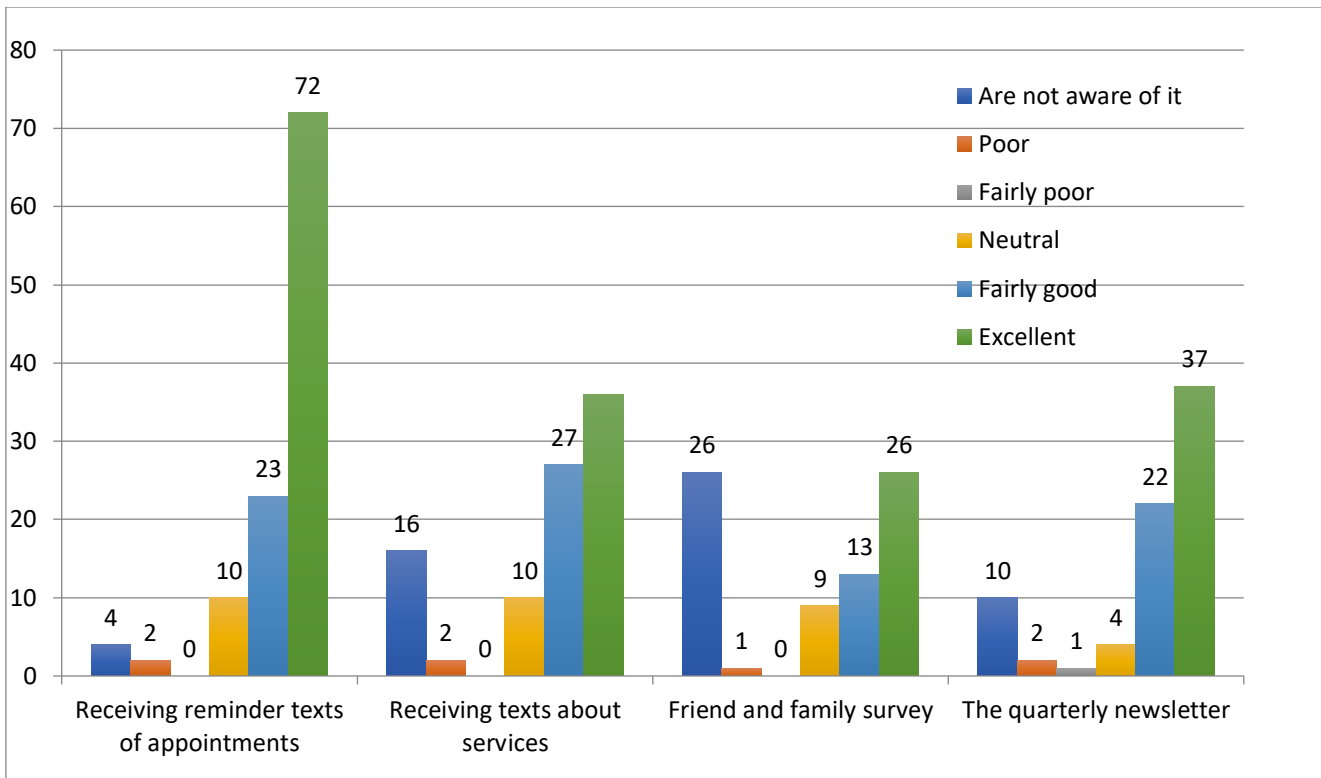
When asked if patients had given permission for the following, the responses were as follows:

	YES	Percentage YES	NO	Percentage NO	NO but would like to	Percentage NO but would like to
To receive emails from the Practice	80	71%	27	24%	6	5%
To receive texts from the Practice	100	85%	17	15%	0	0%
To receive newsletters from the Practice	62	56%	31	28%	17	16%

If anyone wishes to receive any of the above, they should contact the Practice on esxccg.hmxihc@nhs.net

Communication from the Practice





Communications – comments from the PPG

- Significant majorities of patients have given permission to receive email, texts and the newsletter (71%, 85% and 56%, respectively)
- A significant majority felt text reminders were either fairly good or excellent
- Patients felt that communications over Covid were fairly good or excellent
- Only 35 respondents expressed a view of the website. Of that number 66% felt it was fairly easy or very easy
- It's clear that the most dissatisfying aspect of patient communication with the practice and indeed patient satisfaction overall is the length of time patients have to wait on the telephone
- The free text comments of respondents confirm dissatisfaction with the telephone but are otherwise almost universally positive about the service offered by the practice

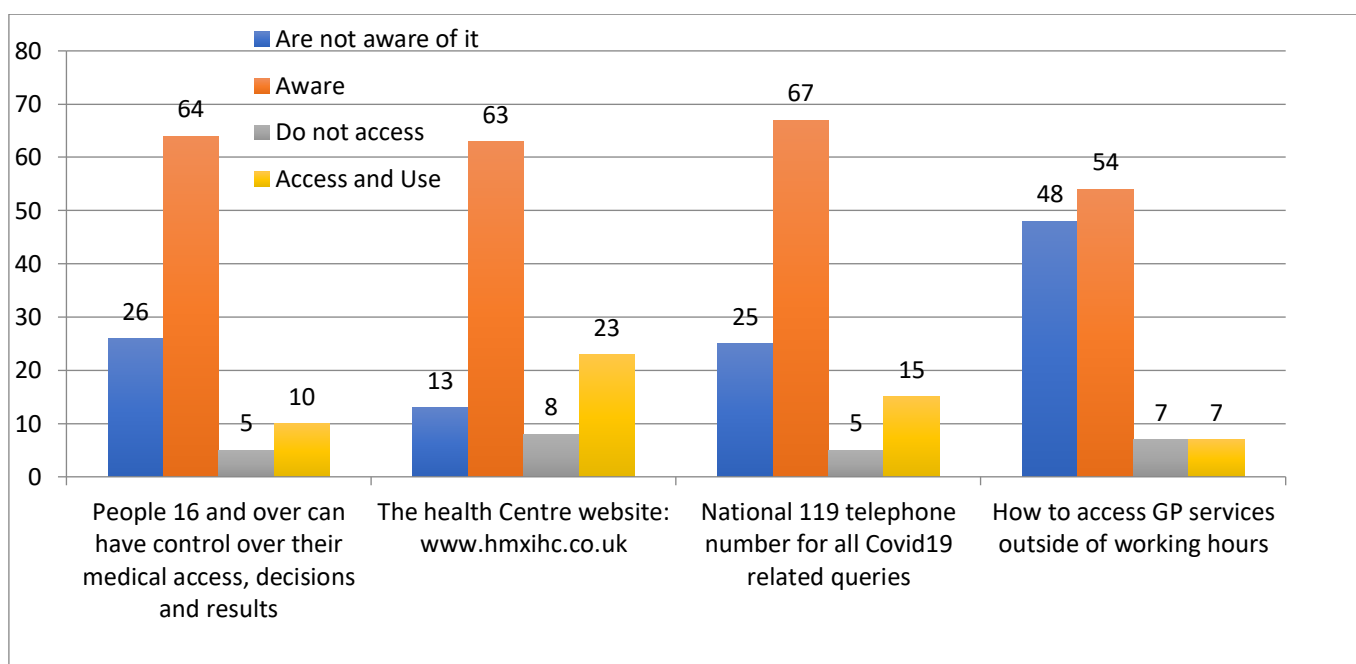
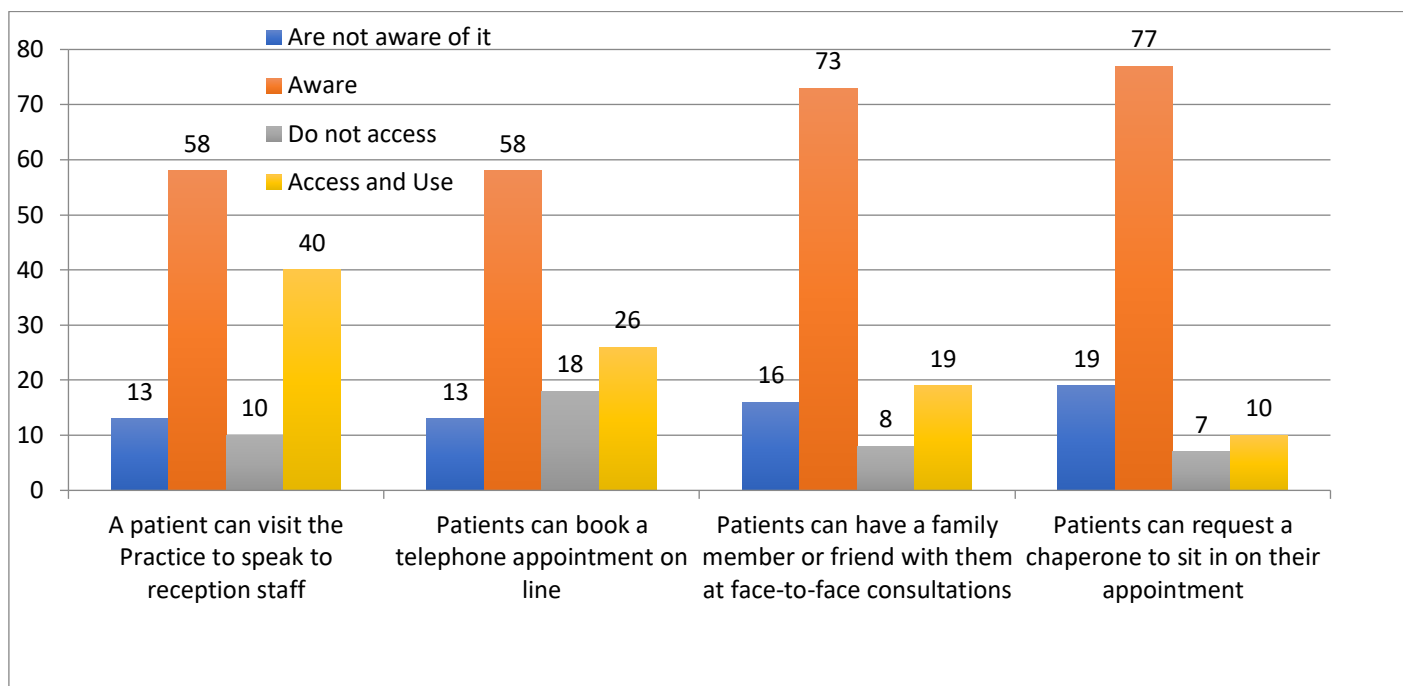
Moving on and learning from the Covid19 lockdown, people were asked how can the practice could improve communication with them in the future.

11 people responded with comments:

- More clarity on how to get a face-to-face appointment with a doctor was needed on the website and use of pro-active communication, maybe use of Facebook as well
- Excellent service throughout covid –9 responses
- Several people liked the variety of contact used by the Practice – emails, texts and on line, although some did want communication via post or landline

Awareness of information from the Practice

People were asked if they were aware of various different services.



3 people commented

- “My understanding of the GP Service out of hours, is that it doesn’t exist beyond contacting an over-burdened 111.”
- “I find a lot of any questions I may have I can get from the Health Centre website”.
- “I use the Patient Access website”.

Practice services – comments from the PPG

- Considerable majority of respondents were aware of the range of different services offered by the practice
- Respondent awareness of how to contact GP services out of hours was divided with almost equal number saying they were aware and unaware
- Some concern is expressed by a limited number of respondents regarding practice follow up on referrals to other services offered by the NHS

Patient satisfaction – comment from the PPG

- 83% of respondents felt the practice was either fairly good or excellent
- Such a survey is bound to centre on patient contact with the reception and administration in general so some negative comments must be expected.
- Everyone (patients and staff) can have a bad day while the majority of those contacting the surgery will be under stress and either concerned about their own welfare, or that of someone close to them
- The general reaction is extremely good; HIHC appears to be providing an excellent service and one which is appreciated

General Feedback

There was an open box for people to offer their thoughts and considerations. Some comments were very detailed, giving greater insights into reasons for earlier responses.

A couple of people wanted to ensure GP continuity and did not like seeing different GPs on consecutive occasions.

A few comments from people who had been referred to consultants but had not had any follow up as a result; also, people generally wished for more details around referrals.

Some comments were received by people which were based on misunderstanding of what is available already, so it is clear we still need to do some publicizing of services available and also how to contact the Practice according to need.

One person suggested A 'slimming world' type group and someone else commended the 'Men's Shed' and allotment facility, provided by the Vitality Villages organisation.