

Preparation of core questionnaire for local health services survey 2005

1 Introduction

This document describes the alterations that have been made to the 2004 Local Health Services Questionnaire in preparation for use in the Primary Care Trust surveys carried out in 2005.

1.1 Aims

The aims of this exercise were:

- To retain all questions which were included as PSA targets.
- Where possible, to retain questions that were included in the 2004 performance indicators. This will facilitate year-on-year comparisons.
- To remove some questions that were not used for performance indicators, and/or were not thought to be useful for quality improvement purposes.
- To ensure that the questions are in line with current policy.
- To ensure that, where appropriate, the questions correspond with questions used in other surveys in the national survey programme.

1.2 Evidence used for this work

The following sources were referred to:

- Comments from PCTs on their experiences of the 2004 survey.
- The full dataset for the local health services questionnaire used by 304 primary care trusts in 2004.
- The inclusion of questions in the 2004 PSA targets.
- The inclusion of questions in the 2004 performance indicators.

2 Questions removed from the core questionnaire

A number of questions were removed from the core questionnaire. We propose that all of them should be retained in the question bank, so that PCTs can include them if they wish. Most of the questions we have removed were not used in 2004 performance indicators in the 2004 survey, but those that were are underlined. This section explains the rationale behind the removal of each question. Question numbers refer to the 2004 core questionnaire.

B1. In the reception area, could other patients overhear what you talked about with the receptionist?

This question was removed because:

- It is not among the issues that are most important to patients
- Only 18% of patients said they could and that they did mind.
- It is not a PSA target or a PI target for 2004

* * *

E1. In the last 12 months, have you had any tests (e.g. blood tests, swabs, smear tests) carried out by anyone from your health centre?

E2. Was the purpose of the test(s) explained in a way you could understand?

E3. Did someone explain the results of the tests in a way you could understand?

These questions were removed because:

- Most patients who had had tests said the purpose (97%) and results (91%) of their tests had been explained
- Feedback from trusts indicated that these questions were not considered useful for quality improvement purposes.

* * *

G1. Were you involved as much as you wanted to be in decisions about your care and treatment? (with another health professional)

This question was removed because:

- In 2004, this question was answered mostly with respect to the care and treatment provided by practice nurses (e.g. taking blood tests, etc.). Opportunities for involving patients do not occur as frequently in this setting as they do in doctor-patient consultations.

* * *

K4. In the last 12 months have you had your blood pressure taken by anyone from your GP surgery/ health centre?

This question was removed because:

- Feedback from PCTs indicated that this question was not useful as blood pressure is not routinely measured in all population groups for health promotion.

3 Changes to existing questions

Questions that were used in 2004 performance indicators are **underlined**. Question numbers refer to 2005 PCT questionnaire v3.

The routing from question 2 about waiting times was changed so that all responders who made an appointment answer question 4:

4. How do you feel about the length of time you had to wait for an appointment with a doctor?

* * *

The sequence of the following questions was changed, so that questions in the section about MAKING AN APPOINTMENT followed in a more logical order:

2. The last time you saw a doctor from your GP surgery did you have to wait for an appointment?
3. What was the main reason you had to wait?
4. How do you feel about the length of time you had to wait for an appointment with a doctor?

* * *

The sequence of the following questions was changed, so that questions in the section about SEEING A DOCTOR followed in a more logical order:

- 14. Did the doctor explain the reasons for any treatment or action in a way that you could understand?**
- 15. If you had questions to ask the doctor, did you get answers that you could understand?**
- 16. Did you have confidence and trust in the doctor?**

* * *

38. Are you currently on a dentist's list as an NHS patient?

- ₁ Yes**
- ₂ No, but I am on a dentist's list as a **non-NHS** patient**
- ₃ No, I am **not** on any dentist's list at all**
- ₄ Don't know**

39. Would you like to be on a dentist's list as an NHS patient?

The wording of these question was changed because “registration” with dentists is being superseded by inclusion on patient lists.

4 New questions added

The following questions were added (Question numbers refer to the numbers on the 2005 questionnaire).

5. If you want to make a doctor's appointment 3 or more working days in advance does your GP surgery allow you to do that?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/ Not sure

35. Have you had a problem getting through to your GP surgery/health centre on the phone?

- Yes, always
- Yes, sometimes
- No
- I have not tried to get through on the phone

These questions were added because:

- Policies affecting access to primary care have changed, particularly with respect to appointments systems
- Feedback from the comments sections of the 2004 survey suggested that getting through on the telephone was difficult for many patients.

* * *

28. Did you receive copies of letters sent between the hospital and your family doctor (GP)?

- Yes, as far as I know I received copies of all letters
- I received copies of some but not all letters
- No, I did not receive copies of any letters
- I do not know if any letters were sent
- I asked not to receive copies of letters

This question was added because:

- It was in the NHS plan and it is important to monitor progress of this policy initiative.
- A similar question was included in the outpatients survey so it will be useful to compare responses across domains.

* * *

37. Was the main reason you went to your GP surgery/health centre dealt with to your satisfaction?

- Yes, completely
- Yes, to some extent
- No

53. Do you have a long-standing physical or mental health problem or disability?

- Yes
- No

54. Does this problem or disability affect your day-to-day activities?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, to some extent
- No

These questions are now included in all surveys.