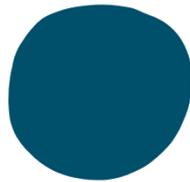
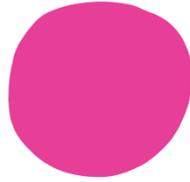


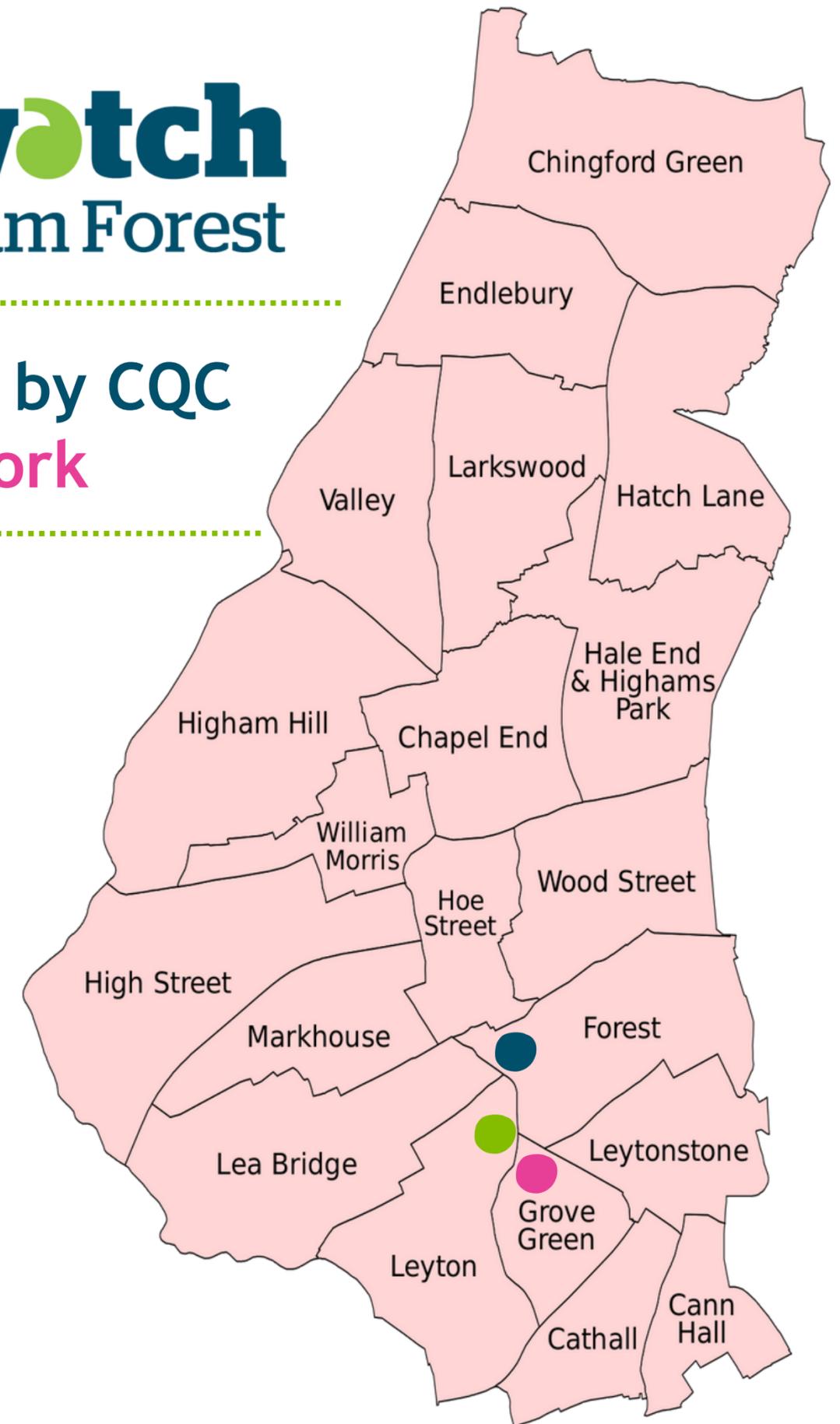
Community insights on GP practice





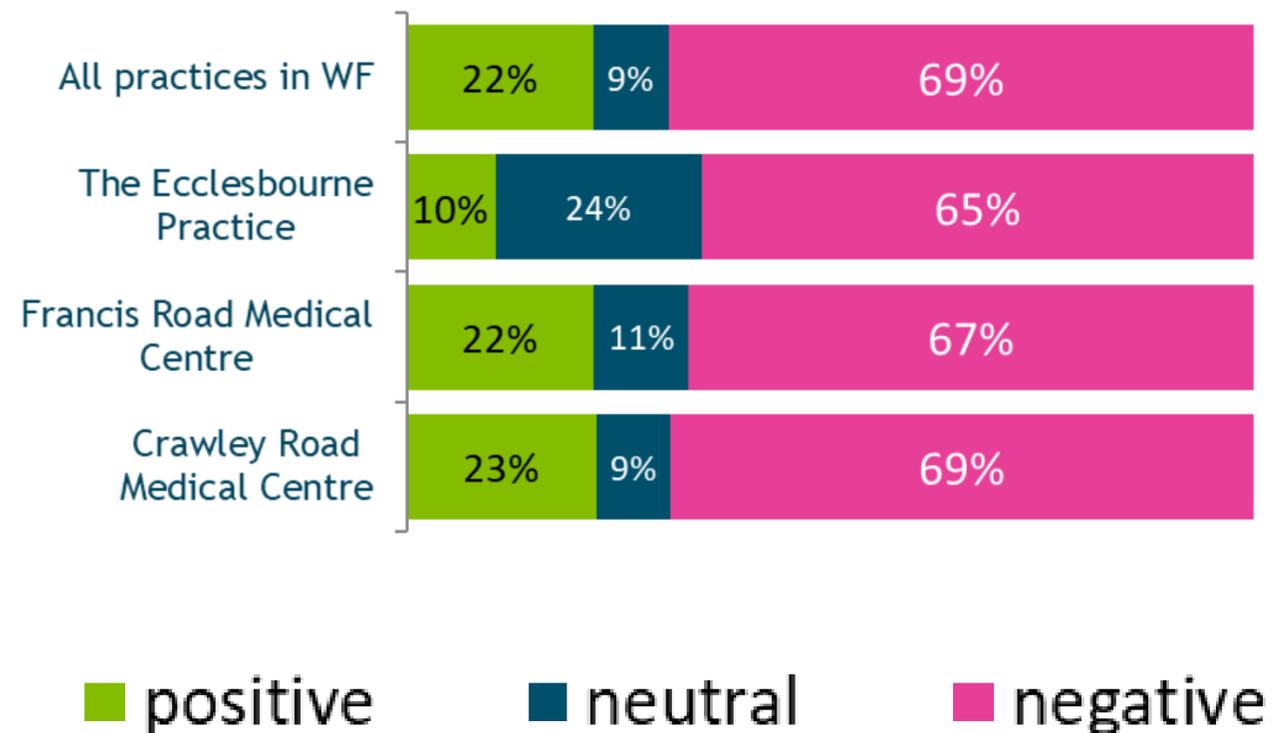
Three GP practices have been rated Inadequate by CQC
All three are in the Forest Integrated network

-  **Ecclesbourne Practice**
Forest Ward
-  **Francis Road Practice**
Grove Green Ward
-  **Crawley Road Practice**
Leyton Ward



Patient opinion of the practices

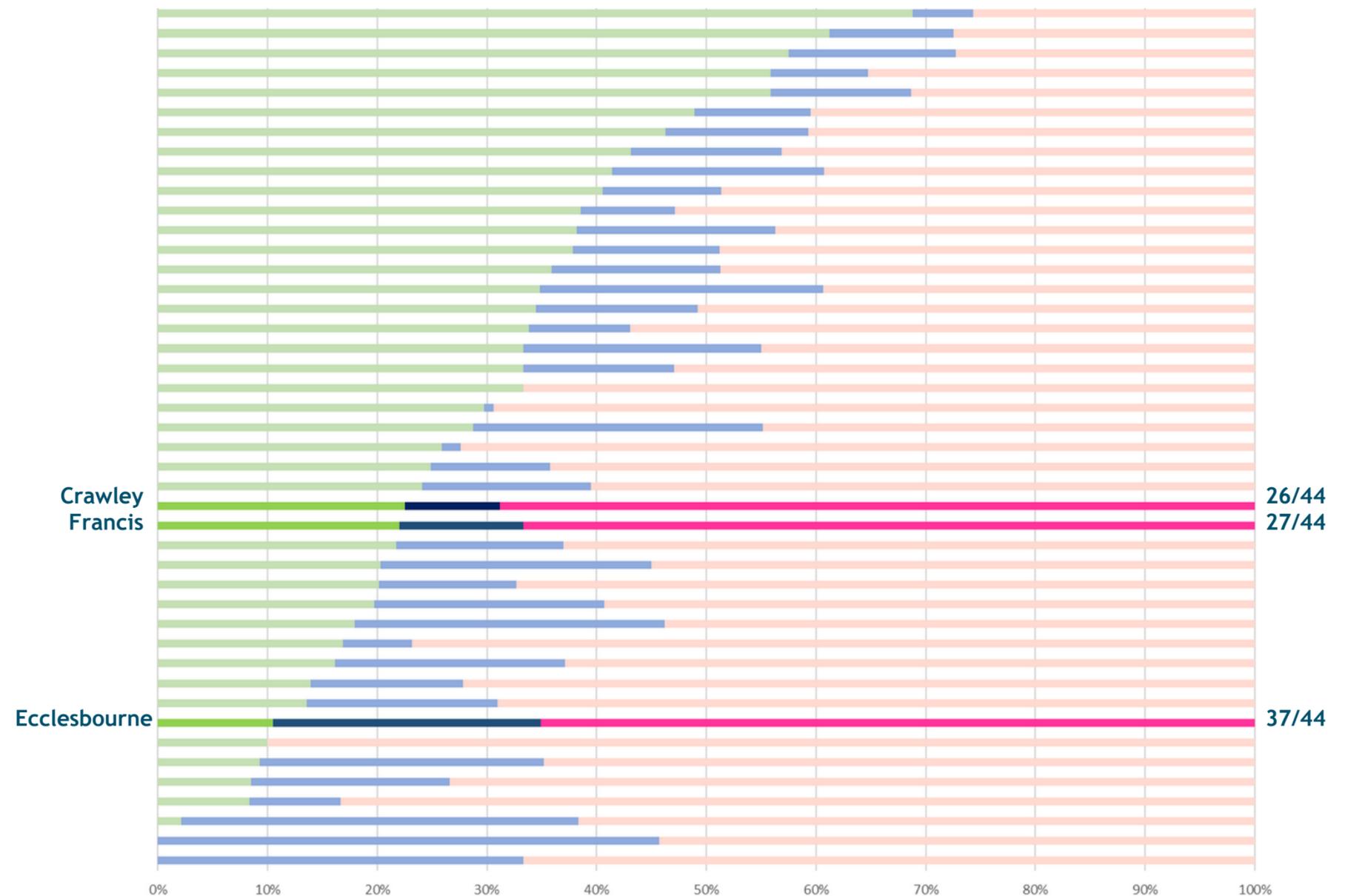
Feedback from patients is negative, but not dissimilar from how people feel about GPs in Waltham Forest as a whole.



44 surgeries in Waltham Forest

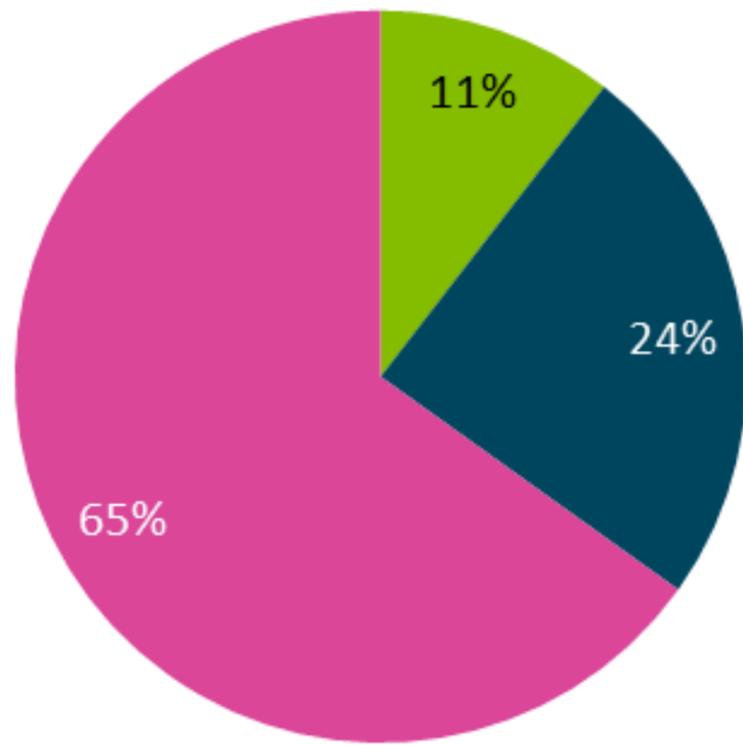
with feedback of more than 20 identified issues in 2022-23 ranked from most to least positive comments

The three practices are in the lower half, but differences are small.



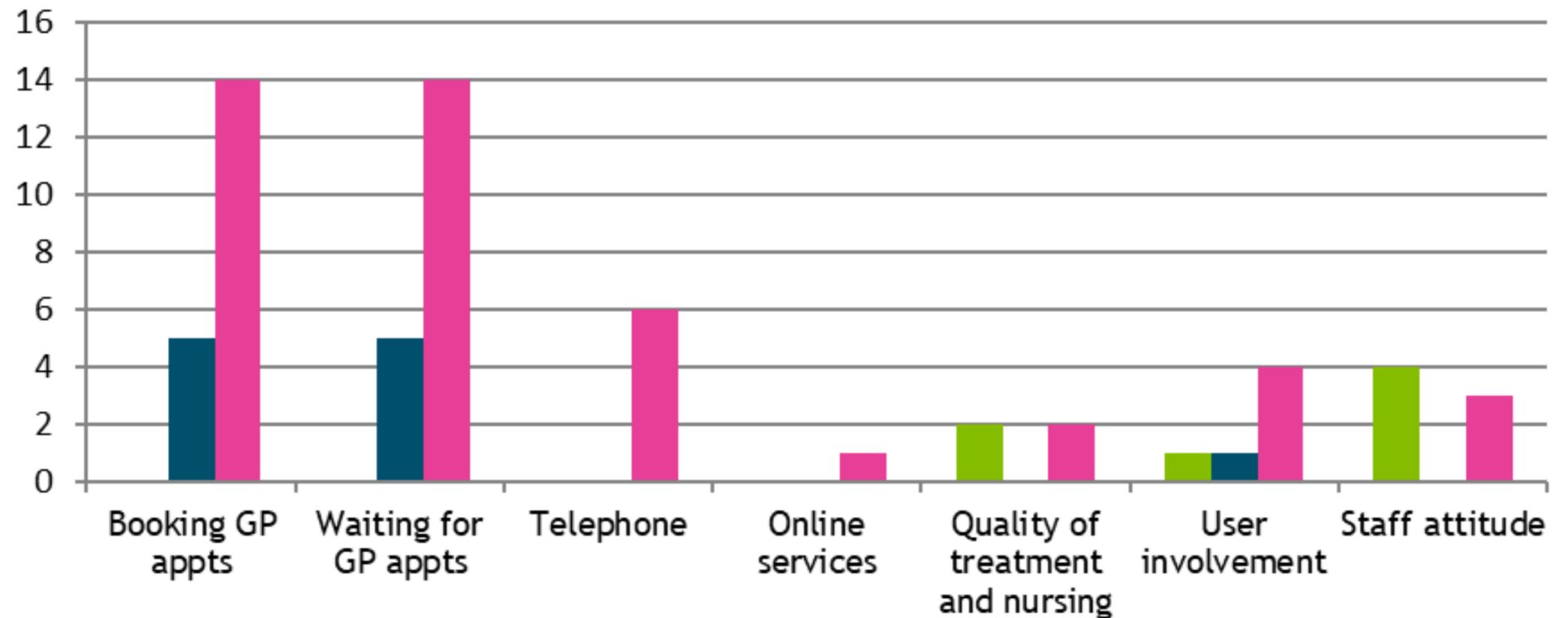
Ecclesbourne Practice- 38 comments

Overall opinion of the practice



- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

The process of **booking appointments** and **long waiting times for appointments** were the issues patients complained the most about.



Ecclesbourne Practice

What patients are saying

- The practice rarely gives appointments in person rather than over the phone, and even phone appointments are hard to get.
- The online booking system is poorly planned and inflexible, leaving patients to wait for a callback over a large swathe of time rather than allowing them to book a slot.
- All patients are expected to call and overstretched phone line for triage, in the morning, at the same time as school runs, making it difficult for parents.

"I've been having some serious leg cramps at night and I've been trying to get an appointment to even speak to the GP. It is almost impossible because I have to phone the surgery by 8:30 in the morning within minutes all the appointments have gone."

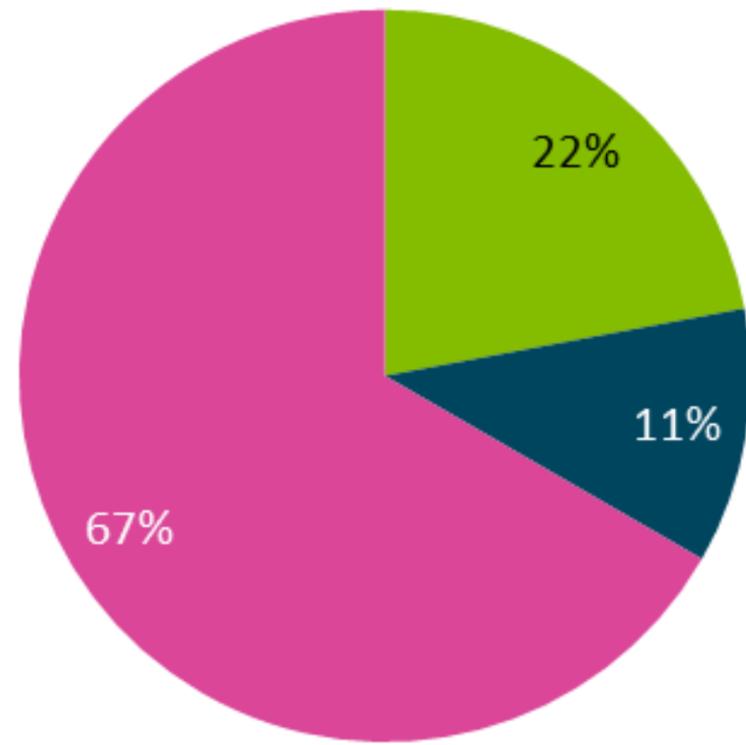
"Being cut off at 9am when you have hung on for 20 mins is unacceptable. Not being able to make an appointment even weeks in advance is unacceptable. Being questioned by a receptionist for your reason for wanting to see your GP is unacceptable. There are no out of hour services- in fact my practice simply says no appointments available go to A&E if you are worried."

What the CQC is saying

- Regular fire drills and weekly smoke and fire alarm checks were not taking place at the practice.
- The practice could not demonstrate all staff had received effective infection control training. There were no records maintained for keeping clinical equipment and cleaning schedules.
- Staff were not up to date with basic life support and anaphylaxis training where it was relevant for their role. There was no defibrillator available and no risk assessment in place.
- There were gaps in systems to review patients with long-term conditions- not all patients were being monitored or followed up to ensure their treatment was in line with national guidance.
- There was no evidence of safeguarding discussions in the practice and the policies in place did not provide all the appropriate information.
- There were gaps in recruitment processes and mandatory staff training; the provider did not have processes in place to ensure that all staff read and actioned safety alerts relevant to their roles.
- We were not provided with any continuing professional development training for the nursing staff.

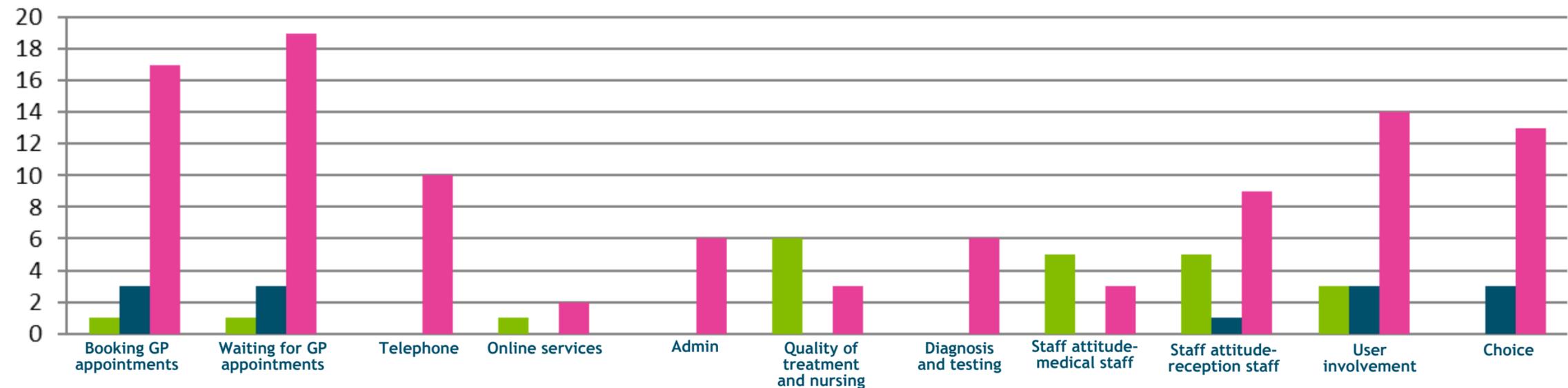
Francis Grove Practice- 70 comments

Overall opinion of the practice



- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

The process of **booking appointments** and long **waiting times for appointments** were the issues patients complained the most about.



As a result of poor access to medical care, patients perceive **reception staff** as adversarial gatekeepers, distrust the process of **diagnosis** (especially when telephone appointments are involved) and feel like they are **not involved in their own care**.

Francis Grove Practice

What patients are saying

"Since the new manager has taken over the service has deteriorated. Letter from hospitals aren't being added to patients file there's a 3 month wait. Repeat prescriptions are not being done on time some times you have days without your medication and not a regularly doctor there. So every time you do see or speak to a doctor you got to explain everything over time and time. Staff on reception are always leaving."

"Been contacting the surgery for the last 2 weeks for an urgent repeat prescription to be approved, eventually it got declined. Reception never passes message to GP, and very exhausting to try and get anything resolved as there's never appointments."

"Something needs to be done with GP practises, I find the whole procession of calling the surgery so daunting, and feel anxious when I speak to receptionist it's like a battle and they just don't have any compassion. "

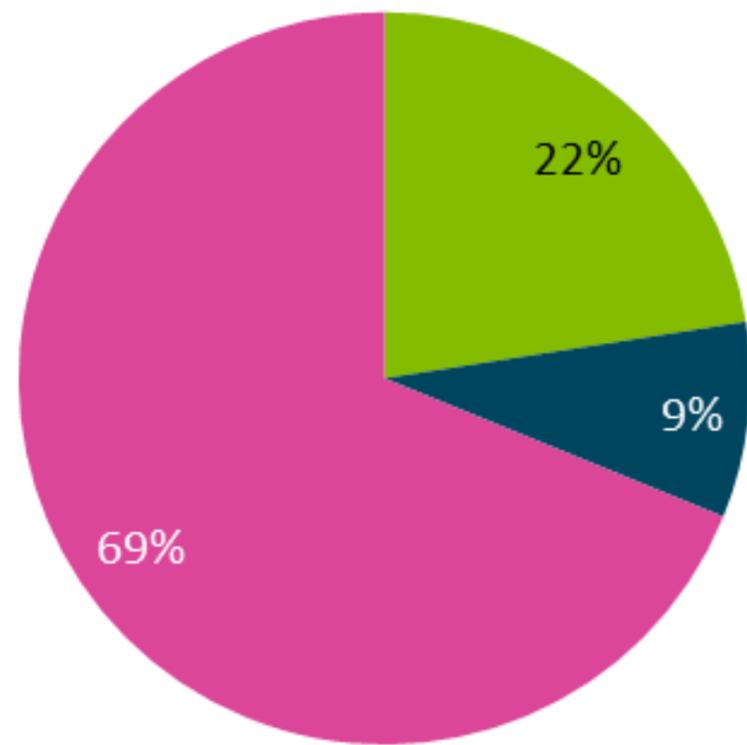
"How doctors can assess patients without seeing them is beyond me. They also fail to make referrals for their random diagnoses and send messages saying that they have sent out prescriptions but don't tell you which pharmacy they have sent them to. When you try to find out they fail to answer the phone. "

What the CQC is saying

- There were gaps in relation to staff immunisations, fire safety, infection control, cervical screening, management of referrals, staff recruitment, managing staff absence, medicines management including high risk medicines. There were also gaps in relation to staff receiving sepsis awareness training.
- The practice did not have any system in place to check clinician's registrations. We did not find evidence of any current registration for three clinicians on inspection.
- The practice could not demonstrate they had an effective programme of learning and development. There were gaps in mandatory staff training for staff. There were no opportunities for role development for non-clinical staff.
- There were gaps in the management of complaints in the practice. There was no evidence provided to show how the practice had addressed patient concerns raised in their practice survey.
- Staff did not find the leaders visible and approachable. There was no emphasis on the safety and well-being of staff and staff were unable to raise concerns without the fear of retribution.
- The practice was not equipped to respond to medical emergencies.

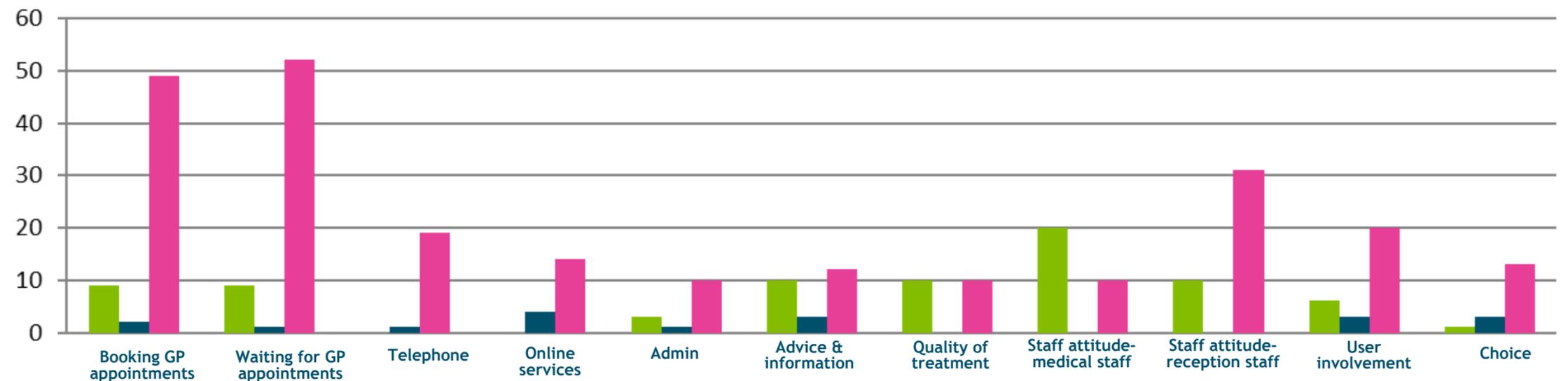
Crawley Road Practice- 70 comments

Overall opinion of the practice



- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative

The process of **booking appointments** and long **waiting times for appointments** were the issues patients complained the most about.



Negative experiences of access are eroding patients' trust in the practice. Reception staff are perceived as **gatekeepers who ration care**, making clinical decisions they have no qualifications for; and ever perception of the quality of clinical treatment is suffering as a result of this lack of trust.

Crawley Road Practice

What patients are saying

"When the online services are unable to deal with your request, inevitably, a call to the surgery is necessary and a sick feeling comes over you not because you need medical assistance but because you have to deal with the receptionists. They are patronising and act as gatekeepers you need to pass through to seek medical help - though some of the doctors and nurses are capable at their job and show empathy (a small reason to stay at this surgery), many do not and veer along the grounds of medical negligence. Receptionists demand to know why you want to talk to a doctor and determine whether or not your reason is enough for them to warrant acknowledgement from medical staff despite not being medical professionals themselves."

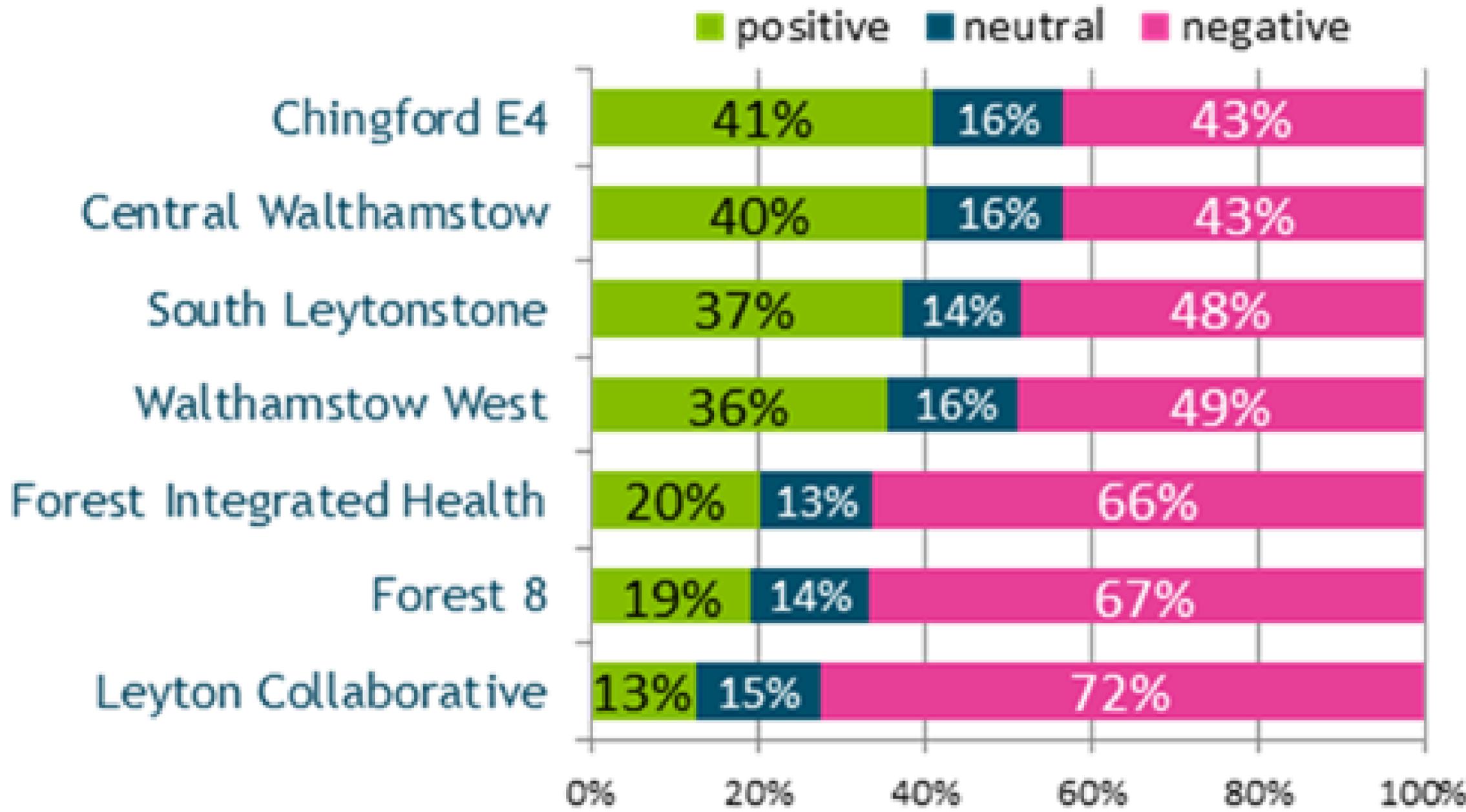
"After filling in an e-consult and not hearing anything for days, I phoned at 8am four days in a row, I got an appointment one day and they told me it would be between 9 and 11am, so when the doctor phoned at 4:30pm I was not available. I managed to book an appointment the following day, only to get a call at 6:30pm from the out of hours service who didn't listen at all to what I had to say. Couldn't be more frustrated with a practise ever, when everyone else is back in person this GP surgery is still absolutely awful. The reception staff refuse to help with anything, and don't even know the basics of the NHS app."

"Most likely you'll get a phone appointment. Which are max 10 minutes. They actually enforce that. The GP told me the other day she wouldn't discuss a second concern of mine and that I'd need to go through the whole process again to get a new appointment for that concern. Overall it's a humourless, inflexible, heartless place."

What the CQC is saying

- Staff told us they did not have processes in place regarding recruitment for staff, including staff immunisations and certified immunity. They did not currently have a process in place regarding induction for new members of staff.
- The provider had made some improvement and implemented a system regarding the management of patients who had been referred by the two-week wait urgent referral system. However, this was not a fail-safe system as they could not demonstrate they had undertaken regular searches to ensure all patients referred had been included on the practice log.
- We found evidence that patients had not undertaken appropriate blood and additional monitoring for high-risk medicines including medicines used to treat hypertension and oedema. When we spoke with the provider, they told us they were aware of national guidance regarding patient care and treatment. However, we identified 41 patients who had been prescribed medicines used to treat hypertension (high blood pressure). We reviewed a sample of five patient records, found concerns for all five patients and saw that national guidance regarding blood monitoring was not consistently followed.

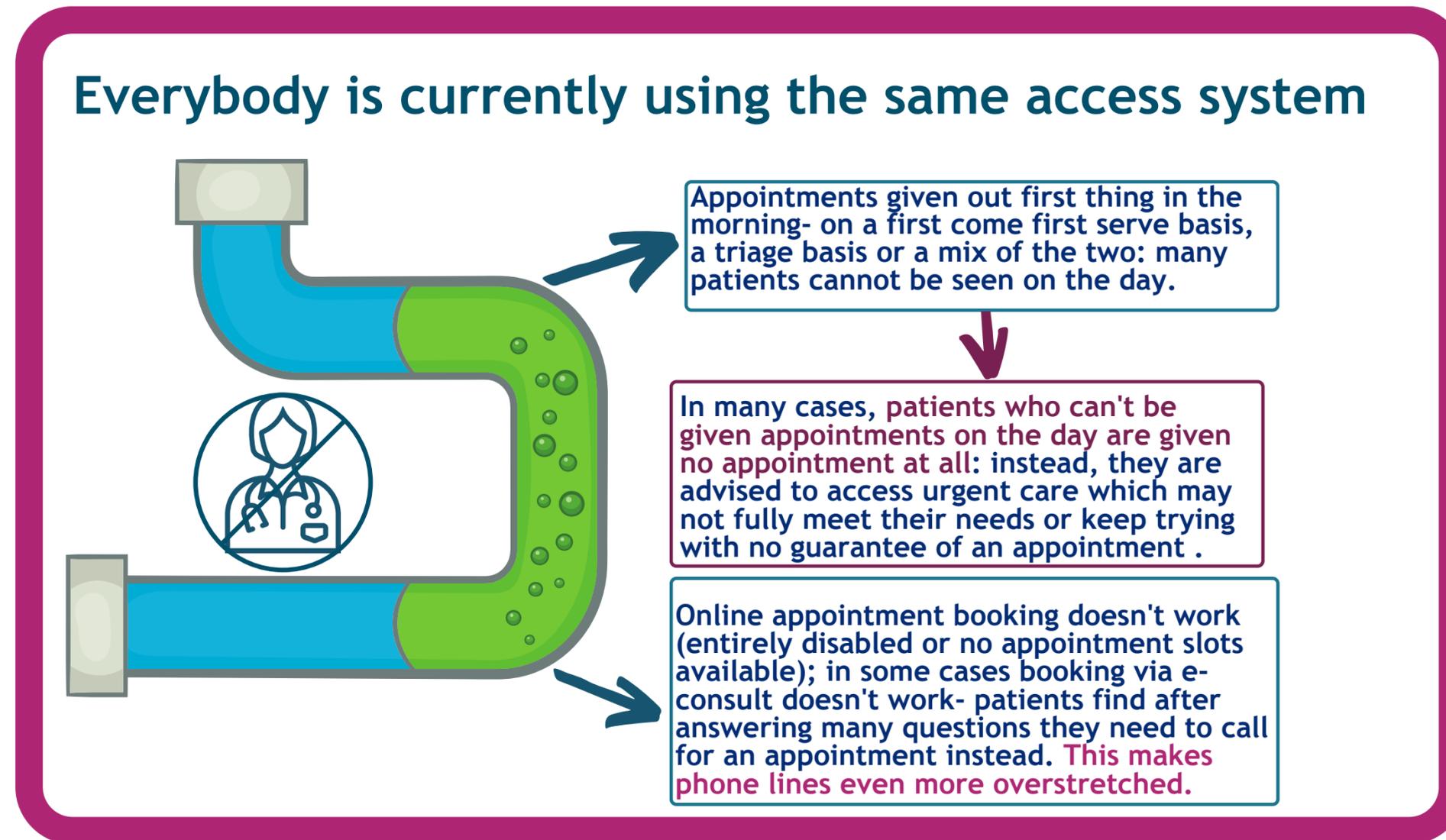
Experience by Primary Care Network



Please note PCNs are not responsible for core GP access. Each practice is responsible for delivering accessible services for their registered patients. The PCN also has no responsibility for practice CQC ratings.

The challenges faced by these three practices are difficult.

But they are by no means unique.



How do we unblock the pipeline?

I don't care who I'm seen by, if it's locum or part-time, if I can be seen promptly and in person.

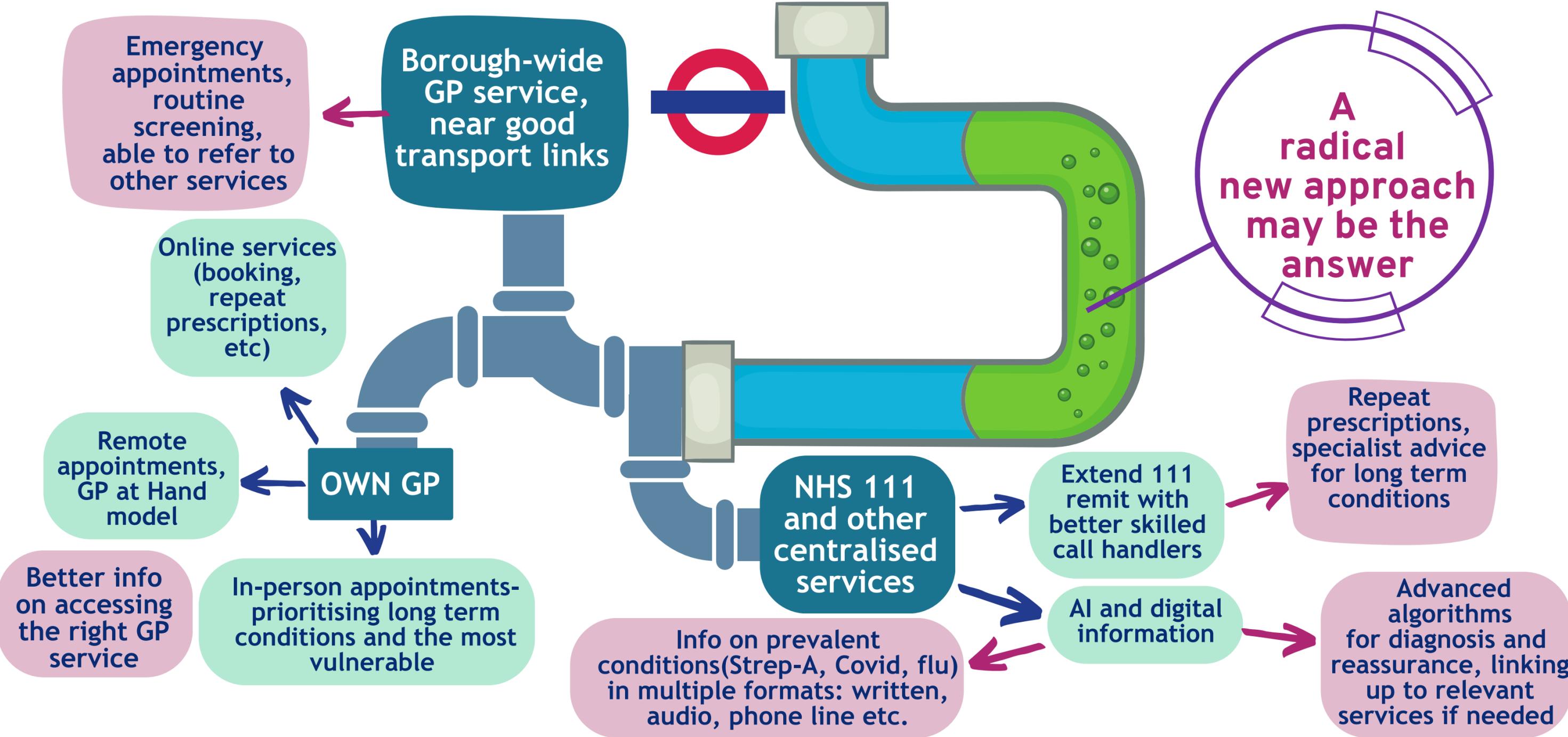
Francis Road practice patient

What I most want to do is see the same GP that I've been accustomed to, not a locum or discovering s/he has moved on. I've seen 7-8 different GPs in the last seven years, rarely on an urgent basis. They keep leaving or cutting their hours.

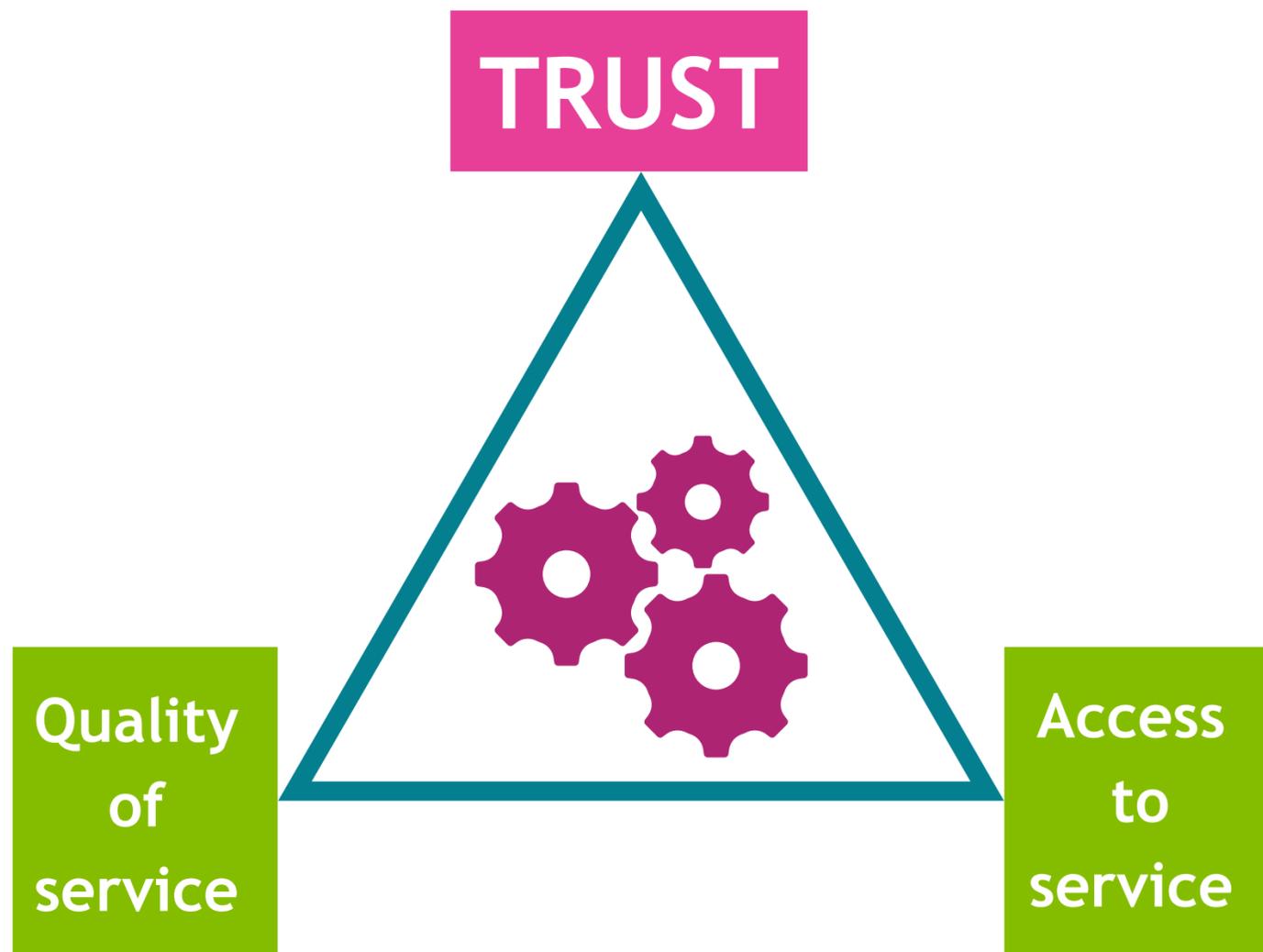
Francis Road practice patient

Do these two patients belong in the same overstretched phone queue?

How do we unblock the pipeline?



Experience of access and perception of quality are linked; why is this happening?



GP patients who struggle to access appointments (especially face to face) trust the quality of the service less:

- They are more likely to perceive reception staff as rude, and the relation with them as adversarial; they may be seen as unqualified gatekeepers whose goal is to offer the minimum possible care.
- If they are offered remote consultations (for example, a call back from a doctor on the phone or an online consultation) they are likely to see this as being of lesser quality than an in-person consultation would have been.

Imagine the following scenarios:

- You call your GP surgery to ask for an appointment. A member of the reception team (non-clinical) asks you about your symptoms. They then tell you that instead of making an appointment you should go to A&E today.
- You make an appointment with your GP surgery, you are told you would receive a telephone consultation. A doctor calls you back, listens to your concerns, then advises you to rest at home and take paracetamol.

Do you TRUST that the advice you received is in your clinical best interest, or do you feel like it's being used as merely a way of saying "We don't have capacity to treat you, sort yourself out without our help"?

The answer may depend on your previous experiences and whether you think your GP practice provides good quality care in general.