

Urgent Care survey

January 2016

1. Introduction

Demand and pressure on urgent care services continues to increase in Sheffield, in line with the national picture. Our urgent care system increasingly struggles to meet demand and deliver clinically effective and safe services, which provide the best patient experience.

NHS Sheffield CCG Governing Body made the decision to formally undertake a city wide review of urgent care services in an attempt to better understand the outcomes required by local people who use such services. From May to August 2015 we talked with patients and the public using a variety of methods, including focus groups, surveys, community events, specialist interest groups and through organisations in the voluntary sector. We estimate that through these methods we made 14,354 contacts with individuals and groups specifically relating to the urgent care services review.

The information collated in the summer gave us clear themes and trends, which were:

Access to GP appointments	A large amount of people feel that they are unable to get a GP appointment when they need one or at a suitable time. This drives people to use urgent care services for convenience, or because their health issues escalate.	“Too difficult to access GP from Friday to Monday. Closed on a Friday afternoon. If condition worsens have to go elsewhere at a weekend.”
Confusion about what services to use	There is a lot of confusion about what services to use for what type of need. It is seen that there is too much choice and people default to services that they are comfortable with, know about or have used before. The language that is used to describe urgent care services is seen as confusing and inconsistent. People feel that there should be better signposting to, and education of, these services. Many people feel that the system should guide patients through rather than have to make the choice themselves.	“I was needlessly sent to adult A&E after contacting NHS 111 for advice. On arrival at A&E I was then sent across town to MIU. This is where I feel I should have been sent in the first place.”
System not working cohesively	People see the urgent care system and wider health and social care system as complicated, fragmented and lacking communication between services and organisations. This has the impact of people having to repeat their story	“The Out of Hours service sent an ambulance to take my partner to A&E. The ambulance crew asked why we had called them,

	at every contact within the system and also affects the continuity of care that they receive. They feel that all organisations providing services need to be joined up better with greater integration across health and social care.	then the doctor at A&E asked why we had called an ambulance!"
Staff attitude and communication	There are mixed reviews around staff attitude. Some people have received the compassionate and friendly care that they expect, whereas others have felt that some staff have been dismissive and unhelpful. Communication between staff and patients, and especially being listened to, are big issues for people.	"Every member of staff I interacted with was brilliant and made me feel very at ease." "Sometimes you are made to feel like it's your fault."
Differing experiences and knowledge of services	People are experiencing urgent care services very differently across Sheffield. Many factors affect their knowledge of, and confidence of using, the different urgent care services that are available to them. These factors can include where people live, the language they speak, their education level, and their age.	"Presume that people have a computer. Need information and advice in other formats. Some people can't access libraries and they are closing them."
Alternative services available closer to home	The types of services, both statutory and voluntary, that are available in the community to support people are varied across Sheffield. People want services in the community that will help to address their health issues before they escalate and require urgent care services like 999 and A&E. Concern was raised that if an ambulance is called they are automatically admitted to hospital when they may be able to stay at home with some quickly arranged support.	"My relative didn't want to go to hospital once they were checked over by the ambulance staff, but they wanted my relative to go. We felt under pressure to go, but when we got there we ended up waiting round for hours."
Discharge failures	The exit point of urgent care is seen as a particular problem. Unplanned discharges, a lack of follow ups and no continuity of care can create a feeling of falling off a cliff edge.	"People are thrown off a cliff edge when they finish their treatment. There needs to be an intermediary."
Mental health	People want to be treated as a whole, with their mental health needs treated as equal to their physical needs. They want plans to help them in a crisis. Experiences of accessing urgent care services for mental health issues are generally poor.	"Mental health should be treated just the same as physical health." "Reduced funding in mental health has stopped my support. Won't be seen again until at crisis point."

From this information, there were six key questions that were outstanding and required further data. Three of these questions were identified as being answerable using routinely captured data from the services themselves. They were:

- Who is using the services?
- When are they using these services?
- What did the service do for them?

In order to answer the additional three questions, a survey (Appendix A) was devised to provide a snapshot of healthcare service use at three urgent care sites, during the busy December period. They were:

- Why are they using these services?
- What other services did they use?
- What would they do if this service didn't exist?

NHS Sheffield Clinical Commissioning Group commissioned Healthwatch Sheffield to complete the survey with current users of these services. The table below shows the date, time and number of surveys completed at each location.

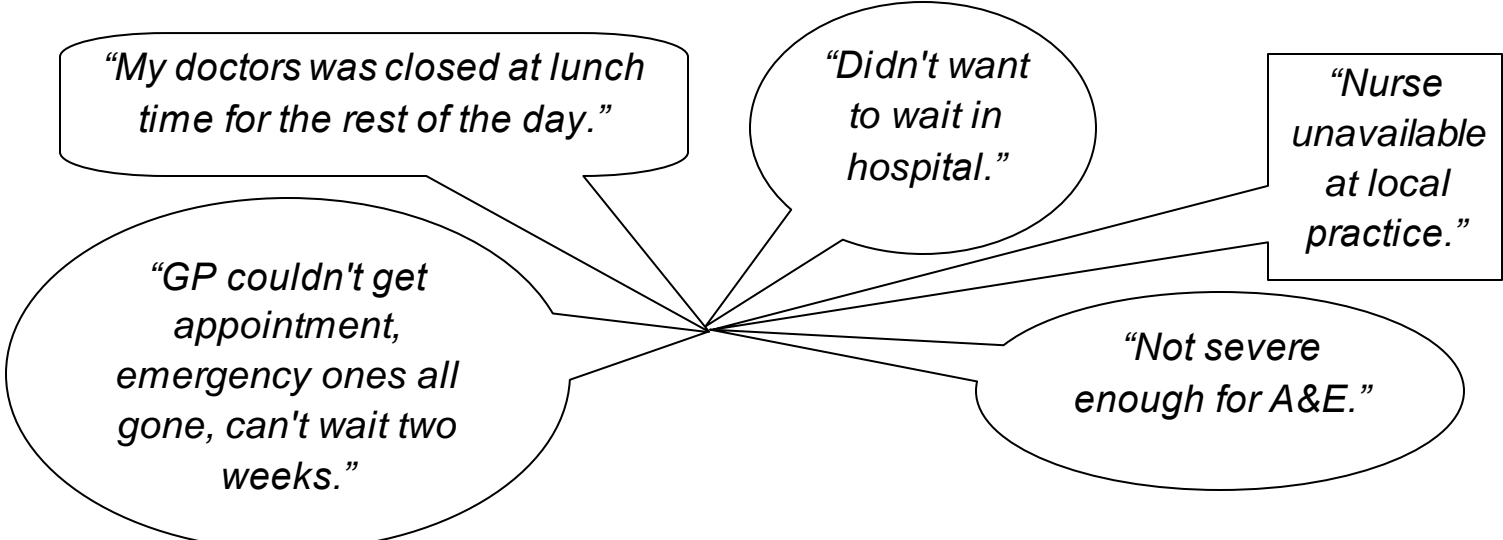
Location	Date	Times	Surveys completed
Children's A&E	10 December 2015	3pm – 8pm	24
Minor Injuries Unit	15 December 2015	3pm – 8pm	17
Walk-in Centre	4 December 2015	3pm – 10pm	40
			81

The combined information should provide a useful insight into people's behaviours and allow for an informed review to conclude on a potential system for the future of urgent care in Sheffield.

2. What we found out from the survey carried out by Healthwatch

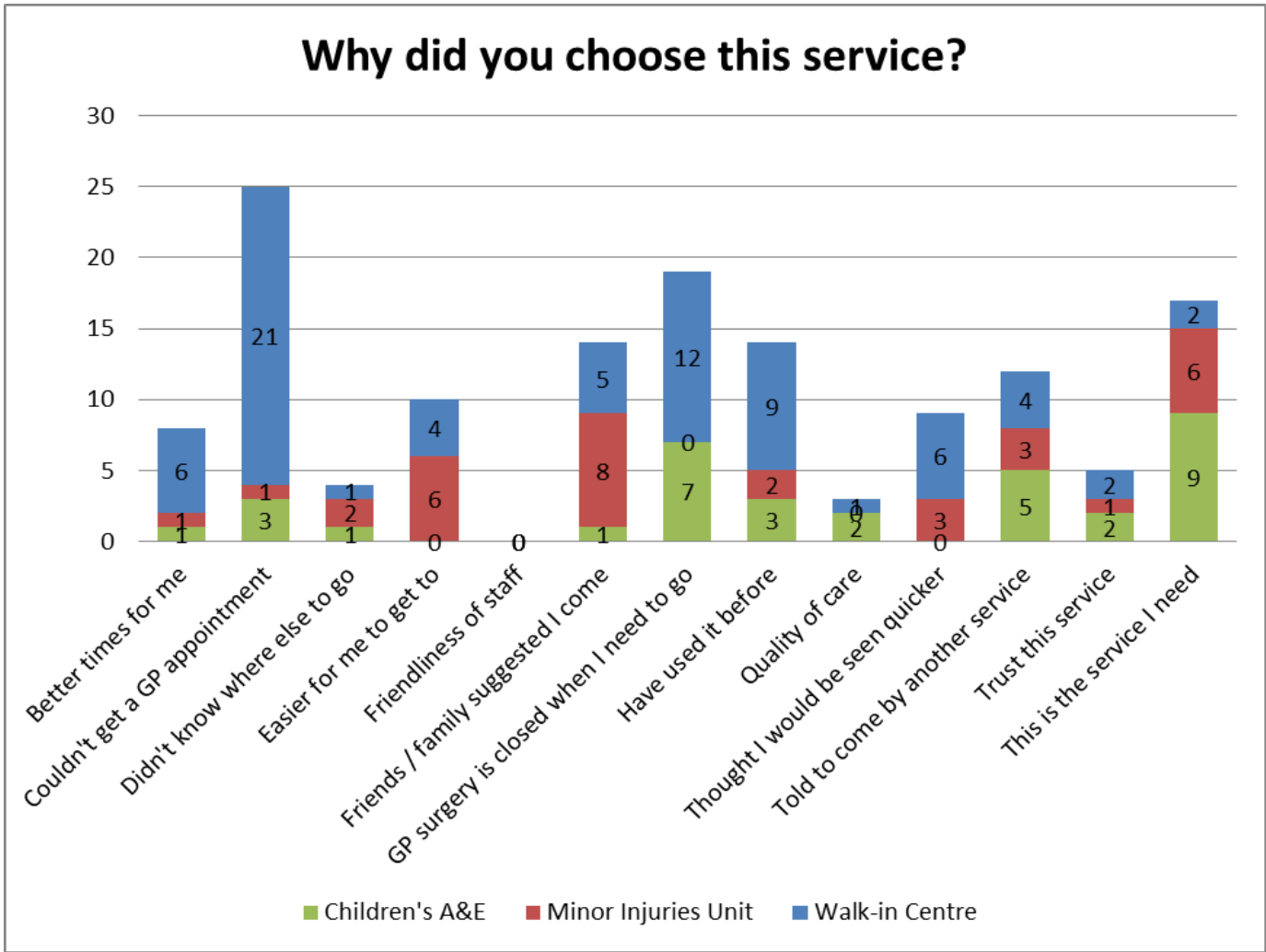
The main themes that can be taken from this engagement activity are:

- 67% of respondents using the Walk-in Centre or Children's A&E had been unable to make an appointment with their GP (either no appointments or closed).
- For those using the Minor Injuries Unit, nearly half chose the service because it was recommended by friends or family.
- People mainly wanted medical advice.
- The majority of people had tried to access other services (mainly GP) before going to these services.
- The main reason other services were unable to help was because an appointment was unable to be made. The second reason was that services had told patients to go to these urgent care services.
- If these services weren't available people would go to the Walk-in Centre, wait to see their own GP or go to A&E.
- Most people were registered with a GP.

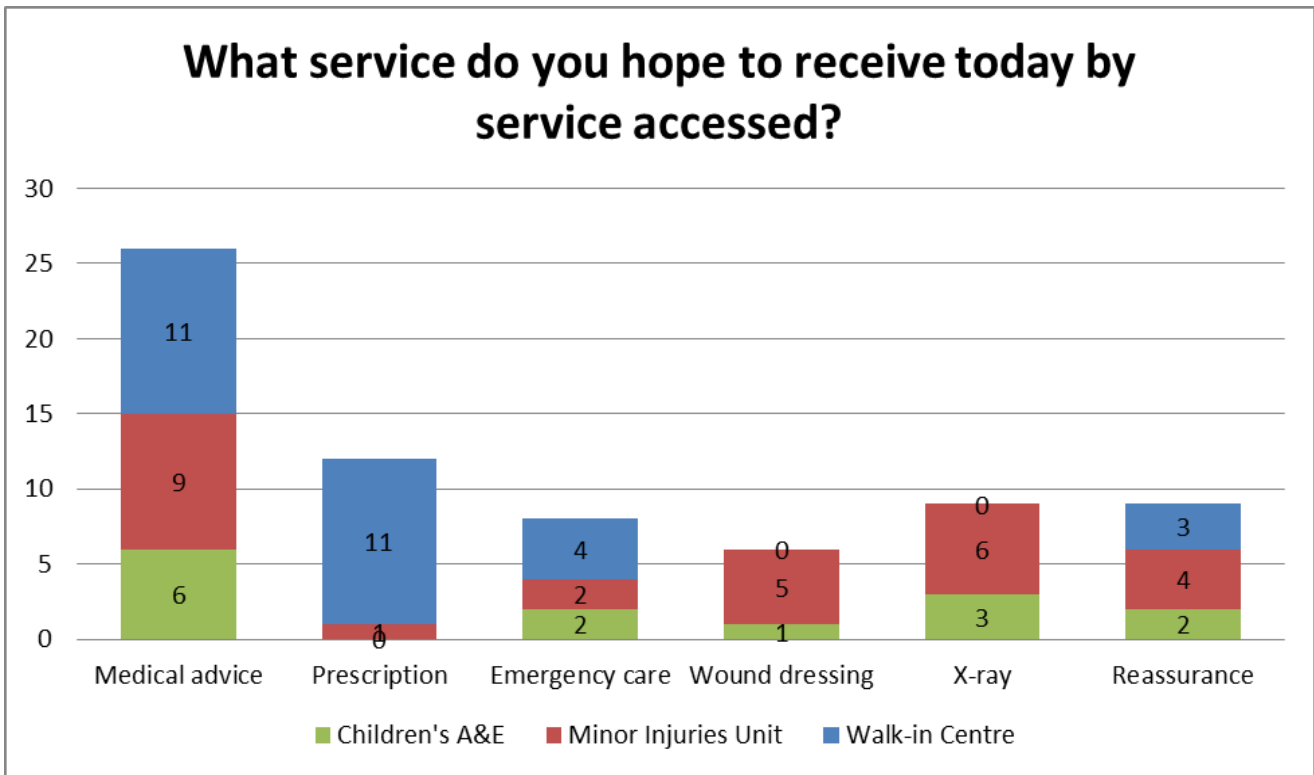


3. Question Responses

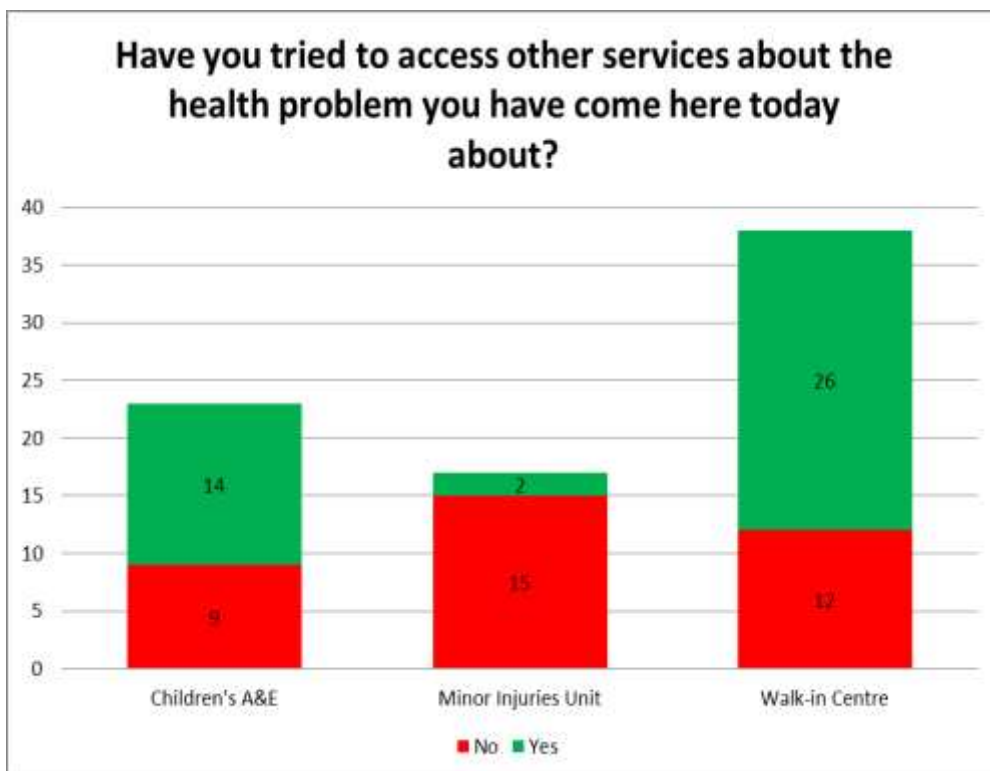
The top two answers to the question below highlight that people had chosen this service because they were unable to make an appointment with their GP or it was closed. When broken down by service, this result shows that 67% of respondents using the Walk-in Centre or Children’s A&E had been unable to make an appointment with their GP (either no appointments or closed). For those using the Minor Injuries Unit, nearly half chose the service because it was recommended by friends or family.



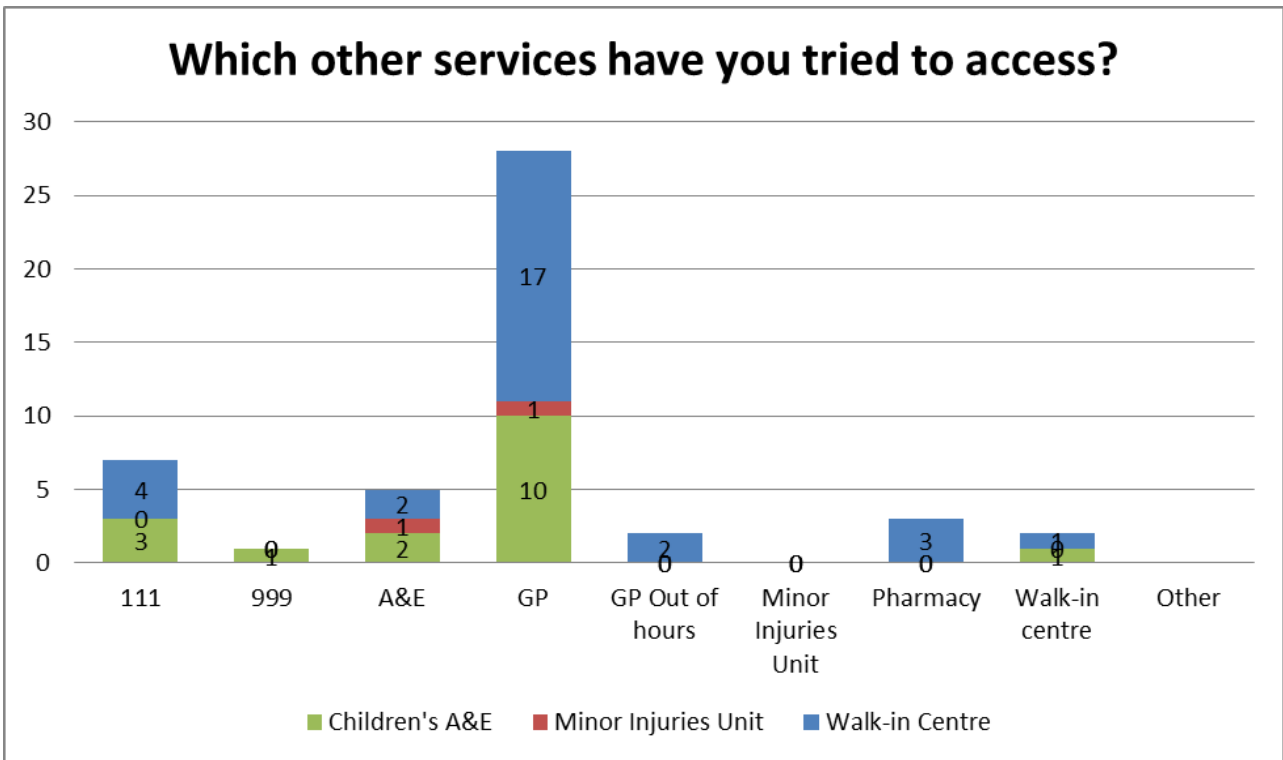
People accessing all services answered that they were mostly looking for medical advice. Those people using the Walk-in Centre were also looking for a prescription, whilst those accessing the Minor Injuries Unit were also looking to have x-rays and wound dressings.



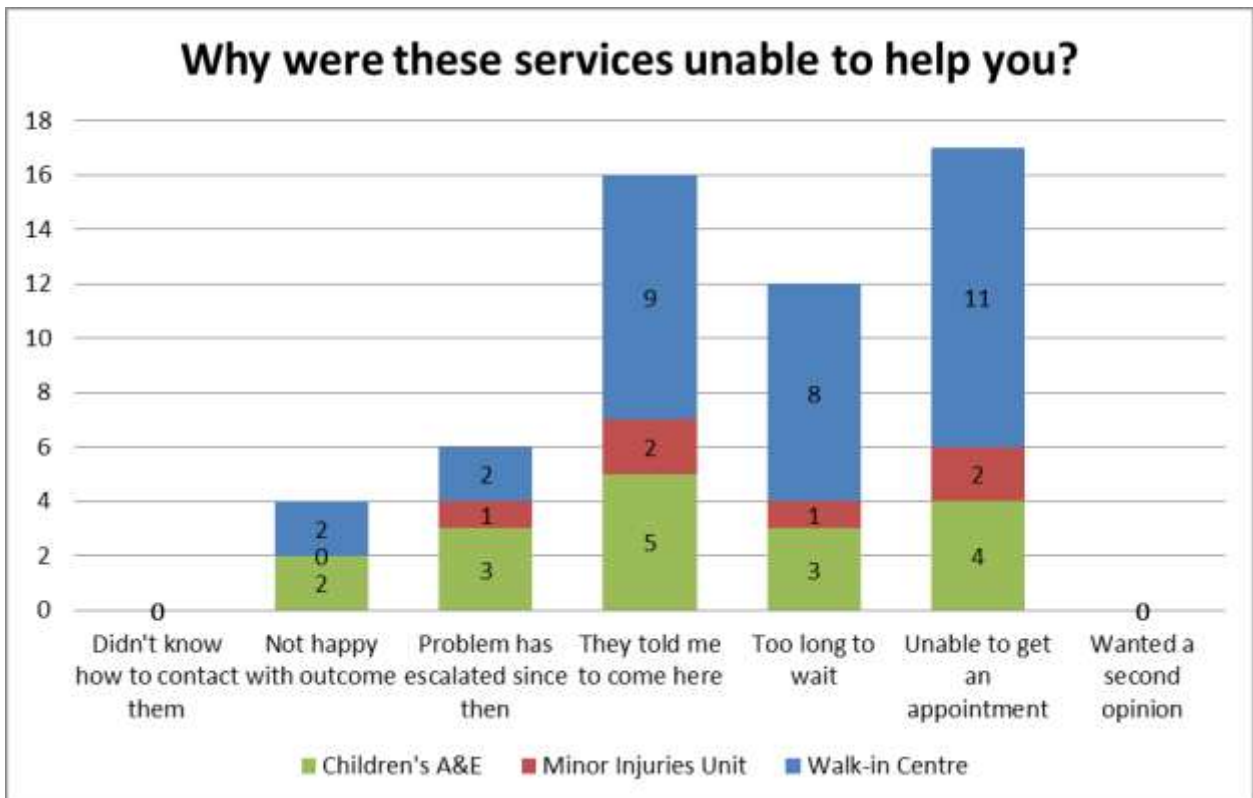
The majority of people who had accessed the Walk-in Centre and Children's A&E had tried to access other services about the same health problem that they were presenting at the service. This was completely the opposite for people who were using the Minor Injuries Unit.



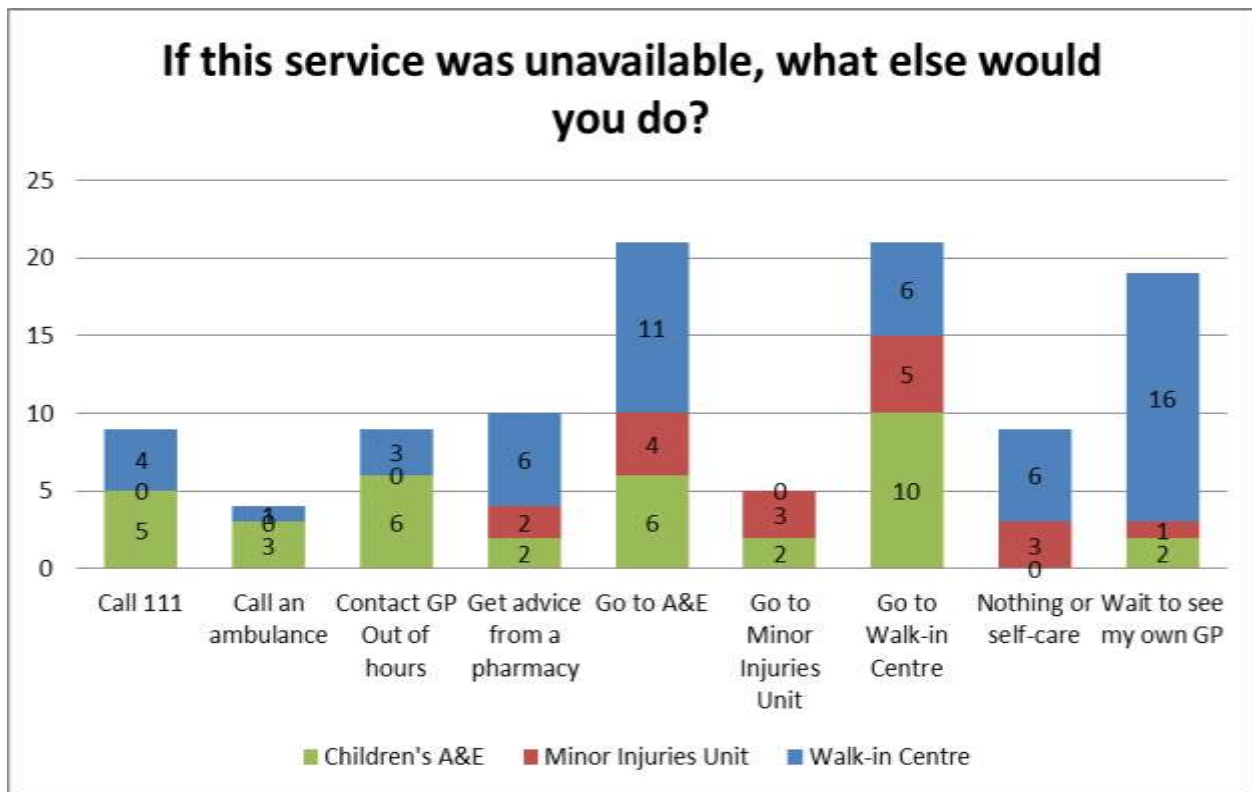
The majority of people who had tried to access other services had tried to access their GP.



The main reason other services were unable to help was because an appointment was unable to be made. The second reason was that services had told patients to go to these urgent care services.



If these services weren't available, those people attending the Walk-in Centre stated they would wait to see their own GP, whilst those attending the Minor Injuries Unit and Children's A&E stated they would go to the Walk-in Centre. The second choice of all groups was to go to A&E.



4. How this information helps us to understand the full picture

This information provides a snapshot into the behaviour of people using these urgent care services at a particular date and time. The information should be used to supplement previously gathered information and other available data to gain a more complete picture of the usage of these services.

5. What else we need to know

This engagement activity has helped us to understand three of the six questions detailed at the start of the report.

We still require to know:

- Who is using the services?
- When are they using these services?
- What did the service do for them?

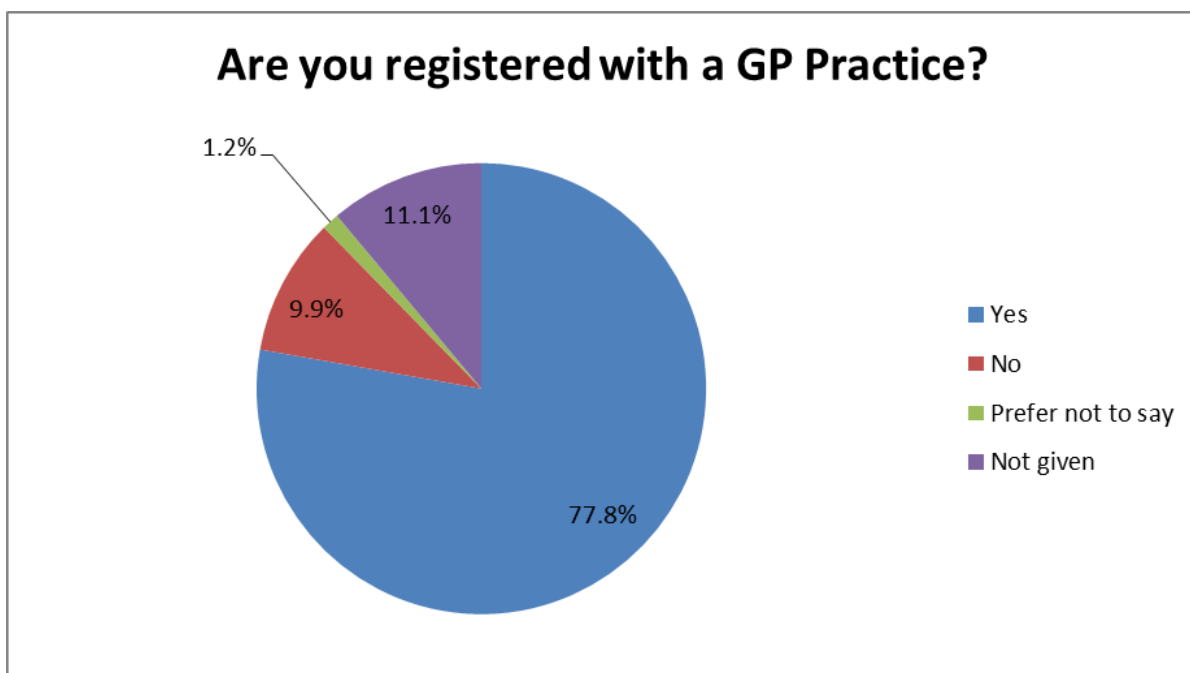
As previously mentioned, other routinely collected data has been identified as being important in aiding our understanding of the use of these services. This data should be collected and analysed to hopefully answer these three outstanding questions.

It is recommended that the same survey should be asked of people accessing NHS Sheffield Teaching Hospital's Emergency Department.

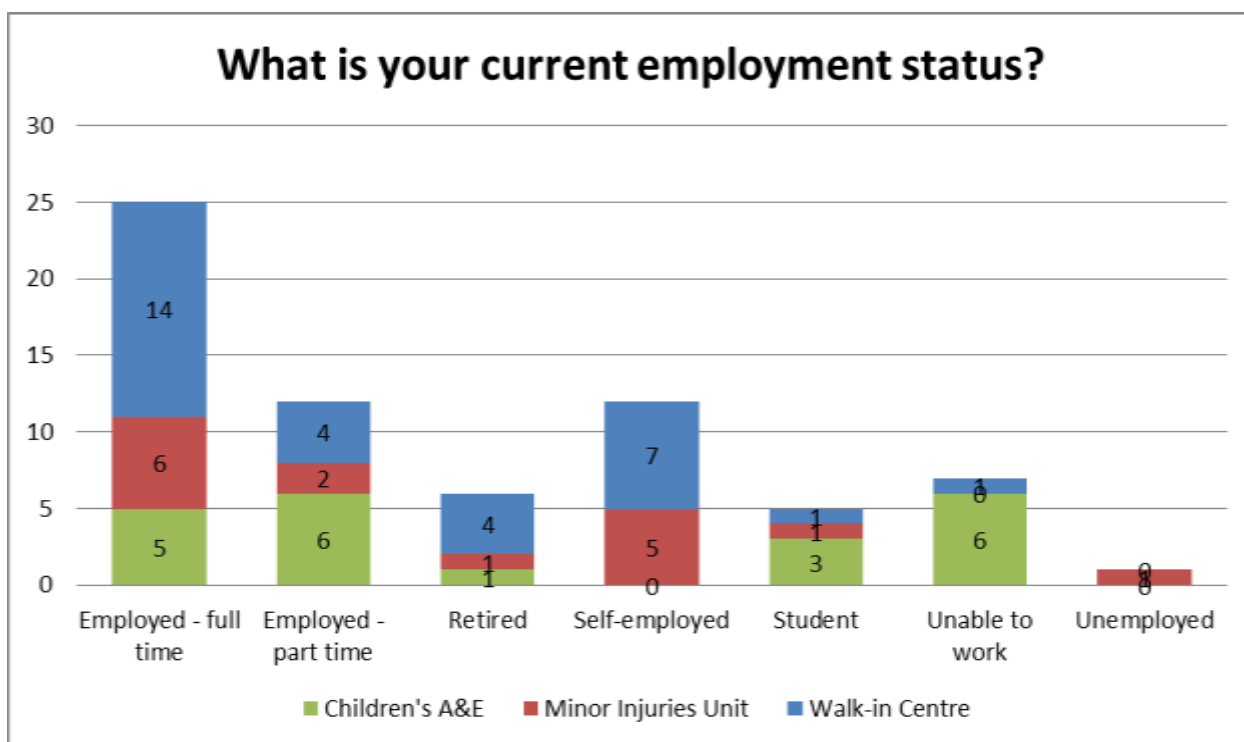
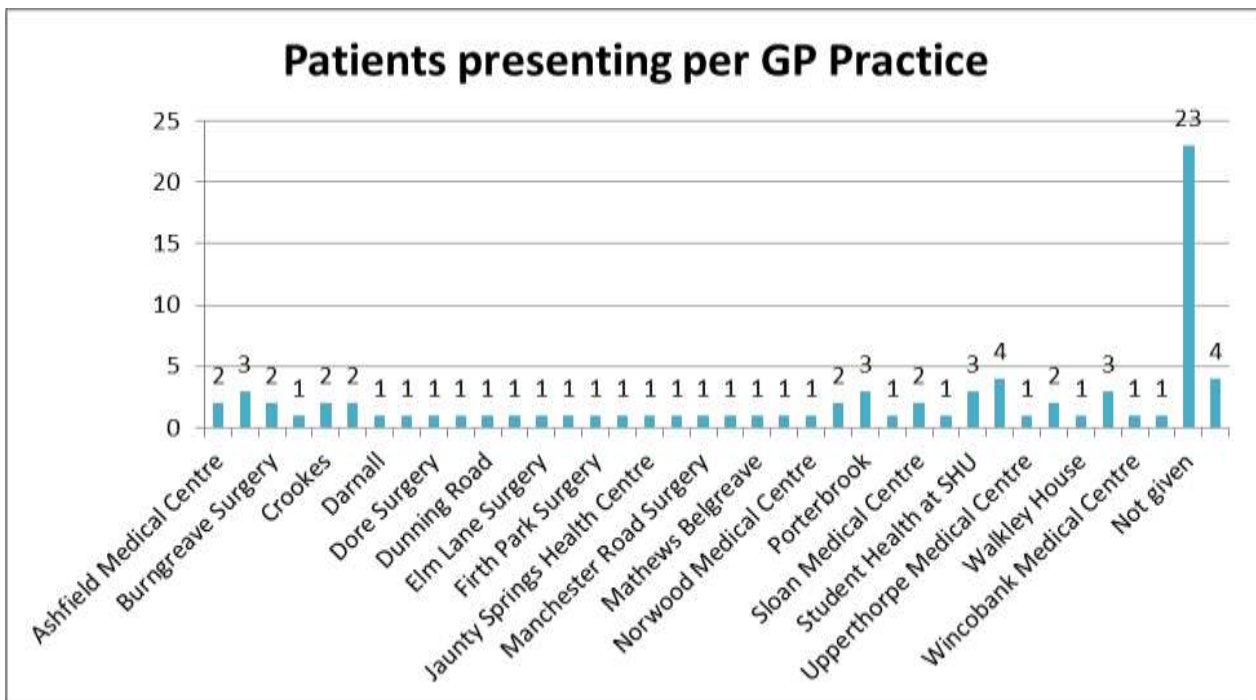
We may also choose to commission HealthWatch to repeat the activity at the same urgent care sites, but at different times of day / week over a longer period of time. This would give us a larger sample size and also allow us to identify trends of similarity or differences over time.

6. Who did we talk to?

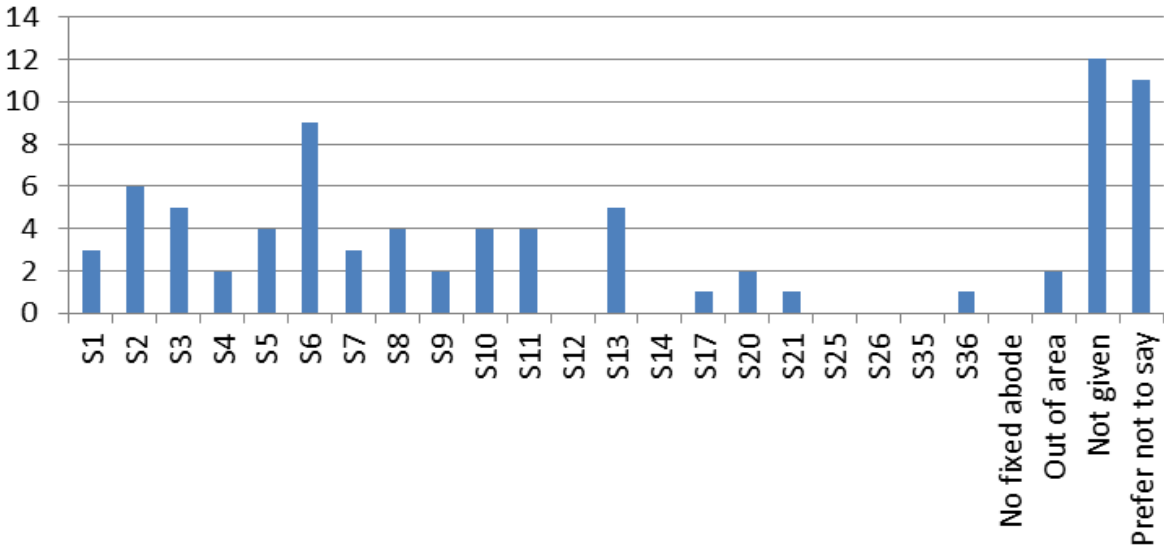
As part of every survey we asked some general questions about the person that was completing the survey to help us to understand which communities were responding. These questions were optional. Although we cannot say that this describes the types of communities that are using these services, we can be assured that views from most communities within Sheffield, including those often defined as hard to reach, are captured within this engagement activity.



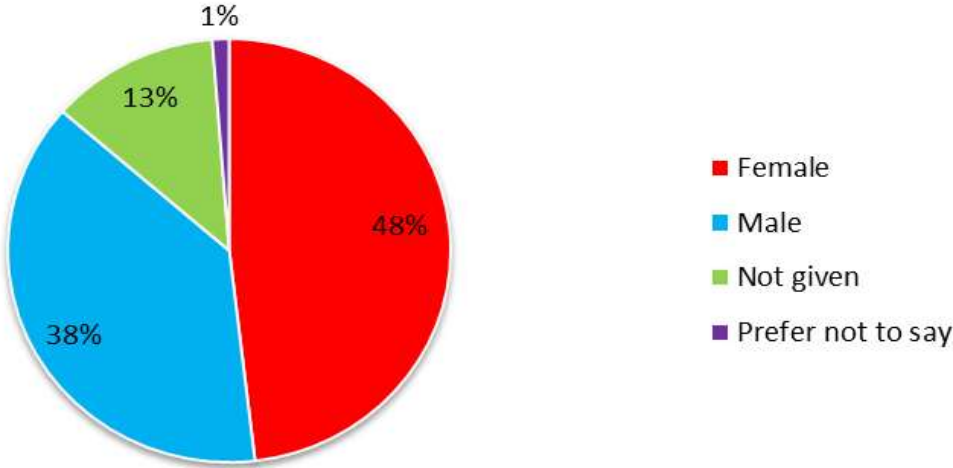
There were no significant variations in patients presenting from individual GP Practices.

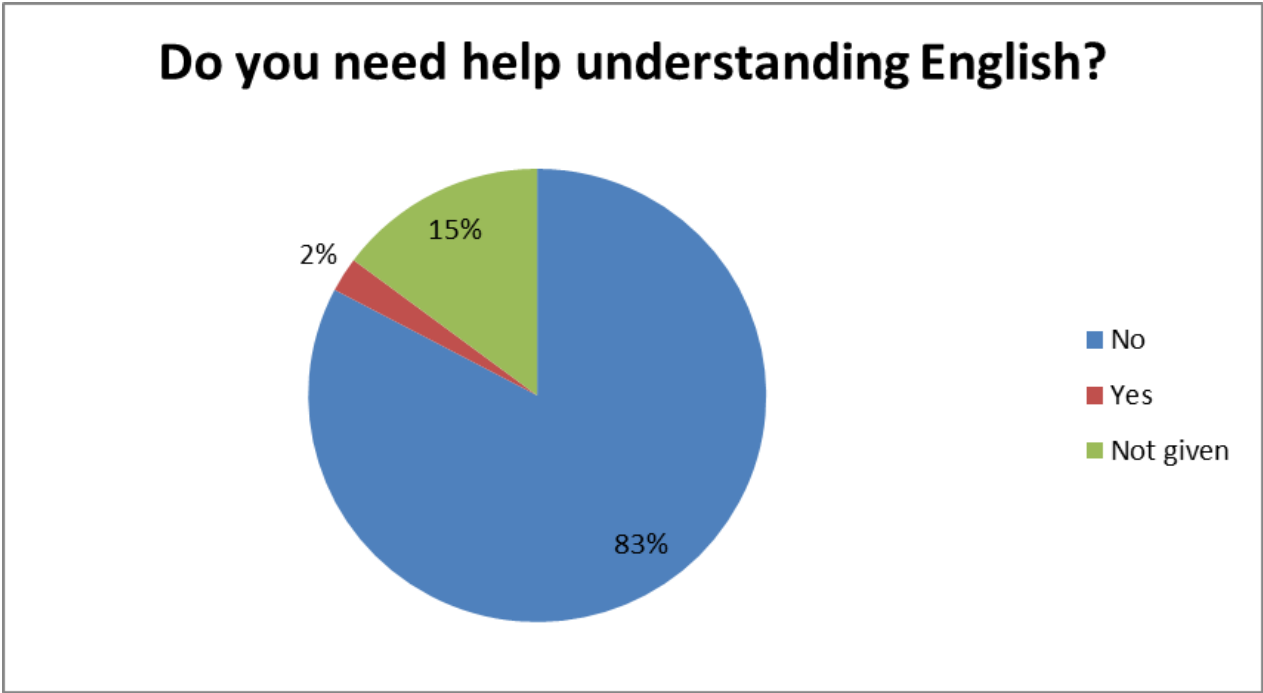
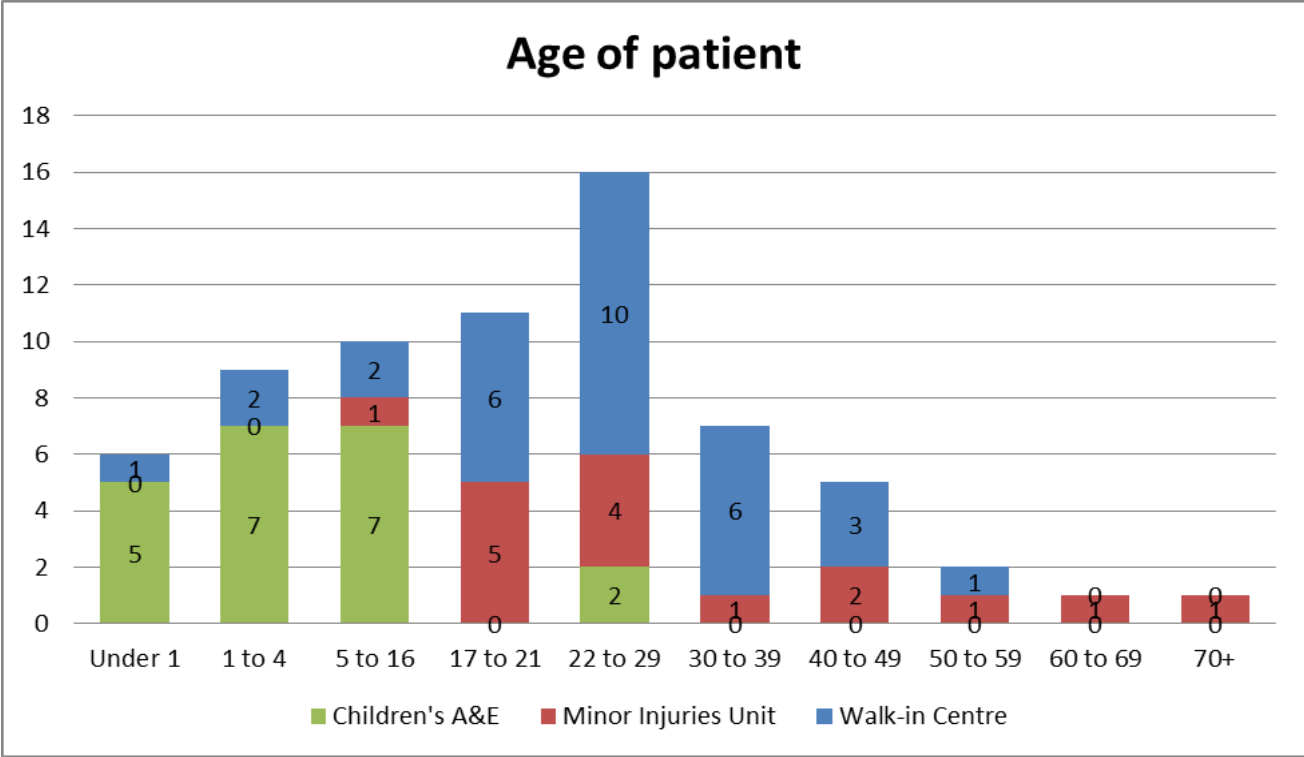


Postcode of patient

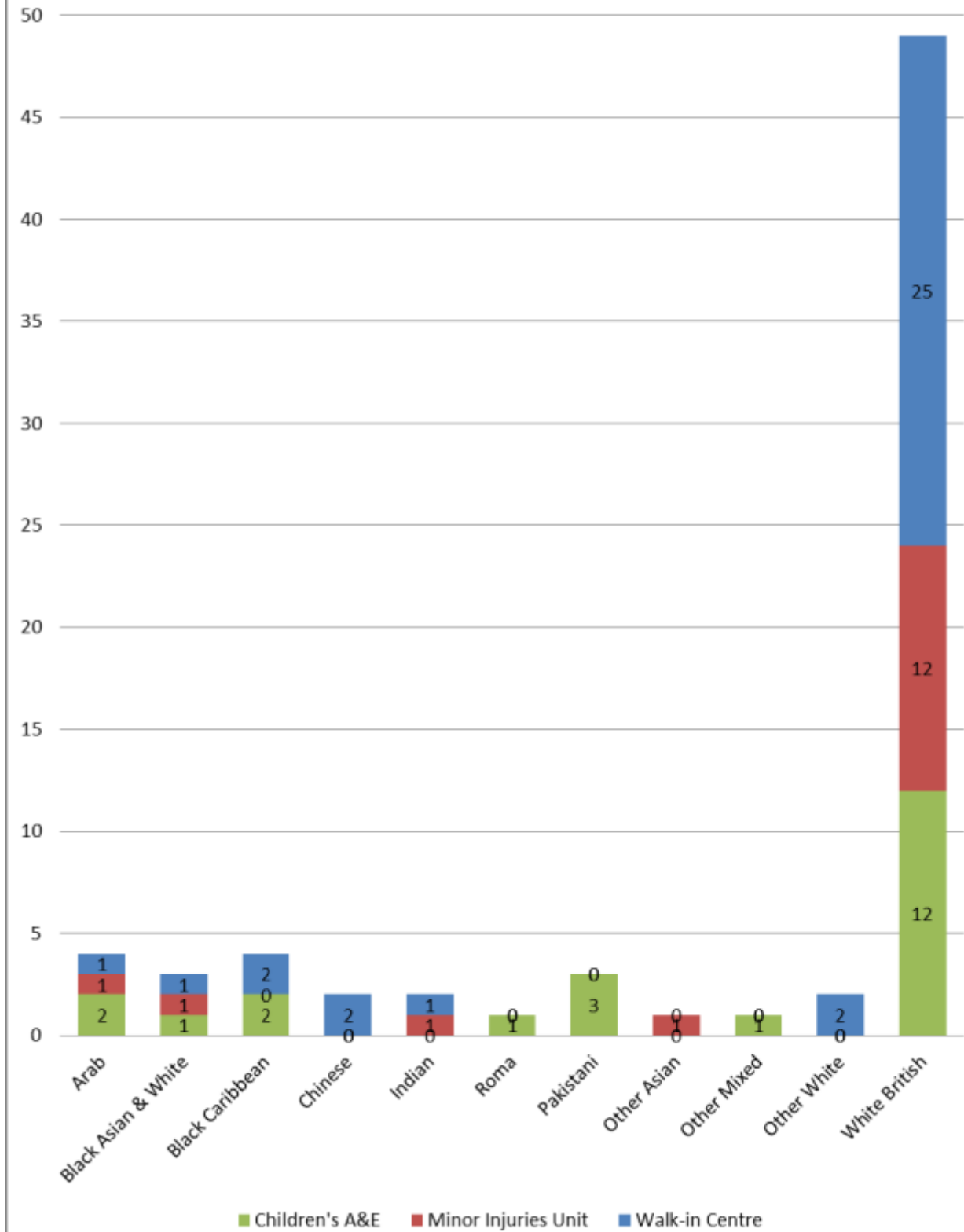


What sex are you?

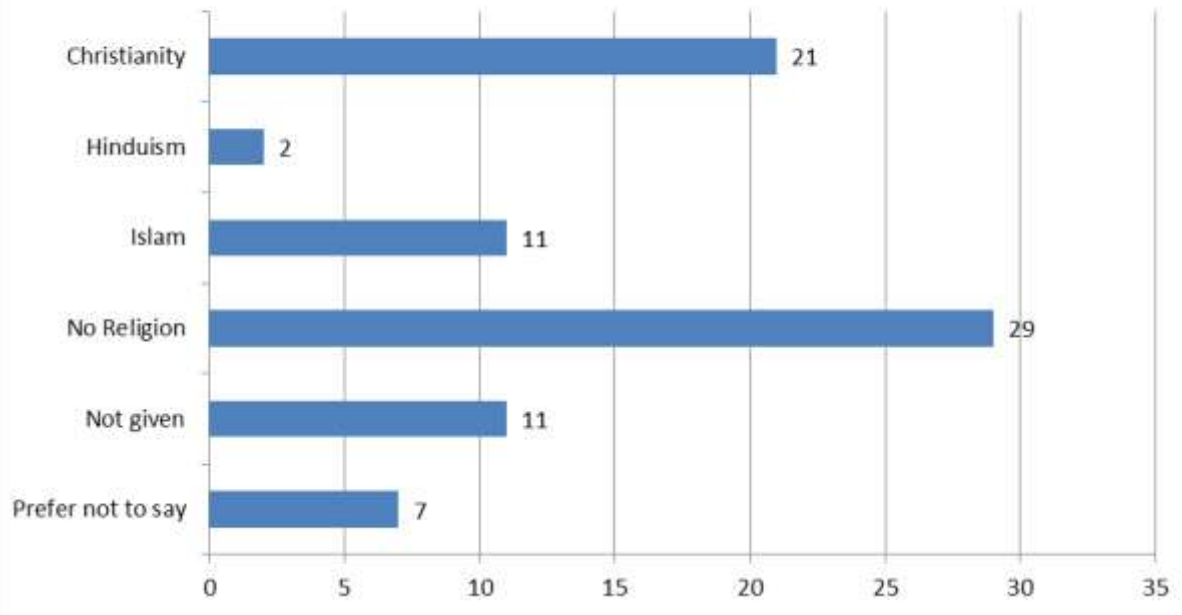




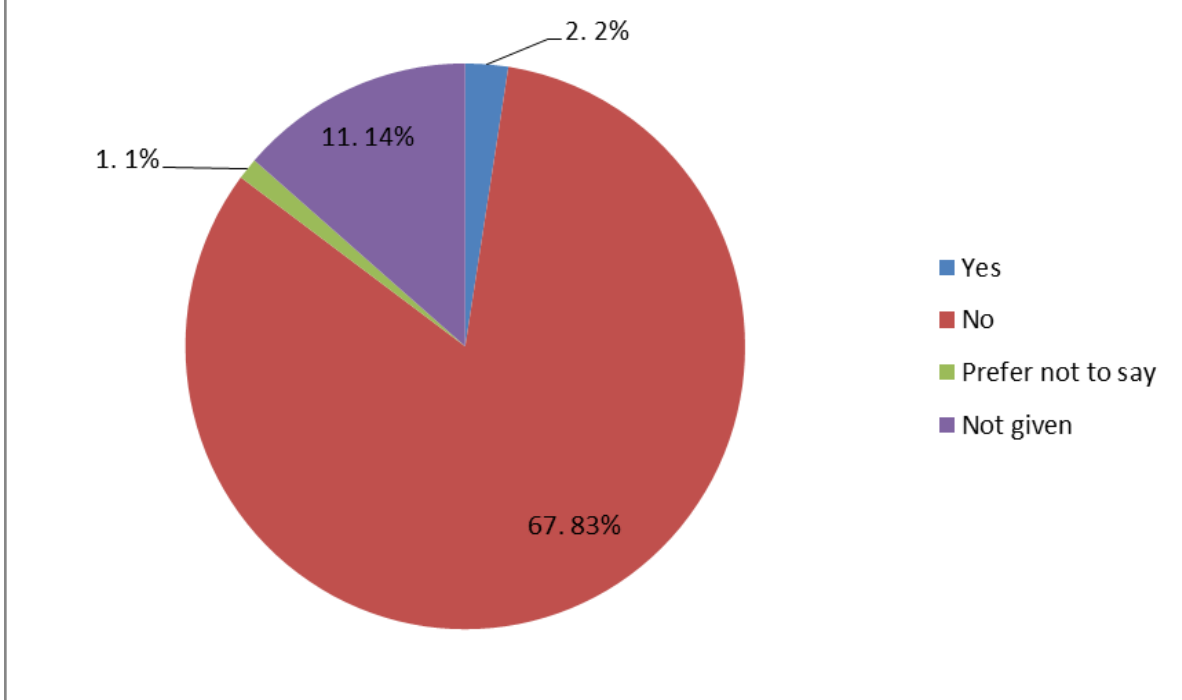
Ethnic background



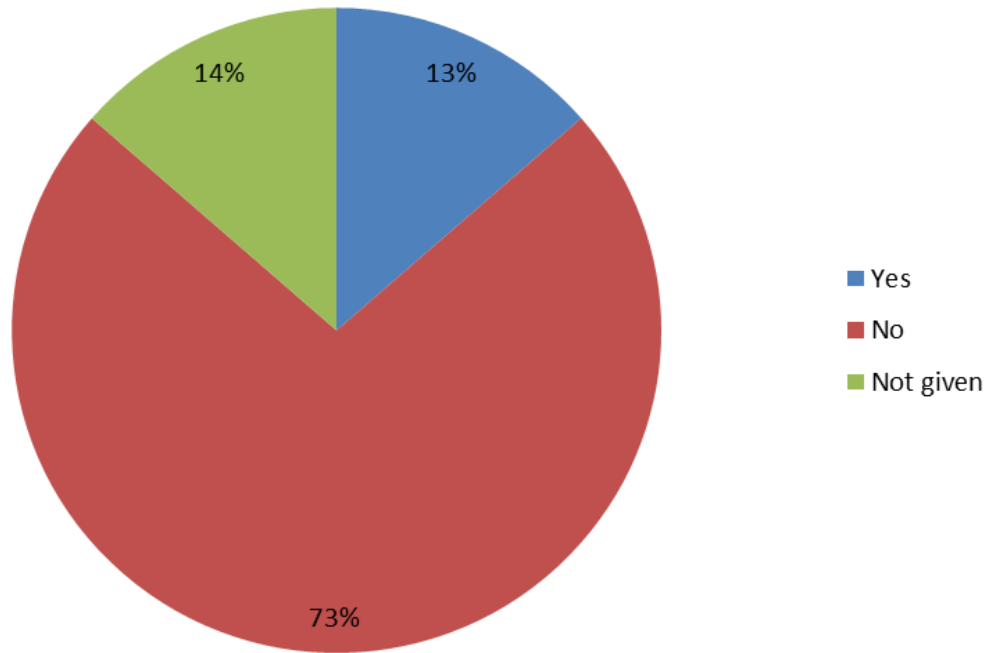
Do you consider yourself to belong to any religion?



Do you consider yourself to be disabled?



Do you provide care for someone?



Urgent Care survey

Date of survey		Time of survey	
Location of survey	A&E	Child A&E	MIU
			WiC

Why did you choose this service? (Tick as many as are relevant)			
Better times for me		Couldn't get a GP appointment	Didn't know where else to go
Easier for me to get to		Friendliness of staff	Friends / family suggested I come
GP surgery is closed when I need to go		Have used it before	Quality of care
Thought I would be seen quicker		Told to come by another service	Trust this service
This is the service I need			
Other: Please tell us			

What service do you hope to receive today? (Tick as many as are relevant)			
Medical advice		Prescription	Emergency care
Wound dressing		X-ray	Reassurance
Other: Please tell us			

Have you tried to access other services about the health problem you have come here today about?			
Yes		No	
If yes, which other services have you tried to access? (Tick all that are relevant)			
111		999	A&E
GP		GP Out of Hours	Minor Injuries Unit
Pharmacy		Walk-in Centre	
Why were these services unable to help you? (Tick as many as are relevant)			
Didn't know how to contact them		Not happy with outcome	Problem has escalated since then
They told me to come here		Too long to wait	Unable to get an appointment
Wanted a second opinion			
Other: Please tell us			

If this service was unavailable, what else would you do?			
Call 111	<input type="checkbox"/>	Call an ambulance	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get advice from a pharmacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Go to A&E	<input type="checkbox"/>
Go to Walk-in Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nothing or self-care	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Contact GP Out of Hours	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Go to Minor Injuries Unit	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Wait to see my own GP	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other: Please tell us			
Do you feel this would be worse for your health?			
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Don't know	<input type="checkbox"/>

Equality Monitoring - OPTIONAL

In order to ensure that we provide the best services for **all** of our communities, and to ensure that we do not knowingly discriminate against any section of our community, it is important for us to gather the following information. No personal information will be released when reporting statistical data and all information will be protected and stored securely in line with data protection rules.

This information will be kept confidential and you do not have to answer all of these questions, but we would be very grateful if you would.

Are you registered with a GP Practice?

If a child is receiving the treatment, please complete this question about them

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, which practice?					

What is your current employment status?

Armed forces veteran	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employed – full time	<input type="checkbox"/>	Employed – part time	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retired	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unable to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unemployed	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Please tell us your postcode

Please enter here	<input type="text"/>	No fixed abode	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
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What sex are you?

Female	<input type="checkbox"/>	Male	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Transgender

Is your gender identity different to the sex you were assumed to be at birth?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
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What is your age?

<input type="text"/>	years	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If a child is receiving the treatment, please tell us their age

<input type="text"/>	years	Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
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What is your sexual orientation?

Bisexual (both sexes)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lesbian (same sex)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Gay man (same sex)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Heterosexual/ Straight (opposite sex)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	Please specify <input type="text"/>					Prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

Do you need any help understanding English?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If yes, has this affected your choice of which service you have used today?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If yes, please explain how it has affected your choice

<input type="text"/>

What is your ethnic background?									
Asian, or Asian British		Black, or Black British		Mixed / multiple ethnic group		White		Other	
Chinese		African		Asian & White		British		Arab	
Indian		Caribbean		Black African & White		Gypsy/ Traveller		Roma	
Pakistani				Black Caribbean & White		Irish			
Other Asian background		Other Black background		Other Mixed / multiple ethnic background		Other White background			
Prefer not to say				Other:	Please specify any other ethnic group here				

Do you consider yourself to belong to any religion?									
Buddhism			Christianity			Hinduism			
Islam			Judaism			Sikhism			
No religion			Prefer not to say			Other:	Please specify		

Do you consider yourself to be disabled?									
The Equality Act 2010 states that a person has a disability if: 'a person has a physical or mental impairment, and the impairment has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on that their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities'									
Yes			No			Prefer not to say			

If yes above, what type of disability do you have? (Tick all that apply)									
Learning disability/difficulty			Long-standing illness or health condition			Mental Health condition			
Physical or mobility			Hearing			Visual			
Prefer not to say			Other:		Please specify				

Do you provide care for someone?									
Such as family, friends, neighbours or others who are ill, disabled or who need support because they are older.									
Yes			No			Prefer not to say			

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form