

## Welwyn Hatfield Extended Access Survey Analysis

<b>Date</b>	Wednesday 6 September 2017
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### 1. Introduction

As part of the introduction of the extended access to GP practices in Welwyn and Hatfield, East and North Herts CCG worked with the federation of GP practices in the area, Ephedra, on an engagement extending the opening hours of GP practices across the whole of Welwyn and Hatfield.

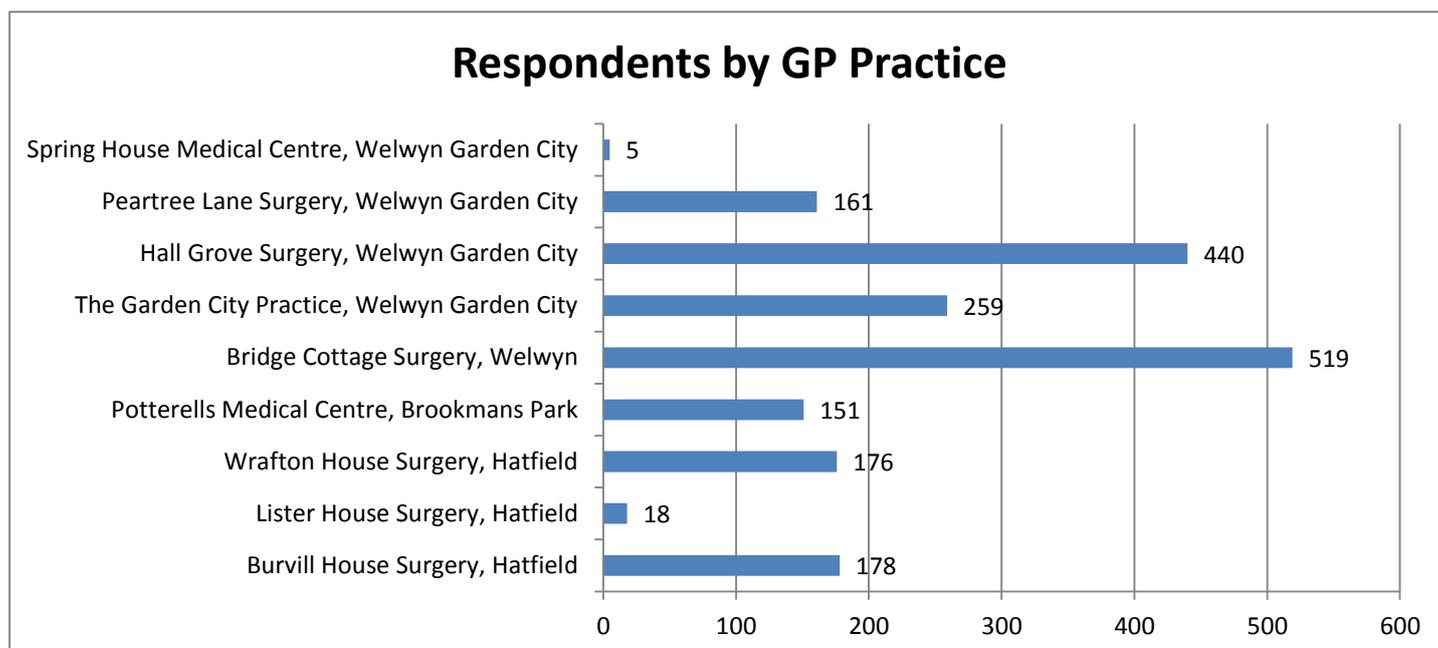
The approach to the engagement was discussed with Hertfordshire Healthwatch and officers of the county's Health Scrutiny Committee.

The survey was promoted by the CCG and surgeries were asked to promote and distribute surveys to their patient population by text and email.

### 2. Survey Feedback

#### a. Respondents

2,764 people from across Welwyn Hatfield completed the survey, with a further 574 completing the survey as part of the Spring House Medical Centre consultation. This equates to almost three per cent of the total Welwyn Hatfield population of 116,000, which is a high response rate for a health survey.



The graph above shows the respondent breakdown by GP Practice. Please note, Spring House patients views have been analysed and fed back as part of the procurement process,

so are not contained within the results, but their views will be referred to throughout this report. Overall there was a good response rate across the practices, with perhaps the exception of Lister House in Hatfield. This was predominantly caused by a change of key staff during the engagement period.

Overall there were more respondents who were female and typically older than the demography of the area, but respondents matched the area's demographics in terms of ethnicity and religion<sup>1</sup>.

- 65.3% identified as female; 33.8% as male; 1% preferred not to say
- 4.7% were between 16-25; 25% were between 26-40; 54.5% were between 41-65; 12% were 66-74, and 2.7% were 75 or over; 1.2% preferred not to say
- 15.8% considered themselves to be unpaid carers
- 10% considered themselves to have a disability or live with a long term condition
- 90% described themselves as heterosexual; 1% as gay and 1% as bisexual; the remainder preferred not to say
- 4.7% were Asian/Asian British; 2.1% were Black/Black British; 86% were white British; 1.5% were dual heritage; and 0.1% were Roma/Traveller with 4.2% preferring not to say
- 0.6% were Buddhist; 50% were Christian; 1.6% were Hindu; 1% were Jewish; 1.4% were Muslim; 35% had no religion or belief; and 0.3% were Sikh; 9.8% preferred not to say
- 4% of respondents were either pregnant, had given birth recently or were on maternity leave

## **b. Views on Extended Access**

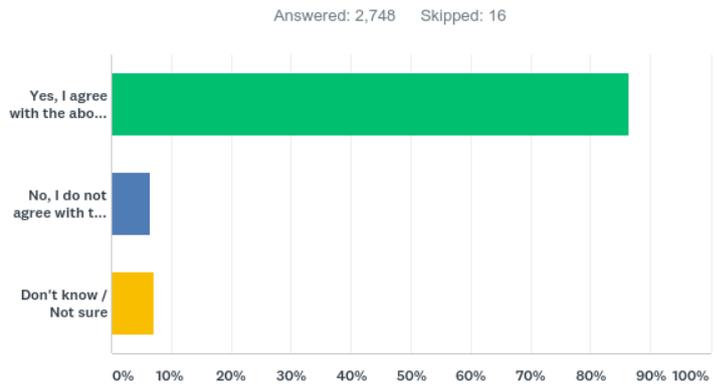
86% of patients felt that extended hours should be available to all patients in Welwyn Hatfield, with just 6.5% disagreeing with the statement. In comparison for Spring House patients 73.5% agreed and 16.9 % did not agree. The remaining percentages did not know.

The vast majority of respondents would want a face to face appointment with a clinician or member of staff (80%) compared to just 9.65% happy with a telephone appointment and 5% with an online appointment.

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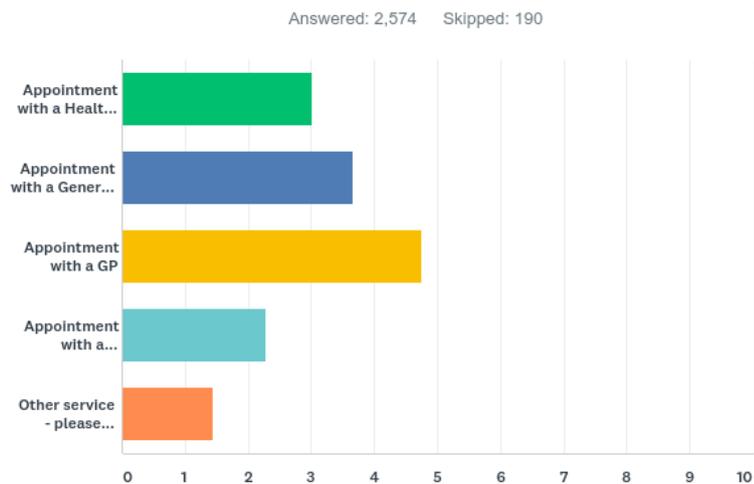
<sup>1</sup> Welwyn Hatfield Council Demographic Profile, March 2016:  
<http://www.welhat.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=9345&p=0>

Q2 Please consider the following statement: 'Extended opening hours for GP services should be available to all patients registered with a GP Practice in Welwyn Hatfield.'



85% of patients showed a first preference for an appointment with a GP as part of the extended hours service (91% at Spring House). 9.6% first preferences were for a practice nurse and 5.5% first preferences were for a health care assistant. Just 1.3% showed a first preference for an appointment with a pharmacist.

Q8 What services would you like to be able to access during the extended hours period? Please rank your choices in order of preference with 1 being your most preferred.

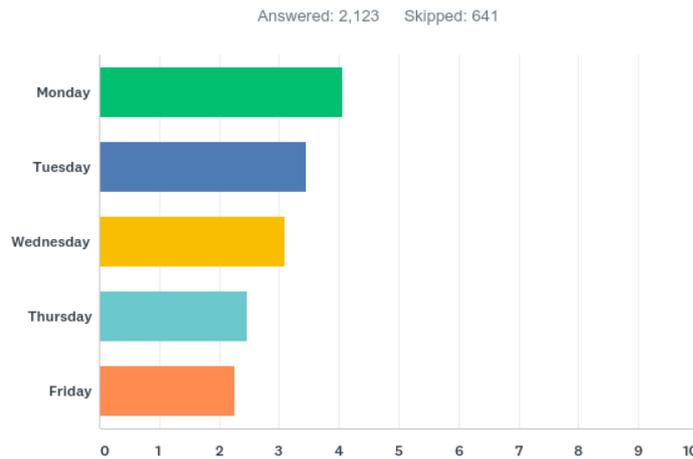


There was a significant difference between Spring House and other practices in their happiness to have an appointment with a clinician from a different practice. 60.3% of patients were happy to see a clinician at a different GP Practice compared to just 33.9% of Spring House patients.

42.3% are willing to travel 0-2 miles for an appointment; 44.42% are willing to travel 3-5 miles; and 12.6% are willing to travel more than 5 miles

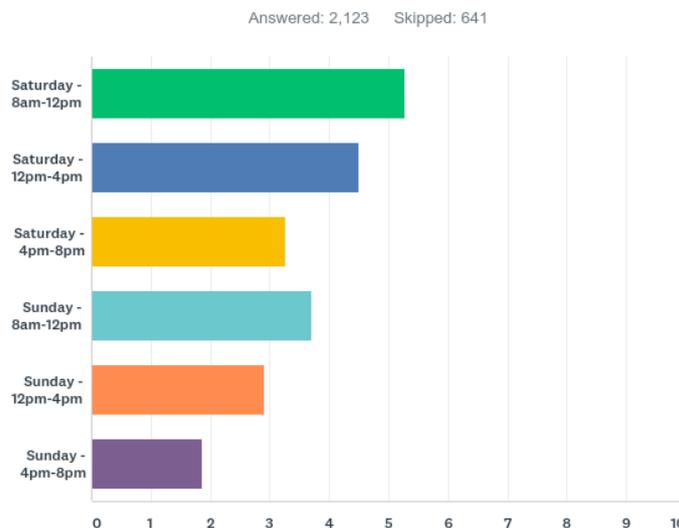
81.3% of patients would want to use an extended hours service on weekday evenings (86.2% at SH). Along with Spring House patients the most popular evening by some way was Monday (first choice preference of 60% of respondents) with a trend to prefer the beginning of the week – i.e. Tuesday second preference choice, closely followed by Wednesday.

Q4 If you answered 'Yes', please select the weekday evenings you are most likely to use the service. Please rank your choices in order of preference, with '1' being your most preferred.



Again slightly less respondents 78.8 % of patients across Welwyn Hatfield versus 85.4 % of Spring House patients said they would use extended hours at weekends. But there was the same pattern of preference for which times these should be held. The most popular being Saturday between 8am and noon (first choice for 74% of patients) followed by Saturday afternoon, noon -4pm, (16.5%) and Sunday morning(7.89%); least popular being Sunday afternoon (3.2%) and Saturday and Sunday evenings (5.3% & 2.8% respectively).

Q6 If you answered 'Yes', which of the following days and times would you be willing to make an appointment? Please rank your choices in order of preference, with '1' being your most preferred.



The survey also asked for respondents general comments in relation to the introduction of extended access services to Welwyn and Hatfield. There were three areas repeated by respondents, which were:

1. A feeling that the extended hours service should be prioritised for those that work full-time or commute, rather than those who were able to attend in the day. There were a small number of people who suggested the introduction of a commuter service allowing people to book for an early morning appointment as well.
2. The second highest area for comments recorded was a concern from respondents around primary care staff. These concerns centred around a worry that GPs and staff would be further overworked – or that there was not the number of GPs available in the area to offer this service. Within these comments there was also a concern around affordability of the service.
3. The third area of concern was the need for a better appointment making system within primary care, with comments regularly focussing on frustration of how to make an appointment.

A table of comments is shown on the next page, with the number of occasions it featured in the survey.

### **Summary conclusions**

The survey received a good response rate, and the methodology of practices sending out to their patient population via email and text worked well. This should be encouraged for further opportunities for engagement and asking the public's views on issues.

The results suggest broad support for the introduction of an extended hours service in Welwyn Hatfield and there are preferences for timings indicating the earlier part of the week (Monday to Wednesday) for evening appointments, and for morning appointments at the weekend.

Within the comments section of the survey, the biggest response was to suggest prioritising extended hours for those who work full-time – and these comments also came from respondents who were retired, but felt that this would be fairer.

There was a clear preference to see a GP as part of the extended hours service, but surprisingly the preference to see a pharmacist was very low suggesting that work needs to be undertaken to improve the reputation of pharmacists and understanding of the skills and qualifications of trained pharmacists to the general public.

In fact throughout a number of the comments there a lack of understanding of primary care services was shown – particularly around its use for routine appointments. This could be an area of work for patient participation groups to support their surgeries in improving the understanding of primary care services amongst their patient population.

**Factors important to Welwyn Hatfield patients in extending hours for GP practices (not including Spring House)**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>No of times</b>
Extended hours should be for full-time workers/beneficial for commuters/workers	89
Don't overwork the staff/ Concern as to where staff/GPs will come from Affordability of service	67
Better appointment booking systems / online booking (5 negative comments about Bridge Cottage appointment system particularly)	66
Accessibility Availability of public transport Car parking	24
Don't think extended hours is needed – stick to what we have	23
Extended hours broadly seen as a good thing	13
Importance of Continuity of care	12
Pharmacy within the surgery/out of hours	9
Would only use this service in an emergency/urgent	9
Would like to see more home visits	8
Improved technology would be beneficial	8
Longer appointment times	7
Ensure introduction of extended hours does not result in less routine service	6
Availability of repeat prescriptions	6
Drop-in service/Walk in centre	6
Important to access patient records	6
More effective telephone triage at GP needed	4
Blood tests available onsite	4
Commuter service (including morning service)	3
Prioritise children and older people	2

**Factors important to Spring House Medical Centre 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.***