



Integrated Laboratory Medicine Directorate

Survey of Service Provision by the Integrated Laboratory Medicine Directorate to General Practitioners (GPs)

2022 Report

Introduction

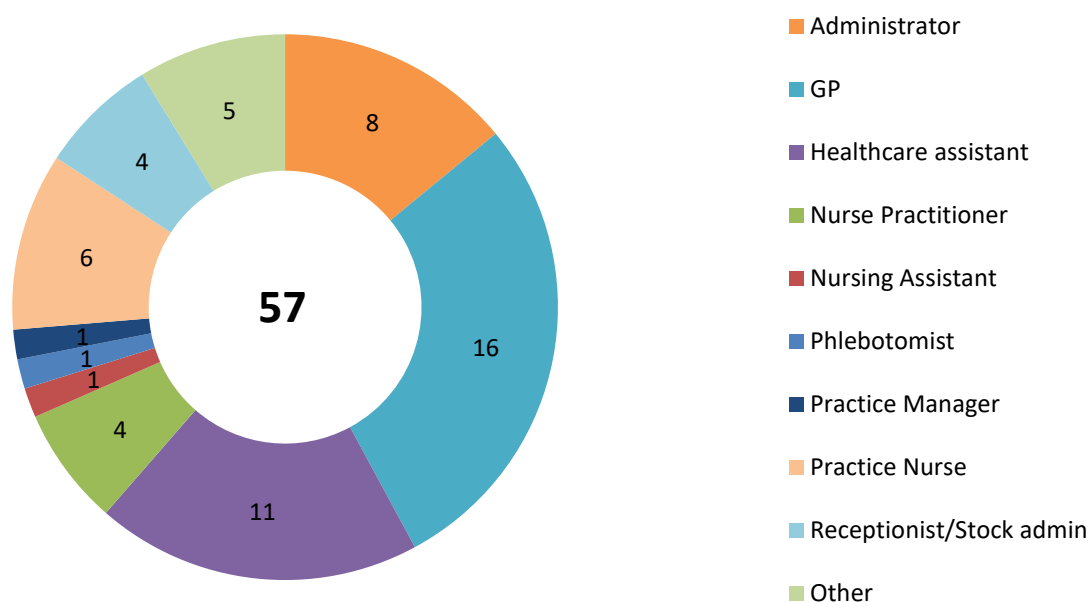
Integrated Laboratory Medicine Directorate (comprised of Blood Sciences, Cellular Pathology, Cytology, Microbiology and Molecular Genetics) is dedicated to continual improvement. As part of this commitment, an annual survey has been produced and circulated amongst the service users. The aim is to provide the opportunity for feedback and suggestions as well as investigate:

- How frequently GPs use our services.
- How well the users feel we have performed.
- How well the users feel our support services (e.g. couriers) performed.
- How user friendly our website is and how often it is used by GPs.
- Provide the opportunity for feedback and recommendations that directly influence our users.

The survey was circulated to GP Portal: GP TeamNet, allowing participation by GPs throughout the Newcastle Upon Tyne Trust.

In total, **18** completed responses were received. Due to the low response rate this year, we decided to include a number of incomplete responses (of which there were 46) providing that they contained answers to any question set beyond their job roles. This increased the number of responses to 64, however after deletions for reasons previously stipulated, **57** responses remained.

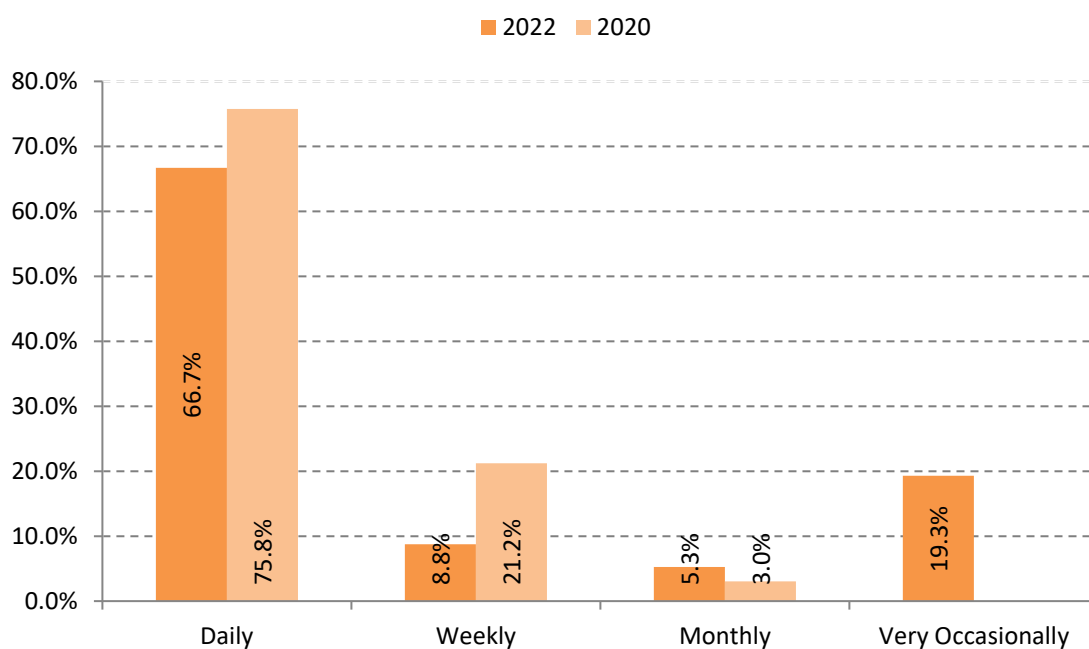
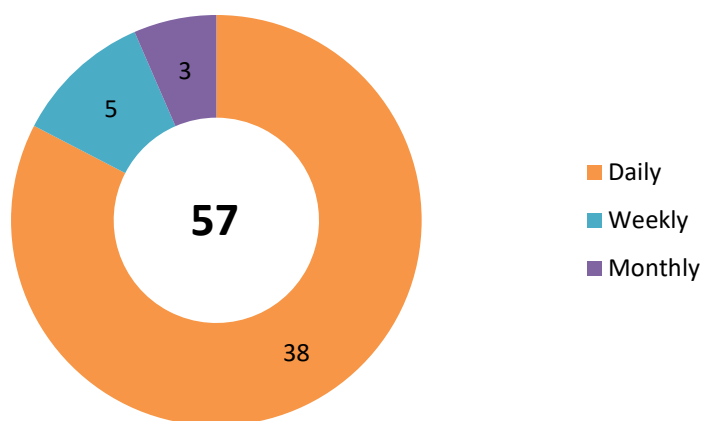
Of the **57** responses to our survey, all chose to provide their job titles. The breakdown is as follows:



Question 1

“How often do you use an Integrated Laboratory Medicine Service (e.g. Blood Sciences, Cellular Pathology, Microbiology and Virology Services)?”

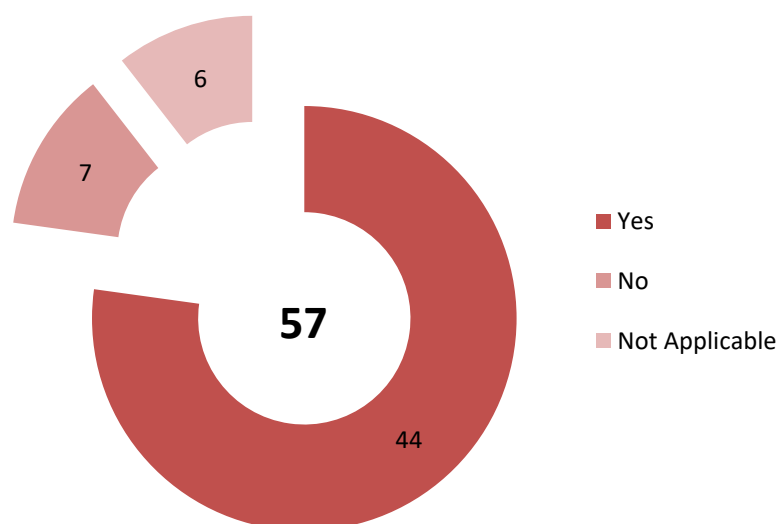
This question was designed to assess the frequency of our customers use and identify the percentage of regular users.



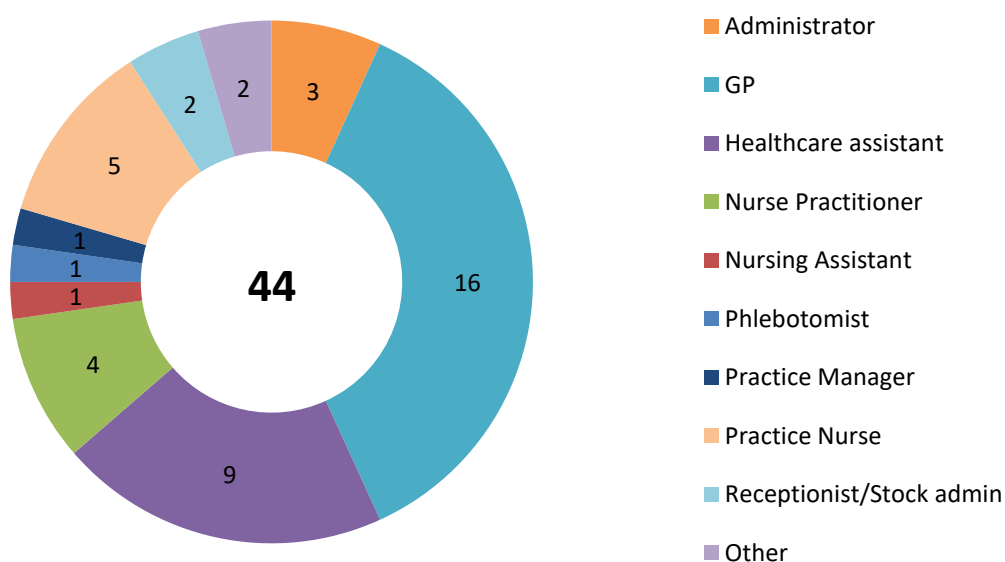
Question 2

“Do you use the Blood Science Service?”

This question was designed to assess how many of the **57** people who took the survey use the Blood Science service.



Of the **44** people who said they used the Blood Sciences service **everyone** provided us with their job title detailed as follows:



Question 3

“How would you rate the following aspects of the Blood Sciences service?”

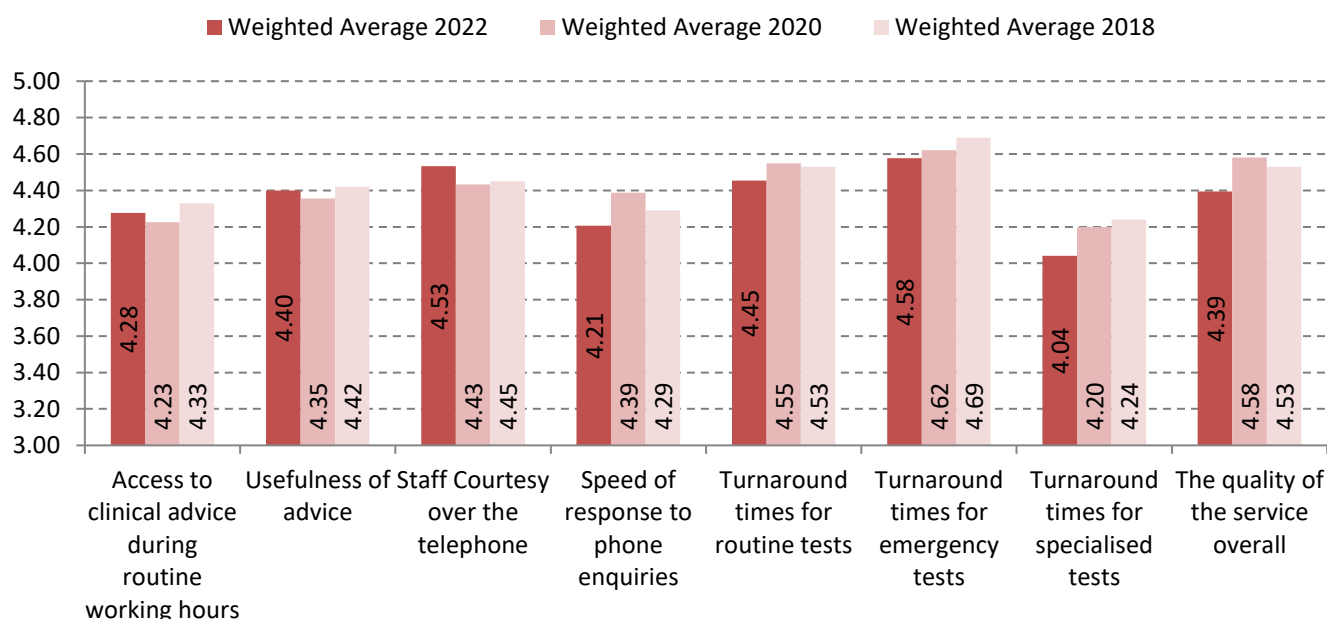
This question asked the user to rank eight services provided by Blood Science into one of six weighted categories:

- Not Applicable 0
- Poor 1
- Below Average 2
- Average 3
- Good 4
- Excellent 5

The services they were asked to rank were:

- Access to clinical advice during routine working hours
- Usefulness of advice
- Staff Courtesy over the telephone
- Speed of response to phone enquiries
- Turnaround times for routine tests
- Turnaround times for emergency tests
- Turnaround times for specialised tests
- The quality of the service overall

Of the **44** users who said they used the Blood Sciences service, **37** people completed this question.

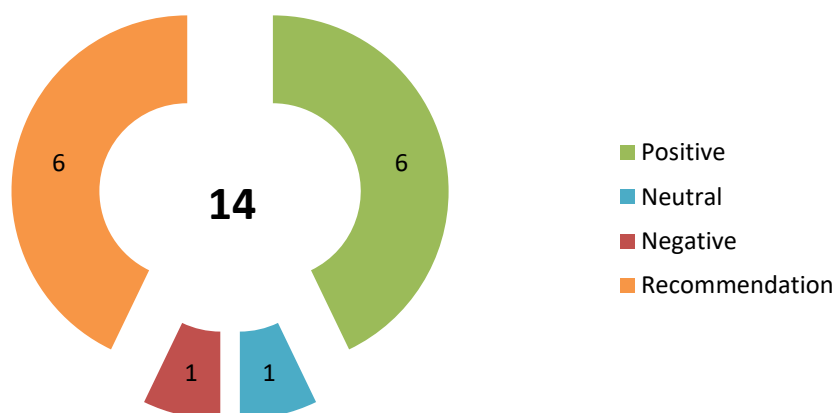


Question 3 cont.

“Please make any comments related to the Blood Sciences Service and any improvements or developments you would like to see made”

This question provided the opportunity to make any comments related to the Blood Sciences service and suggest any improvements or developments. **14** comments were left by our community users, and were broken down into the following categories:

- Positive
- Neutral
- Recommendation
- Negative



The following 14 comments were received:

Positive

- *“Hospital teams seem to think we can request HFE (haemochromatosis) I've had to do this a few times, would be useful to add to ICE. Otherwise I think your service is really good, especially given how stretched everyone is just now. Thanks”*
- *“Very good service, results come through quickly. The email option for adding on tests is great and if not possible always get a prompt reply.”*
- *“Very happy with the service.”*
- *“Very good service, sometimes we seem to be getting duplicates/two identical set of results for patients, ICE issue?”*
- *“Always helpful and knowledgeable”*
- *“I have used the blood sciences service to request add on blood test requests. I have had to ring them to check details of tests etc. They are always excellent, courteous, and go above and beyond to help.”*

Neutral

"I cannot think of any improvements."

Recommendation

- *"Similar system to advice and guidance would be useful."*
- *"Easier access."*
- *"If someone promises to call back they should as few times have been promised and no return phone call."*
- *"Would be nice to be able to order an MSU and a post treatment check MSU at same time."*
- *"Confirmation of emails that request further tests would be helpful but I understand how many emails they must get."*
- *"It would be helpful to have the liver screening bloods in a pre-set."*

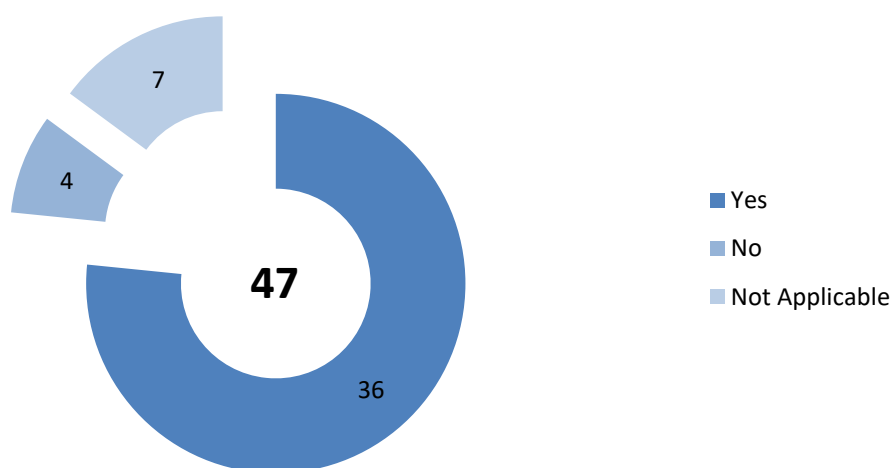
Negative

- *"Response to telephone enquiries could be better. Sometimes kept online for a while or transferred to different disciplines."*

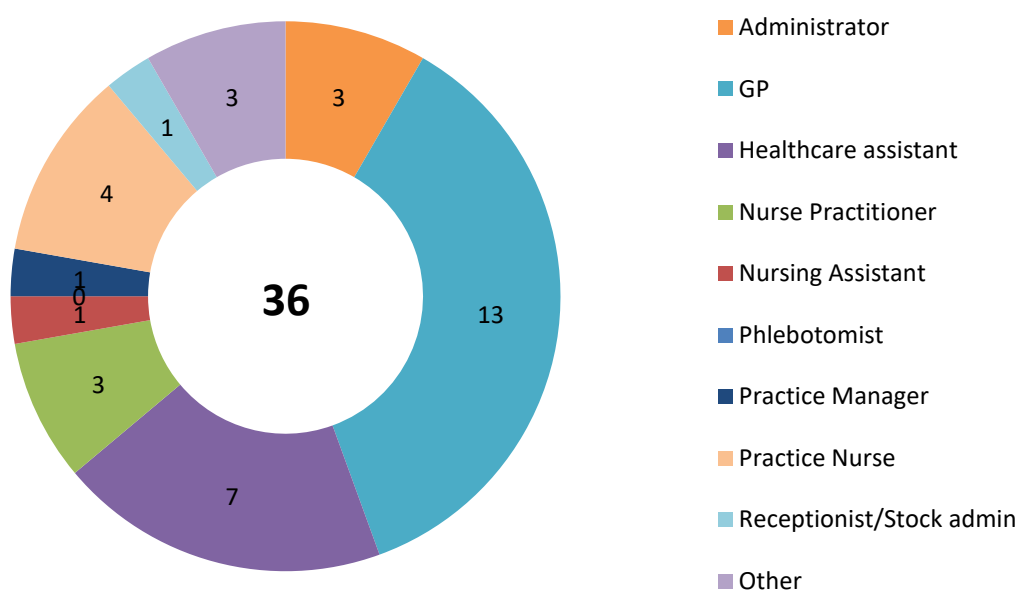
Question 4

“Do you use the Microbiology and Virology service?”

This question was designed to assess how many of the **57** people who took the survey use the Microbiology and Virology service.



Of the **36** people who said they used the Microbiology and Virology service they **all** provided us with their job title detailed as follows:



Question 5

“How would you rate the following aspects of the Microbiology and Virology service?”

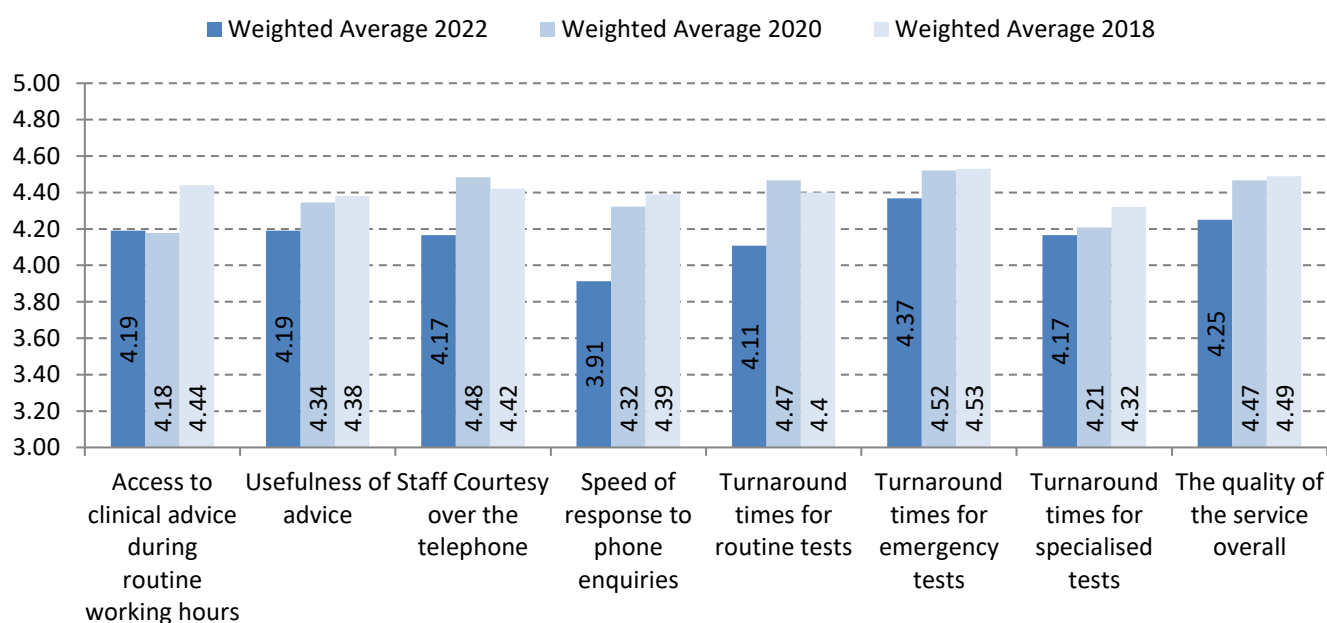
This question asked the user to rank eight services provided by Microbiology and Virology department into one of six weighted categories:

- Not Applicable 0
- Poor 1
- Below Average 2
- Average 3
- Good 4
- Excellent 5

The services they were asked to rank were:

- Access to clinical advice during routine working hours
- Usefulness of advice
- Staff Courtesy over the telephone
- Speed of response to phone enquiries
- Turnaround times for routine tests
- Turnaround times for emergency tests
- Turnaround times for specialised tests
- The quality of the service overall

Of the **36** users who said they used the Microbiology and Virology service, **33** completed this question.

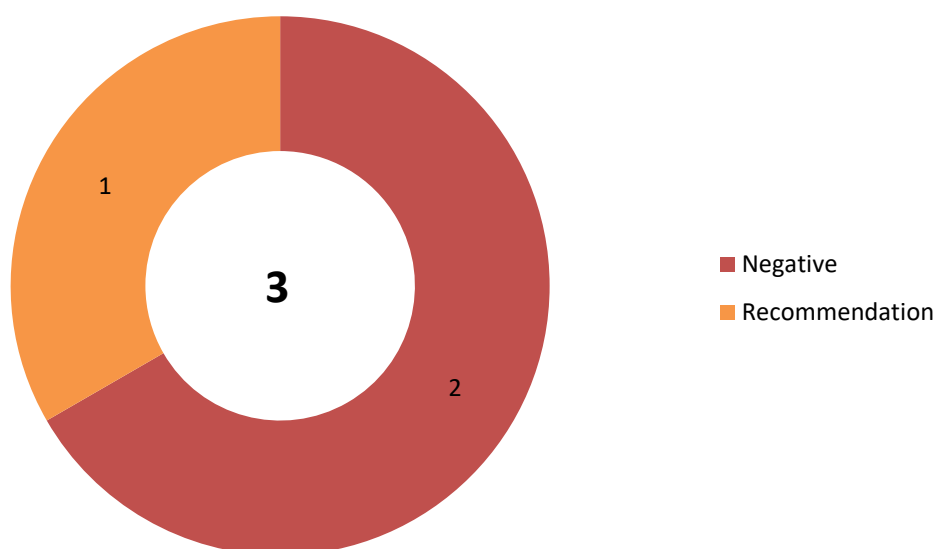


Question 5 cont.

“Please make any comments related to the Microbiology and Virology Service and any improvements or developments you would like to see made”

This question provided the opportunity to make any comments related to the Microbiology and Virology service and suggest any improvements or developments. **3** comments were left by our community users, and were broken down into the following categories:

- Positive
- Neutral
- Recommendation
- Negative



Recommendation

- *“Would be nice to be able to order an MSU and a post treatment check MSU at same time.”*

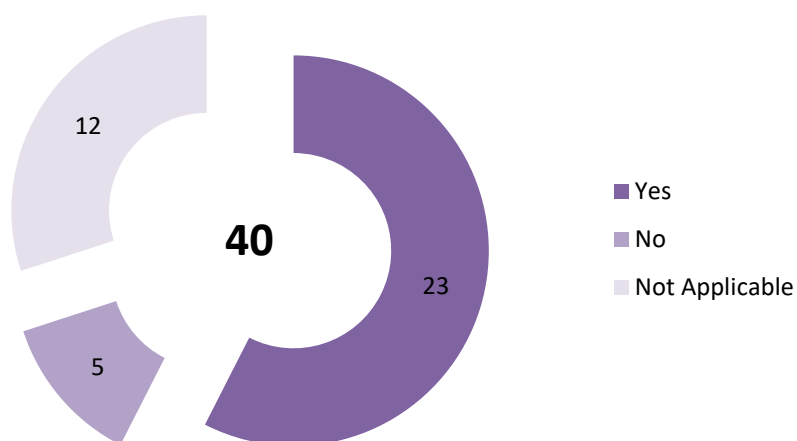
Negative

- *“It’s confusing when I phone for micro advice sometimes- I can’t remember how they answer it but I’m looking for clinical advice and I’m always uncertain I’m speaking to the right person (are these triaged?).”*
- *“Sometimes find routine urine results take a while to return and not all sensitivities given/ limited number of options necessitating call for advice.”*

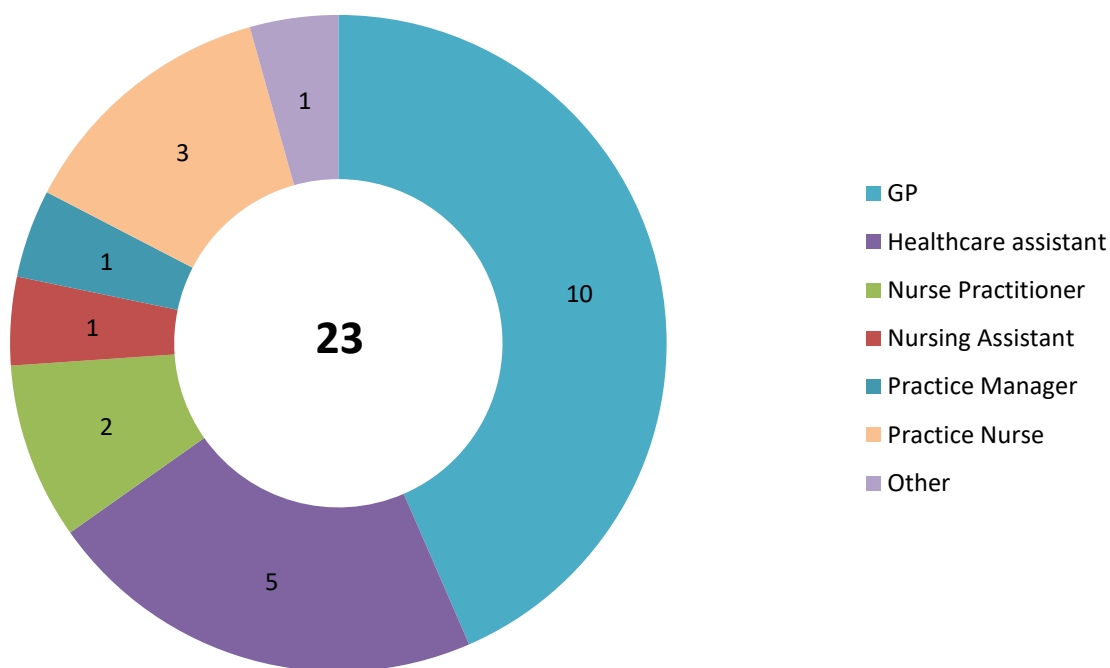
Question 6

“Do you send tissue (biopsy) samples to Cellular Pathology?”

This question was designed to assess how many of the **57** people who took the survey use the Cellular Pathology service.



Of the **23** people who said they used the Cellular Pathology service **everyone** provided us with their job title detailed as follows:



Question 7

“How would you rate the following aspects of the Cellular Pathology service?”

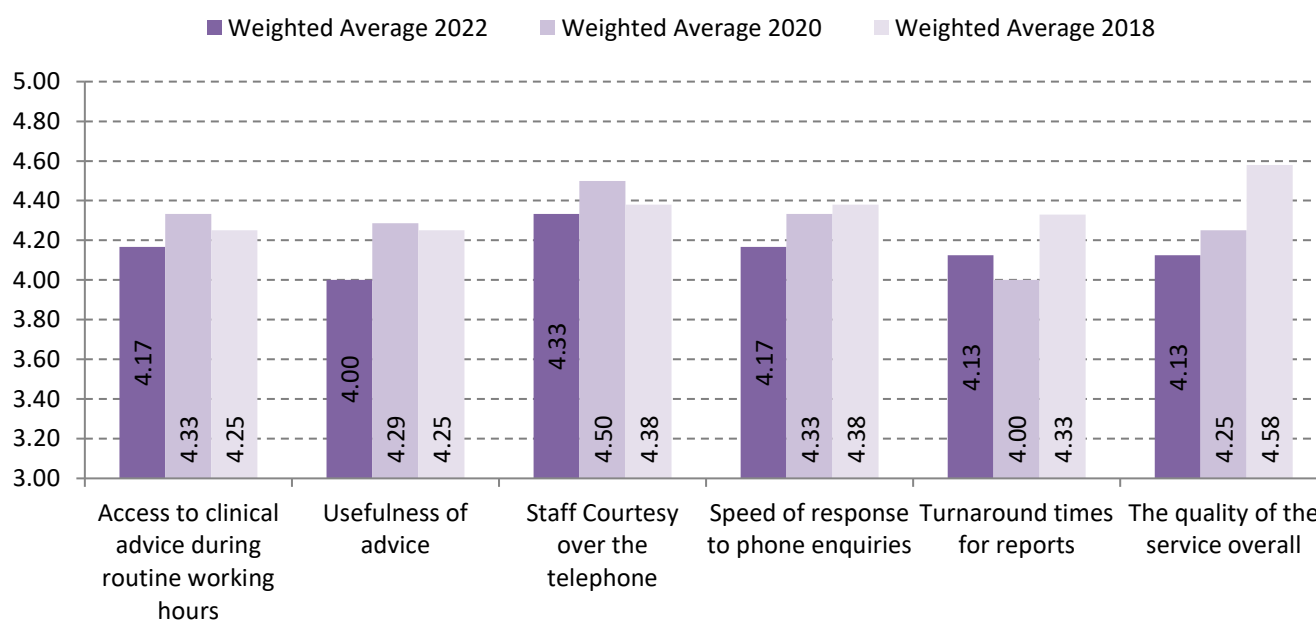
This question asked the user to rank six services provided by Cellular Pathology service into one of six weighted categories:

- Not Applicable 0
- Poor 1
- Below Average 2
- Average 3
- Good 4
- Excellent 5

The services they were asked to rank were:

- Access to clinical advice during routine working hours
- Usefulness of advice
- Staff Courtesy over the telephone
- Speed of response to phone enquiries
- Turnaround times for reports
- The quality of the service overall

Of the **23** users who said they used the Cellular Pathology service, **22** completed this question.



Question 7 cont.

“Please make any comments related to the Cellular Pathology service and any improvements or developments you would like to see made”

This question provided the opportunity to make any comments related to the Cellular Pathology service and suggest any improvements or developments. 1 comment was left by our community users, and were broken down into the following categories:

- Positive
- Neutral
- Recommendation
- Negative



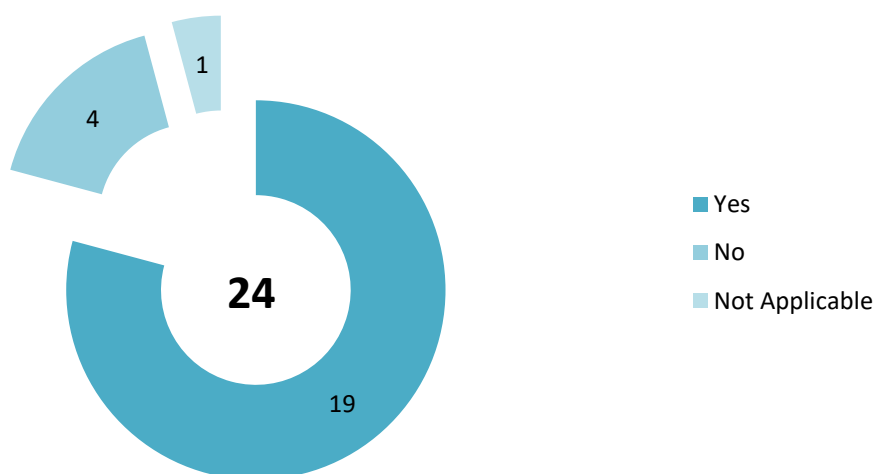
Positive

- *“I have not sought advice over phone, but results e.g. of minor surgery specimens received in timely manner generally.”*

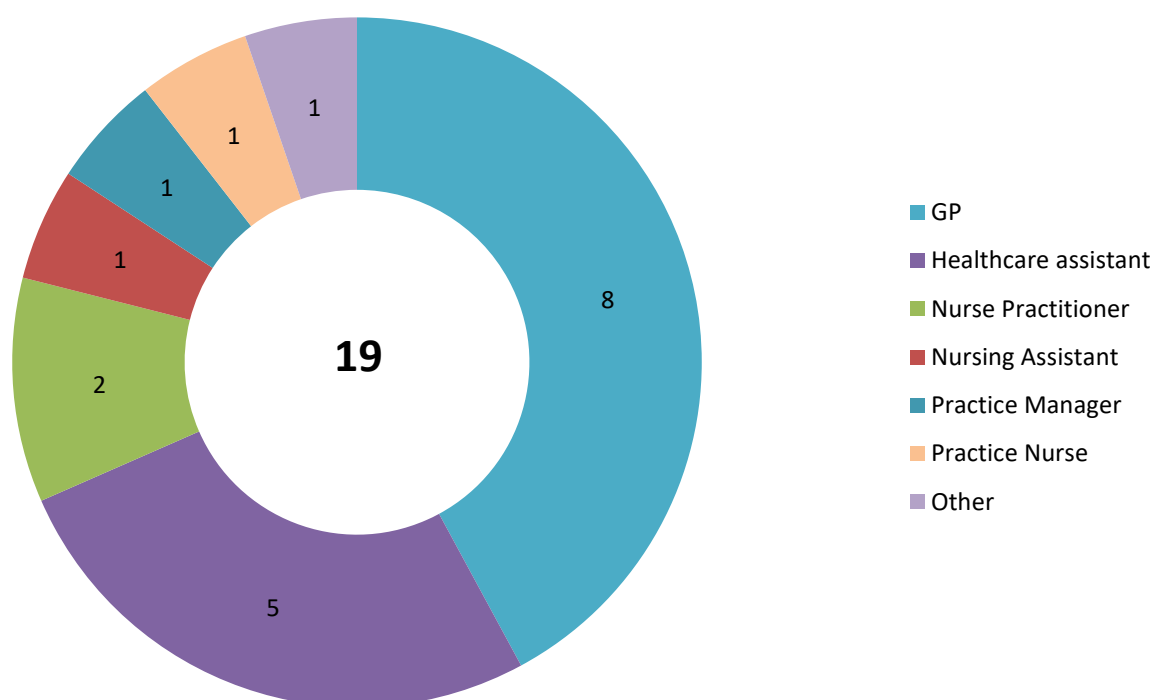
Question 8

“Do you use the Cytology service?”

This question was designed to assess how many of the **57** people who took the survey use the Cytology service.



Of the **19** people who said they used the Cytology service **everyone** provided us with their job title detailed as follows:



Question 9

“How would you rate the following aspects of the Cytology service?”

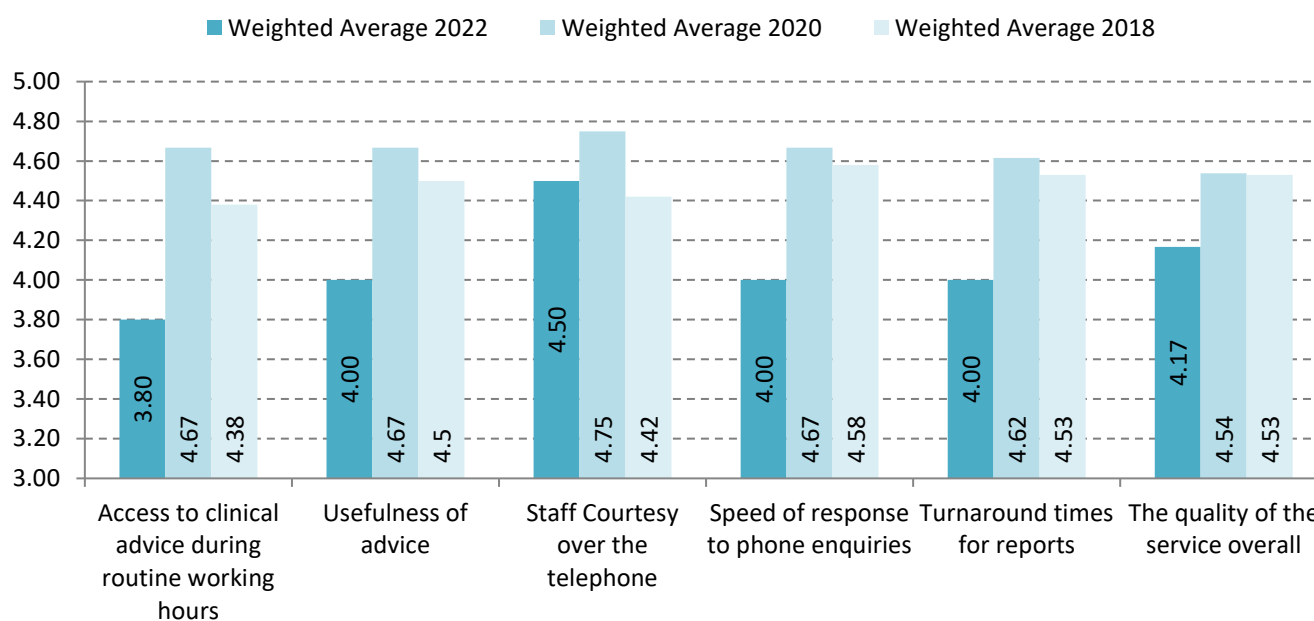
This question asked the user to rank six services provided by Cytology service into one of six weighted categories:

- Not Applicable 0
- Poor 1
- Below Average 2
- Average 3
- Good 4
- Excellent 5

The services they were asked to rank were:

- Access to clinical advice during routine working hours
- Usefulness of advice
- Staff Courtesy over the telephone
- Speed of response to phone enquiries
- Turnaround times for reports
- The quality of the service overall

Of the **19** users who said they used the Cytology service, **18** completed this question.



Question 9 cont.

“Please make any comments related to the Cytology service and any improvements or developments you would like to see made”

No comments were left in relation to the Cytology service in of this survey.

Question 10

“How would you rate the following aspects of the Laboratory Electronic Ordering Service?”

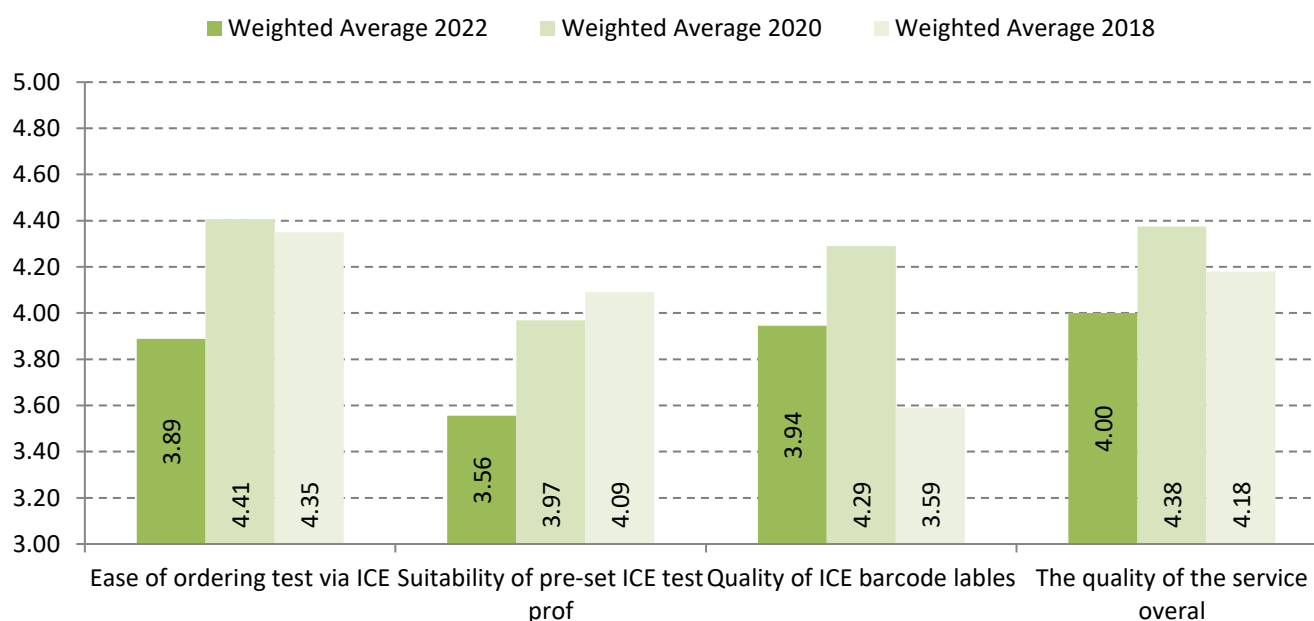
This question asked the user to rank four services provided by the Laboratory Electronic Ordering System, ICE, into one of six weighted categories:

- Not Applicable 0
- Poor 1
- Below Average 2
- Average 3
- Good 4
- Excellent 5

The services they were asked to rank were:

- Ease of ordering tests via ICE
- Suitability of pre-set ICE test profiles
- Quality of ICE user training
- The quality of the service overall

Of the **57** users who took this survey, **20** people answered this question.

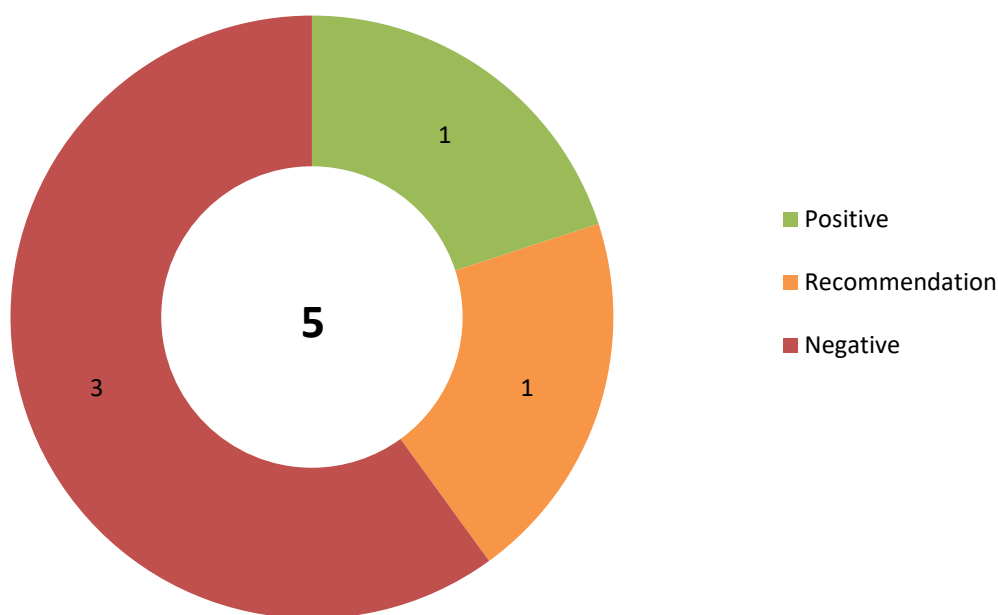


Question 10 cont.

“Please make any comments related to the Laboratory Electronic Ordering service and any improvements or developments you would like to see made.”

This question provided the opportunity to make any comments related to the Electronic Ordering Service and suggest any improvements or developments. 5 comments were left by our community users, and were broken down into the following categories:

- Positive
- Neutral
- Recommendation
- Negative



Positive

- *“Easier to find test.”*

Recommendation

- *“Would like some input into some of the tick boxes, e.g. changing the HbA1C list”*

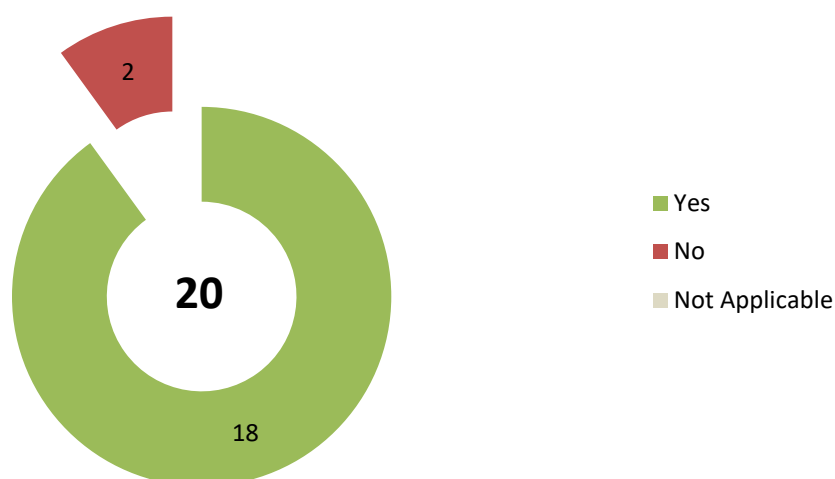
Negative

- *“There’s a lot of admin, slow IT wasted time lots of boxes to tick.”*
- *“ICE label printers everywhere.”*
- *“It’s very slow clicking between tests.”*

Question 11

“Are two collections/deliveries per day suitable to your needs?”

This question aimed to ascertain if our users are happy with the courier service they are currently receiving at their GP surgery. Of the **57** people who took the survey, **20** chose to answer this question.

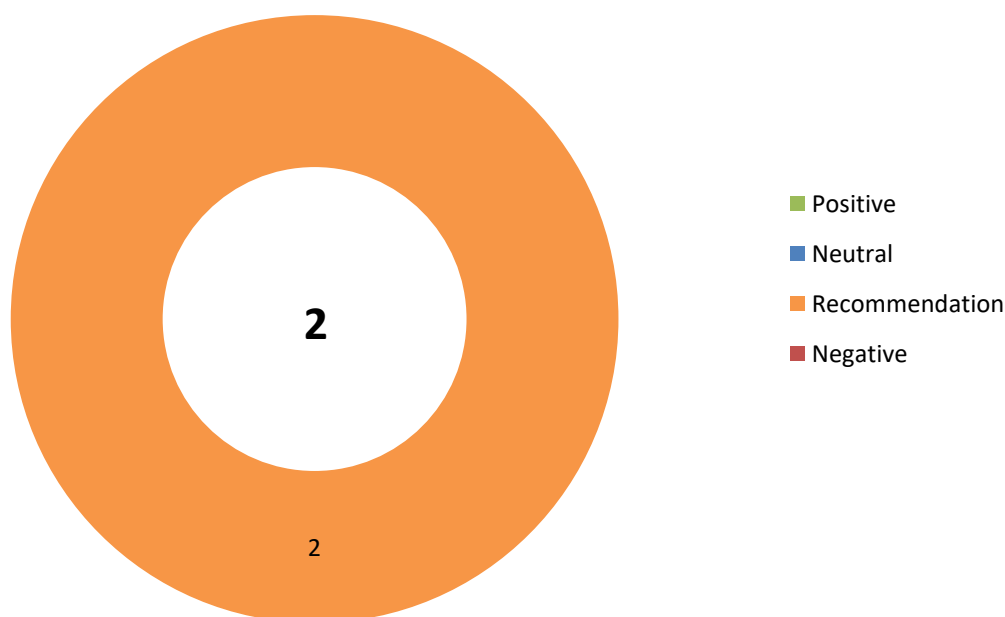


Question 11 cont.

“If the answer to Question 11 was 'No', please advise us how many collections/deliveries you feel would be required, and why.”

This question provided the opportunity to make any comments related to the Electronic Ordering Service and suggest any improvements or developments. **2** comments were left by our community users, and were broken down into the following categories:

- Positive
- Neutral
- Recommendation
- Negative



Recommendation

- *“Could do with the last one at a later time as we work until 6 or 8pm.”*
- *“Would be helpful if we had a later collection.”*

Question 12

“How would you rate your satisfaction with collection and delivery services?”

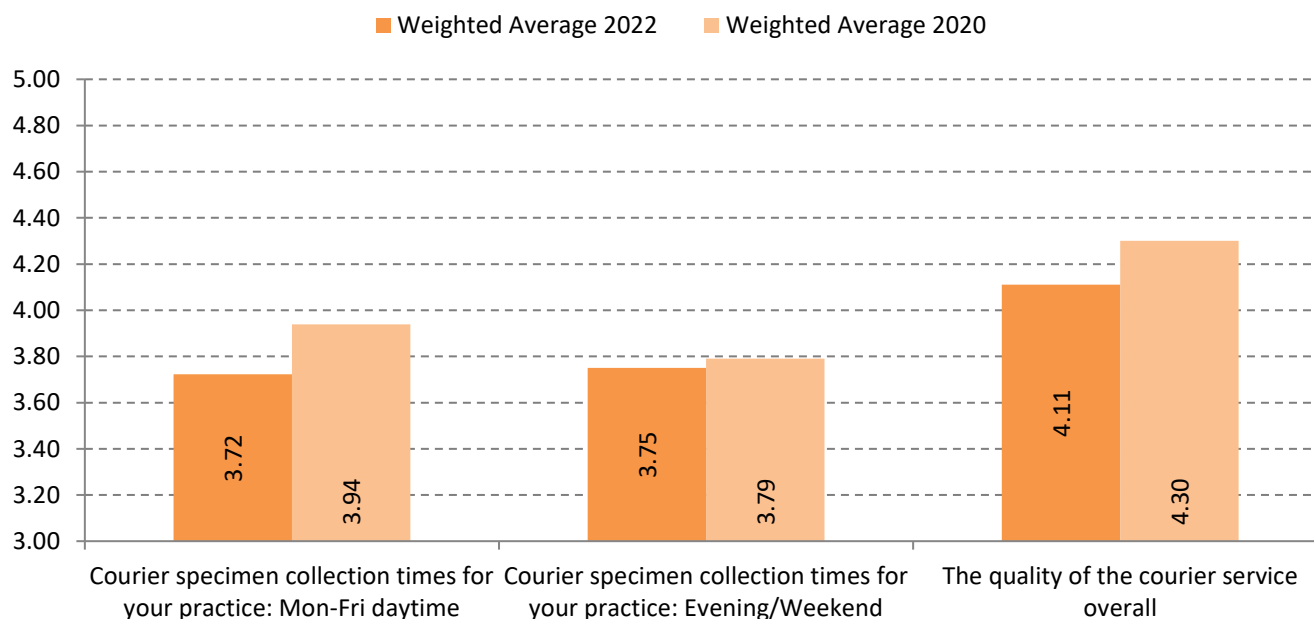
This question is aimed at understanding the user’s opinion on their evening and weekend courier times and general service quality. They were asked the user to rank their evening and weekend courier service into one of six weighted categories:

- Not Applicable 0
- Poor 1
- Below Average 2
- Average 3
- Good 4
- Excellent 5

The services they were asked to rank were:

- Courier specimen collection times for your practice: Mon-Fri daytime
- Courier specimen collection times for your practice: Evening/Weekend
- The quality of the courier service overall

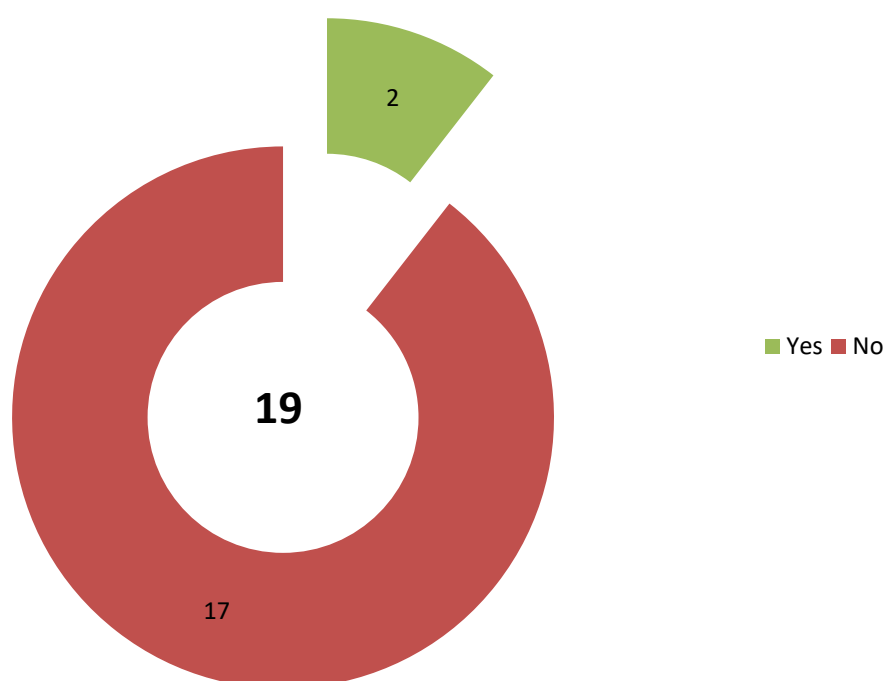
Of the **57** users to complete this survey, **18** people chose to answer.



Question 13

“Would your Practice Manager like to discuss any aspects of our courier transport with the Trust?”

This question was asked in order to identify a potential increase in demand for collection services or as an area for service improvement. Of the **57** survey participants, **19** chose to answer.

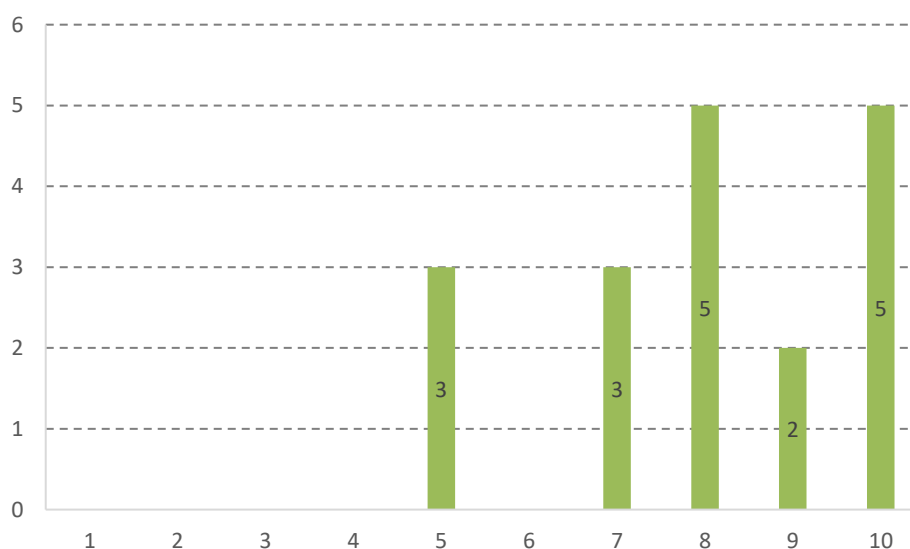


The details of the **two** users expressing an interest in contacting them to discuss aspects of the courier service further will be passed on to the Transport Services team who will be able to liaise with the surgeries to discuss their service provision.

Question 14

“On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 not important and 10 extremely important) how important do you feel it is to be transporting samples in electrified / carbon neutral.”

This question is aimed at understanding the user’s opinion on a greener collection service on a scale of 1 to 10. Of the **57** survey participants, **18** chose to answer.

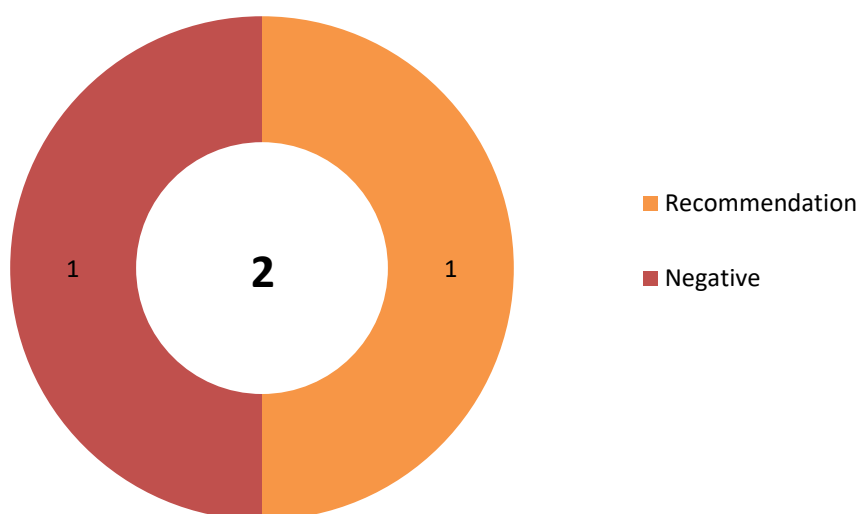


Question 14 cont.

“Please make any comments related to the courier transport service and any improvements or developments you would like to see made.”

This question provided the opportunity to make any comments related to the collection and delivery service and suggest any improvements or developments. **2** comments were left by our community users, and were broken down into the following categories:

- Positive
- Neutral
- Recommendation
- Negative



Recommendation

- *“[Regarding] green vehicles, all for replacing vehicles that need replacing with green vehicles but a lot of carbon tied up in making new cars.”*

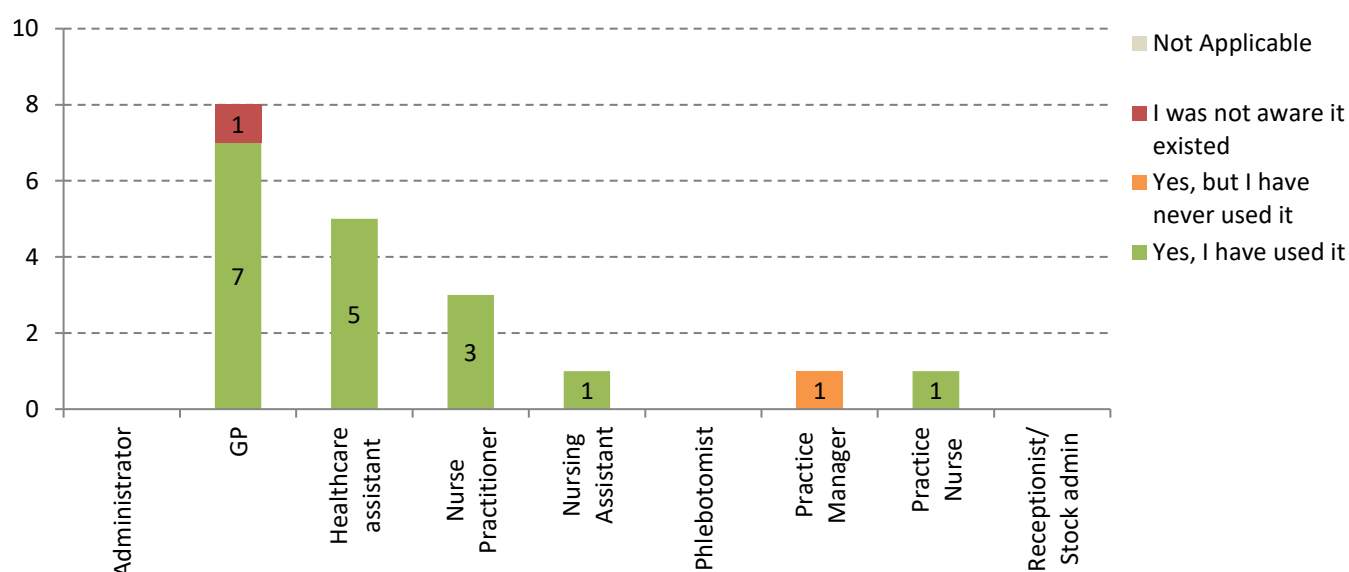
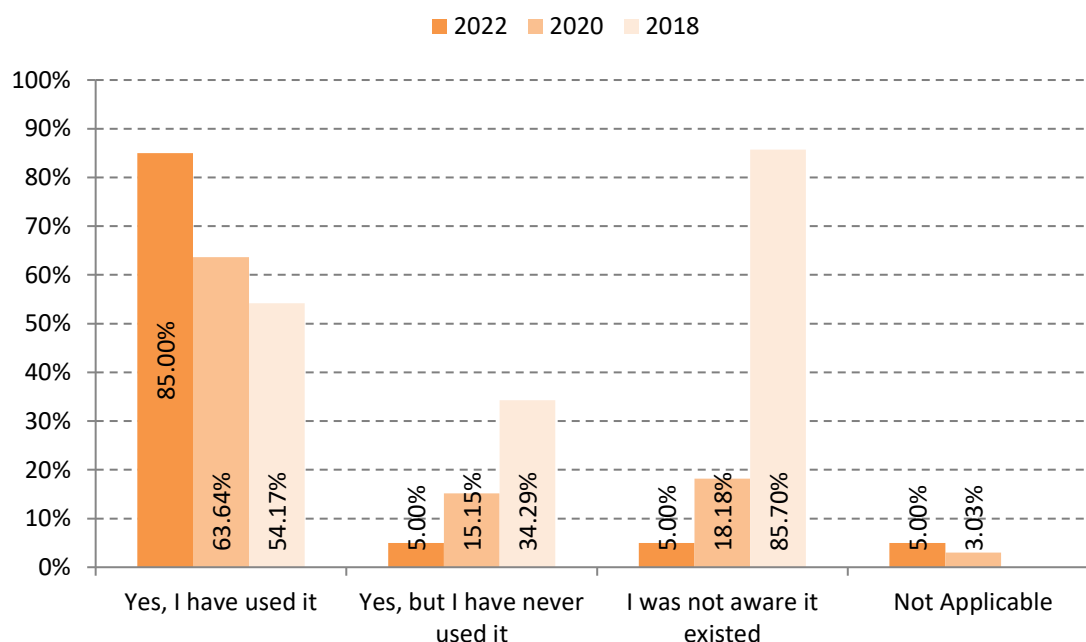
Negative

- *“It is early for last collection 3.30-45.”*

Question 15

“Are you aware of the Newcastle Laboratories website (www.newcastlelaboratories.com)?”

This question was designed to assess how many of the **57** people who took the survey use or are aware of the Newcastle Laboratories website. **20** users chose to answer this question.



Question 16

*“How would you rate the following aspects of the new Laboratory Medicine website?
 (www.newcastlelaboratories.com)”*

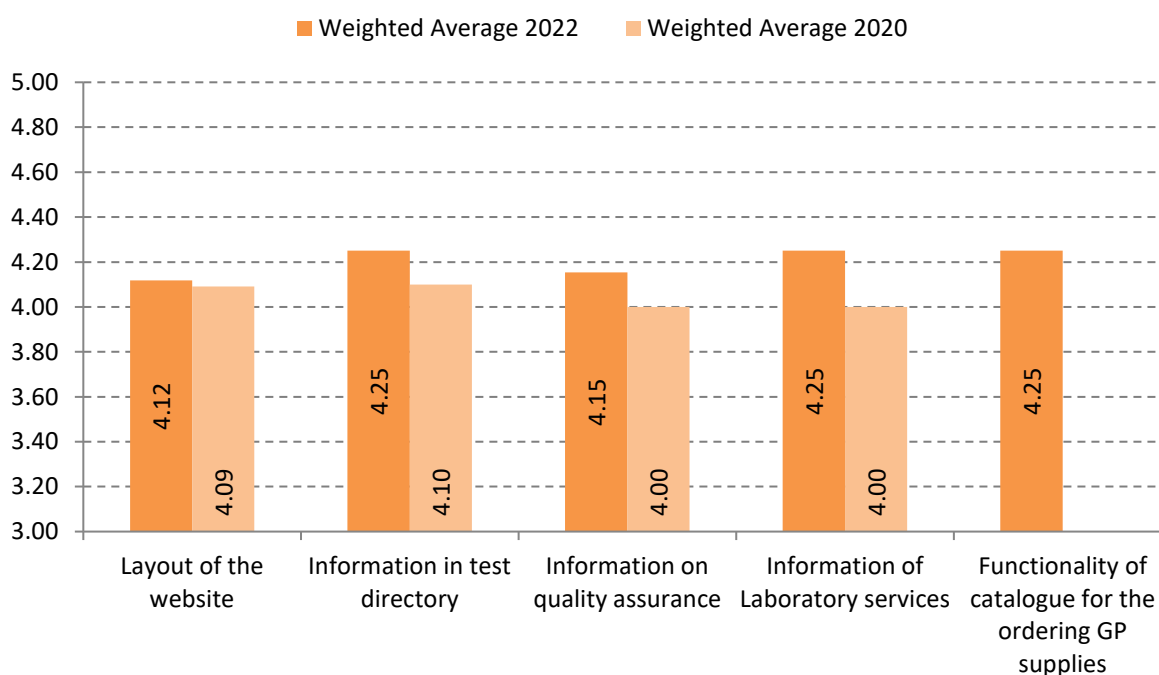
This question asked the user to rank four services provided by the Laboratory Medicine website into one of six weighted categories:

- Not Applicable 0
- Poor 1
- Below Average 2
- Average 3
- Good 4
- Excellent 5

The services provided by the Laboratory Medicine website which users were asked to rank were as follows:

- Layout of the website
- Information in test directory
- Information on quality assurance
- Information of Laboratory services

Of the **57** users who undertook this survey, **19** completed this question.

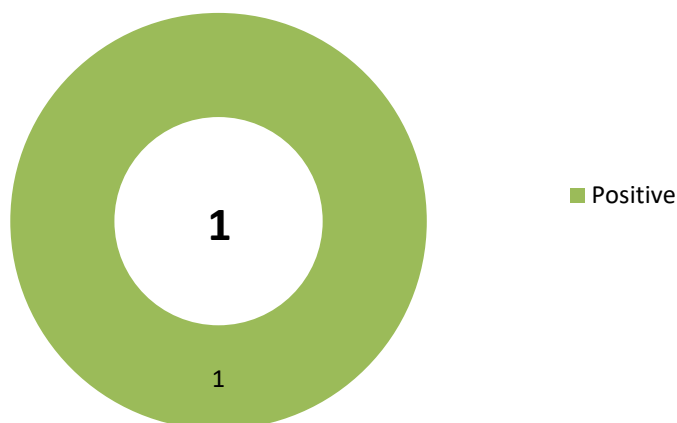


Question 16 cont.

"Please make any comments relating to the Laboratory Medicine website (www.newcastlelaboratories.com)"

This question provided the opportunity to make any comments related to the Laboratory Medicine website and suggest any improvements or developments. **1** comment was left by our community users, and were broken down into the following categories:

- Positive
- Neutral
- Recommendation
- Negative



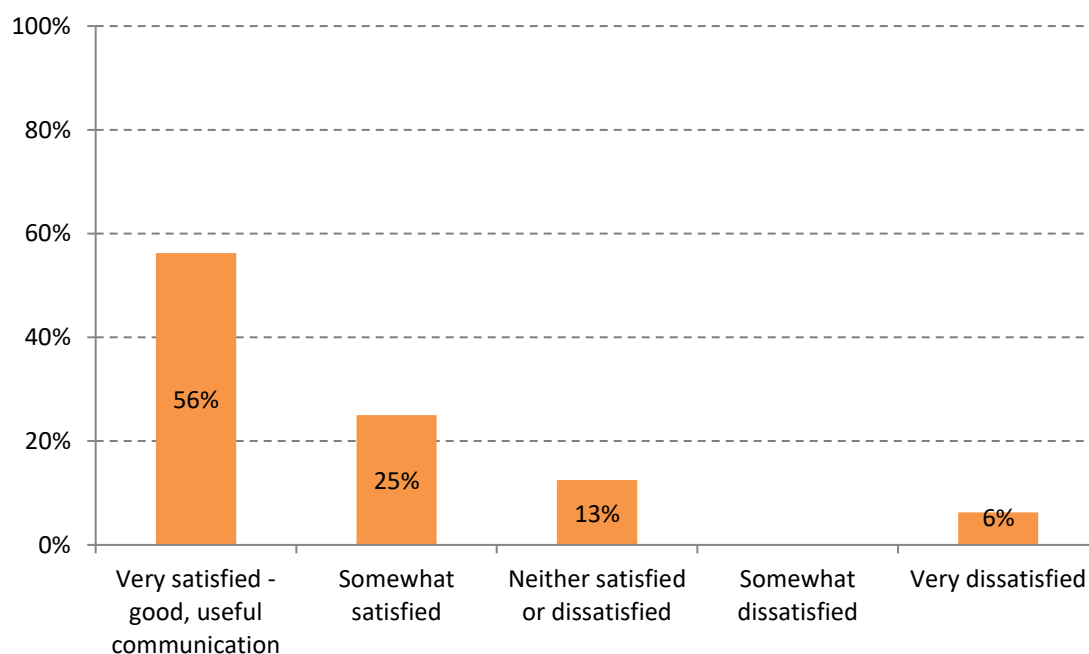
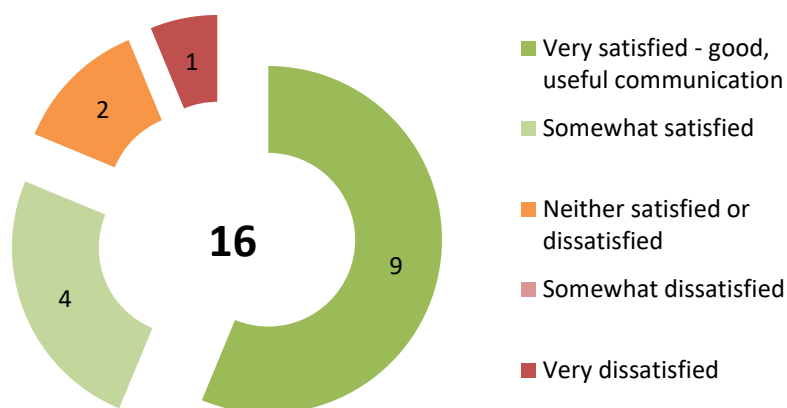
Positive

- *"I really like it!"*

Question 17

“How satisfied are you with the level and quality of communications issued by the laboratories?”

This question was designed to assess the opinion of the **57** users on the communications issued by Integrated Laboratory Medicine. **16** people chose to answer this question.

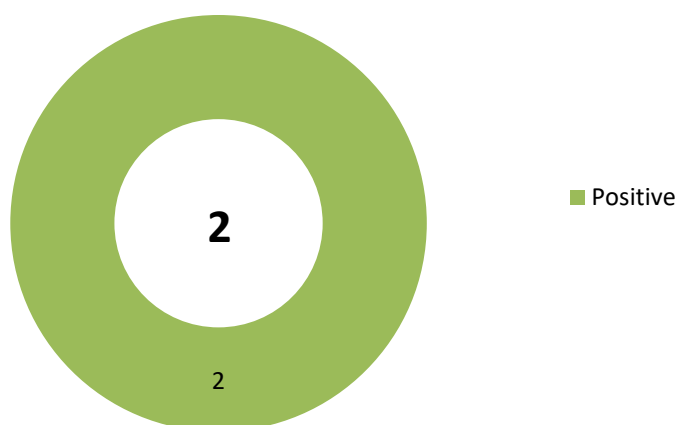


Question 17 cont.

“Please tell us why you've selected the option and, if necessary, provide us with any recommendations.”

This question provided the opportunity to make any comments related to the Laboratory Medicine website and suggest any improvements or developments. **1** comment was left by our community users, and were broken down into the following categories:

- Positive
- Neutral
- Recommendation
- Negative



Positive

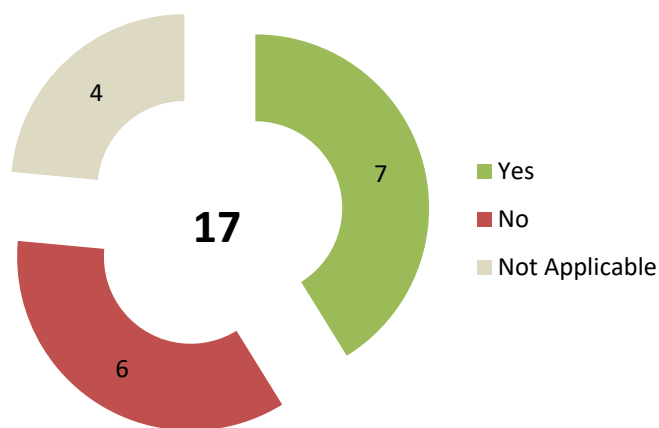
- *Very satisfied - good, useful communication - “I think that you get it right, enough stuff to keep me informed, not overwhelmed.”*
- *Very satisfied - good, useful communication - “Well informed with regard to tests, problems the lab is encountering with supplies etc.”*

No comments were left by those users who responded as feeling “very dissatisfied”.

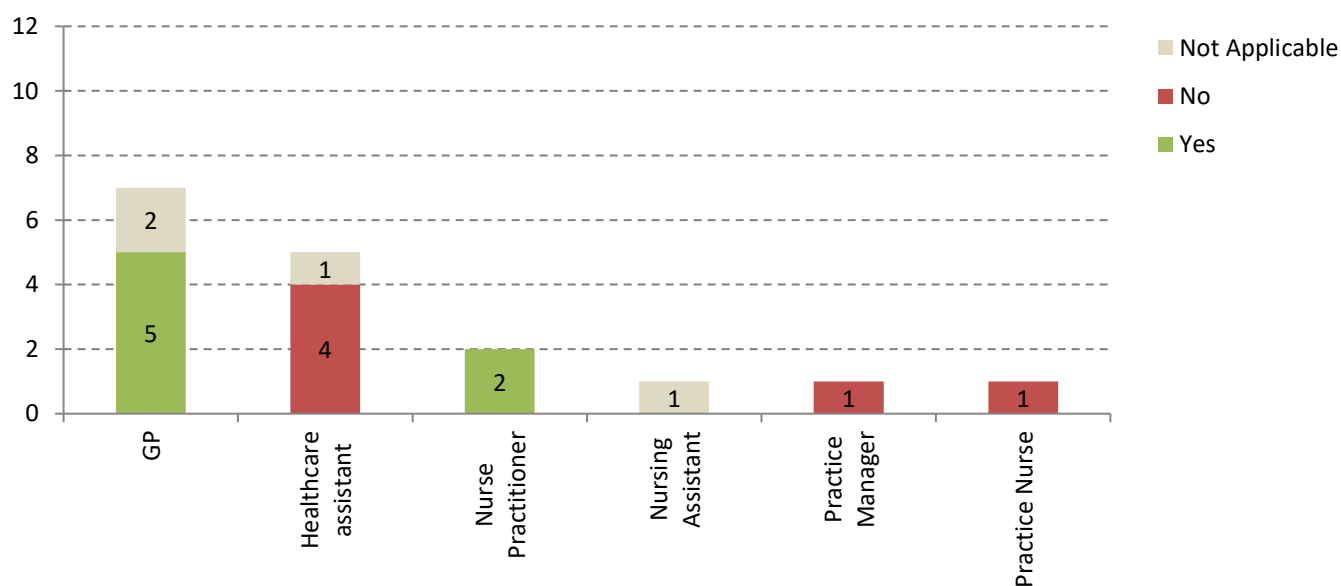
Question 18

“Would you be interested in GP education/engagement sessions with members of the Directorate team?”

This question was designed to assess how many of the **57** people would be interested in participating in education sessions organised by the Integrated Laboratory Medicine Directorate as part of user engagement. **17** people chose to answer this question.



Of the **17** people who answered this question, **7** (41%) answered Yes, **6** (35%) answered No and **4** (24%) believed it was not applicable to them.

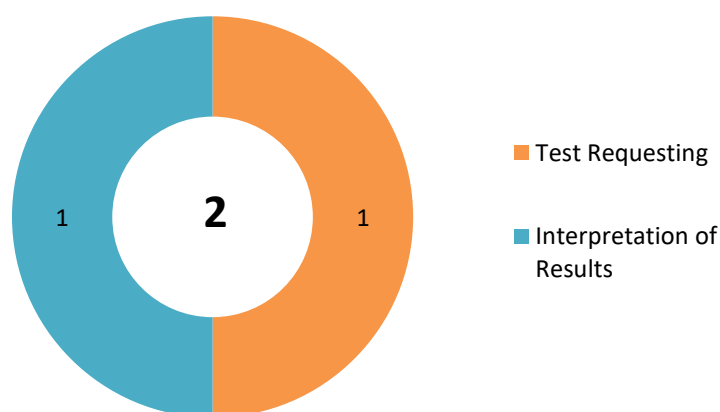


Question 18 cont.

“Are there any topics you would like to see included?”

This question provided an opportunity for those willing to participate in education/user engagement sessions to provide topics relevant to them. Of the **7** users who said they would be willing to be involved, **2** provided comment.

These **2** comments were catagorised into **2** subjects:



Test requesting

- *“Current microbiological sensitivities for the area, guidance on immunology tests.”*

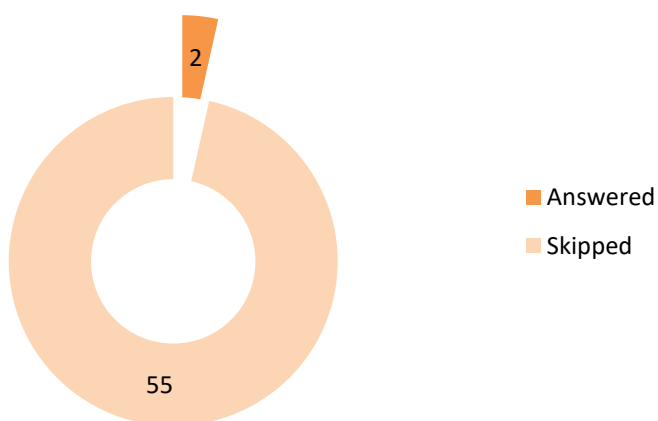
Interpretation of results

- *“Interpreting results, immunology especially.”*

Question 19

“If you wish to receive feedback about any issues raised in this survey, please leave your email address below.”

2 of the 57 users to participate in this survey have left their names, surgery information and email address for further contact and will receive a completed copy of this report.





**Many Thanks to everyone who completed the survey and left comments.
We take your feedback seriously and want to improve the service that we provide to
you.**

Please see the responses to all comments below:

Blood Sciences

“Response to telephone enquiries could be better. Sometimes kept online for a while or transferred to different disciplines.”

We are a large, busy department with multiple sections and need to triage calls to the correct section and this may require callers to be transferred to other areas as appropriate. We aim to do this as efficiently as possible and apologise for any delays where they occur.

“Similar system to advice and guidance would be useful.”

Advice and guidance is available from clinical scientists within the laboratory upon request.

“If someone promises to call back they should as few times have been promised and no return phone call.”

We apologise if, on occasion, we have fallen below our usual high standards. Please provide staff with a direct number or an email address to respond to queries on to enable laboratory staff to respond appropriately.

“Confirmation of emails that request further tests would be helpful, but I understand how many emails they must get”

Due to the volume of add-on requests received in the department it is not possible to respond individually to all add on requests. If confirmation is required a read receipt can be added onto the requesting email.

“It would be helpful to have the liver screening bloods in a pre-set.”

Users can discuss requirements for pre-sets with the duty biochemist and these can be built in the requesting software, if appropriate.

Microbiology and Virology

“Would be nice to be able to order an MSU and a post treatment check MSU at same time.”

We will investigate with the ICE team to see if this is possible.

“It's confusing when I phone for micro advice sometimes- I can't remember how they answer it but I'm looking for clinical advice and I'm always uncertain I'm speaking to the right person (are these triaged?)

Due to the number of calls received at any given time, a triage process is used to ensure callers are transferred to the most appropriate person to support with queries.

“Sometimes find routine urine results take a while to return and not all sensitivities given/ limited number of options necessitating call for advice”

Antimicrobial sensitivities are reported for a significant proportion of isolates, where it is safe to do so. However, this does depend on the particular result, the clinical scenario and individual patient factors. Unrestricted reporting of antimicrobial sensitivities does not support antimicrobial stewardship as it would be likely to promote more widespread and possibly unnecessary prescription of antibiotics. We have an authorisation manual to guide our reporting process. Where clinical details provided with a specimen suggest that antibiotic treatment is indicated, sensitivities would usually be reported (including alternatives if clinicians indicate specific history of drug intolerance or allergy) however, regrettably, clinical details are often missing or inadequate. Advice and support is always available from Medical staff in Microbiology.

Laboratory Electronic Ordering Service

“There's a lot of admin, slow IT wasted time lots of boxes to tick.”

Without additional information we can't really comment. The only admin work we can think of is when GPs need to request new accounts etc. they have to fill in the forms and contact the NuTH IT service desk. This can be time consuming as you have to ring our IT Servicedesk, get issued with an INC number and then you have to send the request form back to Servicedesk mailbox with the INC number in the subject field before the ticket comes to the Development ICE queue for action. Sometimes the wait time for the call to be answered is long which causes the frustration.

“ICE label printers everywhere.”

NECS have been rolling out new label printers for GP practises that did not have any or enough. This is to make it easier to order labels at the point of use.

“It's very slow clicking between tests.”

Some tests have rules behind them which may contain questions which need answering. These are necessary to the order and labs would have asked for these.

“Would like some input into some of the tick boxes, e.g. changing the HbA1C list.”

HbA1c has a rule ‘Condition of patient’ which asks if the patient is being tested for Monitoring Known diabetes or for diagnosis of Diabetes. This rule was added so labs could see why the test was requested.

Any issues from GP practices should be logged with the NuTH IT servicedesk, on (0191) 2821000. However, there is also an ICE admin mailbox for any queries containing patient identifiable data tnu-tr.iceadmin@nhs.net. This mailbox should be used when sending queries containing NHS numbers as the IT service desk will not be able to add patient identifiable data into their requests.

Laboratory Support Services

“Could do with the last one at a later time as we work until 6 or 8pm.”

“Would be helpful if we had a later collection.”

“[Regarding] green vehicles, all for replacing vehicles that need replacing with green vehicles, but a lot of carbon tied up in making new cars.”

“It is early for last collection 3.30-45.”

Any changes to the transport delivery rounds would need to be discussed with the transport team. Please email your enquiries to elaine.young12@nhs.net,

Changes to green electric vehicles will only be considered when the vehicle lease is due for review, or when the vehicle is in need of replacement.