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.
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice of two GPs</th>
<th>Choice of GP</th>
<th>Preferred time (normal surgery hours)</th>
<th>Morning or afternoon</th>
<th>Evening or weekend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Results for the sample population by sex

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Days willing to wait</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choice of two GPs</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of GP</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred time (normal surgery hours)</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning or afternoon</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening or weekend</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Female**

- Choice of two GPs: 6.1
- Choice of GP: 3.0
- Preferred time (normal surgery hours): 2.5
- Morning or afternoon: 5.3
- Evening or weekend: 5.1

**Male**

- Choice of two GPs: 6.7
- Choice of GP: 2.5
- Preferred time (normal surgery hours): 5.3
- Morning or afternoon: 5.4
- Evening or weekend: 6.2
Results for the sample population by age

Days willing to wait

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group</th>
<th>Choice of two GPs</th>
<th>Choice of GP</th>
<th>Preferred time (normal surgery hours)</th>
<th>Morning or afternoon</th>
<th>Evening or weekend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20-49</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-59</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results for those with a disability or long term condition

- Choice of two GPs
  - Long term condition: 5.6 days
  - Disability: 4.6 days
- Choice of GP
  - Long term condition: 7.7 days
  - Disability: 7.2 days
- Preferred time (normal surgery hours)
  - Morning or afternoon: Long term condition: 3.8 days, Disability: 1.0 day
  - Morning or afternoon: Long term condition: 0.1 day, Disability: 0.5 day
- Evening or weekend
  - Long term condition: 2.5 days
  - Disability: 4.1 days

Days willing to wait
Results for non white British

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Days willing to wait</th>
<th>Non-white British</th>
<th>Whole sample population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choice of two GPs</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choice of GP</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferred time (normal surgery hours)</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morning or afternoon</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening or weekend</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results for those from the LGBT community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Choice of two GPs</th>
<th>Choice of GP</th>
<th>Preferred time (normal surgery hours)</th>
<th>Morning or afternoon</th>
<th>Evening or weekend</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LGBT community</td>
<td>Whole sample population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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