

# Online consultations research

## Summary research findings

February 2019

Publishing approval reference: 000795

NHS England and NHS Improvement



# Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. What we did	4
3. GP practice findings	5
4. Public findings	13
5. Healthwatch research	25
6. Healthwatch focus groups	37
7. GP practice interviews	42

# Introduction



- NHS England commissioned North of England Commissioning Support (NECS) to undertake a programme of work to develop messaging and collateral for online consultations with patients.
- To ensure the messaging strategy was robust and evidence based. NECS first undertook a period of research with members of the public, GPs and GP practice staff over a three month period from May to July 2018.
- This provided an in depth understanding of views and feelings and strengthened the development of key messages that have now been developed into a suite of collateral for general practice and patients.
- This pack summarises the findings from the research.

# What we did?

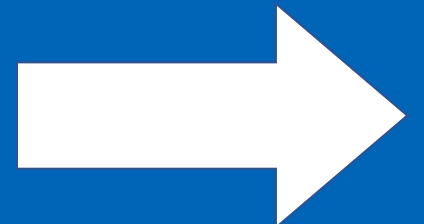
## **Public**

- Online survey for members of the public attracting 3,066 responses.
- 1,674 street surveys in nine locations across the country with a mix of urban and rural locations.
- Carried out 17 in-depth focus groups through Healthwatch, reaching communities who otherwise wouldn't have been involved.

## **GPs and practice staff**

- Online survey attracting 1,529 responses.
- In-depth interviews with six GPs across the English regions.

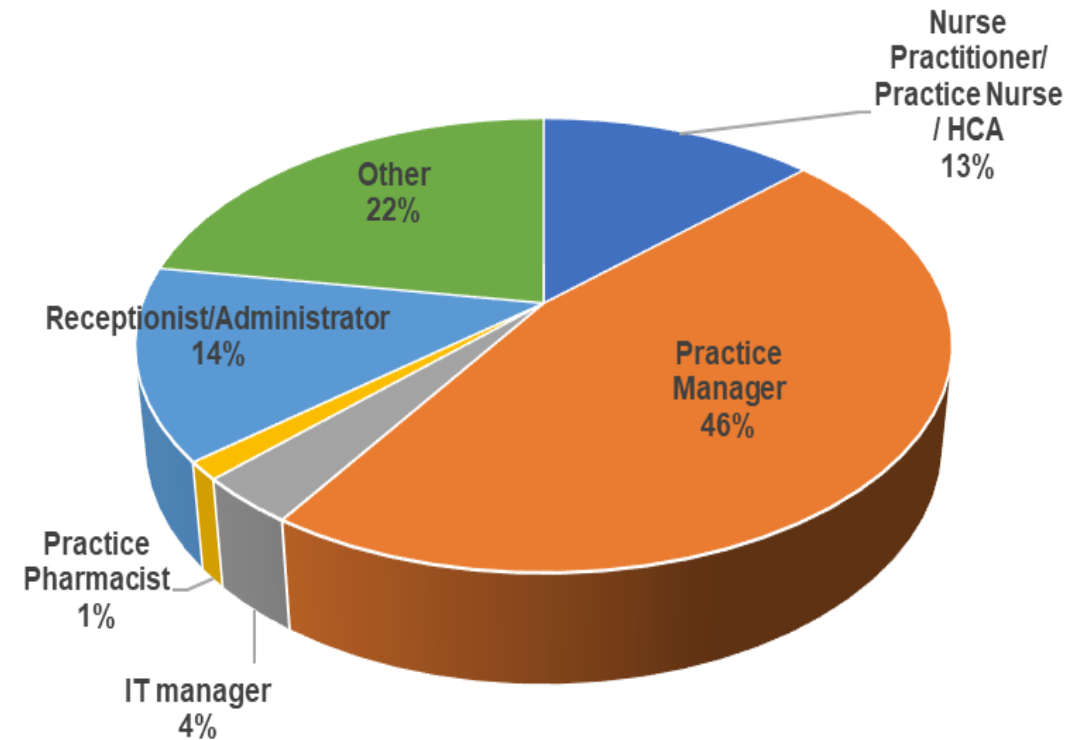
# GP practice findings



# Who responded?

In total **1,529** people responded to the survey, which was open between 8 May and 15 June 2018.

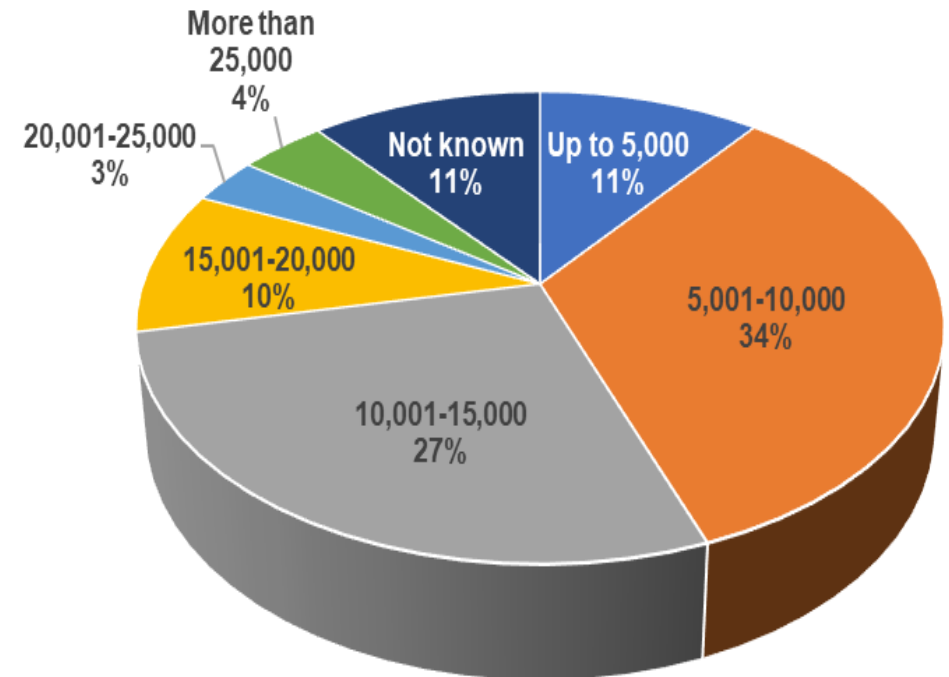
I am a...		
GP	1060	69.3%
Nurse practitioner, practice nurse, health care assistant	61	4.0%
Practice manager	217	14.2%
IT manager	16	1.0%
Practice pharmacist	6	0.4%
Receptionist, administrator	64	4.2%
Other	105	6.9%
<b>Base</b>	<b>1529</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Practice list size

The majority of responding practices (71%) reported between 5,000 and 20,000 (estimated) registered patients. This is largely as expected, with the average reported list size in England being 8,050\*.

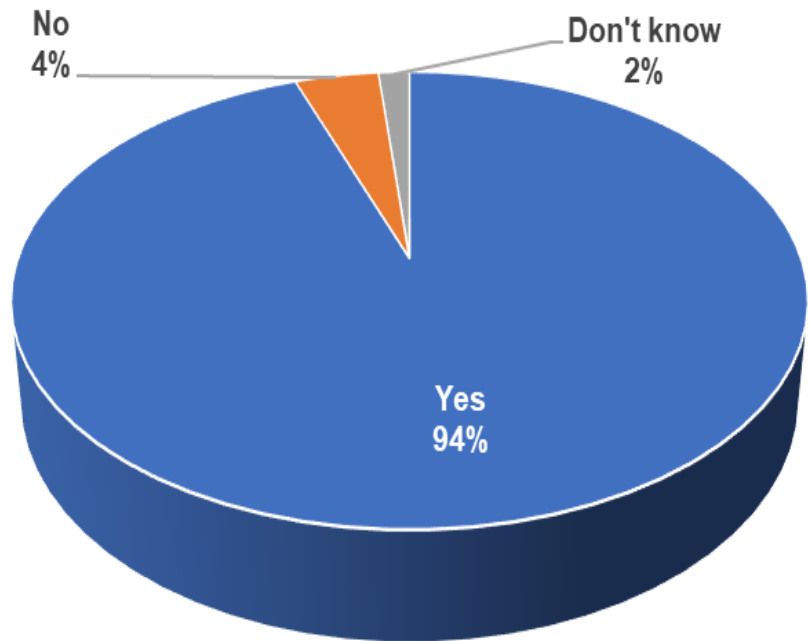
Practice population		
Up to 5,000	162	11%
5,001 – 10,000	516	34%
10,001 – 15,000	419	27%
15,001 – 20,000	151	10%
20,001 – 25,000	49	3%
More than 25,000	63	4%
Not known	169	11%
<b>Base</b>	<b>1529</b>	<b>100%</b>



# Current use of online services

When asked whether they currently offered online services at their practice, 94.4% of respondents (1,444) report they currently offer online access to services e.g. appointment booking, repeat prescriptions, etc.

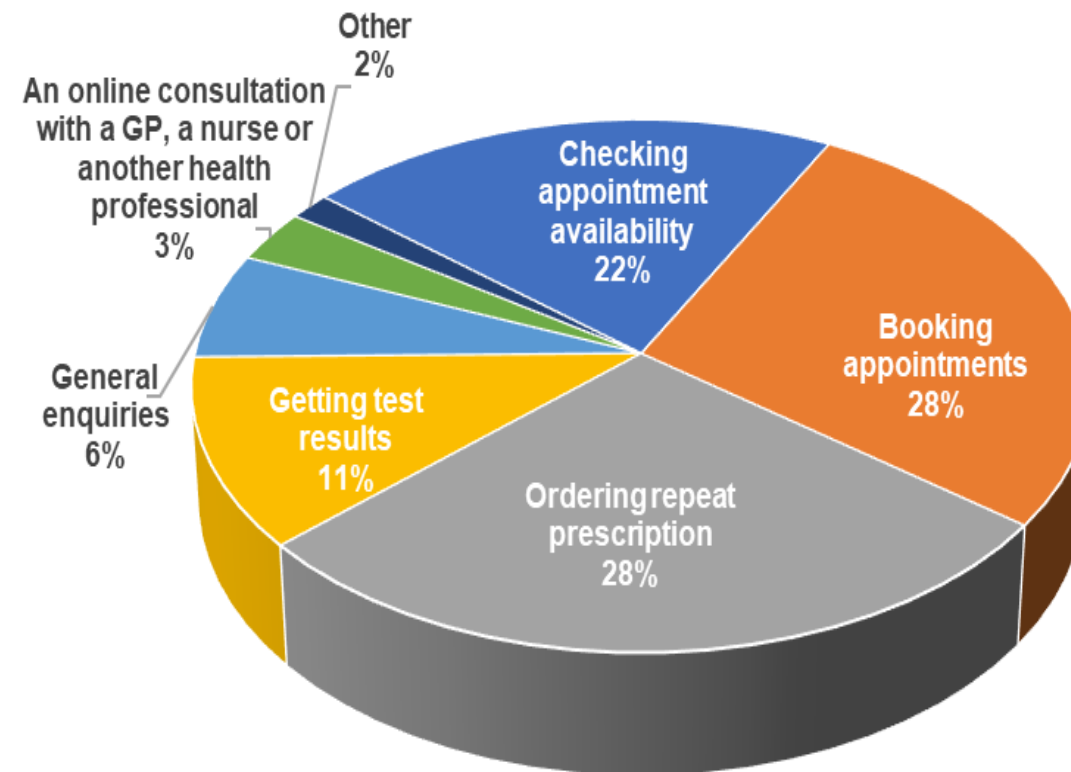
Do you currently offer patients any online access to services, e.g., appointment booking, repeat prescription ordering?		
Yes	1444	94.4%
No	62	4.1%
Don't know	23	1.5%
<b>Base</b>	<b>1529</b>	<b>100%</b>





# Types of online services

Which of the following do you offer patients via online system?		
Ordering repeat prescriptions	1398	91.4%
Booking appointments	1386	90.6%
Checking appointment availability	1083	70.8%
Getting test results	576	37.7%
General enquiries	324	21.2%
An online consultation with a GP, a nurse, or other health professional	160	10.5%
Other	84	5.5%
<b>Base (multiple responses allowed)</b>	<b>1445</b>	



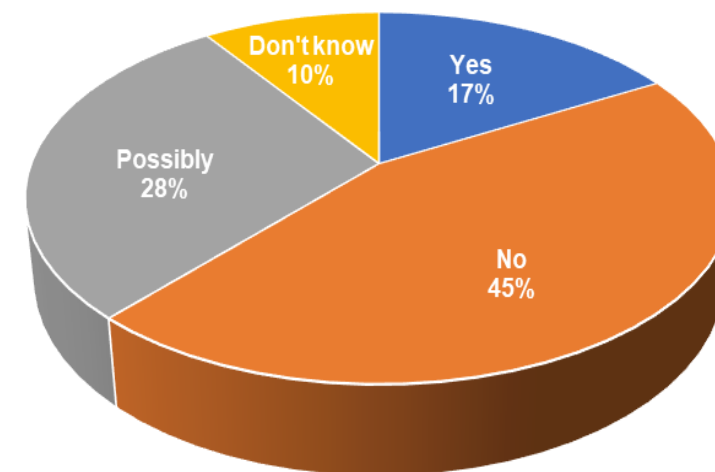
# Willingness to offer online consultations

When considered by current usage:

- 93% of those who answered either yes or no to delivery of the new tools are already offering online services.

When considered by job role and practice size:

- GPs are significantly more likely to **resist** the idea of offering innovative new online services (57%) compared to any other job role.
- Large, or group sized practices (25,000+), are likely to be more **willing** to offer new services compared to any other list size.



Willingness to offer online consultations		
No	685	44.8%
Possibly	438	28.6%
Yes	258	16.9%
Don't know	148	9.7%
<b>Base</b>	<b>1529</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Incentives

- The availability of funding to support new online approaches was the key motivator, higher amongst those who are ‘possible’;
- Being able to test ‘in situ’ and reassurances on information security were next highest;
- Support and training were also important factors supporting the adoption of new service;
- Concerns around technology and broadband infrastructure were mid-level concerns; and
- Choice amongst suppliers was not a high-ranking issue for any of the groups.

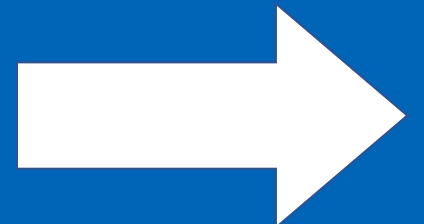
Support		
Funding to implement	707	83.4%
Reassurance about clinical risk	655	77.2%
Ability to test/trial system in practice first	632	74.5%
Reassurance about information security	616	72.6%
Demonstration of the systems	580	68.4%
User training – in practice	567	66.9%
Ongoing and reliable help desk support from supplier	560	66.0%
More information about online in general	473	55.8%
Improved broadband	414	48.8%
User training – online	408	48.1%
Technology upgrade – hardware	396	46.7%
Technology upgrade – software	365	43.0%
Ability to choose from a range of suppliers	305	36.0%
Other	120	12.2%
<b>Base (multiple responses allowed)</b>	<b>848</b>	

# Barriers

Major concerns from professionals around offering 'new' online services centred around:

- Creating more work.
- Concerns around misdiagnosis/lack of observation and the potential to exclude patients who do not have access to, or ability to use the internet.
- Information security and confidentiality also scored high as concerns.

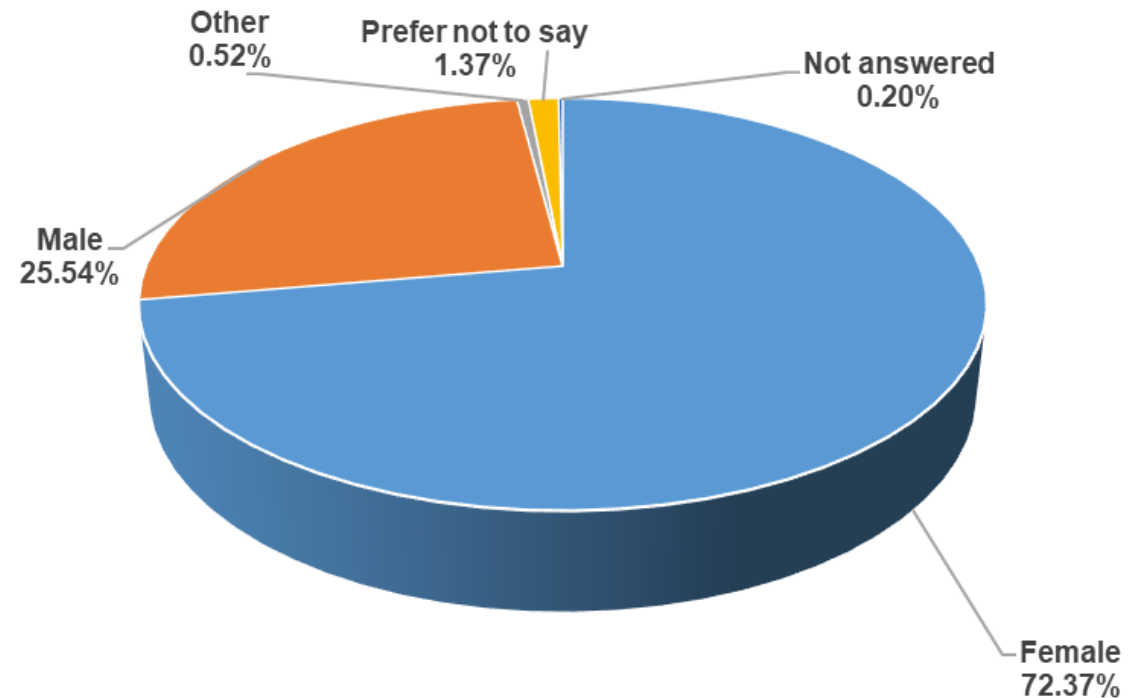
# Public findings



# Who responded

- From a total sample response of 3,066 the majority of respondents identified as female (72%), which is in line with expectations of an online survey.

Gender		
Female	2219	72.4%
Male	783	25.5%
Other	16	0.5%
Prefer not to say	42	1.4%
Not answered	6	0.2%
<b>Base</b>	<b>3066</b>	



# Health of those responding

- 60% of respondents reported a long-term physical or mental health condition.
- The most frequently cited long term condition was arthritis or other musculoskeletal conditions (19%, excluding 'other' at 21%).
- This was followed by high blood pressure (18%) and COPD (12%).

Do you have any long-term physical or mental health conditions, disabilities or illnesses?		
Yes	1838	59.9%
No	1106	36.1%
Don't know / can't say	43	1.4%
Prefer not to say	56	1.8%
Not answered	23	0.8%
<b>Base</b>	<b>3066</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Current use of online systems



## Does your current GP practice have an online system e.g. to book appointments or order your repeat prescriptions?

Yes, and I have used it	1742	57.4%
Yes, but I haven't used it	869	28.6%
No	148	4.9%
Don't know	278	9.1%
<b>Base</b>	<b>3037</b>	<b>100%</b>

- 86% of respondents report their GP practice as having an online system (to book appointments or order repeat prescriptions) and,
- 57.4% have used this system.



# Use of online systems



Of those who reported that their practice have an online system, which they have used, the following activities were carried out:

Which of the following have you done using the online system?		
Ordered repeat prescriptions	1341	44.2%
Checked appointment availability	1248	41.1%
Booked appointments	1224	40.3%
Looked up test results	391	12.9%
Communicated with the practice staff/reception	140	4.6%
Asked a general question about my health or symptom(s)	85	2.8%
Had an online appointment/consultation with a GP	85	2.8%
Other	62	2.0%
None of the above	28	0.9%
Had an online appointment/consultation with a nurse or another health professional at the practice	14	0.5%
<b>Base (multiple responses allowed)</b>	<b>3037</b>	

# Future use of online consultations



When asked “Would you be interested in having an online consultation with a GP/other health professional in the future?”

- **Most respondents (67%) said they would.**
- A further 69 respondents (2.3%) said their practice already provides this.
- A minority of 566 respondents (19%) said they would not be interested, 365 (12%) respondents were unsure.
- Seventeen (0.6%) said they already use a paid for private provider.

# Preferred method of access



Preferred method of access		
Online chat	1308	42.7%
By video chat	1099	35.8%
By email	1002	32.7%
By completing a form on your practice's website and awaiting a response	813	26.5%
By dedicated phone or tablet app	739	24.1%
By messenger app	569	18.6%
By text message/SMS	481	15.7%
With a virtual GP/health professional (a computer stimulation or robot)	218	7.1%
Other	45	1.5%
<b>Base (multiple responses allowed)</b>	<b>3066</b>	

- The most popular choice for future access to online services is through typed messages (43%)
- Followed by video chat (36%).

This was the only category to receive a response from people who do not know or aren't sure about online consultation

- Email and a form on the website are the next most popular; and
- “Robots” have least support

# Preferred device

- The preferred device for accessing online services is a smartphone at 52%.
- Closely followed by PC or laptop at 51%.
- Around one third of respondents (34%) would like to use their tablet.
- There is also a potential growth in access through gaming systems at 0.5%.

Preferred device		
Smartphone	1592	51.9%
PC or laptop	1550	50.6%
Tablet	1050	34.2%
Other	31	1.0%
Gaming system	15	0.5%
<b>Base (multiple responses allowed)</b>	<b>3066</b>	

# Barriers (public findings)



I want to talk to a GP/health professional face-to-face when discussing health issues	1141	(37.2%)
I'd want to be sure that I was getting a response from my own GP – not another doctor or health professional	943	(30.8%)
I'd worry about security of information I would be asked to provide during an online consultation.	844	(27.5%)
I'd worry about the confidentiality of information I would be asked to provide during an online consultation	798	(26.0%)
I'd worry I wouldn't understand the response to an online consultation	442	(14.4%)
Other	308	(10.0%)
I don't trust the internet for things like this	278	(9.1%)
I don't like to go online if I don't have to	180	(5.9%)
I am not confident in using the online services	166	(5.4%)
None of the above	970	(31.6%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>3066</b>	

# Barriers in detail

- When considered by gender women are more likely to distrust, dislike or have no confidence in using the internet.
- Women are more concerned than men about getting an online response from 'any doctor'.
- Those aged 55-74 also see the lack of face-to-face contact as a barrier.
- Confidence, trust and dislike of the internet are the most significant barriers for respondents over 85.
- Carers also cite confidence, trust and dislike of the internet as their most significant barriers.
- Respondents who consider themselves disabled are generally concerned with security and confidentiality as well as citing confidence, trust and dislike of the internet as their most significant barriers.
- Respondents with parental or guardian responsibility are most concerned with security and confidentiality as well as being concerned that they will not understand the information provided in an online consultation.

# Barriers by age



	Under 16	16 – 17	18 – 24	25 – 34	35 – 44	45 – 54	55 – 64	65 – 74	74 – 84	85+	Not answered	Total
I want to talk to a GP / health professional face-to-face when discussing health issues	1 (0.1%)	2 (0.2%)	22 (1.9%)	85 (7.4%)	177 (15.5%)	184 (16.1%)	255 (22.3%)	274 (24.0%)	108 (9.5%)	15 (1.3%)	18 (1.6%)	1141
I'd want to be sure I was getting a response from my own GP – not another doctor or health professional	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.2%)	18 (1.9%)	68 (7.2%)	113 (12.0%)	157 (16.6%)	225 (23.9%)	240 (25.5%)	93 (9.9%)	13 (1.4%)	14 (1.5%)	943
I'd worry I wouldn't understand the response to an online consultation	0 (0.0%)	2 (0.5%)	11 (2.5%)	39 (8.8%)	62 (14.0%)	73 (16.5%)	97 (21.9%)	105 (23.8%)	43 (9.7%)	6 (1.4%)	4 (0.9%)	442
I'd worry about the confidentiality of information I would be asked to provide during an online consultation	1 (0.1%)	1 (0.1%)	16 (2.0%)	73 (9.1%)	113 (14.2%)	155 (19.4%)	200 (25.1%)	172 (21.6%)	46 (5.8%)	5 (0.6%)	16 (2.0%)	798
I'd worry about security of information I would be asked to provide during an online consultation	2 (0.2%)	1 (0.1%)	15 (1.8%)	75 (8.9%)	122 (14.5%)	155 (18.4%)	216 (25.6%)	183 (21.7%)	51 (6.0%)	4 (0.5%)	20 (2.4%)	844
I don't like to go online if I don't have to	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.1%)	4 (2.2%)	15 (8.3%)	17 (9.4%)	38 (21.1%)	69 (38.3%)	25 (13.9%)	7 (3.9%)	3 (1.7%)	180
I am not confident in using the online services	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.2%)	8 (4.8%)	9 (5.4%)	17 (10.2%)	41 (24.7%)	53 (31.9%)	27 (16.3%)	5 (3.0%)	4 (2.4%)	166
I don't trust the internet for things like this	1 (0.4%)	1 (0.4%)	4 (1.4%)	13 (4.7%)	25 (9.0%)	43 (15.5%)	75 (27.0%)	81 (29.1%)	24 (8.6%)	6 (2.2%)	5 (1.8%)	278
None of the above	2 (0.2%)	3 (0.3%)	9 (0.9%)	98 (10.1%)	178 (18.4%)	245 (25.3%)	213 (22.0%)	160 (16.5%)	49 (5.1%)	3 (0.3%)	10 (1.0%)	970
Other	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (1.3%)	30 (9.7%)	74 (24.0%)	65 (21.1%)	75 (24.4%)	36 (11.7%)	16 (5.2%)	3 (1.0%)	5 (1.6%)	308

# Motivators

- The key motivators for respondents in terms of online consultation over any other method revolve around the twin goals of response time for the patient and saving time for staff in GP practices.
- The impact of web-savvy individuals appears relatively low, with a comparatively few (30%) stating they prefer online, because “...I do things online anyway.”

I would get a quicker response rather than waiting for the next available appointment at the practice	1712	(55.8%)
It will save my GP / practice staff time (e.g. doctors, nurses, reception)	1613	(52.6%)
It will save me time	1504	(49.1%)
Knowing I can still get an appointment in person if needed	1427	(46.5%)
GPs/health professional will be able to see more patients	1406	(45.9%)
I won't have to take time off work	1045	(34.1%)
I do most things online, so would prefer this method	917	(29.9%)
It will be more convenient for me in relation to travel / my mobility	886	(28.9%)
Other	150	(4.9%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>3066</b>	



# Changing practice

- When asked “If your GP practice does not currently offer online GP appointments, but you discovered another practice nearby did, would you consider moving to the one that did?”:
- 21% of respondents said they would;
- 62% stated they wouldn’t switch practice over the lack of online GP appointments and;
- 15% are undecided.

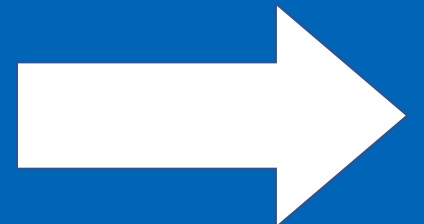
If your GP practice does not currently offer online GP appointments, but you discovered another practice nearby did, would you consider moving to the one that did?		
No	1907	(62.2%)
Yes	653	(21.3%)
Don't know	454	(14.8%)
Not answered	52	(1.7%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>3066</b>	

# Changing practice in detail



- Men report being more likely to switch GP practices than women;
- Those aged 25 to 54 are more likely to switch practice over this issue than any other age group;
- Carers are split roughly 50/50 over the issue of switching practice;
- Respondents who consider themselves disabled are more likely to be undecided than to have a firm opinion on switching; and
- Parent/guardians are more likely to switch to a practice that offers online services than other groups.

# Healthwatch research



# How they did it

- Healthwatch Newcastle was invited to conduct research into attitudes amongst the public, patients, and carers across England. This was achieved by working with partner Healthwatch organisations across the regions to complete at least 200 street surveys
- Survey settings included small gatherings and working with local community at events

Healthwatch	Number of responses
Barnett	223
Bradford	299
Cumbria	167
Manchester	442
Newcastle	319
Northumberland	149
Tower Hamlets	252
<b>Base</b>	<b>1647</b>

# Who responded

- The sample was achieved using a random approach methodology, a loose demographic quota was set, but local Healthwatch groups were constrained by the available sample. The following demographic profile was recorded for the survey respondents.

Sex	No.	%
Transgender	12	(0.73%)
Rather not say	11	(0.67%)
Male	588	(35.70%)
Female	1008	(61.20%)
Other	2	(0.12%)
No answer	26	(1.58%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>1647</b>	<b>100%</b>

Age	No.	%
Under 16	2	(0.12%)
16 – 24	240	(14.57%)
25 – 49	628	(38.13%)
50 – 64	370	(22.47%)
64+	368	(22.34%)
Rather not say	13	(0.79%)
No answer	26	(1.58%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>1647</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Current use of online services



Online system	Response	%
Yes – but I haven't used it	684	(42.25%)
Yes – and I have used it	446	(27.62%)
Don't know	303	(18.76%)
No	161	(9.97%)
No answer	27	(1.67%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>1621</b>	<b>100%</b>

Of the respondents who reported their practice as having an online system, they reported using the following facilities:

- 20% have booked an appointment
- 16% have checked on appointment availability
- 15% had ordered a repeat prescription
- 3% had checked on a test result
- 1% had an online consultation with a GP

# Future use of online consultations



In response to the question “Would you be interested in having an online consultation with a GP/other health professional in the future?” the respondent sample indicated:

- 50% are interested in engaging with their practice online in the future:
- 35% are not;
- 12% are currently uncertain.

Interested	Response	%
Yes	822	(49.91%)
Already have and used online consultation at my practice	9	(0.55%)
I use online consultation through a paid-for, private provider	4	(0.24%)
No	573	(34.79%)
Don't know / not sure	201	(12.20%)
No answer	38	(2.31%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>1647</b>	

# Preferred method

- Similar to the general public feedback, the favourite method is by online chat (46%) very closely followed by video chat; Email and dedicated app are also popular; and
- least popular is talking to a robot.

Choice	Response	%
Online chat	500	(46.55%)
By video chat	492	(45.81%)
By email	385	(35.85%)
By dedicated phone or tablet app	346	(32.22%)
By text message / SMS	331	(30.82%)
By completing a form on your practice website and awaiting response	312	(29.05%)
By messenger app	273	(25.42%)
With a virtual GP / healthcare professional (a computer or simulation robot)	115	(10.71%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>1074</b>	



# Preferred device



The most popular response is via smartphone (47%), closely followed by PC or laptop.

Answer choices	Response	%
Smartphone	775	(47.06%)
Tablet	304	(18.46%)
PC or laptop	513	(31.15%)
Gaming system	20	(1.21%)
Other	26	(1.58%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>1074</b>	<b>100%</b>

# Barriers



Answer choices	Response	%
I want to talk to a healthcare professional face-to-face when discussing health issues	893	(54.22%)
I'd want to be sure I was getting a response from my own GP – not another doctor or healthcare professional	468	(28.42%)
I'd worry I wouldn't understand the response to an online consultation	341	(20.70%)
I'd worry about the confidentiality of information I would be asked to provide during an online consultation	412	(25.02%)
I'd worry about security of information I would be asked to provide during and online consultation	410	(24.89%)
I don't like to go online if I don't have to	295	(17.91%)
I am not confident using the online services	293	(17.79%)
I don't trust the internet for things like this	283	(17.18%)
None of the above	266	(16.15%)
Other	254	(15.42%)
<b>Base</b>		

# Barriers in detail

- The majority of respondents cite the loss of face-to-face contact as a significant barrier, followed by fear of response from ‘another GP’ and not being able to understand the response;
- Confidentiality and security are also significant concerns for the respondents; and
- Dislike, distrust and lack of confidence in using the internet are concerns for this group.
- Men and women are equally concerned about the loss of face-to-face contact;
- Men are less concerned with the issue of not getting a response from their ‘own’ GP but are significantly more concerned than women over issues of security and confidentiality;
- People who consider themselves disabled cite confidence, dislike and dislike of the internet as their most significant barriers.

# Motivators



It will save me time	700	(65.18%)
I would get a quicker response rather than waiting for the next available appointment at the practice	606	(56.42%)
I won't have to take time off work	441	(41.06%)
It will save my GP / practice staff time (e.g. doctors, nurses, reception)	473	(44.04%)
Knowing I can still get an appointment in person if needed	430	(40.04%)
GPs / health professionals will be able to see more patients	403	(37.52%)
It will be more convenient for me in relation to travel / my mobility	383	(35.66%)
I do most things online, so would prefer this method	298	(27.75%)
Other	92	(8.57%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>1074</b>	

# Motivators in detail

- The majority want to save time and get a quicker response as well as not having to take time off work; and
- There was also significant recognition of saving time for practice staff through the use of online consultation.
- Men and women were equally motivated by saving time, however, women were significantly more motivated by not having to take time off work than men;
- Women view the saving of practice time as more important than men;
- People who consider themselves to have a disability were more motivated to use online consultation by the convenience in travel/mobility than any of the other factors;
- Respondents with a child under two report they were more likely to be motivated to use online consultation because they 'do most things online' than any other factor.

# Practice

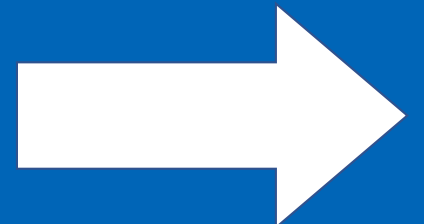


When asked “...if your GP practice does not currently offer online GP appointments, but you discovered another practice nearby did, would you consider moving to the one that did?”

- The majority of this sample would not switch;
- 13% would switch; and
- A further 10% were undecided.

Don't know	164	(9.96%)
Yes	222	(13.48%)
No	1058	(64.24%)
No answer	473	(44.04%)
<b>Base</b>	<b>1647</b>	

# Healthwatch focus groups



# The groups



Healthwatch	Groups
Bradford and District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Equality together Group</li><li>▪ Mary Seacole Day Centre</li></ul>
Barnett	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Refugee Centre</li><li>▪ Barnett &amp; Southgate College</li></ul>
Manchester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Manchester Peoples First</li><li>▪ LGBT</li><li>▪ Greater Manchester Youth Network (GMYN)</li></ul>
Newcastle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Chinese Women's Group</li><li>▪ Vision Support</li><li>▪ Better Days Group</li><li>▪ Elders Council</li><li>▪ First Steps</li></ul>
Northumberland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Choppington Disability Group</li><li>▪ Blyth Stroke Support Group</li></ul>
Tower Hamlets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Bishop Secondary School &amp; Tower Hamlets Education</li><li>▪ Healthwatch Group</li></ul>



# Emerging themes - positive



- **‘Horse for courses’ approach...** it should be available as an option but not as a substitute for face-to-face appointments.
- **It's the way we do business nowadays...** some of those that are more supportive of the idea are increasingly using the internet for day-to-day jobs i.e. grocery shopping.
- **Speeds things up...** with improved and easier access, more efficient handling of minor ailments, quicker/reduced waiting times to speak to a health professional, less time waiting in GP surgeries i.e. when appointments are running late.
- **Practice level benefits...** frees up GPs time and makes surgeries less busy.
- **Supporting communications...** there is less chance of being ‘overheard’ as patients are able to have confidential conversations.

# Emerging themes - negative



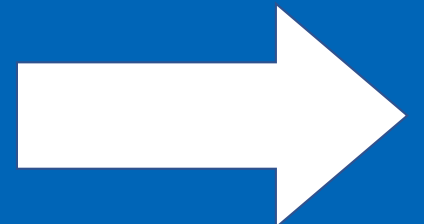
- **Fear of the unknown...** concerns were expressed about confidentiality and security, as well as accessibility i.e. those with no computer, internet access or compatible devices, those who can't read or write, those who don't speak English and those with low levels of computer literacy.
- **Lack of human contact...** this is not a substitute for face-to-face interaction.
- **The potential for misdiagnosis...** it is easier to explain symptoms face-to-face and more difficult to have conversations online.
- **Real and virtual access...** for some the importance of leaving the house cannot be ignored. Access issues - not all patients have access to the internet, know how to use it or have a device which is compatible i.e. elderly and people who are unable to read. As a result, many older people felt the online system will act as another barrier to being able to access their GP.

# Emerging themes - questions



- **A good idea but...** some required more information about how online consultations will look/work before they were able to decide whether they would use it.
- **Is it safe...** there are concerns over the security and confidentiality of online information and being able to find a space to hold a private conversation.
- **Will it backfire on us...** patients who choose to have a face-to-face consultation might be penalised and have to wait longer if GPs are too busy with online consultations.
- **Concerns over the technical infrastructure...** there is uncertainty about how it would work i.e. shortage of GPs, would there be a dedicated person to answer texts/emails?

# GP practice in depth interviews



# Emerging themes - positive



- Respondents believe there is the potential to empower patients; engaging more with their healthcare and facilitating an active contribution to their consultations.
- Many believe there is an opportunity for the use of online consultations to enhance the patient/practitioner relationship.
- In addition, there is an opportunity to utilise these tools to increase the continuity of care and facilitate consistency in the collection of patient data.
- There were some mentions of the ability in future to collect and utilise additional data from patient wearables to supplement medical records and provide an additional level of insight during remote consultations - in whatever form.
- Respondents recognise that patients are using digital technology in almost every aspect of their day-to-day lives and are likely to embrace this new approach. It also aligns with the “now culture” whereby individuals expect online access to services around the clock.
- Many noted the potential to increase the efficiency of triage, with effective signposting to alternative sources of help and self-care where required.

# Emerging themes - questions

Whilst not a specific concern, there is a consideration to be made around understanding the best fit for these tools:

- Who will they work best for?
- What patient groups or types of conditions are most appropriate?
- Where do they have the potential to release time and workload efficiencies for practices?
- Where do they improve the quality and standard of care?
- Where does it have the most potential to be valued by patients?
- What criteria can be put in place to ensure best use of any new tools and ensure the success of the roll out?

# Emerging themes - negative



- Patient identification and verification. How can GPs ensure those utilising the online tool are indeed who they say they are, and not subject to coercion by others?
- Should not be video led, as they felt it wouldn't deliver significant benefits over telephone, as well as the potential for misuse of video files if recorded by patients and subsequently shared over social media.
- Technology literacy of patients is a concern, particularly for those in low income groups and the elderly.
- Should only be used to support diagnosis where the issues presented are routine in nature, and diagnosis can be guideline or algorithm driven. Online consultation tools were not suitable for complex examinations or generating a defensible diagnosis.
- Workload and capacity issues were of key concern to all respondents. There was a strong view that increasing accessibility for patients without increasing capacity within practices would cause significant issues, exacerbating pressure on GPs.