

# Public Experience of Primary Care Services during the Coronavirus Pandemic



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December 2020



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# Share your health and social care experience

Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent is the independent champion for people using local health and social care services. We listen to what people like about services and what could be improved. We share the views of the public with those with the power to make change happen. People can also speak to us to find information about health and social care services available locally.

Our sole purpose is to help make health and social care better for people.

Please contact us if you have an experience or opinion on health and social care services that you would like to share. To share an experience with us you can do so online through our website Feedback Centre, email, telephone or via our active social media platforms; Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

[WWW.HEALTHWATCHSTOKE.CO.UK](http://WWW.HEALTHWATCHSTOKE.CO.UK)

**Find your local service and leave your feedback...**

Find your service by name or location




 info@healthwatchstoke.co.uk

 01782 683080

 @healthwatchstoke

 Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent

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**What you're saying** *quality public*  
*helping A&E ease support doctors*  
*friendly waiting health long-term*  
*improvements good Happy patient* 

## Recommendations

- Review the efficiency of telephone communication, in order to determine if there is a more appropriate strategic method to satisfy the volume of telephone enquiries without excessive delay. Furthermore, review the contents of the opening automated telephone message for need.
- Assess and conclude if the available appointment methods (face to face or digital) are accessible and meet patient needs.
- Re-evaluate if digital or remote appointments are achieving patient satisfaction and assurance. For those patients who share concern, can an alternative solution be shaped?
- Address the patient voice and concerns regarding the speed and availability of receiving prescriptions. Where applicable, clarify if prescriptions are ordered online, collectable at a community pharmacist or collectable directly from the surgery.
- Strive to build long-lasting and resilient working relationships with patients to address areas of distrust, through an adaptable and reactive communications strategy dependent on incoming patient concerns.

We aim to follow-up actions and progress made on our recommendations after a period of 30 days following publication of this report.



## Background

There are 54 GP surgeries across Stoke-on-Trent. To view the full GP list please visit the following link: [List of GPs in Stoke-on-Trent](#)

Since the occurrence of the coronavirus pandemic, GP services have been required to adapt and alter the way that services are delivered. As such, appointment methods, bookings and direct communication between practice and patient have been at the heart of crucial service changes. For example, here are some changes during interaction with GP services:

If you need to contact a GP, do not go into the surgery in person.

You can visit the GP surgery's website, or use an online service to contact your GP or call your GP surgery.

Your GP surgery will then give you advice about what to do.

A phone or video call with a GP, nurse or other healthcare professional may be booked for you.

You'll only be asked to visit the surgery if absolutely necessary.

Your GP surgery may be very busy at the moment and you may have to wait longer than usual to speak to someone if it's not urgent.

(NHS England, 2020).

Throughout this period of newly structured GP services Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent received a growing number of wide-ranging questions, support and information requests and feedback of personal experiences. Healthwatch Stoke-on-Trent is the voice of local residents and is well embedded in the community and monitors the standards of health and social care services, in order to share the public voice within follow up reports and provide recommendations based upon public feedback.



## What we did

A qualitative research design was formed to collect public feedback items. From 9 September 2020 to 19 October 2020, our social media platforms and our website was utilised for a callout to residents of Stoke-on-Trent to collect and understand the public experience of using GP services.

It was evident from the incoming intelligence that people were experiencing complex and diverse GP treatment and care outcomes. In total we collected and analysed 75 responses.

Targeted questions were distributed across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and website news articles to expand virtual reach.

The virtual callout posts addressed the following areas and was structured as follows:

**\*\* Callout for information! \*\***

We are keen to hear public experiences of using GP services in Stoke-on-Trent throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

Would love to hear about your experiences of using GP services. All comments will be anonymised and will only be used to help local health and social care services in your area.

- (1) Have you visited a GP during COVID-19, or range for any support / guidance?*
- (2) Have you had a telephone or video consultation?*
- (3) Have you been able to access your repeat medication?*

You can contact us to let us know by:

- Commenting on this post
- Phoning 01782 683080
- Emailing [info@healthwatchstoke.co.uk](mailto:info@healthwatchstoke.co.uk)

We appreciate your feedback and the time that you spend sharing your experiences with us, all for the good of the future of health and social care.

## What we found

The six overall themes represent all of the 75 feedback items. The six overriding themes are as follows:

### **(1) Displacement with GP Treatment and Care**

28% of residents shared dissatisfaction with the treatment and care that was received.

### **(2) Poor Telephone Experiences and Communication**

25% of residents experienced a form of poor telephone communication.

### **(3) Effective GP Treatment and Care**

23% of residents highlighted positive GP treatment and care.

### **(4) Restricted Accessibility and Inclusion**

11% of residents encountered restricted accessibility and inclusion when engaging with GP services.

### **(5) Unable to Access Medical Prescriptions**

8% of residents were unable to collect or access medical prescriptions.

### **(6) Limited Mental Health Support**

5% of residents indicated that there has been a lack of mental health support.

Displeased with GP Treatment and  
Care

**28%**

Poor Telephone Experiences and  
Communication

**25%**

Effective GP Treatment and  
Care

**23%**

Restricted Accessibility  
and Inclusion

**11%**

Unable to Access  
Medical Prescriptions

**8%**

Limited Mental  
Health Support

**5%**



# Appendix 1 - Reference list

NHS England (2020). Using the NHS and other health services during coronavirus.  
Retrieved from:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/social-distancing/using-the-nhs-and-other-health-services/>

## Appendix 2 - Feedback received

### Theme One - Unable to access medical prescriptions

- (1) For nearly a month I struggled to get my prescription and had to go a couple of weeks on 1 tablet a day instead of 4, then I ran out and had to go without for a week. I changed my mobile number last year and gave it to my GP surgery straight away. Well a couple of months ago I tried to put in for my prescription via Patient Access. I had been signed out for some reason and couldn't get back into my account because I couldn't remember the password so tried to use the 'forgot password'. On Patient Access my old mobile number was still showing so the re set code was getting sent to the wrong number. I couldn't find any way of changing the number myself, so I emailed the surgery (COVID had started) and tried to find out why they hadn't changed my number. They told me it had already been changed when clearly it hadn't. (I have a screen shot showing they never changed it). It took me going to my pharmacy and getting them to find out what's gone on.
- (2) The whole GP situation has been a challenging, my 12 year old daughter is on medication, and we have struggled to get prescriptions with the GP, to the point we have now had to get the hospital to start prescribing it again. Without that medication we have severe issues with her mental health, due to her not being able to sleep without it.
- (3) **Practice A** but considering changing, we have encountered issues with them around my daughters medical needs, rude staff, conflicting information, refusal to issue letters that have been requested.
- (4) A lady rang and said she has been trying to ring **Practice A** Surgery, but no one is answering and her partner needs a repeat prescription. He has tried to access it online however it keeps saying error. She asked if we could help in anyway.
- (5) It has not been possible to get a Vit B12 Injection for the last 6 months at The **Practice A** Surgery. When one is diagnosed with Pernicious Anaemia, they are told injections are needed for life. A person can take tablets which they can buy but these are not suitable for many patients and are often the incorrect strength. The result of this Autoimmune illness being left untreated can have grave consequences.

- (6) Yes, I am yet I am told that the contraceptive injection has been given since lockdown. I have been taking Vit B12 tablets (pharmaceutical grade) since lockdown has begun so would need a blood test before commencing with injections. I feel fine but know of many others (Pernicious Anaemia Society) who are suffering.
- (7) **Practice A** GP Surgery - I have been trying for 3 weeks now! Out of meds but cannot get through to them.
- (8) **Practice A** GP Surgery - They have not yet give me my meds last week even explained why I can only have a certain patch as I am allergic to the common one they prescribed as it gives me second degree burns so pick my meds up only to find they had prescribed them ones tried to explain I sent the others back chemist and I now need the right ones and the doc point blankly refused so left me all weekend without them.

## Theme Two - Poor telephone experiences and communication

- (1) My partners mum has 2 forms of cancer. She needs to get in touch with her GP (she is also with **Practice A**) if she has any pain, troubles...etc. She needed to make an appointment to have phone call consultation as she had major problems with her legs. She tried to ring 50+ times with no luck so I had to walk to the surgery to sort it for her (but the surgery are telling people not to go in if they don't have too, they have to ring the surgery).When I got there I could see the phone constantly ringing and the receptionists were at the back of the reception area.
- (2) A lady rang the office phone and said she has seen our post regarding GP feedback hence why she has called. she explained that she and her family are registered with **Practice A** GP Surgery and they aren't very good at all as they do not answer the telephone a lot, they don't offer many face-face appointments or telephone consultations and it is very rare to see a doctor as the receptionist try to resolve the issue.
- (3) Husband is with **Practice D**. They do answer the phone eventually. No other comments.
- (4) A lady rang and said she saw our post about GP feedback. She explained she is with **Practice A** Surgery and they are ineffective sometimes, as she waited an hour on hold on the telephone. She also mentioned when she gets her

repeat prescription from the chemist next door half of her medication is not there. She said last time she rang the surgery a "boy" answered at reception who said he was training and that he was on reception on his own. She tried to book an appointment for her partner for a b12 injection and he was trying to book a telephone consultation. she explained how an injection work over the telephone work would. He then booked an appointment with the nurse. she also mentioned that she has booked her partner in for a telephone consultation next week for a diabetic check as he should have one every 3 months however he is still waiting and its 12 months. She then mentioned the time they gave to call was between 9am-6pm. She did mention he has got an appointment with the hospital in the afternoon on that day and could they make it more in the morning and they wasn't very helpful.

- (5) I rang **Practice A** on Monday to get an app for my son had a consultation today over the phone he gave me another appointment for my son Friday but I don't know whether it's at the docs on video call and it takes them hours to answer the phone 300 times I rang for my other sons appointment .. was told by docs to get a test my son is 9, no one is willing to do it I ended up 2 hours later getting a paediatric nurse to ring my docs to get them to send my sons app to them so he can get seen finally after ringing the docs, hospital and children's centre for hours.
- (6) I am sole carer for my mother who is 86 and has numerous health issues. Twice over recent months I have contacted the surgery for a telephone GP appointment for her. I have to call at 8.30 in the morning for a call back the same day. This has meant waiting in a queue for over 20 minutes. I am then given a 2-hour time slot. My mother needs my support for the consultation and as I do not live with her it means at least two and a half hours out of my day for a five-minute phone call. If, when booking a face to face appointment I can be given a specific appointment time, I fail to see why the same cannot happen for a telephone consultation. I work for NHS as a health visitor. At the start of lockdown most of my contacts were done by telephone or in clinic, although I have continued home visits throughout if necessary. Almost all of my telephone contacts have been at the appointed time. Our service is in the process of restoration, so all families are now being seen at home and in clinic. We check they are asymptomatic prior to the contact and use PPE and distance where possible. I appreciate that the pandemic has made health services look at new ways of service provision and there are many things which can be dealt with over the phone. However, if so, it needs to be at an appointed time. I also feel that for some patients, particularly the vulnerable with multiple comorbidities, a face to face contact should be offered as a routine and can be managed safely.

- (7) Poor experience during Covid-19. Phoned to ask for appointment for a skin infection on my finger. The receptionist said no appointment available and to go to A and E. Why would I go to A and E for this...?
- (8) **Practice B** - I rang 259 times and took me 40 minutes to get through to the surgery. I asked what the process was is you think you have a UTI and I was informed they will take my details and get the nurse to ring me back within a time frame. The nurse rang and asked some questions, and I was informed a prescription will be sent to the chemist next door. I was happy with this as it saved me time taking a urine sample down and then wait for the results.
- (9) A woman rang and explained she has been waiting for an Urgent MRI scan from the 17th August which her doctors (**Practice B**) sent the referral. and she is still waiting. She has rung the GP surgery to get a Doctor to chase this up as she is in a lot more pain and has had the paramedics out. An appointment was made but with the out of hours doctor who could not do nothing since he wasn't her own GP, since then she has rung on numerous times to get an appointment and she has been unsuccessful. She asked if we could help as she feels no one is listening to her and taking on board the amount of pain she is in.
- (10) I am emailing with regard as a member of public with my experience of using GP service. I am frustrated with how the receptionists treat us. I have tried numerous times to telephone to make an appointment for a pneumonia vaccine. The first part of the messages relates to coronavirus and what to do if you suspect you may have it. Then it tells you if you have an emergency dial 999. Then it quotes numbers for test results etc and then it says, "All lines are busy please try later!" By which time the phone call has lasted a few minutes and I feel they have no intention of answering the phone. This happened many times. I then drove to the surgery and knocked on the side door (wearing my mask) and stood back waiting patiently for someone to answer the door. When a receptionist finally opened the door she just said "Oh". No hello can I help you. I asked for an appointment for a pneumonia vaccine. (I am 66). She then after a few moments gave me a card and said I have sent you a text message. I asked about shingles vaccine having actually having shingles and hospitalised in 2014. She said no I was not old enough! Not once did she say Hello, please, thank you, goodbye or any normal response you would give to another person who was obviously asking for your help. She just turned her back on me and shut the door. I was polite to the end. This is the second receptionist who has treated me like this at my surgery. Only one receptionist (the youngest) treats you well. My surgery is **Practice D**. The nurses at the surgery are excellent. We use the NHS for our repeat prescriptions which then are sent to our pharmacy. This service works

well. We have not seen our doctors since lockdown began in March. My husband had one telephone appointment. We are just glad that we have not been seriously ill, but we are in the age group for the vulnerable. This does not fill us with confidence.

- (11) A lady rang and said she has seen our post regarding GP Surgery feedback, and she would like to share her mother's experience. Her mother is a patient at **Practice B**, and she became ill in March when lockdown began to happen as she had back pain. she managed to get a telephone consultation and was informed she could have a water infection and anti-biotics was given without her urine being tested to confirm. Afterwards she was still in pain and she kept ringing the surgery at 8am and by the time she got through she was informed that all appointments had gone and to try back again the following day. On average they rang once a week since March, as a family then feel like she was not listened to and it has taken months till a GP would listen. She cannot praise DR \*\*\*\* enough as for the past 4 weeks she has listened to the patient and she has been admitted into hospital for treatment as she could possibly have cancer.
- (12) **Practice A GP Surgery** - I have given up ringing as no one answers so I sent a private message on Facebook and they responded quickly and booked me in.
- (13) I have been struggling to get through to Dr \*\*\*\* surgery as I've tried calling a few times and it doesn't even allow me to hold it just says please try again later.
- (14) **Practice A GP Surgery** - I cannot get through on the phone to arrange flu jab, and no reply on their social media account.
- (15) **Practice A GP Surgery** - I tried ringing several times about my copd couldn't get through ended up ringing 111 had an infection had 2 have rescue meds but when tried 2 ring doctors for another batch couldn't get through it's getting worse as you can't even talk 2 a doctor or nurse from our practice anymore.
- (16) **Practice A GP Surgery** - Hours to even get to speak to someone and then have to wait hours for them to phone you back. Cannot even get an appointment if you walk on. My 2-year-old has been having pains in her head for several days now and the doctor's response was "if you get headaches, she is probably mimicking you see how she goes on.
- (17) **Practice A GP Surgery** - I have been trying to get in touch for over two weeks on hold for over an hour a time so had to put the phone down because of

going work. Messaged them on FB and had no reply on there either. I am waiting for surgery and am in constantly pain trying to speak to a doc for pain relief is a nightmare. As for their FB page no point in having it if no one to man it. **Practice A** has gone right down just lately.

- (18) **Practice A** GP Surgery- a few weeks ago, felt really ill, phoned Doctors, was told they would ring me, NEVER HAPPENED - ended up going in Ambulance to A&E, for emergency appointment, Hospital could not believe the Doc's never got back or saw me, sadly the Doctors are leaving all the work to the girls at the desk, this must change, before someone dies.
- (19) **Practice A** - You can Never get through and IF you are lucky enough to get hold of the reception staff, they speak to you poorly. I was unwell 2 weeks ago with a very bad water infection. I am a kidney transplant patient and cannot afford to mess around. I knew something was not right and sent a sample in. somebody rang me about 11am saying I had something showing. She said a doctor MIGHT ring me. About 4 o'clock I was feeling really poorly My husband rang back and was told by the rude receptionist to go the A&E. My husband then rang the transplant team at the hospital, and they said absolutely not, don't go up the A&E. They were really disappointed that the doctors did not start me on antibiotics immediately. I have had sepsis twice and I get poorly very quickly. 5 DAYS later after the transplant team sorted me out on day one, **Practice A** rang me to tell me I had antibiotics waiting.

### Theme Three - Displeased with GP treatment and care

- (1) I am a migraine and headache sufferer. My nan had tumours all over her brain which in time led to her death. She was also a migraine and headache sufferer. I have told a doctor this and requested some kind of scan, tests etc to try and find the cause as they run, ruin and rule my life (asked years before COVID). They just keep putting me down and telling me to just to take medication. They have not even prescribed me any kind of pain killer or blocker so you can tell how much pain I am in most of the time trying to survive on shop brought pain killers. They put me on propranolol and asked me to up the dosage every couple of months if I need to until I'm up to 500mg.
- (2) The same lady also explained that her partner had chest pains, nothing serious to ring for an ambulance but they made an appointment to see a doctor and when they got there the appointment was not with the doctor but they were asked questions by the receptionist who pasted on the messages back and



forth to the doctor. Then where they told to go home and later that day they rang and said he needed to go to the hospital. they went A&E at Royal Stoke and they were fantastic as they were seen within 30 minutes. They were informed to go back to their GP, and he will be given a prescription for inflammatory medication and since then they have been trying to get hold off the doctors but been unsuccessful.

- (3) With reference to your request for information regarding use of GP services, we use **Practice E**, my husband (who has prostate cancer) has been able to access the Centre to see the nurse for his blood test and also for his injection which he has every 12 weeks. He has had a problem with his leg for a number of months and we have had 2 or 3 video calls with the doctor, none we feel have really sorted the problem, we cannot understand why he can go into the centre to see the nurse, but the doctor does not seem to want to arrange an appointment so that they can have a better view of his problem.
- (4) I use **Practice A Surgery** in Meir. Until it was taken over by the current GP, I would say it was THE best surgery in the city. Now it is struggling. It is almost impossible to get through on the telephone. There are constant mix ups re prescriptions. I have had telephone consultations with a GP who I found to be patronising, he has stopped medications that I have been prescribed for several years by my previous GP. On another occasion I was advised by someone (I'm not actually sure this was a GP) to go to a walk in centre with my symptoms as I would be seen quicker as it was a painful knee even though it was not an accident or trauma. I felt this was inappropriate advice. I actually feel anxious about contacting the GP surgery as I know I either will not be able to get through or I will be met by rude staff. I want to change GPs but don't know where to go for a better service.
- (5) GP was not great! I am a carer for my 90-year-old disabled mum. They sent a phlebotomist to take blood 3 times in 2 weeks and never gave us any feedback - we didn't even know why she was having repeat blood tests. When my husband calked them on my behalf to find out the results, he was given the wrong test results and when he queried it with practice manager, she said the results hadn't been put on the computer and this was 4 days after mums blood test. The surgery had also referred him to the hospital without telling us so when the hospital rang me to find out why I hadn't made an appt with the renal dept using the choose and book system I felt a real idiot as I did not know what they were referring to. The Drs also told me to stop one of mum's medications but never rang back to say when I should restart it. I took it upon myself to restart them when I picked up mums repeat prescriptions and saw they were still on her med list. As a carer I should not have to make these decisions. All this made me feel small and worthless and the practice manager



was quite rude when I finally plucked up the courage to bring all this to her attention. She made feeble excuses even inferring that our distress was unnecessary and was obviously trying to cover up her admin staffs errors. However, I wrote a letter of complaint to the GP who was really lovely and rang me to apologise. They wrote me a written report and admitted they had fallen short with mum's care. GP has now actioned more training for his staff. The whole occurrence was very stressful and distressing at what was already a very worrying time.

- (6) **Practice F** - A member of staff from Voices rang the office phone and explained he has got a client who has got mental health issues and a diazepam addiction. He is under CDAS and the doctor has wrote to his GP to go on a reduction programme to reduce the diazepam to 30g and then in 6 months to reduce it to 15g. The client had a medical review in august and the client has not been referred onto the reduction programme the GP has reduced the medication by 5g a week.

He also explained that he had difficulty registering the client with the GP surgery at first as they said they do not want anyone like "his kind" at the surgery.

The member of staff from Voices then informed he has spoken to health professionals and they have said that is a lot to reduce every week as the client has been on diazepam for a lot of years. He also said the client had a telephone consultation scheduled and the doctor did not ring him and since then the client and himself has rang the surgery to get a telephone consultation again and they have been informed if he doesn't like what the doctor has changed then he should look for a new GP Practice.

He wanted some advice on what the client can do next as he needs to ring the surgery today on the client's behalf.

- (7) **Practice A** waste of time been ill with bad chest infection for 3 week now been to the doctors and he wouldn't give me antibiotics sent me to A&E have been twice and unable to stay long enough to get chest X-ray horrific and antibiotics think I am on the doctors hit list to get rid of me.
- (8) Shocking that doctors stay nice and safe behind their surgery doors and do not see patients when pharmacists and nurses are on the frontline.
- (9) **Practice G** - not great service.

- (10) I'm with **Practice A**. Not seen a GP for about a year. Had an invite for health check after lockdown. Had blood test. Not spoken to GP but had phone consultation with nurse. Regarding results. She did ask if I was coping (I have a few health conditions one of which causes chronic pain and fatigue another seizures.) She wasn't interested when I said not really, just kept repeating, but your coping with housework etc, my answer, no not really, I keep trying a few times n that was it. Not had any contact with anyone before or since. I had the impression right or wrongly they don't really want to see or hear me.
- (11) The doctors or top management really don't seem to understand that we really don't get anything resembling even a good service at **Practice B**. When the emphasis that they seem to pride themselves on is the political point of view like making sure that the patient gets the bare minimum of time that the government wants be that 8 minutes or 6 minutes 7 seconds that seems to be the aim one area that they do excel with is the really good quality secretary's that must put up with a lot because of the doctors political leanings.
- (12) I have seen many doctors at **Practice A**, they all say we will look after you, when you don't agree with them, they lose interest, I have a telephone consultation on Friday with a 5th year student doctor, think this will be my last ditch effort to get some sort of care from this surgery, get more understanding from the fibromyalgia UK site, suppose you have to live it to know all about it.
- (13) **Practice A** surgery - I have got from some of the GPs that my fibro will be better if I lost weight and exercised so know exactly what you mean. One actually said it was a case of mind over matter and it's all in my head, if I exercised it will go away. Don't know how they think I can cure my epilepsy though. I have to remind them I have epilepsy too. I've only had a few good experiences and will put off going as I'm sure they have in big letters on my records Hypochondriac.
- (14) A man rang the office phone and said citizens advice have gave him Healthwatch stoke telephone number as he would like to complain about his GP (**Practice C**) as they have sent him for a blood test which come back clear and he has paid for a private blood test which shows he has got a disease. He mentioned he has asked the GP for a breakdown of what they tested for and he said the NICE guidelines were not followed.
- (15) **Practice H** - Wasted journey despite the appointment they don't know what they're doing with Covid-19.

We asked for further details and received the following response:

Further to my previous message I was contacted the following morning by one of the nurse practitioners who apologised she said the nurse involved was only an healthcare assistant and wouldn't have been able to give my b12 so why would the receptionist book me in with her if that's the case, and reason she gave why I was treated outside is that they don't know which is symptomatic or not so that's the reason again this is poor care when other care providers see you face to face i.e. dentist which I've attended hearing test and also the vets I am now booked in for Thursday at 4.45 for the b12 obviously I think there room for improvement regardless of the Covid pandemic thank you.

- (16) **Practice A** GP surgery - it took me 10 weeks of phoning 2/3 a week to get a face to face appointment.
- (17) Had to send photos of a rash I knew was shingles. Doctor rang me and said that it could not be shingles because it was on my front and my back. Did not listen to my symptoms at all. Said take paracetamol. Two days later I was becoming so unwell I rang again. This time a different doctor rang and said it is probably shingles. Prescribed anti-viral which are less effective if not taken as soon as possible. Some appointments may be quicker and better by phone. But some need face to face.
- (18) I have had mixed experiences. The first was at the height of lock down when I had cause to phone with back pain and was asked to call down to collect a swab and urine bottle. I had to return these the following day. While I was fine doing the swab myself as a health professional, I did wonder how a lay person would have managed. It was also concerning that there was no physical examination.
- (19) **Practice A** GP Surgery - I have to have vitamin b12 injections between 9-12 weeks however I am constantly questioned by various nurses if I go any earlier than the 12 week stage, I feel that I have to beg for my treatment at times it is concerning and I shouldn't be made to feel like this.
- (20) I really wanted my daughter see GP, she came out with rashes all over her eyes doctor gave her cream, but she got a few problems that I needed her see doctor, but they wouldn't see her, and still can't get to see 1 now.

## Theme Four - Limited mental health support

- (1) **Practice A Surgery** - I get that these times are hard, and we are still very much in the "unknown" but I took my child for a mental health assessment as he is struggling and he made the monumental mistake of coughing even though it states on his medical record he has asthma (which was open on the computer) that he has asthma, the doctor told us to leave & suggested how it is irresponsible for bringing him when he had a cough.. my 7-year-old son is struggling even more.
- (2) My second experience was related to mental health and I found it was possibly easier to discuss my symptoms over the phone. It was easier from a logistical point of view, but also felt easier to talk from the comfort of my own living room.
- (3) **Practice A surgery** is concerning, I split up with my long-term partner. I'm diagnosed with depression anyway; I went to the doctors as my symptoms had worsened. I was having suicidal thoughts and being sent home from work because I could not physically stop crying. The doctor I saw laughed and asked me if my partner had left me for another woman.

## Theme Five - Effective GP treatment and care

- (1) I am with **Practice I**. They have been Marvellous.
- (2) I am with **Practice J surgery** and have been really pleased by my service. Telephone consultations booked using the patient access app, and a referral for an MRI scan organised quickly.
- (3) I have accessed my GP many times over the past few months. I find the phone call system more accessible than trying to get an appointment. Repeat prescriptions have gone through OK. even better is that they also offer an online consultation, 48 hr turn around and they phone you. Cannot fault it to be honest.
- (4) **Practice K Surgery** has been very good.
- (5) I'm with **Practice L** they always answer the phone never any problems.

- (6) I'm with **Practice J** and they have been very good. No problems with them answering the phone and the receptionist is always polite and helpful. I can't fault the service I've received.
- (7) Nurses have been brilliant at **Practice A Surgery** as they have been regular checking my sons asthma.
- (8) Hi I'm responding to your post about GP feedback during the pandemic, I am with **Practice M** I have had no issues with getting my repeat prescription I had a text questionnaire sent to me regarding my asthma control And I was able to request a blood test and collect the form without issue When calling I do have to stay on hold sometimes but there is a good system which tells me where I am in the queue I haven't needed a doctor consultation. The reception staff are always helpful and polite.
- (9) Once during this pandemic, I needed a doctor. I spoke to the receptionist and explained my position. My doctor rang me back the very same day and answered to my full satisfaction.
- (10) I'm with **Practice K** and they have been great, with me and my children.
- (11) **Practice N** - I rang them Tuesday at 5pm for my daughter I got the on-call doctor ringing me at 7 they are good in all fairness.
- (12) Hi I'm responding to your post about GP feedback during the pandemic, I am with **Practice M** I have had no issues with getting my repeat prescription I had a text questionnaire sent to me regarding my asthma control and I was able to request a blood test and collect the form without issue when calling I do have to stay on hold sometimes but there is a good system which tells me where I am in the queue I haven't needed a doctor consultation. The reception staff are always helpful and polite.
- (13) I just wanted to say our experiences over the last 6 months have been quite positive at **Practice A GP Surgery**. The appt system is frustrating but we have always managed to get a phone consultation and I think there's a real place for them in the future. Of course, some things need to be face to face, but phone appts have been much easier to juggle with work etc. I needed a physical assessment today and was asked to go in, no problems. The reception staff were very busy but very patient, the practice nurse was cheerfully giving flu jabs and encouraging everyone else to get one, it was a nice atmosphere.

- (14) Straight through to **Practice A** with no queue, lovely friendly and efficient receptionist, telephone appointment booked. Hopefully back on track now.
- (15) Getting through on the phone was a bit of a pain, GP appointment was professional and on time for a change. Waited outside until I was called in at the appointment time. Very positive experience.
- (16) GPs have been fine.
- (17) My husband and myself have both had video consultations during the pandemic and have both found it to be very easy to access, a good way to get a GP appt and reliable. My parents who live in a different area and are in their 70s struggled to connect to the video service and have been on hold for 20mins+ just to speak to the receptionist then had to wait for the end of the day or the next day for a call back from the GP.

## Theme Six - Restricted GP access and inclusion

- (1) GP registration form, this needs to be available in large print especially when you ask instead of saying come back in x amount of days to collect one.
- (2) My wife has been advised to have a new dressing on a leg wound every two days, but the easiest appointment is Saturday - four away in my opinion it's not good enough.
- (3) **Practice A** GP surgery - It's took me since lock down started to finally get a face to face appointment for my 11 month old boy a few days ago! After them diagnosing him over the phone for months now after the doctor seeing him they have confirmed its something completely different from what they diagnosed over the phone he's a baby and should of been seen if it wasn't for me keeping on at them and not giving up he would of still been here with the wrong diagnosis.
- (4) Hi, you asked for experiences with GPs during lockdown, my 78 year old mother has been having issues and 5 times between June 2020 and end of August ended up having to go to A and E as the GP service at **Practice O**. One day she rung them and was told a GP would ring her back between 8 and 1 she was asked if she the facility to take a video call she explained no she has no internet to which the receptionist advised to go to A&E, then as GP would not make normal phone call, I took her and we ended up seeing GP at onsite

GP at the hospital this happened twice wasting her time causing stress and anxiety when she could have gone to normal GP. I feel GPs should have seen elderly people who have no internet access or no ability to get to hospital, as this caused my mum so much stress and we are lucky I was able to manage my work and take her. Also, eventually after 5 trips to a and e a random GP made URGENT 2-Week referral for bowel screening which took 6 weeks to come through putting her under more undue stress. Also we have had issues each time with repeat medication for my husband from the GPs, missing tablets, chemist saying they requested medication but GP saying not both blaming each other and ended up with me spending time ringing each service and getting different tale from each of them resulting in my husband nearly running out of heart medication.

- (5) I registered with a Doctor but was told there were not actually any doctors. Unbelievable but true.
- (6) I have found online options my GP has introduced a godsend but there have been a few mistakes that would not have happened if I had been able to go to the practice. Not my GP but many other health services are expecting you to do everything via the telephone which is leaving a lot of people unable to access any of this care due to them being unable to use the telephone without issues.
- (7) I have not had a Dr for over two years. I tried to register with one because I was in pain and could not walk well. Doctors Surgeries, like everything else, will soon be a thing from the past. Things have certainly changed since I last had a doctor. I was told by this one I registered with that how it works these days, is they pass your records on to any random doctor but you only registered at a surgery so you could have access to this service. That is not what I want so I told them to take me off the books again. When you have no doctor, the 111-service refuse to help you and they refuse you urgent care.
- (8) **Practice P** - No services, no podiatry, no diabetes checks, no blood pressure checks and no hospital appointments for specialist.