

Patient Preference Survey

Executive Summary

This survey gathered feedback from 1,798 respondents to provide valuable insights into patient preferences for accessing general practice care in New Zealand. The purpose was to understand how patients value face-to-face and telehealth options and to ensure patient perspectives are visible in discussions regarding access targets.

The survey was distributed through GenPro member practices, who were asked to share the link with their patients. Responses were collected anonymously through SurveyMonkey.

No demographic or regional data was captured, and the results reflect general trends rather than definitive population data.

Key Findings

1. Clear Preference for In-Person GP Care

- 87 % ranked face-to-face consultations in the clinic as their most preferred way to receive care.
- Telehealth Phone (6.8%), video (2.6%), email (.5%), and patient-portal (1%) options ranked significantly lower.
- Only 0.3 % expressed no preference for how they access care.

This indicates that patients prefer to receive care in-person at the practice.

2. When Face-to-Face Matters Most

- 65 % prefer in-person appointments when a physical examination is needed.
- 64 % for new health concerns.
- 42 % said they prefer face-to-face for all health matters.

Patients see in-person appointments as essential for diagnosis, trust, and reassurance.

3. Telehealth Seen as a Complement, Not a Replacement

- 15 % said they do not like telehealth and would not use it.
- Those who use telehealth mainly do so for repeat prescriptions (60 %), test results (55 %), or minor/simple issues (53 %).

This shows telehealth is valued for convenience, but patients still prefer in-person care for clinical engagement.

4. Strong Preference for GP-Led Care

- 96 % said they prefer to see a GP when visiting their practice.
- Nurse Practitioners (42 %) and Practice Nurses (31 %) were seen as suitable, only in some situations.
- 48 % said they always want to see a GP, even when other clinicians are available.

5. Key Drivers When Booking Appointments

- Appointment availability (80 %) and continuity with the same clinician (66 %) were top priorities.
- Cost and convenience were less influential, suggesting patients value ongoing relationships and access more than ease or price.

6. What Patients Value About Their Practice

- Qualified and registered professionals (80 %)
- Being known and understood (61 %)
- Local accessibility and coordinated care (~45 %)

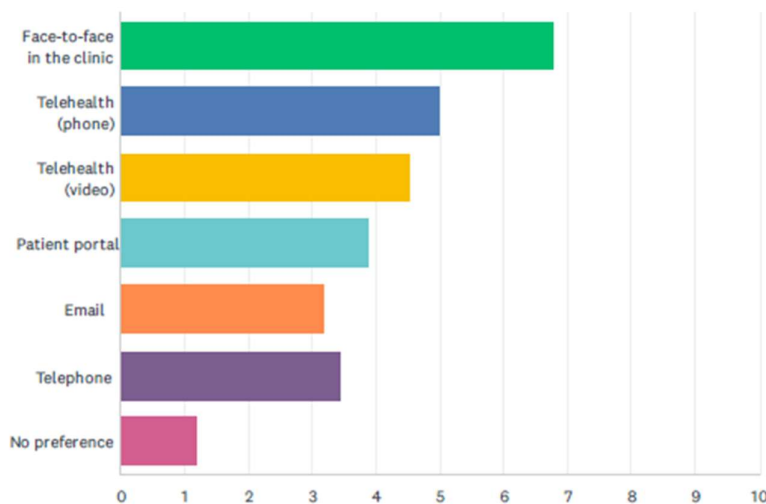
Patients place trust, familiarity, and professional quality above digital features or convenience.

Appendix 1 – The Results

Question 1

Q1 Please rank your preferred way to receive care from your general practice (1 = most preferred, 7 = least preferred)

Answered: 1,798 Skipped: 24

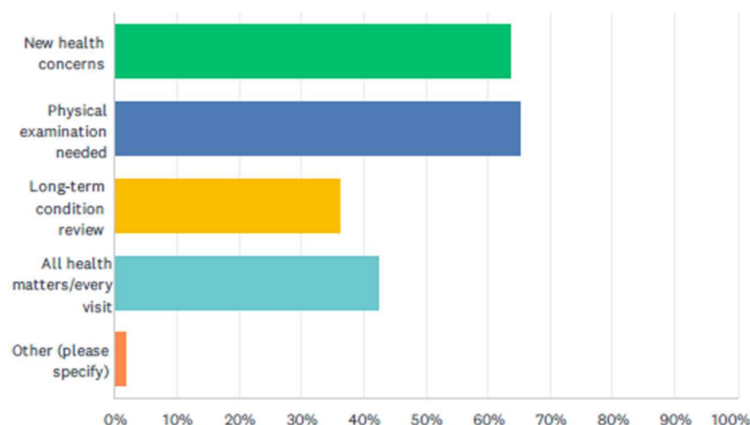


	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	TOTAL	SCORE
Face-to-face in the clinic	87.04% 1,565	8.12% 146	2.84% 51	0.95% 17	0.39% 7	0.39% 7	0.28% 5	1,798	6.78
Telehealth (phone)	6.79% 122	31.59% 568	33.48% 602	13.85% 249	9.79% 176	4.17% 75	0.33% 6	1,798	4.98
Telehealth (video)	2.67% 48	28.14% 506	30.87% 555	13.01% 234	11.07% 199	12.35% 222	1.89% 34	1,798	4.54
Patient portal	1.11% 20	11.79% 212	13.13% 236	39.49% 710	19.47% 350	13.35% 240	1.67% 30	1,798	3.89
Email	0.56% 10	4.06% 73	9.29% 167	14.57% 262	42.83% 770	26.81% 482	1.89% 34	1,798	3.17
Telephone	0.89% 16	15.91% 286	9.90% 178	17.30% 311	14.40% 259	39.15% 704	2.45% 44	1,798	3.44
No preference	0.95% 17	0.39% 7	0.50% 9	0.83% 15	2.06% 37	3.78% 68	91.49% 1,645	1,798	1.20

Question 2

Q2 In what situations do you prefer face-to-face appointments?

Answered: 1,780 Skipped: 42



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
New health concerns	63.65%	1,133
Physical examination needed	65.34%	1,163
Long-term condition review	36.35%	647
All health matters/every visit	42.36%	754
Other (please specify)	1.85%	33
Total Respondents: 1,780		

Top Themes:

1. Sensitive or Personal Matters

Patients prefer face-to-face care when discussing private, emotional, or personal health issues such as mental health, sexual health, miscarriage, or family concerns. They feel more confident and secure in person.

2. Serious or Complex Conditions

In-person appointments are seen as essential for new, serious, or complicated health issues, and for reviews or follow-ups after hospital care. Patients associate in-person visits with accuracy, reassurance, and thorough assessment.

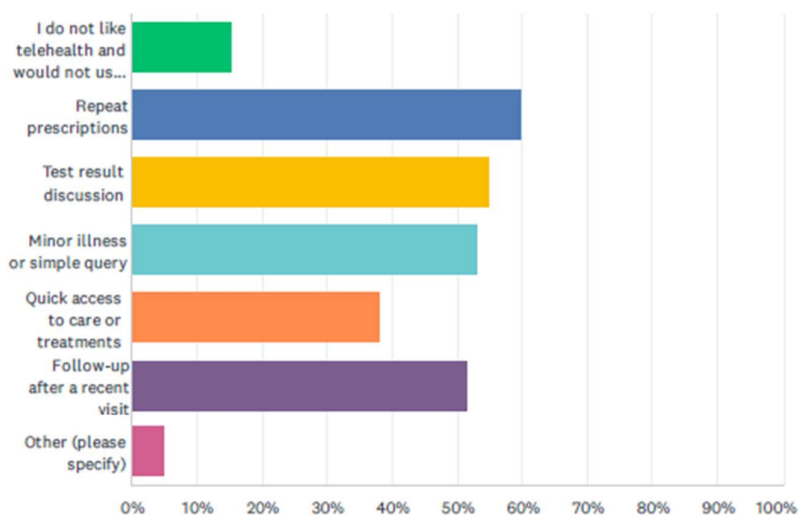
3. Relationship and Trust

Patients value the opportunity to build and maintain a relationship with their GP. They see face-to-face contact as critical for trust, understanding, and effective communication.

Question 3

Q3 In what situations do you prefer telehealth appointments?

Answered: 1,733 Skipped: 89



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I do not like telehealth and would not use this option	15.41%	267
Repeat prescriptions	59.61%	1,033
Test result discussion	54.76%	949
Minor illness or simple query	53.14%	921
Quick access to care or treatments	37.91%	657
Follow-up after a recent visit	51.70%	896
Other (please specify)	4.85%	84
Total Respondents: 1,733		

Top themes:

1. Lack of Awareness or Understanding

A large portion of respondents said they did not know what telehealth is, had never used it, or were unclear about how it works.

2. Preference for Familiar, Trusted GP

Several respondents said they would only use telehealth if it was with their regular GP. They expressed distrust or discomfort with “random” or “unknown” doctors and valued continuity of care.

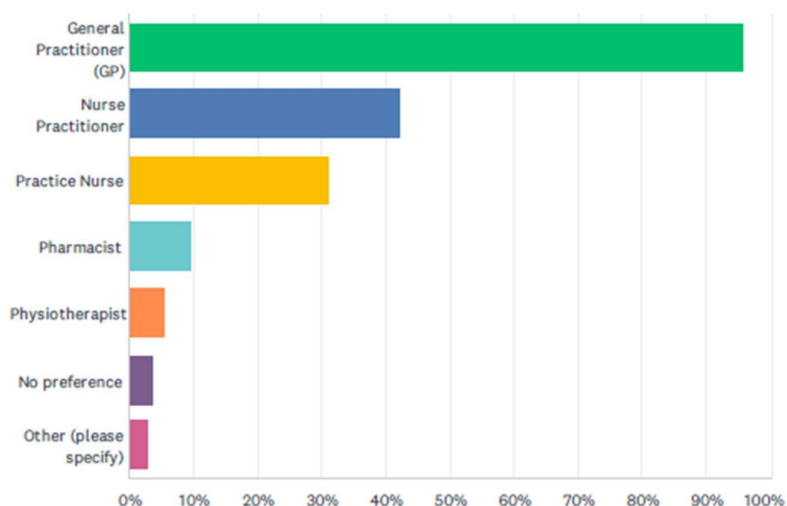
3. Conditional Acceptance for Minor or Access-Related Issues

Some respondents said they might use telehealth for minor issues, repeat prescriptions, or when face-to-face appointments are unavailable (e.g., illness, travel, work constraints).

Question 4

Q4 Which registered health professional(s) do you prefer to see when you visit your general practice? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 1,746 Skipped: 76



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
General Practitioner (GP)	95.82%	1,673
Nurse Practitioner	42.21%	737
Practice Nurse	31.16%	544
Pharmacist	9.56%	167
Physiotherapist	5.61%	98
No preference	3.61%	63
Other (please specify)	2.98%	52
Total Respondents: 1,746		

Top themes:

1. Depends on the Reason or Condition

When stating their preference of health professional, most respondents said it depends on why they are visiting the practice or what the issue is. Examples include “*depends on the problem,*” “*depends on the situation,*” and “*depends on the reason for the visit.*”

2. Role Clarity and Confidence in Qualifications

Many responses show uncertainty about the roles or training of Nurse Practitioners and other team members. Some said they don’t know the difference between roles, while others explicitly stated distrust, e.g. “*Nurse practitioners are not a replacement for GPs.*”

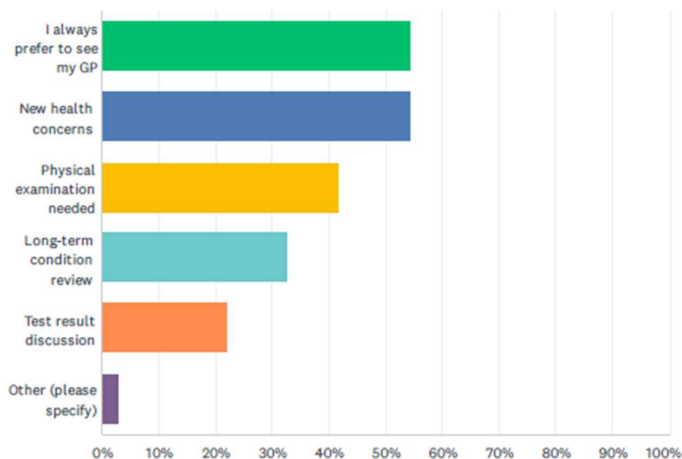
3. Task-Specific or Appropriate Practitioner

Several respondents were comfortable seeing nurses or allied health for specific tasks like vaccinations, wound care, or musculoskeletal issues, but wanted GP involvement for diagnosis, prescriptions, or new health concerns.

Question 5

Q5 In what situations would you always prefer to see a GP? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 1,739 Skipped: 83



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I always prefer to see my GP	54.46%	947
New health concerns	54.40%	946
Physical examination needed	41.58%	723
Long-term condition review	32.72%	569
Test result discussion	21.91%	381
Other (please specify)	2.99%	52
Total Respondents: 1,739		

Top themes:

1. Serious, Complex, or Unresolved Conditions

Respondents consistently said they prefer to see a GP for serious, complex, or ongoing issues, new symptoms, or conditions not improving. Phrases included *“serious concerns,” “complex ongoing symptoms,” “significant illness,”* and *“condition not improving.”*

2. Scope and Clinical Judgment

Many noted they were happy to see a nurse or allied health provider for simple or routine issues, but expect a GP when the issue goes beyond the scope of others. Examples: *“happy to see a nurse if they can diagnose and prescribe,” “when it’s out of scope,” “depends on the issue.”*

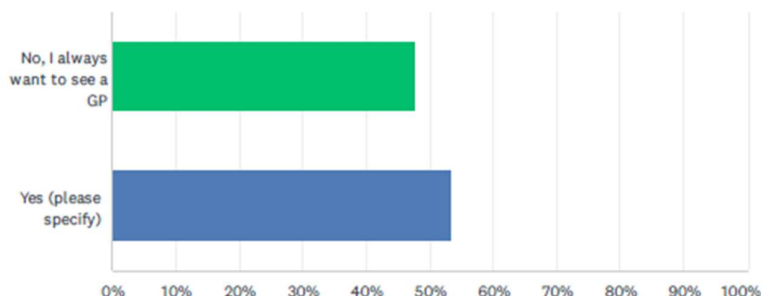
3. Trust, Relationship, and Privacy

Some respondents linked GP preference to trust and familiarity, or said they prefer their GP for private or personal matters. Mentions include *“private matters,” “touch base with my GP,”* and *“I have Aspergers so prefer only my doctor.”*

Question 6

Q6 Are there any situations you would be comfortable seeing another registered health professional first, for example, Nurse Practitioner, Practice Nurse, Physiotherapist?

Answered: 946 Skipped: 876



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
No, I always want to see a GP	47.67%	451
Yes (please specify)	53.38%	505
Total Respondents: 946		

Top themes:

1. Appropriate for Minor, Routine, or Procedural Issues

Many respondents said they are comfortable seeing another health professional for minor, routine, or clearly defined tasks, such as vaccinations, dressings, smears, blood pressure checks, repeat prescriptions, or simple follow-ups.

2. Dependence on Availability or Access

A large number said they would see another professional only if their GP was unavailable or if wait times were long.

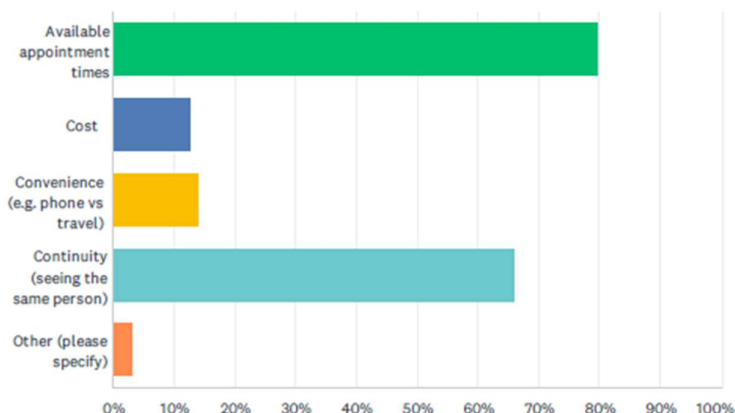
3. Trust in Role and Scope

Many noted they are open to other practitioners if the person is trained, qualified, and clear about their scope, such as a physiotherapist for injuries or a nurse practitioner for wound care or prescriptions. Some also expressed uncertainty about the differences between roles.

Question 7

Q7 What influences your choice most when booking an appointment with your general practice? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 1,679 Skipped: 143



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Available appointment times	79.81%	1,340
Cost	12.81%	215
Convenience (e.g. phone vs travel)	14.00%	235
Continuity (seeing the same person)	66.11%	1,110
Other (please specify)	3.16%	53
Total Respondents: 1,679		

Top themes:

1. Appointment Availability and Wait Times

The most common theme influencing choice when making appointments was appointment availability. Many noted long waits, lack of same-day access, limited hours for working people, and frustration with call systems.

2. Nature or Severity of the Health Issue

Many said their decision depends on how serious or urgent the issue is. They prefer to see a GP for significant or complex concerns, and any available practitioner for minor or urgent needs.

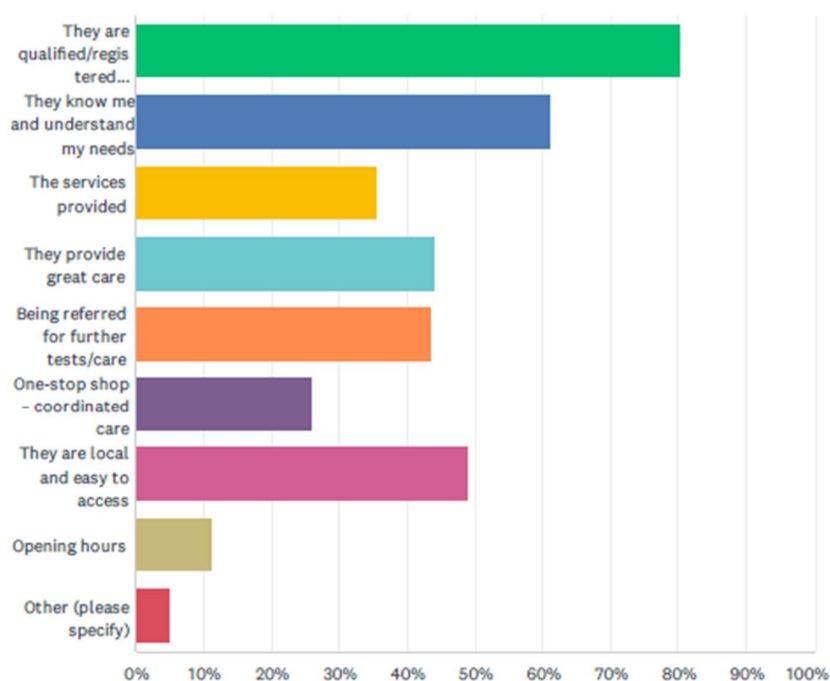
3. Trust and Continuity

A smaller but consistent group highlighted trust, familiarity, and continuity with their GP or practice team as key. Phrases included *"My GP knows my medical history," "long-term association,"* and *"trust."*

Question 8

Q8 What do you value most about your general practice? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 1,677 Skipped: 145



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
They are qualified/registered healthcare providers	80.20%	1,345
They know me and understand my needs	60.88%	1,021
The services provided	35.48%	595
They provide great care	43.89%	736
Being referred for further tests/care	43.53%	730
One-stop shop – coordinated care	25.82%	433
They are local and easy to access	48.96%	821
Opening hours	11.03%	185
Other (please specify)	4.89%	82
Total Respondents: 1,677		

Top themes:

1. Continuity and Trust with a Known GP

The strongest theme regarding what patients value most at their practice was seeing the same GP who knows their medical history and family. Common phrases: *"My GP knows me," "continuity," "my doctor understands me,"* and *"they know my health history."*

2. Access and Appointment Availability

Many comments reflected frustration with wait times and the difficulty of getting an appointment when needed. Some valued practices that offered same-day or online booking, while others reported long delays and poor follow-up.

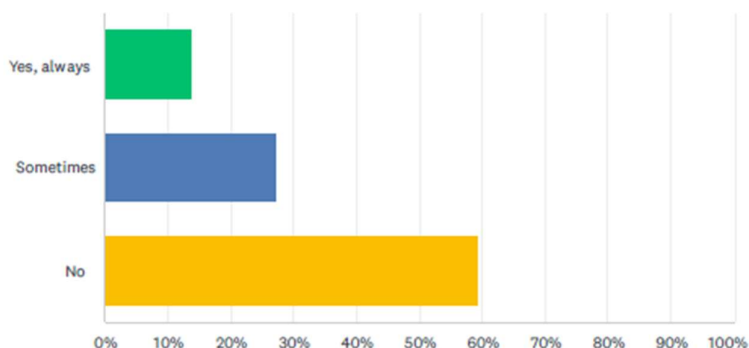
3. Mixed Experiences and Declining Service Quality

A recurring theme was declining satisfaction, often linked to corporate ownership, turnover of doctors, or poor front-desk interactions. Examples include *"they have been bought by a corporate," "rude front staff,"* and *"no continuity."*

Question 9

Q9 Do you usually pre-book an appointment with your general practice during your current visit, for example, at least a month in advance

Answered: 1,672 Skipped: 150



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, always	13.58%	227
Sometimes	27.15%	454
No	59.27%	991
TOTAL		1,672

Question 10

Q10 Would anything encourage you to try a different type of appointment or registered health professional?

1) Faster access drives openness

- People would see other health professionals (not GP) if they got seen sooner.
- Lower cost increases willingness to try alternatives.
- Online booking and simple processes help.

2) Continuity and trust with a known GP

- Many prefer their own GP who knows their history.
- Some will accept phone or video only with their GP.
- Several want any alternative to be overseen by their GP.
- A sizeable group do not want alternatives at all.

3) Clear scope and suitable use cases

- Patients want to know what nurses, NPs, pharmacists and physios can do.
- Openness rises for minor or routine needs, repeats, forms, smears, dressings, BP checks, simple infections.
- For complex or new problems they want a GP.
- Confidence depends on qualifications, prescribing rights, and clear referral back to the GP