Exploring patient choice in GP services

December 2014

This research was commissioned and funded by Monitor
Aims and Methodology

Aims

- This study was carried out by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Monitor, as part of Monitor’s review of GP services.
- The survey explores what patients look for in a GP practice and whether and how patients exercise their right to choose a GP practice.
- The aims of the survey are to try and understand:
  - whether patients engage in actively considering their choice of GP services provider;
  - whether patients are able to assess which GP services provider best satisfies their needs; and,
  - whether patients are able to successfully change to a GP services provider which best meets their needs.

Methodology

- Interviews were carried out by Ipsos MORI’s face-to-face omnibus survey.
- 3,315 interviews were completed with adults between 7th and 20th November 2014.
- Data has been weighted to be representative of adults / GP patient population aged 15+ in England.
Convenience, access and quality are key considerations when choosing a GP practice

- Most people are registered with a GP practice, and those that are tend to use it regularly
  - 96% are currently registered with a GP practice.
  - 75% of those who are registered have visited their GP practice in the last 6 months.

- Convenience of location, access and quality are the main things patients say they look for in a GP practice
  - Proximity of the practice to their home (58%), how easy it is to get an appointment (57%) and good quality diagnosis and treatment (41%) are the most common things people seek from a GP practice.

- However, when patients actually make a choice, convenience of location is the main consideration
  - 77% of patients who have registered with their GP practice in the last 10 years say its location close to their home was the main reason for choosing their GP practice.

- Most patients are satisfied with their GP practice and their expectations are largely being met
  - One in ten patients (10%) are dissatisfied with their GP practice.
  - The majority of patients say that their GP practice meets their expectations, particularly around aspects of convenience of location and quality.

- However, a significant minority of patients feel their expectations around appointments are not being met by their current GP provider
  - At least three in ten patients say their practice is below their expectations for ease of getting an appointment (30%), being offered appointments online (34%), being able to see the same doctor every time (35%) and being open evening and weekends (46%).

- When patients are unable to get a GP appointment some say they would use urgent or emergency services instead
  - 27% say they would go to a walk-in centre instead.
  - 17% say they would go to A&E / hospital instead.
Although choice is seen as important, a lack of ‘engagement’ with choice means few actually consider alternatives when choosing a GP practice

- The vast majority of patients say they are aware that they have the right to choose their GP practice, and think it is important to be able to do so
  - 91% know they have the right to choose a GP practice, while 89% know they have the right to ask to see a particular GP within a practice.
  - 92% think it is important to be able to make a choice about which GP practice to register with.

- However, when registering with a GP practice only a minority considered an alternative GP practice or compared GP practices in their area
  - Most patients who registered with their GP practice in the last 10 years did not consider any other practices at the time that they registered (84%).
  - 40% of these patients have never tried to compare GP practices, rising to nine in ten (88%) of those who have been registered for more than 10 years.

- The majority of patients rate their current GP practice as average or above average, which may show that patients are unaware of the true performance of their GP practice relative to others in their area
  - 3% say that their GP practice is below average.
  - 42% say their GP practice is average, 40% say their GP practice is better than average.

- A significant proportion of patients do not feel as though they have a choice of GP practice if they wanted to change
  - 29% do not feel they have a choice.
  - 65% feel they have a choice of GP practice if they wanted to change.

- Worsening quality of diagnosis (for a serious illness) and dissatisfaction with care are the most likely reasons to make patients change GP practice
  - Though the availability of appointments and other quality and access issues are also important for some.
Most patients rely on word of mouth to compare GP practices rather than on available information about GP practices’ performance

- When comparing GP practices patients tend to rely on word of mouth rather than information available on quality and access
  - 60% of patients who compared GP practices relied on recommendations from family and friends.
  - Few use public sources of information when making these comparisons; 15% use the NHS Choices website while just five per cent use GP patient survey results.
- The majority of those who have used information on GP practice performance found it easy to find and understand
- However, information on quality of diagnosis and treatment was not as easy to find and understand
Majority of patients find registering easy, but there is room for making the process simpler

- The vast majority of patients find registering with a GP practice easy
  - 88% of those who have registered with their GP practice in the last 10 years say they found it easy to do.

- For the minority who found it difficult, they cite inconvenience and time as the main issues
  - 20%* of these patients cite inconvenience of paperwork as an issue.
  - 18%* cite both the time taken to transfer records and the number of procedures as issues.

- A small number of patients who considered alternative GP practices when choosing their current GP practice cite practice boundaries and being refused registration as main reasons why they did not register with an alternative provider
  - 21% of those who have registered with their GP practice in the last 10 years say their GP practice was the only one they were in the catchment area for.
  - 12% of these patients say they tried to register with another GP practice but were refused registration / they were full.

* Please note small base size (34) so results should be treated with caution and seen as indicative only.
Overview
Interpreting the data

- For each question, the responses to each answer are presented as a percentage (%).
- The number of respondents answering (the base size) is stated at the bottom of each slide for each question.
- For questions with fewer than 100 responses, we strongly recommend that findings are interpreted with caution.
- Where results do not sum to 100%, or where individual responses (e.g. tend to agree; strongly agree) do not sum to combined responses (e.g. strongly/tend to agree) this is due to rounding.
- Text summaries have been included for particular subgroups of interest, only significant differences (at 95% significance level) have been commented on in these cases.
Nearly all are registered with a GP practice, with many registered with their current GP practice for a long time

**S1. Are you currently registered with a GP practice?**

**Q3. When did you register with your current GP practice?**

**S1. Are you currently registered with a GP practice?**

- Most people (96%) are registered with a GP practice – significantly more women than men are (98% v 94%).
- Households with children are more likely to be registered than child-free households (97% v 95%).
- Likelihood of being registered with a GP practice increases with age – those aged 15-24 least likely to be registered (89% v 96% overall).

**Q3. When did you register with your current GP practice?**

- Up to and including 10 Years ago: 42%
- More than 10 Years ago: 57%
- Less than a year ago: 1%
- 1 year up to and including 3 years ago: 7%
- Over 3 years up to and including 5 years ago: 11%
- Over 5 years up to and including 10 years ago: 9%
- Registered since birth: 14%
- Don’t know – someone else registered for me: 1%

**Base S1: All respondents (3,315)**
**Base Q3: All respondents currently registered with a GP practice (3,192)**
> When patients do change GP practice this is usually because they have moved home

Q4. Why did you need to register with a new GP practice at that time?

- Moving home is the most common reason to move GP practices – women (86%), those aged 25-44 (89%) and full-time workers (87%) are more likely than others to give this reason (84% overall).

- People aged 65+ are more likely to change GP practice due to being dissatisfied with their previous GP practice (17% v 7% overall).

Base Q4: All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years (1,276)
Many use their GP practice regularly, with three-quarters visiting their GP practice in the last 6 months

Q2. Thinking about the last 6 months, how many times, if any, have you visited your GP practice?

75% have visited their GP practice in last 6 months

Those more likely to be frequent users (3+ times in last 6 months) include:

- **Women** compared with men (39% v 25%).
- **Those aged 65+** compared with those aged under 65 (43% v 30%).
- **Those from less affluent social grades (DE)** compared with those from social grades ABC1C2 (39% v 30%).
- **Those with a long-term condition (LTC), disability or infirmity** compared to those who do not have any of these (57% v 23%).
Location, accessibility and quality are the main things people say they look for in a GP practice…

Q1a. What are the main things you look for in a GP practice? Please read the list of 26 options and then select up to five options.

Top 10 responses

- Close to home: 58%
- Easy to get an appointment: 57%
- Good quality of diagnosis and treatment: 41%
- Good reputation: 26%
- Friendly and attentive staff: 26%
- Can see the same doctor every time: 17%
- Male and female GPs available: 16%
- Open evening and weekends: 14%
- Clean: 14%
- GP practice offers appointments with other healthcare professionals: 13%

Base Q1a: All respondents currently registered with a GP practice (3,192)
... and are also the aspects that continued to be valued by those who have been registered with their GP practice for a long time

**Q28b. You mentioned a number of aspects you value about your current GP practice. Which one of the following is the MOST important aspect to you?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good quality of diagnosis/treatment</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to get appointment</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to home</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good reputation</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can see same doctor every time</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly and attentive staff</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPs speak my language</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That it delivers a particular service I need</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male and Female GPs available</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers appointments with other healthcare professionals</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Those aged 15-44 more likely than those aged 65+ to value convenience of location (24% v 10%).
- In contrast, those aged 65+ are more likely than those aged 15-24 to value quality of services (47% v 36%).
- Those with children in the household more likely than those who do not have any to value convenience of location (20% v 13%).
- Those who live in metropolitan and urban areas are more likely than those who live in rural areas to value convenience of location (16% v 10%)*.

Base Q28: All respondents registered with their current GP practice for more than 10 years (1,916)

*Throughout the report we make comparisons by the type of area people live in. There are four definitions based on the density of population. The definitions for these are as follows: <40,000 inhabitants = Rural; 40,000 – 100,000 inhabitants = Suburban; 100,000 - <550,000 inhabitants = Urban; 550,000+ = Metropolitan
However, when people actually make a choice of which GP practice to register with, the majority do so based on its proximity to their home.

Q7a. Why did you choose to register at your current GP practice?

Top 10 responses:
- Close to home: 77%
- Easy to get an appointment: 21%
- Good reputation: 16%
- It was recommended to me by friends/family: 14%
- Good quality of diagnosis and treatment: 11%
- Male and female GPs available: 10%
- Easy to get to: 9%
- Friendly and attentive staff: 9%
- Close to work: 8%
- Close to a pharmacy: 8%

Base Q7a.: All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years (1,276)
The majority of patients are mostly happy with their GP practice’s offering

Q1b. And for each of the things you look for in a GP practice, to what extent, if at all, does your current GP practice meet your expectations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Meets my expectations</th>
<th>Below my expectations</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Close to a pharmacy (295)</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clean (463)</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%*%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to get to (311)</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to home (1,847)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td></td>
<td>6%*%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable waiting rooms and facilities (153)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male and female GPs available (510)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td></td>
<td>5%*%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can get the prescription I need (239)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td></td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to work (106)</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to family (96)</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td></td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good reputation (855)</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td></td>
<td>7%*%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPs speak my language (389)</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td></td>
<td>8%*%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good quality of diagnosis and treatment (1,342)</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td></td>
<td>11%*%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friendly and attentive staff (840)</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%*%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• However, when we asked patients to rate the performance of their GP practice only four per cent said their GP practice was worse than average. This raises the question about how well informed patients are about the quality of GP services.
However this is not the case for all aspects – particularly the convenience of opening hours and the ability to get appointments.

Q1b. And for each of the things you look for in a GP practice, to what extent, if at all, does your current GP practice meet your expectations?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Meets my expectations</th>
<th>Below my expectations</th>
<th>Don't know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I can order repeat prescriptions online (157)</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That it delivers a particular service I need (304)</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close to childcare (17)*</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My GP offers me choice of hospital for further care (167)</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrated care (221)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parking available (262)</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers telephone consultations (207)</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GP practice has a patient participation group (24)*</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Easy to get an appointment (1,836)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Can see the same doctor every time (546)</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offers appointments online (129)</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open evening and weekends (429)</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base Q1b: All respondents currently registered with a GP practice (numbers in brackets)  
* Caution very small base sizes
This is an issue as when appointments are unavailable, people tend to seek treatment elsewhere rather than wait

### Q8/Q29. If you wanted to see a GP because you were unwell but were unable to get an appointment when you wanted, what would you be most likely to do instead?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Response Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Go to a walk-in centre</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to A&amp;E / Hospital</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make an appointment with my GP for a different time</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call NHS 111</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See an out-of-hours GP</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit a pharmacy</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait to see if the condition got worse</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not seek medical attention / self-medicate</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Look for information / advice on NHS Choices / online</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask friends / family for advice</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ask for a home visit</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to surgery and wait to be seen</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See another GP in the practice</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base Q8/Q29: All respondents registered with a GP practice (3,192)
While most are satisfied with their GP practice, one in ten are dissatisfied

Q21/Q36. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current GP practice?

- People aged 65+ are more likely to be very satisfied than those aged 15-54 (54% v 36%).
- Those from more affluent social grades (ABC1) are more likely to be satisfied than those from less affluent social grades (C2DE) (83% v 78%).
- Those who have a car in their household are more likely to be satisfied than those who do not (82% v 77%) – perhaps linked to the issues around expectations of opening hours and appointments.
- Those living in rural areas are more likely to be satisfied than those in metropolitan areas (85% vs 78%).
- Those registered with their GP practice for more than 10 years are more satisfied than those who registered with their practice in the last 10 years (82% v 78%).
Are respondents able to engage:

Are respondents aware they can choose their GP practice?
Most people know they have a right to choose their GP practice and ask to see a particular GP

Q5/Q26. Do you think you have the right to...

- Choose your GP Practice
  - Yes: 91%
  - No: 2%

- Ask to see a particular GP within a practice
  - Yes: 89%
  - No: 1%

- People aged 65+ are more likely than younger age groups (15-34) to report being aware that they have a right to choose their GP practice (94% vs 88%).
- Women are also more aware than men that they have this choice (92% vs 89%).
- People who think choice is important are more likely to be aware they are able to choose their GP practice than those who do not think it is important (93% vs 73%).
- However, those who live in metropolitan areas are less likely than those who live in urban, suburban or rural areas to be aware that they have the right to choose their GP practice (85% vs 93%).
- There is less variation between sub-groups in claimed knowledge of the right to ask to see a particular GP within a practice.
- Those who have visited a GP practice at least 5 times in the last 6 months are more likely to know they can ask to see a particular GP in the practice than those who have not visited in this time period (93% vs 86%).
Most also think having a choice of GP practice is important

Q6/Q27. How important, if at all, do you think it is to be able to choose the GP practice you register at?

- Women are more likely than men to think that having this choice is *very* important (61% v 52%).
- As do those aged 55+ compared with those aged 15-24 (60% v 43%).
- Those from more affluent social grades (AB) are more likely than other patients to think this choice is not important (10% v 8%).
- All those who moved to their current GP practice because they were unsatisfied with their previous GP think that choice is important (100%).
Despite this, few actually exercise this choice; only a minority considered alternative GP practices – with proximity to home a big reason for not doing so.

**Q11. At the time when you registered with your current GP practice, did you consider any other GP practices?**

**Q12. What were the main reasons why you did not consider any other GP practices at that time?**

### Q11. Did you consider any other GP practices?

- **Yes:** 16%
- **No:** 84%
- **Don’t know:** *

### Q12. What were the main reasons why you did not consider any other GP practices at that time?

- **GP practice is close to my home:** 57%
- **GP practice I chose had a good reputation:** 12%
- **It was recommended to me:** 11%
- **My family were already registered with this practice:** 7%
- **There are no other GP practices near my home or work / that are convenient to get to:** 6%
- **GP practice is close to my family:** 4%
- **GP practice is close to my job / workplace:** 3%
- **Didn’t have time to think about alternatives:** 3%
- **I did not know that I could choose a GP practice / GP:** 2%
- **They are all the same:** 2%

Top responses shown

**Base Q11:** All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years (1,276)

**Base Q12:** All respondents registered with their current GP practice for less than 10 years who did not consider any other GP practices at the time they registered with their current GP practice (1,069)
Only a small number of patients appear to exercise choice; those who did consider alternatives being most likely to compare on reputation / patient satisfaction

Q11. At the time when you registered with your current GP practice, did you consider any other GP practices?
Q15. When you were choosing your GP practice, did you try to compare GP practices for any of the following?

Q11. Did you consider any other GP practices?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don't know</td>
<td>*%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Q15. When you were choosing your GP practice, did you try to compare GP practices for any of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison Factor</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have never tried to compare GP practices</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reputation/patient satisfaction rates</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opening times</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of treatment</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The number of GPs at the surgery</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of diagnosis</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of evening / weekend appointments</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport links/length of time or travel distance</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of appointments with other healthcare professionals</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What clinical services are available</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of male and female GPs</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base Q11: All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years (1,276)
Base Q15: All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years who considered other GP practices when they registered with their current practice (204)
Exercising choice is also low among those who have been registered with their GP practice for a long time

Q30. Have you ever tried to compare GP practices for any of the following?

- I have never tried to compare GP practices: 88%
- Quality of diagnosis: 5%
- Opening times: 4%
- Quality of treatment: 4%
- Reputation/patient satisfaction rates: 2%
- The number of GPs at the surgery: 2%
- Availability of evening / weekend appointments: *
- Transport links/length of time or travel distance: 1%
- Availability of appointments with other healthcare professionals: 1%
- Availability of male and female GPs: *
- What clinical services are available: 1%

Base Q30: All respondents registered with their current GP practice for more than 10 years (1,916)
The majority of patients rate their current GP practice as average or above average, which may show that patients are unaware of the true performance of their GP practice relative to others in their area.

Q19/Q34. How would you describe your GP practice relative to other practices in your local area, would you say it was…?

- Better than average: 42%
- Average: 10%
- Worse than average: 5%
- No other GP practices in my local area: 3%
- Don’t know: 10%

Base Q19/Q34: All respondents registered with a GP practice (3,192)
A lack of alternatives, satisfaction with an individual GP or effort in changing GP practice is preventing those who are dissatisfied from switching GP practice.

Q23/Q38. What is the main reason why you have not moved to a different GP practice?

Only 10% are dissatisfied with their current GP practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Base Q23: Patients who have registered with their GP practice in the last 10 years (129)</th>
<th>Base Q38: Patients who have been registered with their GP practice for more than 10 years (189)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There are no alternatives</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happy/satisfied with GP</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requires too much effort / I don’t have time</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I didn’t know I could change GP practice</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t expect new GP practice to be better than current GP practice/ all the same</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Currently in process of moving</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have complained and waiting to see if the situation improves / changes</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This was the only GP practice I was in the catchment area for</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I moved to a different GP within my GP practice</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A new GP will not know me and my medical history</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of information to compare GP practices against each other</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I won’t be able to see the same GP every time at the new GP practice</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Only 10% are dissatisfied with their current GP practice

Patients who have registered with their GP practice in the last 10 years

Patients who have been registered with their GP practice for more than 10 years

Base Q23: All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years who are dissatisfied with their current GP practice (129)
Base Q38: All respondents registered with their current GP practice for more than 10 years who are dissatisfied with their current GP practice (189)
A significant minority of patients feel as though they do not have a choice of GP practice if they wanted to move

Q24/Q39. If you wanted to register with a different GP practice, do you feel you would have a choice of GP practices to choose from?

- People who have a car in their household are more likely to feel they have a choice of GP practices than those who do not (69% v 59%).
- Those who feel it is important to have choice are more likely to feel they do have a choice (67% v 51%) – likewise, those who do not think it is important tend to feel they do not have a choice (41% v 28%).
- Those aged 15-24 are more likely to think they do not have a choice of GP practices (35% v 29% overall).
- As are those from less affluent social grades (C2DE) compared to those from social grades ABC1 (31% v 27%).
- Those who live in metropolitan areas are more likely to think they do not have a choice than those living in rural, urban and suburban areas (39% v 25%).
Few have actually considered moving GP practice

Q22/Q37. Have you ever considered moving from your current GP practice and registering with a different GP practice?

- Those who live in households with children are more likely to have considered moving GP practice than child-free households (12% v 8%).
- Those aged 25-34 are most likely to consider moving GP practices (14% vs 9% overall).
- More frequent and heavier users of GPs (i.e. those who have used their GP practice 5 or more times in the last 6 months) are more likely to have considered moving GP practice than those who have not used it at all over the same period (14% v 8%).
- Those who are dissatisfied with their current GP practice are more likely than those who are satisfied to have considered moving practice (31% v 5%).

Base Q22/Q37: All respondents registered with a GP practice (3,192)
Worsening of clinical quality is most likely to make people switch GP practice

Q25/Q40. I am going to read out a number of situations. For each please tell me how likely or unlikely you would be to move to a different GP practice as a result.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Respondents who have been registered with their GP practice for less than 10 years</th>
<th>Respondents who have been registered with their GP practice for more than 10 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you found out that the diagnosis of a serious condition (such as cancer) became less accurate</td>
<td>6.70</td>
<td>7.03</td>
<td>6.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you became less satisfied with the treatment you received for your condition (e.g. back pain)</td>
<td>6.02</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>5.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the facilities at the GP practice became less clean (for example the waiting room, toilets etc.)</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>5.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it became more difficult to get an appointment when you wanted one</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>5.91</td>
<td>5.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it became less likely that you would be offered a choice of hospital for further care</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>5.39</td>
<td>4.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it became more difficult to order repeat prescriptions</td>
<td>4.83</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it became more difficult to see the same GP / the GP you wanted to see</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the receptionist became less polite / friendly</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>4.58</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Those registered with their GP practice for more than 10 years are less likely to switch for any of the situations, compared to those who registered with their GP practice in the last 10 years.
Are respondents able to assess their options?
Recommendations from family/friends and NHS Choices website are two key sources of information for those registered with their GP practice in the last 10 years.

**Q16. And what were the main sources of information you used when you were comparing GP practices?**

- **Recommendations from family/friends**: 55%
- **NHS Choices website**: 23%
- **Visited GP practice to find out information**: 15%
- **Phoned GP practice to find out information**: 14%
- **GP practice website**: 11%
- **Online GP survey results**: 8%
- **Other**: 5%
- **Don’t know / Can’t remember**: 4%

*Base Q16: All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years who used sources of information when comparing GP practices (121)*
Whilst those registered with their practice for more than 10 years tend to rely on their friends and family as a source of information.

Q31. And what were the main sources of information you used when you were comparing GP practices?

- Recommendations from family/friends: 62%
- Visited GP practice to find out information: 19%
- Phoned GP practice to find out information: 13%
- NHS Choices website: 10%
- GP practice website: 5%
- Own personal experience: 3%
- Online GP survey results: 2%
- My Health London website: 1%
- Other: 4%
- Don’t know / Can’t remember: 5%

Base Q31: All respondents registered with their current GP practice for less than 10 years who used sources of information when comparing GP practices (236)
Those who have looked for information report that it is relatively easy to locate for opening times and reputation / patient satisfaction rates.

Q17/Q32. How easy or difficult was it to find information on...

- **Opening times (107)**
  - Very easy: 39%
  - Fairly easy: 29%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 19%
  - Fairly difficult: 25%
  - Very difficult: 27%
  - Don’t know: 47%

- **Quality of diagnosis (128)**
  - Very easy: 38%
  - Fairly easy: 19%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 27%
  - Fairly difficult: 25%
  - Very difficult: 27%
  - Don’t know: 47%

- **Quality of treatment (107)**
  - Very easy: 33%
  - Fairly easy: 33%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 27%
  - Fairly difficult: 27%
  - Very difficult: 27%
  - Don’t know: 47%

- **Reputation / patient satisfaction rates (83)**
  - Very easy: 47%
  - Fairly easy: 27%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 27%
  - Fairly difficult: 27%
  - Very difficult: 27%
  - Don’t know: 47%

Base: All respondents registered with their current GP practice who compared GP practices at the time they registered with their current GP practice – bases shown for each of the aspects compared (in brackets). Respondents were also asked about availability of online / email access for making an appointment, but the base for these aspects are too small to chart.
Most who found the information they looked for say it was easy to understand – although there is some difficulty with information on quality.

Q18/Q33. How easy or difficult was it to understand the information about…

![Chart showing the percentage of people finding information easy to understand for different aspects of healthcare.](chart)

- **Opening times (107)**
  - Very easy: 5%
  - Fairly easy: 24%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 28%
  - Fairly difficult: 42%
  - Very difficult: 7%
  - Don’t know: 37%

- **Quality of diagnosis (128)**
  - Very easy: 2%
  - Fairly easy: 9%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 27%
  - Fairly difficult: 42%
  - Very difficult: 12%
  - Don’t know: 7%

- **Quality of treatment (107)**
  - Very easy: 3%
  - Fairly easy: 7%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 25%
  - Fairly difficult: 39%
  - Very difficult: 44%
  - Don’t know: 37%

- **Reputation / patient satisfaction rates (83)**
  - Very easy: 3%
  - Fairly easy: 9%
  - Neither easy nor difficult: 26%
  - Fairly difficult: 39%
  - Very difficult: 44%
  - Don’t know: 37%

Base: All respondents registered with their current GP practice who compared GP practices at the time they registered with their current GP practice – bases shown for each of the aspects compared (in brackets). Respondents were also asked about availability of online / email access for making an appointment, but the base for these aspects are too small to chart.
Patients tend to use public information when forming their opinion on the service their GP practice provides.

Q20/Q35. You said that you think your GP practice is better than/ worse than/average, why do you say that?

- **My personal experience of other GP practices**: 51%
- **A sense I got at the GP practice/gut feeling**: 25%
- **Feedback from family/friends**: 25%
- **Information available on performance of other GP practices (e.g. NHS Choices, GP Patient Survey results etc.)**: 4%
- **Happy with present GP**: 3%
- **Other**: 2%
- **Don’t know**: 2%

Base Q25/Q40: All respondents registered with a GP practice who would describe their practice as average, better than average or worse than average (2,734)
Are respondents able to successfully switch?
The vast majority report registering with a GP practice as easy

Q9. How easy or difficult did you find registering with your current GP practice?

Those groups more likely to find registering with a GP practice as easy include:

- **Those aged 35+** – compared with those aged 15-24 (91% v 80%).
- **Those in more affluent social grades (ABC1)** – compared with those in social grades C2DE (91% v 84%).
- **Those with access to a car in their household** – compared with those who do not (90% v 84%).
- **Those who think their GP practice is better than average** – compared with those who say it is average or worse than average (92% v 85% and 70% respectively).

Base Q9: All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years (1,276)
Q10. For what reasons did you find registering with your current GP practice difficult?

Top responses shown (34)*

- Inconvenience of filling in paperwork: 20%
- It took a long time to transfer my files / records: 18%
- Lots of procedures to go through: 18%
- Inconvenience of having to visit the surgery to register: 14%
- It was difficult to provide the relevant / required documents: 10%
- I did not know my NHS number: 6%
- I did not know where my local practices were / I could not find out which GP practices I could register with: 2%
- Other: 28%

Q9. How easy or difficult did you find registering with your current GP practice?

- Easy: 88%
- Neither easy nor difficult: 9%
- Difficult: 3%
- Don’t know: 1%

Base Q10: All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years who found registering with their current GP practice difficult

* Caution small base size (34)
For patients who have moved GP practice, boundaries and full GP practices appear to prevent some patients from exercising choice.

Q13. What was the main reason why did you not register with any of the other GP practices you considered?

- Those without a car in their household are more likely than those with a car to say they are with their current GP as it is the only one in their catchment area (30% v 16%).
- People with a car tended to choose the practice that was the best option for them (59% v 39% without a car).
Appendix
Variation by region in patients currently registered with a GP practice

Q1. Are you currently registered with a GP practice?

% Registered with a GP practice

Significantly lower than average

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>% Registered</th>
<th>Base (in brackets)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>(276)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>95%</td>
<td>(619)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>(165)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England Average</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>(3,315)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>(326)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>(217)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and Humber</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>(419)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>(445)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td>(438)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East</td>
<td>98%</td>
<td>(410)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base Q1: All respondents age 15+ (in brackets)
Variation by region in whether location of GP practice meets expectations

Q1B. To what extent, if at all, does your current GP practice meet your expectations? Close to home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Meets my expectations</th>
<th>Below my expectations</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and Humber (248)</td>
<td>97%</td>
<td></td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East (88)</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td></td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England Average (1,847)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>*%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (382)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West (190)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands (223)</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East (236)</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands (123)</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West (220)</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern (137)</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base Q1b: All respondents who selected reason at Q1 (in brackets)
### Variation by region in whether quality of diagnosis and treatment at GP practice meets expectations

**Q1B. To what extent, if at all, does your current GP practice meet your expectations? Good quality of diagnosis and treatment**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Meets my expectations</th>
<th>Below my expectations</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands (65)</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West (176)</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West (131)</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England Average (1,342)</td>
<td>89%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East (180)</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands (214)</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and Humber (173)</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (235)</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern (107)</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East (61)</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Base Q1b: All respondents who selected reason at Q1 (in brackets)*
Variation by region in whether ability to make an appointment at GP practice meets expectations

Q1B. To what extent, if at all, does your current GP practice meet your expectations? Easy to get an appointment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Meets my expectations</th>
<th>Below my expectations</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands (119)</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West (164)</td>
<td>79%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern (142)</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands (258)</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England Average (1,836)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East (240)</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West (259)</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and Humber (254)</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London (320)</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East (80)</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>*%</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base Q1b: All respondents who selected reason at Q1 (in brackets)
Variation by region in whether continuity of service at GP practice meets expectations

Q1B. To what extent, if at all, does your current GP practice meet your expectations? Can see the same doctor every time

- Meets my expectations
- Below my expectations
- Don’t know

North East (37) - 51%
South East (92) - 44%
North West (80) - 40%
London (46) - 41%
Yorkshire and Humber (83) - 40%
England Average (546) - 35%
West Midlands (71) - 34%
East Midlands (28) - 20%
South West (68) - 23%
Eastern (41) - 18%

Base Q1b: All respondents who selected reason at Q1 (in brackets)
Variation by region in how satisfied patients are with their current GP practice

Q21/Q36. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your current GP practice?

- **Satisfied**
- **Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied**
- **Dissatisfied**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London (589)</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yorkshire and Humber (406)</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South East (401)</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England Average (3,192)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North West (426)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South West (318)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Midlands (433)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Midlands (212)</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern (250)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North East (157)</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base Q21/Q36: All respondents registered with a GP practice (3,192)
Variation by region on how patients describe their GP practice

Q19/34. How would you describe your GP practice relative to other practices in your local area, would you say it was…?

- Above average
- Average
- Below average
- There are no other GP practices in my local area
- Don’t know

North East (157)
- 24% Above average
- 5% Below average
- 36% Other

London (589)
- 4% Above average
- 51% Average
- 37% Below average

South East (401)
- 7% Above average
- 43% Average
- 38% Below average

Eastern (250)
- 13% Above average
- 40% Average
- 39% Below average

East-Midlands (212)
- 7% Above average
- 48% Average
- 39% Below average

England Average (3,192)
- 10% Above average
- 42% Average
- 40% Below average

North West (426)
- 13% Above average
- 31% Average
- 33% Below average

West-Midlands (433)
- 9% Above average
- 44% Average
- 45% Below average

South West (318)
- 5% Above average
- 8% Average
- 46% Below average

Yorkshire and Humber (406)
- 3% Above average
- 5% Average
- 46% Below average
A reduction in the quality of diagnosis (for a serious illness) and dissatisfaction with care are the reasons people say they would be most likely to switch GP practice for

Q25/Q40. I am going to read out a number of situations. For each please tell me how likely or unlikely you would be to move to a different GP practice as a result.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Up to and including 10 years</th>
<th>More than 10 years</th>
<th>Mean score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If you found out that the diagnosis of a serious condition (such as cancer) became less accurate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7.03</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you became less satisfied with the treatment you received for your condition (e.g. back pain)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6.46</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the facilities at the GP practice became less clean (for example the waiting room, toilets etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5.93</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Availability of appointments, less choice of hospital care and difficulty in getting repeat prescriptions are less likely to make people switch GP practice

**Q25/Q40. I am going to read out a number of situations. For each please tell me how likely or unlikely you would be to move to a different GP practice as a result.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Up to and including 10 years</th>
<th>More than 10 years</th>
<th>Mean score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If it became more difficult to get an appointment when you wanted one</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it became less likely that you would be offered a choice of hospital for further care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it became more difficult to order repeat prescriptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Base Q25:** All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years (1,276) – excluding don’t know

**Base Q40:** All respondents registered with their current GP practice for more than 10 years (1,916) – excluding don’t know
As are continuity of seeing the same GP or the politeness of the receptionist

Q25/Q40. I am going to read out a number of situations. For each please tell me how likely or unlikely you would be to move to a different GP practice as a result.

0 = Very unlikely to move to a different practice  1  2  3  4  5  6  7  8  9  10 = Very likely to move to a different practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Up to and including 10 years</th>
<th>More than 10 years</th>
<th>Mean score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If it became more difficult to see the same GP / the GP you wanted to see</td>
<td>Up to and including 10 years</td>
<td>13% 5% 6% 8% 6% 18% 10% 10% 11% 8% 5%</td>
<td>4.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 10 years</td>
<td>17% 8% 9% 8% 6% 16% 7% 8% 10% 6% 4%</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If the receptionist became less polite / friendly</td>
<td>Up to and including 10 years</td>
<td>13% 7% 9% 9% 7% 19% 9% 8% 8% 7% 5%</td>
<td>4.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>More than 10 years</td>
<td>20% 10% 11% 9% 6% 17% 7% 8% 6% 4% 3%</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base Q25: All respondents registered with their current GP practice in the last 10 years (1,276)
Base Q40: All respondents registered with their current GP practice for more than 10 years (1,916)