

Over the last year (2017/18) the PPG of the Walker Medical Group has continued to be a valued group in the development of the Practice. It has been a very busy year in the NHS as a whole, and certainly many pressures have been felt within GP Practices.

The terms of reference for the PPG are as follows:

1. Purpose

The purpose of the group is to establish a system of communication with patients so that their views and concerns are fed back to the Practice. It will also allow the Walker Medical Group to communicate news and information from the Practice to their patients.

2. Our Aims

The aims of the PPG are to:

- Provide a patient perspective to the Practice
- Provide a forum to discuss issues relevant to the practice and to enable patients to influence local health care services

3. Our objectives are:

- To act as a channel of communication from the Practice to its patients and wider population, and vice versa.
- To support the Practice in drafting practice materials and communications for the practice newsletter, website, Facebook page and vPPG (Virtual Patient Participation Group).
- Provide a means for patients to make positive and realistic suggestions about the Practice and its services.
- Provide advice and recommendations with regards to patient surveys, questionnaires, etc.
- Seek the views and interests of all patients groups, for example patients with specific illnesses or conditions, patients with disabilities, young working families, patients from ethnic minorities.
- Engaging with patients to seek their views for future service redesign including potential transfer of services from secondary care to the primary care setting.

4. Membership

Membership of the PPG includes:

- Members of the Practice team and patient representatives.
- Patient membership is open to registered patients only, however we are happy to listen to the views of carer's on-behalf of registered patients. The Practice will, as far as possible, given the voluntary nature of the Group, ensure that the membership reflects the Practice population.
- Members are selected by co-option or self nomination.
- A list of members is held by the Practice.

5. Meetings

Meetings are held approximately 4 times a year and at least 2 weeks' notice is given in advance of each meeting. Dates of group meetings are made available to patients by way of the Practice website and patient newsletter available in the waiting room.

In 2017/18 the meetings were held on:

- 15 June 2017
- 7 September 2017
- 7 December 2017
- 22 March 2018

6. Developments 2017/18

During 2017/18 there were a total of 4 PPG meetings. At the request of the PPG, meetings were held on different days and times to try and encourage attendance.

Minutes for each meeting are available through our website and a copy is sent to each of our group members (including those who were unable to attend the meeting). A number of items were discussed at the meetings. Including;

- Appointment System
 - Telephone triage
 - Oncall duty team
 - Managing appointment demand
- Implementing YOC (Year of Care)
- New telephone system including call recording
- Introduction of Accessible Information Standards
- Primary Care Navigator
- Signposting
- Royal Voluntary Service
- Dementia Service
- Elders Council
- Introduction of General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)
- vPPG survey
- Friends and Family test patient feedback

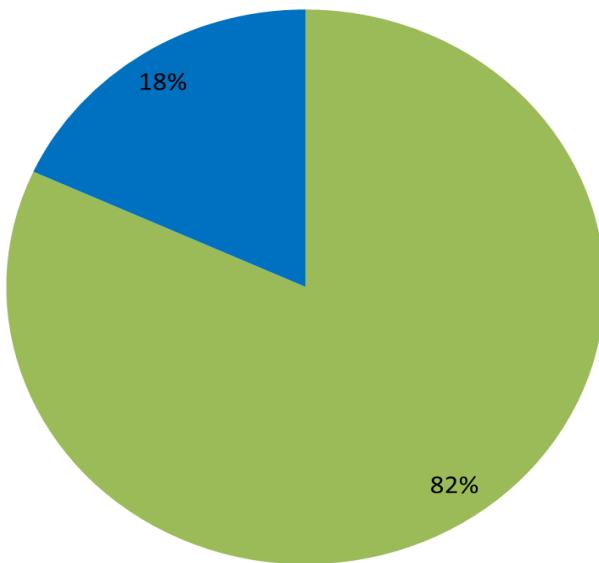
The group participated in a patient questionnaire and continues to be represented at the Newcastle North and East Clinical Commissioning Group Patient Participation Group meetings with two members.

The practice has started a 'you said we did' poster board to address feedback for the Friends and Family test.

The latest virtual survey results are shown below:

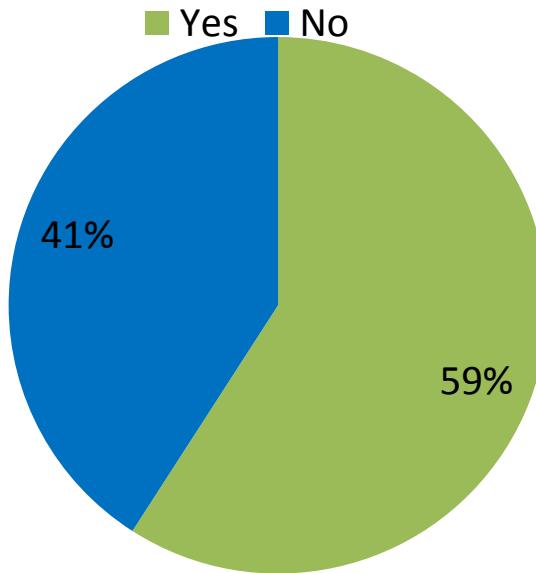
1. Are you aware of the telephone triage system for urgent appointments?

■ Yes ■ No

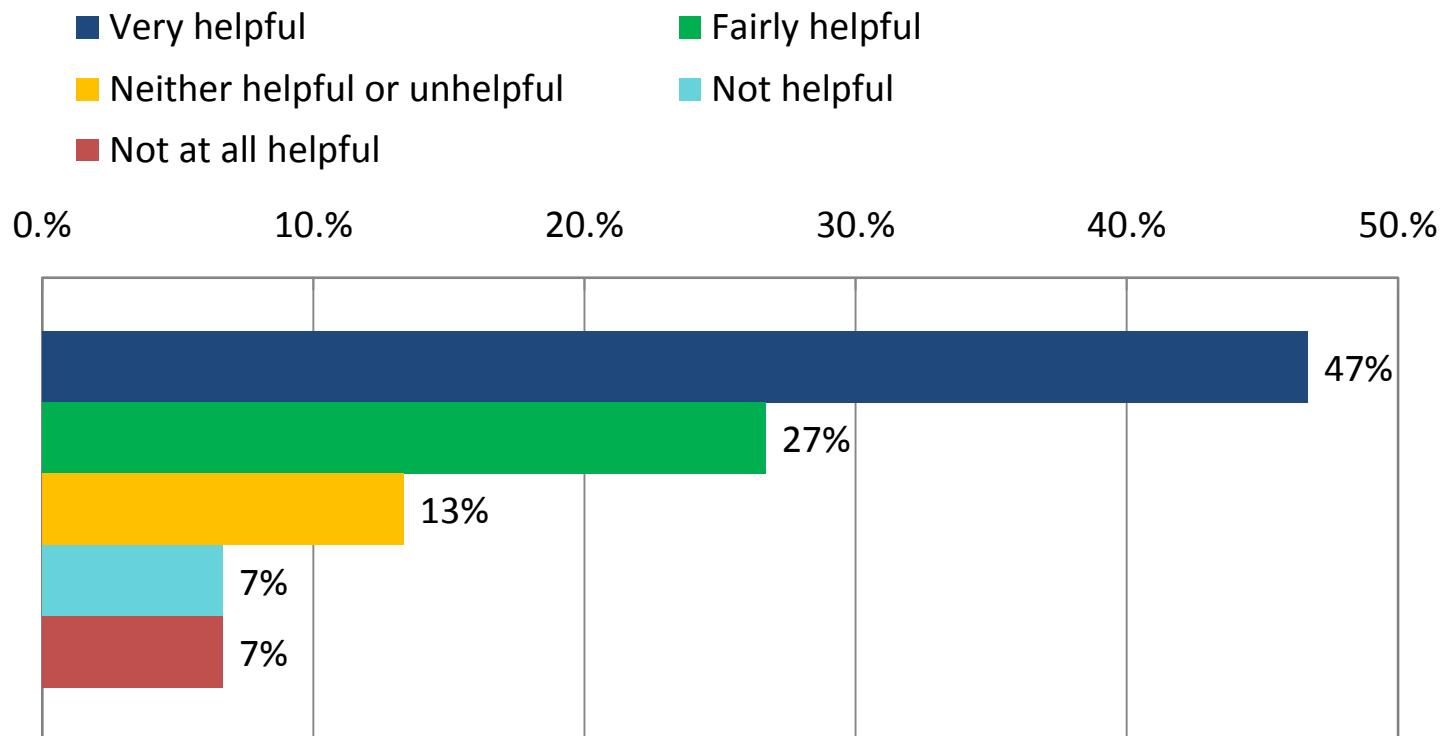


2. Have you used the telephone triage system?

■ Yes ■ No



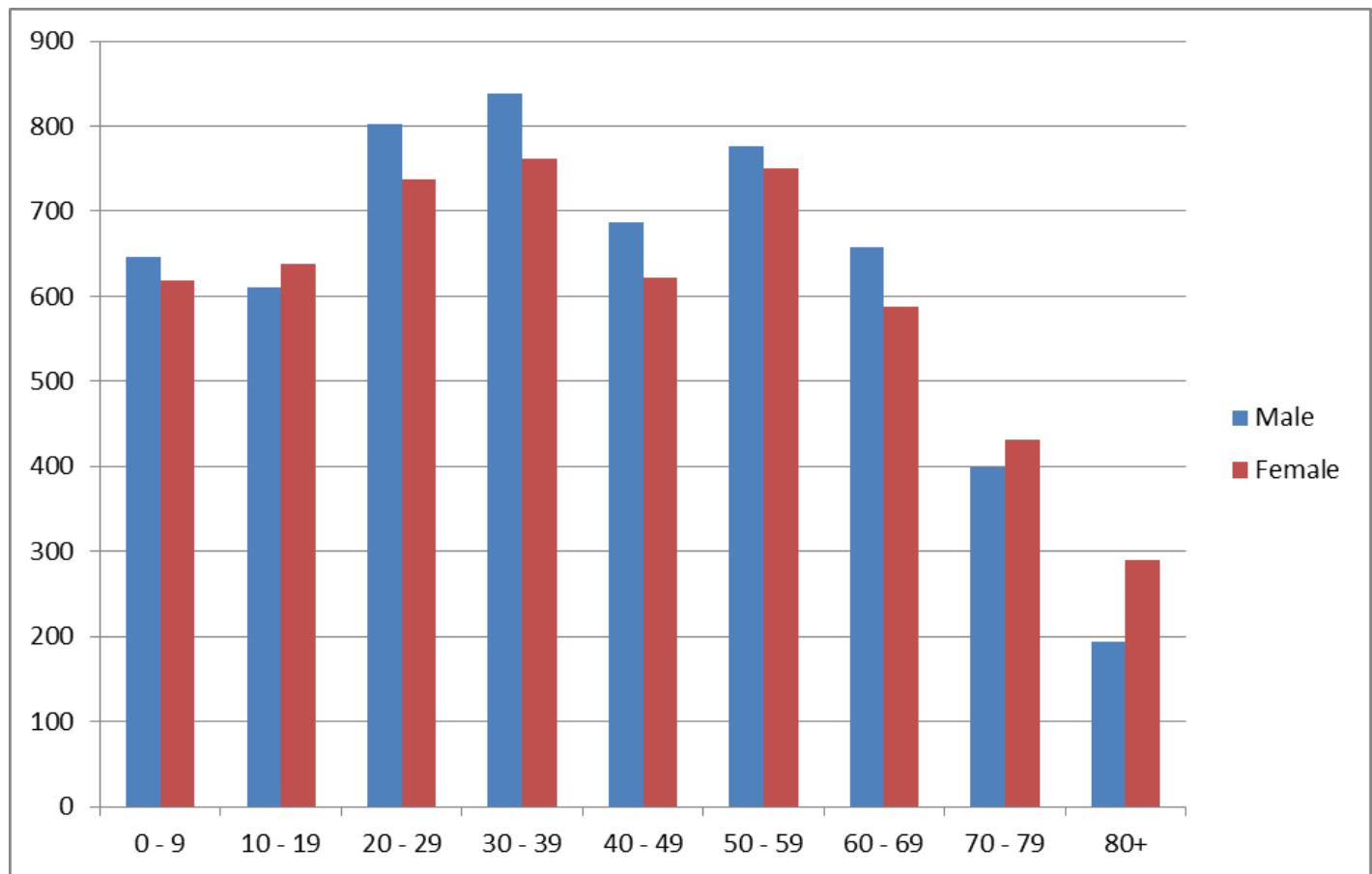
3. For those who have used the service could you rate it from very helpful to not helpful at all.



4. Please leave any other comments on the appointments system here:

- I have noticed it has become extremely difficult to arrange an appointment in recent months (e.g. my elderly mother waited 1 month to be seen by a doctor). However, I do think telephone appointments are a very good solution to the strain the NHS is currently under. It is reassuring to know that we can at least speak to a doctor or nurse practitioner who can then refer us for further care if necessary. I am very concerned about the impact this will have on those with non-urgent but potentially serious issues (e.g. deteriorating mental health) as it is already a struggle to get support when needed. Considering the links between poor mental health and physical illness I hope the practice will continue to prioritise the mental (as well as physical) health of the community when deciding who needs a follow up appointment and who doesn't.
- **Response from Walker Medical Group.** Thank you for this feedback. We are aware of the issue of those of our patients with non-urgent but potentially serious issues and are continually looking to improve access to care for this and all other patient groups. If you want to help shape the care offered by the group perhaps you could consider joining the Patient Participation Group.
- It's a great service. It has meant I got an appointment on that day when needed. But also, after discussion with a doctor, was able to receive a prescription without taking an appointment slot for simple/easy self diagnosed condition such as oral thrush.
- **Response from Walker Medical Group.** Thank you for this feedback. This is how we want the system to work but also do not forget that there are other routes to take if you need care for non-urgent conditions, for example speaking to the Pharmacy is another option available to you.
- Really hard to get an appointment lately was told 4/5 weeks last week and even though it's not urgent I would need seen before 5 weeks.
- **Response from Walker Medical Group.** We apologise for the wait for non-urgent appointments, especially if you want to see a named GP. However, our resources are finite and are being stretched to meet the need which has been especially high this winter. Please ask for a telephone consultation with a member of the on-call team and they will be able to give you the most appropriate appointment slot and offer advice.
- Satisfied with the options available from Walker Medical Group and NHS choices.
- **Response from Walker Medical Group.** Thank you for this feedback. Yes. NHS Choices is a good resource to use along with the 111 service, Walk-in centres and Pharmacies.
- Trying to ring early in the morning for a cancellation appointment and not being able to get through is quite frustrating.
- **Response from Walker Medical Group.** We understand your frustration. There are six lines available and we have invested in a queuing system for them. Once through to reception ask for a telephone consultation with the on-call team. They will give you the most appropriate appointment slot and offer advice.

Practice age and gender profile for Walker Medical Group is as follows:



7. Action Plan

- To continue to involve the PPG group members in talking to our wider patient population
- Gather and present views of our patients to discuss with the group
- Encourage patient participation with the group
- Establish the goals of the group for the upcoming year
- To involve the patient participation group in improving the patient experience by monitoring and developing the appointments system.
- Continue to develop the vPPG.