

The Kennet and Avon Medical Partnership (KAMP) Patient Participation Group (PPG) Survey 2017

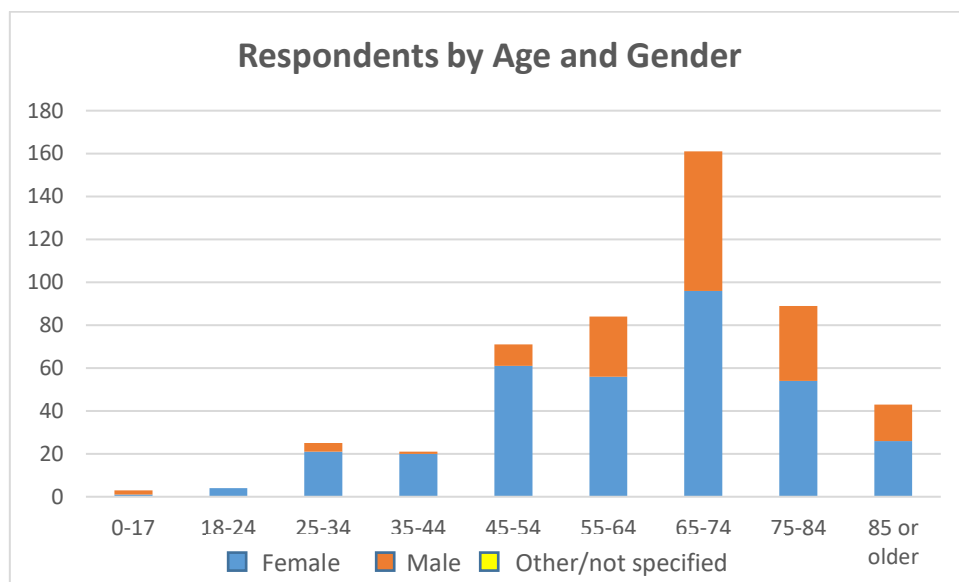
RESULTS

INTRODUCTION

This year saw 539 respondents to the Patient Group Survey, and we would like to thank everyone who took the time to give us feedback about the service offered by the Kennet and Avon Medical Practice.

2017 saw significant change with the merging of what was Marlborough Medical Practice with Pewsey Surgery to form the new Kennet and Avon Medical Partnership. This survey was undertaken during many of the significant changes, and so has collected opinions about the merge as well as the ongoing care provided by the surgery.

The Patient Participation Group has shared the results with the Partners and the majority of this report is dedicated to a Question and Answer session with the partners around key themes from the survey. With such a good response, it is felt the results provide a good cross section of patient opinion, as shown below by the breakdown of respondents by Age and Gender.

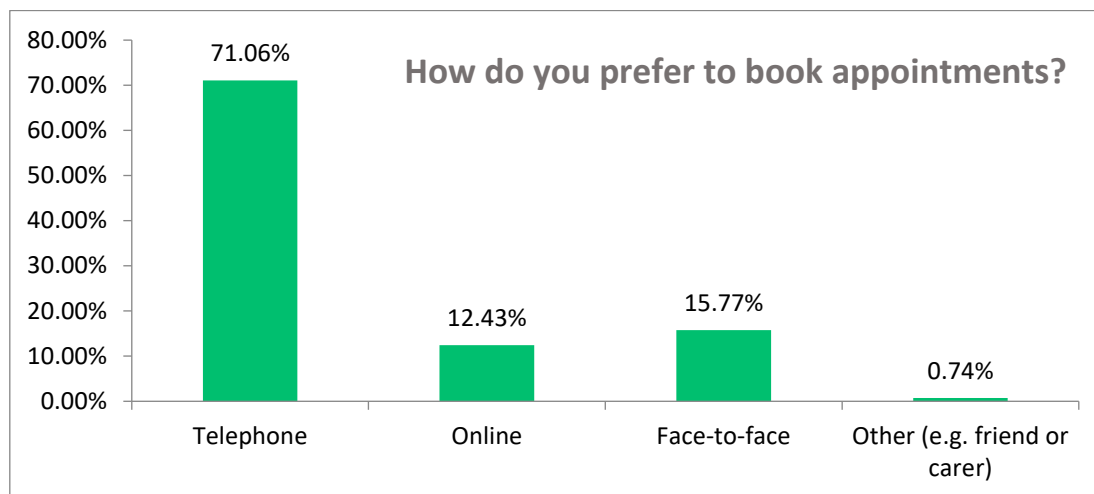


APPOINTMENT BOOKING

How do you prefer to book appointments?

Booking by telephone was overwhelmingly the most popular way to book appointments. This was consistent across demographics.

There has been a small but significant drop (5%) in the number of people booking online. This may be due to the disruption to the online appointment system over the summer of 2017. At this time there were fewer on-line appointments available and patients who registered at Pewsey had no online access for a period of time. This was due to the technical work required behind the scenes to merge the Pewsey and Marlborough systems. There are now a significant number of appointments online again giving patients' greater choice and flexibility to arrange their appointments at a time convenient to them and avoid busy times on the phone.



THE PHONE SYSTEM

The Practice is using a new phone system and website as a result of the merger. Are the options on the phone system straightforward to understand?

Very Straightforward	28.78%	116
Straightforward	52.61%	212
Neither Straightforward nor Complex	13.15%	53
Complex	4.22%	17
Very Complex	1.24%	5

While overall, people found the phone system very straightforward or straightforward (81%), there was a significant amount of feedback about the phones and calling the practice in general. These are covered in the Q&A at the end of this report.

COMMUNICATION FROM THE PRACTICE

How do you regularly access information from the Practice?

Parish Magazines	19.54%
Local Newspaper	15.63%
From a friend	14.71%
Public Meetings	2.99%
Flyers	5.29%
Notice Boards	25.29%
Other (please specify)	42.07%

The PPG and the practice are keen to ensure that information from the practice is as widely available as possible to the patient community. This can be difficult due to the diversity and geographic spread of people who make up the practice population. Feedback from the survey also showed that a large proportion of those who selected “Other” did not want to receive information.

We are pleased that our articles in the parish magazines are getting read, and we will continue to publish these across the local magazines. If people have a specific subject they would like a ‘Did you know’ written about, please email kamp.ppg@gmail.com with details.

The new website replaces the previous Marlborough and Pewsey websites, and has been designed to provide a better means of communication. There are more ways of patients to contact the practice with different types of queries, the practice is able to provide more detailed information in different sections, without the

information becoming overwhelming. In addition, the new website works well on different devices, not just PCs, and so it is hoped that more people will make use of it as a first point of call for information about the practice.

The PPG will be setting up a section on the practice website to allow patients to request to receive updates direct from the PPG.

There was also feedback from people around the use of Facebook, and this will be explored in the coming year.

VISITING THE PRACTICE

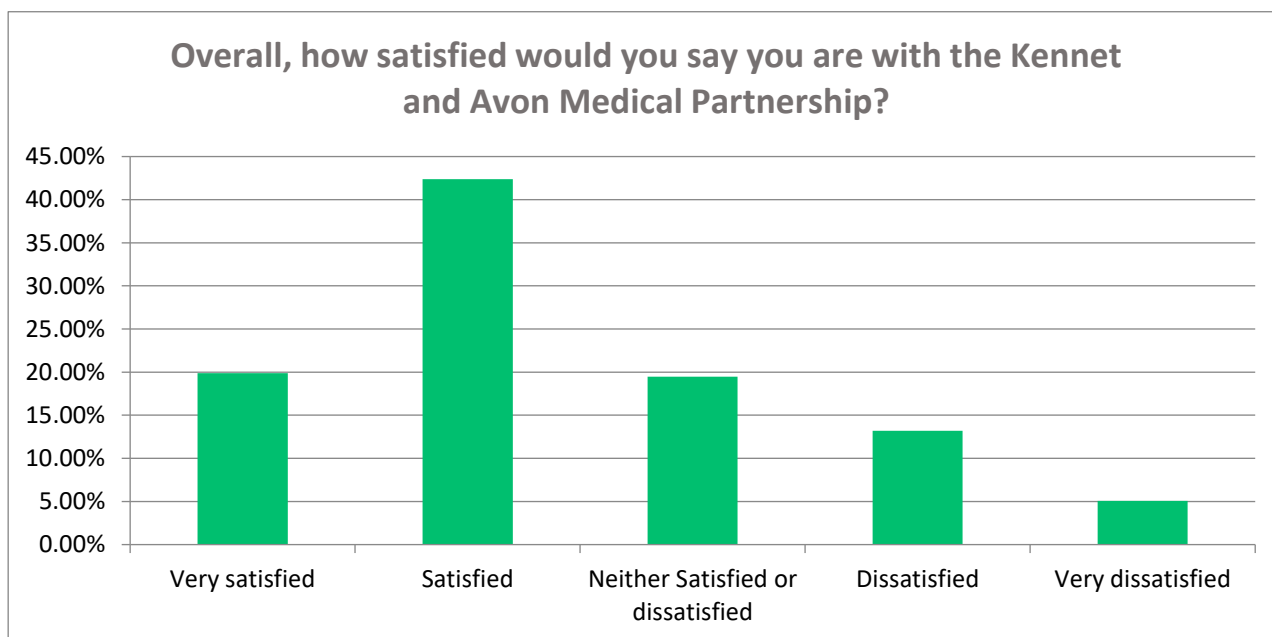
In the future, would you consider taking an appointment at:

Marlborough	46.43%	234
Pewsey	25.60%	129
Don't mind	27.98%	141

Understandably, many people will continue to go to the surgery closest to them. However, patients choosing either practice may find they have a greater choice of appointment.

OVERALL SATISFACTION

Overall, how satisfied would you say you are with the Kennet and Avon Medical Partnership?



Very satisfied	19.88%	98
Satisfied	42.39%	209
Neither Satisfied or dissatisfied	19.47%	96
Dissatisfied	13.18%	65
Very dissatisfied	5.07%	25

We are pleased that the majority of respondents remain satisfied with the service provided by the practice. That said, the practice acknowledged when reviewing the survey results that there have been teething problems with the merger and they also continue to have major difficulties (that are reflected nationwide) with recruiting staff, including Doctors. This has contributed to a number of concerns raised by respondents, such as wait time. This, and other areas of concern, are explored further in our Q&A with the partners.

Practice Question and Answers

There were a number of recurring themes in the Patient feedback section of the survey. The PPG spent some time discussing these with the practice Partners.

WAIT TIME

Sample comments

'Have to wait too long for an appointment. e.g. Waited 6 weeks and then had to go to Pewsey'

'Waiting times to book appointments is really bad and often there is nothing on line '

Partners' Response

Patients will be seen by a GP on the same day if it is clinically necessary to do so. In all cases, if patients are happy to see any GP, then they are likely to be seen sooner than if they wish to see a specific GP.

We know that there are times of the year when there is a higher level of patient demand, ie over winter, and so there may be more of a wait. There are times of the year when it is relatively easy to be seen by a GP, as there is a reduction of demand, however it is often hard to predict when these times will happen.

However, we are encouraging patients to look after themselves, and to use the practice only when appropriate, and to self-care throughout the year. In addition, patients can help as it is not always necessary to see a GP, but another member of the clinical team could see you sooner.

In addition, the practice has had great difficulty with GP recruitment over the last few years. This reflects the national crisis in GP recruitment that has been widely publicised in the national press.

It is worth noting that since January, wait times have been down, and you can normally expect to get an appointment within a week if you do not mind which Doctor you see. As mentioned earlier in this report, the online system has also been fully merged since August and there are consistently a large number of appointments available.

WHY IS IT SO DIFFICULT TO GET APPOINTMENTS WITH SOME GPs?

Sample Comments

Disappointed not to be able to see my Dr in less than 8 weeks. Otherwise, very satisfied and found everyone helpful and kind.

Since the merger of Pewsey with Marlborough practices it now takes 6 weeks for an appointment date with my own doctor in Marlborough. Not good.

Partners' Response

We do recognise that it can be hard to get an appointment if you wish to see a specific GP. Some have less available slots and hence it may be harder to get an appointment with them. As well as seeing patients at pre-booked appointments, GPs have to carry out the following additional tasks. This may reduce the number of appointments that are available for a given GP:

- Arranging palliative care and other support packages
- Writing referrals
- Prescription management
- Signing death certificates
- Safeguarding activities
- Clinical meetings, ie other professionals, multidisciplinary teams

- Home visits
- Care home ward rounds
- CCG meetings

WAS THE MERGER JUST THE FIRST STEP TO CLOSING PEWSEY?

Sample comments

'It seems that Pewsey surgery is running down to be closed and we are being made to accept appointments in Marlborough so that we get used to that. It would be appalling to lose Pewsey. The population is huge and it would be impossible for many to get to Marlborough. Bring back Pewsey to function fully please.'

'I would only use Marlborough in an absolute emergency. There is considerable concern that the Pewsey surgery may close.'

Partners' response:

It seems unimaginable that we would go through the amount of work required to merge two practices just to shut one down. The merger was a move taken to save Pewsey. There has been some attrition as a result of the merger, but that is not unique to our merge or indeed mergers in any walk of life. Change is hard for all involved, Patients and staff, but we are all doing everything we can to maintain the service we offer despite the chronic national shortage of GPs.

It really must be stressed that we have not been able to recruit a single GP in the last year and are having to rely on locums to fill the gaps, when they are available. Whilst not easy, we are trying to do what we believe is best for our patients and gives us the best chance of remaining in a position to provide services to patients.

THE QUEUES FOR THE FLU CLINICS SEEMED MUCH LARGER THIS YEAR AND IT WAS DIFFICULT TO BOOK A SLOT?

Sample Comments

'Not Happy with the scrabble to book a flu jab appointment, the appointments were closed when I and others wanted to book. Perhaps more clinics, or maybe the Doctors can give some of the flu jabs during routine patient appointments as done in some other surgeries'

'Could never get in to Pewsey. vaccination dates always full.'

Partners Response

The response to the flu clinics this year was significantly higher for both sites than in previous years. The new phone system had also just gone live and there were some problems for patients getting through which we tried to resolve as quickly as we could with the service provider. We are still undertaking flu clinics during the week at both sites to vaccinate people who could not get into one of the specific Saturday flu clinics.

We agree that the flu clinics could have been better this year and we have been discussing ways to handle the sheer number of patients - over 5000 this flu season, who require a vaccination each year. There are a number of options we are exploring, and we will do all we can to make the booking and the flu clinic days as easy for patients as possible next year.

WHY COULDN'T I GET AN APPOINTMENT ONLINE?

Sample Comments:

'Appointment booking has been unavailable for months'

'Very hard to book appointments as never seem to be any available'

There was a reduction in people saying they used the online system as their primary way of booking appointments, and there were comments about the lack of appointments or the system being switched off for a period of time.

Partners Response

As mentioned in other parts of this report, there were various issues with online services in 2017. Mainly these were due to the merging of the Marlborough and Pewsey systems. This process was out of our control, and the practice had to wait 5 months for the full system merge to occur. In the run up to the system merge, there were very few appointments available for those originally registered at Marlborough, and the Pewsey system had to be switched off altogether.

With the PPG, we have been monitoring appointments available online for several months and can confirm that it is usually possible to get an appointment with a GP within a week. It is also worth noting that exactly the same appointments are available on line as when you call reception, but you can see what is available and book at your convenience. If there are cancellations, these will also come online and you can book when the phone lines are closed.

NEW PHONE SYSTEM

Sample Comments:

'Sometimes through to other surgery without knowing'

'There is no option to leave a message cancelling an appointment'

'Takes a long time to get through the queuing system - waiting nearly 20 minutes'

Just over 5% of respondents noted that they found the new phone system complicated. There were also a number of comments about not knowing which site you had called.

Partners Response

We are delighted that the new phone system seems to be straightforward. We acknowledge that there have been issues during the installation, but we are working with the provider to iron these out. The comments from patients about the recorded messages and other option that might be useful will be reviewed and if we can make changes, we hope that these can happen in the next few months.

In addition, there was also a much higher than normal load on the phone system in the run up to the flu clinics, and this saw people waiting for a considerable amount of time. This was exacerbated by some of the early installation as the system would fail with people in the queue, and we would have no way to answer the call nor tell people that they were stuck.

We believe we are over the worst of the issues, and hopefully we can look at making some further changes to make the experience even better for patients.

THE WIDER LOCAL AND NATIONAL PICTURE FOR GP SERVICES

Partners Update

General Practice is at threat nationally, and this is recognised by the BMA, RCGP and increasingly, the government. The BMA Campaign "General Practice in Crisis" is calling on the government to address the escalating crisis in general practice by putting several measures in place nationally.

On a more local level, Wiltshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) acknowledges that Wiltshire GP practices are beginning to face challenges with respect to sustainability of delivery of primary care services and resilience for the future. In January 2017, Wiltshire CCG had 12 practices that it classes as 'vulnerable',

including one that had served notice on their contract. In Wiltshire alone, there have been 3 practice mergers, with 6 further practices considering their options.

We believe that by merging, we are creating a sustainable service for our patients. We are aware that there have been times during the merger when we were not able to provide all patients with our usual high level of service, but we hope that now we are through the worst of the transition, we can continue to improve the services we can offer to patients, despite the national challenges to primary care. We are trying to develop innovative ways of working so that the GP recruitment crisis does not impact on patient care, and so patients might need to change their expectation of always seeing a GP, but instead might be asked to be seen more appropriately by a different member of the healthcare team.

We are very grateful to the PPG for conducting the survey, and we hope we can look to introducing changes based on some of the suggestions.

CONCLUSION

We hope that you find this report informative. If you would like to ask any further questions, or you wish to provide any further feedback, this should be directed to the PPG via email to kamp.ppg@gmail.com. Alternatively, any comments can be posted to the PPG at the following address: The Patient Participation Group, C/O Amy Lacey, Kennet and Avon Medical Practice, The Surgery, George Lane, Marlborough, SN8 4BY.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to complete the survey, your feedback is much appreciated.