

**Patient and Public Experience
Regarding
Access to Health Records**

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Introduction

The Access to Health Records department wanted to undertake a second patient experience survey to obtain views from members of the public and patients regarding their experience when requesting access to their medical records. The department could then compare the results to the last survey in 2006.

This piece of work will be used as evidence for the requirement 205 of the information governance toolkit.

Method

Patients and members of the public who had recently accessed their medical records were randomly selected from the database held in the department and sent a questionnaire to complete.

The questionnaire was optional and did not require any personal details. A pre paid envelope was provided for the return of the questionnaires.

Results

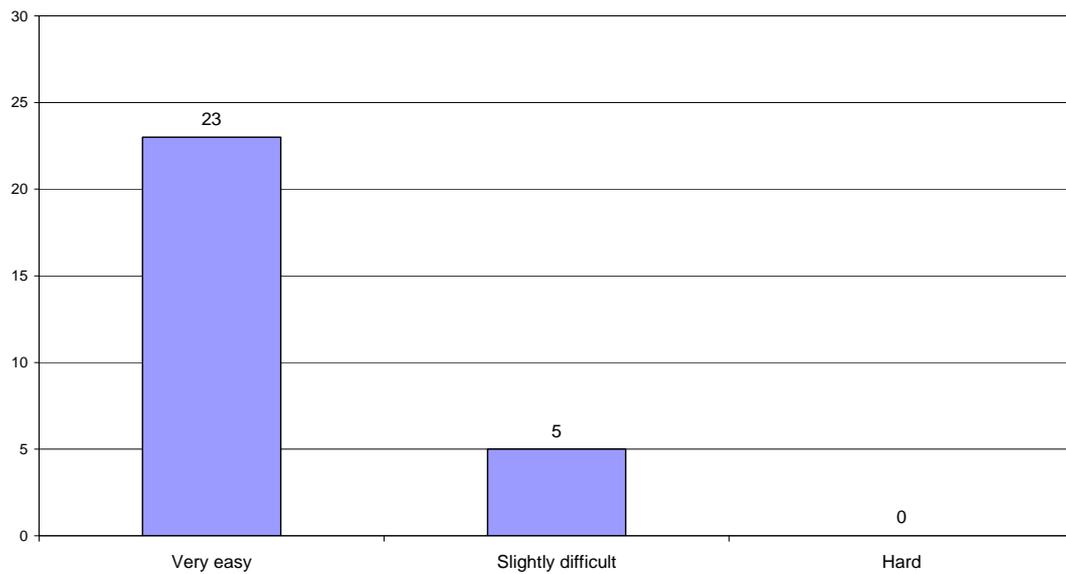
The results are given in graph form. Response rate 46.5% (28 responses)
(41.5% response rate in 2006)

Acknowledgements

Thanks go out to all the patients and members of the public who took time to complete the questionnaires. Thanks also go to the Engagement Department who assisted with the report.

Results

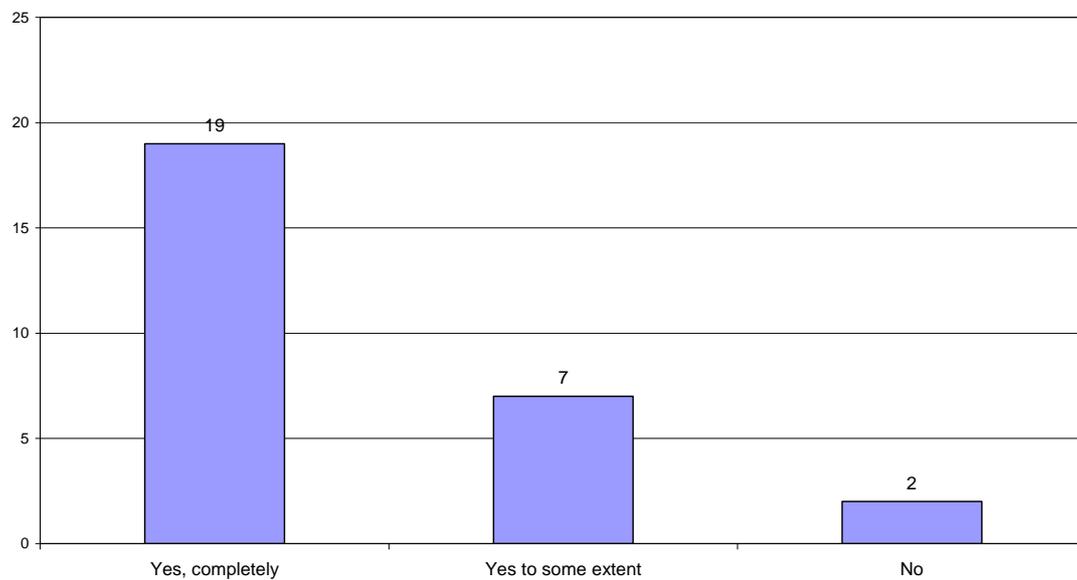
How easy was it for you to find out about access to health records?



When asked how easy was it to find out about access to health records

82% (70% in 2006) said it was very easy
15% (20% in 2006) said it was slightly difficult
0% (10% in 2006) said it was hard

Was your request for your copies of health records dealt with in a timely manner



When asked was your request for copies of health records dealt with in a timely manner

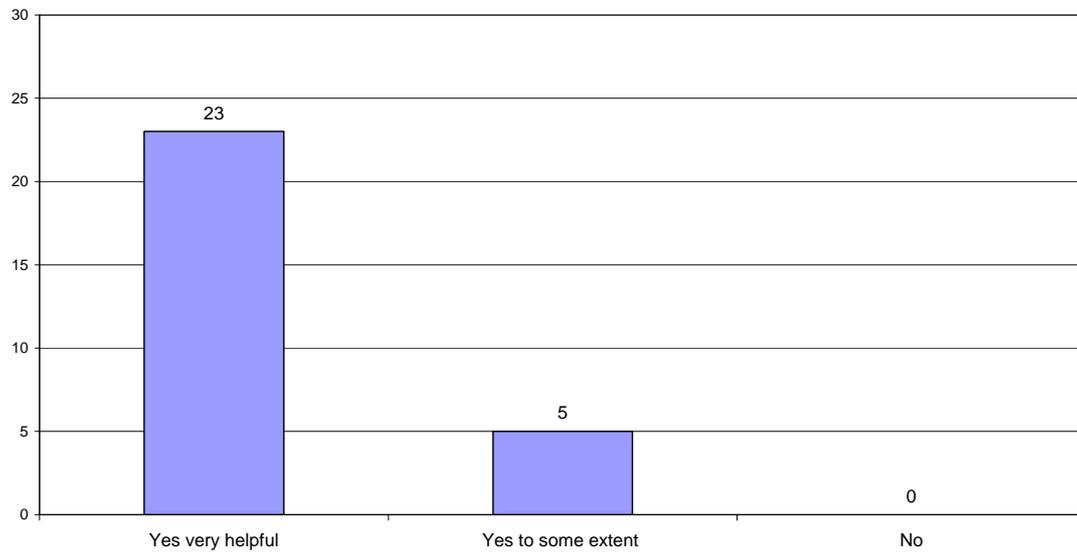
68% (70% in 2006) said yes completely
25% (20% 2006) said yes to some extent
7% (10% 2006) said no

Patient comments

“I am still waiting for some records that I asked for in 2005 and some have recently been disclosed to the NHS Ombudsman”

“From my first phone call to receiving my records it was about 5 weeks and I rang up 4 times to see what was the delay

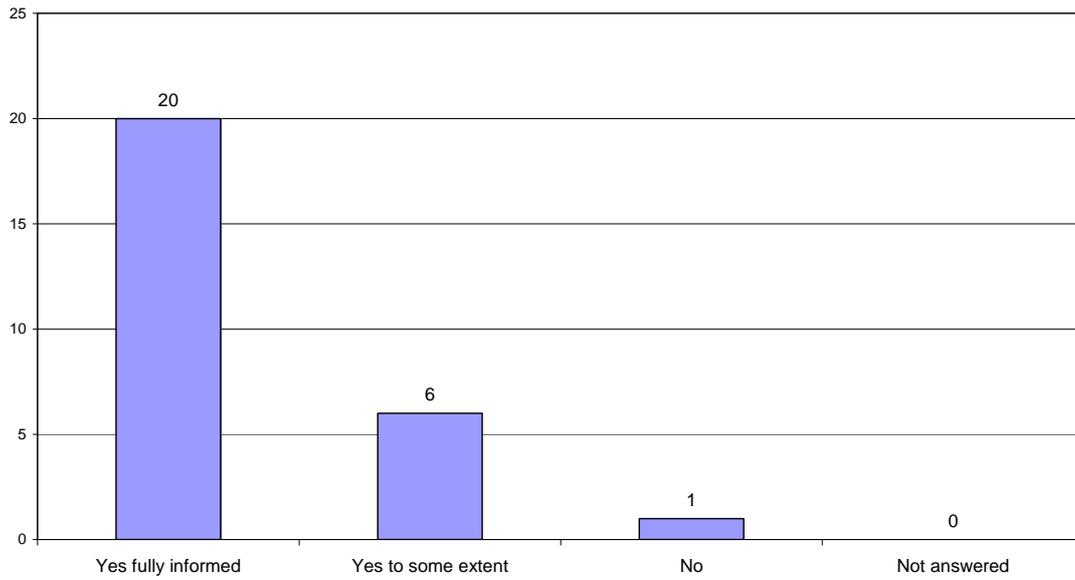
Was the member of staff dealing with your request for access to health records helpful?



When asked was the member of staff dealing with your request for access to health records helpful

82% (85% 2006) said yes very helpful
18% (10% 2006) said yes to some extent
0% (5% (1)2006) said no

Did the staff member give you all the information that you needed?



When asked did the member of staff give you all the information you needed

74% (73.5% 2006) said yes fully informed

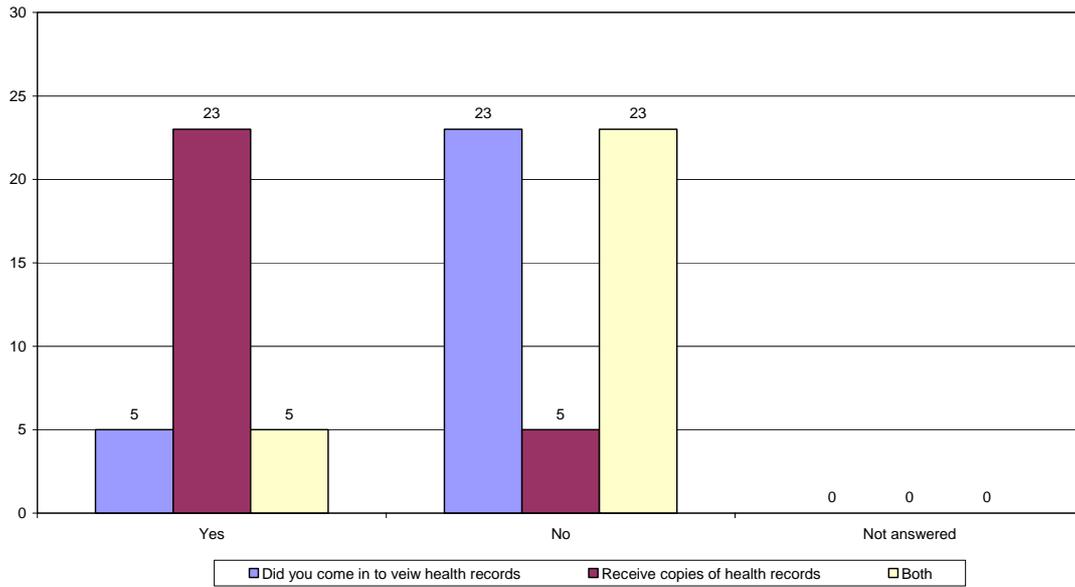
22% (16% 2006) said yes to some extent

4% (10.5% 2006) said no

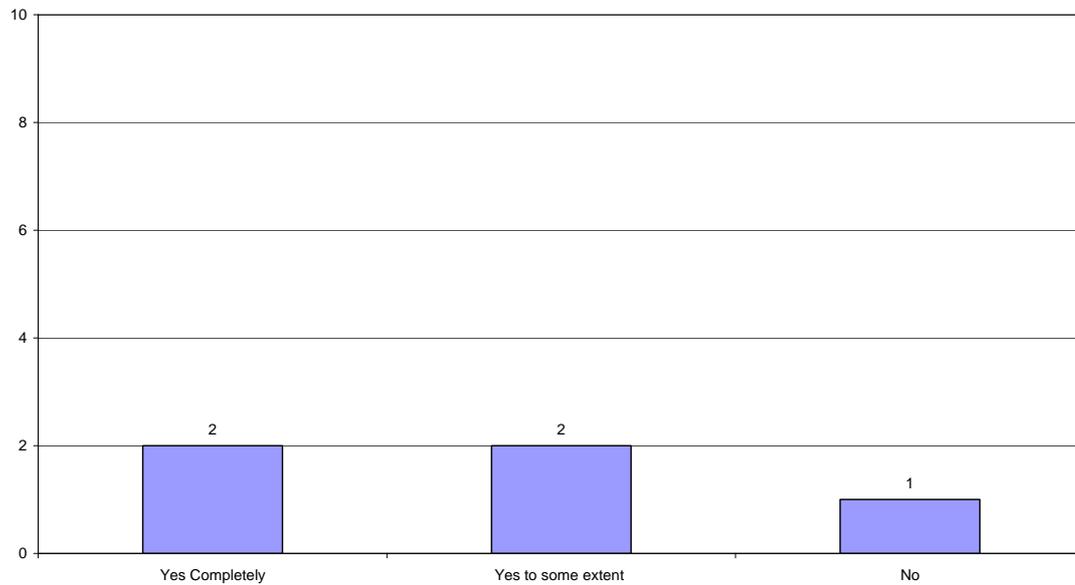
Patient comments

“At first viewing in 2003 not all my notes were there and the admin assistant could not read the Doctors writing”

Accessing your records



If you came in to view your records was the location adequate for your needs?



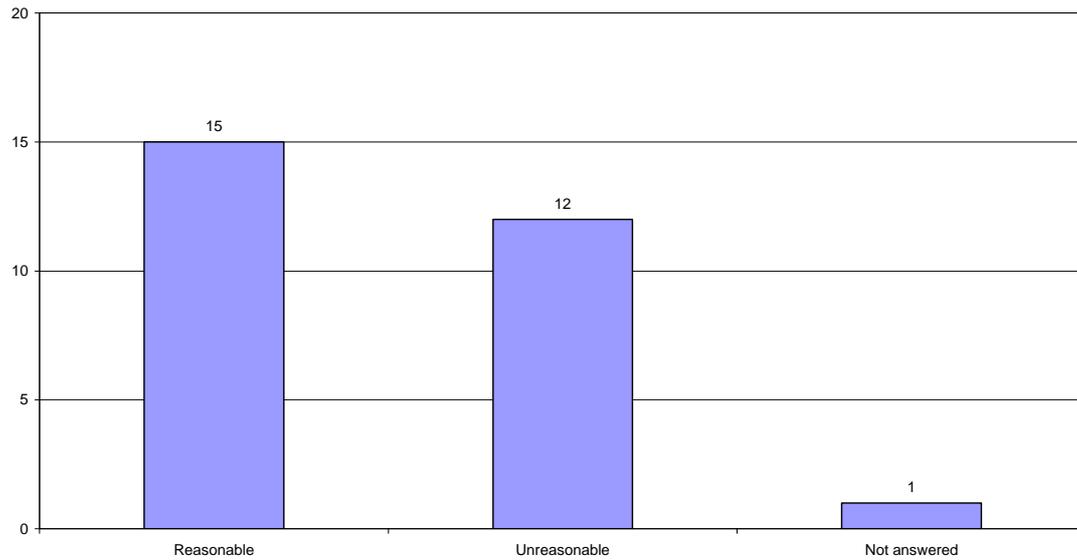
When asked when viewing records was the location adequate

40% (80% in 2006) said yes completely
 40% (10% in 2006) said yes to some extent
 20% (10% in 2006) said no

Patient comments

“I felt intimidated at the second viewing in 2003 as 2 people sat with me as though they did not trust me. I also asked why some of the original entries were now type written thus altering my records since the first viewing but I never got an answer

If you were charged a fee for copies of your health records did you feel the fee was reasonable or unreasonable?



When asked if the fee charged was reasonable or unreasonable

53.5% (80% in 2006) said they thought the fee was reasonable

43% (13.5% in 2006) said they thought it was unreasonable

(6.5% in 2006) said it was reasonable/unreasonable (50/50)

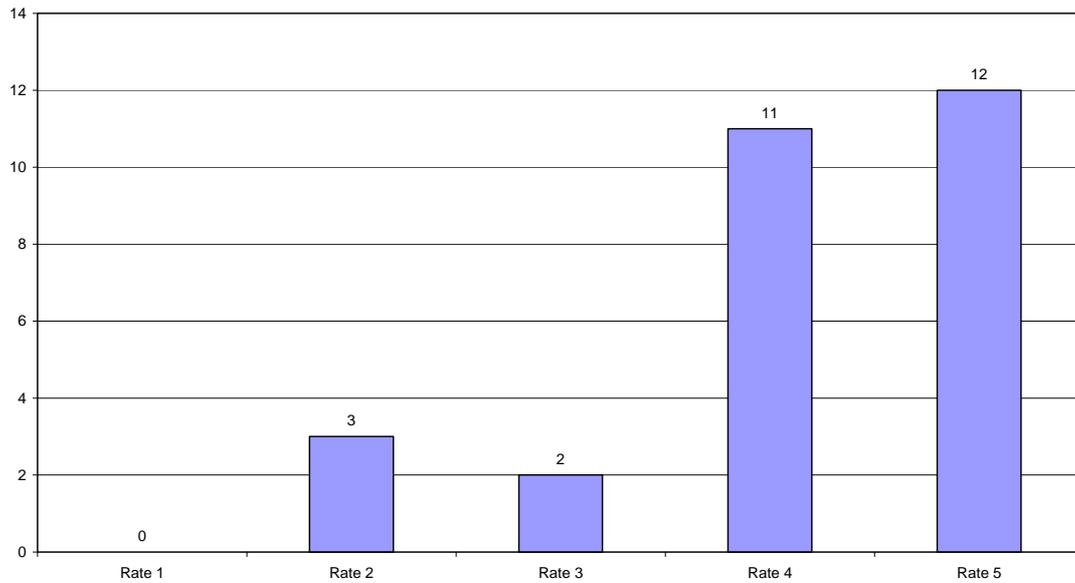
3.5% did not answer

Patient comments

“A small donation may be more reasonable. I don’t see why I should have to pay”

“Feel £20 is excessive – no explanation as to why such cost”

On a scale of 1 - 5 with 5 being excellent, how would you rate the current service?



We asked the clients how would you rate our access to medical record service

43% (40% in 2006) rate the service 5 (excellent)

39% (30% in 2006) rated the service 4

7% (10% in 2006) rated the service 3

0% (20% in 2006) rated the service 1 (poor)

Suggested improvements to the service were

“More adequate facilities. I was crammed into a corner of an office onto someone’s desk. Physiotherapy notes should be linked to your medical/ surgical notes to show continuity of care and for Doctors to review your progress at physiotherapy”

“No charges for copies. This should be a voluntary donation if the patient wishes to do so. They are patients records and should not have to pay any fixed prices for access.”

“Hand written notes which are hard to read and difficult to understand could they be made more legible and avoid jargon or technical terms”

“Charge smaller fees to get your notes copied. It should be your right as an individual and charging a fee is extortionate”

“No improvement but it was nice to be spoken to friendly, nothing too much trouble it makes a nice change”

“A part from reducing the price it would be advantageous to include a time line”

“To make the service available to all irrespective of the availability to pay”

“To better the service it needs more space as I had to use a person’s desk. The staff were more than helpful”

“Improve the surroundings”

Conclusion

The results of this study show that

- 100%(90% in 2006) felt staff were very helpful or helpful to some extent when dealing with their request for access to their health records
- 40% (80% in 2006) were happy with the location where they viewed their health records
- 53% (80% in 2006) thought the fee charged for copies of their health records was reasonable
- No one reported that it was hard to find out about accessing health records. Were as in 2006 10% said it was hard to find out about accessing health records. This proves that the recommendation from the 2006 report to provide more information to members of the public on their rights to access their health records and how to do this has made an impact for the patient
- 68% (70% in 2006) reported that their request for copies of health records was dealt with in a timely manner.
- 3.5% (10.5% in 2006) reported that the staff member did not give them all the information they needed

- 43% (40% in 2006) rated the service 5 (excellent) an improvement on the 2006 results

The results of this study show that overall the Access to Medical Records Team are providing a very good service to their client group and have shown improvements in making information available to clients on how to access their health records.

However clients, were concerned over the accommodation used to view their health records and also the cost of copies of their health record

Recommendations

- To locate more comfortable and accessible facilities where patients and members of the public come to view their health records
- To review the fees charged to the public when accessing records
- To look at ways we can improve the time that the requests for copies of health records are dealt with
- To link Physiotherapy health records with general health records