

## Cancer information on Norfolk GP surgery websites

### Background

Linking in with a piece of work carried out by other East of England Healthwatch, Healthwatch Norfolk (HWN) conducted a mini audit to look at what information is available for cancer patients on GP surgery websites.

We created a survey which was shared with all HWN staff, trustees and volunteers for them to complete about their own surgery websites. The remaining websites were audited by HWN staff.

### What questions were asked?

There were eight questions asked in total. These were:

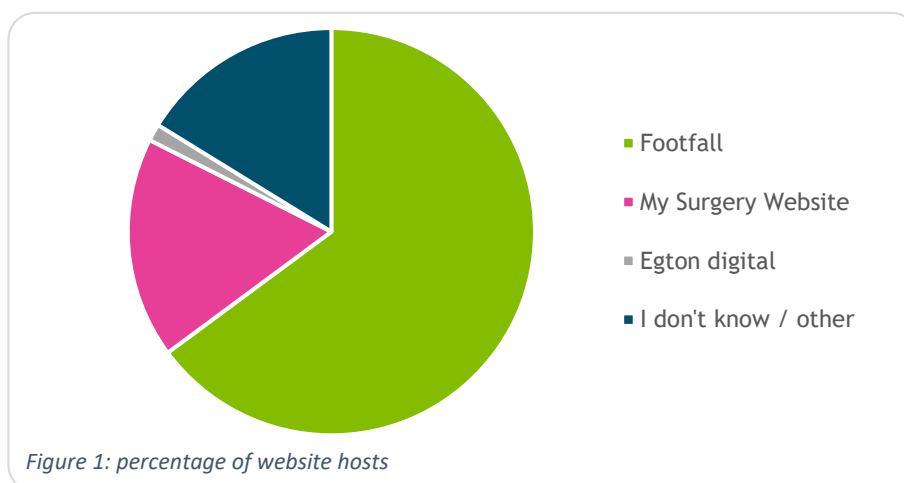
1. What is the name and location of your GP surgery?
2. Which platform is your GP surgery hosted by?<sup>1</sup>
3. Is there any advice or information for cancer patients on the home page of the website?
4. Without using the 'search' function, could you find advice or information for cancer patients anywhere on the website?
5. Please type the keyword "cancer" into the search bar of your GP surgery website. Does this bring up any information regarding accessing support for cancer patients? (Please explain your answer if you wish)
6. Could you find a link to the Macmillan COVID-19 support page (<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/coronavirus/cancer-and-coronavirus>) on your GP surgery website?
7. Could you find any information about local cancer support groups on your GP surgery website?
8. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us in relation to the cancer support information available on your GP surgery website?

### Overview of results

In total, 97 responses were collected. However, six websites were audited twice due to some volunteers, staff or trustees being patients at the same surgeries. This means that 91 different Norfolk GP surgery websites were audited.

### Website host

Figure 1 below shows the percentage of website hosts. 23 responses are not included in this data because of the question being added part way through auditing.



<sup>1</sup> Please note: this question was added part way through the auditing. This was because it became apparent that the website host could significantly affect the ease of finding information, which was not considered in the writing of the questions.

## Access to information

The graphs below show overall responses for the remaining questions relating to accessing information.

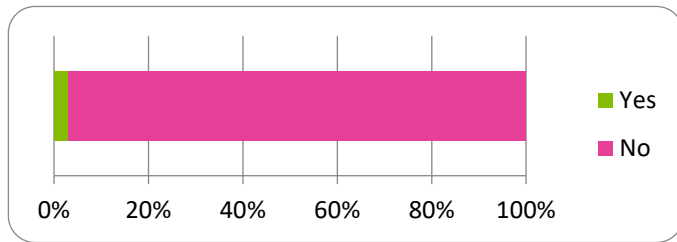


Figure 3: is there information or advice on the home page?

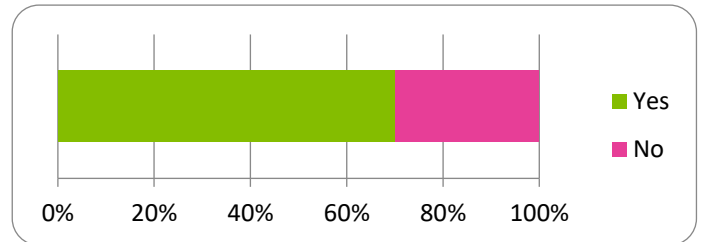


Figure 2: can information be found without using the search bar?

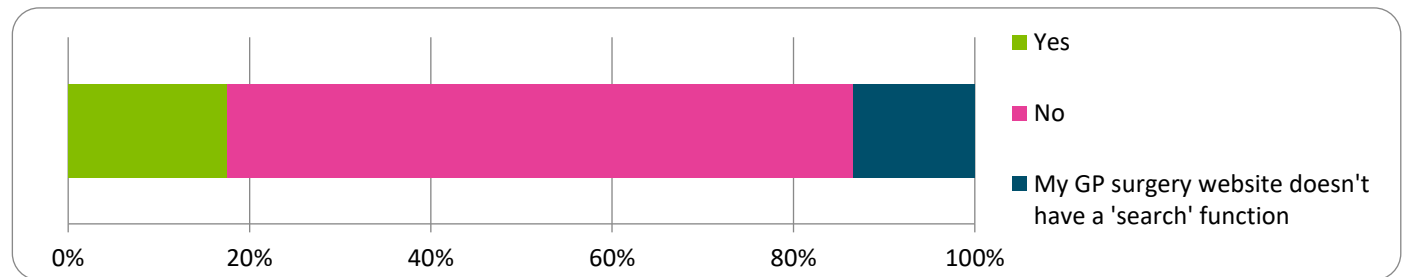


Figure 4: can information be found using the search bar?

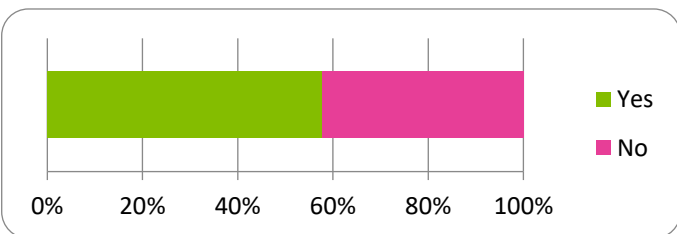


Figure 5: can you find a link to the Macmillan Cancer COVID-19 page?

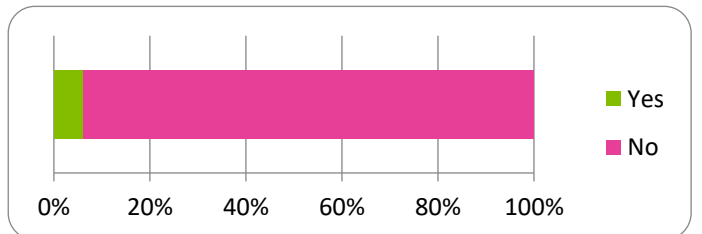


Figure 6: can you find information on any local support groups?

The graphs above indicate an overwhelming difficulty to find information. Some key figures from these results include:

- Only 3% of websites had information about cancer or cancer support on the home page.
- Only 6% of websites had information on local support groups.
- Accessing information was generally easier without using the search bar function: 70% of websites had information attainable without needing to use the search function, but less than 20% of websites had information accessible via the search bar.
- There were varied results as to whether the link to the Macmillan Cancer COVID-19 was accessible, with 58% of websites having it available.

## Footfall v other providers

As *figure 1* on page 1 shows, Footfall was the most common website host with 65% of 74 surgeries using it. The results indicate a contrast between the accessibility of information on Footfall compared to other providers. *Figure 7* below shows the differences in the proportion of positive 'yes' answers to whether information could be found between Footfall and non-Footfall sites:

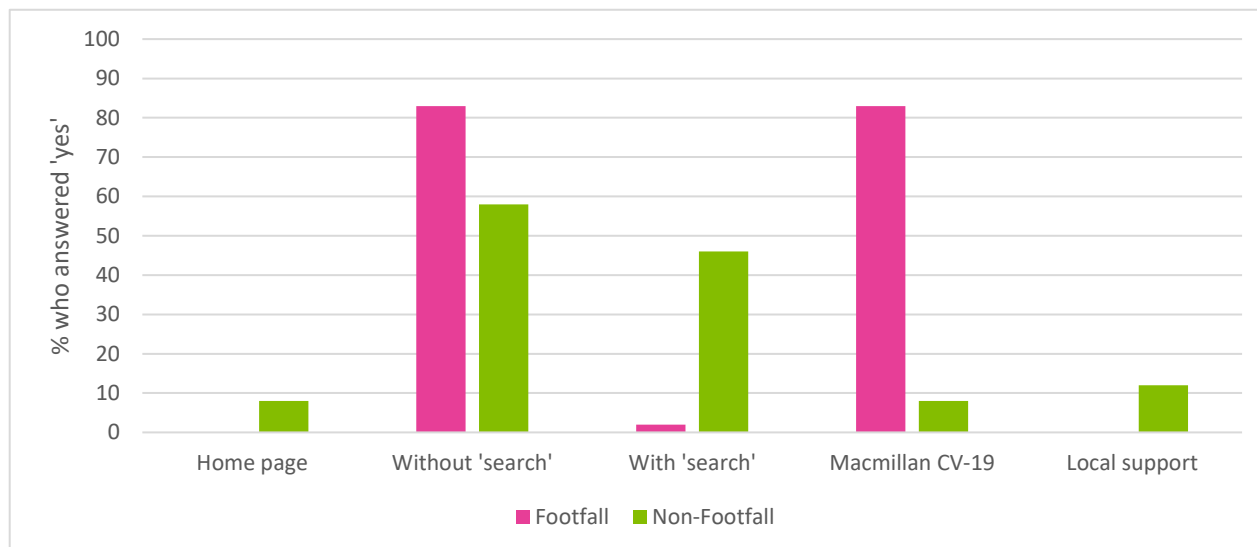


Figure 7: proportions of 'yes' responses to questions, divided by Footfall and non-Footfall sites

As can be seen, finding information without using the 'search' bar was easier on Footfall sites, as was finding a link to the Macmillan COVID-19 page. However, information on the home page and on local support was completely lacking on Footfall sites.

The biggest difference between Footfall and non-Footfall was between the use of the 'search' function. Nearly 50% of non-Footfall sites had information accessible via the search bar, compared to just 2% of Footfall. By typing 'cancer' into a Footfall search bar, dozens of websites returned a 'nothing found' response, several returned information on data, and some returned information on screening.

### Case study: Chet Valley Medical Practice

During the time in which the audits were taking place, one staff member's GP surgery - Chet Valley Medical Practice - moved from using My Surgery Website to Footfall. The staff member had already audited the My Surgery Website site, so decided to re-audit the Footfall site. The re-audit has not been included in the overall results, but a comparison below shows some loss of accessible information:

Table 1: Chet Valley Medical Practice information comparison before and after Footfall

	My Surgery Website	Footfall
Information on home page?	No	No
Found information without using 'search'?	Yes	Yes
Found information using 'search'?	Yes	No
Found Macmillan CV-19 link?	No	Yes
Found information on local support?	Yes	No

This highlights that information which was accessible on surgery websites previously may have been lost in the move over to Footfall.

## Links to support groups

This is something that seemed more subjective among people auditing their surgery. Many websites had a link to the Norfolk Community Directory website, through which you would be able to search for support groups in your area. Although this is better than nothing and does provide some way of finding support groups through a GP surgery website, lists of support groups that were embedded into the surgery website itself were very scarce.

However, a good example of having embedded information on support groups is Long Stratton Medical Partnership, whose website has a page for local and national support found by typing 'cancer' in the search bar.

## General comments

People could leave further comments about the website, which generally indicated the inconsistencies of information available. Below are some of the comments left:

*"There was information on cancer in the A-Z list under Treatment Room but it was generic, not relating to Covid-19 [...] The link to Macmillan was under the Advice for people with pre-existing conditions section of the COVID-19 support room but it didn't show up through a search. There's also a link to Blood Cancer UK. [...] Cancer is listed in an A-Z list of conditions under Treatment room [...] The whole emphasis of the site is on self-service."*  
St Stephen's Gate Medical Practice (Footfall site)

*"I could find no mention of cancer support information. I did try the search button. I did put in Covid19 and Macmillan services and all I got was Covid19 and data protection."*  
Cringleford Surgery (Footfall site)

*"I find these shortfalls of the website rather concerning, maybe the website could do with a complete re-write. No other information such as a link to pages which would highlight potential symptoms."*  
Heathgate Surgery, Poringland. My Surgery Website site

*"This was quite a comprehensive site - although local support groups weren't listed there was a page for national organisations."*  
Fleggburgh Surgery, Websites4GPs site

*"There was no information about cancer support groups actually on the GP Surgery website but there was a link to the Norfolk Community Directory which produced this information using its search function. The only reference to cancer that I could find was the Covid-19 support page link to Macmillan."*  
Orchard Surgery, Dereham. Footfall Site