



Peninsula Practice Patient Experience Survey

April 2022

healthwatch
Suffolk

Background

- In 2021, the Ipswich and East Suffolk Commissioning Group (IES CCG) asked Healthwatch Suffolk (HWS) to engage patients registered with the Peninsula Practice. The aim was to learn more about people's overall experience of the service, and to identify changes in patient demographics, needs and expectations since the start of the pandemic.
- The project sought to understand what factors were driving patients' perceptions of services in order to support improved communication and engagement with people across Suffolk Coastal practices.
- In 2022, IES CCG asked HWS to carry out a further survey across the Peninsula surgeries to assess whether patient experience and perceptions of the practice had changed.
- This briefing paper summarises the findings of the 2022 survey, which was completed by patients between February and March 2022.

Methodology

- The initial survey in 2021 was co-produced with patients and staff of the Peninsula practice.
- The same survey was issued for a second time in 2022, with some minor updates, to ensure comparisons could be made between the data sets.
- As in 2021, Peninsula Practice chose to release the survey to their entire patient base.
- The survey was available online. Paper copies were also made available from Peninsula Practice on request. ACE Anglia were commissioned to produce an easy read version of the survey for patients who required this format.



Analysis

- The briefing below reports on the demographic survey results, and sample, as well as the count of themes.
- Not all respondents completed every question in the survey.
- This analysis seeks to compare, and highlight changes in, patient experience of the Peninsula Practice (Aldeburgh, Alderton and Hollesley and Orford) in 2021 and 2022. For the purposes of this report Alderton and Hollesley will be referred to as 'Alderton'.



The findings

What patients told us

Responses 2021 / 2022

402

responses in 2021

772

responses in 2022

Aldeburgh

41% (166)

36% (275)

Alderton

41% (164)

44% (338)

Orford

18% (72)

20% (159)

Who responded to the survey?

- In both 2021 and 2022, the majority of respondents were between 51 and 70 years of age. **11%** were between 21 and 50 years of age, and only **1%** were under the age of 20.
- In both years, the majority of respondents across all surgeries were White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British. Other responses included 'White Other' (**4%**) and 'White Irish, Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups - Any other Mixed /Multiple ethnic background' (**1%**).
- There were no respondents from the 'Black/African/Caribbean/Black British' or the 'Asian/Asian British' categories in 2022.
- **Fifty-seven percent** of the sample in 2022 were female and **42%** were male.
- Just **1%** of the sample identified as LGBT*Q+.

Visiting the surgery

The majority of the responses in 2022 came from people with recent experience of the practice:

51%

of respondents across the Practice had visited a surgery within the last month. **32%** had visited since January 2021 and **6%** had not visited after January 2020.

And most responses were from regular users of the service:

36%

said they visited the surgery regularly (more than four visits a year). **34%** made two to three visits per year. **26%** made one or two visits a year.

Making an appointment




More people felt they had received a suitable appointment time in 2022 than in 2021:

83% were offered an appointment at a time that was suitable for them, compared to **54%** in 2021. **13%** felt their appointment time was 'somewhat' suitable for them, and **4%** said that their appointment time was 'unsuitable' for them. Satisfaction with appointment times was similar across all surgeries.




The way people contacted the practice to make an appointment changed slightly:

There was a slight decrease across all surgeries in patients using eConsult between 2021 (**8%**) and 2022 (**7%**) or telephone (**88%** in 2021 to **85%** in 2022) to contact the practice. More respondents contacted the surgery face to face (**1%** in 2021 and **4%** in 2022).



“The Practice had problems with providing care during the Covid pandemic. Reception, and appointments, particularly were not always handled well and many patients left. Now the situation is very much better, and I am glad that we did not join the Aldeburgh exodus. A small point - the waiting area for patients here might be made a bit more inviting?” **(Aldeburgh patient)**

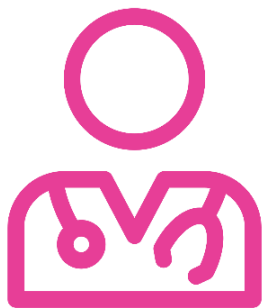
“It is very difficult to get convenient appointments for myself (as I work) and for my children (who attend school). This is particularly true for face-to-face appointments which can only be booked in the morning at a time when we are heading out to work/school. Waiting on the phone would make us late for school/work. It would then be difficult to arrange to get to a face-to-face appointment during work/school hours.” **(Alderton patient)**



Receiving an appointment

There was a large increase in the number of people who reported receiving a face to face appointment (from **28%** in 2021 to **42%** in 2022).

Telephone appointments reduced from **67%** to **54%**. Reported experiences of video appointments remained consistent at around **4%**.



In 2022, across all three surgeries, most (**84%**) appointments were with a clinician, GP or nurse.

9% had seen a 'Phlebotomist', and **5%** had seen a 'Health Care Assistant'. Other professionals who were seen in 2022 included 'Physiotherapists', 'Pharmacists', and 'mental health professionals'.

More people in 2022 felt they were offered an appointment with someone suitable to meet their need(s). Overall, **17%** more respondents felt their appointment was suited to their need(s).

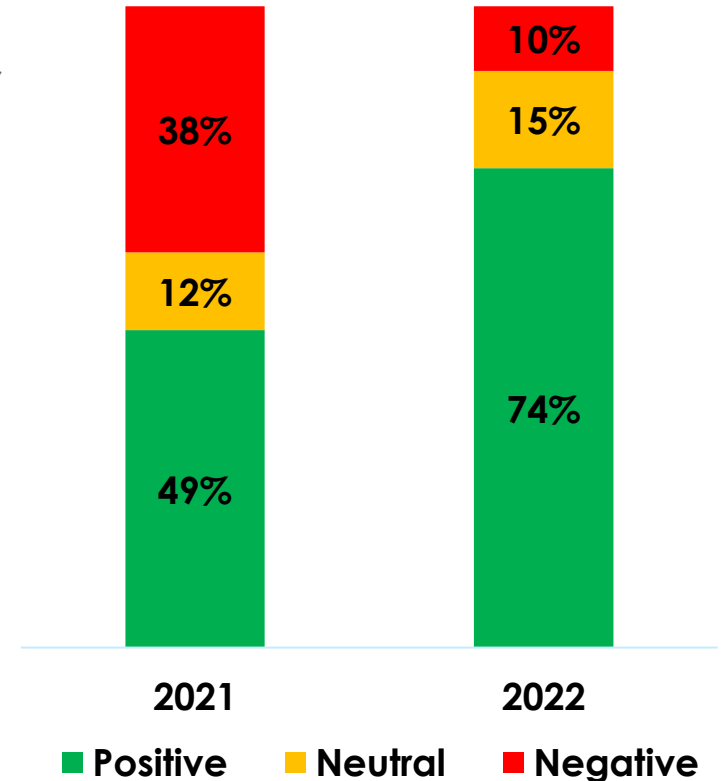
What went well about your appointment or what could have been improved?

Both the 2021 and 2022 surveys asked “what went well about your appointment, or what could have been improved?”

There were **412** responses to this question in 2022.

Compared to 2021, positive comments stating that the appointment went well rose by **25%** across all surgeries. Those reporting a mixed experience rose by **4%**.

The percentage of negative comments or suggestions for improvement fell from **38%** in 2021 to **10%** in 2022.



Treatment and care

In 2022, people were more satisfied about...

...the attitudes of professionals they saw across all surgeries.

91% said that they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the attitude of clinical staff, compared to **79%** overall in 2021.




...the care they received.

89% said they were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the care they had received, compared to **75%** in 2021.

...the way information about their treatment was communicated to them.

89% were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the way information about their treatment was communicated, compared to **74%** in 2021.






“The phlebotomist who does my blood tests and the nurse practitioner who gives my hormone injections are both competent, efficient and put me at ease.” **(Aldeburgh patient)**

“All recent contacts with GPs have been attentive and unhurried, taking time to understand and enquire about my issue. Where necessary further testing/investigation has been done. Overall I feel very fortunate to have Alderton surgery as my GP.” **(Alderton patient)**

“All the staff (medical and nonmedical, including especially those responsible for immunisations and pharmacy staff) have been extremely efficient and dedicated every time I have had contact with them. They go out of their way to help their patients, above and beyond just doing what is necessary.” **(Orford patient)**



Awareness of services provided by the Practice

People were asked to identify which services they had used, or had heard of, that are provided by Peninsula Practice.

Overall awareness of additional services offered by the Practice has increased between 2021 and 2022 including:

- Pre Diabetes programme by **13%**
- Clinics eg Asthma, Diabetes etc by **12%**
- Wound Dressing by **11%**
- Health Promotion Advice by **9%**
- Cancer Care by **9%**
- Mental health by **8%**
- Social Prescribers by **3%**
- Blood Tests by **2%**

Awareness of other services has been more varied or has reduced including:

- Citizens Advice support
- Chiropody
- Compassionate Communities
- Ultrasound

Between 2021 and 2022 interest in additional offers of services has fallen. Only interest in Reflexology in Aldeburgh has increased.

Several other therapies and treatments were suggested including:

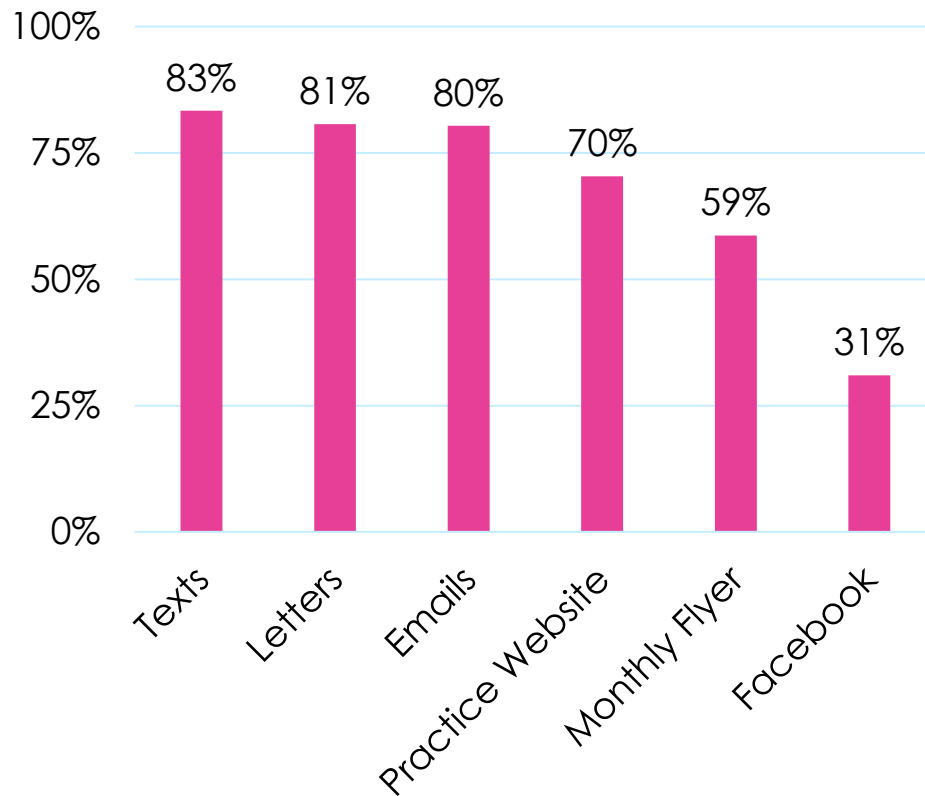
- Ear wax removal
- Dietary/Nutritional Advice
- Chiropractor
- Physiotherapy, Menopause/Female issues
- Massage
- Body mole/cancer checks
- ECG checks/more testing
- Counselling
- Wellbeing
- Homeopathy
- Annual health checks
- Preventative advice/signposting

Awareness of services provided by the Practice

Table 2: Percentage of respondents who said "I know about this" or "I use this" service

| | Aldeburgh | | Alderton/ Hollesey | | Orford | |
|--|-----------|------|-----------------------|------|--------|------|
| | 2021 | 2022 | 2021 | 2022 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Blood Tests | 86% | 87% | 85% | 87% | 84% | 88% |
| Compassionate Communities | 33% | 10% | 34% | 15% | 36% | 16% |
| Clinics e.g Asthma, Diabetes etc | 33% | 60% | 35% | 41% | 36% | 40% |
| Health Promotion advice | 25% | 30% | 34% | 40% | 28% | 44% |
| Wound dressing | 31% | 37% | 31% | 39% | 21% | 40% |
| Ultrasound | 26% | 23% | 14% | 20% | 22% | 18% |
| Child Health and Immunisations, Health Visitors etc | 17% | 16% | 25% | 24% | 13% | 22% |
| Mental Health | 15% | 23% | 26% | 33% | 15% | 25% |
| Chiropody | 14% | 13% | 19% | 23% | 23% | 28% |
| Cancer Care | 15% | 22% | 20% | 25% | 12% | 28% |
| Pre-diabetes referral programme | 13% | 15% | 13% | 20% | 12% | 13% |
| Citizens Advice Support | 9% | 15% | 11% | 11% | 6% | 4% |
| Social Prescribers | 5% | 9% | 12% | 13% | 4% | 10% |

Preferred communication methods



People were asked to identify what their preferred communication methods were to be informed about changes at the practice.

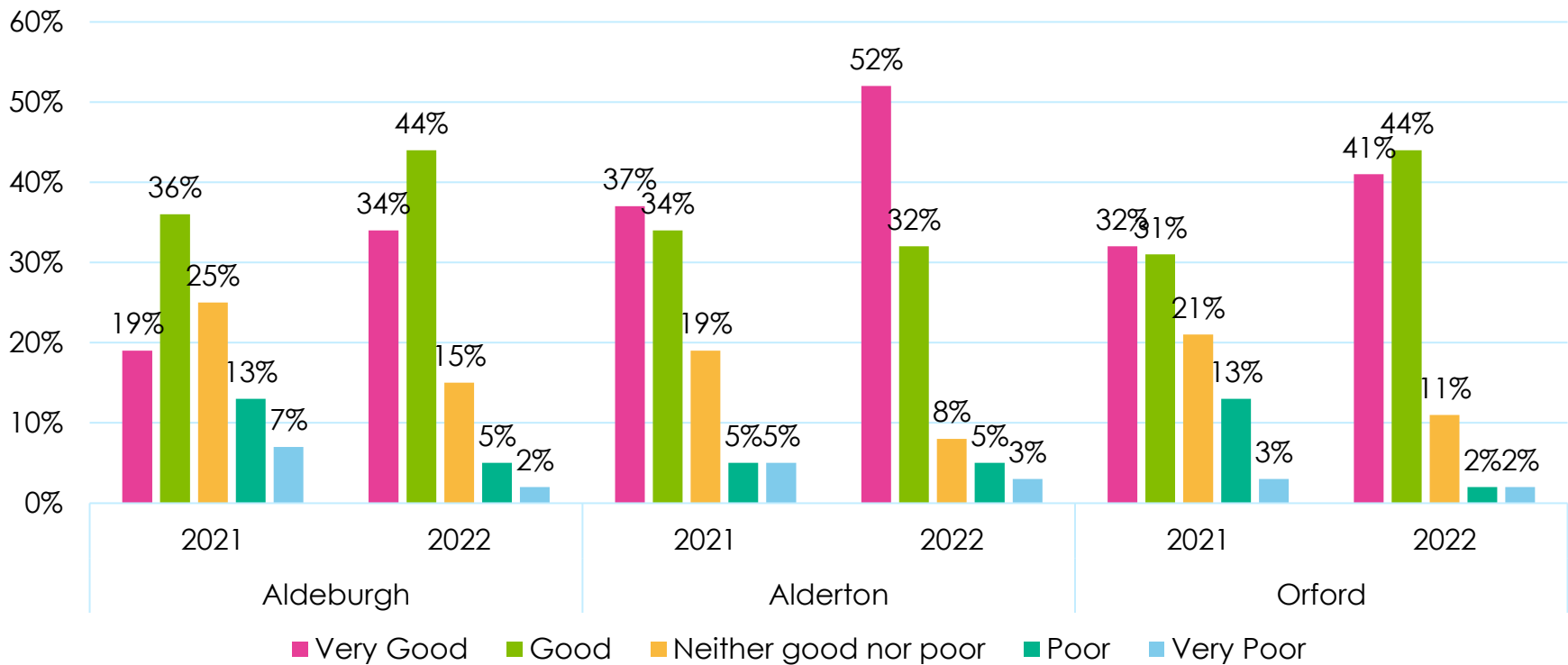
People's preferred communication methods remained the same.


Texts were still the preferred method of contact at **83%**, followed by emails and letters at **80%**.

Other suggestions included social media, WhatsApp, telephone, a notice board outside and posters.

Overall Experience


People's overall ratings of their experience of the Practice were higher across all surgeries than in 2021. Across the practice, 'Good' and 'Very Good' ratings increased by **22%** compared with last year.





“During the first Covid lockdown, times were hard for everyone but the Practice still did it's best for its patients. Now things have improved greatly generally, and the Practice is, in my view now providing an excellent service. The appointment system is improved, the Practice is proactive in contacting patients when something needs attention and in my experience the staff have been excellent in addressing my problems. Fortunately, I don't need their services very often but I am satisfied that when I do need them, they are there for me and I will receive good treatment. I'm a happy patient!” **(Aldeburgh Patient)**

“Changes over last 18 months have improved the attitude at the practice, which had been quite toxic. Reception staff had been quite awkward, in the end I formally complained and had a long letter of apology from a GP.” **(Aldeburgh Patient)**



Suggestions

The final question in the survey asked for people's thoughts on what could support Peninsula Practice to deliver the best service possible. **191** people answered the question. Twenty-six respondents felt that the service delivered was already good and made no suggestions. Top themes are shown below:

| Suggestion | Total comments |
|---|----------------|
| <p>Staff attitudes Suggestions that staff should be better trained to ensure that they deliver a friendly, efficient and professional service. Some felt staff needed to show more understanding, empathy and better listening skills.</p> | 33 |
| <p>Appointments system</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow appointments to be booked in advance rather than on the day. • Improve the flexibility of the system to suit those working or with children. • Accommodate disabled patients who cannot ring early morning or need other support. • Make more appointments available to book online. | 14 |
| <p>Face-to-face appointments Suggestions that more face-to-face appointments should be made available to patients.</p> | 13 |
| <p>Continuity of care Some felt patients should be able to see the doctor of their choice. They felt this would prevent duplication of effort for both patients and doctors who can then build relationships.</p> | 10 |
| <p>Follow-up Suggestions that there is a need to improve communication of follow-up details, results of tests and referrals. These could be made available online to patients.</p> | 8 |
| <p>Staff capacity Suggestions that there is a need for more clinicians and administrative staff across Peninsula practice to reduce telephone and appointment waiting times.</p> | 8 |
| <p>Communication Suggestions to improve communication between practice and patients by using the PPG, online newsletter, improving feedback from patients to practice, making information available in libraries and public areas in town</p> | 8 |

Conclusion

- The 2022 results indicate higher levels of satisfaction levels in all areas covered by the survey.
- A larger percentage of people were 'very satisfied' with the service they received and the professional attitude and efficiency of staff.
- Face-to-face appointments are still favoured, but there are higher levels of satisfaction with telephone appointments.
- Travel does not have the same high levels of concern as in 2021, but it is still an issue for some people.
- People still suggested some areas of improvement across the Peninsula practice, including with regard to staff attitudes, listening skills and politeness when communicating with patients.
- Concern was also expressed at the length of time it takes to get through to the surgery, and the difficulty in making an appointment 'on the day'.
- There is still a need to improve awareness of the full range of services available at the practice as no improvement was noted in 2022 with respect to people's awareness or knowledge.

The Healthwatch Suffolk Feedback Centre

People who responded to the survey were asked whether they would like to share their overall comments on the Healthwatch Suffolk Feedback Centre.

To view their comments, and those about other NHS and social care services in Suffolk, go to:

www.healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk/services



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