

Runcorn Urgent Treatment Centre

Patient Feedback June – August 2022



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What is an Urgent Treatment Centre?

Urgent Treatment Centres (UTCs) are an alternative to A&E. They are centres which treat minor injuries and illness requiring urgent treatment that cannot be seen by your registered GP.

UTCs work alongside other parts of the urgent care network including primary care, community pharmacists, ambulance and other community-based services to provide a locally accessible and convenient alternative to A&E for patients who do not need to attend hospital.

Halton has two Urgent Treatment Centres, located at Halton Hospital in Runcorn, and at the Health Care Resource Centre in Widnes.

Why were we visiting?

During the past seven years we've visited the two local centres on quite a regular basis to ask patients about their experience at the UTC and if they had looked for help or advice elsewhere first before attending the UTC.

In December 2015 we spent a full day at each of the then Urgent Care Centres, speaking with over 200 patients and producing '*A day in the life*' reports on the two centres.

In 2017 we carried out a further twelve visits across the two centres between July 2017 and January 2018 as part of our planned public engagement.

In 2019 we undertook regular monthly outreach sessions at the centres, between January and July 2019, in part to gather feedback on the services, but also to gather feedback on the wider health services used by people attending the centres.

During the past two years we've been unable to carry out visits to the two centres because of the restrictions in place due to the Covid Pandemic.

Following the easing of restrictions, we decided to restart visits to the two centres as part of our planned public outreach and engagement sessions across the borough.

Copies of all reports can be download from our website - <https://bit.ly/hwhUTC2>

What we did

We visited the Runcorn UTC on the following dates and times:

- 21 June 1.00pm – 4.00pm
- 19 July 12.30pm – 3.30pm
- 25 July 9.00am – 12.00pm
- 11 August 9.00am – 1.00pm

Our visits to the UTC lasted between three and four hours and, in total, 72 people took part in our survey.

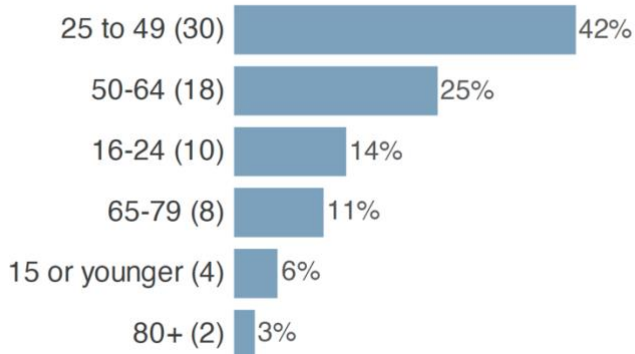
The information in this report is presented to provide a snapshot of the experiences of those who took part, and to highlight areas for consideration by commissioners and providers. Due to the number of responses received they cannot be considered to be representative of all patients who attend the UTC.

Acknowledgement

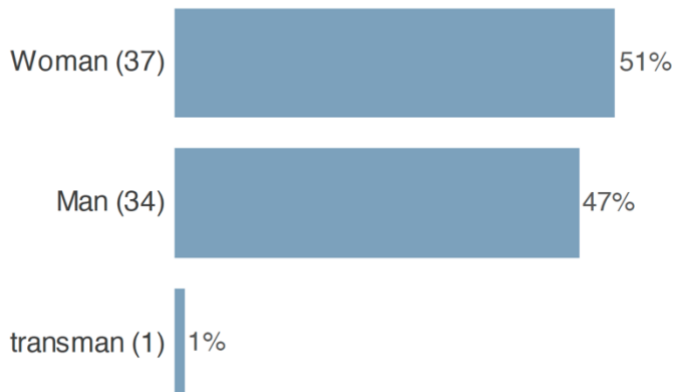
We would like to thank all the staff and patients at NHS Runcorn Urgent Treatment Centre for their help and support during our visits.

Results

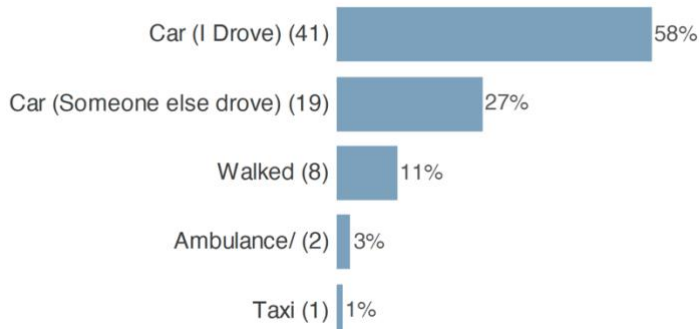
What age group are you? (Age of respondent)



Please tell us which gender you identify with:



How did you get here today?



Those taking part in our questionnaire ranged in age from under sixteen to over 80 years of age.

67% were in the 25 to 64 age group.

Under 25's accounted for 20% of patients we spoke with, while a further 14% were aged 65 or older.

We heard from 37 women, 34 men and one transgender man.

When asked how they arrived at the UTC, 58% said they had driven themselves to the UTC, while 27% had been given a lift by a friend or family member.

Eight people, (11%), told us they had walked to the centre, while one person had arrived by Taxi.

Two people were brought to the centre by ambulance and one other was currently a patient at the hospital and had been brought by wheelchair to the UTC.

Almost 60% of people said they were registered patients at Halton GP practices. A further 38% were registered with GP practices

outside of Halton, one person was currently not registered with a GP practice and one person was in the process of registering with a local GP Practice, telling us, *'I've been waiting a while, it's a slow process.'*

Did you look for help or advice elsewhere before coming to the UTC?

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58%, (42), told us they had looked for help or advice before attending the UTC.

Those who had looked for help or advice before attending the UTC were asked which service(s) they had been in contact prior to coming to the UTC.

The most common response was GP Practice, with 60% (25) saying they had contacted their GP practice first.

14% had contacted NHS 111 and been advised to attend the UTC.

14% had attended A&E and been advised to come to the UTC, due to waiting times at A&E.

7% had visited a pharmacy.

One person had initially rung 999 and been advised to visit the UTC

- *'GP told me to call 999, but there was a 10 hour wait for an ambulance. Colleague told me about this UTC.'*

Why did you end up coming to the UTC?

Most people felt that the UTC was *'the most appropriate place'* to treat them.

Nine people we spoke with came to the UTC as they were unable to book an appointment with their GP practice.

There were additional 13 people who had been advised to visit the UTC by their GP practice.

Three people had attended A&E and been advised to come to the UTC due to the long waits for A&E treatment.

- *'I waited in A and E for 8 hours last night, but people were not moving forward, as many emergencies were coming in. A&E advised I would be sent to minor injuries unit or could come to UTC.'*
- *'I was advised to come by A and E as they had a 15 hour wait last night.'*
- *'I'm in the military so the GP wouldn't see me. Called GP surgery on Friday and I was asked to call again on Monday. On Monday told it takes 2 days to register a military appointment and to come to UTC.'*
- *'Tried phone to GP for over 2 hours, using 2 mobiles from 8.00am. Then walked to the surgery and was told I should have phoned! Advised to come to the UTC.'*

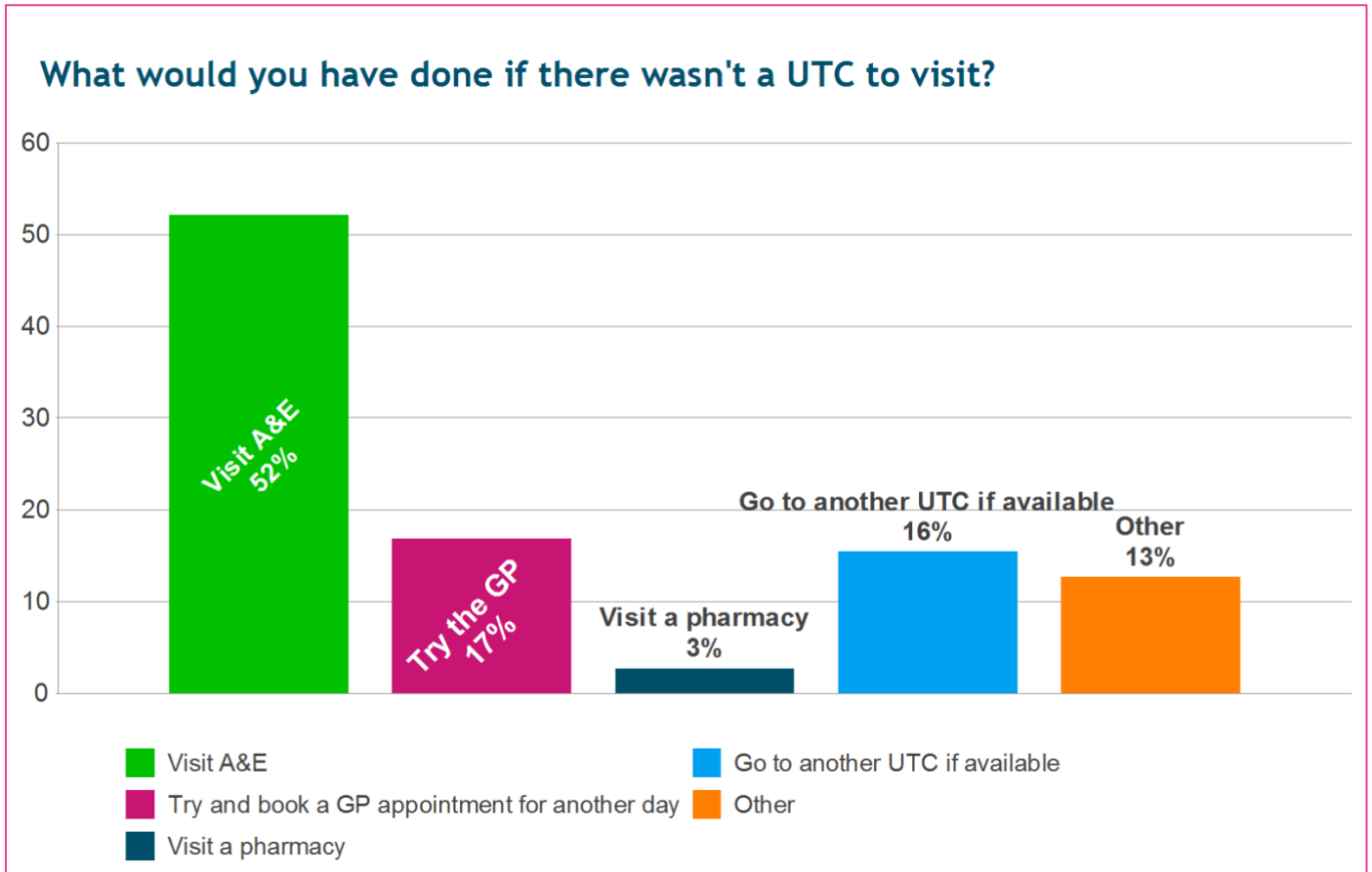
How many times have you visited the UTC in the past year?

64% (46) of people were attending the UTC for the first time in the past 12 months.

28% (20) had been to the UTC twice during the previous 12 months.

7% (6) were visiting for the third, while one person told us it was their sixth visit in the past year.

What would you have done today if there wasn't an Urgent Treatment Centre locally?



Over half, 52% (37), told us they would have attended A&E.

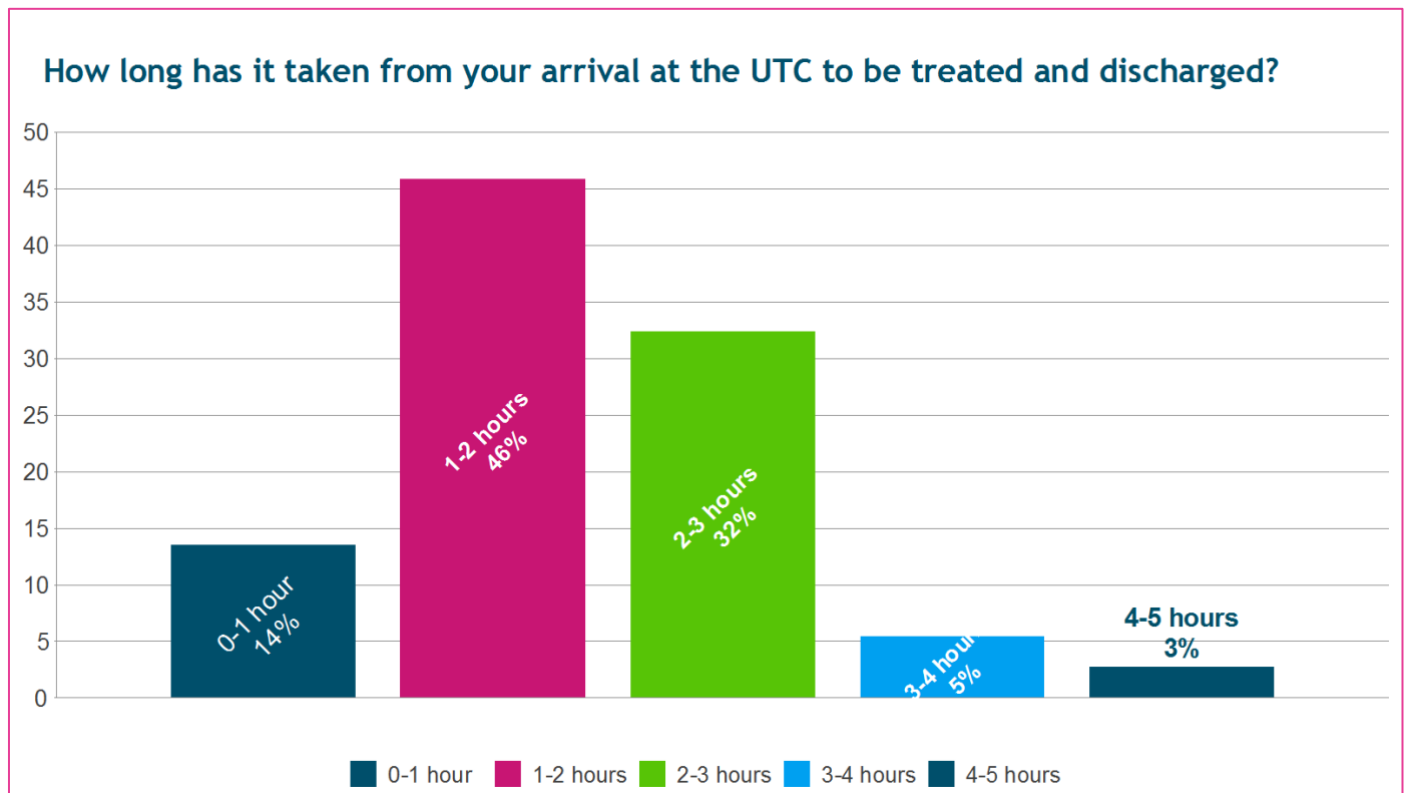
18% (13) said they would try and get an appointment with their GP on another day, while a further 16% (11) would have looked for another UTC to go to.

Two people said they would have gone to the pharmacist

Other alternatives included self-care or being treated privately. One person explained they would have just searched online for information.

How long has it taken from your arrival at the Urgent Treatment Centre to being treated and discharged?

We asked people to complete a second part of the questionnaire once they'd been seen and treated at the UTC. As our visits to the UTC were generally less than four hours in length, we asked for the second part of the questionnaire to be handed in to the UTC reception and the forms were then posted on to us.



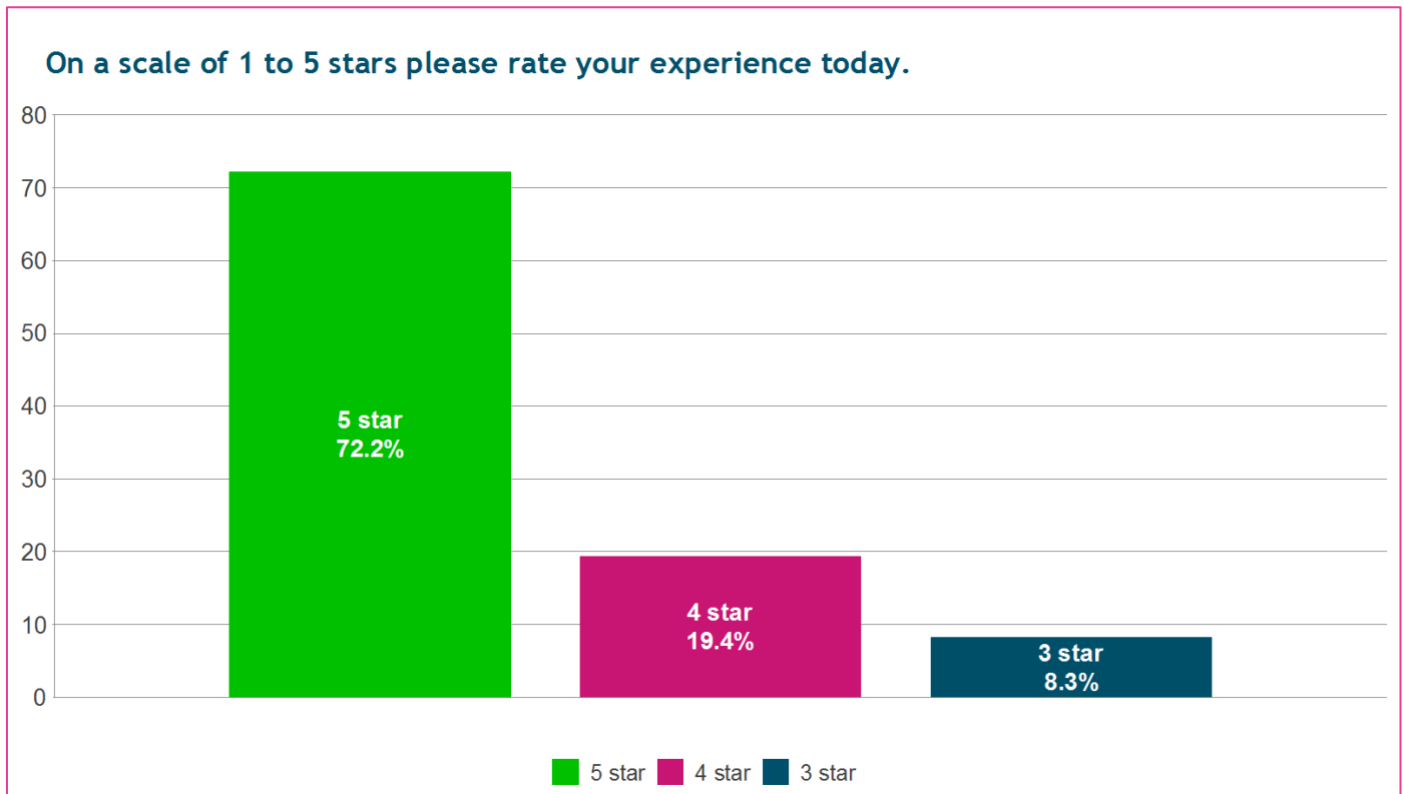
14% of patients were 'in and out' of the service within one hour of arrival.

A further 46% were treated and discharged within two hours of arrival, while another 32% took between two and three hours to be treated and discharged.

In total 97% of patients were treated and discharged in under four hours.

- *'From previous experience getting a same day appointment from GP is impossible, so my preferred option is to come to urgent care if the issue can't wait.'*

On a scale of 1 to 5 stars (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), please rate your experience today

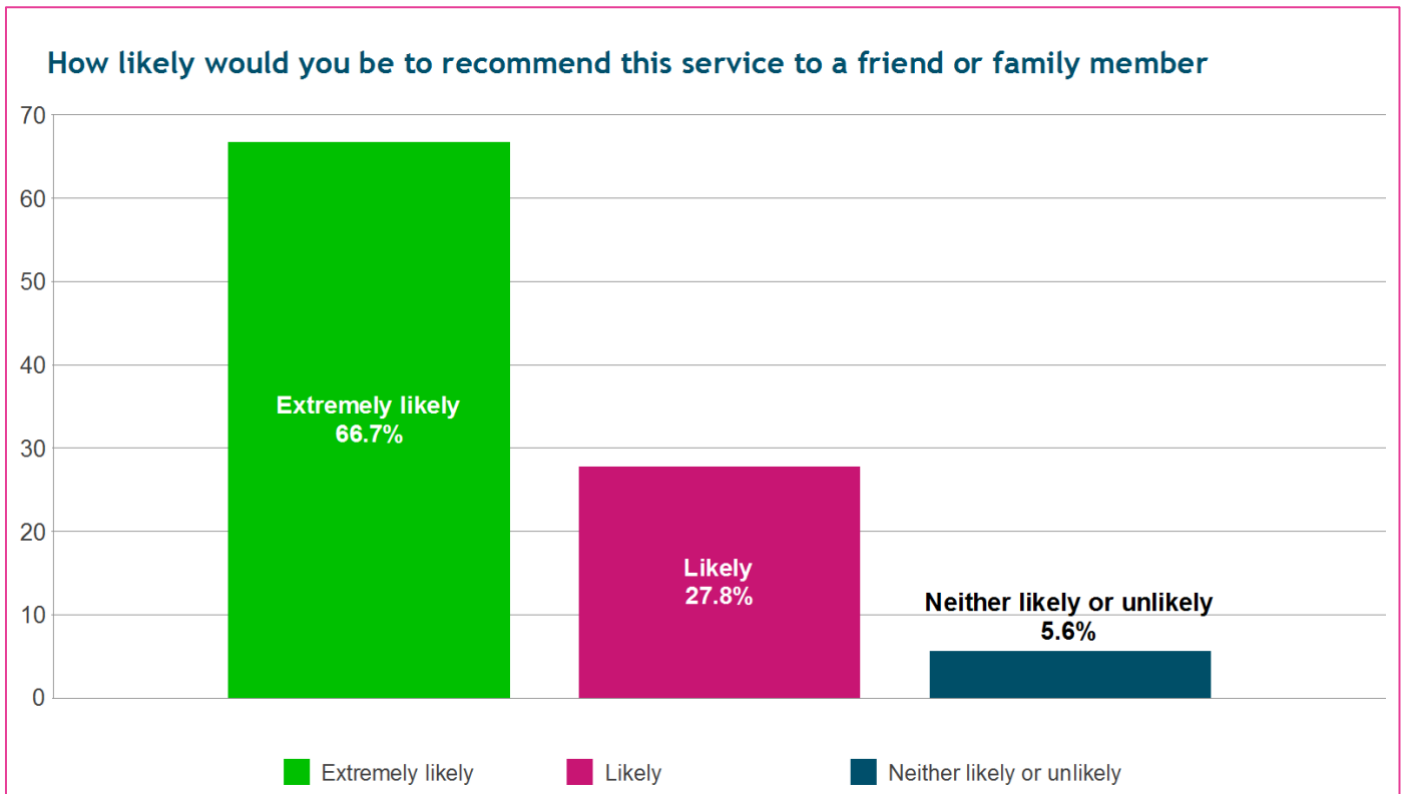


73% of people rated their experience of the UTC as five star, with a further 19% giving it four out of five stars.

8% rated it as a three out of five star experience

- *'Excellent service from a team that show genuine human kindness always. Thank you again, God bless you all!'*
- *'Excellent, kind and caring staff, treated with dignity and respect, much better experience than my local surgery.'*
- *'Every member of staff in the dept were exceptional, thorough, and caring. What a fabulous service.'*

How likely would you be to recommend this service to a friend or family member if they needed similar care or treatment



94% said they would be *'likely'* or *'very likely'* to recommend the service.

The remaining 6% gave a neutral *'neither likely or unlikely'* rating.

- *'I think this is an excellent facility for those not requiring A&E. I unfortunately think I got forgot about as they put me in a private bay with baby, but that doesn't change the excellent care given here. Staff are wonderful.'*
- *'Very good and polite staff. I would recommend it.'*
- *'Good waiting times and nice staff. My teenagers use here too and find it to be helpful. Can always park here without a problem.'*

Summary

During our visits to the Runcorn UTC, we observed all staff at the centre to be helpful and courteous to patients, which is very much reflected in the positive feedback we received.

The vast majority of people gave us very positive feedback on their experience. As many people gave very similar comments, we've given a flavour of them below.

- *'Staff pleasant on approach and very helpful. Without this service it would have been a 7 hour wait at A&E'*
- *'Friendly. Good movement of patients, comfortable environment, overall happy with the service. Thank you :).'*
- *'The staff are always helpful and go the extra mile and this unit is a vital part of the community.'*

We found that local people, and those from neighbouring areas, really value the Urgent Treatment Centre.

Many saw the UTC as a useful alternative to the waiting times at A&E and the difficulties in getting GP appointments.

One patient summed up their experience saying, ***'Staff always very helpful. This is so much better than going to A&E. Treatments are fast and less stressful.'***

A few suggestions were given to us which patients felt would help improve their experience of the service.

One patient raised an issue for people with hearing difficulties, due to staff wearing masks, telling us, ***'Would be a good idea to provide staff with see-through visors for hard of hearing patients who cannot understand people in a mask.'***

Another patient commented on waiting for blood test results saying, ***'All staff were very helpful and kind and made me feel relaxed. I just think the blood results shouldn't take as long to come back.'***



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