



Central Midlands  
Commissioning Support Unit



## Call to Action Public Survey Summary of Responses – Key Themes

## Introduction

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In July 2013, NHS England called on the public, NHS staff and politicians to engage in an

*“open and honest debate about the future shape of the NHS in order to meet rising demand, introduce new technology and meet the expectations of its patients.”<sup>1</sup>*

This document provides a summary of a survey of public opinion that was conducted in Shropshire and Telford and Wrekin in response to this ‘call to action’.

## Background

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The survey contained four open questions, to which members of the public were invited to respond. The questions asked were those suggested as part of the national 'Call to Action'. Although responses were anonymous, respondents were asked to indicate the area in which they lived, the type of area (rural or urban), their age group, employment status, whether they had a long term condition and whether they were a carer.

The survey was made available via a webpage and paper copies were distributed and collected by patient representatives.

The survey closed on 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013, although responses are still being received.

A similar survey was conducted of clinicians' opinions. The results of the clinician survey will be analysed and reported separately.

## The Survey Questions

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1. In terms of healthcare, what is most important to you and your family and why?
2. What might be some options for change?
3. What do you think are the main difficulties and opportunities for the NHS over the next 5 years?
4. Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

## How were the survey results summarised?

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Respondents to the survey gave answers to the four key questions in a free text format.

In order to identify the key themes from these free text responses, a framework for categorising the issues raised in the responses was required. A framework was developed by reviewing the first 100 responses to each of the four questions in detail. All responses were then assigned codes according to this framework. Responses often contained more than one theme. In these cases, multiple codes were assigned to a response. The framework was regularly updated as more responses were reviewed.

It should be noted that the design of the coding framework and the assignment of codes to responses are fundamentally subjective processes.

Any subsequent analysis may identify and highlight subtly different themes.

Whilst this analysis therefore cannot be seen as objective, the methods used are transparent. The coding framework and the codes assigned to each response are available for review.

## Survey Design and Response Rates

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The open nature of the questions asked in the survey were designed to give members of the public an opportunity to share their thoughts about their priorities for the NHS and the future of the NHS without constraint. This summary provides insight into key themes that emerged from the survey.

The survey responses however should not be seen as representative of the views of the population as a whole.

Hand-written responses to the survey first need to be transcribed before they can be analysed. This transcription process is not yet complete, but it is estimated that approximately 2,900 responses have been received in total.

Of the responses that have been transcribed 2,596 had been coded at the point this analysis was carried out.

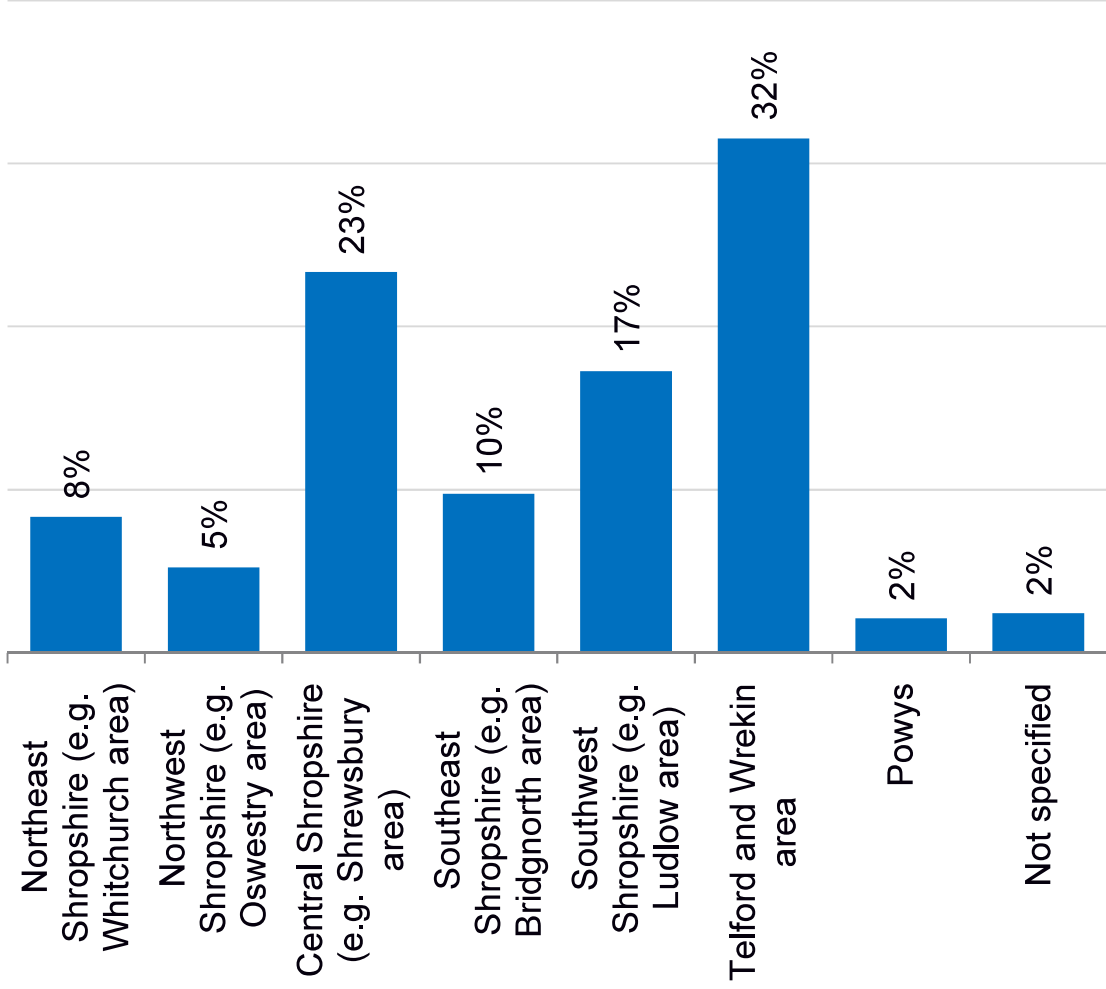


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# Profile of Respondents

# Profile of Respondents by Place of Residence

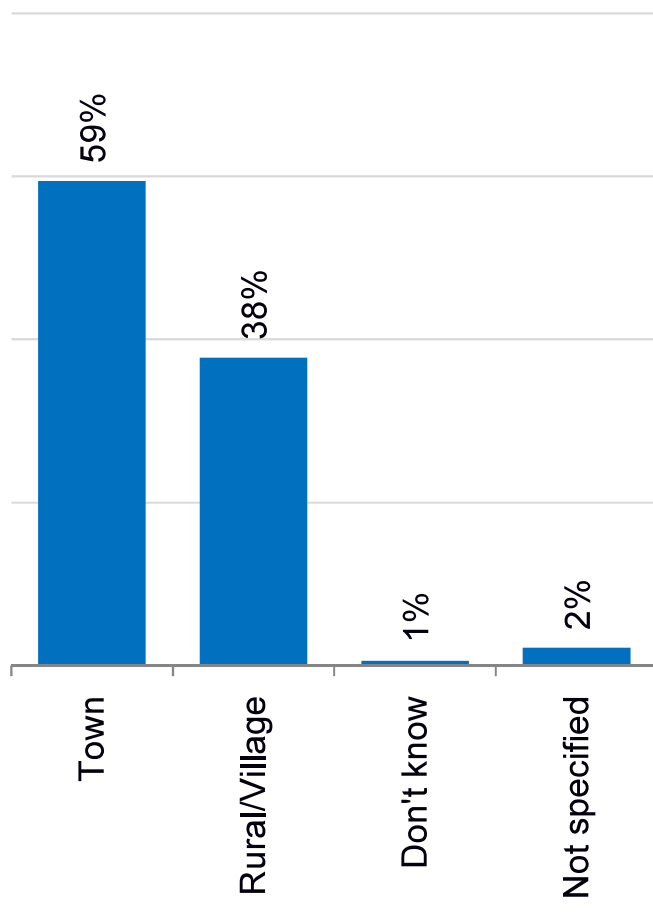
Respondents by Area



64% of the respondents were from Shropshire, 32% from Telford and Wrekin and 2% from Powys.

59% lived in an urban areas and 38% in a rural setting or a village.

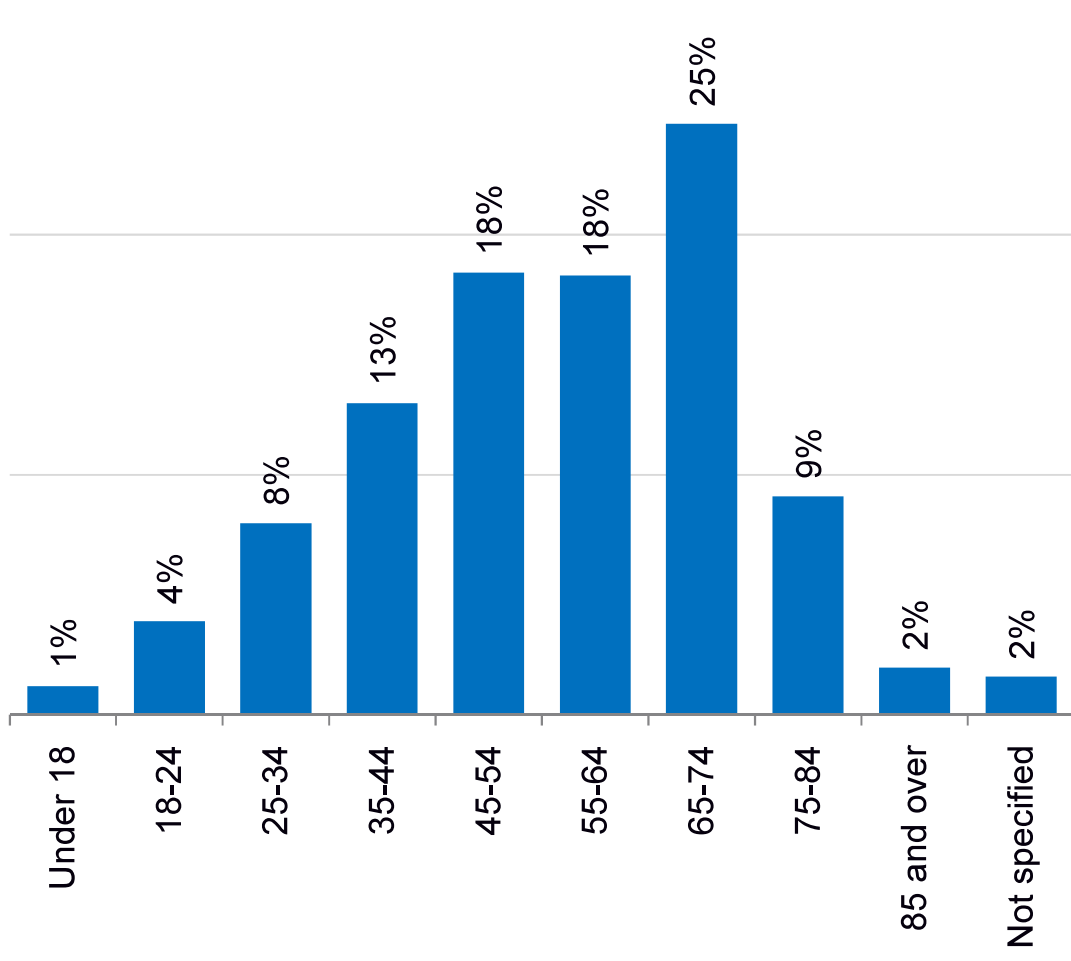
Respondents by Area Type





## Profile of Respondents by Age Group

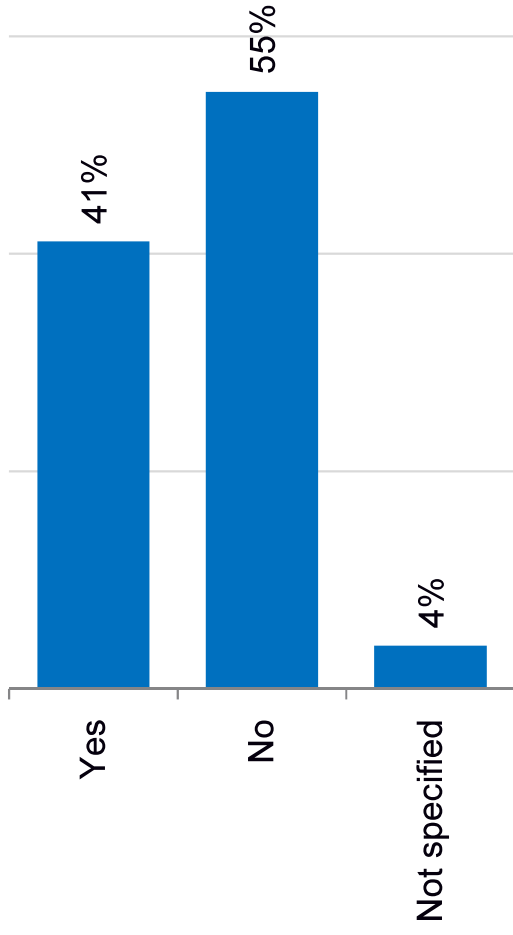
Respondents by Age Group



50% of the respondents were aged between 35 and 64, with 36% aged over 65.

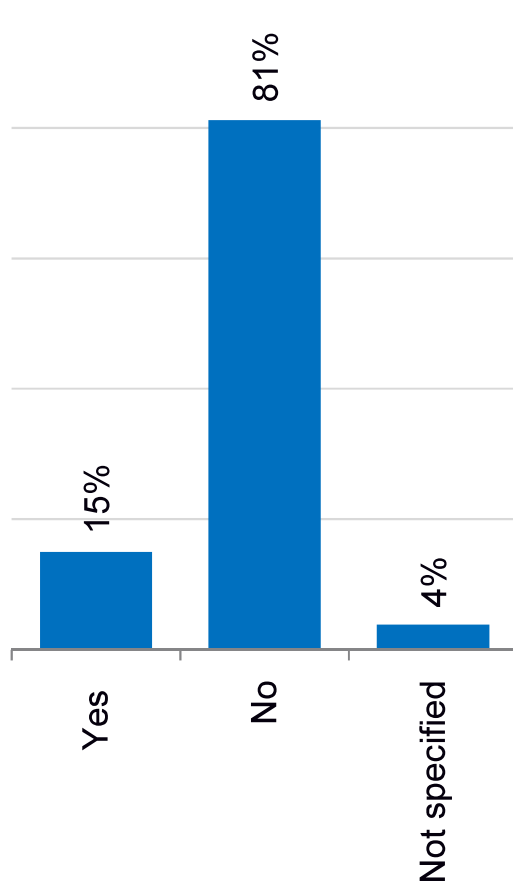
# Profile of Respondents by Long Term Condition and Carer Status

Respondents by Long Term Condition Status



% 41 of the respondents had a long term health condition and 15% were carers.

Respondents by Carer Status



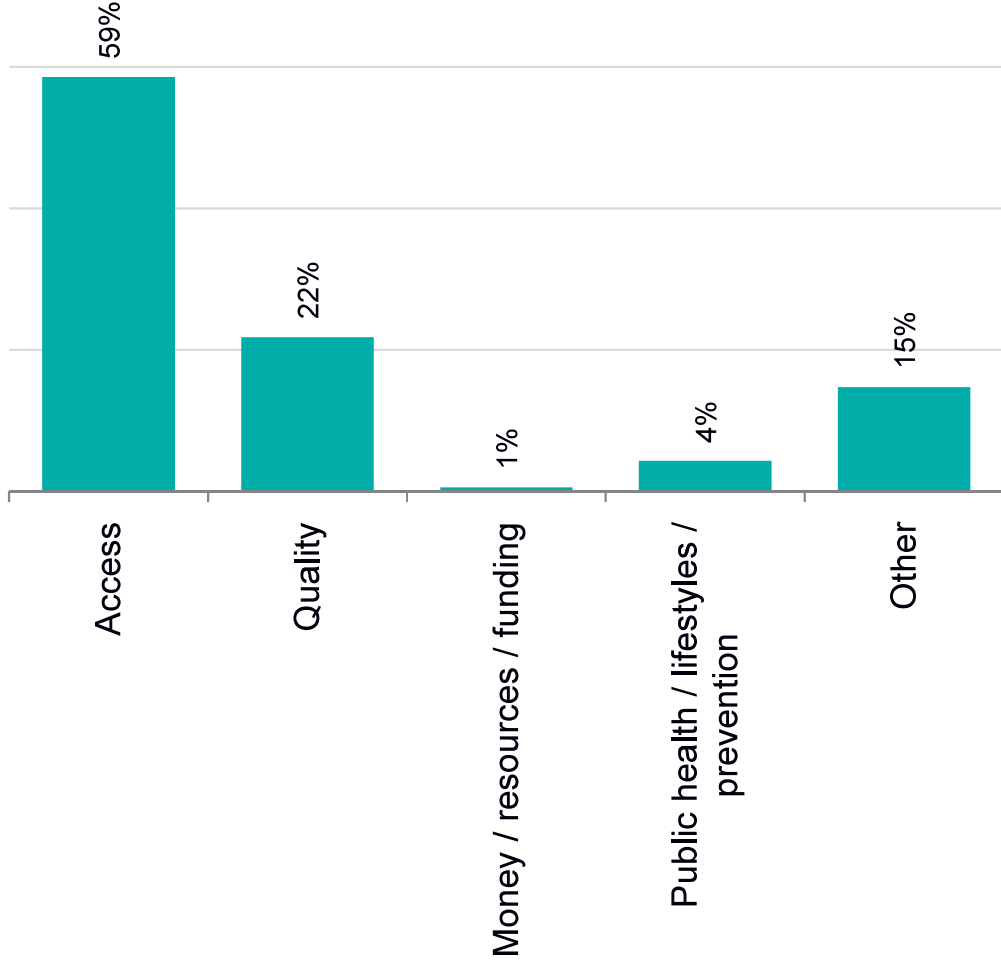


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# Q1 - In terms of healthcare, what is most important to you and your family and why?

## Priorities for the Public – Key Themes

In terms of healthcare, what is most important to you and your family  
% of 3832 comments



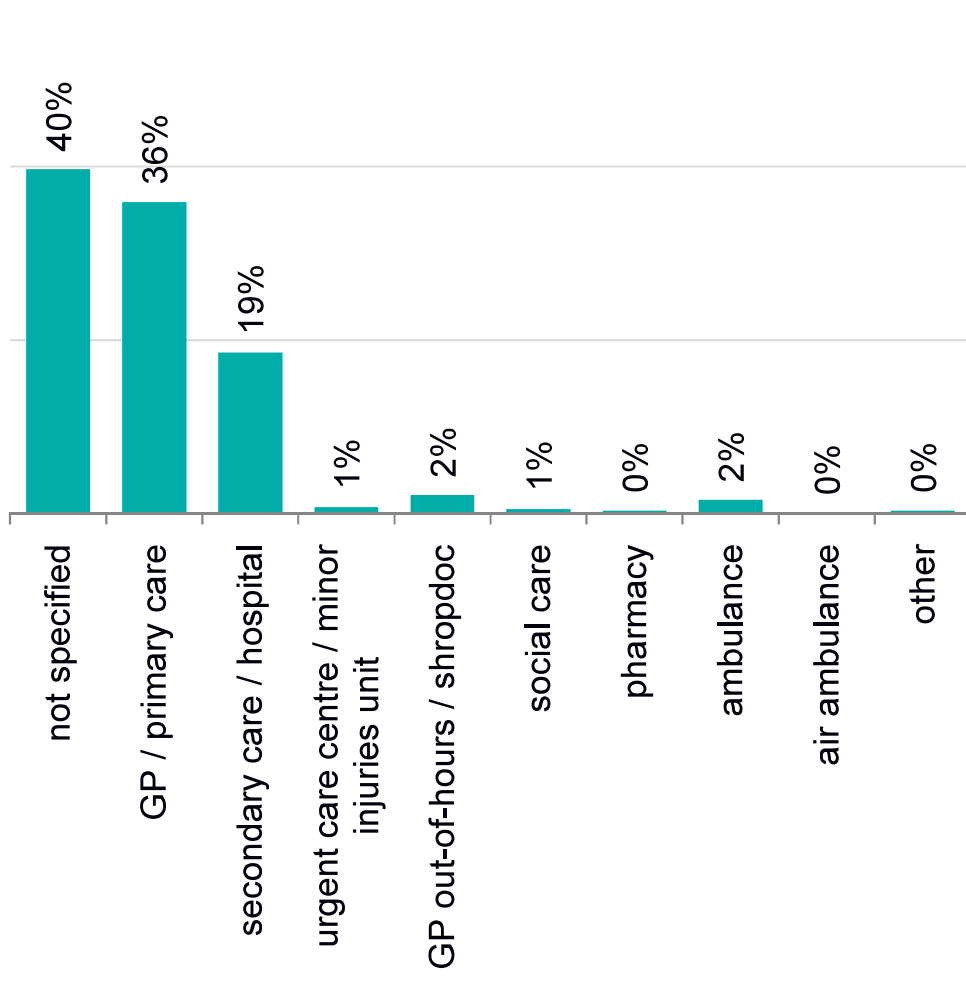
59% of the comments received from the respondents addressed the issue of access to healthcare services.

A further 22% of the comments spoke about the importance of high quality of healthcare services.

Respondents from Northeast and Northwest Shropshire were more likely to comment on issues relating to access whereas respondents from Central Shropshire were more likely to comment on service quality.

## Priorities for the Public - Access

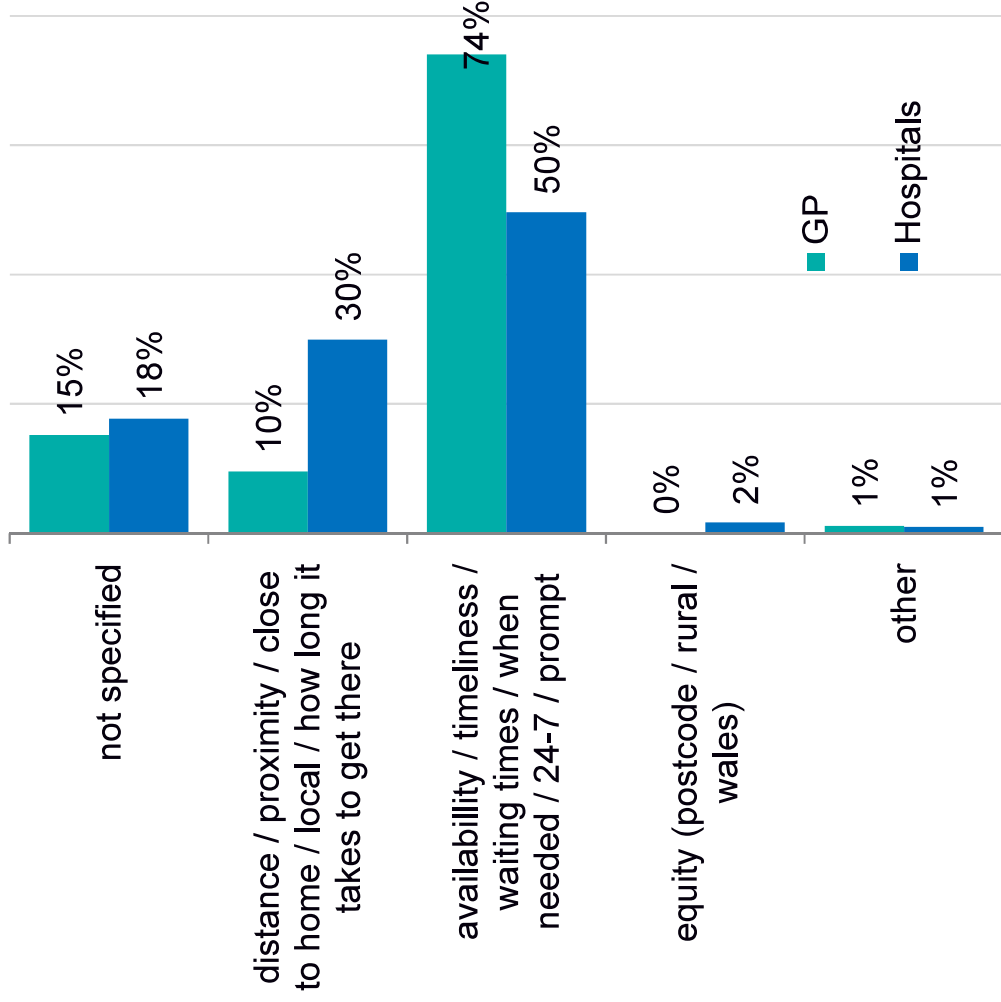
In terms of healthcare, what is most important to you and your family % of 2244 comments relating to Access



When speaking of issues relating to access, 36% of the comments specifically mentioned General Practice or Primary Care and 19% mentioned hospital services.

## Priorities for the Public - Access

In terms of healthcare, what is most important to you and your family  
% of 1222 comments relating to Access to GP/Primary care and Hospitals



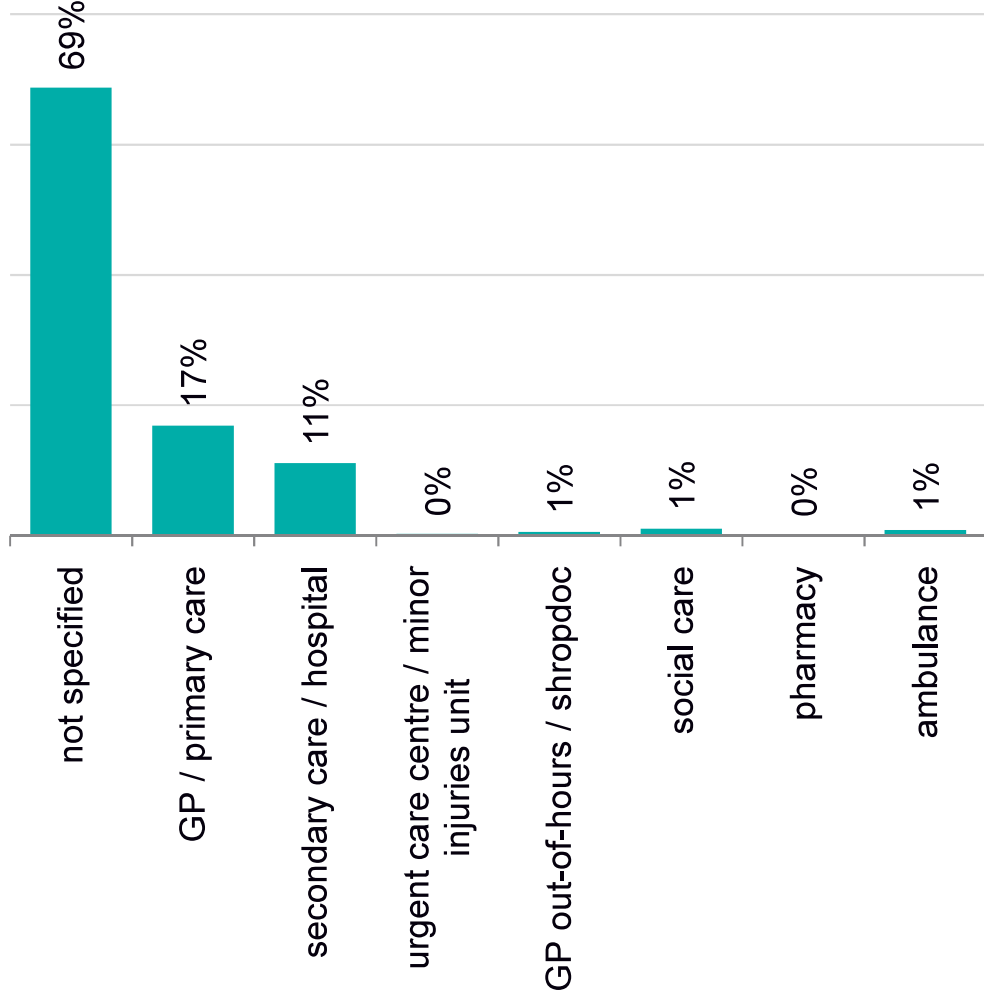
Respondents highlighted three different aspects of the issue of access to primary and hospital healthcare services; proximity or travel time, availability of the service when required and equity of access for people living in different areas.

Respondents were more likely to refer to the issue of proximity when mentioning access to hospitals than when speaking of access to GPs.

The opposite was true when respondents mentioned issues of service availability.

## Priorities for the Public - Quality

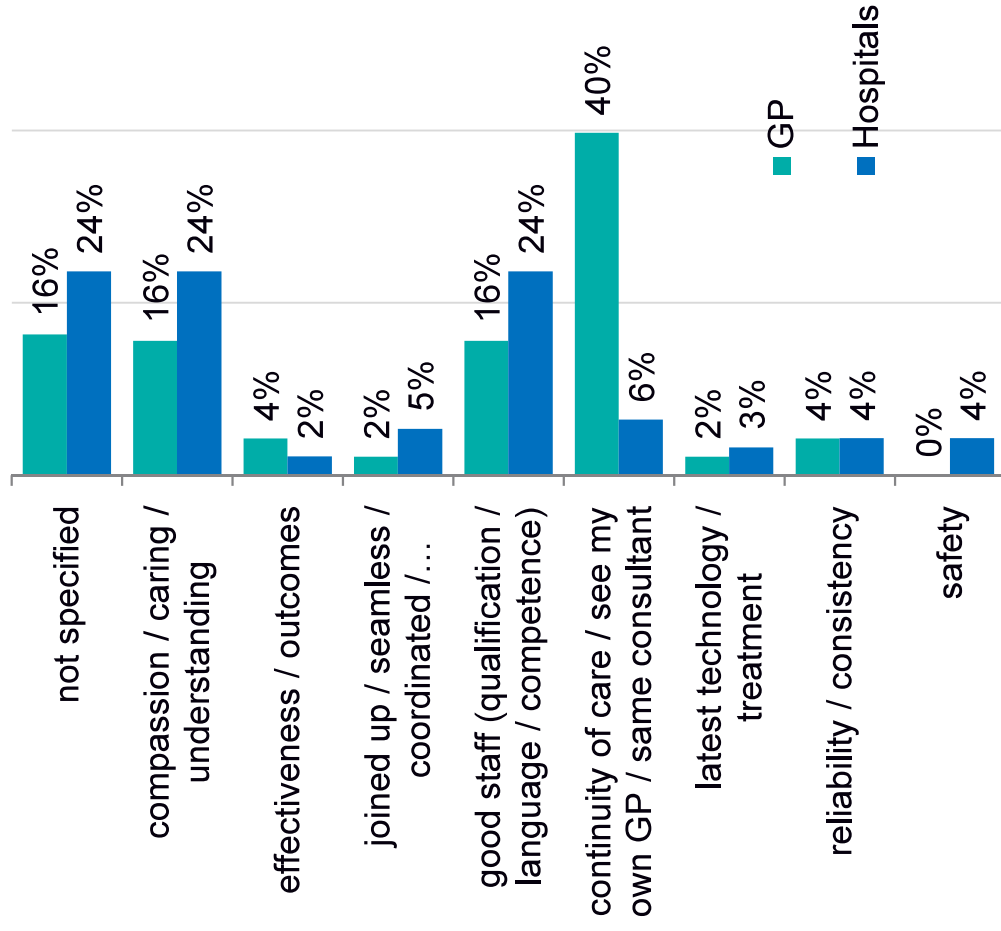
In terms of healthcare, what is most important to you and your family  
% of 836 comments relating to Quality



When mentioning the importance of service quality, most respondents did not do so with regard to a particular service. 17% spoke specifically of the importance of high quality General Practice and 11% of high quality hospitals.

## Priorities for the Public - Quality

In terms of healthcare, what is most important to you and your family % of 234 comments relating to Quality of GP/primary care and Hospitals



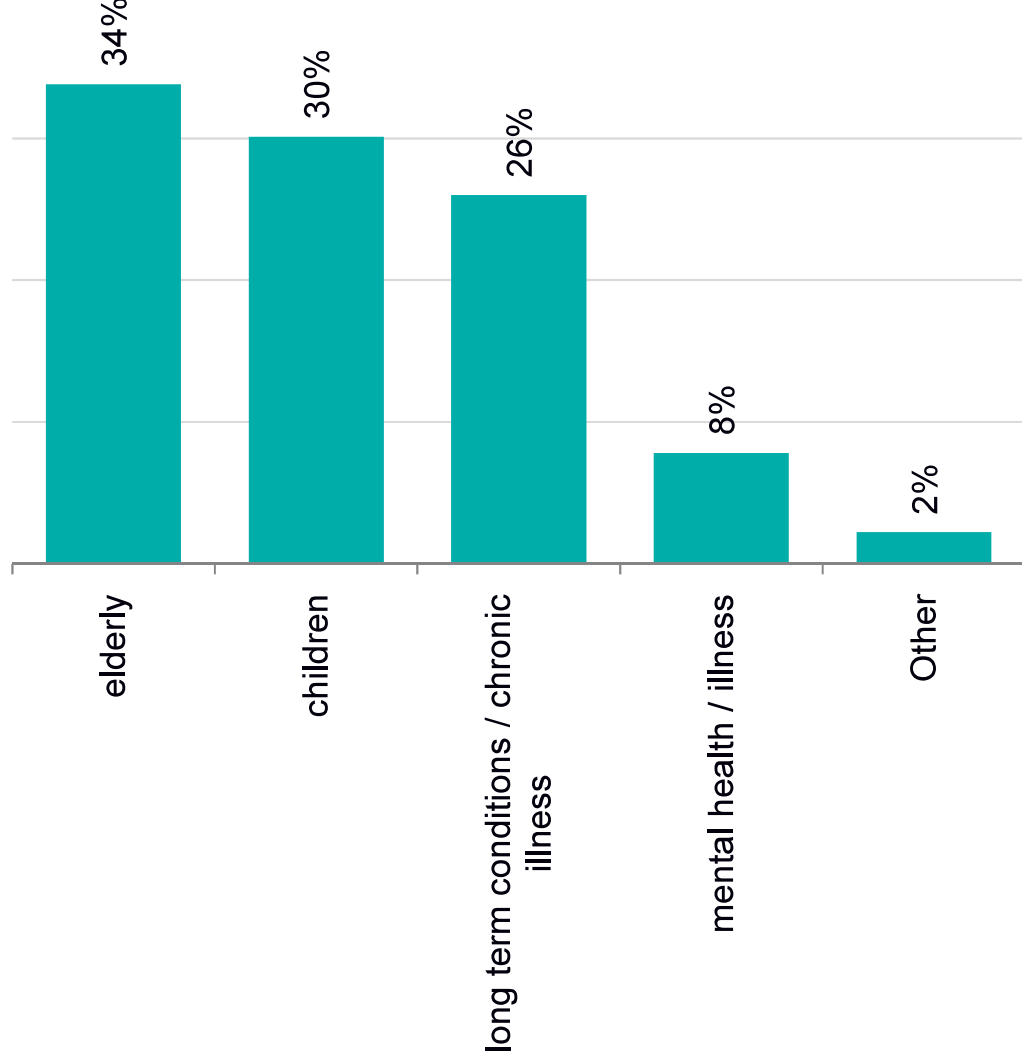
Respondents mentioning the importance of quality in general practice commonly spoke of the issue of continuity of care or the ability to see their own GP.

When writing of the importance of quality in secondary care, respondents were more likely to write of the need for compassionate and competent staff.



## Priorities for the Public – Care for Specific Client Groups

In terms of healthcare, what is most important to you and your family  
% of 269 comments referring to a particular client group



When writing of their priorities, most respondents did not mention specific client groups. Of the 269 responses that did, roughly equal numbers referred to care for children, older people and people with long term conditions. A smaller number spoke about services for people with mental health problems.



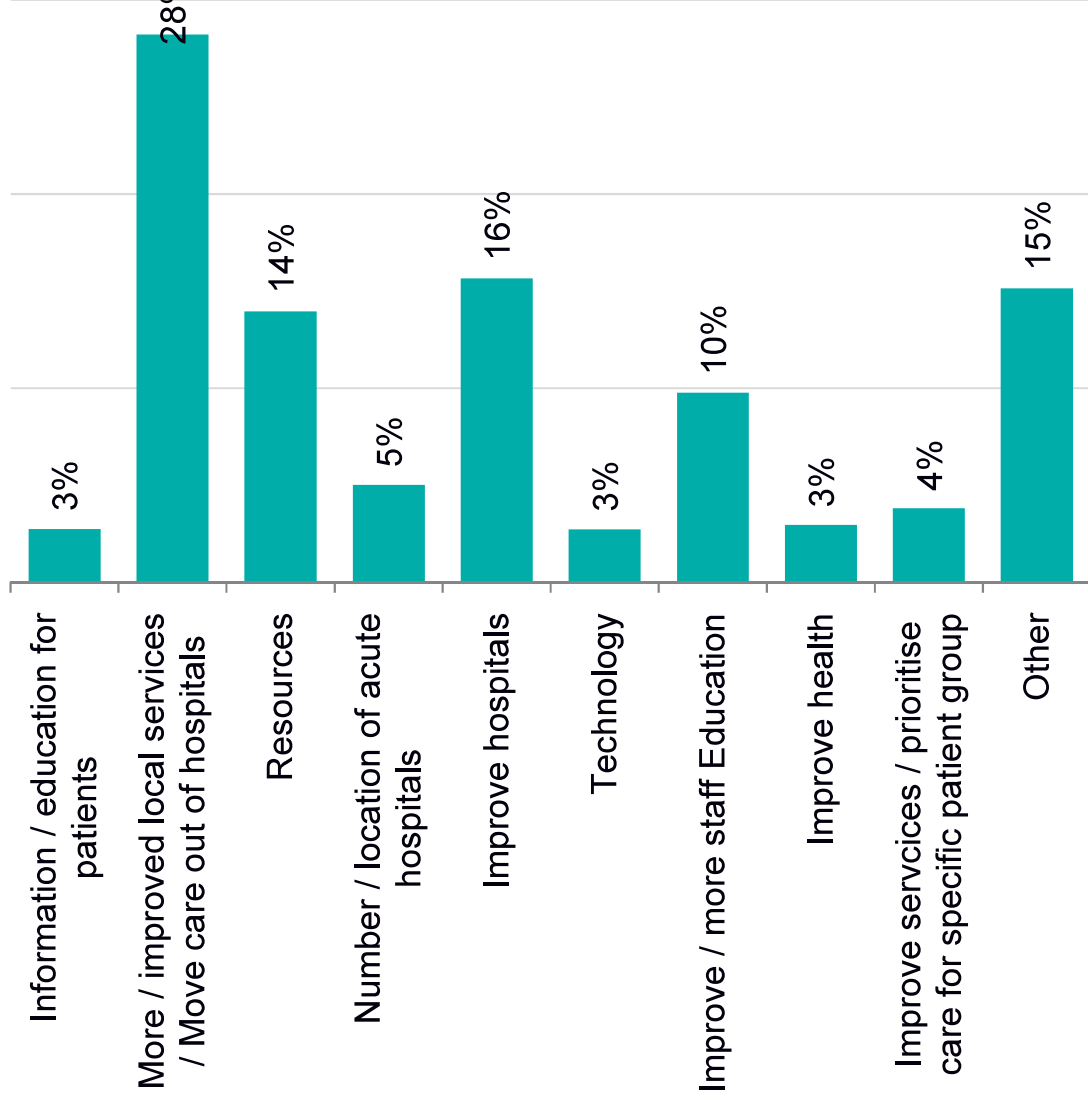
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# Q2 – What might be some options for change

# Options for Change – Key Themes

What might be some options for change?

% of 3666 comments



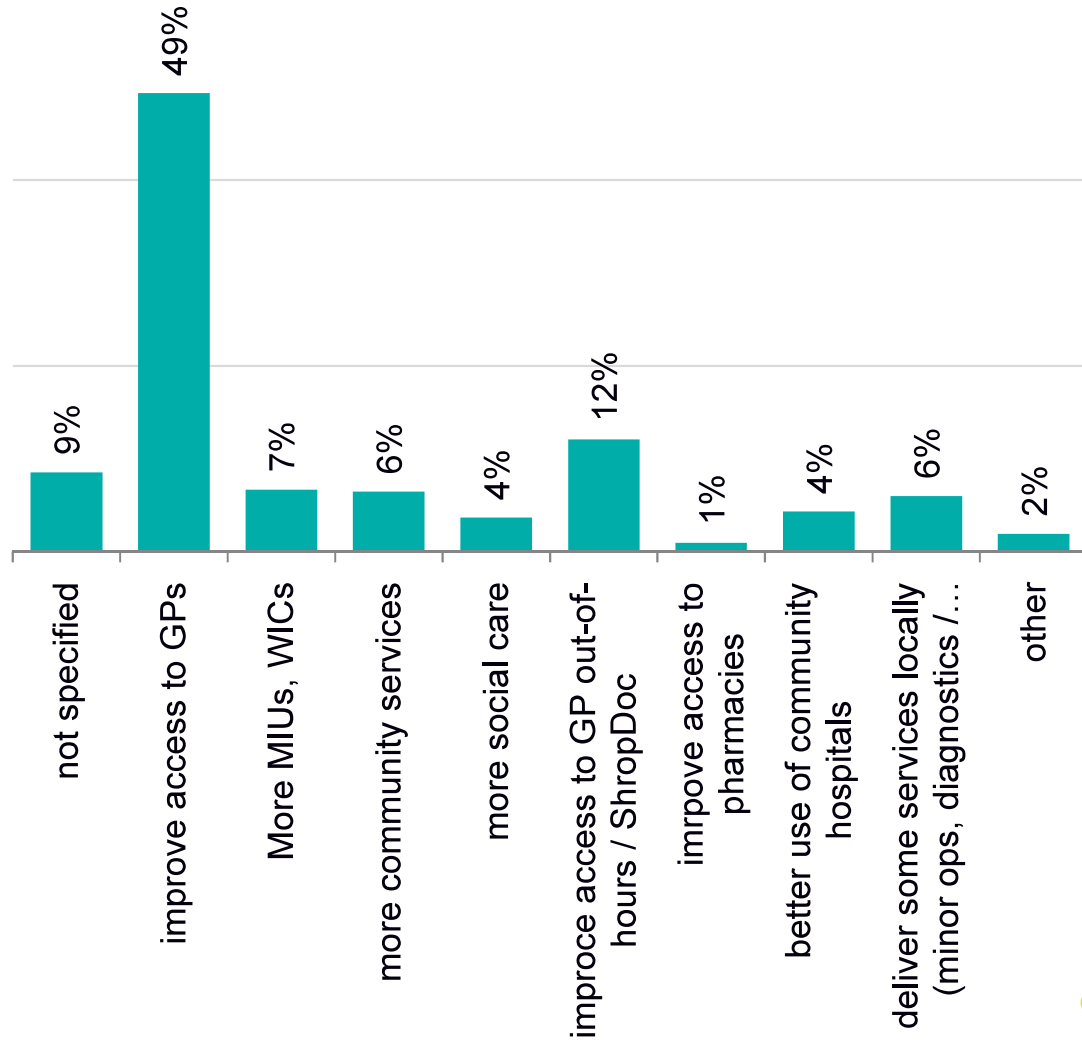
Of the 3,666 comments received in response to question 2, 28% focused on the opportunity to improve local services. This was often mentioned as a means of reducing reliance of hospital services.

Other comments related to the improved use of resources, improved staff education, the number, location and quality of hospitals, the need to prioritise care for certain patient groups, better information and education for patients, making best use of technology and improving population health.

## Options for Change – Improve Local Services

What might be some options for change?

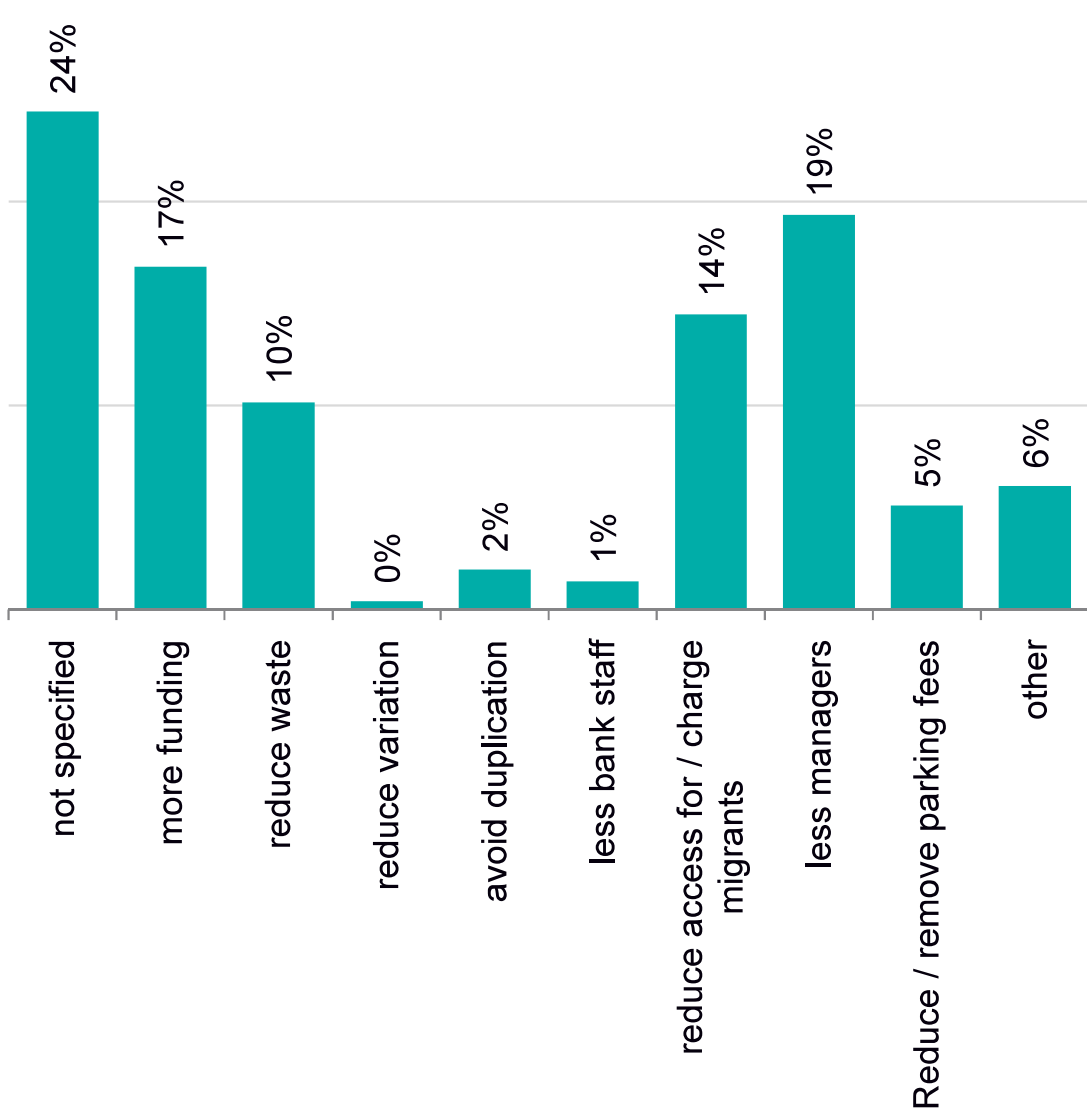
% of 1034 comments relating to More / Improved Local Services



Of the 1,034 comments received about improving local services, 61% referred to improving access to GPs or GP out-of-hours services.

## Options for Change – Improved Use of Resources

What might be some options for change?  
% of 512 comments relating to Use of Resources



Of the 512 comments received about improving the use of resources, roughly equal numbers wrote of increasing healthcare funding and reducing the number of managers.

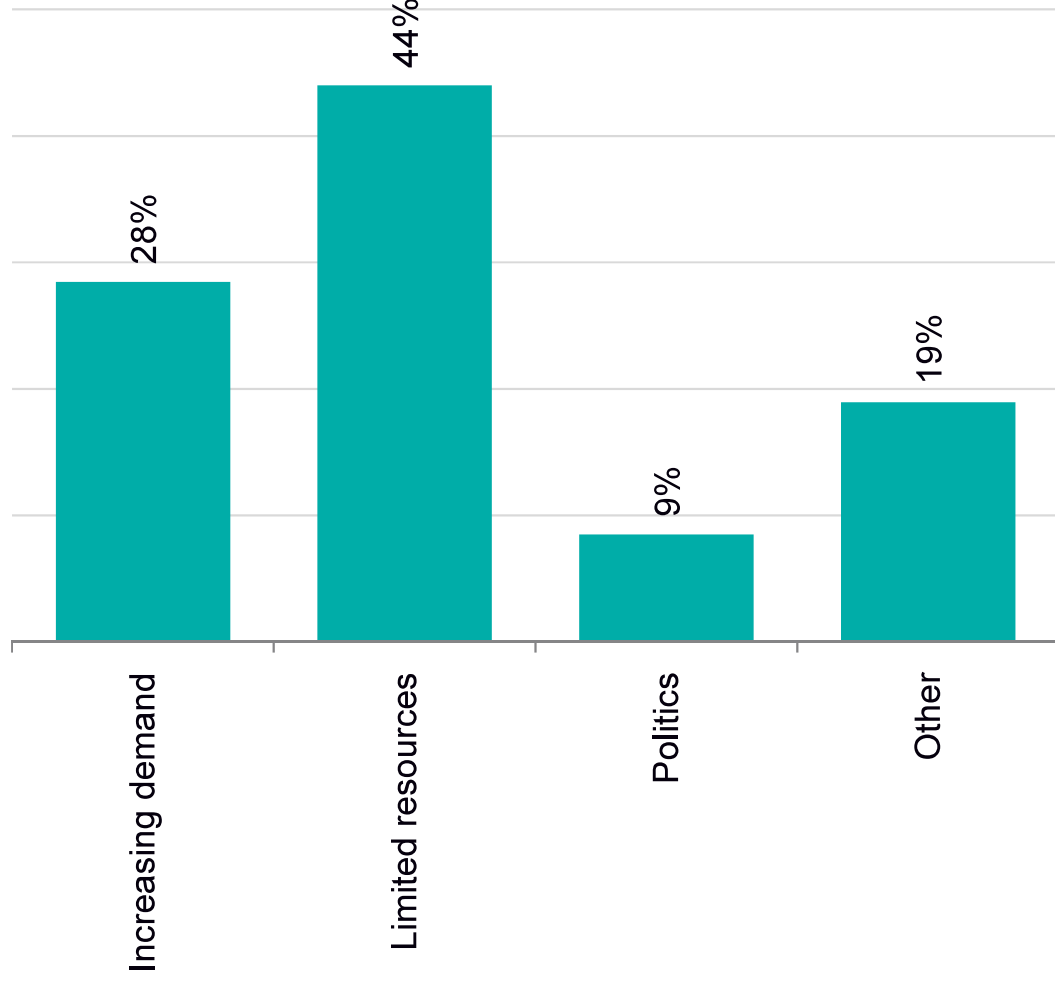


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# Q3 – What do you think are the main difficulties and opportunities for the NHS over the next 5 years?

## Difficulties – Key Themes

What do you think are the main difficulties for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% of 3605 comments



3,605 comments were received in response to question 3 which identified future difficulties for the NHS.

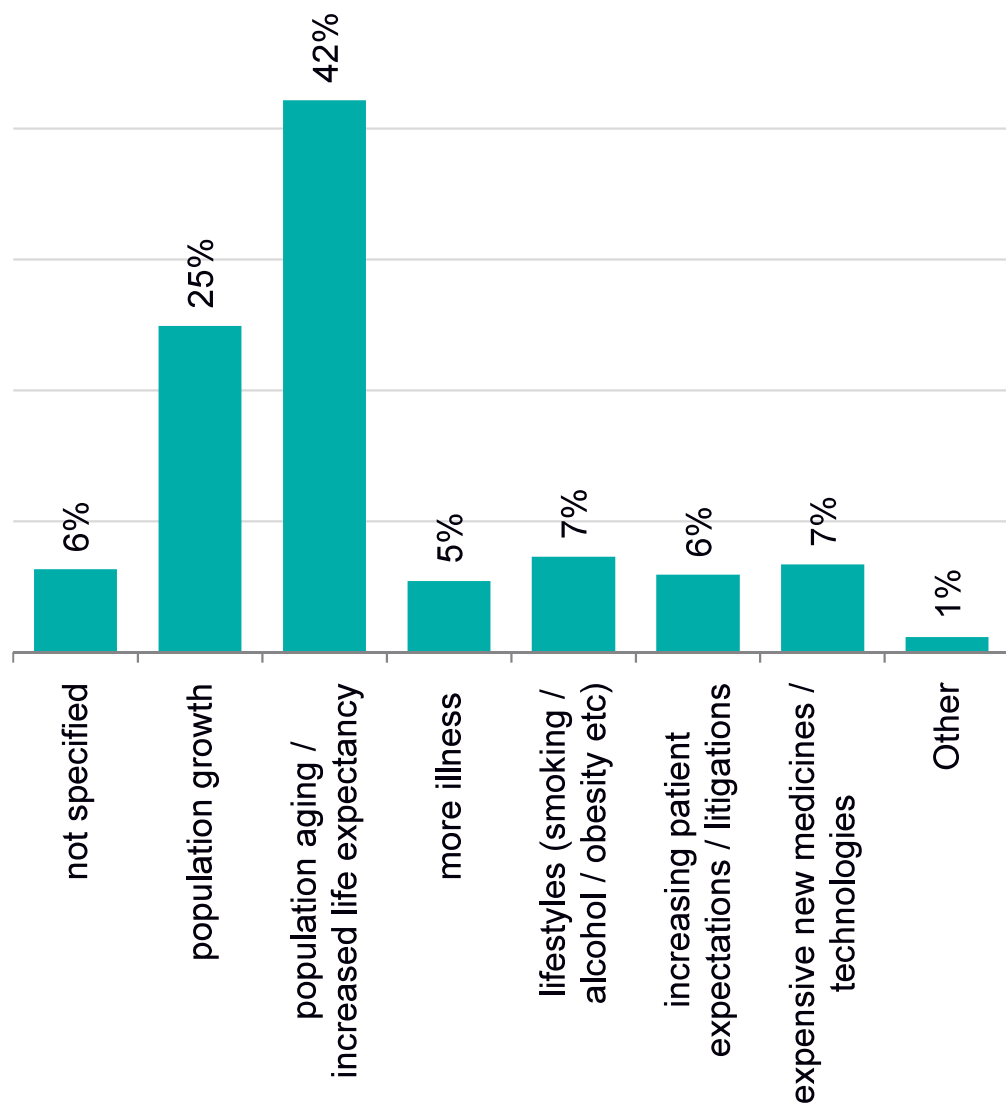
44% of these highlighted the shortage of resources, 28% focused on increasing demand for services and 9% on politics.

Respondents from Powys and Southwest Shropshire and those aged over 65 were more likely to comment on increasing demand.

Respondents from Southeast and Southwest Shropshire and those aged 35-54 were more likely to mention a lack of resources.

# Difficulties – Increasing Demand

What do you think are the main difficulties for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% of 1027 comments relating to increased demand



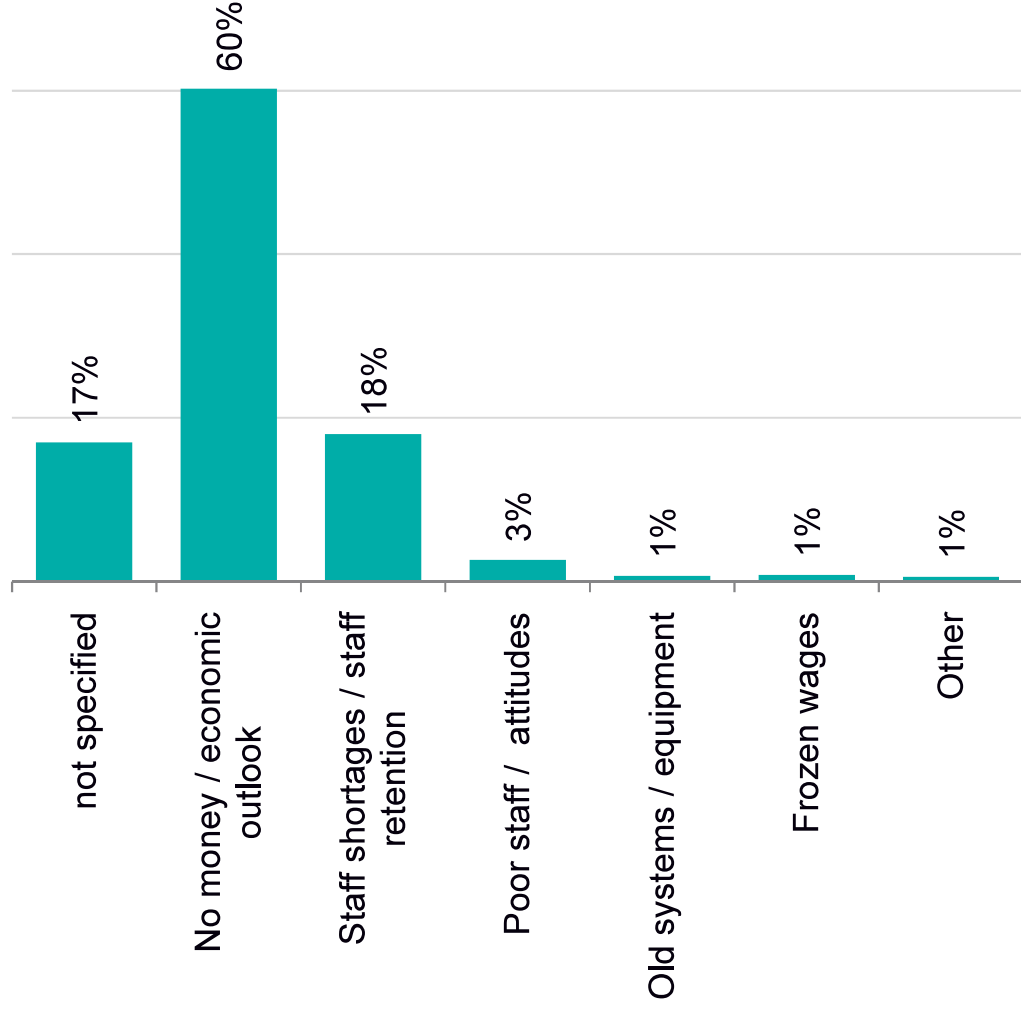
Of the 1,027 comments received about the difficulties caused by increasing demand, 42% focused on population aging and 25% on population growth.

Respondents also spoke of the problems caused by unhealthy lifestyles, the greater prevalence of ill health, the expense of new medical technologies, increases in patient expectations and the legal action that may follow when expectations are not met.



## Difficulties – Limited Resources

What do you think are the main difficulties for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% of 1587 comments relating to limited resources

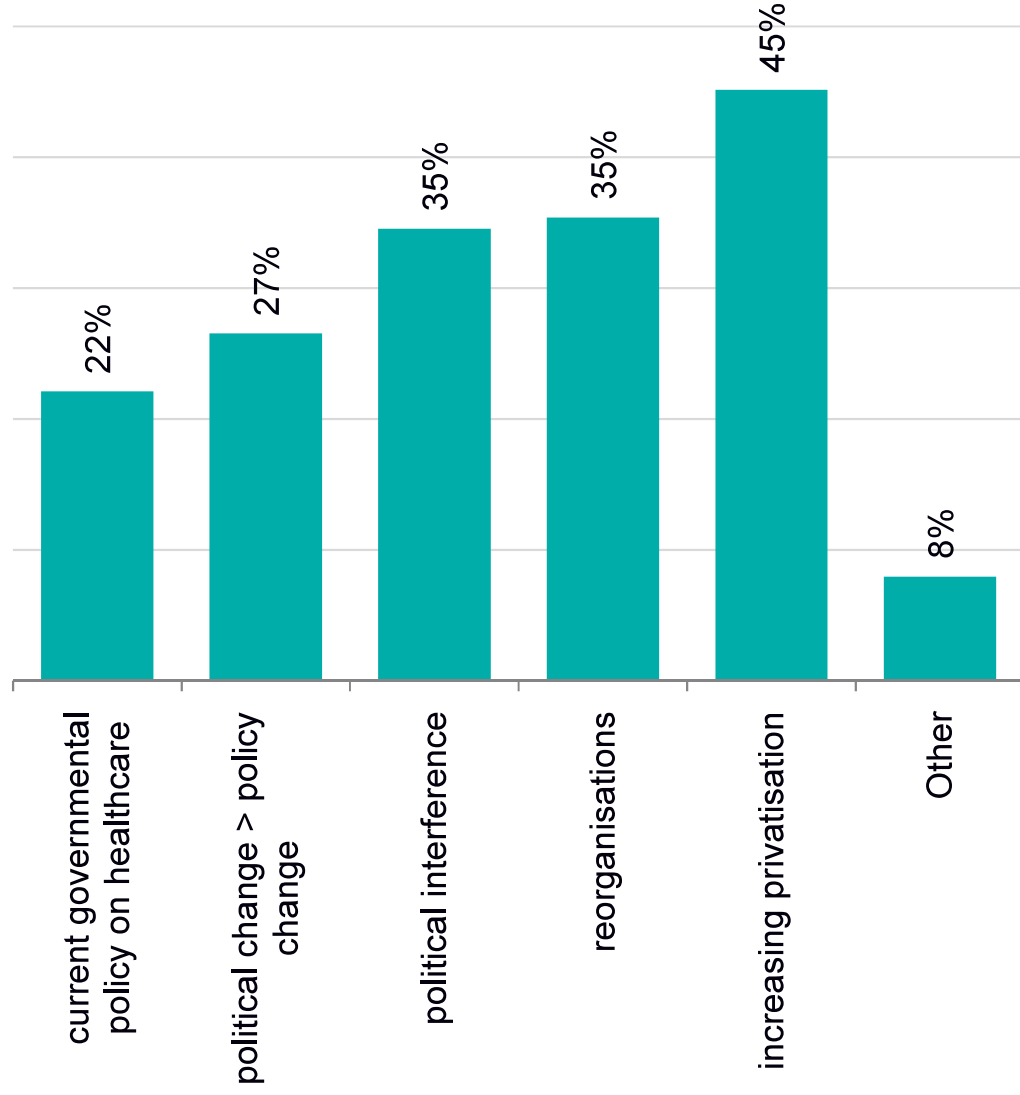


The majority of the comments received that focused on the problem of limited resources, referred to the wider economic climate.

Respondents also spoke about the difficulties of staff shortages and staff retention.

## Difficulties - Politics

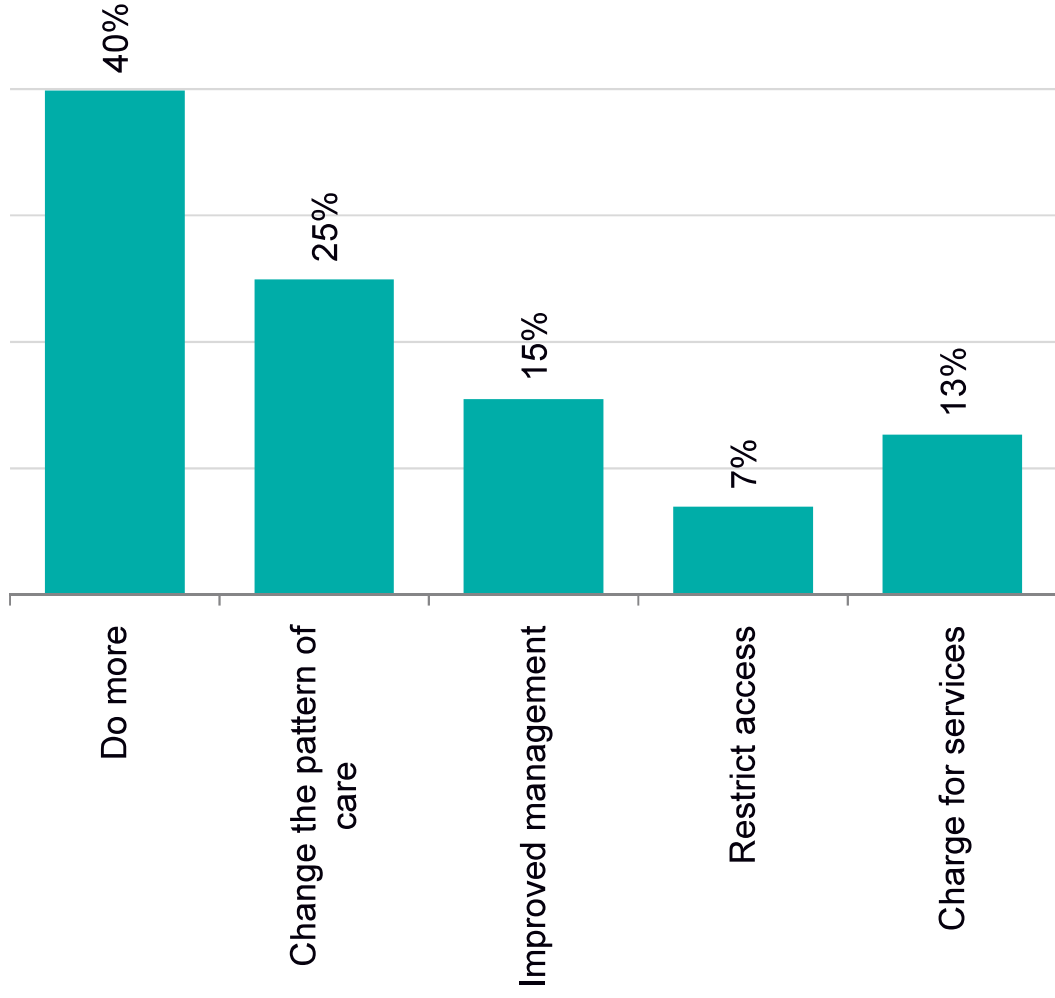
What do you think are the main difficulties for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% 307 of comments relating to politics



Of the 307 comments that addressed the difficulties that might arise through politics, 5 key themes emerged; the potential for political interference in the running of the health service, the negative consequences of politically driven reorganisations, the potential for unsettling policy change when new politicians are elected, the current government policy on healthcare and the risk of increased privatisation of the NHS.

# Opportunities – Key Themes

What do you think are the main opportunities for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% of 1246 comments

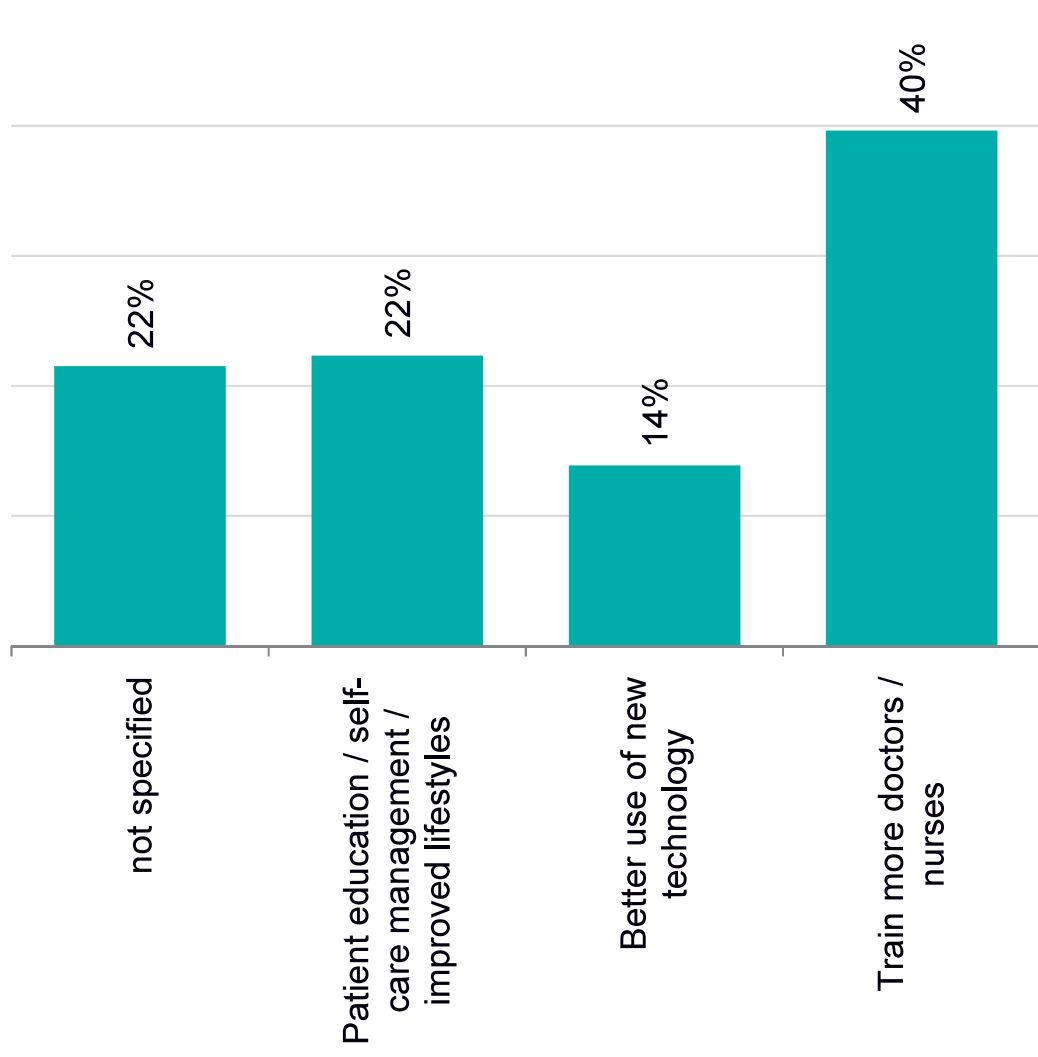


1,246 comments were received in response to question 3 that identified opportunities for the NHS over the next 5 years.

25% of these suggested that the NHS changes the patterns of care it delivers, 40% suggested that the NHS should 'do more' in certain areas, 15% suggested improving the management of services and 20% suggested either restricting access to NHS services or charging for NHS services.

## Opportunities – Doing More

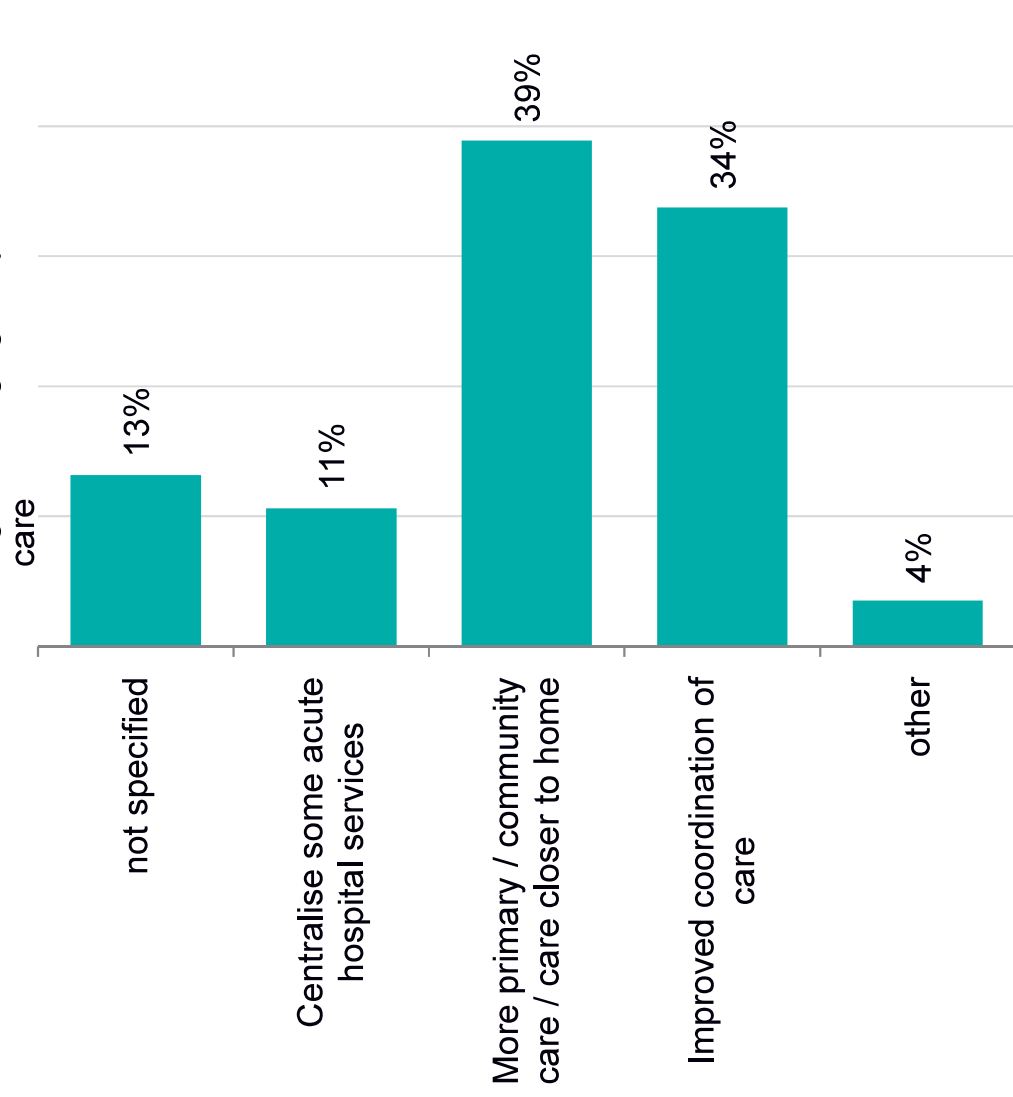
What do you think are the main opportunities for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% of 497 comments relating to doing more



Of the 497 comments that suggested that the NHS should do more, many wrote of training more doctors and nurses, with smaller numbers focusing on delivering more patient education programmes and making use of new and emerging technologies.

# Opportunities – Changing the Pattern of Care

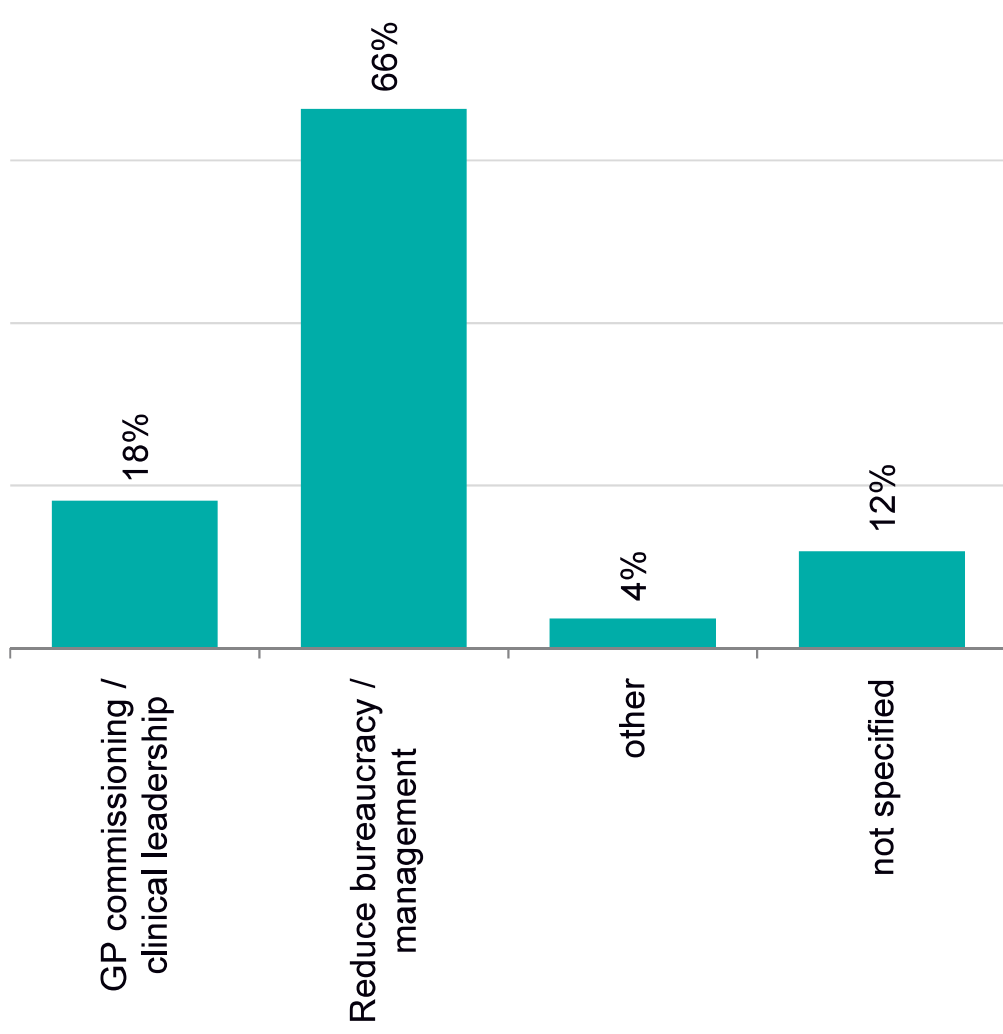
What do you think are the main opportunities for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% of 311 comments relating to changing the pattern of care



Of the 311 comments that related to changing the pattern of care, most focused either on increasing primary or community services and thereby moving care closer to home or on the improved coordination of care.

# Opportunities – Improved Management

What do you think are the main opportunities for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% of 193 comments relating to improved management



Respondents mentioning improved management spoke either of reducing bureaucracy or about the potential benefits of GP commissioning and clinical leadership.



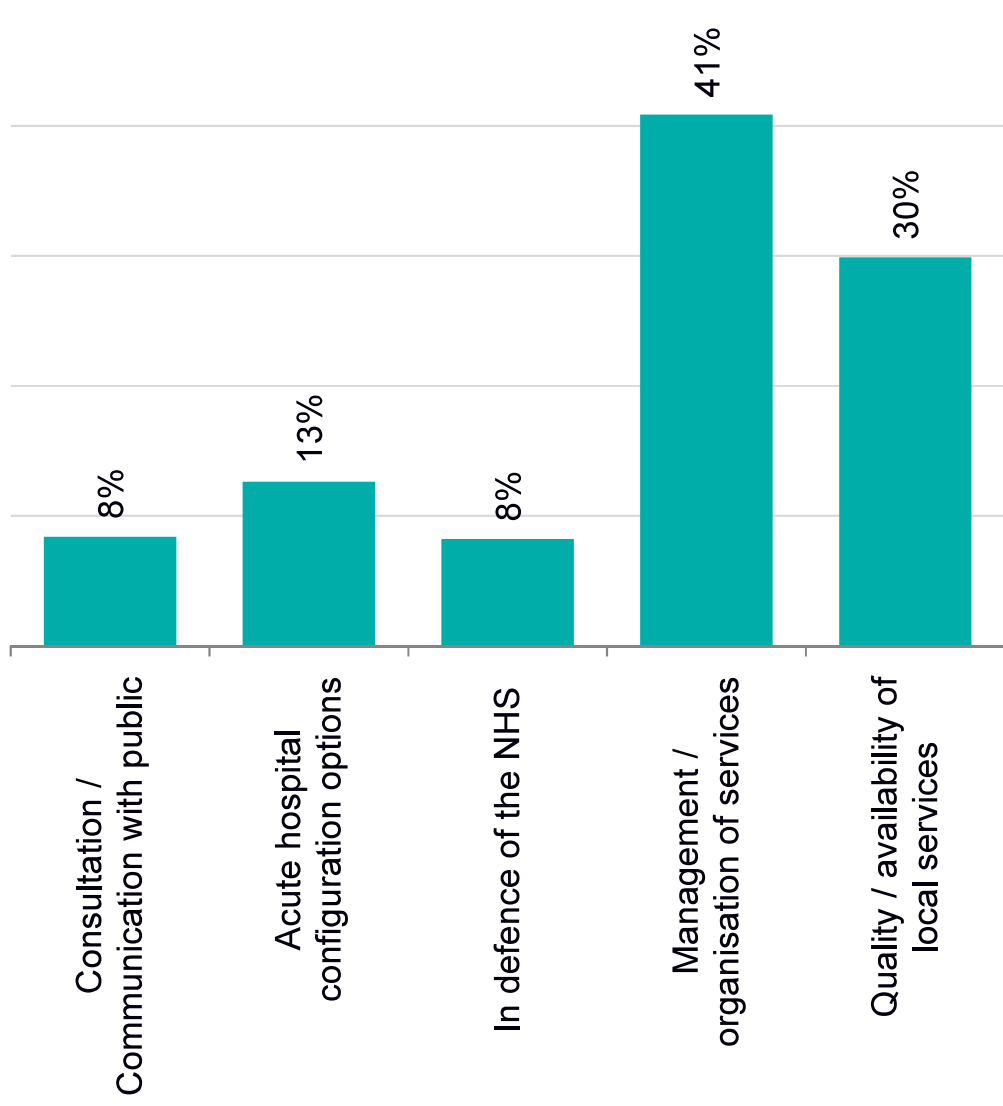
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**Q4 - Do you have any other comments  
you would like to make?**

## Other Comments – key Themes

Do you have any other comments you would like to make?

% of 1559 comments



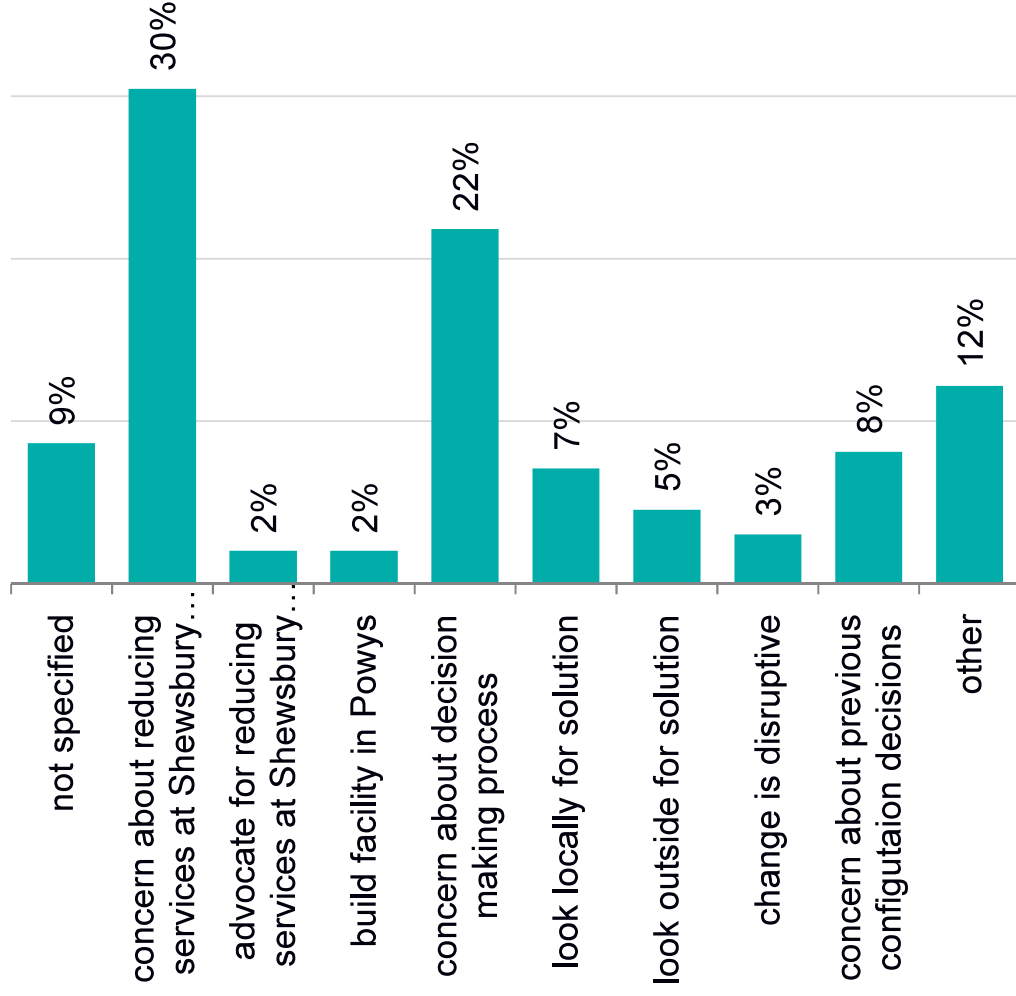
1,559 comments were received in response to question 4. Of these 30% referred to the availability or quality of local services, 13% to acute hospital configuration options and 41% to the management or organisation of healthcare services.

Smaller numbers wrote in defence of the NHS or about the process of consulting or communicating with the public.



## Other Comments – Acute Hospital Configuration

What do you think are the main opportunities for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% of 197 comments relating to acute hospital configuration

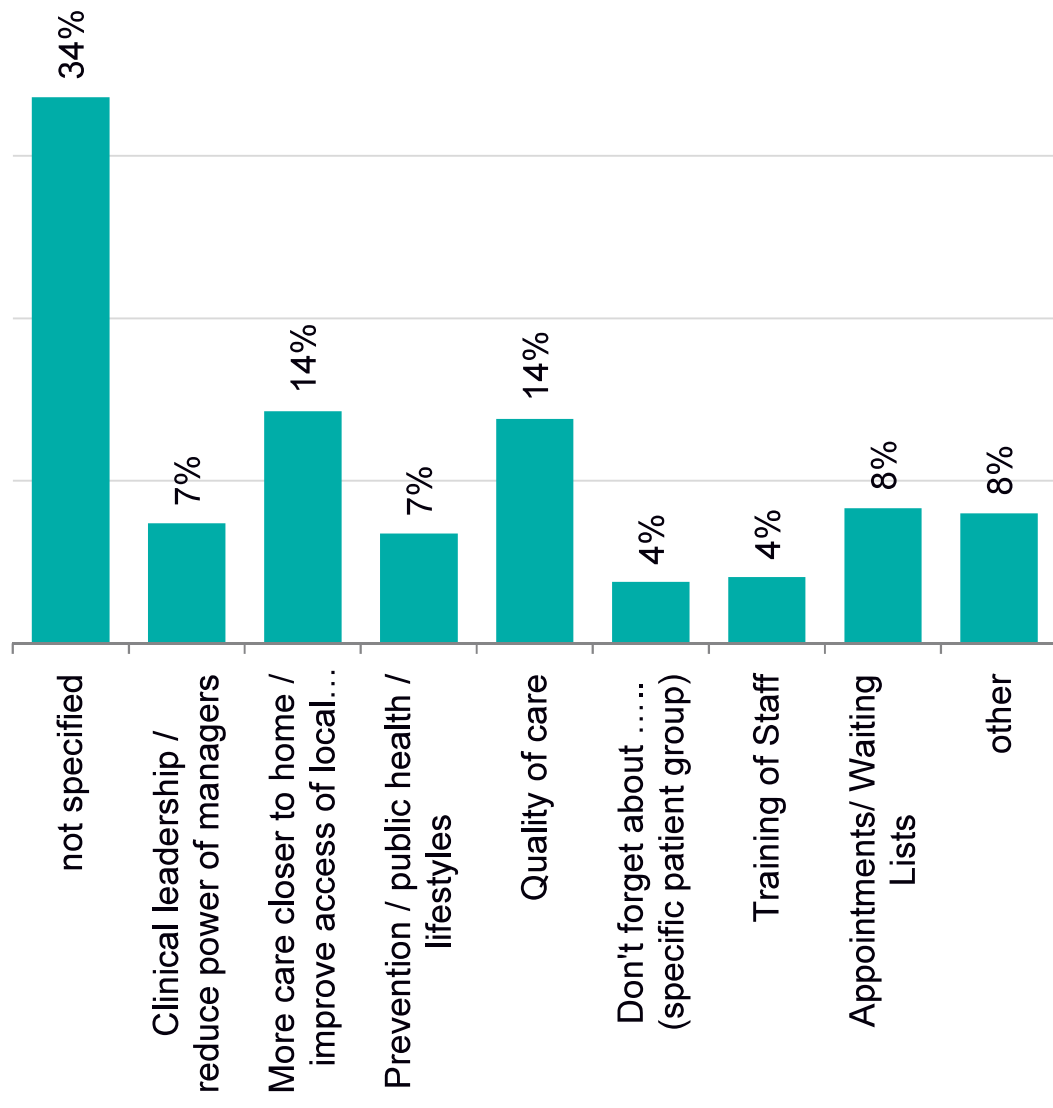


Of the 197 comments received about acute hospital configuration, 30% expressed concerns about losing hospital services at either Shrewsbury or Telford.

22% expressed concerns about the decision making process for any future reconfiguration.

## Other Comments – Management of Services

What do you think are the main opportunities for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% of 637 comments relating to management of services

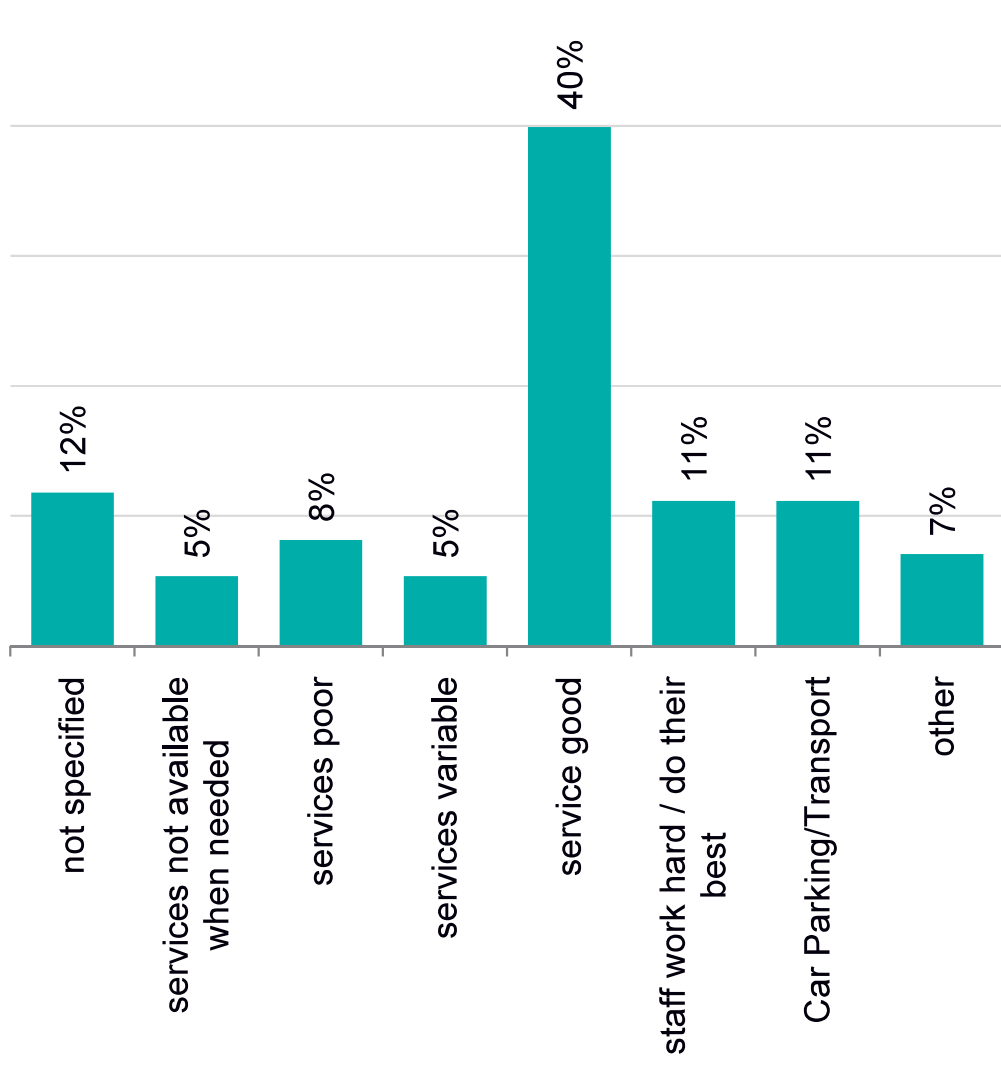


Several issues were raised about the management or organisation of services; moving care closer to home, quality of care, moving power away from managers and towards clinicians, the need for good public health and prevention and training for staff.

A small number of responses asked that the needs of certain groups (e.g. the elderly) were not forgotten.

## Other Comments – Availability / Quality of Local Services

What do you think are the main opportunities for the NHS over the next 5 years?  
% of 466 comments relating to quality / availability of local services



466 of the comments received in response to question 4 raised specific issues about the availability or quality of local services.

A range of issues were raised, many in support of local services and staff, others expressing concerns.