

The Avenue Surgery Carer's Survey 2016/17 Report

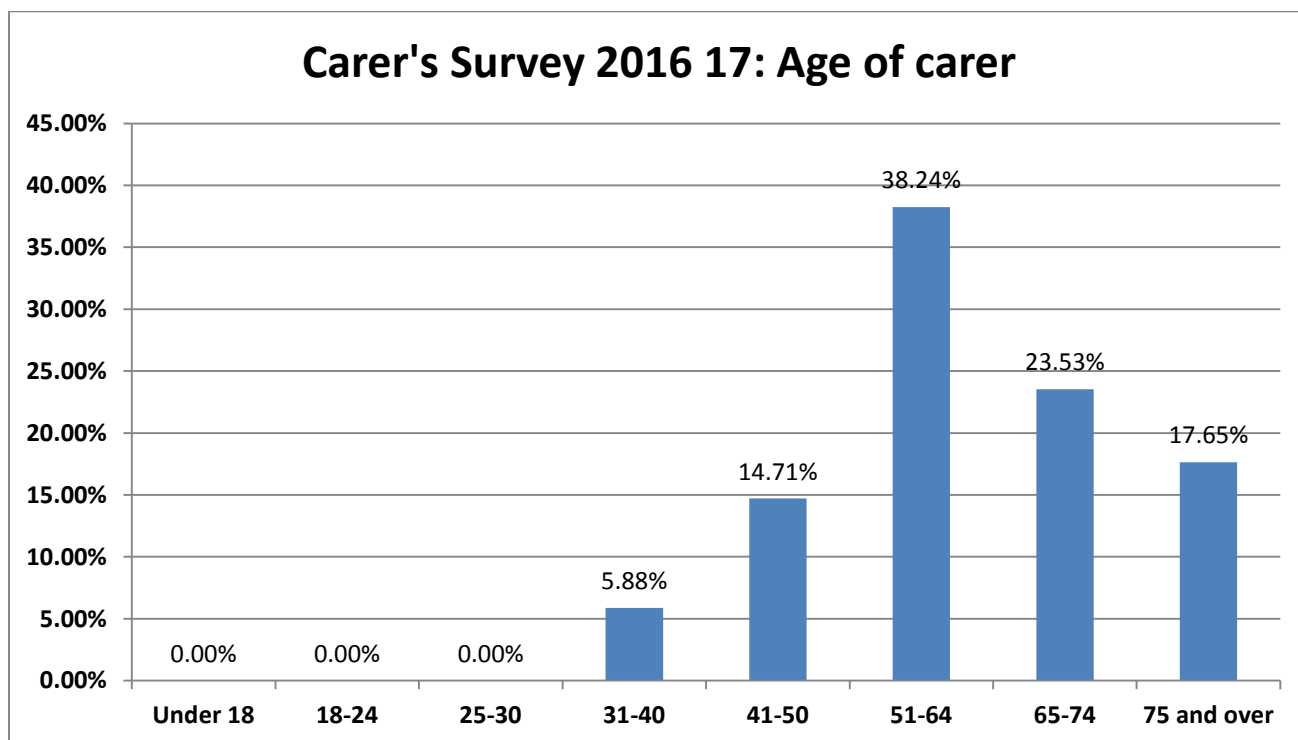
In 2015/16 The Avenue Surgery conducted a survey of our carers. We are very aware that many of our patients are unpaid carers who provide care and support to a partner, relative, friend or neighbour who wouldn't be able to get by on their own.

We used the survey developed last year in consultation with the Carers Centre which was adapted from the GP Practice Toolkit developed by the Carers Trust. Paper copies of the same survey were sent to all patients recorded on our clinical system as a carer. Paper copies were also made available at Reception over a 2 month period in December 2016 and January 2017. The survey was also promoted with posters in the waiting room, on our website and on the patient information TV screen.

The records of all patients coded on the clinical system as a carer were reviewed to ensure that their caring responsibilities are correctly recorded. Twelve patients were identified as no longer having caring responsibilities and their records were amended accordingly.

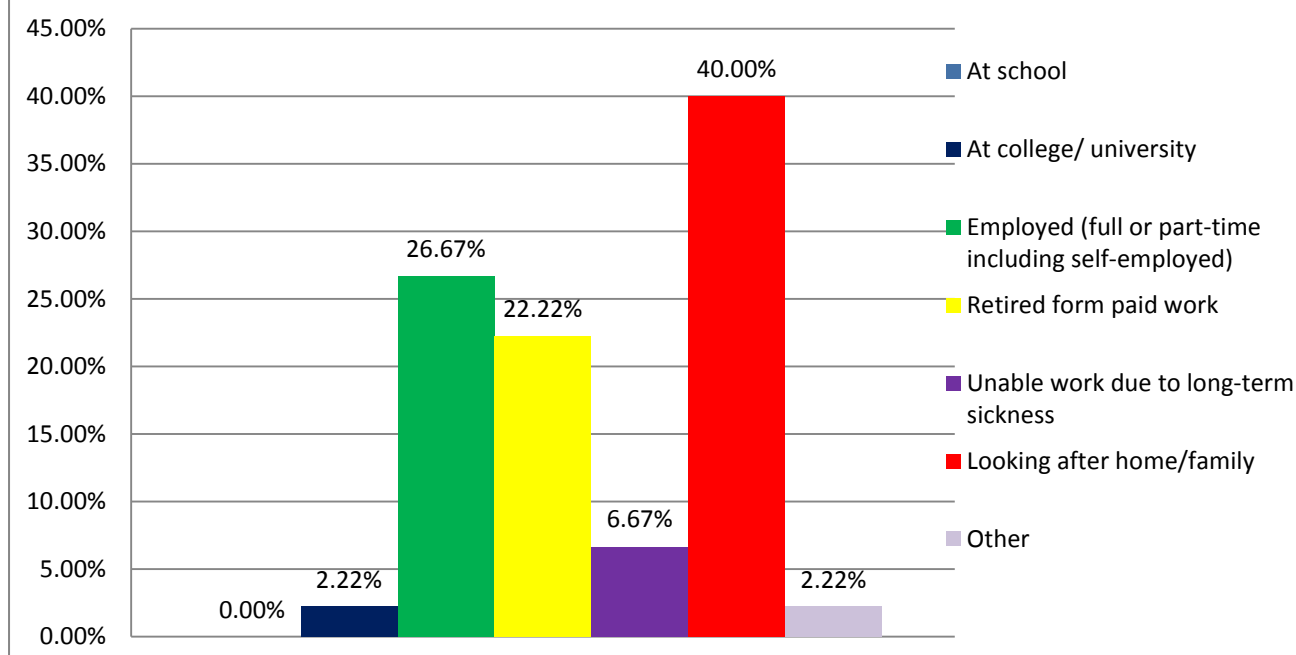
Surveys were posted to the remaining 179 carers on our register and were also handed out opportunistically to patients at the surgery.

A total of 34 completed surveys were returned to the surgery which represented a pleasing response compared to the 17 completed last year.



The majority of carers, 38.24%, who responded to the survey were in the 51-64 age group. With the 65-74 and 75 and over making up a further 41.18%. It is disappointing that this time we had no responses from our younger carers (we sent out 30 surveys to carers aged 30 and under) although we did have responses from a few 31-40 year old carers.

Carer's Survey 2016 17: A little about our carers



Forty per cent of our carers advised that they were looking after the home/family compared with 35% last year. Significantly fewer carers this year advised that they were unable to work themselves due to long-term sickness – 6.67% compared to 23.53% last year.

According to the survey, 26.67% of carers are in some form of work compared with only 17.65% last year and 22.22% were retired from paid work compared with 17.65% last year. Only 2.22% of our carers were at college/university (5.88% in 2016) and unfortunately this year there were again no school age carers.

CARER'S SURVEY 2016 17: BECAUSE OF MY CARING RESPONSIBILITIES...

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
My physical health is worse	12.12%	30.30%	36.36%	12.12%	9.09%
I have injured myself through lifting or moving someone	7.69%	15.38%	19.23%	38.46%	19.23%
My mental health is worse (this includes stress and depression)	14.71%	38.24%	20.59%	11.76%	14.71%
I have put off seeing a GP when I was unwell	6.90%	37.93%	20.69%	17.24%	17.24%
I have put off medical treatment	14.29%	21.43%	21.43%	28.57%	14.29%
I have had to stop working	4.17%	8.33%	20.83%	41.67%	25.00%
I feel isolated	0.00%	24.14%	41.38%	17.24%	17.24%
I find it hard to leave the person I care for on their own to attend an appointment	17.24%	20.69%	31.03%	24.14%	6.90%
It is difficult for me to bring the person I care for to the GP practice	30.00%	20.00%	10.00%	23.33%	16.67%

It is pleasing to note that significantly fewer carers felt that their physical health is worse because of their caring responsibilities (42.42% compared to 60% last year).

When asked if they have injured themselves through lifting or moving the person they care for, 57.69% strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement (50% last year) compared to 23.08% (25% last year) who stated that they had injured themselves.

Over 53% of carers responding stated that their mental health is worse which is significant improvement over the 73% stating that their mental was worse last year.

Nearly 45% have put off seeing a GP when they were unwell (an improvement on last year's 69%) and nearly 36% have put off medical treatment compared to nearly 67% last year.

Over 12% of carers have had to stop working which compares favourably with 42% last year and there was a significant decrease in the percentage of responders who advised that they felt isolated as a result of their caring responsibilities - 24.14% compared to 61.54% last year.

Nearly 38% carers found it hard to leave the person they care for to attend their own appointment compared with 50% last year with 50% advising that this did not pose a problem for them compared with 43.75% last year.

Fifty per cent of carers found it difficult to bring the person they carer for to the practice which compares less favourably to the 41% advised last year.

CARER'S SURVEY 2016 17: STATEMENTS ABOUT HOW THE AVENUE SURGERY SUPPORTS OUR CARERS					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
As a carer I feel supported by the practice	22.58%	41.94%	29.03%	3.23%	3.23%
When I have concerns about the person I look after, I feel able to talk to someone at the practice	37.50%	31.25%	25.00%	3.13%	3.13%
The doctors and nurses know that I'm a carer	36.36%	48.48%	6.06%	9.09%	0.00%
The reception and admin staff know that I'm a carer	16.13%	32.26%	41.94%	6.45%	3.23%
The practice gives me all the information I need to help me care for the person I look after	14.29%	32.14%	28.57%	21.43%	3.57%
As a result of the support the practice has given me, I have been able to cope better with my responsibilities as a carer	14.81%	18.52%	44.44%	18.52%	3.70%
The practice have offered to refer me to my local carers service for support	13.33%	16.67%	36.67%	30.00%	3.33%
The practice encourages carers to let them know they are a carer eg through posters in the waiting room	21.88%	50.00%	18.75%	9.38%	0.00%

It is pleasing to note that 64.52% of carers feel supported by the practice compared to 45.45% last year and 68.75% felt that they were able to talk to someone at the practice if they have concerns about the person they look after compared with 61.54% last year.

A very encouraging 84.85% of carers felt that the doctors or nurses knew that they were a carer compared with 61% last year and 48.39% felt the reception and admin staff knew this fact compared with 36% last year.

Carers reported in 46.43% of cases that the practice gives them all the information they need to care for the person they look after compared with significantly more, 58.34%, last year. Last year 33.33% did not agree that they were given sufficient information but this percentage had improved this year to 25%.

Only 33.3% of patients felt that that as a result of the support they receive from the practice that they are better able to cope with their responsibilities as a carer (25% last year) with 22.2% disagreeing with this statement (33.3% last year).

Disappointingly only 30% of the carers surveyed advised that the practice had offered to refer them to the local carers service for support (42% last year). However only 33% compared to nearly 50% last year stated that they had not been offered this contact.

Nearly 72% of carers felt that the practice encourages them to let the practice know that they are a carer (69% last year) compared to 9.38% who felt that the practice did not encourage them (15.38% last year).

CARER'S SURVEY 2016 17: STATEMENTS ABOUT HOW THE AVENUE SURGERY COULD SUPPORT YOU AS A CARER					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Flexible appointments	50.00%	37.50%	12.50%	0.00%	0.00%
A free flu vaccination	46.67%	46.67%	6.67%	0.00%	0.00%
Support to improve my physical health	28.13%	37.50%	25.00%	6.25%	3.13%
Support to improve my mental health	25.81%	32.26%	32.26%	3.23%	6.45%
Information about the condition of the person I look after to help me care for them	40.63%	31.25%	21.88%	3.13%	3.13%
A referral to my local carers centre or service to find out about other services that could be useful to me a carer	27.59%	27.59%	31.03%	10.34%	3.45%

This year 87.5% of carers would like flexible appointments (94% last year) and 93.3% would welcome a free flu vaccination (86.67% in 2016). Just over 58% of carers would appreciate support to improve their physical health and over 65% would welcome support to improve their mental health (an improvement over the 87% and 85.71% last year).

Nearly 72% of carers would find information about the condition of the person they care about useful in helping them to care for them (78% last year) and over 55% would find a referral to the local carers centre useful (85% last year).

When asked how else the practice might support our carers, suggestions made included having a clear signposting for carers for who they can talk to for support and having more access to a GP at home.

Conclusion

We had twice as many surveys completed this year than last year although we continue to struggle with representation from our younger carers.

Across nearly all indicators carers showed an improvement in the issues that they face for example significantly fewer carers this year advised that they were unable to work themselves due to long-

term sickness compared with last year. Similarly the percentage of carers who felt that their mental health was worse had significantly decreased this year from 73% to 53%.

Encouragingly the percentage of patients who felt supported by the practice had increased from 45.45% last year to 64.52% this year.

There are some areas that still need work. Only 46.43% of carers this year compared to 58.34% last year felt that the practice gives them all the information they need to care for the person they look after. Fewer carers this year advised that the practice had offered to refer them to the local carers service for support (30% compared with 42% last year).

Signposting of support for carers needs to be revisited as some carers felt this was unclear and a couple of carers felt that more access was required to GP home visits.