

Spring House Medical Centre – Re-procurement of Provider

1. Introduction

As part of its procurement of a new contract for primary care services at Spring House Medical Centre (SH), East and North Herts CCG and NHS England wrote to all the practice's registered patients to seek their views about the practice - what services they would like the health organisations to consider as part of a new contract for the practice and specifically, on wider proposals for extending the opening hours of GP practices across the whole of Welwyn and Hatfield.

The approach to the engagement was discussed with Hertfordshire Healthwatch and officers of the county's Health Scrutiny Committee. In addition to a survey sent with the letter, 2 open meetings were held to which registered patients were invited.

2. Survey Feedback

a. Respondents

- 574 people completed the survey; 98.6% were registered patients;
- 29.8% of patients live within a mile of practice; only 7% live more than 5 miles away
- 65.4% identified as female; 33.5% as male; 1% preferred not to say
- 3.4% were between 16-25; 38% were between 26-40; 42.9% were between 41-65; 13.2 % were 66 or over; 2.1% preferred not to say
- 15.4% were unpaid carers
- 17.2% were parents or carers of a patient
- 6.8% considered themselves to have a disability
- 91% described themselves as heterosexual; 1.3% as gay; 1.1% as bisexual; the remainder preferred not to say
- 6.2% were Asian/Asian British; 2.2% were Black/Black British; 86.1% were white British; 1.3% were dual heritage; 4.2% preferred not to say
- 1.8% were Buddhist; 48.3% were Christian; 2.4% were Hindu; 1.3% were Jewish; 1.3% were Muslim; 32.2% had no religion or belief; 9.8% preferred not to say
- 5.8% were either pregnant, had given birth recently or were on maternity leave

b. Quality & Accessibility of Current Services

- 92.4 % of patients rated the service provided by Spring House as either **very good** or **good**. Top reasons given were:

Opening Hours; Availability of, and ease of booking, appointments; Excellent GPs and Staff (see Appendix for comments)

1.4% of patients rated the service as *poor* or *very poor*

- 70.1% of patients make appointments by telephone; 21.7% use online via surgery website; 7% visit the surgery; others use a variety of ways

3. Choosing a new Provider

The top two considerations are:

Availability of same day/urgent appointments (identified as first and second choices by 89.5% of patients)

Continuity of care - permanent GPs and nurses (identified as first and second choices by 73.5% of patients)

[See Appendix A for selection of comments](#)

Types of Appointments wanted

Patients were evenly split on this, favouring appointments that can be arranged with a particular GP/nurse (35.9%) or any GP/nurse (31.2%) followed by same day “emergency” appointments (23%). Same day routine appointments came out as 10%

88.5% of patients want a face to face consultation with a member of staff with the vast majority(91.4%) preferring to see a GP followed by a face to face appointment with a practice nurse

d. Extended Hours

73.5% agree that extended hours should be available to all GP practices in WH; 16.9 % do not agree; the rest are not sure

33.9% of patients would be happy to have an appointment with a clinician at a different practice; 59.1% would only want an appointment at their own practice

54.6% are willing to travel 0-2 miles for an appointment; 35.5% are willing to travel 3-5 miles; just under 10% are willing to travel more than 5 miles

86.2% would use extended hours on weekday evenings; most popular evening is Monday (first and second choice for 75.4% of patients) followed by Tuesday (first and second choice for 65.4% of patients)

85.4 % say they would use extended hours at weekends; most popular is Saturday between 8am and noon (first choice for 74% of patients) followed by Saturday afternoon, noon -4pm, (20.1%) and Sunday morning(13%); least popular is Sunday afternoon(4.2%) and Saturday and Sunday evenings (9% & 6%)

[See Appendix for comments](#)

4. Feedback from meetings with patients held on 25 and 31 July

Appendix – Extracts from Survey Respondents

Patients' Experience of Current Services

Opening times ideal for working people

A lot of people registered based on current opening hours, weekends and walk-in facility – leave it as it is

Please keep same as now as that's why we changed to Spring house

The ability to see a doctor after 6pm and on weekend; the good service provided by team

Nursing team – excellent; Reception staff - sometimes feel I'm being a nuisance to them!

Good Parking and good punctuality

Same day & weekend appointments available so my partner and I do not have to take time off work

The receptionists are very professional, friendly and not acting like a doctor

Would that no changes were made to detract from a superb, NHS resource

Nursing team have all been excellent, welcoming and thorough with explanations (baby vaccinations)

Don't change what works

The nursing team and the GPs are generally excellent.. had a few locums that haven't been at the same standard

Online booking, friendly staff, weekend appointments

Making an appointment was easy; I had a choice of date and time

Other areas to consider in appointing a provider

Ensure all staff are correctly trained

Free parking

Blood tests and X-ray on site

Integration with social care , public health etc

Better communication with patients

Carers and children should be given priority appointments

Worried that if you have one centre for outside hours for all - then the level of service will drop as there will be lots of people trying to use the same place

Factors important to patients in extending hours for GP practices in Welwyn and Hatfield

Availability of parking at other practices; the last thing you need when ill is to battle for parking

Priority should be given to patients in full-time employment

On-line booking would be really helpful

Appointments which could be done on the phone could be out of hours

The difficulties some patients will have in travelling to GPs not near their home especially out of normal hours.

Continuity of care - this system is working, please do not change it, everyone knows of Spring House, everyone has had the chance to change, people have either changed because they were unhappy with their previous surgeries, and those that didn't are clearly happy, so please leave it as it is.