

## **Patient and public views on booking GP appointments in B&NES**

This report summarises the findings of a survey asking people who live in B&NES how they prefer to book GP appointments.

### **Objectives**

- To find out how people in B&NES prefer to book their GP appointments and what they think about the different options available to help them do this.
- To gather feedback which will help the CCG improve appointment booking processes and better promote these locally.

### **Conclusions**

- Most people would prefer to book appointments with their GP surgery by telephone (person-to-person), followed by online booking and then booking in person.
- Virtually all respondents said their GP surgery gives them the option to book appointments by telephone (person-to-person).
- **41%** of respondents shared that online booking systems are very important to them, compared with **10%** for automated telephone booking systems. Some people find these booking methods good for routine appointments, but would like more appointment time choices.
- People raised that certain booking methods are not accessible for everyone e.g. those who aren't online or don't have a computer can't access an online system, whereas someone who is deaf/has a hearing loss might not be able to use a telephone booking system.

### **Methods**

The survey was made available in online and paper forms and shared with GP practices for them to share with patients, and directly with the public via social media and at our Your Health, Your Voice meeting. Healthwatch B&NES and GP practices helped to promote the survey on their social media channels. 473 people filled the survey in (373 online and 100 on paper). We also created a Twitter poll, which 10 people participated in (see Appendix 1).

### **Results**

1. Patient awareness of what booking options their GP surgery offers:
  - **96%** of patients said their GP surgery gives them the option to book appointments by telephone (person-to-person).
  - **68%** of patients are aware that their surgery offers online booking and **51%** for automated telephone booking.

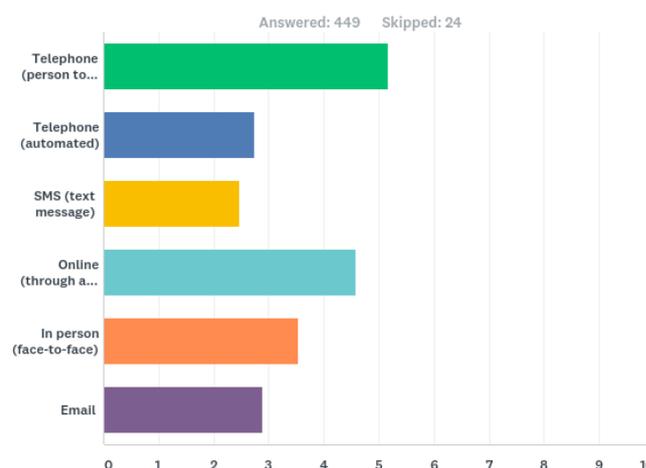
**Q1 Does your GP surgery offer the following ways to book an appointment (please select all that apply):**



**2. How patients would prefer to book appointments:**

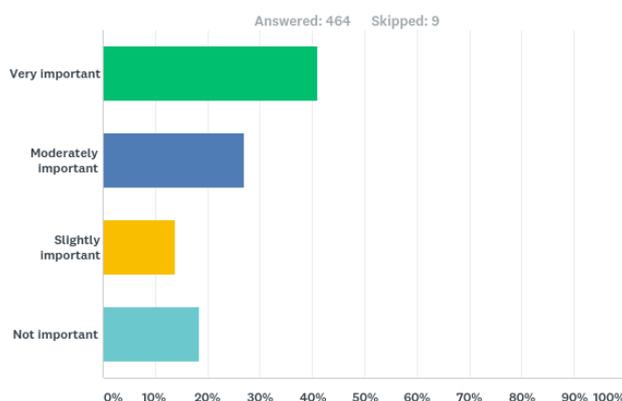
**58%** of B&NES patients would prefer to book appointments with their GP surgery by telephone (person-to-person), followed by online booking (37%) and then booking in person (11%).

**Q2 How would you prefer to book an appointment with your GP Surgery? (Please rank these options from 1-6, with '1' being your most preferred option)**

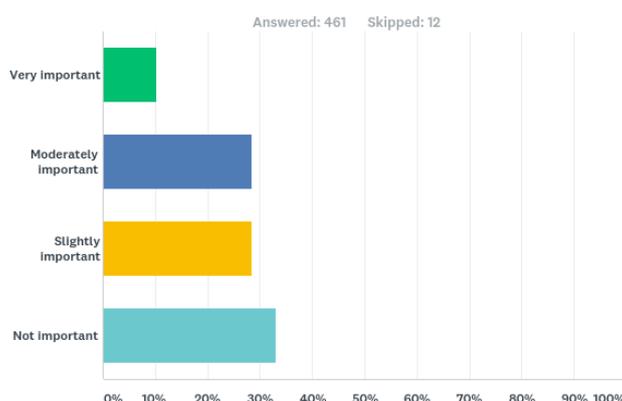


**41%** of patients shared that online booking systems are very important to them, compared with **10%** for automated telephone booking systems.

**Q3 Online telephone booking systems enable patients to book an appointment at their GP surgery when receptionists are answering other calls or when the surgery is closed. How important is an online booking system for you? (Please select one of the below)**



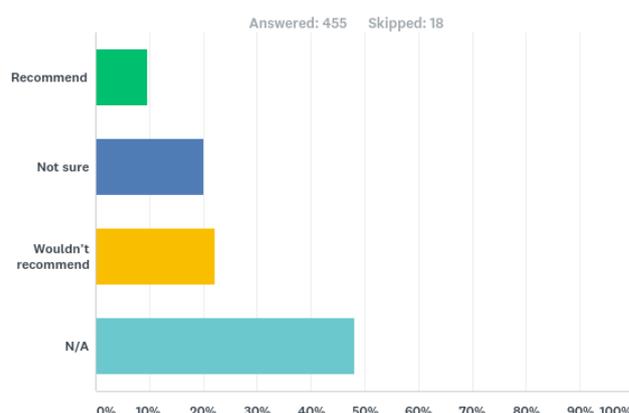
**Q4 Automated telephone booking systems enable patients to book an appointment at their GP surgery when receptionists are answering other calls or when the surgery is closed. How important is an automated telephone booking system for you? (Please select one of the below)**



3 .Patient feedback on automated telephone booking systems:

- **10%** of respondents said they **would recommend** using an automated telephone booking system to their friends, compared to **22%** who **would not recommend it**.
- **20%** of respondents **found it easy** to use an automated telephone booking system, compared to **19%** who **found it difficult**.
- **36%** of respondents said they don't regularly use an automated booking system because they **prefer an alternative booking method**.

**Q5** If you have used an automated telephone booking system to make an appointment at your GP, would you recommend using it to your friends? (Please select one of the below)

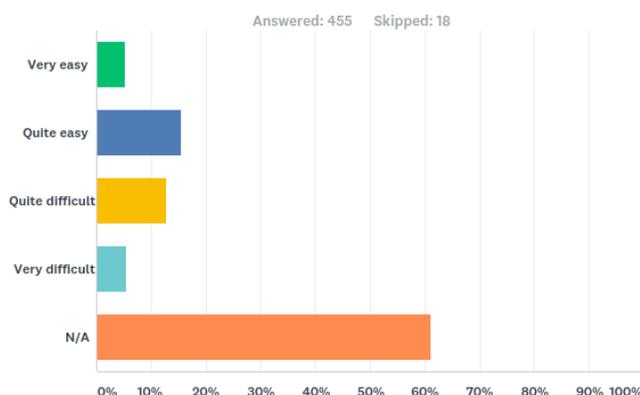


Feedback shared by respondents:

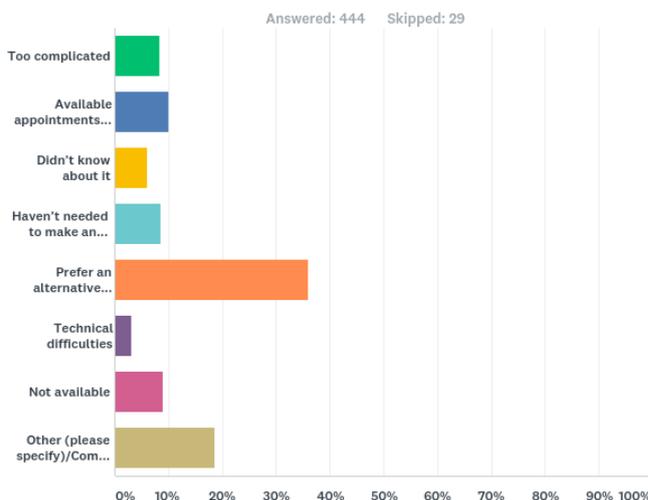
- Automated telephone booking system not available at some GP practices or people aren't aware if it is available/have not used it.
- **Too slow or difficult** to use/people having technical difficulties trying to access it.
- Inaccessibility (e.g. for those who are deaf).
- Some people would **prefer to talk to a person** or use an online system, as they find it easier/more convenient.
- **Want more appointment time choices**/not able to get suitable appointment (with a particular doctor) and finding the system inflexible.
- Fine for booking routine appointments, but **not for more complex issues**.

See Appendix 2 for a detailed breakdown of all comments.

**Q7** If you have used an automated telephone booking system to make an appointment at your GP, how easy was it to use? (Please select one of the below)



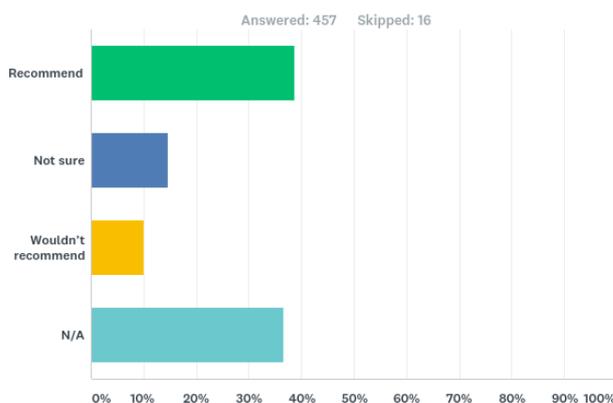
**Q9 If you don't regularly use an automated telephone booking system to make an appointment at your GP, why not?**



**4. Patient feedback on online booking systems:**

- **39%** of respondents said they **would recommend** using an online booking system to their friends, compared to **10%** who **would not recommend** it.
- **47%** of respondents found it easy to use an online booking system, compared to **8%** who **found it difficult**.
- **32%** of respondents said they don't regularly use an online booking system because they **prefer an alternative booking method**.

**Q6 If you have used an online booking system to make an appointment at your GP, would you recommend using it to your friends? (Please select one of the below)**

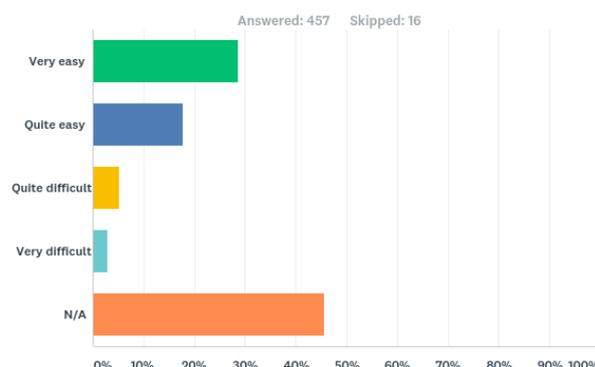


Feedback shared by respondents:

- Some people have booked appointments online in the past, but their GP surgery has stopped using this system.
- Some people have not used an online booking system and **would like to try it**.
- **Good for booking routine appointments**, but not for urgent appointments, which require telephone booking/same day appointment.
- Some find time-consuming or complicated, especially re. registering or remembering **log-ins and passwords**.
- Can't be used by **those who aren't online or don't have a computer**.
- Better for those who **prefer not to use the telephone**, but not for those who prefer to talk to a person.
- **More convenient** for some people (who like having access to appointment times and choosing which suits them), but some people **want more appointment time choices**.

See Appendix 2 for a detailed breakdown of all comments.

**Q8** If you have used an online booking system to make an appointment at your GP, how easy was it to use? (Please select one of the below)



**Q10** If you don't regularly use an online booking system to make an appointment at your GP, why not?

