

## Report on the Results of Hedge End Medical Centre's Friends & Family Test

The NHS Friends & Family Test (FFT) is an anonymous feedback survey created as a way of helping service providers and commissioners identify how happy patients are with their service, and in which areas improvements are needed.

Most NHS services are required to participate in the FFT, including hospitals, GPs, maternity services and more. Since its launch in April 2013, more than 10 million pieces of patient feedback have been submitted using the FFT. The results are published monthly on the NHS England<sup>1</sup> and NHS Choices<sup>2</sup> websites.

The test asks the patient how likely they are to recommend the service they received to their friends and family, out of six choices. It is also common practice to ask them a follow-up question to explain the response they gave. Hedge End Medical Centre also asks a variety of other follow-up questions to further improve the quality and usefulness of the responses received. This report will analyse the responses given by 170 patients, though not all patients answered every question.

### THE NHS FRIENDS AND FAMILY TEST



We would like you to think about your recent experience of our service.

How likely are you to recommend our dental practice to friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment?

Extremely Likely	Likely	Neither likely or unlikely	Unlikely	Extremely Unlikely	Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
					

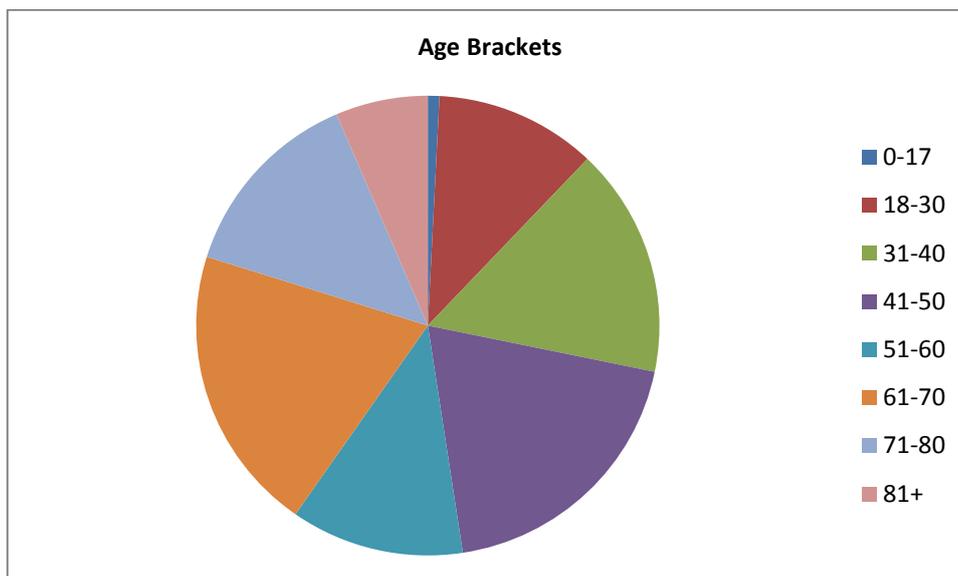
Thinking about your response to this question, what is the main reason why you feel this way?

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/friends-and-family-test/friends-and-family-test-data/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/Pages/nhs-friends-and-family-test.aspx>

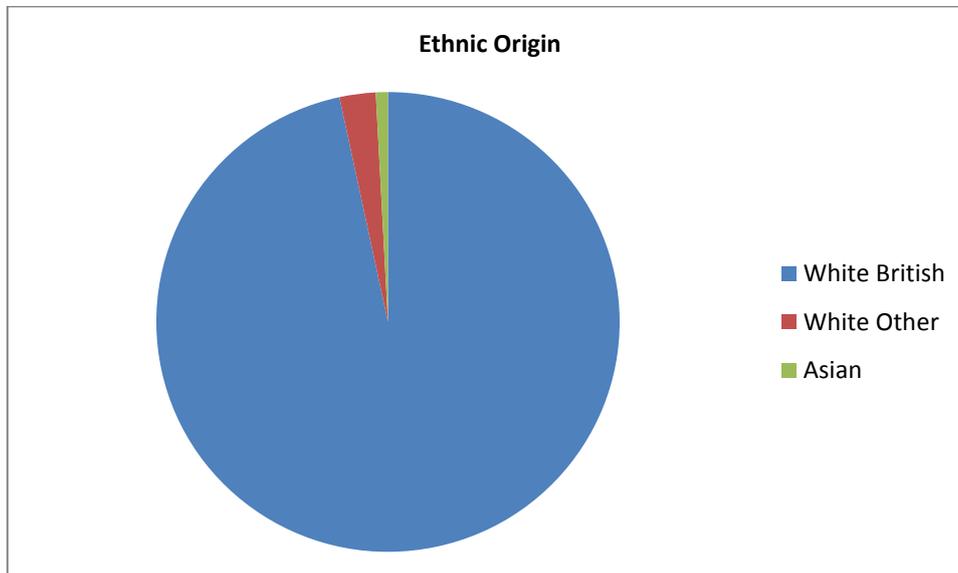
## Demographics

Before delving into the responses to the questions, it is worth taking a look at the demographics that have participated in the FFT over the last year.

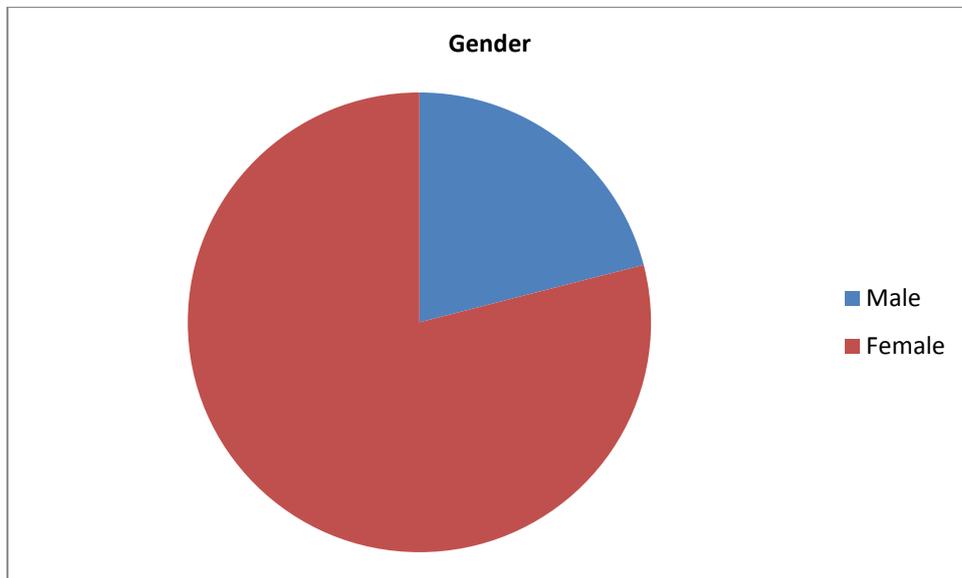


The pie chart above shows that the modal age range of the patients who responded to the test (out of the 124 patients who gave their age) was 61-70 years old (25 patients), and the second largest is 41-50 (24 patients).

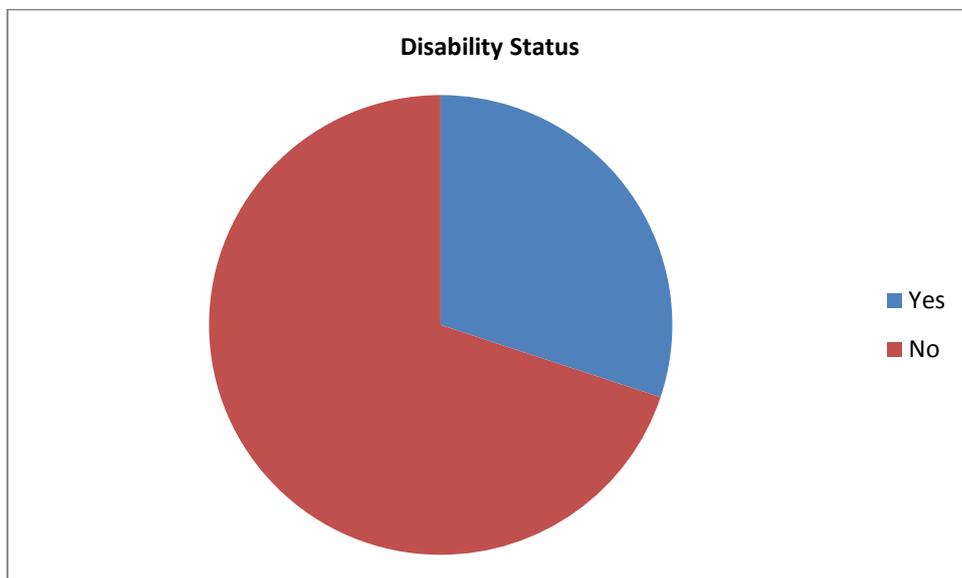
The other demographic graphs below show that the majority of the patients who participated were of white British ethnic origin, female, and not disabled.



119 patients gave their ethnic origin. Of these, 115 were white British, 3 were white non-British, and one was Asian.



143 patients gave their gender. 113 were female, and 30 were male.

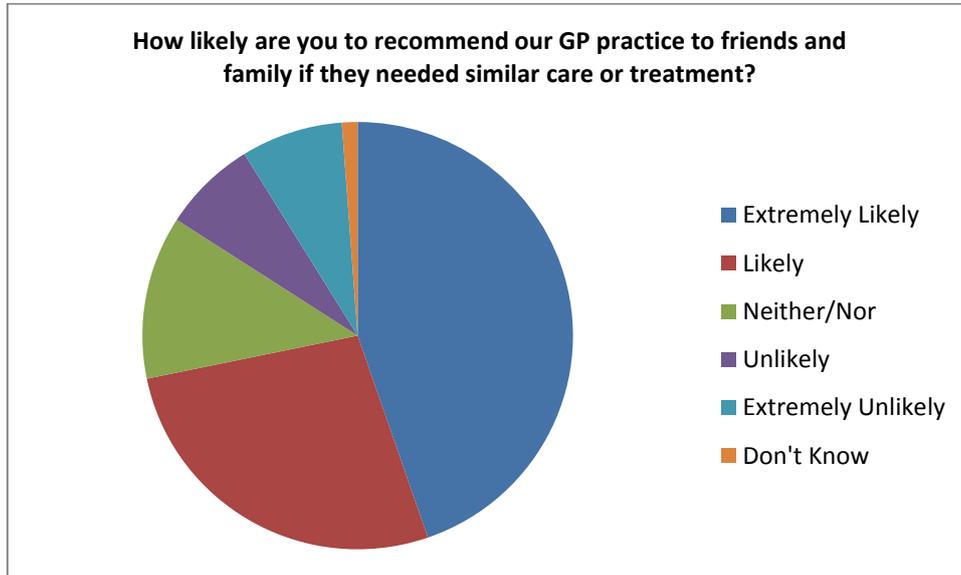


113 patients gave their disability status. 79 did not have a disability, and 34 considered themselves disabled.

## Patient Satisfaction

The first and main question on the FFT is “How likely are you to recommend our GP practice to friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment?”

170 patients responded to this question.



76 of the patients who answered said it is ‘extremely likely’ that they would recommend our practice to their friends and family. 46 said it is ‘likely’ that they would recommend us. This adds up to an approximate 72% positive feedback. 12 patients fell into the ‘unlikely’ category, and 13 into ‘extremely unlikely’, while 21 remained indifferent, and 2 said they didn’t know.

These results show that, overall, the practice is doing a good job of meeting the needs of patients and is providing a good service. However, in order to get a better understanding of what we are doing well, and in which areas improvement are needed, we must look at the responses given to question 2, which asked patients to explain their first answer.

106 pieces of feedback were recorded. 71 pieces of feedback were positive, and 34 were negative. These are some examples of the positive feedback:

Great practice and all staff			
Always had good treatment, lovely staff			
Always happy with doctors & surgery, good telephone advice, but hard to get appointments.			
Staff are helpful, friendly, knowledgeable			
The centre is okay and helpful			
Doctors mostly very helpful			
Doctors are helpful			

Nearly every piece of positive feedback mentions the helpfulness of the staff, describing them as friendly, caring, and knowledgeable. A few pieces of negative feedback say the opposite, but while it is of course important to make sure every patient is satisfied with the service they receive, since the overwhelming majority of feedback about the staff is positive (only 4 of the 34 negative responses explicitly mention staff), it is likely that these were unique or difficult situations, and should be considered on an individual basis.

These are some examples of the negative feedback:

Waiting time is awful. Staff are unhelpful and not very nice. GP doesn't care about me.					
The wait can be lengthy					
Doctor running late.					
Long waiting times.					
Long waiting times for an appointment.					
Unfriendly, lack of consistent care.					
Had to wait 3 weeks to see a doctor and couldn't see the same doctor twice about the same illness.					
It is not acceptable to wait 4 weeks for 2 appointments					

On the other hand, the majority of negative feedback criticises the long wait times, regarding both in the waiting room because the clinician is running late, and how long it takes to get a routine appointment. These are areas for improvement. The responses to question 3 show that this is valid feedback.



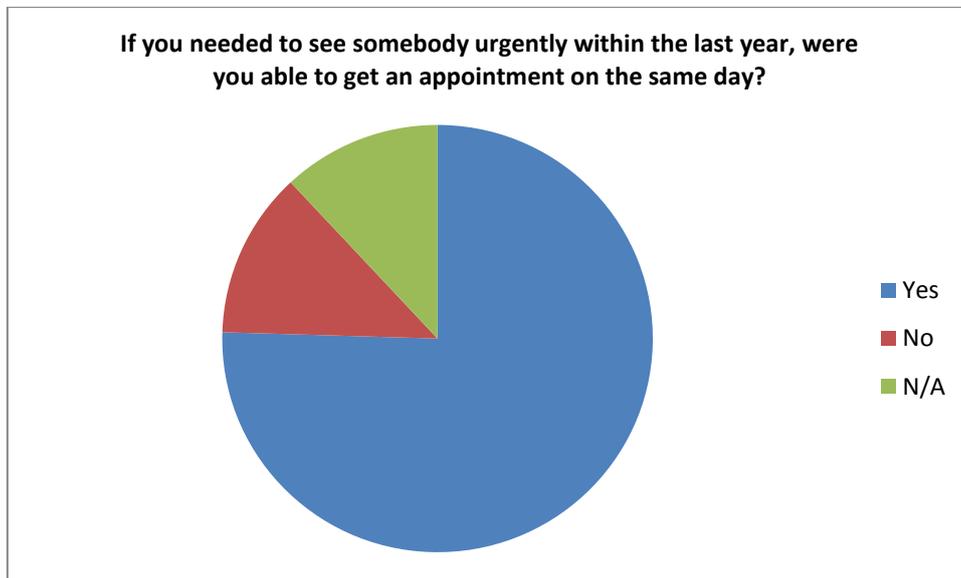
Nearly 60% of the patients who tried to book a routine (non-urgent) appointment within the last year were not able to be seen within 2 weeks. We would ideally like to be able to offer routine appointments with a named GP within 2 weeks; however, due to increasing demands on GP time, reduced funding, an increase in demand for appointments, and an increase in the patient list size, this is not possible. We have, however, implemented a number of initiatives which help to address this.

We offer telephone appointments for problems which are ongoing and need continuity of GP. These are bookable up to a week in advance.

Last year, we implemented Online Consulting<sup>3</sup>, where patients are able to use a tool online which will often answer a query. They are also able to submit a consultation electronically, and the GP will review the consultation by the end of the next working day.

The same-day system is suitable for anyone who can't or doesn't want to wait until the next routine appointment.

<sup>3</sup> [www.Hedgeendmedicalcentre.co.uk](http://www.Hedgeendmedicalcentre.co.uk) and click on the picture "consult online"



85% of the 140 patients who required a same-day appointment were able to get one.

This reflects how we have designed our appointment system. With limited resources, we have directed capacity to where the clinical need is. Our same day appointments (which are not urgent appointments, rather patients are offered these if they wish to be seen today, or the wait for the next routine one is too long for their need) meet the clinical need. The reception team offer same day appointments until we are at capacity for the day, and then if the patient is able to wait until the next day (the receptionist asks “do you feel you are seriously ill, or can your problem wait until tomorrow”), they are asked to ring back in the morning.

If a patient reports they are seriously ill and need to be assessed by a GP today, the GP will always ring them for assessment.

What this result shows is that there is still some misconception about how the on-day system works. We will continue to address this, and this will be one of the action points from this report.

## Patient Suggestions

Question 5 asked patients what one realistic thing they would like to change about the surgery. Most of the responses can be broken down into categories.

Waiting Rooms			
Turn off the radio in the waiting room.			
More relaxing music in the waiting room.			
Most patients seem to be over retirement age - is Radio 1 really an appropriate choice?			
Choice of radio is inappropriate.			
Water dispenser in waiting room.			
Water in waiting room.			
Fans in waiting room.			
Up-to-date magazines in waiting room.			

Several patients suggested improvements to the waiting room. This is where we can see the majority age demographic come into effect. Four patients stated that they believe the choice of radio station in the waiting room is inappropriate and should be changed or turned off. Some patients said this as negative feedback in question 2.

The waiting room radio is normally tuned to Radio 2. On a Wednesday afternoon, in the smaller waiting room, the Teenage Drop in Centre is running and they change the station to Radio 1. We will ensure the station is changed back in future!

Other suggested improvements were to add a water cooler, fans, and better reading material to the waiting room, to simply make it a nicer place.

The water cooler is difficult as it can be misused and get messy! We are always happy to provide water should a patient request it. When the weather heats up, we do have fans and we do put them in the waiting room. We rely on patients to donate magazines for reading in the waiting room. We do change these as they get tatty.

Many patients suggested shorter waiting times and faster appointments.

GP Consistency			
To be able to continuously see the same doctor for long term illness.			
Consistent access to trained GP.			
It would be helpful to be able to see the same doctor.			
Keeping to the same GP rather than pot luck.			

This was addressed above – the drawback of having the excellent same day system is that it reduces the availability of routine appointments. We have introduced telephone appointments for suitable problems, to improve continuity of care.

Appointment Flexibility			
Weekend opening for people who work all week. Available only for people who haven't been seen during the week.			
Adult evening drop-in clinic.			
Weekend surgery, 7 days a week, with more doctors available.			
More evening and weekend appointments.			
Reserve some emergency appointments.			
More appointments online. Releasing of cancelled appointments online as it is difficult to sit on the phone whilst we			
More flexible. Appointment times.			

Another thing which several patients wanted was more flexible appointments. Some complained that it was difficult to get an appointment they were able to attend due to working full-time, and would appreciate having more opportunities to see the doctor during the evening or at the weekend.

We have offered Saturday morning and Monday and Thursday evening appointments at the Practice for a number of years now. The uptake for these is good, so they are widely known about. We advertise them on our website, on NHS Choices, and we also offer them to patients who are struggling to get to an appointment during working hours. We will continue to advertise these.

Convenience				
You have 3 waiting areas. If these were numbered you could easily tell us where to go.				
Put numbers on doctors doors.				
Easier wheelchair access to rooms.				
Additional parking.				
The front doors are too heavy for people in wheelchairs or with pushchairs. Perhaps make them automatic.				

A couple of patients suggested numbering the rooms or waiting areas, to make it easier to find the room they need. One patient also mentioned that if this was implemented, the digital sign-in in the waiting room could tell you where to go to wait.

We have already addressed this as it was also a request from our patient group. We have designed a “map” with clinician locations which is located near the check in screen. We have already had good feedback about this.

The accessibility of the surgery and its rooms for people in wheelchairs, and the problems we have had with the front door was also mentioned. Our automatic front doors unfortunately failed last year. Repairing them has been a much bigger and more expensive job than anticipated! In the interim, we have installed plastic curtains to keep the cold air out, which we remove when the warmer weather arrives.

Miscellaneous				
Secure door closure (new plastic screen allows in cold air)				
A new front.				
Treat small (health) problems as seriously as large problems.				
Once relative blood checks have been done, that information is authorised back onto the online system for ordering.				
Repeat prescriptions take too long to be processed.				
Better support for mental illness. Work with local schools, community.				
Don't change too much; stay as friendly as you are.				

There were also some miscellaneous suggestions, including a lovely comment from a long-time patient who asked us not to change too much!

## Summary

The results of the FFT quite clearly highlight what is being done well, and what is not. The vast majority (72%) of patients are happy with the service they receive, and feel that the staff members and GPs are helpful and caring, and provide the level of support they need.

The majority of the 15% who would not recommend us felt this way because of how long it takes to get an appointment, and the amount of time they have to wait for the doctor. This is a Local and National issue – compared to General Practice a few years ago, the funding is lower and the resources are much more stretched, and this unfortunately has an impact on appointment waits.

Our wait for a routine appointment is longer than it was 5 years ago, we have, as discussed introduced measures to make the system more accessible (online consulting, telephone appointments) and ensure safety netting (Duty team appointments). We have discussed this with our PPG (Patient Participation Group) and they agree that the same day appointments system is a very good compromise and offers a good service. The online system is still in its early days, but patient (and clinician!) feedback has been excellent.

We have already made a number of smaller changes, based on suggestions from patients, including a floor plan of where the clinicians are working and improving the access to the practice for patients in wheelchairs and parents with buggies.

We continually review our appointment system to ensure we are providing safe access for patients with an urgent medical need, balanced with continuity where it is needed.

With regards to the negative feedback, we do make mistakes, when they are brought to our attention, we apologise and try to rectify the issue. Our complaints fell dramatically (by 50%) in 2015-16 compared to the previous year which is enormously encouraging. We would like to make it easier for patients to raise a problem, and will be trialling feedback forms in the waiting room – these will run alongside the ongoing FFT surveys, but will give patients an easy way to feed back problems they raise in the survey – they will need to be prepared to put their names on the feedback, as with many of the issues raised in the survey, we would like to get more details, but without being able to contact the person who made the comment, we are unable to. We will have these in place in the waiting room shortly.

In conclusion, this report shows, for the vast majority of patients providing a service that people would recommend to their friends and family. There is room for improvement, but we should be proud of what we are accomplishing in a time when the NHS has never been under more pressure.

We would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete a survey.