



Home-Start Barnet Engagement with Families & Young Parents

March 2014

Healthwatch Barnet

Healthwatch Barnet was launched with the aim to give citizens and communities a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are provided within their locality. It's the eyes and ears of the local community, providing information, advice and signposting of health and social care services. Healthwatch Barnet is an independent entity lead by CommUNITY Barnet and a partnership of local voluntary organisations, including Home-Start Barnet.

Home-Start Barnet's mission is to support vulnerable Barnet families who have young children and are experiencing difficulties. We recruit volunteers with parenting experience from the local community and train them to make home visits to families who often are at crisis point. We offer time, practical support and friendship, thereby building parents' confidence and improving the lives of their children. Home-Start Barnet's role within Healthwatch Barnet is to capture the views of families with young children, and young parents, on their accessibility to health services.

During the year Home-Start Barnet used a wide range of quantitative and qualitative methods - including web-based, social media, newsletters, focus groups and one to one interviews - to engage, inform and consult views of families and young parents. Their feedback provides us with vital information on how we are delivering our service and meeting the needs of all our user groups. The feedback forms are attached to the back of this document.

Key findings from our engagement with families and young parents are published below.

Families with young children

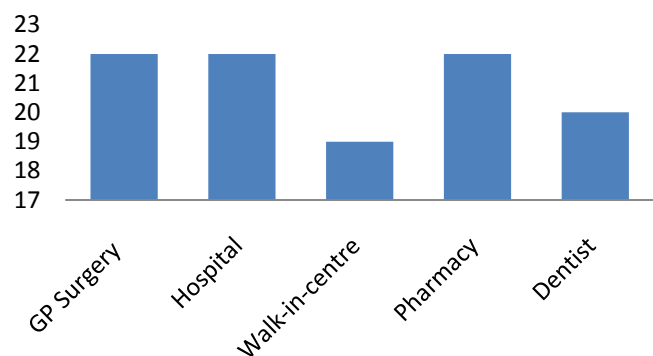
- 8 families took part in our focus group at the Grahame Park Community Centre.
- 14 home-visiting families were randomly selected to complete the Healthwatch questionnaire.
- In total 22 families took part

Key findings

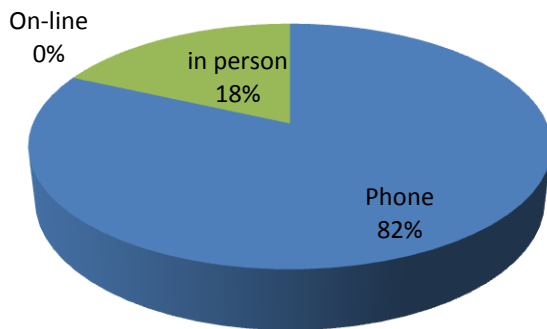
Accessibility

- All families taking part were registered with their local GP and had access to nearby pharmacy and hospital services.
- Almost 10% had not accessed a dentist in the past year for either themselves or their children.
- Nearly 15% were not familiar with a walk-in-centre facility.

Health Services Used



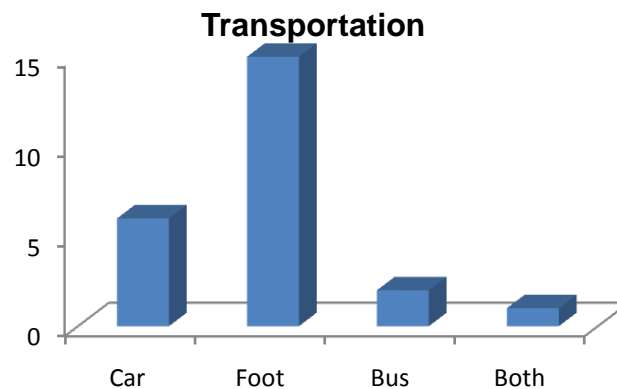
Appointment Booking Method



- When booking appointments to visit a health centre / clinic, over 80% of the families preferred to use the phone. No-one responded to using the on-line booking system. The fact that they could speak to someone directly helped, and their experience was generally good.

- However it was also clear many of the parents were not aware of the on-line service and the ease with which it could be used to book appointments.

- The majority of the families live within walking distance of their local healthcare services as this was the main mode of transportation to access services.



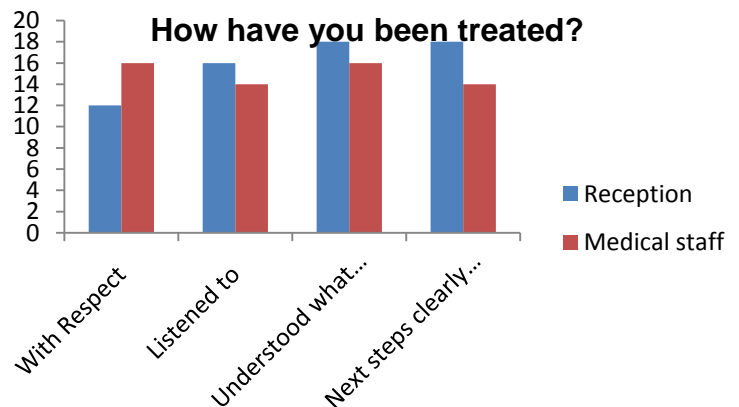
Almost half of families rated their experience of accessing local health services as good.

Quality

In this section we asked families to give their views on the facilities, and the treatment they received from staff.

- Just over 60% of the families responding considered the healthcare facilities to be of good standard.
- When asked what could be improved we received the following comments;
 - *A friendly play area outside for the children*
 - *Child friendly toys*
 - *Somewhere to get tea/coffee*
 - *System to say the doctor will see you*
 - *A coat of paint*

- We explored the patient experience on a number of levels and found more than half of the families felt they were listened to, and understood what was being explained to them.



- Families were more positive about their experience with reception staff than with medical professionals.

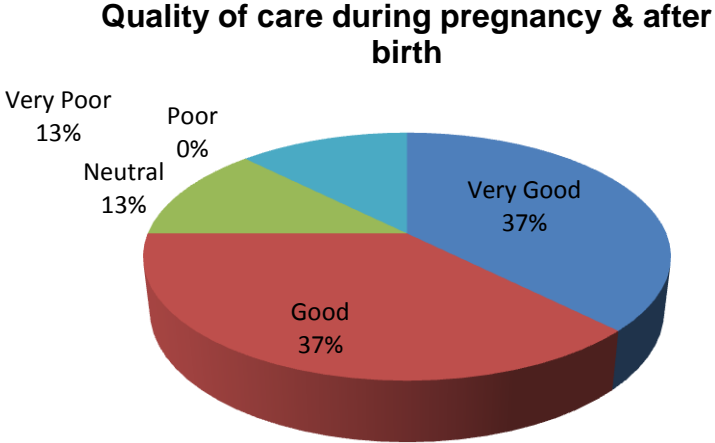
- However when it came to patient respect, 45% of families had a negative image of reception staff.

- Family comments;
 - *Feel judged*
 - *Not valued*
 - *Reception staff off hand*

Maternity Services

In this section we asked the families to give feedback about their experience of Care during pregnancy and after birth.

- Over 80% of mothers responding had more than 5 antenatal check-ups during their pregnancy.
- 10% of respondents attended antenatal classes. Many of them mentioned this was not their first pregnancy.
- A third of respondents had been offered feeding advice by a professional.
- Overall almost 75% of mothers responding felt the quality of care they received during pregnancy and after birth had been good or very good.



Young Parents

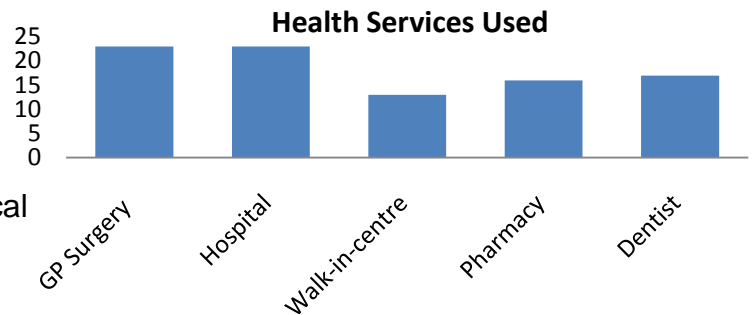
23 young parents took part in our focus groups held at;

- Barnfield Children Centre
- Coppetts Wood Children Centre
- Family Nurse partnership event at Sweets Way

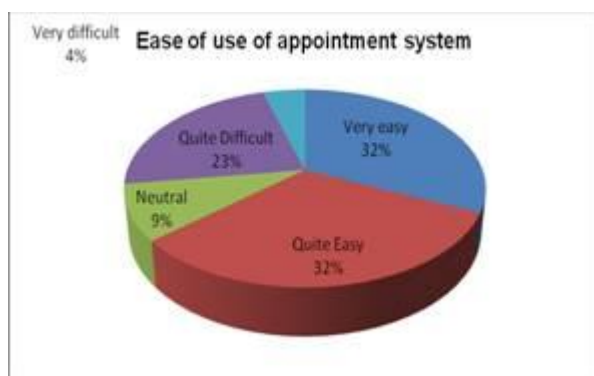
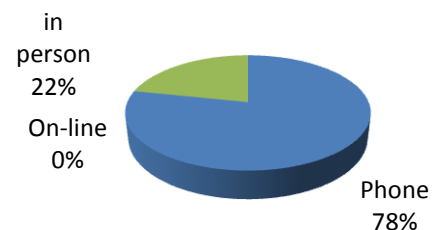
Key findings

Accessibility

- As with families, all young parents taking part had registered with their local GP and had access to nearby hospital services.
- However in comparison to the families that took part there was quite a substantial difference in the level of engagement and accessing of other health services including:
 - Over 40% did not know where their local walk-in-centre was or what it offered.
 - 30% had trouble locating their nearest pharmacy
 - More than 25% of respondents had not accessed a dentist in the last year.
- As with families, young parents either phoned or visited in person to book an appointment to visit their health service. This was quite surprising given most young people are so web savvy. Again it came down to the familiar and being unaware that appointments can be booked on-line, or not having access to the internet.

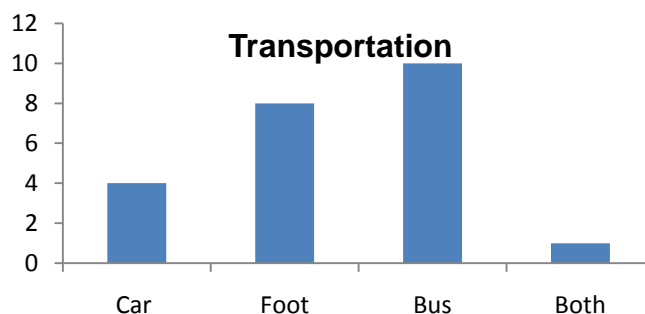


Appointment Booking Method



- Just under a third commented on how difficult they found making an appointment to see their GP. Common issues raised;
 - *kept on hold for a very long time*
 - *No appointment for the day*
 - *Asked if it was urgent*

- Over 40% of young parents use public transport to attend appointments.
- Just over a third walk to attend appointments.



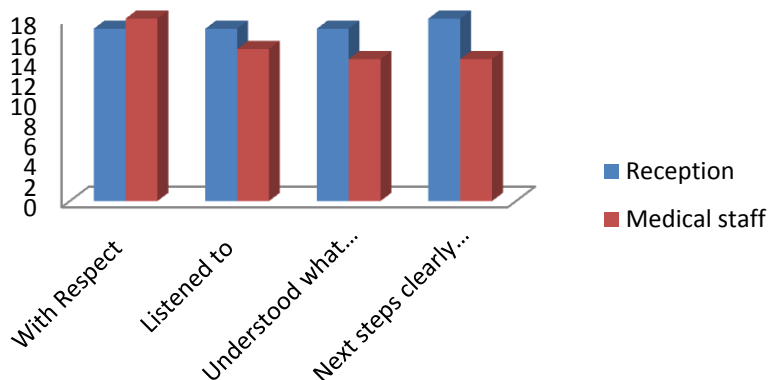
Almost 80% of young parents rated their experience of accessing local health services as good or very good.

Quality

In this section we asked young parents to give their views on the facilities and the treatment they received from staff.

- 85% of the families responding considered the healthcare facilities to be of good standard.
- When asked what could be improved we received the following comments;
 - *Toilets with nappy changing facility*
 - *More space for buggies and more seating would help*
- We explored the patient experience on a number of levels and found over 75% of young parents felt they were treated with respect and listened to, and understood what was being explained to them by the reception staff.
- When it came to medical staff although they felt respected, over a third did not feel listened to or quite understood what was being said to them and information was not clearly explained..

How have you been treated?



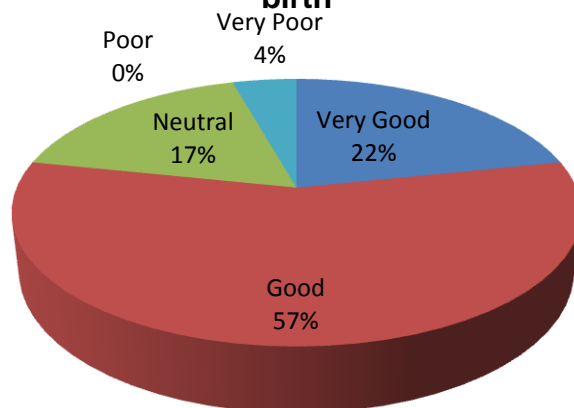
Overall 74% of young people taking part in the focus groups felt the quality of care received from all staff was good or very good.

Maternity Services

In this section we asked the young parents to feedback on their experience of care during pregnancy and after birth.

- 87% of young parents responding had more than 5 antenatal check-ups during their pregnancy.
- 35% of young parents taking part had attended regular antenatal classes.
- 87% of young parents had been offered feeding advice by a professional.
- Almost 80% of young parents felt quality of care they received during pregnancy and after birth had been good or very good.

Quality of care during pregnancy & after birth



Conclusion

Although 100% of the families and young parents who engaged with the Healthwatch Barnet focus group and questionnaire were registered with their local GP, there was a significant proportion in both groups who were unaware of their local walk in centre. The majority of parents in both groups were also unaware of, or reluctant to use, the online booking system to make appointments. A third of young parents also did not know where their local pharmacy was located and 25% had not accessed a dentist in the past year. These statistics suggest that there is a need for some additional specific awareness raising and signposting about key healthcare facilities and how to access them.

The majority of parents agreed that there was a good standard of healthcare facilities in their area and suggested a number of child centred and aesthetic improvements that could be made to the centres which would improve their experience of using them. Responding to questions about the quality of their experience, there was a significant number of both families and young parents who did not feel that they were listened to and also did not fully understand the advice they were given, suggesting that communications between healthcare professionals and reception staff and patients could be improved.

There was a very positive response to the experience of care during pregnancy and after birth with over 80% of mothers in both groups having more than 5 antenatal checkups during their pregnancy. However these results show that only 35%, of young mothers took antenatal classes demonstrating a need for more encouragement and support to be given to this group during pregnancy. Although there was a lower number of mothers in the family group attending antenatal classes this could be due to the fact that this was more likely not to be their first child.