

Public Responses on General Practice

Together We're Better listening exercise

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1 Introduction

This report presents the views and opinions on GP services gathered from patients and public, workforce and other stakeholders across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent during the involvement exercise which took place between 3 June and 25 August 2019 for the Together We're Better Sustainability and Transformation Partnership.

The involvement focussed on the following service areas:

- Urgent and emergency care
- Mental health
- Developing integrated community services
- Maternity care
- Planned care
- Community hospital services.

Feedback was gathered via a main involvement survey, a shorter postcard survey, a series of listening events and roadshows, and correspondence.

This report summarises responses to the main involvement survey and postcard survey that cover primary care. Primary care responses have been identified by searching verbatim comments for the following terms: 'GP', 'GPs', 'practice' or 'surgery'. To see other feedback, please refer to the main report of findings.

This report has been structured as follows:

- Urgent and emergency care
- Mental health
- Integrated community services
- Maternity care services
- Planned care
- Community health services
- Understanding what's important
- Postcard survey.

All sections, excluding the postcard survey section, cover themes raised in the main involvement survey. The report is structured to reflect the structure of the survey.

Verbatim comments have been included. These have not been edited in any way. They have been chosen to best reflect the themes identified around GP services.



2 Urgent and emergency care

2.1 Number of responses

Table 1. Number of responses: urgent and emergency care

Question	No. of responses*
Please explain why you gave this rating.	26
What do you think is working well?	21
What do you think needs to be improved?	43
What is the one thing that you would change now?	36

* Responses that have one or more of the following terms: 'GP', 'GPs', 'practice' or 'surgery'

2.2 Summary of themes

The following themes were highlighted by respondents:

Positive comments

- Extended access and out of hours appointments
- Care received from GPs
- Communication between services.

Negative comments and improvements suggested

- Lack of access to GP services means that patients use A&E, increasing pressure on A&E services
- Improved access to GPs is required in the evenings and at weekends
- More GPs are required
- Improvements in signposting to services are required
- Improved access to mental health services through GPs is required
- Communication between services was also commented on negatively.

2.3 Example verbatims

"There were too many "GP" type patients clogging up the A&E. Give them their own GP service."
Please explain why you gave this rating.

"addition of out of hours hrs provided by the GP federation seem to be very well utilized on all sites"
What do you think is working well?

"A and E waiting times need reducing. More access to GP appointments outside of normal working hours and at weekends at local surgeries and not having to attend a specialised out of hours service which does not have full access to medical records and history that the GP has"
What do you think needs to be improved?



“Increase the advertising/ promotion of responsible use of services, there is no such thing as winter pressures, it's all the year round GP / out of hospital care services available 24hrs a day /365 days a year. I appreciate s model,already exists, but too often the OOH algorithms still end up with people calling 111 and/ or additional visits to primary care services. It does not need to be GP led, but have the full range of health professionals available”

What is the one thing that you would change now?



3 Mental health services

3.1 Number of responses

Table 2. Number of responses: mental health services

Question	No. of responses*
Please explain why you gave this rating.	11
What do you think is working well?	10
What do you think needs to be improved?	5
What is the one thing that you would change now?	5

* Responses that have one or more of the following terms: 'GP', 'GPs', 'practice' or 'surgery'

3.2 Summary of themes

The following themes were highlighted by respondents:

Positive comments

- Good care received from GPs and referred services.

Negative comments and improvements suggested

- Waiting times for services are too long
- Awareness of services needs to be improved (e.g. self-referral awareness)
- Improvements required in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Improved referrals to services from GPs are required
- Access to mental health nurses / counsellors in GP surgeries is required
- Training for GPs / staff in mental health is required.

3.3 Example verbatims

"I was referred by my GP on a Wednesday and the following Monday I was attending my first appointment with a counselor. I had 7 sessions and have made real progress being able to return to full time work."

Please explain why you gave this rating.

"that there is a service and GP's can refer and you can self refer that is local to me rather than having to travel. This means I can fit in appointments around my working hours much easier."

What do you think is working well?

"Referral to CAMHS is appalling as the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Service reject 4 out of 5 referrals leaving no adequate alternative. This is causing anxiety & frustration with parents & children, and wasting large amounts of General Practice time"

What do you think needs to be improved?



“Mental health nurses, counsellors and support groups to be available at or near to GP surgeries, with shorter referral waits.”

What is the one thing that you would change now?



4 Integrated community services

4.1 Number of responses

Table 3. Number of responses: integrated community services

Question	No. of responses*
Please explain why you gave this rating.	71
What do you think is working well?	35
What do you think needs to be improved?	53
What is the one thing that you would change now?	51

* Responses that have one or more of the following terms: 'GP', 'GPs', 'practice' or 'surgery'

4.2 Summary of themes

The following themes were highlighted by respondents:

Positive comments

- Good care and service by GPs and nurses
- Co-location of GPs and pharmacies.

Negative comments and improvements suggested

- Mixed experiences of services provided by pharmacies
- Improvements required to access GP services (e.g. longer opening hours)
- Access to mental health support from GP services requires improvement
- Lack of access to specialists
- Services are under pressure through lack of funding
- More staff required
- More services required at GP level
- Integration between services requires improvement
- Buildings should be better utilised
- Training is required for GPs
- Prescribing process requires improvement.

4.3 Example verbatims

"I have to access my GP regularly and it is always really difficult to get an appointment. They do not offer a late surgery any day and as I work full time it is difficult to take the time off work to attend. It is particularly difficult when you have to ring to get an appointment and by the time you do eventually get through there are no appointments left which means you have to go through the same process the following day or sit for hours in the walk in."

Please explain why you gave this rating.

“I strongly agree with the principal of integrated community services and feel that the more support offered with the local community, nearer to peoples homes the better. I think that GPs are now working well with community nurses and pharmacies and, slowly, people are becoming more aware of the services that a nurse or pharmacist is able to provide, without the need for a GP appointment. Long term, this should reduce the pressure on other areas of the NHS by freeing up GP appointments which, in turn, may reduce the number of those presenting at A&E.”

What do you think is working well?

“Remove the way you have to try and get a GP appointment, for example, queuing outside the surgery as early as 7.30 am to guarantee an appointment on that day”

What do you think needs to be improved?

“Supply of nurses/GPs to increase to meet the demand of the community/residents”

What is the one thing that you would change now?



5 Maternity care services

5.1 Number of responses

Table 4. Number of responses: maternity care services

Question	No. of responses*
Please explain why you gave this rating.	1
What do you think is working well?	2
What do you think needs to be improved?	4
What is the one thing that you would change now?	1

* Responses that have one or more of the following terms: 'GP', 'GPs', 'practice' or 'surgery'

5.2 Summary of themes

The following themes were highlighted by respondents:

Positive comments

- Access to midwives through GP practice.

Negative comments and improvements suggested

- Improved continuity of care
- More checks required during pregnancy
- Improved communication between services is required.

5.3 Example verbatims

“Having the community midwife running clinics from GP surgery facilitates communication about concerns eg health issues and safeguarding”
What do you think is working well?

“Communication from Secondary Care to GPs and Midwives to GPs”
What do you think needs to be improved?



6 Planned care services

6.1 Number of responses

Table 5. Number of responses: planned care services

Question	No. of responses*
Please explain why you gave this rating.	26
What do you think is working well?	10
What do you think needs to be improved?	15
What is the one thing that you would change now?	10

* Responses that have one or more of the following terms: 'GP', 'GPs', 'practice' or 'surgery'

6.2 Summary of themes

The following themes were highlighted by respondents:

Positive comments

- Good experiences of care
- Effective referrals.

Negative comments and improvements suggested

- Improved communication is required
- Some poor experiences of care
- Access to services requires improvement with shorter waiting times
- Management of care by GPs following procedures requires improvement
- More GPs required
- Changing GP contracts was suggested.

6.3 Example verbatims

"Hard to get appointments then always running late and gp doesn't have time to give the care you need ever seems to set up up for those that don't work"
Please explain why you gave this rating.

"referral made efficiently by GP. Appointment accessed easily in secondary care for a non-urgent issue"
What do you think is working well?

"GP. admin. Was supposed to be a quick referral GP told me but two weeks later paperwork was still with GP admin"
What do you think needs to be improved?



“More GP accountability, more GP support, more awareness of on-going treatment support better rapid access to primary care.”

What is the one thing that you would change now?



7 Community hospital services

7.1 Number of responses

Table 6. Number of responses: community hospital services

Question	No. of responses*
Please explain why you gave this rating.	5
What do you think is working well?	2
What do you think needs to be improved?	8
What is the one thing that you would change now?	6

* Responses that have one or more of the following terms: 'GP', 'GPs', 'practice' or 'surgery'

7.2 Summary of themes

The following themes were highlighted by respondents:

Positive comments

- Effective 111 service
- Access to walk-in services at community hospitals.

Negative comments and improvements suggested

- Lack of access to GP appointments meaning patients access walk-in centre
- Speedier referrals
- Integration and communication between services.

7.3 Example verbatims

"I took one of my children to a walk in clinic due to been unable to access a G.P surgery. The wait times were over 4 hours. The staff although rushed were friendly and knowable."

Please explain why you gave this rating.

"The fact that the 111 service can arrange, if needed, an appointment to see a GP out of hours. This helps to reduce the presentations to A&E and the pressures on emergency care outside of usual GP hours and at weekends. I do, however, feel that the ability to make out of hours appointments could be greatly improved ."

What do you think is working well?

"Re-open rehabilitation / GP assessment / respite care facilities"

What do you think needs to be improved?



“Better working relationships with hospitals - GPs- community care calling for patients and working off the same page, one organisation”

What is the one thing that you would change now?



8 Understanding what's important

8.1 Number of responses

Table 7. Number of responses: considerations

Question	No. of responses*
Do you think there are any other things we should consider...?	24
Is there anything else you would like us to consider?	19

* Responses that have one or more of the following terms: 'GP', 'GPs', 'practice' or 'surgery'

8.2 Summary of themes

Considerations raised:

- Consider patient choice
- Consider travel to services (e.g. elderly patients, rural locations)
- Care should be person-centred
- Consider greater utilisation of health centres
- Consider the demographics of the area
- Consider the need for improved administration
- Consider the need for a health visitor service to reduce GP demand
- Consider the use of technology e.g. telephone / video consultations
- Consider arrangements for those living on the border
- More GPs and nurses are required
- Improved access to GP appointments is required, including shorter waiting times and longer opening times.

8.3 Example verbatims

“There is a major increase in the number of residents in Stafford being planned. This means services should stay local to Stafford wherever possible. Ideally nobody should have to travel more than 1 mile for GP services, which could be extended to include more urgent care; hospitals for most routine needs such as maternity, child and adult emergencies should be within 5 miles of residents.”

Do you think there are any other things we should consider when we decide how we could deliver health and care across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent?

“Open GP surgeries longer Stop 2/3 weeks wait for routine appointments GPs and social service working together”

Do you think there are any other things we should consider when we decide how we could deliver health and care across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent?



“Stop consultants from dumping workload into General Practice when they should be undertaking the actions, follow up, investigations & referrals themselves”

Is there anything else you would like us to consider?

“Better information sharing across organisations that sit outside of Staffordshire. Many practices have % patients living over border and accessing services and knowledge of services is often difficult”

Is there anything else you would like us to consider?



9 Postcard survey

9.1 Number of responses

Table 8. Number of responses: postcard survey

Question	No. of responses*
What do you think is working well?	84
What do you think needs to be improved?	112
What is the one thing that you would change now?	68

* Responses that have one or more of the following terms: 'GP', 'GPs', 'practice' or 'surgery'

9.2 Summary of themes

The following themes were highlighted by respondents:

Positive comments

- Access to extended hours appointments
- Care received at GP practices
- Quick referrals
- Use of technology
- Effective 111 service.

Negative comments and improvements suggested

- Access to GP appointments
- Continuity of care (e.g. seeing the same GP)
- Communication from GP practice requires improvement
- Lack of referrals from GPs
- Integration of services requires improvement
- More GPs and nurses are required
- More services should be provided at GP practices.

9.3 Example verbatims

"My local GP work well with regular and books for my needs an interpreter"
What is working well?

"Improved GP appointment availabilitiy. Excellent GP/Patient support. Good multi-functional team with GPs/Nurses/Pharmacies"
What is working well?



“GP appointments having living in Brownhills it would be nice to have a WIC keep Cannock Hospital small”

What do you think needs to be improved?

“General practice needs more of the money to enable it to cope with the demand and help to recruit new GP's”

What do you think needs to be improved?

“I would change the system for GP appointments”

What is the one thing that you would change now?

“Make more GP surgeries able to take A&E minor injuries as drop in”

What is the one thing that you would change now?

