

Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 20 June 2019

Title of Paper: GP appointments in Oxfordshire

Paper for:	Discussion	✓	Decision		Information	✓
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Purpose and Executive Summary:

The following paper aims to provide the Oxfordshire Joint Health and Overview Scrutiny Committee with information on GP appointments in Oxfordshire.

It highlights that:

- Oxfordshire GP practices provide more appointments per 1000 patients than the average for England. Of these appointments a greater percentage are with a GP (compared to with another clinician) when compared to England.
- More patients in Oxfordshire report a good experience of making an appointment when compared to national figures however there has been a reduction in overall experience of GP practice both locally and nationally
- It is recognised that nationally and locally, demand for appointments has increased over time and that some patients may find it more difficult to book an appointment.
- The practices and CCG are working together to understand the new GP contract reform requirements, which introduce new initiatives to help address this. This includes the development of a multidisciplinary workforce that is wider than just clinicians (eg social prescribers) and new digital access targets and introduction of online consultations, which all aim to improve the patient experience.

Members of the Committee are invited to review the content of this paper.

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1. Background

1.1 The Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has asked for information in relation to GP appointments in Oxfordshire, specifically:

- *What are the numbers of GP appointments available in Oxfordshire and where?*
- *What are the trends with GP appointments, nationally and locally? How long, how many, at what times and in what locations in the county.*
- *What are the costs of GP appointments?*
- *Update on the success of weekend and evening GP appointments – share data on demand and how this is monitored?*

2. Funding of General Practice

2.1 The General Medical Services (GMS) contract¹ is the national contract between general practices and NHS England for delivering primary care services to local communities. In Oxfordshire (like most areas of the country) NHS England has delegated the responsibility for commissioning primary care services to the Clinical Commissioning Group. This responsibility comes with a delegated budget.

2.2 General practice funding and provides income for each practice which is its own 'private' business. The level of income is based on the number of registered patients at each practice. The practice then uses this 'income' to pay staff, overheads, equipment, to provide appointments and run the business.

2.3 Other components of the funding include

- Quality and outcome framework (QOF)
- Enhanced services – some of which are optional
- Premises costs
- Dispensing payments (for dispensing practices only)

2.4 Funding is provided as a block and is not based on number of appointments provided and so a cost per appointment is not possible. However NHS England has stated² that an average GP appointment costs £30 when calculating the costs of missed appointments and the Personal Social Services Research unit (PSSRU)³ calculated this to be nearer £37 in 2016/17.

2.5 Additional funding is provided for the national improved access scheme and the CCG currently fund from our discretionary budget additional appointments in the North and West localities as described in the CCG locality plans⁴.

¹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/general-medical-services-contract-19-20.pdf>

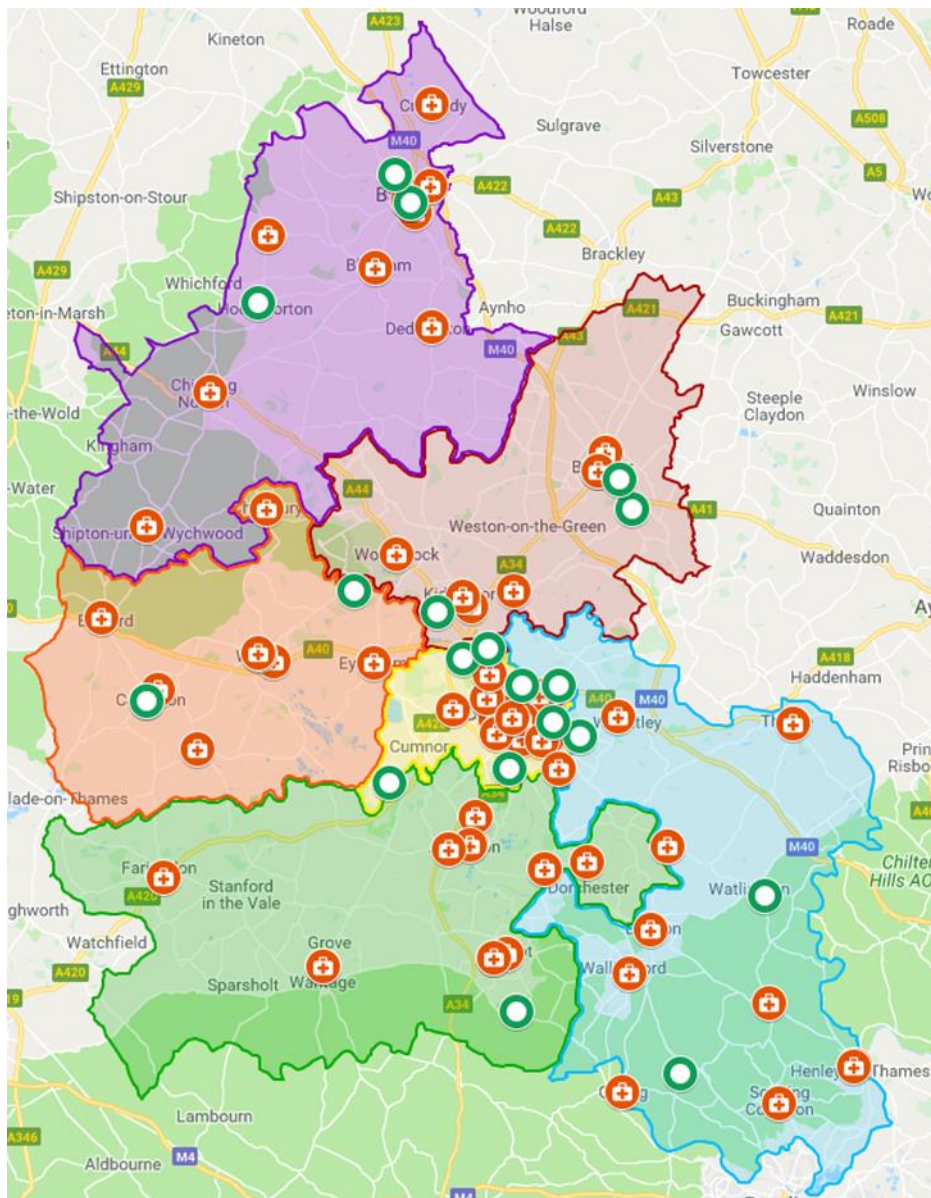
² <https://www.england.nhs.uk/2019/01/missed-gp-appointments-costing-nhs-millions/>

³ <https://www.pssru.ac.uk/pub/uc/uc2017/community-based-health-care-staff.pdf>

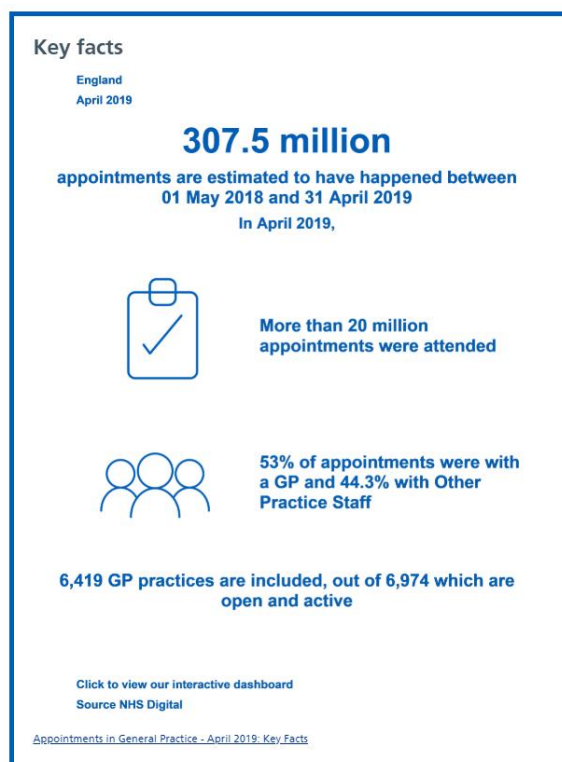
⁴ <https://www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/about-us/locality-plans.htm>

3. Provision of GP appointments

- 3.1 The GMS contract does not state how many appointments each practice should make available. However it does specify that core hours of service provision are from 0800 to 1830 from Monday to Friday except Good Friday, Christmas Day and Bank Holidays and that General Practice must provide services as are appropriate to meet the reasonable needs of its patients. The contract however does not require the practice to make a GP available in person to provide routine services to patients throughout the core hours.
- 3.2 Nationally the number and type of appointment(s) per practice varies significantly and this is dependent on the demographics and local culture. For example if it is easy to access appointments then patients may expect more.
- 3.3 General Practice appointments are provided from all our general practice sites. These include branch surgeries which are often open amended hours.



3.4 Key national data suggests collected by NHS Digital indicates:



3.5 For Oxfordshire CCG⁵ in April 2019⁶

Appointments in General Practice Summary April 2019

Source: NHS Digital

List size: England 55,637,872 Oxfordshire 706,295

Booked appointments	England			Oxfordshire			% Difference (booked)	Difference per 1000 pts
	Number of appts	%	per 1000 pts	Number of appts	per 1000 pts	%		
Attended	20,507,173	89.8%	368.58	272,123	385.28	92.0%	2.2%	16.70
DNA	1,127,575	4.9%	20.27	12,735	18.03	4.3%	-0.6%	-2.24
Not recorded	1,195,120	5.2%	21.48	10,886	15.41	3.7%	-1.6%	-6.07
Total	22,829,868	100.0%	410.33	295,744	418.73	100%	0.0%	8.40

Seen by	England		Oxfordshire		% Difference (booked)
	Number of patients	%	Number of patients	%	
GP	12,099,006	53.0%	163,573	55.3%	2.3%
Other staff	10,119,114	44.3%	124,514	42.1%	-2.2%
Unknown	611,748	2.7%	7,657	2.6%	-0.1%
Total	22,829,868	100.0%	295,744	100.0%	0.0%

Type of appointment	England			Oxfordshire			% Difference (booked)	Difference per 1000 pts
	Type of appt	%	per 1000 pts	Type of appt	per 1000 pts	%		
Face to face	18,850,612	82.6%	338.81	219,240	310.41	74.1%	-8.4%	-28.40
Home visit	224,650	1.0%	4.04	3,164	4.48	1.1%	0.1%	0.44
Telephone	3,245,587	14.2%	58.33	73,340	103.84	24.8%	10.6%	45.50
Video/online	106,298	0.5%	1.91	-	0.00	0.0%	-0.5%	-1.91
Unknown	402,721	1.8%	7.24	-	0.00	0.0%	-1.8%	-7.24
Total	22,829,868	100%	410.33	295,744	418.73	100%	0.0%	8.40

⁵ In Oxfordshire 64/70 practices have provided data

⁶ <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/appointments-in-general-practice/april-2019>

Time from booking to attendance	England		Oxfordshire		% Difference (booked)
	Number of appts	%	Number of appts	%	
Same day	9,801,237	42.9%	124,893	42.2%	-0.7%
1 day	1,503,550	6.6%	19,356	6.5%	0.0%
2-7 days	4,172,235	18.3%	54,560	18.4%	0.2%
8-14 days	3,132,207	13.7%	39,181	13.2%	-0.5%
15-21 days	1,819,448	8.0%	24,112	8.2%	0.2%
22-28 days	1,267,119	5.6%	18,886	6.4%	0.8%
>28 days	1,127,824	4.9%	14,720	5.0%	0.0%
Unknown	6,248	0.0%	36	0.0%	0.0%
Total	22,829,868	100%	295,744	100%	0.0%

Appointments in General Practice Summary April 2019

Source: NHS Digital

3.6 The time from booking to attendance does not necessarily equate to the waiting time for an appointment as many patients may book in advance for, for example, a condition review. The data also does not take into account the additional appointments provided by the GP Federations under the improved access scheme.

3.7 Key points in April 2019

- Oxfordshire provides more appointments /1000 patients than the average for England
- More patients are seen by a GP (with respect to other staff) in Oxfordshire (55.3%) than in the rest of England (53.0%)
- More appointments are by telephone than face to face when compared to the rest of England
- The time from booking to attendance is similar across both Oxfordshire and England

3.8 Appointments with patients are only one part of the workload of a GP, which will typically also include many other tasks such as paperwork, meetings and liaising with other health care professionals.

3.9 At this stage, NHS Digital does not present appointment data at practice level. However the GP contract reform⁷ has made a commitment to have clearer recording and collection of data on access to general practice. This will include real time reporting on activity, capacity and waiting times. The aim is to publish robust activity and waiting time data at individual practice level no later than 2021.

4. Scrutiny of appointments

4.1 The national GP Patient Survey provides practice-level data about patients' experience of their GP practice. In Oxfordshire, 20,620 questionnaires were sent out and 7,649 returned (almost twice the number from 17/18). This represents a response rate of 37%. In general, Oxfordshire general practice do better than the

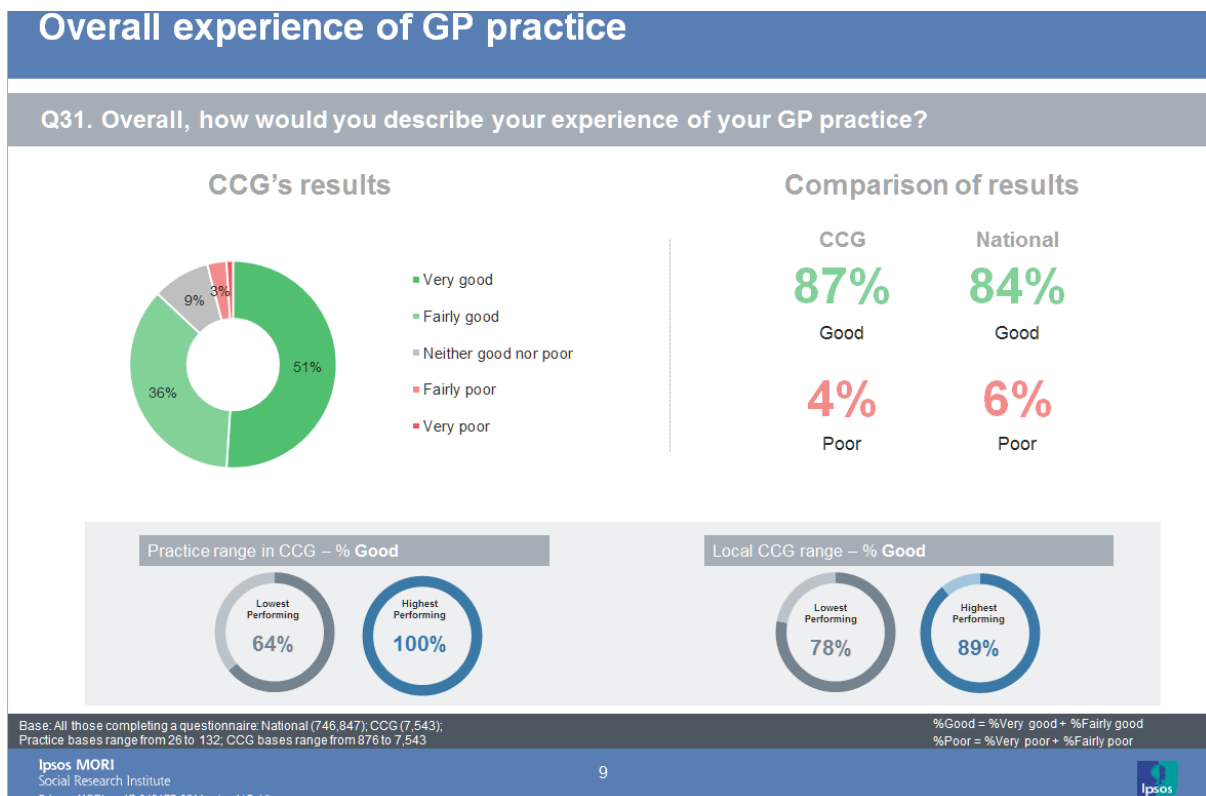
⁷ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/gp-contract-2019.pdf>

national average however there has been a reduction in overall experience of GP practice both locally (89% to 87%) and nationally (85% to 84%) when comparing 2017 data with 2018. More information can be found at www.gp-patient.co.uk/surveys-and-reports

4.2 The national GP survey results were published in August 2018 for the period January to March 2018. An Oxfordshire CCG slide pack can be found on the OCCG website: <http://www.oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/documents/meetings/opccc/2018/09/GP-Patient-Survey-August-2018.pdf> Oxfordshire practices were rated particularly strongly when compared with nationally on

- Ease to get through to GP practice by phone (82% CCG vs 70% nationally)
- Ease of use of practice website (84% vs 78%)
- Good experience of making an appointment (76% vs 69%)

4.3 An overall summary of how patients describe their experience is demonstrated in the following table. There are 4 practices that perform consistently below Oxfordshire CCG and national average and these have been followed up.



5. Improving the patient experience

5.1 In Oxfordshire, the CCG and practices have been working hard to address patient experience and reduce waiting times and this will be further strengthened by the NHS Long Term Plan⁸ which introduces new workforce, more use of digital technology and better integrated care. Oxfordshire has:

- Good multidisciplinary working – many practices have employed Clinical Pharmacists, Advanced Nurse Practitioners or paramedics to help with the workload. The new GP contract reform will also provide funding support for additional (non GP) workforce in Primary Care Networks
- Provided additional evening and weekend appointments (see below)
- Rolled out the online consultation platform econsult – this is where patients submit information about their medical condition which the GP reviews and either provides advice, a prescription, a telephone consultation or asks them to come in for a face to face. 6 practices are currently live and performed 931 online consultations in May
- Ensured patients can book appointments online
- Commissioned a primary care visiting service from our GP federations to allow patients to be visited in their own homes earlier in the day and to reduce the amount of time GPs need to be out of the practice

6. Improved access appointments at evening and weekends.

6.1 The General Practice Forward View⁹ published in April 2016 set out plans to enable Clinical Commissioning groups (CCGs) to commission and fund additional capacity across England to ensure that, by 2020 everyone has improved access to GP services including sufficient routine appointments at evenings and weekends to meet locally determined demand, alongside effective access to out of hours and urgent care services. The core requirements for this service were

- Commission weekday provision of access to pre-bookable and same day appointments to general practice services in evenings (after 6:30pm) – to provide an additional 1.5 hours a day
- Commission weekend provision of access to pre-bookable and same day appointments on both Saturdays and Sundays to meet local population needs
- Commission a minimum additional 30 minutes consultation capacity per 1000 population, rising to 45 minutes per 1000 population
- Ensure services are advertised to patients, including notification on practice websites, notices in local urgent care services and publicity into the community, so that it is clear to patients how they can access these appointments and associated service
- Ensure ease of access for patients including:

⁸ <https://www.longtermplan.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/nhs-long-term-plan.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/gp/gpfv/>

- all practice receptionists able to direct patients to the service and offer appointments to extended hours service on the same basis as appointments to non-extended hours services
- patients should be offered a choice of evening or weekend appointments on an equal footing to core hours appointments

6.2 Some of these improved access appointments started in 2015 following a successful bid to Prime Ministers Challenge Fund. Learning has informed the roll out to all areas and improved access appointments have been in place across Oxfordshire since April 2017. The following provision is in place across Oxfordshire

- Evening appointments 1830 to 2000 in each of the 6 CCG localities (North, North East, City, South East, South West and West)
- Saturday appointments 9-12noon in each of the 6 CCG localities (North, North East, City, South East, South West and West)
- Sunday appointments 9-12noon in Banbury, Oxford City, Abingdon and South East Oxfordshire.

6.3 These appointments are provided from various sites in the locality and will often rotate around practices. Patients can access them through their GP practice. The CCG has commissioned these appointments from the GP Federations. They provided 78,947 appointments in 18/19 split across the following time periods:

		18/19
In Hours	Available	32009
	Used	29436
	% Used	92%
Evenings	Available	21224
	Used	17688
	% Used	83%
Saturday	Available	16859
	Used	14173
	% Used	84%
Sunday	Available	8855
	Used	6763
	% Used	76%

6.4 Appointments are commissioned evenly across Oxfordshire, with each of the GP Federations providing 30 minutes per 1000 population.

6.5 Oxfordshire GP Federations are working to increase usage of these appointments to near 100% through advertising and changing the types of appointments available to boost usage. These appointments cost approximately £50

7. Summary

- 7.1 Oxfordshire GP practices provide more appointments per 1000 patients than the average for England. Of these appointments a greater percentage are with a GP (compared to with another clinician) when compared to England
- 7.2 More patients in Oxfordshire report a good experience of making an appointment when compared to national figures however there has been a reduction in overall experience of GP practice both locally and nationally
- 7.3 It is recognised that nationally and locally, demand for appointments has increased over time and that some patients may find it more difficult to book an appointment.
- 7.4 The practices and CCG are working together to understand the new GP contract reform requirements, which introduce new initiatives to help address this. This includes the development of a multidisciplinary workforce that is wider than just clinicians (eg social prescribers) and new digital access targets and introduction of online consultations, which all aim to improve the patient experience.

Appendix 1 Oxfordshire appointment data April 19

