



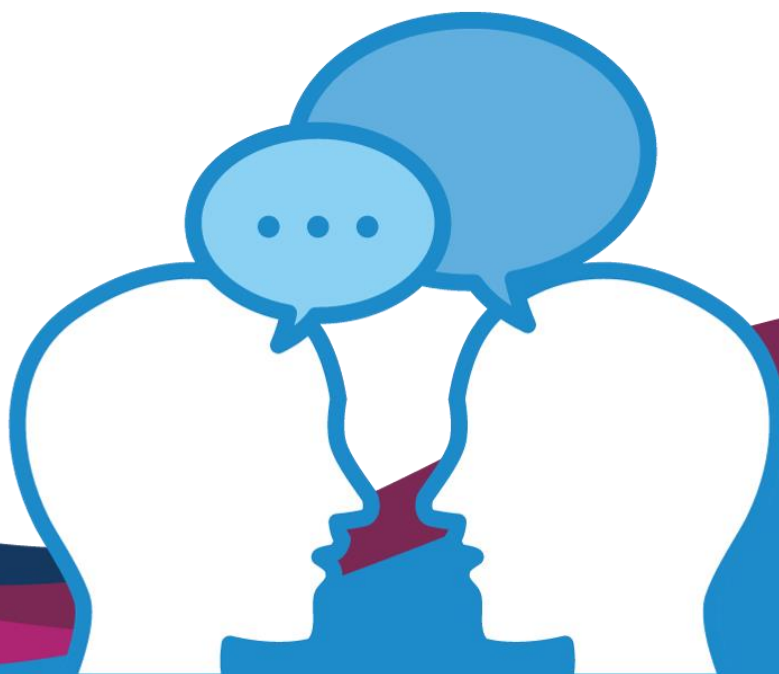
**Lancashire and
South Cumbria**
Integrated Care Board

Dill Hall Surgery

Listening to communities report

March 2025

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Introduction

Dill Hall Surgery is a GP practice in Accrington, serving 2,767 registered patients.

The surgery has been based in the Acorn Primary Health Care Centre and successfully managed by the East Lancashire Alliance on a temporary contract basis since December 2023.

The temporary contract come to an end in December 2025 and planning is now under way to determine the best way forward.

NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) is the organisation responsible for organising primary care services – including GP practices – across the region.

As a statutory NHS body, we have a legal duty to seek the views of patients. We want to consider how changes to services will affect local people and take measures to minimise these. We want to ensure that patients continue to have access to safe, high quality primary medical services.

The process required to determine the future contractual arrangements of a GP practice involves approval from the ICB's primary care commissioning committee, which needs to see evidence of robust engagement that has helped to shape the decision.

This report provides a summary of how that has been achieved for this relocation.

Executive summary

A total of 150 people (around 5.3 per cent of the total number of patients registered at the practice) provided feedback. Engagement included an online survey, which ran from Monday 17 February to Monday 3 March 2025, and two face-to-face drop-in sessions which took place on 25 and 28 February.

Patients are evidently very happy with the service currently experienced and made positive comments about the staff and facilities provided by the East Lancashire Alliance at Acorn Primary Health Care Centre.

Those who engaged with the process explained they had already undergone one major change when relocating from the practice's former premises in December 2023 and were very keen to avoid any further changes, especially when they are happy with the service as it is currently provided.

It is clear that any changes would cause a significant amount of stress and concern to the registered patients who are very supportive of the current management, GPs, nurses and reception staff at Dill Hall Surgery.

What have we been talking to people about and why?

We want to make sure local people...



...Are aware and informed about proposals...

... Know how they can get involved...



... Understand why decisions are made...

...Feel enthusiastic about what is possible...



...Have trust in the process.

Dill Hall Surgery is a GP Practice based in Accrington. The registered patient population, often referred to as list size, is 2,767.

General medical services at Dill Hall Surgery have been successfully managed on a temporary basis by the East Lancashire Alliance since December 2023. The temporary contract for the practice in the Acorn Primary Health Care Centre in Blackburn Road will come to an end in December 2025 and planning is now under way to determine the best way forward.

As the organisation responsible for planning and managing primary healthcare services across the region, NHS Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) must now decide on which course of action to take in order to ensure services can be provided for the long-term future.

In order to support the ICB's primary care commissioning committee in its decision-making, an engagement exercise was undertaken to understand how any potential changes to services would affect registered patients and learn about their experience of the service as it currently is.

Who have we heard from?



How many people got involved?

Sixteen people attended two drop-in sessions at the practice on 25 and 28 February 2025.

134 completed responses to the survey were received, including online and paper copies.

With a list size of **2,767**, this means around **5.4%** of patients took part in the engagement exercise.

The survey was promoted via direct letters sent to all patients, social media, and paper copies were made available in the surgery.

How did we speak to people?



To ensure feedback opportunities were as accessible as possible a range of engagement techniques were adopted.

Public engagement sessions

Public drop-in session took place at the practice on Tuesday 25 February from 1pm to 2pm and Friday 28 February from 10am to 11am. These were promoted via direct letters and SMS messages to patients, as well as via social media and websites, and the local media.

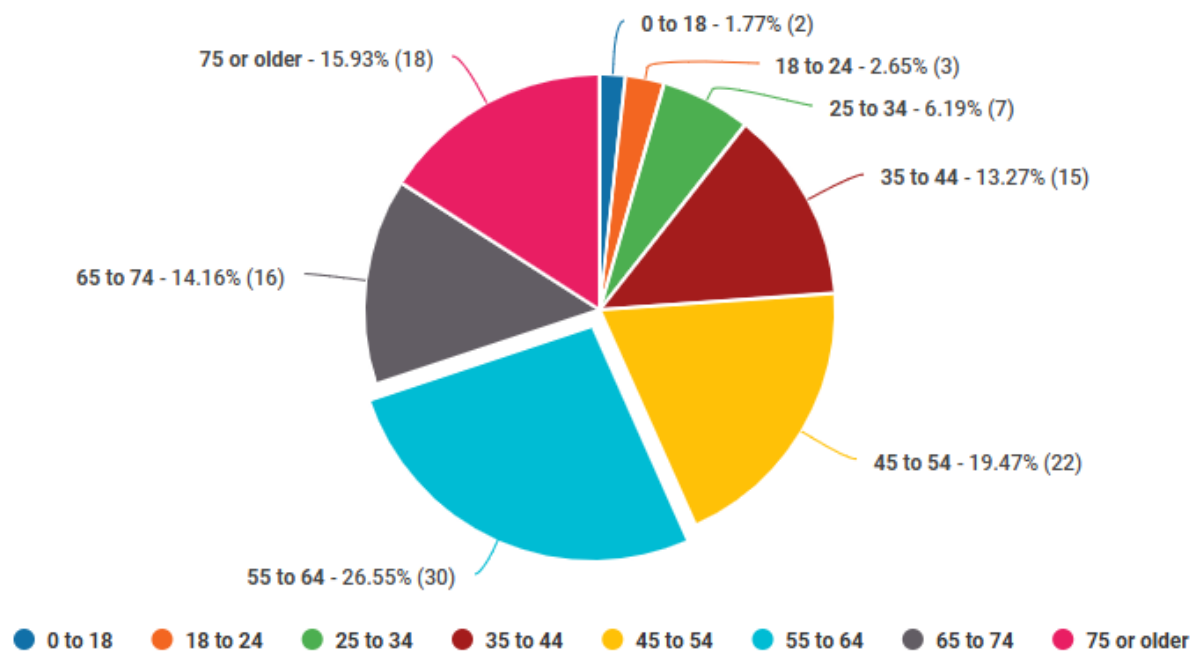
The session provided an opportunity for people to come into the practice and ask questions about how they would be impacted should there be any changes, and to make any comments.

Survey

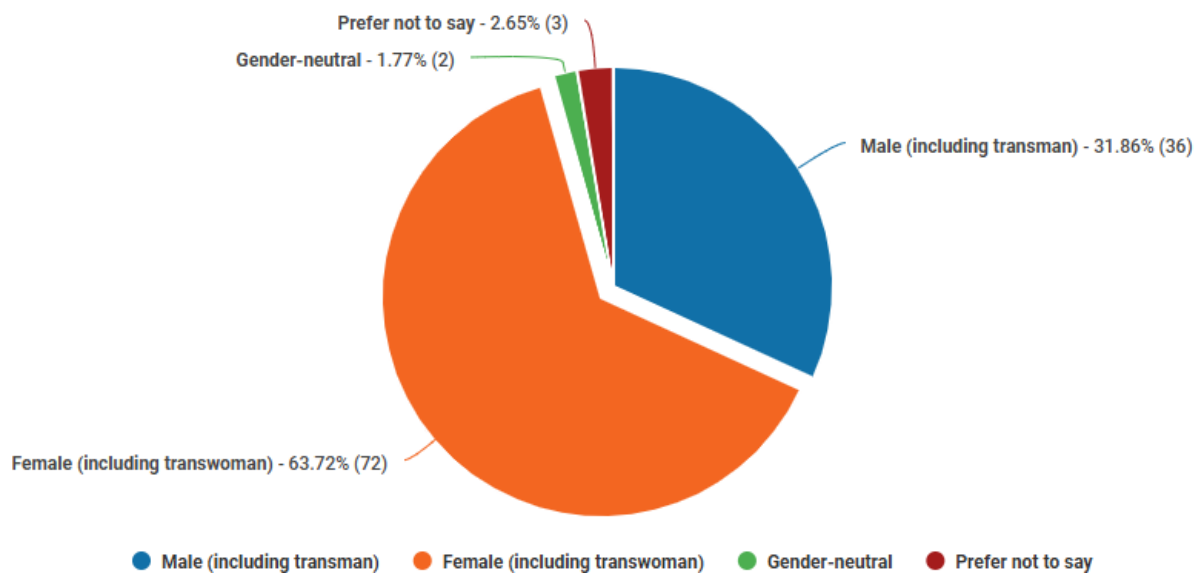
An online survey was developed and promoted via websites and social media, as well as via direct communication to patients and local media. The survey was live from Monday 17 February to Monday 3 March 2025.

As part of the survey, demographic data was captured. Around 85 per cent (112) of respondents agreed to provide this data. The responses, detailing who responded to the survey, are below:

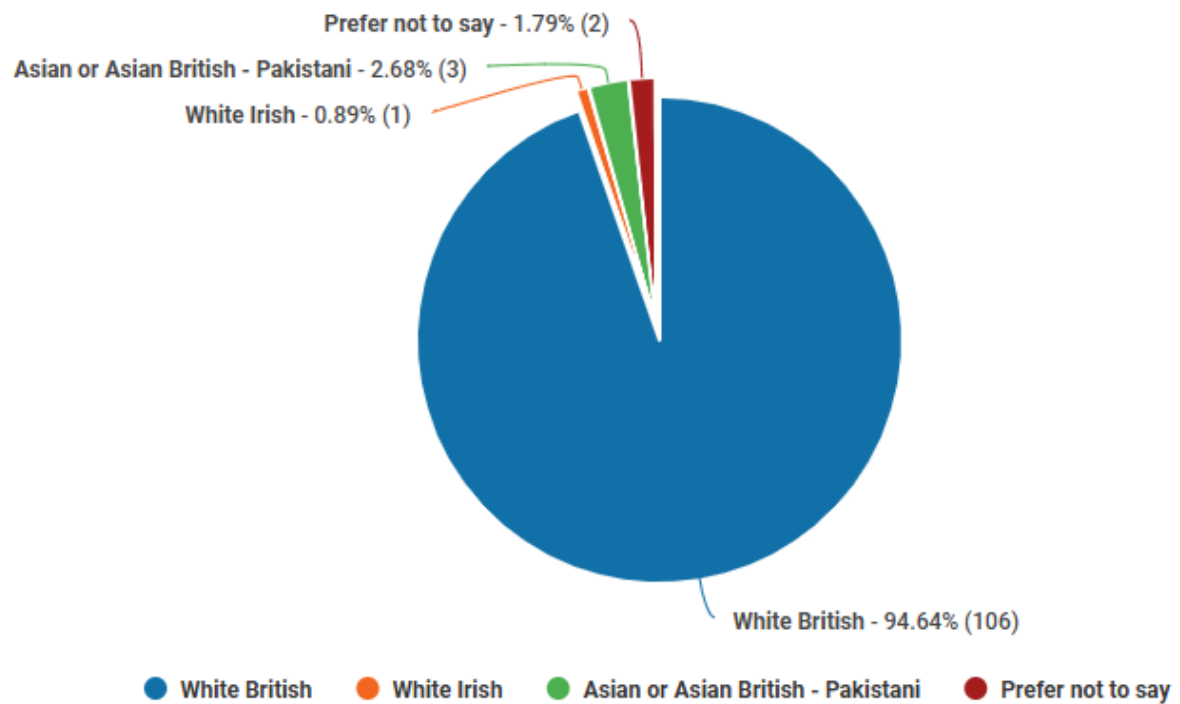
Age



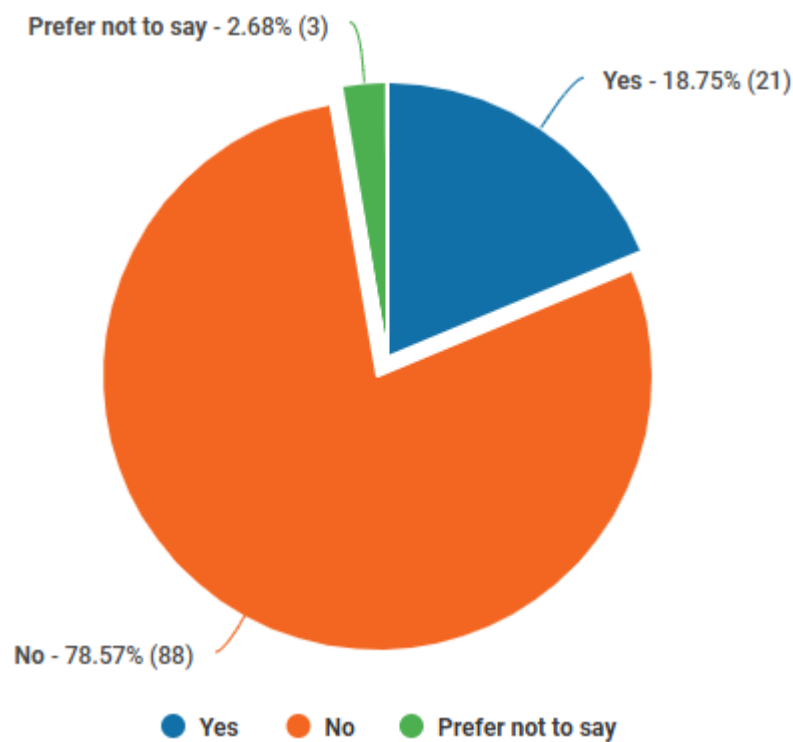
Gender



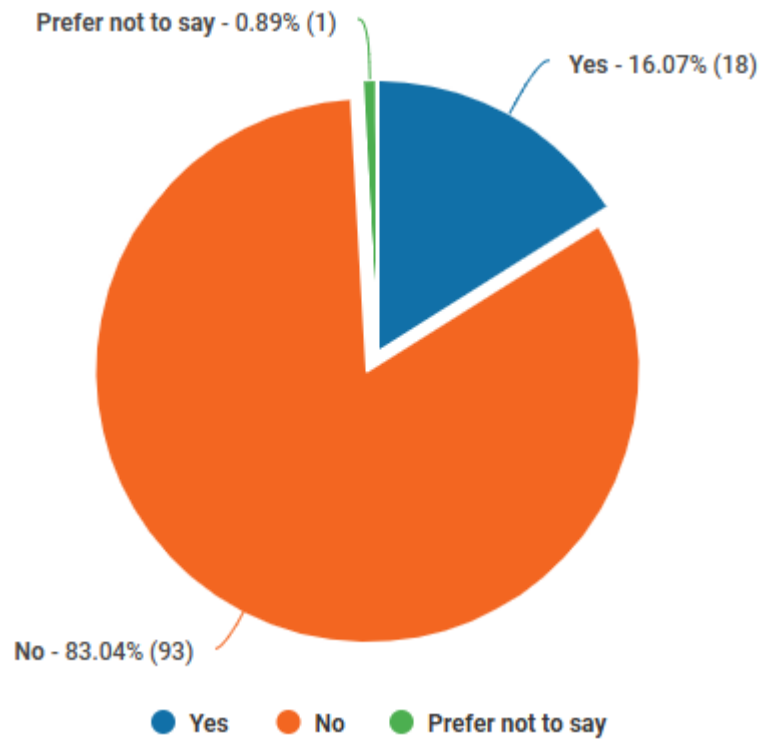
Ethnicity



Disability



Carer



What did we hear?



Public drop-in session

Two public drop-in sessions were held at the practice on Tuesday 25 and Friday 28 February 2025, from 10am to 11am and from 1pm to 2pm. Across the two sessions, 16 people attended to give their views on the service at Dill Hall Surgery.

The over-riding feedback at the sessions was that patients are very happy with the service currently experienced. While there was some disappointment noted at the confusion surrounding the move from the former surgery building in Church Street, patients are very happy with the staff and facilities at Acorn Primary Health Care Centre.

Dr McGrogan has been acting as the primary GP at the surgery and a number of attendees were keen to praise him for his excellent care. Patients also clearly value having access to a regular and consistent GP as this is what they were previously used to in the former premises. There was also praise for reception staff, in particular Christine, Lucy and Debbie, who are very helpful and friendly.

It was noted that, having had to relocate the practice just over a year ago, patients have already undergone a major change to the way they access services and are keen to avoid having to go through such a change again. Continuity is very important to the patients and they were keen for the service to continue being provided as it is now.

Some specific elements of the service were mentioned, including the access to other community services now the service is based in the health centre. One example given was a patient who required a blood test and an x-ray and was able to have both of these on the same day within the same building, saving him a great deal of time and effort getting to multiple appointments.

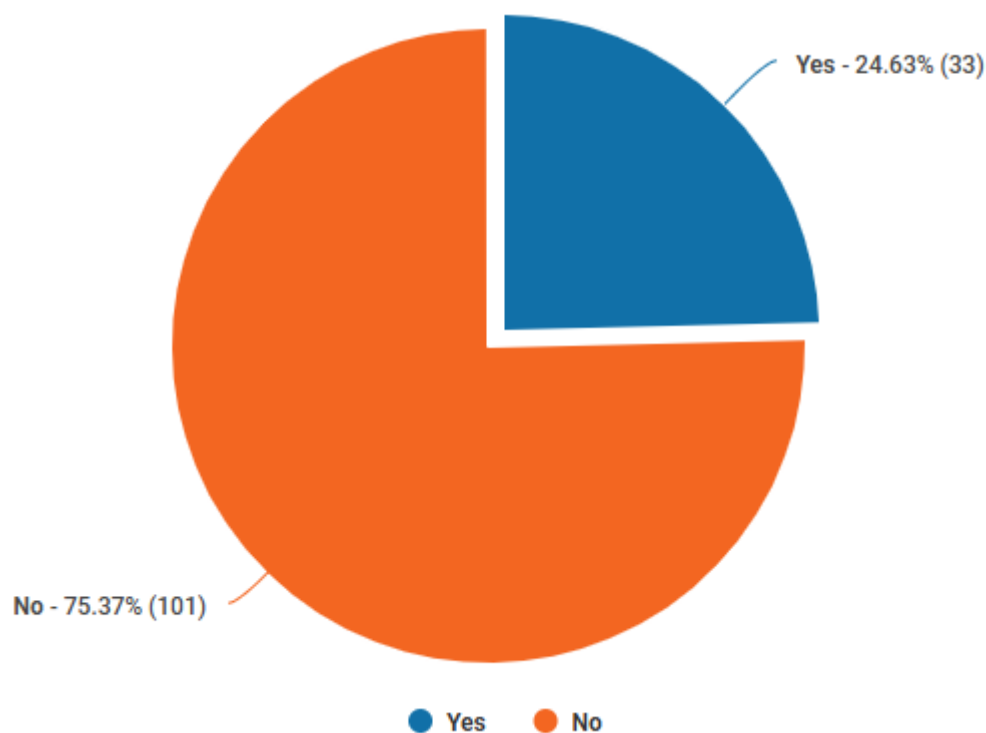
Survey: Please tell us about any difficulties or concerns you might have about registering with a new GP practice

Responses to this question can be broadly themed as below:

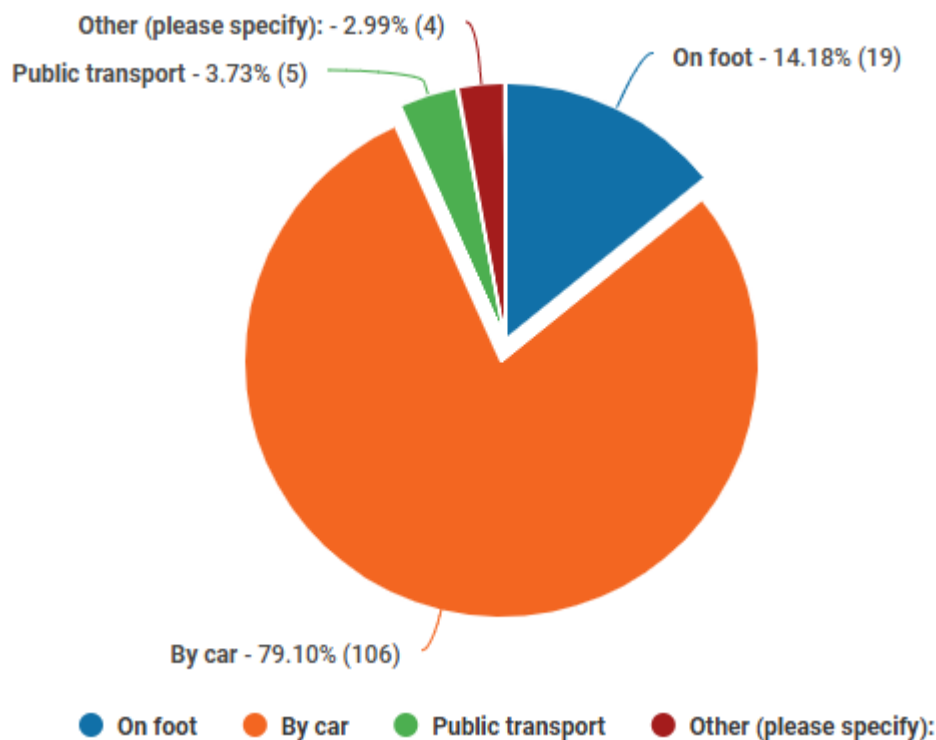
- **Availability of appointments:** Many respondents expressed concern that other practices may have issues with appointment availability.
- **Continuity of care:** A significant number of respondents value having a GP who knows their medical history and are worried about losing this continuity if they have to register with a new practice. They fear that seeing different doctors each time would lead to disjointed care.
- **Quality of service:** Some respondents are happy with the current service at Dill Hall Surgery and are concerned the quality of care might decline if they move to a new practice. They appreciate the personalised care and familiarity with the staff at Dill Hall.
- **Over-subscription and availability of services:** There is a concern that other local practices are already over-subscribed and may not be accepting new patients. Respondents worry about the availability of services and the potential for longer waiting times at other practices.

- **Location and accessibility:** The convenience of the current location and the ease of access to the building, especially for those with mobility issues, is a concern. Respondents are worried about having to travel further to a new practice.
- **Anxiety and stress:** The process of changing GP practices and the uncertainty involved is causing anxiety and stress for some respondents. They are concerned about the impact on their mental health and the additional burden of having to explain their medical history to new doctors.
- **Specific preferences:** Some respondents have specific preferences, such as needing female staff, being on a bus route, or having good parking facilities. They are concerned these preferences may not be met at a new practice.
- **No concerns:** A small number of respondents reported they would have no concerns registering with a new practice.

Survey responses: Do you know which other GP practices are available in your area and how to register with them?



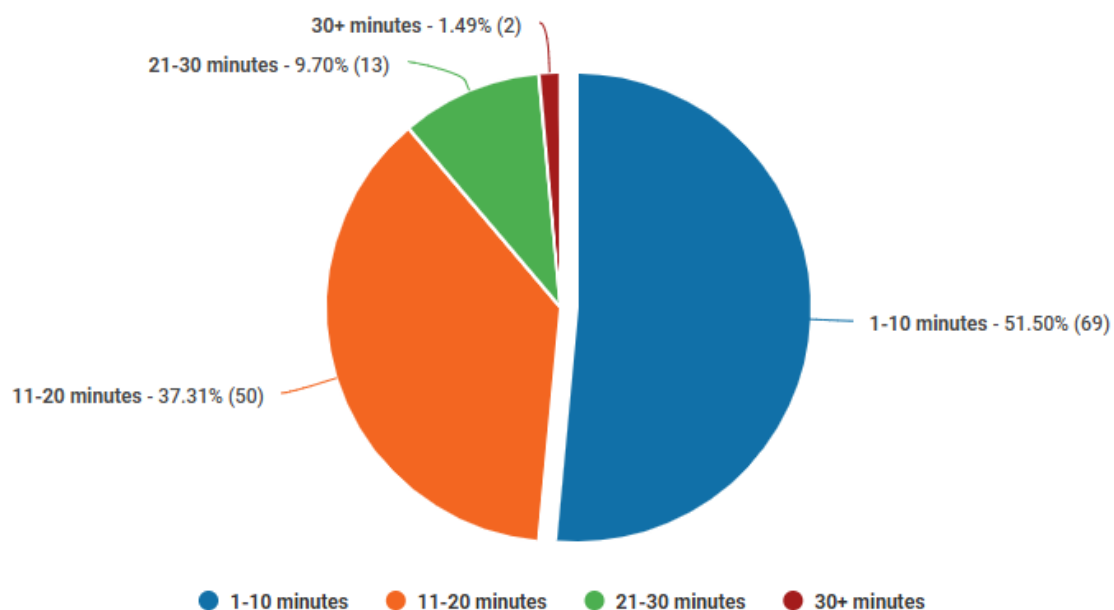
Survey responses: How would you normally travel to your GP practice?



Those who stated 'other' said:

- Home visit or daughter has to take me.
- Rely on relative or taxi now my husband has died. He always drove me.
- With assistance from friend (by car). But most interactions via home visits.
- Taxi since Dill Hall moved.

Survey responses: Approximately how long does it take you to get to your GP practice?



Survey responses: Please rank the following in order of importance to you in terms of your GP practice (one being most important)

Rank	Item	Total score*
1	Getting an appointment	1332
2	Having a face-to-face appointment	1159
3	Seeing an appropriate health professional for my needs	1062
4	Contacting the surgery by telephone	1020
	Helpful reception staff	936
5	Booking appointments online	721
6	Having a virtual appointment	589
7	Car parking	579
8	Accessibility of the building	558
9	Availability of home visits	491
10	On-site pharmacy available	397

** Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks. The score is a sum of all weighted rank counts.*

Survey responses: Any other comments

A number of comments were made which can be themed as below:

- **Appointment availability and continuity:** Many patients emphasised the importance of being able to get appointments within a reasonable time and seeing the same healthcare professional consistently. They value the continuity of care and the familiarity with their medical history.
- **Staff preferences:** There is a preference for having permanent staff rather than locum doctors, and some patients specifically request female doctors and nurses.
- **Concerns about changes:** Patients expressed anxiety about potential changes to their current healthcare setup, particularly if it involves moving to a new practice or changing doctors. They fear that such changes could disrupt the continuity of care and increase the burden on healthcare services.
- **Positive feedback:** Several comments praised the current staff, including doctors and nurses, for their excellent service, knowledge, and the feeling of being listened to. The East Lancashire Alliance and specific doctors such as Dr McGrogan received positive comments.
- **Accessibility and convenience:** Patients highlight the importance of having local GP provision, especially for those who cannot drive or have mobility issues. They also stress the need for minimal waiting times for appointments and the ability to get same-day face-to-face appointments.
- **Concerns about technology:** Some patients, particularly older ones, find the increasing reliance on technology for booking appointments and accessing services challenging. They request support for those who struggle with technology.
- **Patient voices and transparency:** There is a strong call for patient voices to be considered in decision-making processes. Patients want transparency and assurance that any changes will not compromise the quality of care they receive.

Next steps

This report will be presented to the primary care commissioning committee to aid the decision-making regarding the future of services for patients currently registered at Dill Hall Surgery. It will form part of a larger report prepared by the primary care team, which will take the data provided by those who took part in the engagement exercise into account ahead of its recommendations. The report will be published on the ICB website.

Insights we have gained from this process



Patient survey

Some concerns were raised by attendees at the face-to-face drop-in sessions that the questions in the survey suggested the closure of the practice was a foregone conclusion.

While this is not the case, it is important to bear this in mind in future engagement exercises as we need to ensure patients are able to have their say in a way that does not cause unnecessary anxiety or concern.