healthwatch Sutton

St Helier Hospital

Outpatient Report

March 2016

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Following analysis of our 'What matters to you?' (WMTY) feedback system, we identified that outpatient services had been chosen as the second most important area of health and social care for the residents of Sutton (sample of over 400 responses). We put together a project brief to investigate the areas of improvement that had been highlighted in the WMTY responses and liaised with Epsom and St Helier hospital to agree a practical methodology to capture patients' views about outpatients.

Remit

To design and deliver a project to collect the views of patients using outpatients services. This data would then by analysed and key emerging themes used to develop recommendations for improvement.

Methodology

It was agreed that our Healthwatch 'authorised' volunteers would go to St Helier outpatient waiting areas and ask patients to share their experience. Patients were asked to complete two surveys (see Appendix A in the full report). One was completed while they were waiting (239 responses received) and the other was completed after they had left their appointment (83 responses mostly returned by post). The analysis of both the qualitative and quantitative data lead to a series of recommendations.

Key Findings and Recommendations

1. **FINDING -** Over 20% (1 in 5) of respondents stated that the hospital had changed their appointment to a later date.
   RECOMMENDATION - To carry out an internal audit to find out what are the main causes are for the hospital changing appointments. Potentially, check if any particular clinics or care pathways have more difficulty keeping to original appointments than others. To use this information to see if any action can be taken to reduce appointment changes. Work with staff and Healthwatch to develop solutions.

2. **FINDING 1 -** More than half of the respondents stated that they had to wait more than 15 minutes beyond their appointment time to be seen.
   FINDING 2 - 'How satisfied were you with the amount of time between arriving at the clinic and being seen for your appointment?'. Nearly a third of patients (32%) asked this question stated that they were not satisfied with the amount of time they had to wait to be called for their appointment. A further third were 'to some extent' satisfied and the final third completely satisfied. Waiting to be seen invoked the greatest number of negative comments from people who completed the survey. The full report contains 27 comments regarding delays.
   RECOMMENDATION FOR IMPROVEMENT - Carry out an audit of various clinics to establish the most common reasons that have a negative impact on the amount of time patients have to wait beyond their given appointment time. Work with clinical teams and administrators to develop systems to mitigate these delays.

3. **FINDING** - Of those people who had an appointment delayed by more than 15 minutes over half advised that they had not been informed of the delay. Of those people who were informed of the delay, 58% said that they ended up waiting longer than they had been told they would need to. The comments received in response to 'If you were given any reason for the delay please enter the reason below' were also used to develop this recommendation (in full report).
   RECOMMENDATION - Work across the Trust to put in place a universal system that more accurately and routinely informs patients of delays if/when they occur. Investigate potential 'service recovery' plans to be activated when a delay occurs.

4. **FINDING – Pharmacy -** There were no questions relating to pharmacy in the questionnaire, however, respondents have made several comments expressing their frustration with the Pharmacy at St Helier Hospital.
   RECOMMENDATION – Re-assess patient experience of Pharmacy following recent changes. If issues still exist, investigate how other Trusts have put in place systems to reduce the amount of time that prescriptions take to be processed or develop systems to spread demand.

Commendations

1. **COMMENDATION -** Over 80% found it easy to change their appointment. Only one respondent stated that it was 'Not at all easy'

2. **COMMENDATION -** Less than 2% of those who needed time to discuss their health or medical problems felt that they did not have enough time. Of this group (i.e. removing those who 'did not want to discuss' from the equation), 82% said they 'definitely had enough time with a further 17% said 'to some extent'.

3. **COMMENDATION -** Only 1% of patients felt that they hadn't been involved as much as they wanted to be in decisions about their care. There were no comments received relating to involvement in decisions.

4. **COMMENDATION -** Forty seven of the 122 comments received contained a positive statement reflecting a general overall appreciation for Outpatient services and gratitude for the service received.

Next Steps

1. To meet with key staff at Epsom and St Helier hospital to see what action can be taken to address the recommendations given.
2. To work with the Trust and provide any support required to help them improve these areas.
3. To share the report with Healthwatch England, Sutton CCG (including the Quality Committee), Health and Wellbeing Board and PPGs.
4. To monitor progress of any actions that arise as a result of this report.

OUTPATIENT REPORT

1. Prioritisation

In 2014, the Board and staff acknowledged that their current system of prioritisation using a variety of patient/user experience information collected by a variety of different means (events, surveys etc.) in response to a range of questions was in need of improvement.

To address this issue, the Board and staff developed a proposal to set up a universal continuous system that asked a fixed set of questions and was easily accessible. This resulted in the launch of 'What matters to you?' in early 2015. This system asks respondents to select a category of health or social care and then give a free text reason for their choice. It is accessible on-line and on paper and promoted on an on-going basis to local residents.

Approximately 400 responses were analysed in May 2015 and the data was used as the main decision-making tool to prioritise our work plan for 2015/16. Outpatient services were chosen by the second largest number of people as an area for investigation. As such the Board agreed to carry out a project to look into patients' experience of using Outpatient services.

There were only a small number of 'What matters to you?' responses that gave a free text explanation for their choice. Their comments mainly centred on the following themes:

- Long waits after agreed appointment times
- Transportation/hospital navigation
- Slow/Lost referrals
- Hospital facilities (toilets/access to drinks)

2. Remit

The remit of this project is to produce a report that will be an effective tool to bring about changes that will improve the experience of people using Outpatient services. The report should be able to demonstrate that it represents the views of a representative group of outpatient service users. The evidence contained in the report should include both quantitative and qualitative data. The report should clearly outline the key findings and provide a set of recommendations that can be used by provider organisation(s) to improve services.

3. Objectives

1. To demonstrate that this project was chosen due to the fact that it is a priority for local people (or it can be shown that it is a priority for those less engaged with the 'What matters to you?' system of prioritisation).
2. To carry out the project in an open and transparent way in collaboration with the relevant provider organisations.
3. To establish an initial evidence base of patient experience of Outpatient services that can be used as a source of information to develop a series of questions to ask people currently using Outpatient services.
4. To find a suitable/practical method of collection of responses to these questions.
5. To collect a body of evidence, comprised of the views and experiences of local people that will stand up to scrutiny.
6. To analyse response data and identify themes and/or areas for improvement/areas that are working well.
7. To produce a report with a series of recommendations.
8. To follow up on the completion of actions developed in response to the recommendations

4. Project Scope

An initial meeting was held with key staff from Epsom and St Helier Hospital (ESHH) Trust to discuss the scope and methodology that could be employed for this project.

The staff advised that the majority of Sutton residents would receive Outpatient services at St Helier Hospital with far fewer attending clinics at Epsom hospital as services tended to run their clinics on different days at either location so that everyone has access to services locally. ESHH does provide some Outpatient clinics at the Jubilee Health Centre in Wallington. Sutton residents can also have Outpatient services provided by different Trusts at different locations with some patients travelling to St Georges, Kingston or Croydon hospitals. Some patients also receive Outpatient services provided by Sutton and Merton Community Health services and South West London and St Georges Mental Health Trust at locations in the borough.

In addition ESHH Trust provides Maternity and Paediatric Outpatient services through different divisions within the organisation. It was proposed that, in order to effectively implement this project and ensure final accountability for future actions, the cohort of patients involved would be limited to those using services at St Helier hospital with the exclusion of Maternity and Paediatric services.

5. Methodology Considerations

We were keen to find a methodology that would be able to take advantage of the skills and experience of our "authorised" volunteers who have been trained to carry out 'enter and view' activities.

In order to be able to capture the full experience of a patient attending an appointment, the methodology needs to allow the patient to respond at a point in time after they have seen the clinician. The simplest way to come in to direct contact with patients is by speaking to people in waiting rooms, however, at the point that they are waiting they are yet to have experienced their appointment. In order to address this, either patients would need to be asked to complete the survey on their way out or to complete it once they had returned home. In general patients would rather not respond after their appointment due to the fact that they would rather go home and are concerned about parking/transport etc. Response rates for surveys that have been taken away are much lower than those completed with support at the point of contact.

6. Implementation and Variation

The Healthwatch Sutton Board has agreed the governance arrangements for the delivery of all major projects. This includes the establishment of a project group at the beginning of each project. This group will follow the project through and agree the final product (in this case this report) before submission to the responding organisation.

Advertisements were placed on-line, social media and through posters inviting anyone with an interest to come along to the first meeting of the Outpatient Project Group held in August 2015.

The following methodology was proposed and agreed at this meeting.

1. A short survey is put together to collect feedback
2. ESHH will provide a list of outpatient services, days the outpatient appointments are active and key contacts for each service.
3. Healthwatch Sutton volunteers will attend specific clinics and ask patients if they would be willing to complete the survey.
4. The survey will be on paper and divided in to two parts. One part that can be answered during the time that a patient is waiting and the second part after the patient has received the service (seen the clinician).
5. If a patient has attended any other outpatient clinics run by ESSH in the last month then they can complete a full survey (Part 1&2) for their previous attendance.

6. Patients can complete Part 2 either on the way out, on-line later or by post using our freepost address.
7. To incentivise responses to Part 2 respondent would be entitled to put themselves in to a prize draw for a £25 voucher
8. In order to reduce the total number of questions, volunteers will carry out an environment audit. As part of the audit, volunteers can also collect notes regarding interactions observed (i.e. between staff and patients).
9. A minimum target of 250 responses should be collected.
10. Volunteers will be asked to attend a variety of outpatient waiting areas on different days/times initially over a period of 4 weeks. At this point an assessment will be made to see if further data collection is needed.
11. Only clinics that are held in the following units at St Helier Hospital would be included:
    - Eye Unit
    - Davis Unit
    - Springhall Unit and Springhall Annex
    - Powell Unit and Powell Annex
    - MacKenzie Unit

A survey of 2 parts was created (see Appendix A) with a total of 20 questions. Nine questions to be answered before the appointment and 11 after. An environment audit was also created. The limited human resources available at the time of visits has meant that insufficient audit material has been collected to include in the report.

Initially the Jubilee Health Centre was considered for inclusion however, due to number of providers delivering Outpatient services at the Centre and the sharing of waiting areas, it was decided that concentrating on clinics at St Helier Hospital would be the most efficient delivery method.

Three detailed negative responses that we felt should be shared immediately with the Trust were sent by email to key staff at the time of discovery in November so that they could respond accordingly.

7. Analysis

Part 1 – Before your appointment

In total 239 patients completed this part of the survey.

The following number of responses was received for each clinic. Originally it was intended that comparison could be made between clinics, however, only 3 clinics have over 20 responses so making a fair comparison would not be possible.

Outpatient Clinic	
Airways - Nurse Clinic	1
Audiological Medicine Clinic	1
Cardiology	6
Dental Clinic	2
Dermatology	21
ENT	10
Eye	68
Fracture	38
Gastroenterology	13
General Surgery	2
Infusion Suit	1
Neurology	2
Oral and Facial Surgery	1
Orthopaedics	6
Plastic Surgery	1
Respiratory	2
Rheumatology	10
Urology	5
UV Clinic	2
Unknown	48

Part 2 – After your appointment

As we had expected, the response rate for the Part 2 was lower than Part 1 due to the fact that many respondents chose to take the survey home to complete. A total of 83 patients completed this part of the survey.

Outpatient Clinic	
Airways - Nurse Clinic	1
Cardiology	4
Dermatology	14
ENT	3
Eye	32
Fracture	6
Gastroenterology	4
Infusion Suite	1
Neurology	1
Oral and Facial Surgery	1
Respiratory	1
Rheumatology	2
Unknown	9
Urology	2
Visual Fields	1
X-Ray	1

Comments Analysis

All of the comments received in both parts of the analysis were amalgamated in order to analyse emerging themes from the qualitative data received. The following table shows the number of comments received for each theme.

Theme	Number of comments
Positive	47
Delay (waiting to be seen)	29
Directions	7
Parking	6
Availability of Appointments	5
Walk in	5
Pharmacy	4
Unsure (confusing information)	4
Cancellation/ Lost referral	3
Doctor	3
Transition (from one service/appointment to another)	2
Change (appointment date)	2
Environment	2

Healthwatch were pleased to see that the largest number of comments related to people wishing to express positive feedback about their experience. Most of the themes of comments shown in the table above have already been included in the evidence given previously in the analysis comments, however the following fell outside the original scope of the survey questions and as such have been assessed separately:

- Pharmacy
- Parking
- Positive Feedback

Analysis Process

Each question and any related comments were analysed and classified under 4 categories:

1. RECOMMENDATION FOR IMPROVEMENT – These are the areas where concern has been shown by respondents and Healthwatch believes an investigation should be carried out to establish if improvements can be made.

2. POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT – Respondents have shown a lesser degree of concern in comparison to those areas defined as 'RECOMMENDATION FOR IMPROVEMENT' and the Trust may wish to investigate and take action.

3. COMMENDATION – The findings for these particular questions/comment themes shown that the Trust is performing well in relation to patient experience.

4. NEUTRAL – No action required. Findings have no positive or negative bias.

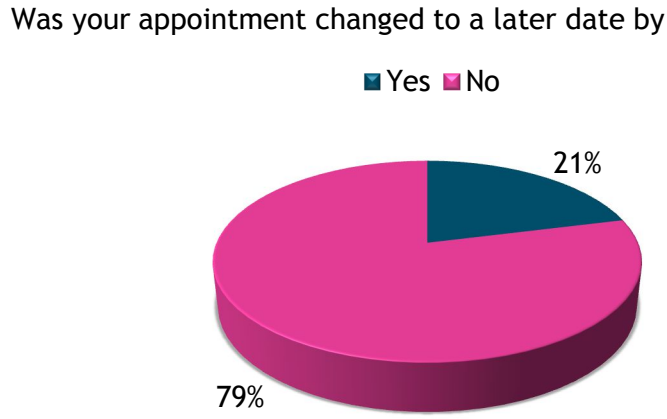
The Key Findings section has been divided into sections relating to the 4 categories below. For this reason the analysis does not follow the order in which the original questions were asked.

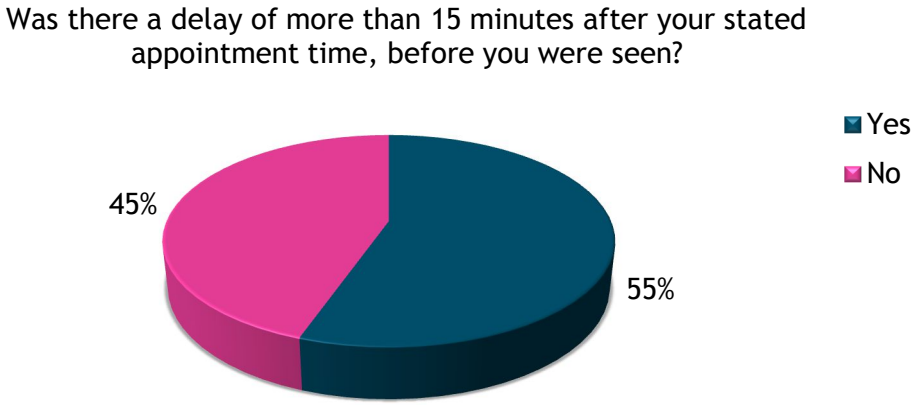
8. Key Findings

RECOMMENDATION FOR IMPROVEMENT

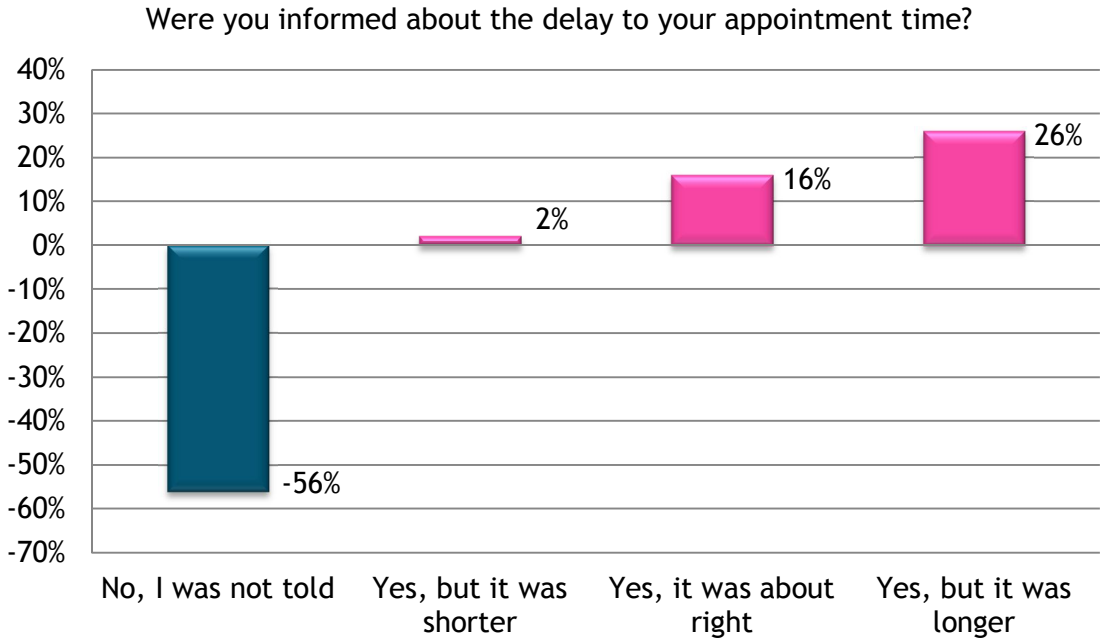
Over 20% (1 in 5) of respondents stated that the hospital had changed their appointment to a later date. For example:

- "*Appointments time keep changing, so it is difficult to know which appointment is the latest. I have had 4 different letters telling me that my appointment time has been moved*" – Unspecified Clinic
- "*Appointments were rescheduled twice by outpatient team*" – Fracture Clinic





More than half of the respondents stated that they had to wait more than 15 minutes beyond their appointment time to be seen. A more detailed response with comments relating to delays are covered under 'How satisfied were you with the amount of time between arriving at the clinic and being seen for your appointment?' See Page 16.



Of those people who had appointment delayed by more than 15 minutes over half advised that they had not been informed of the delay. Of those people who were informed of the delay, 58% said that they ended up waiting longer than they had been told they would need to.

- "*There was no announcement of how late clinic is running and why if possible my doctor did not even had his name on the board - Nurse said, she forgot to put it up*" – Dermatology Clinic

- "*There is a delay to stated time (it appears that too many people are booked in (Over booking). Not enough details either in waiting area*" – Unknown Clinic

- "*Delays in clinic for 1 and half hours. Not much communication from reception*" – Eye Clinic

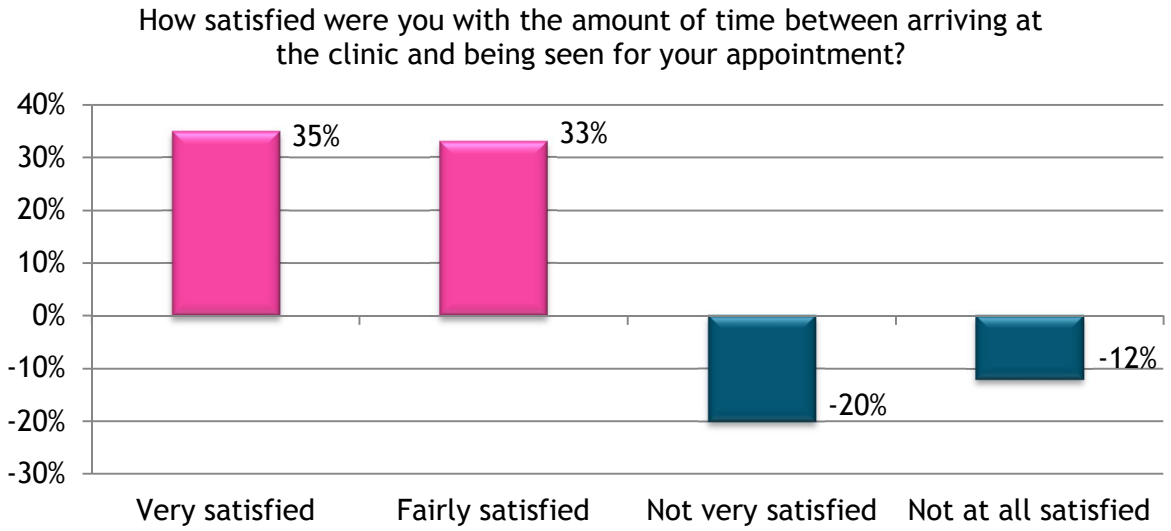
Positive

- "*Found staff very good in keeping us informed of delays. Sadly always delays*" – Dermatology Clinic

QUESTION - If you were given a reason for the delay please give the reason

Comments received for this question are clearly linked to the previous question in the survey 'Were informed about the delay to your appointment time?'

- "*Traffic Accident nearby*" – Cardiology Clinic
- "*I was told that there might be delay before coming to hospital*" – Cardiology Clinic
- "*Doctor did apologise for delay but no reason was given*" – Dermatology Clinic
- "*Previous patients asking too many questions about their conditions*" – ENT Clinic
- "*Waited over an hour for my appointment and got no explanation for delay*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Doctors running late*" Eye Clinic
- "*Dr was late*" – Fracture Clinic
- "*Not even said sorry - They messed up and had not booked me even though they called me to make appointment at 10.15*" - Fracture Clinic
- "*Patients spend longer than normal appointment with doctor hence delay*" – Rheumatology Clinic
- "*No reason was given - as usual the morning session ran over into afternoon*" – Unknown
- "*Patients' appointments were taking longer than anticipated. My appointment was on card as 11.00am and was seen at 11.30am*" - Unknown
- "*Told by nurse that reception had done double booking for appointment on that day*" - Unknown



Nearly a third of patients (32%) asked this question stated that they were not satisfied with the amount of time they had to wait to be called for their appointment. A further third were 'to some extent' satisfied and the final third completely satisfied. Waiting to be seen invoked the greatest number of negative comments from people who completed the survey.
The comments show that many patients waited more than 1 hour to be seen. Again, no specific clinic stood out as having a disproportionate number of negative responses in comparison to the number of responses relating to their clinic.

- "*Hope during my next visit, I will not have to wait long*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Always running late, very frustrating*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Delays in clinic for 1 and half hours*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Yet again, delay to see doctor, very badly organised*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Had to wait 30 minutes for my appointment*" Eye Clinic
- "*I had to wait for 45 minutes or over*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Sadly always delays*" – Dermatology Clinic
- "*Clinic running late*" – Dermatology Clinic
- "*Long delays before you are seen*" – Dermatology Clinic
- "*Most of the time, no problem. But today, I had to wait for a long -long - long - time*" – Fracture Clinic
- "*One hour delay*" - Fracture Clinic
- "*Waiting time - cause for concern. No wifi in clinic area. Staff very nice*" – Fracture Clinic

- "*We had to wait 2 hours. Unbelievable*" – Fracture Clinic
- "*Waited 2 hours to see doctor*" Fracture Clinic
- "*This clinic is always over booked. I have already waited or 45 minutes yet I have not seen doctor. Staff are very polite and helpful*" – Gastroenterology Clinic
- "*All appointments always running late- sometimes waiting over hour*" – Gastroenterology Clinic
- "*One hour delay to see consultant. Times need to be reduced*" Gastroenterology Clinic
- "*Had to wait 30 minutes. Bit disappointing as I had other appointments*" – Rheumatology Clinic
- "*Had to wait for long time*" Unknown Clinic
- "*I attend the anti-coagulant clinic, Inevitably, there is a delay to stated time (it appears that too many people are booked in (Over booking)"* – Anti-coagulant Clinic
- "*Very Good service apart from 20 minutes late*" – Unknown Clinic
- "*I am generally satisfied with St Helier hospital, considering that it is a training hospital. My only concern is waiting time*" – Unknown Clinic
- "*Had to wait 30 minutes to see doctor*" - Urology

Positive

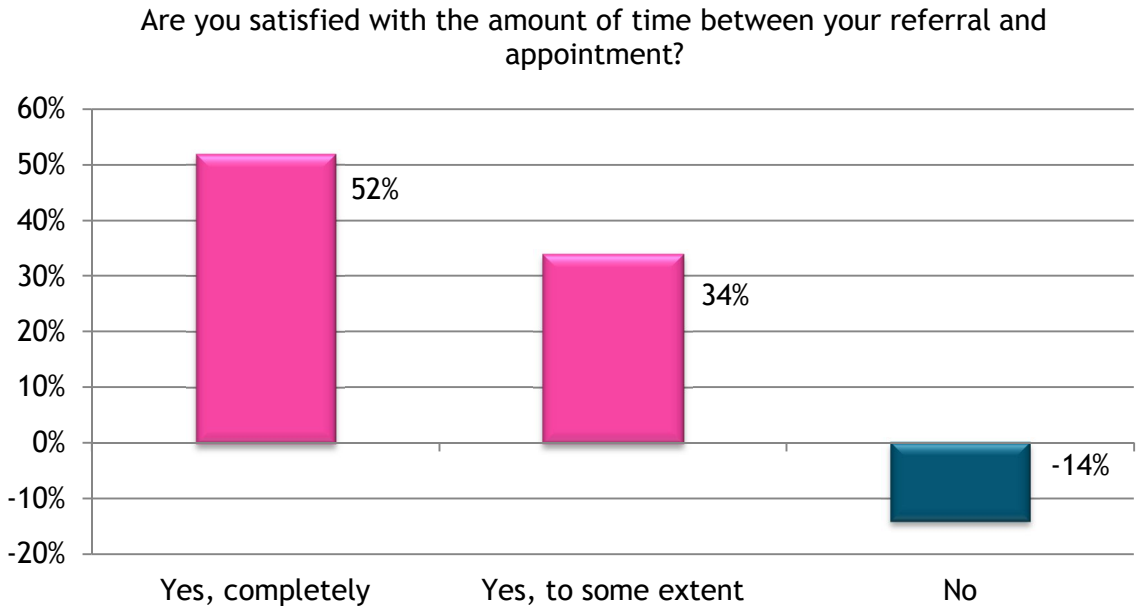
- "*I arrived early and was seen before my appointment time which was wonderful*" – Fracture Clinic
- "*I was seen few minutes earlier - well done*" – Unknown Clinic

Pharmacy

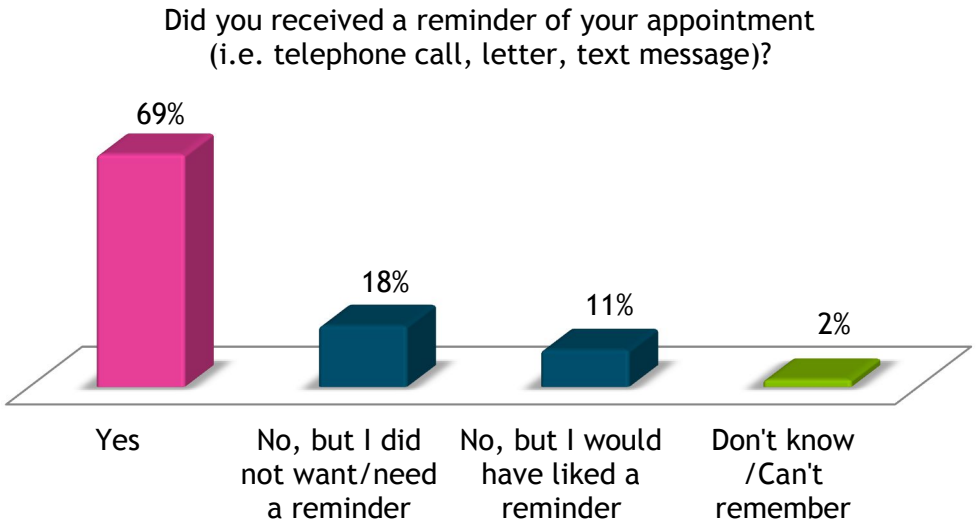
There were no questions relating to pharmacy in the questionnaire, however, respondents have made several comments expressing their frustration of waiting for Pharmacy at St Helier Hospital.

- "*Was unhappy with Pharmacy, had to wait for 45 minutes then was told that my steroid drops had to be ordered. A week later when no one called me back, I phoned - I was told that it was ready. My next appointment was 7 days later while I had to use drops for 14 days prior to appointment*"
- "*Delay - waiting for pharmacy for prescription*"
- "*Pharmacy takes too long - 1hr to 90 minutes*"
- "*Just to get prescription, I had to wait for two hours. - Very disappointing*"

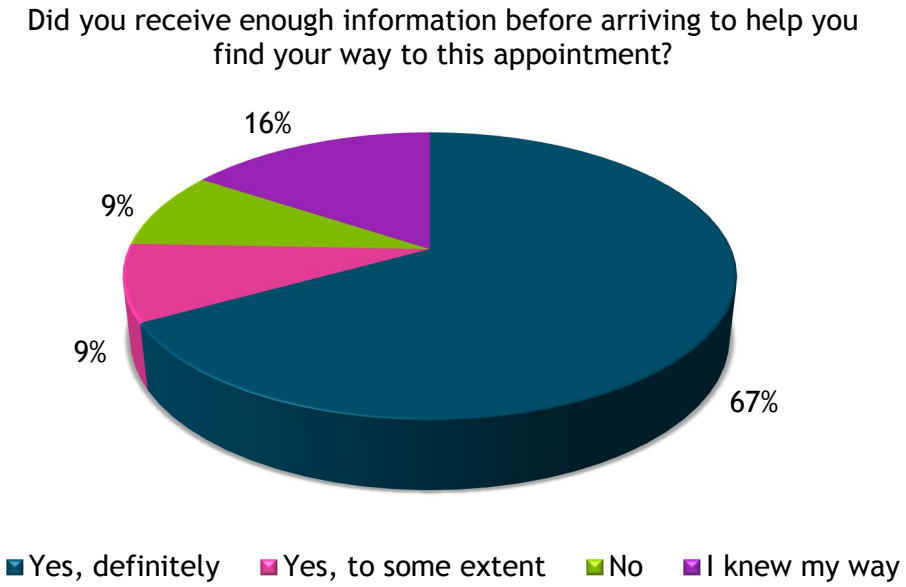
POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENT



Over 50% of patients were completely satisfied with the time taken between referral to appointment. 14 % were not satisfied.

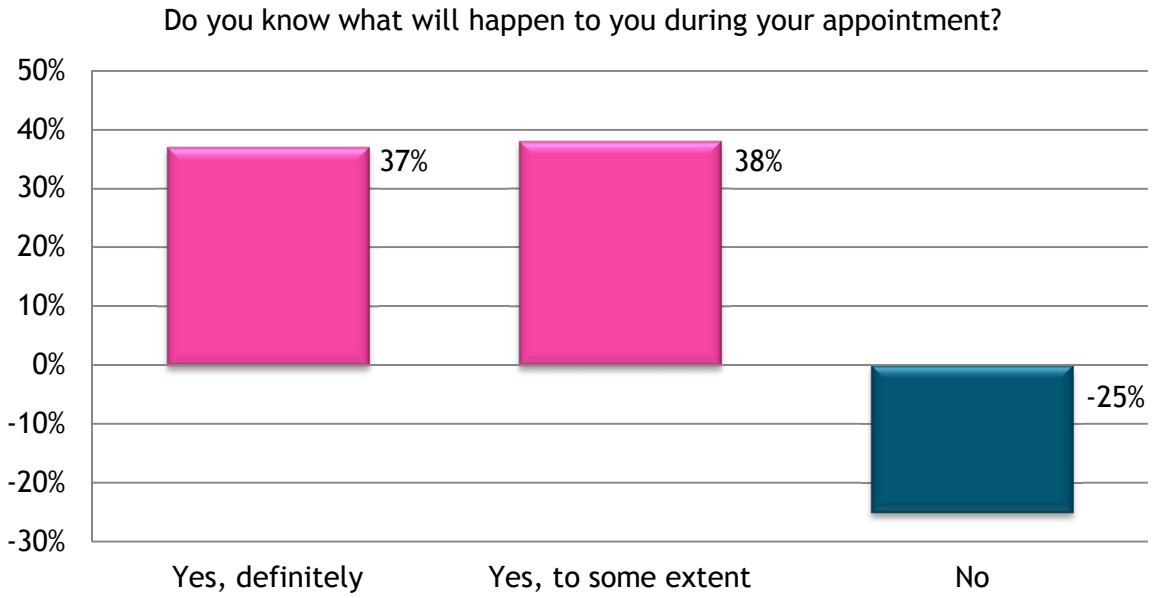


Of those people who didn't receive a reminder, 40% of patients would have liked to receive one. No specific department/clinic showed that they have a disproportionate number of people saying 'No, but I would have liked a reminder' in comparison to their overall response rate.



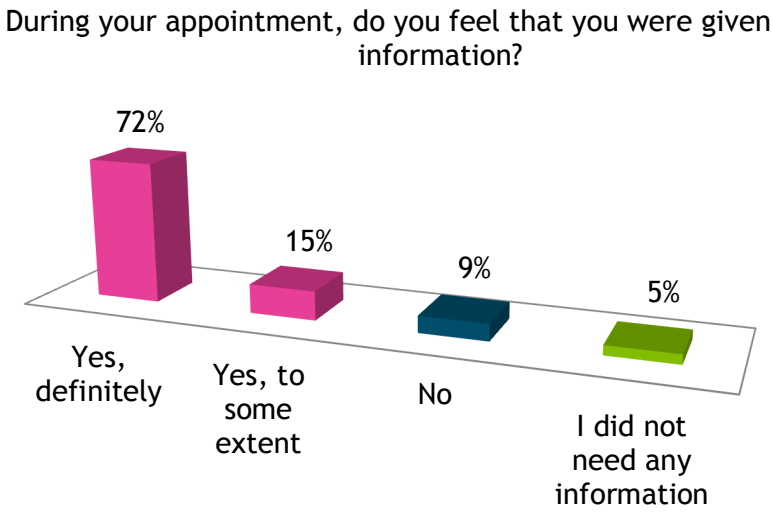
Only 9% of patients stated that they didn't receive enough information to help them find their way. Two thirds of respondents said that they definitely did receive enough information to find their clinic. However there were several mixed comments regarding way finding. The patients who responded 'No' to this questions came to a variety of clinics (i.e. no specific clinic has been highlighted as not providing sufficient information).

- "*This was my first visit - Good directions*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Easy to find*" – Eye Clinic
- "*More information should be provided about where to come and a map too*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Looked up on Internet*" – Fracture Clinic
- "*Nice map at entrance. However, would be nice to receive a map by post*" – Gastroenterology Clinic
- "*Specific instructions as to the department should be given on the appointment letter*" – Unknown Clinic



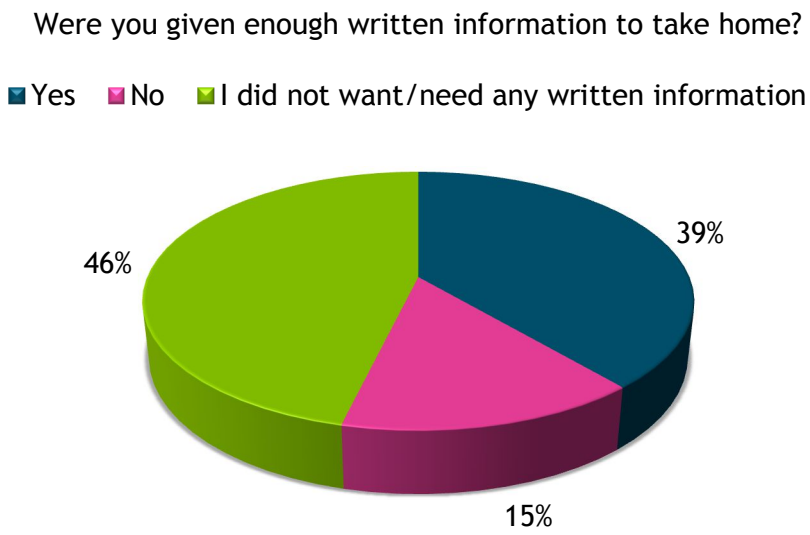
Only 37% of patients showed that they had a clear understanding of what will happen during their appointment. Comments gave some more information about these results.

- "*Some info (should be provided) about what will happen next*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Not sure if I will have any treatment today, could be just consultation today*" – Dermatology Clinic
- "*Not clear if appointment was with nurse only or with nurse plus rheumatologist*" – Unknown Clinic



Over 90% of patients who need information felt that they were 'to some extent' or 'definitely' given enough information during their appointment.

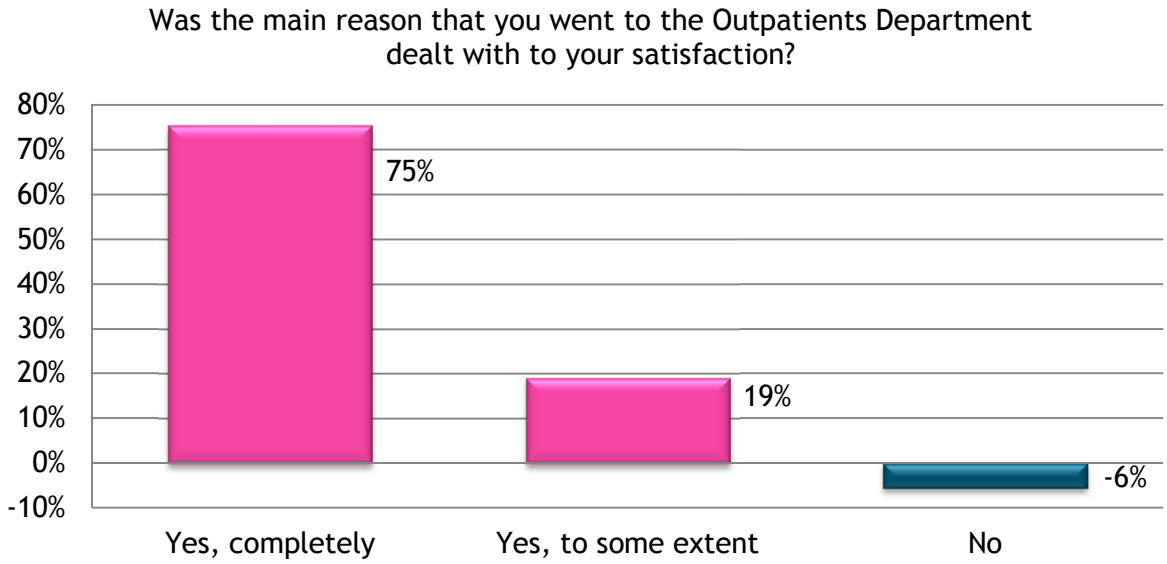
- "*Received good info during appointment*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Was satisfied with discussions with consultant*" – Fracture Clinic



Just less than half the respondents didn't want or need any written information to take home. Of those that did 28% said that they didn't receive the written information they needed. No comments were made specifically about written information

Question - During this appointment did you find out that you had not been given enough information or advice or that you had been given the wrong information or advice? If so, please give details.

- "*Information given was disjointed and confusing which was obvious at the appointment. There was little enquiry about my specific system*" – Gastroenterology
- "*I was told that I would not be seen again for 4 weeks and had been given impression in previous visit that my cast would be removed next time. I was also told to put weight on my broken ankle but not told how. After some discussion registrar eventually suggested seeing the Physio to explain to me how to put weight on. I feel this should have been suggested earlier*" – Fracture Clinic
- "*Broken arm, Physio Dept disagree with Fracture clinic as to which exercise to follow*" – Fracture Clinic



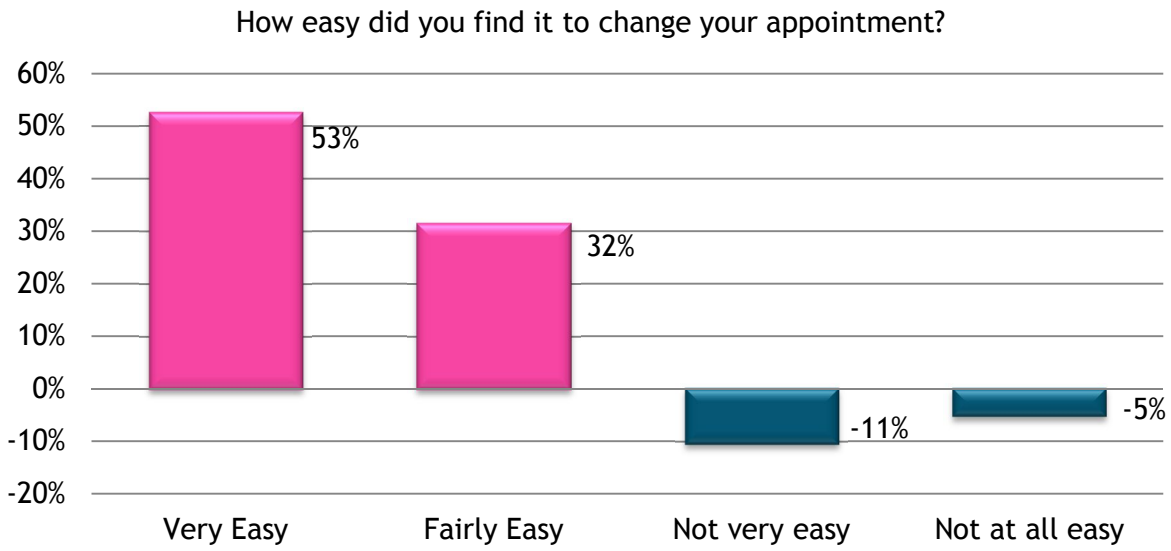
6% of patients felt that the appointment had not dealt with their issue to their satisfaction.

Parking

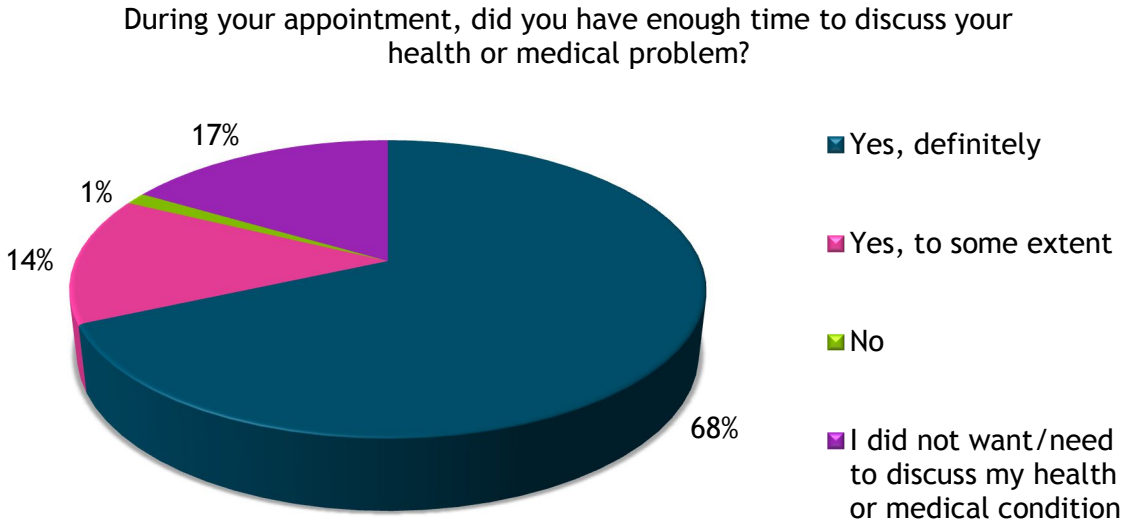
The survey did not ask patients about parking or transportation; however some patients raised concerns about parking. This was intentionally held outside the brief as rectifying issues around parking can be difficult. The following comments could be included in the estates review being carried out by the Trust.

- "*Queue on the road, could not get in car park*"
- "*Parking very difficult when the doctor is running late (one hour), it would be a good idea to have some procedure for car parking fees*"
- "*Parking is a problem*"
- "*Took 20 minutes to park car*"
- "*Long queues in car park*"
- "*Problem with car parking*"

COMMENDATION

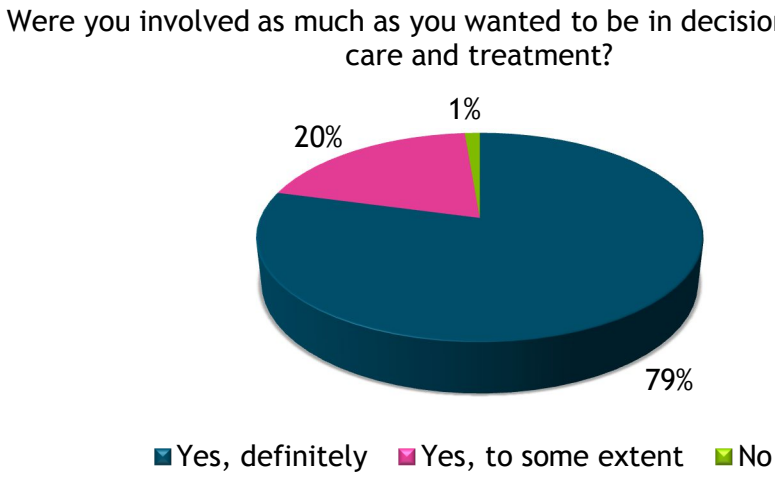


Over 80% found it easy to change their appointment. Only one respondent stated that it was 'Not at all easy'



Less than 2% of those who needed time to discuss their health or medical problems felt that they did not have enough time. Of this group (i.e. removing those who 'did not want to discuss' from the equation), 82% said they 'definitely had enough time with a further 17% said 'to some extent'.

- "*Doctor was very thorough and gave me a lot of options too*" – Dermatology Clinic
- "*Went to great lengths to explain Pro and Cons. Fantastic and First Class service at St Helier so far*" – Orthopaedics
- "*On my second visit, I felt that I did not have sufficient time to talk to the consultant*" – Fracture Clinic



Only 1% of patients felt that they hadn't been involved as much as they wanted to be in decisions about their care. There were no comments received relating to involvement in decisions.

Positive Feedback

Forty seven of the 122 comments received contained a positive statement reflecting a general overall appreciation for Outpatient services and gratitude for the service received.

Cardiology

- *"Very Good service"*

Dermatology Clinic

- *"Have been coming to clinic for many years. Found staff very good in keeping us informed of delays"*
- *"Doctor was very thorough and gave me lot of options too"*
- *"Very happy with speed of treatment and speed of follow up - appointment made. very happy with service"*
- *"Trust provides high quality of services"*
- *"Mine is a complex case. Found doctors excellent in trying to crack it. They have numerous investigations"*
- *"I have moved recently and finished receiving support from this Trust. I want to express my gratitude for the support I received from the Dermatology and Ophthalmology teams"*
- *"Staff very friendly and kind"*

ENT Clinic

- *"Fantastic, cannot fault them at all. All doctors and staff are wonderful"*
- *"Very professional and helpful consultant and nurses"*

Eye Clinic

- *"Easy to find"*
- *"Walk - in straight away. Polite. Names given. Julie was a very reassuring voice"*
- *"Found a cancellation appointment and walked in. Excellent service"*
- *"Very impressed with services. St Helier was closed on Saturday for Eye Section but saw a nurse - Advice was given"*
- *"Excellent website. Nurse at eye clinic - Reception gave me her name when I telephoned and said she would get back to me quickly, which she did in about 20 minutes. Giving me her name was very reassuring"*
- *"I was fully satisfied with my both eyes (Cataract) operation. The eye team is doing a very good job"*
- *"Excellent service, very nice - Transport was provided - very pleasant driver. Helper from hospital brought me in wheel chair. Happy with services. live on my own"*
- *"Very happy, very pleasant staff"*
- *"Excellent and quick treatment. Nurses very courteous and compassionate"*
- *"Well treated"*
- *"The staff were excellent, but when dealing with a patient wearing hearing aid - it was no good talking whilst facing the other way. I cannot grasp words when they are not facing me. I must say again that staff are all very kind and understanding"*
- *"Outpatient Dept. always try their best to satisfy patients"*
- *"Good Service"*
- *"Very satisfied with services"*

Fracture Clinic

- *"I arrived early and was seen before my appointment time which was wonderful"*
- *"Was satisfied with discussions with consultant"*
- *"Brilliant services. Very attentive"*
- *"Have been extremely happy with the way the hospital managed my injury from day 1 to now"*
- *"Have learning disability and blurred vision - However, hospital have managed to help very well"*
- *"Very good and polite service"*
- *"All the staff has been great here and in X ray department. Had many appointments but always kept up to date"*

Gastroenterology Clinic

- *"Very satisfied with every clinics and staff"*
- *"Explained what will happen"*

General Surgery

- *"Very helpful staff"*

Infusion Suite

- *"All staff were very polite and professional. Each covered all patients well"*

Orthopaedics

- *"Went to great lengths to explain Pro and Cons. Fantastic and First Class service at St Helier so far"*
- *"Very satisfied with treatment and help given. All were wonderful. No complaints if any kind"*
- *"Very helpful at the hospital and reception"*

Respiratory Clinic

- *"Very pleased with staff"*

Rheumatology Clinic

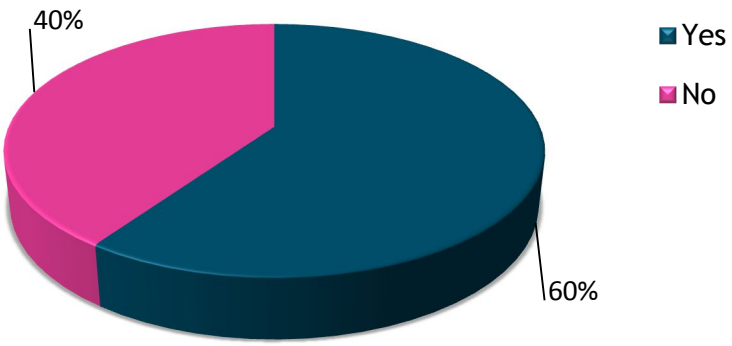
- *"Excellent service from team, in care as well as advice"*
- *"Brilliant service, emergency appointment, called in straightway"*

Unknown Clinic

- *"Happy with everything"*
- *"Every one so helpful including home visit"*
- *"Pleased with speed of treatment"*
- *"Nurses are lovely, surgeons are excellent"*
- *"Good hospital"*
- *"Disabled toilets very nice. All nurses and Doctors very good in comparison with Mayday hospital"*

NEUTRAL

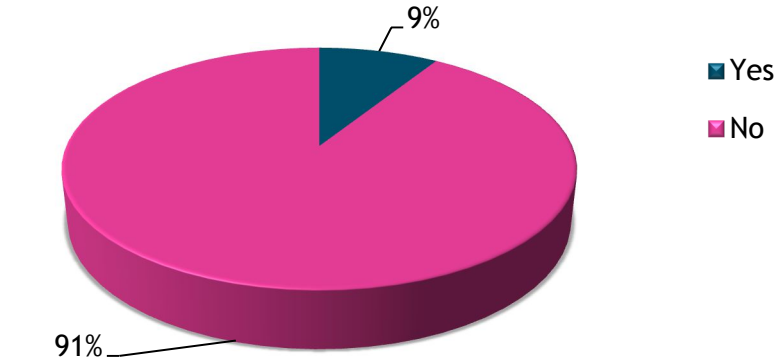
Is this appointment a routine appointment?



40% of patients considered their appointment to not be routine. This may be due to the large number of responses received from the Eye Clinic where many commented that they had been able to 'walk in'. Patients seemed to like this way of accessing the service.

- "*Walk - in straight away. Polite. Names given. Julie was a very reassuring voice*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Found a cancellation appointment and walked in. Excellent service*" – Eye Clinic
- "*It is a just walk in appointment*" – Eye Clinic
- "*Just walked in without appointment*" – Eye Clinic x2

Did you need to change your appointment date or time?



Less than 10% of patients felt that they needed to change their appointment date/time. It could be assumed that appointments given are convenient or that the patient has been able to choose a convenient appointment.

9. Recommendations

Recommendation 1

FINDING
Over 20% (1 in 5) of respondents stated that the hospital had changed their appointment to a later date.

RECOMMENDATION - To carry out an internal audit to find out what are the main causes are for the hospital changing appointments. Potentially, check if any particular clinics or care pathways have more difficulty keeping to original appointments than others. To use this information to see if any action can be taken to reduce appointment changes. Work with staff and Healthwatch to develop solutions.

Recommendation 2

FINDING 1
More than half of the respondents stated that they had to wait more than 15 minutes beyond their appointment time to be seen. A more detailed response with comments relating to delays are covered under the Finding 2 below.

FINDING 2
'How satisfied were you with the amount of time between arriving at the clinic and being seen for your appointment?'
Nearly a third of patients (32%) asked this question stated that they were not satisfied with the amount of time they had to wait to be called for their appointment. A further third were 'to some extent' satisfied and the final third completely satisfied. Waiting to be seen invoked the greatest number of negative comments from people who completed the survey.

RECOMMENDATION FOR IMPROVEMENT - Carry out an audit of various clinics to establish the most common reasons that have a negative impact on the amount of time patients have to wait beyond their given appointment time. Work with clinical teams and administrators to develop systems to mitigate these delays.

Recommendation 3

FINDING
Of those people who had appointment delayed by more than 15 minutes over half advised that they had not been informed of the delay. Of those people who were informed of the delay, 58% said that they ended up waiting longer than they had been told they would need to. The comments received in response to 'If you were given any reason for the delay please enter the reason below' were also used to develop this recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION - Work across the Trust to put in place a universal system that more accurately and routinely informs patients of delays if/when they occur. Investigate potential 'service recovery' plans to be activated when a delay occurs.

Recommendation 4

FINDING

Pharmacy
There were no questions relating to pharmacy in the questionnaire, however, respondents have made several comments expressing their frustration with the Pharmacy at St Helier Hospital.

RECOMMENDATION - Re-assess patient experience of Pharmacy following recent changes. If issues still exist, investigate how other Trusts have put in place systems to reduce the amount of time that prescriptions take to be processed or develop systems to spread demand.

10. Next Steps

1. To meet with key staff at Epsom and St Helier hospital to see what action can be taken to address the recommendations given.

2. To work with the Trust and provide any support required to help them improve these areas.

3. To share the report with Healthwatch England, Sutton CCG (including the Quality Committee), Health and Wellbeing Board and PPGs.

4. To monitor progress of any actions that arise as a result of this report.

11. Acknowledgements

Healthwatch would like to say ‘thank you’ to Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals Trust for all the support and advice that they provided in planning and implementing this project. In particular, Clare Gately, Matron for Clinical Service, Outpatients who was the lead contact at the hospital. Healthwatch Staff and Volunteers found all the staff that they came in to contact with in the Outpatient areas very helpful and supportive.

We would also like to thank all the members of the Outpatient Project Group who agreed to steer the project from its inception to completion. The members are:

Roy Prytherch
Daphne Norman
Janet Emberson
Rose Wright
Ann D’Arcy
Shri Mehrotra
Neena Mehrotra
Terry Redding
Adrian Attard
Marion Taylor

We also owe a great deal of gratitude and thanks to the volunteers who gave up their time to visit St Helier Hospital and speak to patients. They supported and encouraged nearly 300 people to complete the survey. Without this work this project would not have been possible. The volunteers involved were:

David Williams
Shri Mehrotra
Neena Mehrotra
Roy Bentley
Daphne Norman
Aboo Koheeallee

Appendix A

Outpatient Questionnaire

We (Healthwatch Sutton) are the consumer champion for health and social care in Sutton. We are an independent charity (registration no. 1151601) that is here to listen to your views and use your feedback to influence improvements in health and social care. By completing this questionnaire, you will be helping us to put forward recommendations that will improve people's experience of using outpatient services in the future. All responses are confidential and anonymous and we ask that you do not enter any personal information in the free-text boxes of the survey. This questionnaire is completely optional and you are under no obligation to complete it.

There are 9 short questions in Part 1 that will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

Date
Outpatient Clinic Name (for example fracture clinic)
Doctor/Consultant Name (if known)

PART 1 - Before your appointment

1. Is this appointment a routine appointment?
☐ *Yes - Go to question 3*
☐ *No - Go to question 2*

2. Are you satisfied with the amount of time between your referral and this appointment?
☐ *Yes, completely*
☐ *Yes, to some extent*
☐ *No*

3. Did you need to change your appointment date or time?
☐ *Yes - Go to question 4*
☐ *No - Go to question 5*

4. How easy did you find it to change your appointment?
☐ *Very easy*
☐ *Fairly easy*
☐ *Not very easy*
☐ *Not at all easy*

5. Was your appointment changed to a later date by the hospital?
☐ *Yes*
☐ *No*

6. Did you receive a reminder of your appointment (i.e. telephone call, letter, text message)
☐ Yes
☐ No, but I did not want/need a reminder
☐ No, but I would have liked a reminder
☐ Don't know/Can't remember

7. Did you receive enough information before arriving to help you find your way to this appointment?
☐ Yes, definitely
☐ Yes, to some extent
☐ No
☐ I knew my way
Comments ……

8. Do you know what will happen to you during your appointment?
☐ Yes, definitely
☐ Yes, to some extent
☐ No
Comments ……

9. Any other comments?

TO BE COMPLETED AFTER YOUR APPOINTMENT
PART 2 - After your appointment

You can complete these questions in one of the following ways:
- *Hand the completed form to a Healthwatch volunteer on your way out*
- *Return this form in the freepost envelope provided*
- *Complete these questions on-line at www.surveymonkey.com/r/suttonoutpatient*

Date
Outpatient Clinic Name (for example fracture clinic)
Doctor/Consultant Name (if known)

10. Was there a delay of more than 15 minutes after your stated appointment time, before you were seen?
☐ Yes - Go to Question 11
☐ No - Go to Question 13
☐ I did not have a stated appointment time - Go to Question 13
☐ Don't know/Can't remember - Go to Question 13

11. Were you informed about the delay to your appointment time?
☐ Yes, but it was shorter
☐ Yes, it was about right
☐ Yes, but it was longer
☐ No, I was not told
☐ Don't know/can't remember

12. If you were given a reason for the delay please enter the reason in the box below

13. How satisfied were you with the amount of time between arriving at the clinic and being seen for your appointment?
☐ *Very satisfied*
☐ *Fairly satisfied*
☐ *Not very satisfied*
☐ *Not at all satisfied*
☐ *Don't know/Not applicable*

14. During your appointment, do you feel that you were given enough information?
☐ *Yes, definitely*
☐ *Yes, to some extent*
☐ *No*
☐ *I did not need any information*

15. During your appointment, did you have enough time to discuss your health or medical problem?
☐ *Yes, definitely*
☐ *Yes, to some extent*
☐ *No*
☐ *I did not want/need to discuss my health or medical condition*

16. Were you given enough written information to take home?
☐ *Yes*
☐ *No*
☐ *I did not want/need any written information*

17. During this appointment did you find out that you had not been given enough information or advice or that you had been given the wrong information or advice? If so, please give details in the box below.

18. Were you involved as much as you wanted to be in decisions about your care and treatment?
☐ *Yes, definitely*
☐ *Yes, to some extent*
☐ *No*

19. Was the main reason that you went to the Outpatients Department dealt with to your satisfaction?
☐ *Yes, completely*
☐ *Yes, to some extent*
☐ *No*

20. Any other comments?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

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