



Healthwatch Newcastle

GP appointments: What do patients want?

Background to the research

- Our trend analysis reveals we receive more comments about GPs than any other service
- NHS England GP Patient Survey
- Government policy focused upon speed of access but patients also value continuity and convenience
- General practices face increasing demands on their services alongside severe difficulties in recruiting GPs
- Impact of DNAs, which in Newcastle average around 7%



Focus of the research

- To understand what is important to the people of Newcastle when booking a GP appointment
- To estimate the **relative** importance that people put upon the different aspects of a GP appointment:
- To also understand the preferences of the various patient subgroups



How we did it - a Discrete Choice Experiment

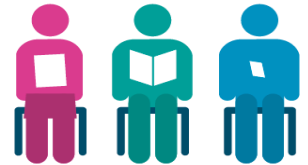
- DCEs determine the relative importance people put upon different attributes of a service.
- They elicit people's preferences by allowing trade-offs between the various attributes.
- Consist of a set of choices that participants are required to make between two alternative scenarios
- Used where resources are restricted and as such they reflect the type of decisions people often make when accessing health services



Our Discrete Choice Experiment

- Most DCEs include an attribute that acts as a ‘currency’ against which other attributes can be valued.
- We chose ‘days wait for an appointment’ as our currency. The other attributes were:
 - choice of GP (continuity)
 - choice of appointment time (convenience)
- Northumbria University designed the DCE survey and undertook the data analysis for us.
- They will publish an academic paper later in the year to sit alongside our report.

WAITING ROOM



Our Discrete Choice Experiment - cont.

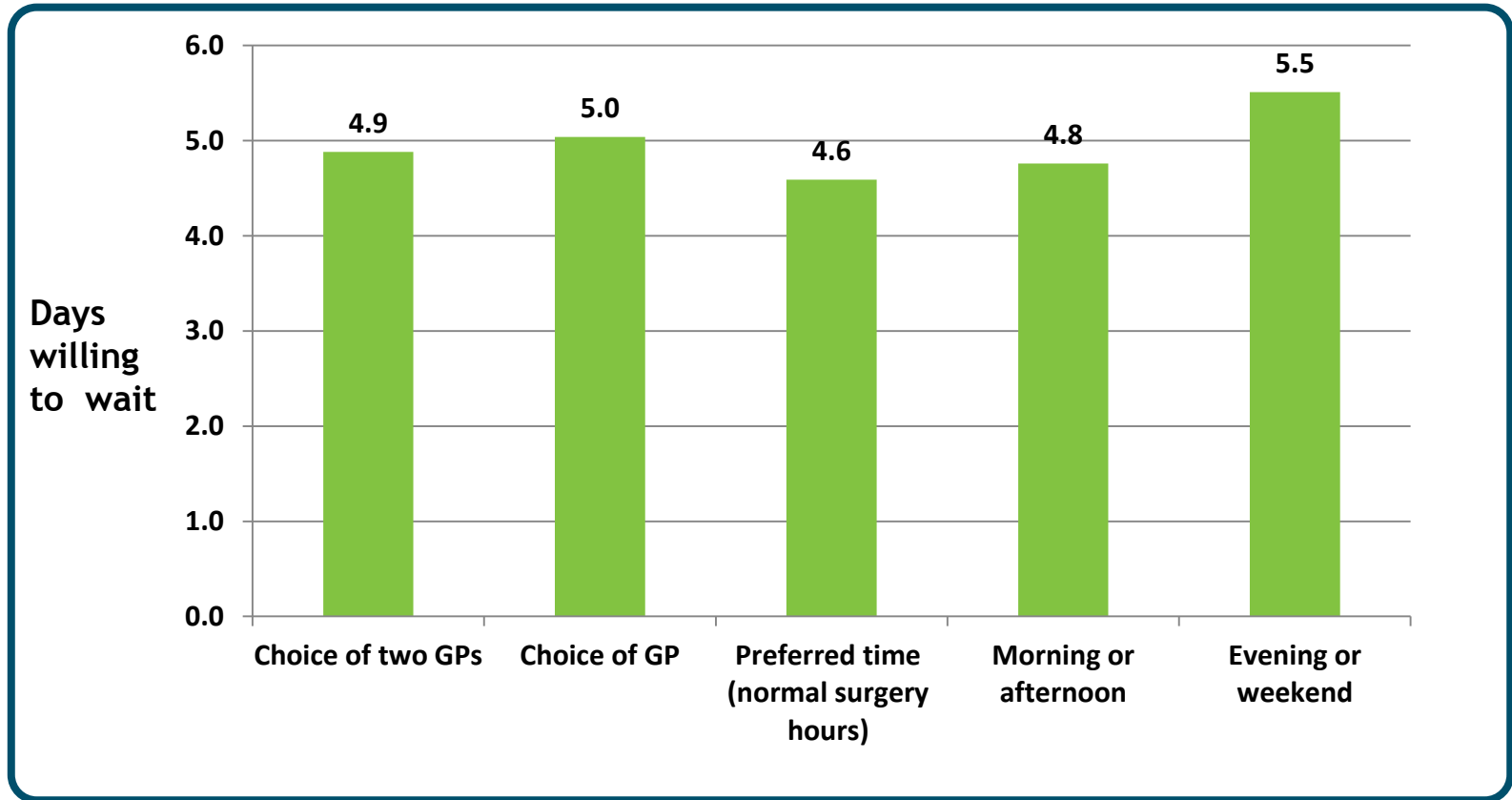
- Healthwatch Newcastle staff and trained volunteers visited 27 venues throughout summer and autumn 2015 to recruit participants.
- Data was collected via:
 - Hard copy questionnaires
 - Electronic questionnaires (laptop, tablet)
 - Online questionnaires on Survey Monkey
- 950 surveys were completed of which 748 were eligible for inclusion



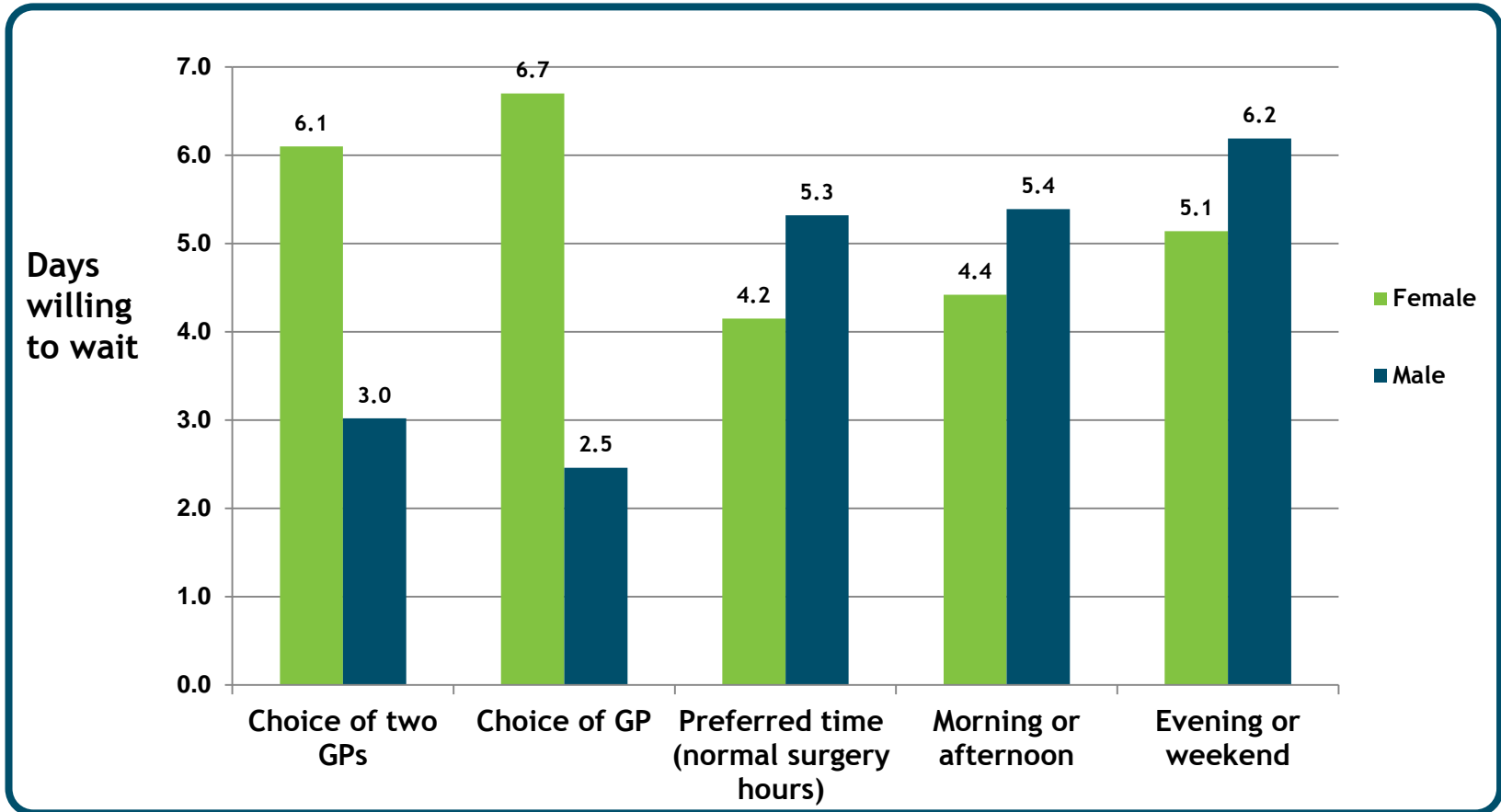
OUR FINDINGS



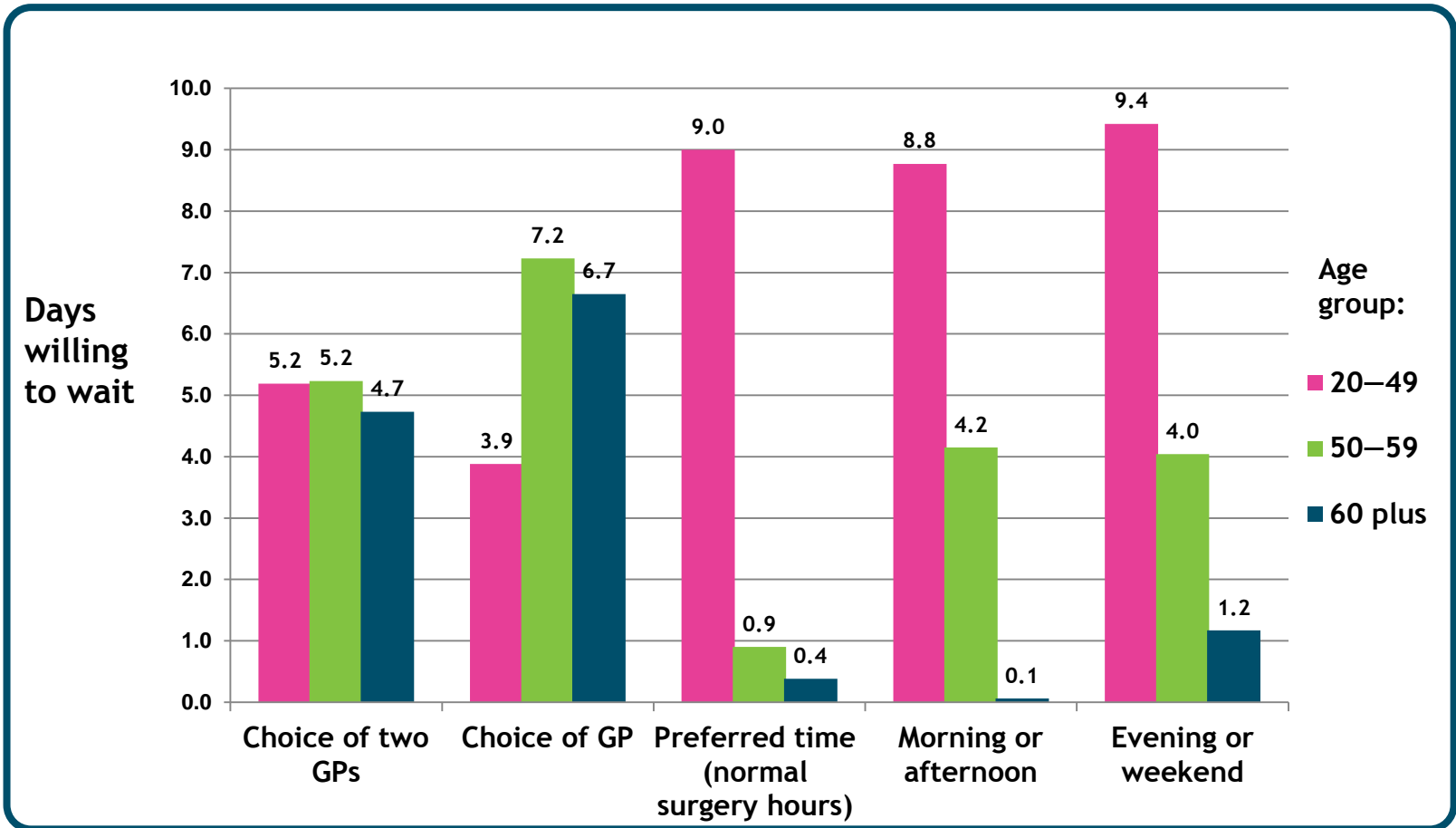
Results for the sample population as a whole



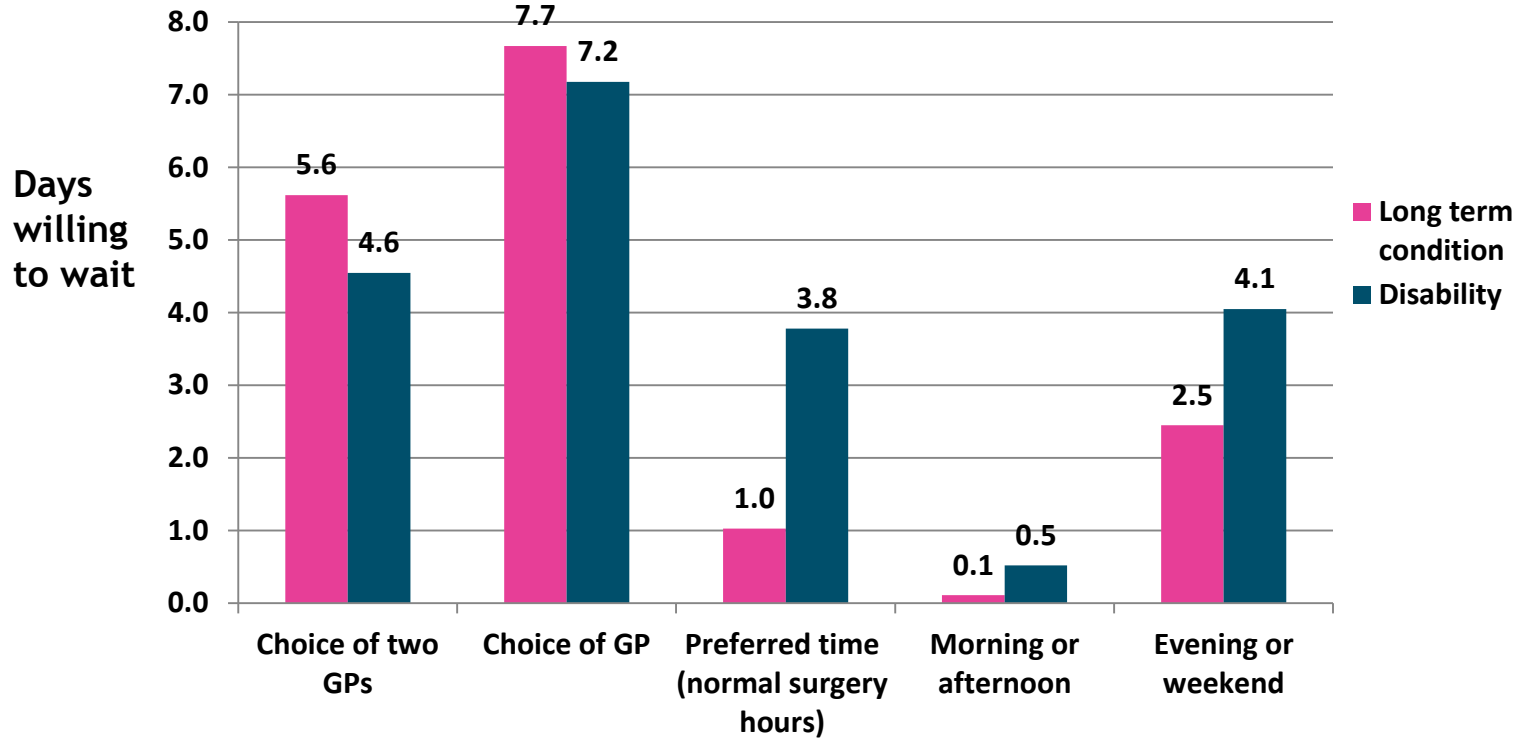
Results for the sample population by sex



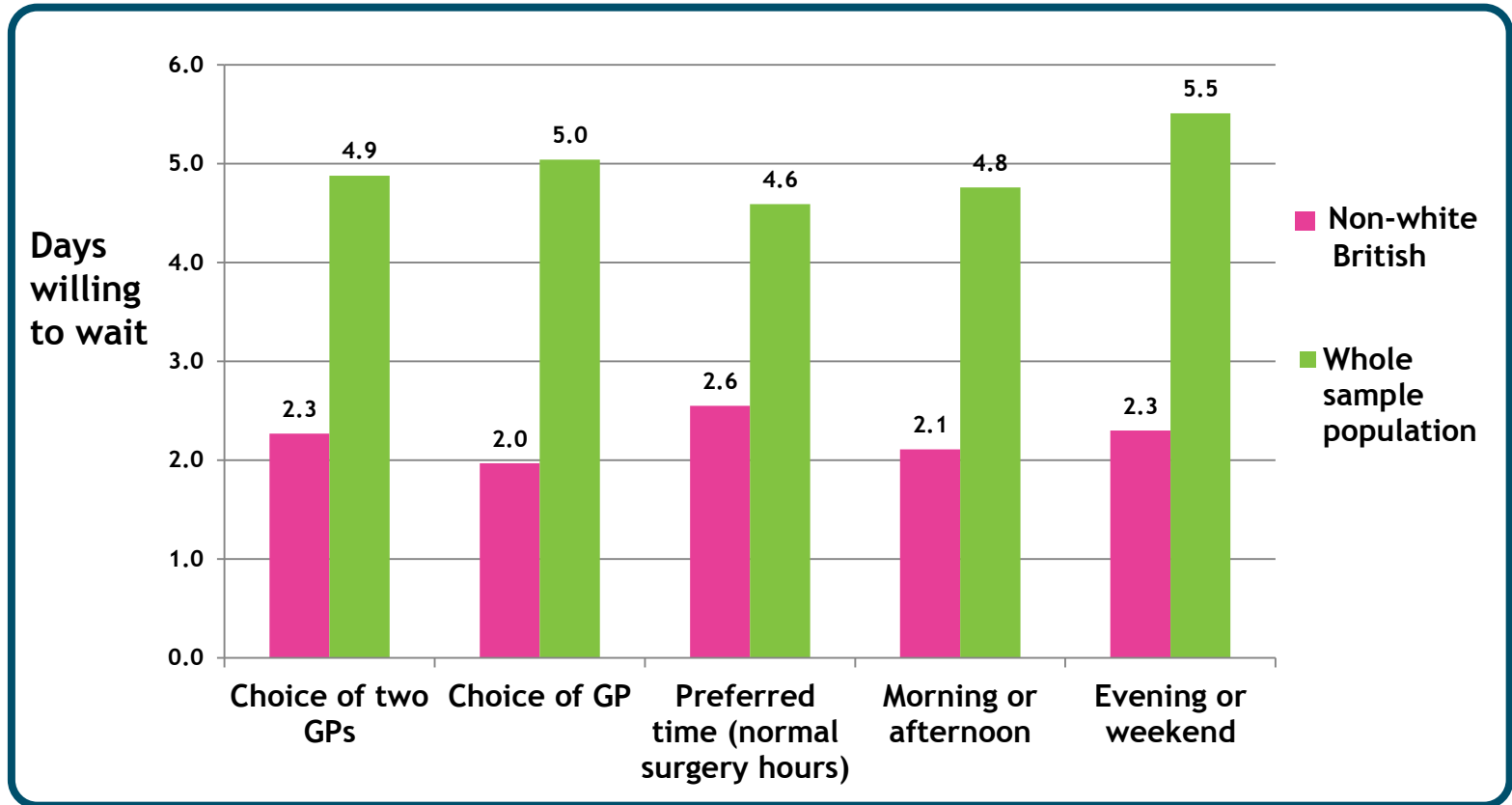
Results for the sample population by age



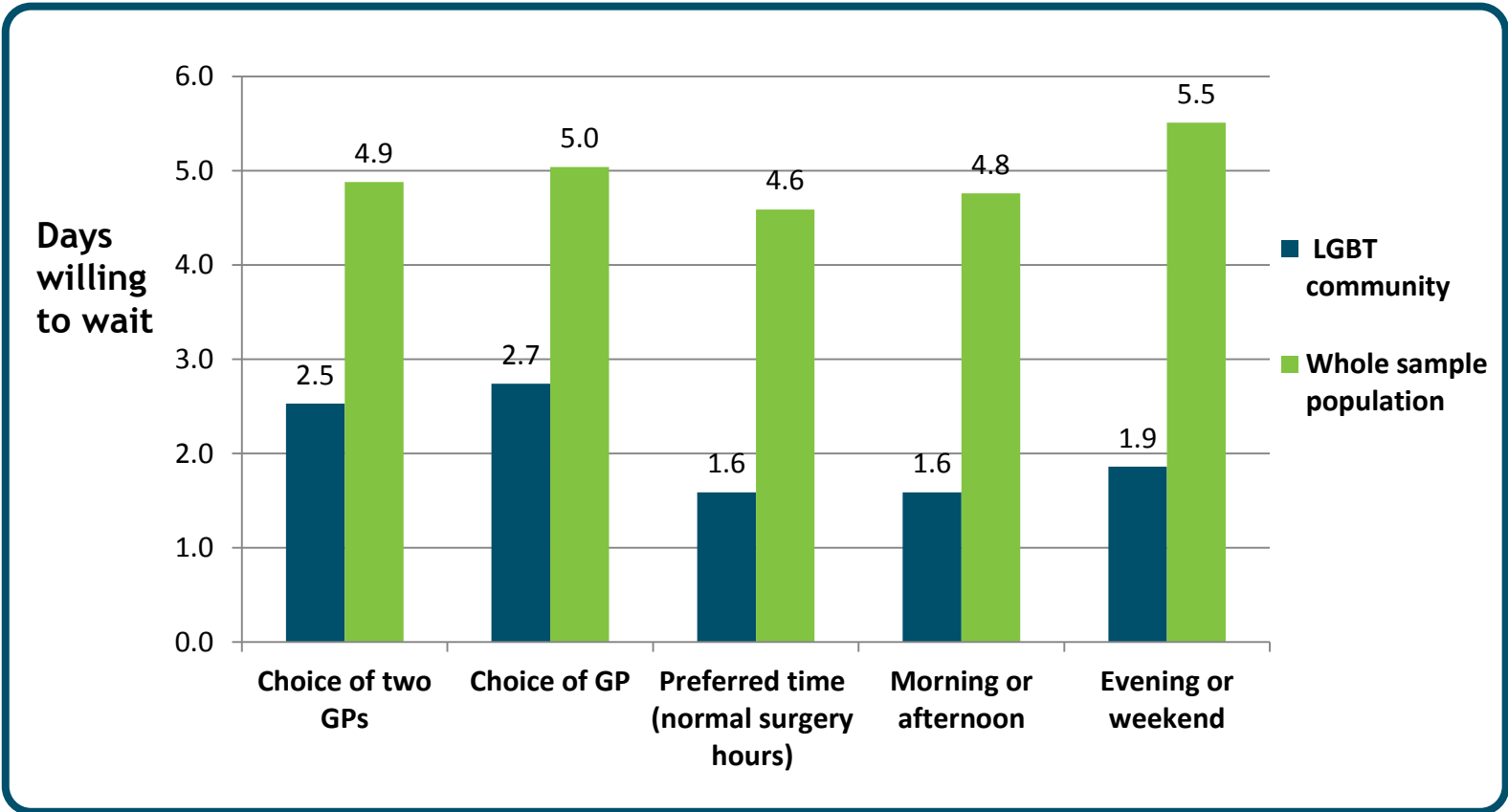
Results for those with a disability or long term condition



Results for non white British



Results for those from the LGBT community



Summary of key findings

- The sample population as a whole puts significant value upon both convenience of appointment time and continuity of GP.
- They are prepared to wait between 5 and 5.5 days to see either their preferred GP or to get an evening or weekend appointment
- Convenience is marginally more valuable than continuity.



and for the sub populations:

- Men and younger people value convenience more
- Women, older people and those with a long term condition or disability value continuity of care more highly
- Non white British people and people from the LGBT community put less value on both of these attributes and value speed of access more.



Next steps - further research:

Into what people mean by evening and weekend appointments:

- Appointments available all day Saturday and Sunday or a shorter service limited to specific times?
- Early evening appointments or do people want appointments available later in the evening?
- We would also like to look at **where** those appointments might take place and with **whom**
- And how perceived urgency might impact on people's preferences

