

## **Patient Participation Report 2015**

### **Contents**

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Background
- 3 Practice Profile
- 4 Profile of Survey Respondents
- 5 Patient Survey
- 6 Survey Results
- 7 Next steps

### **1. Introduction**

As part of Strand Medical Group's commitment to working closely with our patients, the Practice has signed up to the Patient Involvement Enhanced Service. We hope that this will enable us to engage with our patients, identify those areas where patients are dissatisfied with the services that we offer and ensure that changes made bring improvements for the benefit of all our patients. We will also identify those areas which patients report we do well, so that we can build on this.

### **2. Background**

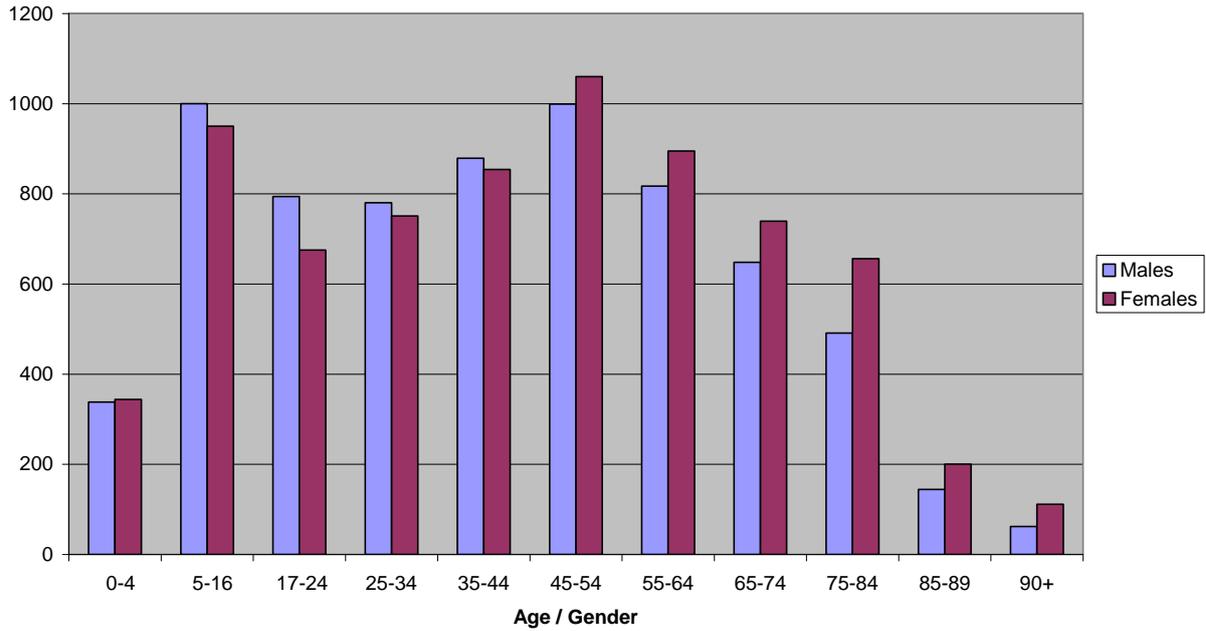
The Practice has historically found it difficult to engage with its population. However, in summer 2011, we set up the Strand Patient Reference Group: a virtual PPG (vPPG). This is an e-mail community that we can consult on a regular basis but which does not have regular face to face meetings. Since that time, we have asked this cohort of patients to assist us by informing our surveys and action plans. The group is registered with the National Association for Patient Participation and we receive regular newsletter and bulletins from NAPP which we forward to the members of our PRG.

We also circulate communications from our Clinical Commissioning Group, Coastal West Sussex (CWS), regarding events, requests for patient representatives, participation in surveys etc.

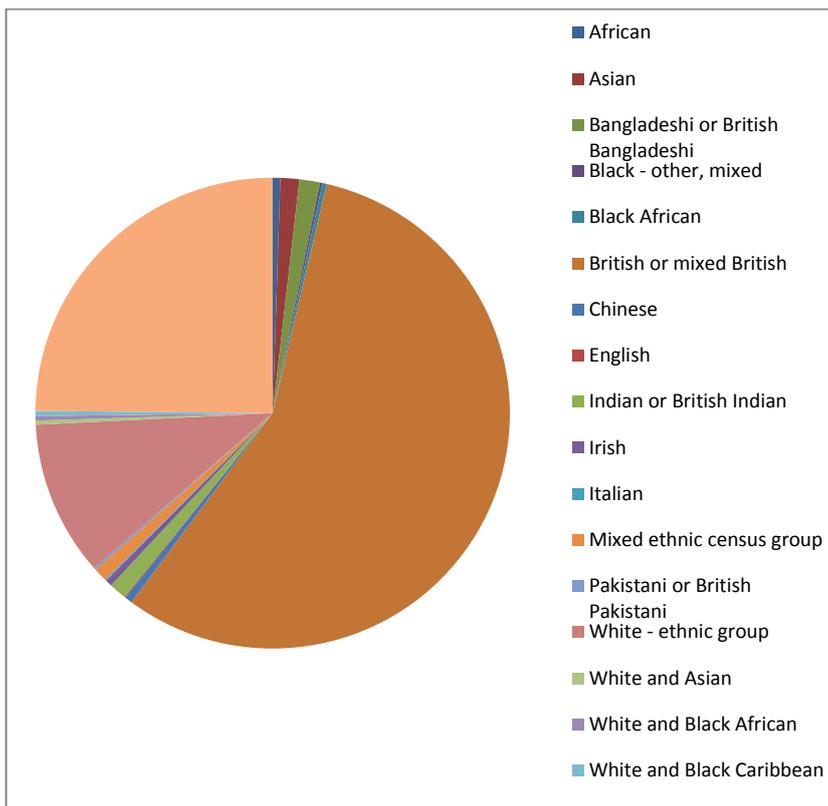
### 3. Practice Profile

The information from Public Health shows that our elderly population is significantly higher than the England average and the West Sussex average in age groups of 65+, 75+ and 85+. Deprivation is also above the average for both England and West Sussex. The Practice has few Nursing homes within the practice area and most elderly patients live in their own homes resulting in a high home visiting rate.

**Strand Medical Group - Patient Demographics**

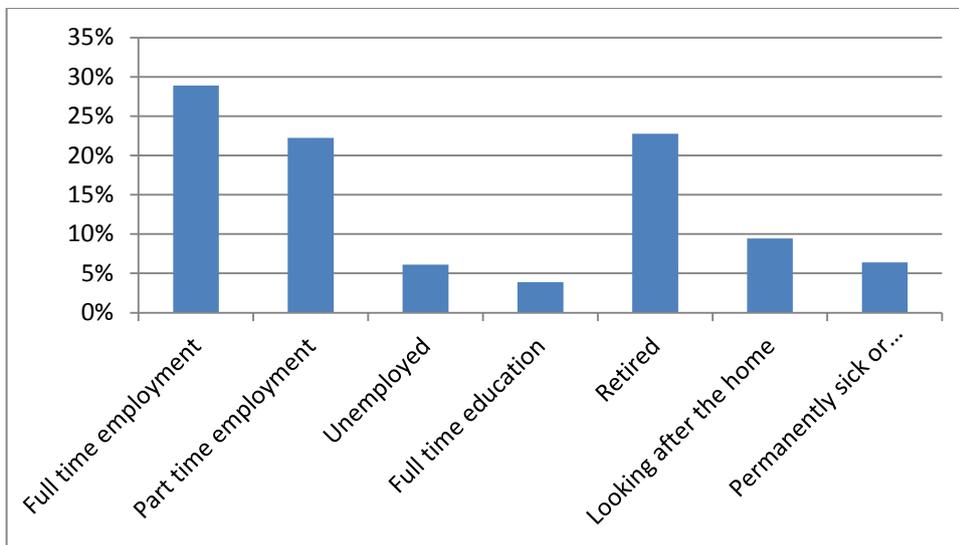
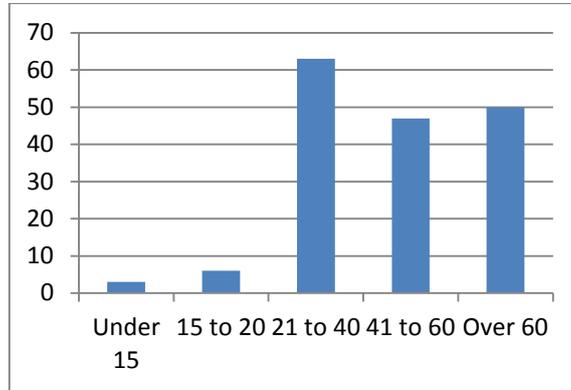
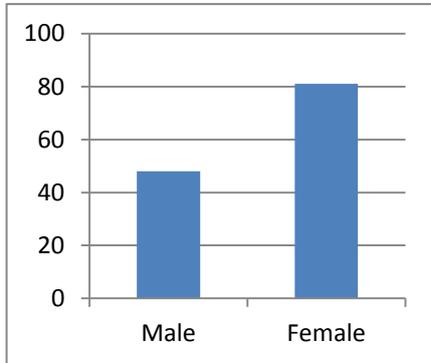


#### Ethnicity:



#### 4. Profile of Survey Respondents

The profile of the respondents by gender, age range and circumstance is shown in the charts below.



#### 5. Patient Survey

We have used a paper survey this year which was made available to our patients attending the surgery in random weeks in February. We require 20 completed surveys for each full time doctor. With 6 full time doctors, we require at least 120 surveys.

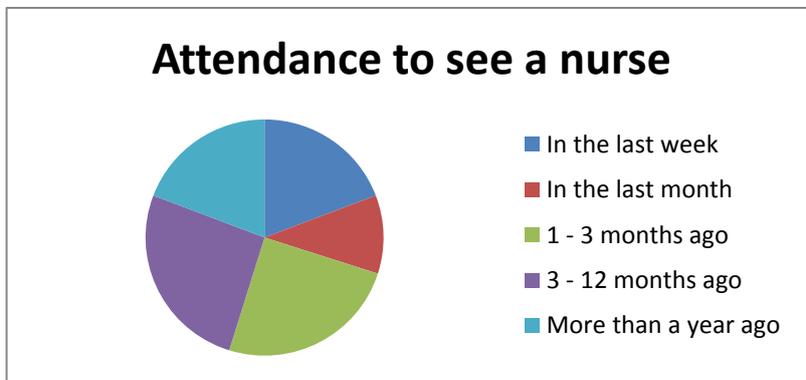
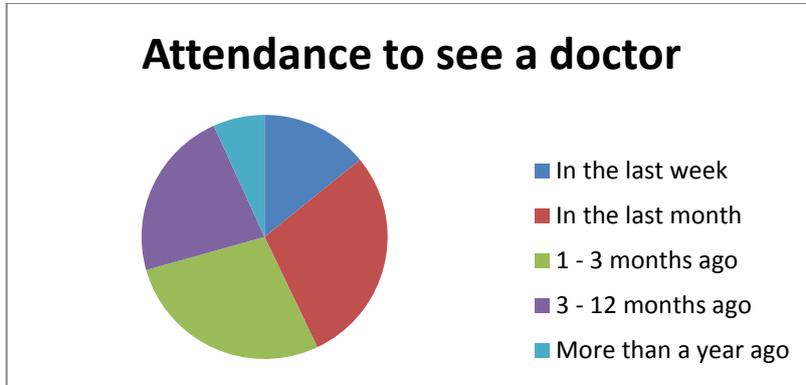
The survey contained questions on the patient experience of:

- Seeing a doctor
- Seeing a nurse
- About the staff
- The telephone consultation service
- Telephone triage service
- About the practice
- About the phone system
- About our services

## 6. Survey Results

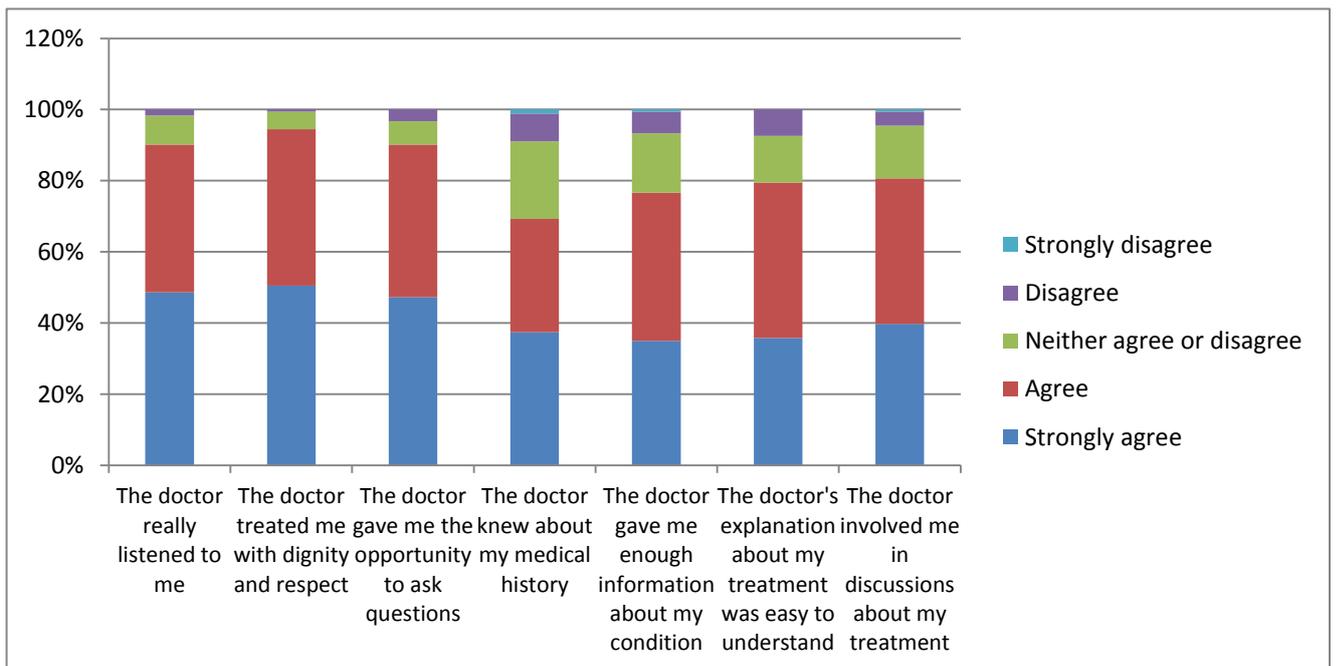
A total of 188 reports have been received. The survey results are as follows:

### Frequency of Attendance at the Practice



### Seeing a Doctor

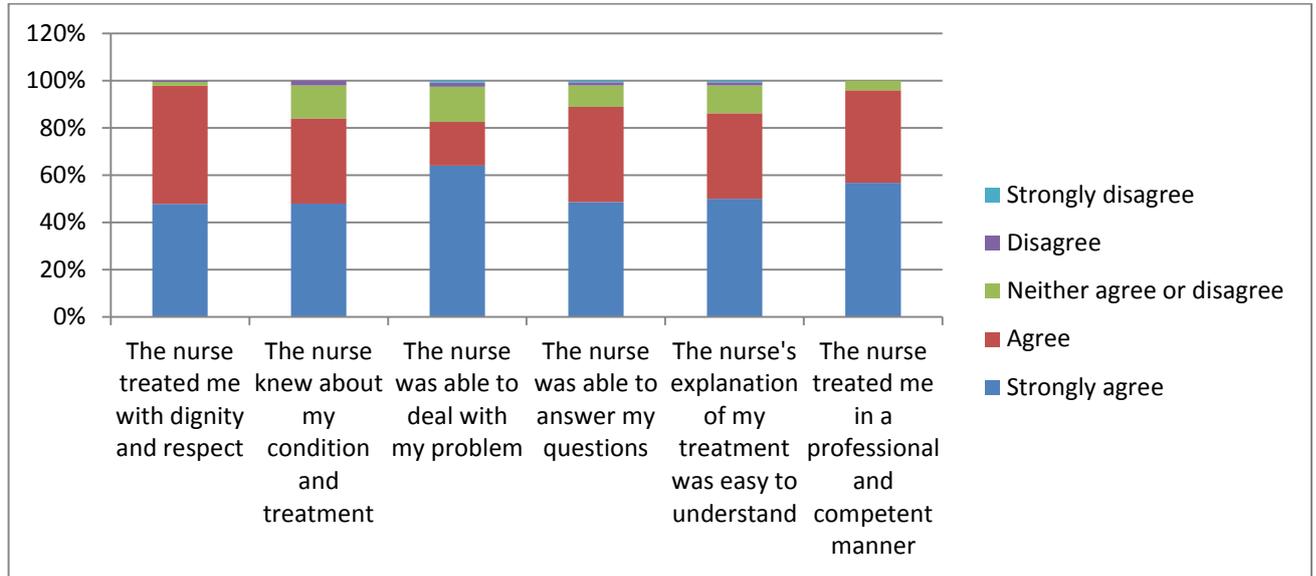
A total of 183 patients responded to this section of the survey.



Patient satisfaction with their experience when seeing a GP is high when rated against all of the areas covered by the survey.

## Seeing a Nurse

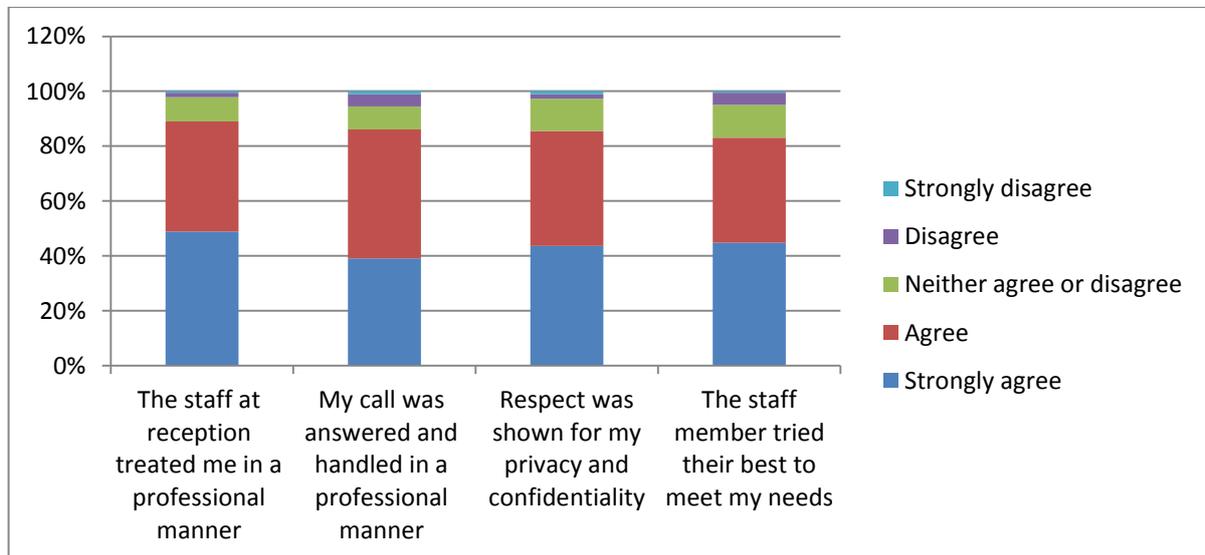
A total of 178 patients responded to this section of the survey.



Patient satisfaction with their experience when seeing a nurse is high when rated against all of the areas covered by the survey.

## About the Staff

A total of 182 patients responded to this section of the survey.



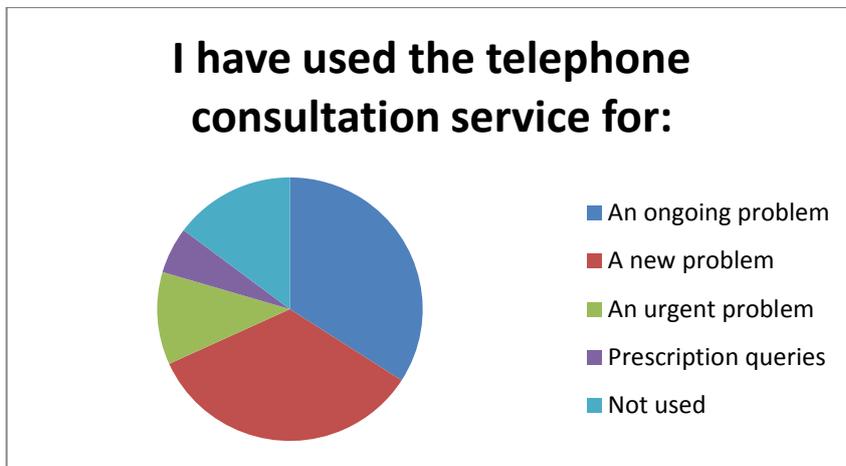
We recognise that the customer service provided by our receptionists to our patients is extremely important. The receptionists have a challenging role in managing patients' expectations and when this is not possible, to provide whatever assistance or alternative is available. We do endeavor always to treat our patients with dignity and respect.

## Telephone Consultation

A total of 88 patients responded to this section of the survey.

In previous years, there has been confusion over the difference between telephone consultation and telephone triage. We have now been using both these systems for the last two years and they have become embedded in our way of working.

The use of telephone consultation has resulted in our ability to deal with an increasing number of patients. Patients are offered telephone consultations by the receptionists as this can often save patients from visiting the practice for minor conditions or simply to obtain a prescription. The doctors also use telephone consultations for following up an ongoing problem with a patient.



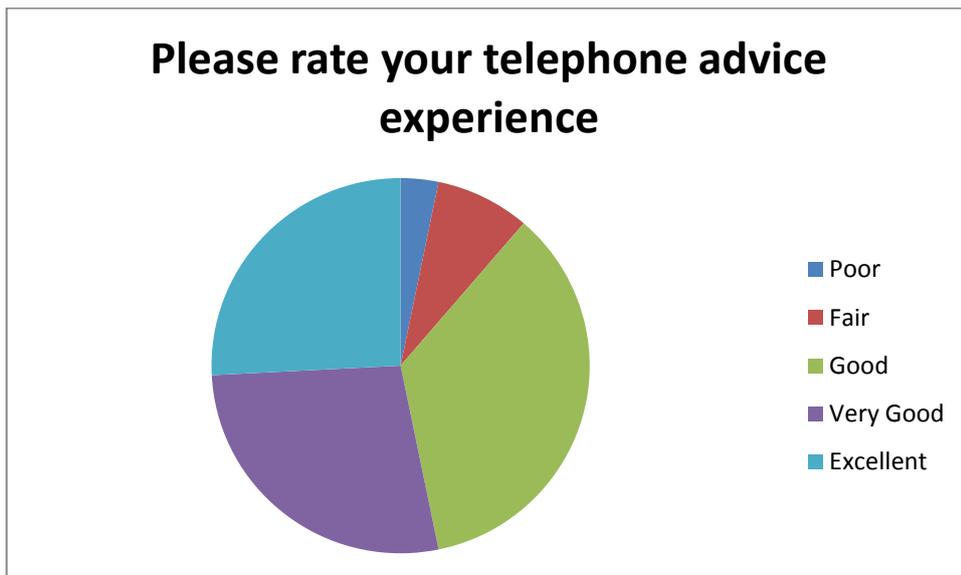
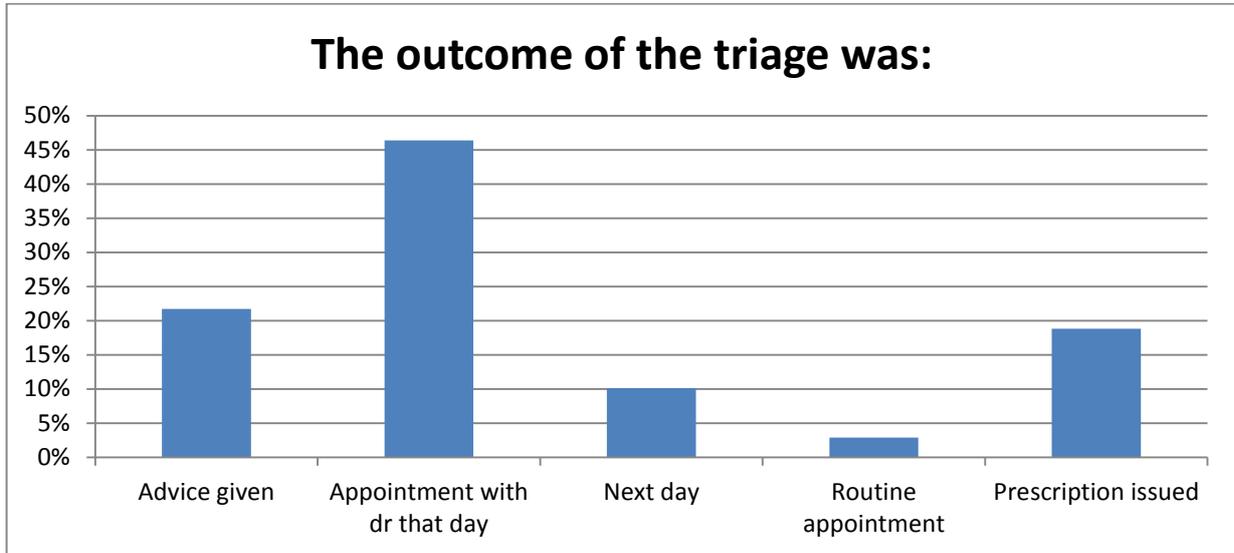
Patients are using this service for both new and ongoing problems in equal measure



We are extremely pleased to see that this year, again, the majority of our patients are satisfied with their experience of using the telephone consultation with 83% rating their experience as good, very good or excellent; this is an improvement on last year's results which we attribute to patient's becoming used to this option and the Practice ensuring that this facility is used appropriately.

## Telephone Triage

A total of 69 patients responded to this section of the survey.



This service has increased the capacity of our service and made the doctors more accessible to a larger number of our patients. We have seen a significant increase in the number of patients finding the service good, very good or excellent with an increased satisfaction rate in this service of 89% compared to 73% last year.

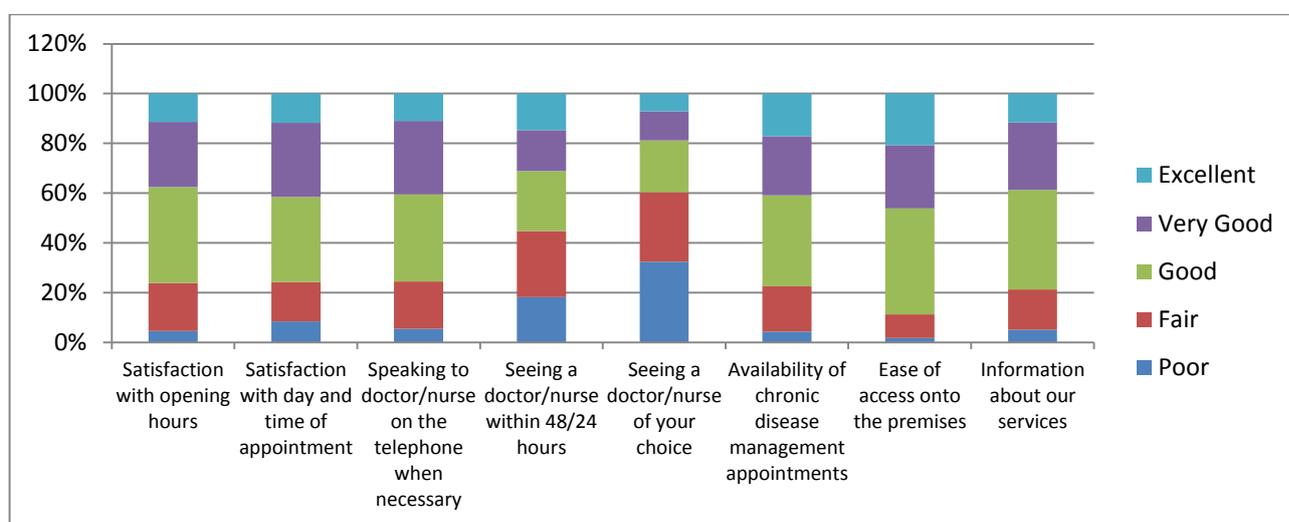
Triage allows the doctors to ensure that patients needs are assessed in a timely manner and that priority can be given to those patients with an urgent medical assistance.

## About the Practice

A total of 176 patients responded to this section of the survey.

We asked a number of questions about the services provided by the practice

- Your level of satisfaction with the practice's opening hours
- Satisfaction with the day and time arranged for your appointment
- Opportunity of speaking to a doctor/nurse on the telephone when necessary
- Chances of seeing a doctor/nurse within 48/24 hours
- Chances of seeing a doctor/nurse of your choice
- Provision/availability of chronic disease management appointments (e.g. asthma, diabetes, etc.)
- Ease of access onto the premises
- Information provided by the practice about its service (e.g. repeat prescriptions, test results, opening times, cost of private certificates etc.)



Overall, satisfaction is good. However, issues to consider are:

**Opening hours:** GP Practices are contracted, nationally by the Department of Health, to open Monday to Friday from 0800 to 1830. Although Strand Medical Group also provides doctors surgeries on two early evenings (Monday and Wednesday) and early morning surgeries on Thursday and Saturday morning nurse-led clinics for chronic diseases (asthma, diabetes, smears etc.) once a month, only 68% of patients rate our opening hours as good, very good or excellent.

**Speaking to a doctor or nurse:** 75% rate their experience in this area as good, very good or excellent. The volume of calls that the practice receives is extremely high and doctors and nurses do have to prioritise based on clinical need. The key issue here may be “when necessary” and how this is assessed differently by clinical staff and patients. There is no easy solution with the doctors already working more hours than most GPs in the local surgeries and limited resources.

**Seeing a doctor or nurse (of the patient’s choice):** This is always a difficult expectation to meet; Strand operates as a group practice and although we encourage patients to see or consult with the same doctor for an episode of care whenever possible, it is difficult to increase satisfaction with this.

## About the phone system

There were a total of 227 responses to this section of the survey as some patients replied to more than one area. We asked a number of questions about our phone system. We asked:

What do you usually telephone the surgery for?

- 65% of patients usually telephone for a Dr Appointment
- 17% of patients usually telephone for a Nurse Appointment
- 8% of patients usually telephone to Arrange Blood test
- 5% of patients usually telephone to get results
- 5% of patients usually telephone with a Prescription queries

What is your experience of getting through on the phone?

- 32% of patients said Poor
- 38% of patients said Fair
- 21% of patients said Good
- 4% of patients said Very good
- 2% of patients said Excellent

What time of the day do you usually telephone the surgery?

- 67% of patients usually telephone at 8am
- 28% of patients usually telephone in the morning
- 4% of patients usually telephone at midday
- 2% of patients usually telephone in the afternoon
- 0% of patients usually telephone after 6pm

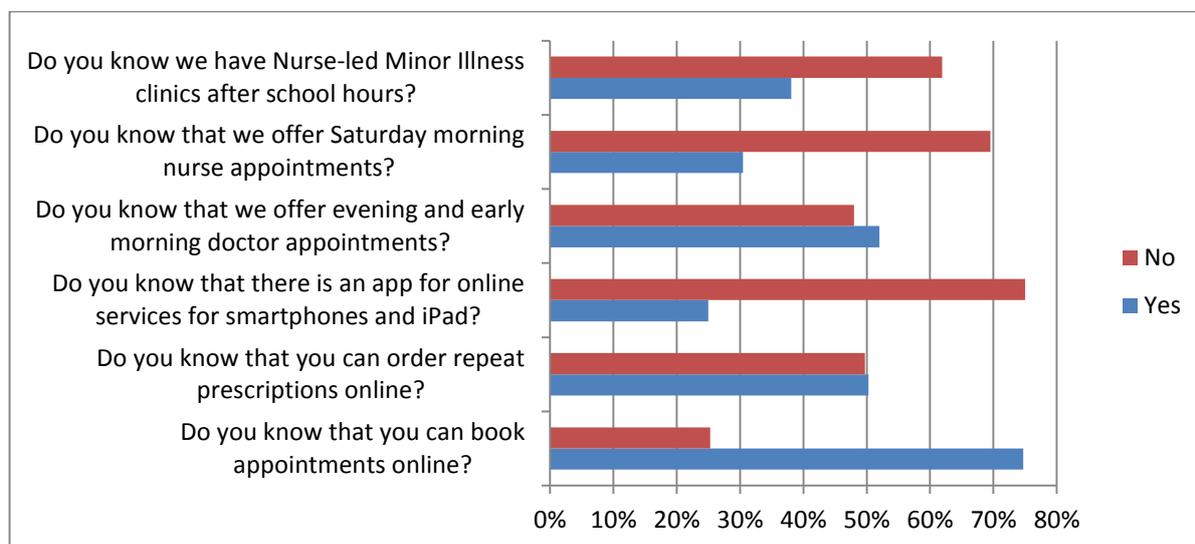
Would you prefer to be in a queuing system or hear engaged tone if there is no receptionist available to answer your call straightaway?

- 88% of patients responded they prefer to be put in a queue
- 7% of patients responded they prefer to hear engaged tone
- 5% of patients responded they prefer to be put on hold

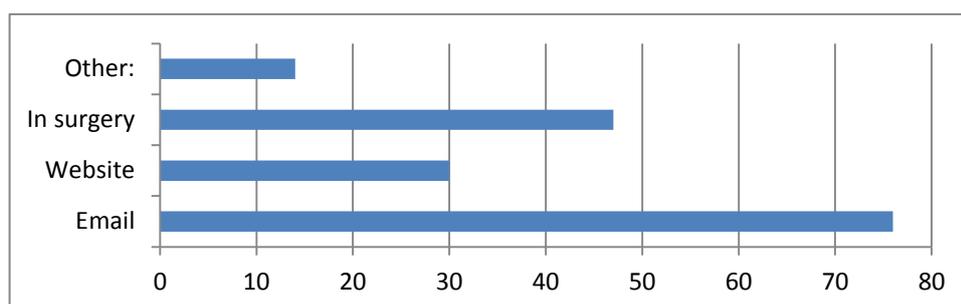
The reported experience of getting through on the phone is particularly disappointing as the Practice has invested in a new phone system last summer with increased queuing capacity and robust call queuing facility, although this result is not surprising as there have been considerable teething issues with the new technology. We have been working through the problems with our telecoms provider and we anticipate a significant increase in patient satisfaction. We have responded to the considerable preference expressed for calls to be queued and have increased this facility.

## About our services

Finally, we asked a number of questions about our services to ascertain whether or not patients knew about these services.



and also, how would you like to hear about our services:



## 7. Comments

Comments from our patients fall into roughly 3 categories.

Appointments: by far the most comments are regarding appointments, whether that is the availability of appointments with doctors or seeing the same doctor. Regrettably, there are a number of factors to be considered.

- Young doctors completing their training do not see being a GP as an attractive career option and like 12 of the 13 GP Practices in Worthing, we have, until this month, had a full time GP vacancy.
- Growing demand from an increasing local population for primary care services.
- Financially limited service. General practice receives less than £100 per patient per year. Between 2005/06 and 2011/12, the UK NHS budget grew by around 18% in real terms, but funding for general practice fell by approximately 8%. And according to Deloitte, if current trends continue, general practice will only receive 7.29% of the UK NHS budget by 2017/18. However, the number of patient consultations in the UK is estimated to rise to an historic high of at least 441m by 2017/18 – up from at least 388m in 2013/14 and 327m in 2008/09.

In order to increase the availability of clinicians to our patients, we have increased our Minor Illness service and also now have a Nurse Practitioner who has advanced specialist skills and can prescribe medications in her own right.

We have expanded our telephone consultation and telephone triage services.

Lastly, we have recently successfully recruited a GP for 2 days per week.

Phone system: as described above, we have made changes to our telephone system and do expect the robustness of the phone system to improve. The system has given the caller their position in the queue for several years.

As regards staffing, as already stated, we are a cash limited service. We endeavor to be flexible with our staffing and there are 7 receptionists rota'ed to work first thing on Mondays and Fridays with 6 receptionists on the remaining days. This gives 2 receptionists on front desk first thing in the morning and between 4 and 5 receptionists on the phones. After 9am, two of the receptionists move on to administrative tasks, dealing with prescriptions, hospital correspondence etc. Staffing levels are affected by absence, whether that is planned or short notice.

Call volume is extremely high first thing in the morning. The table below gives an indication of the volume of calls made to the practice at different times of the day, which show the difficulty in matching staffing levels to call volume. Volumes are for Mondays which experience a significantly higher volume of calls than on other days.

Monday	2 <sup>nd</sup> February	9 <sup>th</sup> February	16 <sup>th</sup> February	23 <sup>rd</sup> February
00:00 – 08:00	199	143	93	185
08:00 – 09:00	570	297	201	226
09:00 – 10:00	67	113	86	91
15:00 – 16:00	30	60	48	

We have a high number of callers who phone before the surgery opens at 08:00, despite an automated switchover from the OOH period.

Satisfaction: lastly, there are a number of patients who are happy with the service that they receive and were kind enough to leave comments praising the doctors and the staff for the service received.

## 8. Next steps

This report and the results have been shared with our Practice staff and with the members of our Patient Reference Group. As a result of our surveys, we will agree an action plan for the coming year.

We will be initiating a Patient Participation Group and we anticipate that they will be able to assist us in delivering our Action Plan.