

Neighbourhood Hubs

Conversations with Young People at The Parallel, Bolton



Engagement Alliance



Purpose of the research

To improve understanding of what Young People want from health and care services delivered at the neighbourhood level. The work is part of the wider engagement on the Locality Plan by the Engagement Alliance. It is intended primarily to inform work on Primary Care and Neighbourhood Organisation.

The research explored Young People's views on the services they currently use, both main stream health services, and the specialist Young People's services offered at The Parallel. The cohort is Young People who are currently accessing The Parallel.

In particular the research addressed the following questions :

1. What attributes create a Young People friendly service?
2. What attitudes, characteristics, behaviours, and facilities Young People might want from Neighbourhood or Hub services.

Methodology

Field researchers used a set of 18 semi-structured questions in interviews with those accessing The Parallel.

The researchers were experienced engagement officers from Healthwatch Bolton.

Respondents were asked to give their views about the services offered to Young People both at The Parallel, and more broadly within their local area. Responses were recorded verbatim and analysed according to theme.

Three general areas were covered by the questions:

- Preferred practitioners and preferred locations of services.
- Views and preferences with regards to location, timings, attitudes and environment in which health services are offered to Young People.
- Specific views on the service/environment offered by The Parallel.

We also asked about attitudes to a) waiting times and b) use of technology in a health context – these results are reported separately in snapshot reports.

Key findings

How Young People feel about the services they are offered

- For some there are issues around getting appointments at GPs.
- Some of the young people were unhappy about how they were treated/communicated with at GP practices.
- Young people appreciate the confidentiality, location, and staff attitude they find at The Parallel.
- There are few things that young people would change about The Parallel, except the opening hours

Attributes of a Young People Friendly Service

- Young People feel it is important to have their own space, they feel that they have continuity of contact, and that they are listened to by Parallel staff.
- The location of The Parallel is good; because it is seen as secluded, which in turn is seen to protect Young People's privacy.
- Service times which fit around school/ college were seen as a positive.
- The ability to just turn up is seen as valuable.

What Young People might want from a Neighbourhood Hub

- Access to GPs and mental health workers (alongside sexual health services).
- Continuation of 'youth specific' atmosphere where young people feel understood and cared for.

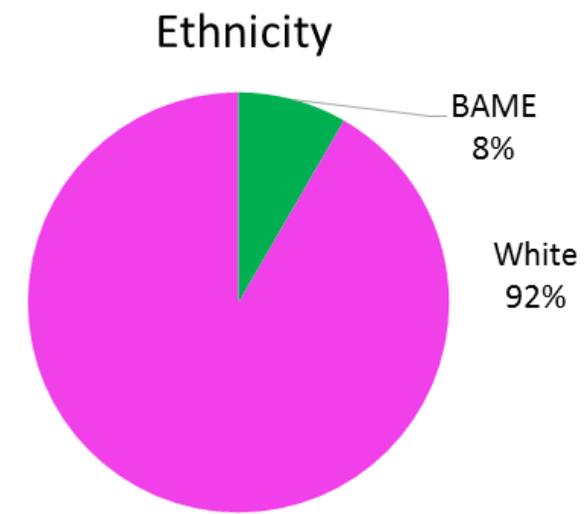
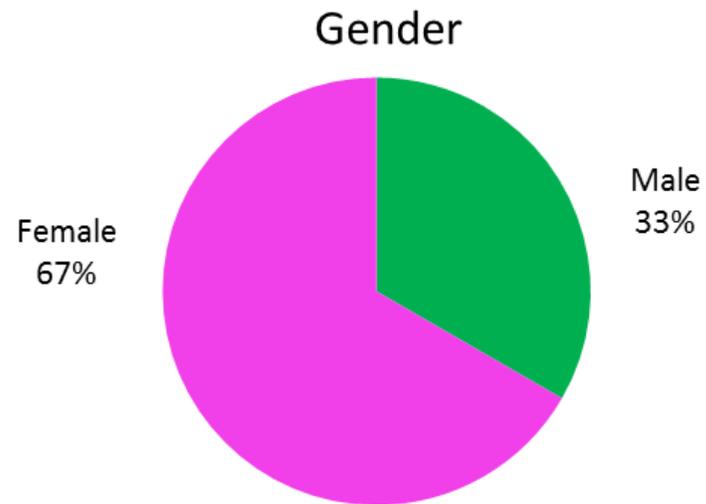
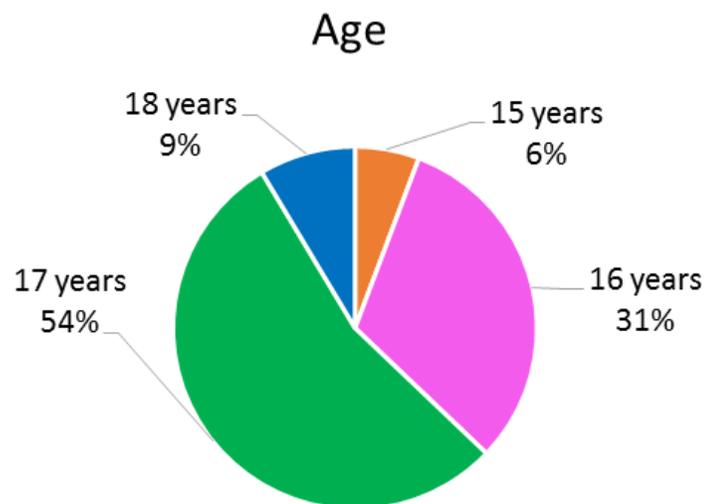
Who we spoke to

A total of 21 Semi structured interviews were gathered from 2 drop in sessions and one appointment session, at The Parallel.

Age – majority of participants were 16/17 (85%).

Gender – a third of respondents were male (33%) and two thirds female (66%).

Ethnicity – most of those taking part identified themselves as White (92%).



Young People's views on specialist vs universal services

The Young People valued The Parallel - which aims to support those that might prefer, or find it easier to engage, with a specialised youth focused service.

Young People were not always aware of other services nearby, or felt there was little for them. In particular they were concerned with confidentiality and access.

Young People's views on The Parallel

The Parallel offers direct access sexual health services for Young People.

The Parallel is a free drop-in service for Young People living in Bolton. Young People can attend from age 11 up to the age of 19.

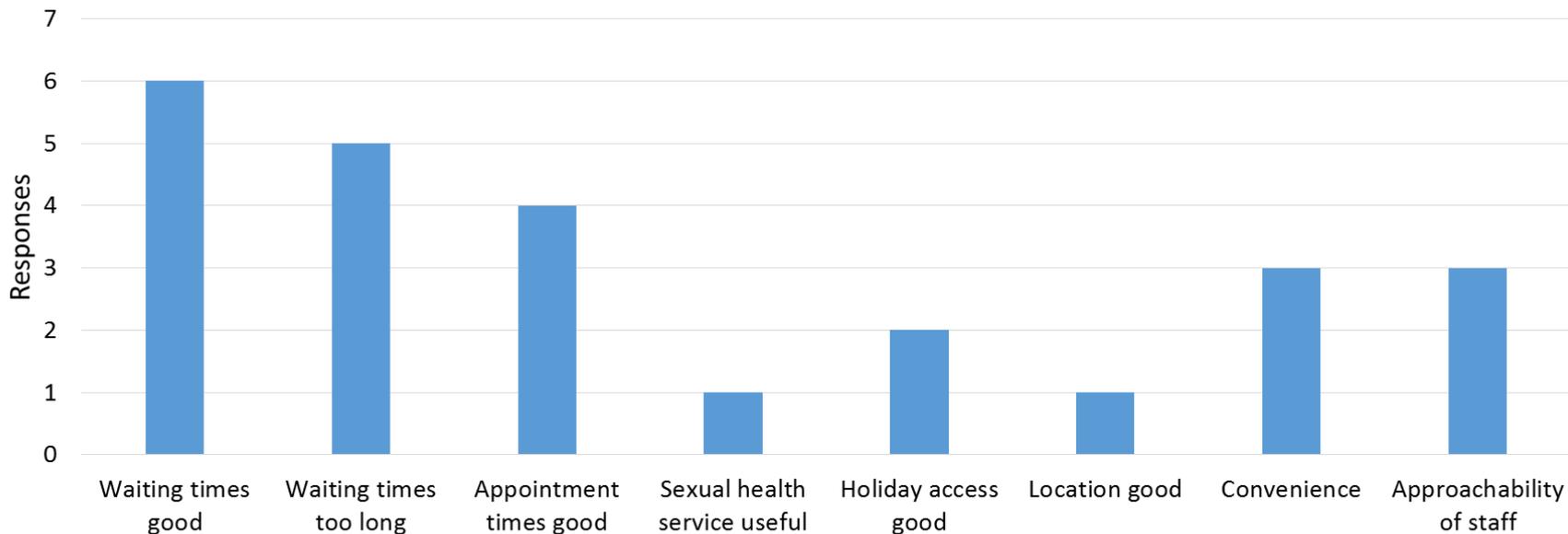
The aim of The Parallel is to offer a safe and confidential service to health concerns or worries.

The service is located in a discreet and convenient location in Bolton town centre.

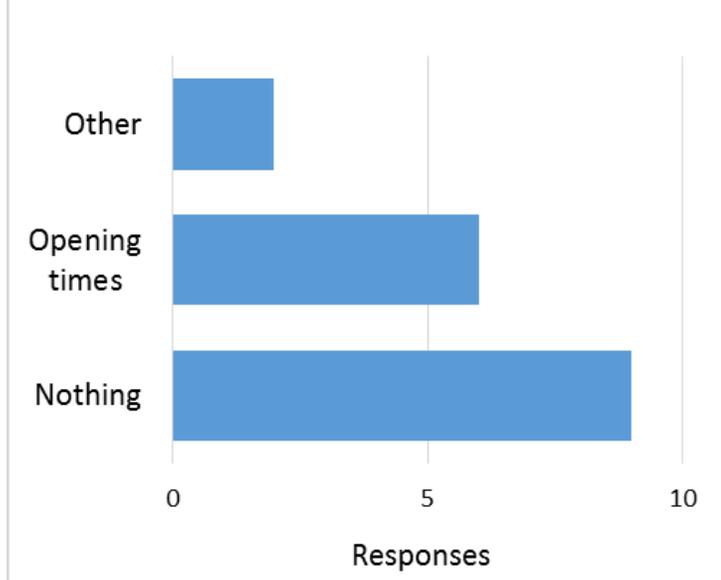
About The Parallel – overall views

- Most respondents said they would not change anything about the Parallel. The approachability of staff, the convenience, and location were all mentioned as positives.
- The drop in appointment system was valued, but some found waiting times too long.
- About a third of respondents said they would like different service opening times to fit around school/college times.

Opinions about The Parallel (n = 25)

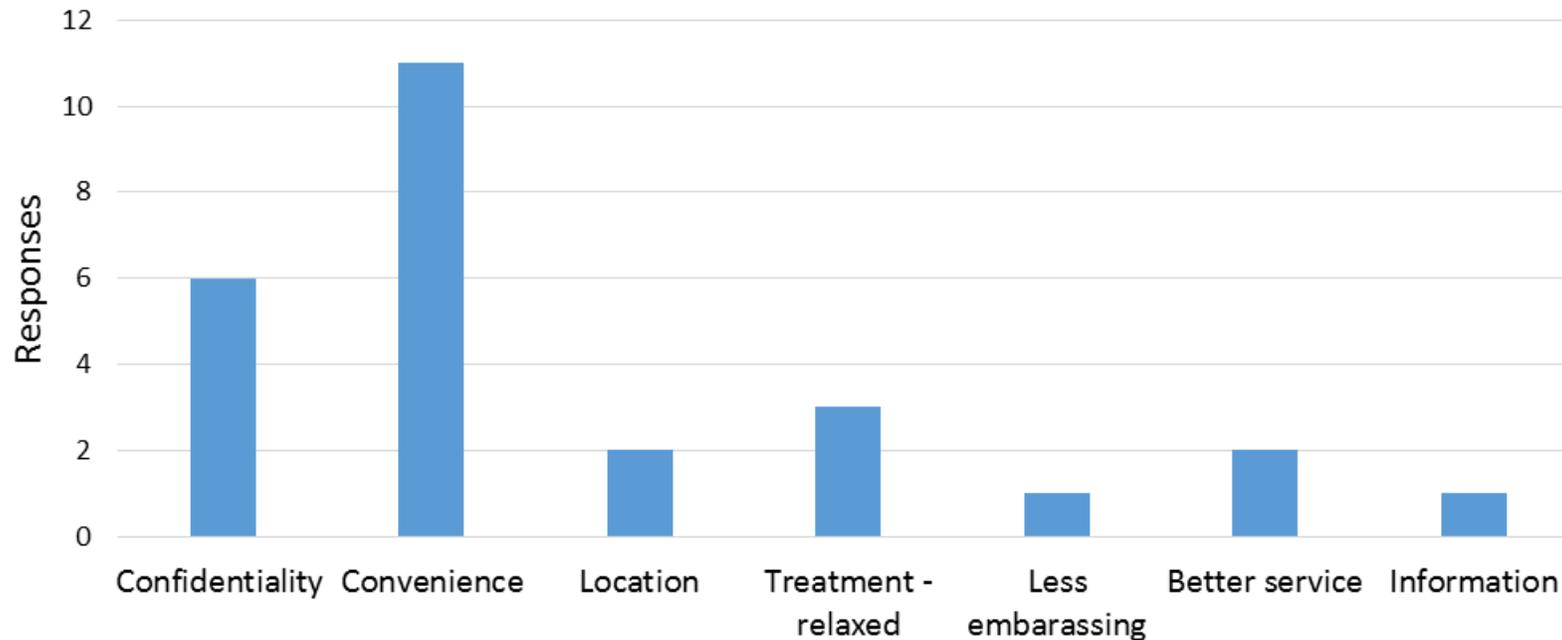


What would you change (n = 17)



What Young People like about The Parallel

Reasons for visiting The Parallel (n = 26)



- Confidentiality and convenience were key reasons why Young People used The Parallel.
- There were mentions of other factors; such as feeling treatment by staff is more relaxed, less embarrassment, and the service being seen as good.

The Parallel focuses on sexual health services which may reflect value placed on confidentiality. The value placed on convenience may reflect a group of Young People who do not engage with other services.

Staff attitudes

- Interaction between staff and Young People at The Parallel seen as good, in particular it is relaxed and suits the Young People's needs.
- The pitching of information and communication style is relevant to Young People.
- Staff are seen as welcoming and friendly.

I feel welcome

'Yes you feel welcome.'

'We always feel welcome and re-assured.'

'I'm confident with the nurses; I don't mind sharing with the nurses.'

'They speak to you even though you might be just waiting.'

'Yes; when I was 14 I came pregnant and the nurse at school sent me here. I was worried about what to say when I first came but its alright now.'

'Easier to tell someone here than your parents.'

'It feels less formal, more relaxed.'

'Yes, the members of staff are lovely and make you feel very welcome.'

'College health services don't do much.'

'They offer more information.'

'The members of staff are lovely and don't look down on you.'

'They talk on your level and use wording you understand unlike doctors.'

Confidentiality and privacy

My privacy is respected

'If you go to see your GP or Nurse you kind of need an excuse with your parents whereas here you can say you're just going into town.'

'It's the not needing an appointment.'

'Because you can drop in you don't have to tell anyone you have an appointment you just say you're going out, you don't have to make an appointment so you just tell your Mum you're going into town and drop in.'

'I feel like a doctor would tell your Mum or Social Services.'

'I feel like a GP will speak to my Mum even though he can't. I don't here; I trust them.'

'I have no worries about that.'

'Yes, that doesn't worry me.'

'Yes, it's the reason I come.'

'Yes. They have to follow data protection acts. At the Parallel they tell you that at every appointment.'

'The private part of their computer system keeps everything private even the GP doesn't know!'

'Yes fine; you write it down so its confidential.'

'Yes you write it down so it's private.'

'Yes. You write down why you have come so no-one in the waiting area knows.'

- For many the Parallel offers greater privacy than the GPs. Young People fear a visit to the GP will compromise their privacy.
- The drop-in set up and town centre location is an important part of the distinction – Young People don't have to say where they are going.
- Young People trust those at The Parallel to keep information private.
- The process of writing down why you need an appointment supports privacy within the setting (other settings could learn from this).

Opening times and waiting times

- Opening hours are seen as good, but some would like weekend or early evening appointments.
- Waiting times at the clinic itself are generally seen to be good or acceptable .

'The waiting times are excellent (you only wait 10 minutes in the walk-in sessions).'

'You can just walk in and be seen at the right time alongside exams etc.'

'You don't have to wait any longer than 30 minutes to an hour. The longest I've waited is an hour; it's still faster than the GPs.'

'The opening hours are good because they work around school but the waiting time can be quite long sometimes.'

'Clinic times aren't as convenient for me as they could be; there are only certain days I can come so I end up waiting a while.'

'If they opened earlier we may not wait so long; sometimes we wait too long. We've waited an hour before.'

'I like the opening hours.'

'If it was open a bit earlier and a bit later on the days it is open – that's to fit in with college.'

'It would be better if it was open till 6.30 or 7pm.'

'Would like it to be open at weekends.'

Engagement Alliance

healthwatch
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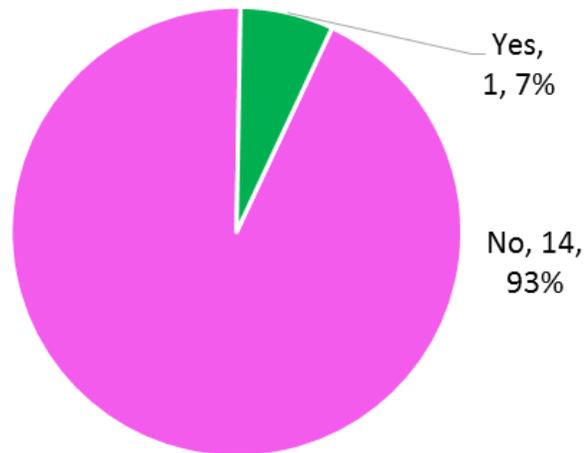
Young People's views of universal services

We wanted to explore how people's experience of using the parallel compared with use of universal health services; such as GPs for example.

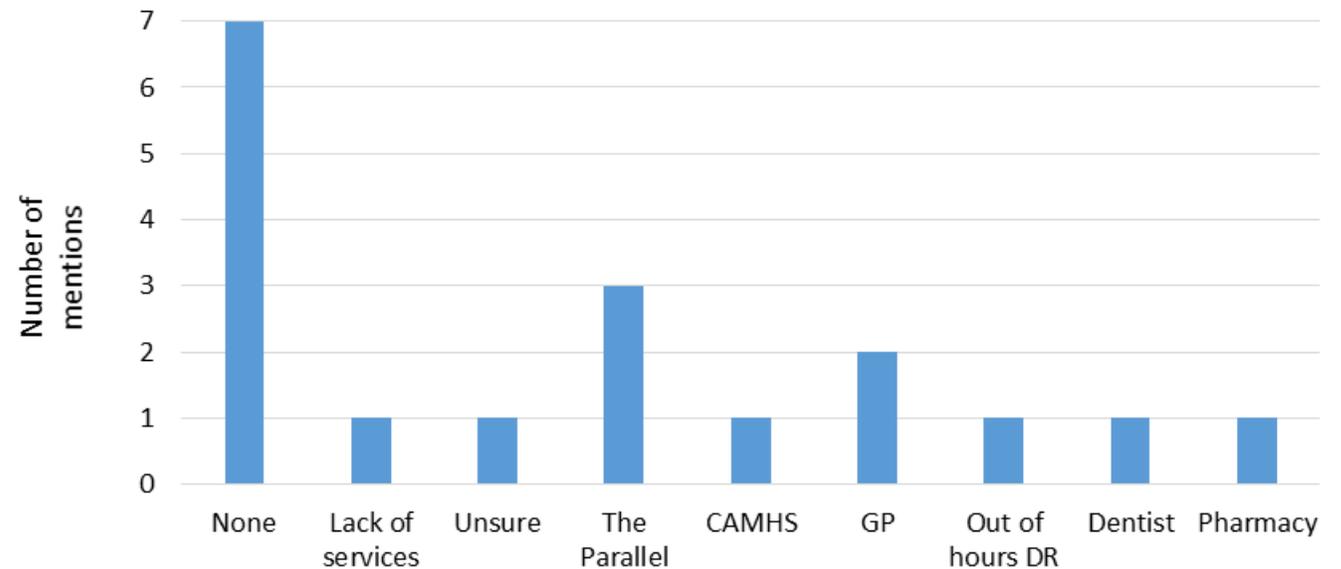
Take up of health services by Young People

- The majority of respondents stated that they were only engaging with health services offered by The Parallel.
- Young People were asked about what health services were available for them as a group.
- Universal services such as GP, Dentist, and Pharmacy scored low, suggesting that respondents did not immediately recognise these services as being for Young People.

Do young people currently use other services?
(n = 15)



Available services for young people (n = 18)



Take up of health services by Young People

- The Parallel seems to be key service for Young People.
- Young People are not always aware of existing services.
- There is a feeling that there are lack of dedicated/appropriate services for Young People local to their homes.
- Parents may act as gatekeepers for Young People.
- School/College times can make accessing universal services difficult.

'It's just here; this is the closest for us.'

'This is local for me.'

'Wouldn't know (about other services).'

'I don't go anywhere so I don't know (about other services).'

'There is nothing near me so no (I don't access other services).'

'If my Mum rings up for me I can get in quicker; when I've rung before the receptionists have said is it really urgent; I felt fobbed off.'

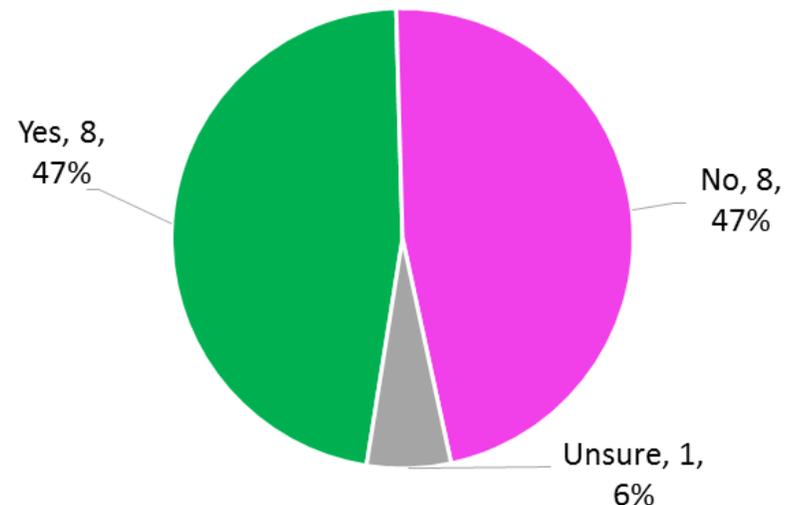
'I find it awkward contacting the school nurses; I don't know how or where to do that.'

'It's difficult to fit in with college times.'

Young People's views on the GP relationship

- About half of respondents felt that their GP doesn't understand them as an individual, appointments are too quick, communication can be lacking, young people may not feel understood or respected.
- Considering the importance of this relationship, some of the young people's comments highlight specific issues which could be looked at to improve understanding between Young People and GPs.

Does your GP understand you as an individual?
(n = 17)



'They talk down to you or talk to you very quickly; you're in and out in 5 minutes; I don't feel taken seriously.'

'I don't like going because I feel judged.'

'No. They don't want to listen to you. They tell you what they think is best for you without discussing it. Here at the Parallel they listen and work with you.'

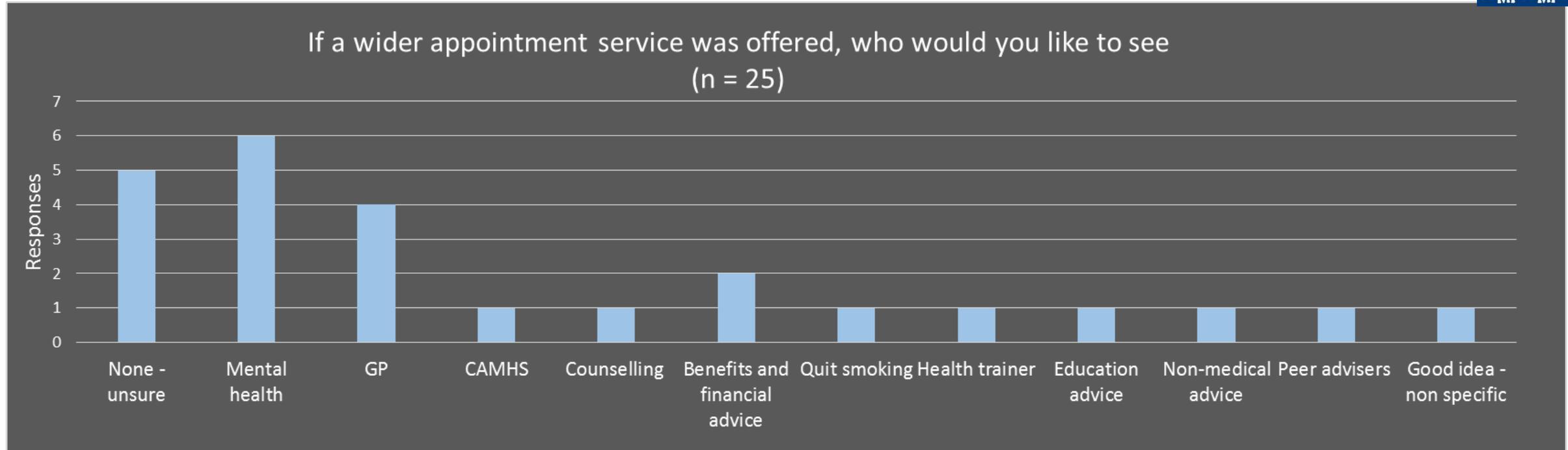
'I think my GP understands me as a young person, he's ok.'

'Yes and they ask about my interests and my family, such as my son.'

What young people want from a Hub site?

As many respondents were not accessing health services other than The Parallel, we framed the questions regarding Neighbourhood Hub activity around The Parallel. We asked what other health services would Young People like to be able to access there.

Views on Hub Site – preferred practitioners



- Respondents were asked about the services they would also like at The Parallel.
- Mental health services and GP services were suggested by a majority.
- The GP mention is especially notable when taken alongside Young People's views on the relationship with their GP

Views on Hub Site – preferred practitioners

‘It would help people to see a mental health worker.’

‘Maybe a low-level mental health worker present would help some people.’

‘Benefits advice and financial advice would be good; I’ve never had that sort of advice at college.’

‘Stopping smoking and electronic cigarette supplies.’

I’d like to be able to see other health workers here

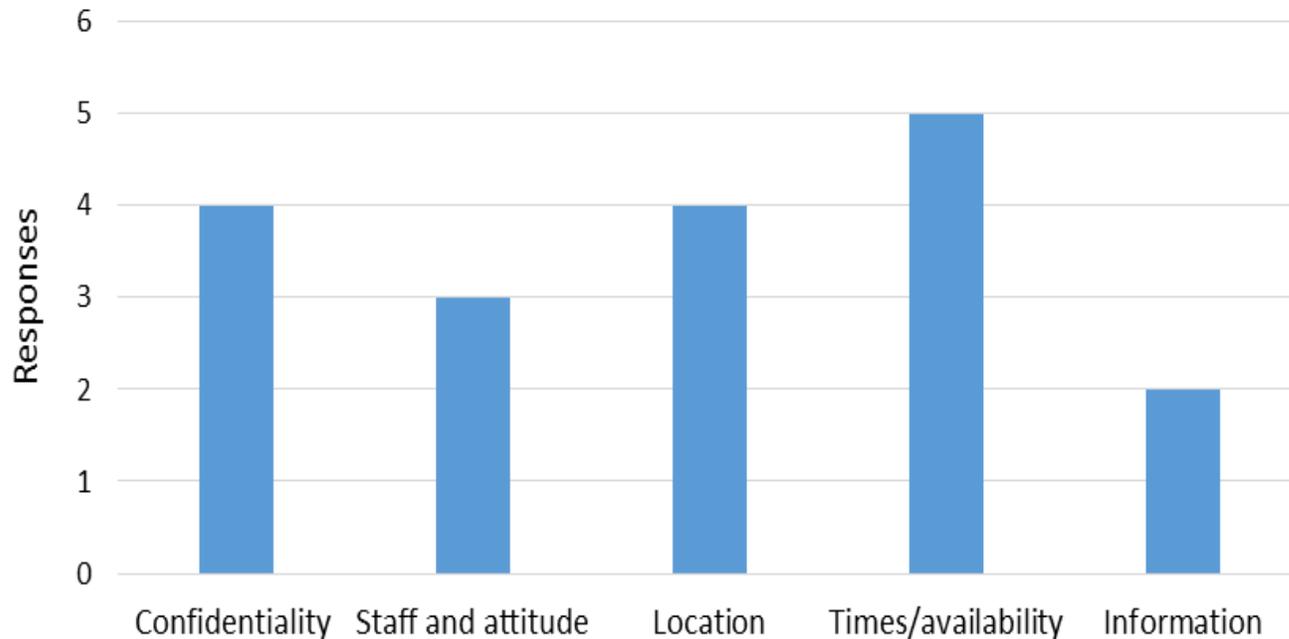
‘A broader range of services would be good, I’m thinking mental health workers; it less fuss than having to go to your GP and then be referred.’

‘A drop-in GP session would be good.’

‘GPs would be great as they can talk about issues in more detail. Voluntary individuals would be lovely such as teenagers as it may be easier for younger teenagers to talk to individuals in their own age group.’

Planning Services - what matters to Young People

Service planning concerns (n = 18)



- When asked about planning services young people's answers reflected The Parallel's aims around confidentiality, location and timing/flexibility of appointments to fit in with their school/college schedules.
- Young People wanted these concerns to be considered in wider services,
- The need for sensitivity related to maintaining privacy - anonymity, location, accessibility.
- Young People value approachability, continuity, and clarity from staff as well as trust and respect, especially around privacy.

I value discretion

'Keeping it anonymous.'

'You write down why you have come so no-one in the waiting area knows.'

'Not make some services obvious or public so you can be seen confidentially so location needs consideration.'

'If you go to see your GP or Nurse you kind of need an excuse with your parents whereas here you can say you're just going into town.'

'You can just walk in and be seen at the right time alongside exams etc.'

'Clinic times aren't as convenient for me as they could be; there are only certain days I can come so I end up waiting a while.'

'We wait a long time at the GP to be seen; it's better here.'

'Offer appointment times that fit around school and college.'

I don't want to miss college**I want approachability
continuity and clarity**

'Staff need to be easy to talk to.'

'No. They don't want to listen to you. They tell you what they think is best for you without discussing it. Here at the Parallel they listen and work with you.'

'We always feel welcome and re-assured.'

'Like to see the same person.'

'The parallel do this anyway but it would be great for health professionals to explain things in wider detail and not use technical terms that individuals may not understand.'

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to the;

- The System Sustainability and Transformation Board
- The Primary Care Strategy and Planning Group
- Integrated Care Strategy and Planning Group
- Childrens' and Maternity Strategy and Planning Group

1. Young People value a dedicated space from which to access health service. The location of services in an anonymous and secluded space, appears to respond to issues of privacy and confidentiality, desired by Young People. **Consideration of the option of dedicated spaces for young people should be considered by those organising neighbourhood level primary care services.**

2. Young People accessing The Parallel said that they would value the introduction of GP and mental health service or liaison within The Parallel set up. **Consideration should be giving to making extended primary care services/practitioners available at The Parallell giving this well valued asset and service some of the qualities of a Neighbourhood Hub for Young People.**

Recommendations

The following recommendations are made to all commissioners and providers in particular;

- The commissioners of Primary Care
- The GP Federation

3. The attitude towards Young People by staff at the Parallel– from receptionists to nurses – is seen as good/positive. **Universal services could learn from The Parallel’s approaches towards confidentiality and discretion.**

4. Drop-in appointments and more appointments at weekends and into the early evening, would be desirable for young people, who do not want to miss college, or be seen to be leaving college for an appointment (by their peers). **The GP extended hours service should give consideration to promoting the service and responding to the needs of Young People.**

The comments

Did you feel confident enough to explain to the receptionist what you have actually come here for today? If not, why not?

I am happy to write down why I'm here

Yes fine; you write it down so its confidential

I'm confident with the nurses; I don't mind sharing with the nurses

The first time I didn't want to say why I was coming and I actually lied the first time about my age; now I know that everything is kept between you and them

I say why I've come

I'm here as support

Yes. You write down why you have come so no-one in the waiting area knows

Yes you write it down so it's private

Yes, you write it down so it's confidential

Yes. I only came with a friend but decided to get checked out myself

Yes I feel confident

Yes I came for a test

Yes; when I was 14 I came pregnant and the nurse at school sent me here. I was worried about what to say when I first came but its alright now.

I came for a booked appointment today with the nurse

Yes

Easier to tell someone here than your parents

Just write it down

Do the staff at The Parallel make you feel welcome when you visit?

Yes you feel welcome

Yes I feel welcome; I've been here before with a group of girls

We always feel welcome and re-assured

They speak to you even though you might be just waiting

We have some banter when we come

We feel welcome

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes always

Yes, they are always really friendly

Yes

Yes, they encouraged me to get checked while I was here with a friend

Yes they do

Yes

The comments

What do you like about The Parallel? Do you think clinic times are appropriate?

I like the opening hours

I'd like to see it open on a Thursday

It's a good thing its hidden away

Its anonymous; no one knows it's here, its hidden away

Its confidential

What do you think about waiting times?

Clinic times aren't as convenient for me as they could be; there are only certain days I can come so I end up waiting a while

I waited for 4 hours

Waiting times are fine for me

If they opened earlier we may not wait so long; sometimes we wait too long. We've waited an hour before.

It should be open earlier say at midday

If we weren't on holiday we would be coming straight out of school; it wouldn't give us a problem

Free condoms

I am at University in another area so I have registered with a GP over

there so it's good that when I come home in the holidays I can come here.

I'm on holiday for two weeks so I can come here on my holidays or after college

Clinic times are generally ok but I would have liked a morning appointment on this occasion

The clinic times are good

I like the clinic times

I like that you can drop in but I would prefer to come at lunchtime

The clinic times are fine and the waiting time isn't long at all

Yes they're satisfying

The waiting times are excellent (you only wait 10 minutes in the walk-in sessions).

The clinic times are very useful

The opening hours are good because they work around school but the waiting time can be quite long sometimes

I don't mind waiting but I don't have to wait long usually.

It needs to fit in around work

It's a good location

They are helpful with your situation you can speak to them.

You can just walk in and be seen at the right time alongside exams etc.

You don't have to wait any longer than 30 minutes to an hour. The longest I've waited is an hour; its still faster than the GPs

The comments

If you had the chance, is there anything you would change, and why?

The first time I came I couldn't find it but now I think it's a good idea to have it hidden away

If it was open a bit earlier and a bit later on the days it is open – that's to fit in with college

The opening hours

No

It would be better if it was open till 6.30 or 7pm.

Would like it to be open at weekends

Maybe the TV working

Maybe a morning drop-in would be helpful

Nothing

No nothing

No

Sessions should start at lunch time, at least on some days

No I wouldn't change anything

No it's good

If I could change anything I would increase the age range as individuals in their 20s deal with sexual health problems

No

Everything is sorted

Are you working with any other service at the moment?

Which ones?

No

No

No

No

No just the Parallel

Only we're both in high school, the final year

No

No

No

No

No

No

No

No

No

I am seeing CAMHS and 'Family First' through the Youth Offending Team

The comments

What does The Parallel offer that makes you come here rather than visit your GP or Practice Nurse or your School Nurse?

If you go to see your GP or Nurse you kind of need an excuse with your parents whereas here you can say you're just going into town

You don't need appointments

It's the not needing an appointment

Because you can drop in you don't have to tell anyone you have an appointment

you just say you're going out ,you don't have to make an appointment so you just tell your Mum you're going into town and drop in

The Parallel is good because its tucked away and that's why we come here

Privacy from your parents; somethings you don't want your parents or GP to know

I feel like a doctor would tell your Mum or Social Services

It's because it's a drop in

You can just drop in and not make an appointment

You can just turn up without an appointment

It feels less formal, more relaxed

It's less embarrassing

College health services don't do much

My GP is now where I live at University so it's great that I can come here when

I'm home during holidays

It's more convenient here than go to my GP. You don't need an appointment and can just drop in

You can just drop in, you don't have to make an appointment

You can drop in and it's easy to get to

Access is good; it's the 'walk-in' we like

The staff are friendly and welcoming which makes me feel more relaxed.

They offer more information

Privacy

They are easy to get appointments. The members of staff are lovely and don't look down on you. They talk on your level and use wording you understand unlike doctors

The busyness is acceptable

The private part of their computer system keeps everything private even the GP doesn't know!

The comments

If The Parallel offered a direct appointment service for a wider set of health needs who else would you like to see here (e.g. a GP, mental health practitioner, health trainer, non-medical advice for benefits, education etc)?

A broader range of services would be good, I'm thinking mental health workers; it less fuss than having to go to your GP and then be referred

A GP here would be good

Mental health

CAMHS – it would be good if I could see my mental health worker here.

Obviously they'd need my notes. The anonymity of the service here which we like could be extended to the CAMHS service. It would be good if someone from the Parallel found a problem with mental health to ask the CAMHS person here to see that person without having to say to see your doctor. It would be quicker and more helpful.

It would help people to see a mental health worker

A mental health worker would be good as I suffer from depression

Counselling

Benefits advice and financial advice would be good; I've never had that sort of advice at college

Stopping smoking and electronic cigarette supplies

Good idea but don't which because I don't use any

Not sure but it's a good idea for others

It would be a good idea as it is a convenient and easy place to get to.

A drop-in GP session would be good and maybe a low-level mental health worker present would help some people

Don't know

No

It would be a good idea to have a GP here, and a mental health worker and some sort of financial advisor. I don't need those things but can see they would be useful to others

We aren't taught about finances at school so some financial advice would be useful

A health trainer, education advice and non-medical advice

Don't know

GPs would be great as they can talk about issues in more detail. Voluntary individuals would be lovely such as teenagers as it may be easier for younger teenagers to talk to individuals in their own age group

The comments

What health services are available for young people where you live?

I find it awkward contacting the school nurses; I don't know how or where to do that

I'm based near to the CAMHS unit

It's just here; this is the closest for us

The clinic the Garnet Fold practice

A dentist

Pharmacy Shop

There are none but I only live 10 minutes away

None

Nothing

None

Nothing

This is local for me

None

None

None that I know of

Wouldn't know

Only GPs, Out of Hours doctors and the Parallel

Are they provided at times that suit you and other young people?

If my Mum rings up for me I can get in quicker; when I've rung before the receptionists have said is it really urgent; I felt fobbed off

It's difficult to fit in with college times

Yes they do

I don't go anywhere so I don't know

There is nothing near me so no

Yes

The comments

Do you feel your GP understands who you are as an individual?

Mine's alright

Mine is ok

I like my GP; I'm with Lever Chambers

Why/Why not?

Yes

Yes

They talk down to you or talk to you very quickly; you're in and out in 5 minutes; I don't feel taken seriously

No he irritates me because he talks to me like I'm 5

I don't like going because I feel judged

No it didn't feel right; it felt like a bit of a barrier was there

No. They don't want to listen to you. They tell you what they think is best for you without discussing it. Here at the Parallel they listen and work with you.

My GP at home has known me all my life but he still isn't very personal and it feels like he's just doing a job

I think my GP understands me as a young person, he's ok

I don't know I never go

Yes, but I always feel more comfortable speaking to the staff at the Parallel

No, she just doesn't

Yes and they ask about my interests and my family, such as my son

No because the GP is less chatty because they have less time

Do you feel confident that your details and information are confidential?

I have no worries about that

Yes that doesn't worry me

Yes it's the reason I come

I feel like a GP will speak to my Mum even though he can't. I don't here; I trust them.

Yes that doesn't worry me

Yes

Yes

Yes

Yes of course

Yes

Yes. They have to follow data protection acts. At the Parallel they tell you that at every appointment

Yes

Yes

The comments

What would you like health professionals to consider when planning services for young people?

Keeping it anonymous

Confidentiality

Confidentiality

Not make some services obvious or public so you can be seen confidentially so location needs consideration

A convenient location

Location

Staff need to be easy to talk to

Access to mental health

Be understanding

Like to see the same person

The questions they ask you

Timings

Consider times for people at school and college

Consider location and access, e.g. availability of public transport

Offer appointment times that fit around school and college

Location and convenience of services

Don't know

Timing of appointments available or sessions running

Think about good ways to help young people or to give them the right

information

The parallel do this anyway but it would be great for health professionals to explain things in wider detail and not use technical terms that individuals may not understand

'Walk-in' accessibility