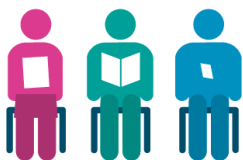




WAITING ROOM



Healthwatch Greenwich Accessing GP services in Greenwich

June 2018

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1. Introduction

1.1. About Healthwatch Greenwich

Healthwatch Greenwich is an independent, statutory organisation representing people who use health and adult social care services in the Borough. We collect patient and public feedback and push for change off the back of it. Our vision is for Greenwich to have high quality services, consistent levels of public

engagement and an excellent service-user experience

which meets patient need and preference. To achieve our vision we listen, we act, and we influence.



1.2. Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Greenwich would like to thank the GP practices, NHS Greenwich Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), service users, and staff for their contribution to the work programme of Healthwatch Greenwich.

1.3. Project context

One of Healthwatch Greenwich's top priorities across 2016-2018 is GP Access. We chose this as a priority workstream due to the high volume of feedback we consistently receive about GP services. Within this report we have brought together the key findings from three GP projects run in 2017-2018:

- **Healthwatch Greenwich GP Access survey**
 - Our GP access survey looked at individuals' experiences of registering with Greenwich GPs and their satisfaction with booking appointments. We also asked questions about individuals' awareness of the Greenwich GP Access Hubs (which opened in 2016 to offer extra evening and weekend GP appointments to those in need¹) and NHS 111 (a telephone triage service for those in need of urgent but non-emergency care²). Finally, the survey explored the public's appetite for

¹ For more information, visit: <http://www.greenwich-health.com/greenwich-extended-hours-clinics>

² For more information, visit:

<https://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/Emergencyandurgentcareservices/Pages/NHS-111.aspx>

online services, as these are increasingly being used in primary care services nationwide. We collected responses through face to face outreach sessions as well as via our online mailing list and social media channels.

- **Healthwatch Greenwich GP Registration audit**

- It is NHS England guidance³ that everyone has the right to register with a GP surgery and receive primary care, regardless of what documentation they possess. Despite this legislation, in 2015-2016 we received numerous reports, largely from Greenwich's migrant population, that Greenwich GPs were refusing registration on the basis that individuals did not have the necessary documents. Therefore, in early 2017 we conducted a telephone audit of all Greenwich GP practices, enquiring about their registration process and whether a patient could register with no proof of address. Our key finding was that six practices in the borough refused to register anyone who did not have any identification or proof of address.⁴
- On the back of these findings, NHS Greenwich CCG implemented training for GP practice reception staff around registering patients with no documentation, emphasising patients' rights. In 2018, we decided to run our survey again to assess if our findings and the training put in place has had a positive effect on GP surgeries' willingness to register patients without documentation. We therefore rang all 42 surgeries and asked about their registration processes, and also looked at their websites for registration information.



- **Healthwatch Greenwich GP Enter and View programme**

- Part of our local Healthwatch programme is to carry out Enter and View visits. Local Healthwatch representatives carry out these visits to health and adult social care services, to collect information on patient experience and the environment of the service, and to make recommendations for areas for

³ NHS England - Patient Registration (Reviewed Dec 2016). <https://www.england.nhs.uk/commissioning/wp-content/uploads/sites/12/2015/11/pat-reg-sop-pmc-gp.pdf>

⁴ For the full Healthwatch Greenwich GP Access 2017 report, visit: <https://healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk/what-we-do/our-reports/>

improvement. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) allows local Healthwatch Authorised Representatives the right of entry to publicly funded health and adult social care services, to observe delivery and talk to service users, their families, and carers.



In addition, in 2017-2018, we visited 14 GP surgeries as part of our Enter and View programme. We have offered a summary of our main findings and recommendations in this report.⁵

⁵ For all Healthwatch Greenwich Enter and View reports, visit:
<https://healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk/what-we-do/enter-and-view/>

2. GP access survey

2.1. Methodology



We designed a survey asking individuals about their experiences of accessing GP appointments and their awareness and experience of additional services, including NHS 111 and Greenwich's GP Access Hubs (Appendix 6.1). Between February and May 2018, we took this to four community outreach sessions at local libraries and promoted it via our social media channels, our online newsletter and our website. In total, we had 248 responses (for demographic details, see Appendix 6.2).

2.2. Findings: Booking GP appointments

2.2.1. Who was registered at the GP?

Most people we spoke to were registered with a Greenwich GP practice (224 people). Of the 5% who were not:

- Six were registered with GP practices in other boroughs.
- Two were planning on registering but had not had the time.
- One had been incorrectly refused registration for not having the correct ID.
- One had been refused registration on the grounds of where they live.

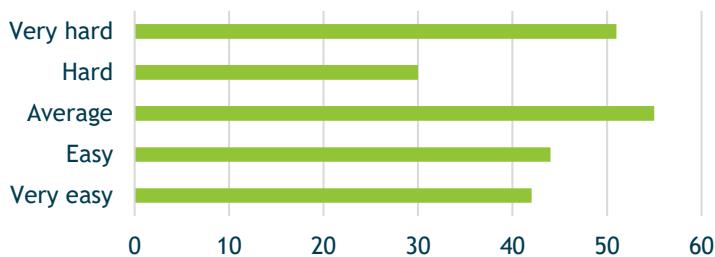




2.2.2. How do people prefer to make their appointments?

Most people we spoke to wanted to make their GP appointments by phoning the surgery. However, one person we spoke to did tell us that although they would prefer to use an online booking system, this service was currently not available to them.

2.2.3. How easy is it to book an appointment at the GP surgery?



People had mixed experiences of booking appointments. Although 38.8% said it was easy or very easy, 36.2% also said it was hard or very hard to make an appointment.

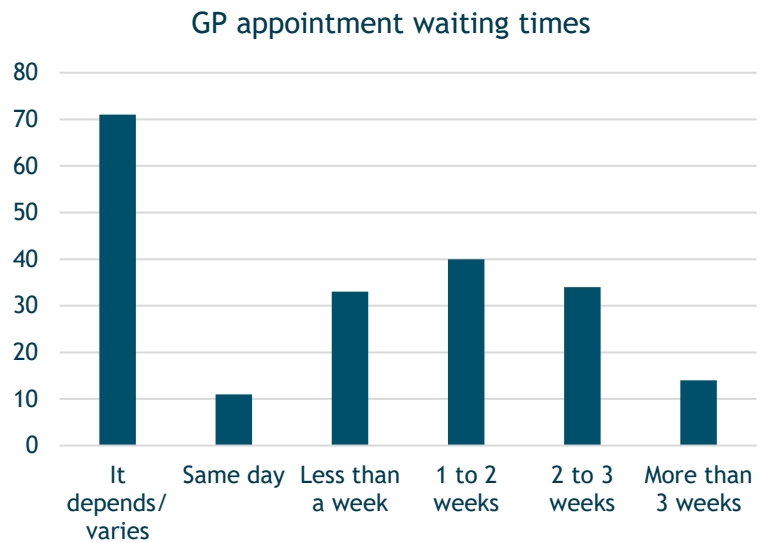
People fed back on positive experiences, such as: *‘our GP surgery is amazing’* and *‘we have always received excellent service from our GP... I cannot speak highly enough of them’*. However, many people found it very hard to book appointments. The negative effects of this included; having to wait several weeks for an appointment, taking time off work, worsening symptoms; and being forced to use other services such as Urgent Care Centres. The emotional impact of this was felt as well:



“It’s awful trying to jump through hoops to get a doctor’s appointment. You are made to feel worthless for needing to see a doctor”

2.2.4. How long do you have to wait to see a GP?

We asked respondents how long they typically had to wait before they received a GP appointment at their surgery. The results were mixed, with 71 people telling us it depends or varies. 40 people told us they usually wait between one to two weeks. Worryingly, 14 people (6.9%) told us it regularly takes more than three weeks to get a GP appointment at their surgery.



Individuals commented that these long waiting times led to unsafe and inadequate primary care services:



“The waiting time to see a GP is so long that it is unsafe. The emergency provision does not work at the surgery ... [It’s] very worrying”

“I am currently waiting five weeks. I am forced to use the urgent care centre. They do not have my clinical details, and this could be a problem. Given the current waiting times, it is reasonable to conclude that there is no primary care service available to me.”



One person commented on how hard it was to fit an appointment in during the working day, which is partially what the GP Access Hubs were designed to address. Sadly, he had not heard of them before:



“As someone who works in the city in a 9-5 job, I find it almost impossible to book GP appointments. I have to work from home for a day if I want to make an appointment. I have to ring up at 8am to be given an appointment on the same day even if it isn't urgent or an emergency, as if trying to book a non-urgent appointment they are often fully booked for the next four weeks and won't book any further in advance than that, so am expected to phone every day to see if they have an appointment for four weeks' time, which is ridiculous...I feel bad taking these slots if it is not for an urgent matter, but there is no other option for getting an appointment.”

2.3. Findings: Out of Hours appointments

2.3.1. Would people use evening or weekend appointments?



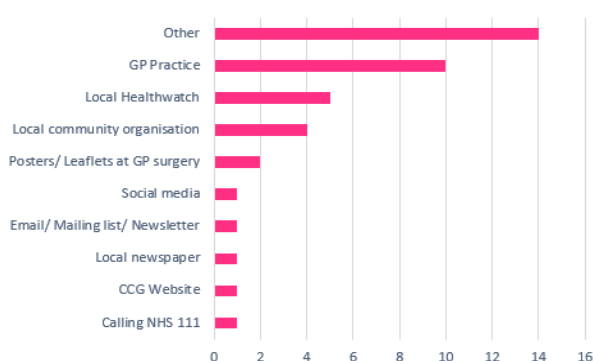
Over 4 in 5 people told us they would use a weekday evening (81.3%) or weekend appointment (87.6%) to see their GP or Nurse if they were available.

2.3.2. Do people know about Greenwich GP Access Hubs?

Given the high numbers of people who would use an evening or weekend appointment, it is disappointing that 81.2% of our respondents had either never heard of the GP Access Hubs (64.7%) or had heard of them but were unsure what they were for (16.5%). Thus, only 40 people we spoke to knew what the GP Access Hubs were and how they could be used.



2.3.3. How had people heard about Greenwich GP Access Hubs?



Respondents had heard about the Hubs through a variety of sources.

Other sources included: through an advert; having taken a friend or family member there in the past; through colleagues/ friends; through a patient participation group, or through working for the NHS.

2.3.4. What were individuals' experiences of using the GP Access Hubs?

Nine people we spoke to provided feedback on the GP Access Hubs. Most reported a positive experience and said they would either use the service again or recommend it to friends and family.

Excellent	
Good	
OK/ Average	
Poor	
Very poor	

2.3.5. What are people's experiences of using NHS 111?



A far higher number of people had heard of NHS 111 services and understood what they were for (192/ 86.5%) than the Access Hubs. 117 of these people had used NHS111 in the past and most reported positive experiences.

Over a quarter of people told us that the service was excellent (25.8%), and a further 33% said that the service was good. Only 14 people told us that the service was poor or very poor. Thus, 77.3% of people we spoke to said that they would either use the service again or recommend it to friends and family.

2.4. Findings: Online bookings and e-consultations

2.4.1 What are people's opinions of online service?



Nearly a third of respondents had used online booking services in the past. 46.7% of people we spoke to said they would use e-consultations if they were available to them, although 80.4% said they would prefer to see their clinician face to face. People also told us it would depend on the issue, as they felt some things would need in-person consultation.

2.5. Summary

- People reported mixed levels of satisfaction when it came to booking appointments with their GP practice, but where there were difficulties getting a timely appointment, it was impacting on individuals' physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Most people preferred to book their GP appointment over the phone, although over a third would be happy to book them online.

- Most people would prefer to see their GP face-to-face, but some would be happy to use an e-consultation service, depending on the nature of their concern and its severity.
 - Over four in five people would be happy to see their nurse on the weekend or in the evening.
 - There was a low level of awareness of the GP Greenwich Access Hubs and their purpose (18.8%), but those who had used them previously were largely happy with the service.
 - People had a high awareness of the role of NHS 111, and those who had used it were predominantly happy with the service.
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3. GP registration audit

3.1. Methodology



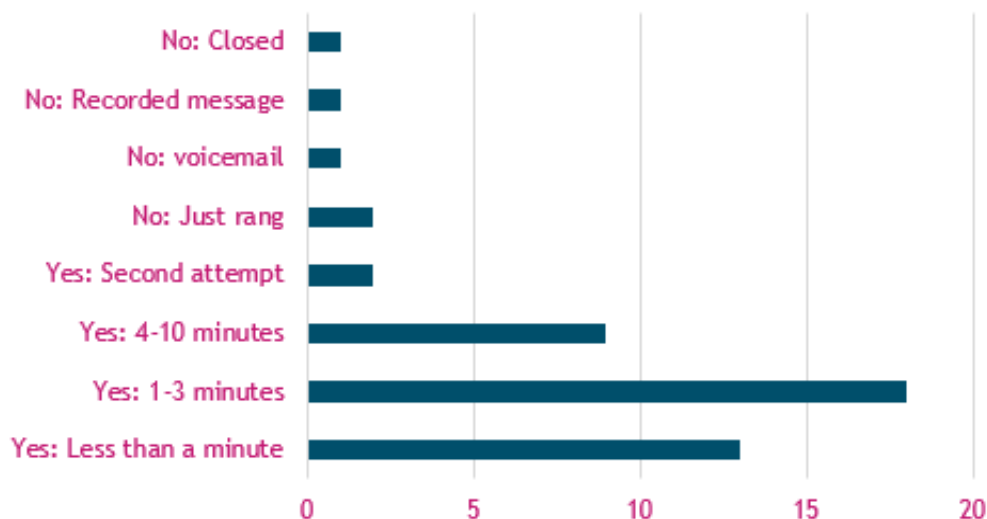
Between 1st and 17th May 2018, Healthwatch staff and authorised representatives phoned all 42 GP surgeries in Greenwich. Following a set script (Appendix 6.3), we asked reception staff about the practice's registration processes, and then asked specifically about the registration process for those without ID.

Where reception staff could either not give us a definitive answer (for instance, if they wanted to check with practice management first), or if they told us that they did need documentation for registration, we emailed the practice manager for clarification the following week.

We also looked at all GP websites, and compared this with the information we were given over the phone.

3.2. Findings: Phoning the practice⁶

Did the practice answer?



⁶ For detailed results of the survey, see Appendix 6.4

We were pleased that most surgeries answered their phones in under three minutes (31), and 13 surgeries answered in less than a minute. However, it did take us between 4-10 minutes to get through to nine of the surgeries, which we felt was too long. There were seven surgeries that we could not get through to on the first attempt.

3.2.1. Documents needed for registering with the practice

We asked reception staff what documentation they would need to register a new patient. Only two surgeries replied that no documentation would be needed, and that new patients only had to fill in a registration form or a patient questionnaire, providing they live in the catchment area (Blackheath Standard Surgery and The Coldharbour Surgery).

3.2.2. Were practices willing to register someone without these?



For the practices who told us a patient would need documentation, we then asked whether a patient would be able to register without these (for instance if they were homeless or a refugee):



25 surgeries told us they **would** be able to register a patient without any ID or proof of address, if the person in question came in and filled in the necessary registration documents. One surgery told us they would helpfully use their own address as the address of the patient.

10 surgeries initially told us they **would not** register a patient without ID, proof of address or proof of when they entered the country. They gave the following reasons:


- 7 of these practices told us they would need a proof of address, or the address of someone already registered at the practice.



- 1 said they would need to provide their NHS number.
- 1 said no, but that the person should speak to their practice manager.
- 1 said the person would have to bring their passport in to ‘prove when they came in the country’

After a follow up email to practice managers at each of these surgeries, four practices stated that they would register a patient without ID, leaving six practices that would not.

7 surgeries gave a vague answer or were **unsure**:



I'm not sure

- 1 staff member was not sure but suggested the person visited the surgery to speak to the practice manager.
- 1 said the person would need a letter from someone already registered at the practice.
- 1 said they would but that the person would need a social services number or the address of a friend.
- 1 said they would have to ‘meet the patient first’.
- 1 said the patient would have to bring in an advocate and speak to the practice manager
- 1 told us they were not sure
- 1 said they were unsure and it was best for the person to seek a solicitor’s advice

3.2.3. Did we receive the correct information?

We followed up the seven surgeries who said they were unsure or gave unclear responses and the ten surgeries who said no, with emails to their practice managers. We received a wide range of responses (Appendix 6.5). Most of the surgeries (seven of the 17 contacted) who responded to our follow up email told us that they would register patients under certain circumstances.

3.3. Findings: Greenwich GP websites

3.3.1. Do Greenwich GP websites provide the correct information?



Disappointingly, **19 Greenwich GP websites** implied that a person wanting to register would need to bring in ID and/or one or two proofs of address and gave no advice on how to proceed if the individual did not have documentation. There

were some examples of information which stood out as good and bad practice.

Incorrect information:

- “Your registration will not be accepted until you have come into the surgery with the required information”
- “Being unable to produce the above documentation does not mean that you cannot access NHS treatment. It does however mean that you may not be able to register as a patient with a doctor”
- “Failure to produce these documents may result in your registration being refused”

Helpful information:

- “Anybody in England can register with a GP practice and receive free medical care from that practice”
- “Call the practice if you are not able not able to provide [documentation] and we will be able to help you”
- “You should not be refused registration or appointments because you don’t have proof of address or personal identification at hand. It is not considered reasonable ground to refuse registration. This also applies if you are an asylum seeker, refugee, a homeless patient or an overseas visitor, whether lawfully in the UK or not”

There was little correlation between information on practice websites and information given by reception staff when we rang up. For instance, although fifteen of the websites gave the correct information online, only eight of these told us we could still register without documentation over the phone.

3.4. Summary

- The number of surgeries who incorrectly informed us that we could not register without proof of ID or address has not changed from last year, with six surgeries still refusing to register patients with no ID or proof of address.
- Reception staff often gave information that was inconsistent with information published on their surgery's website or later given by practice managers.
- There are several Greenwich GP websites presenting either misleading or false information with regards to GP registration processes for those without documentation.
- The different approaches across practices and inconsistent information provided by many practices, is confusing and could hamper people's abilities to get the essential primary health care they are entitled to. In addition, unregistered patients are more likely to go to Accident and Emergency and Urgent Care for non urgent issues placing additional pressure on urgent and emergency services.
- Perhaps more worryingly:
 - At least one practice has used safeguarding as a reason not to register a patient without ID with children. From a safeguarding point of view, it is always safer to register and see the patient, than to turn them away at the door.
 - One practice stated they need to see ID to check the patient's immigration status. This is in no way the responsibility of GP practice staff and should not be happening.
 - One practice said they would need to 'meet the patient first'. This approach is open to abuse and discriminatory practices, potentially making access to services dependent on practice staff's own perceptions of who is 'worthy' to receive healthcare.



4. GP enter and view programme

Between April 2016 and March 2017, we visited 14 surgeries as part of our GP Enter and View programme⁷ in order to look at internal environment and patient experience. There were some overarching recommendations which arose from the programme:

Online services

Practices should increase the promotion of online services for appointment booking and prescription ordering. When patients do register for online services there should be clear instructions and support provided as to how to use them.



Patient involvement and feedback mechanisms

Patient participation groups should be clearly advertised in practice waiting areas, and displays could include a 'you said, we did' poster demonstrating and reporting on how the PPGs have improved practices. Additionally, anonymous comments and complaints boxes should be left in waiting areas, as they are an important means of gathering patient feedback.



Signposting and information

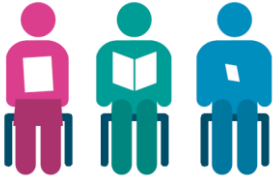
Practices should ensure they are advertising translation services as a priority and that all patients who need the service are able to access it consistently. Information leaflets on health topics in waiting areas should be clearly arranged and cover important aspects of health and care, and there should be active signposting to NHS 111 and the GP Access Hubs. Crucial information, such as check-in procedures, should be provided in other accessible formats, such as Easy Read. The practice's wi-fi information could also be provided, as could a noticeboard with staff names and photos.



⁷ For a full list of GP practices involved, see Appendix 6.6. For full individual visit reports, visit: <https://healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk/what-we-do/enter-and-view/>

Waiting times and queues

WAITING ROOM



Where possible, practices should ensure that the waiting time to speak to reception staff on the phone is minimised. Online check-in systems are a useful way of clearing reception time and should be placed before the reception desk in a prominent position. Waiting times for walk-in services should be clearly advertised (ideally on an electronic board) in the waiting area.

Internal furnishings

Waiting areas should include an area for children with, for example, a children's maze to keep them occupied. There should be hand sanitiser freely available, and ample comfortable seating. Signage within the surgery to facilities such as toilets and consultation rooms should be large and clear.



5. Our recommendations

5.1. Recommendations for NHS Greenwich Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

5.1.1. Recommendation 1

Increase training for GP staff and take action against those GP practices not following NHS England guidance on patient registration for people without ID/proof of address

Greenwich CCG should organise recurrent training on patient registration, following up from the protected learning time (PLT) event held in November 2017. Ensuring that practices add registration guidance training as part of their staff induction process may also help to address the issue.

5.1.2. Recommendation 2

Promote GP Access Hubs more widely across the Borough

Those who had used the GP Access Hubs reported positive experiences. However, knowledge of the Hubs and their function was low amongst those we surveyed. Utilisation of the Hubs is still low at weekends (particularly Sundays) which appears to be primarily due to poor public awareness of other service. The majority of people we spoke to were keen to use out of

hours appointments on weekends and evenings.

5.1.3. Recommendation 3

Develop a simple notice to be placed at reception in GP surgeries outlining the process for registering patients without ID.

This should be in line with NHS England guidance and should be distributed to all GP practices in the Borough.

5.1.4. Recommendation 4

Through the revised Estates strategy, look at ways GP practices can be supported to improve patient confidentiality at the reception desk

GP reception areas are often very open plan and next to or in waiting rooms making confidentiality difficult. In addition, many GP practices have glass screens for reception staff security, which necessitate patients raising their voices to be heard, further increasing the likelihood of being overheard by other patients.

5.2. Recommendations for GP Practices

5.2.1. Recommendation 5

Practices should ensure their registration policies are in line with current NHS England guidance and staff have had recent safeguarding refresher training

Websites should give up to date and detailed information around how patients can register patients if they do not have proof of ID or proof of address. All reception staff should be aware of the policy and should not need to refer to practice managers to impart this information.

The table in Appendix 6.4 gives details on which practices are providing correct or incorrect information.

5.2.2. Recommendation 6

Make information and signposting up to date and accessible

Signposting in GP surgeries should always include the following services: GP Access Hubs, NHS 111, Language Line and interpreting services,⁸ and online services. This will help to alleviate pressure on the services themselves and make better use of primary care services. Furthermore, there was little evidence in the surgeries we

visited that signposting information was accessible in other formats, such as Easy Read.

5.2.3. Recommendation 7

Improve telephone waiting times for those ringing the surgery

Phone queues arose as an issue across all our GP audits and surveys. Surgeries should ensure waiting times are under three minutes. Online check-in systems in GP waiting rooms may help to free up receptionist time and increase their capacity.

5.2.4. Recommendation 8

All GP practices should enable patients to book non-urgent appointments in advance.

Requiring patients to call every morning at 8am to try and get appointments the same day is impractical and has potential cost implications for a large number of working age patients. All GP practices should ensure that patients are able to adequately plan appointments.

⁸ A separate Healthwatch Greenwich report on the uptake of Language Line in GP surgeries can be found

at <https://healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk/what-we-do/our-reports/>

5.2.5. Recommendation 9

Ensure all reception staff are aware of the GP Access Hubs and routinely offer Access Hub appointments to patients

Appointments at the Access Hub should be routinely offered to all patients who have to wait longer than one week for an appointment or who may prefer to see a GP after work or at the weekend. The single most effective method of making patients aware of primary care services is through GP practice reception staff.

6. Appendices

6.1. GP Access survey (non-formatted)

1. Do you live or access health services (e.g. GP practice) in Greenwich?

Yes/ No

2. If no, in which Borough do you live?

3. Are you registered with a Greenwich GP?

Yes/ No/ Don't know

4. Which one?

5. If you're not registered, why not?

Recently moved into the area/ Haven't got around to it yet/ No need/ Too complicated or it takes too long/ Don't have the right ID or proof of address/ No practice nearby/ Other (please state)

6. Over the last 12 months, have you?

Made an appointment at your GP practice (GP or Nurse)/ Been to a walk-in session at your GP practice/ Called NHS 111/ Walked into an Urgent Care Centre/ Made an appointment at an Urgent Care Centre (via NHS111)/ Had an appointment at a GP Access Hub/ Been to Accident and Emergency (A&E)/ Used an online e-consultation service/ Had a hospital appointment (consultant/ screening)/ Had another healthcare appointment

7. How easy is it to make/get an appointment at your GP practice? (1 = very easy and 5 = very hard)

8. How do you/would you prefer to make a GP appointment?

By phone/ Online (website)/ Mobile app/ Going into the practice/ Other (please state)

9. When making an appointment, how long do you normally have to wait?

It depends or varies/ Same day/ Less than a week / 1-2 weeks/ 2-3 weeks/ Over 3 weeks

10. Would you use evening GP or Nurse appointments (4pm to 8pm) Monday to Friday, if available?

Yes/ No/ Don't know

11. Would you use a GP appointment on a Saturday or Sunday, if available?

Yes either/ Yes only Saturdays/ Yes only Sundays/ No/ Don't know

12. Would you use a practice nurse appointment on a Saturday or Sunday, if available?

E.g. for vaccinations, wound dressing etc...

Yes either/ Yes only Saturdays/ Yes only Sundays/ No/ Don't know

13. Did you know that, if you are registered with a GP in Greenwich, you can book a GP appointment out of hours (including evenings and weekends) through the GP Access Hubs?

Yes/ No/ Don't know

14. Have you heard of the Greenwich GP Access Hub (before today)?

Yes I've heard of it and know what it is/ Yes I've heard of it but don't know what it is/ No I've never heard of it/ Don't know

15. If yes, how did you find out about the GP Access Hub?

Speaking to my GP practice/ Calling NHS 111/ My local Clinical Commissioning Group website/ Posters or leaflets at my GP practice/ Posters or leaflets at my local hospital/ Local newspaper/ Local community organisation/ Local Healthwatch/ Via an email, newsletter or mailing list/ Health app or website/ Social media (e.g. Facebook or twitter)/ Other (please state)

16. Have you ever used the GP Access Hubs (in Thamesmead/Eltham)

Yes, during the week (4pm-8pm)/ Yes at the weekend/ No/ Don't know or can't remember

17. Please rate your experience of using the hub?

1 - Excellent 2 - Good 3 - Ok/Average 4 - Poor 5 - Very Poor

18. Would you use again, or recommend the GP Access Hubs?

Yes/ No/ Don't know

19. Have you heard of NHS 111?

Yes I've heard of it and know what it is/ Yes I've heard of it but don't know what it is/ No I've never heard of it/ Don't know

20. Have you ever called NHS 111?

Yes/ No/ Don't know or can't remember

21. How would you rate your experience of using NHS 111? (1 = Excellent and 5 = Very poor)

1 - Excellent 2 - Good 3 - Ok/Average 4 - Poor 5 - Very Poor

22. Would you use it again, or recommend it to anyone else?

Yes/ No/ Don't know

23. Have you ever booked a GP appointment online (website or mobile app)?

Yes/ No/ Don't know or can't remember

24. If your GP practice offered e-consultations (online video/mobile consultations) would you use this service?

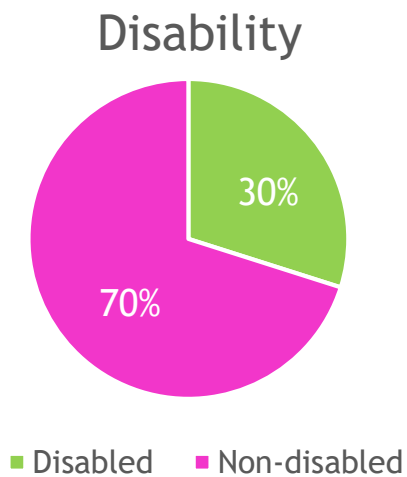
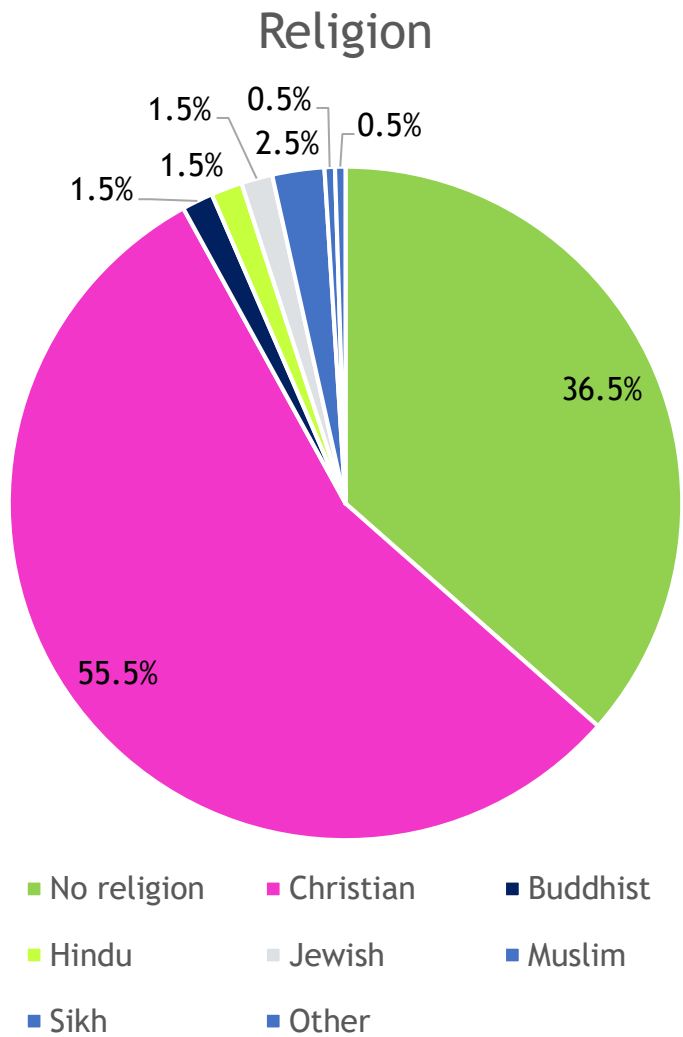
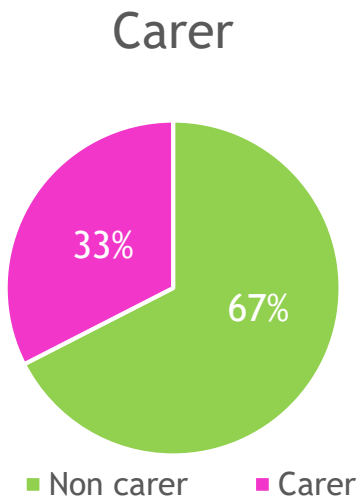
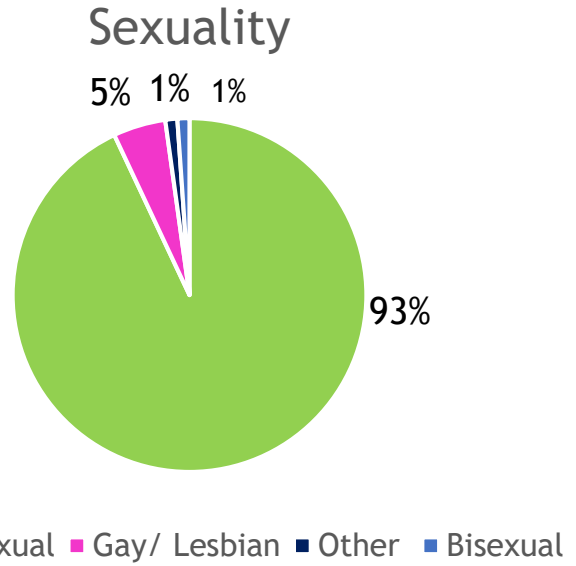
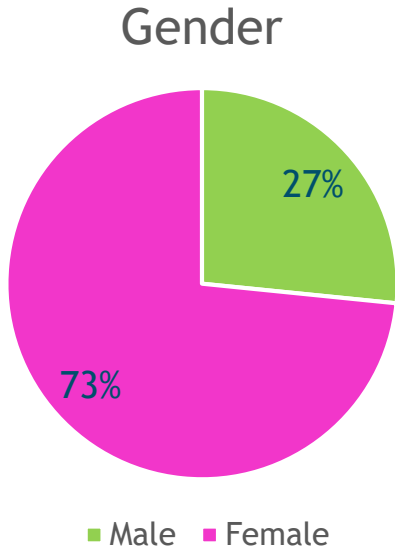
Yes/ No/ Don't know or can't remember

25. Would you rather see a GP face to face or online?

Face to face/ Online/ Don't know or don't mind

26. Is there anything else you would like to add?

6.2. GP Access survey demographic data



Ethnicity

Ethnicity	No. of respondents
White English / Welsh/ Scottish/ Northern Irish/British	140
Irish	7
Any other White	9
Black British	12
African	12
Gypsy or Irish Traveler	1
White and Black Caribbean	1
White and Black African	3
Other mixed/ multiple ethnic background	3
Asian British	5
Chinese	2
Other Asian background	3
Caribbean	5
Any other ethnic group	1

Age

Age	No. of respondents
Under 18	1
18 - 25	5
26 - 35	16
36 - 45	25
46 - 55	39
56 - 65	58
66 - 75	41
76 +	26

6.3. GP Registration audit script

1. Name of the GP practice
 2. Date of phone call
 3. Is there any registration information on the website?
 4. Did they answer the phone, and how long?
 5. Name of the reception staff spoken to
 6. Script to use with GP staff: “Hello. I am calling from Healthwatch Greenwich. We are an organisation that collects patients’ experiences of using health and adult social care services in Greenwich. We have an enquiry from a patient who is concerned about GP registration. Could I ask you a few quick questions about your GP registration processes?”
 7. For registration, what documents do you ask for from patients?
 - Proof of identification (driving license/ passport)
 - 1 x Proof of address (bank statement, utility bill)
 - 2 x Proof of address (bank statement, utility bill)
 - Proof of UK residency
 - NHS Number
 - Unsure
 - Other
 8. If the person registering does not have ID, proof of address, is homeless or in temporary accommodation, can you still register them?
 9. If yes, how can they register with the practice?
 10. If no, what advice is given?
-
-

6.4. GP Audit results table

Practice	Date rung	How long to answer the phone?	For registration, what documents do you need for a new patient?	Can you still register them without?	If no, what advice can you give?	Does the website provide the correct information for registering people without ID?
Abbeywood Surgery	01/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill) & Photo ID	No	They need to bring in a proof of address	No: Website states that people need to bring in proof of address and photo ID
All Saints Medical centre	01/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Photo ID (driving license/ passport), 2 proofs of address, previous GP's name and address	Other	The staff member was unsure but said the person would have to ask the practice manager. But the person should come in and they will help them.	Yes: Website also suggests visiting the surgery for further advice and that they will try to accommodate those in need of urgent help see a clinician even if not registered
Bannockburn surgery	01/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Proof of ID (passport/ driving license), 2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Other	The staff member was unsure.	Yes: The website just says "if you are a new patient you will be required to complete an application form which is available from reception or downloadable on our website"
Basildon Road surgery	01/05/2018	Yes: After the second attempt	Proof of ID (passport/ driving license), 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	Come in and they will help them fill in the form. If they can, they should bring a person or a carer who can "vouch" for them	Yes: The website is clear that "anybody in England can register with a GP practice and receive free medical care from that practice".
Blackheath standard surgery	01/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	None	Yes	They just need to come in and fill in a form; they need to live in the area.	Yes: The website says you will need your previous GP's details but if you are new to the country just the date of your arrival.
Briset corner surgery	01/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	Proof of address (bank statement, utility bill) & NHS number	No	They need to bring in their passport to prove when they came in the country	Yes: The website says "if you live within our practice area then you are welcome to register. Please contact our reception staff who will be pleased to guide you through the procedure".
Burney Street Practice	01/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	Proof of ID (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	We prefer some form of ID, but we can still register them if they don't have it. They need to fill in the registration form.	Yes: The website asks for documentation but then adds: "inability to provide any of the necessary documentation please speak to reception about your registration"

Clover Health centre	01/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Proof of ID (passport/ driving license) & 2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Other	Yes, but they will need a social services number or the address of a friend to register	Other: No website
Conway PMS	01/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	Proof of ID (passport/ driving license) & 2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	They can just walk in and register even with no documents	No: The website asks for photo ID and two utility bills and for those who are renting, a copy of their tenancy agreement. "These documents will be copied and retained for as long as possible in your medical records. Failure to produce these documents may result in your registration being refused."
Conway PMS- Welling branch	01/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	Proof of ID (passport/ driving license) & 2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	They can walk in and fill in a form. They will say 'yes, at the manager's discretion'.	No: As above
Dr M Baksh The Coldharbour surgery	01/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	None	Yes	They just need to fill in a registration form and a patient health questionnaire	Yes: The website says to contact reception for further information.
Dr S Ratneswaren Practice	01/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	1 Proof of address & they will need to fill in a registration form	Yes	They just need to fill in a registration form	Other: The website suggests you need fill in a registration form and that you 'may' be asked for a photo ID and proof of address
Dr S Ratneswaren Practice - Hill surgery branch	02/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill). Fill in a registration form.	No		Other: It says you 'may' be asked for photo ID and proof of address
Dr S Ratneswaren - Campus branch	02/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) or simply a document to say who they are, preferably photographic	No	It is assumed that they will have something	Other: As above
Dr Mostafa PMS	02/05/2018	No: Just rang				
	17/05/2019	Yes: 4-10 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	Personal details need to be taken of the new patient. If the registering process is successful, the person will be registered permanently.	No: The website says you need three forms of ID. No mention that you can register without.
Dr Mostafa PMS -	02/05/2018	No: Just rang				

Wickham lane branch						
	17/05/2018	Yes: 4-10 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	Personal details need to be taken of the new patient. If the registering process is successful, the person will be registered permanently.	No: As above
Eltham Medical practice - Well Hall Road	02/05/2018	Yes: 4-10 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill).	No (Yes, following email to practice manager)	They need some form of address- but the proof can be for the address of a patient already registered at the practice. Follow up to email to practice manager stated that they would never refuse to register someone.	No: The website asks for photo ID and two utility bills and, for those who are renting, a copy of their tenancy agreement. "These documents will be copied and retained for as long as possible in your medical records. Failure to produce these documents may result in your registration being refused."
Eltham Medical practice - Passey Place branch	02/05/2018	Yes: After second attempt	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill). Dated in the last three months.	No	They should get in touch with a social worker, because they will need the proof. Even if this proof is just a letter from a friend saying they live together.	No: As above
Eltham Palace surgery	02/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill) dated within three months.	Other	They need a letter from a patient who is already registered at the practice. If they don't have ID, they just need to receive an 'ok' from the practice manager.	Other: No information on the website
Eltham Park surgery	02/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	Photo identification (passport/ driving license) & 2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	If they provide anything in writing that 'says something about themselves' then they can still register.	Other: No information on the website
Ferryview medical centre	02/05/2018	No: Voicemail				
	17/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Photographic proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	They can still be registered	No: The website says you need to bring all completed registration forms to the practice along with proof of ID and proof of address

TMA Gallions Reach health centre	02/05/2018	Yes: 4 to 10 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	No (Yes, following email to practice manager)	They can come and fill in a registration form, and we will see what we can do, but they will need a proof of address.	No: The website is clear that you must provide proof of ID and proof of address, and 'failure to provide documentation may result in the refusal of your registration'
TMA Heronsgate Medical centre	03/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill) & NHS	Yes	They just need to live within our catchment area	No: the website is clear that you must provide proof of ID and proof of address, and 'failure to provide documentation may result in the refusal of your registration'
Glyndon Medical Centre	03/05/2018	No answer: just rang				
	17/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill) & if they are a child, their full birth certificate	Other (Yes, following email to practice manager)	They would have to see the patient	Yes: The website states "anybody in England can register with a GP practice and receive free medical care from that practice"
Greenwich Peninsula practice	03/05/2018	Yes: 4-10 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill) & Photo ID	No	"They need those documents"	Yes: The website states that no documentation is needed
Manor Brook Medical centre	03/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 2 proofs of address (bank statement/ utility bill dated in the last 3 months) & to live within the catchment area	Yes	They can but we prefer some paperwork	No: The website is clear that you must provide proof of ID and proof of address, and 'failure to provide documentation may result in the refusal of your registration'
New Eltham Medical practice - Thaxted Road	03/05/2018	Closed				
	24/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & proof of address & his NHS number	No	He would need to have his NHS number at a minimum, and he would need proof of address. He could maybe register as a	Yes: the website only asks new patients to fill in the registration form available from the reception desk

					temporary resident, but that's all	
New Eltham Medical practice-Blackfen	03/05/2018	Yes: 4-10 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement, utility bill)	Yes	They need to fall within the catchment area and receive an ok from the practice manager	Yes: the website only asks new patients to fill in the registration form available from the reception desk
Plumbridge medical centre	03/05/2018	Yes: Less than a minute	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill), fill in registration form	Yes	Yes, but they need a proof of address. If they can't do this they should contact an organisation who could provide a proof of address for them, for instance if they are homeless	Yes: The website only mentions needing to fill in a registration form
Royal Arsenal PMS	03/05/2018	No answer: Recorded message				
		Yes: 4-10 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 2 proofs of address	Other (Yes, following email to practice manager)	Yes, but someone must come as an advocate and ask for Kevin Ryan	Yes: The website states "To register with us please come into the practice to collect a registration form from reception"
Sherard Road Medical centre	03/05/2018	Yes: less than a minute	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	Speak to the practice manager, and they will see what they can do	No: The website is clear that it asks people to bring ID and proofs of address, as well either their medical card or to fill in a registration form
St Marks Medical Centre - Wrotesley Road	03/05/2018	Yes: less than a minute	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	They will just need an address that they can be contacted at by letter, for example a friend or a relative, if the GP needs to inform them to go to hospital for example	Yes: The website states "to register with the GP you will need proof of your identity and proof of your current address. Call the practice if you require any more information or if you are not able to provide these and we will be able to help you."
The Fairfield Centre	14/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	No (Yes, following email to practice manager)	The person will be advised to speak to the practice manager	No: The website says they will need to see 1 proof of ID & 1 proof of address

The Trinity Medical centre	14/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	The person can just fill in a registration form	Yes: The website states "any person residing within the "practice area" (as described below) is eligible for registration at the practice, depending on vacancies. If we are unable to accommodate you, we will direct you to an alternative local GP practice."
Triveni PMS- Escreet Grove	14/05/2018	Yes: 4-10 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 2 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	People without documents can still be registered	No: the website asks for a photo ID and a proof of address, and states: "your registration will not be accepted until you have come in to the surgery with the required information."
Triveni PMS- Plumstead Common branch	14/05/2018	Yes: 4-10 minutes	1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill) & if registering online, 1 proof of photo ID	Yes	People may still be registered without these documents	No: As above
Vanbrugh Health centre	14/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	No documents are needed from patients, they just fill in the form at the surgery	Yes	No documents needed from patients. They just fill in the form at the surgery	Yes: The website states that you just need to fill in a registration form
Plumstead Health Centre - Tewson Road	16/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill) & photographic proof of identification	Yes	We take the persons details and use the GPs address as their own address. Once this is verified, the person can permanently be part of the GP and make appointments unless they are going to immigrate to another country.	No: The website states that people need photo ID & two utility bills from the last six months or an up to date tenancy agreement. Then says: "If you come from outside the EU, your passport or documentation must reflect your current status and eligibility to remain in the UK. Being unable to produce the above documentation does not mean that you cannot access NHS treatment. It does however mean that you may not be able to register as a patient with a doctor. If you are unsure, please ask at reception for advice.
Plumstead Health centre- Garland Road	16/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill) & photographic proof of identification	Yes	We take the persons details and use the GPs address as their own address. Once this is verified, the person can permanently be part of the GP and make appointments unless they are going to immigrate to another country.	No: As above

Thamesmead NHS Health centre	16/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Photographic proof of identification (passport/ driving license) & 1 proof of address (bank statement/ utility bill)	Yes	They can register but it would be helpful for example if HW provide an address for his registration and they will need his personal details. Once they have approved the application, one can be permanently registered to the GP and get access to the same health and social care services	Yes: The website states “You should not be refused registration or appointments because you don't have a proof of address or personal identification at hand. It is not considered a reasonable ground to refuse registration. This also applies if you are an asylum seeker, refugee, a homeless patient or an overseas visitor, whether lawfully in the UK or not. If you fall under one of the above-mentioned patient groups, please download one of the 'How to register with a GP' patient leaflets below and bring it with you when you register with a GP practice. If you have problems registering with the practice, there is advice on what do to and where to go for further support.”
Westmount Surgery	16/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Proof of identification & passport	Yes	Visit the GP and fill in the registration form. Once the application form is approved you will be registered to the GP for three months and they will direct you to the council who can help.	No: The website states that new registrars are required to provide a form of photographic ID and proof of residence in Eltham
Woodland Walk surgery	16/05/2018	Yes: 1-3 minutes	Proof of identification (passport/ driving license)	Other (Yes, following email to practice manager)	It's best to go to a solicitor for advice.	No: the website only mentions needing to fill in a registration form

6.5. GP Audit practice manager responses

1. **Abbeywood Surgery** - no response received at time of publication
2. **All Saints Medical Centre** - no response received at time of publication
3. **Bannockburn Surgery** - no response received at time of publication
4. **Briset Corner Surgery** - no response received at time of publication
5. **Dr S Ratneswaren Practice (Hill Surgery branch & Campus branch)** - no response received at time of publication

6. **Eltham Medical Practice (Well Hall Road branch & Passey Place branch)**

“Our policy is that somebody with no formal ID or proof of address would then be asked if they could provide a letter from the person they were staying with as presumably if they were living independently then they would have a utility bill of some description. If, however, they are homeless then they would be registered with the practice address as their address. Please be clear our policy applies to all patients who wish to be registered and is in place solely for the purpose of ensuring that patients do not register with multiple practices to obtain prescriptions and also that the patient lives in our catchment area... I would also just add that ultimately we would never refuse to register a patient”

Caroline Partridge (practice manager), 23 May 2018

7. **Eltham Palace surgery**

“It has always been our practice policy to ask for ID and proof of address (by a recent utility bill) and that the person attends in person to register for ALL patients. At this stage we verify the ID so we can at this stage also sign the patient up to on- line services and tick the verification box as to which documents we have seen. Obviously if a patient has no ID we do make allowances as many patients do not have driving licences and passports but my staff normally discuss this with a manager or a GP partner if they are unsure but we not at this stage sign them up to on line services if we are unsure of their identity. We ask for current proof of address so as we know that the patient falls in our catchment area. If the person has no proof of address even not a tenancy agreement we would ask that the bill payer puts in writing that this person lives at this address. For many years registration has been a very grey area and we try to stick to our policy the best we can, but we do realise that sometimes a patient does not have the documents and at that point we make a decision to register. We are aware that if we were to register a homeless person that we would register them under our practice address as we have done this in the past.”

Johanna Gilby (practice manager) 25 May 2018

8. Gallions Reach health centre

“I had a meeting with all the staff yesterday regarding our position with registrations. As a practice we do register patients and we ask for ID and any proof of address, however if a patient does not have these we still register them”

Tinashe Magwenzi (practice manager) 25 May 2019

9. Greenwich Peninsula practice - no response received at time of publication**10. The Fairfield centre:**

“Yes, a person with no formal ID can register at the Fairfield practice. If a person has no formal ID or proof of address then the receptionist will speak to me and we work with the patient so they can register”

Karen James (practice manager), 29 May 2018

11. Woodland Walk surgery:

“We can register without ID and address proof.”

Ahila Sithamparappillai (practice manager), 23 May 2018

12. Royal Arsenal PMS:

“Yes, they are able to register, but we try and obtain as much information as possible to enable us to better care for these individuals.”

Kevin Ryan (practice manager), 24 May 2018

13. Clover Health Centre - no response received at time of publication**14. New Eltham medical practice - no response received at time of publication****15. Plumbridge medical centre - no response received at time of publication****16. St Marks medical centre - no response received at time of publication****17. Glyndon Medical Centre:**

“Our policy at this practice would be to firstly ask for two forms of address ID and one of photo ID. When the patient cannot provide us with the required information we would take as much previous registration information from the patient as possible then register them. My apologies for any misunderstanding. I will reiterate our policy procedures to all staff concerned. I will reiterate our policy procedures to all staff concerned.”

Kerry Ruston (Deputy Practice manager), 24 May 2018

6.6. GP Enter and View programme list 2017/18

- Trinity Medical Centre, 15 June 2017
 - Royal Arsenal Medical Centre, 23 June 2017
 - Vanbrugh Group practice, 27 June 2017
 - Thamesmead Medical Associates (Heronsgate), 5 September
 - Thamesmead Medical Associates (Gallions Reach), 14 September 2017
 - Greenwich Peninsula Practice, 28 September 2017
 - Manor Brook Medical Centre, 28 September 2017
 - Tudway Road Surgery, 5 October 2017
 - Sherard Road Medical Centre, 6 October 2017
 - Conway PMS (main), 1 December 2017
 - Conway PMS (branch), 8 December 2017
 - Blackheath Standard Surgery, 12 December 2017
 - St Marks Surgery, 31st January 2018
 - Nightingale Surgery, 2nd February 2018
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8. Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed on the specific date(s) stated. Our report is not necessarily a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users and staff, only an account of what was observed and contributed at the time.

9. Contact us

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If you require this report in an alternative format, please contact us at the address above.

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