

Report on consultation activities with children and young people about GPs and dentists

Consultations carried out: January and February 2011

1. Introduction

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) is responsible for making sure there are safe and good quality health and social care services in England. We do this by registering, and therefore licensing, providers of care services if they meet essential standards of quality and safety, and we monitor them to make sure they continue to meet these standards.

We began registering dentists from April 2011 and are currently planning to register GPs from April 2012. We have not registered these services before.

We wanted to find out what children and young people thought was good, or not so good, about using these services.

2. Background

In January and February 2011, CQC ran eight workshops engaging with children and young people on their views and experiences using GP and dentist services.

The majority of the consultation work was delivered in partnership with Barking and Dagenham Centre for Independent Living and Green Shoes Arts CIC. We ran six workshops with a range of children, young people and parents/carers in Barking and Dagenham.

In addition, we ran two sessions with East Croydon Youth Club. This was organised by CQC's involvement and a colleague with experience of children's issues.

3. Consultation process and approaches

We delivered eight workshops in four education and community settings:

- Ab Phab Youth Group (11 to 25 year-olds) 43 people, two workshops.
- Gasgoine Children's Centre (4 to 10 year-olds and parent/carers) 32 people, three workshops.

- Jo Richardson School (11 to 14 year-olds) 22 people, one big workshop.
- East Croydon Youth Club (14 to 16 year-olds) 21 young people, 2 workshops.

A total of 118 children and young people across a wide age range participated in these workshops (including seven parents/carers for 4 to 6 year-olds).

The three questions that each group were consulted on were as follows:

- What are the main things you think your dentist/GP service does well?
- What could your dentist/GP service do better?
- Is there anything else you want to tell us about your dentist/GP?

To ensure these questions were clear and accessible they were translated into the following six questions:

- What is positive about your experiences of visiting the doctor?
- What is negative about your experiences of visiting the doctor?
- What would be included in the ideal trip to the doctor?
- What is positive about your experiences of visiting the dentist?
- What is negative about your experiences of visiting the dentist?
- What would be included in the ideal trip to the dentist?

We used various creative consultation methods to make sure activities were suitable and accessible for each setting and group.

Examples of the methods used are listed below:

- Clay faces and speech bubbles: 7 to 10 year-olds at Gasgoine Children's Centre during an after school drop-in workshop. Children were asked to use the clay to create a face depicting the expression of the way they feel when they visit the doctors or the dentist. They were then asked to fill in a speech bubble to explain their feelings and give detail. They were able to take home the clay faces they had made and the speech bubbles were collected so feedback could be recorded.
- Ideal visit photo stories: 11 to 14 year olds at Jo Richardson School during a two-hour workshop with 20 students. Young people were introduced to the method of image work, which consists of making still pictures with their bodies to display a situation or idea. They were then asked to discuss what would happen during their ideal visit to the doctor or dentist. In small groups they created three images depicting their perfect visit. Each story was performed for the other groups and photographs taken. As a final step, each group provided captions or explanations of each image.
- 'I am a great doctor/dentist because...' plasticine models: 2 to 5 year-olds and their parent/carers during a one-hour drop-in activity at Gasgoine Children's

Centre. Children were encouraged to play with the modelling clay as facilitators spoke with their parent/carers. For children old enough, they modelled people to represent doctors or dentists. Younger children were simply able to play, which enabled the adults to engage in conversation. Parent/carers were asked about their experiences of taking their children to either the doctors or dentist and facilitators made notes on the worksheets provided enabling adults to interact and supervise their children.

4. Essential standards of quality and safety

The feedback we received tells us about the services that children and young people expect from their doctor and GP. It also tells us what works well and what could be done to improve services.

Areas of service that were good and areas that could be made better can be related to the following outcome areas within the essential standards of quality and safety:

Respecting and involving people who use services

People who use services:

- Understand the care, treatment and support choices available to them.
- Can express their views, so far as they are able to do so, and are involved in making decisions about their care, treatment and support.
- Have their privacy, dignity and independence respected.
- Have their views and experiences taken into account in the way the service is provided and delivered.

Those acting on behalf of people who use services:

- Understand the care, treatment and support choices available to the people who use services.
- Can represent the views of the person using the service by expressing these on their behalf, and are involved appropriately in making decisions about their care, treatment and support.

Care and welfare of people who use services

People who use services:

- Experience effective, safe and appropriate care, treatment and support that meets their needs and protects their rights.

Safety and suitability of premises

People who use services and people who work in or visit the premises:

- Are in safe, accessible surroundings that promote their wellbeing.

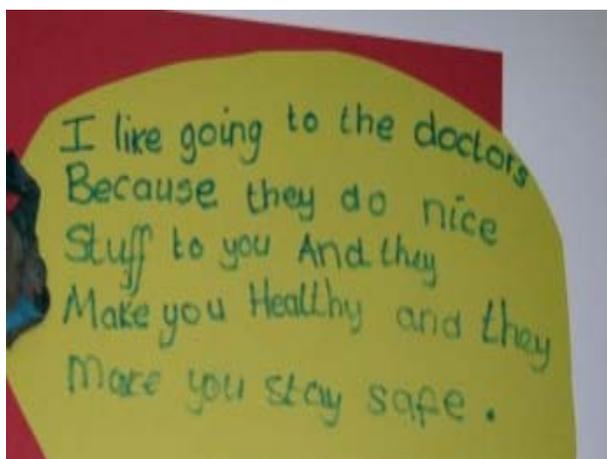
Requirements relating to workers and supporting workers

People who use services:

- Are safe and their health and welfare needs are met by staff who are fit, appropriately qualified and are physically and mentally able to do their job.
- People who use services: Are safe and their health and welfare needs are met by competent staff.

5. Detailed feedback on doctors and dentists

5.1 The things doctors do well:



Some of the most positive things people told us were that their doctor was friendly and polite and that the doctor listened and explained things to them:

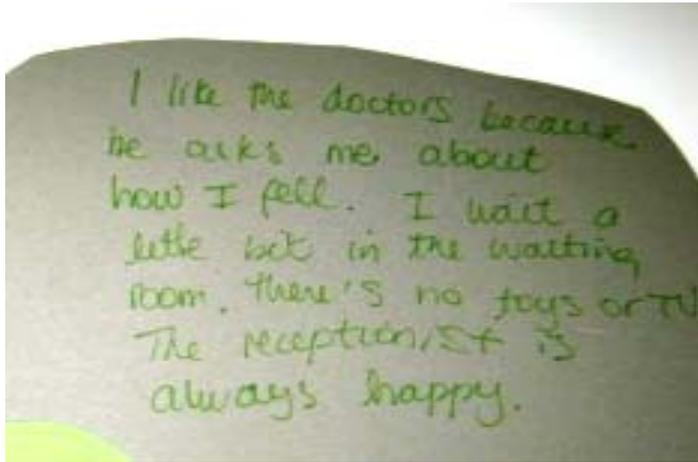
"He knows his patients needs and is always ready to listen and help you."

"The doctors are really nice and they tell me what they are going to do."

"Friendly. Speaks to me nicely."

"He (doctor) is a cool and friendly guy. He talks to me and gives me advice."

"They do their jobs well. They explain to me and talk to me directly."



People also felt strongly that the doctor's surgery should be clean, welcoming, well run and accessible to people who use wheelchairs. Some people said they liked that the doctor was close to where they live.

"Building is good and smells nice."

"The reception area is clean."

"I can go to the doctors on my own. It is close to my house, and it is not too big."

Some good experiences of reception staff were talked about:

"There is also a polite receptionist, and they explain everything really well."

"The receptionist is nice and helpful."

"The receptionist is always happy."

"Receptionist and waiting room is good."

People also mentioned:

- Good disabled access for people who use wheelchairs.
- Efficient staff.
- Acceptable waiting times.
- Ease of getting an appointment, including emergency appointments.
- Plenty to keep you entertained (magazines, TV, games)
- Stickers and sugar-free lollies for younger children.

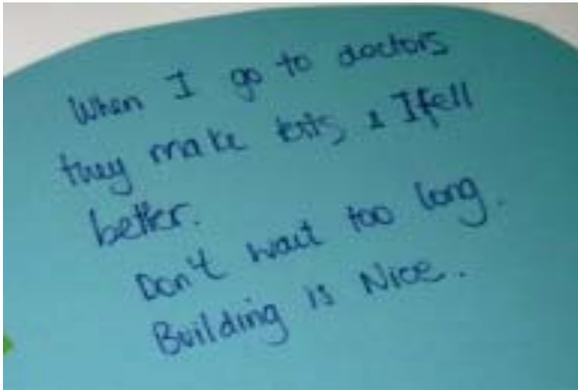
"Appointments are quite fast. I call in the morning and get an appointment."

"Don't have to wait too long for an appointment."

"I like going to the doctor. I like to play."

"I like going to the doctors because I get a lollipop."

"I am happy because I get a sticker when I go to the doctor."

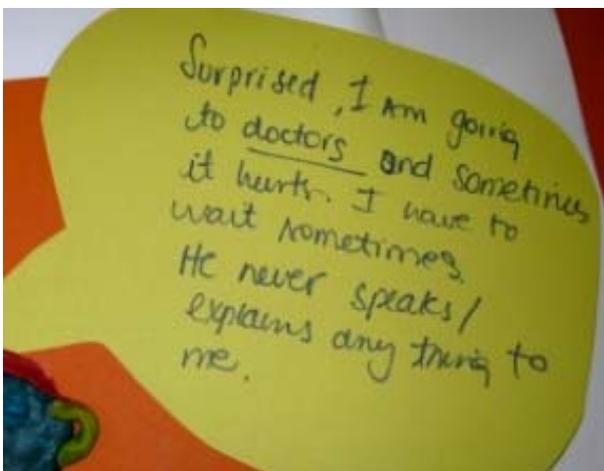


5.2 The things doctors could do better

Some problems were common across all age groups. One of the main problems was that the doctor was not understanding enough and did not listen to their worries, and that the doctor just spoke to their parent or carer.

Some 11-16 year-olds felt strongly about not being listened to with comments such as: "it feels as though the doctor is fed up"; "can't be bothered"; or "doesn't want to be there". Several said they spend their time looking at the computer and do not look you in the eye.

Other comments included:



“What I dislike about the doctors is they sometimes don’t listen, and they are always rushing.”

“They just say ‘mmm’. They listen but don’t do anything.”

“They need to be more interactive, not just ‘mmm!’”

“The doctor always asks my mum and mostly listens to her too.”

“They ask wrong questions, i.e. are you ok? Obviously I am not ok! They should ask ‘what is wrong?’”

Children and young people of all ages felt that the waiting times at the doctor’s surgery were too long:

“You turn up on time but don’t get seen on time.”

“I do not like the waiting time.”

“There is a lot of waiting.”

“I had to wait for two hours at one of my appointments with the GP last year.”

Many also said it was difficult to get an appointment because the wait is too long, the phone is always busy or they have to go to the surgery just make an appointment:

“Appointments are never on time. I have to wait about a week for appointment.”

“I have to go to the clinic to make an appointment for the first time.”

Access inside surgery buildings is not always good enough, especially for wheelchair users. And practices are not welcoming enough:

“Poor wheelchair access.”

“They don’t have toys for children to play. They used to have them. It should be more welcoming for children.”

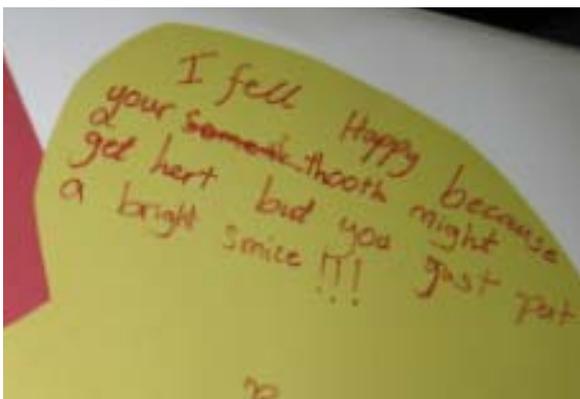
“Waiting for the doctor does not make you feel welcome.”

Several young people in East Croydon said there were many ‘foreign’ doctors and sometimes it was difficult for them to understand what they were saying.

5.3 What would a perfect visit to doctor include?

1. The practice is close to the place where you live.
2. The practice is clean and comfortable.
3. The practice is easy for everyone to access.
4. The reception staff are friendly and make you feel welcome.
5. You don't have to wait too long once inside the surgery.
6. If you do have to wait then there are things to do in the waiting area such as magazines and toys.
7. The doctor and other staff are friendly and polite.
8. The doctor and other staff smile and make eye contact.
9. The doctor knows about you.
10. The doctor listens to you.
11. The doctor talks to you as well as your parent/carer.
12. The doctor takes time to explain things so that you understand them.
13. The doctor is calm and patient.
14. The doctor has good knowledge about healthcare and you are happy that the doctor knows what is best to help keep you healthy.
15. The doctor can offer clear advice.
16. The doctor can help to make you calm.
17. Doctors give you a sticker and sugar- free lollipop at the end of your appointment!

5.4 The things dentists do well:



It was easier for people to tell us good things about their dentist, such as:

- The dentist is able to keep them calm.
- They explain things clearly.

- They are friendly and polite.
- The dentist tells them things in a way that they can understand.

“Fully explains what they are going to do, friendly, polite, there are magazines to read while you wait.”

“Explained what was wrong with my teeth. Gave me advice. I understood it.”

People felt welcomed by staff and comfortable because the surgery was clean:

“I went over to see my dentist today. The place was nice and welcoming... just finished re-decorating. They talk to me directly... A nice TV there.”

Other good things people told us about included:

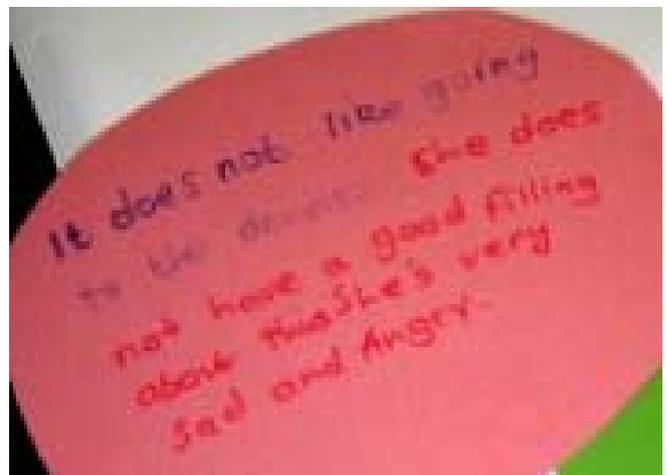
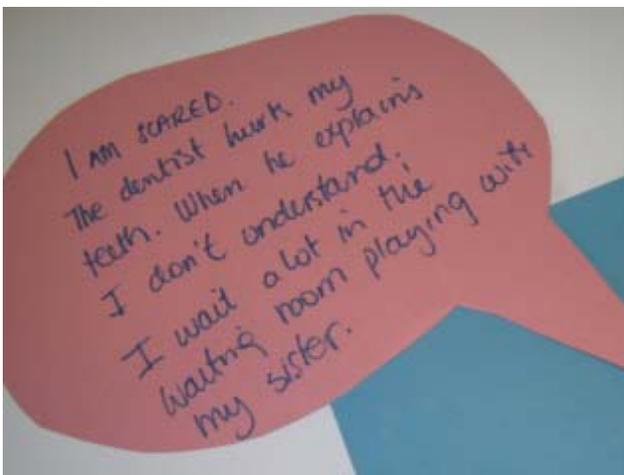
- Being seen on time.
- Getting reminder cards for appointments.
- Being able to get appointments at the right time.

“The receptionist tells us when the next appointment is and gives a reminder card.”

The building was also seen as important in making a trip to the dentist a good experience when it is close to home, accessible and modern.

Many children (especially seven to 10 year-olds) felt that getting a sticker and lollipop after an appointment was an important part of making it a good experience.

5.5 The things dentists could do better:



Many people said they had to wait too long to make appointments on the phone, and also in the waiting area where there was often nothing to do while waiting. Many people also said there was a strange smell at the dentists and that the surgery was not always clean.

“In the waiting room you do nothing but sit down on a chair.”

“No TV or magazines to look at.”

“The smell could be better.”

“Smells funny.”

Many young people (particularly 14-16 year olds) were also very sensitive to the taste at the dentists such as gloves and mouth wash.

“I do not like dentists. Gloves taste disgusting.”

“Can they not put in some flavour inside the mouth wash? I cannot stand the taste.”

One big problem was poor access to surgeries because many are upstairs.

“It could be bigger. It’s not accessible.”

“A lot of dentists are upstairs.”

Some people said the dentist did not explain things in a way that they could understand but this was less of a problem than with doctors.

“The dentist hurts my teeth. When he explains I don’t understand.”

“He (dentist) did not explain. He asked me to open my mouth and pulled out the broken tooth straight away – it hurt too much!”

5.6 What would a perfect visit to the dentist include?

1. Less waiting in the surgery.
2. If you have to wait, then there should be things to do or read.
3. The surgery should be clean and accessible.
4. Calming, warm, friendly and welcoming staff.
5. Surgery should be more comfortable.
6. Making both children and adults calm and comfortable in what can be an intimidating and frightening environment.

7. Nicely decorated ceiling, i.e. a palm tree or a beach view, to help calm people down.
8. Lollipop and sticker at the end of the appointment

6. What we will do with the information you have given us

- Feed it into guidance for our inspectors to help them look for things that matter to people.
- Use it to improve how we engage with children and young people.
- Produce 'top tips' for doctors and dentists on providing a good service for children and young people.

7. Thank you

We would like to say thank you to everyone for taking the time to tell us about your experiences of doctors and dentists. The things you told us are very important.