

# NHS Health Checks

Experiences of NHS Health Checks in Norfolk

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# Who we are and what we do

Healthwatch Norfolk is the independent voice for patients and service users in the county. We gather people's views of health and social care services in the county and make sure they are heard by the people in charge.

The people who fund and provide services have to listen to you, through us. So, whether you share a good or bad experience with us, your views can help make changes to how services are designed and delivered in Norfolk.

Our work covers all areas of health and social care. This includes GP surgeries, hospitals, dentists, care homes, pharmacies, opticians and more.

We also give out information about the health and care services available in Norfolk and direct people to someone who can help.

At Healthwatch Norfolk we have five main objectives:

1. Gather your views and experiences (good and bad)
2. Pay particular attention to underrepresented groups
3. Show how we contribute to making services better
4. Contribute to better signposting of services
5. Work with national organisations to help create better services

We make sure we have lots of ways to collect feedback from people who use Norfolk's health and social care services. This means that everyone has the same chance to be heard.

# Summary

## Why and how we looked at this

Healthwatch Norfolk was asked by Norfolk County Council Public Health team to gather the public's opinion, uptake and experiences of NHS Health Checks in Norfolk. The aim was to develop a greater understanding of why uptake is low and what could be done to improve this. We did this by conducting a survey with members of the public. The questions were discussed and agreed with Norfolk County Council Public Health team. The survey could be completed online, via telephone or in-person.

No sample size was set, as participation in the survey was voluntary. In total, we gathered feedback from 410 individuals. Once the data was cleaned (duplicate responses and responses from those outside the age range were removed), there was a total of 393 responses.

From the survey, Healthwatch Norfolk was able to gain a broader understanding of public awareness of NHS Health Checks, barriers to accessing an NHS Health Check and people's experiences of having one.

## What we found out and what this means

From the questions we asked on the survey, we found that most people welcomed having an NHS Health Check, with most people who have had an NHS Health Check (80%, 108) saying they would have one again. Whilst there is a low uptake of NHS Health Checks amongst survey respondents, the most common barrier to accessing an NHS Health check was not being invited to one. This suggests that the main reason for the low uptake is lack of communication rather than because people do not want an NHS Health Check.

Women were more likely to attend an NHS Health check than men, with 48% (103) of women having an NHS Health Check in the last five years, compared to just 30% (29) of men. There is also a slight variation in attendance of NHS Health Checks in the different areas of Norfolk. Half of respondents (49%, 19) in Great

Yarmouth and Waveney told us they have had an NHS Health Check in the last five years, compared to just 36% (18) of respondents in West Norfolk.

When asked how they would like to be invited to an NHS Health Check, most people told us they would like to be invited via email and around half would like to be invited via text message.

Of respondents who had not had an NHS Health Check, 39% (70) told us that the location of the check would make them more likely to have one, with some people mentioning it would need to be somewhere local and convenient. Several people also told us that information beforehand, would make them more likely to have an NHS Health Check, with some people mentioning that they would like more information on what to expect during an NHS Health Check. Others told us that the time of the NHS Health Check, would need to fit around their other commitments or work, or that the person doing the health check would make them more likely to have one. A few people specifically mentioned that they would like a doctor to carry out the check. However, most people who have had an NHS Health Check in the last five years felt that the professional explained what they were testing for and their results clearly.

There is also a lack of awareness amongst survey respondents of where they can access an NHS Health Check. Whilst most were aware they could access an NHS Health Check at their GP surgery, only a minority were aware that NHS Health Checks could also be accessed at pharmacies, or community venues (e.g. leisure centres or community centres). More communication and information could help to raise awareness of the other places NHS Health Checks can be accessed.

Awareness of what NHS Health Checks aim to help prevent is not as good as it could be. Most people were aware that NHS Health Checks help to prevent heart disease (74%, 42), diabetes (75%, 42), and stroke (55%, 121), but less than half were aware that they also aim to help prevent kidney disease and dementia. Some respondents told us they thought NHS Health Checks help to prevent cancer, mental health problems or arthritis (even though these conditions are not tested for during the check). People who have not had an NHS Health Check also had less understanding of the purpose of NHS Health Checks.

There is also limited behaviour change following an NHS Health Check. When asked what difference the NHS Health Check had made, less than half of respondents (41%, 55) told us they have a better understanding of their health

and many people said that the check made no difference (26%, 35). Only some people changed their behaviour by eating more healthily, doing more exercise, reducing their alcohol intake, or stopping smoking. More staff training on how to better facilitate behaviour change, could help more people to change their behaviour following an NHS Health Check.

Many people are not receiving advice when they have their NHS Health Check (although sometimes advice does not need to be given). Around a third of people who have had an NHS Health Check told us they were given no advice to lead a healthier lifestyle (34%, 45). A quarter were given nutritional (diet) advice and only a minority were told to attend a particular class or were referred to an exercise scheme or health trainer.

Overall, the findings of this report suggest that the NHS Health Check is not making as much difference to people's risk of CVD as it could be. Invitations for NHS Health Checks need to increase and including behaviour change support could help people to make changes which could modify their CVD risk.

## Recommendations

From the findings of this piece of work several recommendations can be made to the Norfolk County Council Public Health team, who commission NHS Health Checks, regarding what they can do to help raise awareness and improve uptake of NHS Health Checks in Norfolk.

1. Increase communication and information about NHS Health Checks.
2. Make invitation templates available in a variety of formats (e.g. text and email) and include more information on NHS Health Checks in the invitation, such as the other locations (e.g., pharmacies, community venues etc) and times NHS Health Checks are available.
3. More invitations should be sent by GP practices and a range of ways to invite patients should be used- GP practices should invite patients to an NHS Health Check, in line with the patient's communication preferences (e.g. text message, email, letter etc). Multiple invitations or reminders should be used to increase uptake.
4. More staff training into how to give personalised advice to help facilitate behaviour change. Staff should be made more aware of the barriers to

behaviour change and consider these when giving specific advice and be trained in how to proactively deliver key messages.

Please note the recommendations at the end of the report are provided in a more detailed form.

# Why we looked at this

Norfolk County Council Public Health team asked Healthwatch Norfolk to gather feedback from the public on their awareness, uptake, and experiences of NHS Health Checks in Norfolk, with the goal of providing recommendations on how to increase public awareness and uptake. Norfolk's current service provision delivers NHS Health Checks to 42.8% of those eligible (Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, 2021), however Norfolk County Council Public Health team are keen to increase this.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a general term used for conditions which affect the heart or blood vessels (NHS, 2022), such as heart disease or stroke. CVD is one of the leading causes of disease, disability, and death in England (Raliegh et al 2022). It is estimated that CVD costs £8.96 billion a year in NHS healthcare costs which puts a strain on the NHS and wider society (Waterall, 2018). Early detection and prevention of CVD are important priorities for the NHS; the NHS Long Term Plan identifies CVD as a 'clinical priority' (NHS England, 2022).

As of 2013, local authorities have a legal duty to offer the NHS Health Check to all eligible patients in their area (NHS Digital 2022, Office for Health Improvement & Disparities, 2022). The NHS Health Check is a national CVD programme which helps to prevent and detect the early signs of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, kidney disease, stroke and some types of dementia (NHS, 2022a). People who are aged 40-74 and are eligible should be invited by their GP surgery (in Norfolk) to have their free NHS Health Check, once every five years (NHS, 2022a).

As mentioned, not everyone is eligible for an NHS Health Check as there are a number of pre-existing conditions and criteria that exclude people from having an NHS Health Check (e.g. having heart disease or diabetes) (NHS, 2022a). A more detailed list of eligibility criteria can be found in Appendix 1. The NHS Health Check is also different and separate from the free annual health check the NHS offers for people with severe mental health conditions (NHS, 2022b) or people with learning disabilities who are on their GP practice's learning disability register (NHS, 2022c).

An NHS Health Check takes around 20-30 minutes. During the Health Check:

- The patient will be asked some questions about their family history and any medication they are taking.



- The patient's height, weight, gender, ethnicity and age will be recorded.
- The patient will have their blood pressure taken.
- A fingertip blood test will also be carried out to check the patient's cholesterol level (Norfolk County Council, 2022).

It is estimated that 50% to 80% of CVD cases are caused by risk factors that are modifiable and preventable, examples of these include: smoking, high cholesterol, poor diet and lack of exercise (Waterall, 2018). After having an NHS Health Check, patients are given personalised advice on how to improve their risk of CVD. This could involve talking about how they can improve their diet or whether they could take medication to lower their blood pressure or cholesterol (NHS, 2022). Patients may also be referred to lifestyle services (e.g., smoking cessation or weight management) to help support them to change their behaviour (Kearney, 2016).

In 2017 Healthwatch Norfolk published a report on cardiovascular disease prevention and management in the community. The first part of the project focused on the experiences and perspectives of people with regards to the primary prevention of CVD, whilst the second part focused on the secondary prevention of CVD. Based on the findings of this research, several recommendations were made, including embedding the role pharmacies have to play into the Health Care system and *Making Every Contact Count* (Healthwatch Norfolk, 2017).

Each year, NHS Health Checks in Norfolk, have the potential to prevent 27 heart attacks and strokes, prevent 68 people developing diabetes, detect 340 cases of diabetes or kidney disease and avoid at least 11 premature deaths (Norfolk County Council Public Health, 2022). In Norfolk, NHS Health Checks are available in most GP surgeries (for their eligible patients) and at pharmacies across the county (for anyone who lives in Norfolk). REED Wellbeing also offer NHS Health Checks in local venues (e.g. Town halls and leisure centres) to support GPs and pharmacies (Norfolk County Council, 2022). REED Wellbeing is a catch-up service to fulfil the 36,000 missed NHS Health Checks during the pandemic. There is also the Health and Wellbeing Support Service, which provides support for practices to deliver NHS Health Checks (for the current eligible population) within community settings (Knowledge Anglia, 2022).

# How we did this

## Methodology

The project aimed to collect feedback on the public's awareness, uptake and experiences of NHS Health Checks in Norfolk, and develop an understanding of how public awareness and uptake can be increased. We designed a public survey which was created using SmartSurvey.

We wanted to know:

- If people were aware what NHS Health Checks were for.
- If people have had an NHS Health Check, what this was like.
- If the NHS Health Check helped people make changes to their lifestyle to improve their health and wellbeing.
- If people have had an NHS Health Check, would they have one again.
- What are the barriers to accessing NHS Health Checks.
- Whether there is anything that would make people more likely to have an NHS Health Check.

The target audience of this project are Norfolk residents who are aged between 40-79 years old. This age range was used, so people who have been eligible for an NHS Health Check in the last five years were still included. The survey was designed so that anyone who selected an age outside of the 40-79 age range was thanked but unable to proceed with the survey.

Healthwatch Norfolk worked with Norfolk County Council Public Health team to create the survey with a series of questions to meet the aims and objectives of the project. To reach as many people as possible, an online and print survey was used. There was also an option to call Healthwatch Norfolk and complete the survey over the telephone. The Healthwatch Norfolk team also attended a small number of Reed Wellbeing NHS Health Check sites (these were at Great Yarmouth Town Hall and Attleborough Enterprise Centre), so people could complete the survey face-to-face. This was to ensure that those who may be digitally excluded had the opportunity to take part.

The survey ran from 21<sup>st</sup> November 2022 to 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2022 and all responses (n=410) were collected during this time frame. Once data was cleaned (responses from those outside the age range and duplicates were removed), there were 393 responses in total.

Additionally, Healthwatch Norfolk emailed a select few GP practices asking the practice manager or staff to answer some questions about NHS Health Checks. This was to gain an insight into the opinions of professionals delivering and overseeing NHS Health Checks regularly.

## **Sample size**

A sample size was not set as the survey was entirely voluntary and members of the public chose whether to provide feedback. As the Norfolk population covers a range of demographics, we cannot say that the sample size (n=393) of this survey is representative of the entire Norfolk population, however this sample does provide a snapshot of people's experiences and opinions of NHS Health Checks in Norfolk.

## **Participant Involvement and Consent**

Healthwatch Norfolk developed a range of promotional materials to encourage participation, with a goal of reaching as many individuals and groups as possible, including those seldom heard. Healthwatch Norfolk promoted the survey through social media channels (LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter), awareness videos, the Healthwatch Norfolk newsletter and Healthwatch Norfolk website. The survey was also promoted on GP websites via Footfall from which 68% (217) of respondents heard about the survey.

Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous. To complete the survey, participants ticked a box on the survey to confirm that they understand what the survey is about, agree to take part and consent for their answers and feedback to be shared in this report. Participants could choose which questions they wanted to answer and could end the survey without completing all the questions.

A number of GP practices across Norfolk were also emailed, asking a member of their staff to answer some questions about their experiences of delivering NHS Health Checks (see Appendix 2). These questions were also put into a short online survey. We received a total of six responses. This additional data was used to gain insight into the views and experiences of healthcare staff for NHS Health Checks.

## Survey Data Analysis

The survey included a range of question types, including open-ended, closed-ended, and multiple-choice questions. Therefore, a range of analysis methods were used to reflect this. The results and comments are reported on in the 'What we found out' section.

Answers that were closed-ended or multiple choice were exported from SmartSurvey and analysed in Excel. The percentages in this report are rounded to the nearest whole number. Answers where participants could write their own comments, were analysed using thematic analysis. This enabled comments to be coded to establish themes, which are explored further in the 'What we found out' section of this report. Any comments used as direct quotes in this report have been left unchanged, this is to ensure originality.

We also collected demographic data to gain a better understanding of the reach of the survey, to help make sure that we engage with people from different backgrounds and so that we can understand what needs different groups in our community have. A summary of this demographic data can be found in Appendix 3.

A copy of the survey questions can be found in Appendix 4.

The feedback we received helped us to gain an insight into and develop themes around the public's awareness and experiences of NHS Health Checks and identify barriers to accessing them.

## Limitations

Whilst there were open-ended questions in the survey, there is a lack of depth to answers when compared to alternative methods such as focus groups or interviews, however this is something that could be addressed in future work.

We initially contacted GP practices asking if we could conduct the survey in-person with their patients at the practice (to engage with a wide variety of people). However, no GP practices agreed to this in the time frame.

The Healthwatch Norfolk team visited a small number of REED Wellbeing Health Check sites, where participants could complete the survey in-person. However,

this resulted in all paper surveys being completed only by respondents who'd had an NHS Health Check. In total we received 8 (2%) paper copies of the survey. Whilst we tried to reach people who are digitally excluded, due to the small sample size we received, we cannot say that the responses are representative for this population.

Almost half of respondents (47%, 147) told us they have a long term condition. This means they are likely to already be well linked into healthcare services. In England 43% of adults have at least one long term condition (NHS Digital, 2019) which is slightly lower than the percentage of people with a long term condition in our sample. Therefore, our sample may not be representative of the wider population who do not have long term conditions and may engage less with healthcare services.

Also, only a small number of respondents (11%, 44) were aged 40-49. This is a limitation as people in this age range may have had different experiences or opinions of NHS Health Checks, so their views may not be fully captured in this research. Research has also shown that people aged 40-49 are less likely to attend an NHS Health Check than those aged 60-74 (Robson et al, 2016). Therefore, the people that we had had difficulty engaging with in this survey, may be the same people that do not attend their NHS Health Check.

# What we found out

## Survey Results

Please note that questions were not compulsory so the number of responses will vary by question.

### Who we received responses from

The survey received 410 responses. Once the data was cleaned (responses from those outside the age range and duplicates were removed), there were 393 responses, which make up the following analysis. Most responses (98%, 385) were completed online via the survey link, with only 2% (8) being completed in person. We received responses from patients at 79 (87%) different GP practices out of a possible 91. The list of surgeries and the number of responses for each one can be found in Appendix 3.

Most respondents told us they:

- Were female (67%, 251)
- Were White British / English / Northern Irish / Scottish Welsh (92%, 291).

Around half of respondents told us they have a long term condition (47%, 147) and 40% of respondents were aged 60 to 69 (157). A breakdown of the age of the respondents can be seen in Figure 1.

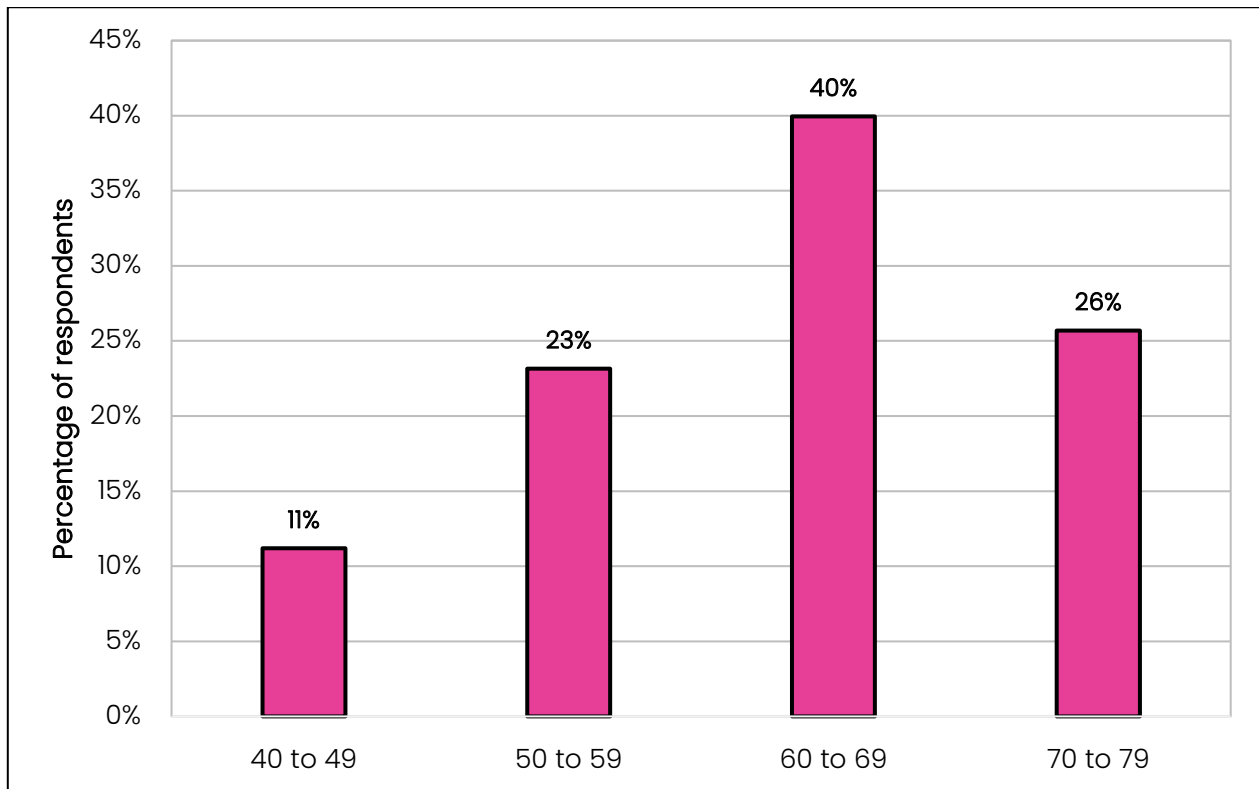


Figure 1. A graph to show age of respondents.

## Awareness of NHS Health Checks

We asked participants what they thought an NHS Health Check was for (Figure 2). Most people who answered our survey were aware that an NHS Health Check aims to help prevent diabetes (75%, 290), heart disease (74%, 288) and stroke (55%, 212). However, less than half of respondents were aware that NHS Health Checks also aim to help prevent kidney disease (46%, 178) and dementia (34%, 130). Some respondents told us they thought NHS Health Checks aim to prevent cancer (40%, 157), mental health problems (31%, 121) and arthritis (25%, 98), although these health conditions are not tested for during an NHS Health Check.

This lack of awareness of the purpose of an NHS Health Check, was also reflected through the comments of the 'other' answer (11%, 42). Comments mostly focused on that the NHS Health Check is a general health check or that it tests for all of the conditions listed. Answers include:

- *'An overall check of my general health'*
- *'Surely it should be for everything'*
- *'All of the above'*
- *'A general check up to see how your health is and to see if you have and problems health wise or with mental health'.*

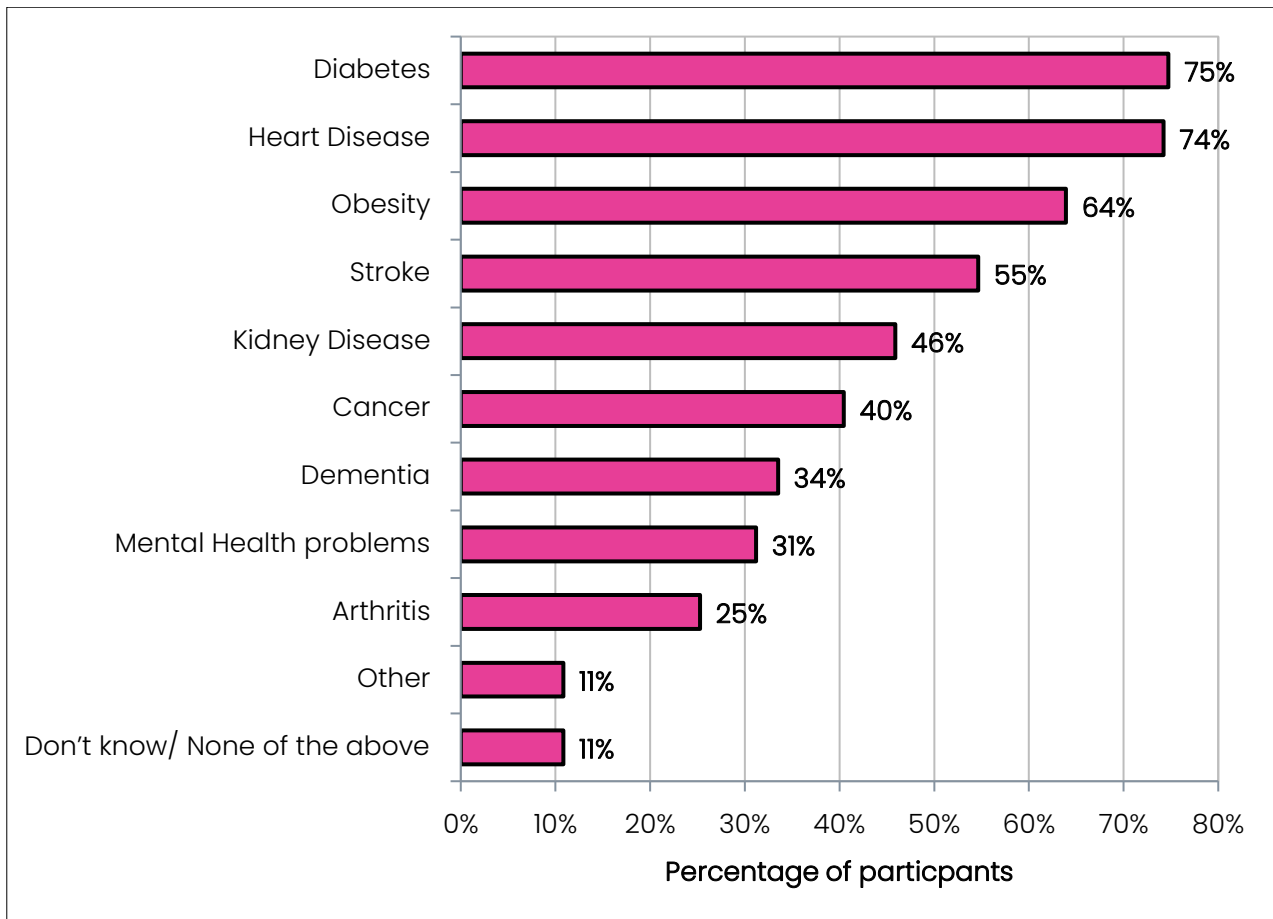


Figure 2. Responses to the question 'What do you think an NHS Health Check is for? To help prevent...'. Respondents were able to choose more than one option.

Respondents who have had an NHS Health Check in the last five years were slightly more aware than those who haven't had a check, that it aims to help prevent heart disease, diabetes and stroke, although they were less aware that the check aims to help prevent kidney disease and dementia. Respondents who have not had an NHS Health Check were more likely to think that the check aims to help prevent arthritis, cancer and mental health problems. This is shown in Figure 3.



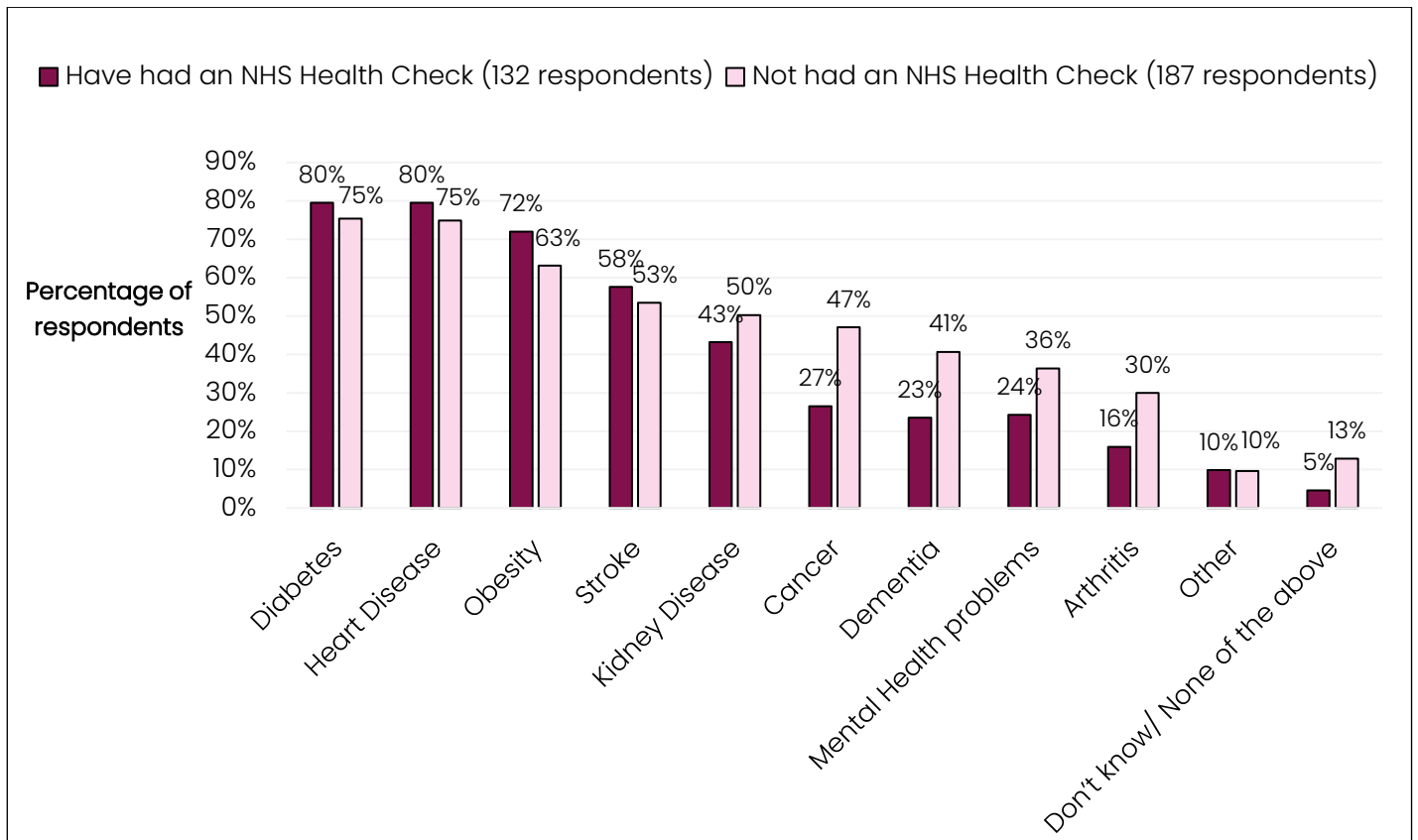


Figure 3. Responses to the question 'What do you think an NHS Health Check is for? To help prevent...'. Comparison between those who have had an NHS Health Check and those that haven't.

## Where to access NHS Health Checks

Most respondents were aware they could access an NHS Health Check at a GP Surgery (83%, 323), as displayed in Figure 4. It should be noted that whilst most GP practices in Norfolk deliver NHS Health Checks (Norfolk County Council, 2022) some are outsourcing these, so they are no longer delivered at the practice. Only a minority of respondents were aware that NHS Health Checks can be accessed at a pharmacy (15%, 60), community centre (9%, 37) or leisure centre (3%, 13). Some respondents (13%, 51) did not know where they could access an NHS Health Check.

Responses to the 'other' answer, include mentions of local libraries, online or at an office. Some people specifically mentioned that the NHS Health Check would not be at their GP practice, for example one person told us: "Used to be GP surgery, but not anymore", whilst another said, "Wouldn't be at our surgery they do as little as possible".

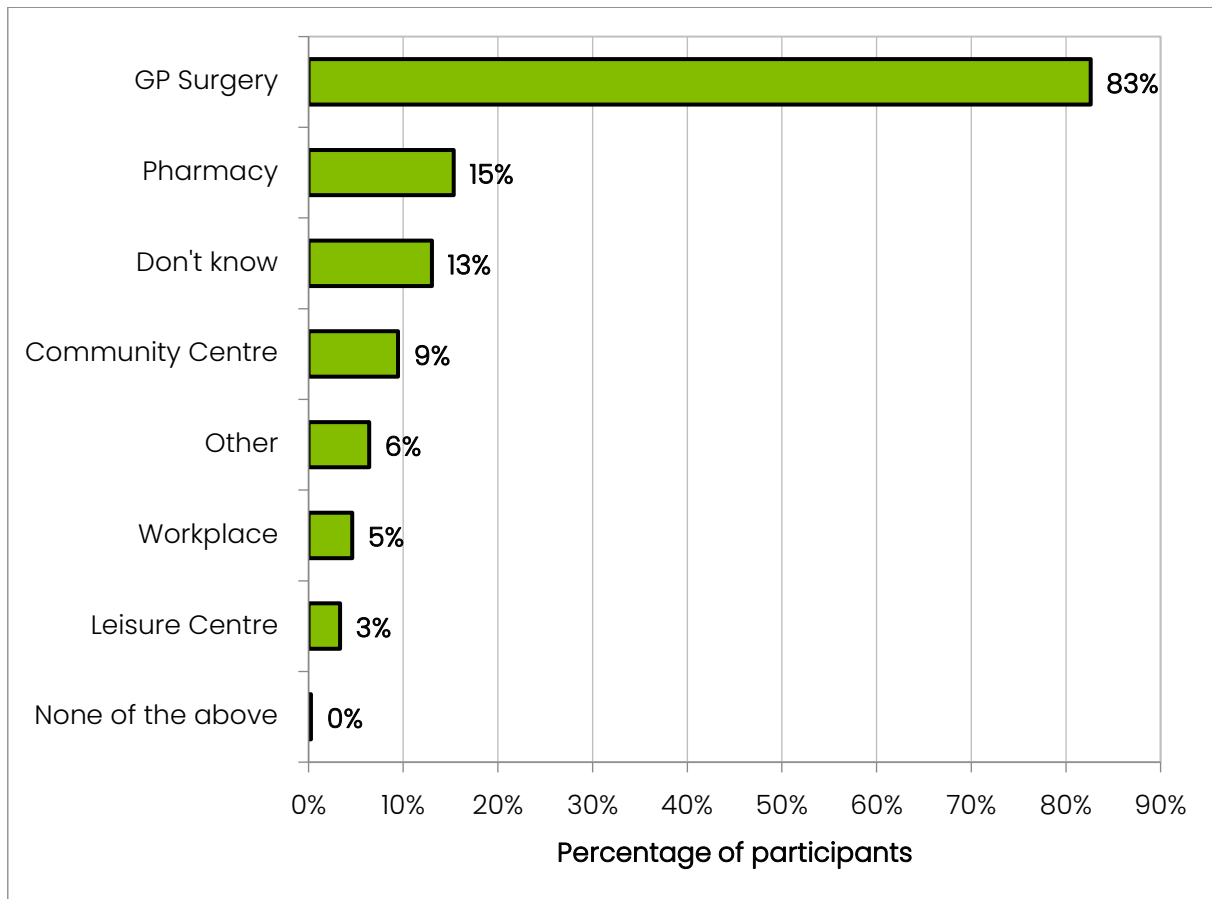


Figure 4. Responses to the question 'Where do you think you can access an NHS Health Check?'. Respondents were able to select more than one option.

## Invitation to NHS Health Checks

We also asked people how they would like to be invited to an NHS Health Check. As Figure 5 displays, the most common response was 'email', with 76% (291) of respondents saying they would choose this method. Half of respondents told us they would like to be invited via 'text message' (52%, 201) and only a minority of respondents (5%, 19) told us they did not want to be invited to an NHS Health Check.

One respondent told us that they would prefer to be sent a link in a text or email because they tend to lose letters. This is illustrated in the following extract:

**"The letter invitation put me off. i lose letters and they all look the same. a link in a text or email to book into an appointment slot would be more effective. also do them at centres covering larger areas. i don't think it's a good use of GP surgery's time."**

Preference for email invitation increases with age, from 68% (30) of people aged 40 to 49 to 81% (80) of people aged 70 to 79. Whereas preference for text message invitation decreases with age from 66% (29) of people aged 40 to 49 to less than half (45%, 45) of people aged 70 to 79.

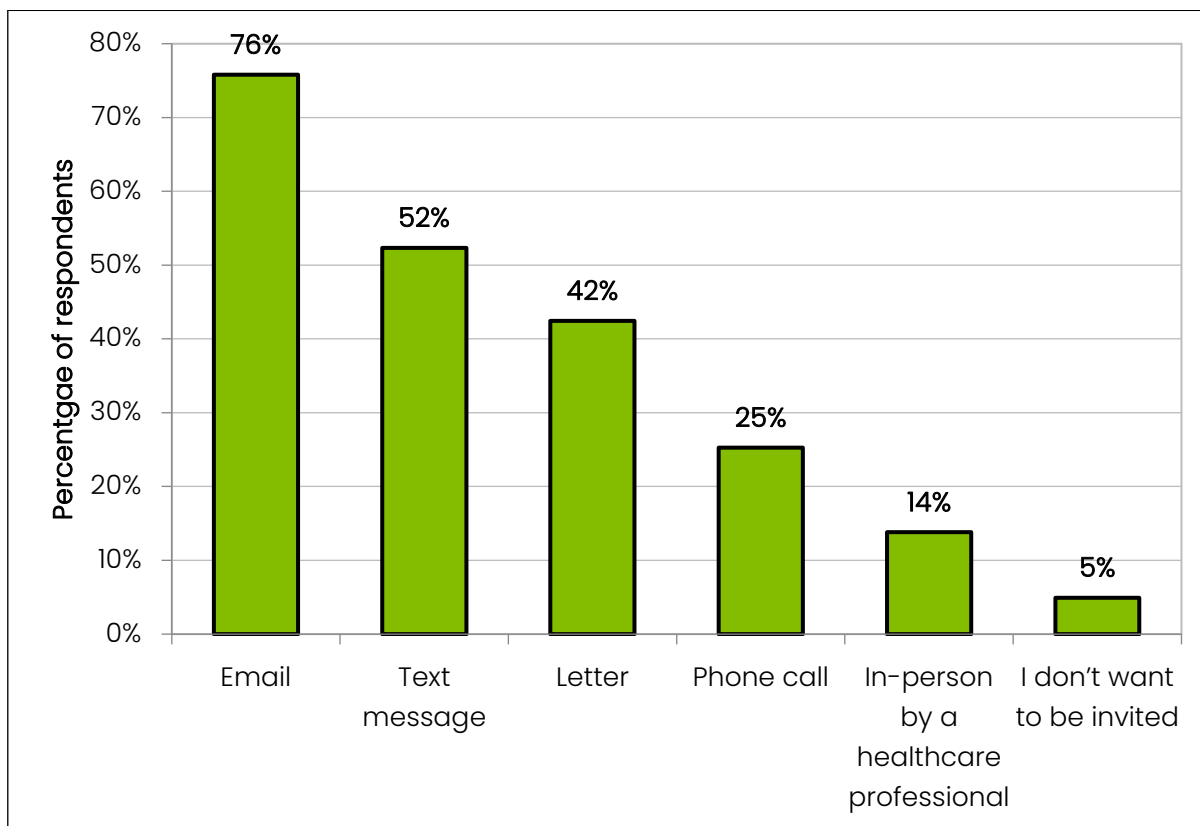


Figure 5. Responses to the question 'How would you like to be invited to an NHS Health Check?'. Respondents could select up to three options.

## Uptake of NHS Health Checks

Almost half of respondents have not been for an NHS Health Check in the last five years (48%, 188) compared to around a third of respondents (35%, 136) who have had an NHS Health Check. Some respondents were unsure whether or not they had been for an NHS Health Check (18%, 69). This is shown in Figure 6.

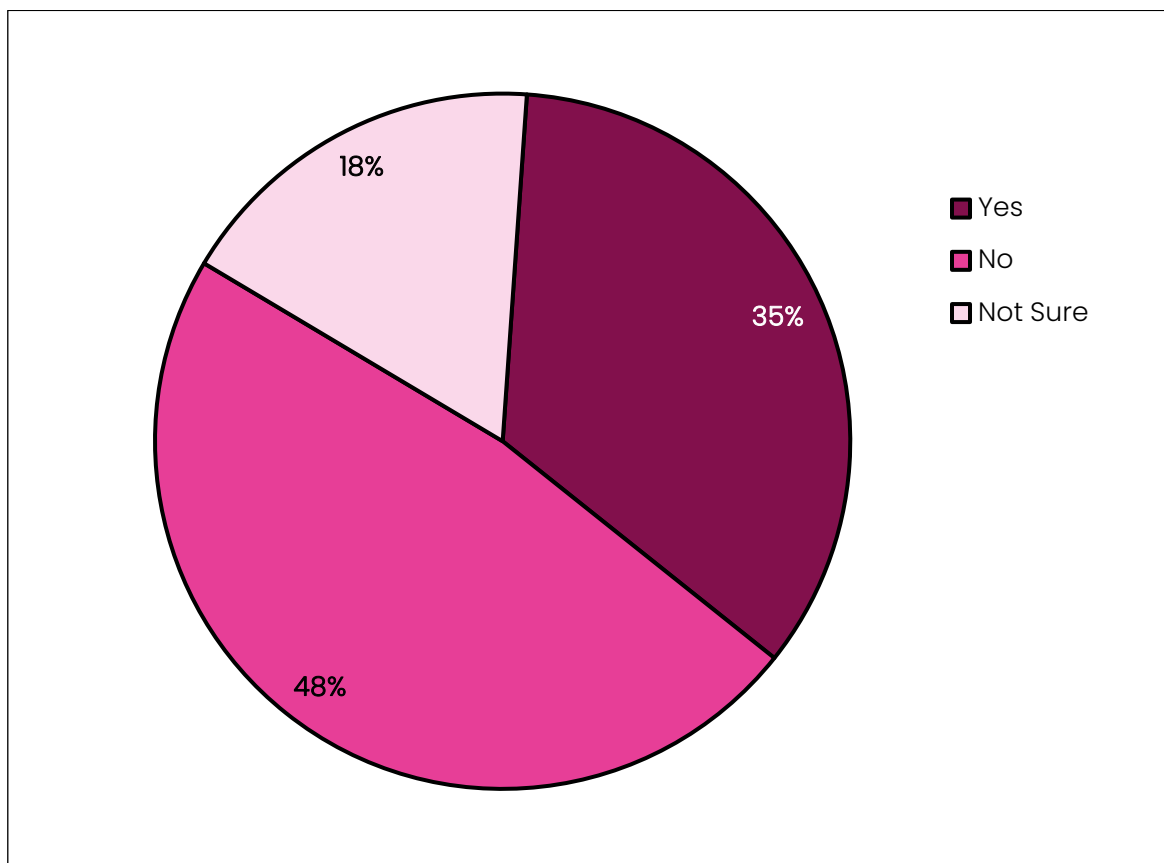


Figure 6. Responses to the question 'Have you been for an NHS Health Check in the last five years?'

Overall, women were more likely to attend an NHS Health Check than men. Almost half of female survey respondents (48%, 103) told us they have had an NHS Health Check in the last five years, compared to just 30% (29) of men.

There were only small variations between the age groups, with people aged 50 to 59 being the most likely to have had an NHS Health Check (38%, 35) and 60 to 69 year olds, the least likely (31%, 49). People with a disability (38%, 17) or long term condition (38%, 56) were the least likely to have had an NHS Health Check in the last five years.

There is a slight variation in attendance of NHS Health Checks in the different areas of Norfolk (Table 1). For example, half of respondents (49%, 19) in Great Yarmouth and Waveney have had an NHS Health Check in the last five years, compared to just 36% (18) of respondents in West Norfolk.

Table 1

*Number of respondents who have attended an NHS Health Check in the last five years, by Primary Care Network (PCN) area.*

Area	Total number of respondents	Attended an NHS Health Check	Percentage attended
Great Yarmouth and Waveney	39	19	49%
North Norfolk	56	27	48%
Norwich	76	31	41%
South Norfolk	89	34	38%
West Norfolk	50	18	36%

## Experiences of NHS Health Checks

Respondents who told us they have had an NHS Health Check in the last five years, were then asked a series of questions about their experience.

As displayed in Figure 7 most respondents felt the professional clearly explained what they were testing for and what would happen during the appointment (78%, 104). Only 10% (14) told us the professional was unclear in what they were testing for and what would happen during the appointment.

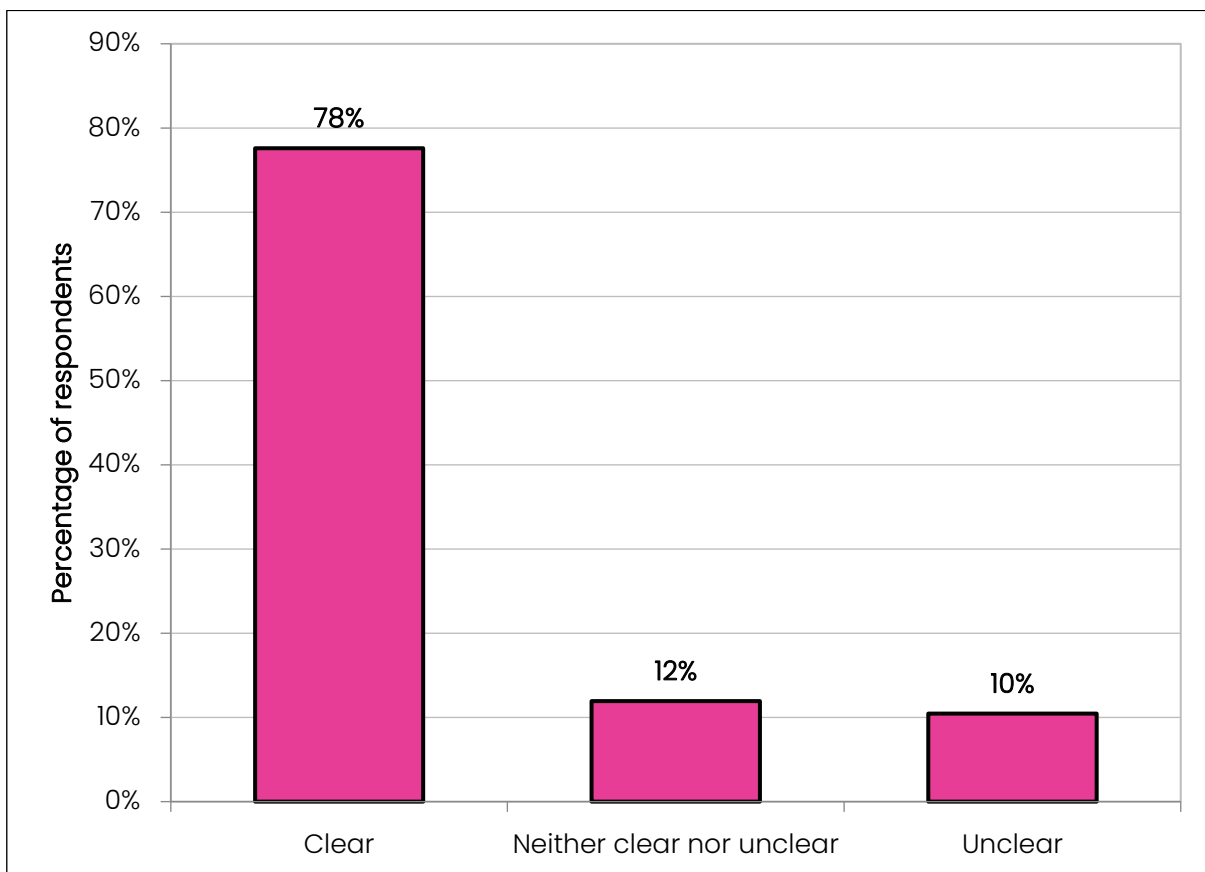


Figure 7. Responses to the question 'How clearly do you feel the professional explained what they were testing for and what would happen during the appointment?'

We also asked people how clearly they felt the professional explained their results. Most respondents told us they felt the professional explained their results clearly (73%, 99), 15% (20) told us their results were explained neither clearly nor unclearly and 12% (16) told us their results were unclearly explained.

## Further test and referrals

The majority of people did not have any tests or referrals as a result of, or following the NHS Health Check (60%, 82). This is displayed in Figure 8.

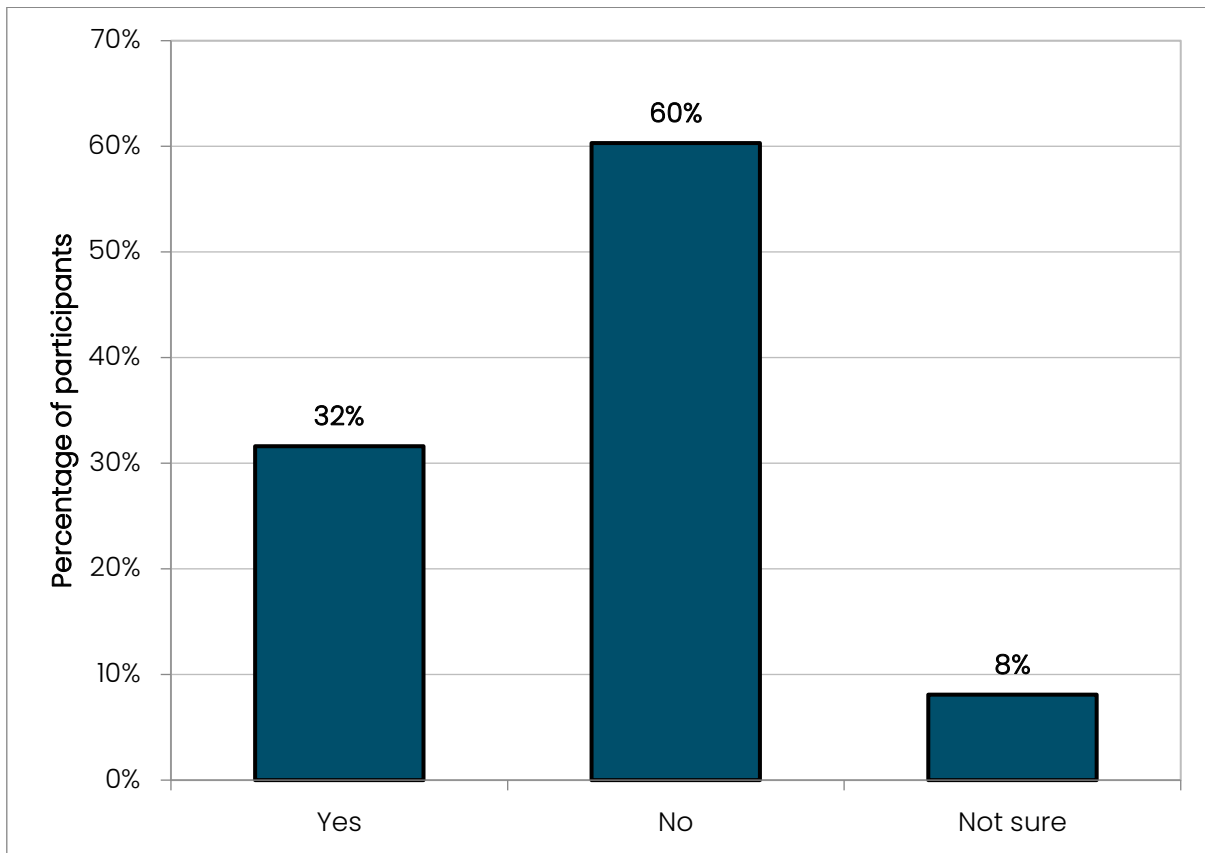


Figure 8. Responses to the question 'Did you have any further tests/ referrals because of the NHS Health Check?'

Only 32% (43) of respondents told us they had further tests or referrals as a result of the NHS Health Check. People aged 40 to 49 were the most likely to have further tests or referrals (18%, 8), whereas participants aged 60 to 69 were the least likely to (9%, 14). Women (36%, 37) were also more likely than men (17%, 5) to have further tests or referrals.

When asked to share further comments on their experience, there were a range of answers, both negative and positive.

Positive experiences included respondents simply describing the experience of having had further tests or referrals as 'good' to being impressed with the service. For example, one participant told us they had a: *'Swift follow-up (within a week of the Health Check) with excellent communication and a patient-centred approach.'*

Of respondents who described a negative experience, many mentioned that they were still waiting to be contacted, this is reflected in the comments below:

- *'Referred to GP practice, who did not respond to arrange an appointment'*
- *'Still waiting. Heathcheck in June but referral has only had confirmation that I am on waiting list not actual appointment'*

### Further advice

We asked people whether they were given any advice that might help them to lead a healthier lifestyle. Around a third of respondents were given no advice (35%, 45), a quarter (24%, 32) were given recommended nutritional (diet) advice, and only 6% (8) were referred to an exercise scheme or health trainer (Figure 9).

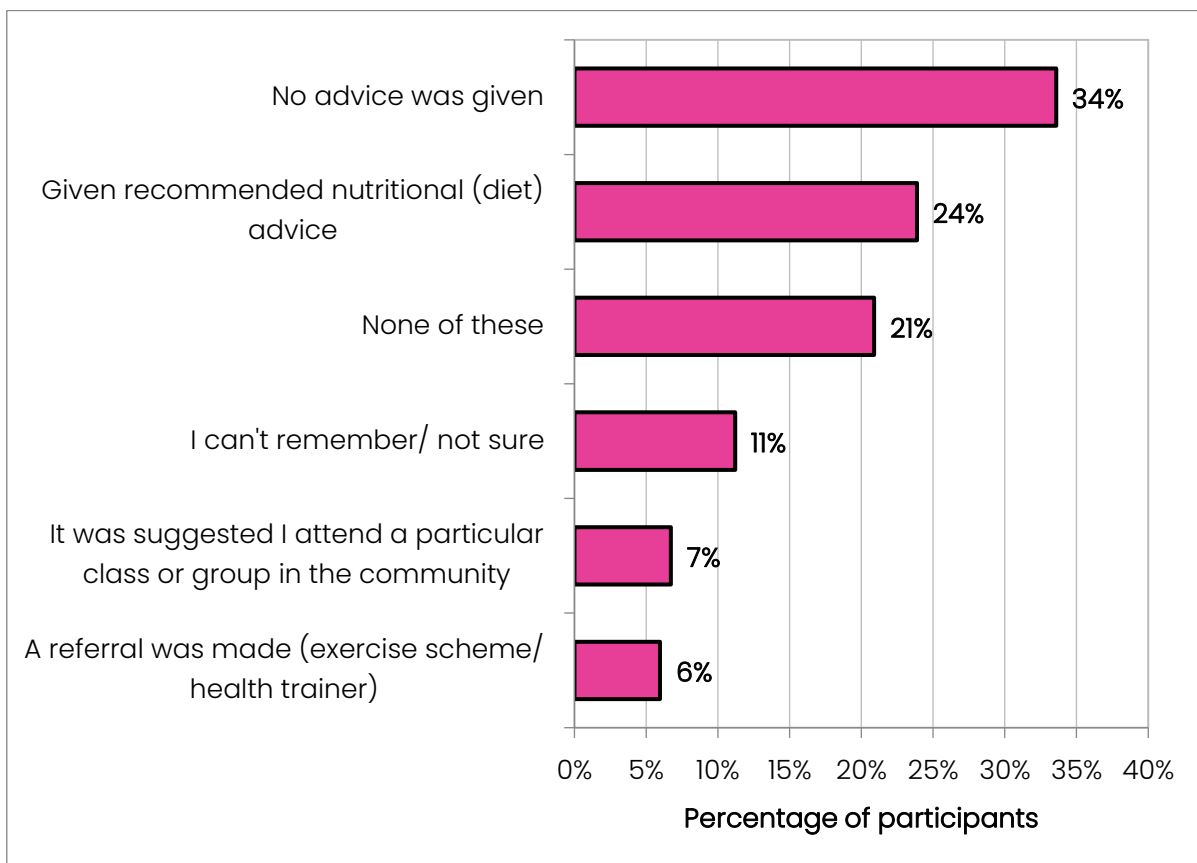


Figure 9. Responses to the question 'Were you given any advice that might help you to lead a healthier lifestyle?'. Respondents could choose more than one option.

Overall, men (69%, 20) were slightly more likely to receive advice than women (66%, 69). There are some key differences between men and women, in the advice they received to help them to lead a healthier lifestyle. Men (34%, 10) were



more likely to be given recommended nutritional (diet) advice than women (21%, 22) whereas women (9%, 9) were more likely than men to receive a suggestion to attend a particular class or group in the community. Surprisingly, no men were told to attend a class or group in the community.

The number of people receiving advice to lead a healthier lifestyle also varies by PCN area. Respondents in West Norfolk were the most likely to say they received no advice (18%, 9) compared to just 9% (5) of respondents in North Norfolk.

### Usefulness of advice

When asked how useful they found the advice they received, 29% (39) told us they received no advice. Of respondents who received advice (95), the majority found the advice useful (67%, 64), 13% (12) did not find the advice useful and 20% (19) said neither.

This is displayed in Figure 10.

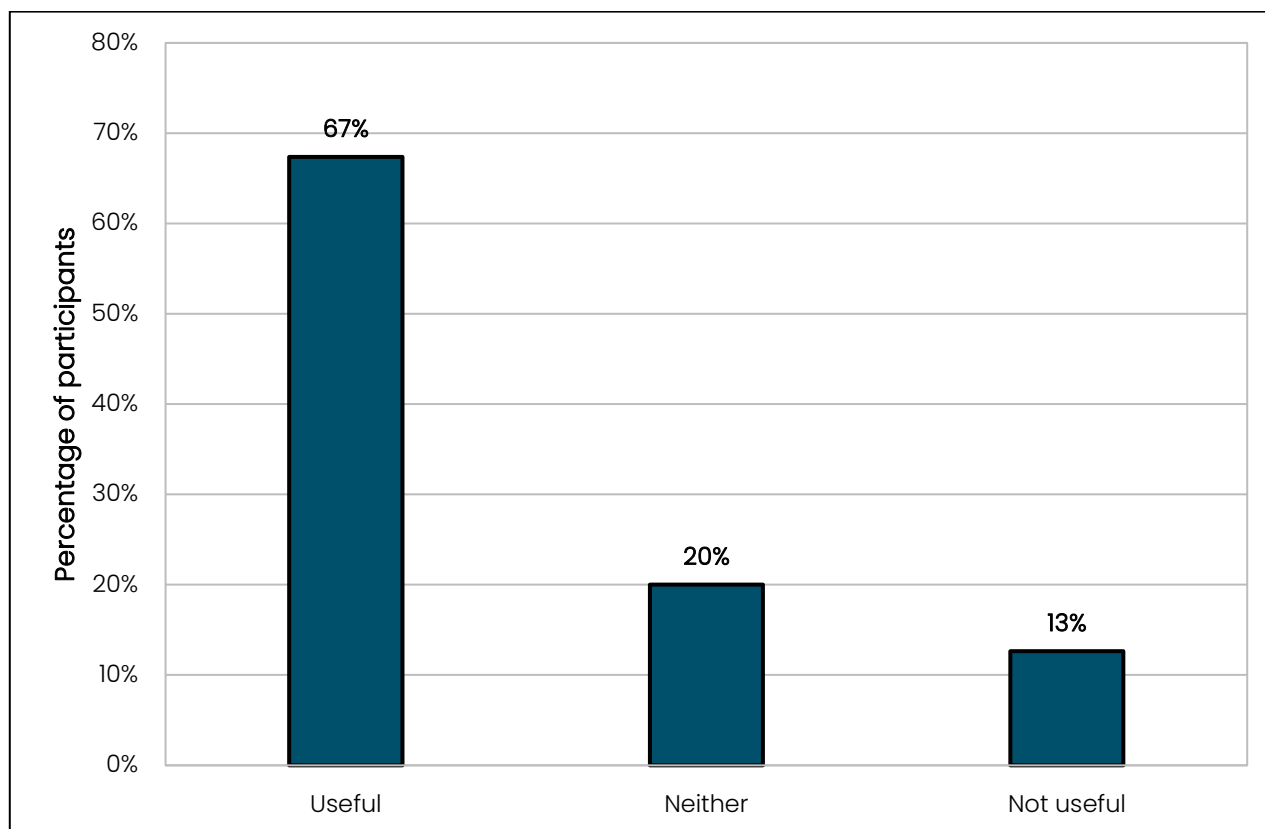


Figure 10. Responses to the question 'How useful do you think the advice you received was?'

## What difference did the NHS Health Check make

We asked participants what difference (if any) the NHS Health Check made (Figure 11). The most common difference that people told us was that they have a better understanding of their health (41%, 55). Around a quarter of respondents (26%, 35) told us the NHS Health Check made no difference and 23% (30) felt reassured.

Less than one in four respondents told us they changed their behaviour by eating more healthily (21%, 28), doing more exercise (16%, 21), reducing their alcohol intake (7%, 9), or stopping smoking (2%, 2). Only 8% (11) chose the 'other' option.

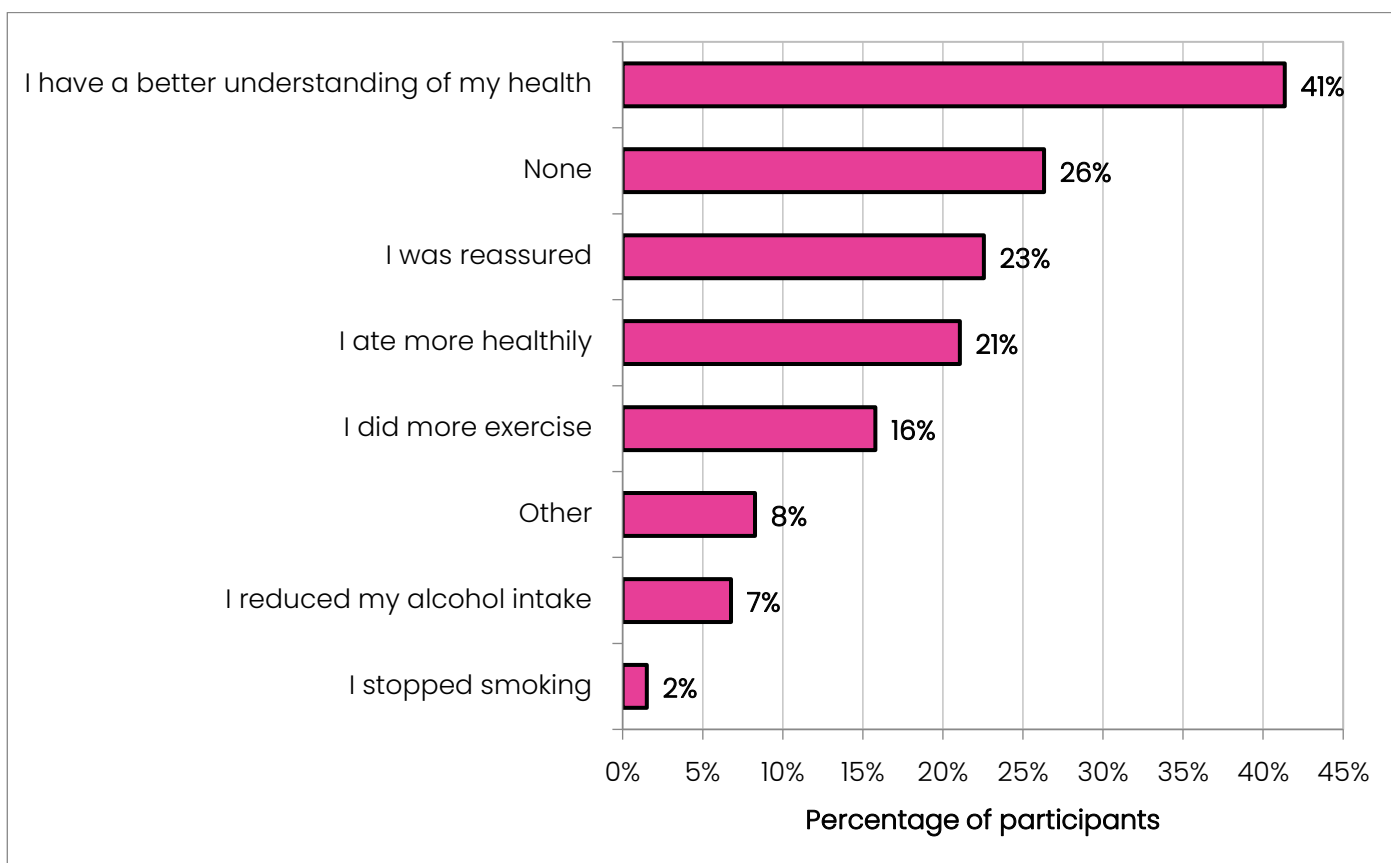


Figure 11. Responses to the question 'What difference (if any) did the NHS Health Check make?'. Respondents could select more than one option.

Men were more likely than women to change their behaviour by doing more exercise, reducing their alcohol intake or eating more healthily. Whereas women (19%, 26) were slightly more likely than men (16%, 8) to say that the NHS Health Check made no difference. This is displayed in Figure 12.

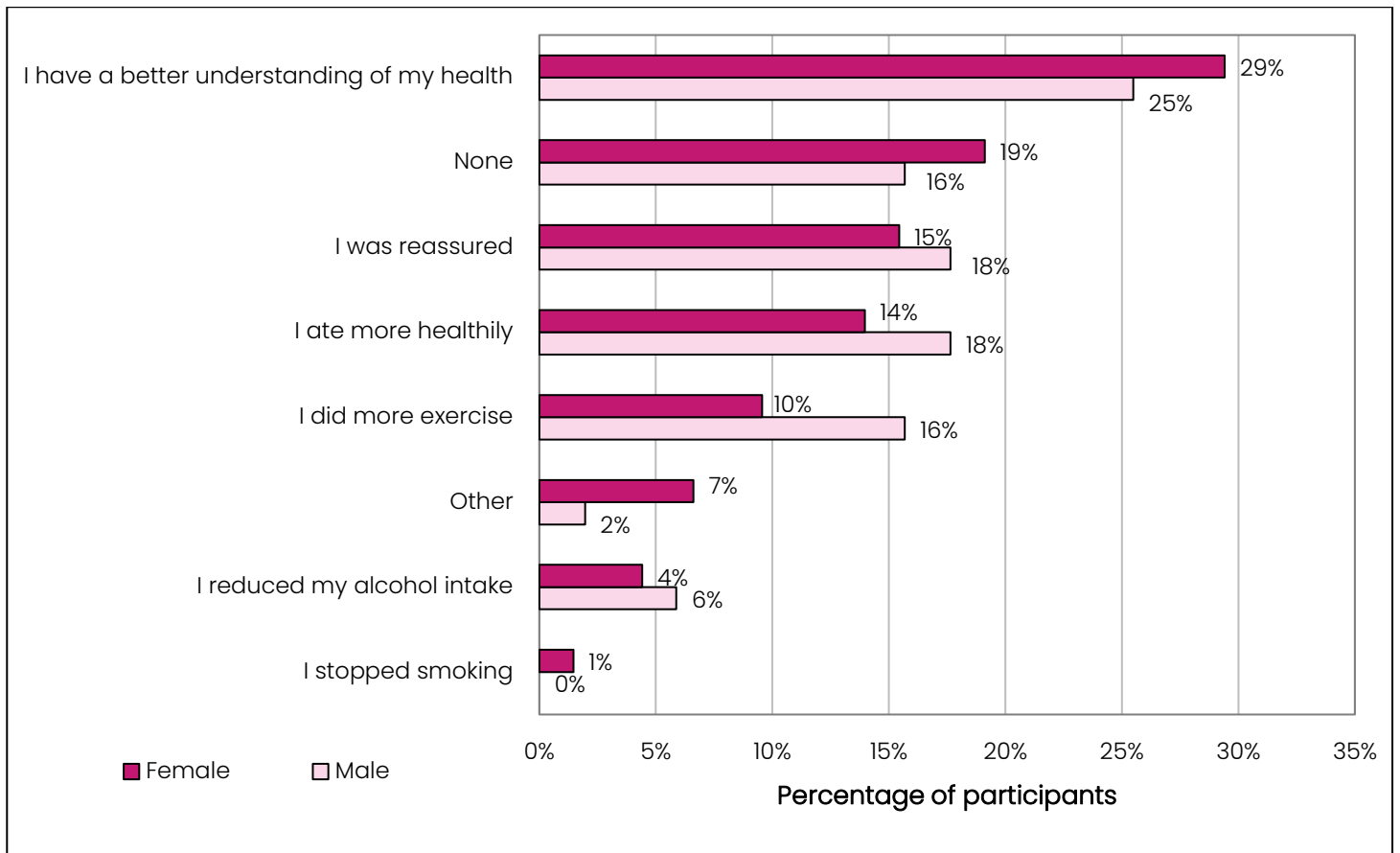


Figure 12. Responses to the question 'What difference (if any) did the NHS Health Check make?'. Comparison between men and women.

The number of respondents who received advice and changed their behaviour by doing more exercise, reducing their alcohol intake or eating more healthily varies across the age ranges. For example, people aged 40 to 49 were the most likely to do more exercise (27%, 4), whereas people aged 50 to 59 were the most likely to eat more healthily (45%, 9).

Participants were also asked whether they have a better understanding of their health after having an NHS Health Check (Figure 13). Half of respondents (49%, 67) told us they had a better understanding of their health. However, 28% (38) of respondents said they do not have a better understanding of their health, following their health check.

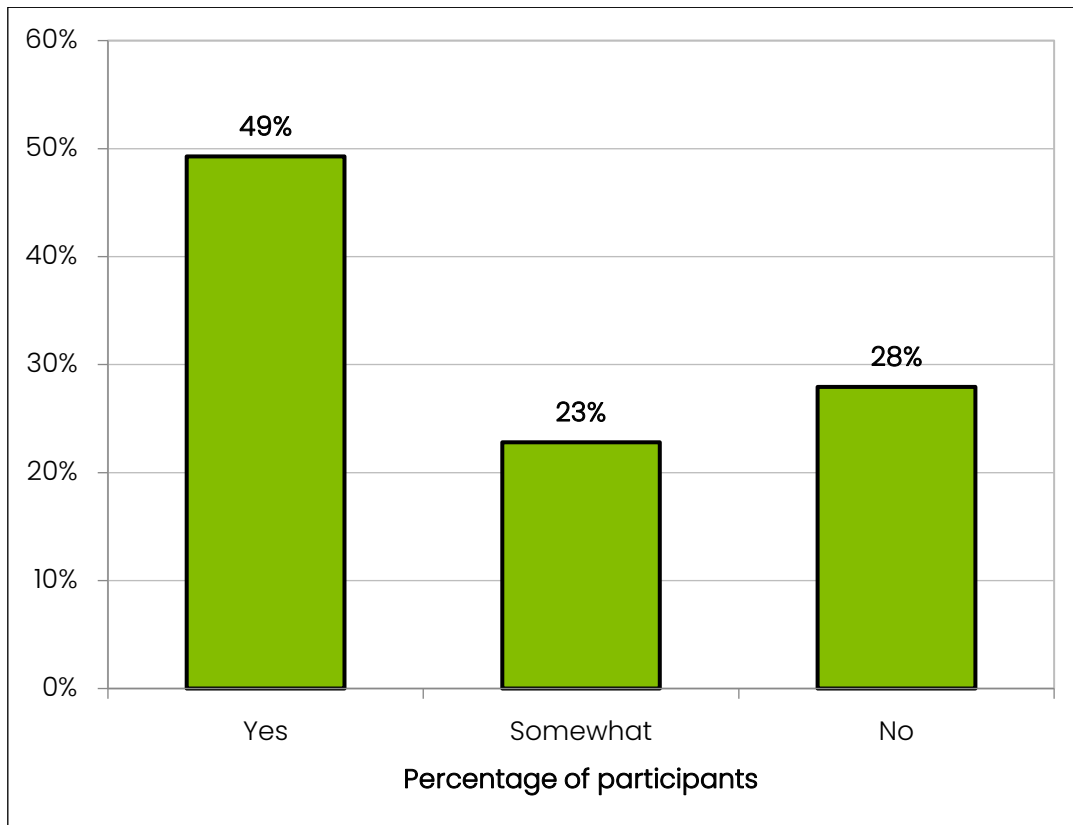


Figure 13. Responses to the question 'Having had an NHS Health Check, do you feel you have a better understanding of your health?'

### Would you have an NHS Health Check again?

Of respondents who have had an NHS Health Check, the majority (80%, 108) told us they would have one again. Only a minority (9%, 12) of respondents would not have an NHS Health Check again and 11% (15) were unsure (Figure 14).

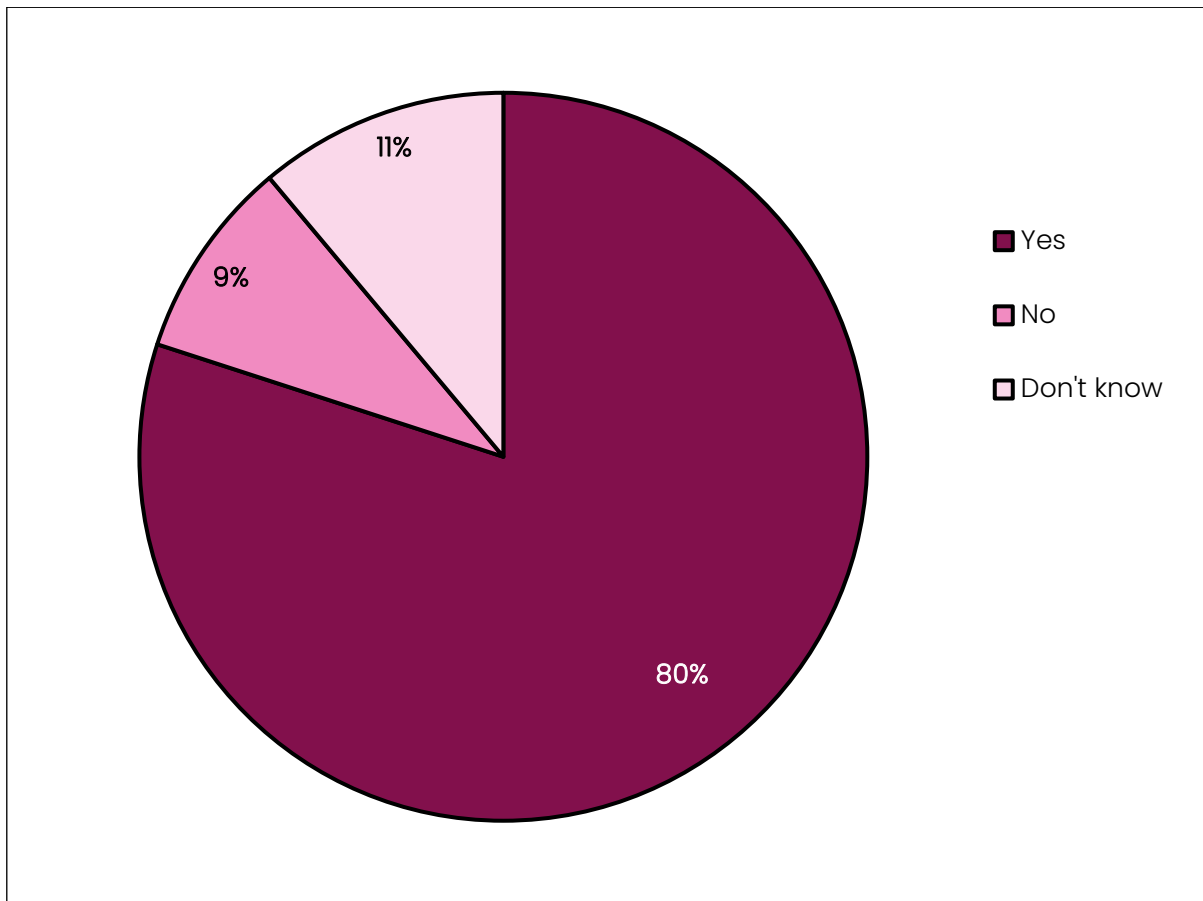


Figure 14. Responses to the question 'Would you have an NHS Health Check again?'

As part of this question, participants were asked to share further comments on why they had chosen their answer. Of participants that said they would have an NHS Health Check again, many mentioned the importance of monitoring their health, answers include:

- *'I find it helpful to know what my risks are and what I can do to reduce them'*
- *'Always happy to have any sort of health check as I'm interested in pursuing a healthy life style.'*
- *'Because it's really worthwhile, doesn't take long,'*
- *'Health issues can be picked up as well as been given advice on how to stay healthy'*

Similarly, another participant told us:

*"It makes sense to monitor one's health - especially later in life. Early diagnosis must benefit individuals and the NHS."*

Some people mentioned how NHS Health Checks provided them with reassurance and how they can use them to see changes or improvements in their health. One participant told us: *'I would like to understand where I am with my cholesterol now that I have adjusted my diet'*.

Of respondents that said they would not have an NHS Health Check again, a few mentioned that it was a waste of resources or that they would only have one if it tested for more health issues. One participant told us: *'It would have been far more helpful if the blood test had included testing for arthritis/rheumatism'*.

### Barriers to accessing NHS Health Checks

We asked respondents who have not had an NHS Health Check in the last five years, why not (Figure 15). The majority of respondents told us that they had not had an NHS Health Check because they had not had an invite (86%, 160).

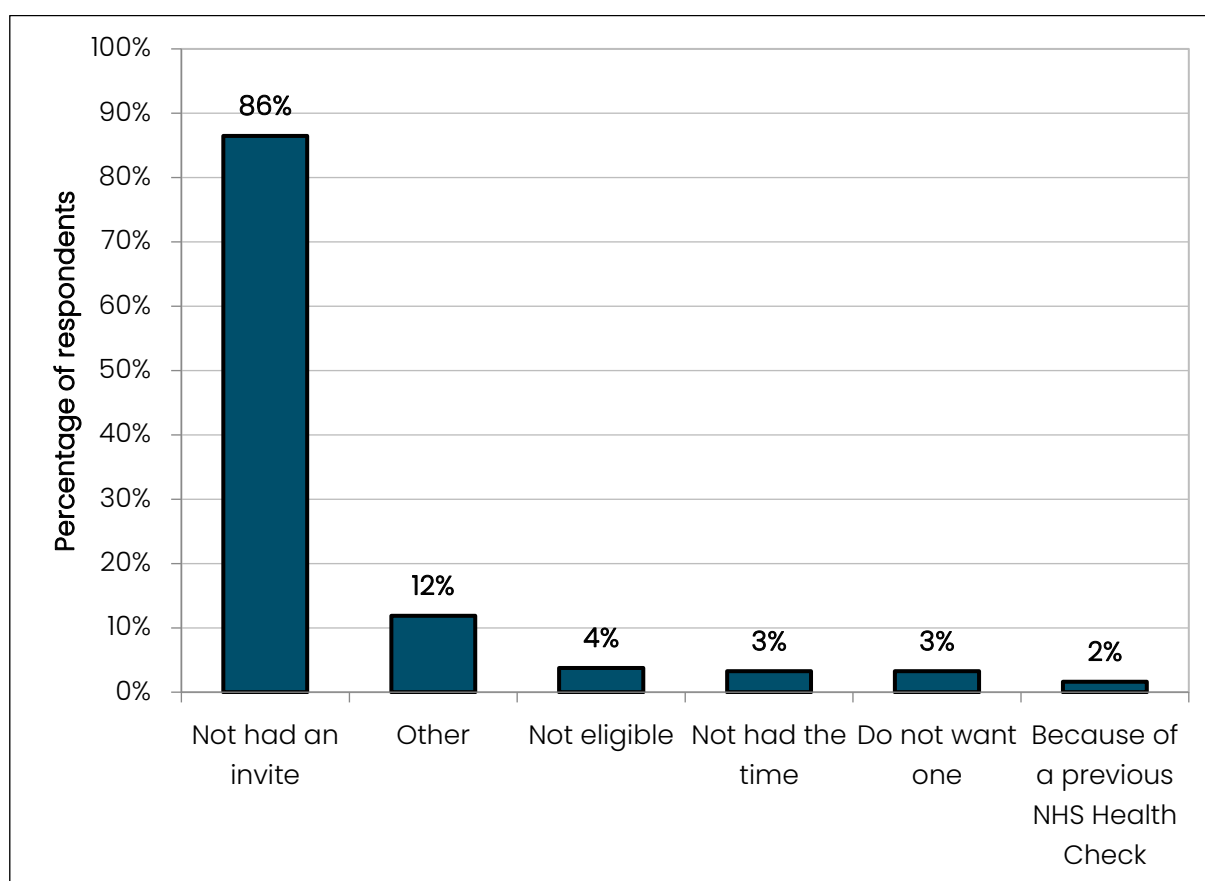


Figure 15. Responses to the question 'If you have not had or been offered an NHS Health Check in the last 5 years, why not?'. Respondents could select more than one option.

This lack of invitation was also reflected in open ended responses throughout the survey, for example:

- *"I'm now 56 and never had or been invited for a health check, however, you state for 40-70yr olds. How come never been invited before, 16yrs too late."*
- *"Well I would really like to be invited in for one!"*
- *"I don't know why I didn't receive an invitation to a health check"*

One respondent told us how they felt ignored and overlooked, due to not being invited for the NHS Health Check. This is illustrated in the following comment:

*"I didn't know that I was entitled to this check. I haven't been invited and am rather disappointed and I feel I've been ignored and overlooked."*

'Other' responses included a variety of answers, such as not being aware of NHS Health Checks and having difficulty getting a check at their GP surgery. For example, one respondent told us: *'[The] Surgery has no one to perform them so they aren't offered'* and another respondent said: *'I asked the surgery and they said they no longer do them unless for a specific problem'*.

## **What would make people more likely to have an NHS Health Check**

Participants were asked whether there is anything that would make them more likely to have an NHS Health Check (Figure 16). Location was the most common answer (39%, 70), with some respondents saying the location would need to be somewhere local and accessible. Respondents in West Norfolk were the most likely to say that the location of the NHS Health Check would make them more likely to have one (32%, 34). One participant told us: *'I live in a rural area so need to be easy access'*. Some participants also specifically mentioned that they would prefer to have an NHS Health Check at their GP surgery. This is illustrated in the following comment:

*"It would have to be at my surgery as I can't get to another one. I don't drive nor does my partner and I'm in a wheelchair. I'd like my surgery to contact me that way I could arrange a time"*.

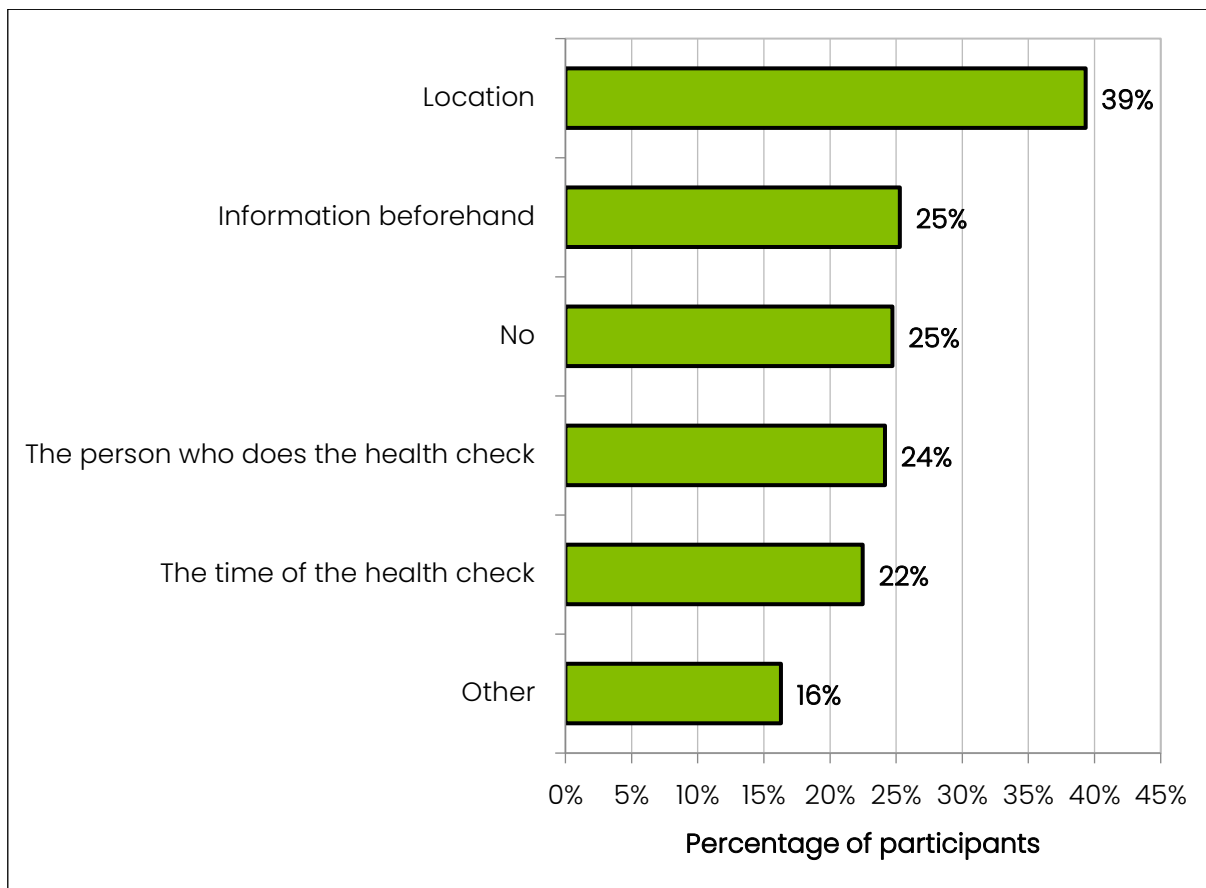


Figure 16. Responses to the question 'Is there anything that would make you more likely to have an NHS Health Check?'. Respondents could select more than one option.

One in four (25%, 45) people said information beforehand would make them more likely to have an NHS Health Check, with some people mentioning that they would like more information on what to expect during an NHS Health Check. A similar number of respondents (24%, 43) told us that the person who does the health check would make them more likely to have an NHS Health Check, with some participants mentioning that they would like a doctor to carry out the check.

Several people also told us that the time of the health check (22%, 40) would make them more likely to have one. Many participants said that the time would need to be convenient to fit around their work or availability. This is illustrated in the following extract: *'I work full time and dont want to spend a day off going for one. Maybe a weekend appointment would be better? I dont know if they do them'*

Of the respondents who chose the 'other' option (16%, 29), many mentioned that they would be more likely to have an NHS Health Check if they received an invitation, answers include:



- *“Actually being invited to one. our surgery is very bad at this sort of thing”*
- *“If invited I am always happy to take part in an NHS health check as it is of benefit... prevention is better than cure”*
- *“Being invited! I have never been asked in the last 30 years.. this is not preventative medicine!”*

## **Other comments**

We asked survey respondents, if they had anything else they would like to tell us about NHS Health Checks. Apart from the lack of invitation already mentioned, several respondents told us that NHS Health Checks are a good idea, this is illustrated in the following comment: *‘I think they are a good thing. I’m glad I went for one’* and *‘Health checks are an excellent idea, it checks on underlying issues before they get worse’*. Some people also mentioned that they thought NHS Health Checks should be more regular, with some suggesting that NHS Health Checks should be annual.

## **Feedback from healthcare staff**

Additionally, we asked healthcare staff (at a subset of GP practices) about their experiences of delivering NHS Health Checks. We received a total of six responses.

When asked what method they use to send out invites, several staff members told us they send letters to invite patients to their NHS Health Check. Staff at one practice mentioned that whilst they use letters, they have had more success with opportunistic offers. Other invitation methods included text messages, telephone calls and verbal invites.

Healthcare staff listed a variety of barriers they face when delivering NHS Health Checks. These included, not all staff being trained, staff shortages, the demand on healthcare assistants and there not being enough space within the practice. One staff member told us they think the uptake for their surgery is good but mentioned that the some of their outside provider’s blood pressure and cholesterol machines were not working well, which created more work for the surgery.

We also asked healthcare staff whether there is anything that would help them to deliver more NHS Health Checks. There were a range of answers, with one staff member suggesting that NHS Health Check letters should be available in multiple languages, whilst another told us they needed more space. A few staff told us that there was nothing that would help them deliver more NHS Health Checks.

# What this means

Our sample size of 393 responses represents less than 1% of the eligible population for health checks in Norfolk. The majority of respondents were women, which does not reflect the population as we would expect to see broadly equal numbers of women and men.

The majority of respondents were white British, or white other, which is broadly in line with the population of Norfolk and Waveney. Almost half of respondents told us they had a long term condition. Similarly, we only received a small number of responses from people aged 40–49. Therefore, our sample may not be representative of the wider population of Norfolk.

From the responses that we received the majority of the people welcomed the opportunity to have an NHS Health Check and the majority of those who have had an NHS Health Check in the last five years, told us they would have one again, with many mentioning the importance of monitoring their health.

Whilst there was a low uptake of NHS Health Checks amongst survey respondents, the most common barrier to accessing the NHS Health Check was not being invited to one. This suggests that the main reason for the low uptake is lack of communication rather than people not wanting an NHS Health Check. This lack of communication is a common theme which ran throughout the survey. However, it should be noted that not everyone is eligible for an NHS Health Check (NHS, 2022a) and those who are not eligible, will not receive an invitation. Therefore, some respondents may think that they should have received an invitation if they were unaware of the NHS Health Check eligibility criteria.

When asked how they would like to be invited to an NHS Health Check, the most common invitation method was email, followed by text message. Older people prefer an email invitation, whereas younger people, prefer an invitation by text message. A range of ways to invite patients to have an NHS Health Check would help to reach as many people as possible. Multiple invitations or reminders could also be sent to help make people more aware that they are being invited. Prompts on a computer system in general practice, could also be used to remind healthcare staff to send out invites to eligible patients, research has

shown that computer generated prompts in general practice have also helped to improve uptake of NHS Health Checks (Gold, 2021).

There are also other barriers to accessing NHS Health Checks that need to be addressed. When people were asked what would make them more likely to have an NHS Health Check, the most common answer was location. Some respondents mentioned that the check would need to be somewhere local and easily accessible. People in West Norfolk were most likely to say that the location of the NHS Health Check would make them more likely to have one. Some people also mentioned that the time of the NHS Health Check would need to fit around their other commitments or work.

Information about the purpose of having an NHS Health Check, where they can have an NHS Health Check and who should do it could be improved.

Whilst most people were aware that NHS Health Checks aim to help prevent diabetes, heart disease and stroke, less than half were aware that NHS Health Checks also aim to help prevent kidney disease and dementia. Some respondents also thought that NHS Health Checks aim to help prevent cancer, mental health problems and arthritis (although these conditions are not tested for during the check). Those who have not previously had an NHS Health Check had less understanding about the purpose – emphasising the need for clearer information to be included with the invitation.

Only a minority of people were aware that they can access an NHS Health Check at pharmacies, community centres or leisure centres. Information about alternative venues to GP surgeries could also help to increase take-up for those who cannot access their local GP surgery due to location or their working hours. One way this could be done is by adding a list of the places and times NHS Health Checks can be accessed, in the invitation.

A few people specifically mentioned that they would like a doctor to carry out the check. However, it is important to communicate to people why it does not need to be the GP carrying out NHS Health Checks and reassure them that any concerns that are identified can be referred appropriately. Most people told us that the professional who completed the NHS Health Check explained what they were testing for, what would happen during the NHS Health Check and their results clearly.

One of the key aspects of NHS Health Checks is the advice, information and support given to people to modify their CVD risk. Of the respondents who received advice the majority found it useful. However, our survey identified that many people are not being given advice at NHS Health Checks, for example: around a third of respondents (34%, 45) told us they were given no advice to help them lead a healthier lifestyle. Although, it should be noted that sometimes advice does not need to be given. Only a minority of respondents were told to attend a particular class or were referred to an exercise scheme or health trainer. The survey responses also highlighted some disparities in the advice given to men and women, with men more likely to be given advice about diet but not referred to an exercise scheme. There was also variation according to where people lived, people in West Norfolk were mostly likely to say they did not receive any advice to lead a healthier lifestyle.

There is limited behaviour change following an NHS Health Check. Without changing their behaviour, people cannot modify their CVD risk which is one of the key factors of an NHS Health Check. Many respondents told us that the NHS Health Check made no difference and less than a quarter told us they changed their behaviour by eating more healthily, doing more exercise, reducing their alcohol intake or stopping smoking. We would anticipate that the majority of people who attend an NHS Health Check would have some health behaviour that could be modified in some way.

The findings suggest that there is a need for staff to be trained and supported to provide appropriate advice, how they can better facilitate behaviour change and encourage people to reduce their risk of CVD.

Overall, the findings of this report suggests that the NHS Health Check is not making as much difference to people's risk of CVD as it could be. There needs to be an increase in the number of NHS Health Check invitations being sent and including behaviour change support could help people to make changes, which could modify their CVD risk.

# Recommendations

From the findings of this piece of work several recommendations can be made to Norfolk County Council Public Health team regarding what they can do to help raise awareness and improve uptake of NHS Health Checks in Norfolk.

## **Increase communication and information about NHS Health Checks**

- Norfolk County Council Public Health team should increase communication about what an NHS Health Check is, the conditions it aims to prevent, the purpose of the check and the other places NHS Health Checks can be accessed. A variety of communication methods (e.g., leaflets, posters, social media posts) should be used, to reach as many people as possible.
- Norfolk County Council Public Health team should also promote the type of work that Reed Wellbeing have undertaken, including their outreach and community based work. They offer NHS Health Checks at a variety of community venues convenient to the service user. This could help to raise awareness of the other times and locations NHS Health Checks are available.
- Norfolk County Council Public Health team should partner with GP Surgeries, Pharmacies, NHS Health Check providers and community organisations to encourage these to distribute more the information around NHS Health Check including who should do NHS Health Checks and why (e.g., highlighting that NHS Health Checks are not a job for GPs and how any identified concerns can be referred appropriately). NHS Health Checks could also be promoted through GP websites via Footfall.
- Norfolk County Council Public Health team should review their data on men's uptake of NHS Health Checks on an ongoing basis.

## **Invitation templates should be available in a variety of formats and include more information on NHS Health Checks**

- Information about what an NHS Health Check is, and the other places people can access NHS Health Checks (such as pharmacies, leisure centres and community centres) and the times these are available should be included in the invitation.

- NHS Health Check invitation templates should be available in a variety of formats, for example, email, text message and letter.

## **More invitations should be sent and a range of ways to invite patients should be used**

- There needs to be a range of ways to invite patients, to ensure as many people are reached as possible. GP practices should invite patients to an NHS Health Check, in line with the patient's communication preferences. For example, if a patient has signed up for text alerts it may be better to invite them to their NHS Health Check via text message, rather than a letter.
- There should be an increase in the number of invitations sent. Multiple invitations or reminders could be used to increase uptake. Prompts on a computer system in general practice, could also be used to remind healthcare staff to send out invites to eligible patients.

## **More staff training into how to give personalised advice to help facilitate behaviour change**

- All staff delivering the NHS Health Checks should receive more training on how to give personalised advice about prevention and the actions people can take to help facilitate behaviour change. Staff should be made more aware of the barriers to behaviour change and consider these when giving specific advice and be trained in how to proactively deliver key messages. As mentioned in our 'Insight into prevention activity in Norfolk & Waveney' (2022) report, what intervention or activity works well for one person will not work well for another. This is why staff should be trained to give people personalised advice to facilitate behaviour change.

For more information on the barriers to making healthier lifestyle changes, see the Healthwatch Norfolk 'Insight into prevention activity in Norfolk & Waveney' (2022) report.

- All staff should be made aware of the eligibility criteria for referring people to services that support behaviour change, such as exercise referral schemes or classes/ groups in the community, to ensure that everyone who needs to be referred is.

# Formal Response

## Public Health, Norfolk County Council response to Healthwatch Norfolk NHS Health Checks report

Ciceley Scarborough Acting Consultant in Public Health

9<sup>th</sup> March 2023

*Public Health, Norfolk County Council commissioned this report from Healthwatch Norfolk and welcome the findings. After a review of our NHS Health Check programme, we are working across the Health System with those who deliver NHS Health Checks which includes, GP's, Pharmacists, and our provider Reed Wellbeing to improve our service and provide quality NHS Health Checks for residents of Norfolk who meet the eligibility criteria.*

*The detail in the report and the helpful recommendations give us a valuable insight into resident voice about NHS Health Checks. We will embed the learning from the report into our NHS Health Check improvement programme. We would welcome a further conversation with Healthwatch in the future to assess progress against their recommendations.*



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# Appendix

## Appendix 1: NHS Health Check eligibility

### Am I eligible for an NHS Health Check?

The check is for people who are aged 40 to 74 who do not have any of the following pre-existing conditions:

- heart disease
- chronic kidney disease
- diabetes
- high blood pressure (hypertension)
- atrial fibrillation
- transient ischaemic attack
- inherited high cholesterol (familial hypercholesterolemia)
- heart failure
- peripheral arterial disease
- stroke
- currently being prescribed statins to lower cholesterol
- previous checks have found that you have a 20% or higher risk of getting cardiovascular disease over the next 10 years

You should have regular check-ups if you have one of these conditions. Your care team will be able to give you more information about this.

### How do I get an NHS Health Check?

If you're in the 40 to 74 age group without a pre-existing condition, you should receive a letter from your GP surgery or local council inviting you for a free NHS Health Check every 5 years. You can also call your GP surgery to book a Health Check. You may want to try this online [Heart Age test](#).

NHS. (2022a). *NHS Health Check*. Retrieved from <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-health-check/>

## Appendix 2: Healthcare Staff questions

### SmartSurvey example

#### Who is Healthwatch Norfolk?

Healthwatch Norfolk is the independent voice for patients and service users in the county. We gather your views of health and social care services to ensure they are heard by the people in charge.

#### What is this survey about?

We are working with Norfolk County Council (NCC) to understand more about people's experiences and uptake of NHS Health Checks in Norfolk. To gather this feedback, we have developed a survey. The responses will be used by Healthwatch Norfolk to make recommendations to NCC as part of a project report.

As part of this project, we would be grateful if the practice manager (or staff) could please complete this short survey. The survey should take approximately ten minutes to complete.

We are also contacting local GP surgeries to arrange to conduct face-to-face engagement with their patients (at a select number of practices) with a focus on collecting feedback on NHS Health Checks.

#### How the survey results will be used

Survey responses are being collected and analysed by Healthwatch Norfolk. You can read our full privacy policy at:

<http://www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk/about-us/privacy-statement>.

All responses will be anonymous and will be used to make recommendations to health and social care providers. The report will also be publicly available on our website and may be used in other Healthwatch Norfolk communications.

#### Want to keep in touch?

To stay up to date with what we are doing at Healthwatch, you can sign up to our newsletter via our website: <http://www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk>

If you do not use email, you can call Healthwatch Norfolk on 01953 856029 to ask to receive our newsletter via post.

Survey closing date: 3rd January 2023

If you would prefer to do this survey with us over the phone, please call Healthwatch Norfolk on 01953 856029 and we will arrange a time to ring you back to complete the survey.

Alternatively, please email: [enquiries@healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk) for further support.

Please note: questions marked with an asterisk (\*) require a response.

Please tick to confirm \*

I have read and understood the above statement

Healthwatch Norfolk produce newsletters about health and social care in Norfolk. If you'd like to receive this newsletter please leave your email here:

1. What method do you use to send out invites to eligible patients inviting them to have an NHS Health Check (e.g. Email, letter etc)?

2. Is there anything that would help you send out more invites for the NHS Health Check?

3. Do you face any barriers to delivering NHS Health Checks?

4. Is there anything that would help you deliver more NHS Health Checks?

5. Is there anything else you would like to say about NHS Health Checks?

6. What doctors' surgery do you work at?

## Appendix 3: Demographic Data

		Percentage of respondents	Number of respondents
<b>Age</b>	40 to 49	11%	44
	50 to 59	23%	91
	60 to 69	40%	157
	70 to 79	26%	101
<b>Gender</b>	Female	68%	216
	Male	30%	96
	Gender Fluid	<1%	1
	Prefer to self-describe	<1%	1
	Prefer not to say	2%	5
<b>Sexuality</b>	Heterosexual or straight	89%	280
	Bisexual	3%	8
	Gay or Lesbian	3%	8
	Pansexual	<1%	1
	Prefer to self-describe	1%	3
	Prefer not to say	4%	14
<b>Ethnic group</b>	White: British/English/Northern Irish/Scottish	92%	291
	Any other White background	4%	14
	White: Irish	1%	2
	Black/Black British: African	<1%	1
	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: Asian and White	<1%	1
	Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups: Black Caribbean and White	<1%	1

	Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups background	<1%	1
	Prefer not to say	2%	5
<b>Disability</b>	I have a disability	14%	45
<b>Long Term Condition</b>	I have a long term condition	47%	147
<b>Carer</b>	I am a carer	6%	19

<b>Doctors' Surgery</b>	<b>Percentage of respondents</b>	<b>Number of respondents</b>
Acle Medical Partnership	1%	4
Aldborough Surgery	0%	1
Andaman Surgery	0%	1
Attleborough Surgeries	3%	8
Bacon Road Medical Centre	1%	3
Beechcroft and Old Palace	1%	2
Boughton Surgery	0%	1
Bridge Road Surgery	1%	2
Bridge Street Surgery	1%	2
Brundall Medical Partnership	0%	1
Bungay Medical Centre	0%	1
Campingland Surgery	0%	1
Chet Valley Medical Practice	2%	5
Coastal Villages	2%	5
Coltishall Medical Practice	1%	2
Cromer Group Practice	1%	4
Cutlers Hill Surgery	0%	1
Drayton St Faiths and Horsford	2%	5
East Harling and Kenninghall Medical Practice	1%	3
East Norfolk Medical Practice	0%	1



East Norwich Medical Partnership	2%	7
Elmham Surgery	0%	1
Fakenham Medical Practice	2%	7
Feltwell Surgery	2%	5
Great Massingham and Docking	1%	3
Grove Surgery	1%	2
Harleston Medical Practice	1%	3
Heacham Group Practice	2%	7
Heathgate Medical Practice	1%	2
Hellesdon Medical Practice	1%	3
High Street Surgery	1%	2
Hingham Surgery	0%	1
Holt Medical Practice	4%	11
Hoveton and Wroxham Medical Centre	1%	3
Humbleyard Practice	8%	24
Kirkley Mill Health Centre	0%	1
Lakenham Surgery	1%	4
Lawson Road Surgery	1%	4
Lionwood Medical Practice	2%	7
Litcham Health Centre	1%	2
Ludham and Stalham Green Surgeries	1%	3
Magdalen Medical Practice	0%	1
Manor Farm Medical Centre	1%	3
Market Surgery	1%	2
Mattishall and Lenwade Surgeries	0%	1
Mundesley Medical Centre	1%	2
Norwich Practices' Health Centre	1%	3
Oak Street Medical Practice	2%	6
Old Catton Medical Practice	1%	4

Old Mill and Millgates Medical Practice	1%	3
Orchard Surgery	1%	4
Parish Fields Practice	3%	8
Park Surgery	2%	6
Paston Surgery	1%	2
Plowright Medical Centre	1%	3
Reepham and Aylsham Medical Practice	1%	2
Rosedale Surgery	1%	2
Roundwell Medical Centre	0%	1
Sheringham Medical Practice	1%	2
Southgates and The Woottons Surgeries	3%	9
St James Medical Practice	2%	6
St Johns Surgery	0%	1
St Stephens Gate Medical Partnership	4%	11
Staithe Surgery	1%	4
Taverham Partnership	0%	1
The Beaches Medical Centre	3%	9
The Burnhams Surgery	1%	4
The Lawns Medical Practice	0%	1
The Millwood Partnership	3%	8
Theatre Royal Surgery	1%	3
Trinity and Bowthorpe Medical Practice	2%	7
Upwell Health Centre	1%	2
Vida Healthcare	0%	1
Watton Medical Practice	2%	6
Wensum Valley Medical Practice	1%	2
West Pottergate Medical Practice	1%	4

Windmill Surgery	1%	2
Woodcock Road Surgery	2%	6
Wymondham Medical Practice	4%	12

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## Appendix 4: Survey Questions

### Who is Healthwatch Norfolk?

Healthwatch Norfolk is the independent voice for patients and service users in the county. We gather your views of health and social care services to ensure they are heard by the people in charge.

### What is this survey about?

If you are between 40-74 years old you may be eligible for an NHS Health Check.

An NHS Health Check will check for certain health problems or early signs of some conditions. In Norfolk we want to increase the amount of people who go for their free NHS Health Check. We want to understand more about people's experiences of NHS Health Checks in Norfolk, and this short questionnaire will help us do that.

The survey should take approximately ten minutes to complete.

### How the survey results will be used

Survey responses are being collected and analysed by Healthwatch Norfolk. You can read our full privacy policy at:

<http://www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk/about-us/privacy-statement>.

All responses will be anonymous and will be used to make recommendations to health and social care providers. The report will also be publicly available on our website and may be used in other Healthwatch Norfolk communications.

### Want to keep in touch?

To stay up to date with what we are doing at Healthwatch, you can sign up to our newsletter via our website: <http://www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk>

If you do not use email, you can call Healthwatch Norfolk on 01953 856029 to ask to receive our newsletter via post.

Survey closing date: 3rd January 2023

If you would prefer to do this survey with us over the phone, please call Healthwatch

Norfolk on 01953 856029 and we will arrange a time to ring you back to complete the survey.

Alternatively, please email: [enquiries@healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk) for further support.

Please note: questions marked with an asterisk (\*) require a response.

Please tick to confirm \*

I have read and understood the above statement

How old are you? \*

Healthwatch Norfolk produce newsletters about health and social care in Norfolk. If you'd like to receive this newsletter please leave your email here:

What do you think an NHS Health Check is for? You can select more than one option.

To help prevent...

- Arthritis
- Cancer
- Dementia
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease
- Kidney Disease
- Mental Health problems

- Obesity
- Stroke
- Don't know/ None of the above
- Other (please specify):

Where do you think you can access an NHS Health Check? You can select more than one option.

- GP Surgery
- Pharmacy
- Workplace
- Community Centre
- Leisure Centre
- None of the above
- Don't know
- Other (please specify):

How would you like to be invited to an NHS Health Check? Please select up to 3 options.

- Email
- In-person by a healthcare professional
- Letter
- Phone call
- Text message
- I don't want to be invited

Have you been for an NHS Health Check in the last five years?

To find out more about what an NHS Health Check is, click here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-health-check/> \*

- Yes
- No
- Not Sure

How clearly do you feel the professional explained what they were testing for and what would happen during the appointment?

- Clear
- Neither clear nor unclear
- Unclear

How clearly do you feel the professional explained your results?

- Clear
- Neither clear nor unclear
- Unclear

Did you have any further tests/ referrals because of the NHS Health Check?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

If yes, how was your experience?

Were you given any advice that might help you to lead a healthier lifestyle?

- A referral was made (GP exercise scheme/ health trainer)
- It was suggested I attend a particular class or group in the community
- Given recommended nutritional (diet) advice
- No advice was given
- None of these
- I can't remember/ not sure

How useful did you think the advice you received was?

- Useful
- Neither
- Not useful
- I did not receive any advice

What difference (if any) did the NHS Health Check make? You can select more than one option.

- I did more exercise
- I reduced my alcohol intake
- I ate more healthily
- I stopped smoking
- I was reassured
- I have a better understanding of my health
- Other
- None

Please use this space to tell us why you have chosen this answer(s):



Having had an NHS Health Check, do you feel you have a better understanding of your health?

- Yes
- Somewhat
- No

Would you have an NHS Health Check again?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Please use this space to tell us why you have chosen this answer:

If you have not had or been offered an NHS Health Check in the last 5 years, why not?  
You can select more than one option.

To find out if you are eligible for an NHS Health Check, click here:  
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/nhs-health-check/>

- Not had an invite
- Not had the time
- Not eligible
- Do not want one
- Because of a previous NHS Health Check
- Other (please specify):

Is there anything that would make you more likely to have an NHS Health Check? You can select more than one option.

- Location
- The person who does the health check
- Information beforehand
- The time of the health check
- Other
- No

Please use this space to tell us why you have chosen this answer(s):

If there is anything else you would like to tell us about NHS Health Checks then please tell us here:

## 6. Demographics

### About you

In this next section we will be asking you some questions about yourself and your life. All these questions are optional. Your answers help us make sure that we hear from people from different backgrounds and that we understand the needs of different groups in our community. Remember: all your answers are strictly confidential and the survey is anonymous.

What doctors' surgery do you go to?

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary
- Genderfluid
- Genderqueer
- Intersex
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self-describe:

What is your sexuality?

- Bisexual
- Gay or Lesbian
- Heterosexual or straight
- Pansexual
- Prefer not to say

If you feel the choices do not provide a suitable option, please write how you would describe your sexual orientation:

What is your ethnic group?

- Arab

**Asian / Asian British:**

- Bangladeshi
- Chinese
- Indian
- Pakistani

Any other Asian / Asian British background

**Black / Black British:**

African

Caribbean

Any other Black / Black British background

**Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups:**

Asian and White

Black African and White

Black Caribbean and White

Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups background

**White:**

British / English / Northern Irish / Scottish / Welsh

Irish

Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller

Roma

Any other White background

**Other:**

Any other Ethnic Group

Prefer not to say

If other, please specify:

Please select any of the following that apply to you:

I have a disability

I have a long term condition

I am a carer

None of the above

I prefer not to say

Where did you hear about this survey?

- GP website
- Healthwatch Norfolk Event
- Healthwatch Norfolk Newsletter
- Healthwatch Norfolk Website
- News (website / radio / local newspaper)
- Podcast
- Search Engine (e.g. Google)
- Social Media (e.g. Facebook / Instagram / Twitter)
- Through a friend or co-worker
- YouTube
- Other (please specify):

Thank you for your interest in our survey. This survey is exploring experiences of NHS health checks. You have indicated that you are not aged between 40-74 years old. This means that you will not be eligible for an NHS health check.

We still would like to hear your experiences so please visit our website to leave feedback on services: <http://www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk/services>. Alternatively you can contact us by email on <http://enquiries@healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk> or call us on 01953 856029.



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