



Dressing Clinic Evaluation

December 2019 - January 2020

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Executive summary

This report presents the views of a small sample of residents living in the London Borough of Bexley (LBB). The two-month evaluation period took place from 1st December 2019 until 31st January 2020.

Healthwatch Bexley (Healthwatch) gathered feedback from **32** people, based on their experience of using the dressing clinic service provided at Queen Mary's hospital (QMH).

Despite some issues raised (below), the overall response was positive and residents felt the dressing clinic to be a valuable service.

Healthwatch would like to thank all the residents who took part in the evaluation. We would also like to thank Queen Mary's hospital, Sidcup for kindly assisting us by asking patients to complete a questionnaire about the service.

Key issues

- Accessibility to the dressing clinic for older people, as the clinic is only open from 6pm – 8pm during the week. Many older people do not like using public transport at night. They may also be frail and more prone to falls.
- The clinic will only look at some post-operative dressings.
- Residents who live north of the borough have to travel to Sidcup.

Recommendations

1. The dressing clinic should continue to be supported by the CCG past its trial date to help prevent patients presenting at Erith and QMH UCC for dressing changes. Difficulty in patients getting a GP appointment is a key factor in them presenting at UCC.
2. The dressing clinic should be located in two locations, one in the north of the borough and one in the south of the borough, so that it is more accessible to all Bexley residents.
3. The dressing clinic should be extended to include more specialised dressing changes, i.e. for people suffering from pressure ulcers or other chronic conditions.
4. An increase in the hours the clinic is available should be considered, especially for older adults who may not want to travel by public transport in the evenings.

Introduction

Healthwatch were pleased to be asked by Bexley Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) to evaluate the dressing clinic service based at the 8-8 Hub, Queen Mary's hospital, Sidcup.

The dressing clinic was opened in September 2019 at Queen Mary's hospital and has been trialling for 6 months. Healthwatch started the evaluation in December 2020 allowing time for the clinic to become established. The clinic is located within the GP hub at Queen Mary's hospital and consists of one treatment room and a shared reception area. An experienced dressings nurse is on site to treat post-operative patients.

The clinic is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday nights, 6pm – 8pm. Saturdays 9am until 5pm and Sundays 9am until 3pm. Appointments for post-operative patients to have dressings changed are made through their GP surgery. The dressing clinic is unable to deal with all dressings and GP appointments are still used if patients can get them. Patients who require daily dressing changes are not expected to attend the dressing clinic for more than a week as they will be shown how to change the dressing themselves if they are able.

The benefits of the dressings clinic is to reduce the chance of infection, to promote a faster healing time and patients only having one point of contact. It is hoped that a dedicated dressing service will reduce the flow of patients attending A and E and the Urgent Care Centres at Erith Hospital and Queen Mary's Hospital, as well as freeing up appointment times at local GP Practices.

The key areas our evaluation covered were:

- Referral process
- The dressings clinic environment and service

Methodology

The Healthwatch evaluation period ran from 6th January 2020 to 31st January 2020.

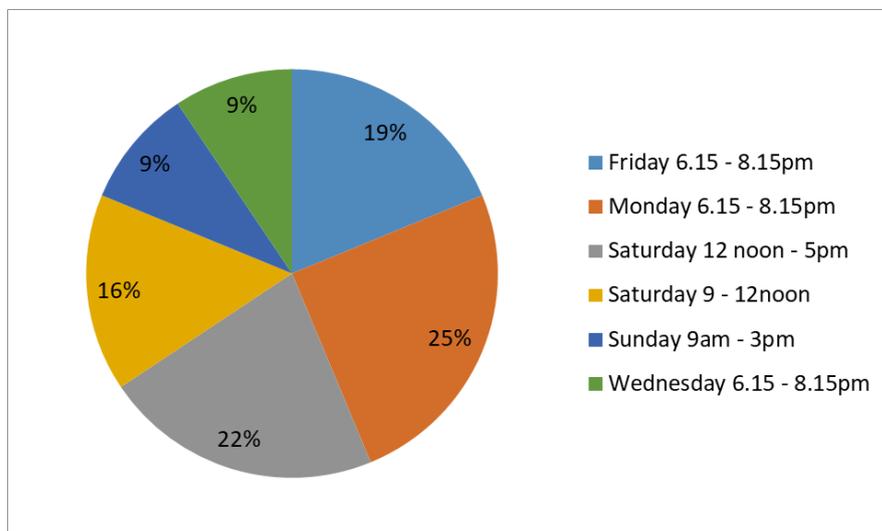
Healthwatch worked with the Bexley CCG team to produce a series of quantitative and one qualitative question to capture people's views.

Healthwatch invited people to comment on the dressing clinic by completing an anonymous questionnaire. Completing the questionnaire was optional, with most people happy to engage. The

dressing clinic receptionists and dressing nurses helped Healthwatch by asking patients to complete the questionnaire, which the patient then put in a Healthwatch post box situated on the dressing clinic reception desk. The questionnaires were collected regularly during the consultation period. Data captured from questionnaires was input in February 2020. This data was collated and used to write this report by a member of the Healthwatch Bexley team.

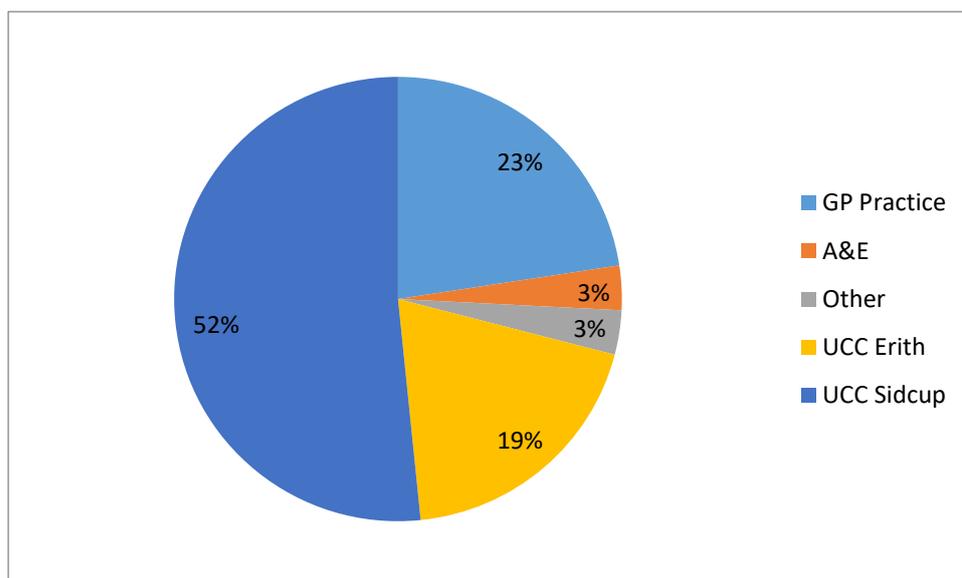
Breakdown of responses

1. Day and time of visit (n32)



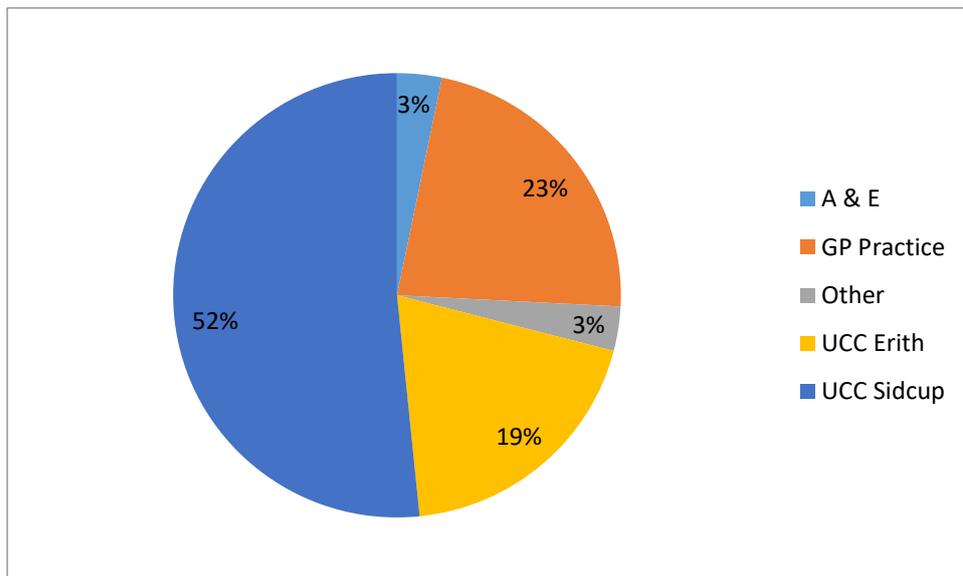
This represents the amount of people attending the clinic who completed our questionnaire, rather than the popularity of the clinic.

2. Who referred you to/told you about the dressing clinic here today? (n31)



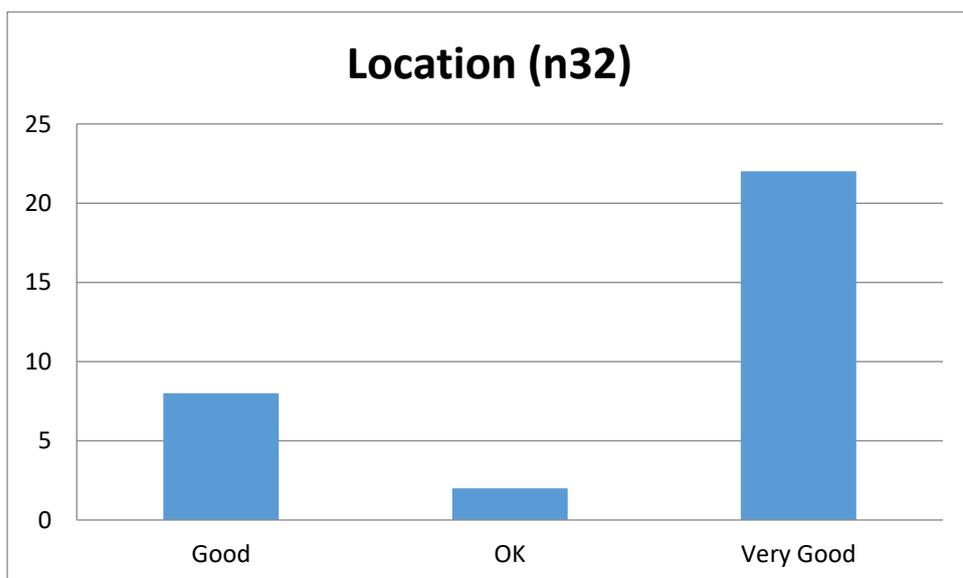
The majority of patients, were referred by UCC and over half were referred to the dressing clinic through Sidcup UCC. 3 patients had previously visited the dressing clinic and were return visitors.

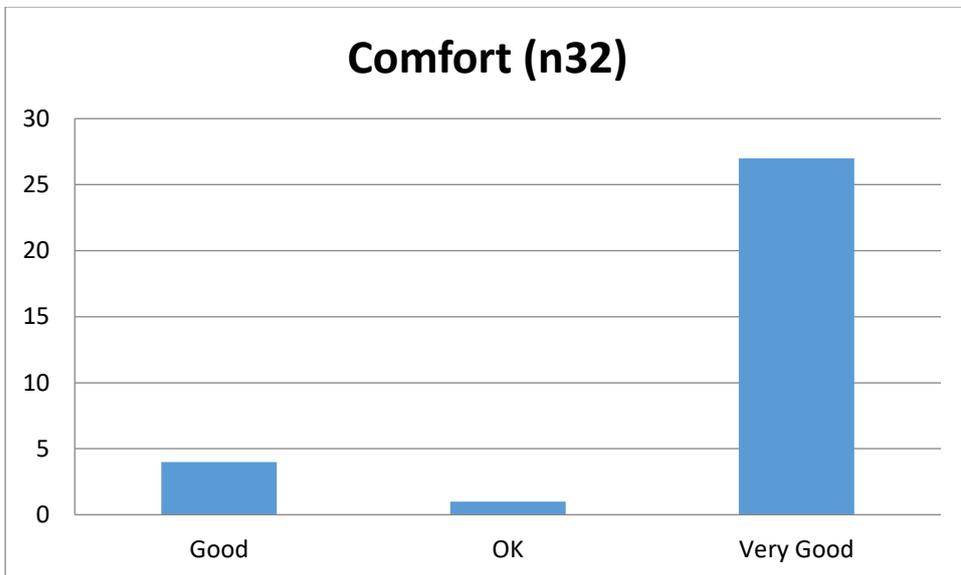
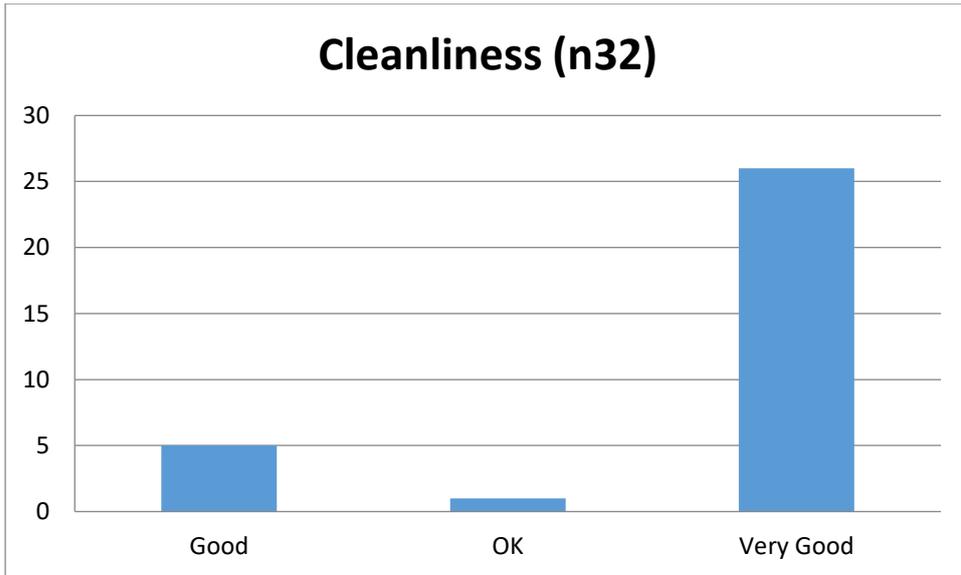
3. Where would you have gone to get your dressing changed if you had not visited the hub today? (n31)

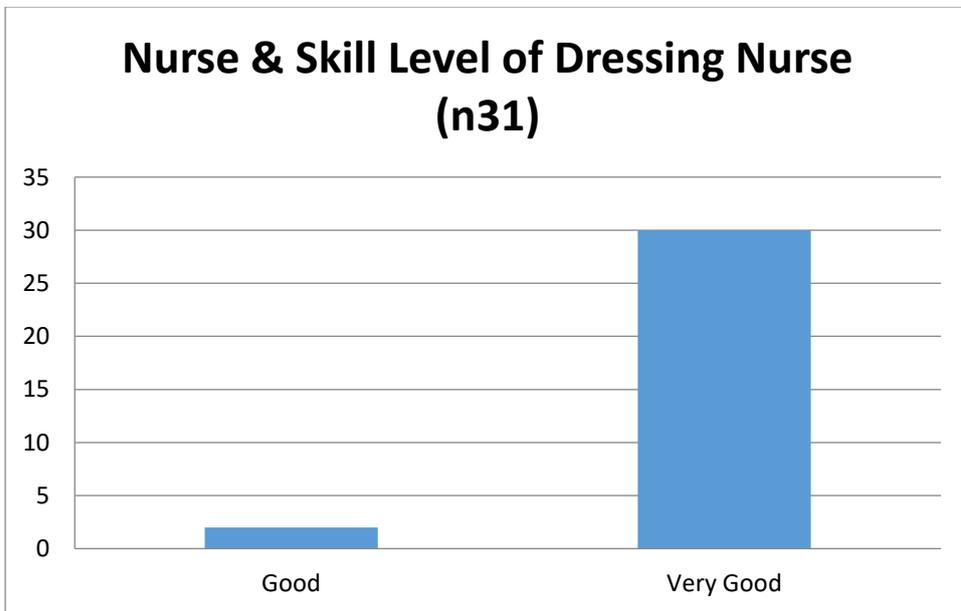


The majority of patients, 71% would have attended an urgent care centre to have their dressings changed. One patient would have visited 'wound care' at Queen Elizabeth Hospital.

4. Please rate the environment/service today? (n32)

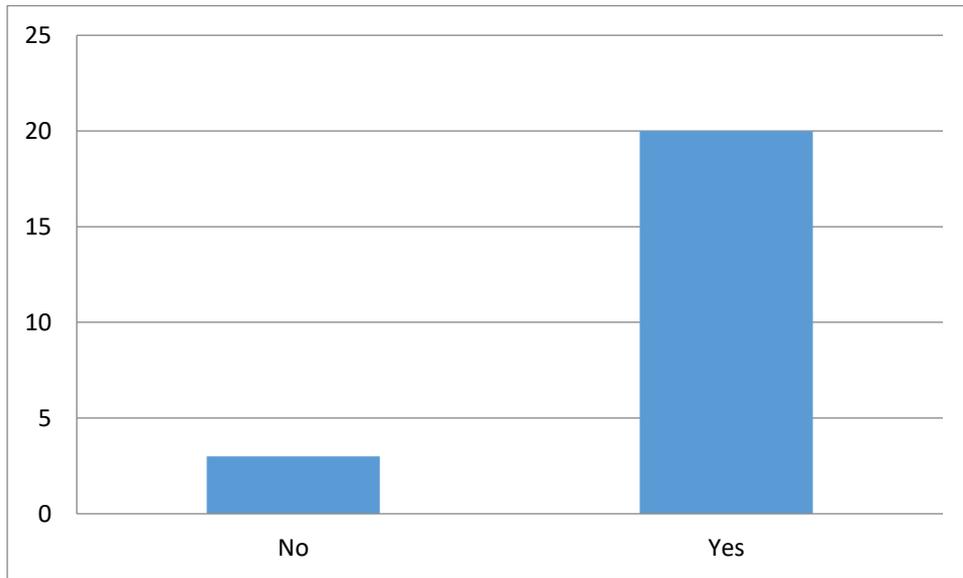




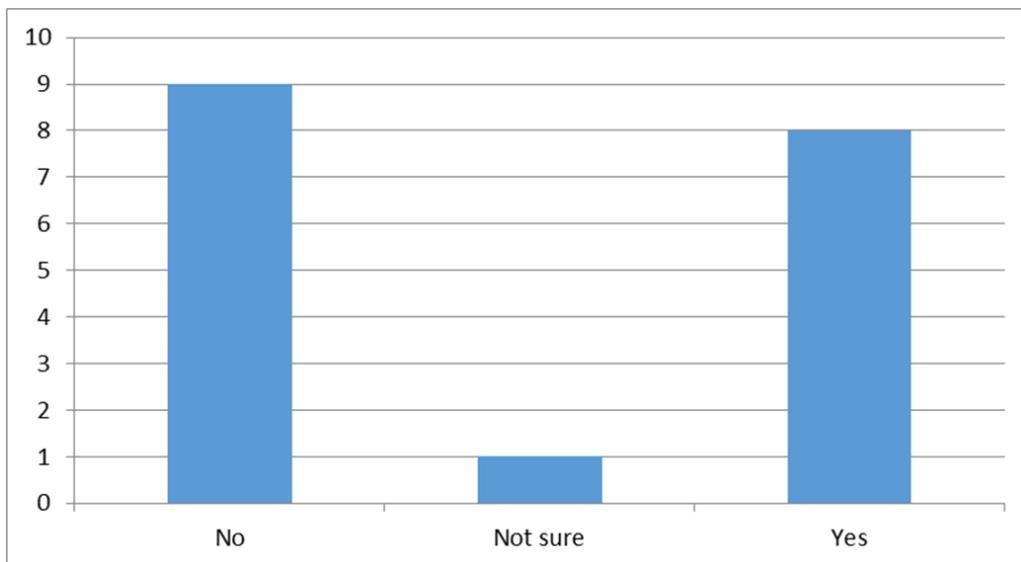


The overall data shows that the service received and the environment of the dressing clinic was rated by patients as very good.

5. Were you given advice and shown how to care for your dressing? (n23)

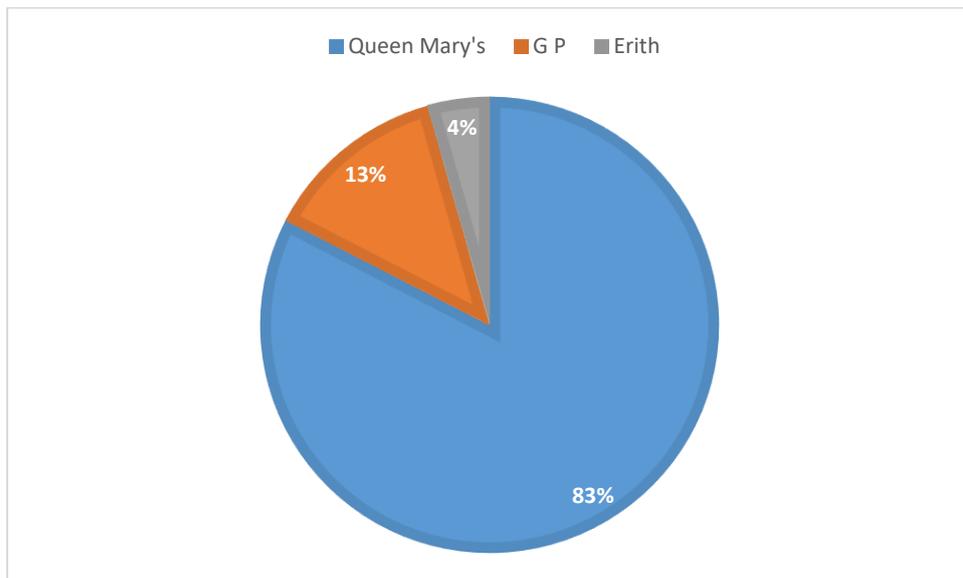


6. Were you given advice and shown how to change your own dressing? (n18)



8 patients had been shown how to change their dressing. Some patients may not have been able to change their own dressings due to the nature and complexity of the dressing or may not have the capacity or ability to change their own dressing.

7. Where would you ideally like/think the dressing clinic should be situated? (n23)



The majority of patients, 83%, thought the dressing clinic should remain at Queen Mary's Hospital within the GP Hub. Only 4% thought the service should be located in Erith.

Comments

"Ok as it is."

"Where it is, is a good location."

"In all GP surgeries."

"Centrally in the borough."

"Perfect here in Sidcup."

"If one at Erith I would attend there but QMH fine."

8. Any other comments

"A full 7 day service would be even better."

"Excellent that the hub service has been extended to wound dressings."

"A very valuable resource - especially as my GP practice has very little nurse cover."

"The nurse was absolutely fantastic."

"Very helpful - convenient location."

Conclusion

The dressing clinic service is a valuable service in the borough in preventing post-operative patients from attending UCC or their GP practice to have dressings changed. As most patients, 71% would have attended UCC at Erith Hospital or QMH Sidcup, the dressing clinic can be considered an effective service in diverting patients away from visiting UCC to have their dressings changed. The patients we spoke to were happy to be attending a specialised, dedicated service with specially trained nurses with an appointment time, rather than having to sit and wait.

The dressing clinic at QMH is well liked by those using the service, the majority of whom rated the location, cleanliness, comfort, service, reception and dressing nurses as very good or good.

Reception staff and the dressing clinic nurses described the clinic as busy, with all the appointments generally being filled. However, the location and restricted opening hours may be a barrier to older adults who may not be confident to travel on public transport in the evenings, especially if they have to travel across the borough.

Most of the patients referred to the dressing clinic that we engaged with (83%), would prefer the clinic to remain at QMH. However this may partly reflect the fact that over half (52%) would have attended UCC at QMH and had been referred by QMH UCC, indicating that QMH is their preferred choice of hospital. Fewer patients were actually referred from Erith UCC and the reason for this has not been explored. Others suggested that the dressing clinic should be located either centrally or in both the north and south of the borough. The high percentage preferring the dressing clinic to remain at QMH is surprising as 10 patients, just under half, lived in the north of the borough in Erith and Belvedere, 9 lived in Welling with 4 living in Bexleyheath or Bexley.

Some patients felt that the service should be extended to include other more specialist dressing changes. There is generally a lack of provision for dressing changes in the borough, hence the need to go to UCC if patients cannot get a timely appointment at their GP practice.

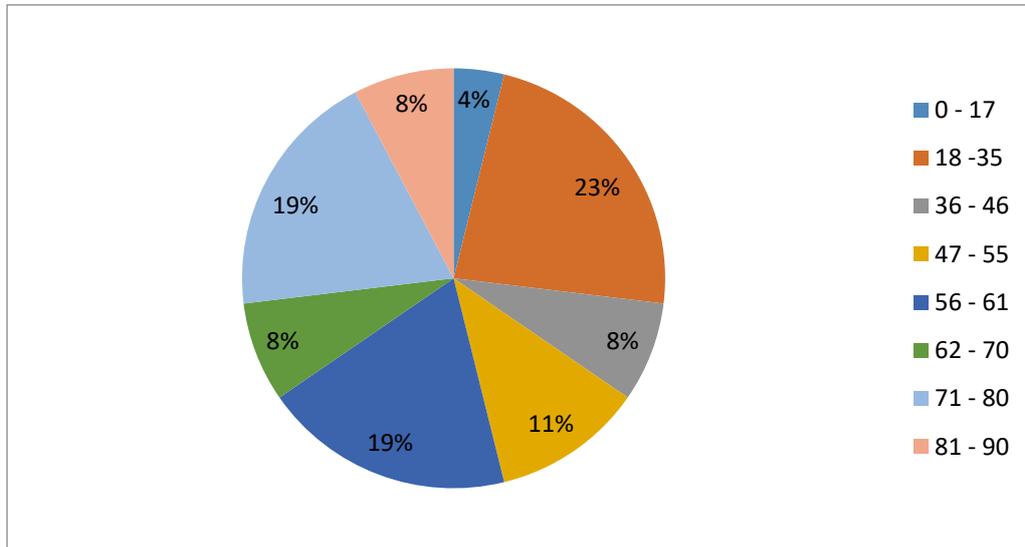
Recommendations

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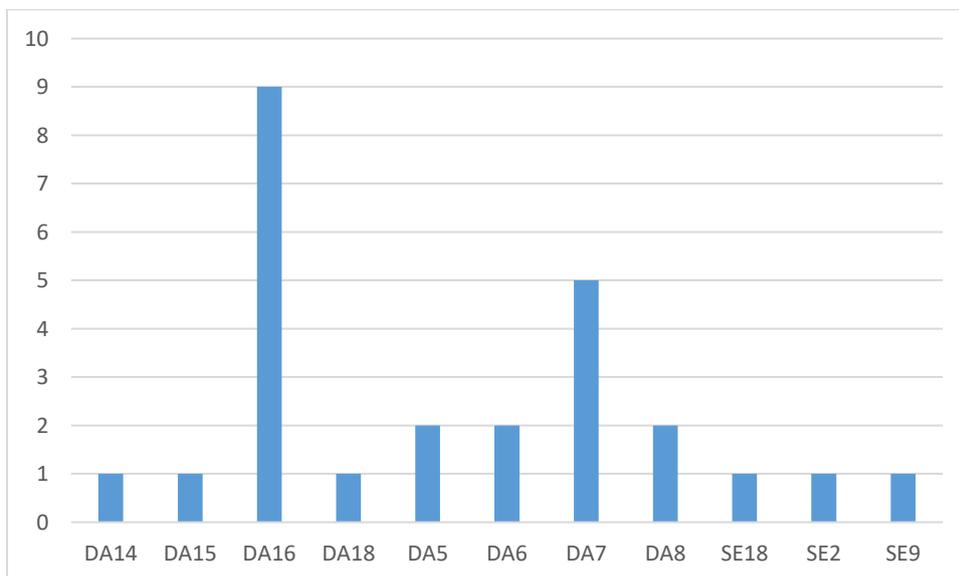
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Appendix 1 – Demographics

Age (n26)

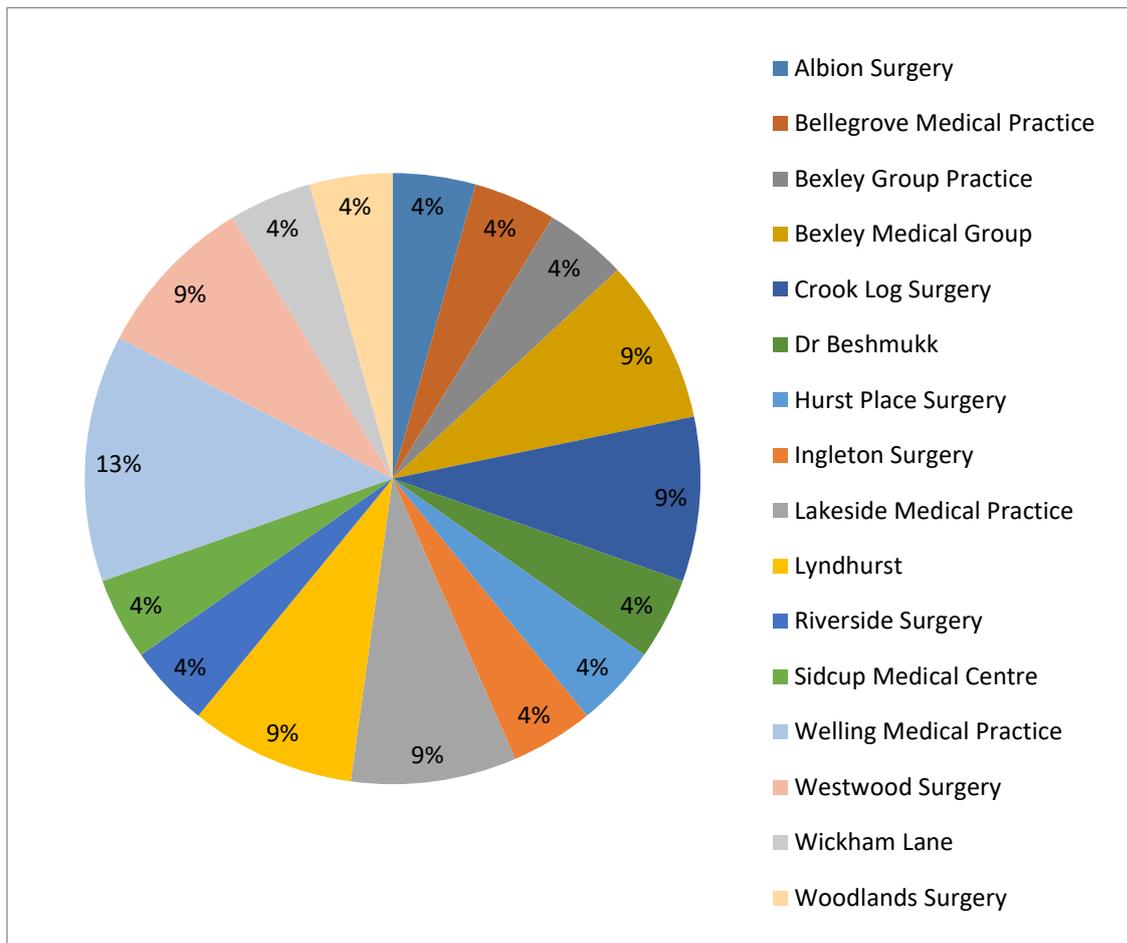


Postcode (n16)



10 patients had travelled from the north of Bexley to visit the dressing hub and the remaining 16 lived in Welling, Sidcup, Bexley or Bexleyheath.

GP Practice



Appendix 2 - Evaluation of the dressing clinic at Queen Mary's Hospital

Please tell us about your visit to the dressing clinic at Queen Marys Hospital TODAY

Age: _____ **Postcode:** _____ **GP Practice registered with:** _____

Day and time of visit (Please tick one)		
Monday 6:15-8:15pm	Wednesday 6:15-8:15pm	Friday 6:15-8:15pm
Saturday 9-12am / 12-5pm	Sunday 9-3pm	

Who referred you to/told you about the dressing clinic here today (Please tick one)	
My GP Practice	Urgent Care Centre Erith
Urgent Care Centre Sidcup	Other:

Where would you have gone to get your dressing changed had you not visited the clinic today?			
A&E	Urgent care/treatment centre: Erith Sidcup	GP Practice	Other:

Please rate the environment/service today?					
	Very Good	Good	OK	Poor	Very Poor
Location					
Cleanliness					
Comfort					
Service					
Reception					
Nurse					
Skill level of nurse					

Were you given advice and shown how to:			
Care for your dressing	Yes	No	Not sure
Change your own dressing	Yes	No	Not sure

Where would you ideally like/think the dressing clinic should be situated?

Any other comments (please use the back of the sheet if you need more space to write)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this evaluation. Your comments will help to shape the service in the future.