

Your Voice Can Change Services:

**Experience of patients using
Parkway, Fieldway and Headley Drive
GP surgeries**

**New Addington Group Practices
AT Medics**

December 2021

Findings in brief

59% respondents rated their GP as positive and 14% were negative.

91% knew about the Dr IQ app, 74% had used it and 43% used it regularly.

53% would recommend DR iQ app to family and friends with 19% unlikely to.

Low responses from Headley Drives suggest that they patients here are less digitally connected.

Patients would welcome more support on DR iQ app usage.

On overall Croydon service, staff attitude and training and access were key issues.

Recommendations in brief

Incorporate additional features on DR iQ app.

Training sessions on how to use DR iQ app.

Work with patients to increase engagement in all services not just the app.

Understand the different demographics in the specific surgeries.

Continue conversations with patients to help improve services.

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Executive Summary

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak in March 2020, Healthwatch Croydon ceased from face-to-face community engagement and because of this started virtual online engagement with people in the community using digital survey solution.

To gain the views of Croydon residents, we used Smart Survey online survey to gather information on the views and experiences of people using Health and social care services and to know how they got on using the DR iQ Mobile app which is the fastest way to access to any NHS GP service. Dr iQ is a free NHS online consultation platform, providing fast, safe, and effective online consultations with GPs, reducing the need to book and wait for a face-to-face GP appointment.

Healthwatch Croydon approached AT Medics – New Addington Group practice based on their past recognition of the very few GP Practices in Croydon who appeared to be customer service focus driven following a report we published in 2019 on GP Mystery Shopping.

We agreed on using their GP text message service to roll out a survey in October 2020 to have an insight on people's experiences using Health and social care services. This was an exciting opportunity for us because we experienced how technology could gather and increase the number of responses using the text messaging avenue and gather feedback instantly.

We aim to get the best out of local health and social care services by responding to the voices of seldom heard groups and people in the community by improving services, listening to the views and experiences, and then influencing decision-making.

These are our findings:

- **Positive GP rating:** The analysis of this survey showed a very good rating (59%) on the experience respondents had with their GPs and the narratives collated evidenced that GPs were professional during patients visits which was helpful and the service offered was supportive. They also rated GPs positive because appointments were booked on time and the staff attitude were great. (See page 15 - 18)
- **For those who found it negative:** 14% found it negative, due to not getting appointments on time, waiting times, wrong medication was given, and some found staff attitude very unprofessional. (See page 15, 21-22)
- **Use of the DR iQ app:** AT Medics have introduced this app for patients to use to support their access and response to services. 91% of the respondents have heard of it, 74% had used, 43% used it regularly and 30% less than once a month. It was mainly used to put in medication and prescription requests to upload readings or collect results. 44% found they could use this easily, but some did have issues of access and ease. (See pages 23-28)
- **Recommendation of DR iQ app:** 33% of respondents have said they are very likely to recommend this app to their family and friends with a further 20% stating they were likely to/ The benefit of this app is that patients skip the long waiting queues at surgeries and are privileged to order prescription/medication, book appointments, view medical records and many more via the app. However, 19% were likely or unlikely to use it with a further 16% who had not used it at all. (See page 33)

- **Patient support on DR iQ app usage:** We asked respondents how this app could be improved based on their experience and discovered that patients needed support using the app. Some said their medical history was not fully logged. A vast number of respondents especially the elderly are not computer literate and could be excluded digitally.
(See page 32)
- **Responses from Headley Drive relatively low:** The survey was circulated via AT Medics text message service three times but the response rate from Headley drive remained low at a figure of 7 compared to Parkway Health Centre and Fieldway Medical Center who had a total of 206 and 119 respondents, respectively. This might suggest that those had Headley Drive are less likely to use digital which may impact the usefulness of the Dr IQ app.
(See page 14)
- **View of Croydon's health and care services:** When asked about overall health and care services In Croydon, staff attitude and training came up as an issue. (See page 33-34)

These are our recommendations:

- **Improved features on DR iQ app:** Based on the analysis collated from respondents who participated in this survey, the DR iQ app might need additional features which can be incorporated during future updates of the app to accommodate the needs and accessibility of patients ([see page 32](#))
- **Bite Size training sessions on DR iQ app:** Training sessions either online or within the practice center on a how to use the app should be made available for patients. A user friendly easy to read guide or link to a short YouTube video clip on how to access and use DR iQ app would benefit a lot of patients who find it difficult to access. Information about the app also can be displayed on screen in the waiting area of the GP practice.
- **Work with patients to increase engagement in all services not just the app:** While it is clear the app has worked well for many; some have not used it that much or at all. Although the above suggestions will help, more focus is needed on those who use it less to engage with them in ways that work for them. The Patient Participation Group is a good place to begin,
- **Understand the different demographics in the specific surgeries:** The low response at Headley Drive suggests less digital connection with the patients here. Look into the specific demographics and see how service access can be adapted to meet their needs rather than taking a one size fit all approach.
- **Continue conversations with patients to help improve services:** This insight has brought up some relevant points to help improve service but consider ways to continue conversations to ensure services meet needs and expectations. Again, an effective Patient Participation Group will help with this.

1 Background

1.1 Context

About Healthwatch Croydon

Healthwatch Croydon works to get the best out of local health and social care services responding to your voice. From improving services today to helping shape better ones for tomorrow, we listen to your views and experiences and then influence decision-making. We have several legal functions, under the 2012 Health and Social Care Act.

National level: The GP Patient Survey 2019 compiled responses from 770,512 people across the country on their experience of the services provided by GP practices, including access to GPs, making appointments, quality of care received from GPs and other health professionals, waiting times, and satisfaction with opening hours and out-of-hours NHS services ¹

Other key findings of the survey include:

1. 82.9% described the overall experience of their GP practice as good.
2. 67.4% of patients rated their overall experience of making an appointment as good.
3. Of everyone who wanted a same day appointment, 62.1% got one.
4. Of those who have a preferred GP, around half (48%) said that they see or speak to them always, almost always, or a lot of the time.
5. 73.6% were satisfied with the appointment they were offered

¹ NHS England GP Survey 2019

6. 77% of patients who have tried to use their GP practice website found it easy to access information or services.
7. 69.5% waited less than 15 minutes to be seen following their appointment time
8. Almost seven in ten patients (69,5%) reported a good experience of NHS services when they wanted to see a GP but their GP practice was closed.
9. 91.1% of patients had confidence and trust in the people they saw or spoke to when their GP practice was closed.

Nine out of 10 patients have “confidence and trust” in their family doctor as well as other general practice staff such as nurses and pharmacists, according to new research published today ²

Patients rate their overall experience of their family doctor highly, with four out of five saying their GP treats them with “care and concern” and provides them with enough time to listen to their needs.

With patient choice a priority the NHS Long Term Plan, nine out of 10 patients felt involved in decisions about their care, while seven in 10 rated their overall experience of making a GP appointment as “good”, the GP patient survey shows.

However, GPs continue to face pressure and increasing demand and while seven in 10 patients were satisfied with the appointment they were offered, some patients were waiting longer than they would have liked to see their GP.

² NHS England GP Survey 2019

1.2 Rationale and Methodology

Healthwatch Croydon could not conduct face-to-face regular engagement due to COVID-19 and the current lockdown restrictions. These constraints allowed us to reach out and engage virtually to capture the views and experiences of people using health and social care services in Croydon through a text message service a GP Practise.

1.3 Method

During the scoping phase of this piece of work Healthwatch Croydon approached AT Medics - New Addington practices to conduct a survey using their GP text messaging service to capture the views of people using health and social care services and their experience of using the DR iQ Mobile app.

We conducted a qualitative survey which was rolled out and sent via the test message service across the three GP practices under AT Medics i.e., Parkway Health Centre, Fieldway Medical Centre, and Headley Drive Surgery.




We asked them the following questions:

1. What is the name of your GP Practice?
2. How would you rate your experience with your GP?
3. Parkway Health Centre, Fieldway Medical Centre and Headley Drive Surgery have launched the Dr iQ mobile app recently, have you heard about it?
4. How often do you use Dr iQ?
5. How can we improve your experience with the app?
6. How likely are you to recommend Dr iQ to friends and family?
7. Tell us more about your experiences of using Croydon's health and social care services, other than your GP. This could include hospitals, community services, care homes and dentists. Please include the name of the service in your reply.
8. What one improvement would you like to see to Croydon's health and social care services?
9. Demographic Information: - Name, Age, gender, sexuality, religious belief, ethnic background, disability status.

The surveys were conducted virtually which gave people the chance and freedom to express themselves use any electronic devices of their choice to complete the survey.

All surveys were completed on a voluntary basis and some participants did not answer all the questions. Healthwatch Croydon appreciates all the responses we received especially during this challenging and unprecedented time.

In total 335 surveys were completed via the text messaging service between October 2020 and January 2021. See diagram below.

Parkway Health Centre		62%	206
Fieldway Medical Centre		36%	119
Headley Drive Surgery		2%	7
Answered: 332 Skipped: 3		Response Total:	332

Respondents were encouraged to tell us about the services and are included in the comments throughout this report.

Thank you.

Healthwatch Croydon would like to express their appreciation and thanks to Nicola Shergold (Practice Manager) and Ismail Mohammed (Service Manager) at AT-Medics New Addington Practices for allowing us to carry out this piece of work virtually especially during this challenging and unprecedented times.

An incredible thanks goes to our Healthwatch Croydon long standing volunteers Michael and Carole Hembest for their great impact and contribution during the coding and analysis session.

Healthwatch staff team was in great support right from the onset of this piece of work and the team spirit was fully appreciated.

Limits of the research




Lockdown Restrictions: As a result of the pandemic and to control the spread of Covid-19, many countries put restrictions on movement, and asked those who are more vulnerable to infection to self-isolate and remain at home. The lockdown restrictions did not permit Healthwatch Croydon to conduct the usual face to face community engagement. As a result of this we utilised a different approach to collect the views and experiences of people using Health and social care services.

Clearance and acceptance: Although Healthwatch Croydon virtually engaged with 335 people through AT medics text message service, we understandably needed to gain clearance to connect with people online due to COVID-19 restrictions however the time this took was a significant limitation in getting the work completed within the planned original period.

Partial response: Apparently 515 clicked on the survey, whilst 180 partially attempted a few questions but did not wish to continue. We ended up with 335 who read the survey and completed it.

2 Insight results

2.1 What is the name of your GP Practice?

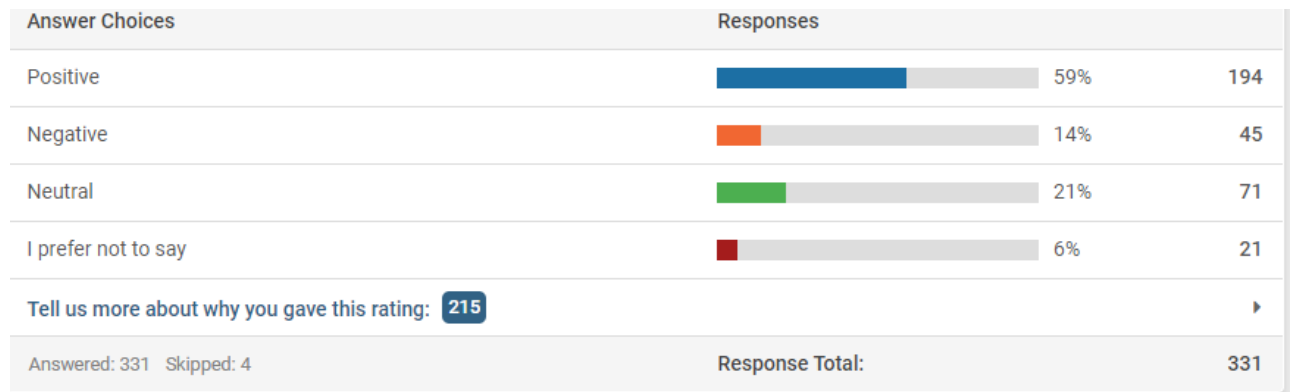
Answer Choices	Responses		
Parkway Health Centre		62%	206
Fieldway Medical Centre		36%	119
Headley Drive Surgery		2%	7
Answered: 332 Skipped: 3	Response Total:		332

We received 332 responses most from Parkway and just over a third from Fieldway and only seven from Headley Drive. Healthwatch Croydon is unsure why the responses were low from Headley Drive and perhaps the size and number of patients registered here are not as much as Field way and Parkway.

The survey was sent out through the test message service more than twice to give people registered at the above GP practices a chance to send their views and experiences of using health and social care services but the figures for Headley Drive Surgery remained significantly low.

It may also suggest that more at Parkway and Fieldway patients are more digitally connected.

2.2 How would you rate your experience with your GP?



The chart above shows that 59% rated their experience with their GP as positive with 21% neutral and 14% having a negative experience.

Healthwatch Croydon asked respondents to tell us more about why they gave these. We received a total of 331 who responded to the ratings of their GP and Two hundred and fifteen gave reasons why they had rated their GP either as positive, Negative, Neutral, or preferred not to say (**See above chart**)

2.2b Tell us more about why you gave this rating according to 2.2?

Positive responses: The themes that came out of the reasons why respondents rated the experience with their GP as positive are as following: Staff attitude was great, good communication and engagement with GP, Got appointments on time, and easy access.

(Please see below a few comments from respondents).

“Doctors are quick to respond and give advice if needed.”

“The nurses and everybody is so kind and helpful.”

“Helpful and Always there I get responses.”

“They go the extra mile for you.”

“Recently during Covid I had an urgent need to see a GP. Thanks to Dr IQ I was able to send images by text and get any appropriate treatment started. I was then given a GP appointment and referred to CUH for urgent treatment.”

“They always take time to listen and help if they can.”

“I never have any problems.”

“The doctor i spoke to was very thorough, nice and explained everything.”

“I have found the Doctors are all lovely, professional & efficient.”

“ found the last one very good as I was referred.”

Positive responses:

“Receptionists are always polite when I called and book to see GP and I'm always see the GP on my appointment time and practitioner always listen to me no rushing or anything and I enjoy consulting cause I'm always satisfied and all the health centre is always best and tidy.”

“Parkway surgery is one in a million interns of their customer service.”

“Always helpful.”

“Michael has Alzheimer's and one doctor in particular. Dr brown has been very good.”

“My GP's and especially the receptionists have been very helpful putting my mind at ease about the processes put in place etc.”

“Its easier to get help and advice for minor things and order medications.”

“Because the lady Dr i have is such a lovely and caring person not like some of them.”

“I find it so easy to use the app.”

“Only recently joined surgery. I have not needed to see a GP in this time. I have only needed repeat prescriptions which is done through Pharmacy2U. The only contact I have had has been by phone and this was positive. I will be able to supply more information when I have actually seen my GP, hopefully not in the near future. The reception staff have been very helpful and friendly.”

“He listens to you.”

“Can be very helpful at times.”

Positive responses:

“The response when you go in or contacting them directly through the app always get back to you and try to make you comfortable good listen.”

“Clean & no wait time very Professional.”

“My engagement with my GP has always been good with proper guidance.”

“They have gone above and beyond to address issues I have had. Fantastic bunch and Parkway Medical hub.”

“Always had a quick response with a call back from the Doctor.”

“They are prompt and helpful in most cases.”

“I always get appointments for me and my son when needed. GPs are always pleasant and helpful.”

“Never had any problems. Staff are always helpful and pleasant. It’s been my practice since the beginning.”

Neutral Responses: - Some responses were neutral since their experiences with the GP were not fully satisfying due lack of communication, and staff attitude.

(Please see below a few comments from respondents).

“Most appointments have been positive but a couple of appointments i have felt were not resolved.”

“It’s hit and miss as to how things go, sometimes it’s flawless but more recently it has become more of a stress to get to the point of actually speaking to a doctor Doctors and staff are great and helpful. Your DR iQ app is rubbish you can’t order meds after 6PM on line that’s total rubbish and pointless having the app.”

“Experience was good but I never got called to say medication had been sent to chemist so I ended up calling GP.”

“Had a Ultrasound 3 weeks today and not a reply yet.”

“Prior to DR IQ I was informed they cannot help me because my patient records are locked, I drove to surgery, receptionist who by the way has seen me knows Me stated sorry I don’t have your records open, this was communicated Via An open Window at the surgery and the lady closed the window. There are Numerous examples I could Give but I do not think anything would change its embedded in the culture of the practice.”

“Not really had any joy finding out what is wrong with my wrist and arm when I have asked why so painful so had to give up my job as a domestic because of my arm.”

“Some of the receptionist staff can be very rude and can forget to order your medications. I find Ms “M” and Ms “C.A” the most efficient and very professional in all they do. Ms “T” is also very helpful and professional ”

Neutral Responses:

“Have not been to the doctor for about 3/4 years contacted them 3 times in 5 weeks because I had on going problems for 3 months had to demand to see a doctor in the end find IQ us a barrier between the patient and the doctor it feels like they don't want to see you also if you ring to speak to the receptionist all they say is go on IQ no help at all in the end I was going to give up. The IQ should give you the opt of ever online consolations or having an appointment the government have now said last week that GP's should make themselves available to their patients.”

“Dreadful Prior to the current crisis things were okay . Since then the service is virtually non-existent.”

“I have always had a positive experience for myself but have found they seem to forget my housebound mother as she is not a complainer so seems to be forgotten.”

“Because they didn't call me at all.”

“I never see the same doctor, I feel that I have to instruct my GP of what I want or think my need is.”

“You can't order any medicine or see a doctor you have to go through this and most of the time when you request for a doctor to call it don't go through to them, me it is a waste of time.”

“Never see the same doctor.”

“Had some great doctors but also some terrible ones who have ignored my concerns and belittled me.”

“Nobody wanted to see or speak to me.”

Negative Responses: - Some responses were negative since their experiences with the GP were not satisfying due lack of communication, given wrong prescriptions and staff attitude.

(Please see below a few comments from respondents).

“Very difficult to communicate and obtain a response, I have to chase up, at times argue, because they do not take anything on board, they have been known to deny me appointments even medication, the relationship deteriorated when I made about their staff Member I became their target, this started with the practice manager then trickled down to staff, I have been With the surgery for 25 years I called for help during first lockdown Prior to DR IQ I was informed they cannot help me because my patient records are locked, I drove to surgery, receptionist who by the way has seen me knows Me stated sorry I don’t have your records open, this was communicated Via An open Window at the surgery and the lady closed the window. There are Numerous examples I could Give but I do not think anything would change its embedded in the culture of the practice.”

“I feel like they don’t pay attention and don’t care about the patients.”

“Very bad experience I ordered my medication on 3/9/20 but it’s been issued on 12/9/20 after my enquires I don’t know what they are waiting to issue my regular repeat medicines which was runout due to that I did not use my medicine for two days.”

“I have various problems and given medications that don’t work and spend my life 24/7 in pain with cramps all night in my feet and legs and ulcers under my crouch so I can’t sit down or walk as they burst and sting, I also have a permanent stoma, hernia and collapsed abdomen muscle.”

“They are slow and are terrible at sending prescriptions across to the chemist. Communication with the pharmacy is awful regularly. No one cares anymore.”

Negative Responses:



“Every other prescription is wrong, not done or missing important tablets Only one nurse available a time and have to wait 3 weeks for appointments then they get cancelled on the day and have to wait another 3 weeks. My son will now be having his q6 weeks injections at 24 weeks because of this It was a complete disaster. They don’t know what they are doing, and the staff was very confused. It was a complete waste of time.”

“Last visit was because I have fungal nail infection in my toes. I still have it, I was only given one option for treatment which hasn’t worked. I took in a second lot of nail clippings after over a year and a half of taking the tablets I was prescribed and heard no more. No follow up, wasn’t informed of the results. I only found out after being prescribed these tablets they can adversely affect your kidneys, I should of been told this before hand.”

“Every time I have to go to doctors I see a doc I’ve never seen before so they know nothing about me and previous ailments I have had in the past, absolute joke of a place. Of the regular doctors I have seen in the past they all leave because they cannot work alongside or under Dr L, I know because they have told me.”


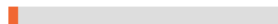





“They are rude over there they don’t help you at all if I ever need anything done I contact parkway. They roll their eyes at you and everything. You try and book a call back they do not put it through. I could keep going but I am not going to I have had numerous problems with Fieldway too many to mention.”

2.3 Parkway Health Centre, Fieldway Medical Centre and Headley Drive Surgery have launched the Dr iQ mobile app recently, have you heard about it?

Answer Choices	Responses
Yes	 91% 302
No	 9% 29
Answered: 331 Skipped: 4	
Response Total: 331	

Over 90% of those who completed this survey had heard about the Dr iQ app compared to 9% (29) respondents who said they have not. The next question below highlights how often the app is been used amongst people.

2.4 How often do you use Dr iQ?

Answer Choices	Responses
Every day	 0% 1
A few times a week	 3% 10
About once a week	 4% 14
A few times a month	 20% 66
Once a month	 16% 53
Less than once a month	 30% 97
I have not used Dr iQ	 26% 85
Please tell us why you give this answer: 193	
Answered: 326 Skipped: 9	
Response Total: 326	

The analysis above indicates the frequency of the app usage and quite a lot of the respondents seem to use it either a few times a month 20% (66) or on a monthly 16% (53) basis, which may reflect patient need. However, 26%, (85) had said they have not used the Dr iQ app at all.

2.4.1 See below respondents' reasons/frequency for why they use the Dr iQ app?

We received 193 responses of the reasons and frequency of why they used the Dr iQ app and this was themed into categories as shown below. The respondents also shared their narratives which was grouped into positive, negative, and neutral sentiments. The comments highlighted barriers and the quality of the app. (Please see page 24 -27 for the quotes from respondents).



2.4.2 Themed categories of why people used DR iQ app

Medications/ Medications+: We analysed and found 39 respondents who used the DR iQ app to request not only for medication supply but also other additional request such as medical check-up, blood tests, personal health problems and other online consultations. Below is a selection of quotes on their experience.

“I have been using epipens and steroids for the last few years and if I have used them, I need to replace them.”

“I use it every 3 months to order medication.”

“I have lots of medication to order and a few health problems.”

“I use it when I need to get in touch with a GP or order medication.”

“I use the service for booking appointments and then discussing symptoms. I also use for repeat prescriptions. It’s a fantastic service.”

“To request medication Especially during this Covid lockdown it is a great way to speak to your GP and order meds.”

“I only need to use the app for my blood pressure tablets I get every 2 months or when I am unwell.”

“I use it for repeat medications and find it brilliant. Also for appointments which is generally very good.”

Prescriptions: We observed that 26 respondents used the DR iQ app basically for repeat prescriptions. Some prescriptions were ordered on behalf of family members as well. Please see below a few quotes from individuals who used the app for prescriptions.

“I order my prescriptions & use app if I'm unwell.”

“I order my repeat prescriptions on it regularly.”

“Also, just recently I have needed to be issued with a sickness certificate which I was able to do on Dr IQ which was quick, and enabled me to e-mail directly to my employer.”

“For my mums prescription.”

“For repeat prescription as I am housebound
Prescription renewal.”

“Normally use it for repeat prescriptions for myself and my husband.”

“My repeat prescription GABERPENTIN is monthly. So that's mainly why. They are simply the best!!! I think that DR P should be reinstated!! He's got a BRILLIANT MIND.”

“Because of my daughter's need for her repeat prescription which has been really difficult to get these past months.”

“As and when required to order my prescription, I asked for letter for my employer to confirm vulnerability ion covid shielding list and they have not provided me with the letter no response either.”

“repeat prescriptions ordered 11th September and am still waiting.”

Quality: The quality of the app was an aspect we discovered respondents found challenging. We read from a variety of 33 people who either had compatibility issues, not been able to access the app for one reason or the other. See a selection of quotes from individuals who used the app, but the quality affected their ability to use it.

“When I tried there was no room for comments.”

“I have tried to download the service but i cannot get into the app.”

“It never works for me and I get upset and frustrated about it when I’m ill and being told to use it when I can’t get connected.”

“It never seems to work for me and I like to talk to a person then being told to use the app all the time.”

“I try to use Dr iQ app it won’t give access it says my password is invalid.”

“It isn’t any good for ordering different meds or consulting.”

“My mother is 66 and never used a computer I have to use the app on her behalf as they don’t even offer training on the app. They change apps every year and never copy the data across i.e. meds your on.”

“My dad suffers with high blood pressure, every time his blood pressure has shown high, and I’ve used the app, I’m told not to worry about it, they’re useless.”

“Tried using it but didn’t get any response to my enquiry till date. Had to call GO Hub instead.”

“Whilst I have downloaded and set up the app for a family member, I have not done so for myself. It would be very useful if one household (or family) could be under one login on the app. As their are older members of the family that may not be able to use the app as well as younger members of the family and ask for the assistance of these younger members. The problem then is if the app is now downloaded using one family member details for contact purposes, that family member cannot use the same log in details for their own account.”

Positive Reasons: The Dr iQ app was quite positive for some respondents. We analyzed 44 people who felt they could access the easily. Here is a selection of positive quotes from individuals used the app.

“I use DRIQ to manage my mother in law and my partners health so use on a regular basis.”

“I have to submit my blood pressure readings every 2 months I do this at home to save bothering the surgery.”

“My son uses it for me or I make a phone call to the practice.”

“Had some issues at minute and always get a response.”

“Because it is an easier service.”

“Because I use it when I need.”

“I’m currently having health issues so am using it more often.”

“I only visit or contact the doctors when a need to do so occurs.”

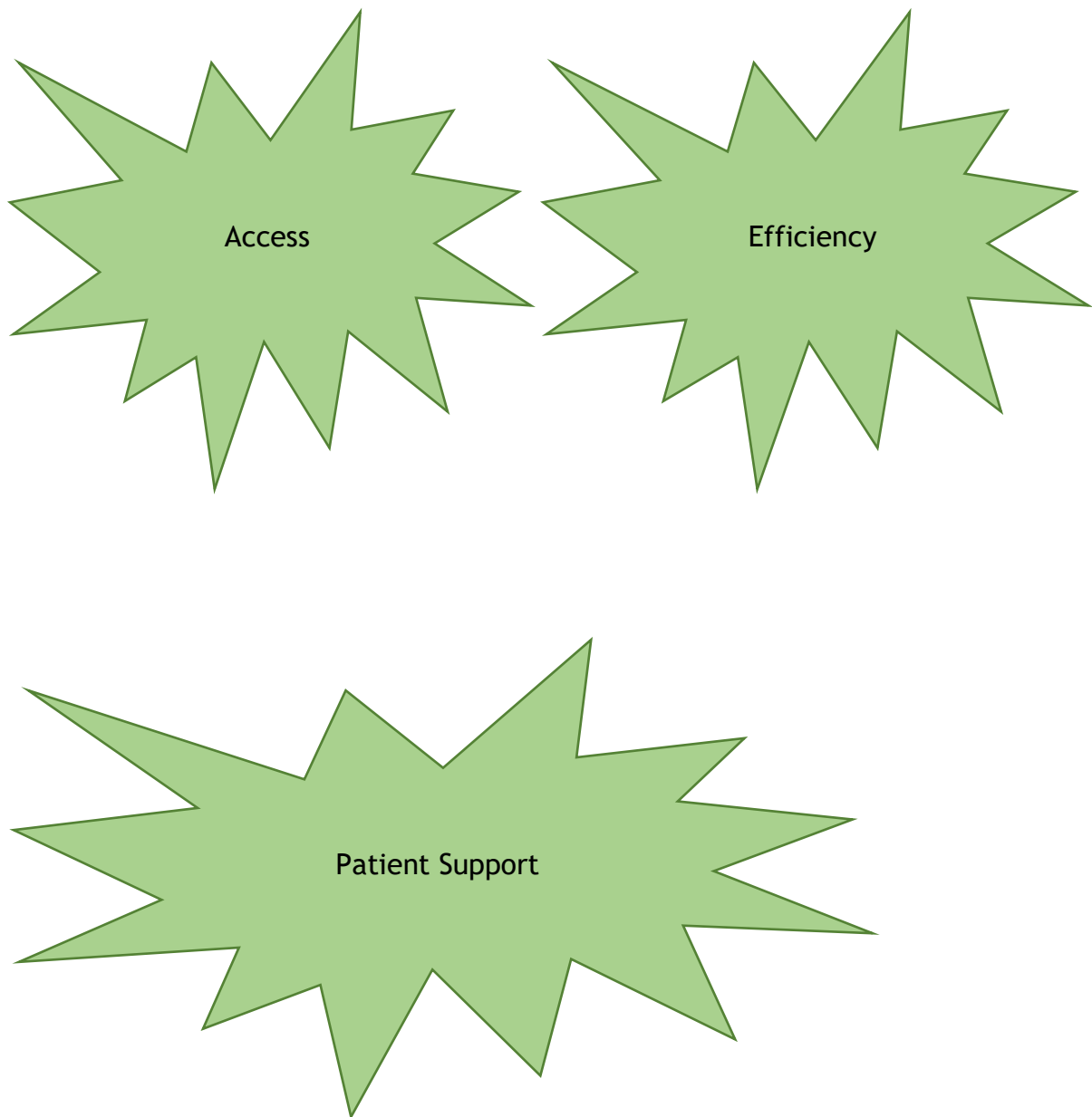
“It easier to speak and ask for advice, quick results and fast way to book an appointment without being.”

“I use it when I need to now I have it.”

“I did need to use it recently for blood test and summer time for possible dislocation of my left ankle.”

2.5 How can we improve your experience with the app?

We asked respondents how the DR iQ app could be improved based on their experience and 228 gave narratives which we themed as the following: - access, efficiency, and patient support. (Read a few quotes relating to these themes on page 29 -31.)



Access: Based on the experience of respondents who used the app, accessibility was highlighted because the app did not offer enough flexibility to view medical records easily. **(Please see a few comments on accessibility)**

“Make it easier to talk to someone.”

“Leave it open on weekends.”

“That u can get access to it 24 hours a day.”

“Keep the app open 24/7 like it was.”

“I did try to book an appointment at Fieldway but had to have a phone consultation first. The doctor wanted to see me so she booked me an appointment but as she is based at Parkway that's where I had to go.”

“Better pathways and better communication with doctor.”

“Having it operating 24/7 and not just when the practice is open plus a few hours. Also by having a qualified person deciding what treatment is needed rather than the reception team as to whether you need to see a doctor.”

“Would be better if we are able to start a messaging service to the GP. Often, I missed their call after requesting a call on the app, I'd have to ring the surgery as normal and wait in the queue. Would be easier to have access to booking appointments in the app too. Like to actually choose dates instead of waiting for a call back.”

“Unsure but do know a lot of us older people don't have internet or get quite muddled with it.”

“Let you order repeat prescriptions at any time not just during opening hours.”

Efficiency: 60 respondents emphasized on the efficiency of the app and the comments indicated that the app perhaps did not reflect certain features to fit patient's medical query. **(Please see comments below on efficiency).**

“Cannot book an appointment with nurse.”

“App is very slow especially when ordering medicine.”

“When selecting the chemist, it only locates chemists available where you are when you order meds.”

“Maybe a usual chemist is able to be selected quickly, rather than searching every time.”

“Make sure you do prescriptions correctly if a problem. Contact me.”

“I have to submit my blood pressure readings every 2 months but I find it very hard to submit my reading on the app could you please find a little space on the app so you can submit reading without bothering the surgery often in a Saturday or Sunday I have struggled to but a message on to the system due to unable to get the system to pick the chemist, could the last used chemist be make a default to uses can just confirm or change as required? Could tell me when they send my stuff to pharmacy.”

“I have used the app on 3 separate occasions once I was prescribed medicine based on what I had said. The second much the same and had to request that more was done otherwise I would of been on constant pain relief and the 3rd no one got back to me. By letting you order meds and easy to get in touch with a doctor.”

“I was never informed of the new app until I needed medication and even then I did not get the prescription.”

“Make the re-ordering of scripts less tortuous. For example, I'm on Warfarin, which needs to be re-ordered monthly, but can't be put as a repeat. That means I have to re-type everything, name, dosage, how often daily, then I must enter the reason why I need it, which should be pretty obvious.

There should be another box in using app, another category, because sometimes, the reason we need to use the practice doesn't fit into the existing boxes.

There needs to be a: ""contact us"" box too, with e-mail addresses, sub-sections such as "" practice reception@"" , ""pharmacist @"" , "" gp@"" , etc. For example, I had an online consult, where GP replied asking more questions, and there was no way for me to answer without going through the process of booking another consultation.”

Patient Support: Patient support was a theme that came up during the analysis as 19 mentioned that some sort of assistance was required to help patients use the app especially the elderly ones and those who are not digitally savvy.

(Please see comments from respondents on Patient Support).

“Write more instructions.”

“need contact with someone who can help me with the app to resolve the issue. tried the GP service but unable to assist.”

“Stop shoving it down every ones throat a lot of us older people like to talk to the surgery and can’t use a phone app to do it Creeps us out.”

“Make it easier for the older people.”

“Have more staff at the surgeries to help patients set it up, none of them seem able to do it when I ask, yet they are stressing down the phone that you’re to use it, I don’t understand that. They don’t know how to set it up but expect you to.”

“Make it more simple especially for the older generation.”

“Need a repeat prescription click here etc.”

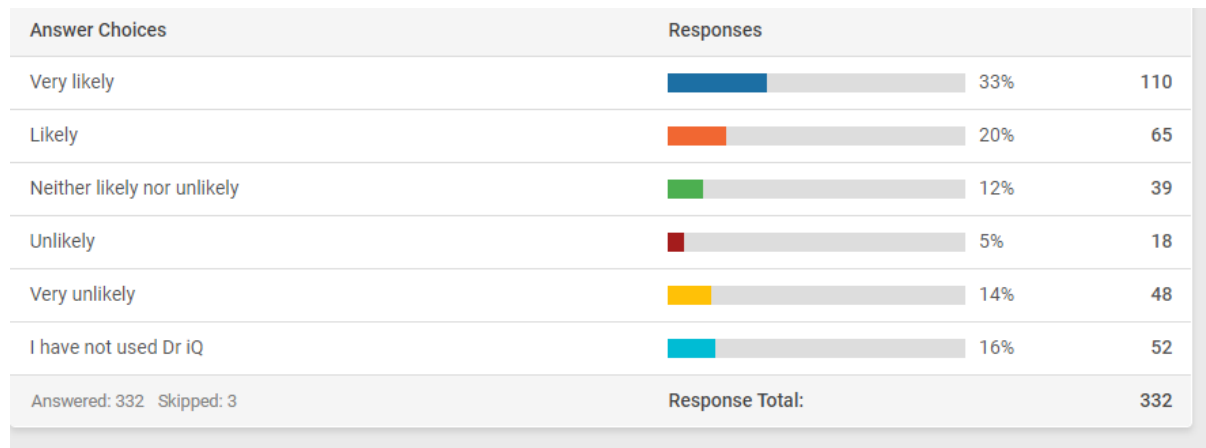
“Show me how to use it.”

“Make it easy for people who are not computer literate.”

“I don’t like the app at all as it has taken away the personal relationship you used to have with your GP and reception staff and I don’t have trust in the diagnosis through the app as you’re not actually seen by anyone.”

“Training has to be offered to patients. Not all medication that is issued is logged on the system. When you order meds it says approved but that’s not always the case and from experience it’s like reception have read the requested and approved it for a doctor to review. So you don’t know if the meds have actually been approved and some time it says approved but has been rejected.”

2.6 How likely are you to recommend Dr iQ to friends and family?



The graph shows that 33% are very likely to recommend the DR iQ app to family and friend and 20% likely to recommend, 19% are unlikely or very unlikely to recommend. However, 52 people (16%) haven't used the app and so could not comment.

2.7 What one improvement would you like to see to Croydon's health and social care services?

We received 196 comments regarding the improvement respondents would like to see within Croydon's health and social care services. Based on the comments received from our respondents, staff attitude was a theme which came up frequently. They would like to see changes around staff attitude i.e., better, and clearer communication, be more understanding and have a better holistic approach toward patients. (See below a few comments from respondents)

Staff Attitude: Respondents highlighted and emphasized on staff attitude. They wanted more understanding, care, and clearer communication
(Read below comments from respondents)

“To be more kind caring and helpful respectful and not be rude and give a advice and ask questions.”

“Listen to the patient, they know there own body.”

“Your staff needs training.”

“Understanding, Caring thoughtful, understanding their problems and health and more are more.”

“For people to listen and not to just treat the illness at the time.”

“Social services are so stretched they never get back to you they throw the book at you to tell you how wrong you are .and make threats to take you to court.”

“Not worry about money so much and be more caring.”

“More patient care and understanding.”

“Better and clearer communication.”

“Social care services should be trained to what they deal with. I've seen this first hand with my mum who passed away Sept 2020 social care service didn't have a clue on dealing with her. I just hope I don't have to rely on them in my old age.”

Improvement around access: The survey showed that 8 patients would like improvement on access to seeing a GP, get appointments on time without having to wait for long, have more hospitals and for Health care professionals to provide better care at Accident & Emergency service at Croydon University Hospital.

(See below comments from respondents)

“There's always room for improvement. I would like to see more ethnicity on reception, especially Black British Caribbean. I feel under represented. There's very little diversity at both Fieldway and Parkway medical practices. Both of which I use. That would be a welcome change. I'd be happy to be a part time Receptionist at Parkway Medical as I'm very personable and professional.”

“Better care at Accident & Emergency service at Croydon University Hospital.”

“See a doctor like we used too.”

“More doctors and nurses, more appointment slots for donating blood.”

“I notice people are not able to see the GP even at their giving appointment time and some have to wait longer I have experience it but not too open and i didn't even had that to my earlier answers reason be I always go there expecting such looking at how every case is different but I think is also fair when someone run late and there is a GP the person deserve to be seen not we can rebook you cause you late as it goes the same way and that's sound logical to me.”

“Make the doctors do some work for there money and stop cancelling appointments.”

“Face to face consultations.”

“Make services like weight loss clinics more available. Maybe do like a group thing so that we can get more support and advice. I'm under the live well programme which is fantastic, but I would like a see a group thing run by the health and social care teams.”

General Need: This is a selection of the 49 respondents who further gave comments generally on what they desire for improvement within health and social care services in Croydon. (Read comments below)

“There should be more staff and funding.”

“Telephone bookings.”

“Face to face appointments.”

“Helping either those that are dealing with homeless issues when the local council neglect real issues.”

“They should improve our dental care.”

“More support for me as I have complex disabilities and get anxious every time I think what would happen to me if my mother died cos she helps me a lot with my frustration and anxiety, etc.”

“More ambulances, this priority call system is shocking, if your condition isn't life threatening you have to make your own way to hospitals otherwise you wait up to two hours.”

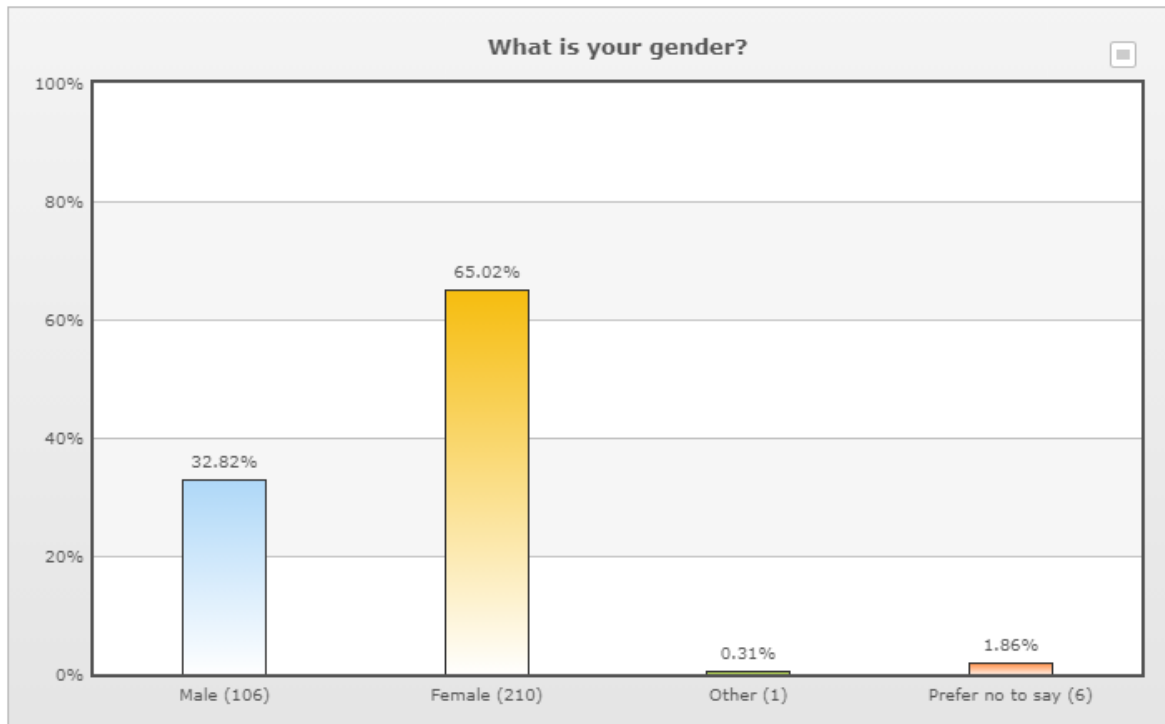
“More support for first time mums.”

“Better time management, especially during this pandemic. At Parkway in particular you arrive at the time of your appointment however practitioners are running behind schedule and you are sat out in the waiting area with a number of other people including children without face coverings. Does not feel safe.”

“More frontline workers.”

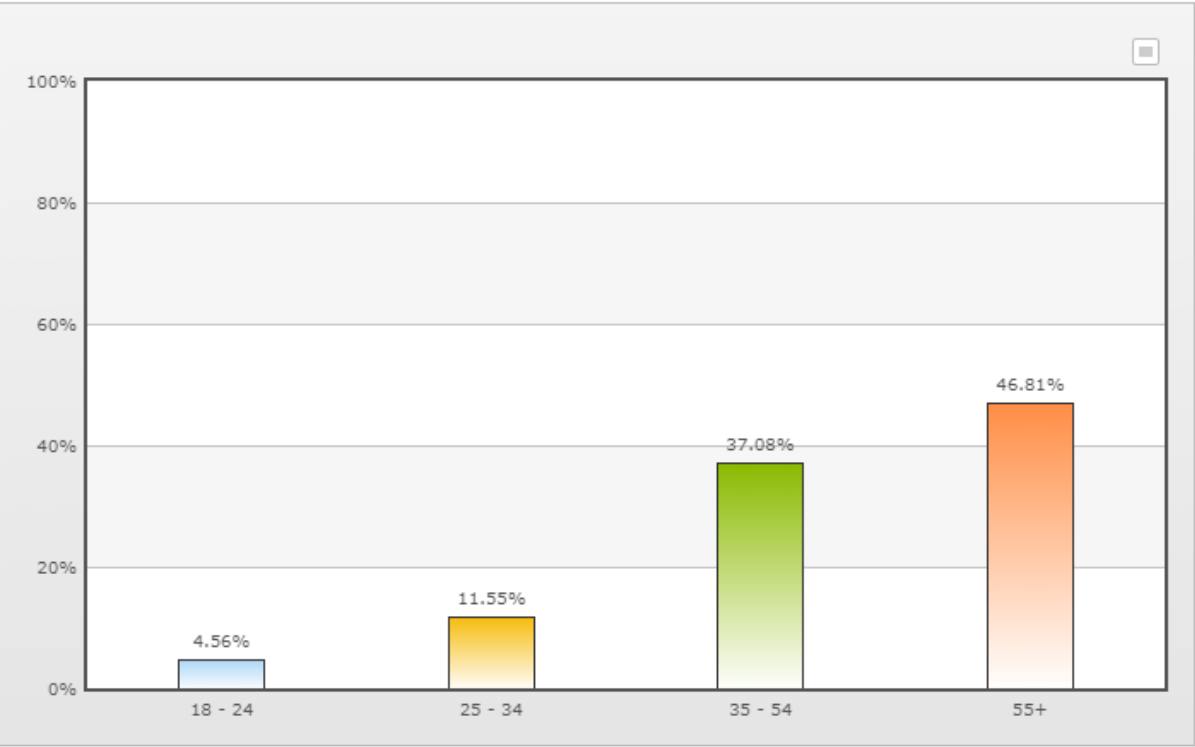
3 Key demographics of sample

3.1 What is your Gender.



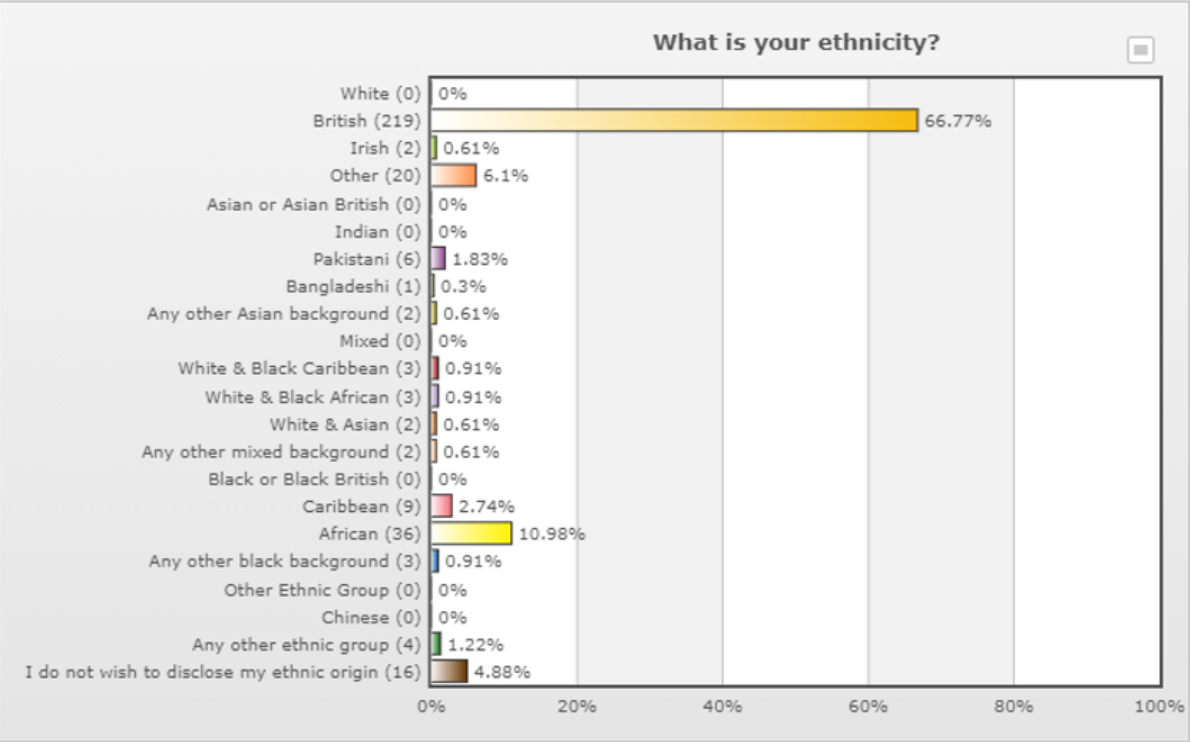
Our sample had a higher than average number of female respondents 65% to 32%

3.2 What is your age



Most of our respondents were over 35 years old, with a majority of those 55+

3.3 What is your ethnic background?



66% identified as British, with African or Caribbean around 16% and very few Asian respondents.

4. Responses to our research

Before publication, we shared this report and its full data with the practice manager of the three surgeries to give a response to our recommendations and findings. This is their response:

Kuljeet Sodhi, Deputy Regional Manager Kuljeet Sodhi | Deputy Regional Manager - Croydon & Greenwich AT Medics:

“It is good to see that most people are happy with the appointment access provided to them and it also reflects the hard work from clinicians and staff that goes into providing good access for our patients and providing them with the best patient care. Our own review of Dr iQ app has shown us that patients find Dr iQ the most convenient way to access our GP services. Consistency of patient access is vital to those who rely on our services. We will continue to improve our access for our patients.”

5. Quality assurance

Does the research ask questions that?

Are pertinent? Healthwatch Croydon aims to hear the views and experiences of patients at AT Medics-New Addington Group Practices and Croydon Residents who use health and social care services and how they find the DR iQ Mobile app. We will share comments anonymously with the service providers to help them to continue to deliver good quality care at this time

Increase knowledge about health and social care service delivery? This research helps both commissioners and providers of services both in the health and social care sectors. The experiences and views of people registered at AT Medics-New Addington Group Practices, will help inform knowledge for the future delivery of services.

Is the research design appropriate for the question being asked?

a) Proportionate: A survey was rolled out via AT Medics text messaging service and 330 people responded.

b) Appropriate sample size: AT medics is the first GP practice that Healthwatch Croydon have used their text messaging service to engage with registered patients at the practice. Healthwatch Croydon used these networks to extend our reach to listen to the views and experiences of people who use health and social care services.

Have ethical considerations been assessed and addressed appropriately?

Everyone was given the right to refuse and not partake in completing the survey, also we scoped and designed our survey with insight from the service manager at AT Medics. Healthwatch Croydon had to go through the clearance protocol before accessing this group.

Has risk been assessed where relevant and does it include?

- a) **Risk to well-being:** None.
- b) **Reputational risk:** Careful checking and referring to the relevant organisation has been undertaken before publication.
- c) **Legal risk:** Have appropriate resources been accessed and used to conduct the research? There was no need to refer to legal resources for this research.

Where relevant have all contractual and funding arrangements been adhered to? This did not relate to any specific contractual or funding arrangement. It was referred to by the draft business plan agreed with the commissioner.

Data Collection and Retention

Is the collection, analysis and management of data clearly articulated within the research design? Yes.

Has good practice guidance been followed? Yes.

Has data retention and security been addressed appropriately? Yes.

Have the GDPR and FOIA been considered, and requirements met? Yes.

Have all relevant legal requirements been adhered to ensure that the well-being of participants has been accounted for? i.e. the Mental Capacity Act. None required for this research.

Has appropriate care and consideration been given to the dignity, rights, and safety of participants? Yes, all participants were given the right to refuse or partake in the research.

Were participants clearly informed of how their information would be used and assurances made regarding confidentiality/anonymity? Yes.

Collaborative Working

Where work is being undertaken in collaboration with other organization’s have protocols and policies been clearly understood and agreed, including the development of a clear contractual agreement prior to commencement? There was no contractual agreement for this piece of work, but our working with AT medics was clearly agreed in advance of research taking place. The Practice Manager suggested that the service manager for AT-medics got involved in the process. Healthwatch Croydon was given approval to use their text message service to gain insight to the views and experiences of using health and social care services including the use of the DR IQ app.

Have any potential issues or risks that could arise been mitigated? These are shown below:

Risk factors	Level of risk	Contingency
Due to COVID-19 and the lockdown restrictions, we cannot access AT Medics and conduct face-to-face engagement.	Medium	Work with AT medics and utilize their text messaging service to reach out to patients registered at the practice.
Not enough respondents	Medium	Extend survey time which can affect publish date.
Overlapping of other projects	Low	Be realistic when scheduling time for other projects as this can affect the publish date.

Has Healthwatch independence been maintained? Yes, this research is shared with partner organisation before publication for their comment and communicated at all levels.

Quality Controls

Has a quality assurance process been incorporated into the design? There was a proper process of scoping.

Has quality assurance occurred prior to publication? Data collection was checked and re-checked.

Has peer review been undertaken? No peer review was undertaken. It was not required for this research project.

Conflicts of Interest

Have any conflicts of interest been accounted for? No conflict of interest.

Does the research consider intellectual property rights, authorship and acknowledgements as per organisational requirements? The research is owned by Healthwatch Croydon, who are managed by Help and Care. Other organisations support has been recognised and suitably referenced.

Is the research accessible to the public? It appears on our website by 22 December 2021.

Are the research findings clearly articulated and accurate? To the best of our knowledge, we believe they are.

6 References

NHS (2019) Nine out of 10 patients have confidence and trust in their GP, NHS website

See link at

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/2019/07/nine-out-of-10-patients-have-confidence-and-trust-in-their-gp/>

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