

**Patient survey from *Summerhill Surgery* practice,
using the General Practice Assessment Questionnaire (GPAQ)**

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Date: 12 May 2009

How the survey was carried out

The survey was carried out in-house using the approved GPAQ consultation questionnaire; on booking-in the patients were asked if they would consider filling in a questionnaire whilst they waited to be seen; completing questions 10 and 11 after their consultation. This was completed over a period of time until each GP had 50 surveys completed to fulfill the nGMS requirements.

Summary of results

GPAQ evaluation questions

The following table summarises the individual scores for the evaluation questions in GPAQ, i.e. the ones where patients made a judgment about how good that aspect of care was. Each score is expressed as an average (mean) for all patients who completed the individual question. They are represented as a percentage of the maximum possible score, so the best possible score in each case is 100. You will be able to see the areas where your practice scores well and where improvement may be needed, both comparing aspects of care in your own practice and comparing yourself with others.

The figures in the right hand column contain current national GPAQ benchmarks for that question. Once again, these figures are expressed as percentages of the maximum possible score in this table. These are regularly updated on the GPAQ website. Details of how many patients completed each of the individual responses for each of these questions for your practice are given in full in appendix 3.

	Mean score	GPAQ benchmark
Q2. Satisfaction with receptionists	75	77
Q3a. Satisfaction with opening hours	65	67
Q4b. Satisfaction with availability of particular doctor	57	60
Q5b. Satisfaction with availability of any doctor	64	69
Q7b. Satisfaction with waiting times at practice	47	57
Q8a. Satisfaction with phoning through to practice	35	59
Q8b. Satisfaction with phoning through to doctor for advice	45	61
Q9b. Satisfaction with continuity of care	56	69
Q10a. Satisfaction with doctor's questioning	79	81
Q10b. Satisfaction with how well doctor listens	81	84
Q10c. Satisfaction with how well doctor puts patient at ease	81	84
Q10d. Satisfaction with how much doctor involves patient	80	81
Q10e. Satisfaction with doctor's explanations	81	83
Q10f. Satisfaction with time doctor spends	78	80
Q10g. Satisfaction with doctor's patience	82	84
Q10h. Satisfaction with doctor's caring and concern	83	84
Q11a. Ability to understand problem after visiting doctor	64	69
Q11b. Ability to cope with problem after visiting doctor	62	66
Q11c. Ability to keep healthy after visiting doctor	59	62

Table 1. Mean scores of evaluation questions (as percentages) compared to the GPAQ benchmarks*

*Please note that these benchmark figures have been calculated using data from the postal version of the General Practice Assessment Survey (GPAS), a previous questionnaire from which GPAQ has been developed for the 2003 GP contract. As GPAQ is a new questionnaire there is not yet enough data to produce benchmark figures using GPAQ alone. As the majority of questions in GPAQ are also in GPAS, the GPAS data is currently being used to provide the benchmark figures. Six of the questions in the benchmark figures currently have very low numbers of responses as they are new questions or because the GPAS data was not comparable, and caution should be taken when comparing your own data to these values. These are questions 4a, 4b, 5a, 5b, 10c and 10d. Please refer to <http://www.gpaq.info/benchmarks.htm> for further information.

GPAQ report questions

Some GPAQ questions ask about specific experiences, or ask the patient for specific information. The responses to these questions are summarised here.

Q3b. Additional hours requested	Number of responses
Mornings	11
Lunchtime	5
Evenings	55
Weekends	62
None	72

Q4a. Availability of particular doctor	Number of responses
Same day	94
Next working day	15
Within 2 working days	24
Within 3 working days	12
Within 4 working days	7
5 or more working days	9
Does not apply	37

Q5a. Availability of any doctor	Number of responses
Same day	130
Next working day	23
Within 2 working days	11
Within 3 working days	6
Within 4 working days	1
5 or more working days	3
Does not apply	15

Q6. Same day urgent availability of doctor	Number of responses
Yes	107
No	54
Don't know/never needed to	32

Q7a. Waiting time at practice	Number of responses
5 minutes or less	3
6-10 minutes	45
11-20 minutes	74
21-30 minutes	38
More than 30 minutes	29

Q9a. Continuity for seeing same doctor	Number of responses
Always	24
Almost always	50
A lot of the time	29
Some of the time	46
Almost never	21
Never	4

Demographics

The following tables display the demographic data collected in GPAQ.

Q12. Sex	Number of responses
Male	54
Female	133

Q13. Age	Number of responses
Up to 44 years old	85
45 years old and above	100
<i>Mean</i>	48

Q14. Long standing illness, disability or infirmity	Number of responses
Yes	102
No	78

Q15. Ethnic group	Number of responses
White	180
Black or Black British	2
Asian or Asian British	2
Mixed	2
Chinese	0
Other ethnic group	0

Q16. Accommodation status	Number of responses
Owner-occupied/ mortgaged	106
Rented or other arrangements	71

Q17. Employment status	Number of responses
Employed (full/part time, self-employed)	70
Unemployed	3
School or full time education	10
Long term sickness	29
Looking after home/family	18
Retired	47
Other	3

For all other frequency distribution tables that have not been included in the report so far, please refer to appendix 3.

Appendix 1

Notes about how the General Practice Assessment Questionnaire (GPAQ) was developed

Some aspects of quality are best assessed by asking patients. We reviewed the literature to identify aspects of GP care which are most highly valued by patients. These include:

Availability and accessibility, including: availability of appointments, waiting times, physical access and telephone access.

Technical competence, including: the doctor's knowledge and skills, and the effectiveness of his or her treatments.

Communication skills, including: providing time, exploring patients' needs, listening, explaining, giving information and sharing decisions.

Inter-personal attributes, including: humaneness, caring, supporting and trust.

Organisation of care, including: continuity of care, and, the range of services available.

In order to assess these aspects of care we started from what we regarded as the best currently available questionnaire, the Primary Care Assessment Survey (PCAS) ^{i, ii, iii, iv,} which had been extensively validated in the United States. In collaboration with the Health Institute in Boston, we modified PCAS for use in British general practice. The modified questionnaire was called the General Practice Assessment Survey (GPAS). We have used GPAS in large studies in the UK: and detailed research data on GPAS have been published ^{v vi vii viii ix}.

For the new GP contract, we were asked to modify our original GPAS questionnaire, and have produced GPAQ. The main differences are that the new questionnaire is shorter. We have also produced two versions, one designed to be sent by post, and one designed to be given to patients after consultations in the surgery.

GPAQ focuses mainly on questions about access, inter-personal aspects of care, and continuity of care. The version designed to be completed after the consultation asks about care given by an individual doctor. These scores will be able to be used by GPs for their appraisals and revalidation folders. The postal version of GPAQ does not allow scores to be calculated for individual doctors. However, it does include questions about the practice nurses.

GPAQ is described in more detail in the manual which can be downloaded from the GPAQ website, www.gpaq.info.

Appendix 2

Guidance on how to use the results of the questionnaire to improve care in your practice – taking action on GPAQ scores

There is little purpose in doing a survey unless you are prepared to act on the results. In this section, we discuss briefly how you might do this.

GPAQ has been designed so that it is as easy as possible to know how you can use your scores to improve care in your practice. All the questions can be linked directly to some action which you could take. For example, in the communication questions, we have included questions on listening and explaining rather than important but rather nebulous concepts like trust. So for every question in GPAQ, there is some behaviour which you could think about improving.

Some of the work of deciding how to use the results can be done with the practice staff. So, for example, some of the access questions throw up issues which can be addressed through the practice management – e.g. managing the appointment system, phone answering, etc. The access questions form the largest single group of questions.

The next largest group is about communication. This is more difficult to address, but there are well tested methods of improving doctors' communication skills in consultations. These generally rely on critical analysis of videotaped surgeries, usually with a partner or friendly mentor. This is something which all training practices will have had experience of in recent years, as consultation skills training forms an important part of vocational training.

In thinking about who to discuss your survey results with, you should think about:

- Your partners and other doctors working in the practice
- Nurses working in the practice
- Your practice managers and receptionist / admin staff.

Some issues, e.g. scores on the access scale, will need to be discussed with all your staff.

To get level 2 and level 3 payments for the new contract, you will need to do more than this, and will have to have discussed the results of your survey with patients (e.g. a 'critical friends'

group, or a patient participation group), and shown that you have done something about the results.

We are aware that most practices have little experience of how to use questionnaires to help them improve care. So, the National Primary Care Research and Development Centre, with the University of Exeter and CFEP are writing a practical handbook on this subject. We expect that it will be published in early 2004, when it will be freely available. Details will be on NPCRDC's website (www.npcrdc.man.ac.uk)

Appendix 3

Frequency distribution tables not included in the main body of the report

Q1. Number of visits to doctor in last 12 months	Number of responses
None	10
Once or twice	42
Three or four times	58
Five or six times	35
Seven times or more	53

Q2. Satisfaction with receptionists	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	3
Fair	17
Good	60
Very good	67
Excellent	52

Q3a. Satisfaction with opening hours	Number of responses
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Very poor	1
Poor	9
Fair	27
Good	88
Very good	46
Excellent	26

Q4b. Satisfaction with availability of particular doctor	Number of responses
Very poor	9
Poor	28
Fair	35
Good	42
Very good	29
Excellent	30
Does not apply	23

Q5b. Satisfaction with availability of any doctor	Number of responses
Very poor	6
Poor	17
Fair	29
Good	42
Very good	35
Excellent	38
Does not apply	13

Q7b. Satisfaction with waiting times at practice	Number of responses
Very poor	6
Poor	28
Fair	74
Good	57
Very good	19
Excellent	3

Q8a. Satisfaction with phoning through to practice	Number of responses
Very poor	39
Poor	50
Fair	47
Good	36
Very good	15
Excellent	5
Don't know/ never tried	3

Q8b. Satisfaction with phoning through to doctor for advice	Number of responses
Very poor	16
Poor	16
Fair	30
Good	24
Very good	15
Excellent	7
Don't know/ never tried	81

Q9b. Satisfaction with continuity of care	Number of responses
Very poor	8
Poor	24
Fair	42
Good	39
Very good	38
Excellent	21

Q10a. Satisfaction with doctor's questioning	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	2
Fair	13
Good	45
Very good	55
Excellent	70
Does not apply	1

Q10b. Satisfaction with how well doctor listens	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	2
Fair	13
Good	35
Very good	59
Excellent	76
Does not apply	1

Q10c. Satisfaction with how well doctor puts patient at ease	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	2
Fair	12
Good	36
Very good	45
Excellent	72
Does not apply	20

Q10d. Satisfaction with how much doctor involves patient	Number of responses
Very poor	1
Poor	1
Fair	14
Good	38
Very good	52
Excellent	71
Does not apply	9

Q10e. Satisfaction with doctor's explanations	Number of responses
Very poor	1
Poor	1
Fair	14
Good	33
Very good	57
Excellent	76
Does not apply	2

Q10f. Satisfaction with time doctor spends	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	3
Fair	16
Good	41
Very good	55
Excellent	67
Does not apply	3

Q10g. Satisfaction with doctor's patience	Number of responses
Very poor	1
Poor	1
Fair	10
Good	41
Very good	47
Excellent	84
Does not apply	3

Q10h. Satisfaction with doctor's caring and concern	Number of responses
Very poor	1
Poor	0
Fair	11
Good	36
Very good	50
Excellent	86
Does not apply	2

Q11a. Ability to understand problem after visiting doctor	Number of responses
Much more than before the visit	71
A little more than before the visit	53
The same or less than before the visit	28
Does not apply	30

Q11b. Ability to cope with problem after visiting doctor	Number of responses
Much more than before the visit	69
A little more than before the visit	49
The same or less than before the visit	33
Does not apply	30

Q11c. Ability to keep healthy after visiting doctor	Number of responses
Much more than before the visit	56
A little more than before the visit	51
The same or less than before the visit	32
Does not apply	41

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DR O B PETERS
DR S P GROVER
DR P K AGARWAL



Summerhill Surgery
243 Margate Road
Ramsgate
CT12 6SU
Tel: 01843 591758
Fax: 01843 580370

Is there anything particularly good about your health care?

- Yes, it's the best in the world and still the envy of all of it
- Dr Peters is a very good Doctor when you can get to see him
- Pleasant team at the surgery; polite and helpful
- Being able to speak with confidence to my GP
- Dr Peters is a good GP; I have an excellent relationship with him
- Some days are good; some days are bad
- Care is very good
- All doctors look after you as much as they can
- My health care has been dealt with promptly when seen
- A new system with appointments
- Getting to see the Doctor I request to see
- The Doctors and Receptionists are always very caring, helpful and understanding
- Always receive care and attention
- Have found the verrucae clinic very good
- Dr Grover is first rate and always alleviates my fears and concerns
- Yes still active!
- I recently visited my GP and really felt that he gave me the time I needed in a positive way which had a great impact on my health
- Very good
- I find Dr Grover very helpful at all times
- I like my Doctor
- Dr Peters and Dr Grover are very good at understanding and identifying problems; excellent Doctors

- I have been with this surgery for many years and have always had excellent care from everyone
- Dr Grover is always very pleasant; he talks to you as a person not just a medical file.
- Yes Dr Grover is excellent
- Good, nice people
- Treated fine
- I see one particular doctor every four weeks due to medical checks on some medications, I've recently had problems with other health issues and the help and advice was good and put me at ease
- Yes, I feel that things were missed at my previous surgery
- Dr Peters!
- I think they do well
- Really like the locum doctor, he is very helpful
- The surgery tries and helps with all situations
- Good waiting times both at the surgery and the hospital
- Dr Grover and Dr Peters are thorough, they listen, they care...you can ask anything and you are taken seriously...I always feel reassured
- All the receptionists are polite and helpful
- I have 100% trust in the doctors here – they have always been helpful and treated me quickly and correctly
- Finally getting a repeat prescription!
- Yes, Dr Agarwal is very thorough and even phoned me at work with my results
- Doctors do not seem to take time and listen, it seems to me that they just want to get you out and the next one in
- The seats are comfy and I like the water machine, I like the radio in the background and the receptionists are nice and very, very good.
- Always treated well and get repeat prescriptions on time and always get an appointment
- Receptionists have been helpful and considerate when asking about personal health information for appointments
- The care afforded me by my GP

- My doctor always listens carefully to any of my concerns
- Referrals have always been within two or three weeks
- I always feel able to phone or see the doctor on the same day that I feel ill and I find this good

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DR P K AGARWAL



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Fax: 01843 580370

Is there anything that could be improved?

- Yes the present phone-in system for appointments needs an urgent review
- No quite happy with service
- The amount of time I wait to see a doctor; I don't think it has ever been sooner than 10 minutes after my appointment time
- Not enough space
- Yes getting through on the phone is very difficult
- My weight!
- The time you have to wait in the waiting room and the difficulty getting through on the phone to make an appointment in the morning
- Appointment waiting times, on more than one occasion I have sat for an hour past my appointment time – this has been for Dr Grover and Dr Peters. There has been no explanation offered on any occasion. I have noticed this seems to happen mostly if an appointment is a follow-up scheduled at 11.30am, I cannot comment if this has improved recently as I have not attended at that time for a while...thankfully!
- Phone calls for appointments; the calls are not answered and when you get through the appointments are all gone!
- Fine at this time (09)
- Having to phone back the next day if you get through and all the appointments are gone
- Appointment system; I would like to be able to book to see my doctor. I have never missed or cancelled as I am a teacher I cannot get supply cover so can only see a GP after school...this always proves impossible because only being allowed to phone at 8am on the day by time you get through all the appointments for Dr Grover have been booked

- Yes, people that can't get through on the phone queue up outside so that by 8.30am when you can get through there are no appointments left.
- Telephone system; there could be a queuing system so that you know when your call will be answered as to keep redialling can be a problem
- To be answered quicker; as to wait 45mins and then to be told that there are no appointments available
- Would prefer to see the same doctor each time
- Make it easier to get through on the phones at 8am as it will usually take a few times
- Getting appointments!
- Having to phone on the day to get an appointment; sometimes spending 20 mins dialling and re-dialling; then to be told there are no appointments left
- Yes take on two other doctors who speak English as their first language
- Can take up to 30 mins to get through first thing in the morning
- Would like to see a lady GP as can feel uncomfortable with a male (especially with my younger daughter)
- Availability to make appointments in advance
- Waiting times
- Just the waiting times
- Trying to get an appointment with your regular doctor
- Availability to see GP of choice and appointment availability
- Appointments!
- Appointments!
- Getting through to make an appointment could be improved
- None as far as I am concerned
- It is annoying that I can only phone at 8am to get an appointment
- Maybe a female GP
- Yes – process of making an appointment!
- Appointments – phoning in at 8am does not work
- Patients who trouble to come to the surgery before 8.15am should have early morning appointments. People waiting outside are phoning in for appointments and walking away while the others are waiting in the cold!

- It would be better if you were able to book appointments a day in advance if necessary to see a GP
- Appointment availability needs to be addressed, it's a joke on going medical treatment unable to obtain follow-up appointments as asked for by GP...what's going on...receptionists say none are set up, left hand doesn't know what right-hand is doing...very poor in my opinion...needs looking at very soon.
- When you phone on the day to get an appointment by the time you have got through all the appointments have gone or you have to see a GP you wouldn't have chosen
- Ability to get appointments on the same day as trying to ring in the morning is difficult and when you get through all the appointments are gone...by 8.15am!! Would like a female GP.
- Being able to pre-book with Dr Grover; getting through on the telephone
- The ability to get through to make an appointment
- The booking system; trying to get through is a nightmare!
- Not enough pre-bookable appointments
- I don't like having to ring at 8am only for an appointment; the waiting times are ludicrous...I waited 1hour 45 minutes a few weeks ago!!
- Helpful if you could speak to the GP on the phone; no house calls anymore? Seems they have too many policies, government stats and core services to meet!
- 8am –8.30am doesn't suit parents on the school run or those who work!
- Availability of appointments on the day you phone. I have a son with ongoing medical problems and he is prone to infections but can never get an appointment at the surgery for him. I can attempt 40 times to be told at 8.19am that all the appointments have gone, it is ridiculous. This isn't a one off either I have never been able to get an on the day appointment.

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DR S P GROVER
DR P K AGARWAL



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243 Margate Road
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Any other comments?

- I have always found Receptionists willing to find an answer to any query or problem with enthusiasm
- Now I know there are pre-bookable appointments on a Saturday I will use this facility for non-urgent appointments
- Keep up the good work it is appreciated
- I had to wait an hour for my appointment today...which isn't easy with a 3 year old
- We are lucky to still have a health service
- Very confident in Dr Grover
- Bookable appointments with your chosen GP should be available
- Don't really like seeing any other doctors apart from the 2 main ones; I have a job understanding the others and they know nothing about me
- Phoning in the morning is a joke
- I rarely visit the surgery but when I do, everyone is most helpful and I have absolutely no complaints about the practice
- I don't have any complaints my GP is very good
- More receptionists to answer the phones in the morning
- I think pre-booked appointments are better, the phone is often busy and when you get through the GPs lists are full

- Please can we have something similar to ring back as this was good
- Good service all round
- A caring locum
- I think you should be able to book appointments in advance
- I am perfectly happy with all aspects of my care at this surgery
- Try calling in a range of 12 people in for a joint meeting with all the doctors one evening (this will probably never happen?)

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Staff Comments

- The majority of the positive comments were about the patients' care and the relationship they have with the GPs and the surgery staff which is encouraging. The negative comments were all about the telephones and lack of appointments; it is difficult and stressful for staff to be in a situation where day after day you have to deal with patients being frustrated and disappointed with the system; thankfully the system can change!
- With comments of patients unable to get an appointment after getting threw on the phone after 8 a.m. this generally happens at many doctor surgeries. Maybe a review of a number of appointments available is needed. But this will probably not resolve this issue. Also I suggest maybe a trial of other staff as well as receptionist answering the phones between 8 to 9 a.m. this seem to work at a previous surgery I worked for, which resulted on patients not having to wait more then a minute on average to be answered by a member of staff.