

# Changes to Sunderland Urgent Care – ongoing engagement

Results report from on-street survey and Big  
Indoor Sports Festival engagement

Sunderland Clinical Commissioning Group  
February 2020 – Headline Report

## Introduction

### Background

Urgent care services in Sunderland have now changed following a long consultation in 2018 and major two-phase communications campaign in 2019. The urgent care walk-in service offered in Houghton, Bunny Hill and Washington have now been replaced by a new system which offers increased access to GP appointments through the Sunderland extended access services (one in each of the five localities); alongside the new urgent treatment centre in Pallion, the NHS 111 service and GP practices.

There was a need for market research in order to gather views from a service user perspective. This engagement activity aimed to collect the views from service users to help inform delivery of the service, to find out what is working well with the current service, and what could be improved.

### Methodology and response rate

#### On-street survey

An on-street survey was completed in all five localities of Sunderland. On-street research was conducted in public areas on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>, and 25<sup>th</sup> January. In total, 387 surveys were completed.

- Coalfields – 74 responses
- Sunderland West – 85 responses
- Sunderland North – 110 responses
- Sunderland East – 60 responses
- Washington - 58 responses

Of all respondents, 320 people provided a postcode in the Sunderland area, 38 people provided a postcode outside of the Sunderland area, and 29 people did not provide a postcode. Full information can be seen in the Demographics section at the end of this report.

#### Big Indoor Sports Festival – kiosk survey

In addition to the on-street work, NHS Sunderland CCG held a stall at Sunderland Council's Big Indoor Sports Festival on 19 February 2020. In total, 44 surveys were completed at this event. Out of all respondents at the Big Indoor Sports Festival, 39 provided a postcode in the Sunderland area.

### Report

The following report will present each question, followed by the on-street results and the Big Indoor Sports Festival results.

## Headline results

Respondents were provided with a summary about the changes made to urgent care service in Sunderland, before being asked for their thoughts.

### Q1: Do you have any thoughts or comments about these changes that you would like to share with me today? (n=284 / n=24)

In total, 284 people made 496 comments through the on-street survey. An additional 24 people made 47 comments at the Big Indoor Sports Festival event.

These comments fall into the following four themes:

Table 1: Question 1 - themes identified

	On-street survey	Big indoor event
	No. of comments	
Thoughts about the changes	218	26
Finance and other comments	108	7
Travel and parking (including Pallion)	101	4
Continuity of care and self-care	69	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>496</b>	<b>47</b>

### Thoughts about the changes

#### **On-street results**

Out of the four themes identified for this question, this received the highest number of comments (218 comments). Although the majority of comments received were negative (97), there was also a large number of positive comments made (72) with 49 neutral comments made about the changes to urgent care services.

Out of the negative comments received, the majority of people told us they did not like the changes, that there were too many changes, and that they found these changes confusing (82 comments).

*“Too many changes all the time. It's confusing for people.”* [Sunderland North, female, age 45 – 54].

However, there were also a number of positive comments received about the changes, including people saying they were happy or okay with the service (21 comments), that they liked extended access (17 comments), NHS 111 (16 comments), or their own GP (8 comments).

*“Think the closures are a good thing. It stops people abusing the services.”*  
[Sunderland West, female, age 25 – 34].

In addition, some respondents told us they were not concerned about the changes to urgent care services (30 comments), that they didn’t know about the changes (17 comments), or that more awareness was needed (8 comments).

*“Wouldn't make a difference. I haven't used a walk-in centre for years and years. I have used NHS 111 when my daughter was ill. They gave good advice and arranged appointment through NHS 111. The school advised me to phone.”* [No demographic information provided].

The below table details more information about the comments collected in this theme.

**Table 2: Question 1 - Thoughts about the changes - on-street results**

<b>+/-</b>	<b>Thoughts about the changes</b>	<b>No. of comments</b>
-	Don't like the changes, there are too many changes – confusing / disgraceful	82
/	Not concerned or don't have an opinion – it doesn't affect me	30
+	Happy or okay with the service	21
/	Didn't know about the changes	17
+	Extended hours are a good thing	17
+	Positive thoughts about the use of 111	16
+	Like my own GP and / or have no problems with access	8
-	More awareness required – don't know enough about the changes	8
+	Were aware of the changes	7
-	Went to walk-in and found out it was closed	4
+	Have accessed support through a pharmacist	3
-	Don't like 111	3
/	It's out of our control	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>218</b>

### ***Big Indoor Sports Festival results***

Out of the four themes identified for this question, this received the highest number of comments (26 comments).

There were a number of positive comments received about the changes, including people saying they were happy or okay with the service (8 comments), that they liked extended access (2 comments) and NHS 111 (1 comment).

*“Had a good experience using the SEAS.”* [Sunderland North, female, age 55 – 64].

Some people also told us they were not happy with the changes to urgent care services in Sunderland (5 comments).

*“Not happy with these changes. there is no flexibility now. The old service was convenient, and the timings aren’t good.”* [Sunderland North, female, age 35 – 44].

Some respondents told us that more awareness of the changes was needed (3 comments), or that they didn’t know about the changes (1 comment).

*“Not everyone will know about this so I think there should be different ways to get out.”* [No demographic information provided]

The below table details more information about the comments collected in this theme.

**Table 3: Question 1 - Thoughts about the changes - big indoor sports festival results**

+/-	Thoughts about the changes	No. of comments
+	Happy or okay with the service	8
-	Don’t like the changes, there are too many changes – confusing / disgraceful	5
-	Don’t like 111	4
-	More awareness required – don’t know enough about the changes	3
+	Extended hours are a good thing	2
/	Didn’t know about the changes	1
+	Positive thoughts about the use of 111	1
+	Were aware of the changes	1
-	Went to walk-in and found out it was closed	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>

## Finance and other comments

### ***On-street results***

Funding was also addressed by some people, with some thinking that funding was spent on the buildings and the services for them just to be closed, whilst others addressed concerns over funding cuts and their impacts on closures and health (28 comments).

*“Upset about closures. Why spend all that money in the first place?”* [Sunderland West, female, age 55 – 64].

A small number of comments mentioned being unhappy with NHS (9 comments) or the NHS needing more staff and / or better pay (3 comments).

A large number of comments could not be grouped into a theme. These include:

*“I don’t think people will use it.”* [Coalfields, female, age 45 – 54].

*“...I’m really worried about the corona outbreak - more awareness should be put forward on how to look after yourself. Especially in schools.”* [No demographics provided].

More information can be seen in the below table.

**Table 4: Question 1 - Finance and other comments - on-street results**

+/-	Finance and other comments	No. of comments
/	Other	34
-	Funding cuts – risk to health / wasted money closing services and buildings	28
/	No comment / don’t know	22
-	Not happy with the NHS – service / they’re struggling / need to improve	9
/	Don’t live in the area	7
/	Why are they making these changes?	5
/	The NHS need more staff and / or better pay	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>108</b>

### ***Big Indoor Sports Festival results***

Funding in the guise of building and service closures was also addressed by a few (3 comments).

*“Certain centres have closed. Appointments only now.”* [Sunderland East, female, age 35 – 44].

A number of themes could not be grouped. These include:

*“...NHS 111 was on the phone.”* [Sunderland West, female, age 25 – 34].

**Table 5: Question 1 - Finance and other comments - big indoor sports festival results**

+/-	Finance and other comments	No. of comments
/	Other	3
-	Funding cuts – risk to health / wasted money closing services and buildings	3
-	Not happy with the NHS – service / they’re struggling / need to improve	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>

### Travel and parking

#### **On-street results**

The next theme to emerge from this question was around travel and parking (101 comments).

A large number of comments came from people concerned about travelling to the urgent treatment centre, particularly for people who may have no transport (72 comments).

*“Ridiculous. Used to be more accessible. When I couldn’t get a GP appointment I could just walk in. I fell before Christmas and couldn’t get x-rayed locally. I had to get a taxi £36. Waste of a building now 111 assessments ridiculous.”* [Coalfields, female, age 25 – 34].

Sixteen people voiced concern over the use of Pallion as an urgent treatment centre, including the car park. However, comments were also received from people identifying that they were happy to travel (3 comments), and that Pallion is local to them (7 comments).

**Table 6: Question 1 - Travel and parking comments - on-street results**

+/-	Travel and parking	No. of comments
-	Concerns over travel – treatment should be local / difficult for people with no transport / cost	72
-	Concerns over the use of Pallion – too busy / carpark / don’t like	16
+	Pallion is closest / local, I use Pallion	7
+	Have transport and or are happy to travel	3
-	Further to travel means the extra work for the ambulance service	3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>101</b>

## **Big Indoor Sports Festival results**

Another theme to emerge from this question was around travel and parking (4 comments).

People were concerned about travelling to the urgent treatment centre, with suggestions that it is too far to travel (2 comments).

*“Currently reside in Washington, and if urgent care is needed we are directed to either Pallion or bunny hill. It’s quite far out of the area and sometimes difficult to access.”* [Coalfields, female, age 35 – 44].

Two people also voiced concern over the use of Pallion as an urgent treatment centre, focusing on the waiting rooms and how busy the centre is.

*“Pallion health walk in centre is now ridiculous. recently my nephew had a serious chest infection and was waiting 4 hours to then be told he had to go A&E. Booking appointments through 11 makes no difference as you end up having to wait. GP appointments have a two week wait. There is only one main urgent care centre in Sunderland now. It is a disgrace. It forces people to go to A&E. especially when you have young children, mine is 6.”* [Sunderland East, female, age 35-44].

**Table 7: Question 1 - Travel and parking comments - big indoor sports festival results**

<b>+/-</b>	<b>Travel and parking</b>	<b>No. of comments</b>
-	Concerns over travel – treatment should be local / difficult for people with no transport /cost	2
-	Concerns over the use of Pallion – too busy / carpark / don’t like	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>

## **Continuity of care and self-care**

### **On-street results**

Concerns were raised over continuity of care and lack of access to GP appointments as well as waiting times (41 comments) with some people suggesting that walk-in centres are needed, they are popular and/or needed to relieve the pressure on A&E (25 comments).

*“...we need more walk-in centres. People need access to the NHS.”* [Outside of Sunderland, male, age 18 – 24].

There was particular concern over older people and younger people having access to health services (14 comments). Some people discussed the need to use health services properly (7 comments) or seeking advice or support elsewhere (5 comments) or through self-care (2 comments).



**Table 8: Question 1 - Continuity of care and self-care comments - on-street results**

<b>+/-</b>	<b>Continuity of care and self-care</b>	<b>No. of comments</b>
-	Concerns over continuity of care – access to GP appointments and long waits	41
-	Walk-in centers are needed / liked – they relieve the pressure on A&E and/or reduce workload	27
-	Particular concern over access for the older generation and the young	14
/	A need to use services appropriately. For example, A&E	7
/	Seek help/advice from a family member	5
/	Self-care	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>96</b>

### **Big Indoor Sports Festival results**

There were also concerns over continuity of care and lack of access to GP appointments (7 comments) with one person suggesting that walk-in centres are needed, they are popular and / or needed to relieve the pressure on A&E (1 comment).

*“Rubbish. Bad at giving GP appointments.”* [Washington, female, age 35-44].

There was also concern over younger people having access to health services (2 comments).

**Table 9: Question 1 - Continuity of care and self-care comments - big indoor sports festival results**

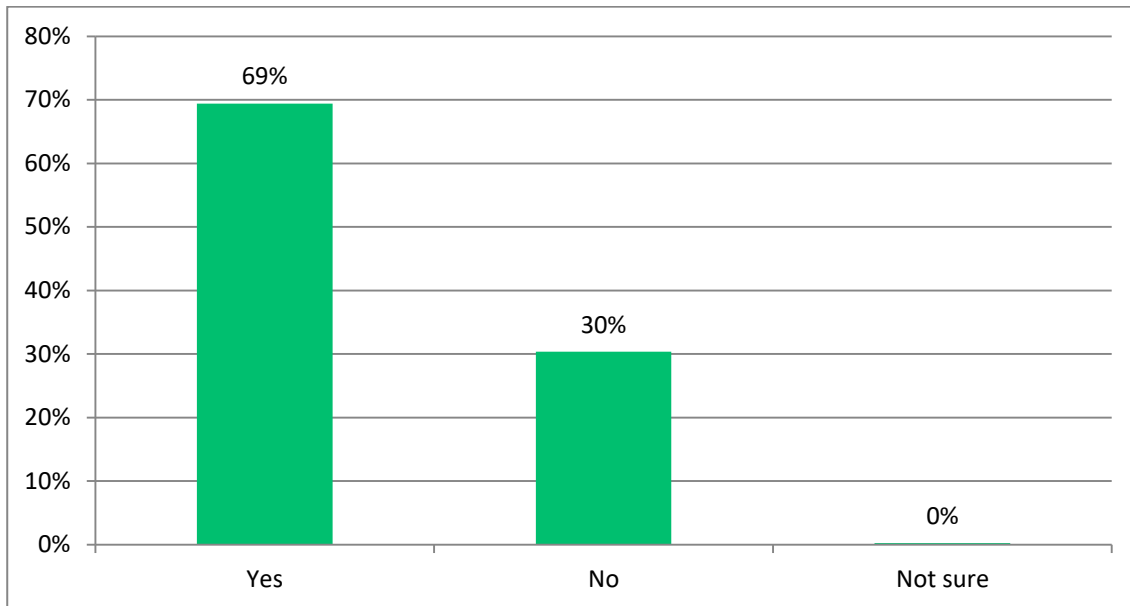
<b>+/-</b>	<b>Continuity of care and self-care</b>	<b>No. of comments</b>
-	Concerns over continuity of care – access to GP appointments and long waits	7
-	Particular concern over access for the older generation and the young	2
/	Walk-in centres are needed / liked – they relieve the pressure on A&E and/or reduce workload	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>

## **Q2: Had you heard about the changes to urgent care services in Sunderland before today? (n=379 / n=43)**

### **On-street results (n=379)**

People were asked to tell us if they had heard about the changes to Sunderland Urgent Care services before being approached to complete this survey. Reassuringly, seven out of ten people told us they had (69%).

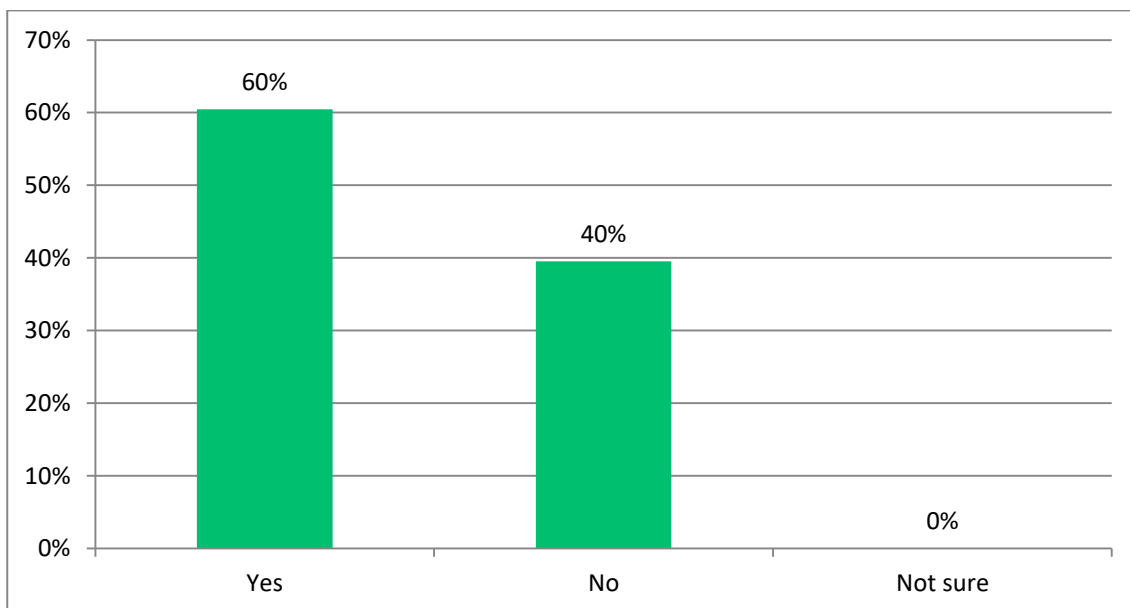
Figure 1: Question 2 - heard about the changes - on-street results



### Big Indoor Sports Festival results (n=43)

People were asked to tell us if they had heard about the changes to Sunderland Urgent Care services before today, and reassuringly, six out of ten people told us they had (60%).

Figure 2: heard about the changes - big indoor sports event results



### Q3: Can you tell us how you heard about the changes to Sunderland Urgent Care services (n=307)

#### On-street results (n=307)

People were asked to tell us how they had heard about the changes to Sunderland Urgent Care. The responses are summarised in the below graph and table.

Just under half of the people who completed the street-survey said they heard about the changes through posters and leaflets left at public places (46%). Of these, people were most likely to say they found the posters and leaflets at GP practices or pharmacies (24%, 11% respectively).

Some people also indicated that they heard about the changes via word of mouth and social media (27%, 12% respectively).

Approximately one in seven respondents said they had not heard about the changes (14% - 44 people) and one in ten (10% - 32 people) said they had heard about the changes via another means not mentioned. These people were given the opportunity to elaborate on their response, which is detailed later on in this section.

**Figure 3: Question 3 - Where people heard about the changes - on-street results**

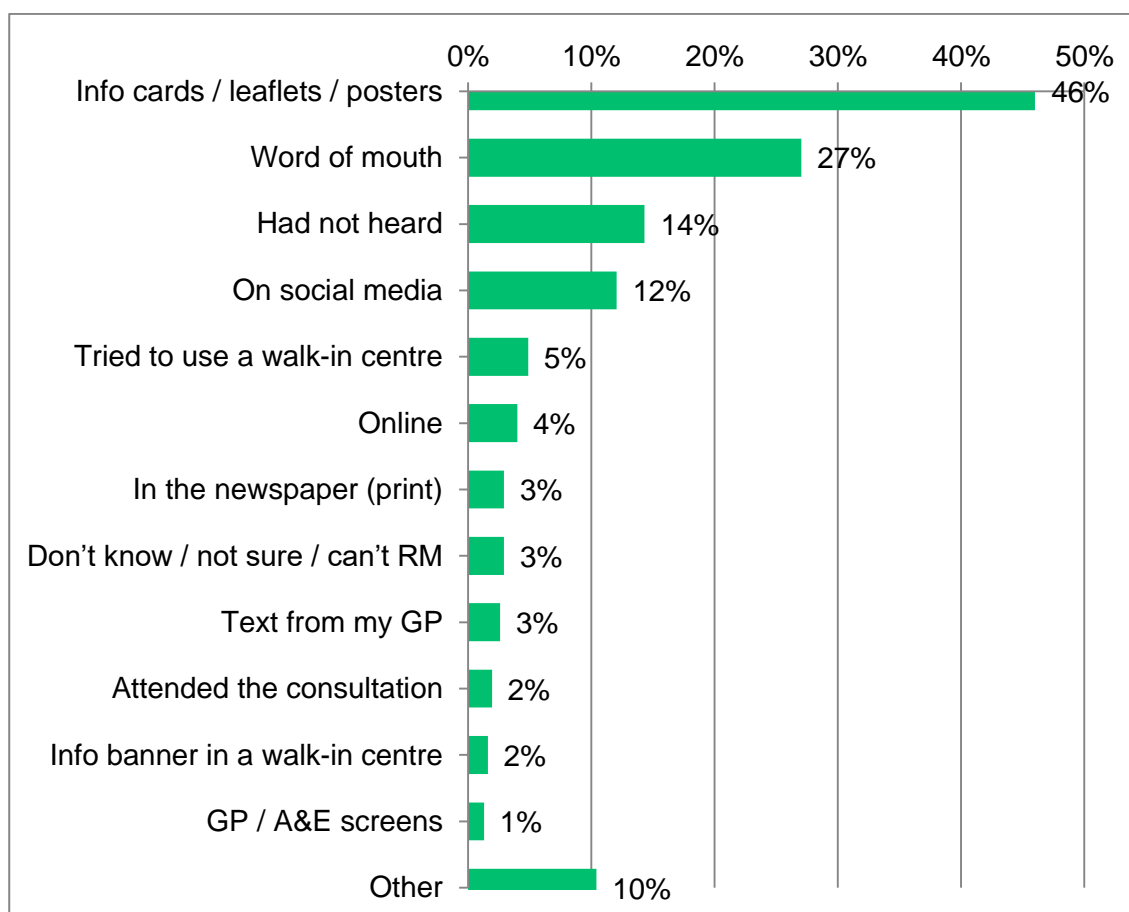


Table 10: Question 3 - Where people heard about the changes - on-street results

How they heard about the changes (n=307)	%	No.
Info cards / Leaflets / posters (see below for detail)	46%	140
- Left at GP practices	24%	75
- Left at pharmacies	11%	34
- Left at urgent care centres	3%	10
- Left elsewhere	3%	10
- Left at community venue	2%	5
- On-street leaflets	2%	6
In the newspaper (print)	3%	9
Text from my GP	3%	8
Attended the consultation	2%	6
GP / A&E screens	1%	4
Online (see below for detail)	4%	12
- Sunderland CCG website	1%	4
- News site (Sun FM / Chronicle)	1%	4
- Practice website	1%	3
- Other website	0%	1
Word of mouth	27%	83
Had not heard	14%	44
On social media	12%	37
Tried to use a walk-in-centre	5%	15
Don't know / not sure / can't RM	3%	9
Info banner in a walk-in centre	2%	5
Other	10%	32

Respondents were asked to tell us other ways that they have heard about the changes to Sunderland Urgent Care services. In total, 32 people made 33 comments. These are summarised in the table below.

Overall, people told us that they heard about the changes through the media (6 comments), through work (4 comments), via a GP letter (3 comments), or from a family or friend (3 comments).

Table 11: Question 3 - Where people heard about the changes, other comments - on-street results

Theme	No. of comments
Media	6
Work	4
GP letter	3
Family/friend	3
Hospital	3
Email	2
On the phone	2
Other (see below)	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>

A number of people made individual comments which could not be grouped into themes. These include things like:

- *“Knew about no walk-ins, not about extended hours.”*
- *“Like to see our doctor.”*
- *“Filled a form in.”*
- *“... Spend money elsewhere.”*
- *“I’ve lost business.”*
- *“I don’t use often.”*
- *“Called in.”*
- *“Personal experience.”*
- *“Went to walk in centre. It was closed.”*

### Big Indoor Sports Festival results (n=28)

People were asked to tell us how they had heard about the changes to Sunderland Urgent Care. The responses are summarised in the below graph and table.

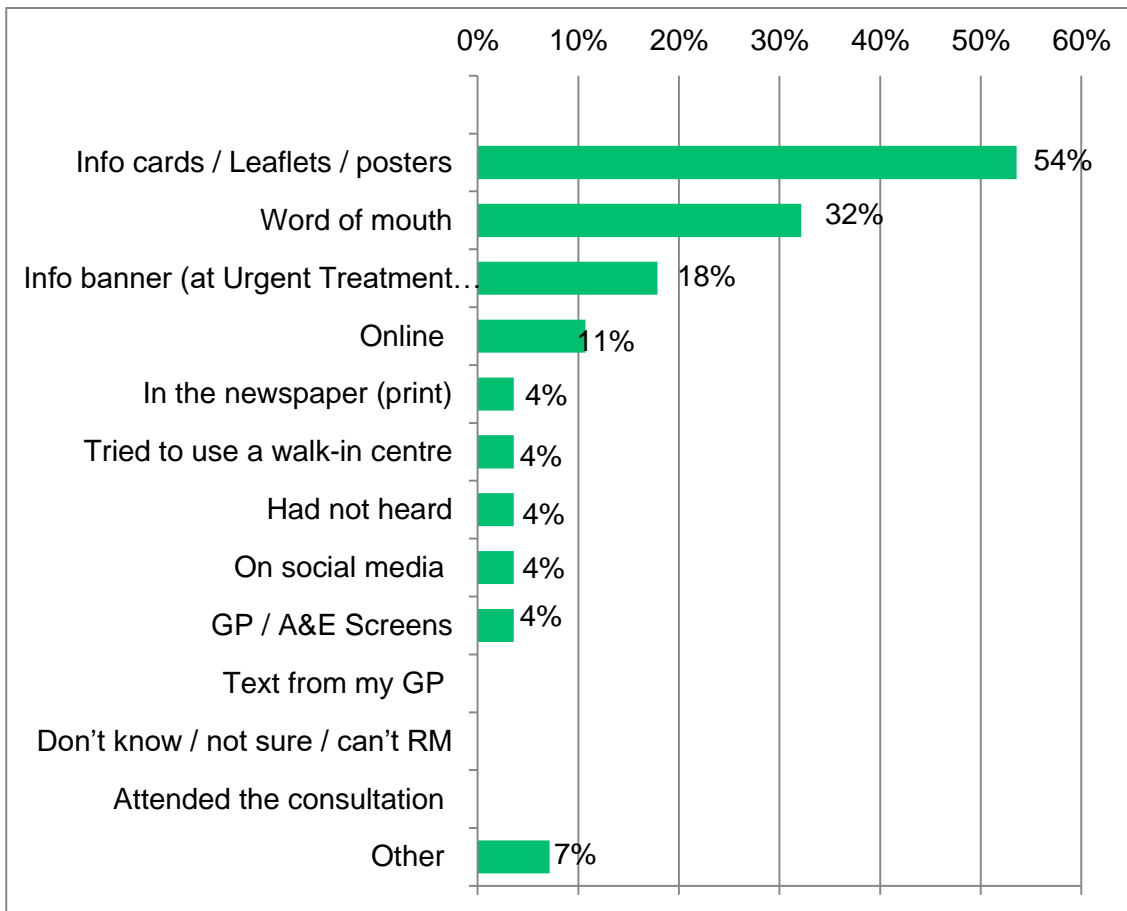
Over half of the people who completed the survey told us they heard about the changes through posters and leaflets left at public places (54%).

A good proportion of people also indicated that they heard about the changes via word of mouth, via an info banner at a walk-in-centre and online (32%, 12%, 11% respectively).

Two people also indicated that they had heard about the changes via other means. These people were given the opportunity to answer this question independently and provided the following responses:

- *“Friend recommending”*
- *“Work”*

Figure 4: Question 3 - Where people heard about the changes – big indoor sports festival results

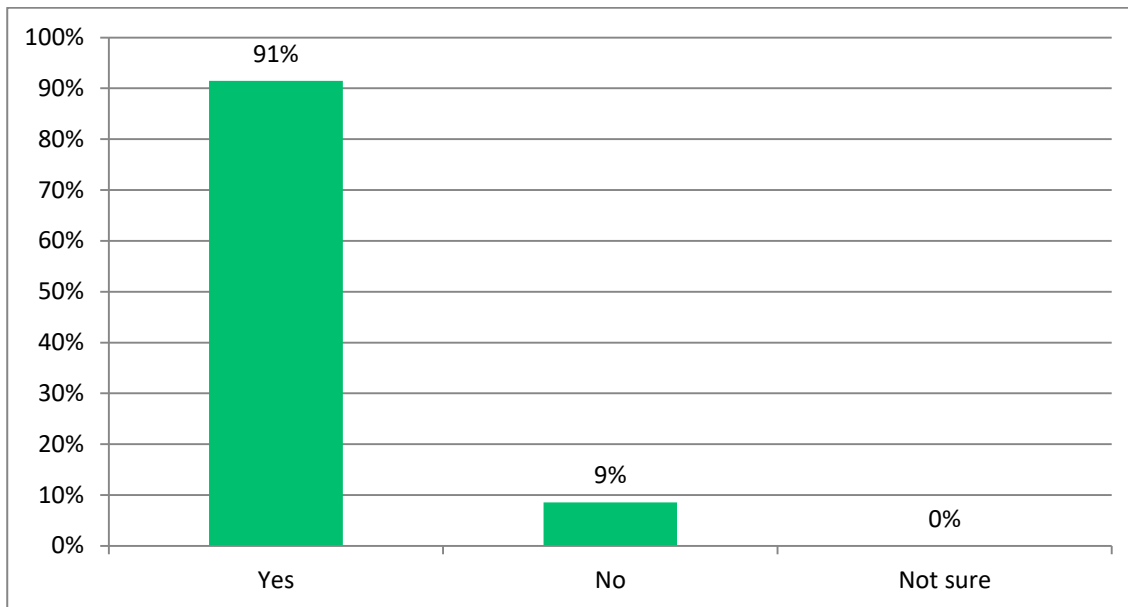


#### Q4: Do you live in the Sunderland, Houghton, or Washington area? (N=374 / N=42)

##### On-street results (n=374)

Over nine-tenths of people involved in the on-street engagement lived in the Sunderland area, including Washington and Houghton (91%).

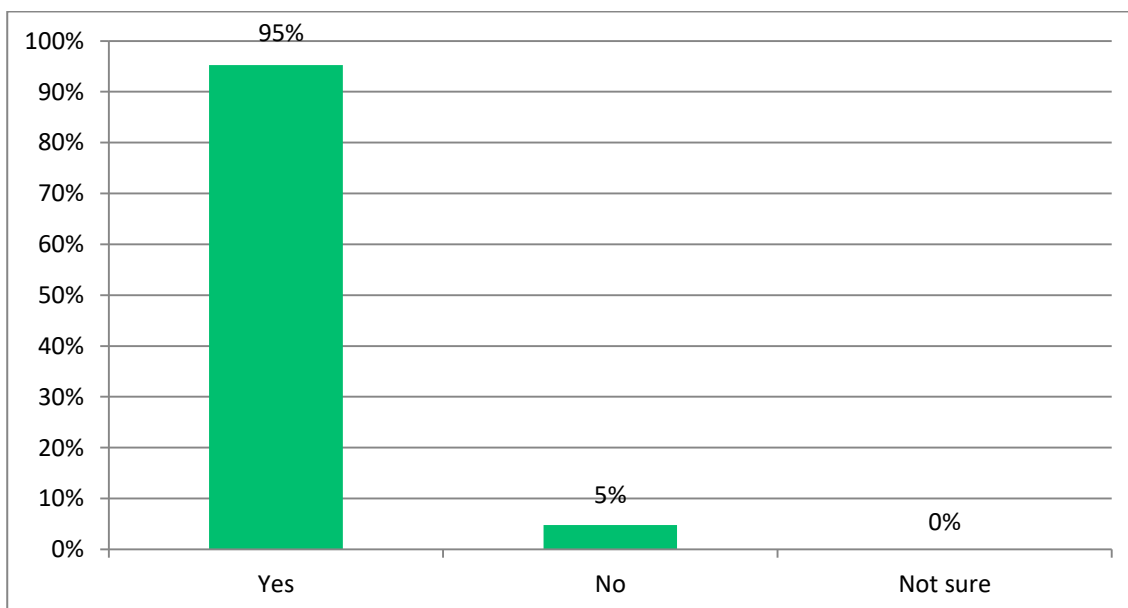
Figure 5: Question 4 – Where people live – on-street results



##### Big Indoor Sports Festival results (n=42)

Over nine-tenths of people involved in the on-street engagement lived in the Sunderland area, including Washington and Houghton (95%).

Figure 6: Question 4 – Where people live – big indoor sports festival results



## **Q5: Any other comments outside of questions? (N=5)**

People were asked if they had any questions outside of the questions. In total, 5 people made 5 comments through the on-street survey. No additional comments were made through the Big Indoor Sports event engagement.

No themes were addressed and therefore comments have been included below:

- *"I ring 911."*
- *"I don't really care."*
- *"Hard to get in. Took community stuff away. Banks etc. Will shut altogether - my mum has to travel to."*
- *"Want to walk in. A&E busy. Wasted millions opening centres."*
- *"District nurses don't come out to house."*



## Demographics

Individuals were asked to provide some demographic information. This information has been detailed in the below table:

Table 12: Demographics for all respondents

Demographic	On-street		Big Indoor	
	%	No.	%	No.
AGE	N=373		N=42	
16 – 17	2%	6	0%	0
18 – 24	6%	22	5%	2
25 – 34	12%	45	19%	8
35 – 44	13%	48	57%	24
45 – 54	19%	72	0%	0
55 – 64	23%	84	14%	6
65 – 74	16%	61	5%	2
75 or older	9%	33	0%	0
Prefer not to say	1%	2	0%	0
GENDER	N=374		N=41	
Male	39%	146	7%	3
Female	61%	228	93%	38
SUNDERLAND POSTCODES	N=320		N=39	
Coalfields – DH4 / DH5	24%	76	15%	6
Sunderland East – SR1 / SR2	4%	12	13%	5
Sunderland West – SR3 / SR4	38%	120	13%	5
Sunderland North – SR5 / SR6	27%	85	46%	18
Washington – NE37 / NE38	8%	27	13%	5
OTHER POSTCODES	N=38		N=3	
Newcastle (NE2, NE9, NE10, NE11, NE12, NE21)	24%	9		
Durham (DH1, DH6, DH7, DH8, DH9, SR7)	26%	10	33%	1
South Tyneside (NE32, NE33, NE34, NE35, NE36)	34%	13	67%	2
North Tyneside (NE23)	3%	1		
Darlington (DL16)	3%	1		
Teesside (TS23 4)	3%	1		
Outside of North East	8%	3		