



Bridlington GP Access Insights Survey

March 2023

Exploring lived experiences of accessing GP services in Bridlington and evaluating the effectiveness of appointment booking methods for the local community.

healthwatch
East Riding of Yorkshire

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Disclaimer

All the views, opinions, and statements made in this report are those of the residents who participated in our research.

This report analyses the data collected regarding the experiences of individuals accessing GP services within the Bridlington area, their registered practices, and the methods used for booking appointments.

This perception may not fully reflect the actual quality and availability of GP services in the local area. Nevertheless, it is the perception of participants whose information Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire has collected.

About Healthwatch

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We exist to make sure that people are at the heart of care. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share their views with those with the power to make change happen. We also help people find the information they need about services in their area.

We have the power to make sure that people's voices are heard by the government and those running services. As well as seeking the public's view, ourselves, we also encourage services to involve people in decisions that affect them. Our sole purpose is to help make care better for people.



In summary, Healthwatch is here to:

- Help people find out about local care.
- Listen to what people think of services.
- Help improve the quality of services by letting those running services and the government know what people want from care.
- Encourage people running services to involve people in changes to care.

Foreword

As the access to healthcare services evolves, it is crucial to understand patient experiences and needs to provide optimal care for our community. The people of Bridlington have faced challenges in accessing GP services, and addressing these concerns is vital.



This Healthwatch report presents the findings of the Bridlington GP Access Survey, aimed at gathering patient feedback on accessing GP services in the area. Our goal is to improve patient experience and access to appointments.

We are grateful to the Bridlington residents and GP practice staff for their invaluable contributions to this survey and report. We hope our findings and recommendations will foster an ongoing dialogue among healthcare providers, policymakers, and the community to create a more accessible, efficient, and responsive healthcare system in Bridlington.



“In recent times, the people of Bridlington have faced challenges in accessing GP services, and we recognise the importance of addressing these concerns.”



Why this subject?

This survey was in response to an increase in concerns expressed by residents about the difficulties they faced in accessing local GP services. These challenges impact the community's overall health and well-being, making it an essential topic to explore.

HWERY recognises the important changes to primary care services in Bridlington but felt, due to increased negative lived-experiences received, they needed to investigate the extent of these challenges and identify the barriers faced by patients when trying to access their local GP services. Recognising that some services were new and others had been established since June 2022. By understanding these issues, we aim to uncover potential areas for improvement and make informed recommendations for change.

Furthermore, HWERY were interested in exploring the various methods of booking appointments, such as in-person, by phone, and through the NHS app. We wanted to assess the ease and effectiveness of these methods.

The goal of this survey and report is to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current GP access situation in Bridlington, and ultimately, to contribute to the development of a more accessible and efficient healthcare system for all residents.



"Improving GP access starts with understanding the community's needs; let's bridge the gap together."



Executive Summary

Aims and Objectives

This report examines the findings of the Bridlington GP Access Survey. This survey was promoted with the support of the Bridlington Health Forum and the PPG for the respective practice, to evaluate the availability of GP services in the area and the challenges faced by residents.

The report investigates patients' lived-experiences with GP practices in Bridlington and whether they have faced difficulties accessing GP services. The survey examines the methods used to book appointments, the ease of accessing these services, and the patient's overall satisfaction with the process.



It looks to establish whether there is sufficient awareness about the available appointment booking methods, such as in-person, by phone, or through the NHS app, and how these methods can be improved to ensure better access to GP services for the community in a convenient and efficient manner.

Methodology

Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire (HWERY) collected data in the following ways to evaluate GP access in Bridlington:

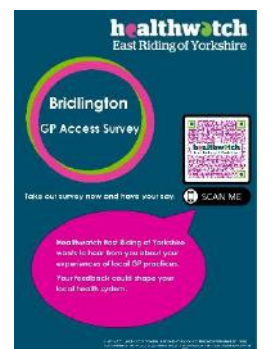
Face to face approach



HWERY visited public spaces such as community centres and the medical centre to ask residents to complete paper copies of the survey. To ensure anonymity, we waited for participants to finish the survey and then collected the completed forms directly from them, maintaining confidentiality and encouraging honest feedback.

Online Survey

The survey was available for residents to fill out online for those who did not wish to complete a paper copy. We created posters featuring a QR code which provided direct access to the online survey. These posters were shared with local partner organisations and through our social media channels to encourage people to complete the survey.



In addition, the survey was made available through the HWERY website and further promoted on social media. Local partner organisations who requested the survey shared it with their staff and members. HWERY collaborated closely with the Bridlington Health Forum to raise awareness of the survey and encourage participation from residents.

Highlight of Findings

- We received feedback from 489 people which is a great response.
- A significant 82 % of respondents expressed concerns about the challenges they face in accessing GP services in Bridlington.
- Many respondents indicated a lack of awareness about the available appointment booking methods and how to access them effectively, such as:
 - as in-person,
 - by phone,
 - through the NHS app.
- The majority of people surveyed reported difficulties in booking appointments, particularly over the phone, with many experiencing long hold times or engaged lines.



“Residents need more awareness of available GP services in Bridlington and guidance on accessing them effectively.”



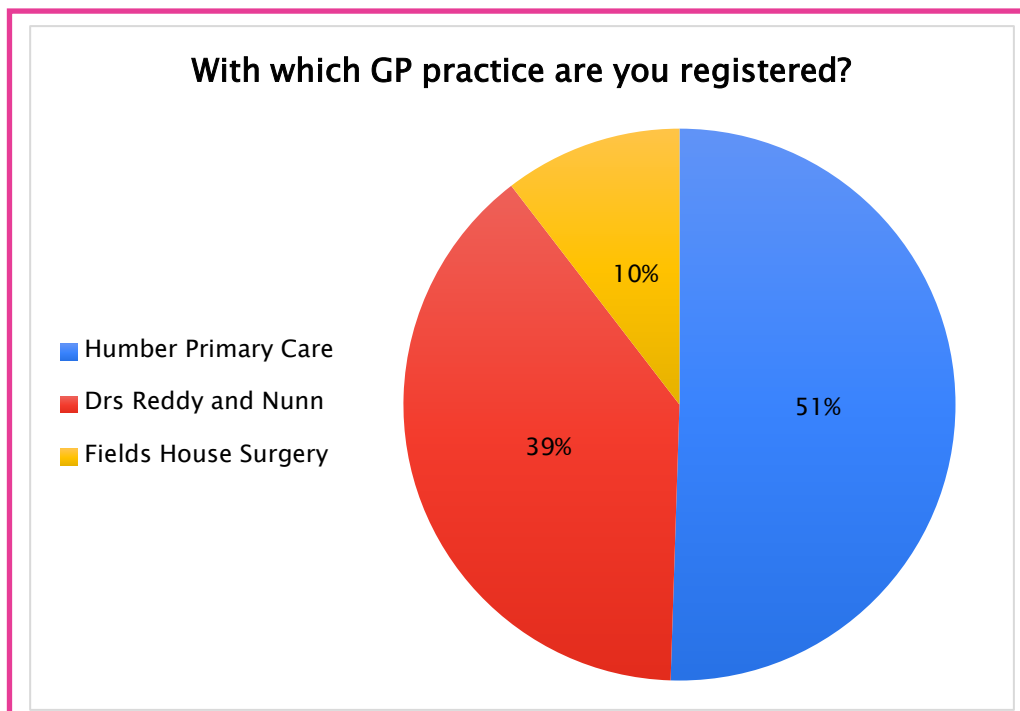
Looking at the data

Our survey focused on Bridlington residents, and we made sure to gather responses from a diverse range of age groups.

Access to GP services

“With which GP practice are you registered?”

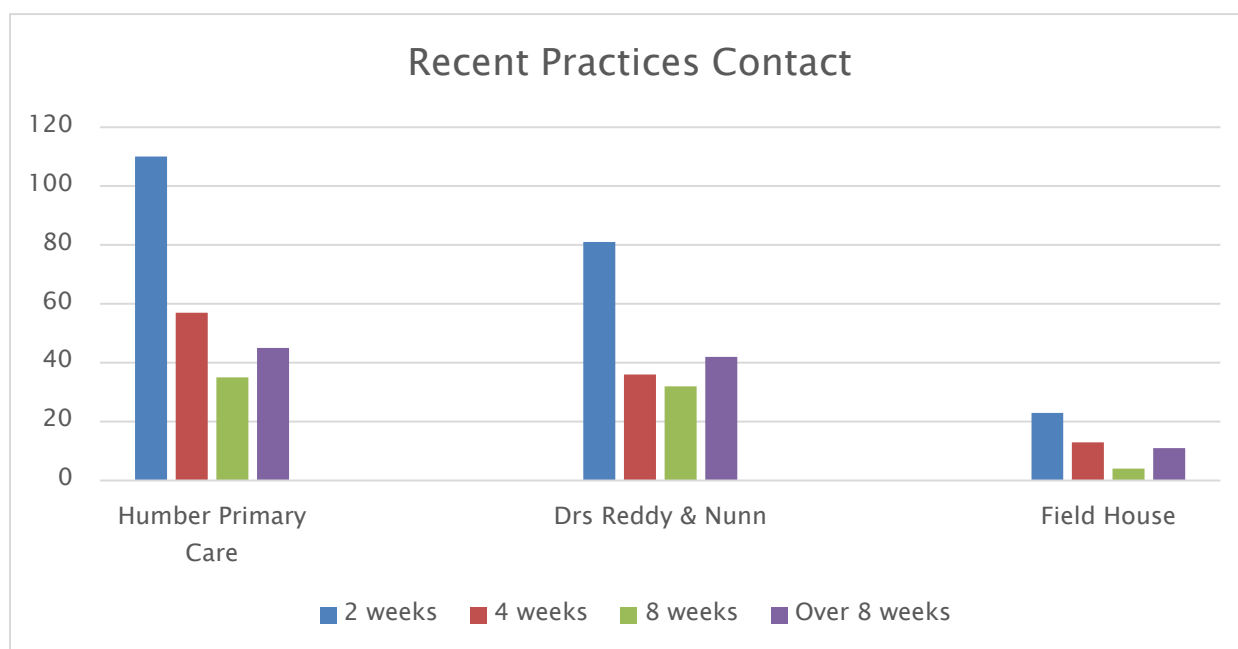
From the 489 answers, we found the following distribution of residents registered with each GP practice:



The chart above shows the percentage of respondents registered with each GP practice, providing a clear overview of the representation of each practice within the survey. This data allows us to analyse the experiences and concerns of the residents registered with these practices.

“How recently have you contacted your surgery?”

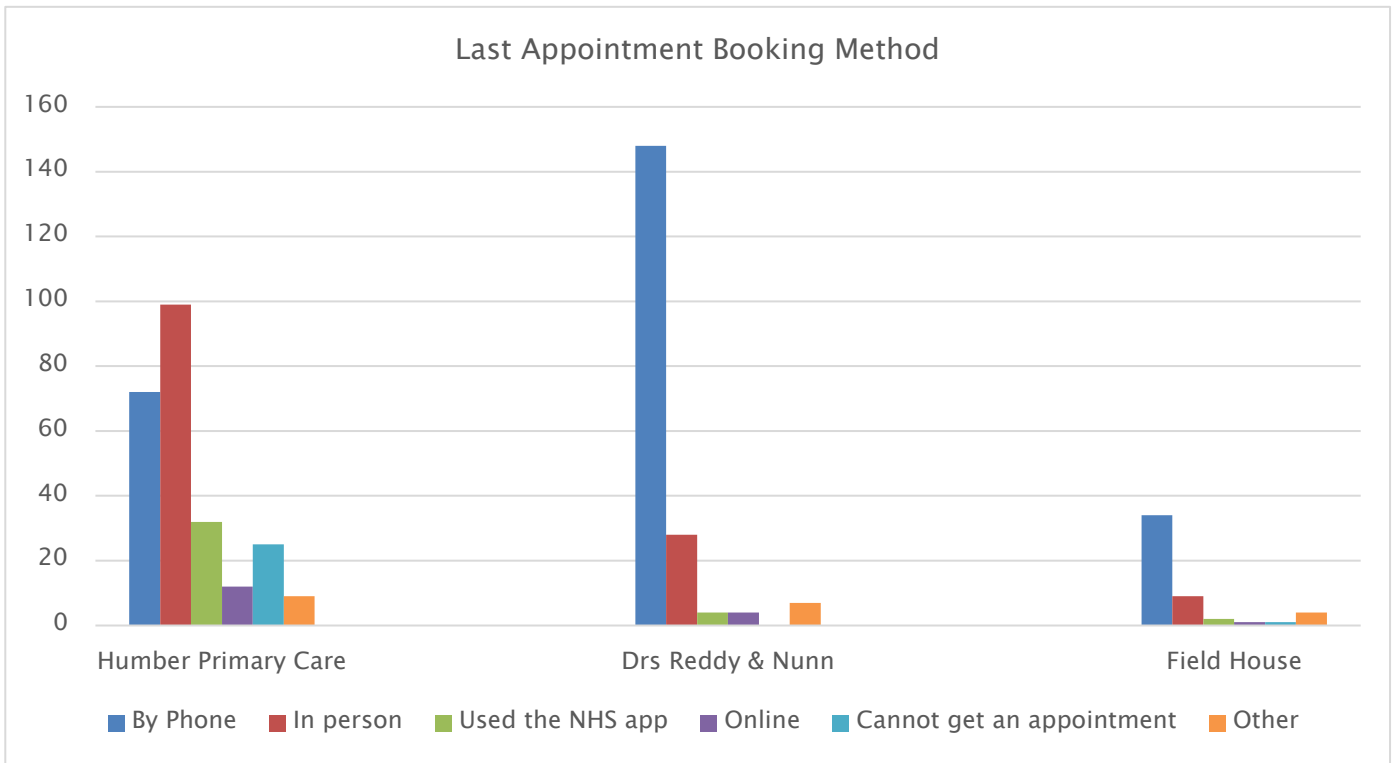
We asked this question to understand how recent the contact between residents and their respective GP practices in Bridlington, had been that people were reporting on. The data collected is broken down by each GP practice, as shown in the chart below:



Interestingly, patients with recent GP interactions were more likely to complete the survey. For all three practices, the majority of responses came from those who contacted their surgery in the past 2 weeks. This suggests that recent experiences could have motivated patients to share their feedback.

“How did you make your appointment for your last visit to the doctor?”

We asked the residents about the method they used to make their appointment for their last visit to the doctor. The data collected for each GP practice is as follows:



The chart above displays the distribution of the appointment booking methods for each GP practice, providing a clear overview of the preferences and experiences of residents when making appointments. This data allows us to analyse the accessibility and efficiency of various booking methods and identify potential areas for improvement in GP services in Bridlington.

According to the data:

- Compared to Humber Primary Care, both Drs Reddy & Nunn (4%) and Field House Surgery (6%) had significantly lower usage of the NHS app and online booking, as opposed to Humber Primary Care's 18%.
- Interestingly, most patients at Humber Primary Care (40%) made appointments in person, while most patients at Drs Reddy & Nunn and Field House Surgery made phone appointments (78% and 67%, respectively). From this data, it might be beneficial for Humber Primary Care to investigate the reasons behind patients choosing these methods to access their services. Understanding the preferences and needs of their patients could help HPC tailor their appointment booking options.

When asked the previous question, it is important to note that 10% of patients at Humber Primary Care reported difficulties in getting an appointment. Compared with the other practices Reddy & Nunn (0%) and Field House (2%), this is a concerning figure.

Below are some examples of what people told us regarding appointment-making at HPC:



“It is impossible to get an appointment.”

Anon



“I got cut off after 30 minutes of waiting. Call back later to discover that there were no appointments left.”

Anon



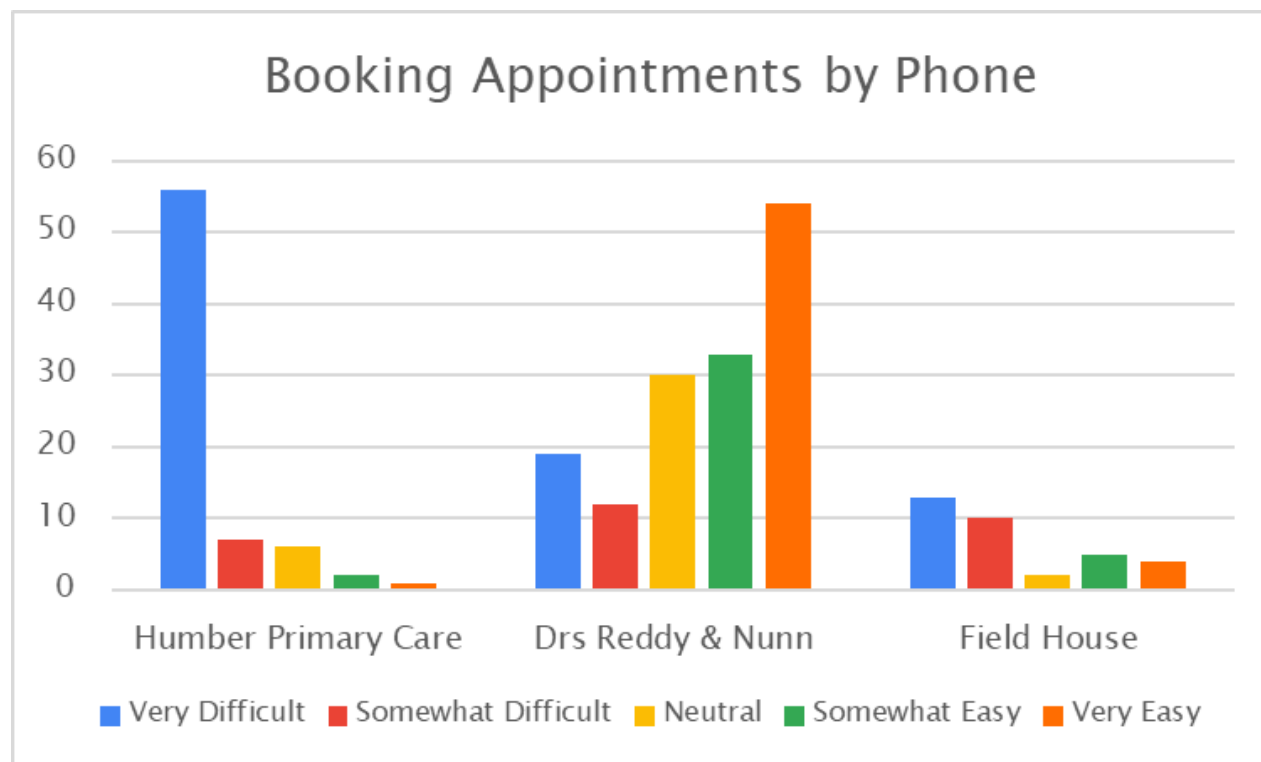
“It seems like no one works there, the phones never get answered”

Anon



“If you made your appointment by phone, how easy was it to reach the practice?”

We wanted to know, for patients who reported making their appointments via phone, how easy it was to reach their respective GP practices. The chart below shows the distribution of responses given based on a scale, highlighting the differences in experiences among the three practices:



According to the chart above, 78% of Humber Primary Care patients find it difficult to contact their practice by phone. Contrary to this, patients from the other practices present different experiences. 36% of Patients from Drs Reddy & Nunn patients describe making a phone appointment as extremely easy. On the other hand, Field House's patient reviews are mixed, demonstrating varied experiences.

Humber Primary Care patients experience the greatest difficulty in reaching their GP practices by phone, based on these findings. It may be necessary to address this issue in order to improve accessibility and patient satisfaction.

“Do you have any comments about making an appointment by phone?”



Below are the examples of what people told us in the comments with regards to HPC:

NB: Comments have been taken directly from entered responses and spellings and abbreviations remain uncorrected

Can't get appointments
It is impossible to get answered.
Yes it is difficult to get an answer or you get cut off
Long time to answer 10th in queue then cut off
It is impossible if there are more than 10 people in the queue you are cut off - then they never answer anyway - if you go down in person at 8.00 am they tell you there are no appointments
Can't get through. 9 hours calling between 8am and 5pm, finally got through at 5.19pm and told to phone back at 8 next day - REPEAT
After 1 hour and 53 minutes to get through. I eventually spoke to the receptionist to give them information. I then requested to speak to management, and aired my concerns of the length of time waiting to give some vital information.
12th in the queue waited 1hr 25 mins to be answered just to make an appt
No appointments when you call at 8am
Can't get through. My daughter filled in an online consultation form a week ago on the advice of the receptionist at practice 2 and she still hasn't received a response.
Very nearly impossible, finally get to caller 1 then phone goes dead
You can never get through always number 10 or above in the queue waste of time and money trying to phone !
It's much quicker to drive to the surgery than trying to get through to them
have to ring at 8am to get an appointment to speak to anybody most times you cant or get an appointment to do so ITS RUBBISH PEOPLE ARE QUEING AT THE SURGERY BUT STILL DONT GET ANYWERE
Caller no 8 then 9 then 10 gave up in the end
I had to deal via 111 to get a visit from doctor - i am housebound - it took nearly all day
You can be on the phone for as long as 40-50 minutes
Even when I try at 8am there are already 10 in the queue so the call is ended. It then takes at least 80 minutes to get through when all appointments have gone
It's a nightmare just having to hold on and listen to a tune for what seems to be forever
long preamble about unrelated issues re prescriptions dialing 111 or anything other than getting to see a GP
At least 45 minutes on hold
Easier to go round at 7.45am & make appointment when the door opens.
Takes far too long to get through. Recently waited 59 minutes and was then cut off so had to ring again and wait a further 45 minutes. Waiting just under 2 hours has happened often. Would like to ask why are there not more phone lines and more staff to answer calls.
I was number 16 in the queue but when I got to number 2 the phone went dead .
Normally takes at least an hour to get through to a receptionist and then there are no appointments left
I couldn't get one and was told to go to Urgent Care... for eczema!
No one answers, your call gets disconnected and if you're lucky enough to speak to anyone there are no appointments. I've been trying to see a Dr for MONTHS with no success
Trying to ring doctors is a nightmare

Number 6 in the phone queue. Phone answered 15 minutes later. I was told all appointments gone as only 3 appointments released that day. Very frustrating. I rang straight at 8 a.m.
You cant get through
Phone line cuts off as more than 10 in the queue. Takes too long to get through. Then when you do all appointments are gone.
No comments.
your are waiting 20 mins for someone to answer or they dont answer at all
Take to long to answer phone
It cuts you off if there are more than 10 people in the queue, if you are placed in the queue it still takes 1hr on average to get through.
Unable to contact practise by phone very long wait and getting cut off
Its a nightmare, if there's 10 people in the queue they just cut you off. There needs to be more people answering the phone!
I didn't actually make the appointment. I went without as after half an hour I was still 7th person in the queue and it was difficult to stay on hold wit(a newborn baby that needed tending to.
Taking to long waiting on phone over 1 hour some times
Nobody answers usually takes 30 minutes as in a queue
Was always above the cut off of number 10 , eventually 2 of us tried and one waited 25 minutes in the queue after gaining a place
It's almost impossible to get through without been cut by off after the voice message, you can spend all day calling, I work in pharmacy and the number off calls we get numerous times every day from patients asking us for help to try and contact the surgery, this is so distressing for elderly people.
Takes too long to get through.
Need lots of patience waiting to speak to someone I was 5 in line and waited over 30 mins
They sent me to minor injuries when it was not appropriate
Unbelievable queues.
Impossible all gone or can't get through
Poor communication lack of persons answering phone
Phones not answers quick enough. Cut off if over 10 in queue. When you do get through there are never any appointments left, so told to ring back the next day. Then the whole nightmare process starts again the next morning. When working you can't be on the phone for over an hour just trying to make an appointment. Or trying to juggle the school run while on the phone either
No point, far too long answering. Unacceptable when working
I would like to get through after been waiting on the line for a long time, I ring again on the line 45 minutes for yet again no response
If your not in the list of first ten callers then you get cut off. If you wait for over 10 minutes you get cut off. If you get the answering machine and it directs you to another location it rings once and cuts you off. It's virtually impossible to get an appointment. My appointment was only made when they rang me.
They don't answer the phone.
It's a joke have not been able to make appointment and as soon as you get to caller 1 it hangs up on you and doctor call back 4 hours after appointment and hang up when you answer it's a disgrace
Impossible to make contact. Give up in the end.
Impossible !
I do not even try anymore.
Should not have a recording that you can book online, as no appointments available online. An hour plus to be on the phone is inexcusable.
It's so frustrating the time wasted trying to talk someone

Very frustrating
Call at exactly 8am 9th in the queue 40 minutes before it's answered then no appointments
Nobody answers
If you ring at 8oclock you get cut off. A very long wait for little result
Couldn't get one
Can't. Then you need to go in person.
Never can get through
Had to keep ringing as I was waiting for a gp to call me!!! All day I was trying!
It's not fit for purpose. Waits for response not unusual to be more than half an hour. Very rarely is it answered in anything like a reasonable time.
tried 5 times to get a prescription, not offered an appointment
Difficult to access the practice via the phones.
You can't make appointments over the phone
Takes too long but unable to book what I needed to book on NHS app
The current system doesn't work
like a merry go round
practically impossible - gave up
At the time, long waiting time to be answered.
Impossible
Impossible to phone for an appointment
On hold for 40 minutes then cut of
The queuing system - far too many waiting. The music - annoying. The interrogation of some of the 'care navigators'.
Always get cut off
Very hard to get though
Takes so long queuing to just get through to anyone
It's impossible
Nearly none existant
Waiting too long on the phone. Huge queue
Very long waiting time to be answered and then still unable to make an appointment, attended surgery at 7.45am and no appointments for that day or foreseeable future.
Not worth trying.
You need more staff or working phone lines.
It is almost impossible and very frustrating
Called at 8am for the line to be busy. Tried until I got through
Numerous calls required. Long wait, long queues
Can only get an appointment by phoning up at 8 am when I work so not always able what has happened to booking online
I kept getting cut off. It took hours of phoning
An answer would be good
I didn't even get to make an appointment. Rang at 7am 3 days in a row, first in the queue, sent to urgent care every time as no appointment available.

Very long wait for phone to be answered, long queue system
45mins waiting
Impossible
Couldn't get through so went to stations avenue
Takes a while but they are always helpful when you do get through.
It is nice to talk to a real person.
Too long to wait over 45 mins
Can never get through so no longer phone
No 17 in the queue, took 56 minutes to get through .. diabolical!
long queue & long time on the phone
Yes ridiculous you can never get through
Its impossible to get through.
Its impossible
Impossible
Waited 40minutes for phone to be answered. Appointment was at Manor house. Blood test end on November and still no results to date.





Below are examples of what people told us in the comments with regards to Drs Reddy and Nunn:

Speedily answered
No problems Practice 3 are very efficient
I'd rather book online but can't
You can't get an appointment with a doctor which ever way you contact them
It took 20 minutes before I spoke to the receptionist.
Can't get through and when you do no appointments available
excellent service
My call was answered in a timely manner and I was seen the same day
Told I was number 10 in the queue, phone answered in less than 5 minutes
Very efficient
Great service from the staff at Reddy and Nunn practice
I am "triaged" always to one of the nursing staff, for a persistent and worrying Kidney Infection/UTI
I was 16th in the queue, call time totalled 18 minutes.
Usually a Q
I was in a queue Of 17 people!
Just the long wait on the phone
Very pleasantly surprised to get through straight away and very helpful person on the phone
Wasn't able to see a Doctor, only a nurse.
Just takes a while to wait to be answered but always a positive response
It costs about three pounds front a land line while you are waiting in the call queue
Prior to amalgamation it was very easy to talk to the receptionist. Not the case when I rang recently.
Not a viable option always find it better to call at surgery.
None at all
Very quick for a nurse to ring back.
Appointment made for the same day.
Very efficient service directed to clinical practitioner
Takes too long
Bit of a wait but very efficient.
None available when needed.
Quite a long time on hold & it would seem you are only able to access another health professional, either a nurse or paramedic & more commonly offered a telephone appointment
I've not had a problem at all getting through to my gp's surgery but it was a few months ago now. I have been in a queue but not waited long for someone to answer.
The telephone ques are too long I phoned at 8.30am exactly and was 12 in the que - 1hour 15 mins later I was still no. 5 in the que. I had to hang up - it took me 1 and a half days to get through to the reception.
Very quick to answer



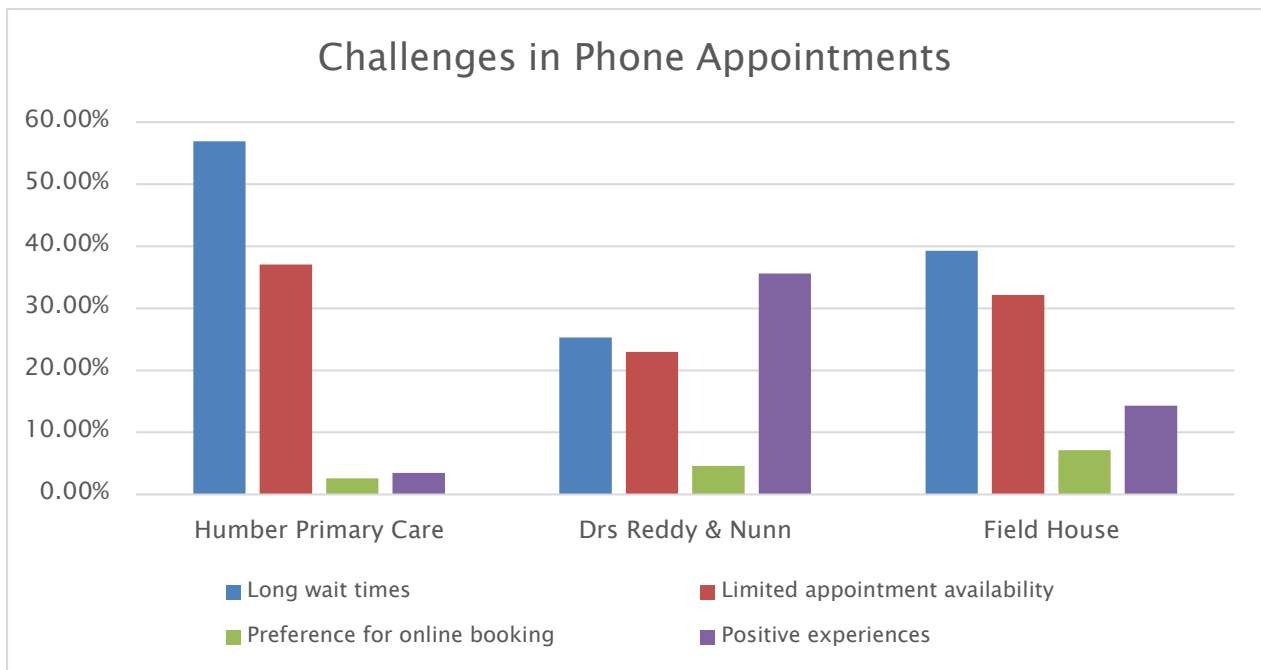


Below are examples of what people told us in the comments with regards to Fields House Surgery

The wait is too long. The line sometimes cuts out and receptionists seem unwilling to give appointments.
Have to ring by 8 am. Not always able to get appointment
Historically I have never had an issue
Always found Fieldhouse accessible as long as you phone later in the day
Long waits
I've always found it easy to obtain an appointment. I am careful to select times when I contact the surgery when hopefully they are quieter
Waiting times are horrendous
Just that it is very hard when you get cut off after listening to the message over & over
Can't always get through in time
Too much information and different options especially for hard of hearing
Ridiculous wait times on the phone!!
long wait times to get through, its sometimes easier to get the bus there and back and do it in person!
Takes too long to answer
You usually get a phone consultation not always a face to face appointment. There is never a chance to build rapport or for a doctor to get to know you anymore.
Got through on 2nd day of ringing at 8am
If they answered sooner
I asked to see a doctor, appointment was made with only a nurse. They were unable to help me
No one answers plus when they do half or time you have to speak to a receptionist who wants to know why your calling an not very good service at all
I had to wait for nearly three hours on the phone to make an appointment. When I got to number 3 it cut off. I was furious! No way was I going to wait another 3 hours.
Hard to get past the receptionist
Excellent service from Fieldhouse Surgery
I could not get to see my Doctor I ended up going to A&E
Unprintable !
I have hearing problems so I have to go into the reception at the surgery in order to get a prescription
Not really. You usually get answered in 5-10m and get a plan of action i.e. appointment or a further phone call on the day.



Amongst the three GP practices, we observed distinct differences. Below is a chart showing the distribution of responses:



Based on patient comments about their experiences with making appointments by phone, we identified the following themes:

1. Long wait times.
2. Limited appointment availability.
3. Preference for online booking.
4. Positive experiences.

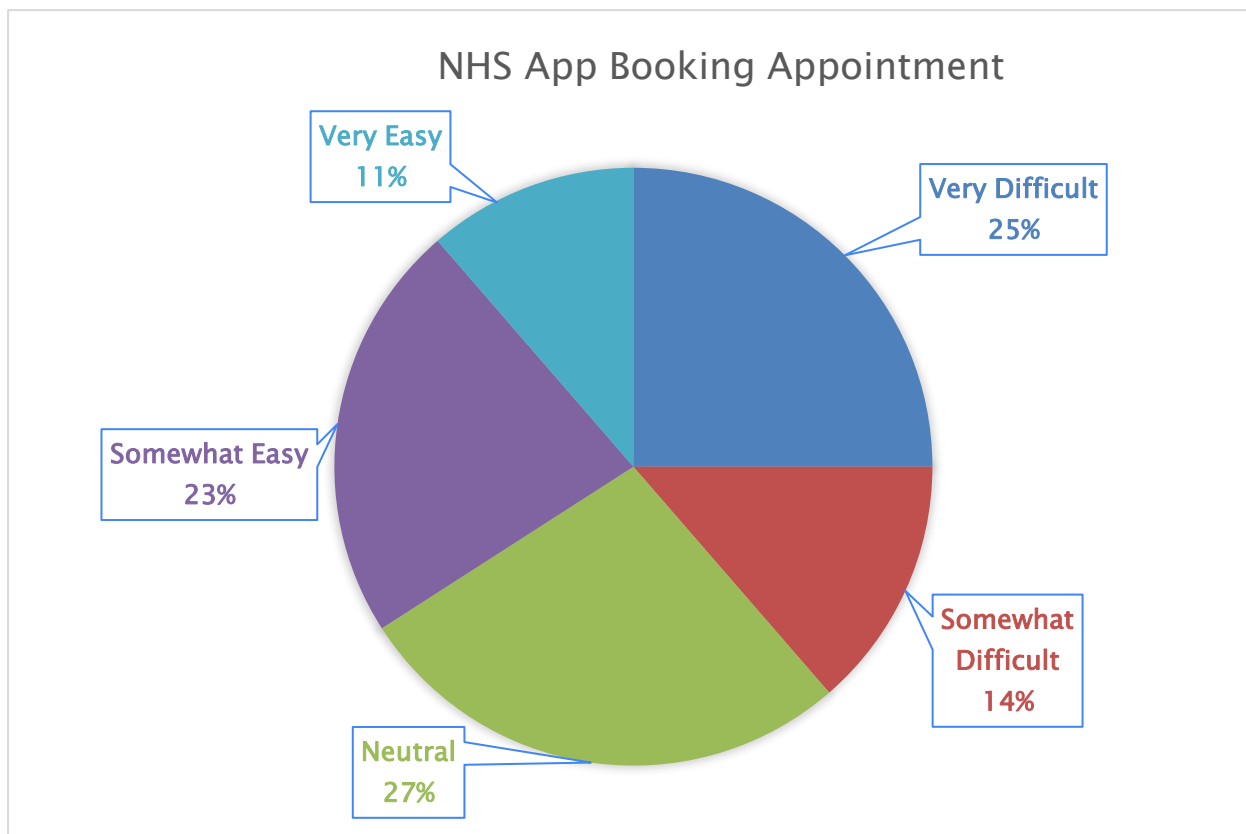
- Humber Primary Care had the highest percentage of patients experiencing long wait times (57%) and limited appointment availability (37%) based on 116 responses from patients.
- In contrast, 77 patients of Drs Reddy & Nunn had the lowest percentage of experiences with long wait times (25%) and a higher percentage of positive experiences (36%). It was reported by 26 patients of Field House that there was a long wait time (39%) and a limited number of appointments available (32%).
- Compared to the other practices, Drs Reddy & Nunn appear to be more effective in providing satisfactory phone appointments.

Online booking

Interestingly, although a relatively small percentage of patients across all practices expressed a preference for online booking, Drs Reddy & Nunn had a higher rate of positive experiences compared to the other two practices.

“If you made your appointment through the NHS app, how easy was it to make the appointment through the app?”

We were interested in finding out about the experiences of patients who made their appointments through the NHS app. We asked them to rate the ease of making appointments using the app. The chart below illustrates the distribution of responses for each GP practice, highlighting the differences in experiences amongst the three practices.



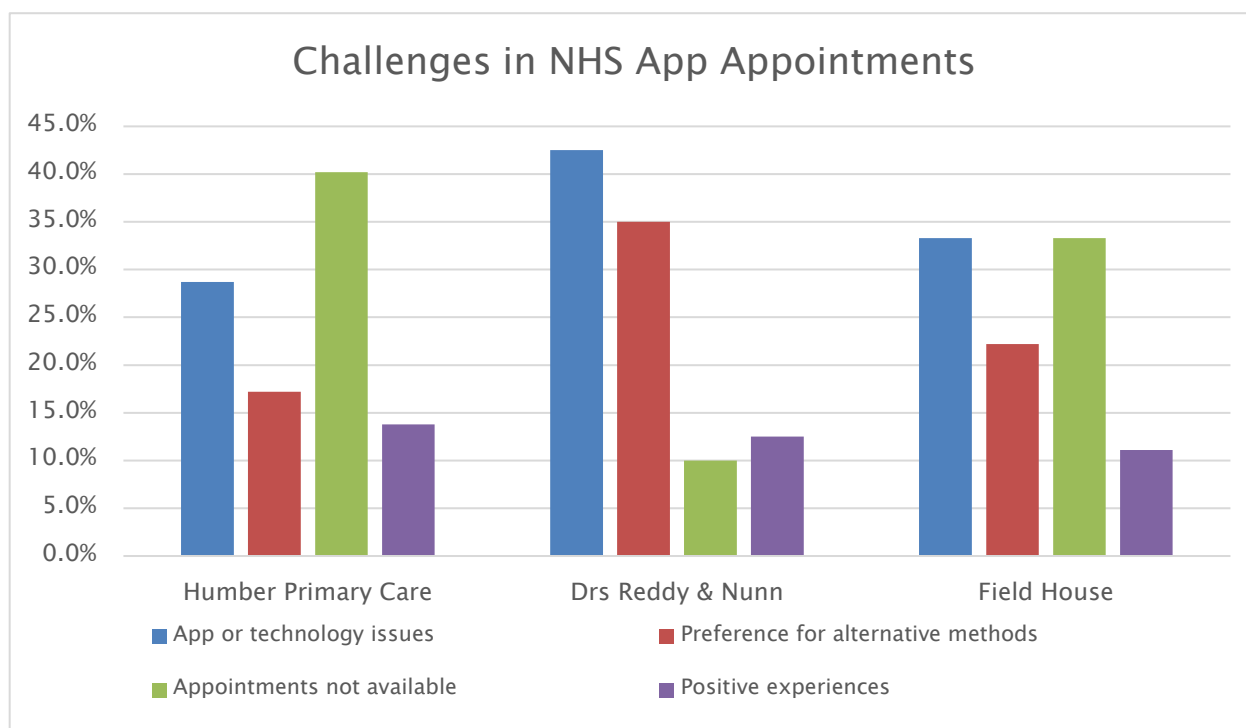
According to the responses, patients at Humber Primary Care had mixed experiences with the NHS app, with 21% finding it easy and 28% reporting difficulties. At Drs Reddy & Nunn, fewer patients used the app, but 50% found it very easy and 50% neutral. At Field House, 67% of the 6 patients who used the app found it easy, while 33% experienced difficulties.

Interestingly, there are considerable differences in patients' experiences with the NHS app across the three practices.

It would be beneficial for the practices to investigate the reasons behind these differences and work towards educating users around accessibility and increase the number of appointments available via the app, as a significant percentage of patients faced difficulties with appointment availability.

“Do you have any comments about making an appointment through the NHS app?”

We wanted to know if patients who reported making their appointments through the NHS app had any comments about their experiences using the app. Among the three GP practices, we observed distinct differences. Below is a chart showing the distribution of responses:



Based on patient comments about their experiences with making appointments by NHS app, we identified the following themes:

1. App or technology issues.
2. Preference for alternative methods.
3. Appointments not available.
4. Positive experiences.

Among the 87 comments received from Humber Primary Care patients, the most prominent concern was the unavailability of appointments through the NHS app (40%). Additionally, 29% reported app or technology issues, while 17% preferred alternative methods for booking appointments. A smaller percentage of patients, 14%, shared positive experiences with the app.

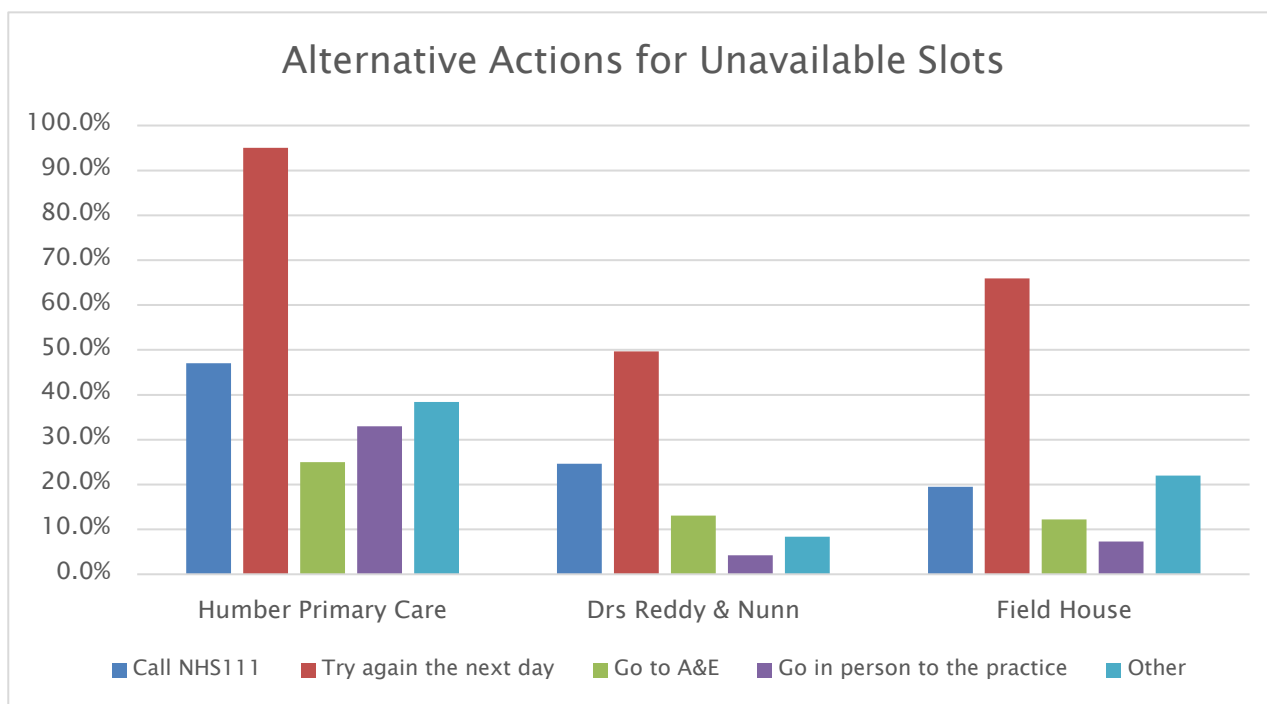
In contrast, the 40 comments from Drs Reddy & Nunn patients revealed a different pattern. While 42% reported app or technology issues, only 10% expressed concerns about appointment availability. Interestingly, 35% of patients preferred alternative methods for booking appointments, and 12% had positive experiences with the NHS app.

For Field House practice, the 18 comments received showed that 33% of patients experienced app or technology issues and had difficulty securing appointments. Preference for alternative methods was expressed by 22% of respondents, and 11% reported positive experiences with the app.

It is worth noting that Drs Reddy & Nunn had the highest percentage (35%) of patients preferring alternative booking methods among all practices. Positive experiences with the NHS app were relatively similar across the three practices, with Humber Primary Care reporting the highest percentage (14%).

“If you cannot get an appointment slot, what do you do?”

We asked this question to explore the actions patients take when they encounter unavailable appointment slots, which has been a primary concern. Our options reflected possible next steps that they could consider. Based on the responses, the following chart illustrates the differences between the three practices, shedding light on the various courses of action patients choose when they are unable to secure an appointment slot:



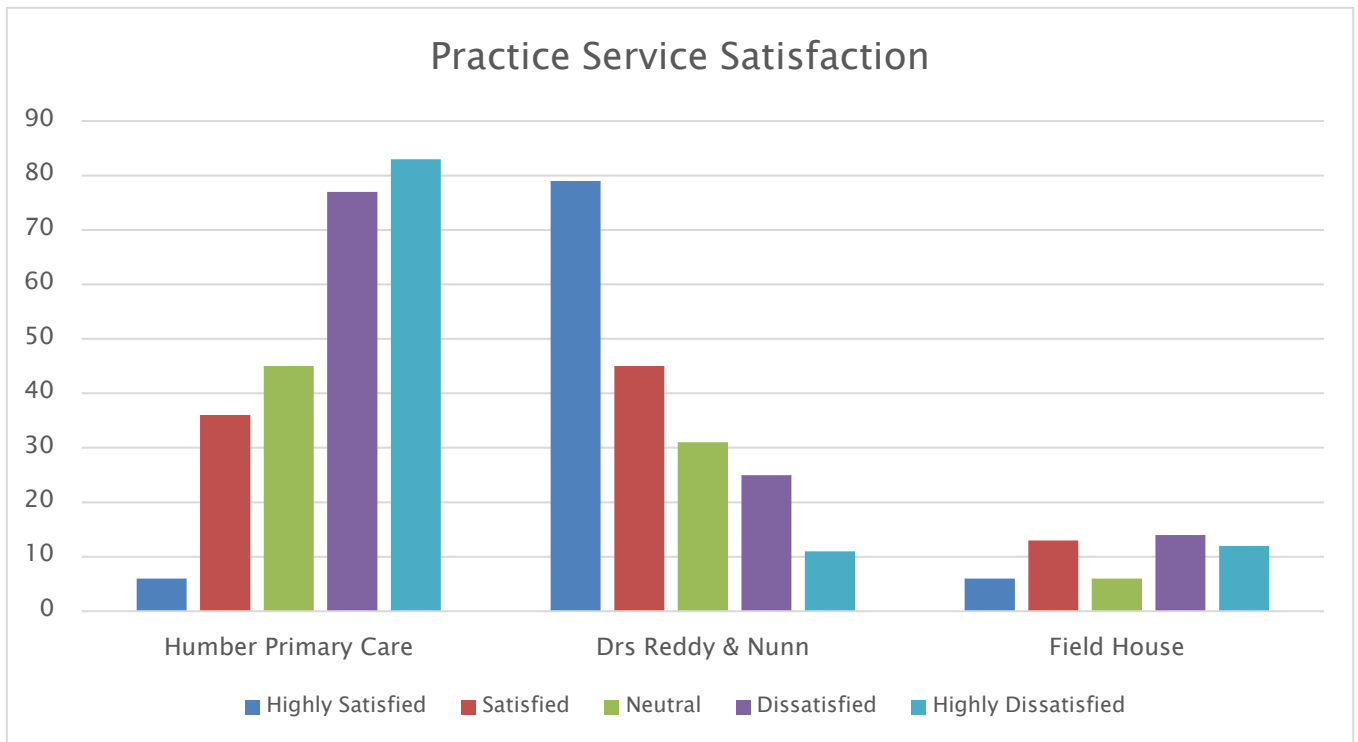
Amongst the three practices, the responses to unavailable appointment slots showed similar trends, with patients able to select multiple steps. For Humber Primary Care (276 responses), 94% would try again the next day, while 24% would call NHS 111. In Drs Reddy & Nunn's practice (191 responses), 50% would try again the next day and 25% would call NHS 111. In Field House Surgery practice (51 responses), 66% of patients would try again the next day, and 20% chose NHS 111.

Visiting A&E and the practice in person were less frequent choices for patients across all practices, with percentages ranging from 4% to 17%. The data highlights a consistent pattern in patients' actions when faced with unavailable appointment slots, with trying again the next day being the most common action for all three practices.

“Overall, how satisfied were you with the service you received from your practice?”

In order to gain a comprehensive understanding of patient satisfaction, we asked patients about their overall satisfaction with the practice's service. Our goal was to gather a general assessment of patients' experiences with their GP practices. The chart below presents the distribution of responses, facilitating a comparison between the three practices:

Referring to the question, "Overall, how satisfied were you with the service you received from your practice?" We observed notable differences in patient satisfaction levels across the three practices.



Humber Primary Care

Out of 247 responses from Humber Primary Care patients, 15% were either highly satisfied or satisfied, while a significant 65% reported being dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied. Additionally, 20% remained neutral.

Total Number Received	Number of responses when filtered	Category Filtered
247 responses	160 responses	Dissatisfied/highly dissatisfied
247 responses	45 responses	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
36 responses	9 responses	Who were satisfied, wrote comments that complained



Comments received focused on:

- more staff needed
 - always getting cut off
 - phone system not being effective
 - not able to get appointments
- Healthwatch received multiple responses that, "It's impossible"



Drs Reddy and Nunn

Patient satisfaction levels at Drs Reddy & Nunn were considerably higher, with 65% of the 191 answers being either highly satisfied or satisfied. Only 18% of patients were dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied, while 16% remained neutral.

Total Number Received	Number of responses when filtered	Category Filtered
191 responses	34 responses	Dissatisfied/highly dissatisfied
191 responses	31 responses	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
45 responses	1 response	Who were satisfied, wrote comments that complained



Comments received focused on:

- specific individualised issue with care
- requests regarding staff-politeness when answering calls
- not being able to see a doctor and being forced to see someone else



Field House Surgery

In Field House Surgery, 46% of the 51 patients who answered were either highly satisfied or satisfied, while 51 % reported being dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied. Meanwhile, 15% remained neutral.

Total Number Received	Number of responses when filtered	Category Filtered
51 responses	26 responses	Dissatisfied/highly dissatisfied
51 responses	6 responses	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
13 responses	4 responses	Who were satisfied, wrote comments that complained



Comments received focused on:

- employ some doctor
- always locums who don't know your history
- can't get through



“Reasons & Improvement Suggestions”

We also included the open-ended question “What improvement(s) would you suggest for your practice, if any, and why?” in our survey, and below are some themes that were common amongst most of the answers given.



Conclusion

Analysis of our survey results demonstrate that patients have concerns regarding the quality of service and accessibility at the three primary care practices. The feedback provided by the patients highlighted areas that necessitate improvement, including appointment availability, telephone systems, and overall patient satisfaction.

Throughout the survey analysis, we identified several common themes across the practices:

- difficulties in booking appointments,
- inefficient telephone systems,
- long waiting times,
- a desire for more face-to-face consultations.

This information offers valuable insight into the challenges faced by patients and helps identify potential areas for improvement in each practice.



The willingness of patients to provide feedback and suggestions demonstrates their eagerness to see positive change and improvements in their healthcare experience. It is crucial for primary care practices to address these concerns and work towards implementing changes that will enhance patient satisfaction and overall care quality.

By working together with healthcare professionals, primary care practices can develop and implement strategies to address the identified issues.

In conclusion, the survey has provided valuable insights into the experiences and concerns of patients at the three primary care practices in Bridlington. It is vital that these concerns are addressed, and improvements are made to ensure that patients receive the high-quality care they deserve. By working collaboratively with healthcare professionals and implementing the suggested improvements, these practices have the opportunity to enhance patient satisfaction, improve access to care, and ultimately contribute to better health outcomes for the Bridlington community.

Our Recommendations

Theme: Methods of Contacting GP Practices | Recommendation 1

GP practices should take a proactive approach in understanding the preferences of their patients when it comes to booking appointments and contacting the practice to ensure that the service they offer meets the needs of all patients.

Theme: Difficulty booking appointments by phone | Recommendation 2 (HPC)

Humber Primary care practice should prioritize the training of staff to utilise a more efficient triage system.

Theme: Difficulty booking appointments by phone | Recommendation 3

Primary Care Commissioners should address the disparity in ease of booking appointments by phone across the practices. This should involve, as a minimum, prioritizing access to a new telephone system for Humber Primary Care.

Theme: Challenges in phone appointments | Recommendation 4

Practice managers should review and adapt their current mechanisms for directing patients to other health care options for example social prescribing or community pharmacy in order to free up the telephone lines for patients who need it most.

Theme: Use of the NHS App | Recommendation 5

All three practices should ensure they optimise the NHS app booking system by ensuring they increase the amount of appointments available to book online.

Theme: If you cannot get an appointment what do you do next? | Recommendation 6

Humber Primary care practice should ensure they have a mechanism for signposting people who are unable to get through on the telephone to an alternative satisfactory option.

Theme: | Recommendation 7 (HPC)

All three practices should proactively review the reasons why patients may be dissatisfied or highly dissatisfied and ensure they adopt any lessons learnt and reduce the percentage of patients selecting these categories when responding to services provided.

Next Steps

What will happen next with this report?

The report will be submitted to local commissioners and providers under the Healthwatch power to make reports and recommendations. Services have 20 days from receipt to respond.

Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire will monitor responses to our recommendations and keep members of the public and stakeholders informed of progress and actions to deliver improved services.

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire would like to thank the following organisations for their contribution and involvement with this project:

- Bridlington Health Forum
- Emily Hulme – PPG (Patient Participation Group) for Humber Primary Care
- Jane Tye – PPG (Patient Participation Group) for Drs Reddy & Nunn
- All patients, carers and staff who took the time to speak to us or complete our surveys.

We appreciate the willingness of all involved to share their experiences and insights, and their dedication to improving the quality of primary care services in Bridlington. The collaboration and engagement of all these organisations and individuals have been instrumental in the success of this project, and we look forward to working together in the future to continue addressing the needs and concerns of the local community.

Report Responses

Following our report being submitted to local commissioners and providers, we received responses from both Humber Primary Care and Practice 3. Healthwatch East Riding have also been invited to participate in regular meetings with HPC and BHF.



Humber Teaching
NHS Foundation Trust

9 May 2023

Cheryl Howley
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Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire

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Dear Cheryl

Re **Formal report with recommendations submission under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (part 14) as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (Part 5)**

As requested in your letter dated 24 April 2023, please see below responses to your recommendations:

1. Our patients, service users, carers and communities are at the centre of everything we do at both Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust and Humber Primary Care in Bridlington. There is no better or more important way of improving our services than by listening to what individuals think, feel and experience throughout their care journey.

Emily Hulme, PPG Chair for Humber Primary Care, has established a collaborative forum between the practice and its patient population with 72 and 6, virtual and core PPG members, respectively. This forum is focused highly on understanding the preferences of patients when it comes to booking appointments. Emily is also working towards expanding the patient representation at the PPG through AccuRx promotion in partnership with the practice.

Humber Primary Care is also working directly with the Bridlington Health Forum, a group of volunteers representing a proportion of Bridlington residents, to further learn of patient healthcare needs and experience, in improving accessibility through telephone lines, NHS111, online consultation, SystemOnline and the NHS App. An operational plan focusing on the improvement of accessibility, quality and patient experience has been created in partnership and to be launched in the coming weeks.

Furthermore, the Trust's Complaints and Feedback Team is a service for patients to contact the practice regarding their experience in accessing services. The Trust take a proactive approach to reviewing themes and trends from all patient contacts in relation to Humber Primary Care to ensure our service offer meets the needs of all patients.

Additionally, through feedback provided by the Friends and Family Test, Humber Primary Care has introduced the “You Said, We Did” initiative to evidence to patients that their feedback is important in the development of our services and we continuously strive to improve in response to their experiences.

As noted, Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust and Humber Primary Care, have taken a proactive approach in establishing processes and forums to garner patient feedback. This work is done in partnership, both internally and externally, with multiple health and social care organisations, including voluntary organisations. Based on the feedback provided in responses to Healthwatch’s recommendations, both the Trust and the Practice would welcome any further areas our approaches can be strengthened to support the local population.

2. The practice currently utilises a care navigation system. This is the system which the ICB has developed for all East Riding practices. Whilst we are in the process of trialling the Total Triage model through AccuRx, we agree further and ongoing training is required for our staff on the current system until a new system is implemented.

Humber Primary Care will continue to work with the ICB to enhance the skills of the team to efficiently use the care navigation tool.

3. The current provider of the Humber Primary Care telephony system is KCOM. Their Smart Comms system is not primary care specific but is instead a general cloud telephony solution that is also provided to the Trust in its entirety. Whilst having call management functionality it doesn’t meet the requirements of primary care.

The Primary Care Leadership Team is already part way into resolving the issues patients face by looking at a new primary care-specific cloud-based telephony solution that helps ease the demands on staff and improves the patient experience.

Staff from Humber Primary Care have already observed solution demonstrations and have visited other practices which currently use these suppliers to observe how they work in ‘field conditions’ and to gather the experience from system users. Timescales regarding procurement and implementation of a new telephony solution are to be confirmed imminently and we will update you in due course.

4. Humber Primary Care continues to progress signposting and the advertisement of the ‘Choose Well’ campaign. The Care Navigation Template (provided by East Riding Place) continues to be completed for patients signposted to other healthcare options.


The April-23 position for Humber Primary Care showed that 539 patients were signposted to other healthcare options which accounts for 22% of all practice contacts. Benchmarking of this data against other practices would identify if Humber Primary Care is performing lower or higher against peers and if further work is required.

5. Humber Primary Care constantly reviews and monitors the appointments available to book online as well as the type of appointment to book on the NHS App and are working closely with the PCN and ICB to improve knowledge of the NHS App.
6. The below data for Care Navigation, NHS 111 and Engage Consultations notes that a significant % of patients that did not access healthcare services via Humber Primary Care telephones use alternative facilities.

Care Navigation data included as part of recommendation 4.

NHS 111 Data for Humber Primary Care shows the following number of patients were signposted to other more appropriate healthcare options than Primary Care:-

- Feb-23 449
- Mar-23 549
- Apr-23 439

	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Trend
Engage Consultation Enquiries Received	315	274	440	743	711	675	610	1126	1646	2380	

7. Please refer to the response included as part of the first recommendation made by Healthwatch. As noted, Humber Teaching NHS Foundation Trust and Humber Primary Care, have taken a proactive approach in establishing processes and forums to garner patient feedback.

We look forward to continuing to work with Healthwatch.
Kind Regards

S. Wardlow

Sue Wardlow
Service Manager Primary Care



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Chief Executive, Michele Moran

Dear Cheryl

Re **Formal report with recommendations submission under the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (part 14) as amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012 (Part 5)**

In response to the survey, we have highlighted some of the issues below but we're pleased to see we have a large percentage of satisfied patients.

We do have some appointments to book on-line, but these are mainly for the Nursing Team. Previously when more appointments were available, these were being booked incorrectly.

Unfortunately, due to us having to change our telephone system we did encounter some issues. We are monitoring this regularly and hopefully the issues that patients were experiencing have been resolved.

Due to the increased number of patients, our care navigators do need to triage appointments so that patients are seen by the appropriate clinician.

We have increased the numbers of Doctors but we also have many other higher trained clinicians (paramedics / Advanced nurse practitioners/ advanced clinical practitioners/ MSK practitioners/ dietician/ mental health nurse/GP assistant/ nursing associate/health care practitioners/ practice nurses/ pharmacy technicians/ pharmacists) and if their issue requires further input from a doctor there is always one available to review their case and see the patient at the same time if needed.

We often offer same day appts which we are proud of and is rare in many practices.

Patients have highlighted that they do not want to necessarily book we are sorting our telephone answering method so sometimes there is a larger queue but then a larger team picks up at that time which is why patients have said the queue went down quickly.

We are proactively working at making the patient experience better and have had a 'meet and greet' person in the dome area to support patients during this transition period.

We also have a dedicated patient experience team starting shortly to assist in all matters including resolving issues and assisting the practice manager with any complaints.

Thanks

From Dr Nunn and everyone at our practice

Healthwatch East Riding of Yorkshire will continue to monitor recommendations and are planning to repeat the survey after 6 months to further update the public with regards to progress.



healthwatch

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