

GP appointments;
Access and Location

A Healthwatch Isle of Wight Report 2016



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Acknowledgements

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- All members of the public who shared their experiences of accessing GP appointments with Healthwatch Isle of Wight.
- All Isle of Wight GP practices for providing appointment information to Healthwatch Isle of Wight.

Background

healthwatch



Healthwatch Isle of Wight is the ‘consumer champion’ for local health and social care services. It was created in April 2013 through legislation bringing in a Healthwatch organisation within each Local Authority area of England.

Feedback on services is received from local residents and a number of topics identified each year through public engagement for further consideration. Healthwatch works with service providers to explore these topics in detail, helping uphold what works well and identifying improvements that may be needed. Healthwatch Isle of Wight is supported by a team of paid staff and an enthusiastic group of volunteers.

Healthwatch Isle of Wight relates to all health and social care that is funded for Isle of Wight residents. The principal focus of this report is the availability of GP appointments and appointments with a nurse that is able to provide prescriptions across the three localities of the Isle of Wight.

Methodology

Over the past 18 months Healthwatch Isle of Wight has received increasing amounts of feedback relating to long waiting times and difficulties in accessing GP appointments. A total of 145 pieces of feedback have been received relating to GP provision.

The Isle of Wight currently has 16 GP practices that operate 22 GP surgeries across the Island. For this piece of work a data collection survey was sent to all GP practices on the Isle of Wight in May 2016 to ascertain what the current level of provision is for each of the 22 surgeries.

Each GP surgery operates within a locality. The information returned from the surgeries has been analysed within its locality to see if provision is equally spread and whether there may be some gaps in certain areas.

This approach has been adopted because it is important to note that although an individual has the right to register with a GP practice of their choice, unless there are reasonable grounds for the practice to refuse*, this can mean you are ineligible to receive certain aspects of the service. For example, if you registered with a GP practice that is convenient to your workplace but is in a different area to your home address you may not be within the practice boundaries for the home visit service.

* The NHS Constitution

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/480482/NHS_Constitution_WEB.pdf



-  West and Central Wight
-  North East Wight
-  South Wight

The figures used throughout this report have been calculated using the data provided by practice managers.

Alongside the statistical analysis to capture the impact the current level of service is having on the local community, feedback from service users has been included within this report.

People's Experiences

"It is difficult to ring at the required times, due to school run"
South Wight

"I always get an appointment"
West and Central Wight

"There is good access to appointments"
North East Wight

"I was told the wait was two weeks wait for an appointment so I went to the Beacon instead"

North East Wight

"I have the best surgery for appointments and staff"
South Wight

"I was told to ring at 8.30am for appointments, but everyone calls then, so it is impossible to get through"
South Wight

"If I want an appointment I always say it's an emergency even if it isn't, otherwise I have to wait 3 weeks"

West and Central Wight

"There were no appointments for my sick child, was advised to go to the Beacon"
North East Wight

"The wait for appointments is too long, so I always just make an emergency appointment"
West and Central Wight

Localities at a Glance



142,356 patients registered on the Isle of Wight

West and Central Wight

- 58,202 patients registered
- 7 GP surgeries
- 1/7 surgeries offering a GP sit and wait provision
- The average waiting time to see a GP is 8.4 days
- 5/7 surgeries have prescribing nurses
- Appointments per 1000 registered patients is 66.9 per week

North East Wight

- 40,983 patients registered
- 6 GP surgeries
- 3/6 surgeries offering a GP sit and wait provision
- The average waiting time to see a GP is 7.8 days
- 6/6 surgeries have prescribing nurses
- Appointments per 1000 registered patients is 77.6 per week

South Wight

- 43,171 patients registered
- 9 GP surgeries
- 9/9 surgeries offering a GP sit and wait provision
- The average waiting time to see a GP is 3.6 days
- 6/9 surgeries have prescribing nurses
- Appointments per 1000 registered patients is 92.6 per week

Telephone Line Opening Times

Healthwatch Isle of Wight received feedback stating that it is difficult to make an appointment and that telephone lines are particularly busy at opening times, with some feedback going on to say that there are no appointments available once they have managed to contact the surgery.

Healthwatch have analysed the data provided by practice managers to establish how appointments are managed in each locality.

West and Central Wight

Opening times - varies from 8am - 8.30am

Closing times - 6.30pm - Not all surgery closing times were provided.

North East Wight

Opening times - varies from 8am - 8.30am.

Closing times - varies from 6pm - 6.30pm.

South Wight

Opening times - varies from 8am - 8.30am.

Closing times - varies from 6pm - 6.30pm.

5 out of 22 (22.7%) surgeries refer people to the Beacon when there are no appointments available. The 5 have 43814 registered patients between them, which is 30.7% of the Islands registered patients.



Online Booking Systems

West and Central Wight

- The online appointment booking facility varies from 0% of GP appointments being available to book online through to 70% of GP appointments being available to book online.
- 2 out of the 7 (28.6%) surgeries within this locality do not offer online appointment booking.
- 2 out of the 7 (28.6%) surgeries within this locality allow same day GP appointments to be booked online.
- No surgeries within this locality currently offer online booking for appointments with prescribing nurses.

North East Wight

- The online booking facility varies from 10% of GP appointments being available to book online through to 50% of GP appointments being available to book online.
- 100% (6/6) of surgeries within this locality offer online appointment booking
- 1 out of the 6 (16.6%) surgeries within this locality allow same day GP appointments to be booked online.
- No surgeries within this locality currently offer online booking for appointments with prescribing nurses.

South Wight

- The online booking facility varies from 0% of GP appointments being available to book online through to 100% of GP appointments being available to book online.
- 1 out of the 9 (11.1%) surgeries within this locality were not currently offering online appointment booking due to migrating computer systems.
- 4 out of the 9 (44.4%) surgeries within this locality allow same day appointments to be booked online.
- 1 out of the 6 (16.7%) surgeries within this locality offers online booking for appointments with prescribing nurses.

Waiting Times

WAITING ROOM



GP Waiting times

The mean waiting time (average) for an appointment to see a GP is 8.4 days.

The median waiting time (middle number) is 3 days.

The range between the longest and shortest waiting times is 19 days.

47.4% of registered patients in this locality face waits of 14-21 days to see a GP.

GP wait times varied from 2 days to 21 days. As 2 of the surgeries offer same day appointments only they have not been included within the waiting times analysis.

Prescribing nurse wait times varied from 1 to 2 days. As 2 of the surgeries do not have prescribing nurses they have not been included in the waiting times analysis.

Prescribing nurse waiting times

The mean waiting time (average) for an appointment with a prescribing nurse is 1.8 days.

The median waiting time (middle number) is 2 days.

The range between the longest and shortest waiting times is 1 day.

West and Central Wight

Waiting Times

WAITING ROOM



GP Waiting times

The mean waiting time (average) for an appointment to see a GP is 7.8 days.

The median waiting time (middle number) is 1 days.

The range between the longest and shortest waiting times is 13 days.

41.5% of patients registered in this locality wait between 10-14 days to see a GP.

GP wait times varied from 1 day to 14 days.

Prescribing nurse wait times varied from 0 to 21 days.

Prescribing nurse waiting times

The mean waiting time (average) for an appointment with a prescribing nurse is 7.5 days.

The median waiting time (middle number) is 5 days.

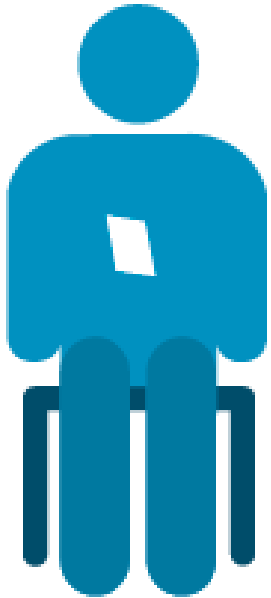
The range between the longest and shortest waiting times is 21 days.

28.9% of patients registered in this locality wait between 10-21 days to see a prescribing nurse.

North East Wight

Waiting Times

WAITING ROOM



GP Waiting times

The mean waiting time (average) for an appointment to see a GP is 3.6 days.

The median waiting time (middle number) is 1 days.

The range between the longest and shortest waiting times is 13 days.

34.9% of patients registered in this locality wait between 10-14 days to see a GP.

GP wait times varied from 1 day to 14 days.

Prescribing nurse wait times varied from 0 to 1 days. As 2 of the surgeries do not have prescribing nurses they have not been included in the waiting times analysis.

Prescribing nurse waiting times

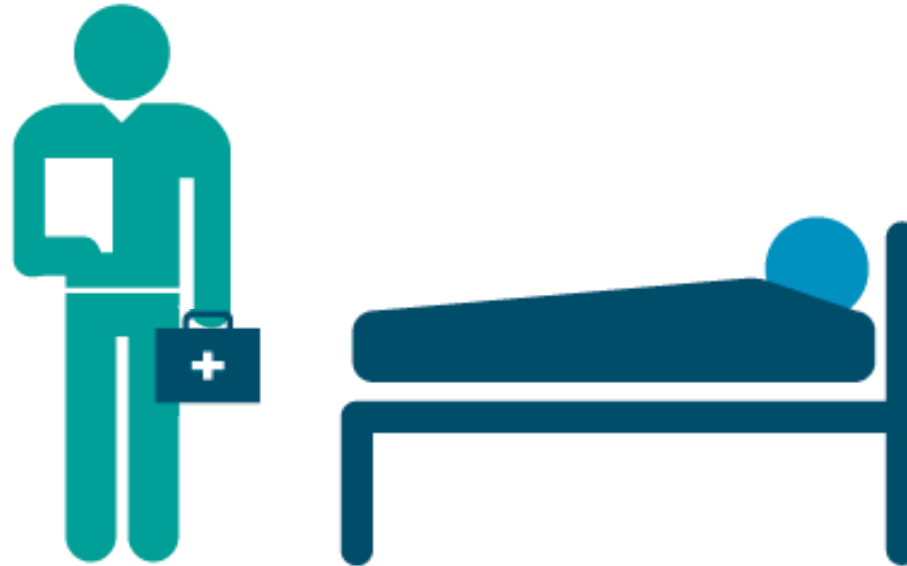
The mean waiting time (average) for an appointment with a prescribing nurse is 0.8 days.

The median waiting time (middle number) is 1 days.

The range between the longest and shortest waiting times is 1 days.

South Wight

Telephone Consultations and Home Visits



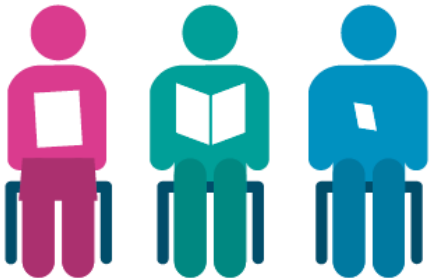
A number of practice managers contacted Healthwatch Isle of Wight and stated that home visits and telephone calls should be included within this report.

This information was then provided by all practices but unfortunately cannot be analysed as the majority of responses stated 'as many as required' which cannot be equated into numbers.

However, it is worth noting that all of the practices offer telephone consultations and home visits.

Sit and Wait Provision

Sit and Wait



Sit and wait provision

It is unclear how many patients are seen by GPs / prescribing nurses during sit and wait sessions.

West and Central Wight

1 out of the 7 surgeries offer sit and wait appointments with a GP. This is equivalent to 14.3% of surgeries in the West and Central Wight.

No surgeries within this locality offer sit and wait appointments with a prescribing nurse.

1 out of the 5 (20%) surgeries that have prescribing nurses have indicated they will be piloting sit and wait appointments throughout July.

North East Wight

3 out of the 6 surgeries offer sit and wait appointments with a GP. This is equivalent to 50% of surgeries in the North East Wight.

3 out of the 6 (50%) surgeries offer sit and wait appointments with prescribing nurses within this locality.

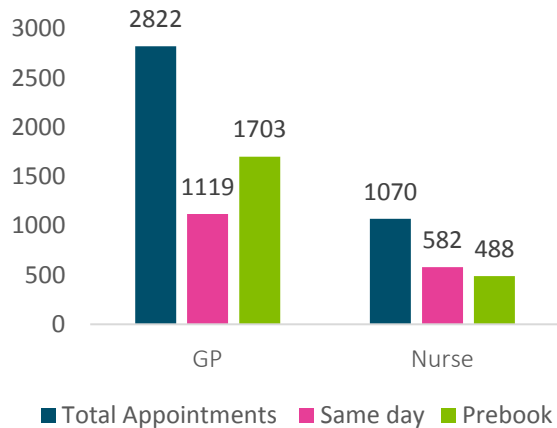
South Wight

9 out of the 9 surgeries offer sit and wait appointments. This is equivalent to 100% of surgeries in the South Wight.

1 out of the 6 (16.7%) of surgeries that have a prescribing nurse within this locality offer sit and wait appointments with a prescribing nurse.

Appointments Availability - Localities

West Wight



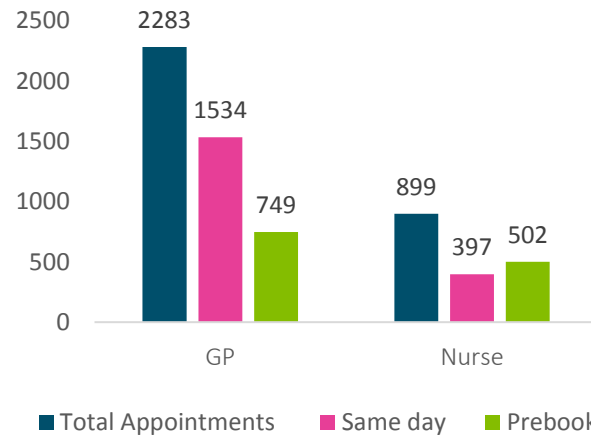
58,202 patients registered in this locality

Appointments per 1000 patients per week = **66.9** (48.5 GP) (18.4 prescribing nurse)

Same day appointments per 1000 patients per week = **29.2** (19.2 GP) (9.9 prescribing nurse)

Prebook appointments per 1000 patients per week = **37.7** (29.3 GP) (8.4 prescribing nurse)

North East Wight



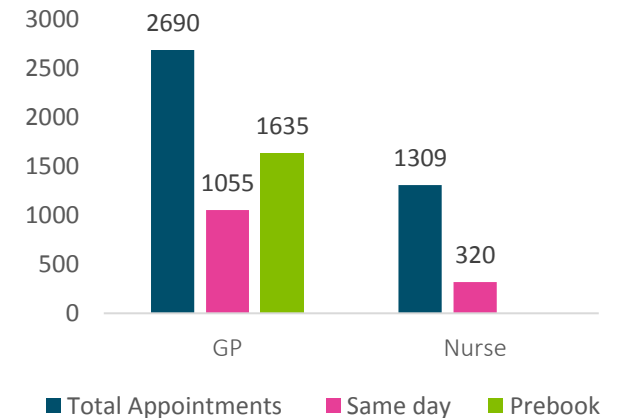
40,983 patients registered in this locality

Appointments per 1000 patients per week = **77.6** (55.7 GP) (21.9 prescribing nurse)

Same day appointments per 1000 patients per week = **47.1** (37.4 GP) (9.7 prescribing nurse)

Prebook appointments per 1000 patients per week = **30.5** (18.3 GP) (12.3 prescribing nurse)

South Wight



43,171 patients registered in this locality

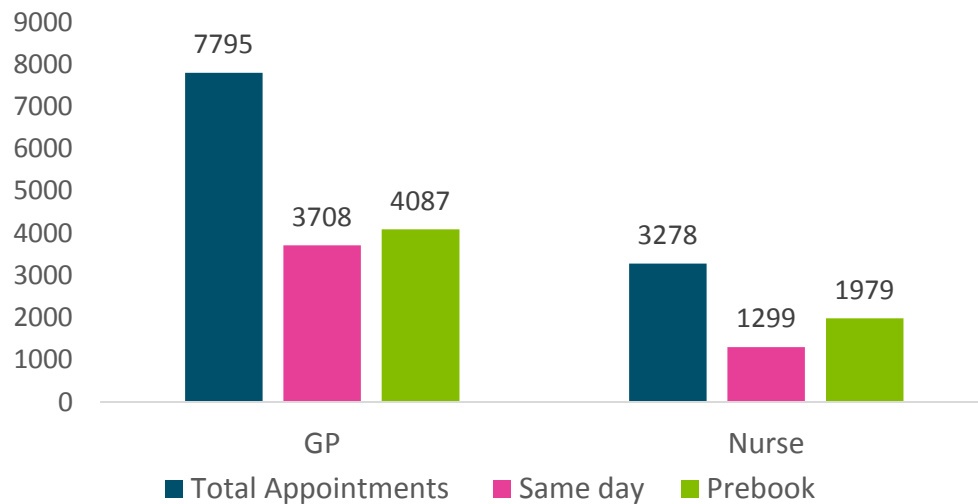
Appointments per 1000 patients per week = **92.6** (62.3 GP) (30.3 prescribing nurse)

Same day appointments per 1000 patients per week = **31.9** (24.4 GP) (7.4 prescribing nurse)

Prebook appointments per 1000 patients per week = **60.8** (37.9 GP) (22.9 prescribing nurse)

Appointments Availability - Island Wide

Isle of Wight



142,356 patients registered Island wide.

Appointments per 1000 patients per week = **77.8**

GP = 54.8

Prescribing nurse = 23

Same day appointments per 1000 patients per week = **35.2**

GP = 26.1

Prescribing nurse = 9.1

Prebook appointments per 1000 patients per week = **42.6**

GP = 28.7

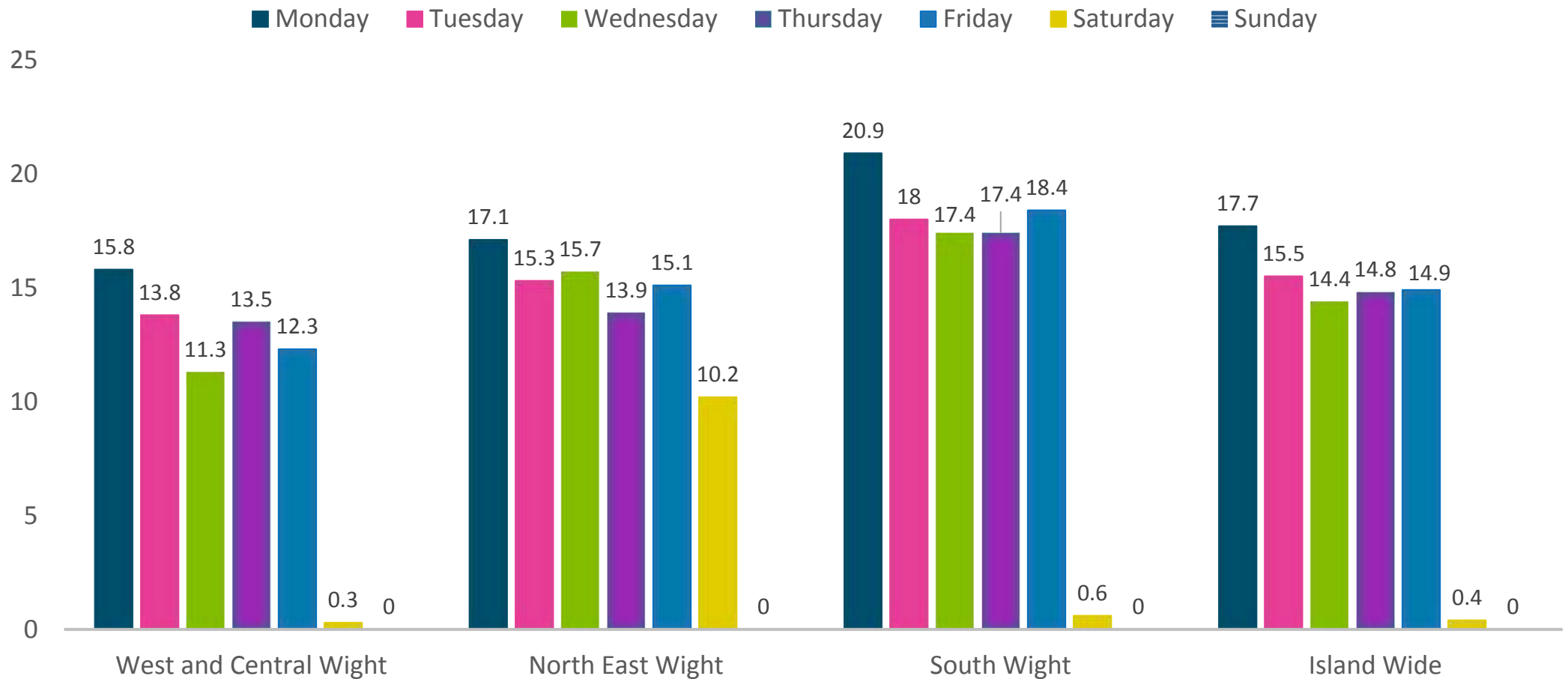
Prescribing nurse = 13.9

17 out of the 22 (77.3%) surgeries offer appointments with a prescribing nurse.

This equates to 123,151 (86.5%) patients being able to access these appointments with a prescribing nurse and leaves 19,205 (13.5%) patients that are not able to access an appointment with a prescribing nurse.



Provision per Locality Versus Island Wide Availability



GP & Prescribing nurse appointments per 1000 patients per week

Staffing

GPs

West and Central Wight

5 out of the 7 surgeries within the West and Central Wight have GP vacancies.

In total there are 8 GP vacancies within the West and Central Wight.

North East Wight

1 out of the 6 surgeries within the North East Wight have GP vacancies.

In total there is 1 GP vacancy within the North East Wight.

South Wight

1 out of the 9 surgeries within the South Wight have GP vacancies.

In total there is 1 GP vacancy within the South Wight.

Prescribing Nurses

West and Central Wight

4 out of the 7 surgeries within the West and Central Wight have prescribing nurse vacancies.

In total there are 5 prescribing nurse vacancies within the West and Central Wight.

North East Wight

There are no prescribing nurse vacancies within the North East Wight.

South Wight

There are no prescribing nurse vacancies within the South Wight.



It is worth noting that GP surgeries do not consist only of GPs and prescribing nurses although this is the focus of this report.

Many other clinical staff work within GP surgeries throughout the Island including but not limited to, nurses, healthcare assistants and pharmacists.



Patient Participation Groups

As of April 2016 all GP practices are required to have a Patient Participation Group and should aim to ensure the group is representative of the practices patient population*.

A PPG can be a virtual group or one where members attend physical meetings and these provide an opportunity for practice patients to raise any concerns they may have, to highlight what they feel is working well and to make any suggestions for future improvements.

*PPG - <http://www.napp.org.uk/ppgintro.html>



Most GP practices on the Isle of Wight have stated that they have an active PPG and are willing to accept an unlimited amount of members. However, there are a few that have very small PPGs, with as little as 3 members and are currently not accepting any more members.

This is a concern to Healthwatch Isle of Wight as inviting patient feedback and experience is vital and provides invaluable insight as to how to raise and maintain standards.

Summary

Appointment Booking Systems

Appointment booking systems vary largely within and between localities. Online booking facilities are not available for all surgeries and only 7 out of 22 allow same day GP appointments to be booked online. Only 1 out of 22 surgeries allow prescribing nurse appointments to be booked online.

Telephone lines open between 8am - 8.30am and close between 6pm-6.30pm across the Island.



Waiting Times

Waiting times to see a GP across the Island are high with 47.4% of patients in the West and Central Wight locality facing waits of between 14-21 days, 41.5% of patients in the North East Wight waiting between 10-14 days and 34.9% of patients in the South Wight also waiting between 10-14 days.

Waiting times to see a prescribing nurse are short within both the West and Central Wight and South Wight with patients waiting 1-2 days. Within the North East Wight however, 28.9% of patients face waits of between 10-21 days.

Sit and Wait Appointments

Although Healthwatch Isle of Wight have been unable to identify how many appointments the sit and wait provision provides, it has been possible to ascertain that these appointments are lacking in the West and Central Wight with only 1 of the 7 surgeries permanently offering this service.

This compares with the North East Wight providing this service in 3 out of the 6 surgeries and 9 out of the 9 surgeries providing this Service in the South Wight.

Summary - continued

Same day appointments

GP

The North East Wight has significantly more same day appointments with a GP per 1000 patients than the other localities with 37.4 appointments versus 24.4 in the South Wight and 19.2 in the West and Central Wight.

Prescribing Nurse

Prescribing nurse same day appointments are fairly evenly spread with West and Central Wight having 9.9 per 1000 patients, the North East have 9.7 and the South have slightly lower with 7.4.

Prebook appointments

GP

The South Wight has significantly more prebook appointments with a GP per 1000 patients than the other localities with 37.9 appointments versus 29.3 in the West and Central Wight and 18.3 in the North East Wight.

It is of great concern to Healthwatch Isle of Wight that 10,700 patients in the West and Central Wight are unable to prebook GP appointments.

Prescribing Nurse

Prescribing nurse prebook appointments again are significantly higher in the South Wight with 22.9 per 1000 patients versus 12.3 in the North East Wight and 8.4 in the West and Central Wight.

Overall appointments

The South Wight has significantly more appointments available than the other localities with 92.6 per 1000 patients versus 77.6 in the North East Wight and 66.9 in the West and Central Wight.

The North East Wight has significantly more same day appointments than the other localities with 47.1 appointments per 1000 patients versus 31.9 in the South Wight and 29.2 in the West and Central Wight.

The South Wight has significantly more prebook appointments per 1000 patients with 60.8 versus 37.7 in the West and Central Wight and 30.5 in the North East Wight.

Vacancies

There are significantly more GP vacancies in the West and Central Wight with 8 versus only 1 in the North East Wight and 1 in the South Wight.

There are 5 prescribing nurse vacancies on the Island all of which are within the West and Central Wight.



Recommendations

Healthwatch Isle of Wight recommend that GP practices:

1. Proactively advertise and signpost people to other appropriate services and schemes such as the pharmacy first scheme.
2. Actively seek to engage with their patients to ensure their voices are heard. They should aim to improve their PPG numbers to ensure the voices that are heard are representative of their patient population.
3. Advertise their booking systems more widely using a variety of methods, such as online, via posters/information sheets within the practice, to ensure that all their patients know how and when they can make an appointment.
4. Evaluate their booking systems with the aim to make them more equitable for all their patients as not everybody is able to call when telephone lines open at 8/8.30 am.

Healthwatch Isle of Wight recommend that the Isle of Wight Clinical Commissioning Group:

1. Ensure that equality of access to service is considered during all future commissioning of Primary Care Provision.
2. Support the West and Central Wight to secure resources that allow Prebook GP appointments to be available in all practices.

Contact Us



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