



**THE GP PATIENT SURVEY**  
In Northern Ireland



**What if I have a complaint about my GP?**

If you are not happy with the care or treatment you have received at your GP surgery, or you have been refused treatment for a condition, you have the right to complain, have your complaint investigated, and be given a full and prompt reply. In the first instance you should raise the matter directly with the practice or with the Health and Social Care Board. If you're still unhappy, you can refer the matter to the Northern Ireland Ombudsman.

By phone:  
**0800 34 34 24** (this is a Freephone number)  
Or **028 9023 3821** (switchboard)

By fax:  
**028 9023 4912**

By e-mail:  
**ombudsman@ni-ombudsman.org.uk**

By writing to:  
**The Ombudsman**  
**Freepost BEL 1478**  
**Belfast**  
**BT1 6BR**

**Where can I find more information about the survey?**

More information about the GP Patient Survey in Northern Ireland can be found at:  
**[www.gp-patient.hscni.net](http://www.gp-patient.hscni.net)**

We have provided answers to lots of frequently asked questions on the site but if you have any more questions or need help filling in the questionnaire, please contact Ipsos MORI on freephone 0808 238 5385 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 9pm; Saturday 10am to 5pm).

You can also email us at:  
**[GPPatientSurvey@dhsspsni.gov.uk](mailto:GPPatientSurvey@dhsspsni.gov.uk)**

**Information For Patients**

In January 2010 you may receive a questionnaire through the post from Ipsos MORI about your GP surgery. We would like you to fill in this questionnaire and return it in the freepost envelope provided or complete it online. Your answers will give your GP surgery valuable information about how it is run and the services it provides.

# What is the GP Patient Survey in Northern Ireland?



For most of us, family doctors are our main contact with local health services. People value these services and the staff who provide them, and it is important that everybody has access to good quality services. The Government is committed to using public views to improve services. The only way we can do this is by asking patients like you what is important to you. This means that your answers to the GP Patient Survey in Northern Ireland can have an impact on how your GP surgery is run.

The GP Patient Survey in Northern Ireland covers a broad range of topics that are important to people when they visit their GP surgery. This includes key questions about how easy it is to get to see a GP or healthcare professional and book an appointment. We also ask about the overall quality of the service once you are at the surgery, for example: Are the reception staff in the surgery helpful? Did you have confidence and trust in the doctor you saw last time you went? Do you usually get to see the doctor you prefer?

## What will my answers mean for my GP?

If you need to see a GP or other healthcare professional at your surgery quickly, you should be able to get an appointment within two days. If you want to book ahead for an appointment, you should be able to do that too. Some of the money paid to your GP surgery depends on how well they provide this service. If you have been able to see a GP or healthcare professional when you wanted to, you should say so in the survey, as your GP surgery will be rewarded on this basis.

Your answers will be confidential. This means that your GP will not know who has received questionnaires or who has filled them in. Your GP surgery will get a summary of the results so they can see where they have done well and where they need to improve.

## What information do you have about me?

**Ipsos MORI does not have access to any of your medical information.**

Ipsos MORI only receives the information about you that they need to carry out the survey. This is from the central Health Service system and includes:

- Your name
- Your address
- Your Health & Social Care number
- Your year and month of birth – this is to make sure we do not contact anyone aged under 18
- Your gender – this is so we can monitor how many woman and how many men complete the survey

**Individual patients cannot be identified from the results of the survey.**

## How can I take part in the survey?

Patients are selected at random from the list of patients registered at their GP surgery. If you are selected to take part in the survey you will receive a questionnaire through the post in January 2010. If you do not respond, we will send reminders in February and March.

If you do not receive a survey you are not able to take part, but you may be chosen in a future year of the survey.

## Can I opt-out of the survey?

We hope that you will complete the survey as it provides your GP surgery and the Health Service with valuable information about your experiences of visiting the surgery. However, taking part is voluntary and we understand that not everyone will want to take part. If you receive a survey but would rather not hear from us again, please say so using the contact details provided in the letter that comes with the survey.

## Are there any other ways to complete the survey?

There are several ways to complete the survey. You can fill the questionnaire in online or over the phone in English and ten other languages, and large print and Braille copies are available on request. There is also a telephone helpline if you have any queries.

More information about the various ways to complete the survey can be found in the letter and questionnaire you will receive if you are selected to take part in the survey.