

Mendip Vale Patient Satisfaction Survey 2024

In collaboration with the North Somerset Patient Participation Group (PPG), we conducted a patient survey titled Tell Us What You Think between July 1st and August 1st, 2024. This survey was designed to gather patient feedback across Mendip Vale Medical Group (MVMG), including Bristol, South Gloucestershire, and North Somerset, to better understand how we can enhance our services and how our patients perceive our surgery and staff. By comparing the results to last year's survey and the NHS GP Patient Survey conducted in February 2024, we can assess our progress and identify areas for further improvement. Our survey aims to delve deeper into the nuances of patient experiences, providing a more comprehensive understanding.

To read the actions from 2023, go to the Mendip Vale website: [Tell Us what you think Survey – Mendip Vale Actions](#)

Out of approximately 85,000 registered patients, 946 completed the survey. Of these, 66% were from North Somerset, while the remaining 34% were from South Gloucestershire and Bristol. Compared to last year, several significant improvements have been recognised:

- **Response Time:** 63% of patients reported being contacted by Mendip Vale within three working days, up from 38% in 2023 for their routine appointment requests.
- **Follow-Up:** The percentage of patients who did not need to follow up after three working days increased from 47% in 2023 to 66% this year for their routine appointment requests.
- **Quality of Care:** The proportion of patients rating the quality of care as good or above rose from 59% to 64% in 2024.
- **Appointment Booking (eConsult):** Satisfaction with the booking process improved significantly, with 40% of patients rating it as good or above, compared to 28% in 2023. Additionally, those who rated the booking process as bad or below decreased from 51% to 37%.
- **Reception Service:** Satisfaction with reception service, rated as good or above, improved from 36% to 55%.
- **Communication:** Satisfaction with communication from the practice, rated as good or above, increased from 44% to 55%.

Areas to Improve

Whilst we see steady improvement in comparison to last year's results, the survey also shows there are still several areas for improvement.

1. Improvements with eConsult

Numerous comments were made regarding the use of eConsult, with some improvements noted in patient satisfaction. Only 38% of patients in the survey reported using eConsult to request their appointment, which contrasts with Mendip Vale's internal data showing 70% usage. Additionally, while Mendip Vale reports that 99% of patients are contacted within three working days after submitting an eConsult, only 65% of survey respondents confirmed this experience. This discrepancy highlights potential areas for improvement in patient satisfaction, as well as in communication and consistency.

**eConsult has a default setting which tells patients that the surgery will contact them within 24 hours. This is now being removed to reflect the practices's response time of 72 working hours (as the service is for routine not urgent requests). "Three working days" refers to the hours during which the surgery operates (Monday to Friday, 8:00 AM to 6:30 PM). If a patient submits an eConsult on a Friday, they can expect a response by the end of the day on Wednesday. As the surgery is closed on bank holidays, these days do not count toward the three-working-day schedule, which may result in a longer response time.

Mendip Vale's Actions:

- In collaboration with the Patient Participation Group (PPG), we will continue exploring alternative systems to eConsult and advocate for improvements to enhance its functionality and user experience.
 - **Engage with eConsult Representatives:** Sharing patient feedback on their experiences directly with eConsult. eConsult is scheduled to attend a PPG meeting in December 2024 to address questions and gather suggestions for improvement. **Deadline: December 2024**
 - Request an update from eConsult following the suggestions and concerns raised in the meeting. **Deadline: January 2025**
- Monitor and report on eConsult response times, aiming to improve the percentage of patients contacted within three working days. While doing so, we will provide clear communication on what constitutes an unsuccessful patient contact attempt after submitting an eConsult, ensuring patients have a better understanding and reducing confusion. **Deadline: Bi-monthly**
 - Investigate the possibility of sending follow-up text messages to patients after their appointment, asking whether they were contacted within three working days to gauge the accuracy of data. **Deadline: June 2025**
- With the new national requirement for appointments to be booked within two weeks of an enquiry, the PPG would like to monitor and record whether this standard is being met. **Deadline: Bi-monthly**

2. Telephone system

The telephone system showed significant improvement compared to 2023. However, there are still areas for refinement, particularly regarding the call-back process. Despite the progress, 40% of patients reported that contacting the surgery by phone remains either "Fairly Difficult" or "Very Difficult," indicating a need for further enhancements.

Mendip Vale's Actions:

- Mendip Vale will review the current features on the telephone option to ensure that they are functioning correctly including:
 - Review the current 'Callback' limit for each call option, with consideration of offering the callback feature regardless of queue position, specifically for the prescriptions queries option. **Deadline: January 2025**
 - Review and simplify the telephone menu options for patients to make it easier for patients to select the relevant team, as there are repeating messages. This will improve the overall accessibility and navigation. **Deadline: January 2025**
 - Ensure the Check and Cancel option is operational for all surgeries. **Deadline: January 2025**
- Mendip Vale will continue to collaborate closely with the telephone provider to explore and implement new features in the phone system aimed at reducing the 8 a.m. rush. **Deadline: Continuous**

3. Dissatisfaction with Staff Interactions

The results indicated a need for ongoing training for our patient-facing staff, with a particular emphasis on customer service and positive communications when handling enquiries. A notable volume of dissatisfied feedback highlighted the need from better interactions with Patient Co-ordinators. Additionally, the results revealed inconsistencies in the processes followed by each surgery team, with varying approaches and different information being communicated to patients. This lack of alignment with the standard procedure has contributed to the inconsistency and dissatisfaction.

Mendip Vale's Actions:

- We will continue to provide regular training sessions, with a renewed focus on improving communication and customer service skills. We will reassess the structure and monitoring of the training to ensure that it effectively addresses performance issues and fosters greater consistency across all teams by monitoring quality of calls with in staff quarterly reviews. **Deadline: April 2025**

4. Improvement with Communication

The results revealed that 78% of respondents preferred receiving communication via text messages or emails, with significantly less interest in the newsletter—a surprising shift compared to last year's findings. However, there remains a noticeable lack of awareness about the three available options for booking appointments, both among patients and MV staff. Additionally, more information has been requested regarding the responsibilities and training of Patient Co-Ordinators. Finally, there is a clear need for improved communication about the repeat prescription process, as many patients remain unclear on the steps involved, leading to confusion and delays.

Mendip Vale's Actions:

- We will explore new communication methods, including increased use of the NHS App and displaying a printed version of the newsletter in reception (as requested by patients). Patients will be able to request a printed copy to take home. **Deadline: January 2025**
- Based on the preferred communication methods, we will begin utilising text messages and emails, for simpler messages, while ensuring that long weblinks are sent by emails only. **Deadline: June 2025**
- We will enhance the continuation of promotion of the following, by using more visual aids, such as posters, notices on TV screens in the waiting areas and improvements to the messaging on the telephone system **Deadline: Continuous**
 - The three ways to contact the practice, online, by paper form and by telephone.
 - That patients should receive an appointment within 2 weeks as national standard via communication channels for routine appointments.
 - The promotion of the NHS App to read your test results
 - The prioritisation of face-to-face appointments
 - How to request and manage a repeat prescription
 - Why can't eConsult be used out of surgery hours
- We will expand on last year's efforts by exploring ways to prominently display GP Partners and Surgery Manager details for each site on our new website and within the surgery premises. **Deadline: January 2025**
- The term "Receptionist" will be replaced with "Patient Coordinator" to better reflect their role. We will provide more information about their responsibilities and the training they receive to enhance patient understanding. **Deadline: February 2025**
- We are considering the creation of informative videos with clinicians on specific health topics, as well as podcasts, to both educate patients and highlight the various roles within the practice. **Deadline: June 2025**
- We aim to provide clearer, more frequent updates through multiple channels, including the website, surgery notices and direct communication with patients, to ensure they are well-informed about how to request and manage repeat prescriptions. **Deadline: June 2025**

Summary

To summarise, significant progress has been made over the past year to enhance patient satisfaction and improve the quality of care and services provided by the practice. The Patient Participation Group has been instrumental in holding the practice accountable for these improvements. This year's survey results show

positive momentum compared to last year, reflecting our commitment to using appointment capacity effectively while maintaining high standards of care.

Between November 1st and 30th, Mendip Vale facilitated 18,897 appointments in Bristol and South Gloucestershire and 24,576 in North Somerset. These were approximately evenly split between triaged routine appointments and urgent, same-day care initiated by patients.

Thank you

Thank you. Thank you to all the patients who took the time to complete the survey and for supporting the practice. Your feedback is very important to us, and every comment is valued and has been considered.

Special thanks to our Patient Participation Group (PPG), winners of the prestigious National Association for Patient Participation (NAPP) Award 2024. This national honour recognises their exceptional work in enhancing patient care, communication, and services. We're proud of their achievements and grateful for their continued support in shaping better healthcare for our community.