

Community Engagement

Same Day Access to GPs

Survey of use in Havering

June/July 2025



What is Healthwatch Havering?

Healthwatch Havering is the local consumer champion for both health and social care in the London Borough of Havering. Our aim is to give local citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided for all individuals locally.

We are an independent organisation, established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012, and employ our own staff and involve lay people/volunteers so that we can become the influential and effective voice of the public.

Healthwatch Havering is a Community Interest Company Limited by Guarantee, managed by three part-time directors, including the Chairman and the Company Secretary, supported by two part-time staff, and by volunteers, both from professional health and social care backgrounds and lay people who have an interest in health or social care issues.

Why is this important to you and your family and friends?

Healthwatch England is the national organisation which enables the collective views of the people who use NHS and social services to influence national policy, advice and guidance.

Healthwatch Havering is your voice, enabling you on behalf of yourself, your family and your friends to ensure views and concerns about the local health and social services are understood.

Your contribution is vital in helping to build a picture of where services are doing well and where they need to be improved. This will help and support the Clinical Commissioning Groups, NHS Services and contractors, and the Local Authority to make sure their services really are designed to meet citizens' needs.

*'You make a living by what you get,
but you make a life by what you give.'*

Winston Churchill

Community engagement

Under Section 221 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, Healthwatch Havering has a statutory duty to ascertain the views of health and social care services and to make them known to the commissioners and providers of those services so that they can be taken into account in the development, commissioning and delivery of services.

We do this in a variety of ways, such as surveys, interviews and focus groups.

We also participate, with other Healthwatch organisations across North East London, in the Community Insights System, which gathers views and comments on health and social care from people across the area.

Intelligence gained from Community Insights is used directly in, or to inform, many of the surveys and other public engagement events that we carry out.

The results of our community engagement are shared with Havering Council, NHS North East London, NHS and other provider organisations and Healthwatch England.

Introduction

North East London ICB – Havering Place asked us to carry out a survey of patients in Havering to understand better what people knew about the Same Day Access service for GPs (out of hours and at weekends and bank holidays).

We conducted the survey over the six weeks from the beginning of June to mid-July 2025. 121 respondents provided information from which we have been able to prepare this report.

Charts derived from selected responses are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

The respondents came from the whole of Havering, although two areas – Hornchurch and Elm Park, and Romford and Mawneys – predominated. Of those who told us, most respondents were female (78); 18 males also responded but 34 respondents declined to indicate their gender. Most respondents (52) were aged 65 or older, but 32 were in the age range of 50–65 and 12 were in the 26–49 range. 89 respondents were white British, with 2 Irish, 1 from another white background, 1 of white/Indian heritage and 1 Indian; 36 respondents declined to provide details of their ethnicity. Of those who replied, 27 told us they had a chronic illness or long-term condition, 6 had a hearing impairment, 2 had a sight impairment and 1 had a learning disability.

We asked respondents whether they had used the Same Day Access service (formerly often referred to as the GP hubs service). There are Same Day Access hubs operating from GP surgeries at

- Haiderian Medical Centre – 181 Corbets Tey Road, Upminster RM14 2YN
- Lynwood Practice – 2a-6 Lynwood Drive, Romford RM5 3QL
- Petersfield Surgery – 70 Petersfield Avenue, Romford RM3 9PD
- Raphael House – Victoria Centre, Pettits Lane, Romford RM1 4HP¹
- Rosewood Practice – 30 Astra Close, Hornchurch RM12 5NJ
- Rush Green – 261 Dagenham Road, Romford RM7 0XR

Hubs generally operate from 6.30pm to 10pm weekdays and at weekends and on public holidays.

We asked patients whether they had USED the service – and, depending on the answer to that question, others relating to their experience of using it, or not.

49 respondents had used the service, but 72 had not.

¹ This hub replaced a hub previously operating at North Street Medical Centre, North Street, Romford

Patients who had not used the service

Of the respondents who had not used the service, 37 (51%) did not know that it was available and 26 (36%) told us that they had not needed Same Day Care. 6 had preferred to wait for an appointment at their own GP practice, 2 did not want to go the location offered and 1 declined to say why they had not used the service.

It is interesting to note that NHS data indicates that some 94% of available consultation slots at all Hubs are booked; this suggests that sufficient patients are aware of, or are made aware of, the Hubs to make their continued provision justified and viable.

Patients who had used the service

Although all the Hubs had been used by respondents, only two had been used by relatively large numbers of them:

Petersfield Surgery Hub – had been used by 15 respondents

Rosewood Practice Hub – had been used by 24

None of the other hubs had been used by more than 3 respondents.

There did not appear to be any particular preference for the use of particular Hubs.

In most cases, the respondents had been seen by a clinician in person but 6 had been spoken to over the telephone.

Most respondents had found the location of the Hub convenient but for 6 it had been inconvenient: for 4 of them, it was too far from home and the other 2 found it difficult to get to the hub by public transport. For more information about the accessibility of Hubs, see Appendix 1.

Again, the time of the appointment (which varied from same day to several days later) and the day (again varying throughout the week), was convenient for most respondents. For the 5 who found the time inconvenient, in one case it was because the appointment was almost too quickly available but the rest found the time later than they would have liked.

In most case, unsurprisingly, the Hub appointment was made by the respondent's own GP practice but in 8 cases the appointment was made by NHS 111, in one case it was made by an Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC) and 6 made the appointment themselves.

25 respondents had sought an appointment for an urgent consultation; 31 had done so as no appointments were available

at their own GP practice. 6 had not wanted to go to a UTC or Hospital Emergency Department (A&E).

18 respondents told us that, had they not been able to have a Hub appointment, they would have contact NHS 111 for advice; 10 said they would have awaited an appointment at their GP practice; 9 would have visited a UTC and 7 would have gone to A&E. Only one respondent would have gone to a prescribing pharmacy.

Interestingly, two respondents said they would have “suffered in silence” or “suffered until I got a GP appointment”.

Conclusion and recommendations

A total of 130 people responded to the survey, of whom 121 provided useable data. Although this is not a large sample of respondents, it does provide some helpful pointers to the demand for Same Day Access.

The key observation is that only about 40% of those responding had used Same Day Access, and that 21% of respondents had not needed to make use of the service but 31% (almost one-third) of respondents were not aware that it was available.

Given the low number of respondents using most of the Hubs it is difficult to draw any conclusions about the spread of Hubs

across Havering although comments by those respondents who found the Hub location inconvenient suggest that care is needed to ensure that their locations are easily accessible for those using public transport (and it must be borne in mind that not everyone has access to a car or other personal transport, and many people cannot afford a taxi/minicab fare) – see Appendix 2 to this report for more detail of the accessibility of each of the Hubs.

The relatively large number of respondents claiming to be unaware of the existence of Same Day Access reinforces anecdotal evidence available through calls made to us about GP appointment arrangements, in which many callers allege that the GP practice had not offered them any alternative to waiting for an appointment, in some cases for several weeks. This suggests that not only are some practice staff not signposting patients to the service but that such staff may be unaware of it themselves.

There does appear to be a need to mount an information campaign aimed at both patients and practice staff, especially receptionists answering calls for appointments, to ensure that they are aware of Same Day Access appointment opportunities.

There does not appear to be a major problem for patients accessing the existing Hubs but it would be sensible to ensure

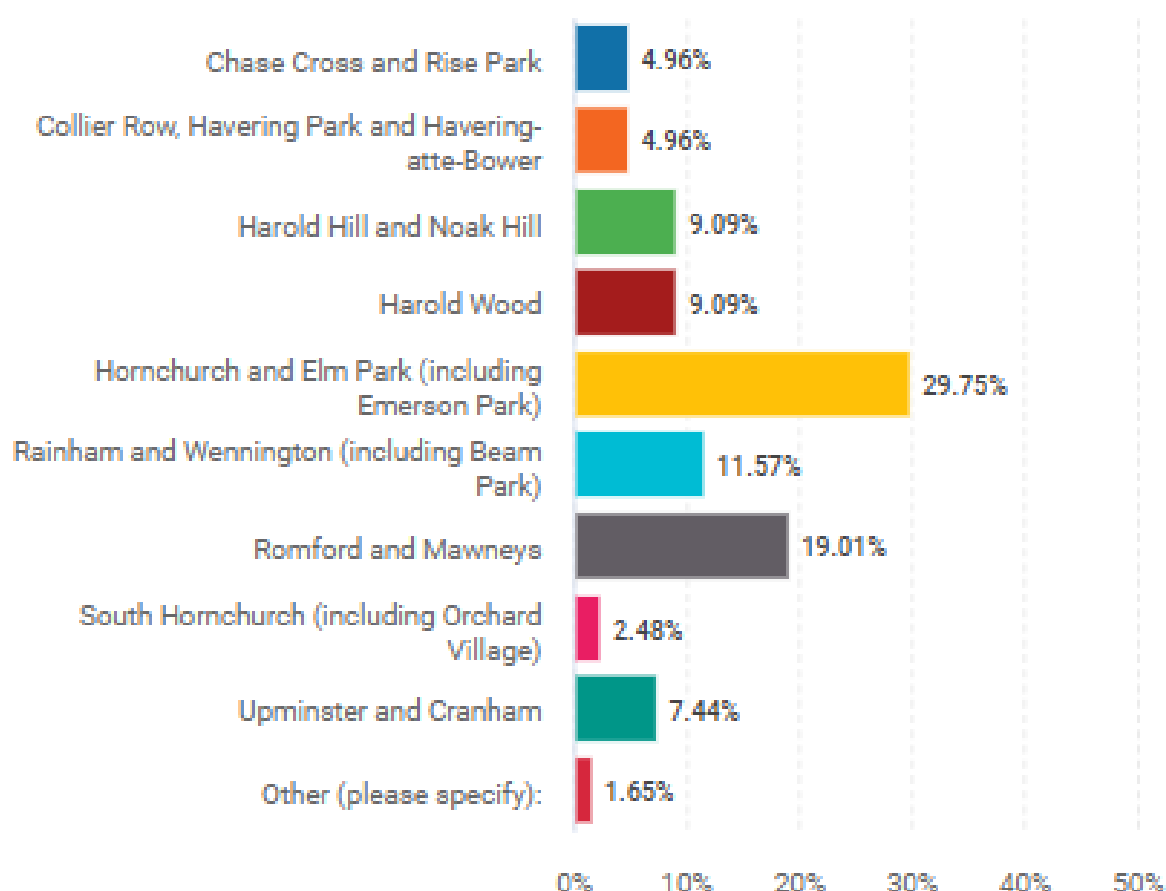
that any premises selected as a Hub are within reasonable distance of bus services, and that car parking is available (not necessarily on the premises, but in the vicinity – ideally off-street).

APPENDIX 1

Selected charts

The following charts are extracted from the survey. Please note that not every respondent answered each question and so the numbers displayed may not always add up to 121.

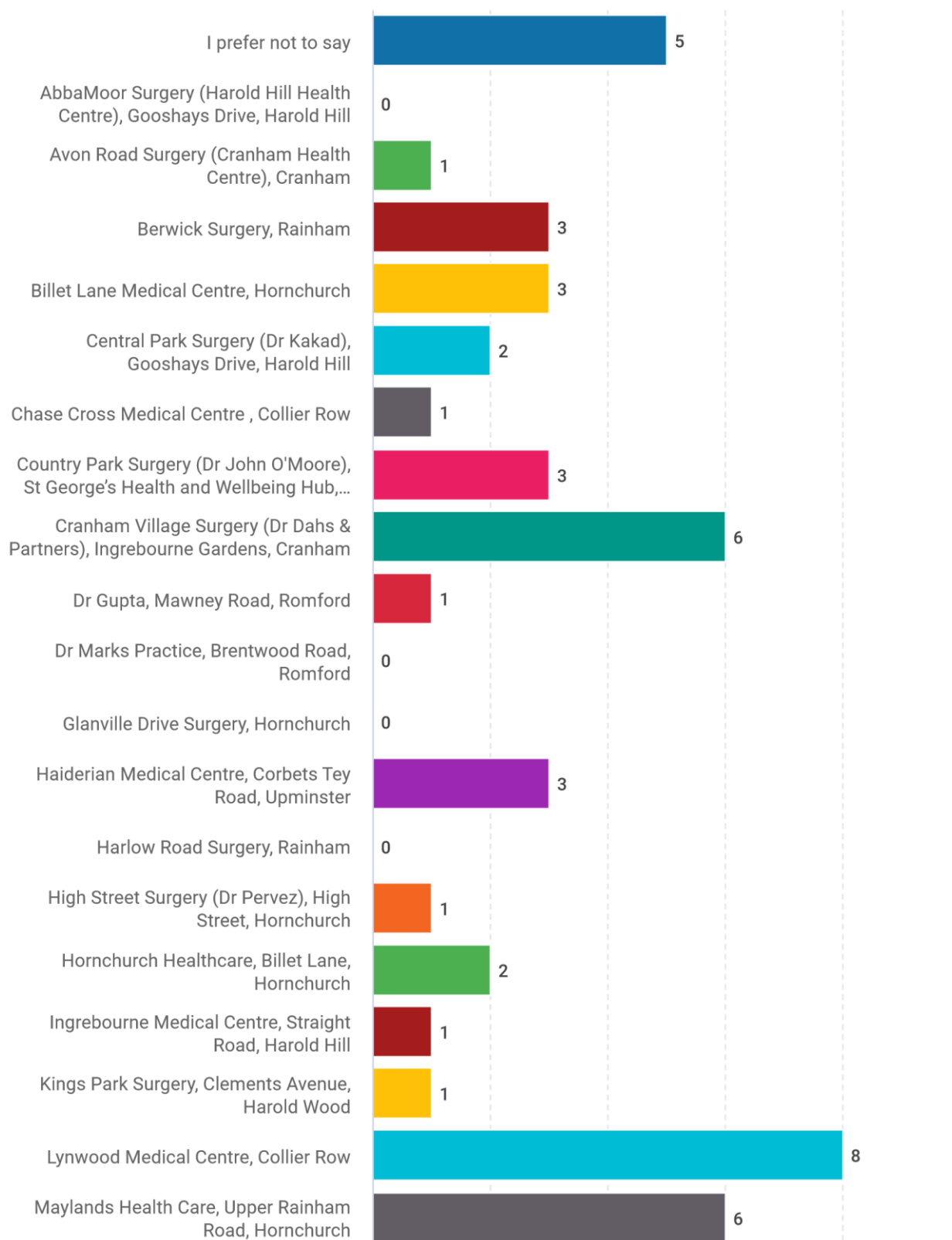
Location of residence

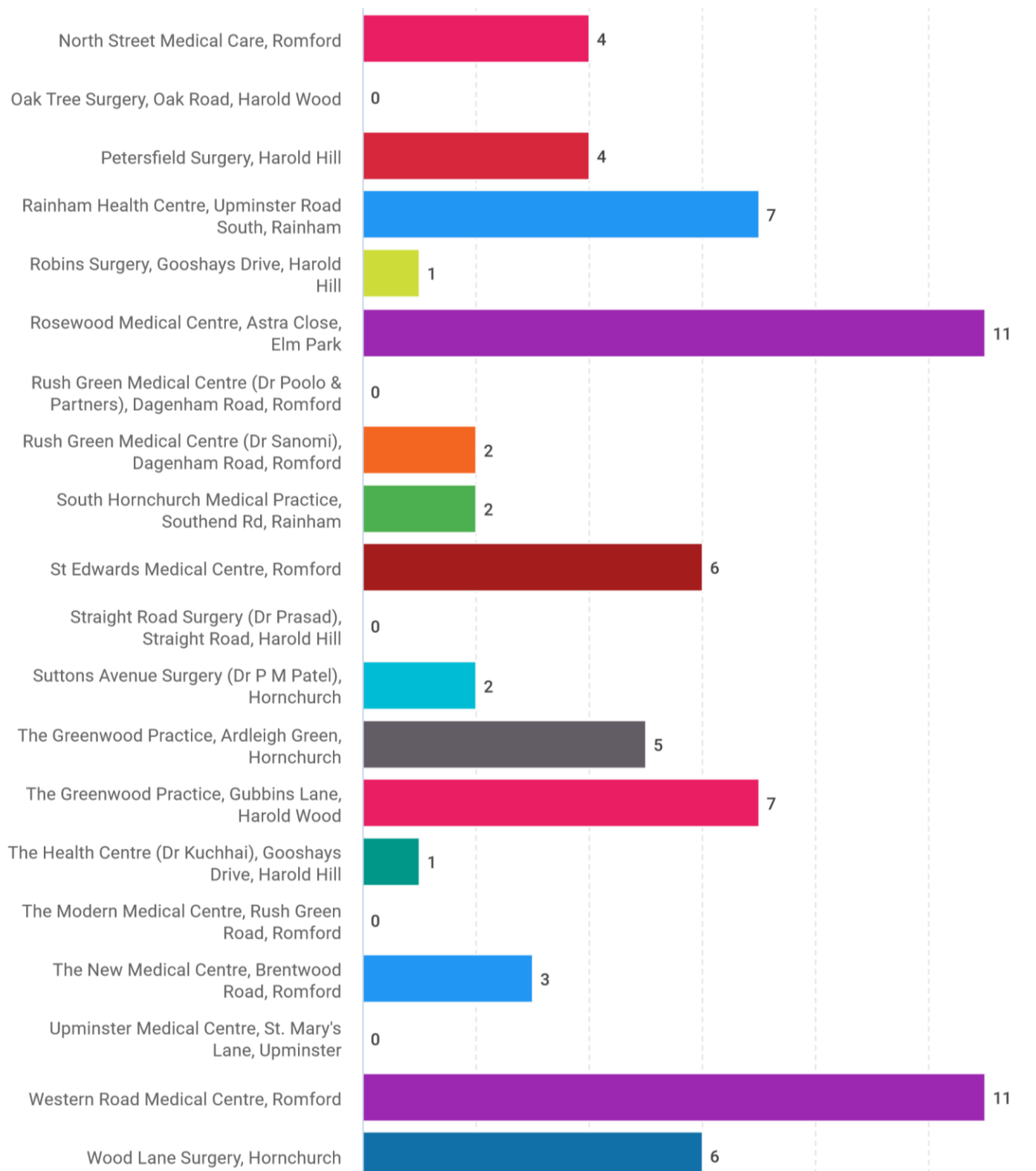


The locations of those responding "Other" were Rush Green (2 people) and 1 preferred not to say

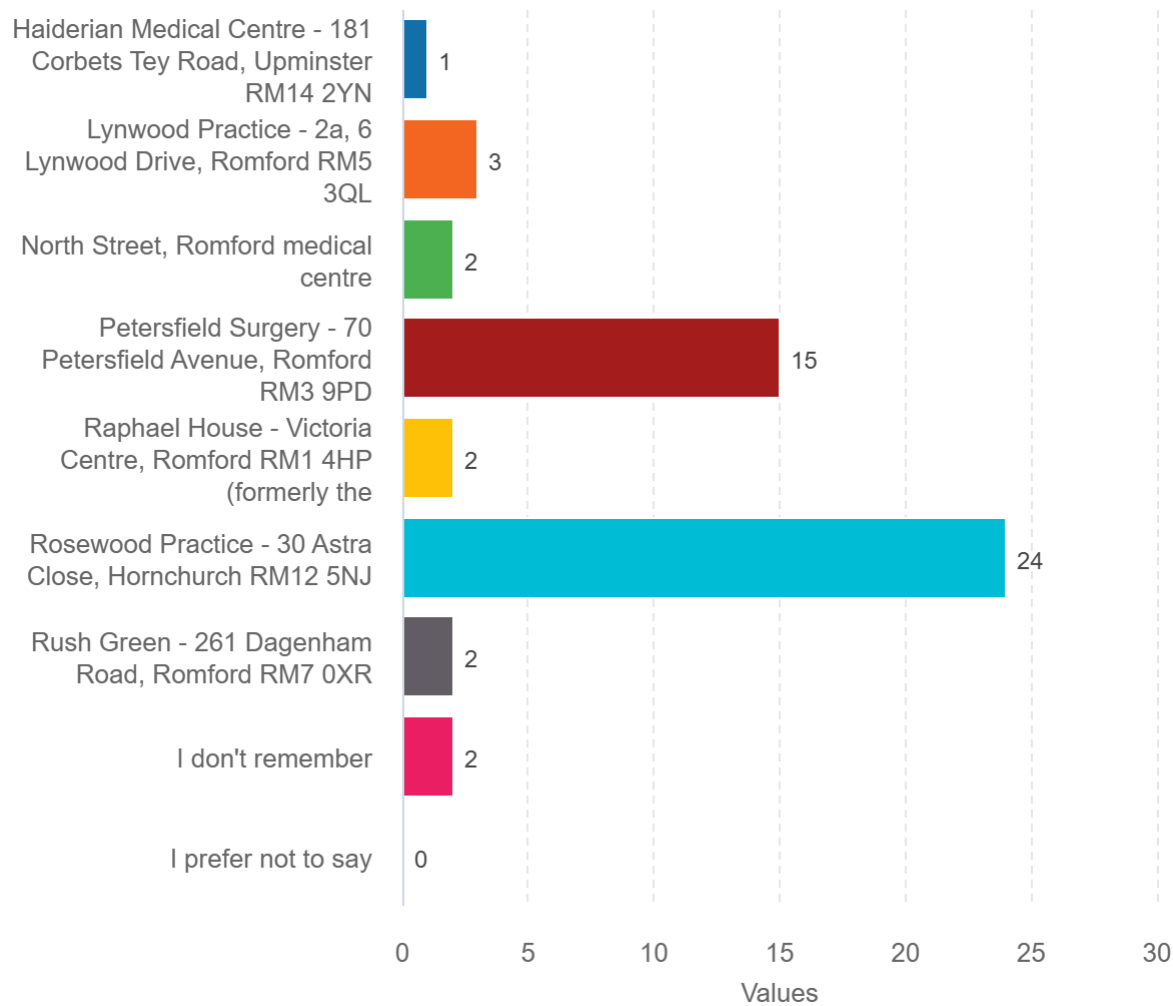
Respondents' GP practices

The following chart – split over two pages – shows at which practices the respondents to the survey are patients:

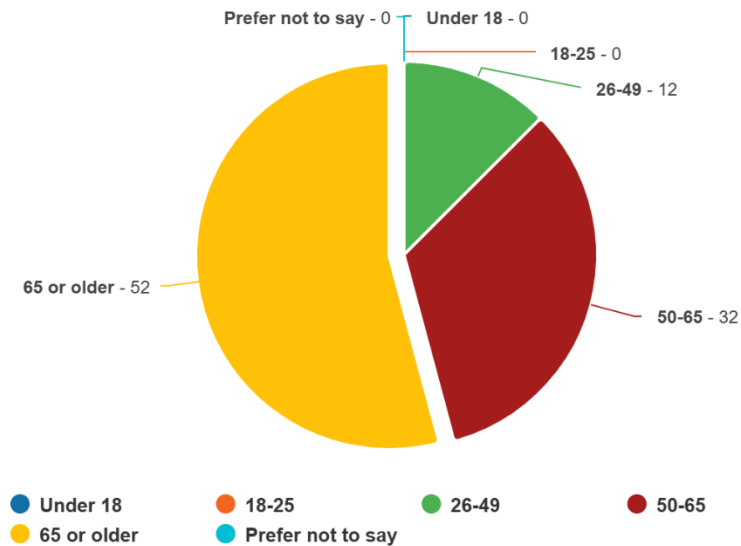




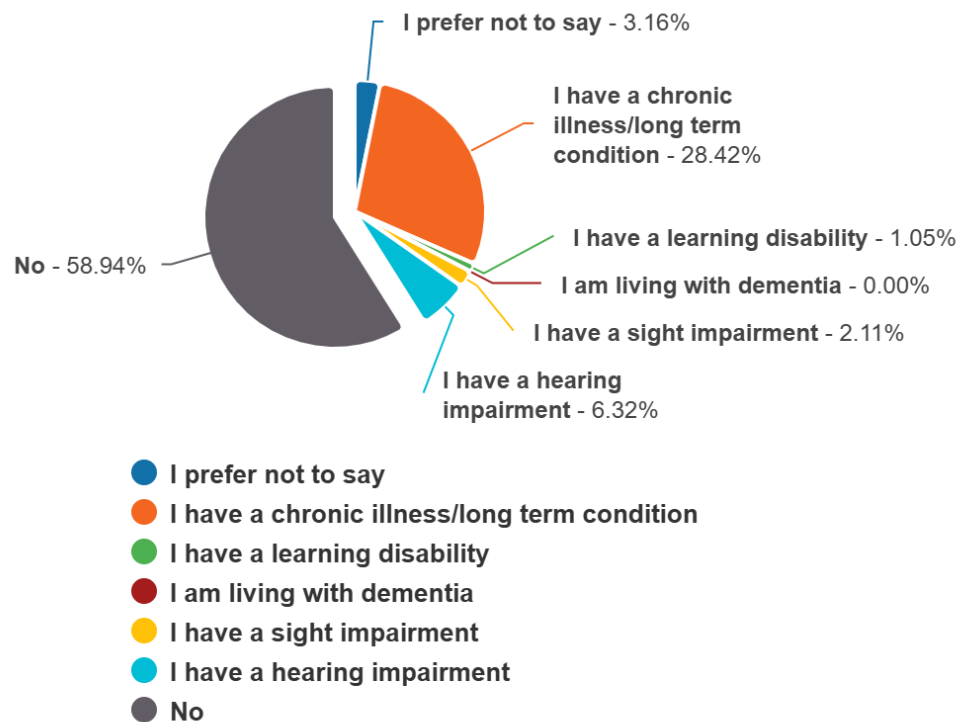
Locations of Hubs to which respondents were referred



Respondents' age groups

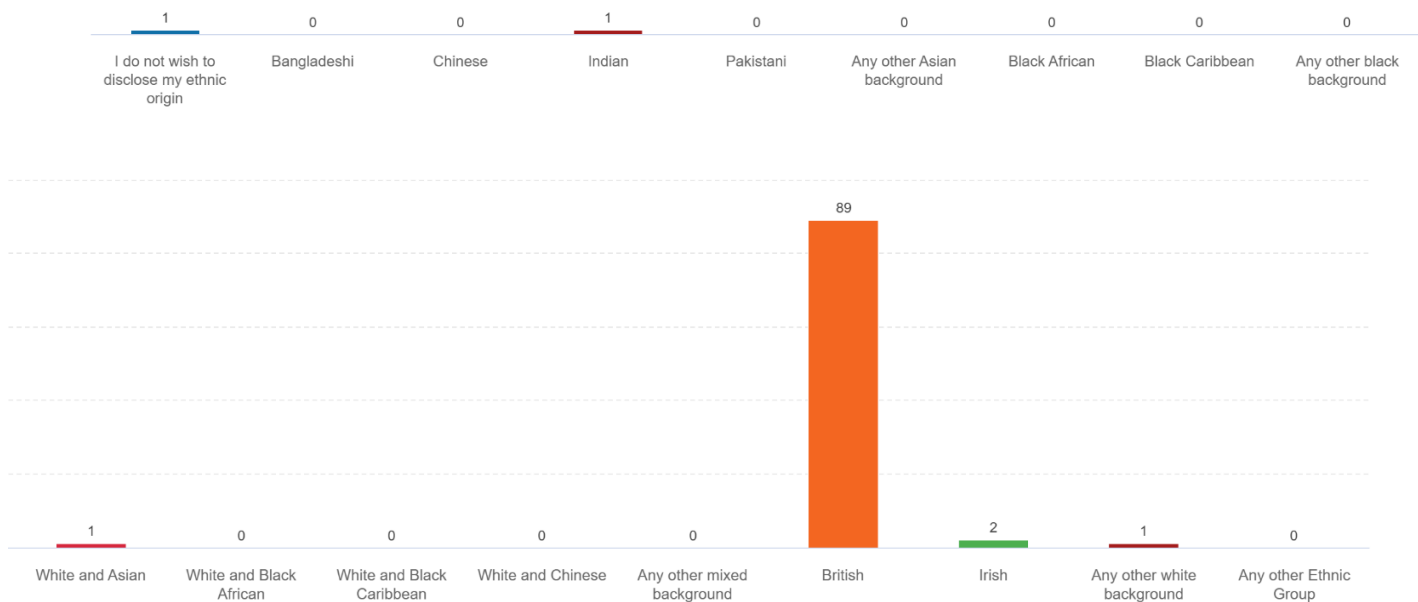


Respondents with special needs



Respondents' ethnicity

Not every respondent chose to answer the ethnicity question; those who did responded as follows:



APPENDIX 2**Hub accessibility**

One issue identified in this report is the proximity (or otherwise) of Hubs to public transport links and on-street car parking facilities.

In this Appendix, each hub is listed with details of public transport links (mainly bus services) and car parking facilities.

Although at least one bus route passes near to each of the Hubs, many of those routes are effectively local and do not serve all areas from which people are likely to come. In many cases, patients travelling to a Hub may, therefore, have to change buses enroute.

Haiderian Medical Centre – Corbets Tey Road, Upminster

Bus services – route 370 passes nearby

Car parking – limited on-site parking; limited on-street parking available nearby (with yellow-line restrictions applying at certain times)

Lynwood Practice – Lynwood Drive, Romford

Bus services – route 365 passes nearby; routes 247, 252 and 294 serve Collier Row Town Centre about 350 metres distant

Car parking – no on-site parking; limited on-street parking available nearby

Petersfield Surgery – Petersfield Avenue, Romford

Bus services – route 496 passes nearby; routes 256 and 294 pass about 400 metres distant

Car parking – no on-site parking; limited on-street available nearby

Raphael House – Victoria Centre, Pettits Lane, Romford

Bus services – route 499 passes nearby; routes 174 and 496 pass along Main Road, about 300 metres distant

Car parking – limited on-site parking; limited on-street parking available nearby (yellow line restrictions apply 8.30am-6pm in Pettits Lane and in nearby streets)

Rosewood Practice – Astra Close, Hornchurch

Bus services – route 252 passes nearby

Car parking – limited on-site parking; limited on-street parking available nearby

Rush Green – Dagenham Road, Romford

Bus services – routes 5, 103, 128 and 174 pass nearby

Car parking – no on-site or street parking available in vicinity

Participation in Healthwatch Havering

Local people who have time to spare are welcome to join us as volunteers. We need both people who work in health or social care services, and those who are simply interested in getting the best possible health and social care services for the people of Havering.

Our aim is to develop wide, comprehensive and inclusive involvement in Healthwatch Havering, to allow every individual and organisation of the Havering Community to have a role and a voice at a level they feel appropriate to their personal circumstances.

Members

This is the key working role. For some, this role will provide an opportunity to help improve an area of health and social care where they, their families or friends have experienced problems or difficulties. Very often a life experience has encouraged people to think about giving something back to the local community or simply personal circumstances now allow individuals to have time to develop themselves. This role will enable people to extend their networks, and can help prepare for college, university or a change in the working life. There is no need for any prior experience in health or social care for this role.

The role provides the face-to-face contact with the community, listening, helping, signposting, providing advice. It also is part of ensuring the most isolated people within our community have a voice.

Healthwatch Havering Friends' Network

Join our Friends' Network for regular updates and other information about health and social care in Havering and North East London. It cost nothing to join and there is no ongoing commitment.

To find out more, visit our website at

<https://www.healthwatchhaverling.co.uk/advice-and-information/2022-06-06/our-friends-network-archive>



Healthwatch Havering is the operating name of

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A community interest company limited by guarantee

Registered in England and Wales

No. 08416383

Registered Office:

St James Court, 27-43 Eastern Road, Romford RM1 3NH

Telephone: 01708 303300



Call us on **01708 303 300**



email enquiries@healthwatchhavering.co.uk



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