

# Widnes Urgent Treatment Centre

Patient Feedback report – March 2023



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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 are we visiting the Urgent Treatment Centre?

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 July 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 Widnes UTC on the following dates:

- 16 November 2022
- 14 February 2022

Each visit lasted between two and three hours and in total 36 people took part in our survey.

The information in this report gives a snapshot of the experiences of people attending the Widnes Urgent Treatment Centre during our visits.

Due to the number of responses received they cannot be considered to be representative of all patients, but it is presented to provide a snapshot of the experiences of those who took part and to highlight areas for consideration by commissioners and providers.

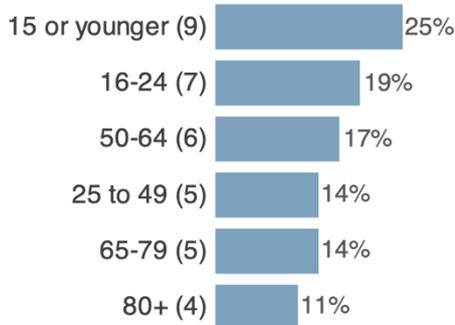
### **Acknowledgement**

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

## Results

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

### What age group are you?



31% were in the 25 to 64 age group.

Under 25's accounted for 44% of patients.

25% were aged 65 or older.

17 respondents were woman, 19 were men.

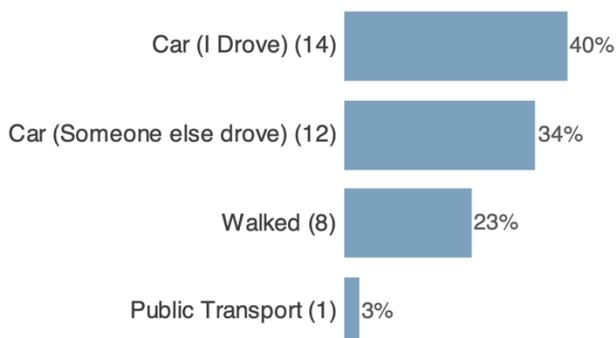
### Please tell us which gender you identify with:



14 people (40%) said they had driven themselves to the centre, with a further 12 (34%) stating they had been driven by a friend or family member.

Eight people (23%) told us they had walked to the centre, while one person told us they had used public transport to get to the UTC.

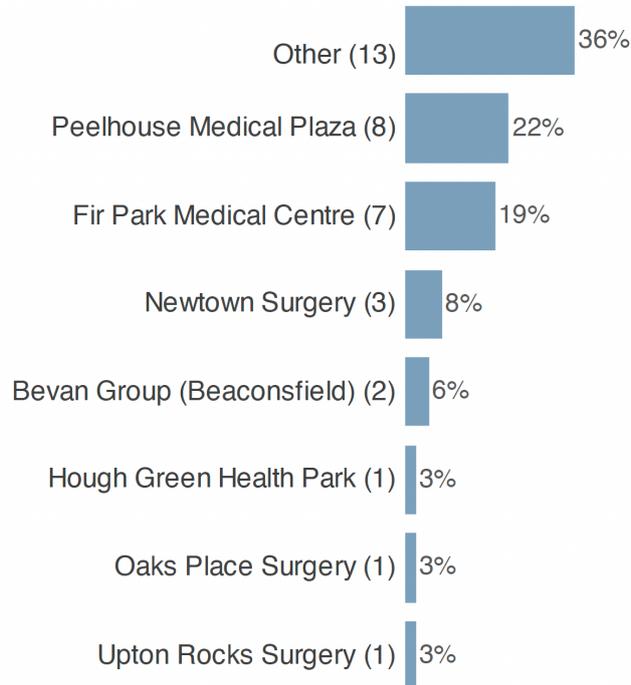
### How did you get here today?



23 people (64%) were registered patients at Halton GP practices, 12 (33%) were registered with GP practices outside of Halton and one person was from Australia and visiting relatives.

## Which GP practice are you registered with?

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Thirteen people (36%) attending the UTC were registered with GP practices outside Halton. These were mainly Warrington patients who said they found it easier to travel to the Widnes UTC rather than attend A&E.

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

39% (14) said they had looked elsewhere for help or advice before attending the UTC.

One person told us they had contacted NHS 111.

Thirteen had contacted, or attempted to contact, their GP practice. One had been advised to come to the UTC by their GP. Another person, who had been discharged from hospital the week before, had been advised on discharge, to contact the hospital ward if they had any issues. On contacting the hospital, they were told they needed a referral from a GP. They were unable to get an appointment to see a GP so they came to the UTC.

One person explained that they had tried two days running to get a GP appointment before deciding to attend the UTC.

Another person said they had tried e-consult, but hadn't received a call back before attending the UTC.

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### Why did you end up coming to the UTC?

People decided to attend the UTC for a variety of reasons.

Many felt that it was **'the most appropriate place'** to treat them.

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

Two people had been advised to visit the UTC by their GP practice.

One person had been advised by NHS 111 to visit the UTC

Two people were attending the UTC to have stitches removed.

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

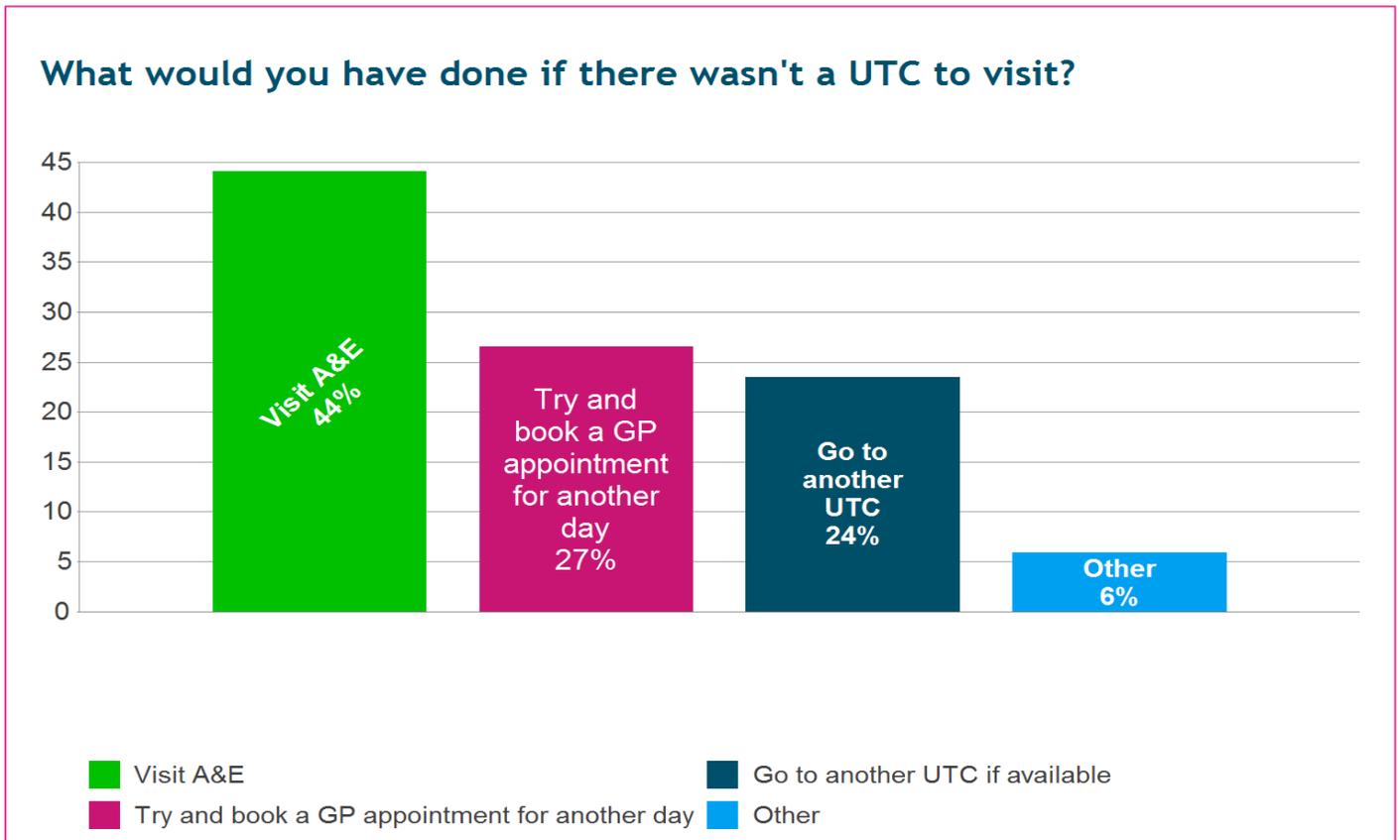
53% (19) were attending the UTC for the first time in the past year.

14% (5) had been to the UTC twice in the past year.

22% (8) had attended the UTC between three and six times in the past year.

11% (4) had attended seven or more times in the past year.

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



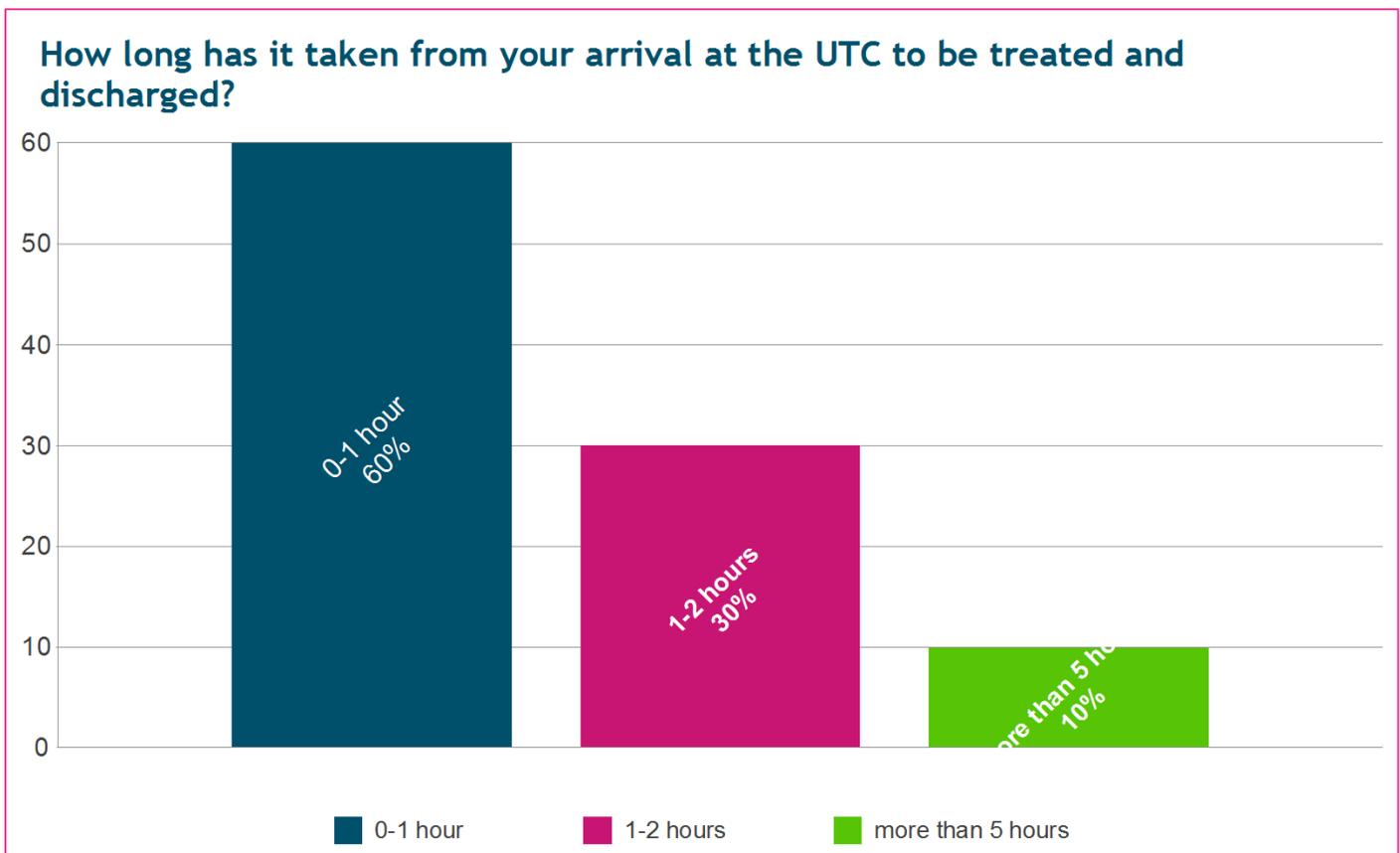
Just under half of respondents, 44%, told us they would have attended A&E if there hadn't been the option of an Urgent Treatment Centre.

27% (9) said they would try and get an appointment with their GP on another day, while a further 24% (8) would have looked for a UTC in another local area to attend. Two people told us they would have called NHS 111 for help.

- *'I just need advice, I don't want to bother A&E'*

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

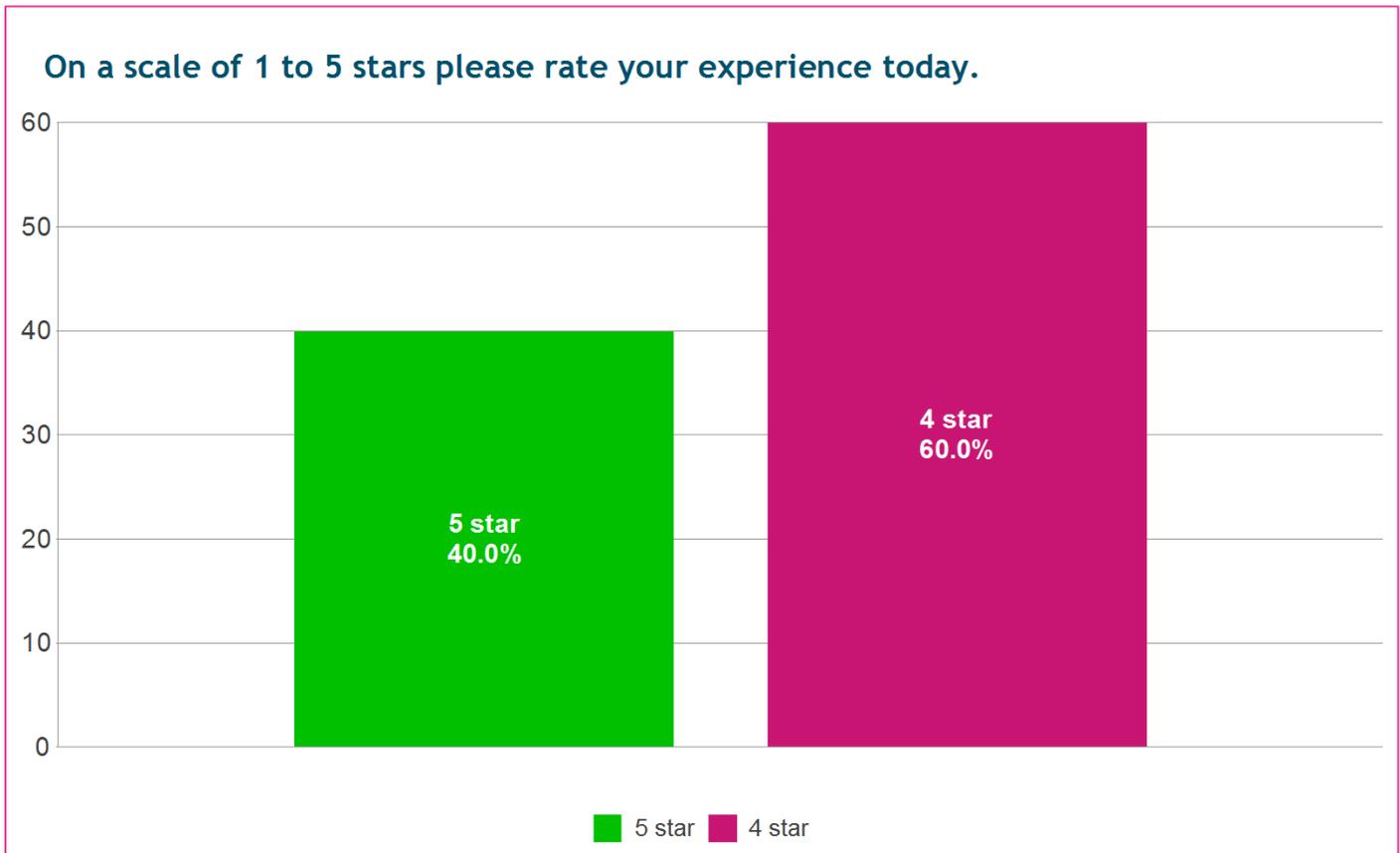
We asked people to complete a second part of the questionnaire once they'd been seen and treated at the UTC. As our visits to the UTC are generally less than four hours in length, we ask for the second part of the questionnaire to be handed in to the UTC reception and forms are then posted on to us. Not everyone completes and returns this form. Only ten 'part 2' forms were returned.



The UTC was relatively quiet during these two visits with 60% (six) of respondents saying they were 'in and out' of the UTC within one hour of arrival. 30% were discharged in less than two hours from arrival.

One patient said they spent more than 5 hours at the UTC. They gave no further information.

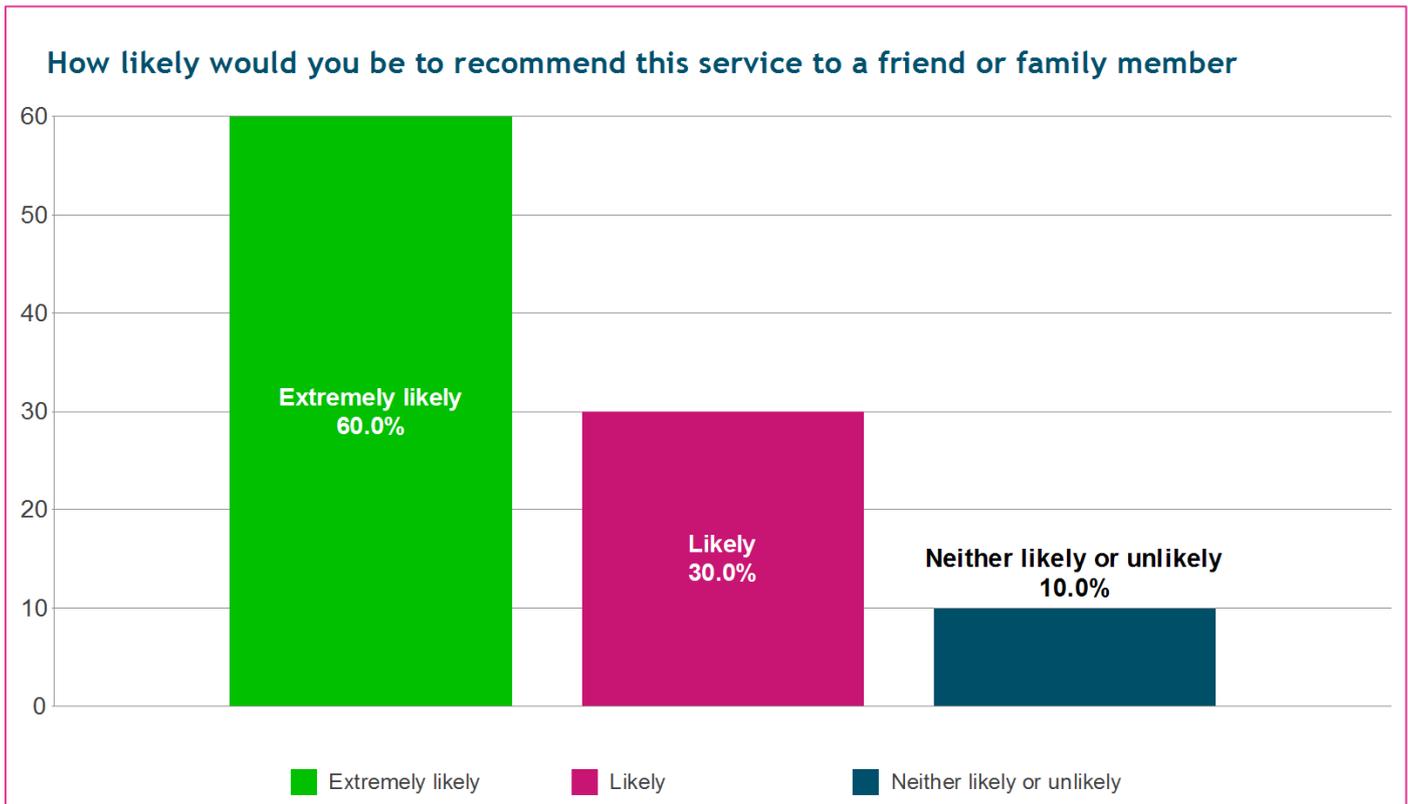
On a scale of 1 to 5 stars (1 being poor and 5 being excellent), please rate your experience today



40% of people rated their experience at the UTC as five star, with the remaining 60% rating it as four star.

- *'Calm atmosphere, not too busy, seen rather promptly.'*
- *'Everyone is very nice and it was really quick today. Thank You!'*
- *Quiet today, a one and half hours wait is acceptable, it's normally four hours.*

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



90% said they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to recommend the service.

10% gave a neutral 'neither likely or unlikely' rating

- *'All the nurses and staff treated me wonderful. I could not get looked after better anywhere else.'*
- *'Triage with a very experienced nurse practitioner was excellent. It was fantastic having somewhere to go urgently. With hindsight I should have dialled 111 and sought advice through that route. The advice I received was needed at the time. The person conducting the Healthwatch survey was fantastic too and it felt I mattered as a patient.'*

## Summary

During these two visits, we observed staff at the centre to be helpful and courteous to patients, which is yet again reflected in the feedback we received. One patient commented that the 'Waiting Time' signage was 'hardly visible' and asked if this could be improved.

This has been highlighted as an issue by patients in previous feedback reports.



**healthwatch**  
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