



Public Health
England

NHS
England

Public opinion survey 2015

Sustainability and the NHS, Public Health and Social Care system
– Ipsos Mori survey

Sustainability is an important issue for people living in England both in terms of their own lives and across the NHS, public health and social care system

March 2016



Survey introduction:

In September 2015 the Sustainable Development Unit commissioned Ipsos MORI to carry out a public opinion survey to establish what the public's expectation was in relation to sustainability in the health and care system. This follows on from the surveys that were carried out in 2013 and 2011 (2011 was in relation to the NHS only). Each survey comprised close to 1000 interviews.

The 2011 and 2013 reports are available on the SDU website at:

<http://www.sduhealth.org.uk/policy-strategy/reporting/ipsos-mori.aspx>

Headline summary of responses:

The survey shows that the public continues to think that sustainability remains an important issue for the health system.

- The survey shows that the public continues to think that sustainability remains an important issue for the health system.
- The percentage of the public who think it is important for the health system to work in a more sustainable way has increased to 92% in 2015 (89% in 2013, 2011 survey results for NHS only were 92% in 2011)
- The percentage of the public who said the health system should act in a more sustainable way even if it would cost more money is now 43% (36% in 2013 and 33% in 2011).
- When asked to state how high priority sustainability should be in the health system the responses increased with 25% (1 in 4) saying it should be a top priority (compared to 19% or 1 in 5 in both 2013 and 2011).

Survey questions and responses for 2015 survey:

The survey definition, question and summary of responses are detailed below. The results are based on all respondents (1011) unless otherwise stated and is weighted to reflect the population profiles of people in England aged 15+. Where results do not sum to 100, this may be due to multiple responses, computer rounding or the exclusion of don't knows/not stated. An asterisk (*) represents a value of less than half of one per cent, but not zero.



Survey definition:

“One definition of a sustainable lifestyle is to use the planet’s resources in a way that minimises the negative impact on the wellbeing of others and on the environment, both now and in the future.”

“Thinking about sustainability”

**Q1 Which of these best describes how you feel about living a sustainable lifestyle?
Please read out the letter that applies.**

	%
I’m not interested in living a sustainable lifestyle	7
I could do somewhat more to live sustainably	33
I could do a lot more to live sustainably	24
I do all I can to live sustainably	34
Don’t know	1

Definition:

“The health system. The following questions relate to the health system in England. By health system we mean the NHS and other providers of health care services including social care and public health. “

“The health system could become more sustainable by doing things such as; making sure that unused lights are switched off, that the buildings are not kept too hot, and that patients can receive more of their treatment or care closer to home.”

Q2 How important do you think it is, if at all, for the health system to work in a more sustainable way?

	%
Very important	57
Fairly important	35
Not very important	5
Not at all important	2
Don’t know	1

Q3

To what extent do you feel the health system should make sustainability a part of the way it does its work in the future?

Please give your answer on a scale of one to ten where ten means that sustainability should be the top priority for the health system and one means it should not be a priority at all.

	%
1 = Not a priority at all	2
2	1
3	2
4	3
5	11
6	9
7	17
8	22
9	9
10 = top priority	25
Don't know	1

Q4

Which, if any, of the following statements is closest to your view?

	%
The health system should <u>not</u> act in any more sustainable a way than they do now	4
The health system should <u>only</u> act in a more sustainable way where this <u>would save</u> money	24
The health system should act in a more sustainable way even where this <u>would not save or cost</u> money	26
The health system should act in a more sustainable way even where this <u>would cost</u> a <u>small</u> amount	30
The health system should act in a more sustainable way even where this <u>would cost</u> a <u>significant</u> amount	13
Don't know	2
None of these	1



The health system is already making some changes to make it more sustainable. I am going to read out some of these changes.

Q5

		Get a lot better	Get a little better	Stay about the same	Get a little worse	Get a lot worse	Don't know
		%	%	%	%	%	%
1	Using teleconference services such as video or telephone or internet communications. This would mean that patients could talk to their doctor or other health professionals from or close to their home	26	35	22	10	5	2
2	Locating services closer to people's homes (where suitable) so that they do not always have to travel to hospital	41	34	19	5	1	1
3	Making it easier for patients and staff to cycle or walk to health services (where this is appropriate)	18	35	35	5	4	3
4	Improving buildings (such as hospitals and GP surgeries) so that the energy to heat, cool, ventilate and light the buildings is used more effectively	31	38	25	4	*	1
5	Supporting patients to manage their own illness at home, for instance patients using blood pressure monitors at home so they can monitor their condition	27	39	21	9	3	2
6	Serving patients more locally-sourced, seasonal and fresh food	33	36	25	3	1	2



There are a number of things that patients and the public could do to help the health system to become more sustainable.

Q6

		Very likely	Fairly likely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Fairly unlikely	Very unlikely	Don't know
		%	%	%	%	%	%
1	Inform staff if you notice that resources (such as energy, packaging and equipment) have been wasted	16	27	20	24	13	1
2	Use public transport when travelling to health services	21	22	13	18	25	*
3	Accept re-issued medicines that have been returned by other patients because they were not used and after they have been checked for safety	31	28	13	10	17	1
4	Use online treatment services (for example using online video call facilities to have an online consultation with your doctor)	24	30	13	14	18	1

Q7 Which of the following services, if any, have you personally used in the last year or so? Base: 1006 respondents¹

	%
Visited an NHS GP	69
Attended an NHS hospital as an outpatient	28
Visited a Pharmacist/ Chemist for medical advice	34
Visited an accident and emergency (A&E) department	20
Been an inpatient at an NHS hospital	14
Used an NHS telephone help service	12
Used a walk-in clinic	16
Used the NHS Choices website	9
Used social care services	4
Don't know	1
Refused	*
None of these	15

¹Please note that these questions were asked later in the survey and some respondents dropped out of the interview so the base size is reduced.



Q8 Do you personally, members of your family, or any of your friends work for the NHS or any part of the health care system in any capacity?

Base: 1006²

	%
Yes – me personally	8
Yes – members of my family	18
Yes – friends	10
No	68
Don't know	1

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