

**Report to the Somerset Primary Care Commissioning Committee Meeting on 7  
December 2020**

<b>Title: Primary Care Appointment Activity</b>	<b>Enclosure H</b>
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Version Number / Status:	1
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**Summary and Purpose of Paper**

To appraise the Somerset Primary Care Commissioning Committee of the latest appointment activity data across Somerset following a request at the September 2020 Committee to understand the ratio of face to face appointments against virtual.

**Recommendations and next steps**

The Somerset Primary Care Commissioning Committee is asked to note the activity data and discuss as appropriate whilst we await data broken down per practice, rather than at CCG level.

**Impact Assessments – key issues identified**

<b>Equality</b>	N/A			
<b>Quality</b>	Ensuring appropriate appointment provision to the population of Somerset with face to face appointments being offered where clinically appropriate/necessary			
<b>Privacy</b>	Data is publically available through NHS Digital			
<b>Engagement</b>	No recommendations – for review/discussion			
<b>Financial / Resource</b>	N/A			
<b>Governance or Legal</b>	N/A			
<b>Risk Description</b>	N/A			
<b>Risk Rating</b>	Consequence	Likelihood	RAG Rating	GBAF Ref



## Primary Care Appointment Data

### 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. At the Primary Care Commissioning Committee held on 17 September 2020 patient appointment data was discussed, in the context of national priorities to ensure that a 'digital first' approach is being delivered by General Practice and also to ensure that face to face appointments are offered where clinically appropriate.

### 2. AVAILABLE DATA

- 2.1. NHS Digital provides data specifically on the number of each consultation type, per month and therefore we are able to analyse this data for our Somerset population. This data allows us the opportunity to compare the number of face to face, home visit, telephone and video/online consultations throughout the Covid19 pandemic with the level undertaken pre-Covid19 in March 2020.

Month*	Count of practices collection open to	Count of practices included	Total	Face-to-Face	Home Visit	Telephone	Video/Online	Unknown
September	65	6	288,382	141,775	3,108	99,066	60	44,373
August	65	65	215,912	93,998	2,473	84,898	16	34,527
July	65	65	239,881	101,026	2,867	96,975	6	39,007
June	65	65	221,340	85,562	2,278	99,082	0	34,418
May	65	65	180,486	65,403	1,892	84,443	1	28,747
April	65	60	146,015	60,417	1,740	83,850	8	0
March	65	60	225,033	142,022	3,811	79,191	9	0

\*data only available to September 2020 at the time of writing

- 2.2. This data is indicative of Somerset as a whole and at present NHS Digital do not have the capability to split this data by practice. However, we are awaiting a revised dataset which will be displayed by practice, although we are unable to give a definitive date that this will arrive.

#### **Caveats**

- 2.3. The data collection in March and April 2020 is not representative of all 65 practices. For example, if Frome Medical Practice were not submitting data at that point it is likely to vary the figures considerably given their list size. We are unable to obtain information on which practices are included as this is unfortunately linked to the fact the data is not yet displayed at practice level.
- 2.4. Although NHS Digital are confident that the increase in 'unknown' is likely to be for virtual consultations, we are unable to say for certain due to system coding analysis – hence being presented as 'unknown'.
- 2.5. If a telephone consultation turns into a video consultation, the appointment mode will remain as telephone from a coding perspective.

### **3. COMMUNICATIONS**

- 3.1. We have issued clear guidance to GP services in Somerset to ensure that patients are well informed about the services on offer and how to access them. This includes social media messaging confirming that GP services are open but patients should expect a digital first approach. Face to face consultations will always be provided where necessary.

### **4. ASSURANCE**

- 4.1. We have assurance from all practices that they are offering 'digital first' approaches as appropriate to their patients.
- 4.2. At an aggregate level, the data shown in the table above shows that total consultations were higher in September than March 2020, and face to face consultations were at almost the same level (142,022 in March and 141,775 in September). We are not therefore concerned about patients receiving the correct care at a Somerset level. This is compared to Dorset CCG who recorded 280,836 face to face in March and 271,268 in September.
- 4.3. We expect to receive this data at individual practice level in the near future. This data will be analysed and any practices which show a significantly different pattern to the Somerset average will be followed up for discussion. It is important to note that there is no guidance on the 'correct' ratio of face to face to other consultation types, and that there is usually variation between individual clinicians and practices. Our aim would be to understand whether any significant variation was unwarranted or whether it represented good practice.
- 4.4. The Primary Care Cell has maintained an oversight of primary care quality and delivery throughout the pandemic and includes several GPs in its membership, who have kept the cell informed of operational practice. The Cell has gained a level of assurance from these discussions that patients in Somerset are being offered the right balance between 'digital first' and face to face consultations.