



# Enter and View report: Graham Road Surgery

April 2023

**healthwatch**  
North Somerset

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# Details of visit

## **Location:**

**22 Graham Road, Weston-super-Mare BS23 1YA**

## **Date and time of visit:**

**22nd November 2022, 10.00am – 12.00pm**

## **Enter and View representatives:**

**Julie Bird**

**Helen West**

**Jan White**

## **Registered provider:**

**Graham Road Surgery (part of Pier Health Group Ltd)**

## **Type of service:**

**GP surgery**

## **Specialisms:**

**Social prescribers, Nurse-led clinics for long term conditions.**

**Physiotherapists, a Learning Disability Nurse, a Psychiatric Nurse and three mental health support workers from Second Step.**

## **Practice Manager**

**Kelly Smith**

# Acknowledgements

Authorised Enter and View representatives from Healthwatch North Somerset wish to thank the Practice Manager, Kelly Smith, and in particular, the staff and patients at Graham Road Surgery.

## Purpose of the visit

Healthwatch North Somerset carried out a previous Enter and View visit at Graham Road Surgery in January 2020. The Enter and View (E&V) visit in November 2022 was as a follow up to the earlier visit.

Healthwatch North Somerset made the decision to revisit Graham Road Surgery in Weston-super-Mare in response to patient feedback in 2022 and to follow-up recommendations from the previous visit carried out in January 2020.

Feedback gathered from local people can provide an insight about the services that need to be improved and can give examples of good practice. Access to Primary Care is a theme frequently identified in the intelligence gathered by Healthwatch North Somerset, and Enter and View visits allow observation of the patient environment and an opportunity to collect face-to-face feedback from the services users.

The purpose of this Enter and View visit was to hear from patients and record their experiences at the surgery. We asked specific questions regarding access to appointments, the telephone system, waiting times for booking appointments, appointment satisfaction, home visits and referrals. Our goal was to make suitable and achievable suggestions for improvement and share examples of good practice with the service.

As a result of our visit, we may also make recommendations to commissioners or regulators. Healthwatch North Somerset may utilise our recommendations to explore particular issues in more detail. Unless stated otherwise, Enter and View visits are not designed to rectify issues previously identified by other regulatory agencies. Any serious issues that are identified during a Healthwatch Enter and View visit are referred to the service provider and appropriate regulatory agencies for their rectification.

This report relates to this specific visit, including feedback from patients received during the two hours of the Enter and View visit, feedback from a questionnaire via SmartSurvey and feedback emailed to Healthwatch North Somerset. Therefore, it is not representative of all service users, only those who contributed

within the restricted time available, through interviews, other feedback and emails.

# Background information

Graham Road Surgery is situated in an urban area in Weston-super-Mare, North Somerset. Graham Road Surgery has approximately 14,000 patients, including 4,000 patients from Clarence Park Surgery which closed in September 2019. The practice is part of a wider network of GP practices, Pier Health Group Limited.

The deprivation within the practice population group is in the second lowest decile (two of 10). The lower the decile, the more deprived the practice population is relative to others.

# Description of the service

For appointments, the surgery now operates a telephone triage system. A dispensing pharmacy is available onsite.

The provider is registered with the Care Quality Commission to deliver 'regulated activities': diagnostic and screening procedures, family planning, maternity and midwifery services, treatment of disease, disorder or injury and surgical procedures.

The team is comprised of six permanent GPs and one additional long-term locum GP, who provides cover at both Graham Road and Horizon Health Centre. The GPs on average have 90 appointments each day. 60 daily appointments are provided by two Advanced Nurse Practitioners and their team.

The practice has a team of six nurses who provide nurse-led clinics for long-term conditions. Services are also available from social prescribers, physiotherapists, additional specialisms and a dedicated Learning Disability Nurse. There is currently no midwifery provision, although the surgery has requested this.

The GPs are supported at the practice by a team of administration staff.

There are 74 staff in total and 72% of these are part-time.

The practice manager shares their time between Graham Road Surgery and Horizon Health Centre to provide managerial oversight.

The practice is open between 8am to 8:30pm, Monday to Friday. The practice offers a range of appointment types including book on the day, telephone consultations and advance appointments. The surgery also offers access to askmyGP services and gives instructions on how to make use of this service clearly on their website.

Extended hours access is provided locally by Severnside Integrated Urgent Care Service, where late evening and weekend appointments are available. Out-of-hours services are provided by NHS 111.

## Planning for the visit

The Practice Manager, Kelly Smith, was given notice in advance of this visit. Healthwatch sent confirmation by letter and via posters and leaflets provided to the surgery to inform patients, relatives, carers and staff about both the Enter and View visit and the role of Healthwatch North Somerset. The timing of the visit was agreed as 10am-12pm which was a busy period for the surgery. At least forty patients were observed using the services at reception, in the pharmacy and in the waiting area throughout the Enter and View Authorised Representatives' visit.

## How was the Enter and View conducted?

Three of Healthwatch's trained Enter and View Authorised Representatives carried out the visit. The Representative Lead met with the Practice Manager at the start and at the end of the visit. The Representatives observed the condition of the premises and the interaction between the staff and patients. The Representatives approached patients during the visit to ask a series of questions about their experiences of using Graham Road Surgery. The Representatives sought background information and reviewed the website to note the information available to patients, and made a call out of hours to note the recorded information given to patients.

# How were the findings recorded?

Comments and quotes were recorded by the Enter and View Representatives whilst observing the practice and engaging with the patients and the Practice Manager. Observation documents and prompt sheets were used to record notes.

## Communication with the Manager

The Enter and View Representative leader met with the Practice Manager, Kelly Smith, immediately before the Enter and View visit. Healthwatch North Somerset also sent some questions to the manager by email to be completed in their own time. The questions mainly related to the recommendations Healthwatch North Somerset had made based on the previous Enter and View visit in January 2020.

The Practice Manager discussed changes that had been made to the practice in 2022 (since the last Healthwatch visit). These included an updated phone system and mechanisms to improve patient access. She addressed issues around the number of available appointments and stated that this has been increased and that the surgery has been able to do this by recruiting more clinicians, changing the way they offer appointments and opening one Saturday each month. The team is comprised of six permanent GPs and one additional long-term locum GP, who provides cover at both Graham Road and Horizon Health Centre.

In 2020, Healthwatch recommended a review of the askmyGP system. The manager stated that the surgery has improved access by recruiting more clinicians and admin staff, and using askmyGP in a more efficient way by reporting on a capacity and demand model. They have a new phone system that records call volume and frequency. The improved system gives an option to the patient holding their place in the queue and they are called back when they are number one in line. She added that calls to the surgery are answered from 8am until 8.30pm Monday to Friday.

After hearing from patients, Healthwatch had concerns regarding continuity between the surgery and pharmaceutical services. The manager stated that they have regular communication with all pharmacies and that pharmacies have their own email address that goes straight to the pharmacy team, and this

is checked throughout the day. Complaints regarding repeat medication have greatly decreased since 2020.

The manager addressed issues highlighted by Healthwatch in 2020 around internal signage, stating this was now clearly visible along with notification and promotion of Patient Participation Group messages. There are also posters in reception for mental health assistance, including out of hours.

Since 2022, the surgery also has in place a team of four mental health practitioners: one psychiatric nurse and three mental health support workers. The team can prescribe medication and make referrals to secondary mental health services when needed. The surgery has established a network relationship with Avon and Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (AWP) to receive referrals to their services from the surgery. The surgery assists AWP by supporting patients for appointments within the practice when they do not wish to attend the mental health premises.

Recently Second Step (who support people with mental health problems - <http://www.second-step.co.uk/about-us/>) have commenced regular sessions at the invitation of the surgeries on Fridays to see people with mental health issues providing signposting and talking therapy. They are able to see patients that Graham Road have referred to their service on the premises.

Talking to Healthwatch representatives on the day, the Practice Manager acknowledged the challenges that the surgery faced including transport links and the age and condition of the building.

In the last year the number of online complaints had reduced on average from one a day to one a week, The surgery 'complaints' email address and process is clearly displayed to patients both online and on the premises. The surgery is now a registered representative for foodbank vouchers. As the catchment area has an elderly demographic profile, care home visits are a regular service from two dedicated nurses performing routine six-month visits to patients/residents.

Each Monday between 10am and 12pm, a trainee GP spends time at a local project, 'Somewhere to go', who offer support and meals to homeless people. The GP engages with patients, offers basic tests, minor consulting and gives health advice.

The surgery is also working with the MAXwell Project (an initiative being coordinated by University of Bristol's Centre for Academic Primary Care and Bristol Medical School) looking at supporting patients with long-term health conditions holistically and across both the Graham Road Surgery and Horizon Health Centres sites.

The manager praised her team for being incredibly hard working and caring.

The Enter and View team talked to practice staff members who commented that they had seen real improvement in the last year, and patients themselves seem more positive. They said that the Victorian building is challenging and at times it is frustrating not always being able to meet patients '*expectations around*

*waiting times and availability.*' They added that there was always has enough time to complete tasks and that patients are given time-appropriate care for their needs.

Additionally, they said that staff were well supported, encouraged to voice their opinions, HR policies were widely available and there is a high degree of colleague support.

# Feedback, observations and findings

## Patient feedback

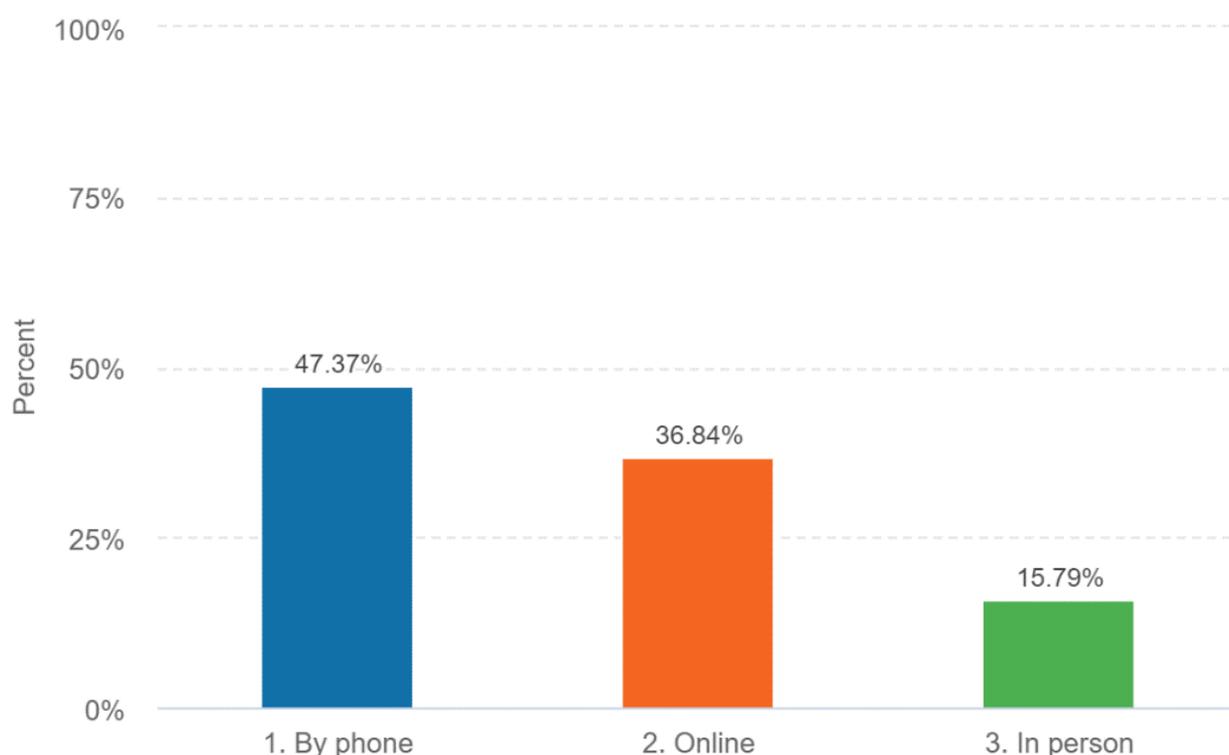
Additional feedback from patients was gathered online via several methods: online using SmartSurvey, by post, through our 'Share your views' leaflets, and during the two-hour Enter and View visit. Healthwatch North Somerset sent posters and leaflets to inform patients, relatives, carers and staff about the Enter and View visit, and to encourage them to share their feedback with us even if they did not feel they could give it in person.

## Appointments

The practice manager stated that consultations are 50% face to face and 50% telephone based. They said 80% of those requesting an appointment are seen within two days.

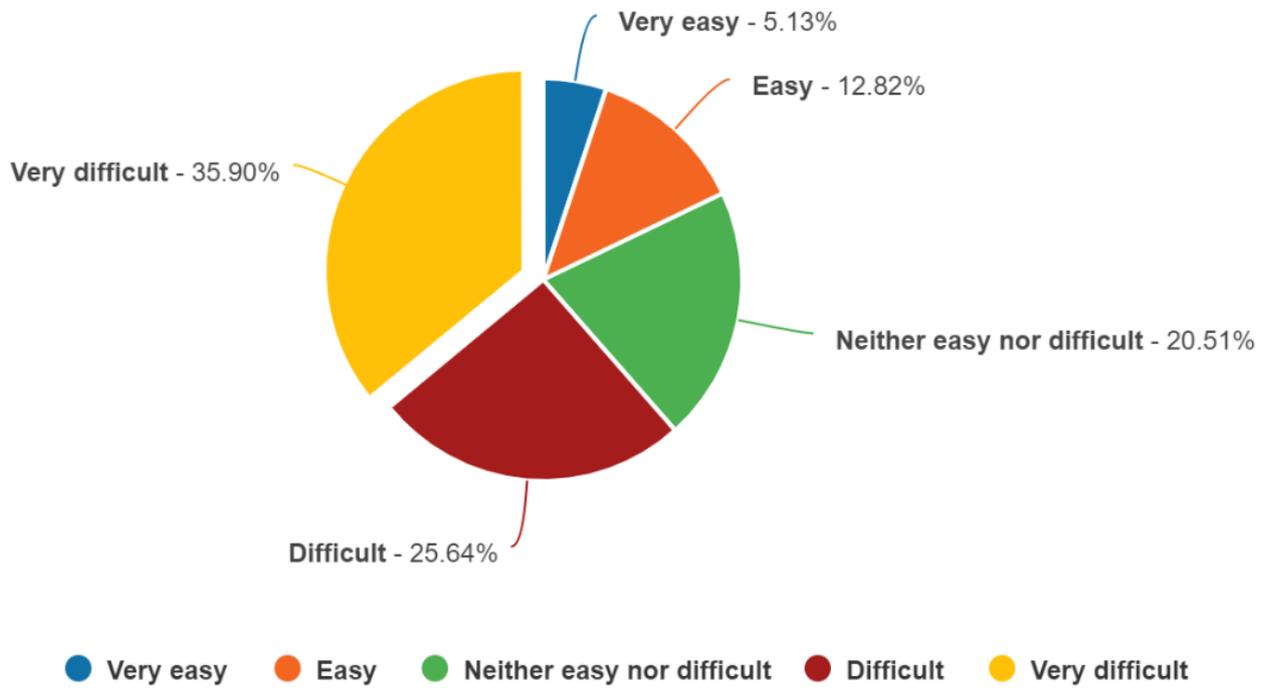
According to our survey most patients usually make an appointment by telephone.

### How do you usually make an appointment?



Over half of those said making the appointment was “difficult”.

### How easy is it to make an appointment?



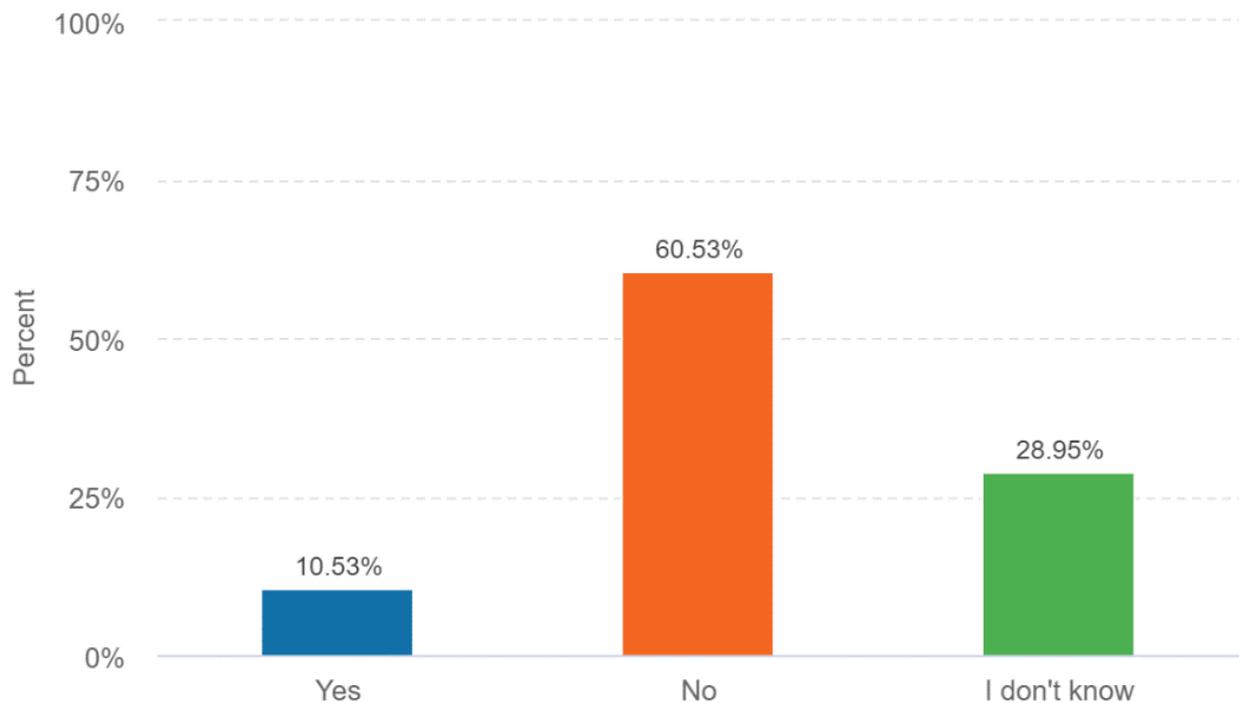
Half of patients surveyed felt they could get an appointment when they wanted one. But of those who disagreed one said: *“Graham Road needs a total overhaul, staff and premises”*. He added that it felt very difficult to see a doctor at the surgery.

## Patient comments about the phone system

The Practice Manager explained that the phone system, which was upgraded in April 2022, allows for detailed monitoring of all calls. This includes average waiting times, and enables the manager to see which services are under most demand and increase staff ratio to cover this. If a person is more than tenth in queue, a recorded message offers a call back when the queue has lessened. However 60% of surveyed and interviewed respondents said they had seen no improvement in the phone system.

“Getting through to the surgery and getting an appointment are the biggest issues – but the care is good.”

Do you think the telephone service has improved in the last 6 months?



Patient comments were mixed. One said it “Never seems to work”, “They never answer, or it takes a long time”.

Another stated: “The technology has changed but is not an improvement”.

A third said: “The phone system has improved by telling you what number you are in the queue, but still can take a long time to get appointments.”

One patient remarked: “It seems as though generally it is easier to make appointments and does not take as long.”

## Patient comments about the making appointments at reception

From our interviews and survey 64% of comments concerning reception staff were positive:

"When I've had to come in staff have been helpful and pleasant", "The staff are always lovely." "The receptionists are always kind. They are extremely chatty."

The receptionist 'gets on' with everyone. *"They are polite and helpful."*

Not all comments were positive:

"I don't recognise the name of the person I am seeing today. I find it helpful seeing the same person, but often that doesn't happen and it is frustrating. There is no continuity of care."

A commentator felt: "The rudeness of staff makes it a thoroughly miserable and stressful experience "

One said they were "rude and abrasive, dismissing me for needing an urgent appointment for my child, reducing me to tears when my son was seriously ill and needed to see a doctor. Abrupt, and extremely unhelpful" "I was a patient, but eventually I left Graham Road surgery....It was not welcoming".

## askmyGP

The manager stated that requests via askmyGP are triaged at the beginning of the day and throughout working hours . The clinicians work through the list and mark patients in need for face-to-face or telephone appointments. The receptionists then call and make appointments.

There are clear registration details for the askmyGP service on the surgery website.

The manager told us the askmyGP service is open for longer than before, often until 11am and sometimes all day . This is an improvement on comments that Healthwatch received in 2021 concerning the service being of limited accessibility, sometimes available only for ten minutes a day.

## To our question 'when they saw a professional, were your needs met?' patient responses were varied:

Over two thirds of the patients we talked to were able to see the professional that they wanted. Patients also said:

"I was very satisfied with the appointment".

"I don't always feel listened to by the doctors".

"I don't always feel safe".

"I don't feel respected at the surgery".

One individual said: “sometimes you are called back by an advanced nurse or another health professional...I would prefer being called back by a doctor.”

Most patients felt their needs had been met by the clinicians.

“My son needed more care and ended up in hospital but the doctor we saw at the time was incredibly kind and gave excellent care”.

Not everyone agreed. A patient said: “I was supposed to be referred to the hospital for a scan...but two weeks later I had to get another appointment as the referral did not go through...two weeks later and I am still waiting in pain.”

## **Patient comments on communication between the surgery and pharmacy**

78% of the survey and interview participants had taken medication prescribed by the surgery. Half felt that the communication between the surgery and the pharmacy was effective and easy. The Healthwatch team collected comments regarding both services and the communication between them.

Of those who did not find it an easy process, one person said:

“I have stopped asking for medication, they are rude and unhelpful.”

## **Patient comments on home visits/appointments**

Home visit requests are triaged by a paramedic. If a home visit is requested, then the patient is called to assess needs before a visit is planned. The policy and criteria regarding home visits is published on the website.

75% of patients that we surveyed or talked to regarding home visits felt that these were satisfactory.

## Patient comments on clinical referrals

Nearly two thirds of the surveyed patients had experienced a referral by the surgery and over 78% were "positive" or "very positive" about this.

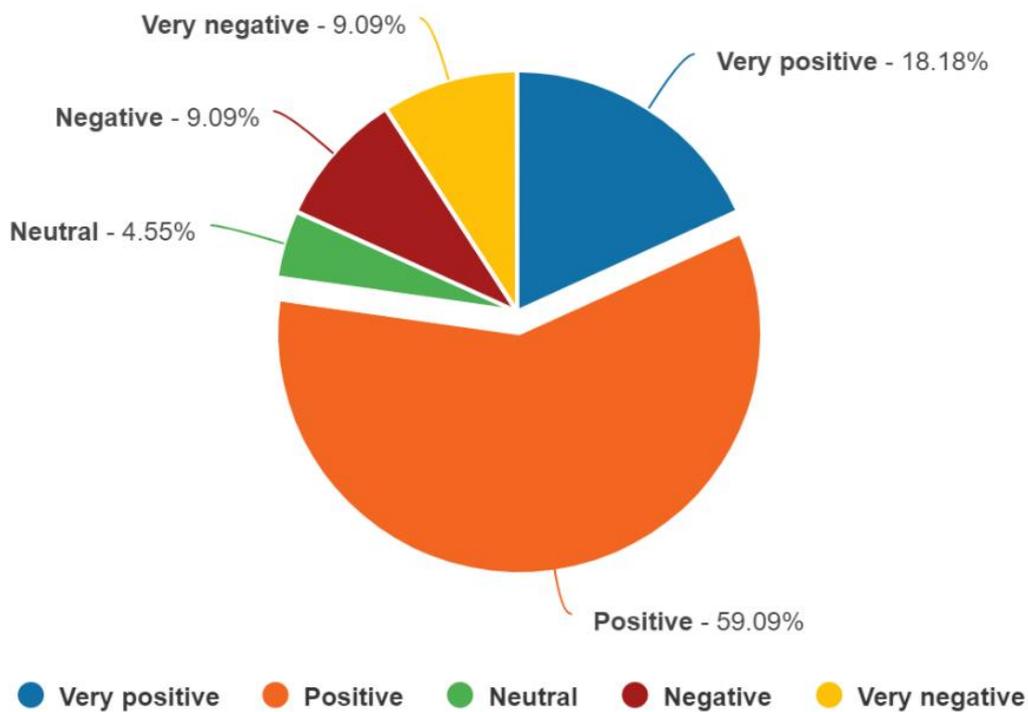
"If I need a referral, I am always given one and have had no trouble with this".

Patients commented on changes they were aware of at the surgery:

"In general, the staff are good. The problem is the operation of the system."

"I was not aware of any changes at the surgery".

If yes, how was your experience with the referral?



# Observations and findings

The Enter and View Representatives observed the following on the day of the visit:

## **Building condition**

The building itself is old and in need of general repairs. The Practice Manager acknowledges that this is one of the main challenges for both staff and patients. The ground floor is cramped and space limited, but at the time of the visit the floors and surfaces were clean and tidy.

The carpark has limited spaces (8) and no designated parking for those with disabilities – most of the spaces were used by practice clinicians. The closest public transport was at the station which is a considerable distance, and many patients were observed arriving by taxi.

There was clear and welcoming signage to the premises.

The entrance is by single door, which was not wide enough for unaided wheelchair access. Disabled people were seen to struggle.

An internal door leads to the waiting area and a young mother with a pram was observed having to open the door, prop it open, go back to the pram, enter the waiting room and then unprop the door.

The Enter and View Representatives observed a parent with a pram struggle to get into waiting room/pharmacy and through main entrance.

Healthwatch also noted there is still very little room in the waiting room for a wheelchair user to manoeuvre and observed a carer/person with a patient having to move several chairs so that the wheelchair could be positioned at the side where the chairs were, rather than in the middle of the room.

A patient said: "The premises are not clean or welcoming".

## **Reception area**

Our observation was that the reception area is bright and clean with good signage. The staff here were welcoming and positive. The reception has three separate windows but all at chest-high height, making contact difficult for wheelchair users. It offered little conversational privacy and patients could be overheard discussing details.

A separate room is shared with the pharmacy and can be used for privacy if requested but no signage for this was seen. There was no 'comments box'

available at the time of the visit. When a queue formed, additional staff were called to assist.

There are signs for a hearing loop, but the equipment was not readily available. Hand sanitising gel is available upon entry and at the main desk, and large print versions of information leaflets were available if requested at reception. A chaperone service poster was clearly visible. An electronic check-in screen was present but has been out of service for two months. Following the Enter and View Representatives' observation to the manager, this machine has since been repaired and is in working order.

## **Waiting room**

The waiting room is shared with the dispensing chemist so many of those attending was not there for an appointment and were standing between the seated patients and the clinical areas. The seating is around the outside of the room with five plastic chairs and seating available on a window ledge. The Representatives observed that the chairs did not have arm rests and would be difficult to rise from unaided for some patients. Following this observation to the manager, new chairs with arms have been ordered to support patients with limited mobility. The flooring was in good order, and there are heaters beneath the window seating. There were no staff profile descriptions or photographs on display.

One patient said:

"I would like a 'meet the doctor' board in the waiting room with photos and names, so that you can see who your appointment is with if you haven't met them before."

"The premises are not clean or well maintained and it smells rotten."

## **Information boards/leaflets**

There are numerous noticeboards which were up-to-date and uncluttered. The practice mission statement is displayed, and relevant health and social care flyers are present. 'Family and Friends' forms could not be seen. There is no dedicated notice board for carers. There was clearly displayed information regarding how to book an online appointment and directions for requesting British Sign Language (BSL) or translation assistance.

The Patient Participation Group (PPG) is promoted clearly, although 85% of patients we heard from said they had received no information from them in the last year. One patient said he *"was not sure whether the PPG is still going"*.

A document about the consultation regarding new premises is on a wall behind where patients enter the waiting room and not easily visible. Just over half the patients surveyed or interviewed said they were aware of the planned move, and most had received the news from sources other than the surgery.

## **The surgery website**

The website construction and maintenance are outsourced, and they have received no complaints concerning it. The homepage clearly features a contact telephone number and practice address. The homepage features drop-down boxes with links to guidance for self-care, appointments, repeat prescriptions and out-of-hours services. There is health information, links to clinics, services, policies and a clear feedback process.

## **Good practice**

There were multiple hand sanitiser stations and signs encouraging patient use. The clinicians calling patients for treatment, waited for each patient at the doorway and escorted them to the clinical room.

## **Surgery out of hours**

The surgery website and telephone message guides patients to NHS 111 provided by Severnside Integrated Urgent Care Service for issues that are urgent but aren't emergencies. Additionally, there is signposting to opening hours for local A&E departments and Clevedon Minor Injuries Unit.

## **We collated on-the-day visit information, with online survey findings**

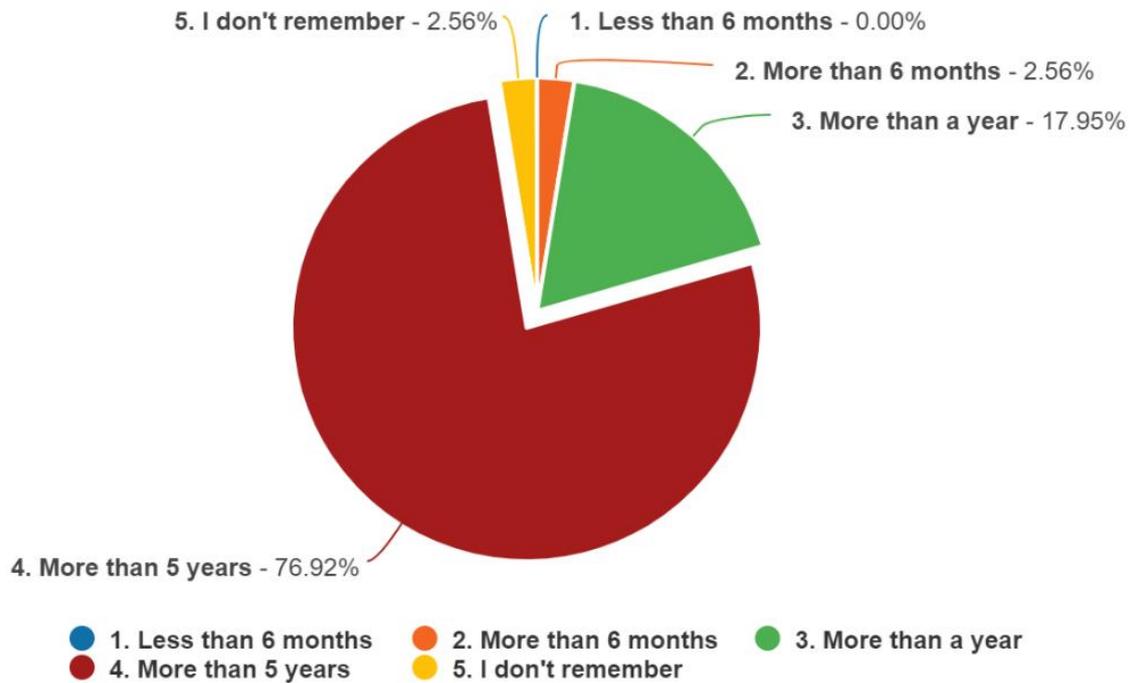
Healthwatch created and offered an online survey replicating the questions that patients were asked during the visit. The survey was open between 16th November 2022 and 8th December 2022 and was advertised at the surgery, on the Healthwatch North Somerset website and shared across stakeholder networks.

Overall, there were 39 responses. 64% of those who responded were Graham Road patients and 36% were Horizon Health Centre patients.

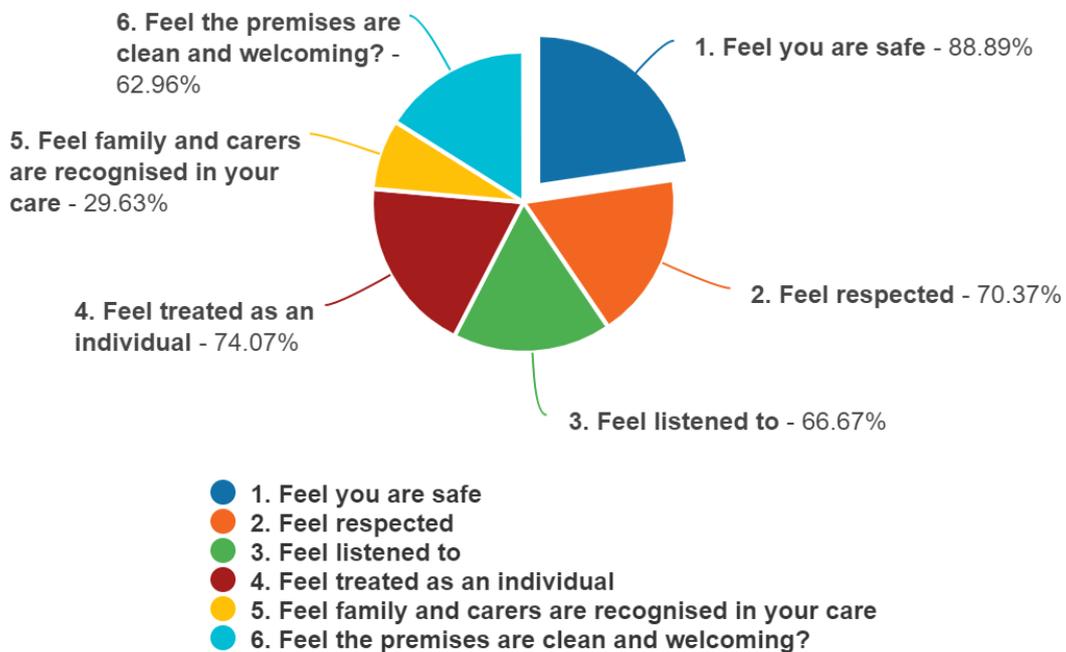
In 2020, our main recommendation was that patients see an improvement in their timely and appropriate access to members of staff by telephone. In 2022, over 60% of patients responding to the survey felt the telephone system had improved. However, 36% still describe it as 'very difficult' or 'difficult' to make an appointment at the surgery. 37% said they use the askmyGP online appointment services and many found the service was not available for long enough.

The majority of patients who responded had been with the surgery for more than five years. Most patients felt safe, respected and listened to.

## How long have you been a patient at your surgery?



## When you use your GP surgery do you:



# Recommendations

Service providers and commissioners have a duty to respond to local Healthwatch reports and recommendations within 20 working days, in writing, to acknowledge receipt and to explain what action they intend to take; or if they do not intend to take action, they must explain why. (Health and Social Care Act 2012: Addendum to summary report: issues relating to local Healthwatch regulations).

Some of the recommendations below remain the same as listed in the 2020 report, based on similar observations and findings.

We believe the recommendations to be achievable, affordable and evidence based.

## Recommendations based on patient feedback

- We recommend a more robust means of ensuring prescriptions provided by the surgery are dispensed accurately by the pharmacy.
- Our visit in 2020 recommended that patients are given information about the professionals they are likely to see at appointments. We recommend again in 2023 that a photographic staff display board and website section provides information for patients, families, and carers about the staff at the surgery as requested by patients.
- We recommend that the surgery have a process for including wider family and carers in appointments. Only 3 out of ten people felt the surgery recognised the holistic role of families and carers in the care process.
- We recommend, as we did in 2020 that the surgery builds trusting relationships with all patients by sharing information. They should be made aware of better services such as the telephone system, the availability of doctors and other new staff, or the opening times of askmyGP. This should be communicated utilising alternative means to ensure all patients are informed regardless of digital access.
- We recommend monitoring and maintaining cleanliness throughout the day. 37% of patients in the survey said they did not find the premises clean or welcoming.
- We recommend Pier Health Group review and monitor the telephone appointment system to ensure the continuation of service improvement in this area. Pier Health Group said: "We do regularly monitor the phone systems and will continue to do so. We have good insight and data produced monthly and quarterly that allows us to make the right calls and decisions with regards to this. We have not linked our phones to EMIS. It will work better once we can link it to EMIS, it will save time as it automatically pulls the patient

information up into EMIS. We are in communications with the ICB team about our EMIS mergers.”

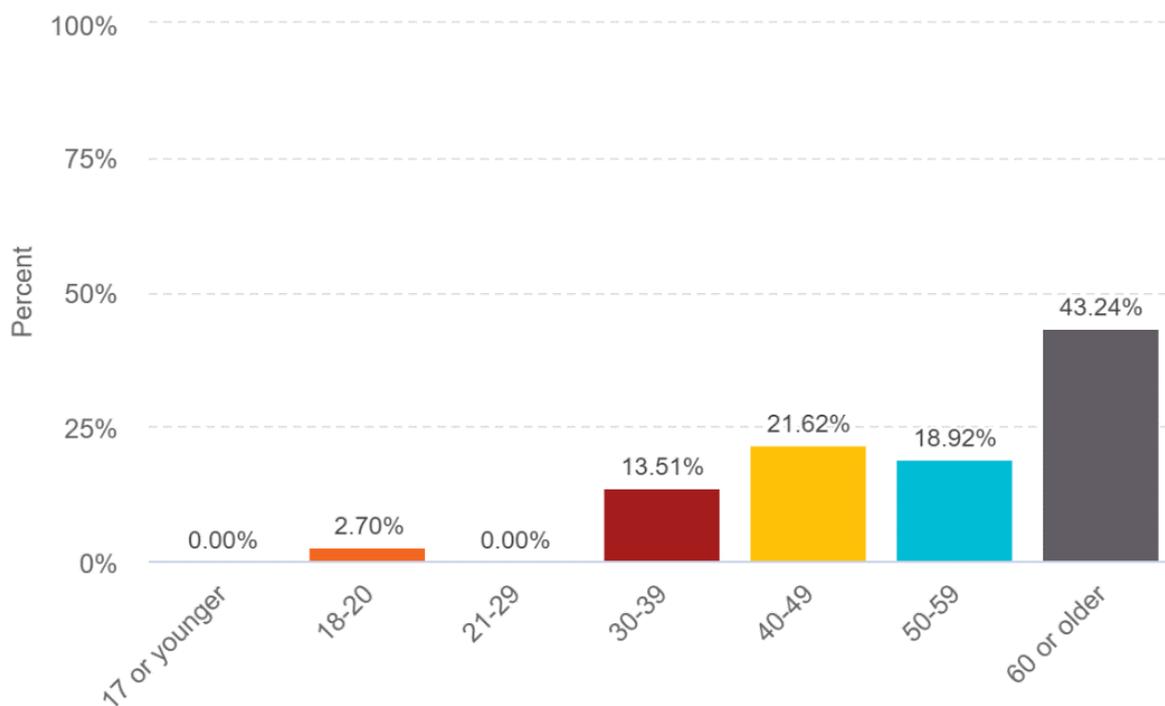
### **Recommendations based on observation**

- The provision of a permanent comment box, pen and paper to allow patients to feedback their views whilst at the surgery.
- Dedicated parking spaces for disabled users.
- Seating with armed chairs to assist patients with mobility issues.
- Notice boards clearly displaying relevant information are kept up to date.

# Who we spoke to

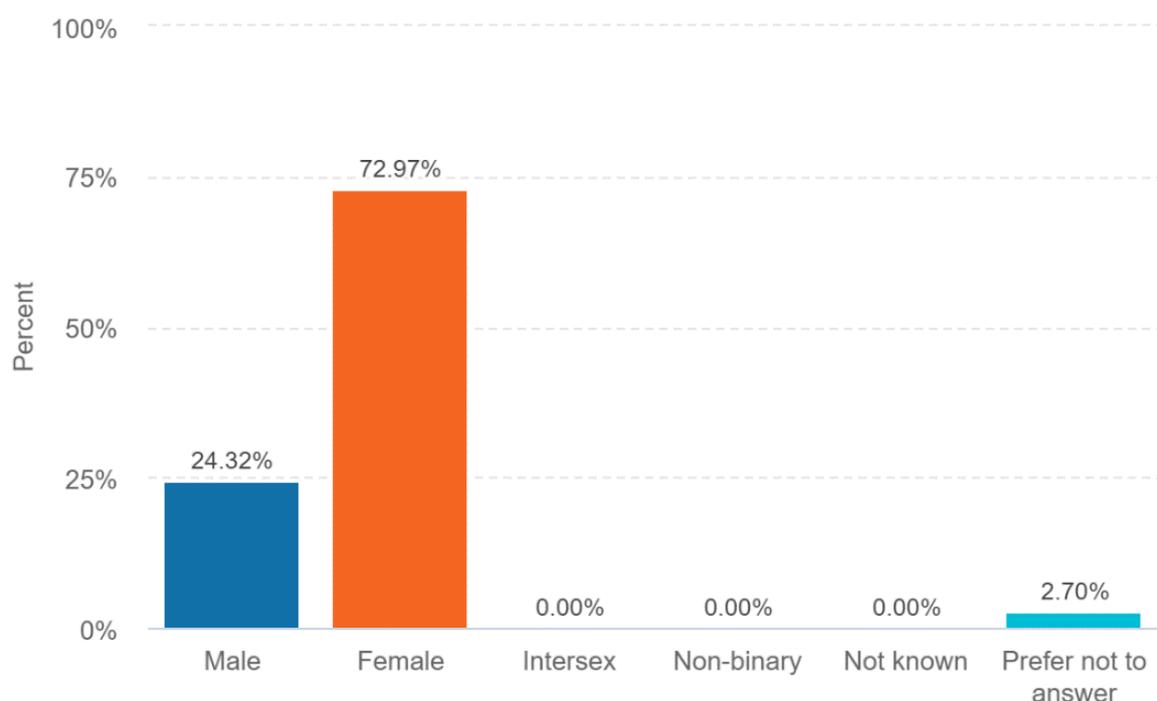
## Age

How old are you?



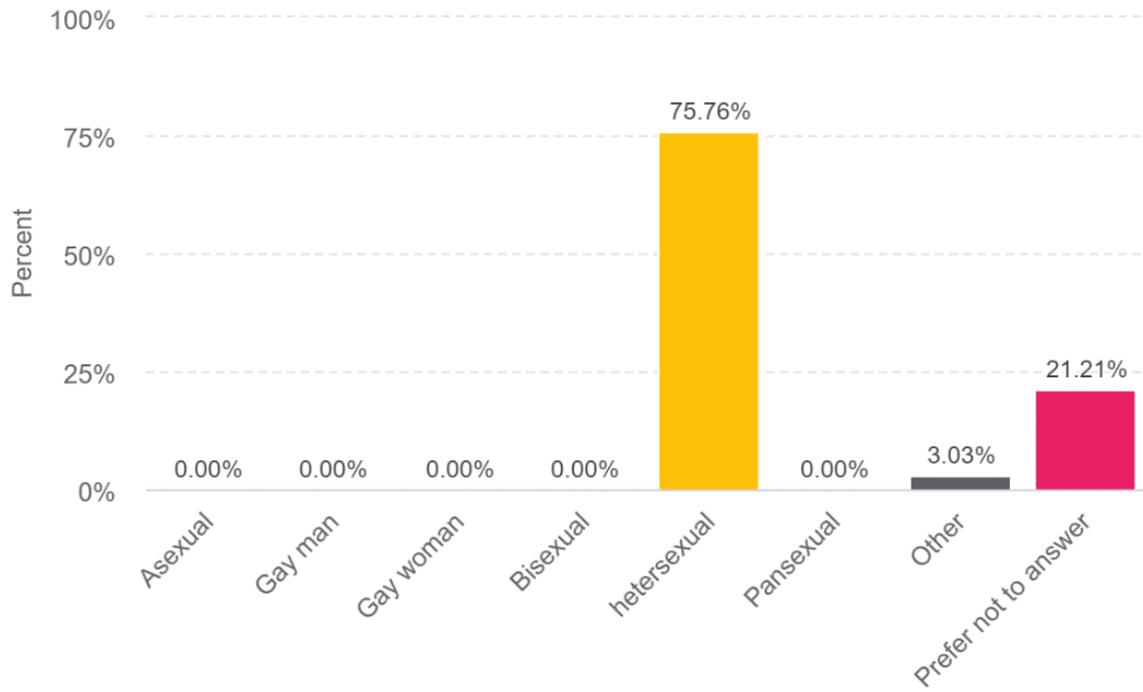
## Gender

What is your gender?



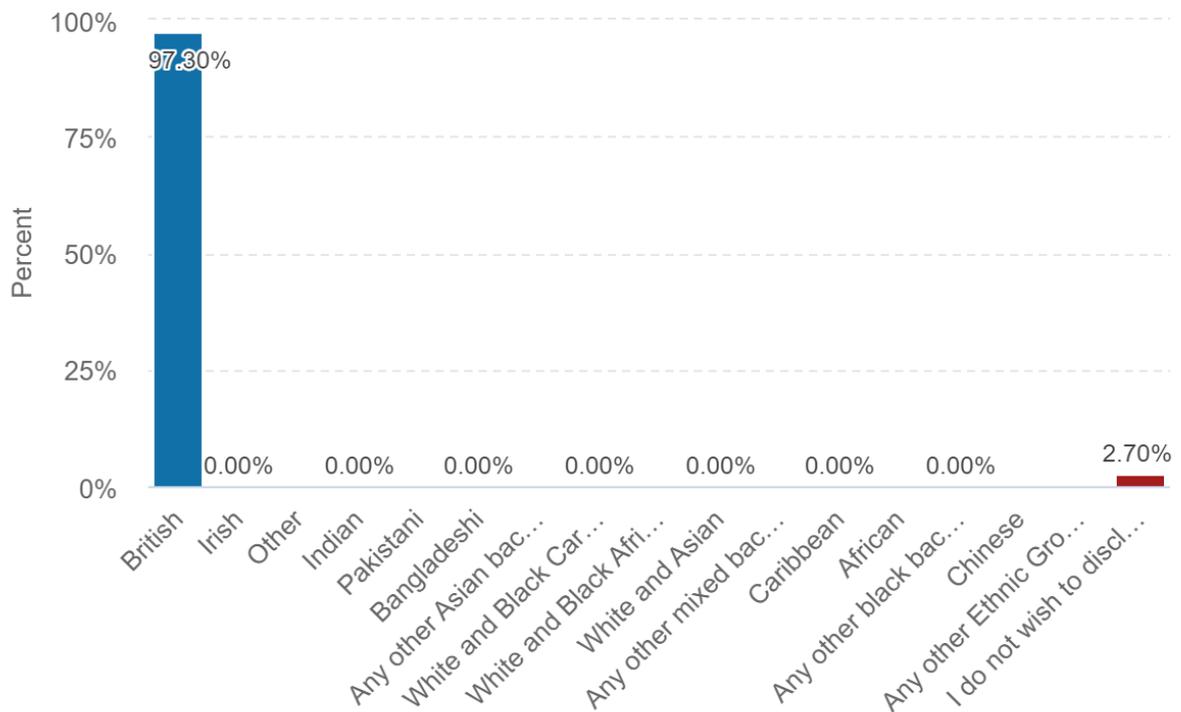
## Sexual orientation

What is your sexual orientation?



## Ethnicity

How do you describe your ethnicity?

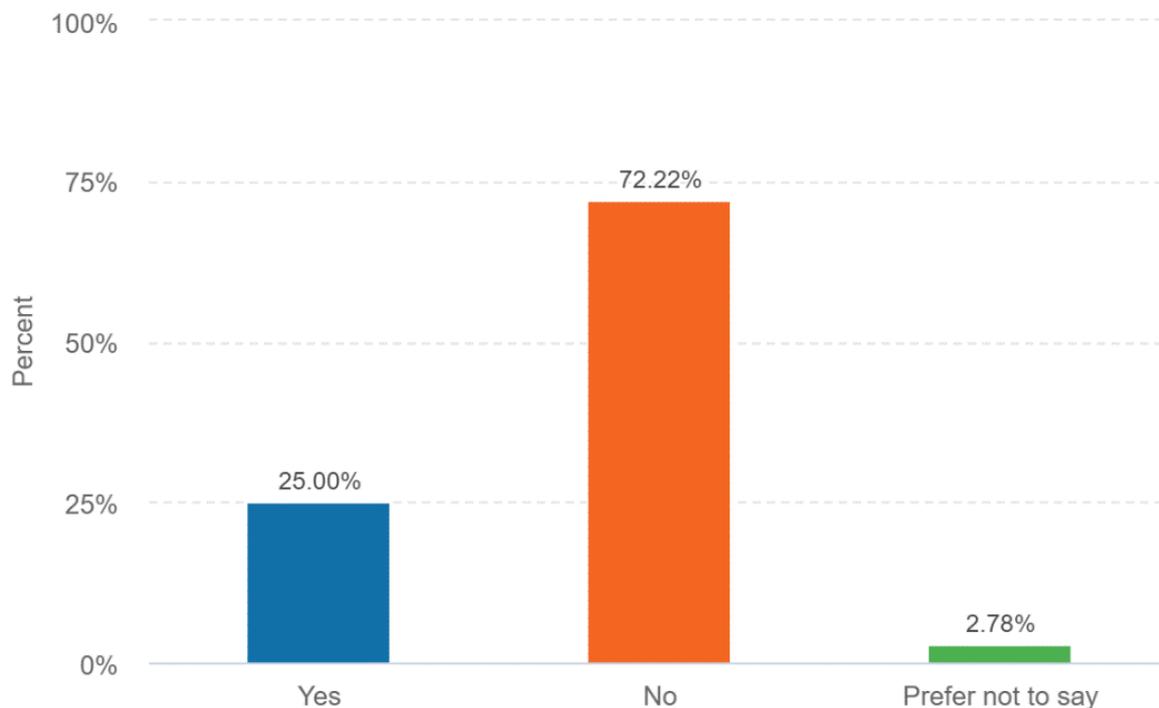


## Religion

50% Christian, 48% preferred not to say and 1% pagan.

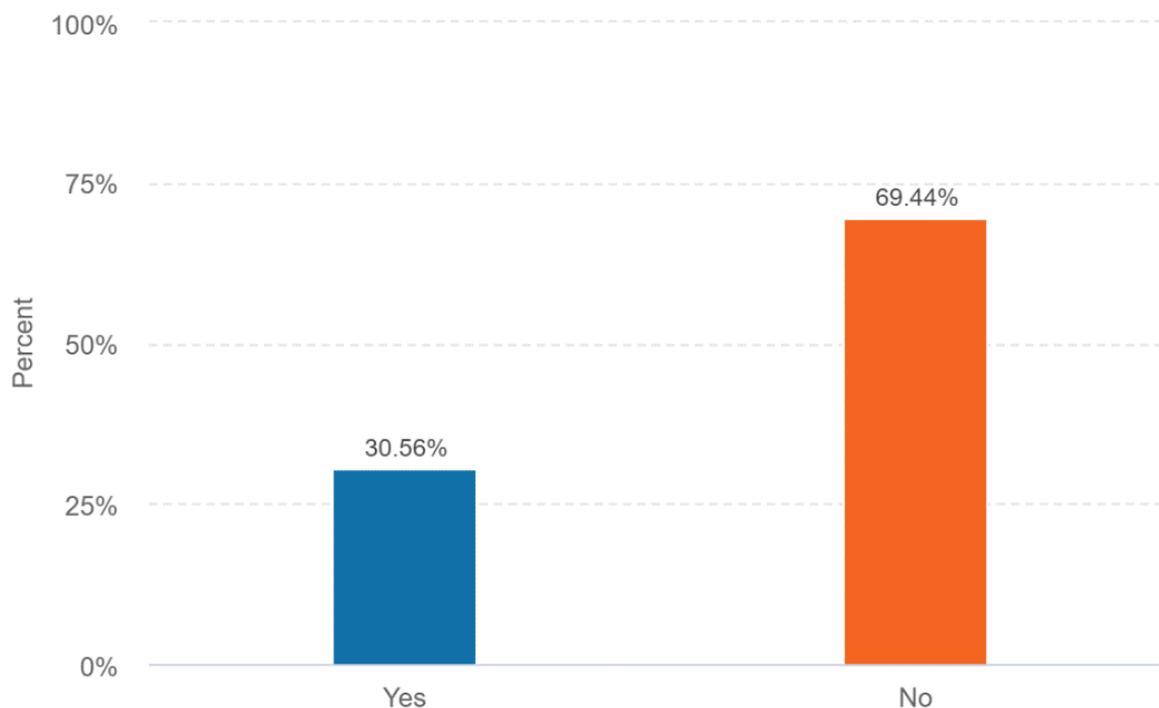
## Disability

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?



## Carers

Are you a carer?



# Provider Response

Dr John Heather, Clinical Director, Pier Health Group

Brandie Deignan, Chief Executive Officer, Pier Health Group

We are grateful for the recommendations provided by Healthwatch and the comments from all who were a part of this report. Pier Health Group Limited has:

1. Reflected on the information shared with us in this report.
2. Will ensure we prioritise the improvements recommended and measure these as we go on this journey.
3. Will show a clear learning culture from the recommendations and strive to action these, to allow for an improved patient experience.
4. Will continue to work with all our partners to ensure the services we offer are as accessible and high quality as possible.

## **Relocation of Graham Road Surgery to new Weston Rugby Club Development**

Between our Enter and View visit in November 2022 and the publication of this report in April 2023, local NHS leaders approved the full business case for the plans to move Graham Road Surgery from its current premises to a purpose-built building on the Weston Rugby Club development.

You can view the meeting papers from the ICB Board meeting on 6 April 2023 on the ICB website: <https://bnssg.icb.nhs.uk/events/integrated-care-board-icb-board-meeting-6-april-2023/>

## About Healthwatch North Somerset

Healthwatch North Somerset is the local independent voice for health and social care services. We work with local people to improve services for people who live, or access services in North Somerset, gathering local views and experiences and acting on them to make local services better, now and in the future.

Healthwatch North Somerset's statutory function and remit, which is laid out in the Health and Social Care Act 2012, is to provide a voice for people who use health and adult social care services, by:

### Influencing

- Giving people an opportunity to have a say about their local health and social care services, including those whose voice isn't usually heard.
- Taking public views to the people who make decisions – including having a representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- Feeding issues back to government via Healthwatch England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

### Signposting

- Providing information about health and social care services in the local area.
- Advising people on where to go for specialist help or information (signposting).
- Helping people make choices and decisions about their care.
- Working closely with other groups and organisations in the local area.

# Enter and View

To enable Healthwatch North Somerset to gather the information it needs about services, there are times when it is appropriate for Healthwatch North Somerset staff and volunteers to see and hear for themselves how those services are provided. That is why the government has introduced duties on certain commissioners and providers of health and social care services (with some exceptions) to allow authorised Healthwatch North Somerset representatives to enter premises that service providers own or control to observe the nature and quality of those services.

Healthwatch North Somerset Enter and Views are not part of a formal inspection process, nor are they any form of audit. Rather, they are a way for Healthwatch North Somerset to gain a better understanding of local health and social care services by seeing them in operation. Healthwatch North Somerset Enter and View Authorised Representatives are not required to have any prior in-depth knowledge about a service before they visit. Their role is to observe the service, talk to service users and staff if appropriate, and make comments and recommendations based on their subjective observations and impressions in the form of a report.

Legislation allows 'Enter and View' activity to be undertaken with regard to the following organisations or persons:

- NHS Trusts
- NHS Foundation Trusts
- Local Authorities
- a person providing primary medical services (e.g. GPs)
- a person providing primary dental services (i.e. dentists)
- a person providing primary ophthalmic services (i.e. opticians)
- a person providing pharmaceutical services (e.g. community pharmacists)
- a person who owns or controls premises where ophthalmic and pharmaceutical services are provided
- Bodies or institutions which are contracted by Local Authorities or the NHS to provide health or care services (e.g. adult social care homes and day-care centres).

## Key benefits of Enter and View

To encourage, support, recommend and influence service improvement by:

- Capturing and reflecting the views of service users who often go unheard, e.g. care home residents.
- Offering service users an independent, trusted party (lay person) with whom they feel comfortable sharing experiences.
- Engaging carers and relatives.
- Identifying and sharing 'best practice', e.g. activities that work well.
- Keeping 'quality of life' matters firmly on the agenda.
- Encouraging providers to engage with local Healthwatch as a 'critical friend', outside of formal inspection.
- Gathering evidence at the point of service delivery, to add to a wider understanding of how services are delivered to local people.
- Supporting the local Healthwatch remit to help ensure that the views and feedback from service users and carers play an integral part in local commissioning.

## Relevant legislation

- The Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013. (18 February 2013).
- The arrangements to be made by Relevant Bodies in Respect of Local Healthwatch Regulations 2013. (28 March 2013).
- The Local Authorities (Public Health Functions and entry to Premises by Local Healthwatch Representatives) Regulations 2013. (18 February 2013).
- The arrangements to be made by Relevant Bodies in Respect of Local Healthwatch Regulations 2013. (28 March 2013).



# healthwatch

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