

Widnes 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 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 and times:

- 25 May 10.00am – 12.00pm
- 15 June 9.00am – 12.00pm
- 03 August 1.00pm – 4.00pm
- 16 August 1.00pm – 4.00pm

Each visit lasted between two and three hours and in total 77 people took part in our survey.

The information in this report gives a snapshot of the experiences of people attending the Urgent Treatment Centres services in Halton during our visits.

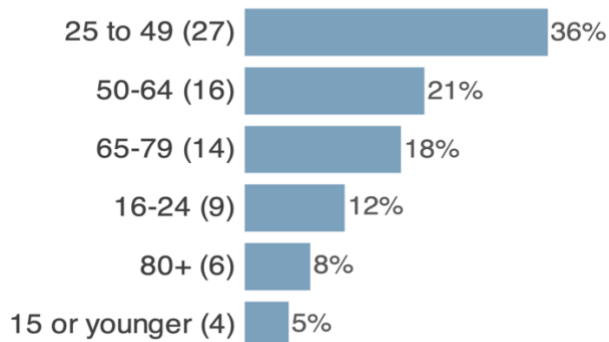
Due to the number of responses received they cannot be considered to be representative of all patients, but it is presented to provide a snapshot of the experiences of those who took part and to highlight areas for consideration by commissioners and providers.

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

What age group are you? (Age of respondent)



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

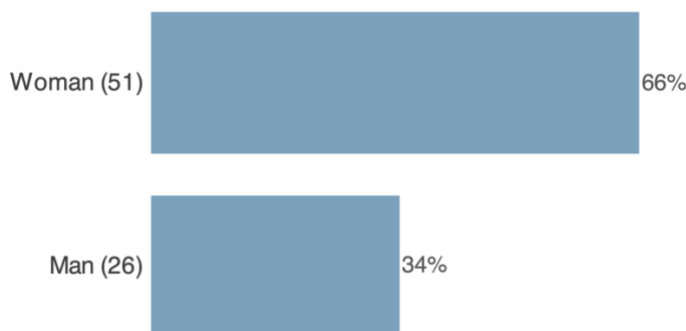
57% were in the 25 to 64 age group.

Under 25's accounted for 17% of patients we heard from.

26% were aged 65 or older.

51 respondents were woman, 26 were men.

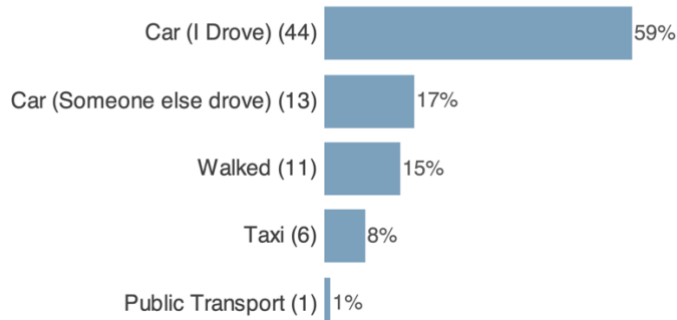
Please tell us which gender you identify with:



44 people (59%) said they had driven themselves to the centre, with a further 13 (17%) stating they had been driven by a friend or family member.

Eleven people (15%) told us they had walked to the centre, while a further six people (8%) had arrived by Taxi. One person told us they had used public transport to get to the UTC.

How did you get here today?



55 people (71%) were registered patients at Halton GP practices, 19 (25%) were registered with GP practices outside of Halton and three people were not currently registered with a GP.

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

57% (44) said they had looked for help or advice before attending the UTC.

Those that said that they had looked for help or advice before attending the UTC were asked what service(s) they had been in contact with first.

79% (34) of those who answered the question said that they had contacted their GP practice before attending the UTC.

7% had contacted NHS 111 and been advised to attend the UTC. One person had initially contacted 999.

- *'I came straight here without contacting GP as can never get an appointment with the GP'*

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.

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

Seven people said they 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.

One person told us they had been advised by their GP to call 999, but there was a 10 hour wait for an ambulance. A work colleague had suggested they try the Urgent Treatment Centre.

- *'We came straight from the school.'*
- *'It's hard to get appointment anywhere else.'*
- *'It's the quickest place for treatment.'*
- *You walk in here. Waste of time calling my GP they can never see you.*

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

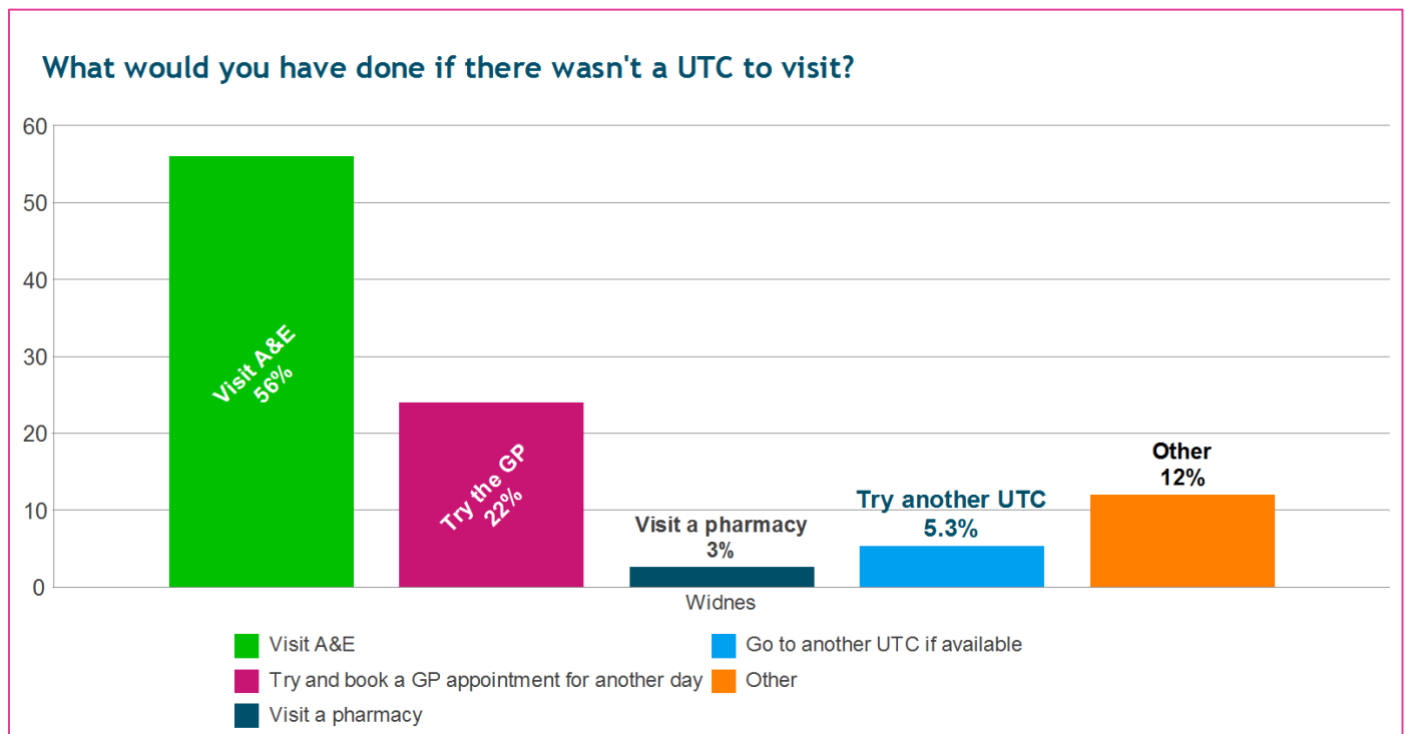
53% (41) of people were attending the UTC for the first time in the past 12 months.

26% (20) had been to the UTC twice in during the previous 12 months.

20% (15) were visiting for the third or fourth time, while one person told us it was their sixth visit in the past year.

- *'My GP refuses to see anyone and just tells you to book an appointment at the UTC. My GP will only book children's appointments on a Monday when the child specialist is in. I have brought my children to the UTC four times this year.'*

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

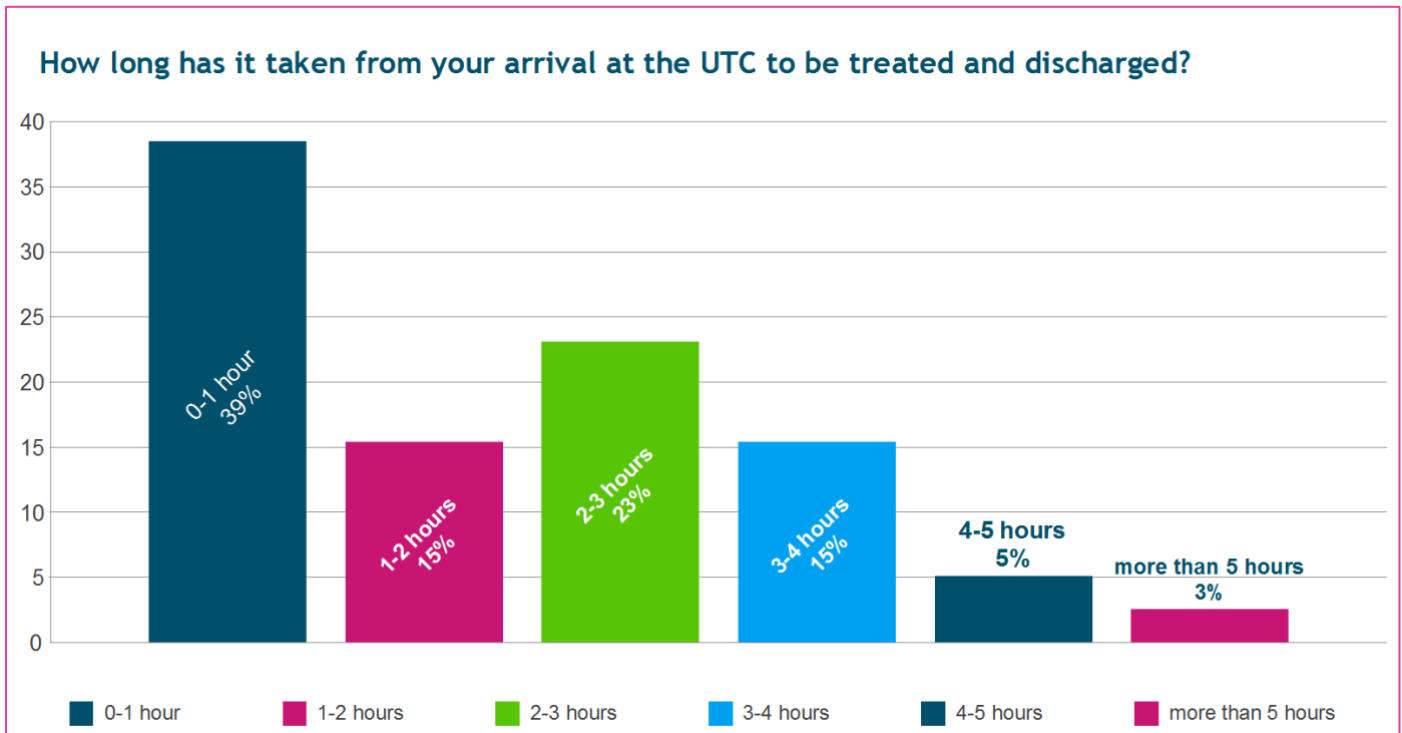


Over half, 56% (42), told us they would have attended A&E.

22% (18) said they would try and get an appointment with their GP on another day, while a further 5% (11) would have looked for a UTC in another local area to attend.

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.

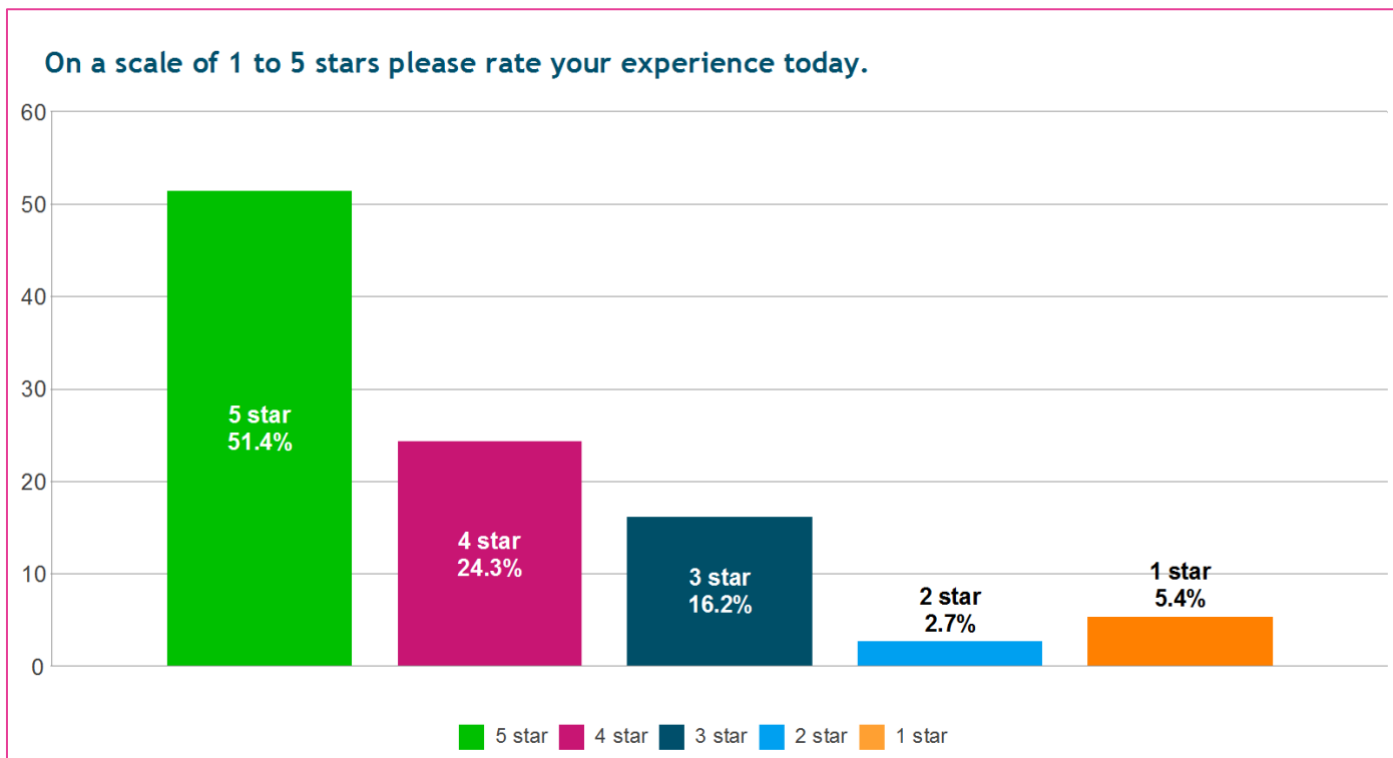


39% were 'in and out' within one hour of arrival. A further 15% were treated and discharged within two hours of arrival, while another 38% took between two and four hours to be treated and discharged.

- *'I only had a 15-minute wait and then straight in and out. Excellent.'*
- *Good care. Waiting time very accurate. Spot on!*

8% of people said it took over four hours to be treated and discharged.

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

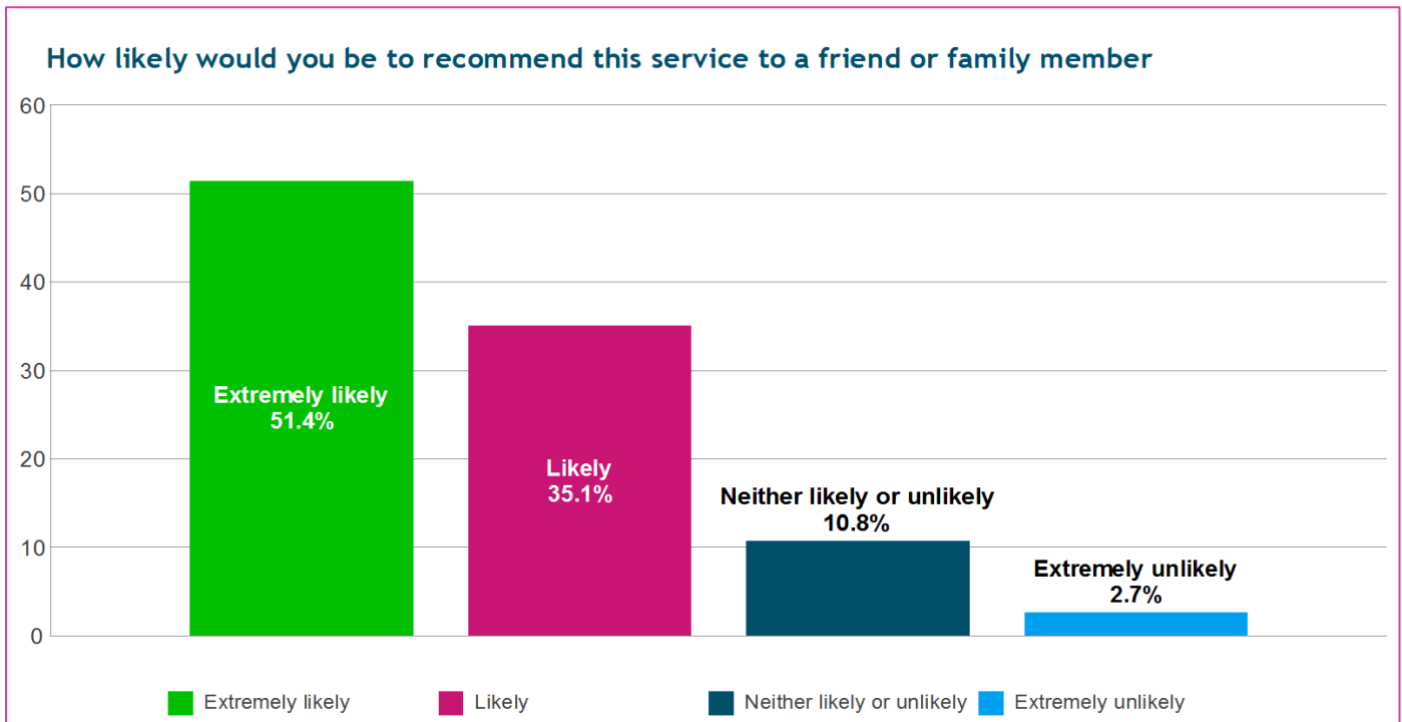


51% of people rated their experience of the UTC as five star, with a further 24% giving it four out of five stars.

16% rated it as a three out of five star experience with 8% rating it as one or two stars.

- *'I was looked after extremely well in every department that I visited during my treatment. Taking into account how understaffed they are my visit to this urgent care centre was above their call of duty. Top marks to all staff.'*

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



86% said they would be 'likely' or 'very likely' to recommend the service.

11% gave a neutral 'neither likely or unlikely' rating with the remaining 3% extremely unlikely to recommend the service.

- *'Marvellous service and excellent staff.'*
- *'It is a good job we have these centres. They should be bigger and there should be one in Warrington. More houses are being built all the time but no more care facilities!'*

On arrival for one of our visits the centre was extremely busy and had waiting times in excess of 3 hours, which lead to some dissatisfaction with the delays from patients.

- *'Been here three and a half hours so far.'*
- *'I've been here over two hours already, long waits.'*
- *'We've been here over 1 1/2 hours and not yet triaged. Not happy with the long wait!'*
- *'Pathetic time waiting. Not enough chairs.'*

During our other visits waiting times for treatment was generally around two hours.

Summary

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

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

- *'I found the staff to be very nice and helpful.'*
- *'Good service. Wish I had a local centre by me.'*
- *'All staff were very helpful and polite. The nurse was very thorough. There was a long wait but that is to be expected. 5 Star treatment and staff!'*
- *'...not registered with a GP - removed from previous GP after I moved house. Fab treatment here, always good service. There are more checks here than the GP who have missed things before.'*
- *'Today was not as busy so the wait time was short'.*

Apart from the comments expressed around waiting times, on a particularly busy day at the UTC in June, there was very little dissatisfaction with the service in general.

We found that patients valued the treatment and care received. Many saw the UTC as a useful alternative to the waiting times at A&E and the difficulties in getting GP appointments.

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, ***'It's not very clear when calling names for treatment, due to wearing masks. They only call the name once.'***

Another patient asked if the order in which people would be treated could be explained, stating, ***'People seem to be seen sooner than my daughter who is in bad pain with her eye and has been hospitalised because of it in the past. It***

would be better if the procedures of how people are seen and in what order was explained and clearer as we wait.'

There were comments from a couple of patients that the the service should consider installing screens displaying current waiting times, rather than the time being written on a whiteboard.

This is something we have suggested previously, and something that is currently in place at the Runcorn UTC. Waiting times for the Runcorn UTC are also displayed online at <https://dashboard.whh.nhs.uk/ed/?platform=hootsuite>.

If a system similar to this was introduced we believe it would be of benefit to many patients using the centre.



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