

# Ravenscar Surgery

## Healthwatch Redcar and Cleveland Engagement

March 2023

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## **Introduction**

We received feedback through our information and signposting service regarding Ravenscar Surgery which included suggestions for updates to the website and improvements to the patient experience.

We shared this information with the practice provider, ELM Alliance, and were informed by the Practice Manager that they were reviewing their systems and were invited to support them with patient engagement to inform improvements in these areas.

The Practice arranged a 'Meet the Team' event on 30 January 2023 where we had the opportunity to have conversations directly with patients, in addition to this, we developed in collaboration with the Practice, a patient survey which was completed by 13 patients.

## **Methodology**

### **Survey and Engagement**

The Practice Manager informed us of the areas which they had identified for improvement which formed the basis of the survey.

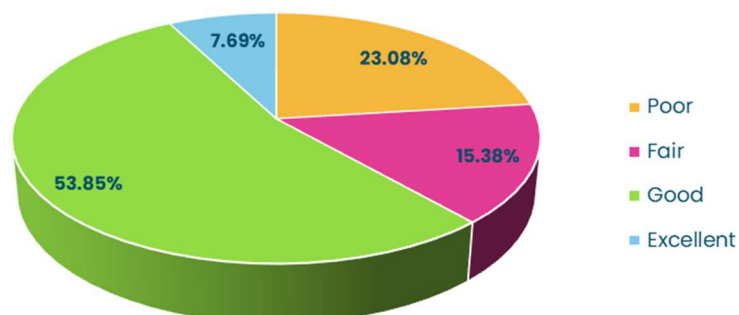
We uploaded the questions onto Survey Monkey and printed off paper copies of the survey to take to the event for those who did not have digital access.

Staff and volunteers from Healthwatch South Tees attended the event and we were also supported by the Integrated Care Board digital team. They were already working with the Practice to improve their website which our engagement informed.

To compliment this activity, we invited the South Tees Primary Care Link Worker and colleagues from Dementia Action Teesside and Dementia UK to raise awareness of training opportunities that would support the Practice with carers and those living with dementia.

## Findings from survey responses

### Question 1 – What is your current experience of Ravenscar Surgery?



The majority of respondents (53.85%) rated their experience as good.

### Question 2 – What would improve your experience?

There was a lot of consistency in replies with key themes being:

- Difficulty making appointments.
- Lack of face-face appointments.
- Empathy of all practice staff.
- Medical staff not reading patients notes.
- Carers not being aware if they were on the carers register.
- Lack of update on practice news and updates.

*The waiting times (in the practice waiting area) are too long. I am bad with my nerves, and I find this difficult.*

*I don't think my doctor takes me seriously. He doesn't listen to me, and I feel that he isn't giving me the right treatment.*

*It is far too complicated to make an appointment. I came into the surgery to make an appointment due to the difficulty and I was told to go home and do it.*

*There is never anyone on reception Someone should answer the phone. Its shouldn't be an answering machine. There is zero lack of empathy.*

### Question 3 – Would you prefer an automated voice or a practice member recording on the telephone system?

Of those that answered, all would prefer a recording of someone from the Practice rather than an automated message.

*The current voicemail message is out of date.*

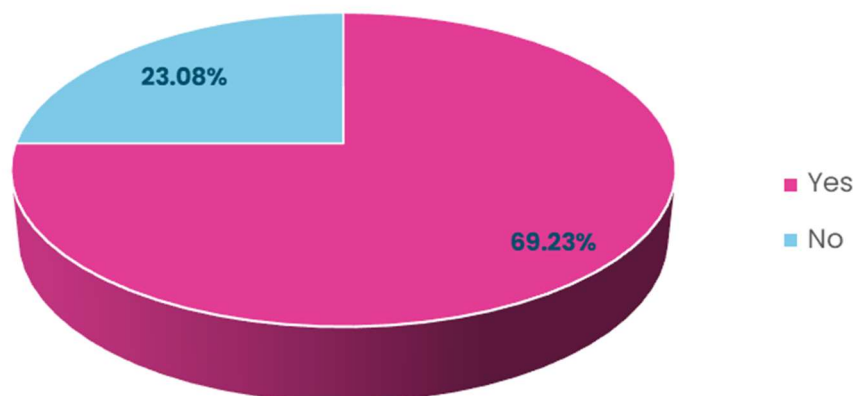
*It's long winded.*

*The message is 4 minutes long.*

*Patients would like to be able to telephone and pre-book appointments. Some respondents commented that they did not want to discuss their health issues or the reason for seeing the doctor with the person who answers the telephone.*

*The phone system sometimes appears to 'bomb you out of the queue' when you have been waiting for some time.*

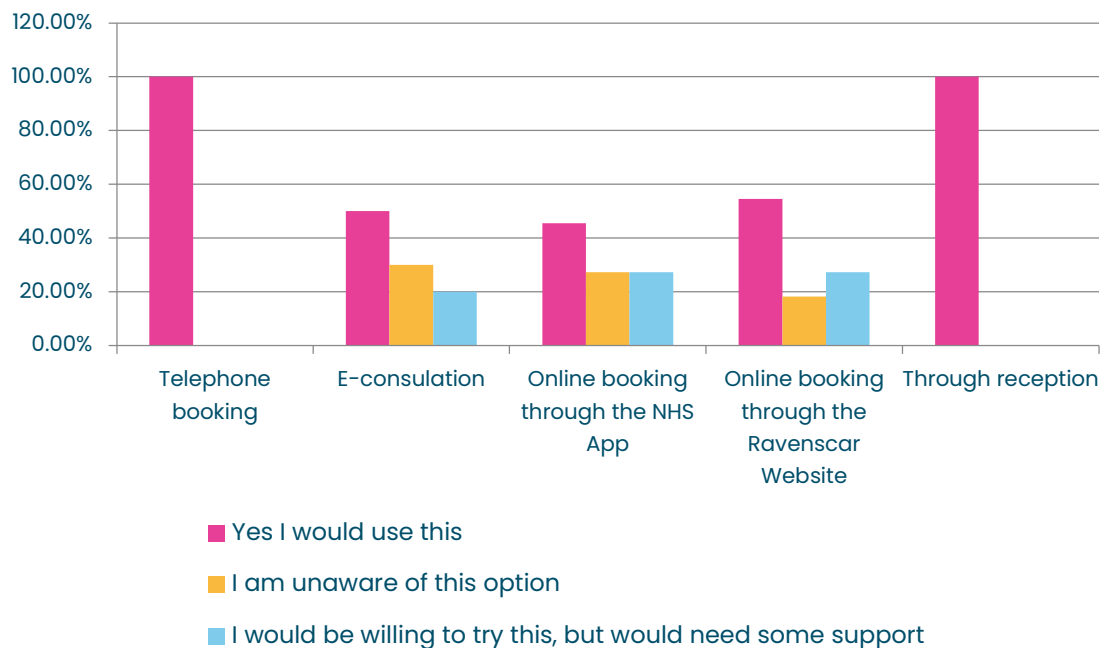
### Question 4 – Do you use the website?



Respondents were also asked if there were any improvements they would like to see to the website. The key areas people would like to be able to use the website for were:

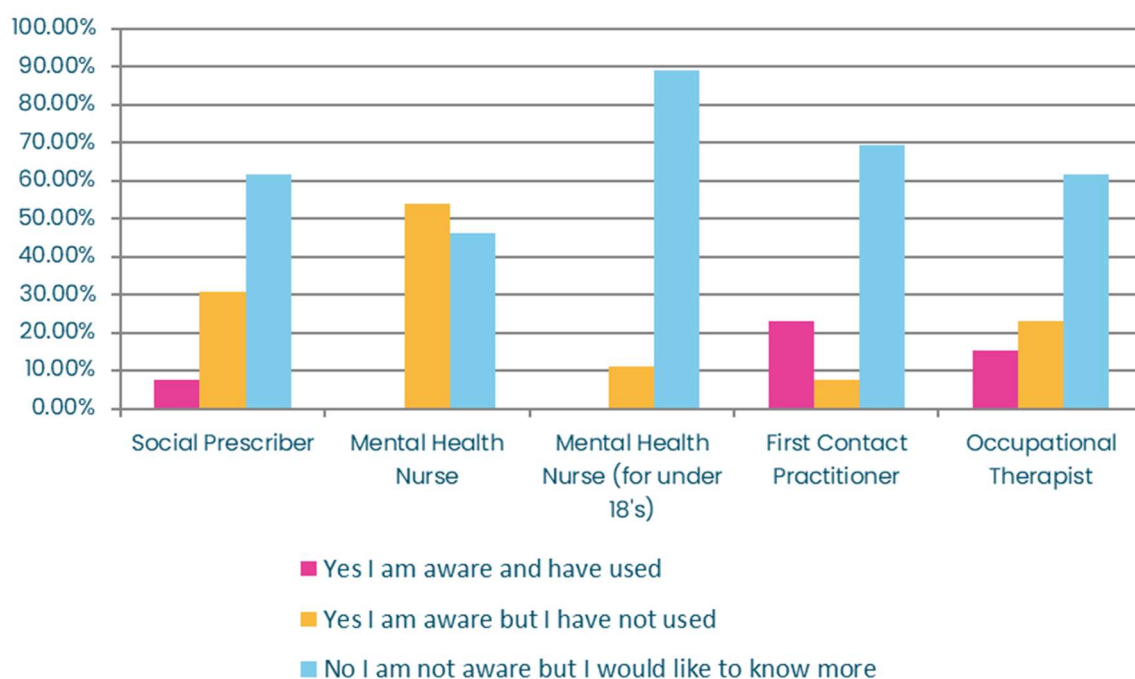
- To book appointments.
- To access their medical records.

### Question 5 – How would you prefer to book an appointment in the future?



- All of those who responded would still use the telephone and or the reception within the Practice to book an appointment in the future.
- Half would use the e-consultation service, with a further 20% being willing to try with some support. 20% were not aware of the service.
- 55% of respondents would book their appointment through the practice website, compared only 45% who would book using the NHS App.

**Question 6 - Which of the following roles are you aware of, and have you used any of these services?**



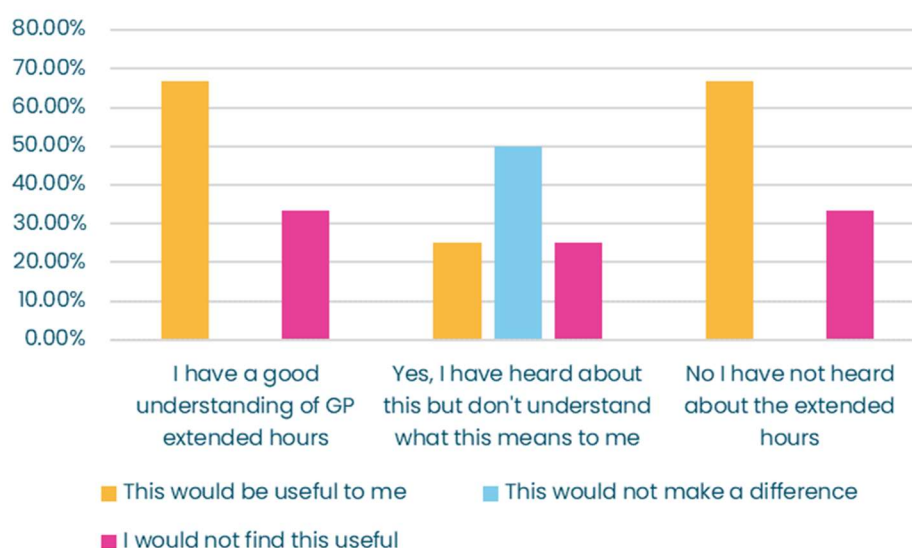
Respondents did not have a good awareness of the different roles available at the Practice.

Whilst only 7% of respondents were aware of the Social Prescriber role, it was conveyed that having the social prescriber speak at the 'Meet the Team' event was beneficial.

People were keen to find out more about the Mental Health Nurse, with 47% asking for more information. Notably more than half of the respondents were aware of this role, this is significantly more awareness than the others.

In general, patients are keen to find out more about the various roles within the practice.

## Question 7 – How would you use the GP extended hours service?



- Those respondents who were already aware of the GP extended hours service found it useful. A significant percentage of those who were not aware of the service would find this useful, but the Practice may need to raise more awareness.

## Question 8 – The practice wants to create a Patient Participation Group. Respondents were asked if they would be interested in being part of the group.

There was significant interest in respondents who wanted to be part of the Patient Participation Group. Respondents contact information was shared, with their agreement, with the Practice Manager.

### Key Themes from our Analysis & Recommendations

From the analysis it was clear that respondents were keen to support improvements in the Practice. This is evident in the positive response from people wanting to be part of the Patient Participation Group.

We have identified key themes and made suggestions for the Practice to consider:

- 1. Patients are not always aware or informed of changes to services such as extended GP hours, new roles such as Social Prescribers, and general information within the Practice. Updates to the website are currently underway with the ICB digital team working alongside the Practice.**



We would also suggest that the Practice considers developing a communication strategy including consideration of methods for those who are not digitally connected or require communication support to get messages across to all patients, consistently and in a timely manner.

**2. Respondents are not clear why they cannot always have a face-to-face appointment instead of a telephone appointment.**

An explanation on the website, through newsletter and social media as part of a communication campaign to inform patients would support patients' understanding.

**3. Patients are not aware of the daily workings of the Practice, for example:**

- **Why is there no one sat at reception?**
- **When the GP finishes an appointment early what are they doing until the next patient comes in?**

This could be supported through a 'day in the life' communication message, examples could include a video on their website, played on the screen in the surgery for those visiting, or a write up in a newsletter format for those patients who are not digitally included.

**4. Respondents would like to use online facilities to:**

- **Book their appointments.**
- **Have access to their medical records online.**
- **Continue to order repeat prescriptions.**

It is suggested this is communicated to its patients in a format that is suitable to their needs through the suggested communications strategy.

**5. The Practice is aware, and respondents agree the telephone system is not effective, they would like:**

- **A voicemail from one of the Practice team.**
- **A shorter voicemail.**
- **An up-to-date message.**

It should be noted that the Practice is currently reviewing the telephone system, the comments from respondents will be considered as part of this.

# healthwatch

Redcar and Cleveland

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