

Poll: Recent Changes to GP practices

In September 2025, we sought people's experiences of recent changes to GP practices, including using technology to access health services the introduction of new staff roles.

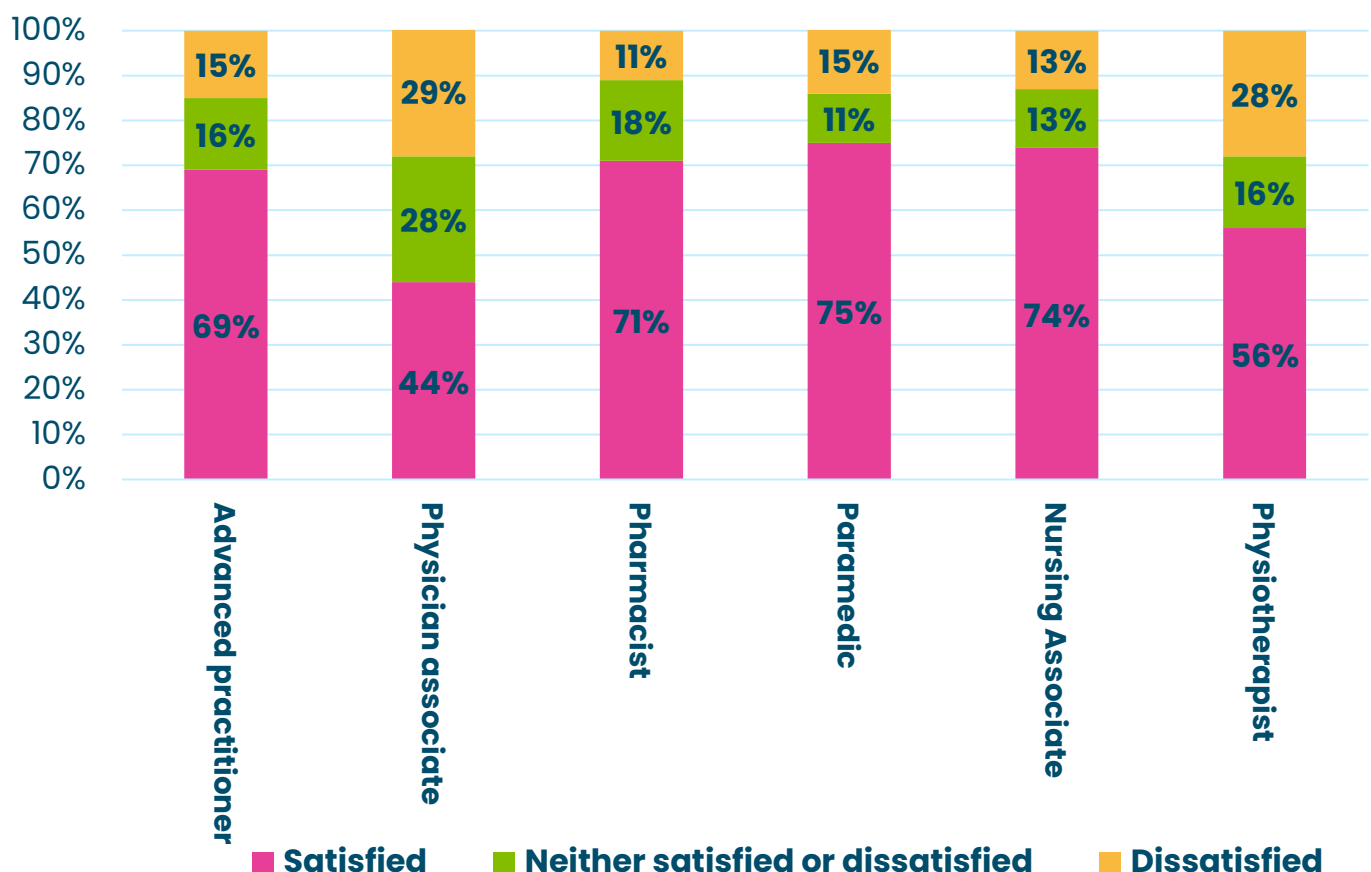
603 people from across Sussex shared their views with us.

In terms of whom respondents were being treated by in the NHS and in GP surgeries, we heard:

- The majority of respondents had not experienced care or treatment from staff in new roles in GP surgeries such as paramedics, physician associates and care co-ordinators. For example, 87% had not used a health and wellbeing coach, 89% had not used a dietitian and 60% had not been seen a paramedic.
- However, those respondents who had accessed medical support from staff in these new roles they were generally satisfied with the care and treatment they receive. For example; 74% were satisfied with care and treatment from Nursing Associates, 75% with Paramedics, 71% with Pharmacists and 69% with Advanced Practitioners.
- Physicians Associates received the highest rate of dissatisfaction in our poll (29%). Comments revealed concerns around their qualifications, training and wasting patient's time by having to refer back to a GP to issue prescriptions or make decisions.
- Comments highlighted some confusion about these new roles and both positive and negative experiences of care received from the professionals in them.

Satisfaction with care and treatment received from professionals, from those that experienced the six most commonly used roles

(Please note figures exclude not used and don't know responses)

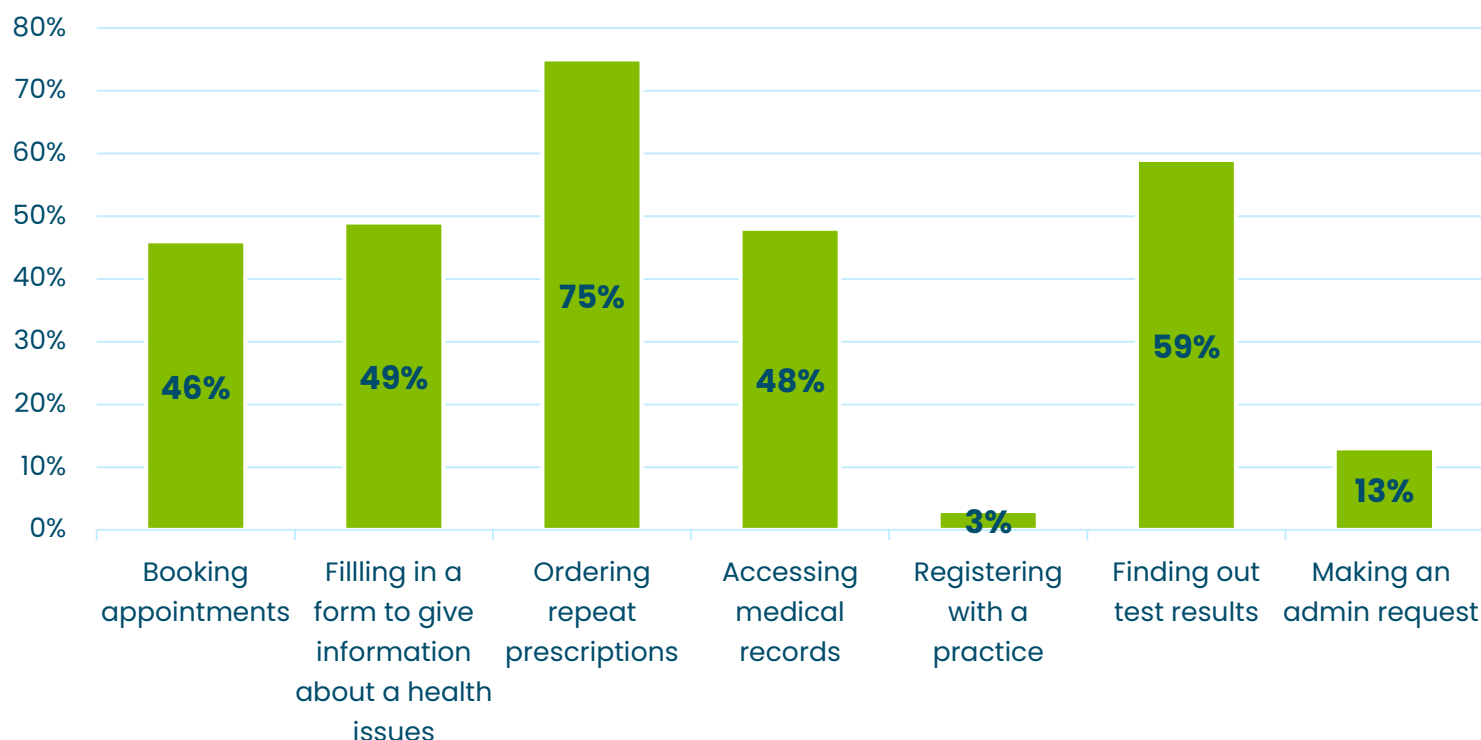


In terms of using technology to access health care, we heard:

- The majority of respondents (62%) felt either very confident or somewhat confident about using technology to access support for their health needs. 26% felt confident or very unconfident. This is especially interesting as the average age of our respondents was 70.
- When asked what online GP services respondents used in the last 12 months, the most used were ordering repeat prescriptions (75%) and finding out test results (59%). Least used were registering with a practice (3%) and making an administrative request (13%):

What online GP services have you used in the past 12 months?

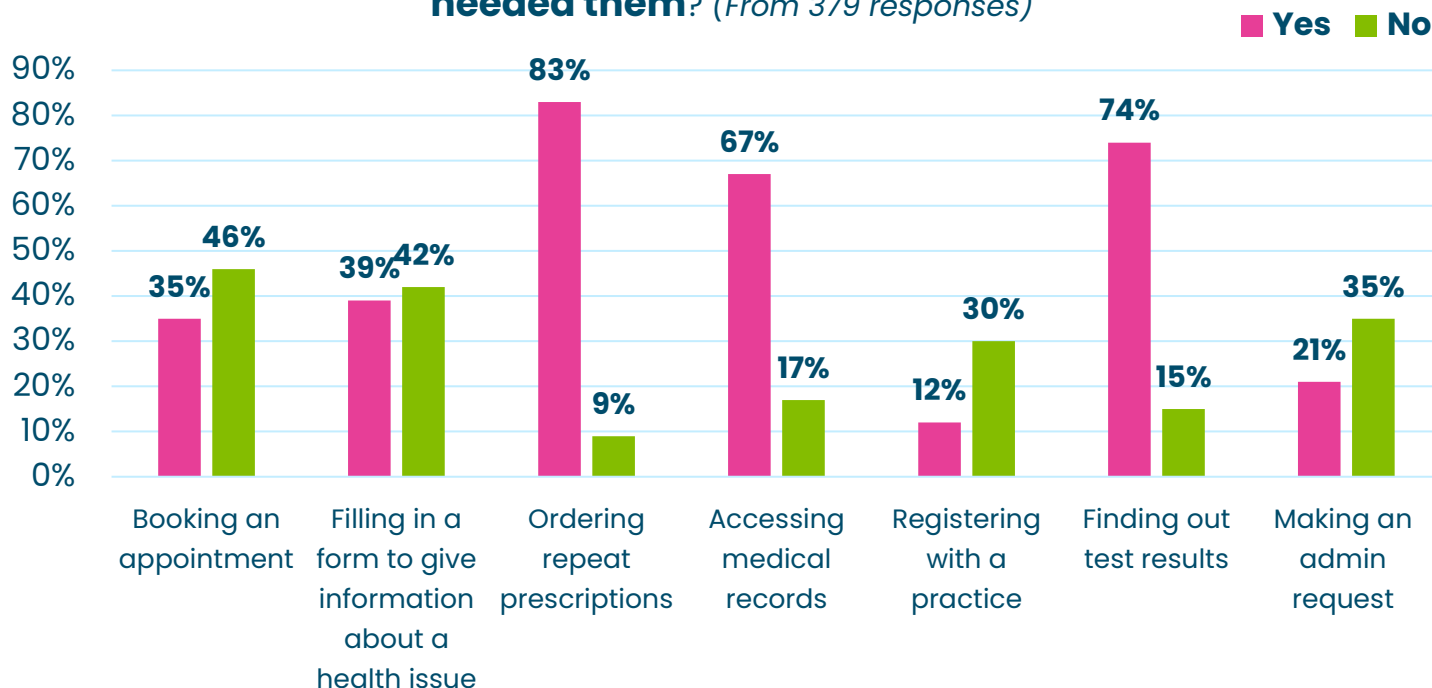
(From 597 responses)



When asked if online services were available when needed, ordering a repeat prescription was most likely to be available (83% said it was available when needed) and booking an appointment was most likely to be unavailable when needed (45%):

Were the online services you used, available when you

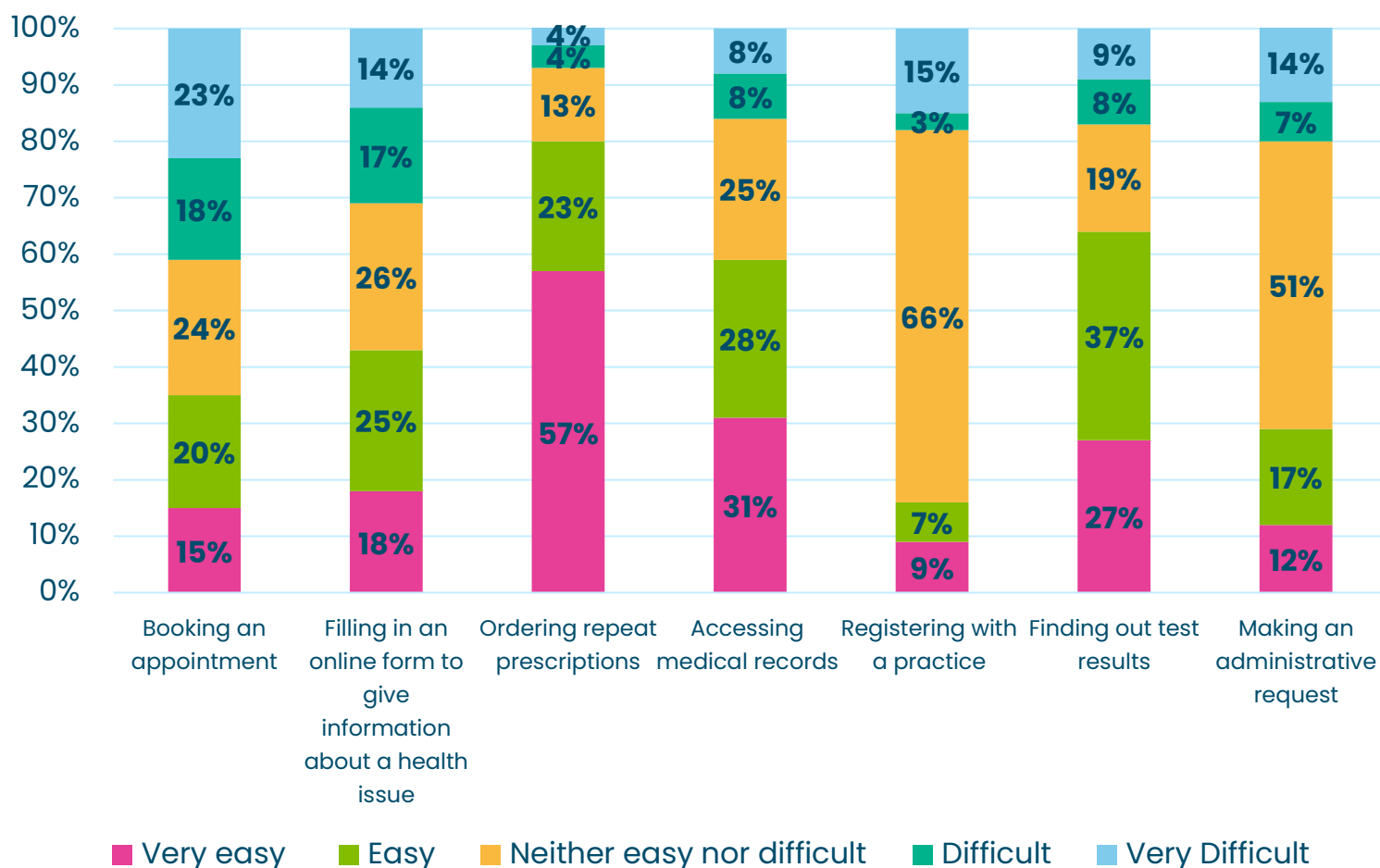
needed them? (From 379 responses)



In terms of **ease of use of online services** respondents found ordering repeat prescriptions, accessing medical records and finding out test results the easiest, and registering with a practice online the most difficult as the chart below shows:

How easy or difficult did you find the online services to use?

(Responses received ranged from 502–206 depending on service used)



Respondents' experiences of using online forms to contact their GP

Where respondents had used an online form to contact their GP, they were mostly positive about their experiences:

- 47% rated their overall experience of using an online form very good or good compared to 31% who rated it poor or very poor.
- The area respondents rated most highly was 'follow up communication they received after the consultation' with 58% rating it as either very good or good compared to 23% who found it either poor or very poor.
- 54% found the ease of finding forms very good or good, compared to 21% who found ease of finding forms poor or very poor.
- The 'appropriateness of questions asked in the form' was rated most poorly (32% rated this as either poor or very poor compared to 35% who rated it good or very good).

When asked '**What type of training or support would best help you to become more confident in using technology and online support to access support for your health needs?**'

- 26% told us animations or short films showing you how to use the service would best help them.
- 25% told us they already felt confident and did not need any training or support
- 13% said group coaching or mentoring at the GP surgery would best help.
- 10% told us E-learning courses/ or one-to-one help and support would best support them.
- 28% told us 'none of the above – I do not want to use online health services'.

Respondents to our 2025 poll told us:

There is a lack of understanding of the newer roles in GP surgeries but there have been some positive experiences (32 comments):

"There's no information available to tell you what services your surgery provides, or what you have been booked, so it's a surprise when you arrive to discover your appointment isn't with a doctor."

"Very impressed that my surgery now has Mental Health practitioners who were able to very speedily sort out my right to choose referral."

"The additional posts used by the practice have reduced waiting times and improved availability of response."

"It has really improved access to my surgery (which was already good). I am happy to see different practitioner's as I don't always need a GP."

Many people are concerned about the shift to online health services for the elderly and digitally excluded: (59 comments)

"Although once accessed care has been quite good, for many older people internet technology is alien, frustrating and cannot replace talking to a person."

"As I'm not confident using online technology to access GP services, I want to have the option to telephone and/or speak face to face to staff directly [...] I am concerned that withdrawal of non-Digital services is discriminatory against older people, disabled people and BAME communities."

"The online technology may be easy for younger generation but for me, the older generation, it's difficult,"

Online appointments are not always available when needed or are often fully booked (43 comments). Please note new changes were been brought in by the NHS to improve online booking on the 1st October 2025 and patients should now be able to request appointments throughout the day.

"Despite using the online eConsult system at 8am there are never any slots available."

"We are unable to use technology to make an appointment. The e-consult form is not always available depending on the time of day. It can be frustrating to try and speak to or to see a doctor."

"I accept the need for some form of remote contact, and agree that it can be adequate in particular cases, but find the limited hours in which one can fill in a form requesting advice/an appointment unacceptable."

Tell us your experience

We always want to hear more about people's experiences of health and care services. Share your story with your local Healthwatch:

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