

# New Addington GPs gain insight from their patients on their service and digital app.

Press release: 22 December 2021

- Healthwatch Croydon worked with Fieldway, Parkway and Headley Drive surgeries in New Addington to gain insight from patients.
- GP sent independent survey via the GP text service, and Healthwatch Croydon collected and analysed the data and presented findings.
- GPs gained insight from over 330 patients with detail about their service and their new app, DoctorIQ.

A Croydon-based GP partnership have trialled Healthwatch Croydon's new virtual outreach service and gained more insight about the service they provide. This report, *Experience of patients using Parkway, Fieldway and Headley Drive G surgeries*, heard from 335 patients about all aspects of the services they provide including questions about their specific digital app service. This has helped GPs understand more about their patient needs as the questions related specifically to the services at their surgery.

Under the Primary Care Contract, each GP should ensure they engage with patients and listen to their experience of services. While national surveys such as Friends and Family and the National GP survey give good feedback, the general nature of the question designed to apply for all surgeries means that some insights of patient experience can be overlooked.

Traditionally, before COVID, Healthwatch Croydon was regularly visiting GP surgeries across Croydon gaining insight. While COVID has limited their ability to connect face-to-face, particularly under restrictions. By adopting a digital approach and working in partnership with the GP, Healthwatch Croydon has been able to gain more responses and

more swiftly. Healthwatch Croydon will always consider face-to-face as a priority when it is safe to do, but this development adds more options to receive the views of patients.

In response to COVID-10 Healthwatch Croydon trialled a new survey basing a few key questions about GP services with options for up to three questions to be on a subject specific to that surgery. In the case of Parkway, Fieldway and Headley Drive, the group practice has been encouraging patients to use the DoctorIQ app to book appointments, arrange prescriptions and gain further information of services. This survey allowed for independent assessment of the service based on the views of 335 patients.

### These are our findings:

- **Positive GP rating:** The analysis of this survey showed a very good rating (59%) on the experience respondents had with their GPs and the narratives collated evidenced that GPs were professional during patients visits which was helpful and the service offered was supportive. They also rated GPs positive because appointments were booked on time and the staff attitude were great.
- **But there were some issues for some:** Nearly 1 in 6 (14%) had a negative experience due to not getting appointments on time, waiting times, wrong medication was given, and some found staff attitude very unprofessional.
- **Use of the DR iQ app:** The surgeries have introduced this app for patients to use to support their access and response to services. 91% of the respondents have heard of it, 74% had used, 43% used it regularly and 30% less than once a month. It was mainly used to put in medication and prescription requests to upload readings or collect results and 44% found they could use this easily. Some did have issues of access and ease.
- **Recommendation of DR iQ app:** 33% of respondents have said they are very likely to recommend this app to their family and friends with a further 20% stating they were likely to. Patient said the benefit of this app was that patients skip the long waiting queues at surgeries and are privileged to order prescription/medication, book appointments, view medical records and many more via the app. However, 19% were likely or unlikely to use it with a further 16% who had not used it at all.

- **Patient support on DR iQ app usage:** We asked respondents how this app could be improved based on their experience and discovered that patients needed support using the app. Some said their medical history was not fully log. Some respondents especially the elderly was not computer literate and could be excluded digitally.
- **Responses from Headley Drive relatively low:** The survey was circulated via AT Medics text message service three times but the response rate from Headley drive remained low at a figure of 7 compared to Parkway Health Centre and Fieldway Medical Center who had a total of 206 and 119 respondents, respectively.

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### These are our recommendations:

- **Improved features on DR iQ app:** Based on the analysis collated from respondents who participated in this survey, the DR iQ app might need additional features which can be incorporated during future updates of the app to accommodate the needs and accessibility of patients.
- **Bite Size training sessions on DR iQ app:** Training sessions either online or within the practice center on a how to use the app should be made available for patients. A user friendly easy to read guide or link to a short YouTube video clip on how to access and use DR iQ app would benefit a lot of patients who find it difficult to access. Information about the app also can be displayed on screen in the waiting area of the GP practice.
- **Work with patients to increase engagement in all services not just the app:** While it is clear the app has worked well for many; some have not used it that much or at all. Although the above suggestions will help, more focus is needed on those who use it less to engage with them in ways that work for them. The Patient Participation Group is a good place to begin.
- **Understand the different demographics in the specific surgeries:** The low response at Headley Drive suggests less digital connection with the patients here. Look into the specific demographics and see how service access can be adapted to meet their needs rather than taking a one size fit all approach.

- **Continue conversations with patients to help improve services:** This insight has brought up some relevant points to help improve service but consider ways to continue conversations to ensure services meet needs and expectations. An effective Patient Participation Group will help with this.

**Gordon Kay, Healthwatch Croydon Manager, said:**

“In response to not being able to go into GP surgeries, we launched our virtual outreach project with Fieldway, Parkway and Headley Drive surgeries to see if we can reach people through their text service. We received a very good response which enabled us to provide good insight on services when so much change was happening in response to COVID-19. The GPs gained independent insight about their services and their innovative DoctorIQ app, which has been brought in to assist patient experience. We thank the partners and staff for their openness in making this happen and for patients giving time to share their views. We hope the insight provided will help in their future planning, along with the national surveys they undertake. We welcome to opportunity to work with any other GPs in Croydon to provide independent insight of their services, tailored to the specific services they provide.”

**Kuljeet Sodhi, Deputy Regional Manager Kuljeet Sodhi | Deputy Regional Manager - Croydon & Greenwich AT Medics:**

“It is good to see that most people are happy with the appointment access provided to them and it also reflects the hard work from clinicians and staff that goes into providing good access for our patients and providing them with the best patient care. Our own review of Dr iQ app has shown us that patients find Dr iQ the most convenient way to access our GP services. Consistency of patient access is vital to those who rely on our services. We will continue to improve our access for our patients.”

## Editor's notes

Healthwatch Croydon is here to improve the experience that Croydon people have when they need to use health and social care services. We believe that the best way to do this is by listening to patients and service users.

There is a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England.

Our role is to make sure that that local health and social care services, and the local decision makers, put the experiences of people at the heart of their care.

We are a statutory body - this means that we have a legal status to exist within the Health and Social Care Act 2012. This means decision-makers should listen to us when we give them feedback and make suggestions.

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