



North East London

Improving access to GP Services & workforce shortages in primary care

Tower Hamlets

Primary Care in Tower Hamlets

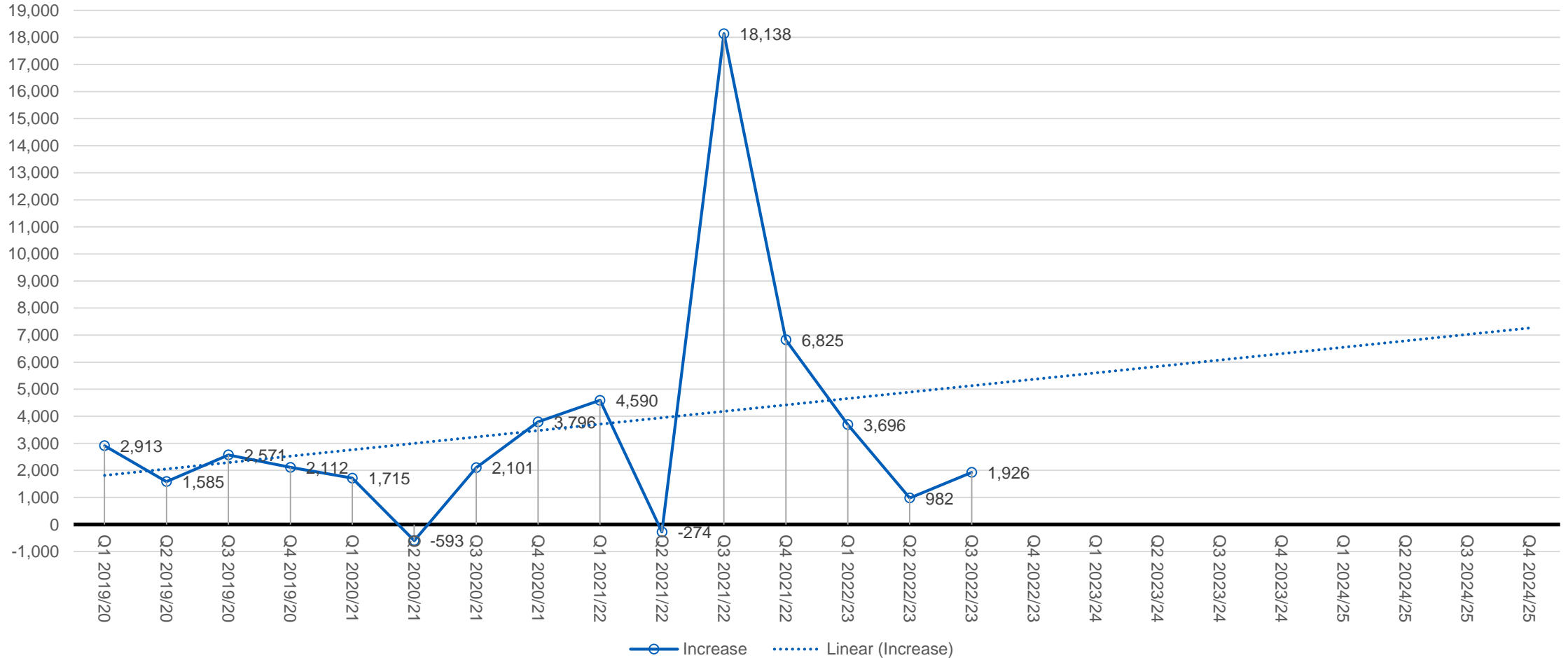
- 32 Practices
- National GP Contract
- Varying patient list sizes –ranging from 2,500 to 30,000
- 7 Primary Care Networks (PCN) - groups of Practices working together
- Weekday evening and Saturday appointments available across multiple sites in the borough
- Additional services (e.g. Long term conditions care) commissioned locally

Challenges

- Rapid population growth
- Mobile population leading to high turnover of patients (30%)
- GP and Nurse workforce crisis – exacerbated by the cost of living/housing compared to outside of London
- Impact of the pandemic is still very much alive and pressure on GP Practices and their staff remains high
- Hospital waiting lists add to existing pressures in primary care
- Telephony and access biggest post pandemic issues
- No single approach to access

List size growth

Tower Hamlets list size increase



The Experience of GP Services

A trends analysis report by Healthwatch Tower Hamlets, 5 October 2022



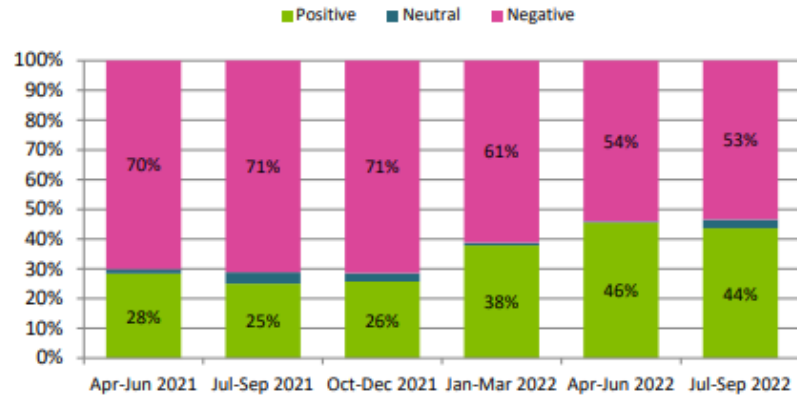
Healthwatch is the official consumer champion for users of health and social care services. We listen to people's stories, good and bad, and report on their collective experience. In this report, we examine the experience of local GP services.

Reporting Period: 1 October 2021 - 30 September 2022

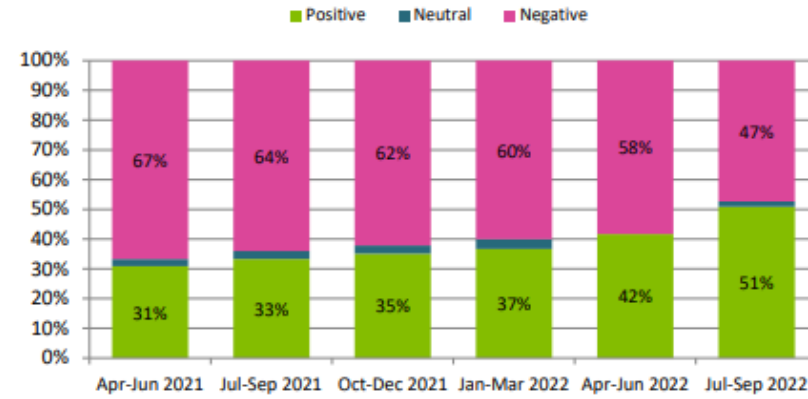
3. Timeline: 18 Month Tracker



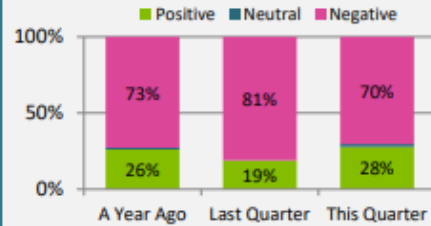
3.5 Administration, Sentiment



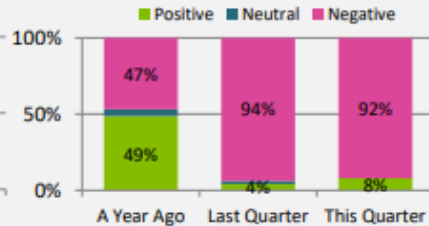
3.6 Communication, Sentiment



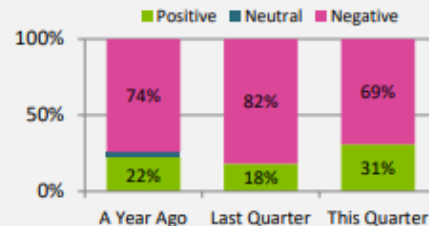
3.7 Booking, Snapshot



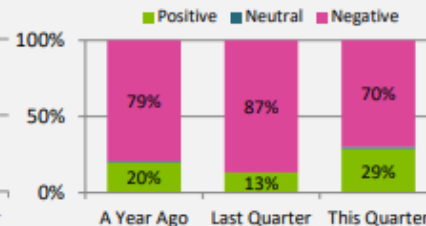
3.8 Telephone, Snapshot



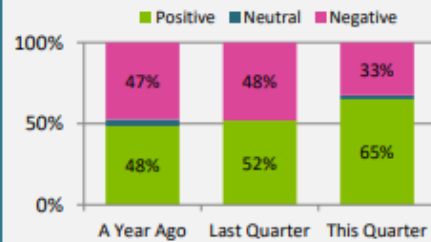
3.9 Online Access, Snapshot



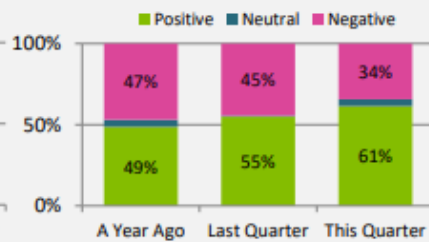
3.10 Waiting List, Snapshot



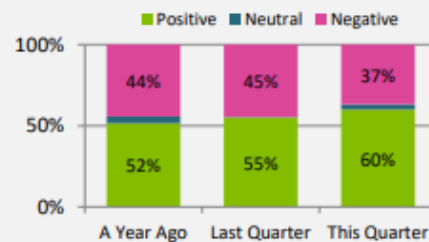
3.11 Involvement Snapshot



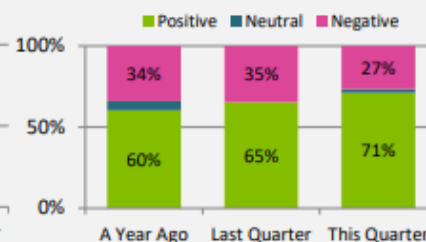
3.12 Support, Snapshot



3.13 Staff Attitude, Snapshot



3.14 Quality, Snapshot



User experience

Themes captured from Healthwatch data show some clear priorities:

***Source:** This follows the analyses of 28,212 pieces of feedback from 5,985 people from the NEL ICB / Healthwatch Community Insights system.

A **website** that explains clearly how to access practice services and is optimised for accessibility software. Surgery staff can provide initial support to help patients use it.

Provide **patients with comprehensive but clear information** about how the practice works supporting patients to find the help they need quickly and efficiently.

Text people to inform them that this is the **first point of access** for information on booking appointments and put together an information campaign to promote it.

Clear and transparent booking systems. Explain what booking systems you currently use and how to use them. **Say if these are in the process of changing and why.**

Be clear on the website about practice roles e.g. Patient Assistants - what they are being asked to do and how they are trained.

Engage patients to help improve access.

Help those who are struggling (digitally excluded).

Simple online systems: Make online consultation application processes simple, straightforward and user-friendly.

A **telephone system that works for patients** (lets people know where they are in the queue).

Total triage seems to have a knock-on **positive impact** on patient opinion of other factors, such as waiting for appointments, telephones and communication with reception staff.

Understand who **total triage doesn't work for** and **adapt** to their **needs** as well.

Provide more **narrow time slots than AM/PM** particularly for working people.

Average Appointment Rate Per 1000 Patients Per Week – Total Appointments

- The data in this slide is sourced from the recently published GP Appointments dataset. The bar chart the rate of all appointments per 1000 registered patients in 2022/23 Q2 for each Tower Hamlets practice.
- The practices have been ordered by their list size (largest to smallest from left to right)

Average Weekly Rate of Total Appointments Per 1000 Patients Per Week - Tower Hamlets



Percentage of Appointment Mode By PCN and GP Practice - GP

“Uncategorised” appointments represent appointments slots that have not been mapped (or consistently mapped) to NHS England "National Categories".

PCN Name	Practice Name	Face-to-Face	Digital	Uncategorised	
TOWER HAMLETS NETWORK 1 PCN	BETHNAL GREEN HEALTH CTR.	30.10%	69.90%	31.73%	
	STROUTS PLACE MEDICAL CENTRE	48.45%	51.55%	0.54%	
	SUTTONS WHARF HEALTH CENTRE	66.75%	33.25%	0.64%	
	THE MISSION PRACTICE	67.57%	32.43%	18.01%	
TOWER HAMLETS NETWORK 2 PCN	ALBION HEALTH CENTRE	99.58%	0.42%	2.95%	
	HEALTH E1	63.55%	36.45%	0.23%	
	THE BLITHEHALE MED.CTR.	94.47%	5.53%	17.11%	
	THE SPITALFIELDS PRACTICE	49.86%	50.14%	12.01%	
TOWER HAMLETS NETWORK 5 PCN	HARLEY GROVE MEDICAL CTR.	79.63%	20.37%	19.80%	
	RUSTON STREET CLINIC	57.69%	42.31%	18.04%	
	ST. STEPHENS HEALTH CENTRE	50.58%	49.42%	17.25%	
	THE GROVE ROAD SURGERY	99.59%	0.41%	0.53%	
	TREDEGAR PRACTICE	91.38%	8.62%	9.34%	
TOWER HAMLETS NETWORK 6 PCN	ST ANDREWS HEALTH CENTRE	75.19%	24.81%	37.42%	
	ST. PAUL'S WAY MEDICAL CTR	49.32%	50.68%	10.17%	
	WELLINGTON WAY HEALTH CENTRE	45.05%	54.95%	33.38%	
	XX PLACE HEALTH CENTRE	84.43%	15.57%	13.23%	
TOWER HAMLETS NETWORK 7 PCN	ABERFELDY PRACTICE	40.61%	59.39%	22.18%	
	GOUGH WALK PRACTICE	64.17%	35.83%	7.76%	
	THE CHRISP STREET HTH CTR	44.50%	55.50%	6.51%	
	THE LIMEHOUSE PRACTICE	93.62%	6.38%	12.66%	
TOWER HAMLETS NETWORK 8 PCN	DOCKLANDS MEDICAL CENTRE	44.68%	55.32%	8.39%	
	ISLAND HEALTH	43.23%	56.77%	16.32%	
	ROBERTON STREET SURGERY	52.25%	47.75%	2.36%	
	THE BARKANTINE PRACTICE	37.82%	62.18%	2.22%	
TOWER NETWORK PCN	CITY SQUARE MEDICAL GROUP	54.61%	45.39%	20.51%	
	GOODMAN'S FIELD HEALTH CENTRE	63.54%	36.46%	59.62%	
	HARFORD HEALTH CENTRE	31.73%	68.27%	6.68%	
	JUBILEE STREET PRACTICE	27.55%	72.45%	40.31%	
	ST. KATHERINE'S DOCK PRACTICE	91.30%	8.70%	51.85%	
	THE WAPPING GROUP PRACTICE	94.50%	5.50%	38.36%	
Grand Total		0	58.71%	41.29%	20.14%

Practice Operating Models

- Telephone and online consultation model in practices to safely manage the current level of demand
- Helps to direct patients to other available services (community pharmacy, social prescribers, physiotherapist, occupational therapist, nursing associate etc.), where appropriate
- Reduces the waiting time for appointments
- Online consultation releases capacity for people who need face to face appointments the most
- Patients often feel these create a barrier to face to face appointments
- Can create long waits on telephone

Workforce Shortages

- GP and Nurse workforce crisis – exacerbated by the cost of living/housing compared to outside of London
- GPs reducing hours and retiring early
- GP and Nurse Locum work is more attractive than taking substantive permanent roles
- Practices unable to offer competitive salary packages
- The nature and pressure of the work can lead to long working hours, which is not appealing to a younger generation of graduates
- Need to recruit wider primary care workforce roles
- Patients need education on wider roles

Expanding our workforce

- Recruiting additional roles to create bespoke multi-disciplinary teams
 - Clinical pharmacists
 - Pharmacy technicians
 - First contact physiotherapists
 - Physician's associates
 - Dietitians
 - Occupational therapists
 - Community paramedics
 - Nursing associates and trainee nursing associates
 - Social prescribing link workers
 - Care co-ordinators
 - Health and wellbeing coaches

Recruitment and Retention

- Workforce planning and recruitment to the primary care workforce continues to be a key priority
- Key schemes include:
 - Protected Learning Time for all Practices in Tower Hamlets
 - Staff development programmes and apprenticeships
 - GP and Nurse graduate schemes – keeping trainees in Tower Hamlets
 - New to Partnership Payment Scheme
 - ‘Open Doors Programme’ - *providing nurse education, support, supervision, and assessment to nurses and health care assistants working for general practice teams*
 - General Practice Fellowship programme *(a two-year programme of support, available to all newly-qualified GPs and nurses working substantively in general practice)*
 - GP retention scheme *(financial and educational resources to help doctors, who might otherwise leave the profession, remain in clinical general practice)*
 - Supporting Mentors Scheme *(to upskill experienced GPs and provide a portfolio working opportunity)*

How we can collaborate to improve patient experience of access and address workforce shortages

Communication/Education

- Signposting
- Pharmacy
- How to Self Manage
- Encourage Flu/Covid boosters
- Advice on where to raise issues relating to dental, housing and other letters (not to GP)
- Educating the community about the benefit of other specialised roles – nurses, pharmacists physiotherapists etc.
- Downloading NHS app for access to results and repeat prescribing

Shared Learning

- How do we communicate change to residents
- Inroads to excluded communities
- How did Council services manage to moving services online

Enablers – People

- NHS and Borough Communications teams
- Co-production
- Access to Council job recruitment team
- Patient experience feedback and measures

Enablers – Infrastructure

- Estates – Key worker housing
- Telephony upgrades for practices
- Any access to CIL funds
- Event spaces – free of charge
- Blood Pressure machines at home
- Thermometers at home
- Pulse oximetry machines for respiratory conditions