

WentWest 2021 Needs Survey: GPs and Allied Health Professionals

Summary of insights and findings

WentWest surveyed more than 450 General Practitioners (GPs) and Allied Health Professionals (AHPs) in late 2021 for its annual WentWest Needs Survey: General Practice and Allied Health.

This report is a summary of its findings.

We survey GPs and AHPs annually to gain insights into their needs and identify opportunities related to health services in our region. This also helps us better understand the changing health needs in our community: specifically which health services are needed and how best to deliver them.

In our survey, we asked health professionals about the impact of COVID-19 on their workload and stress levels, and whether they still enjoyed their work. Results showed that 63% of GPs and 77% of AHPs reported a high level of work satisfaction, similar to last year's survey.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, 62% of GPs said that WentWest COVID-19 communications helped them navigate daily challenges, and 92% of respondents were able to use the data insights and advice from our reports in their general practice. One practitioner said: "The level of support offered has been very impressive and has helped us implement safer strategies to work in a safe environment during the pandemic."

Our annual Needs Survey is an integral part of our information gathering in our region. As the Western Sydney Primary Health Network, WentWest relies on these surveys to guide service design and drive quality improvement initiatives in our community.

Thank you to all the practitioners for their valuable time, insight and contribution to the WentWest 2021 Needs Survey.



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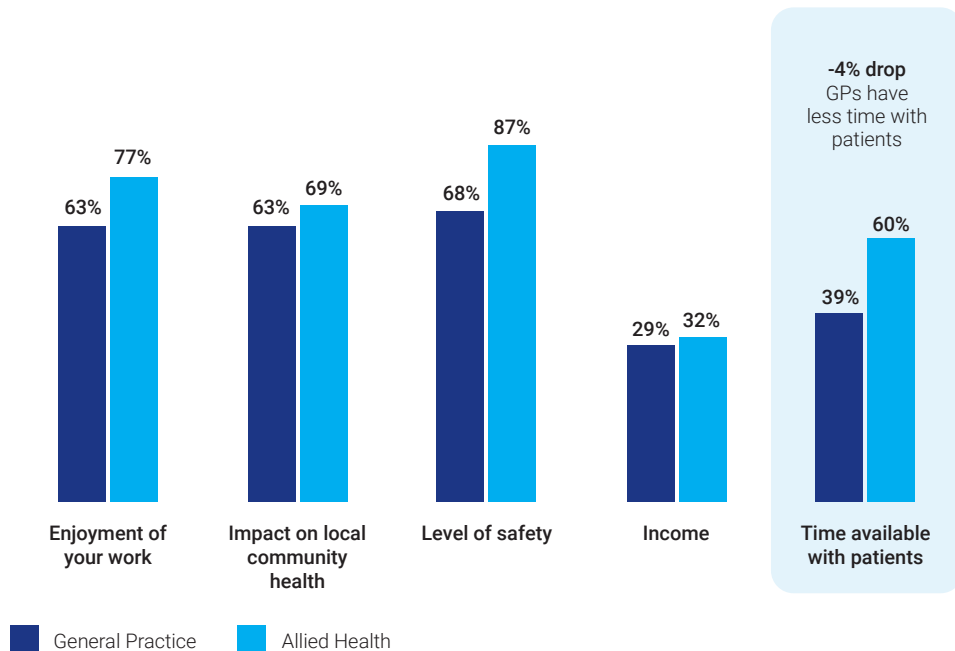
Delivering Health Care to Patients



GPs Satisfied with Work but have Less Time

While 73% of RACGP fellows report they are moderately or very satisfied with being a GP, the long-lasting effects of COVID-19 virus continue to impact their workloads and resources. GPs reported spending less time with patients, compared to previous years which is most likely driven by remote consulting.

GP satisfaction with aspects of work: % high / very high

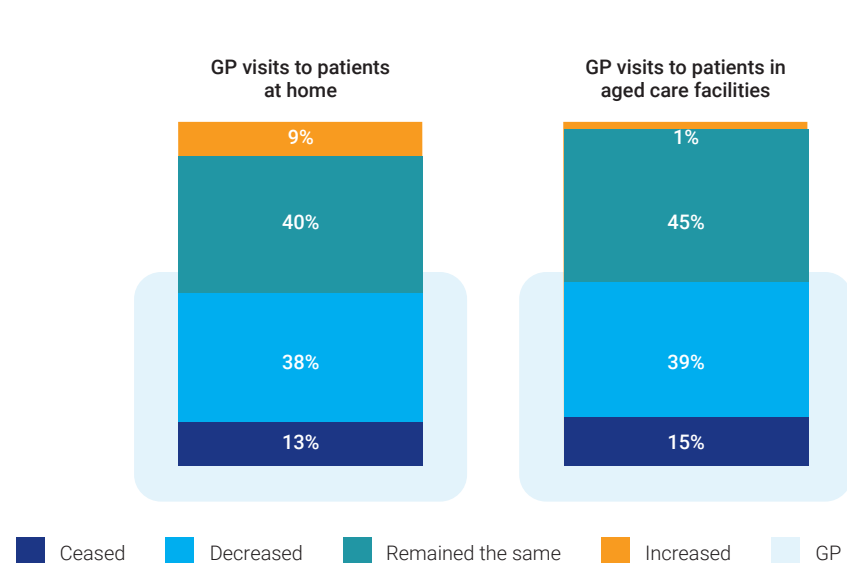


Telehealth is the New Normal

Telehealth was expanded during the COVID-19 pandemic to ensure the safety of patients and health care providers. Many of these services have now been retained permanently with our survey reporting 88% of providers using telephone consultations successfully.

COVID-19 Impacts on Home and Aged Care Visits

COVID-19 and the need for social distancing have had a significant impact on GP home and aged care facility visits with the survey showing a 38% decrease of GPs visits to patients in their homes, and 13% stopping visits altogether. A similar trend is reflected in the 39% decrease of GP visits to aged care homes and 15% of GPs discontinuing visits.



Complex Mental Health Needs Continue

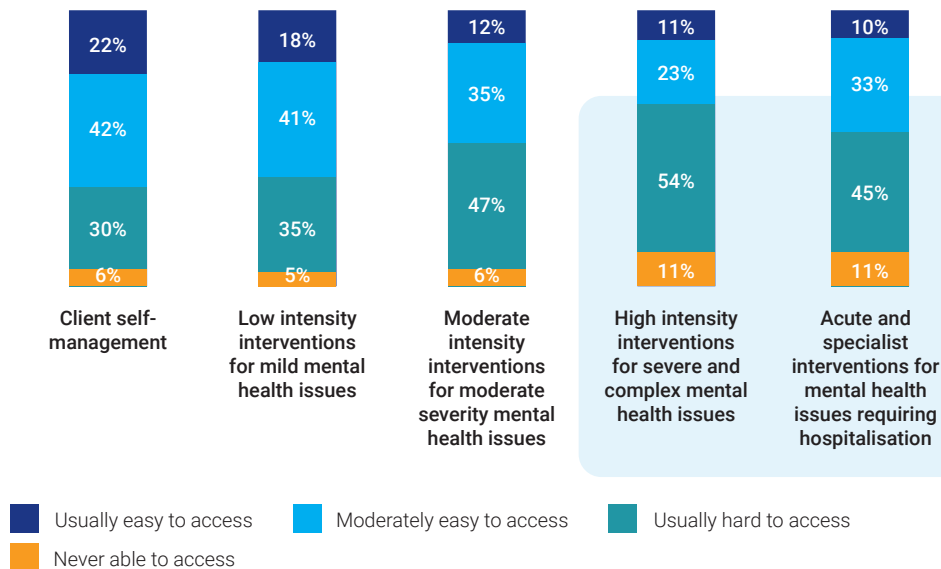
Increasing access to health services, particularly mental health, is a key priority in Western Sydney.

In 2021, the RACGP reported that 70% of GPs listed 'psychological' as one of the most common reasons for patient presentations. Our health programs are designed to assist a range of priority groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, older people, young people, those experiencing homelessness, and people engaged with the justice system.

One of the main barriers to accessing mental health support is the lack of awareness of these services. We found access to health services continues to be difficult as the complexity of need and service intensity increases.

Access to mental health services by intervention intensity

Access remains problematic as service intensity increases



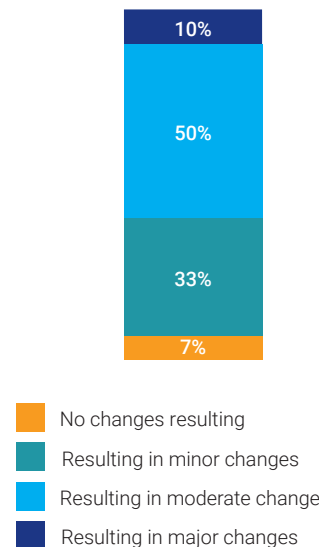
Health Intelligence Reporting Driving Change

WentWest's Health Intelligence Unit (HIU) captures, translates and shares data with internal and external system partners to help support, inform, evaluate and improve the health and wellbeing of our Western Sydney community.

HIU supports the transformation of primary care through data driven quality improvement initiatives, risk stratification, predictive modelling and structured QI reports.

More than 90% of GPs surveyed use health intelligence reporting to make and drive change in their practice, and 60% say it has had a major or moderate impact on their practice.

Question: How much impact have the insights from these reports had on your practice in terms of changes made?



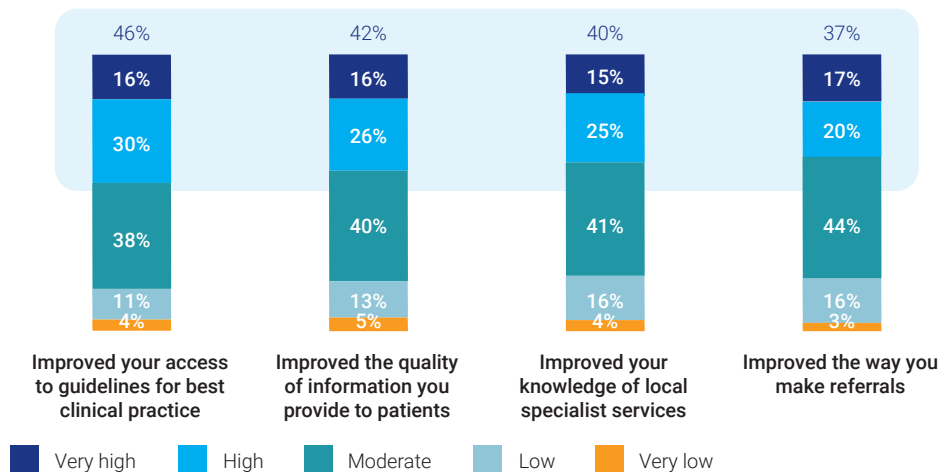
Question: How confident are you in understanding how to apply the insight available from these reports, to your own practice setting?



GPs Using and Benefiting from HealthPathways

In the past year, the HealthPathways site had 137,572 page views from over 570 pathways. The team has developed 42 new pathways across 15 categories of care. More than 40% of GPs said HealthPathways has had a high or very high impact on their ability to access clinical practice guidelines. A further 40% or more said they've had a moderate impact.

How HealthPathways has helped GPs access guidelines for best clinical practice



Practice Development Team Building Capacity and Capability

The Practice Development Team (PDT) connects general practice with services and programs to build capacity and capability to improve health outcomes across Western Sydney. Twenty six per cent of practices said they improved their practice systems through a combination of face-to-face meetings, remote and phone meetings. The PDT reached 1,582 GPs across 352 practices over this period.

How did our practice support team assist your practice?



Data will Shape our Service Design and Delivery

This report provides a small snapshot of some of the insights and findings arising from our 2021 Needs Survey report.

WentWest will use the detailed data contained within these survey findings to guide and inform our service design and to develop and drive quality improvement initiatives in our community.

On behalf of the WentWest team, we extend our thanks to the 450 GPs and AHPs who responded to this annual survey. Your input and contributions are invaluable and provide us with important feedback and insights to develop programs and deliver support to better meet your needs.