

**General Practice Assessment Questionnaire  
(GPAQ)**

**2008 - 2009**

**GP ANONYMITY**

**N84005**

**Cumberland House Surgery  
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Southport  
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**Date: 19 November 2008**



## How the survey was carried out

During October 2008, Cumberland House Surgery undertook the General Practice Assessment Questionnaire (GPAQ) Consultation Patient Survey.

250 questionnaires were issued for Cumberland House Surgery with the requirement that 250 be completed, and patients were informed of the survey prior to their consultation with the GP.

Following their consultation, patients were given a questionnaire and an explanatory letter describing the patient survey process and identifying that all questionnaire information would be provided on an anonymous basis and analysed by staff at Corporate Performance & Standards Department of Sefton PCT.

Patients were requested to complete the questionnaire before leaving the practice.

A total of 250 questionnaires (100%) were completed/partially completed and returned to the PCT for analysis.

## Summary of results

### GPAQ evaluation questions

The following table summarises the individual scores for the evaluation questions in GPAQ, i.e. the ones where patients made a judgment about how good that aspect of care was. Each score is expressed as an average (mean) for all patients who completed the individual question. They are represented as a percentage of the maximum possible score, so the best possible score in each case is 100. You will be able to see the areas where your practice scores well and where improvement may be needed, both comparing aspects of care in your own practice and comparing yourself with others.

The figures in the right hand column contain current national GPAQ benchmarks for that question. Once again, these figures are expressed as percentages of the maximum possible score in this table. These are regularly updated on the GPAQ website. Details of how many patients completed each of the individual responses for each of these questions for your practice are given in full in appendix 3.



	Mean score	GPAQ benchmark
Q2. Satisfaction with receptionists	79	77
Q3a. Satisfaction with opening hours	72	67
Q4b. Satisfaction with availability of particular doctor	69	60
Q5b. Satisfaction with availability of any doctor	78	69
Q7. Satisfaction with waiting times at practice	74	57
Q8a. Satisfaction with phoning through to practice	65	59
Q8b. Satisfaction with phoning through to doctor for advice	59	61
Q9b. Satisfaction with continuity of care	72	69
Q10a. Satisfaction with doctor's questioning	85	81
Q10b. Satisfaction with how well doctor listens	87	84
Q10c. Satisfaction with how well doctor puts patient at ease	88	84
Q10d. Satisfaction with how much doctor involves patient	85	81
Q10e. Satisfaction with doctor's explanations	87	83
Q10f. Satisfaction with time doctor spends	83	80
Q10g. Satisfaction with doctor's patience	87	84
Q10h. Satisfaction with doctor's caring and concern	87	84
Q11a. Ability to understand problem after visiting doctor	70	69
Q11b. Ability to cope with problem after visiting doctor	65	66
Q11c. Ability to keep healthy after visiting doctor	64	62

Table 1. Mean scores of evaluation questions (as percentages) compared to the GPAQ benchmarks



These benchmark figures are based on data from 232,908 respondents to both the postal and post-consultation versions of GPAQ (combined) collected during the 2004/2005 contract year. Separate benchmarks for the two different versions of GPAQ will be posted in due course if on-going analyses show that mode of administration produces significantly different GPAQ scores after controlling for social and demographic factors known to influence patient evaluations.

Please check our website <http://www.gpaq.info/benchmarks.htm> for further information.

### **GPAQ report questions**

Some GPAQ questions ask about specific experiences, or ask the patient for specific information. The responses to these questions are summarised here.

Q3b. Additional hours requested	Number of responses
Mornings	9
Lunchtime	1
Evenings	55
Weekends	82
None	121

Q4a. Availability of particular doctor	Number of responses
Same day	74
Next working day	31
Within 2 working days	36
Within 3 working days	21
Within 4 working days	27
5 or more working days	43
Does not apply	18



Q5a. Availability of any doctor	Number of responses
Same day	145
Next working day	37
Within 2 working days	33
Within 3 working days	9
Within 4 working days	4
5 or more working days	4
Does not apply	16

Q6. Same day urgent availability of doctor	Number of responses
Yes	190
No	12
Don't know/never needed to	45

Q7. Waiting time at practice	Number of responses
5 minutes or less	54
6-10 minutes	129
11-20 minutes	58
21-30 minutes	6
More than 30 minutes	0



Q9a. Continuity for seeing same doctor	Number of responses
Always	29
Almost always	97
A lot of the time	47
Some of the time	42
Almost never	15
Never	0

### Demographics

The following tables display the demographic data collected in GPAQ.

Q12. Sex	Number of responses
Male	89
Female	160

Q13. Age	Number of responses
Up to 44 years old	91
45 years old and above	158
<i>Mean</i>	<i>53</i>

Q14. Long standing illness, disability or infirmity	Number of responses
Yes	121
No	122



Q15. Ethnic group	Number of responses
White	238
Black or Black British	3
Asian or Asian British	3
Mixed	2
Chinese	1
Other ethnic group	0

Q16. Accommodation status	Number of responses
Owner-occupied/ mortgaged	184
Rented or other arrangements	62

Q17. Employment status	Number of responses
Employed (full/part time, self-employed)	118
Unemployed	8
School or full time education	5
Long term sickness	12
Looking after home/family	20
Retired	80
Other	0

For all other frequency distribution tables that have not been included in the report so far, please refer to appendix 3.



## Appendix 1

### Notes about how the General Practice Assessment Questionnaire (GPAQ) was developed

Some aspects of quality are best assessed by asking patients. We reviewed the literature to identify aspects of GP care which are most highly valued by patients. These include:

Availability and accessibility, including: availability of appointments, waiting times, physical access and telephone access.

Technical competence, including: the doctor's knowledge and skills, and the effectiveness of his or her treatments.

Communication skills, including: providing time, exploring patients' needs, listening, explaining, giving information and sharing decisions.

Inter-personal attributes, including: humaneness, caring, supporting and trust.

Organisation of care, including: continuity of care, and, the range of services available.

In order to assess these aspects of care we started from what we regarded as the best currently available questionnaire, the Primary Care Assessment Survey (PCAS)<sup>i, ii, iii, iv</sup>, which had been extensively validated in the United States. In collaboration with the Health Institute in Boston, we modified PCAS for use in British general practice. The modified questionnaire was called the General Practice Assessment Survey (GPAS). We have used GPAS in large studies in the UK: and detailed research data on GPAS have been published<sup>v vi viii ix</sup>.

For the new GP contract, we were asked to modify our original GPAS questionnaire, and have produced GPAQ. The main differences are that the new questionnaire is shorter. We have also produced two versions, one designed to be sent by post, and one designed to be given to patients after consultations in the surgery.

GPAQ focuses mainly on questions about access, inter-personal aspects of care, and continuity of care. The version designed to be completed after the consultation asks about are given by an individual doctor. These scores will be able to be used by GPs for their appraisals and revalidation folders. The postal version of GPAQ does not allow scores to be calculated for individual doctors. However, it does include questions about the practice nurses.

GPAQ is described in more detail in the manual which can be downloaded from the GPAQ website, [www.gpaq.info](http://www.gpaq.info).



## Appendix 2

### Guidance on how to use the results of the questionnaire to improve care in your practice – taking action on GPAQ scores

There is little purpose in doing a survey unless you are prepared to act on the results. In this section, we discuss briefly how you might do this.

GPAQ has been designed so that it is as easy as possible to know how you can use your scores to improve care in your practice. All the questions can be linked directly to some action which you could take. For example, in the communication questions, we have included questions on listening and explaining rather than important but rather nebulous concepts like trust. So for every question in GPAQ, there is some behavior which you could think about improving.

Some of the work of deciding how to use the results can be done with the practice staff. So, for example, some of the access questions throw up issues which can be addressed through the practice management – e.g. managing the appointment system, phone answering, etc. The access questions form the largest single group of questions.

The next largest group is about communication. This is more difficult to address, but there are well tested methods of improving doctors' communication skills in consultations. These generally rely on critical analysis of videotaped surgeries, usually with a partner or friendly mentor. This is something which all training practices will have had experience of in recent years, as consultation skills training forms an important part of vocational training.

In thinking about who to discuss your survey results with, you should think about:

- Your partners and other doctors working in the practice
- Nurses working in the practice
- Your practice managers and receptionist / admin staff.

Some issues, e.g. scores on the access scale, will need to be discussed with all your staff.

To get level 2 and level 3 payments for the new contract, you will need to do more than this, and will have to have discussed the results of your survey with patients (e.g. a 'critical friends' group, or a patient participation group), and shown that you have done something about the results.

We are aware that most practices have little experience of how to use questionnaires to help them improve care. So, the National Primary Care Research and Development Centre, with the University of Exeter and CFEP have written a practical handbook on this subject. This handbook is freely available to download from NPCRDC's website (<http://www.npcrdc.man.ac.uk/PublicationDetail.cfm?ID=111>).



## Appendix 3

### Frequency distribution tables not included in the main body of the report

Q1. Number of visits to doctor in last 12 months	Number of responses
None	8
Once or twice	55
Three or four times	78
Five or six times	54
Seven times or more	55

Q2. Satisfaction with receptionists	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	0
Fair	14
Good	55
Very good	108
Excellent	73

Q3a. Satisfaction with opening hours	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	1
Fair	20
Good	90
Very good	104
Excellent	34



Q4b. Satisfaction with availability of particular doctor	Number of responses
Very poor	2
Poor	9
Fair	54
Good	53
Very good	48
Excellent	65
Does not apply	14

Q5b. Satisfaction with availability of any doctor	Number of responses
Very poor	3
Poor	3
Fair	25
Good	43
Very good	58
Excellent	94
Does not apply	16

Q7. Satisfaction with waiting times at practice	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	0
Fair	6
Good	58
Very good	183
Excellent	0





Q8a. Satisfaction with phoning through to practice	Number of responses
Very poor	2
Poor	9
Fair	42
Good	91
Very good	74
Excellent	27
Don't know/ never tried	4

Q8b. Satisfaction with phoning through to doctor for advice	Number of responses
Very poor	3
Poor	8
Fair	16
Good	24
Very good	14
Excellent	11
Don't know/ never tried	156

Q9b. Satisfaction with continuity of care	Number of responses
Very poor	1
Poor	6
Fair	25
Good	67
Very good	85
Excellent	45



Q10a. Satisfaction with doctor's questioning	Number of responses
Very poor	1
Poor	0
Fair	2
Good	35
Very good	99
Excellent	100
Does not apply	4

Q10b. Satisfaction with how well doctor listens	Number of responses
Very poor	1
Poor	0
Fair	2
Good	30
Very good	90
Excellent	119
Does not apply	1

Q10c. Satisfaction with how well doctor puts patient at ease	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	1
Fair	0
Good	29
Very good	65
Excellent	116
Does not apply	33



Q10d. Satisfaction with how much doctor involves patient	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	1
Fair	3
Good	29
Very good	80
Excellent	95
Does not apply	36

Q10e. Satisfaction with doctor's explanations	Number of responses
Very poor	1
Poor	0
Fair	2
Good	32
Very good	77
Excellent	121
Does not apply	12

Q10f. Satisfaction with time doctor spends	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	2
Fair	5
Good	44
Very good	88
Excellent	97
Does not apply	5



Q10g. Satisfaction with doctor's patience	Number of responses
Very poor	0
Poor	1
Fair	3
Good	37
Very good	73
Excellent	126
Does not apply	5

Q10h. Satisfaction with doctor's caring and concern	Number of responses
Very poor	1
Poor	0
Fair	2
Good	35
Very good	77
Excellent	124
Does not apply	4

Q11a. Ability to understand problem after visiting doctor	Number of responses
Much more than before the visit	110
A little more than before the visit	58
The same or less than before the visit	30
Does not apply	39



Q11b. Ability to cope with problem after visiting doctor	Number of responses
Much more than before the visit	97
A little more than before the visit	57
The same or less than before the visit	38
Does not apply	42

Q11c. Ability to keep healthy after visiting doctor	Number of responses
Much more than before the visit	88
A little more than before the visit	52
The same or less than before the visit	39
Does not apply	56



## Appendix 4

### Patient's Comments Question 18

#### Is there anything particularly good about your health care?

Doctors are good. Friendly reception staff who are very busy.  
I have great confidence in my doctor.  
Speed with which I have been referred to other health care workers. Doctors listen.  
Very caring, always ready to listen and does not rush which makes you feel very comfortable.  
Have no criticism.  
Lots of visits concerning terminally ill sister. Doctor paid every attention, visiting and ringing.  
A very professional doctor whose attention and dedication is complete.  
My doctor is an excellent practitioner.  
Always treated fairly and promptly and symptoms explained.  
Yes. Everything.  
All good.  
Very satisfactory.  
I am more than satisfied. I have been treated kindly always.  
Satisfactory.  
Regular check ups.  
Doctors excellent. Staff caring.  
Much better than last practice.  
Blood pressures.  
The doctor listens to my concerns and allows me a say in what treatment I get.  
Staff.  
The doctors are very nice with you.  
My doctor is wonderful.  
Diabetes care is good.  
All very good.  
No complaints.  
Care and professionalism of all doctors, nurses and receptionists. Always treated politely, with care and as an individual.  
My doctor is an excellent doctor. She always has time to listen to you and she really cares about you.  
Always get to see a doctor.  
When I need hospital attention the doctor always refers me and it isn't too long to get an appointment. Very pleased with surgery and hospital.  
Satisfied.  
I really like my doctor and she is very understanding. I like this surgery a lot and left my old one as I was unhappy.  
Very good.  
My doctor understands my illness and is sympathetic.  
Yes. My doctor.  
Yes.  
My doctor is a warm and caring GP who came highly recommended by other family members when I moved into the area and needed to register with a new GP.  
Totally satisfied and treated with care and all questions answered to my satisfaction.  
Everybody in the practice is very helpful at all times.  
My health care is excellent.  
I have always had a very good service from the surgery but have had no serious illness.  
Everything satisfactory.



I think we are all looked after very, very well. I have no grievances at all.  
My doctor is always supportive and understanding and makes me feel completely at ease.  
Yes, the continued effort to keep me healthy.  
The doctors have helped me at every appointment.  
I have every confidence in my doctor who gives me all the time and care that I need and with whom I feel completely at ease.  
First class service throughout each stage of the system.  
It is a bit early for me to comment as it was my first visit.  
Close to home. Have had same GP for 25 plus years until he retired.  
Small practice which appears to care a lot more than my previous practice and is more thorough.  
The way that you get seen the same day.  
All aspects.  
Marvellous practice.  
I am quite satisfied with the care I receive.  
I can usually contact a receptionist by telephone on the first attempt and be dealt with politely and efficiently.  
My doctor has been excellent with my recent problems and massively helped my recovery.  
I have been with this practice for 20 years or more, I have seen many improvements over the years especially with appointments. The only complaint I have is doctors not being available over weekends and having to go through a phone interview before you can see one.  
The late evening appointments are good as people do not have to take time off work to come.  
Very satisfactory.  
I have received excellent attention from this practice and other agencies since the diagnosis of diabetes in June 2008.  
I feel the appointment system is good in that you can ring in a morning and nearly always get an appointment.  
Quick to help people who phone up with emergencies.  
Able to discuss things.  
You can always see a doctor when required.  
Always had excellent service over the past years, never had to wait. Had excellent service from NHS Direct also when the surgery is closed.  
Yes, it always gets dealt with.  
My doctor is very good and very attentive.  
My health care is excellent.  
The doctors are always very helpful.



## Is there anything that could be improved?

No x 12.

Ability to get through on the phone.

I would like to be able to book an appointment for when the doctor tells me to come back before I leave the surgery.

Probably not.

No TV or music on the premises.

I don't think so.

All good.

Unsure.

Not really. Open Saturday mornings would be good.

Blood pressures.

If possible a Saturday morning surgery for my daughter as she is away on business all weekdays.

When you ring for an appointment.

Waiting room. Time waiting for your appointments.

It would be helpful to be able to ring up for repeat prescription requests instead of having to come into surgery.

Timing.

Not really.

Totally satisfied with doctors.

I suppose there is but I cannot think of any at all.

Internet prescription requests.

Could have some toys and books for children in the waiting room upstairs.

Not in my book.

Weekend opening.

Some of the receptionist's attitude towards the patients.

Travelling to Ormskirk for certain treatments.

Not really.

Through my work I find it difficult to make daytime appointments.

Evening surgeries. Due to the fact I work out of town and when needing to see a doctor could be the next day.

Ability to book in advance.

Saturday morning surgery would be fantastic and later opening hours once or twice a week.

The waiting time to see a doctor at the hospital.

At the moment I work away a lot, I have never been refused a forward appointment because sometimes I need to make one, pill test etc.

That chair in the upstairs waiting room sinks down in the middle and the fake marble on the fireplace should probably be repainted.

Totally satisfied with the surgery.

Saturday opening. Just morning would be ok.

You cannot book an appointment for the next day, instead you have to call at 8am the following morning, Why?



### **Any other comments?**

Access to my GP is good because I am retired and available for any appointment.

Very good practice. Very happy with service.

Very accommodating receptionists.

Just very good.

My doctor has always been approachable, caring and concerned in my health and worries. He always has time to listen and considers what you say.

Receptionists are a dream.

Rather pleased as it is.

Please do not change anything. More than satisfied.

I am a nurse and deal with a lot of GPs. This is one of the best.

I have been with this practice 36 years and am extremely happy with it.

In general I find the care at this practice to be extremely good.

Smashing receptionists.

My doctor puts me completely at ease and I was completely satisfied with my treatment by her.

Very pleased with care.

Waiting for phone to be answered between 8am and 8.30am.

I always find the receptionists very helpful and my doctor is excellent.

All doctors at this practice are excellent.

Excellent service.

I would like to say a very big thank you for the way I and my family are treated.

I am a very satisfied customer.

I understood late night opening was for those of us fortunate enough to be employed full time. I was annoyed how many pensioners were in the waiting room after 6pm when they have ALL DAY.

Very impressed about the positive proactive response from the doctor in comparison to my previous doctor.

My husband finds it hard to attend for non urgent stuff.

I am very pleased with all the doctors at my surgery.

Have seen a different doctor the last two visits and found him very understanding.

I have just seen my doctor and I have to say for your records how impressed I was with his performance.

I feel comfortable with the doctor.

Lovely staff.

The website and online prescription re order is very good.

Waiting room carpet upstairs makes eyes a bit dizzy.

I consider this practice to be outstanding. Thank you.

Due to no facilities for children being available for emergencies in Southport or Ormskirk as they send children to Alder Hey more and more frequently now, a centre for children is the one thing local surgeries could offer for simple treatments.

Just an overall good vibe. Thank you.

Outstanding practice all round.

Re Q4, I can only fix an appointment when convenient to me so it is difficult to give an exact answer.



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