



**Kent and Medway
Health Informatics Service**

Kent and Medway Health Informatics Service

Eastern & Coastal Kent PCT Out of Hours Survey Results Report

June 2009

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1 INTRODUCTION

Eastern & Coastal Kent PCT has undertaken work to better understand the quality of the out of hours service, as perceived by the public.

To inform further work in this area, a survey was circulated through the Eastern & Coastal Kent Virtual Panel, the Health Matters Reference Group, and also to seldom heard groups to measure the public's experience of the out of hours service.

The Kent and Medway Health Informatics Service was commissioned to analyse the results and to report their findings to the Urgent Care Team.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Methodology

The surveying took place in the Spring of 2009 with the aim to collect baseline data to add to anecdotal evidence, and Appendix 5.1 details the questions in the survey.

There were no set sampling techniques used and there was no previously agreed margin of error or set sample size and no strict surveying methods.

Although different groups were approached, there were no set parameters on who should complete the survey; so gender, age, ethnicity and general health of the respondents were not considered.

There were no incentives given for completing the survey, only the more intangible incentive of providing an assessment of the out of hours services and therefore potentially influencing future service improvements. Completion of the survey was also entirely voluntary.

The answers given are all tick box responses, although many additional comments were also added by the respondents. There were some instances where an answer could not be understood in the context of the question, or which was left blank and these have been recorded as "blank" for analysis purposes. There are also a few returned surveys that have been identified as possible duplicate replies, but this accounts for less than half a percent of all responses received, so these possible duplicates have been included in the analysis.

Where there were specific issues with the data set, it has been recorded in the body of this report.

3 RESULTS

As the survey was distributed across different groups, the return envelope was marked to denote which group the reply was from. Overall there were 307 surveys returned, which can be categorised as follows:

Mark on the envelope: s	18
Mark on the envelope: x	242
Unmarked envelope	1
Online response	46
Grand Total	307

Additional comments were written on many of the returned surveys, and 18.8% of all returned paper surveys were not completed but had the additional comment that the respondent had not used the service. Online responses did not have the facility for additional comments to be made, but for the purposes of evaluation, it can be assumed that it would not have been submitted by respondents that did not know the service.

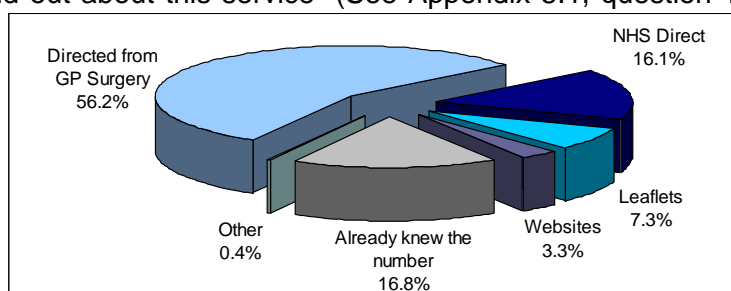
The following analysis has been done on the replies received for each question, and has not included the blank responses in the figures. It should be noted that some questions had a high proportion of “blank” responses, as can be seen in Appendix 5.2. The increase in blank answers in the later stages of the questionnaire may have been reduced with the addition of a “not applicable” option.

3.1 “How did you find out about the service?”

To the question “How did you find out about this service” (See Appendix 5.1, question 1), 56.2% of those who answered, said they were directed from their GP surgery.

16.8% already knew the number, and 16.1% heard about the service from NHS Direct.

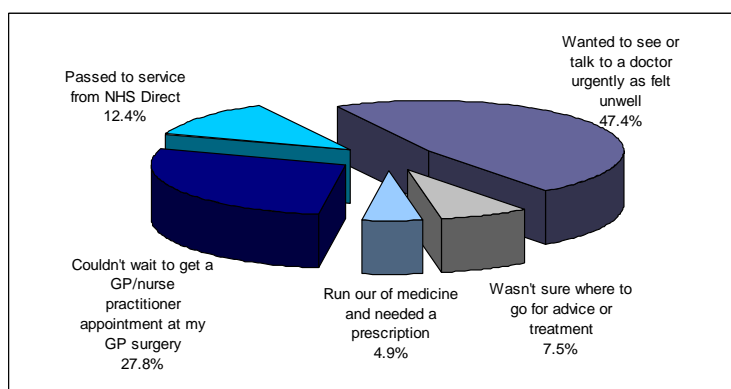
The “other” was a respondent who wrote on the survey that they heard about the service through a friend.



3.2 “Why did you phone for advice or treatment?”

To the question “Why did you phone for advice or treatment” (See Appendix 5.1, question 2), 47.4% of respondents that answered wanted to urgently see or speak to someone as they felt unwell while 27.8% could not wait for an appointment at their GP surgery.

12.4% attended the service at the guidance of NHS Direct, and of the remaining replies, 4.9% needed prescriptions and 7.5% were unsure of where to go for advice and treatment.

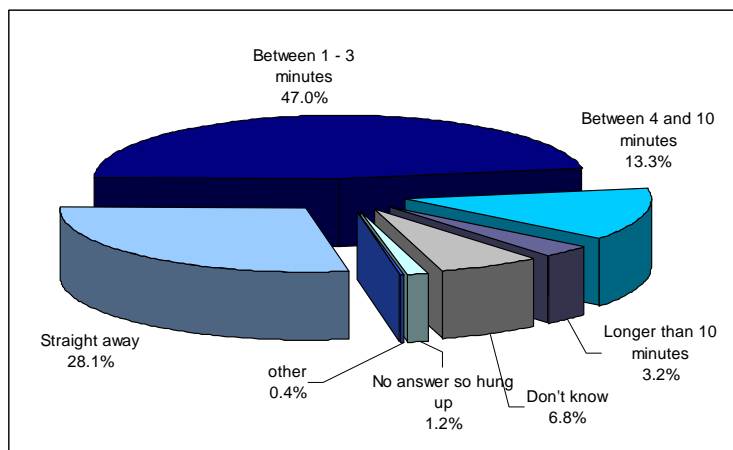


3.3 “How quickly did they answer the phone?”

To the question “How quickly did they answer the phone?” (See Appendix 5.1, question 3), 75.1% of those that answered the question said that their call was answered straight away or in less than three minutes.

16.5% of respondents reported that it took four minutes or longer for the call to be answered, of which, 3.2% of all respondents waited longer than 10 minutes.

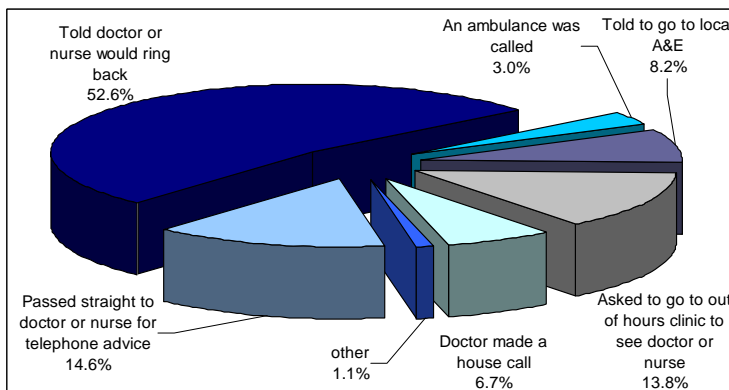
8.0% of answers were for “don’t know” or “no answer so hung up” and the “other” was a respondent who wrote on the survey that they did not call, but “just turned up” at the service.



3.4 “What happened when you rang?”

To the question “What happened when you rang?” (See Appendix 5.1, question 4), 52.6% of those that answered were told that a doctor or nurse would ring them back.

Of the remaining categories, 14.6% were passed straight to telephone advice, and 6.7% had a house call. 13.8% were asked to visit a clinic. The remaining 11.2% of answers were for emergency treatment; with 8.2% told to go to A&E and an ambulance was called for 3.0% of respondents.

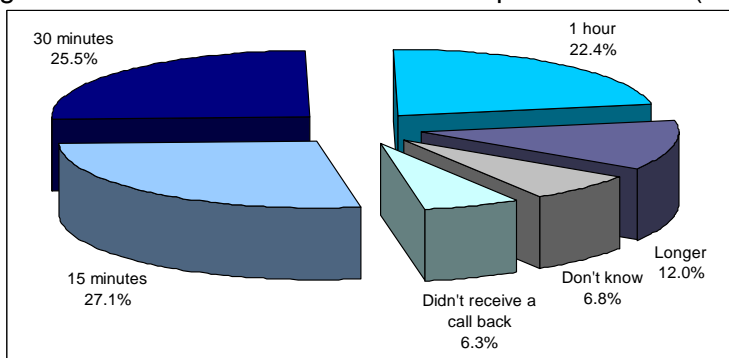


The “other” category comprises three respondents; one wrote that they “arranged an appointment”, one that they visited the service, and one who commented “none of these - told to take paracetamol”.

3.5 How long did it take for a doctor to call back?

To the question asking how long it took for a doctor to call the respondent back (See Appendix 5.1, question 5), 52.6% of those who answered the question were called back within 30 minutes, of which, 27.1% of all responses were within 15 minutes. 22.4% received a call within one hour, but a further 12.0% felt they had to wait longer than this.

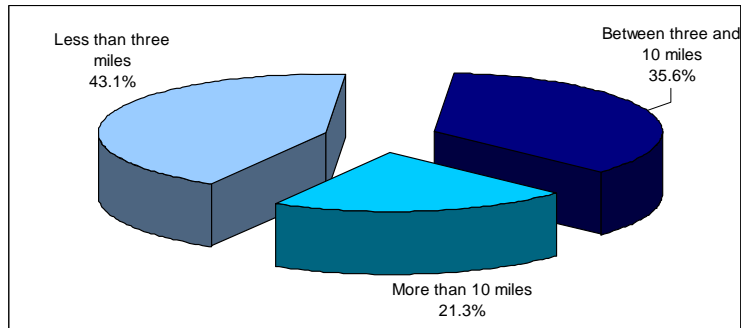
Of the remaining replies, 6.8% of respondents did not know



how long they waited, and 6.3% did not receive a return call.

3.6 How far did you travel if you visited the clinic?

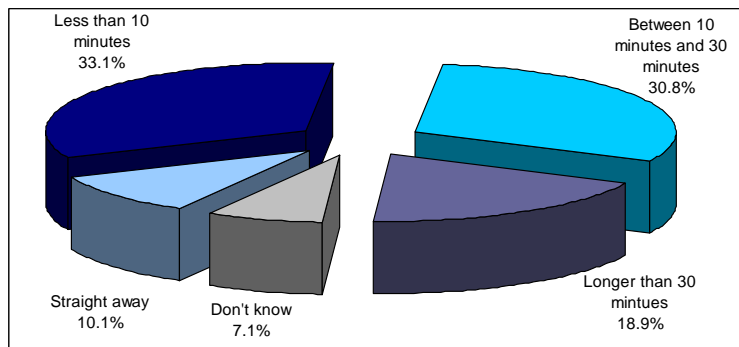
To the question asking how far the respondents travelled (See Appendix 5.1, question 6), 43.1% of respondents that answered the question travelled less than three miles, and 35.6% travelled between three and 10 miles. More than 10 miles was the distance travelled by 21.3% of respondents.



3.7 How long did you wait to be seen if you visited the clinic?

To the question asking how long the respondents waited to be seen (See Appendix 5.1, question 7), 74.0% of those that responded waited less than 30 minutes to be seen, comprising 10.1% of all respondents were seen straight away and 33.1% were seen within 10 minutes.

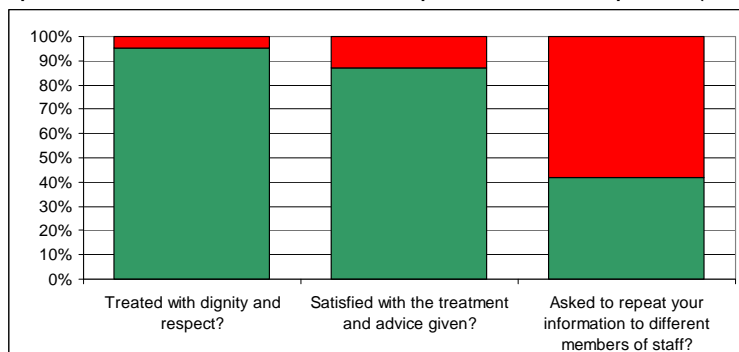
18.9% of respondents had to wait for longer than 30 minutes and 7.1% did not know how long they had waited.



3.8 How were you treated?

The question asking how the respondents were treated was split into three parts (See Appendix 5.1, question 8). Of those that answered part one, 95.1% felt they were treated with dignity and respect and of those that answered part two, 87.0% were satisfied with the treatment and advice they received.

Part three was a question asking if information had to be repeated by the patient to different members of staff. Of those that replied, 58.4% said they did have to repeat their information, and the remaining 41.6% of respondents did not.

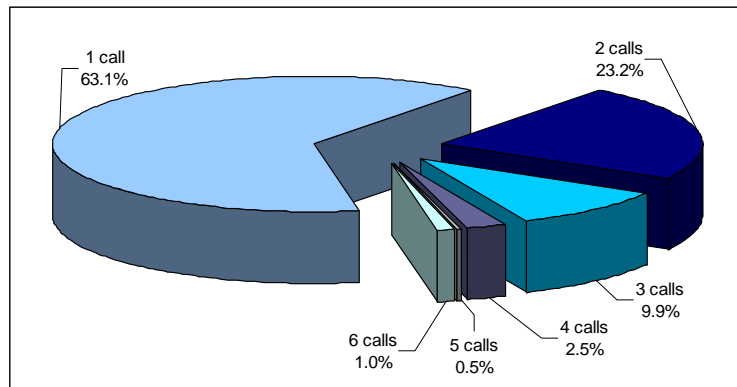


3.9 “How many calls did you make to get the advice & treatment you needed?”

To the question “How many calls did you make to get the advice and treatment you needed?” (See Appendix 5.1, question 9), 63.1% of those that responded to the question only called the service once.

Of those who had to make repeat calls, 23.2% called twice, 9.9% called three times and 4.0% called four times or more.

Two respondents added a comment that they called an ambulance as they could not get an answer.



4 CONCLUSION

The responses to some questions had an answer that accounted for approximately half of all replies, others were more evenly split across the categories, and there was only one question that divided the respondents (58.4% and 41.6%) and this was when asked if they needed to repeat information to different members of staff.

From the answers given it can be surmised that the majority of respondents;

- Were directed to the service from their GP surgery,
- Wanted to talk to a doctor urgently,
- Had their call answered between one and three minutes,
- Were told a doctor or nurse would call them back,
- Were called back within one hour,
- Travelled 10 miles or less,
- Were seen within 30 minutes,
- Were treated with dignity and respect,
- Were satisfied with the treatment and advice they received,
- Only needed to make one call.

5 APPENDIX

5.1 Example Survey

Out of Hours Survey

There may have been occasions when you or a relative have needed urgent medical advice or treatment outside the normal opening hours of your own GP surgery. This out of hours service is currently provided by South East Kent Ltd. We would like you to complete this survey so that we can assess the quality of service you have received.

1. How did find out about this service?

Directed from GP surgery

NHS Direct

Leaflets

Websites

Already knew the number

please tick

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Why did you phone for advice or treatment?

Run out of medicines and needed a prescription

Couldn't wait to get a GP/nurse practitioner appointment at my GP surgery

Passed to service from NHS Direct

Wanted to see or talk to a doctor urgently as felt unwell

Wasn't sure where to go for advice or treatment

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How quickly did they answer the phone?

Straight away

Between 1 – 3 minutes

Between 4 and 10 minutes

Longer than 10 minutes

Don't know

No answer so hung up

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

4. What happened when you rang?

Passed straight through to doctor or nurse for telephone advice

Told doctor or nurse would ring back

An ambulance was called

Told to go to local A&E

Asked to go to out of hours clinic to see doctor or nurse

Doctor made a house call

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

5. If you were told a doctor or nurse would call back, did they call you back within

15 minutes

30 minutes

1 hour

Longer

Don't know

Didn't receive a call back

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

6. If you were asked to go to the clinic to see the doctor or nurse, how far did you have to travel?

Less than three miles

Between three and 10 miles

More than 10 miles

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

7. If you went to the clinic, how long did you have to wait to be seen?

Straight away

Less than 10 minutes

Between 10 minutes and 30 minutes

Longer than 30 minutes

Don't know

<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Were you:

Treated with dignity and respect?

Satisfied with the treatment and advice given?

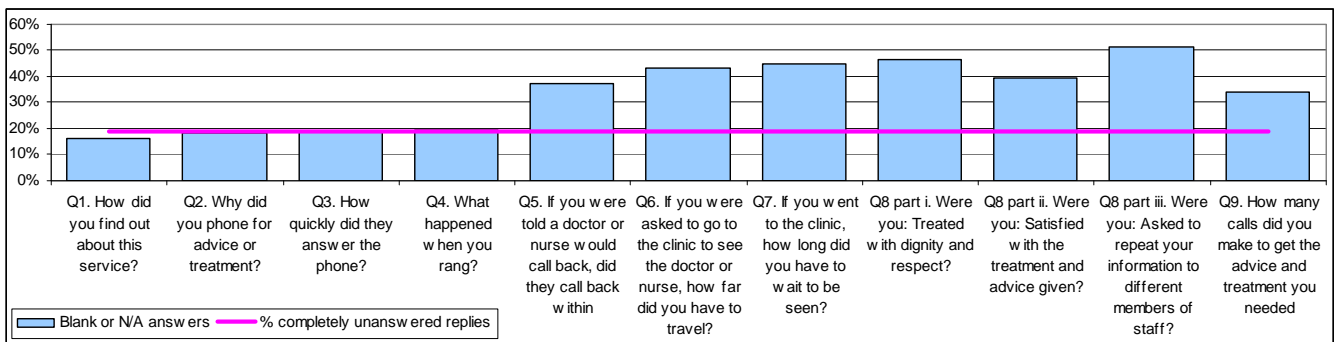
Asked to repeat your information to different members of staff?

yes	no
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. How many calls did you make to get the advice & treatment you needed

Please send your responses back
by Tuesday 5 May in the enclosed envelope

5.2 Graph to show the number of responses left blank for each survey question



Note: Question 1 had multiple replies and so the overall percentage of blank responses is lower than the questions that only had one answer per respondent.

End of report