

PHARMACEUTICAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Report March 2022



Healthwatch Walsall

Healthwatch Walsall is independent, speaking for communities and individuals in Walsall. We can challenge commissioners and providers to make improvements important to people and support them in promoting best practise. We also help individuals understand what choices are available to them and help them to get information and advice.

Healthwatch Walsall has:

- The power to request information from service providers and commissioners
- The right to carry out Enter & View visits to services and make recommendations for improvement
- Rights as a statutory consultee when commissioners and providers plan to make changes to services
- The power to report concerns to the Care Quality Commission and/or Healthwatch England
- A place representing the public voice on the local Health & Wellbeing Board, alongside Walsall Council, Walsall Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS England

Healthwatch Walsall's main objective is to engage with the public to find out the issues that matter most to them. We hold and attend meetings and events around the Borough and work with partners to ensure that we reach different sections of community including those whose voices are seldom heard.



<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
Context	2
Key Headlines	2
Survey Results	3 - 10
Findings	11
Recommendations	11
Demographics	12-13

Context

The Pharmaceutical Needs Assessment (PNA) is a key commissioning tool for NHS England, Local Authority and Clinical Commissioning Group's (CCG). The PNA includes pharmaceutical services and other services that may be delivered through community pharmacy. The PNA maps current provision, assesses local need, and identifies any gaps in provision. It is reviewed every 3 years and Healthwatch Walsall were pleased to be asked to have an integral role in the consultation process.

Robust, up to date evidence is important to ensure that community pharmacy services are provided in the right place and that the pharmaceutical services commissioned by NHS England and services commissioned by Walsall Council and the CCG meet the needs of the communities they serve. Healthwatch Walsall were asked to engage with the citizens of Walsall to ascertain their views on how Community Pharmacies meet their needs.

The PNA is a statutory required document which help Walsall Borough Council assess current and future pharmaceutical needs for the local population. It is also important that local people are given the opportunity to contribute their views within the PNA.

Healthwatch Walsall developed a simple survey to capture local people's views and experiences of using pharmacy services. This was made available online and hard copy paper surveys were made available at local pharmacies. Healthwatch Walsall were able to gather 142 responses from the public in Walsall.

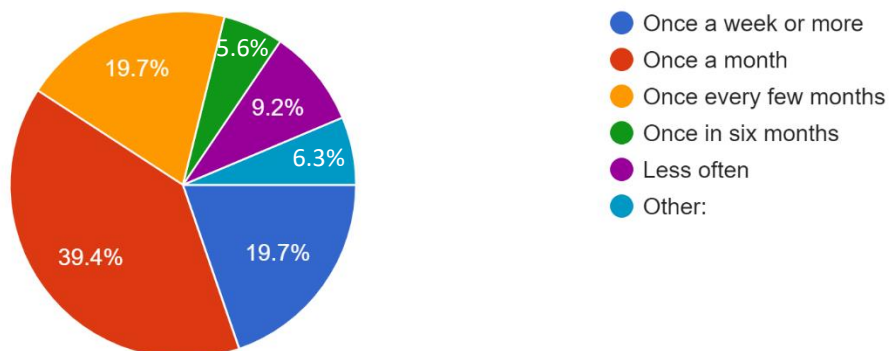
Key Headlines

- Local pharmacies are important to members of the public with the majority of people visiting their local pharmacy on a monthly basis.
- The public value advice and information available from pharmacists.
- Travel time and access is also an important factor when visiting a pharmacy.
- The main reason for using a pharmacy is to collect prescribed medication.
- The majority (80%) of respondents indicate they have not changed the way they use their pharmacy since the Pandemic.

Results of Survey

1. How often, if at all, do you visit a pharmacy? Please select one answer only.

142 responses



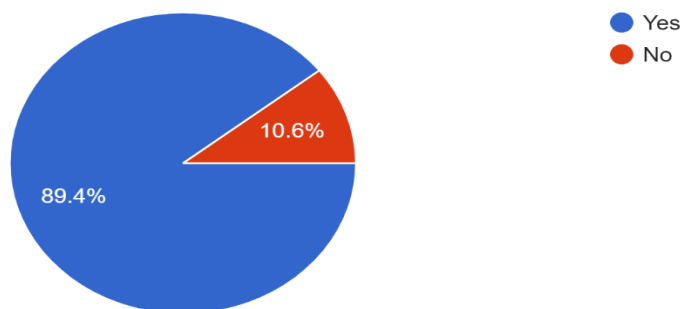
Other responses:

- Every 2 months
- Fortnightly
- Prescriptions are delivered so no need to visit
- A minimum of once a month but often (not always) more than once a week
- When needed
- Hardly ever
- 2 to 3 times a month
- At least twice a week
- Six weeks
- Work in pharmacy
- Collect my repeat prescription

The above pie chart highlights the importance of local pharmacies for local people with just under 60% of participants highlighting that they use pharmacy services within a monthly basis.

2. Do you have a regular or preferred pharmacy that you visit? Please select one answer only

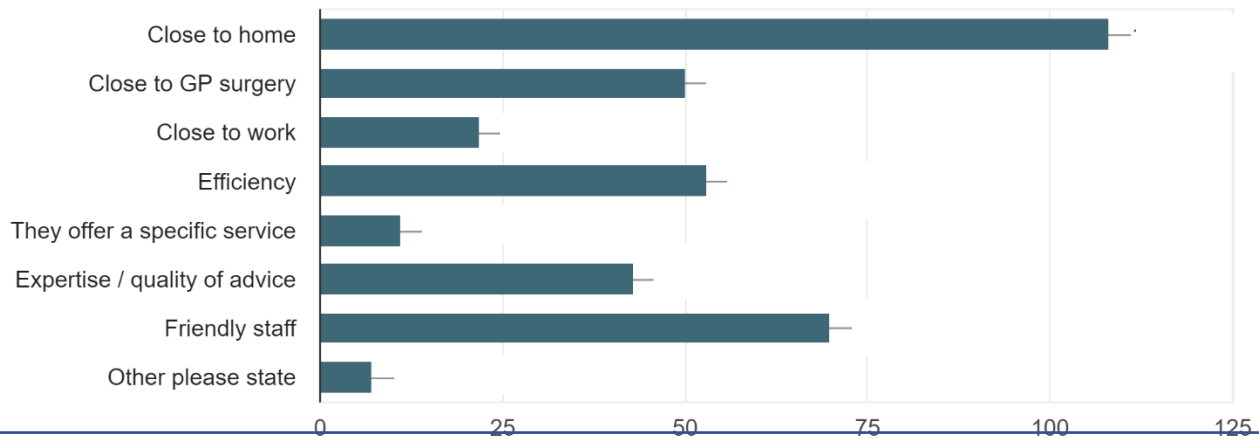
142 responses



Most people that participated indicated that they use a preferred pharmacy. This highlighted a number of important factors with closeness to home, work and their GP practice being an important factor but also the quality of advice and expertise of the pharmacy staff being important.

3. When considering a choice of pharmacy, which of the following helps you choose? Please select all that apply.

142 responses

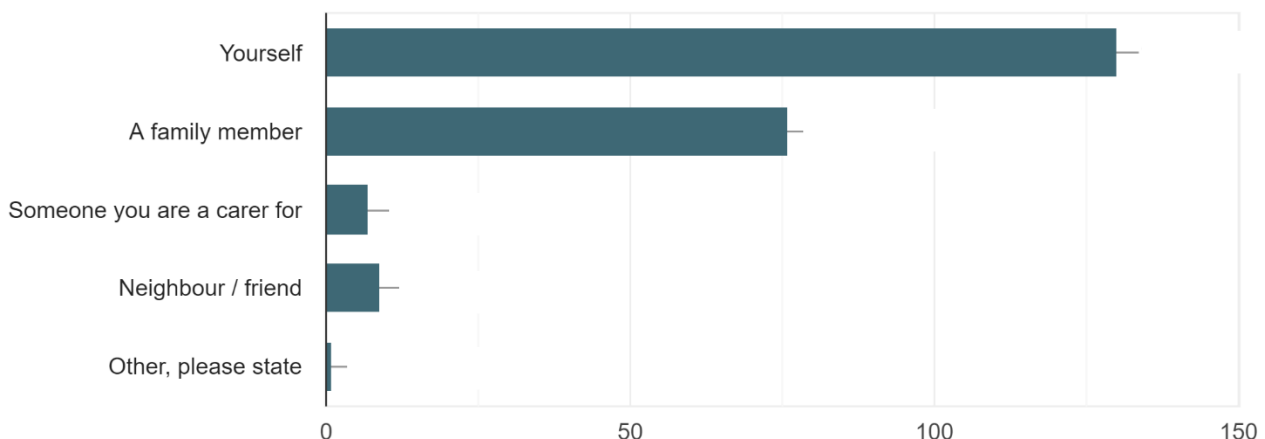


Other responses that were given included:

- They have the medication I need every time. And where possible always the same brand to avoid confusion between tablets.
- Easy parking.
- Opening times.
- Text me when script ready to collect.
- Very friendly and helpful staff always ready to help and be kind.
- Will also see you for minor questions which is a great help, good parking a great help. Best Pharmacy anywhere.
- Can access whilst shopping.

4. Who would you normally visit the pharmacy for? Please tick all that apply.

142 responses

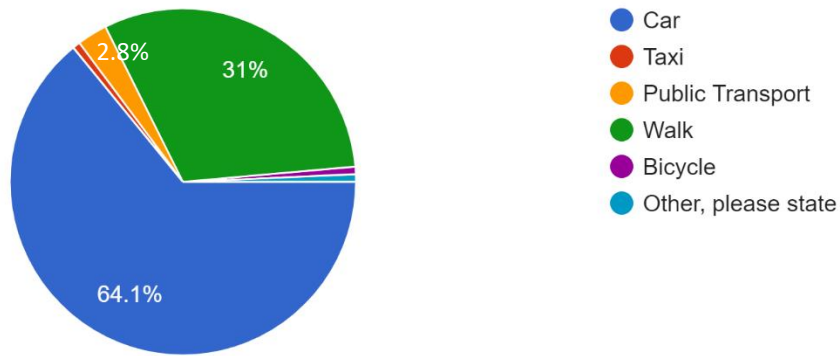


Other responses;

- My friend who doesn't now drive so I take her

5. How do you usually travel to the pharmacy? Please select one answer.

142 responses

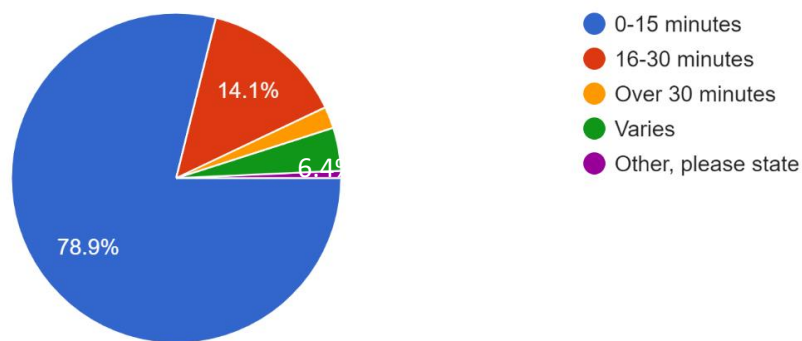


Other responses:

- Mobility scooter

6. On average, how long does it take you to travel to a pharmacy? Please select one answer. *

142 responses



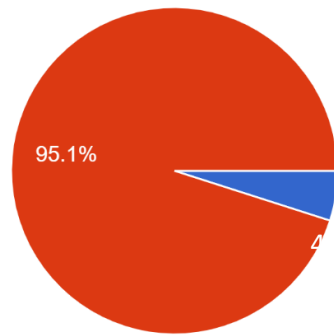
The importance of access and travel to and from a preferred pharmacy has also been highlighted.

Other responses:

- 3 - 5 minutes

7. Do you have any difficulties when travelling to a pharmacy? Please select one answer. *

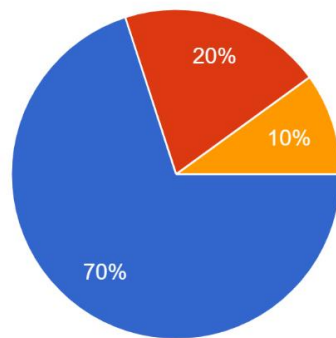
142 responses



- Yes (Please go to question 8)
- No (Please go to question 9)

8. If you answered yes to the previous question, please select one of the following reasons: Please select one answer. *

10 responses



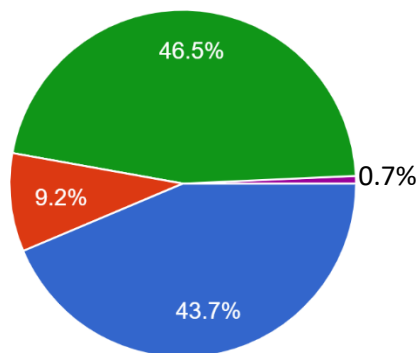
- Location of pharmacy
- Parking difficulties
- Public transport availability
- Wheelchair or other access problems
- Other, please state

Other responses:

- Don't go out alone so rely on helpers.

9. What is the most convenient day for you to visit a pharmacy? Please select one answer. Please select one answer. *

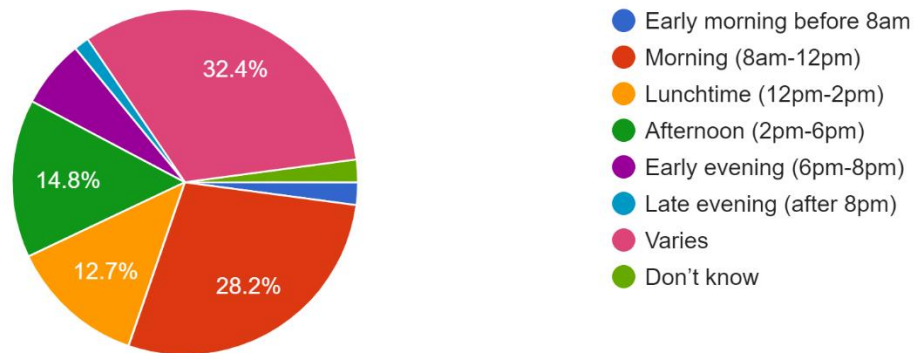
142 responses



- Monday to Friday
- Saturday
- Sunday
- Varies
- Don't know

10. When do you prefer to visit a pharmacy? Please select one answer.

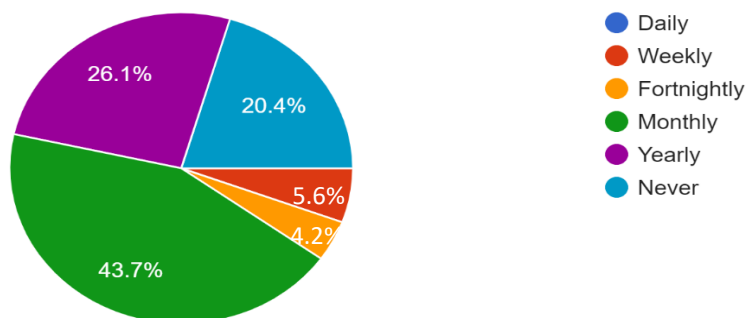
142 responses



Having a pharmacy that is flexible with its opening hours and days is also an importance factor for Walsall people.

11. How regularly do you typically buy an over the counter (i.e. non-prescription) medicine from a pharmacy? *

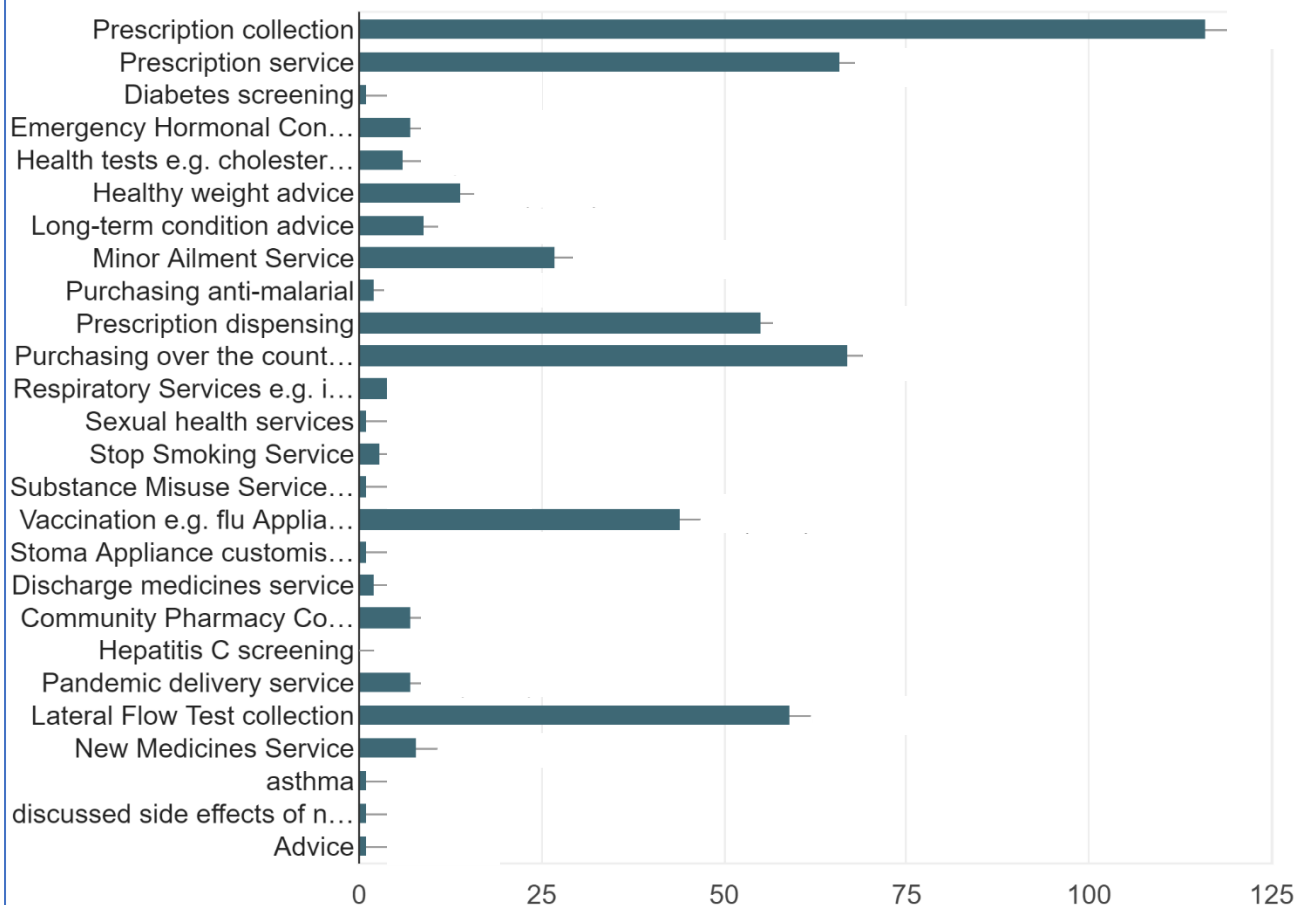
142 responses



Over 25% of participants indicated that they purchase over the counter products within a fortnightly timescale indicated the importance of this service that is offered to the public.

12. Which pharmacy services have you used? *

142 responses



Prescription collection and dispensing were the main services that people used their pharmacies. However, a larger proportion of the participants indicated that the ability to purchase items over the counter was important.

Other top 7 services used at Pharmacies that were highlighted were:

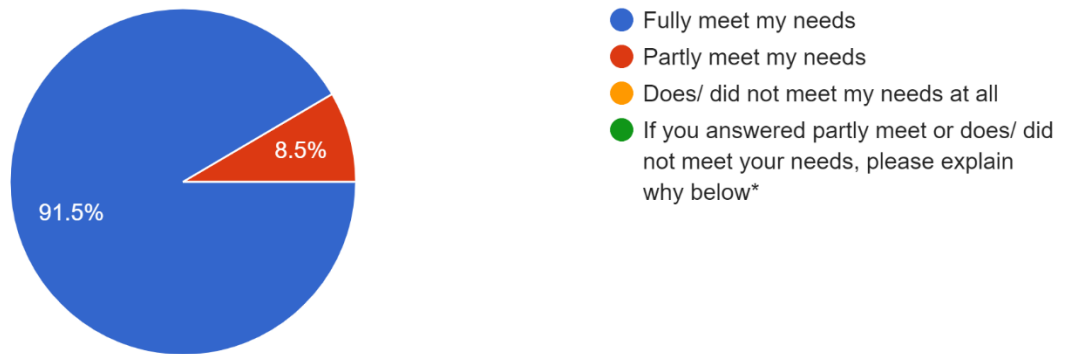
1. Prescription collection
2. Purchasing over the counter medication
3. Prescription service
4. Lateral flow test collection
5. Prescription dispensing
6. Vaccination e.g., flu
7. Minor ailment service

Other responses that we received:

- Dossett/ blister packs. Finding medications can be confusing due to changing packaging/ tablet colours. I have asked at +10 pharmacies and been denied the help at all despite clearly stating I am taking wrong medication and ordering wrongly multiple times
- Advice for medications,
- Prescribed medicines such as topical antibiotic cream, etc.
- Pleased if provided community health advice plus social prescribing
- We always have flu jab at local chemist, much better than waiting in queue at doctors

13. Please tell us if the pharmacy service(s) meets your needs? Please select one answer. *

142 responses

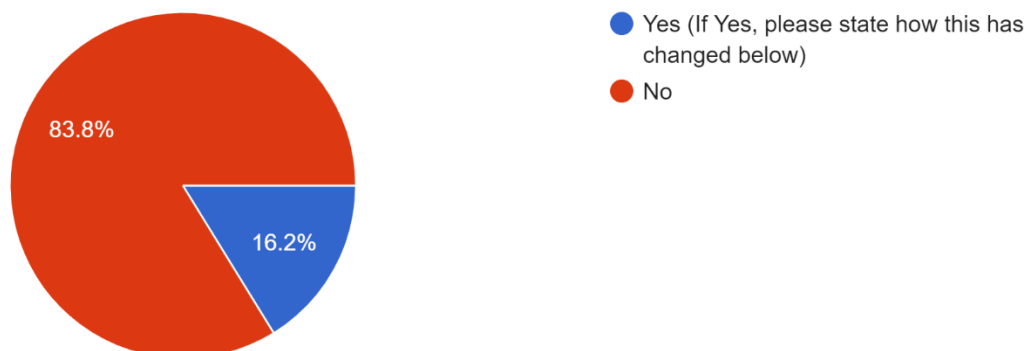


Other responses that we received:

- Won't do Dossett boxes
- Mixed up medication from order on phone
- Changing medication brands is confusing me
- My workplace flu vaccination was not offered at my local pharmacy
- I would like to have a pharmacist who can prescribe for lesser ailments when the doctors are closed
- Pharmacy I use is very efficient and knowledgeable, opening hours longer due to being inside a supermarket. Prescriptions ordered online are ready, where previous pharmacy next to GP surgery, you always had to wait, even if you had put in your prescription days before
- They don't open at the weekend which can be inconvenient for working people
- I use the pharmacy for prescriptions only, to which this works for me
- Goods not always ready even though prescription took to Drs in plenty of time
- The wait involved in pharmacy services is always too long
- Does not always have drugs
- They always have my medication in stock and if they don't, they deliver to my home when it comes into their store

14. Has Covid-19 changed the way you use a Pharmacy? *

142 responses



Over 80% of the responses that we received stated that the pandemic has not changed the way in which people use their pharmacy. When answered yes responses were:

- Face mask shortages
- I'd prefer to have paper prescription so I can collect it at a convenient time to me
- I don't go shopping as often as I used to
- Made me more conscious of other people/germs etc -so I will continue to wear a face covering in this environment
- Don't come to shops so often
- I try to visit in the early evening when it is quieter
- I am wary visiting now when chemist is busy, I am scared to catch the virus
- Try to buy everything from supermarket
- Face masks, social distancing, 2 people allowed in at one time
- I get my prescriptions delivered now.
- I have moved my own prescriptions online for delivery, I collect my moms from the pharmacy
- More wary of going when busy. Will normally go at a quieter time
- I receive my prescription by post
- Visit more often
- Waiting outside only 2 people at one time
- Injections
- Try not to go in and now order for delivery
- Would not go in without a mask and keep social distancing in practice
- Now call pharmacy to order repeat prescriptions - previously would collect from doctor's surgery myself.
- Like to get shopping done in one place
- I use the online service to order my prescription which gets sent straight to my nominated pharmacy
- Wearing of masks, distancing, good parking, still using

A number of people have indicated that as a result of the pandemic they have chosen to have their medication delivered and using an online or telephone ordering system as a result of not wanting to physically go to the pharmacy.

Findings

- Pharmacists across Walsall provide essential services for many people. We have had a good response rate with 142 people participating in the survey, both by online and hard copy responses. Over 90% of participants indicated that their pharmacist meets their needs.
- For those who indicated that the services offered could be improved the main issues have been limited people being allowed in pharmacies and access to masks as a result of the pandemic.
- The pandemic has meant that some people are choosing to use the service differently.
- One of the other issues has been when patients have had their prescriptions sent to the pharmacy by the GP there have been a number of occasions when medication has not been immediately available to be issued.
- Some people also highlighted those changes in medication packaging, medication colour / size can be confusing and particularly for people on a variety of different medications.
- The flexibility of opening hours is very important to people accessing their pharmacy along with accessibility and proximity to their home. It has also been highlighted they the experience and advice offered by the Pharmacist team and significantly important.

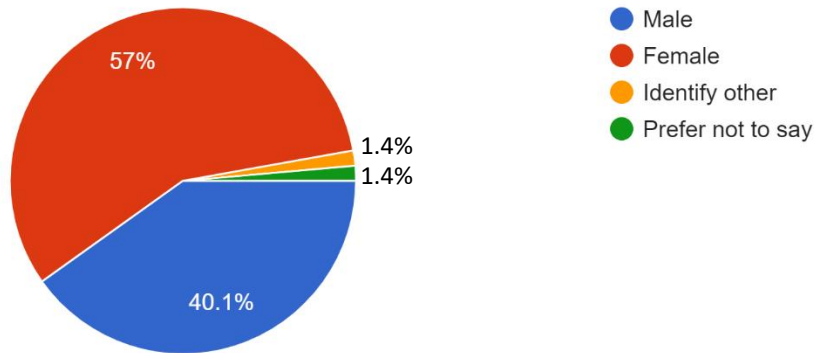
Recommendations

- To ensure that patients and users of pharmacies continue to have choice of pharmacies locally and that pharmacies continue to be flexible in their opening hours, wherever possible to include some weekend opening times. If this is not possible, then to provide patients with information of locally available pharmacies during out of hours.
- Pharmacies to ensure they have sufficient medication available to meet the needs of people on repeat prescriptions, in order that there are no delays in treatment.
- More pharmacies to offer delivery services for medication.
- Dossett box/blister packs are made available wherever possible.
- Information is provided to patients about any change of medication brand/colouring to avoid confusion.
- Promote additional services offered by pharmacies.

Demographics

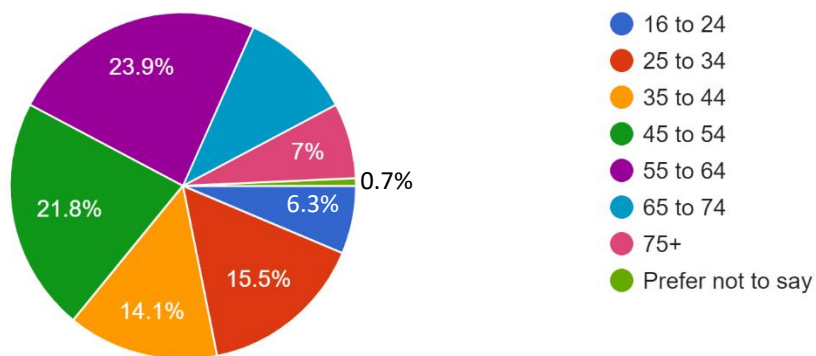
15. Your gender identification

142 responses



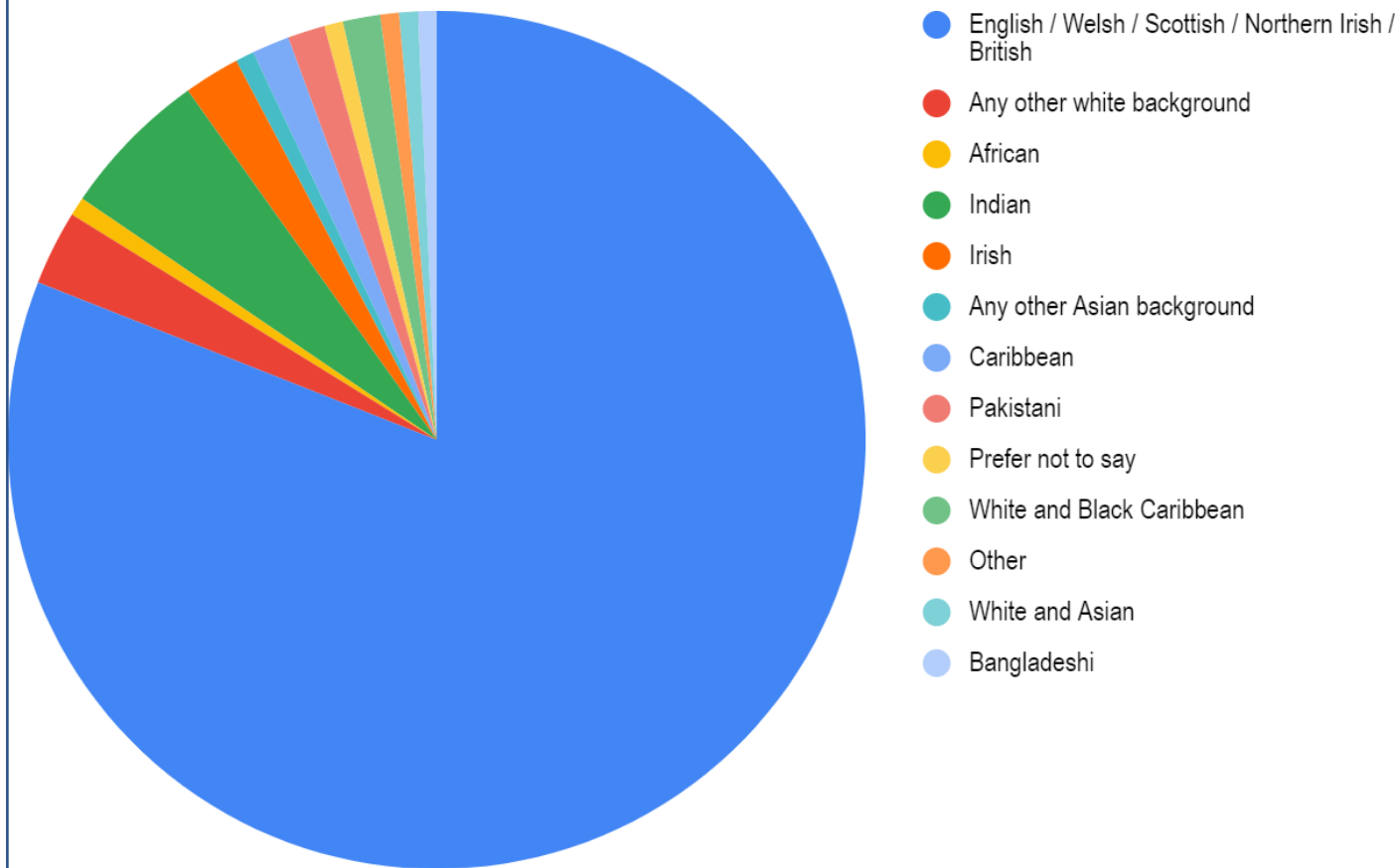
16. What age are you? *

142 responses

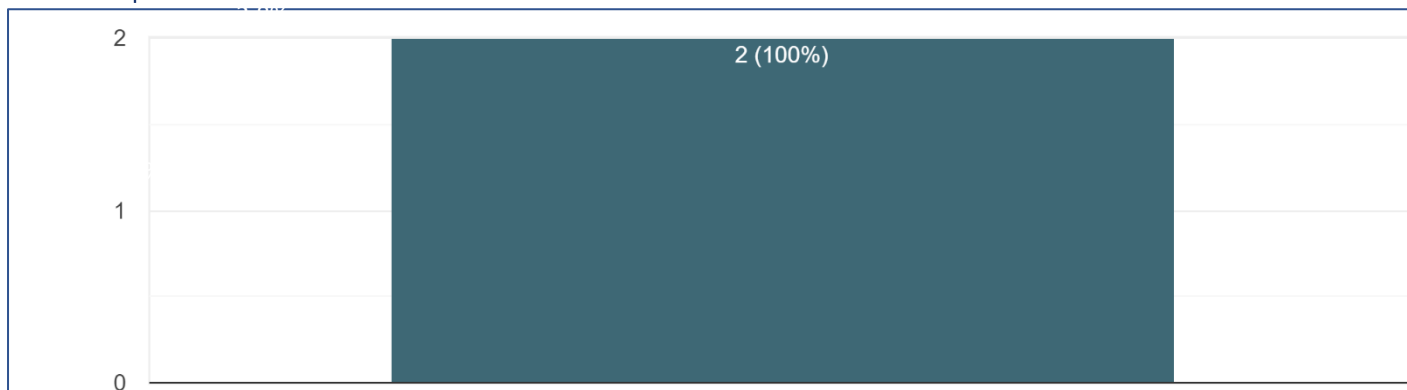


17. What is your ethnic group? *

142 responses



Other responses:



Responses received from the following postcodes:

- | | |
|-----|------|
| B4 | WS6 |
| B7 | WS7 |
| DY2 | WS8 |
| DY3 | WS9 |
| WS1 | WS10 |
| WS2 | WV11 |
| WS3 | WV12 |
| WS4 | |
| WS5 | |

Healthwatch Walsall would like to thank all members of the public who took time to participate in this survey.

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Healthwatch Walsall

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