



# Patient Experience Survey of GP and Local NHS Services 2011/12

## Volume 1: National Results

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# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## About the survey

- 1.1 These results are from the 2011/12 Scottish Patient Experience Survey of GP and Local NHS Services. This is a postal survey which was sent to a random sample of patients who were registered with a GP in Scotland in October 2011. The survey was completed by 145,569 respondents.
- 1.2 The focus of this report is on the national results of the survey. Individual reports for each GP practice, Community Health Partnerships (CHP) and NHS Board are available at: <http://surveyresults.bettertogetherscotland.com>.

## GP practices

- 1.3 The experiences of Scottish GP patients in 2011/12 are similar to those reported for 2009/10:
- Patients were mainly positive about their experience of consultation with doctors or nurses. At least 90 per cent of patients responded positively to all of the questions about doctors and nurses.
  - Patients remained very positive about their involvement in their care and treatment. Overall 89 per cent of patients felt that the care provided by the GP surgery was excellent or good.
- 1.4 Patients were slightly more positive about their experiences of doctors and nurses than they were in the 2009/10 survey.
- 1.5 Patients were less positive about their experiences of accessing GP practice services - there was a decrease in the percentage of patients rating the overall arrangements for seeing doctors and nurses as good or excellent. This decrease was seen across almost all NHS Boards. As in 2009/10 there was considerable variation in the results for individual GP practices on patients' experiences of the overall arrangements for seeing doctors.
- 1.6 Patients were most positive about the cleanliness of the GP practice, understanding how and when to take medicines and experiences of consultation with nurses and doctors.
- 1.7 As in the 2009/10 survey, the most negative results relate to accessing GP services:
- The question that most patients answered negatively was about trying to make an appointment with a doctor 3 or more working days in advance with 20 per cent saying that they were unable to;
  - All of the bottom five results related to accessing GP services.

## **Referral to another NHS health professional and other local NHS services**

- 1.8 For the first time we asked patients to rate the referral arrangements to see another NHS health professional.
- 76 per cent of patients who were referred by their GP in the last twelve months to see another NHS professional rated the referral arrangements as excellent or good, with 8 per cent rating the arrangements as poor or very poor.
- 1.9 We also introduced questions in the survey about the use of other local NHS services.
- 97% of people who returned the survey had used at least one service in the last 12 months;
  - GP surgery, pharmacist/chemist and NHS dentist were the most commonly used services.
- 1.10 The survey also asked about patients use and experience of out-of-hours services.
- Of patients surveyed, 26 per cent had tried to get medical help, treatment or advice, for themselves or someone they were looking after, when their GP surgery was closed;
  - Of patients seeking help out of hours, 69 per cent spoke to NHS 24 first. More than half of patients seeking help out of hours were treated by an out-of-hours service or in A&E/ Casualty;
  - Patients were generally positive about their experiences of out-of-hours healthcare with 72 per cent rating their overall care they received as good or excellent. However 11 per cent of patients rated the overall care as poor or very poor.

## **International comparisons**

- 1.11 Scottish patients generally seem to have similar experiences to those in England, Wales and Northern Ireland:
- Approximately 90 per cent of Scottish, English, Welsh and Northern Irish patients answered positively about the care provided by their GP practice.
- 1.12 Scotland generally performs favourably compared to other countries included in the 2010 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey. Doctor patient communication, such as involvement in care decisions and opportunity to ask questions about treatment, were areas where Scotland did well.

## 2 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### Introduction

- 2.1 The Better Together Patient Experience Survey of GP and Local NHS Services is a postal survey which was sent to a random sample of patients who were registered with a GP in Scotland in October 2011. The survey is the successor to the 2009/10 GP Patient Experience Survey.
- 2.2 Like the 2009/10 GP Patient Experience Survey, it asked patients about their experience of accessing their GP practice, making an appointment, visiting reception, seeing either a doctor and/or nurse at the surgery, receiving medication and the overall care provided by the practice. New questions were added to find out about patients' experiences of referrals to other health professionals, out-of-hours services and outcomes from NHS treatments.
- 2.3 The focus of this report is on the national results of the survey. Individual reports for each GP practice, Community Health Partnership (CHP) and NHS Board are available at: <http://surveyresults.bettertogetherscotland.com>.
- 2.4 Within the national report, we have made comparisons with the 2009/10 survey wherever possible. However given changes to some of the questions, not all results are directly comparable.
- 2.5 Some of the changes we made have allowed us to benchmark our results with the other GP patient experience surveys carried out elsewhere in the UK. Other changes have also allowed us to better understand patients' experiences, for example around access to and experience of wider local NHS services as well as the impact of NHS treatment on patient outcomes. The technical report explains the rationale for changes to individual questions and is available at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/gp-survey-technical-report-2012>

### Better Together Programme

- 2.6 Better Together is Scotland's Patient Experience Programme, using the people's experiences of NHSScotland to improve health services.
- 2.7 The Better Together programme supports the *Healthcare Quality Strategy for NHSScotland* (or *Quality Strategy*) by providing a basis for the measurement of quality as experienced by service users across Scotland, in addition to support for local improvement.
- 2.8 The ultimate aim of the *Quality Strategy* is to deliver the highest quality health and care services to people in Scotland, and through this to ensure that NHSScotland is recognised by the people of Scotland as amongst the best in the world. Through the Better Together programme, people in Scotland are being given the opportunity to comment systematically on their experience of healthcare and its impact on their quality of life. The Scottish GP / local NHS services survey is one example of this work. The Scottish Inpatient Patient Experience Survey also allows patients to comment on inpatient services.

Further information on the inpatient survey can be found at:  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/InpatientSurvey>

- 2.9 Further information about the Quality Strategy can be found at:  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/NHS-Scotland/NHSQuality>

### **Aims of the survey**

The survey's specific objectives were to:

- Provide GP practices with structured feedback on their patients' experience of their service, relative to other practices in Scotland;
- Provide information on patients' use and experience of local NHS services;
- Identify areas of best practice and areas for improvement;
- Monitor the NHSScotland HEAT standards on accessing GP services;
- Assess if and how the level of positive and negative experiences change over time, between GP Practices and between NHS Boards;
- Assess the types of outcomes patients had from any NHS treatment to inform the quality outcome indicator on patient reported outcomes;
- Contribute to the patient experience quality outcome indicator;
- Explore if there are variations in the experiences of different groups of patients.

### **Survey design**

- 2.10 The survey was redeveloped during summer 2011 with an aim to cover other local NHS Services as well as general practice. We included questions on local NHS services in this survey to help address the growing interest in understanding how people use a range of local NHS services and help support further improvement outside general practice. Consultation workshops were held with members of the public to find out what was important to them. We also consulted key stakeholders from NHSScotland, Scottish Government and Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP).
- 2.11 The survey was then cognitively tested with patient and public panels to ensure that the new questions worked well in terms of understanding the purpose of the questions and the response scales.
- 2.12 Further information on the development of the survey is available in the technical report at: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/gp-survey-technical-report-2012>

### **Survey fieldwork and response**

- 2.13 The sample was designed to provide results for individual GP practices as well as providing information for use by NHSScotland, NHS Boards and CHPs. Patients who were sent the survey were randomly sampled from the lists of patients registered with each GP practice in Scotland. This was done confidentially by the [Information Services Division \(ISD\) of the NHS National](#)



[Services Scotland](#)<sup>1</sup>. The survey was administered by [Picker Europe](#)<sup>2</sup>, a charity which provides support for patient experience surveys, with assistance from ISD and SG. Fieldwork for the survey began on 4 November, 2011 and ended on 31 January, 2012.

- 2.14 In total 605,896 surveys were sent to patients and 145,569 were returned completed, giving an overall response rate of 24 per cent. The expected response rate was 23 per cent. This response rate appears low compared to that achieved for the previous survey (38 per cent). This is because the previous survey sent two reminders, but this year's survey was designed to achieve the required number of responses for each practice without reminders. It proved to be cost effective to send more surveys initially than to send fewer surveys and reminders.

### Data analysis and reporting

- 2.15 The survey data collected and coded by Picker were securely transferred to ISD. The main analysis for this report was carried out by ISD. In addition ISD prepared the supplementary tables showing analysis of results for NHS boards and CHPs in conjunction with Scottish Government.
- 2.16 Throughout this report, weighted average percentages have been presented. This accounts for the different sizes of GP practices. Weighting the results in this way provides results more representative of the population at Scotland and NHS Board level.
- 2.17 All changes from the 2009/10 national results that are discussed in the report are statistically significant at the 5% level. Due to the large sample size even small changes of one per cent in the national results are statistically significant. For tables showing changes in results for NHS Boards, statistically significant differences are highlighted in bold.
- 2.18 More information on the survey design, response rates and methodology can be found in the technical report: <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/gp-survey-technical-report-2012>
- 2.19 High level results of the survey can be found in section 1 (Executive Summary), while detailed results are available in sections three to twelve. Sections three to eight of this report focus on the results for GP practices, while the remaining sections focus on: out-of-hours care (section nine); outcomes from NHS treatment (section ten); results for CHPs and NHS boards (section eleven); and UK and international comparisons (sections twelve and thirteen).

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.isdscotland.org/> The Information Services Division (ISD) is a division of National Services Scotland, part of NHSScotland. ISD provides health information, health intelligence, statistical services and advice that support the NHS in progressing quality improvement in health and care and facilitates robust planning and decision making.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.pickereurope.org/>

### 3 GP PRACTICES – GETTING TO SEE OR SPEAK TO SOMEONE

#### Summary

3.1 In total 75 per cent of people rated the overall arrangements for getting to see a doctor as good or excellent, although this was six percentage points lower than in 2009/10. Most people had a positive experience of phoning their GP surgery, both in terms of getting through on the phone and speaking to staff. Almost 8 out of 10 patients who attended surgeries with more than one doctor were able to see the doctor they preferred. More information on these results and other questions relating to accessing local health services are outlined below.

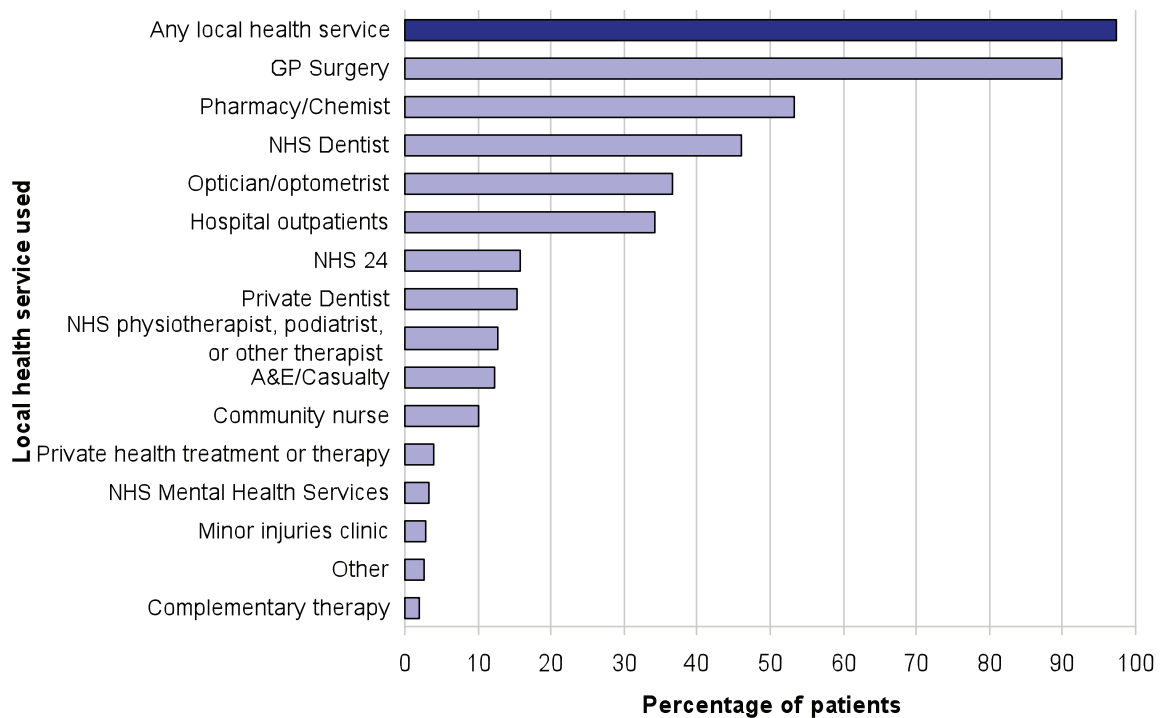
#### Use of local health services

3.2 Respondents were asked to indicate from a list which local health services they had used in the last 12 months. Ninety seven per cent of people who returned the survey had used at least one local health service in the last twelve months.

3.3 Of those who used a local health service

- 90 per cent used GP surgery services
- 53 per cent used pharmacy/chemist services
- 46 per cent used NHS dentist services (Chart 1).

Chart 1: Local services used in the last twelve months

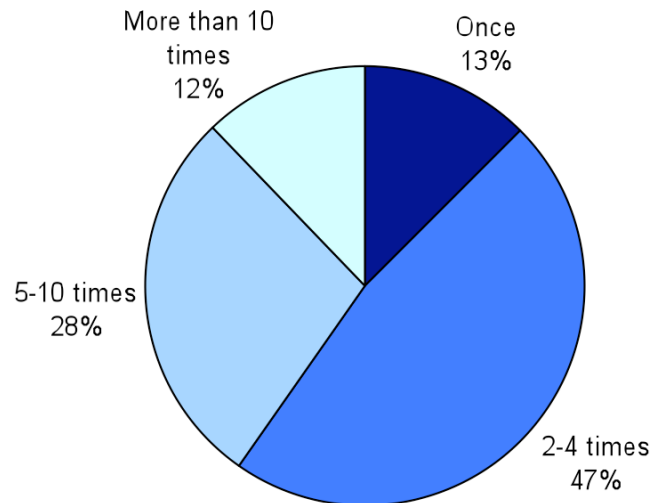


### How often people contacted their GP surgery

3.4 Of people who could remember how many times they had contacted their GP surgery:

- 47 per cent contacted it two to four times during the last 12 months
- 40 per cent contacted it five times or more in the last 12 months (Chart 2).

Chart 2: How often patients contacted their GP surgery in the last twelve months



### Phoning the GP surgery

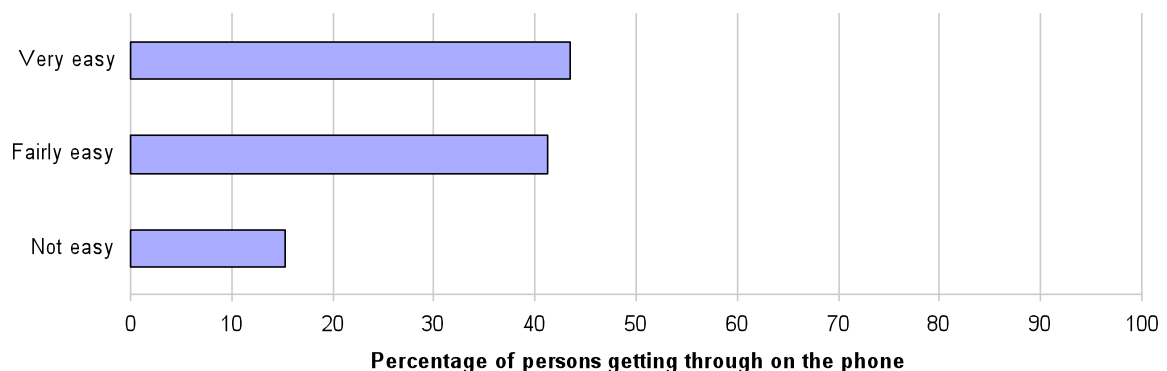
#### Getting through

3.5 Patients were asked how easy it was for them to get through on the phone the last time they had contacted their GP surgery.

3.6 Of patients who remembered their last experience of phoning the surgery:

- 85 per cent found it very easy or fairly easy (44 per cent responded very easy and 41 per cent fairly easy);
- 15 per cent responded they did not find it easy (Chart 3).

Chart 3: Getting through on the phone



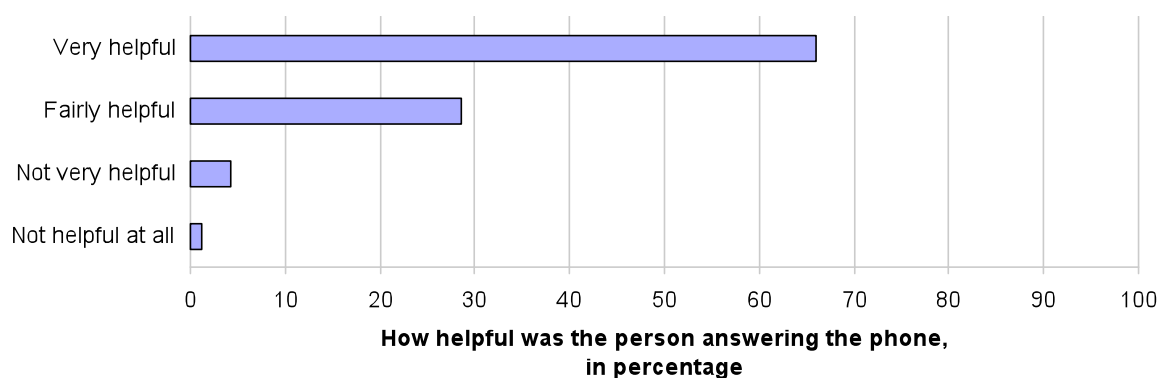
## Helpfulness

3.7 Patients were asked ‘The last time you phoned the GP surgery, how helpful was the person who answered?’

3.8 Of the patients who remembered their last call:

- 95 per cent found the person who answered very helpful or fairly helpful (66 per cent responded very helpful and 29 per cent fairly helpful);
- 5 per cent responded that the person who answered was either not very helpful or not helpful at all (Chart 4).

Chart 4: How helpful was the person who answered the phone at the GP surgery?



## Surgery opening hours

3.9 Patients were asked what they thought of the opening hours of their GP surgery.

- 80 per cent were happy with the opening hours;
- 11 per cent found it too difficult to get time away from work during opening hours;
- 2 per cent responded that the opening hours were not convenient for another reason;
- 8 per cent did not know what the opening hours were.

## Two working day access to see a doctor or nurse

3.10 Often a patient's first and only contact with the NHS is through their GP practice. It is vital, therefore, that every member of the public has fast and convenient access to their local primary medical services to ensure better health outcomes and a good patient experience. Every NHS Board in Scotland is required to meet a HEAT<sup>3</sup> standard that monitors the percentage of patients able to obtain access within two working days and book an appointment in advance to an appropriate healthcare professional. GP practices are expected to provide reasonable appropriate access for their patients as part of their services.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms/partnerstories/NHSScotlandperformance>

- 3.11 In the survey patients were asked, when they had needed to contact their GP surgery quite urgently, if they had been able to see or speak to a doctor or nurse within two working days.
- 3.12 Of those patients who were able to remember:
- 85 per cent could see or speak to a doctor or nurse within two working days compared to 90 per cent in 2009/10.
- 3.13 Until 2010/11 GP practices were allocated some funding based on the percentage of their patients able to obtain 48 hour and advance access. The decrease in the percentage of patients able to get 48 hour access is the second largest (5 percentage point) found in this survey compared to the 2009/10 results, the largest being for the overall arrangements to see a doctor (6 percentage point reduction). The reasons for this large decrease are not clear and to understand them fully would require further detailed exploration; however in the absence of financial incentives targeting 48 hour access, practices may have focused on other aspects of quality. For example there was a 3 percentage point increase in the percentage of patients who felt that they had enough time with their doctor.
- 3.14 Of those 15 per cent who were unable to see or speak to a doctor or nurse within two working days:
- 45 per cent said they had not been offered a chance to see or speak to anyone within two working days;
  - 38 per cent reported that the person they wanted to see was not available in the next two days;
  - 12 per cent reported that the times available were not suitable for them;
  - 5 per cent were unable for another reason.
- 3.15 For the HEAT standard we count patients as being able to obtain two working day access if they were offered an appointment, but the person they wanted to see was unavailable or the time did not suit them.
- 93 per cent of patients were able to see or speak to a doctor or nurse within two working days, or were offered an appointment but either the person they wanted to see was unavailable or the time was not suitable. This is two per cent lower than in 2009/10.

### **Book an appointment in advance**

- 3.16 Patients were asked if their GP surgery allowed them to make an appointment with a doctor three or more working days in advance.
- 24 per cent of patients said they did not know if they could book an appointment 3 or more days in advance;
  - Of those who did know, 80 per cent responded that their GP practice allowed them to book an appointment three or more working days in advance. The remaining 20 per cent responded that their GP practice did not allow them to.

## **Preferred doctor**

3.17 The survey asked patients if they usually saw the doctor they preferred when making an appointment.

- For patients at GP surgeries where there is usually more than one doctor, 21 per cent of patients indicated that they do not have a preferred doctor. This percentage remains the same as in 2009/10.
- Of the patients who have a preferred doctor, 79 per cent reported that they are usually able to see the doctor that they prefer. This is a one percentage point decrease compared to 2009/10.

## **Overall arrangements to see a doctor or a nurse**

3.18 Patients were asked to rate the overall arrangements for getting to see a doctor and/or a nurse in their GP surgery. Patients rated the overall arrangements for getting to see a nurse better than for doctors.

- 75 per cent of patients rated the overall arrangements to see a doctor as excellent or good compared to 81 per cent in 2009/10;
- 8 per cent of patients rated the overall arrangements to see a doctor as poor or very poor compared to 6 per cent in 2009/10.
- 84 per cent of patients rated the overall arrangements to see a nurse as excellent or good compared to 87 per cent in 2009/10;
- 3 per cent of patients rated the overall arrangements to see a nurse as poor or very poor compared to 2 per cent in 2009/10.

## 4 GP PRACTICES – THE RECEPTION AND ENVIRONMENT

### Summary

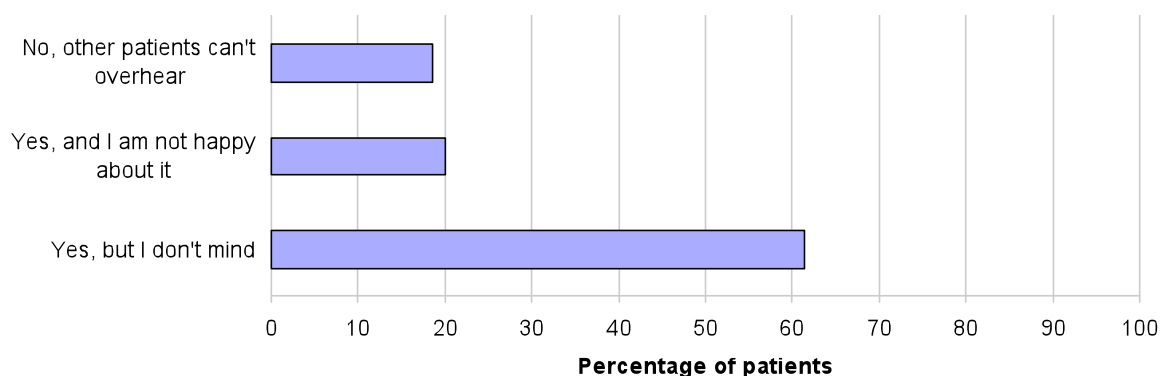
4.1 Overall patients' experience of the reception area and reception staff is fairly positive. Most patients found the reception staff very helpful or fairly helpful and almost all patients found the reception area very clean or fairly clean. A large proportion of patients also found that the wait to be seen after they had arrived at the GP surgery was reasonable. More information on these results and other questions relating to the GP surgery reception and environment are outlined below.

### Privacy in the reception area

4.2 Patients were asked whether, during their visits to the GP surgery in the last twelve months, other patients could overhear what they said to the staff in the reception area.

- 19 per cent said they could not be overheard by other patients while talking to staff. 20 per cent of patients said that other patients could overhear them and were not happy about it and 61 per cent said they could be overheard but did not mind (Chart 5).

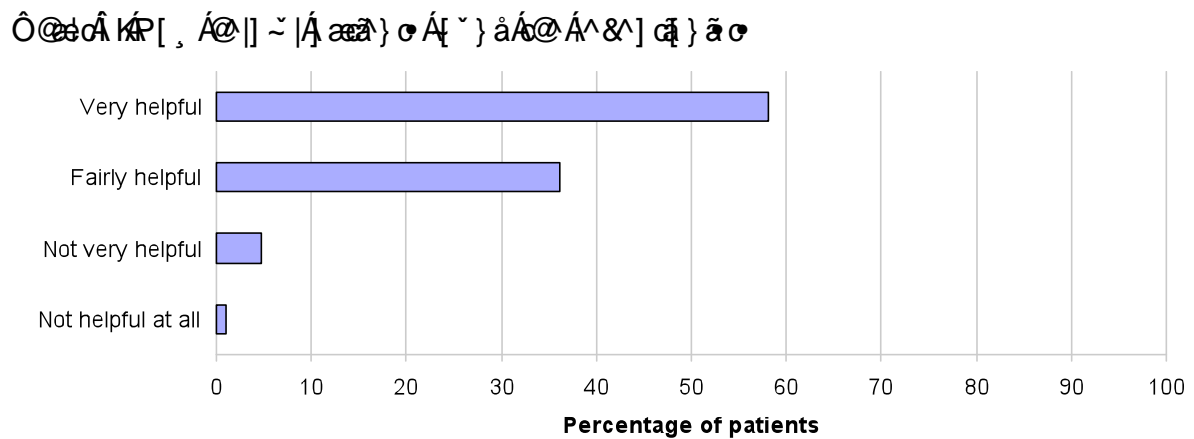
Chart 5: Can other patients overhear what you say to the staff in the reception area?



### Receptionists

4.3 Patients were asked how helpful they had found the receptionists during their visits to the GP surgery in the last twelve months.

- 94 per cent of patients found the receptionists very helpful or fairly helpful in their visits in the last twelve months (58 per cent found the receptionists very helpful and 36 per cent fairly helpful);
- 6 percent found the receptionist not very helpful or not helpful at all (Chart 6).



### Cleanliness of the GP surgery

4.4 Patients were asked for the first time in this year's survey how clean they had found the GP surgery or health centre during their visits in the last twelve months.

- 76 per cent of patients found their GP surgery very clean;
- 23 per cent of patients found it fairly clean;
- 1 percent of patients found it not very clean.

### Waiting to be seen after arriving at the GP surgery

4.5 Patients were asked how they felt about the time they usually had to wait to be seen after arriving at their GP surgery, during their visits in the last twelve months.

- Of patients who could remember, 87 per cent thought that the time they had usually waited to be seen after arriving at their GP surgery was reasonable while 13 per cent thought that it was too long;
- Results are very similar to the 2009/10 survey, where 88 per cent of patients rated the time they had to wait as reasonable.



## 5 GP PRACTICES – CONSULTATIONS WITH DOCTORS AND NURSES

### Summary

- 5.1 The 2011/12 survey results showed that patients were mainly positive about their experiences of consultation with doctors and nurses. In most areas patients reported a better experience compared to the 2009/10 survey.
- 5.2 Patients' experience of their involvement in decisions around their care and treatment remained very positive, with over 8 out of 10 patients being involved as much as they wanted to be. More information on these results and other questions relating to the consultations with doctors and nurses are described in the following sections.

### Introduction

- 5.3 This survey asks a series of questions on experiences of consultation with doctors and nurses, which explores some of the key features of patient-centred care. An important element of the NHSScotland Quality Strategy<sup>4</sup> is to support person-centred care. Similarly, delivering person or patient centred care is one of the six core competencies required to be a trained general practitioner. It is based on the concepts of autonomy, human rights and choice.
- 5.4 The Charter of Patient Rights and Responsibilities is currently being introduced through the Patient Rights (Scotland) Act 2011<sup>5</sup>. It an information document for patients and members of the public and sets out what they can expect when they use NHS services and receive NHS care in Scotland. It also details what the NHS in Scotland expects of patients in return. It aims to support good communication between patient and their carers and health staff to deliver high quality, person centred, effective and safe care, including empowering and supporting people in self management and self care where relevant.

### Doctors

- 5.5 Of patients who had visited their GP surgery in the last year, 92 per cent had seen a doctor.
- 5.6 In the following section of the survey patients were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with six statements about the last time they saw a doctor at their GP surgery. The six statements were
- The doctor listened to me
  - I felt that the doctor had all the information needed to treat me
  - The doctor was considerate and understanding

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/05/10102307/0>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2012/04/6273>

- The doctor talked in a way that helped me understand my condition and treatment
- I felt confident in the doctor's ability to treat me
- I had enough time with the doctor.

5.7 Patients were most positive about doctors listening to them, with 95 per cent agreeing or strongly agreeing that their doctor listened to them. This is a one percentage point increase from the 2009/10 survey.

5.8 The largest increase from 2009/10 (3 percentage points) comes from patients responding positively to having enough time with the doctor.

5.9 'The doctor talked in a way that helped me understand my condition and treatment' is the only statement showing a decrease (1 percentage point) from the 2009/10 results.

Table 1: Summary results of questions about doctors

Statement <sup>1</sup>	2011/12			Change from 2009/10 in positive % <sup>3 4</sup>
	Disagree or strongly disagree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree or strongly agree (%)	
The doctor listened to me	2	3	95	1
The doctor was considerate and understanding <sup>2</sup>	3	5	92	n/a
The doctor talked in a way that helped me understand my condition and treatment	3	7	91	-1
I had enough time with the doctor	4	6	90	3
I felt that the doctor had all the information needed to treat me	3	7	90	2
I felt confident in the doctor's ability to treat me	3	6	90	0

Notes:

1. Statements sorted by percentage of patients strongly agreeing or agreeing.
2. This statement was changed from last survey and therefore results are not comparable.
3. Positive percentage results are based on agree and strongly agree answers.
4. All changes in this table are statistically significant
5. Totals may not add due to rounding

## **Nurses**

- 5.10 Of patients who had visited their GP surgery in the last year, 69 per cent had seen a nurse.
- 5.11 The next question in the survey asked about the same statements for nurses as for doctors. The six statements were
- The nurse listened to me
  - I felt that the nurse had all the information needed to treat me
  - The nurse was considerate and understanding
  - The nurse talked in a way that helped me understand my condition and treatment
  - I felt confident in the nurse's ability to treat me
  - I had enough time with the nurse.
- 5.12 Overall patients expressed a more positive experience this year than they had done in the previous survey, with results increasing or staying the same for all questions that could be compared.
- 5.13 96 per cent of patients agreed or strongly agreed with three statements: patients had enough time with the nurse, the nurse listened to them and the nurse was considerate and understanding.
- 5.14 The largest increase from 2009/10 (3 percentage points) comes from patients responding positively to 'I feel that the nurse had all the information needed to treat me' (Table 2).

Table 2: Summary results of questions about nurses

Statement <sup>1</sup>	2011/12			Change from 2009/10 in positive % <sup>3</sup>
	Disagree or strongly disagree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree or strongly agree (%)	
I had enough time with the nurse	1	3	96	1
The nurse listened to me	1	3	96	0
The nurse was considerate and understanding <sup>2</sup>	1	3	96	n/a
I felt confident in the nurse's ability to treat me	2	4	95	2
I felt that the nurse had all the information needed to treat me	2	4	94	3
The nurse talked in a way that helped me understand my condition and treatment	1	6	93	0

Notes:

1. Statements sorted by percentage of patients strongly agreeing or agreeing.
2. This statement was changed from last survey and therefore results are not comparable.
3. Positive percentage results are based on agree and strongly agree answers.
4. All changes in this table are statistically significant
5. Totals may not add due to rounding

### Patient involvement in decisions around their care and treatment

5.15 Patients were asked whether they were involved as much as they wanted to in decisions about their care and treatment.

- 88 per cent of patients stated that they had been involved as much as they wanted to be. This has remained unchanged from the previous survey in 2009/10
- 7 per cent answered they had not been involved enough
- 3 per cent answered they had been involved more than they wanted to be
- 1 per cent answered they had not wished to be involved.

### Patient's ability to work

5.16 Work is important for keeping healthy and returning to work can help recovery from a condition. If a health condition makes it difficult to keep working, health professionals should offer advice on how a patient can return to work and on what discussions they can have with their employer to support this. Advice on a Fit Note can provide help for patients and employers.

5.17 The statement of fitness for work, or Fit Note, was introduced in 6 April 2010 to replace the Sick Note. With the Fit Note “doctors are able to advise people who are on sick leave for over 7 days whether, with extra support from their employer, they could return to work earlier.”

5.18 We introduced new questions on patient’s ability to work in this year’s survey. Patients were asked

- whether they had seen any health professionals in the last twelve months about something that affected their ability to work, and
- whether the health professionals had discussed this with them and how useful their discussion had been.

5.19 17 per cent of patients answered they had seen a health professional in the last twelve months about something that affected their ability to work.

Of these,

- 70 per cent of patients answered that health professionals had discussed their ability to work with them and they had found it useful;
- 9 per cent of patients answered that health professionals had discussed their ability to work with them and they had not found it useful;
- 10 per cent of patients did not have any discussions with health professionals but would have found it useful;
- 11 per cent did not have any discussions with health professionals but did not want to.

## 6 GP PRACTICES – MEDICINES

### Summary

6.1 86 per cent of patients were prescribed medicines at their GP surgery in the last twelve months and most had a good understanding of, and access to, these medicines.

### Introduction

6.2 Medicines are the most frequently used intervention in healthcare. In primary care, there are some 90 million prescriptions dispensed each year with an annual drugs bill of around £1 billion<sup>6</sup> (around 10% of the annual healthcare budget).

6.3 Policies centre on promoting a healthier Scotland, and that everyone can access the medicines they need and make choices about managing and improving their health.

6.4 Importantly, more effective medicine use can help

- deliver better care outcomes for patients
- reduce the incidence of avoidable hospital admissions and
- improve the efficiency and effectiveness of treatment.

6.5 Central to this is supporting the patient with the right level of information and advice in taking his/her medicine as prescribed by a doctor or other trained healthcare prescribers (such as a pharmacist or specialist nurse). This is an objective common to a range of healthcare professionals, including GPs and community pharmacists / chemists and aims to improve health outcomes as well as reduce waste in prescribed medicines.

6.6 We reviewed the statements in the 2011/12 survey and added the following two new statements:

- It was easy enough for me to get my medicines
- I took my prescription as I was supposed to.

6.7 We also changed the way we asked this question, moving from asking how often patients had experienced each of the statements during the year, to asking how much they agreed or disagreed with them for the last time they were prescribed medicines. Despite these changes, we have compared results with the previous survey and the results are very similar. Positive responses ('always/most of the time' and 'strongly agree/agree') were compared.

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<sup>6</sup> See <http://www.isdscotland.org/Health-Topics/Prescribing-and-Medicines/Community-Dispensing/Prescription-Cost-Analysis/>

## Statements about medicines

6.8 Patients were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with six statements about the last time they had been prescribed medicines at their GP surgery. The six statements were:

- It was easy enough for me to get my medicines
- I knew enough about what my medicines were for
- I knew enough about how and when to take my medicines
- I knew enough about possible side effects of my medicines
- I would know what to do if I had any problems with my medicines
- I took my prescription as I was supposed to.

6.9 98 per cent agreed or strongly agreed with the statement ‘I knew enough about how and when to take my medicines’ and ‘I took my prescription as I was supposed to’.

6.10 The lowest result for these statements related to ‘I knew enough about the possible side effects of my medicines’ – only 83 per cent agreed or strongly agreed with this statement (Table 3).

Table 3: Summary results of questions about medicines

Statement <sup>1</sup>	2011/12			Change from 2009/10 in positive % <sup>3 4</sup>
	Disagree or strongly disagree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree or strongly agree (%)	
I knew enough about how and when to take my medicines	1	1	98	-1
I took my prescription as I was supposed to <sup>2</sup>	1	1	98	n/a
I knew enough about what my medicines were for	1	2	96	0
It was easy enough for me to get my medicines <sup>2</sup>	2	2	96	n/a
I would know what to do if I had any problems with my medicines	3	6	90	-1
I knew enough about possible side effects of my medicines	6	11	83	-2

Notes:

1. Statements sorted by percentage of patients strongly agreeing or agreeing.
2. New statement for the 2011/12 survey.
3. Positive percentage results are based on agree and strongly agree answers.
4. All changes in this table are statistically significant
5. Totals may not add due to rounding

## 7 GP PRACTICES – OVERALL RESULTS

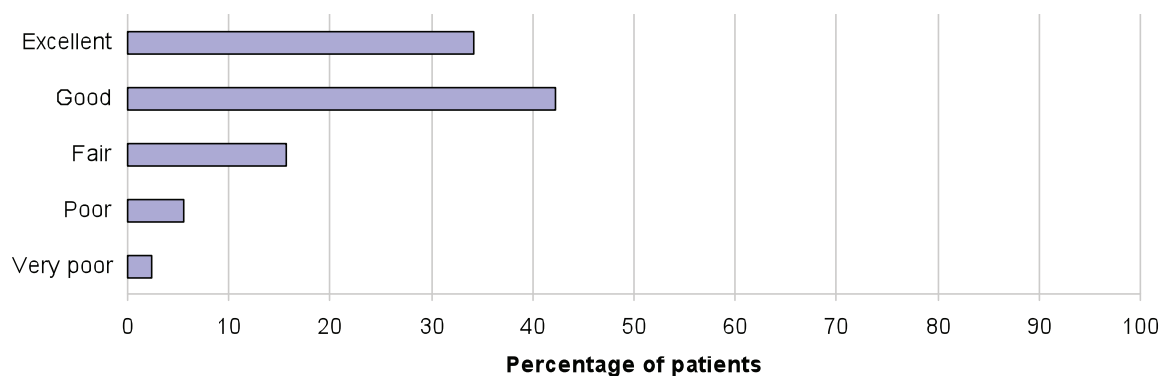
### Summary

- 7.1 Most patients agreed or strongly agreed that they had been treated with dignity and respect, and with kindness and understanding by the staff at their GP surgery. Overall 89 per cent of patients felt that the care provided by the GP surgery was excellent or good.
- 7.2 The areas that patients were most likely to answer negatively about were accessing GP services and referral to another NHS health professional.

### GP referral to another NHS health professional

- 7.3 The 2011/12 survey included a new question on referrals: ‘Thinking of the last time your GP referred you, how would you rate the arrangements for getting to see another NHS health professional?’
- 76 per cent of patients who were referred by their GP in the last twelve months to see another NHS professional rated the referral arrangements as excellent or good;
  - 8 per cent rated the arrangements as poor or very poor (Chart 7).

Chart 7: Referral arrangements to another NHS health professional



### How patients were treated by the staff at their GP surgery

- 7.4 Patients were asked about how much they agreed or disagreed with the following statements in relation to the way they had been treated by the staff at their GP surgery
- I am treated with dignity and respect;
  - I am treated with kindness and understanding.
- 7.5 The statement on kindness and understanding replaced the statement on personal values and beliefs used in the 2009/10 survey.



- 7.6 91 per cent of patients agreed or strongly agreed that they were treated with dignity and respect, while 7 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed and 2 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed with that statement. There is a reduction of 3 percentage points in the proportion of patients who agreed or strongly agreed to this statement compared to the 2009/10 survey (Table 4).
- 7.7 88 per cent of patients agreed or strongly agreed that they were treated with kindness and understanding, while 10 per cent neither agreed nor disagreed and 3 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed (Table 4).

Table 4: Summary results of statements about dignity, respect, kindness and understanding

Statement	Disagree or strongly disagree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Agree or strongly agree (%)
I am treated with dignity and respect	2	7	91
I am treated with kindness and understanding	3	10	88

Note:

Totals may not add due to rounding

### Overall experience

- 7.8 Patients were asked to rate their overall experience of the care provided by their GP surgery.
- 89 per cent of patients rated their overall experience of care by the GP surgery as excellent or good, a reduction of 1 percentage point from the 2009/10 results (Table 5).
  - 9 per cent of patients rated their overall experience as fair and 2 per cent as poor or very poor (Table 5).

Table 5: Summary results of question on overall experience of care provided by the GP surgery

Question	2011/12			Change from 2009/10 in positive % <sup>1</sup>
	Poor or very poor (%)	Fair (%)	Excellent or good (%)	
Overall, how would you rate the care provided by your GP surgery?	2	9	89	-1

<sup>1</sup> This change is statistically significant

## Top five and bottom five results

7.9 The question that most patients answered positively was about how clean their GP surgery or health centre was with 76 per cent answering that it was very clean and 23 per cent that it was fairly clean (Table 6). Three of the questions that patients answered most positively were about medicines.

Table 6: Top five results

Question	Percentage of patients answering positively		
	Strongly agree	Agree	Total
The GP surgery is clean	76 (very clean)	23 (fairly clean)	99
Patients took their prescription as they were supposed to	60	38	98
Patients know enough about how and when to take their medicines	59	39	98
Patients know enough about what their medicines are for	56	40	96
Patients have enough time with the nurse	56	40	96

7.10 The question that most patients answered negatively was about trying to make an appointment with a doctor 3 or more working days in advance with 20 per cent saying that they were unable to (Table 7). All of the bottom five results are related to accessing GP services.

Table 7: Bottom five results

Question	Percentage of patients answering negatively
Able to book a doctors appointment 3 or more working days in advance	20
Can usually see preferred doctor	16
It was easy to get through on the phone	15
Could see or speak to a doctor or nurse within 2 working days	15
Time waiting to be seen at GP surgery	13

## Changes since the 2009/10 survey

7.11 The biggest improvements compared to the 2009/10 survey were in the percentage of patients who felt that they had enough time with the doctor (+3 percentage points) and the percentage who felt that the nurse had all the information needed to treat them (+3 percentage points).

7.12 The biggest decreases in the results compared to 2009/10 were in the percentage of patients who rated the overall access arrangements as good or excellent (-6 percentage points) and the percentage of patients who were able to see or speak to a doctor or nurse within two working days (-5 percentage points).

## 8 VARIATION IN GP PRACTICE RESULTS

8.1 The survey covered 996 GP surgeries in Scotland. Reports for individual GP practices are available at: <http://surveyresults.bettertogetherscotland.com/gp>

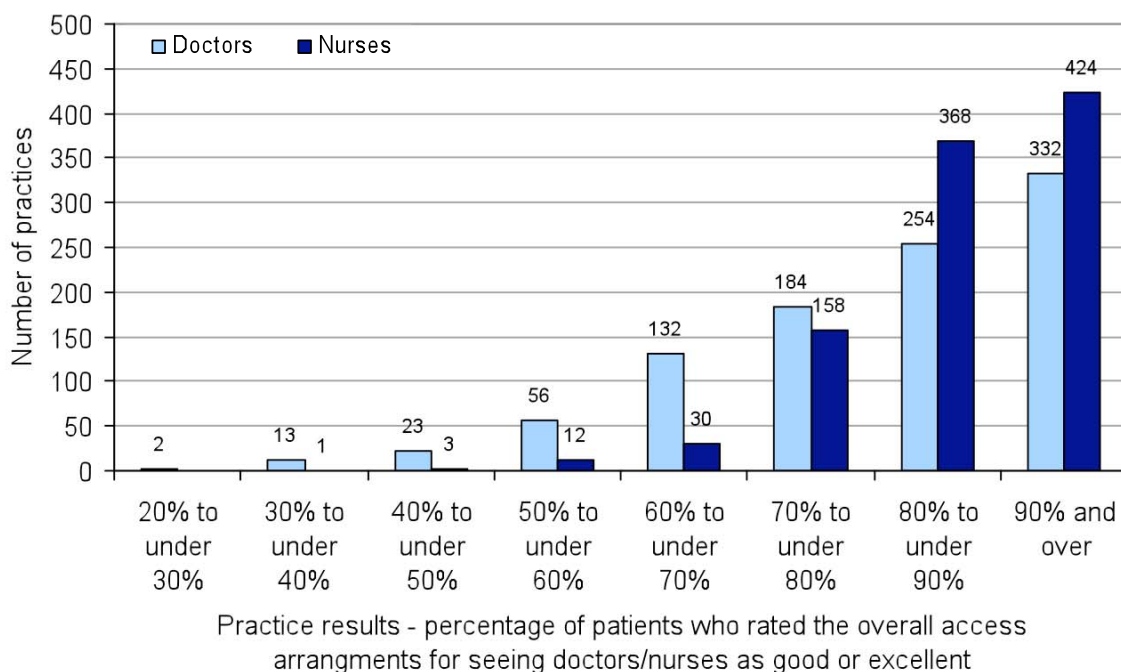
8.2 This section explores the variation in the results of GP practices, focusing on the overall experience of accessing services and the care provided.

### Access arrangements

8.3 Nationally 75 per cent of patients rated the overall arrangements for seeing a doctor as good or excellent. There was considerable variation in the results for individual practices.

- At 332 GP practices at least 90 per cent of patients rated the overall arrangements for seeing a doctor as good or excellent. This equates to 33 per cent of GP practices;
- At 424 GP practices at least 90 per cent of patients rated the overall arrangements for seeing a nurse as good or excellent. This equates to 43 per cent of GP practices.

Chart 8: Distribution of practice results for overall access arrangements

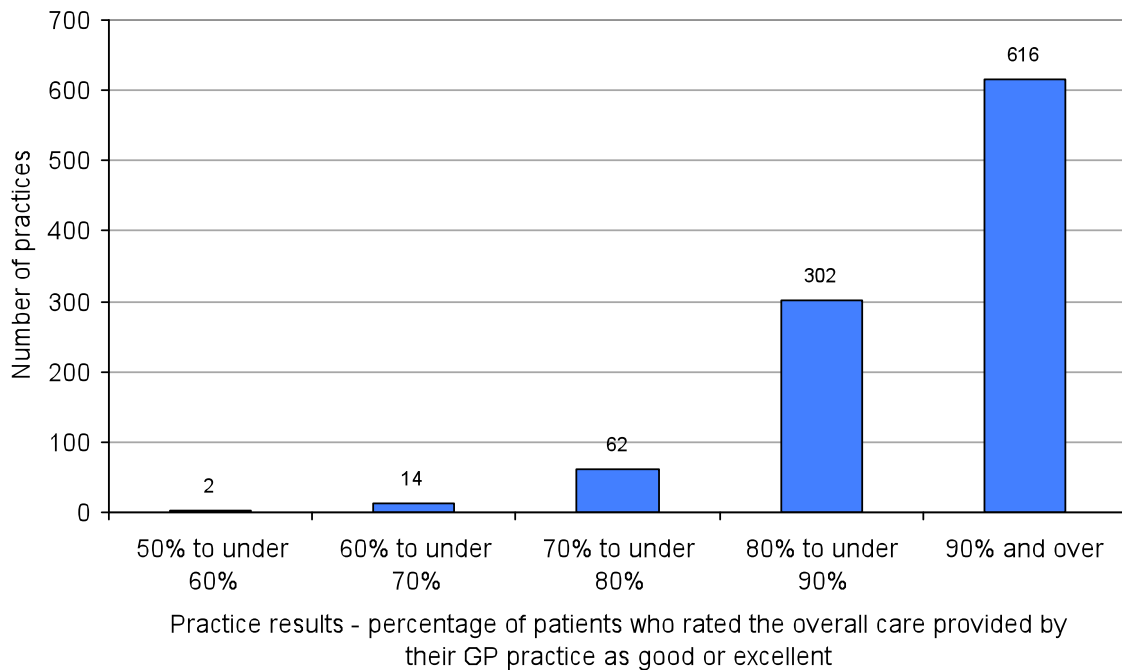


### Overall care provided by the GP surgery

8.4 Nationally 89 per cent of patients rated the overall care provided by their GP surgery as good or excellent.

- At 616 GP practices at least 90 per cent of patients rated the overall care provided by their GP surgery as good or excellent. This equates to 62 per cent of GP practices;
- At 302 GP practices at least 80 per cent, but less than 90 per cent of patients rated the overall care provided by their GP surgery as good or excellent. This equates to 30 per cent of GP practices;
- At 78 GP practices less than 80 per cent of patients rated the overall care provided by their GP surgery as good or excellent. This equates to 8 per cent of GP practices (
- Chart 9).

Chart 9 Distribution of practice results for overall care provided by GP practice



## 9 OUT-OF-HOURS HEALTHCARE

### Summary

- 9.1 Patients were generally positive about their experiences of out-of-hours healthcare with 72 per cent rating their overall care they received as good or excellent. However this percentage is lower than the percentage of patients who rated the overall care provided by their GP practice as good or excellent (89 per cent). Of patients seeking help out of hours, 69 per cent spoke to NHS 24 first. More than half of patients seeking help out of hours were treated by an out-of-hours service or in A&E/ Casualty. More details on these and other findings are outlined below.

### Introduction

- 9.2 From 1 April 2004, the Primary Medical Services (Scotland) Act 2004 placed a duty on NHS boards to provide 'primary medical services' for everyone living in the NHS board area. These are the services provided by GP practices to patients registered with them. NHS boards have a legal responsibility to ensure these services are provided at all times, including out-of-hours.
- 9.3 The out-of-hours period is: the period beginning at 6.30pm from Monday to Thursday and ending at 8.00am the following day; the period between 6.30pm on Friday and 8.00am the following Monday; and Christmas Day, New Year's Day and other public or local holidays.
- 9.4 Since 2004, GPs have had the option of continuing to provide a service during the out-of-hours period or to opt out of providing this service on condition that there is an acceptable alternative. Over recent years alternative arrangements for providing out-of-hours care have been established. In many cases this involves a number of agencies and healthcare professionals working together to provide an integrated service for patients.
- 9.5 Many patients contact the NHS in a way that is unplanned, for example if they become ill during the day or night, or at the weekend. It is crucial that the NHS responds in a way that meets the needs of the patient in a timely, person centred, safe and clinically appropriate way. Often the journey of care will involve more than one part of the healthcare system so it is important for systems and process to be joined up, and for patient information to be shared by the healthcare professionals involved in supporting patients.

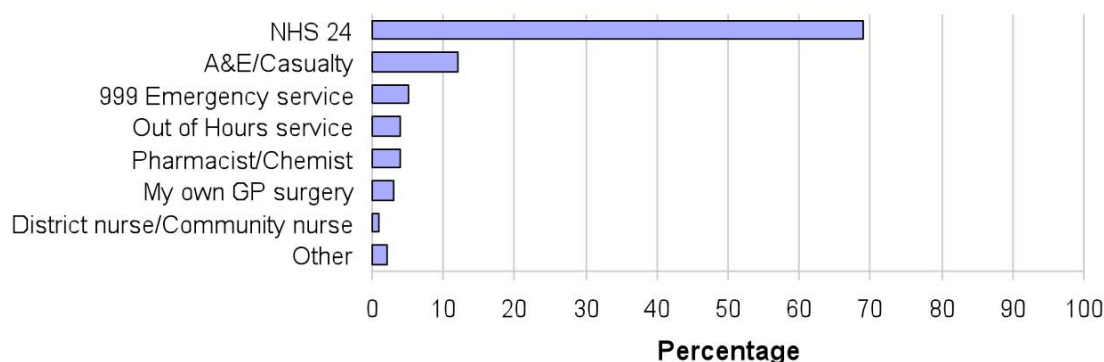
### Use of out-of-hours NHS services

- 9.6 The survey introduced questions on patients use and experience of out-of-hours services.
- 9.7 Of patients surveyed, 26 per cent had tried to get medical help, treatment or advice, for themselves or someone they were looking after, when their GP surgery was closed. Chart 10 and Chart 11 show which services patients first contacted to get help out of hours and who they ended up being seen by.

9.8 Of these patients who had sought medical help, treatment or advice when their GP surgery was closed:

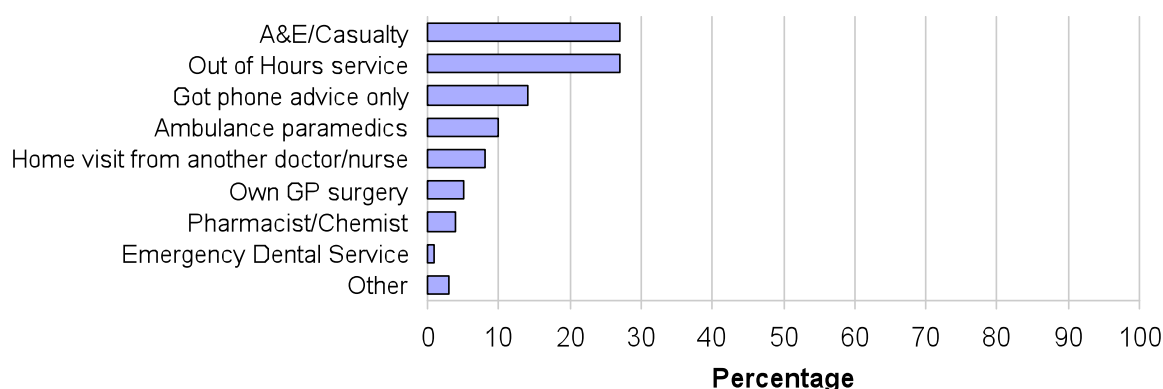
- 69 per cent of patients who contacted a service outside their GP surgery opening hours initially contacted NHS 24
- 12 per cent initially contacted A&E/Casualty services

Chart 10: NHS service patients spoke to or got to first when they tried to get help out of hours



9.9 Over half of patients who contacted a service outside their GP surgery opening hours ended up being treated in out-of-hours or A&E/Casualty services (both 27 per cent). Another 14 per cent of patients received phone advice only.

Chart 11: Services patients ended up being treated by when they used out-of-hours services



9.10 The most common journeys through out-of-hours services (Table 8) were:

- 23 per cent of patients first contacted NHS 24 and were then seen by the out-of-hours service;
- 13 per cent of patients first contacted NHS 24 and were then treated in A&E/ Casualty;
- 13 per cent of patients first contacted NHS 24 and received phone advice only;
- 11 per cent of patients went to A&E / casualty and were treated there.

Table 8 Percentage of patients being treated by each service, by the service they spoke to first

Service they spoke to first:	Service they ended up being treated by:									
	Out-of-hours service	A&E/ Casualty	Got phone advice only	Ambulance paramedics	Home visit from another doctor/ nurse	Own GP surgery	Pharmacist/ Chemist	Emergency Dental Service	Other	Total
NHS 24	23	13	13	6	7	3	1	1	2	69
A&E/Casualty	*	11	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	12
999 Emergency service	*	1	*	3	*	*	*	*	*	5
Pharmacist/ Chemist	1	*	*	*	*	*	3	*	*	4
Out-of-hours service	2	*	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	4
My own GP surgery	*	*	*	*	*	2	*	*	*	3
District nurse/ Community nurse	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	1
Other	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	1	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>

\* Less than 0.5%, but greater than 0%

## Experience of out-of-hours healthcare

9.11 Patients were asked to rate their overall experience of the care provided by out-of-hours services. In total 72 per cent of patients rated the overall care they received out of hours as excellent or good, with 11 per cent rating it as poor or very poor. It is worth noting that fewer patients rated out-of-hours care positively than did for overall care provided by their GP practice, where 89 percent rated their care as good or excellent.

9.12 The survey also asked patients who had tried to get help out of hours how much they agreed or disagreed with the following five statements:

- The time I waited was reasonable
- I felt that the person had all the information needed to treat me
- I felt I was listened to
- Things were explained to me in a way I could understand
- I felt that I got the right treatment or advice



9.13 The statement that the most patients agreed with was that things were explained to them in a way they could understand (85 per cent). The statement that the fewest patients agreed with was that the time they waited was reasonable (76 per cent). The results are shown in the table below.

Table 9: Summary of results of out-of-hours questions

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Disagree or strongly disagree (%)</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree (%)</b>	<b>Agree or strongly agree (%)</b>
Things were explained to me in a way I could understand	6	9	85
I felt I was listened to	7	9	84
I felt that I got the right treatment or advice	10	10	80
I felt that the person had all the information needed to treat me	11	12	77
The time I waited was reasonable	15	9	76

Notes:

1. Statements sorted by percentage of patients strongly agreeing or agreeing.
2. Totals may not add due to rounding

## 10 OUTCOMES FROM NHS TREATMENTS

### Introduction

- 10.1 One of the key actions identified in the Quality Strategy<sup>7</sup> was to “Improve and embed patient-reported outcomes and experience across all NHS Scotland services”. Patient Reported Outcome Measures (PROMs) are recommended in the Quality Strategy for use across NHS Scotland for service improvement, as well as to track outcomes nationally as a quality outcome indicator.
- 10.2 While the survey was designed to better understand people’s experience of NHS services locally and nationally, there were no questions asking patients how they felt about their outcomes from NHS treatment. A small number of new questions were therefore developed to test the idea of measuring this across Scotland, with the intention to use the data to calculate a Quality Outcome Indicator. This is detailed at the end of the chapter.
- 10.3 The new questions are based around three dimensions of health status – pain, ability to do usual activities and anxiety/ depression. They ask people about their experience of the impact of treatment on these three dimensions separately. While it is recognised that people cannot easily quantify change in health status, they are able to identify whether or not they have experienced an improvement. The “too soon to say” option allowed an answer for people who have been treated but are not yet expected to see a benefit.
- 10.4 These questions were added on an experimental basis as, while they tested well on individual patients it was not clear how they would work on a larger scale. At the aggregate level they should give some measure of the impact of treatment and show improvement over time. While the questions are not specific enough to be directly useful for local improvement (e.g. we do not know what treatments people have had, or where they had them), the results raise some interesting questions that merit further research with patients.
- 10.5 The results of these questions are not specifically related to GPs, therefore they have not been included in the individual practice reports. However, the NHS Boards and CHP reports will include these results, which will be used to further explore how well services are meeting people’s needs and expectations.
- 10.6 More research is needed to better understand these results, and how they relate to people’s expectations of their outcomes as well as the impact of treatment and co-existing conditions.

### People’s ability to do their usual activities

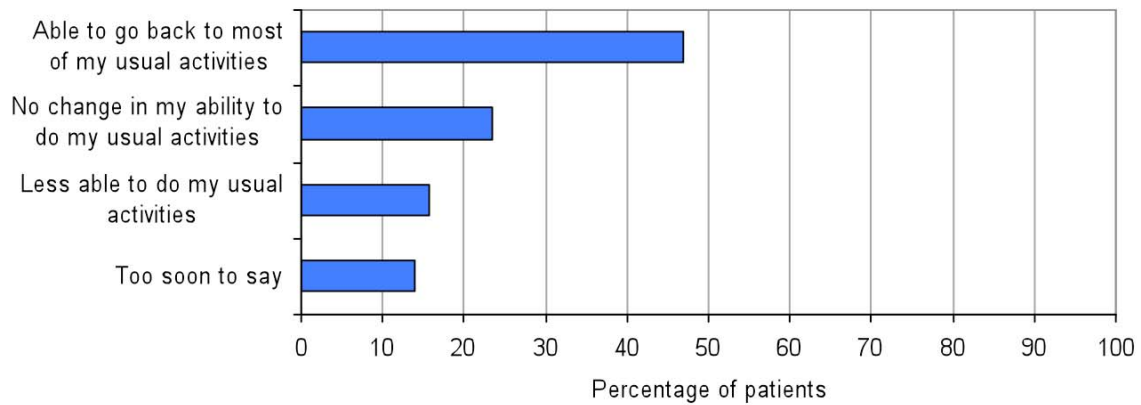
- 10.7 Respondents were asked if they had received NHS treatment or advice in the last year because of something that was affecting their ability to do their usual activities.
- 35 per cent of patients answered yes

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/05/10102307/0>

10.8 The results are shown in Chart 12. Of patients who had sought treatment or advice, 47 per cent were able to go back to most of their usual activities. However 16 per cent were less able to do their usual activities.

Chart 12: The effect of treatment on patients' ability to do their usual activities



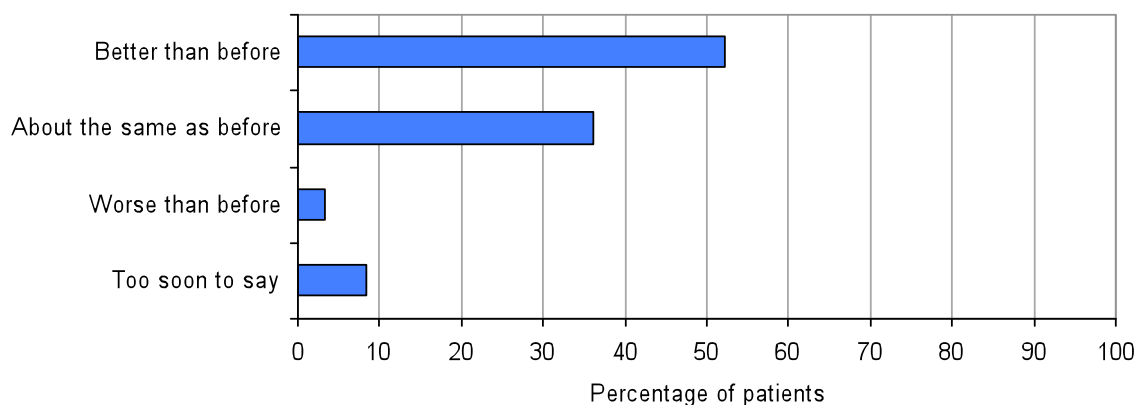
### Pain or discomfort

10.9 Patients were asked if they had received NHS treatment or advice because of something that was causing them pain or discomfort.

- 58 per cent of patients answered yes

10.10 Of patients who had sought treatment or advice, 52 per cent reported that the effect of the treatment was to make them feel better than before. The results are shown in Chart 13.

Chart 13: The effect of treatment on pain or discomfort



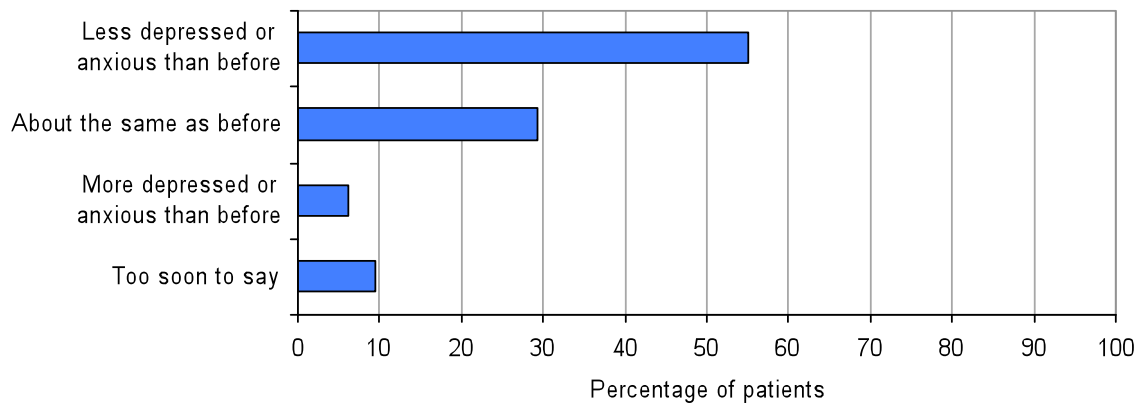
## Depression or anxiety

10.11 Patients were asked if they had received NHS treatment or advice because of something that was making them feel depressed or anxious.

- 17 per cent of patients answered yes

10.12 Of patients who had sought treatment or advice, 55 per cent reported that the effect of the treatment was to make them feel better than before. The results are shown in Chart 14.

Chart 14: The effect of treatment on depression or anxiety



## Quality Outcome Indicator

10.13 The Quality Strategy emphasises the importance of measurement, and a Quality Measurement Framework has been developed<sup>8</sup> in order to provide a structure for describing and aligning the wide range of measurement work with the Quality Ambitions and Outcomes. As part of this framework, 12 national Quality Outcome Indicators have been identified, which are intended to show national progress towards achievement of the Quality Ambitions.

10.14 One of these twelve Quality Outcome Indicators relates to Patient Reported Outcomes. While initial proposals envisaged that this indicator would be built up from local patient feedback information, it was recognised that this would require long term development and that therefore a high level indicator should be captured using this national survey.

10.15 The initial value of the Patient Reported Outcomes Quality Outcome Indicator is **75.2**, based on the outcomes questions reported above. Further information on how the indicator has been calculated is available in the technical report. It should be kept in mind that this indicator represents a score and not a percentage value.

10.16 Results by NHS Board are presented in Table 10 below:

Table 10: Outcome Indicator by NHS Board

NHS Board	Outcomes indicator	95% confidence Interval	
		Lower limit	Upper limit
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	74.1	73.2	75.0
NHS Borders	76.3	74.9	77.6
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	74.8	73.5	76.1
NHS Fife	74.2	73.3	75.1
NHS Forth Valley	75.1	74.2	76.0
NHS Grampian	77.1	76.3	77.8
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	74.1	73.7	74.5
NHS Highland	77.7	77.0	78.5
NHS Lanarkshire	73.6	72.9	74.3
NHS Lothian	76.0	75.5	76.6
NHS Orkney	78.5	75.9	81.1
NHS Shetland	78.4	75.8	81.1
NHS Tayside	75.8	75.0	76.7
NHS Western Isles	79.4	77.2	81.6
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>75.2</b>	75.0	75.4

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Health/NHS-Scotland/NHSQuality/MeasuringQualityS>

## 11 RESULTS FOR NHS BOARDS

### Overall results for NHS Boards

- 11.1 More detailed results for NHS Boards are shown in a spreadsheet on the Scottish Government website at:  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Health/GPPatientExperienceSurvey>

### Overall access arrangements

- 11.2 Since the previous survey in 2009/10, there has been a decrease in the percentage of patients rating the overall arrangements for seeing doctors and nurses as good or excellent. This decrease has been seen across almost all NHS Boards (Table 11).
- 11.3 The percentage of patients rating the overall arrangements for getting to see doctors as good or excellent ranged from 69 per cent in NHS Fife and NHS Shetland to 96 per cent in NHS Orkney.
- 11.4 The percentage of patients rating the overall arrangements for getting to see nurses as good or excellent ranged from 80 per cent in NHS Lanarkshire to 97 per cent in NHS Orkney.

Table 11: Rating of overall arrangements for getting to see doctors and nurses

NHS Board	Doctor		Nurse	
	Good or excellent %	Difference from 2009/10	Good or excellent %	Difference from 2009/10
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	72	<b>-8</b>	83	<b>-5</b>
NHS Borders	77	<b>-7</b>	85	<b>-5</b>
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	81	<b>-3</b>	89	<b>-1</b>
NHS Fife	69	<b>-9</b>	81	<b>-5</b>
NHS Forth Valley	75	<b>-5</b>	82	<b>-3</b>
NHS Grampian	71	<b>-7</b>	83	<b>-3</b>
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	80	<b>-4</b>	85	<b>-3</b>
NHS Highland	82	<b>-4</b>	89	<b>-3</b>
NHS Lanarkshire	70	<b>-6</b>	80	<b>-5</b>
NHS Lothian	74	<b>-6</b>	83	<b>-4</b>
NHS Orkney	96	<b>-2</b>	97	<b>-2</b>
NHS Shetland	69	<b>-3</b>	85	<b>0</b>
NHS Tayside	78	<b>-3</b>	86	<b>-3</b>
NHS Western Isles	82	<b>-5</b>	93	<b>2</b>
Scotland	75	<b>-6</b>	84	<b>-3</b>

Note: Statistically significant differences are in bold

## **Arrangements for getting to see other health professionals**

11.5 The percentage of patients rating the overall arrangements for getting to see other health professionals as good or excellent ranged from 73 per cent in NHS Grampian to 87 per cent in NHS Orkney (Table 12).

Table 12 Arrangements for getting to see other health professionals by NHS Board

<b>NHS Board</b>	<b>Poor or very poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good or excellent</b>
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	8	16	77
NHS Borders	6	14	81
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	5	12	82
NHS Fife	7	15	78
NHS Forth Valley	8	16	75
NHS Grampian	10	17	73
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	7	16	77
NHS Highland	6	13	81
NHS Lanarkshire	10	18	73
NHS Lothian	10	16	74
NHS Orkney	4	8	87
NHS Shetland	9	16	75
NHS Tayside	6	13	81
NHS Western Isles	6	11	83
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>76</b>

## **HEAT standards – 48 hour access and advance access**

11.6 Every NHS Board in Scotland is required to meet a HEAT<sup>9</sup> standard that monitors the percentage of patients able to obtain access within two working days and book an appointment in advance to an appropriate healthcare professional. GP practices are expected to provide reasonable appropriate access for their patients as part of their services. The results for 48 hour and advance access HEAT standards are shown in Table 13. More information on the 48 hour HEAT standard is available in 3.15.

11.7 The results for 48 hour access ranged from 89.3 per cent in NHS Fife to 99.4 per cent in NHS Orkney. The results for advance access ranged from 61.7 per cent for NHS Shetland to 98.4 per cent for NHS Orkney.

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/scotPerforms/partnerstories/NHSScotlandperformance>

Table 13 HEAT standards 48 hour and advance access by NHS Board

<b>NHS Board</b>	<b>48 hour access</b>	<b>Advance access<sup>10</sup></b>
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	92.5	77.6
NHS Borders	94.0	85.2
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	96.0	87.2
NHS Fife	89.3	79.6
NHS Forth Valley	91.8	82.5
NHS Grampian	92.0	83.4
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	93.4	80.5
NHS Highland	95.2	86.6
NHS Lanarkshire	90.3	70.5
NHS Lothian	91.8	80.0
NHS Orkney	99.4	98.4
NHS Shetland	97.5	61.7
NHS Tayside	94.9	72.7
NHS Western Isles	97.2	89.1
<b>NHSScotland</b>	<b>92.6</b>	<b>79.6</b>

### **Overall care provided by GP practices**

11.8 There was a small decrease in the percentage of patients rating the overall care provided by their GP surgery as good or excellent across almost all NHS Boards (Table 11). The percentage of patients rating the overall care provided by their GP surgery as good or excellent ranged from 84 per cent in NHS Shetland to 96 per cent in NHS Orkney.

Table 14: Rating of overall care provided by GP surgery

<b>NHS Board</b>	<b>Good or excellent %</b>	<b>Difference from 2009/10</b>
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	88	<b>-2</b>
NHS Borders	90	<b>-4</b>
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	92	0
NHS Fife	86	<b>-4</b>
NHS Forth Valley	88	<b>-3</b>
NHS Grampian	89	<b>-1</b>
NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde	90	<b>-1</b>
NHS Highland	91	<b>-1</b>
NHS Lanarkshire	85	<b>-3</b>
NHS Lothian	88	<b>-1</b>
NHS Orkney	96	<b>-2</b>
NHS Shetland	84	<b>-4</b>
NHS Tayside	90	<b>-1</b>
NHS Western Isles	92	<b>-2</b>
Scotland	89	<b>-1</b>

Note: Statistically significant differences are in bold

<sup>10</sup> The advance access question previously asked patients if they were able to book an appointment with a doctor in advance the last time that they tried to do so. The question now asks patients if their practice allows appointments with doctors to be booked 3 or more working days in advance.



## **Overall rating of care provided out of hours**

11.9 The percentage of patients rating the care provided out of hours as good or excellent ranged from 67 per cent in NHS Borders, NHS Forth Valley and NHS Western Isles to 75 per cent in NHS Lothian and NHS Highland (Table 15).

Table 15 Overall rating of care provided out of hours by NHS Board

<b>NHS Board</b>	<b>Poor or very poor</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Good or excellent</b>
NHS Ayrshire & Arran	10	16	73
NHS Borders	13	19	67
NHS Dumfries & Galloway	12	20	68
NHS Fife	11	18	71
NHS Forth Valley	13	19	67
NHS Grampian	9	17	74
NHS Greater Glasgow & Clyde	10	17	73
NHS Highland	11	15	75
NHS Lanarkshire	11	18	70
NHS Lothian	9	16	75
NHS Orkney	9	22	69
NHS Shetland	12	18	70
NHS Tayside	11	18	71
NHS Western Isles	13	20	67
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>72</b>

Notes:

1. Totals may not add due to rounding

## 12 COMPARISONS WITH REST OF UK

### Summary

- 12.1 Recent surveys of GP services in the rest of the UK show that these patients report similar experiences to Scottish patients. Approximately 90 per cent of Scottish, English, Welsh and Northern Irish patients answered positively about the care provided by their GP practice.

### Comparisons within the UK

- 12.2 GP patient experience surveys were carried out in England<sup>11</sup>, Northern Ireland<sup>12</sup> and Wales<sup>13</sup> in 2011.
- 12.3 England started biannual surveys in 2011; the most recent of these was released on 15 Dec 2011. Data period covered was July-September 2011.
- 12.4 Surveys in Northern Ireland and Wales were both annual surveys carried out in January / February 2011 and released in June 2011. The Northern Irish survey was a postal survey, whereas the Welsh survey was handed out to patients visiting the surgery and only included a few questions on access and demographics.
- 12.5 This section compares the results of the Patient Experience Survey of GP and other local NHS services in Scotland with these surveys where possible.

### *Overall rating of care provided by GP surgery*

- 12.6 The Scottish survey asked patients how they rated the overall care provided by their GP surgery, while the Northern Irish and Welsh surveys asked patients how satisfied they were with the care provided by their surgery. England reviewed this question from previous surveys and asked patients to rate their overall experience of their GP surgery. Although the question was slightly different, Scotland and England show very similar results.
- 12.7 In Scotland 89 per cent of patients rated the overall care provided by their GP surgery as good or excellent. In England 88 per cent of patients rated the overall experience of their GP surgery as very good or fairly good. In Northern Ireland and Wales 94 and 92 per cent respectively said they were satisfied or very satisfied with the care they received at their surgery (Table 16).

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.dh.gov.uk/health/2011/12/gp-patient-survey/>

<sup>12</sup> [http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/gp\\_contracts/gp\\_contract\\_gof/gp\\_patient\\_survey.htm](http://www.dhsspsni.gov.uk/index/hss/gp_contracts/gp_contract_gof/gp_patient_survey.htm)

<sup>13</sup> <http://wales.gov.uk/topics/statistics/headlines/health2011/110616/?lang=en>

Table 16: UK comparisons on care received at surgery

<b>Response</b>	<b>Scottish patients %</b>	<b>English patients %</b>	<b>Northern Irish patients %</b>	<b>Welsh patients %</b>
Scotland - excellent or good England – very good or fairly good Northern Ireland and Wales – very satisfied or fairly satisfied	89	88	94	92
Scotland - fair England – neither good nor poor Northern Ireland and Wales – neither satisfied nor dissatisfied satisfied	9	8	4	5
Scotland – poor or very poor England – fairly poor or very poor Northern Ireland and Wales – fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	2	4	1	3

Notes:

1. Totals may not add due to rounding

### ***Comparisons of statements on doctors between Scotland, England and Northern Ireland***

- 12.8 Patients surveyed in Scotland, England and Northern Ireland were given some statements about their doctor. In Scotland patients answered how much they agreed with each statement, while in England and Northern Ireland patients were asked to rate how good the doctor was at each one. Two of the questions are comparable (Table 17).
- 12.9 Northern Ireland had the highest percentage of patients (93 per cent) who agreed that the doctor had given them enough time. In Scotland more patients agreed that they had enough time with the doctor (90 per cent) than in England (88 per cent).
- 12.10 Scotland had the highest percentage of patients (95 per cent) who agreed that the doctor had listened to them. Northern Ireland had a similar percentage of patients (93 per cent) who agreed that the doctor had listened to them, while England had the lowest percentage (90 per cent).

Table 17: Comparison between doctors in Scotland, England and Northern Ireland

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Scotland Strongly agree or agree %</b>	<b>England Very good or good %</b>	<b>Northern Ireland Very good or good %</b>
Scotland - I have enough time with the doctor England/Northern Ireland – Giving you enough time	90	88	93
Scotland – The doctor listens to me England/Northern Ireland – Listening to you	95	90	93

Note: Results for England have been reweighted to exclude those answering “doesn’t apply”.

12.11 These results are fairly similar to the previous Scottish and English surveys, the most important increase being in the percentage of Scottish patients reporting having enough time with their GP. This figure increased from 87 per cent in the last survey to 90 per cent this year.

**Comparisons of statements on nurses between Scotland, England and Northern Ireland**

12.12 Patients surveyed in Scotland, England and Northern Ireland were given some statements about their nurse. In Scotland patients answered how much they agreed with each statement while in England and Northern Ireland patients were asked to rate how good the nurse was at each one. Two of the questions are comparable.

12.13 In Scotland more patients agreed that they had enough time with the nurse and that the nurse had listened to them, than in England or Northern Ireland.

Table 18: Comparison between nurses in Scotland and England

<b>Statement</b>	<b>Scotland: Strongly agree or agree</b>	<b>England<sup>1</sup>: Very good or good</b>	<b>Northern Ireland<sup>2</sup>: Very good or good</b>
Scotland - I have enough time with the nurse England/Northern Ireland – Giving you enough time	96	93	88
Scotland – The nurse listens to me England/Northern Ireland – Listening to you	96	92	82

Notes:

1. Results for England have been reweighted to exclude those answering “doesn’t apply”.
2. Results for Northern Ireland have been reweighted to exclude those answering “doesn’t apply”.

12.14 These results are fairly similar to the previous Scottish, English and Northern Irish surveys, with the biggest increase being in the percentage of English patients reporting that the nurse listened to them. This figure increased from 90 per cent in the previous survey to 92 per cent this year.

## 13 INTERNATIONAL COMPARISONS

### Introduction

- 13.1 A number of surveys relating to patients experience of GP services are published on the World Wide Web. The '2010 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey'<sup>14</sup> was of a particular interest to this report as it reported on similar questions as the Scottish survey. This survey was supported by the Commonwealth Fund and co-funded by the other participating countries.
- 13.2 This section presents results from the 2010 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey only. A more recent survey was carried out in 2011 but focused on a specific group of patients, therefore was not used for comparisons in this report.

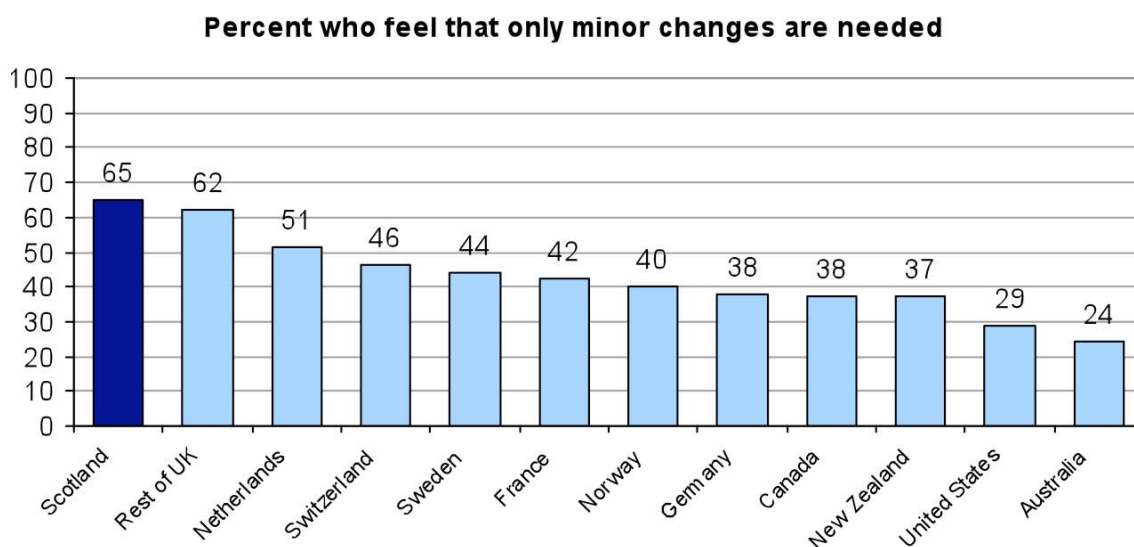
### ***2010 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey***

- 13.3 The Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey was carried out between March and June 2010 across eleven countries (Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States). The survey was carried out over the telephone. Almost 20,000 adults aged 18 and more responded to the survey. The survey looked at affordability, access, insurance complexity, equity, and system views.
- 13.4 The Commonwealth Fund did not publish results for Scotland, but they kindly provided their dataset allowing us to split the UK results into Scotland and the rest of the UK. We have not compared the results of the Commonwealth Fund survey with the findings of the Scottish GP patient experience survey as the questions are not directly comparable. Rather, we have focused on the Commonwealth Fund survey and presented comparisons between Scotland and other nations surveyed. There were 1,511 respondents from the UK, of which 303 were from Scotland.
- 13.5 The survey asked patients about their overall view of the healthcare system. Although this question is not about patient experience it is related as it is about overall satisfaction. The percentage of people who felt that only minor changes were needed was significantly higher in Scotland (65 per cent) and the rest of the UK (62 per cent) compared to all of the other countries (Chart 15).

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<sup>14</sup> <http://www.commonwealthfund.org/Surveys/2010/Nov/2010-International-Survey.aspx>

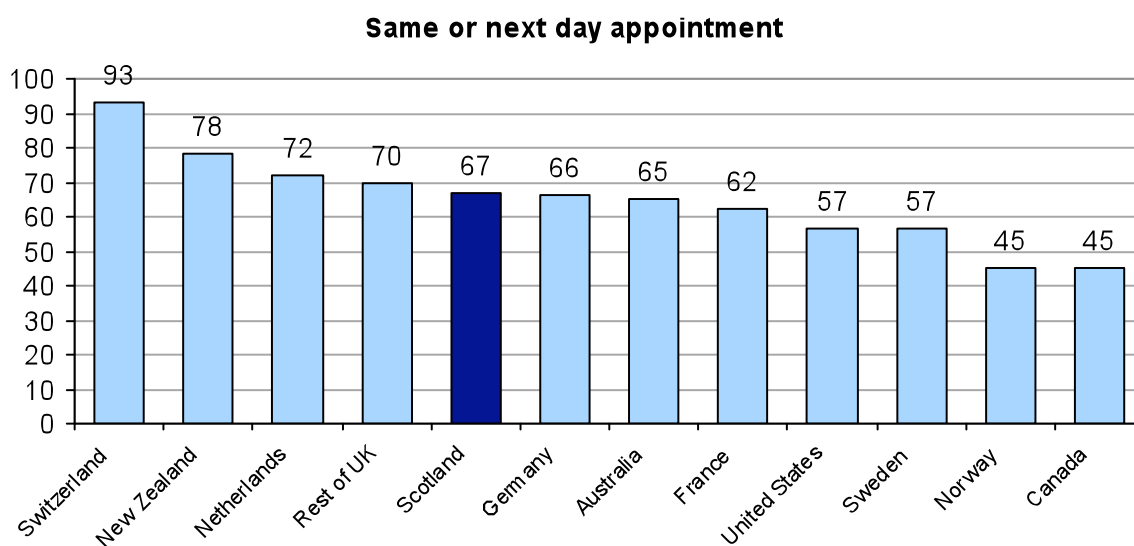
Chart 15 Overall views of the health care system



**2010 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey - Access**

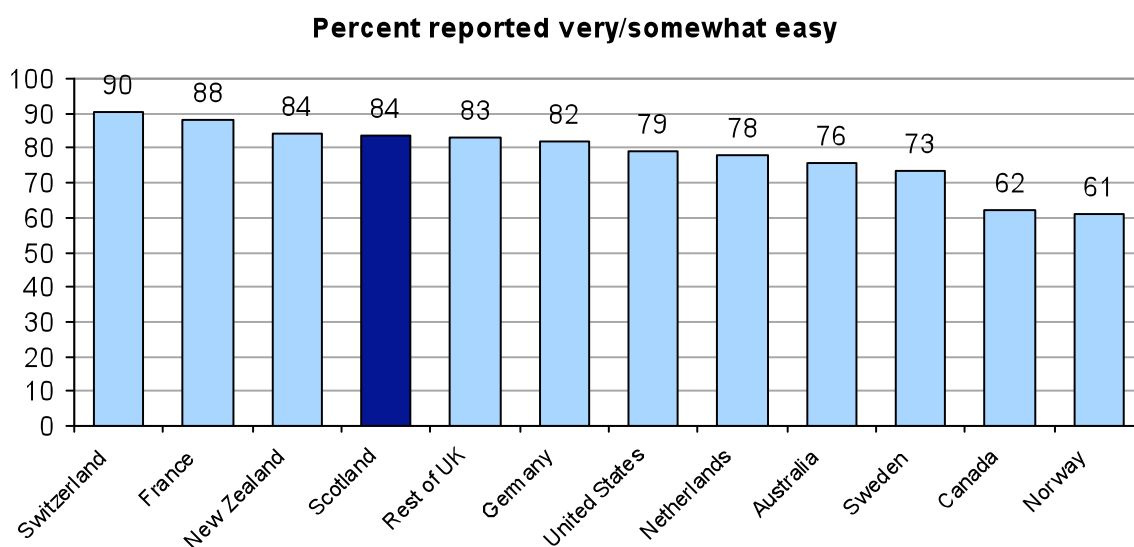
13.6 In Scotland 67 per cent of patients were able to get a same or next day appointment when they were sick or needed care. This was significantly higher than in USA, Sweden Norway and Canada, but significantly lower than in Switzerland and New Zealand (Chart 16).

Chart 16: Access to doctor or nurse when sick or needed care



13.7 In Scotland 84 per cent of patients reported it was very or somewhat easy to contact their doctor by phone during regular hours. This was significantly higher than in Australia, Sweden, Canada and Norway, but significantly lower than in the Switzerland (Chart 17).

Chart 17 Easy to contact doctor by phone during regular hours<sup>15</sup>



**2010 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey – Doctors**

13.8 From Table 19 it can be seen that Scotland performs well for the five questions on the patient experience of doctor communication. No country has a significantly better result for any of these questions compared to Scotland.

Table 19: Doctor patient communication<sup>16</sup>

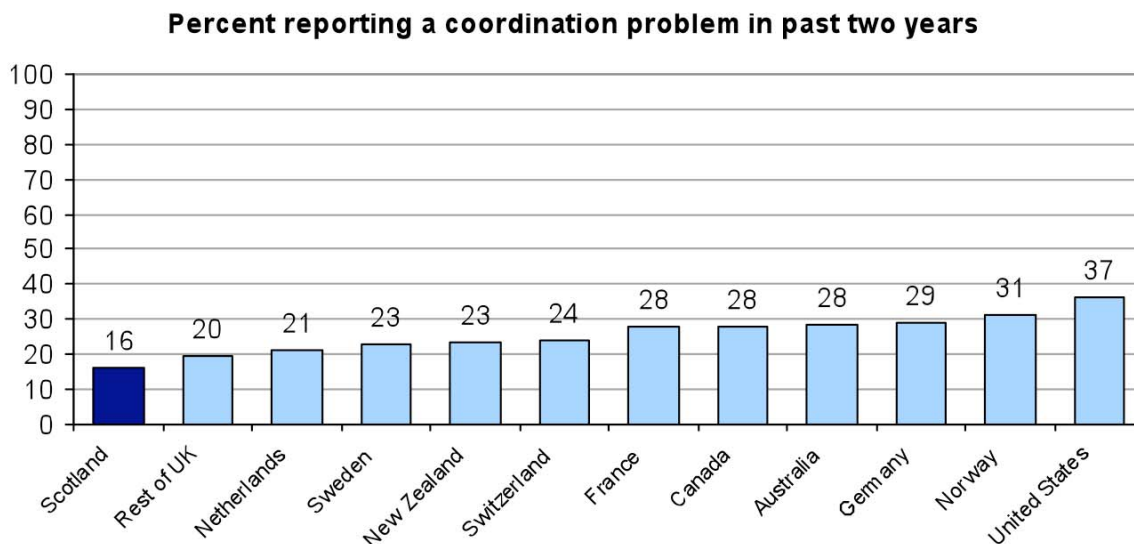
Country	Percent reporting doctor always/often				
	Knows important information about medical history	Gives opportunity to ask questions about recommended treatment	Spends enough time with you	Involves you as much as you want in care decisions	Explains things in a way that is easy to understand
Australia	87	88	85	86	91
Canada	84	85	80	83	89
New Zealand	93	92	90	92	92
United States	85	86	82	86	89
Germany	92	91	91	84	94
Netherlands	88	87	89	81	93
France	84	83	85	82	89
Norway	75	77	76	80	86
Sweden	57	65	67	62	74
Switzerland	89	92	90	85	94
Rest of UK	89	91	88	90	89
Scotland	90	93	88	91	92

<sup>15</sup> Base: Has regular doctor/place of care and tried contacting.

<sup>16</sup> Countries are shaded pink if Scotland has a significantly better result. There are no countries that have significantly better results than Scotland.

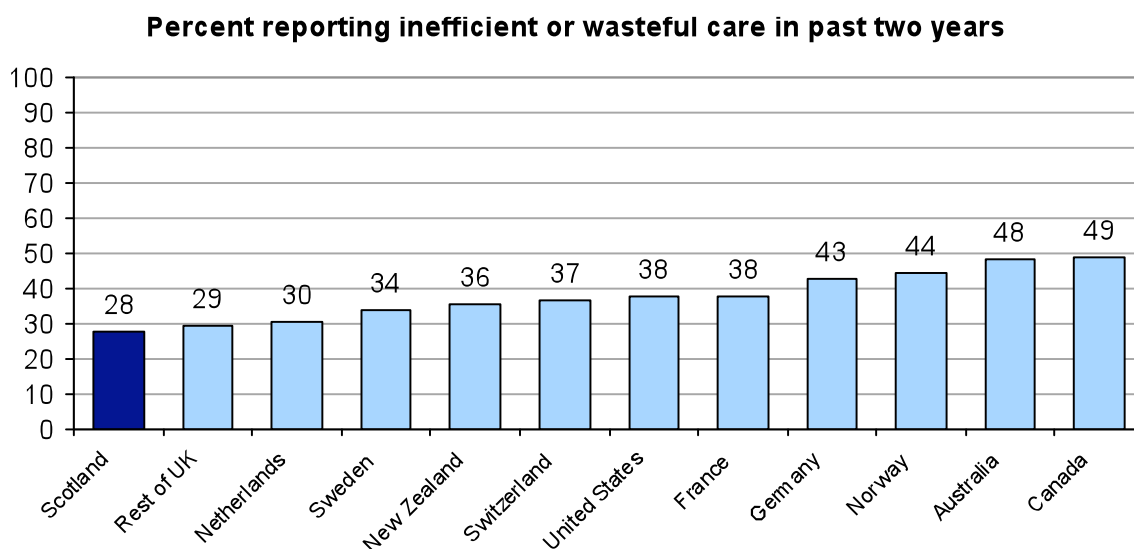
13.9 In Scotland 16 percent of patients reported a coordination problem<sup>17</sup> in the past two years. This was significantly lower than in Sweden, New Zealand, Switzerland, France, Canada, Australia, Germany, Norway and United States (Chart 18).

Chart 18: Coordination problems



13.10 In Scotland 28 percent of patients reported experiencing inefficient or wasteful care in the past two years. This was significantly lower than in New Zealand, Switzerland, United States, France, Germany, Norway, Australia and Canada (Chart 19).

Chart 19: Perception of inefficient or wasteful care<sup>18</sup>



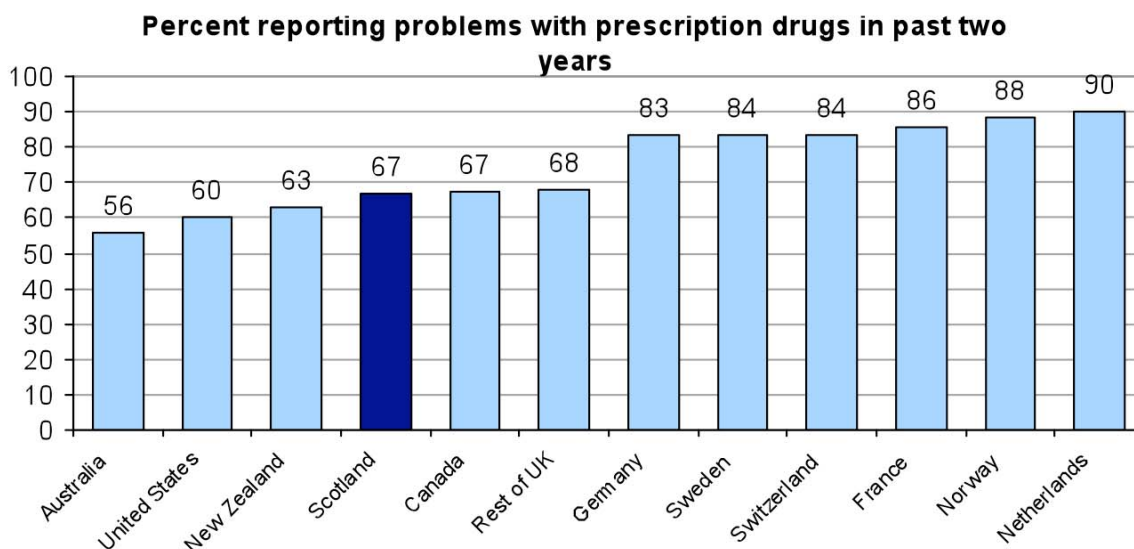
<sup>17</sup> A coordination problem is defined as test results not available at time of appointment, receiving conflicting information from different health professionals and doctors ordering duplicate tests.

<sup>18</sup> Wasteful or inefficient care is defined as patients feeling that time was wasted because of it taking too long to schedule tests or appointments, because of being kept waiting too long to see a doctor for a scheduled appointment or because care was poorly organised or coordinated.



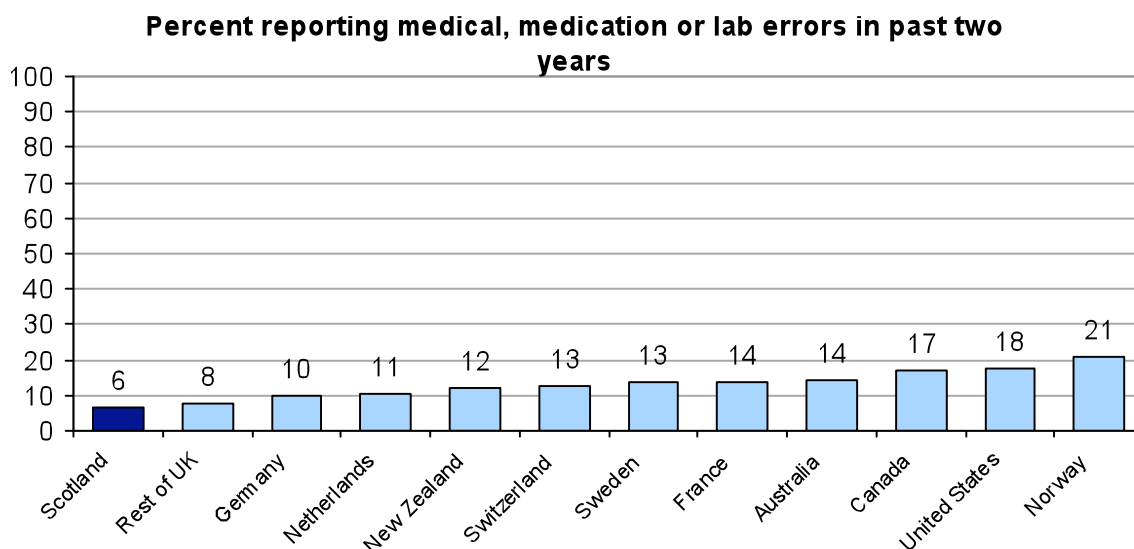
13.11 In Scotland 67 per cent of patients reported a problem with their prescription drugs in the past two years<sup>19</sup>. This was significantly lower than in Germany, Sweden, Switzerland, France, Norway and Netherlands but significantly higher than in the Australia (Chart 20).

Chart 20: Problems with prescription drugs in past two years



13.12 In Scotland 6 per cent of patients reported a medical, medication or lab test error in the past two years<sup>20</sup>. This was significantly lower than in all other countries apart from Germany and the rest of the UK (Chart 21).

Chart 21: Medical, medication or lab test errors

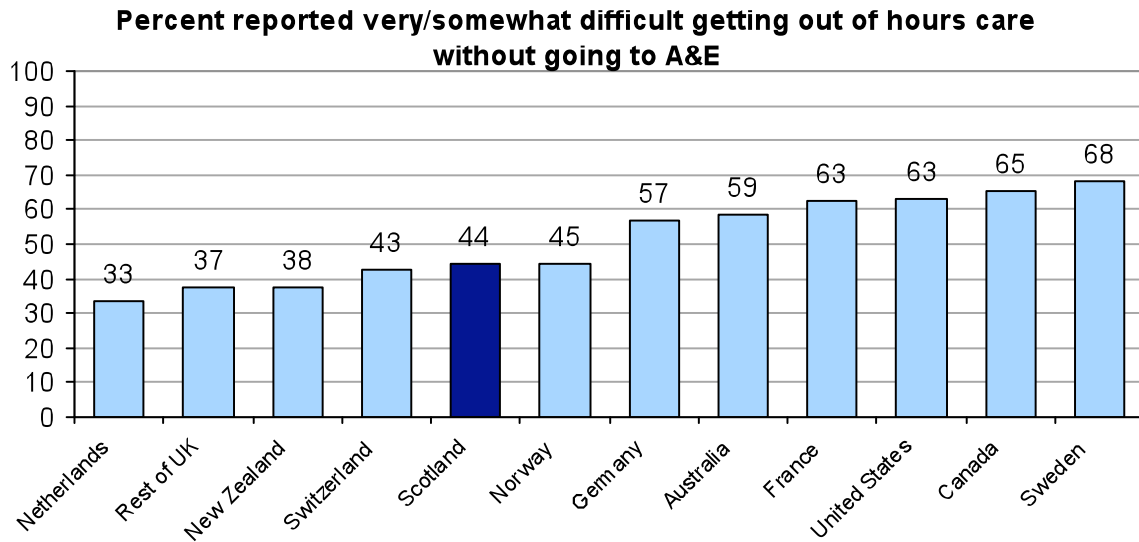


<sup>19</sup> A problem with prescription drugs was defined as someone from their regular place of care not reviewing all of their medications, not explaining the side effects of a medication or not providing a written list of all prescribed medications.

<sup>20</sup> A medical, medication or lab test error is defined as the wrong medication or dose, medical mistake in treatment, incorrect diagnostic/lab test results or delays in abnormal test results.

13.13 In Scotland 44 per cent of patients reported it was very or somewhat difficult to get out-of-hours care without going to A&E. This was significantly lower than in Germany, Australia, France, United States, Canada and Sweden, but significantly higher than in the Netherlands (Chart 22).

Chart 22: Difficulty getting out-of-hours care without going to A&E



## 14 CONCLUSIONS

### Accessing GP services continues to be an issue for many patients

- 14.1 The survey results again highlighted that patients continue to experience problems accessing GP services. The biggest issues are around the arrangements for getting to see doctors and the experiences of patients have worsened. This year there was a 6 percentage point decrease in the percentage of patients who rated the overall arrangements for getting to see a doctor as good or excellent. Similarly there was a five percentage point decrease in the percentage of patients able to see or speak to a doctor or nurse within two working days.
- 14.2 Another key finding around access is that there is a lot more variation between GP practices in patients' experiences of accessing services compared to other areas covered by the survey. This suggests that some practices are finding it difficult to improve access for patients.
- 14.3 The reasons for the deterioration in results for accessing GP services are not clear and to understand them fully would require further detailed exploration; however in the absence of financial incentives targeting 48 hour access, practices may have focused on improving aspects of quality. There was a 3 percentage point increase in the percentage of patients who felt that they had enough time with their doctor which suggests that this may be the case.
- 14.4 Some of the access problems patients experience have been presented in a report summarising the findings from a review of the patient comments left in the 2009/10 GP survey. <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/gp-survey-comments-report-2012>
- 14.5 The largest number of comments related to access, of which the majority were negative. Issues highlighted by patients included: difficulties obtaining on-the day/ emergency appointments as well as advanced appointments; length of wait to see preferred doctor; and lack of flexibility for working patients.

### Patients reported slightly better experiences of consultation with doctors and nurses

- 14.6 There were small increases in most of the questions about consultation with doctors and nurses. As mentioned above, a possible explanation is that practices have focused more on quality and continuity of care rather than providing rapid access.

### Patients generally report positive experiences of out-of-hours services

- 14.7 For the first time we asked patients about their experiences of out-of-hours healthcare when they sought medical help, treatment or advice when the surgery was closed. When they required out-of-hours services, the majority of patients (69 per cent) first contacted NHS 24.

- 14.8 Patients generally reported positive experiences of out-of-hours services. However they were less positive than they were about their experiences of services at their GP practice. This is to be expected as it is likely that patients will be able form better relationships with staff at their GP practices. Another issue might be that patients may be more anxious about contacting out-of-hours services about something which can't wait until their GP practice reopens. The biggest issue for respondents was the time they had to wait with 15 per cent of patients feeling that it was not reasonable.
- 14.9 Patients were able to leave comments in the survey about their experiences of using out-of-hours services. These comments will be analysed to provide further understanding of what patients see as important and possible areas for improvement.

### **Scottish patients report similar experiences compared to UK countries**

14.10 Scottish patients generally seem to have similar experiences to those in England, Wales and Northern Ireland:

- Approximately 90 per cent of Scottish, English, Welsh and Northern Irish patients answered positively about the care provided by their GP practice.

14.11 Scotland generally performs favourably compared to other countries included in the 2010 Commonwealth Fund International Health Policy Survey. Doctor patient communication, such as involvement in care decisions and opportunity to ask questions about treatment, were areas where Scotland did well.

## ANNEX A PERCENT POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE RESULTS

The table below shows which answers were classed as positive and which were classed as negative. The “Percent Positive Text” column shows how each question was rewritten for the GP surgery report.

Answers such as “neither agree nor disagree” and “fair” were treated as neutral. Other answers such as “can’t remember / don’t know” and “not relevant” were excluded from the analysis.

The table also shows how many respondents there were for each of the percent positive questions.

Question Number	Question text	Percent Positive Text	Positive	Negative	Respondents
4	Thinking of the last time you contacted this GP surgery by phone, how easy was it for you to get through?	It was easy to get through on the phone	Very easy; Fairly easy	Not easy	127,127
5	The last time you phoned the GP surgery, how helpful was the person who answered?	Person answering the phone was helpful	Very helpful; fairly helpful	Not very helpful; not at all helpful	127,083
6	The last time you needed to see or speak to a doctor or nurse from your GP surgery quite urgently, how long did you wait?	Could see or speak to a doctor or nurse within 2 working days	I saw or spoke to a doctor or nurse on the same day; I saw or spoke to a doctor or nurse within 1-2 working days	I waited more than 2 working days to see or speak to a doctor or nurse	96,237
8	If you ask to make an appointment with a doctor 3 or more working days in advance, does your GP practice allow you to?	Able to book a doctors appointment 3 or more working days in advance	Yes	No	98,448
9	When you arrange to see a doctor at your GP surgery can you usually see the doctor you prefer?	Can usually see preferred doctor	Yes; I don't have a doctor I prefer to see	No	125,372
10a	Overall how would you rate the arrangements for getting to see a doctor in your GP surgery?	Overall arrangements for getting to see a doctor	Excellent; Good	Poor; Very poor	129,788

Question Number	Question text	Percent Positive Text	Positive	Negative	Respondents
10b	Overall how would you rate the arrangements for getting to see a nurse in your GP surgery?	Overall arrangements for getting to see a nurse	Excellent; Good	Poor; Very poor	102,926
12	Thinking about the last time your GP referred you, how would you rate the arrangements for getting to see another NHS health professional?	Arrangements for seeing other NHS professionals	Excellent; Good	Poor; Very poor	65,662
14	How helpful do you find the receptionists at your GP surgery?	The receptionists are helpful	Very helpful; fairly helpful	Not very helpful; not at all helpful	130,854
15	How clean is your GP surgery or health centre?	The GP surgery is clean	Very clean; fairly clean	Not very clean; Not at all clean	130,371
16	How do you feel about how long you usually have to wait to be seen after you arrive at your GP surgery?	Time waiting to be seen at GP surgery	It is reasonable	It is too long	129,725
17b	The doctor listened to me	The doctor listens to the patient	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	120,907
17c	I felt that the doctor had all the information needed to treat me	Patients feel that the doctor has all the information they need to treat them	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	119,947
17d	The doctor was considerate and understanding	The doctor was considerate and understanding	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	120,323
17e	The doctor talked in a way that helped me understand my condition and treatment	The doctor talks in a way that helps the patient to understand their condition and treatment	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	120,349
17f	I felt confident in the doctor's ability to treat me	Patients have confidence in the doctor's ability to treat them	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	120,481
17g	I had enough time with the doctor	Patients have enough time with the doctor	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	120,430
18b	The nurse listened to me	The nurse listens to the patient	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	89,121

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Question text</b>	<b>Percent Positive Text</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Respondents</b>
18c	I felt that the nurse had all the information needed to treat me	Patients feel that the nurse has all the information they need to treat them	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	88,785
18d	The nurse was considerate and understanding	The nurse was considerate and understanding	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	88,894
18e	The nurse talked in a way that helped me understand my condition and treatment	The nurse talks in a way that helps the patient to understand their condition and treatment	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	88,514
18f	I felt confident in the nurse's ability to treat me	Patients have confidence in the nurse's ability to treat them	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	89,109
18g	I had enough time with the nurse	Patients have enough time with the nurse	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	89,050
19	Are you involved as much as you want to be in decisions about your care and treatment?	Patients are involved as much as they want to be in decisions about their care and treatment	I am involved as much as I want to be	I am involved more than I want to be; I am not involved enough	116,352
23a	It was easy enough for me to get my medicines	Patients found it easy enough for them to get their medicines	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	113,895
23b	I knew enough about what my medicines were for	Patients know enough about what their medicines are for	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	113,116
23c	I knew enough about how and when to take my medicines	Patients know enough about how and when to take their medicines	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	113,048
23d	I knew enough about possible side effects of my medicines	Patients know enough about side effects of medicines	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	112,469
23e	I would know what to do if I had any problems with my medicines	Patients know what to do if they have any problems with their medicines	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	112,524

<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Question text</b>	<b>Percent Positive Text</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>Respondents</b>
23f	I took my prescription as I was supposed to	Patients took their prescription as they were supposed to	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	113,273
24a	I am treated with dignity and respect	Patients are treated with dignity and respect	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	129,178
24b	I am treated with kindness and understanding	Patients are treated with kindness and understanding	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	127,720
25	Overall, how would you rate the care provided by your GP surgery?	Rating of overall care provided by GP surgery	Excellent; Good	Poor; Very poor	131,608
29a	The time I waited was reasonable	The time I waited for out of hours services was reasonable	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	37,015
29b	I felt that the person had all the information needed to treat me	Patients feel that the person had all the information they need to treat them	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	36,292
29c	I felt I was listened to	Patients felt that they were listened to	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	36,433
29d	Things were explained to me in a way I could understand	Things were explained to patients in a way they could understand	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	36,336
29e	I felt that I got the right treatment or advice	Patients felt that they got the right treatment or advice	Strongly agree; agree	Disagree; Strongly disagree	36,502
30	Overall, how would you rate the care you experienced out of hours?	Rating of overall care provided out of hours	Excellent; Good	Poor; Very poor	37,313



## A NATIONAL STATISTICS PUBLICATION FOR SCOTLAND

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

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### Our Aim

To provide relevant and reliable information, analysis and advice that meet the needs of government, business and the people of Scotland.

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