



THE IMPACT OF NEW OUTSOURCED SERVICES IN DACORUM

A SURVEY OF PUBLIC OPINION

Introduction

The survey was developed due to the growth of outsourced community health services in various locations and the issues that had arisen with the first one, ie Connect, who provide a community Musculoskeletal (MSK)/Physiotherapy service. We had sent a report of our concerns to the Herts Valleys Clinical Commissioning Group HVCCG. We wanted to ascertain whether there were still issues and how the newer outsourced services had affected local people. Also there had been little information regarding their performance.

We launched the survey with a press release dated 16th February 2020, publicised the survey on Social Media and by email distribution, and invited people to share the survey link widely. We asked people to let us know by completing the survey on SurveyMonkey how satisfied or otherwise they had been with any of the five new community services listed below in the past year.

The new outsourced services covered were: Dermatology delivered by Health Harmonie, ENT by Communitas, Ophthalmology by Community Health Eye Care Ltd, Ultrasound by Physiological Measurement Ltd and MSK/Physiotherapy by Connect

The analysis of the survey results took more time than expected and this report was also delayed due to Covid 19. Now, thanks to the effective vaccination programme and due to the policy of services closer to home in the plans for the future of services in west Hertfordshire, it was felt that the report should be published as the findings are still relevant.

There were 195 responses. While we are aware that the numbers are small and it is a self-selected survey there are lessons to be learnt. Around 50% of the respondents were seen by Connect for Physiotherapy.

We would have liked to have had a greater number of respondents but did not have the necessary resources. We would ask the HVCCG to undertake and publish a more comprehensive and larger study of all the newer outsourced services.

Main Findings

The overall rating of patients' experience of the five services covered is very significant with only 16.3% saying they were very satisfied and 51% that they were not very or not at all satisfied. There are clearly issues that need to be resolved to deliver services of a satisfactory standard in accessible locations. Physiotherapy/MSK and Dermatology services both had 60% of patients either not very or not at all satisfied.

Just under half (44%) of respondents said the location of their appointment was difficult to get to and 23.7% thought the parking was poor.

Overall 38.3% of respondents had problems making a follow up appointment and of the five services a higher proportion had problems with physiotherapy and dermatology, at 40% and 50% respectively. There would seem to be an issue here that needs further investigation and addressing.

At the time of the survey more than two in three patients waited more than a month fewer than one in three patients waited less than a month for their initial appointment and 9.8% waited more than four months.

39.8% of respondents had to wait a further 1-2 months for their follow-up appointment with 33.9% having to wait 2 months or more. A higher proportion of respondents had to wait over four months for ENT, Physiotherapy/MSK and Ophthalmology than those waiting for the other two services though it is difficult to compare because numbers were small.

38.3% of respondents had problems making their follow-up appointment. The main reasons respondents gave were Repeated contact necessary (Ophthalmology 80% ENT over 30%) Poor organisation (Dermatology, Ultrasound and ENT), Difficult to book appointment (ENT Physiotherapy), not contacted (ENT, Physiotherapy).

40% of respondents were not satisfied with the outcome of their follow-up appointment. Around half of those attending Physiotherapy and ENT were not satisfied.

77.5% of appointments were conducted in person with the rest conducted on the telephone.

61% of patients were seen in Hemel Hempstead.

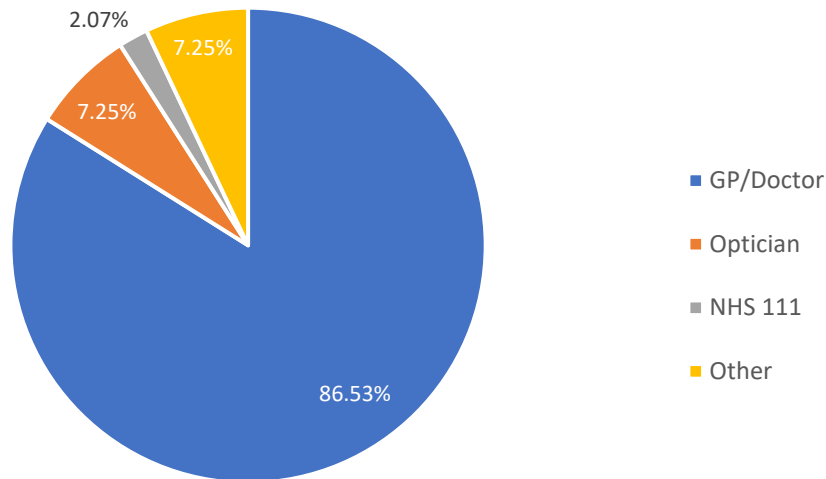
71% of patients got to their appointments in their own car or were driven by a family member or friend.

Following on from this, here is the full analysis of the results and then some examples of comments made by respondents.

Analysis of Results

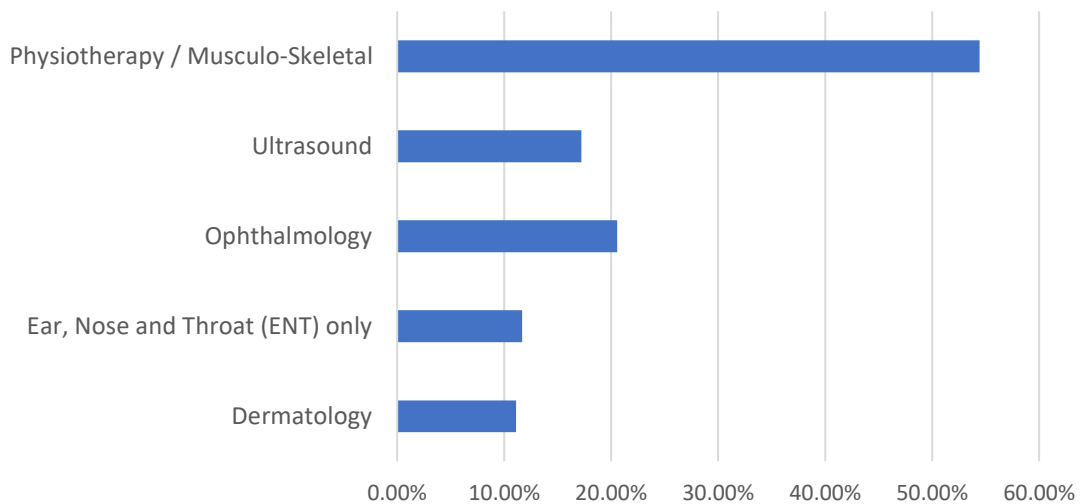
1. Who made your referral to the service?

A large majority of respondents (86.53%) were referred to the service by their GP. 7.25% were referred by their optician, 2.07% by NHS 111 and 7.25% by other means.



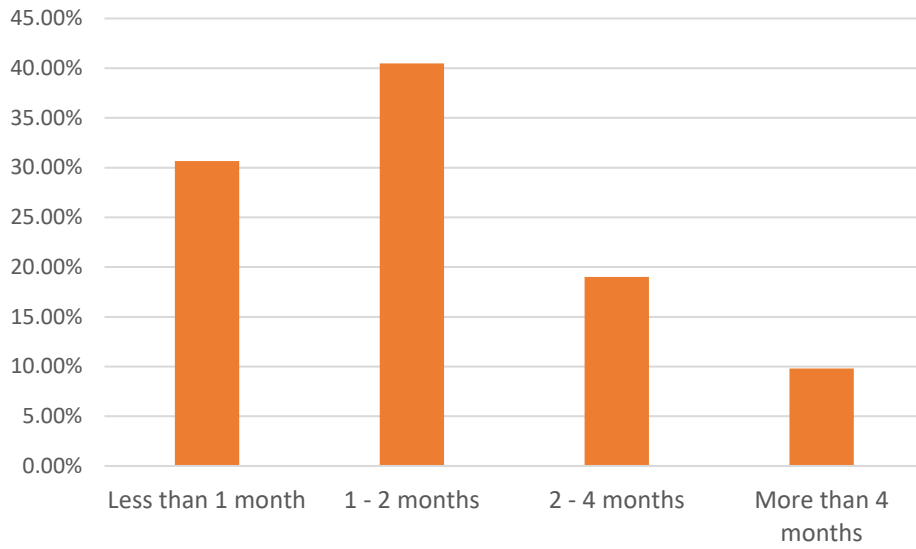
2. Which service were you referred to?

54.44% of respondents were referred to physiotherapy or musculo-skeletal treatment, 20.56% to ophthalmology, 17.22% to ultrasound, 11.47% to ENT only and 11.11% to dermatology.



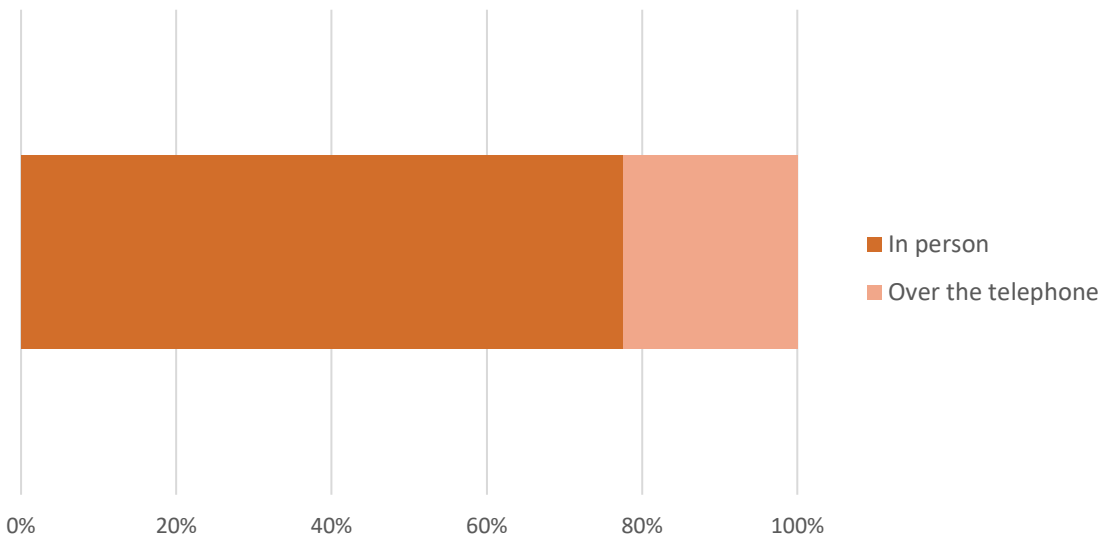
3. How long did you wait for your initial appointment?

30.67% of respondents waited less than a month for their first appointment, 40.49% waited 1-2 months, 19.02% waited 2-4 months and 9.82% waited more than 4 months.



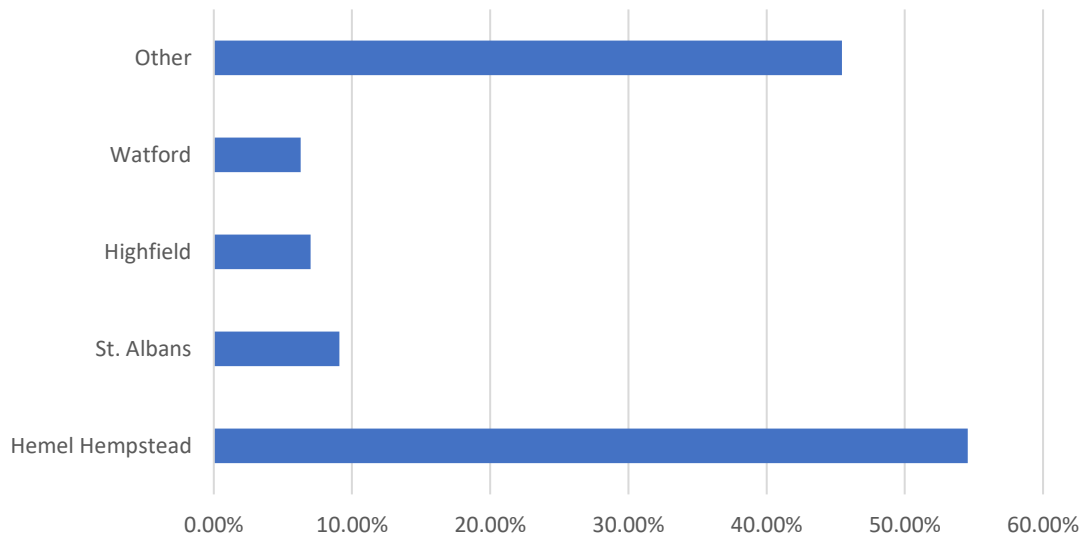
telephone.

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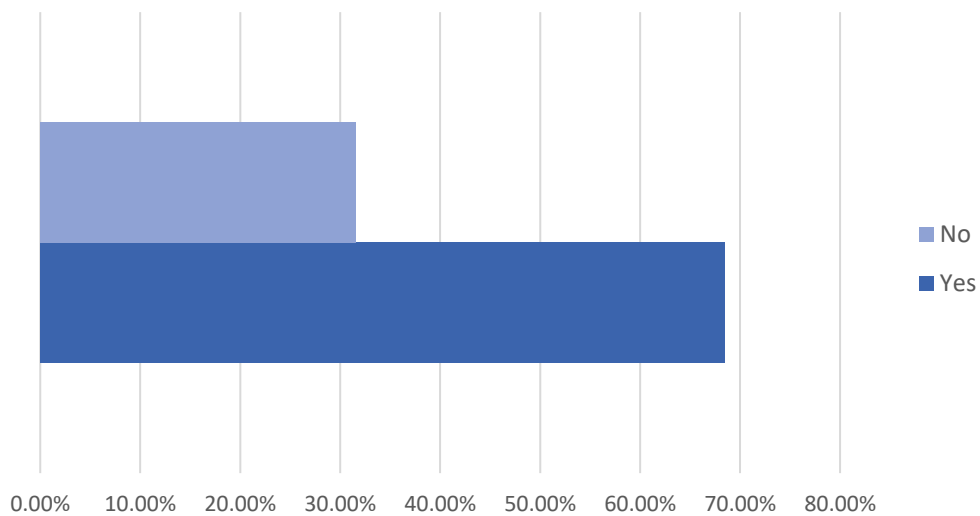
5. Where was your appointment held?

A majority of respondents (54.55%) said their appointments were held in Hemel Hempstead.

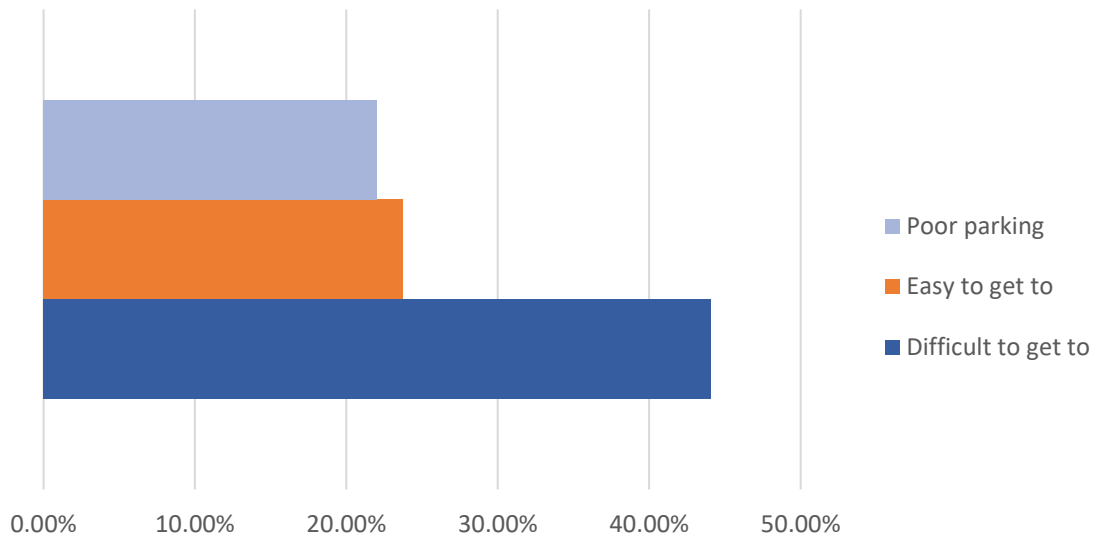


6. Was your appointment held in a convenient location?

68.46% of respondents thought their appointment was held in a convenient location. 31.54% did not.

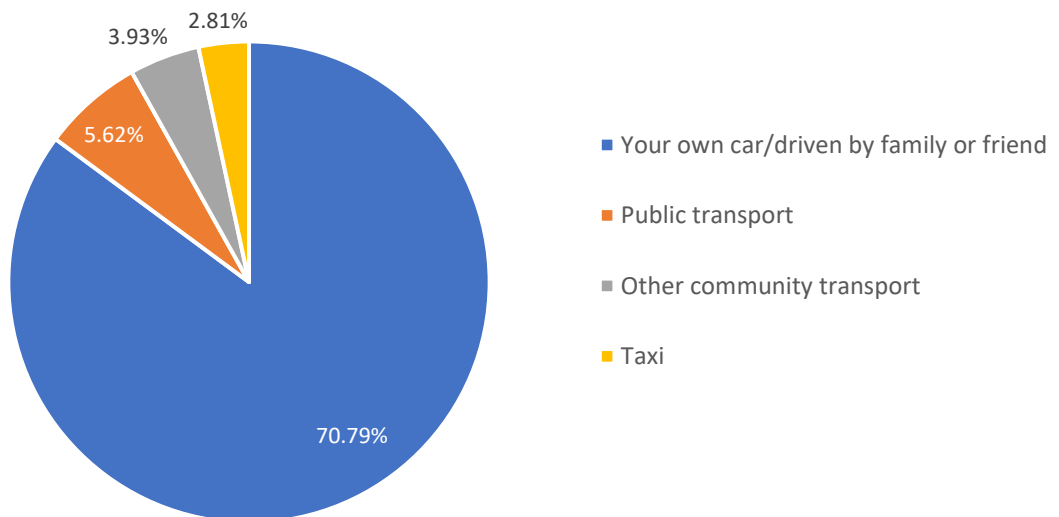


44.07% of respondents said the location of their appointment was difficult to get to and 22.03% said it had poor parking. 23.73% thought the location was easy to get to.



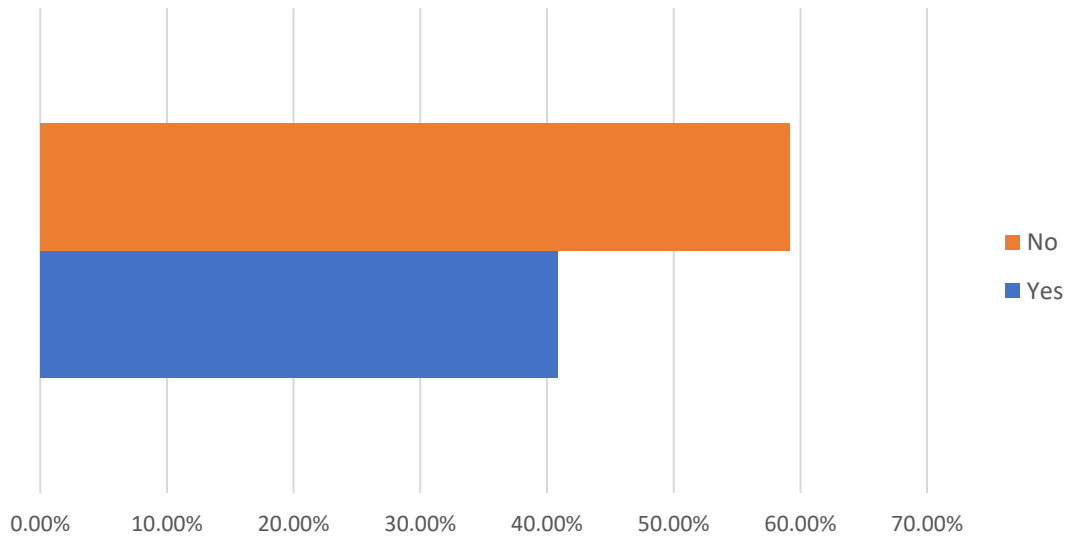
7. How did you get to the appointment?

A majority of respondents (70.79%) got to the appointment by their own car or were driven by a family or friend. 5.62% used public transport.



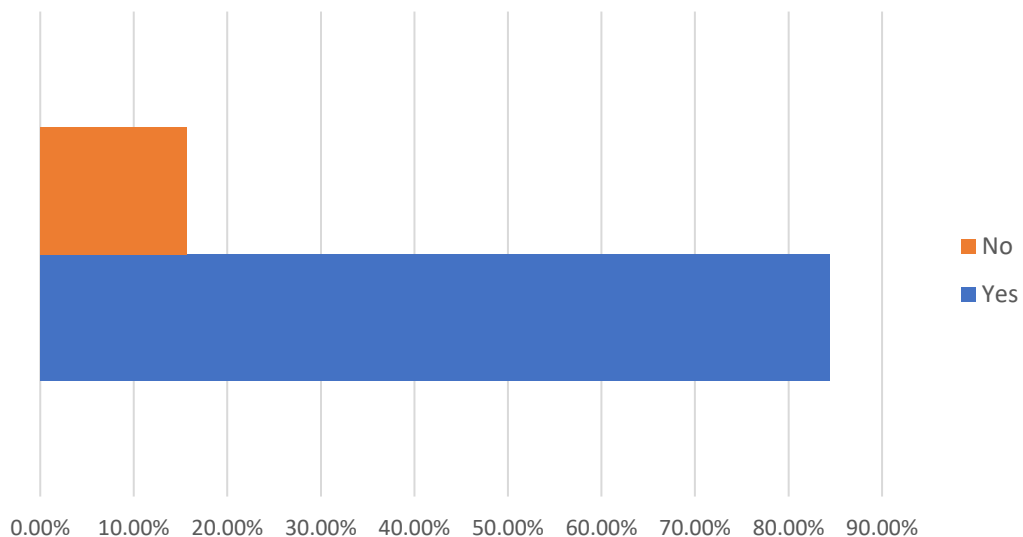
8. If you arrived by car, did you find there was adequate on-site parking?

59.13% of respondents that arrived by car did not think there was adequate on-site parking.

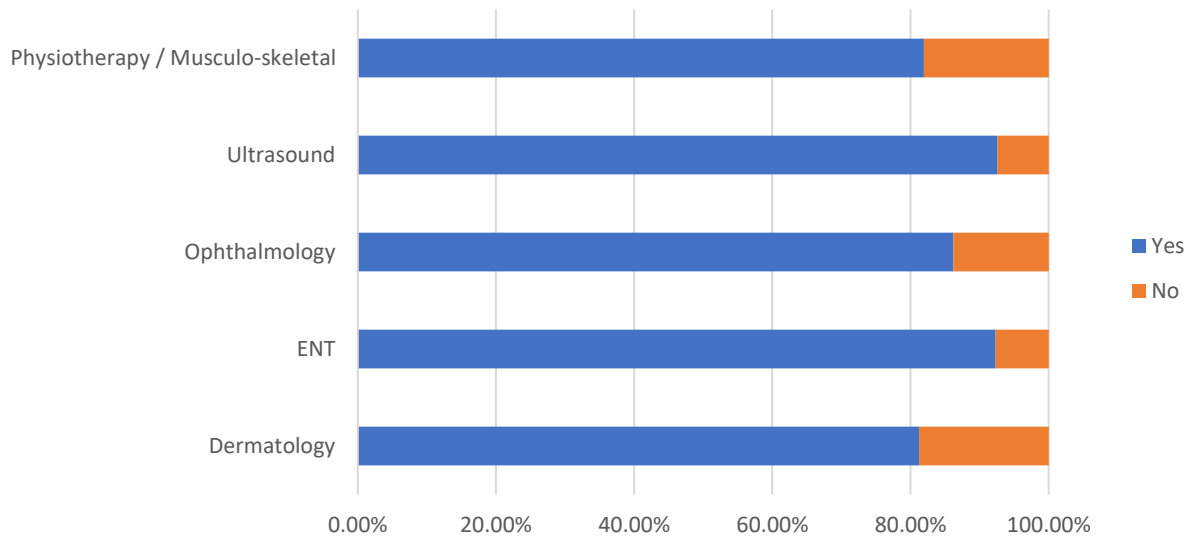


9. Do you feel that you were treated with dignity and privacy at your appointment?

Overall, 15.65% of respondents did not feel they were treated with dignity and privacy at their appointment.

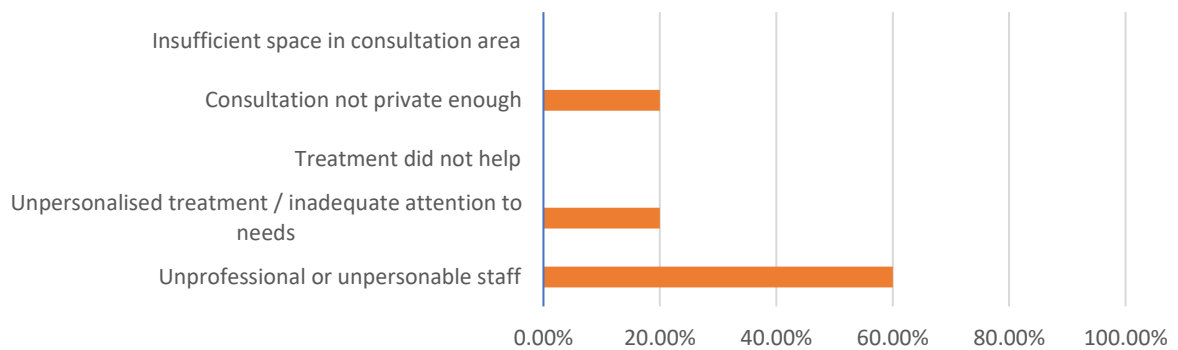


Of the five services, dermatology and physiotherapy / musculo-skeletal had the highest proportion of people that felt they were not treated with dignity and privacy, with 18.75% and 18.06% respectively saying they were not.

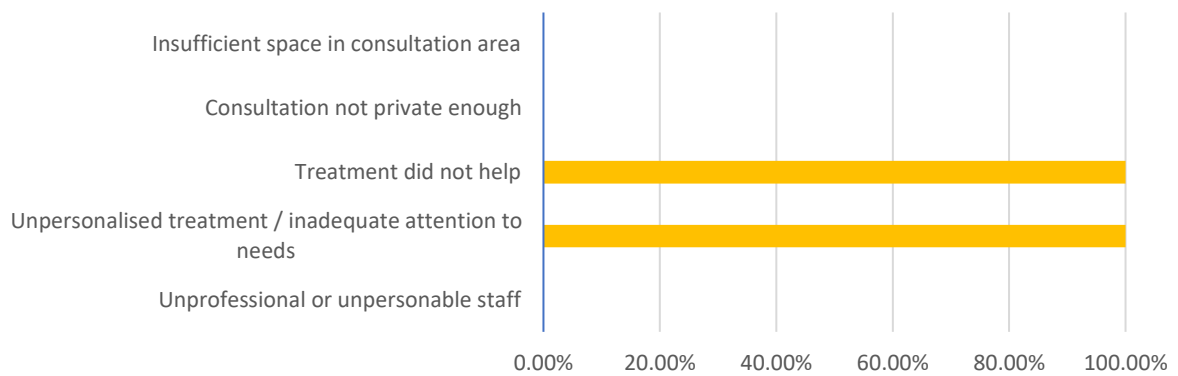


9b. Comments on why people did not feel they were treated with dignity and respect

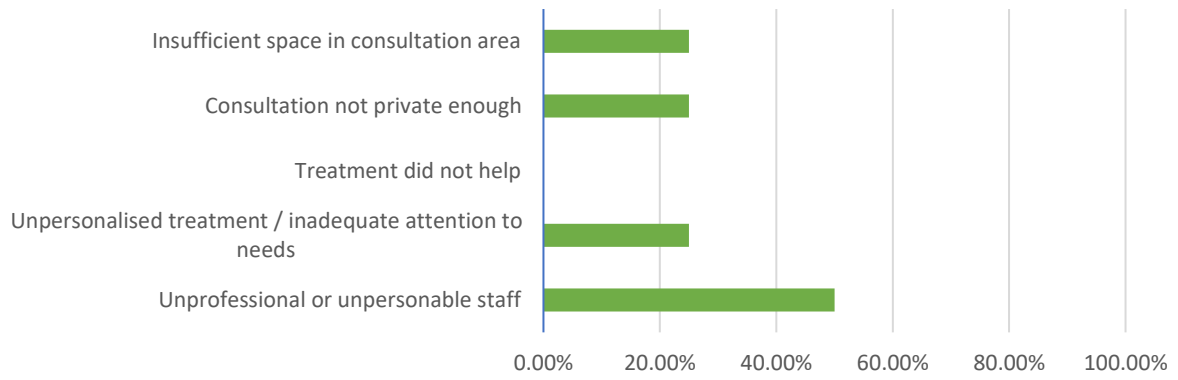
Dermatology



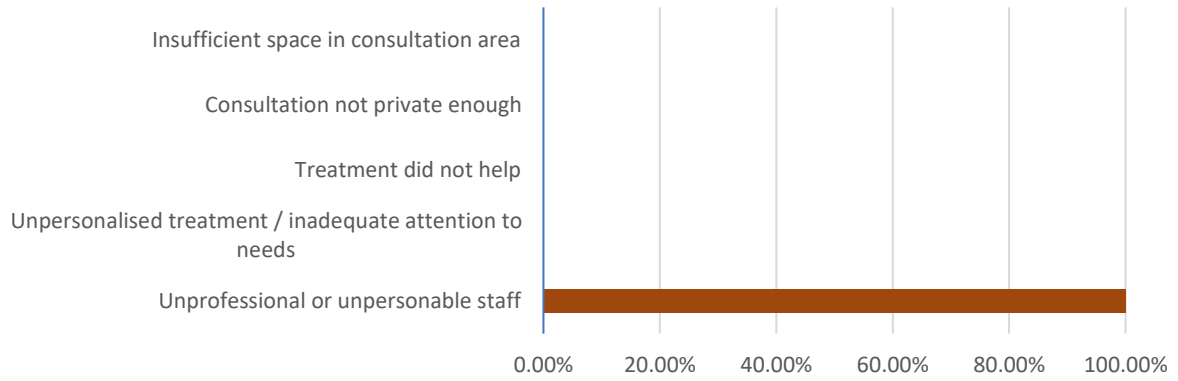
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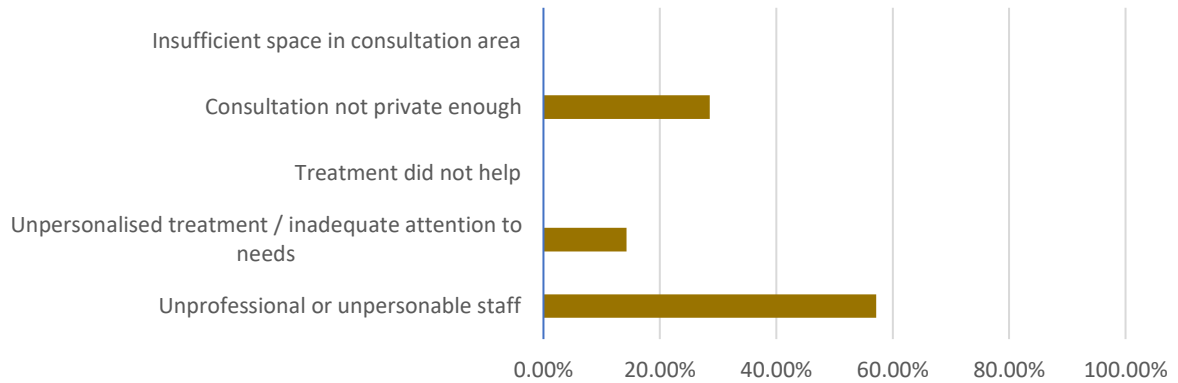
Ophthalmology



Ultrasound

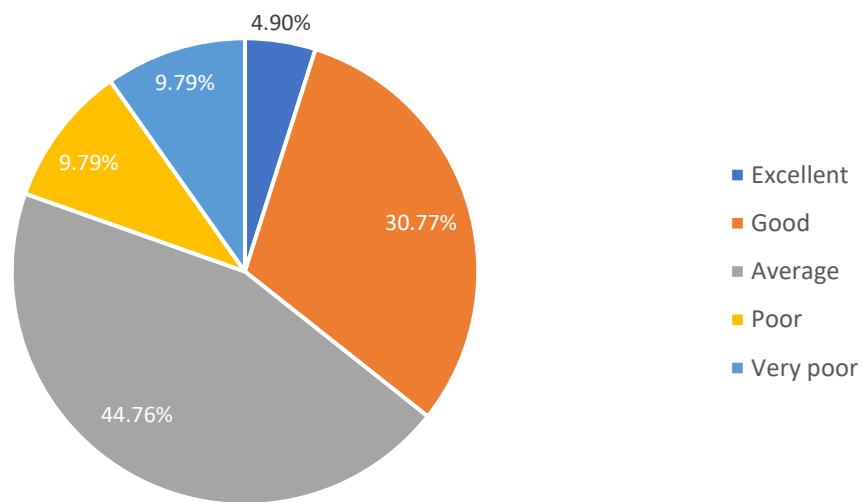


Physiotherapy / Musculo-skeletal

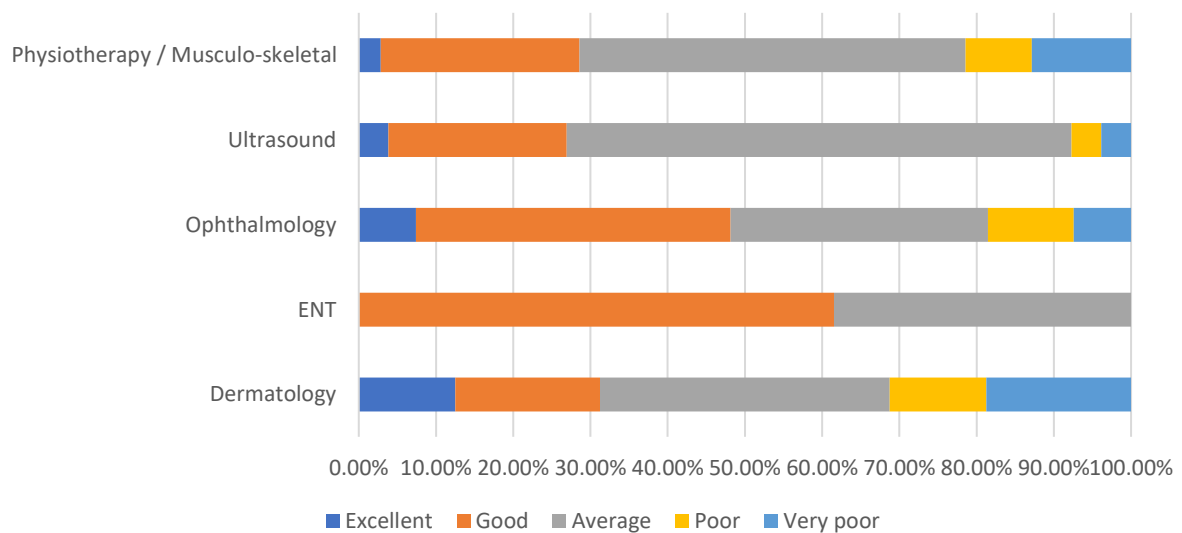


10. How would you rate the premises and facilities?

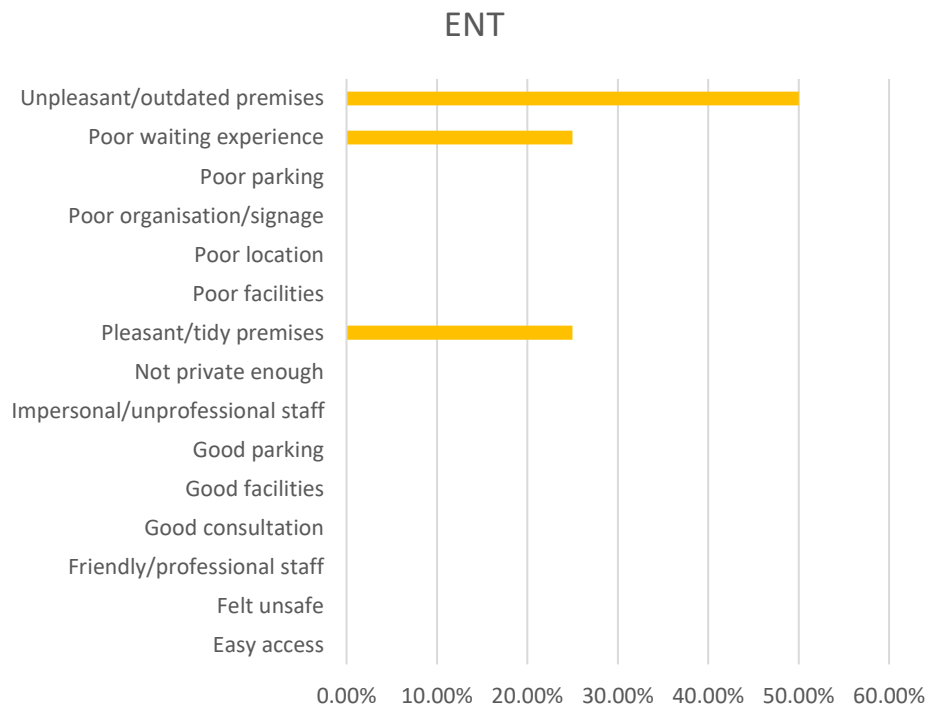
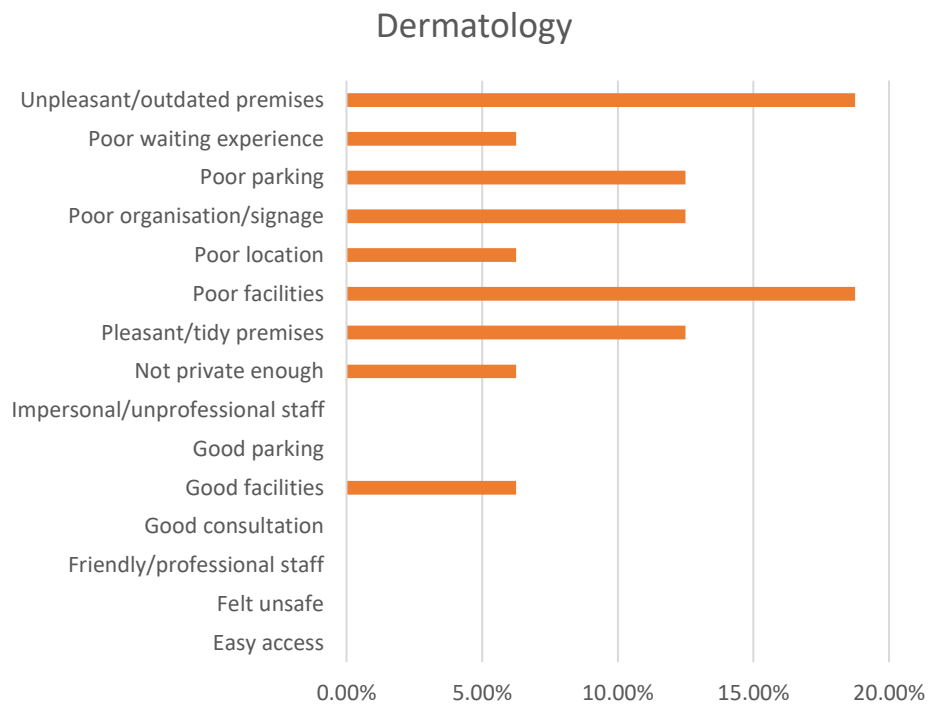
A majority of respondents (44.76%) rated the premises and facilities as average. 30.77% rated them as good. 19.58% rated them as poor or very poor.



Of the five services, a larger proportion of respondents rated dermatology and physiotherapy / musculo-skeletal as poor or very poor than the other services.



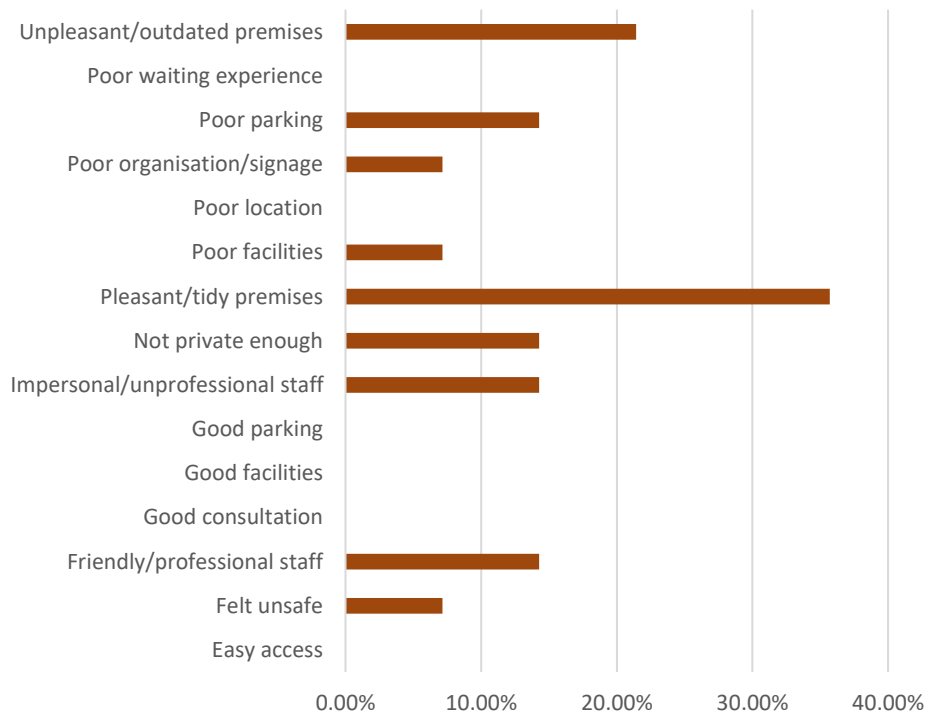
10b. Comments on why respondents rated the premises and facilities as they did by service



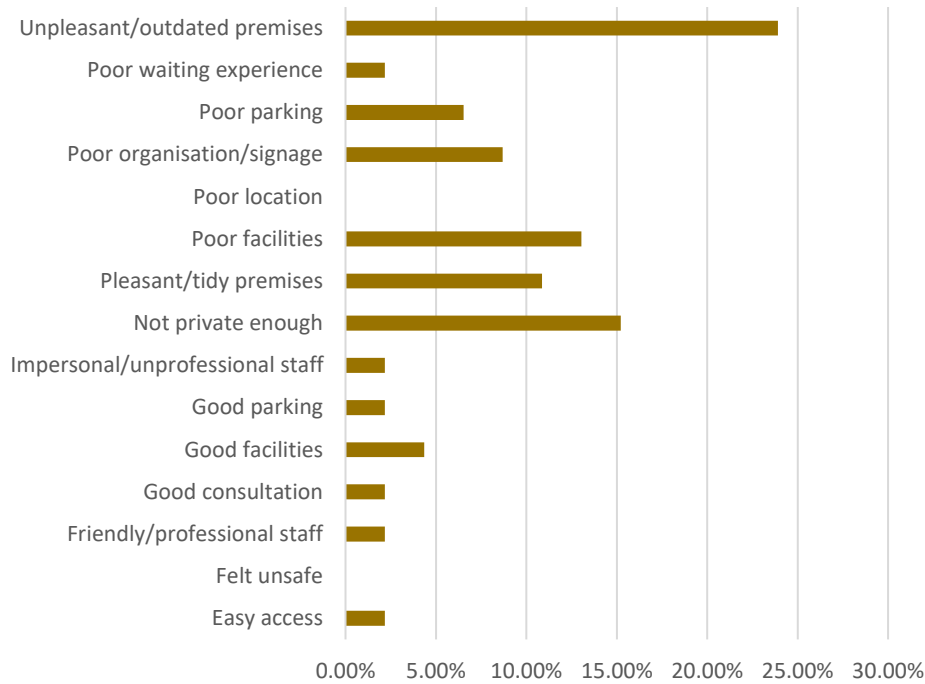
Ophthalmology



Ultrasound

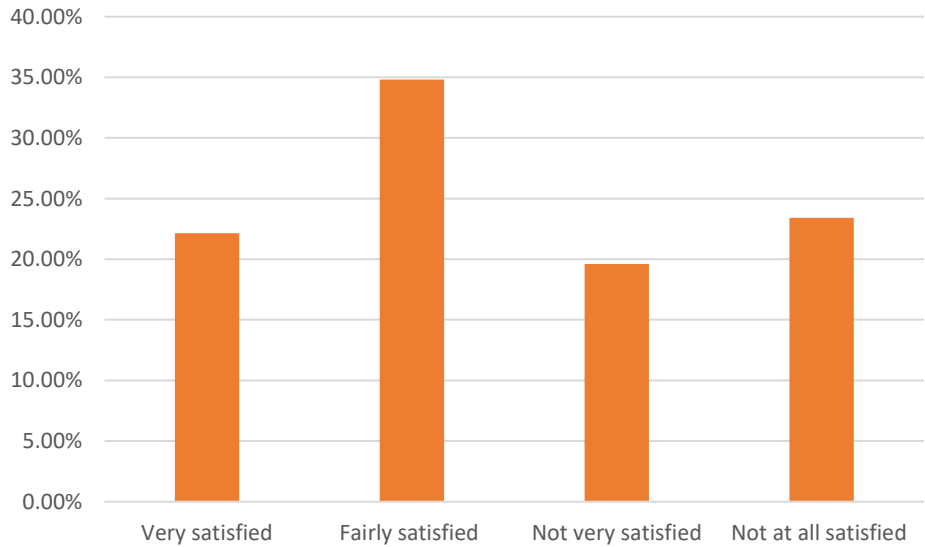


Physiotherapy / Musculo-skeletal

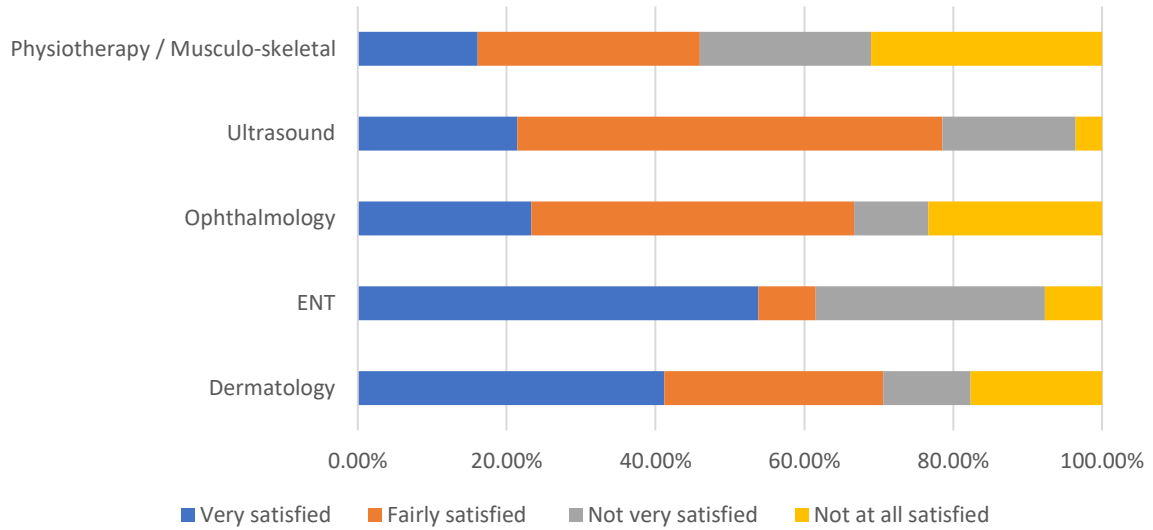


11. Were you satisfied with the outcome of the consultation?

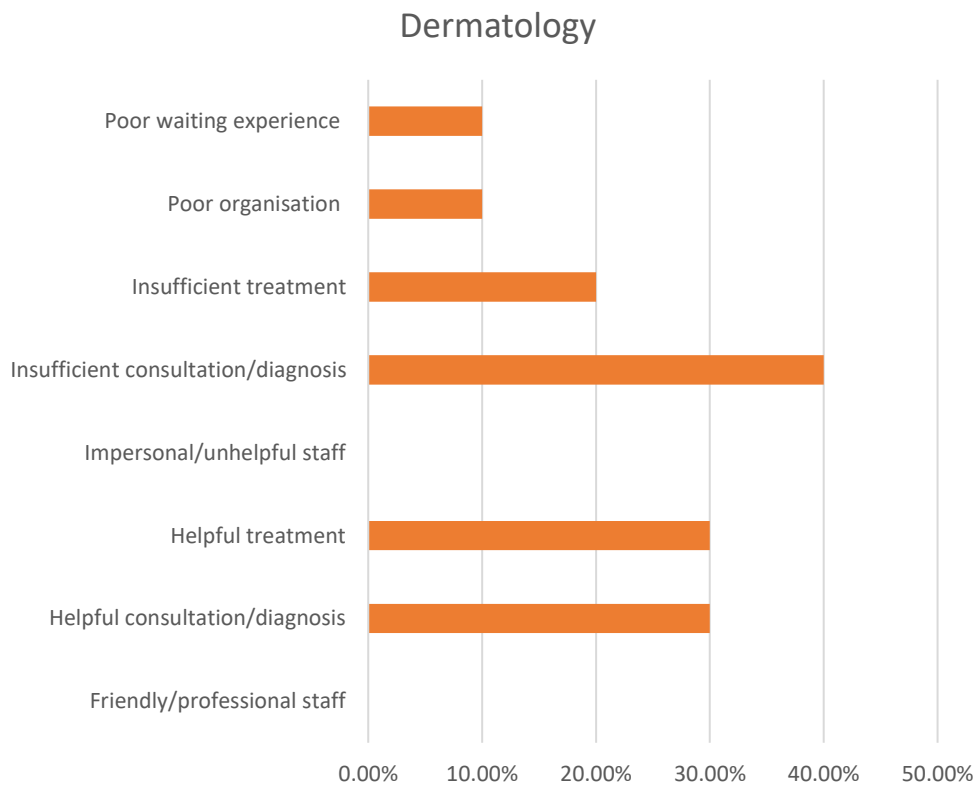
34.81% of respondents were fairly satisfied with their consultation. 23.42% were not at all satisfied.



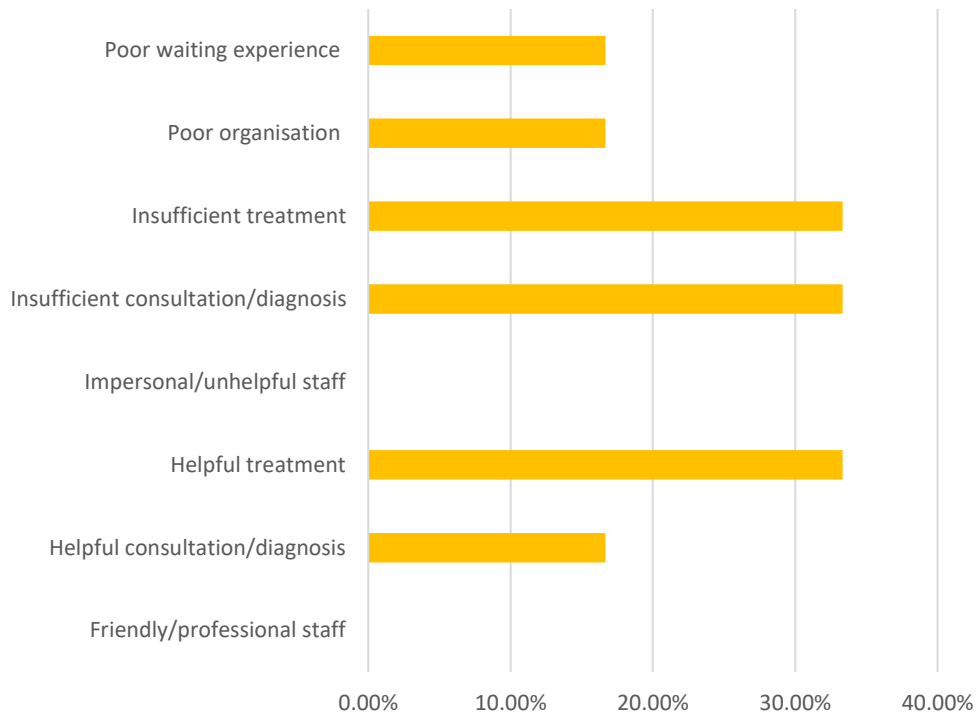
Of the five services, a higher proportion of people said they were not at all satisfied or not very satisfied with physiotherapy / musculoskeletal and ENT.



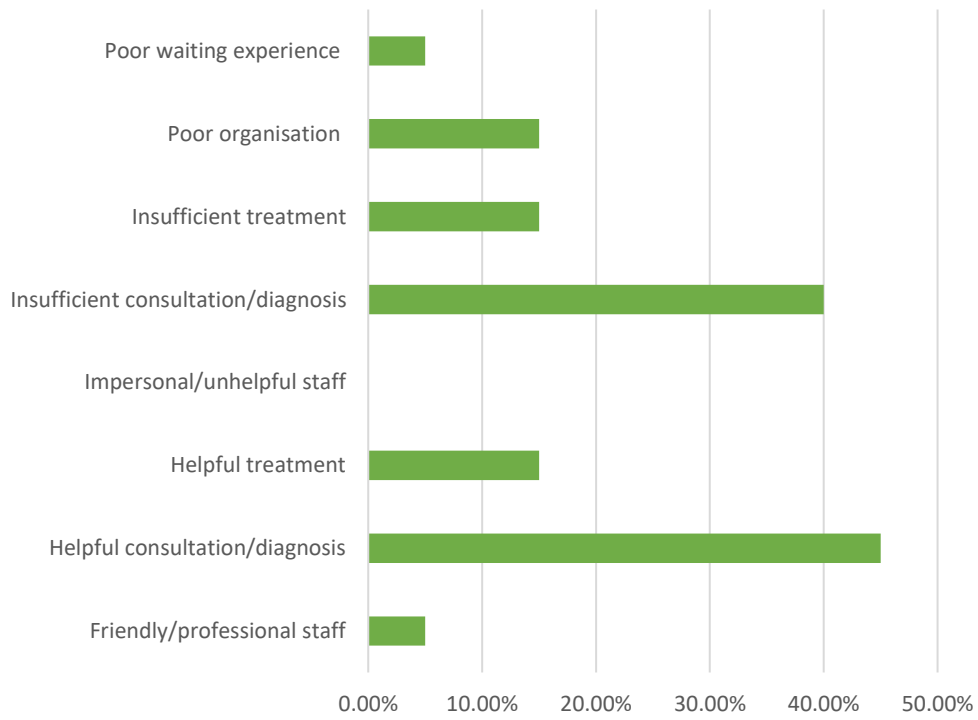
11b. Comments on why respondents rated their satisfaction with their consultation as they did by service



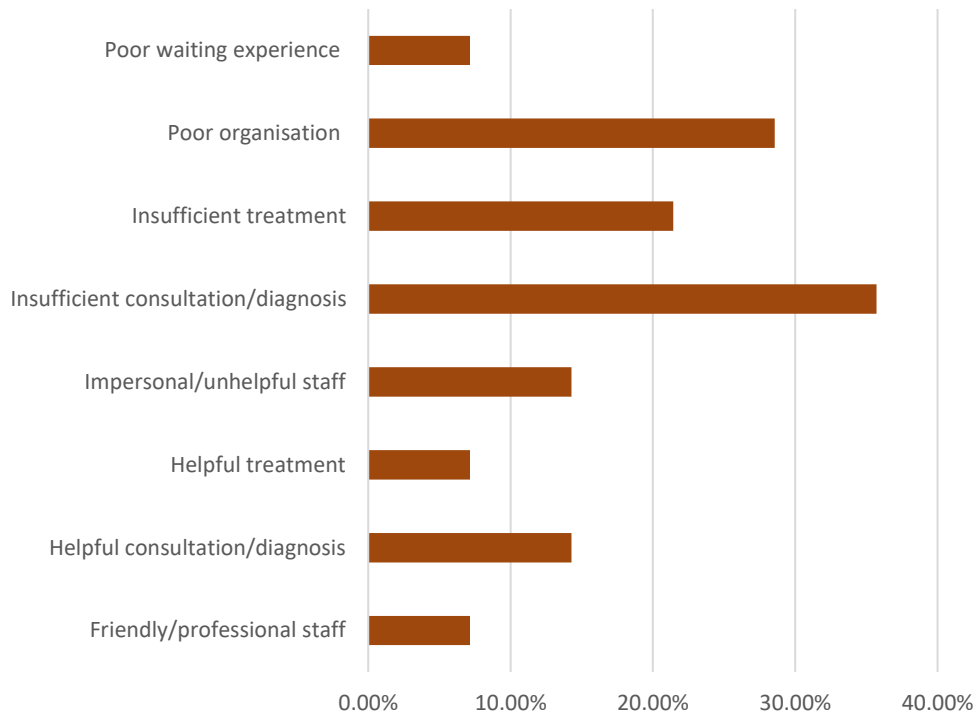
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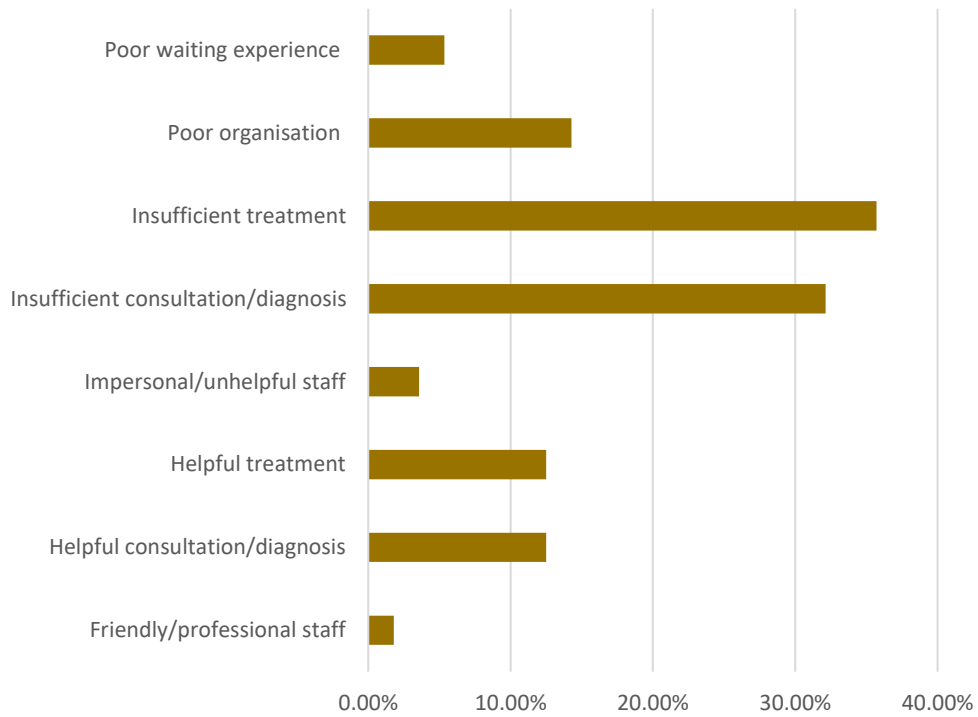
Ophthalmology



Ultrasound

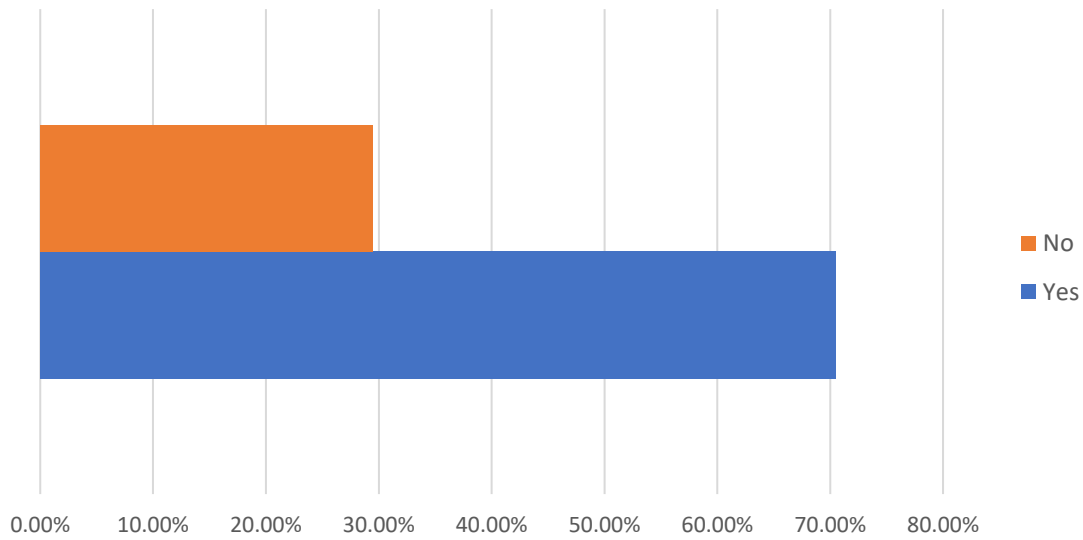


Physiotherapy / Musculo-skeletal



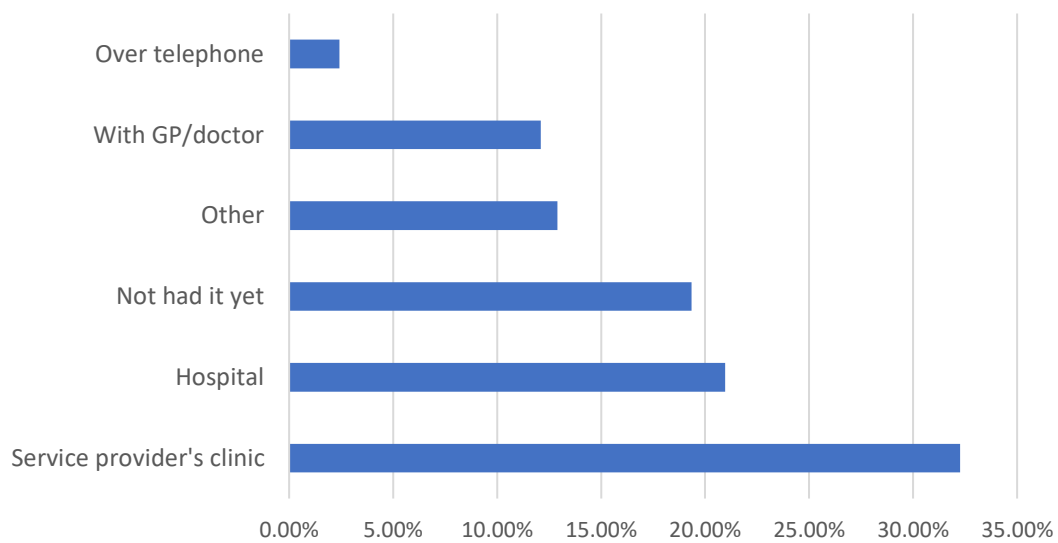
12. Did you need a follow-up appointment?

70.51% of respondents said they needed a follow-up appointment.



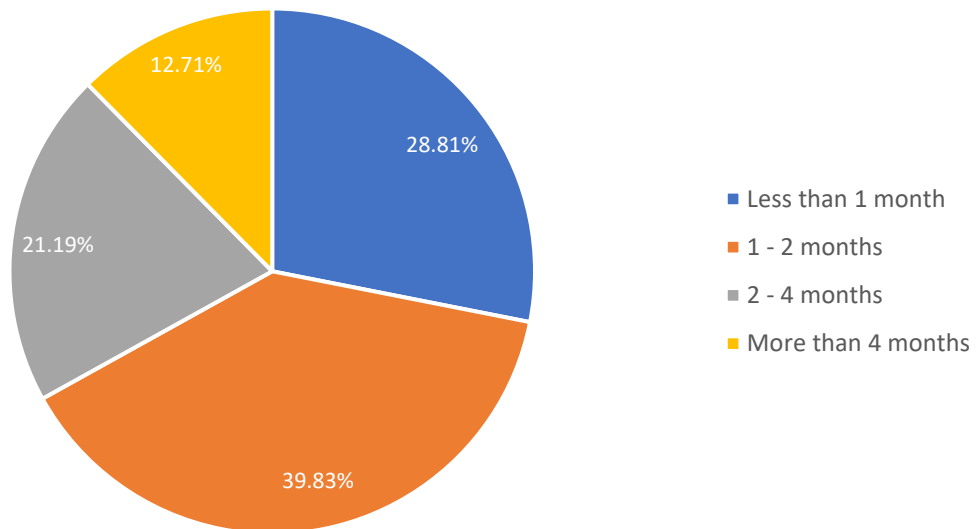
13. Where was the follow-up appointment held?

32.26% of respondents' follow-up appointments were held at the service provider's clinic. 20.97% were held at a hospital.

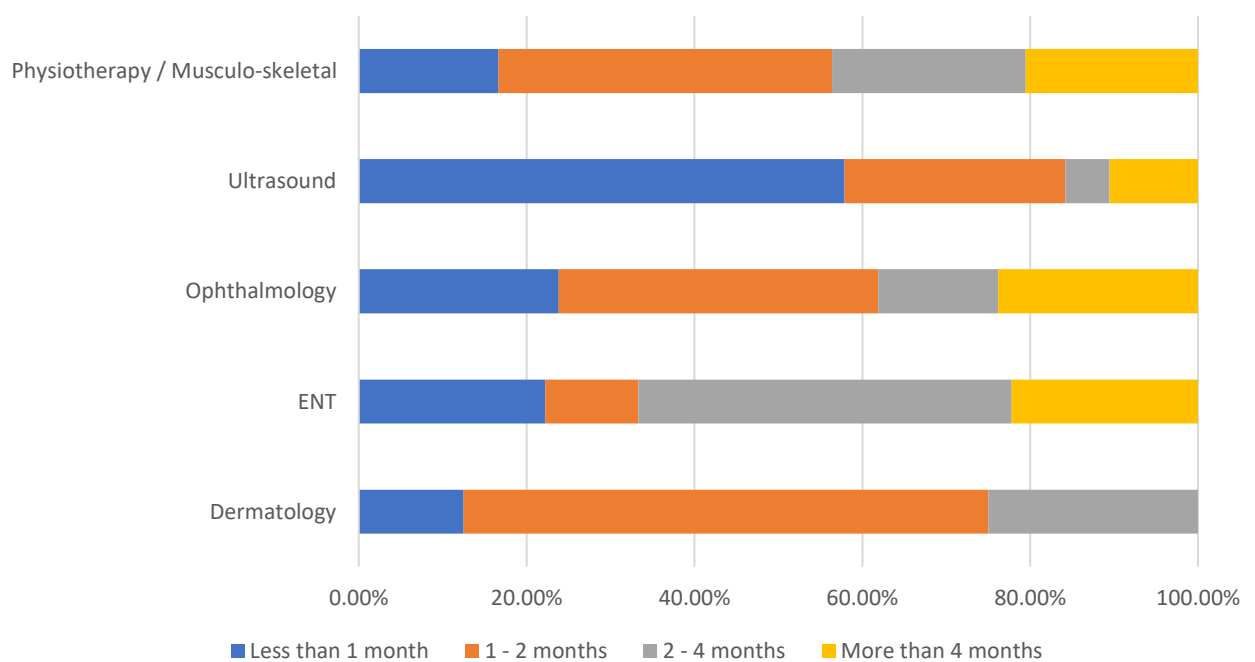


14. How long did you have to wait for the follow-up appointment?

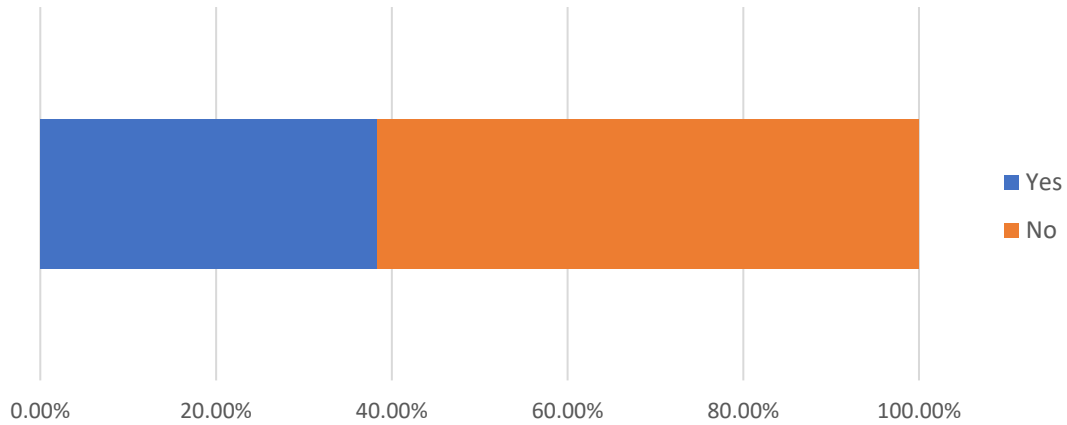
39.83% of respondents had to wait 1-2 months for a follow-up appointment, while 33.9% of people had to wait 2 months or more.



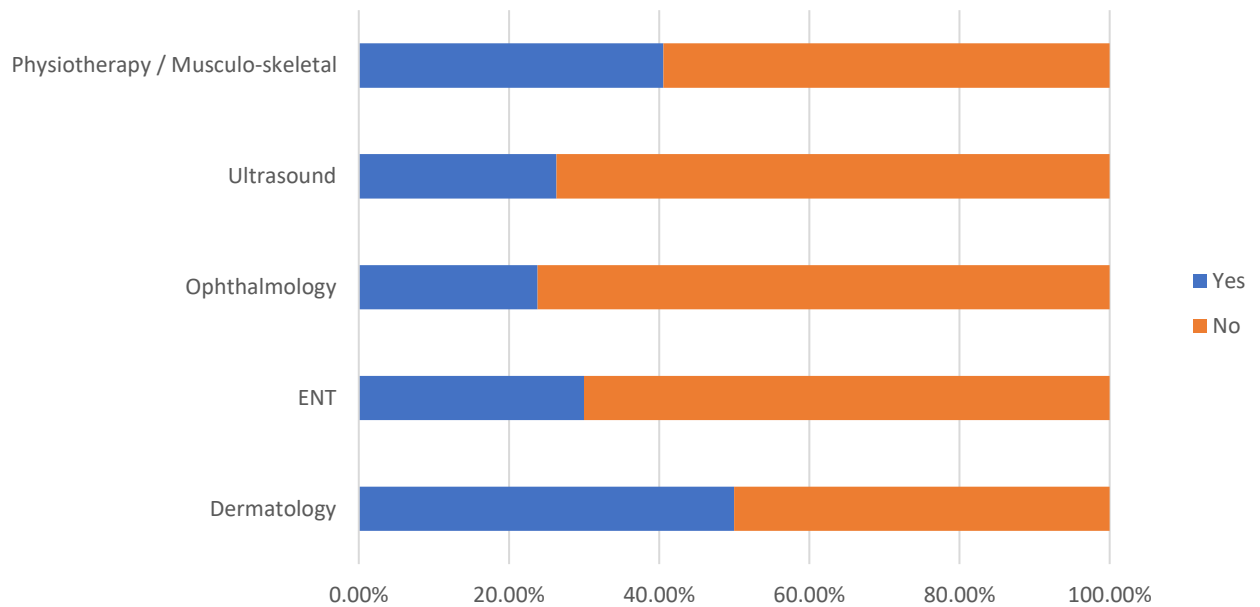
Of the five services, a higher proportion of respondents had to wait more than four months for ENT, physiotherapy / musculo-skeletal and ophthalmology than the other two services.



15. Did you have any problems in making the follow-up appointment?
38.33% of respondents said they had problems in making a follow-up appointment.

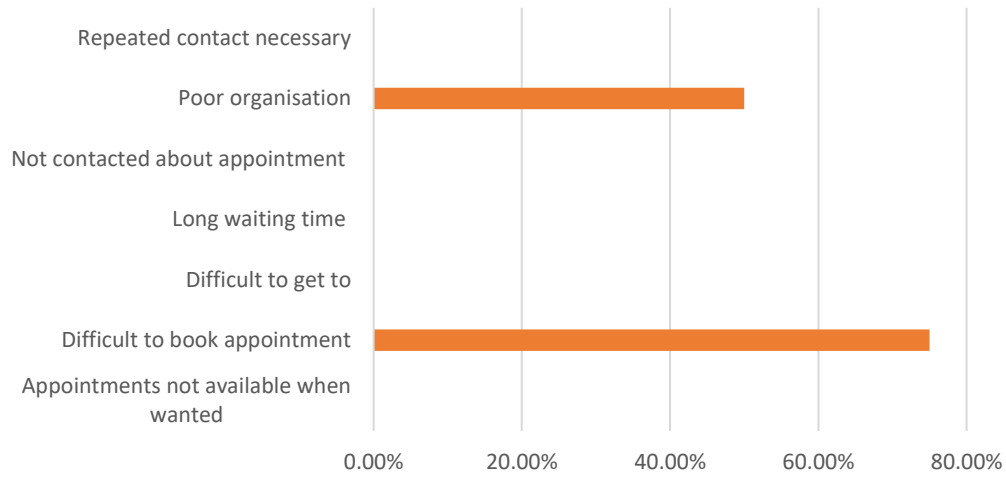


Of the five services, a higher proportion of respondents had problems making a follow-up appointment with physiotherapy/musculo-skeletal and dermatology.

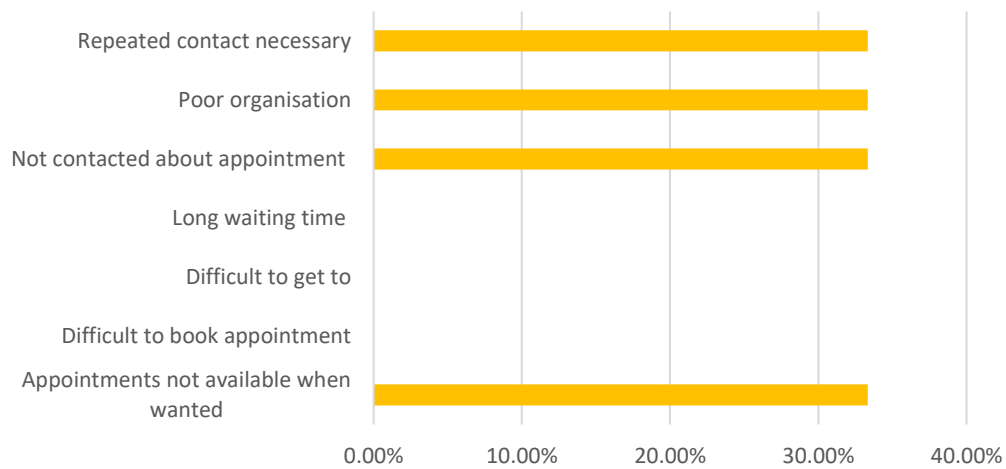


15b. Comments about the problems respondents had with making a follow-up appointment by service

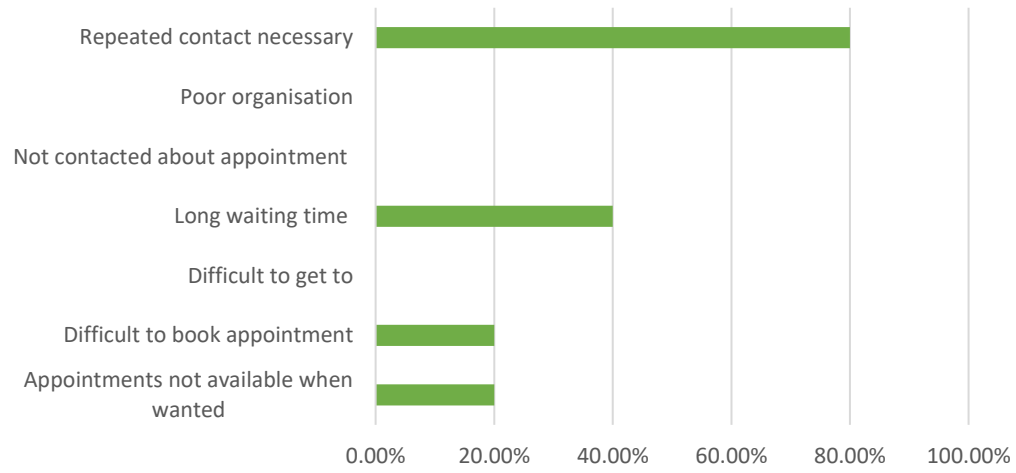
Dermatology



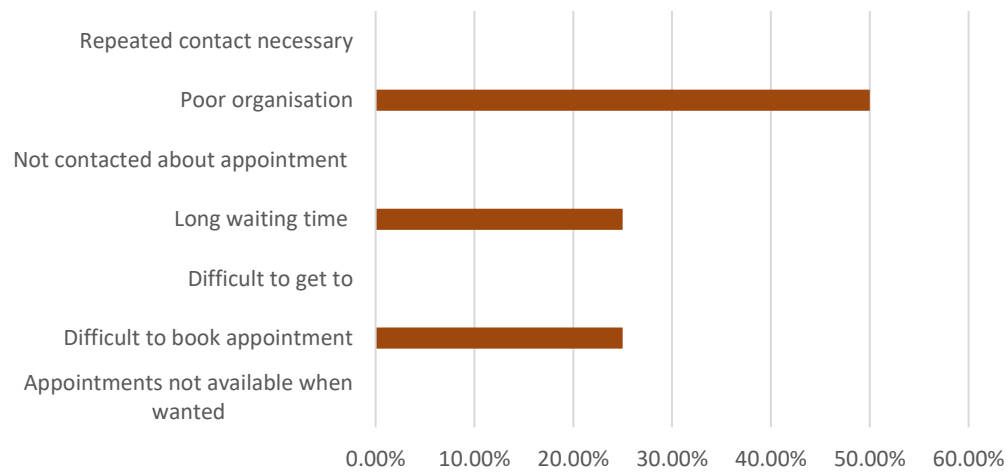
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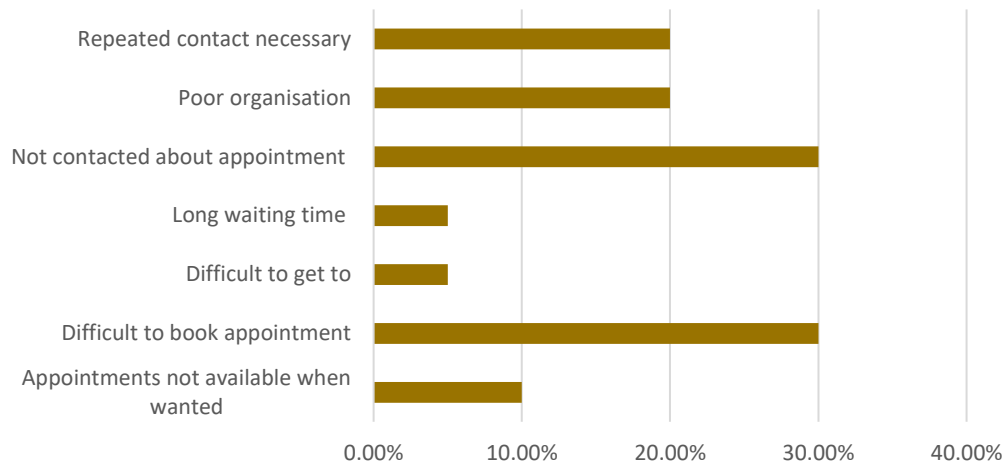
Ophthalmology



Ultrasound

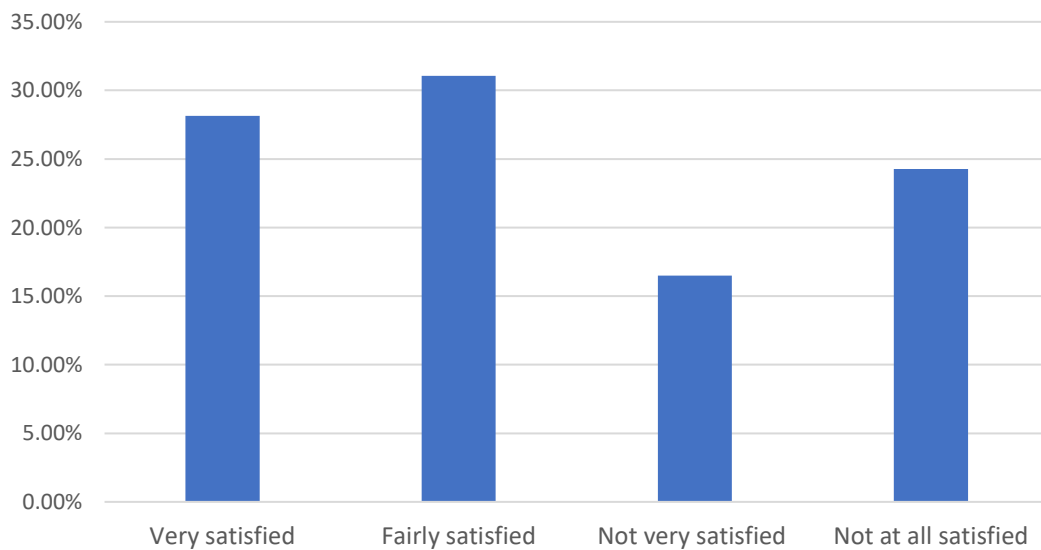


Physiotherapy / Musculo-skeletal

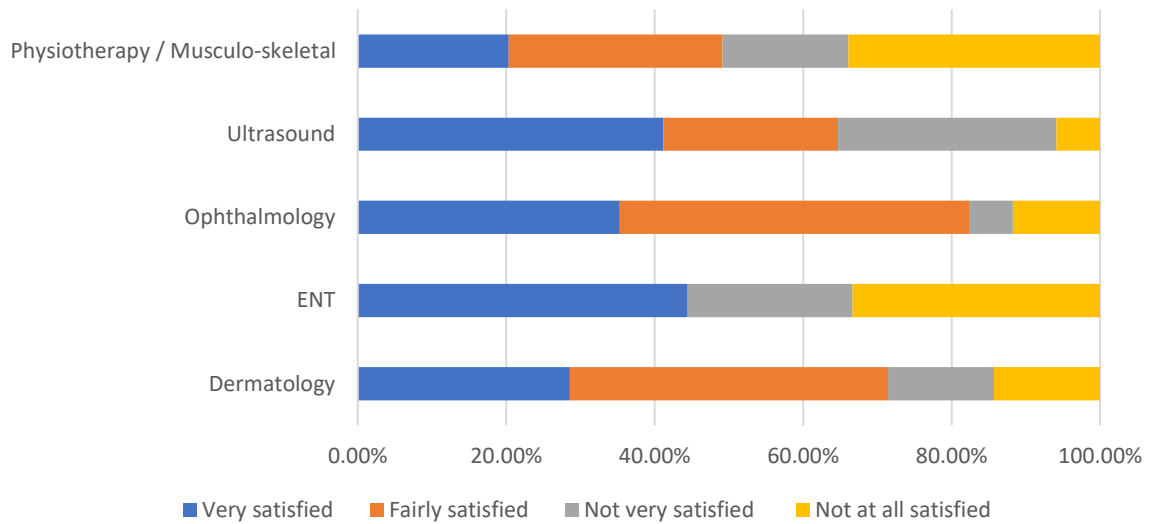


16. Were you satisfied with the outcome of your follow-up appointment?

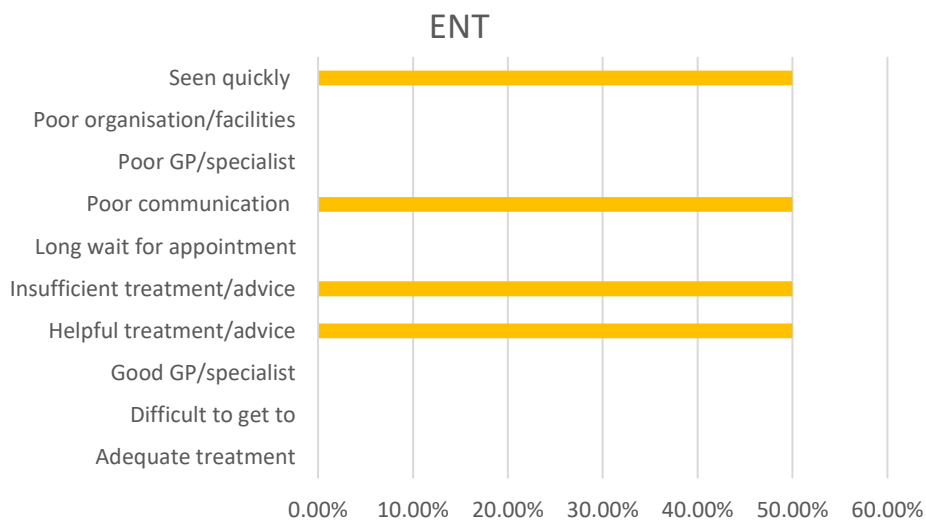
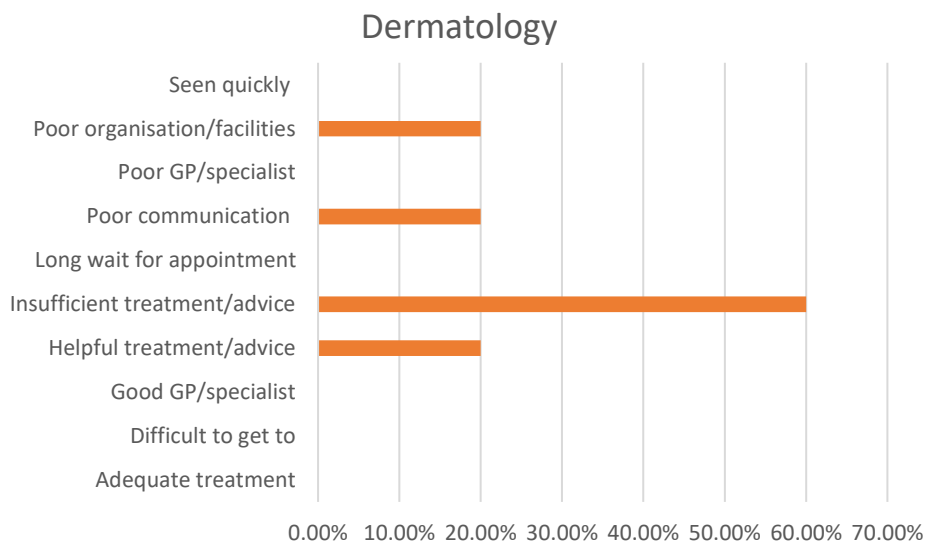
28.16% of people were very satisfied with the outcome of their follow-up appointment and 31.07% were fairly satisfied. However, 16.5% said they were not very satisfied and 24.27% said they were not at all satisfied.



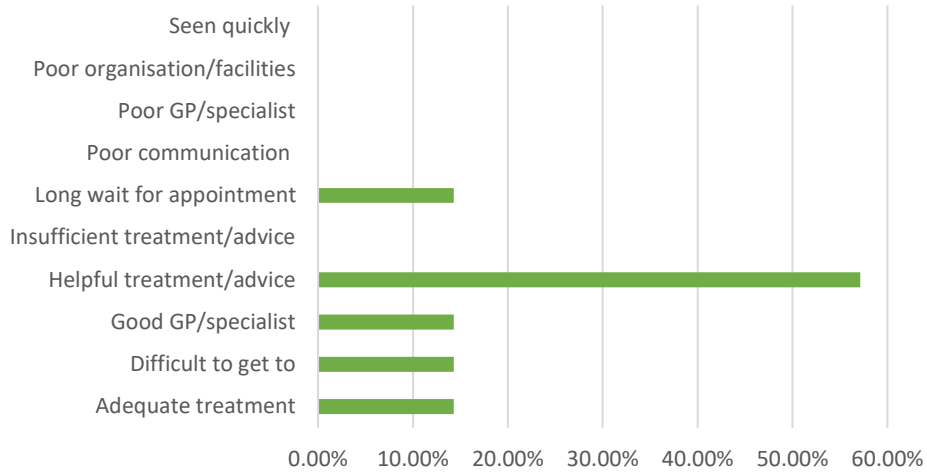
Of the five services, a higher proportion of respondents were not at all satisfied or not very satisfied with the outcome of their physiotherapy/musculo-skeletal and ENT follow-up appointments.



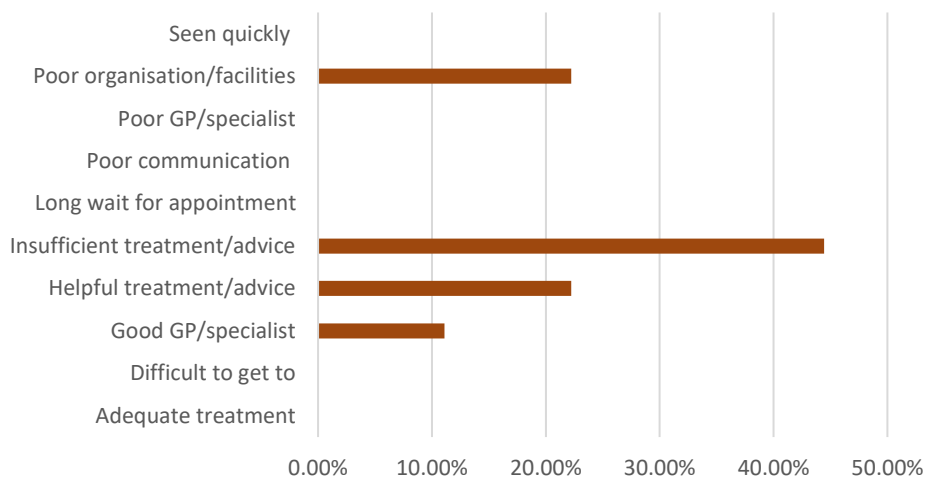
16b. Comments on why respondents rated their satisfaction with their follow-up appointment as they did



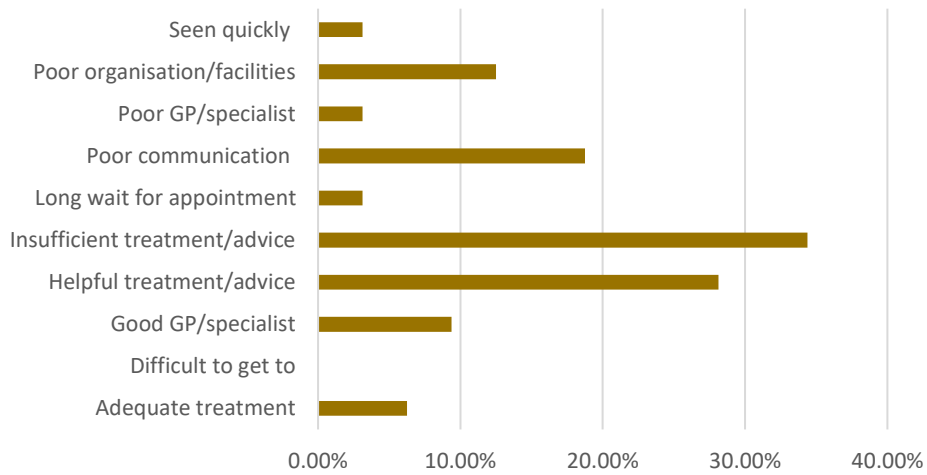
Ophthalmology



Ultrasound

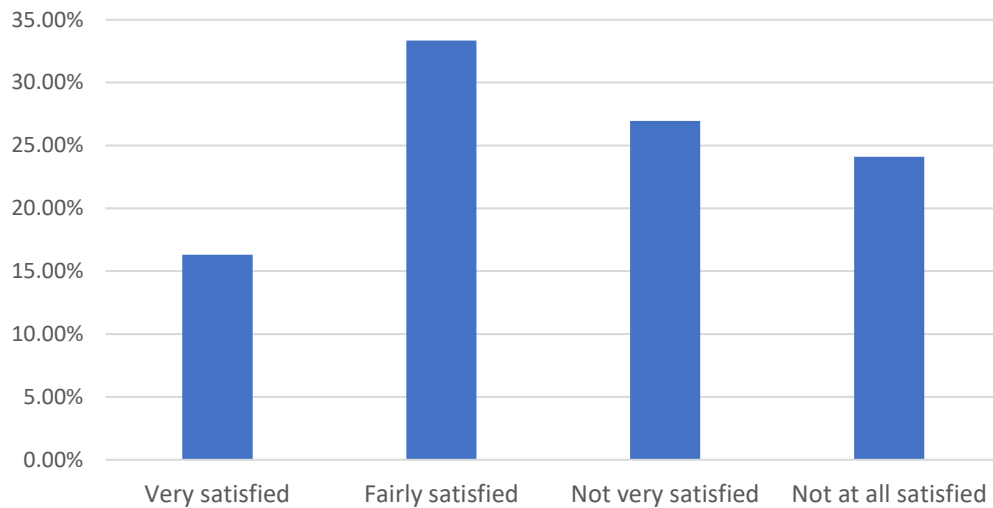


Physiotherapy / Musculo-skeletal

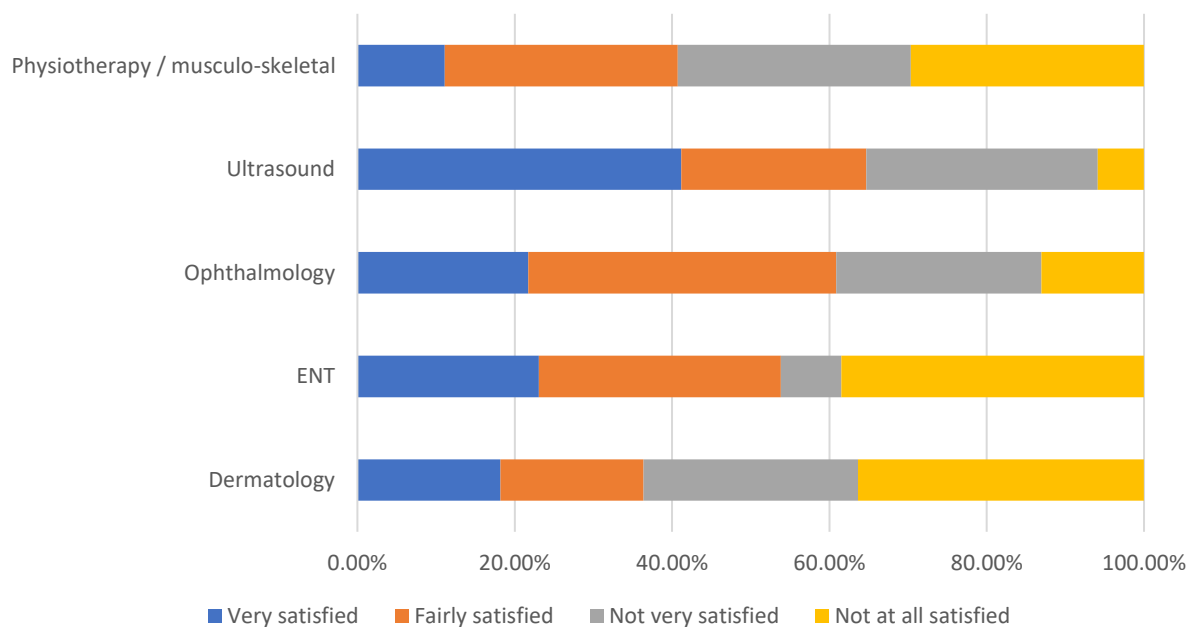


17. Please rate your overall experience with the service provided to you

33.33% were fairly satisfied with the service they received, while 26.95% were not very satisfied and 24.11% were not at all satisfied. Only 16.31% said they were very satisfied.

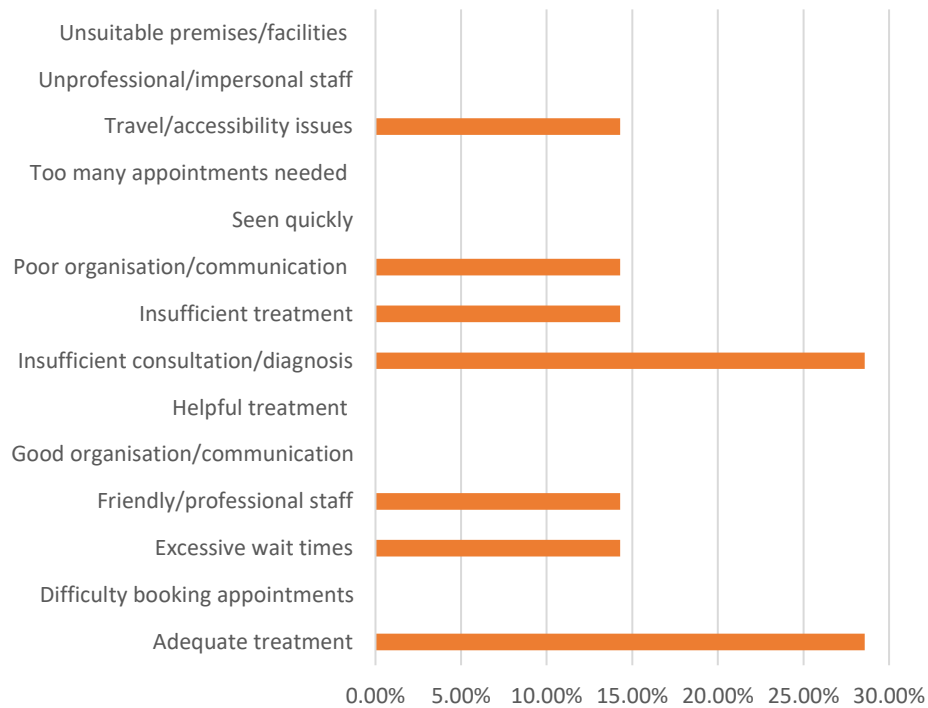


Of the five services, a higher proportion of people were either not very satisfied or not at all satisfied with physiotherapy/musculo-skeletal and dermatology.

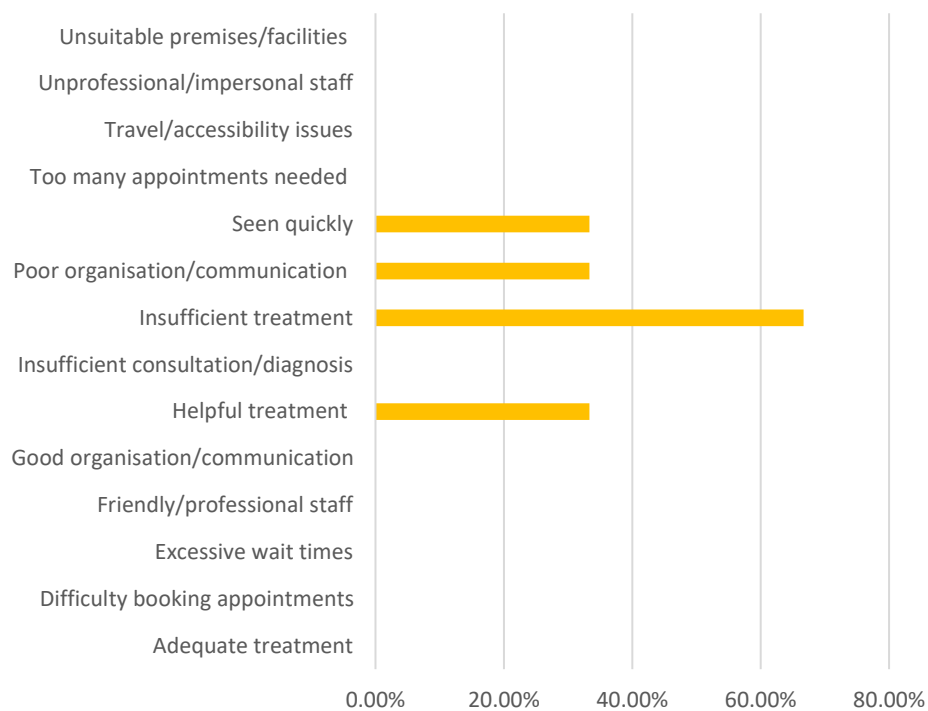


17b. Comments on why respondents rated their overall satisfaction with the service as they did

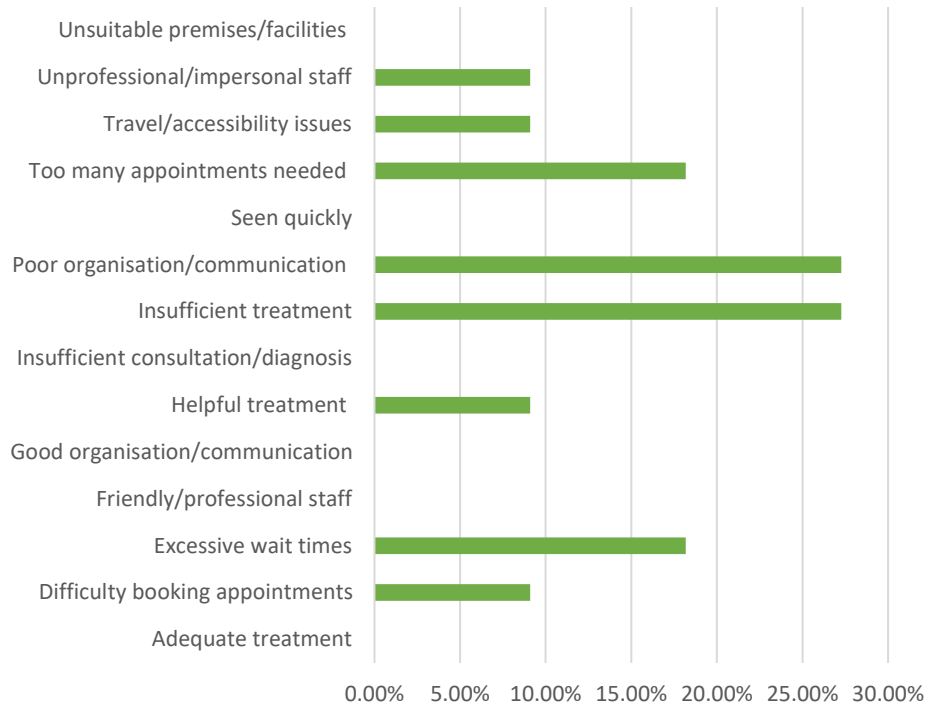
Dermatology



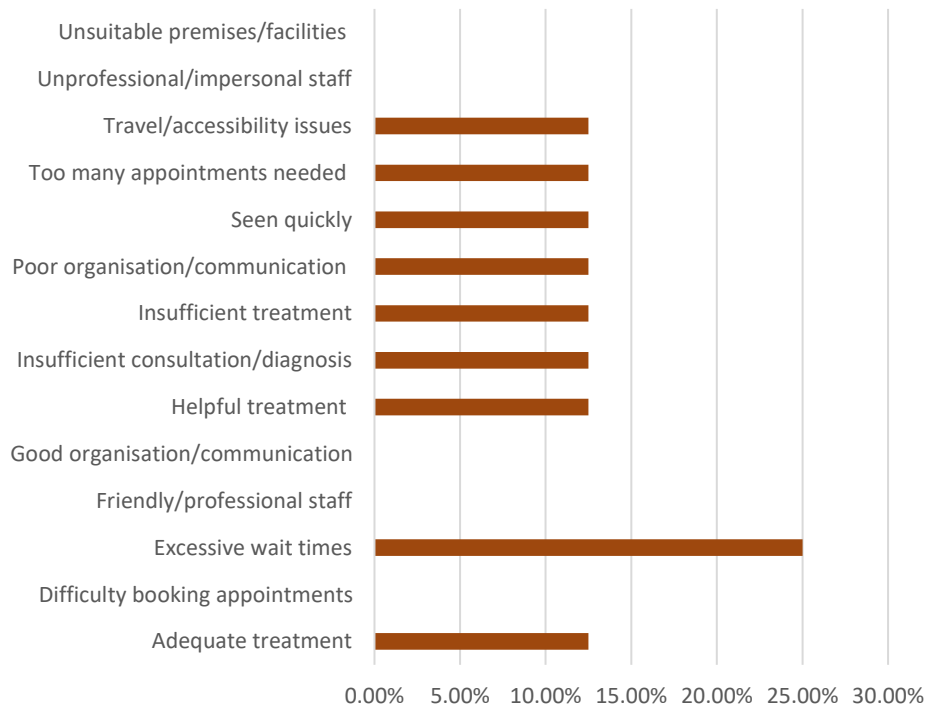
ENT



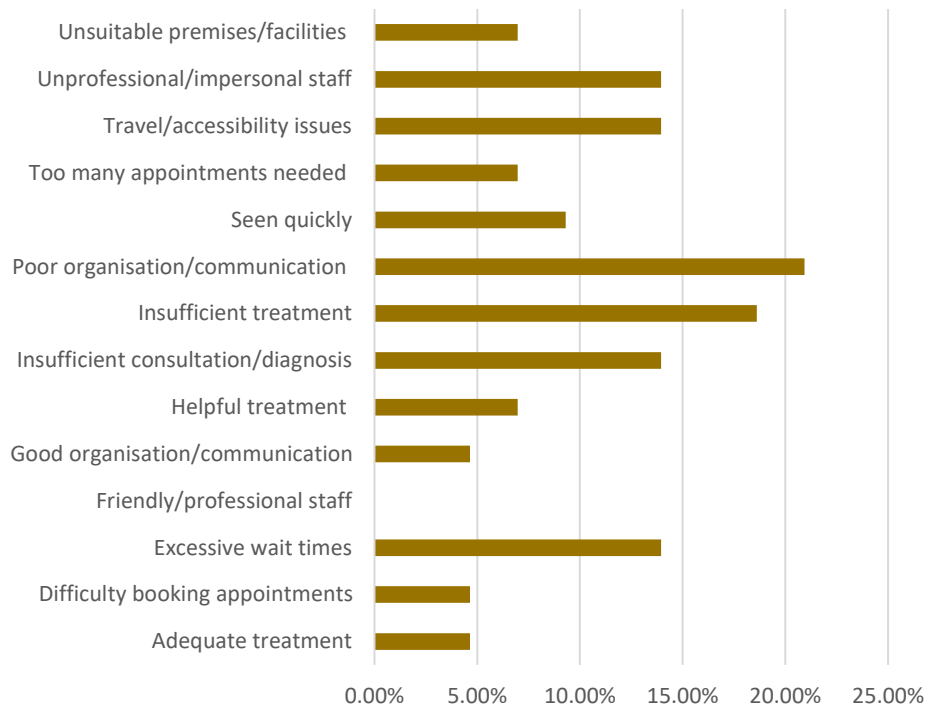
Ophthalmology



Ultrasound



Physiotherapy / musculo-skeletal



Some Examples of Comments

The comments are recorded here as provided to us

Key to service:- Dermatology = (D)

Ear Nose & Throat = (ENT)

Ophthalmology = (O)

Physiotherapy = (MSK)

Ultrasound = (U)

Access

From Berkhamsted it's into Hemel then out again to an unfamiliar area and no knowledge of local transport. As it's Ophthalmology the patient can't drive because of the nature of the examination.(O)

After appointments were stopped at Bennetts End Surgery I had to go to Fleetville one day for my field vision test and Tring Surgery another day to see the Doctor. Both about 5-6 miles from my house in different directions. I wish I could be seen in Hemel Hempstead. (O)

Relatively easy to get to and parking available nearby.(U)

Can no longer drive so had to ask family member to take me. Hemel would have been more convenient.(ENT)

Nowhere near bus route and no easy walking route. I couldn't drive but going by bus took almost three hours round trip for a half hour appointment.(MSK)

Difficult to park on site due to very few parking spaces. Has to park in town centre car park and walk from there, having recently had a knee replacement. (MSK)

Quality of Consultation

My symptoms continued since the technician said everything was fine and I had to go private to a Gynaecologist afterwards who found a polyp which had to be removed. My symptoms then cleared up completely. (U)

Woodhall Farm was cancelled twice as ultra-sonographer off sick.(U)

The nurse did not seem able to use the equipment, took ages, unable to take my father in law's eye pressure, he was growing very stressed, she did not seem to know what she was doing, in the end she said we'd have to have another appointment with someone else. He has glaucoma and only one eye so it is essential his eye pressure is regularly monitored. (O)

The Physiotherapist was very thorough and clear. Gave me plenty of exercises to do between consultations and answered all my questions clearly. Every appointment has been on time. (MSK)

Felt my mother was rushed especially when she was told she could download her exercises online. Difficult when you don't have a computer. (MSK)

My therapist was very polite and kind we had a long appointment where we discussed all issues. I have been doing the recommended exercises and they have helped. (MSK)

At no time was I physically examined for my back pain-the Physiotherapist demonstrated two "new exercises" to me and that was it. (MSK)

I don't think the examination was thorough enough and treatment was non-existent. I am still in pain with no real diagnosis. (MSK)

Communication

The telephone number doesn't seem to be monitored and repeated calls and long waits on the line seemed normal. (MSK)

Telephone was constantly engaged and when I got through her (mother's) Physio had left and she was put with someone else. (MSK)

This was follow-up apt. I never received it and system kicked me out. Had to be re-referred by GP. Now still waiting for 2nd follow-up date. Connect's coms are hopeless. (MSK)

