

# **Community Action on Health**

## **Heaton Medical Centre Proposed Premises Changes Report of the Patient Consultation**

**January 2010**



Community Action on Health is a charity working within Newcastle to tackle health inequalities through patient, carer and public involvement.

We have vast experience and expertise in gathering the views and opinions of patients, carers and the general public in relation to health services. For example:

- locating new GP surgeries
- services to include in new community health facilities
- visibility of existing health services
- changes to care pathways

We employ various quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques:

- Questionnaires – paper-based and online
- Participatory appraisals
- Drop-in events
- Face-to-face interviews
- Focus groups
- Informal group discussions

We also provide guidance on:

- how services can engage with patients, carers and the public
- developing patient-friendly services
- a patient-focussed approach to delivering health services

For more information about the services we can provide please contact Nick Forbes on 0191 2263450 or email [nick@caoh.org.uk](mailto:nick@caoh.org.uk). Visit our website at: [www.caoh.org.uk](http://www.caoh.org.uk)

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### 1.0 Introduction

In order to provide a high quality service to their patients, GP practices require a building which meets the needs of both staff and patients. In recent years it has become apparent that Heaton Medical Centre's practice building is no longer fit for purpose. It is felt that the premises are too small, disabled access needs improving and there is no scope for increasing the clinical services on offer.

The practice has since been offered space in a new Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust development on the Walkergate Hospital site. The building would offer them the additional space they require to provide a quality service to patients and also the opportunity to provide additional health-related services.

### 1.1 Aim

Community Action on Health (CAOH) is an independent charity which works to bring about change by helping communities have a strong and effective voice on health issues. CAOH was asked by Newcastle Primary Care Trust (PCT) to assist the PCT and NHS North of Tyne staff to carry out some consultation work with patients about proposals to relocate the surgery to Walkergate.

The aim of this consultation is to:

Gather patients' views of the proposed premises change of Heaton Medical Centre from 37A Heaton Road, to Walkergate Hospital.

### 1.2 Objectives

The key objectives of the consultation are to:

- Explore patients' feelings and attitudes towards the proposed move
- Identify any barriers to patients using the surgery in its proposed location
- Identify ways to overcome those barriers

### 1.3 Outcomes

The consultation hopes to provide the practice, Newcastle PCT and NHS North of Tyne with an understanding of patients' views of the proposed move. This will give the stakeholders additional valuable information to help inform their final decision about the relocation.

### 2.0 Methodology

The consultation period ran from Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November until Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> January. During the consultation period several different techniques were employed to gather the patients' views.

### 2.1 Questionnaire

A postal questionnaire was distributed to all 5,884 heads of household registered with the practice, accompanied by an explanatory letter from the practice and one letter from Newcastle PCT. Questionnaires were also available in the surgery itself.

The questionnaire covered patients':

- views of the current surgery building
- preferences regarding ideas for additional service
- concerns about the proposed move
- likelihood of remaining with the practice if it decided to relocate
- suggestions for making the move easier for them

A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix 1.

One thousand and sixty-four questionnaires were returned in total. See Appendix 2 for a profile of these patients.

### 2.2 Drop-ins

Patients and the local community were also given the opportunity to learn more about the proposals at drop-in sessions. Plans of the proposed building could be viewed and staff from the practice, NHS North of Tyne and CAO H were available to answer patients' questions and record their thoughts about the proposal.

Six drop-in sessions took place in Byker, Heaton (x2), Longbenton, Walker and Walkergate. To maximise attendees CAO H arranged for them to take place in well known community venues at various times of the day. Approximately 40 people attended these sessions, see Appendix 4 for a summary of their views.

The sessions were advertised within the patient letter, in the practice newsletter, through a press release to local media and through posters displayed in numerous local community buildings, pharmacies and places of worship amongst others.

### 2.3 Telephone calls

The PCT's patient letter also invited patients who were unable to complete a questionnaire or who simply preferred to give their views over the telephone, the

opportunity to contact CAOJ by telephone. Twelve patients chose to use this feedback mechanism, their comments can be viewed in Appendix 5.

## **2.4 Data analysis**

The view's of patients were all recorded electronically and analysed. The following section shows the results of this consultation.

### 3.0 Findings

This section explores patients' views about the surgery's proposed move to the Walkergate Hospital site. This captures information gathered through questionnaires, telephone calls and drop-ins.

#### 3.1 The current practice

Patients were asked their views of the current physical surgery building – what they liked about it and what they disliked. Many also commented on other aspects of the service and the situation of the building, as shown in the table overleaf.

Ninety-one respondents (10.9%) stated that there was nothing they liked about the surgery whereas 56 (6.7%) liked everything or felt that it served its purpose and met all of their needs.

## What patients like about the surgery

<b>835 people responded to this question</b>	<b>No. of responses*</b>	<b>% of responses</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>675</b>	<b>59.8</b>	
Location - nearby/walking distance /convenient	444	39.4	53.2
Accessible by public transport	122	10.8	14.6
Pharmacy nearby	67	5.9	8.0
Shops nearby	21	1.9	2.5
Parking available/free parking	9	0.8	1.1
Dentist nearby	7	0.6	0.8
Location/building accessible for disabled/elderly	5	0.4	0.6
<b>Surgery building</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>10.6</b>	
Size - right size/easy to navigate/layout	39	3.5	4.7
Clean and tidy	34	3.0	4.1
Self-checking in for appointments	14	1.2	1.7
Comfortable waiting/reception area/plenty of seats	12	1.1	1.4
Warm	10	0.9	1.2
Well lit/bright	6	0.5	0.7
Digital display board	5	0.4	0.6
<b>Service provided</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>6.4</b>	
Staff - doctors/nurses	58	5.1	6.9
Efficient service	14	1.2	1.7
<b>Other</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>15.1</b>	
Friendly atmosphere/welcoming/cosy /personal touch	78	6.9	9.3
Everything/serves its purpose/meets my needs	56	5.0	6.7
Familiar	36	3.2	4.3
<b>Nothing</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>8.1</b>	<b>10.9</b>
Total	1128	100.0	

\*Respondents could give more than one answer

Over half of respondents (53.2%, 444 respondents) answering this question liked the practice's current location which is close to many patients' homes and often within walking distance. Related to this people found the surgery very easy to get to using public transport and the nearby pharmacy, shops and dentist, very convenient.

"Friendly atmosphere, easily accessible from my home, near to pharmacy"

"Easily accessible on bus route. Near main shopping centre"

The friendly, cosy atmosphere and staff providing a personal touch are also seen as positives of the surgery.

“There is a warmth about it staying pretty much the same, a cosy familiarity”

“High standard of service given by medical nursing and all support staff regardless”

### What patients dislike about the surgery

<b>867 people responded to this question</b>	<b>No. of responses*</b>	<b>% of responses</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<b>Surgery building</b>	<b>756</b>	<b>62.3</b>	
Size - small/overcrowded/layout	429	35.3	49.5
Waiting area small/lack of seats	105	8.6	12.1
Old/run down/needs refurbishment	80	6.6	9.2
Reception area - no privacy/small	31	2.6	3.6
Poor disabled access/prams to building and rooms	30	2.5	3.5
Toilets - location/state/number	23	1.9	2.7
Poorly lit/dark/dingy	19	1.6	2.2
Consultation rooms – no privacy	16	1.3	1.8
Waiting area not child friendly	10	0.8	1.2
Not clean	10	0.8	1.2
Cold	2	0.2	0.2
Digital display board	1	0.1	0.1
<b>Parking</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>20.1</b>	
Lack of parking	244	20.1	28.1
<b>Service provided</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>1.8</b>	
Limited medical services	17	1.4	2.0
Reception staff	5	0.4	0.6
<b>Other</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	
Location - too far away	1	0.1	0.1
<b>Nothing</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>15.7</b>	<b>22.0</b>
Total	1214	100.0	

\*Respondents could give more than one answer

One hundred and ninety-one respondents (22.0%) stated that there was nothing they disliked about the surgery. However, as shown in the table above, patients did identify sixteen things that they disliked about the building and service provided.

By far, the biggest dislike was the size of the building with 49.5% of patients (429) mentioning this. Patients felt that the building was generally too small and a further 12.1% (105) specifically stated that the waiting area was an inadequate size.

Patients also disliked the reception area with the majority commenting that it offered no privacy. In addition, 16 people (1.8%) stated that consultations could be overheard by people sitting in the waiting room. A lack of parking was also mentioned by over one quarter of patients (28.1%, 244 respondents).

“Very small and cramped - sometimes you can hear people talking in consultation rooms when you are sat outside. Whole place rather depressing”

“Not very disabled friendly as I use a wheelchair. It's a nightmare to get parked!”

### 3.2 Additional medical and community services

The questionnaire also gave patients the opportunity to say how they would like some of the space used, if the surgery moved to the Walkergate site. Patients were able to choose from a list provided and could also make their own suggestions.

#### 3.2.1 Medical services

The table below shows that patients had a preference for a pharmacy within the building and in terms of medical services, chiropody or podiatry would be welcomed by respondents who answered this question.

#### Extra medical services suggestions

<b>955 people responded to this question</b>	<b>No. of responses*</b>	<b>% of responses</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
Pharmacy	778	26.4	81.5
Chiropody/Podiatry	589	20.0	61.7
Dentist	474	16.1	49.6
Complimentary therapies e.g. massage	446	15.1	46.7
Supply & fitting of hearing aid batteries	259	8.8	27.1
Drop-in contraception clinics	183	6.2	19.2
Sexual health	163	5.5	17.1
Other	59	2.0	6.2
Total	2951	100.0	

\*Respondents could give more than one answer

The ‘other’ services that patients suggested that the space could be used for, are shown overleaf:

### Other suggestions

<b>59 people gave other suggestions</b>	<b>No. of responses*</b>	<b>% of responses</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
Physiotherapy	13	19.7	22.0
X-ray facilities	11	16.7	18.6
Mental health services - counselling/ psychotherapy/AA/drugs/gambling	9	13.6	15.3
General health checks/well person clinic	5	7.6	8.5
Walk-in Centre/out of hours clinic	5	7.6	8.5
Chiropractor/osteopath	4	6.1	6.8
Gym facilities	3	4.5	5.1
Weight loss support	3	4.5	5.1
Internet facilities for health information	2	3.0	3.4
Diabetic clinic/eye clinic	2	3.0	3.4
Minor surgery	2	3.0	3.4
Orthopaedics	1	1.5	1.7
Other	6	9.1	10.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

\*Respondents could give more than one answer

### 3.2.2 Community space

Patients would like the community space used for Citizen's Advice services in the first instance. A community café was also a popular choice amongst respondents, followed by a healthy food co-operative.

### Community space suggestions

<b>851 people responded to this question</b>	<b>No. of responses*</b>	<b>% of responses</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
Citizens Advice Bureau drop-ins	537	20.8	63.1
Community café	406	15.8	47.7
Healthy food co-operative	335	13.0	39.4
Social Services drop-ins	308	12.0	36.2
Health Trainer Service	293	11.4	34.4
Local community groups	274	10.6	32.2
WeightWatchers/Slimming World	255	9.9	30.0
Job advisors	139	5.4	16.3
Other	29	1.1	3.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>2576</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

\*Respondents could give more than one answer

Patients also suggested 'other' things that the space could be used for as shown overleaf:

## Other suggestions

<b>29 people gave other suggestions</b>	<b>No. of responses*</b>	<b>% of responses</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
Leisure facilities/gym/fitness classes/Exercise on Referral	8	27.6	27.6
Children's play area/crèche	4	13.8	13.8
Young people's health advice/counselling	3	10.3	10.3
Internet facilities for health information/internet café	3	10.3	10.3
Shop - convenience foods/refreshments	2	6.9	6.9
Dietetics/weight loss provided GP surgery	2	6.9	6.9
Weekly no smoking clinic without appointments	1	3.4	3.4
Hairdresser	1	3.4	3.4
Lip reading classes	1	3.4	3.4
Parent and toddler groups, children's activity groups	1	3.4	3.4
Arts/creative events	1	3.4	3.4
Councillor surgeries	1	3.4	3.4
NHS Condition Management	1	3.4	3.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*Respondents could give more than one answer

### 3.3 Concerns about the proposed move

Patients were asked whether they had any concerns about the proposed move and the table overleaf summarises their responses. Three hundred and forty-two respondents (39.6%) stated that nothing concerned them about the move and 26 (3.0%) stated that they had concerns but did not specify what they were.

### Concerns about the proposed move

<b>864 people responded to this question</b>			
	<b>No. of responses*</b>	<b>% of responses</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<b>Location</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>26.9</b>	
Too far/takes too long/too difficult/awkward	200	19.9	23.1
Inaccessible for the elderly/disabled	42	4.2	4.9
Can't walk there/will have to get public transport/will have to travel to get there	28	2.8	3.2
<b>Transport</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>23.7</b>	
Not accessible by public transport/poor transport/lack of	227	22.6	26.3
Will have to use a taxi	7	0.7	0.8
Do not feel safe using the Metro	4	0.4	0.5
<b>Proposed site</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>6.4</b>	
Will there be a pharmacy nearby?/Can we use the old pharmacy?	18	1.8	2.1
Will there be plenty parking?/Will parking be free?	15	1.5	1.7
Will I be able to find it?/How will I get there?	12	1.2	1.4
Site on congested/busy road	8	0.8	0.9
Site/area is dark/remote	7	0.7	0.8
Its location on the Hospital site	3	0.3	0.3
It is an unsafe area	1	0.1	0.1
<b>Costs</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>2.6</b>	
Too expensive to get there/will cost more to get there	26	2.6	3.0
<b>Service provided</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2.0</b>	
Will all the staff be moving with the building?	8	0.8	0.9
Will it offer the same services?	5	0.5	0.6
Will I still be able to have home visits?	4	0.4	0.5
Will it become too big making it more difficult to get appointments?	3	0.3	0.3
<b>Other</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>4.3</b>	
Loss of personal touch	10	1.0	1.2
Will the catchment area change?/Will I have to move practices?	7	0.7	0.8
Not specified concern	26	2.6	3.0
<b>None</b>	<b>342</b>	<b>34.1</b>	<b>39.6</b>
Total	1003	100.0	

\*Respondents could give more than one answer

As can be seen, getting to the new site is the largest single concern to respondents, it was felt that the site was not accessible by public transport or poorly serviced. Alongside this respondents felt that the location of the new surgery building was too far for them to travel to, particularly when they are ill, many do not want to have to get public transport to visit their GP.

In addition, patients were concerned that it would cost them more to get to the site, wondered about whether the parking was free and how plentiful it would be.

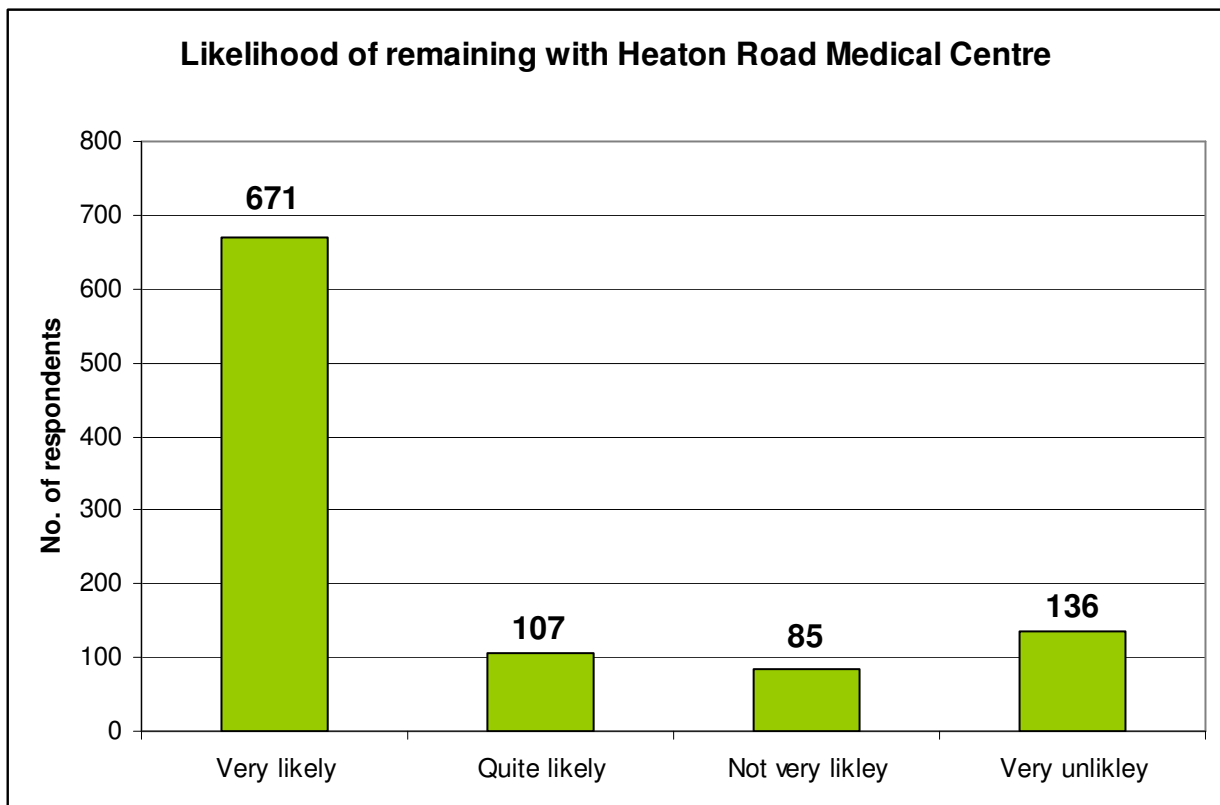
“I cannot get there by any form of public transport. I do not drive and I am 83 years old. Hospital grounds at night potentially unsafe for elderly people”

“It's going to be too far away. I registered here because it is near where I live - I don't have a car”

“Transport will be difficult for a lot of people, they will probably have to get two buses or one bus then Metro. If people are not well enough to travel there will be a lot of doctor call outs”

### 3.4 Remaining with the practice

Another part of the consultation questionnaire asked patients how likely they would be to remain registered with Heaton Medical Centre if it were to move to the Walkergate Hospital site. The question was answered by 999 patients, the results of which are shown in the chart below.



\*No. of respondents 999

Over three-quarters (77.9%) of patients responding to this question would be likely to remain with the surgery if it moved.

The remaining 22.1% of patients (221) stated that they would be not very likely or very unlikely to stay with the practice. The following four tables show the gender, age, postcode and ethnicity of this group. Women account for nearly two-thirds of respondents, those aged 60 or over account for 38.9% of respondents (86) and those who are White British make up over four-fifths of those who responded. Finally, those living in the immediate vicinity of the surgery in Byker and South Heaton (NE6) and North Heaton (NE7) would be more likely to leave the practice if it moved.

#### **Gender of those not very likely or very unlikely to stay with the practice**

	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
Female	133	60.2
Male	71	32.1
Blank	17	7.7
Total	221	100.0

#### **Age of those not very likely or very unlikely to stay with the practice**

	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
Under 16	4	1.8
16-30	24	10.9
30-59	79	35.7
60+	86	38.9
Blank	28	12.7
Total	221	100.0

#### **Postcode of those not very likely or very unlikely to stay with the practice**

	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
NE1	10	4.5
NE2	9	4.1
NE3	2	0.9
NE4	0	0.0
NE5	1	0.5
NE6	116	52.5
NE7	21	9.5
NE12	5	2.3
NE28	1	0.5
Blank	56	25.3

Total	221	100.0
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### Ethnicity of those not very likely or very unlikely to stay with the practice

	No. of respondents	% of respondents
White British	185	83.7
White Irish	1	0.5
Any other White background	2	0.9
Any other Mixed	1	0.5
Chinese	1	0.5
Asian or Asian British – Indian	3	1.4
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	4	1.8
Any other ethnic group - Iranian	1	0.5
Any other ethnic group – Korean	1	1.8
Blank	22	10.0
Total	221	100.0

The group were asked why they would be unlikely to remain and the table below summarises their responses. Eleven patients (5.0%) did not give a reason for their response.

### Reasons for not remaining with the practice

221 people responded to this question	No. of responses*	% of responses	% of respondents
<b>Location</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>60.7</b>	
Too far/takes too long/too difficult/awkward	135	46.6	61.1
Can't walk there/will have to get public transport/will have to travel to get there	34	11.7	15.4
Inaccessible for the elderly/disabled	7	2.4	3.2
<b>Transport</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>24.5</b>	
Not accessible by public transport/poor transport/lack of	71	24.5	32.1
<b>Proposed site</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2.8</b>	
Its location on the Hospital site	3	1.0	1.4
It is an unsafe area	3	1.0	1.4
Site on congested/busy road	1	0.3	0.5
Will there be a pharmacy nearby?/Can we use the old pharmacy?	1	0.3	0.5
<b>Costs</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>4.5</b>	
Too expensive to get there/will cost more to get there	13	4.5	5.9
<b>Other</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3.8</b>	
Will register with a surgery closer to home	11	3.8	5.0

<b>No reason given</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>5.0</b>
Total	290	100.0	

\*Respondents could give more than one answer

Mirroring the concerns raised by all patients above, the majority of respondents gave the location of the building and how accessible it was in terms of travel time, mode of transport and type of patient as their reasons for leaving the practice.

“I can't get there on my scooter as it would run out of power”

“Can't get time off to get appointments and the new location is not near where I live or work. Location is important to me”

“Too far to travel. I like the idea of the doctors being very close for the needs of myself and family. Cost is also an issue, some days I wouldn't have a bus fare to get to the doctors”

### **3.5 Making the move easier**

The surgery was also interested in suggestions from patients about what would make the move easier for them. However, 167 (29.3%) people stated outright that nothing could be done to make it easier.

The table overleaf shows the suggestions put forward by respondents.

### Suggestions to make the move easier

<b>569 people responded to this question</b>	<b>No. of responses*</b>	<b>% of responses</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<b>Transport</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>38.9</b>	
Direct bus service/several different bus routes to site/bus stop nearby	211	34.4	37.1
Provide information about public transport/taxi companies/clear directions how to get there	17	2.8	3.0
Free transport to surgery/discounted taxi/shuttle bus	11	1.8	1.9
<b>Current surgery site</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>12.2</b>	
Stay in same area/do not move	48	7.8	8.4
Another location for the building	18	2.9	3.2
Satellite surgery/Have one surgery at Heaton Road and one at Walkergate	9	1.5	1.6
<b>Proposed surgery site</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>8.0</b>	
Plenty of parking/free/bicycle racks	27	4.4	4.7
Pharmacy nearby/late night pharmacy	11	1.8	1.9
Better disabled access/disabled parking/help with building design	5	0.8	0.9
Improved lighting around the site and nearby streets/good signage	4	0.7	0.7
Shop nearby/vending machine	2	0.3	0.4
<b>Communication</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>7.7</b>	
Be kept informed/good communication/lots of information/advance warning	47	7.7	8.3
<b>Service provided</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>4.7</b>	
More appointments/appointments for workers late night appointments/walk-in service/online booking	12	2.0	2.1
Getting repeat prescriptions without going to surgery/getting longer prescriptions	6	1.0	1.1
All staff to move with the building	4	0.7	0.7
Offer the same services	3	0.5	0.5
More women GPs	2	0.3	0.4
Don't lose personal touch	1	0.2	0.2
Home visits for people who live far away	1	0.2	0.2
<b>Other</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1.3</b>	
Move as soon as possible	5	0.8	0.9
Help with/automatic transfer to another surgery	3	0.5	0.5
<b>Nothing</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>27.2</b>	<b>29.3</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>614</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

\*Respondents could give more than one answer

Forty-eight respondents (8.4%) felt that the surgery not moving (some people suggested it be improved and expanded) or moving within the immediate area i.e. within Heaton or Byker (3.2%, 18 respondents) would be the best outcome. They offered specific alternative sites as follows:

- Molineux Street NHS Centre
- Kwiksave in Byker
- Accountant's building next door to surgery
- Fossway Shopping Park
- Empty buildings on Heaton Road e.g. former DWP building on Heaton Road, opposite the bingo hall
- Empty buildings on Shields Road
- Geoffrey Rhodes Centre
- Disused surgery on Welbeck Road/corner of Scrogg Road
- Rothbury Terrace

The Molineux Centre was the most popular choice, mentioned by seven people (1.2%).

The most frequent suggestion overall however, made by over one third of respondents (37.1%) was for a direct bus service or several different bus routes that go down Benfield Road, with a bus stop outside the surgery building.

“Find premises closer to current surgery or ask bus service to provide very regular services”

“Bike racks with secure parking (i.e. in sight of reception staff or cameras); a bus route between Heaton and Walkergate (and more frequent than half hourly)”

In addition, good communication was vital to many patients. They asked to be kept up-to-date with the proposed move and to be given plenty of advanced warning if the move was to go ahead.

“Check out location prior to using as not exactly sure where it is. Need to give patients as much information as possible prior to opening about what is on offer. Maybe have open day prior to opening and know exactly which doctors will be resident there, old and new, also receptionists as they are first people you see”

Parking which is plentiful and free is also important to patients and several also suggested having bicycle racks outside the building.

“Plenty of parking spaces in hospital grounds, preferably free”

### **3.6 Other comments**

Respondents also offered other comments related to the proposed building move as shown in the table overleaf. The majority of respondents stated that they were in favour of the move, that it would be closer to their home or easier to get to than the current

site on Heaton Road. They also wanted it to happen as soon as possible. However people also offered negative comments; believing the move to be a bad idea, too far to travel or stating that the surgery should not move. Twenty-five people (7.8%) said that they would be registering with another surgery if the proposed move went ahead.

### Other comments

<b>322 people responded to this question</b>	<b>No. of responses*</b>	<b>% of responses</b>	<b>% of respondents</b>
<b>Positive comments</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>50.9</b>	
Good idea/happy with it	174	39.2	54.0
It will be closer to home/easier to get to	45	10.1	14.0
Move as soon as possible	7	1.6	2.2
<b>Negative comments</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>32.9</b>	
Bad idea	80	18.0	24.8
Will be further/inconvenient/too far	37	8.3	11.5
I will be changing GPs/consider changing	25	5.6	7.8
Do not move/stay in Heaton area	2	0.5	0.6
There will not be enough parking	1	0.2	0.3
The move would result in more home visit requests	1	0.2	0.3
<b>Current service</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>10.4</b>	
Happy with service as it is/it's an excellent service	30	6.8	9.3
Suggestions for improving current service	16	3.6	5.0
<b>Other</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>5.9</b>	
Other	24	5.4	7.5
Keep patients informed/provide public transport information	1	0.2	0.3
Is there a pharmacy nearby?	1	0.2	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

\*Respondents could give more than one answer

Some patients also used the consultation as an opportunity to feed back their views about the current service which were mainly positive.

“I find Heaton Road Medical Centre very helpful. They will do anything to help you. The doctors, nurses and the rest of the staff gives 100% every time to help you”

“My wife and I have been at the practice for over 45 years and have always been most satisfied with our treatment by all the doctors, nurses and staff. It is a most caring practice and we have been pleased to recommend it to others”

However, some patients felt that improvements could be made to the current service.

“The lack of appointments is a real problem. To have to wait approximately one week for an appointment if I don't phone at 8.15am is not really acceptable if I am suffering with ill health”

“Doctors should visit over 80 year olds once a month like they did in the old days”

### 3.7 Summary

During the consultation:

- 1064 people returned questionnaires. This represents 12.7% of the total practice population and 18.1% of all households within the practice. However it must be noted that patients were free to pick up questionnaires in the surgery therefore more than one questionnaire could have been returned per household.
- 40 people (approx.) attended drop-ins
- 12 people gave their views over the telephone

It is clear to see from the findings above that patients have mixed views about the proposed relocation of the surgery building to the Walkergate Hospital site.

The things that people liked best about the current surgery were:

- Its present convenient location within walking distance of their home 53.2% (444)
- Its accessibility by public transport 14.6% (122)
- Its friendly atmosphere and personal touch 9.3% (78)

People disliked:

- Its small size and layout and how overcrowded it was 49.5% (429)
- The lack of parking 28.1% (244)
- The waiting area being small or lacking seats 12.1% (105)

522 people (48.5% of all respondents who gave their views by questionnaire or telephone) had concerns about the proposed move. The most frequently mentioned reasons were:

- Not accessible by public transport or poor public transport to the site 26.3% (227)
- Too far or too difficult to get to 23.1% (200)
- Not accessible for the elderly or disabled 4.9% (42)

This shows that the location and its accessibility were the most significant concerns that people had.

Despite these concerns, 77.9% of people (778) responding to the question said that they would remain with the practice. Of the 22.1% (221) who said they were not very likely or very unlikely to remain registered:

- 38.9% (86) were over 60;

- 52.5% (116) lived in the NE6 postcode area (the area closest to the current practice building)

A number of people who expressed concerns about the proposed location suggested that a satellite surgery be established or that an alternative location be identified. Molineux Street NHS Centre was the site most people suggested as a potential location for this.