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# Carers Assessments Evaluation

Autumn 2023

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# Method

- Carers who had received a Carers Assessment / Health and Wellbeing Check between May and August 2023 were contacted about their experience of their assessment.
  - Two Carer Evaluators contacted a total of 71 Carers, asking for feedback on their experience of their Carers Assessment. We had a response rate of 70%.
  - 50 evaluations were undertaken by telephone.
  - Carer Evaluators inputted information online while the Carer spoke to them.
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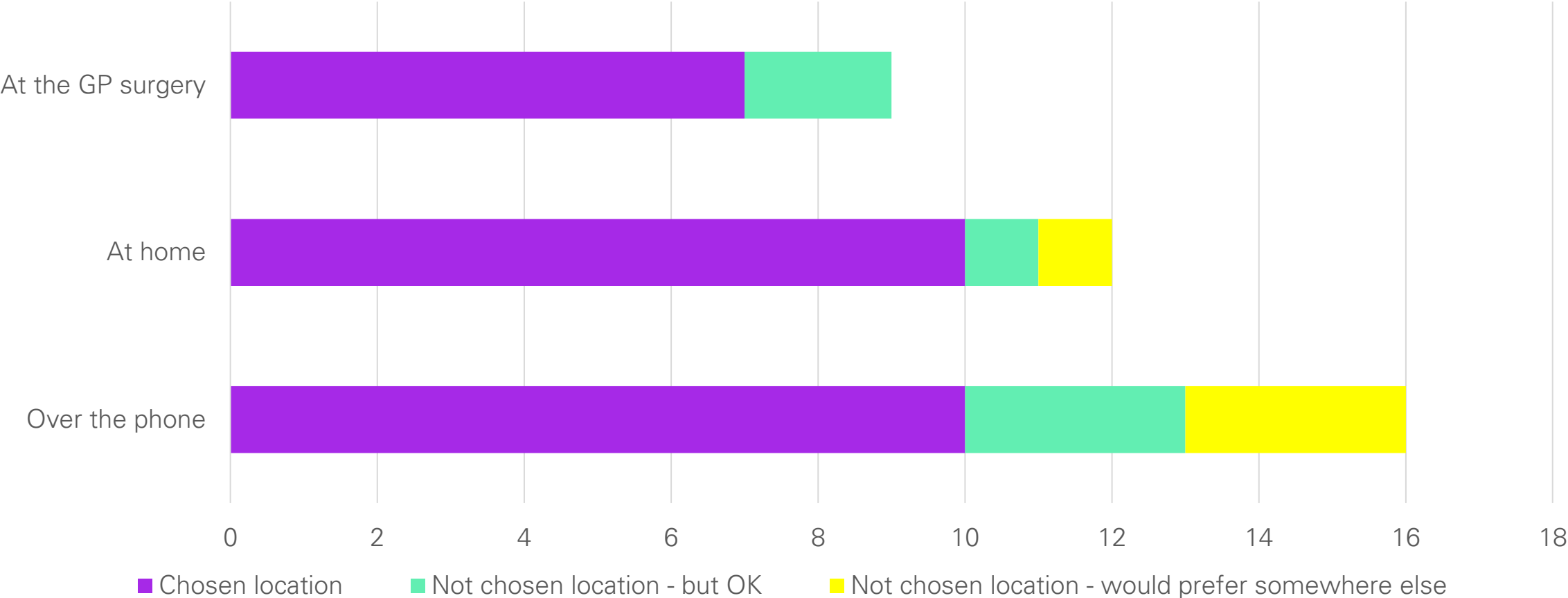
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# Location of Carer's Assessment

- Carers' Assessments were mostly completed over the phone (37%), at the Carer's home (29%) or at the GP Surgery (21%). The remainder had their assessments in various alternative locations or did not answer.
  - 71% of Carers said they had chosen the location of their Assessment.
    - Adult Social Care (ASC) offered Assessments in Carers' chosen location on 7 out of 8 occasions (6 out of 8 took place in the Carer's home).
    - GP Carer Support Workers offered 11 out of 14 in the chosen location (2 at GP practice and one over the phone were not the chosen location).
  - Those completed by GP Carer Support Workers predominantly took place in the GP surgeries or by phone. The remainder other than ASC tended to complete Carer's Assessments by phone.
  - One disadvantage was lack of privacy (either from the cared for person or generally – one at cared for person's home and another in the hospital)
  - The other disadvantage was with the location not being conducive to having a good conversation (mostly those over the phone).
  - One advantage centred on convenience (over the phone and at home in particular).
  - The other advantage was with privacy from the cared for person (phone and GP surgery met this need).
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# Choice of location for the Assessment



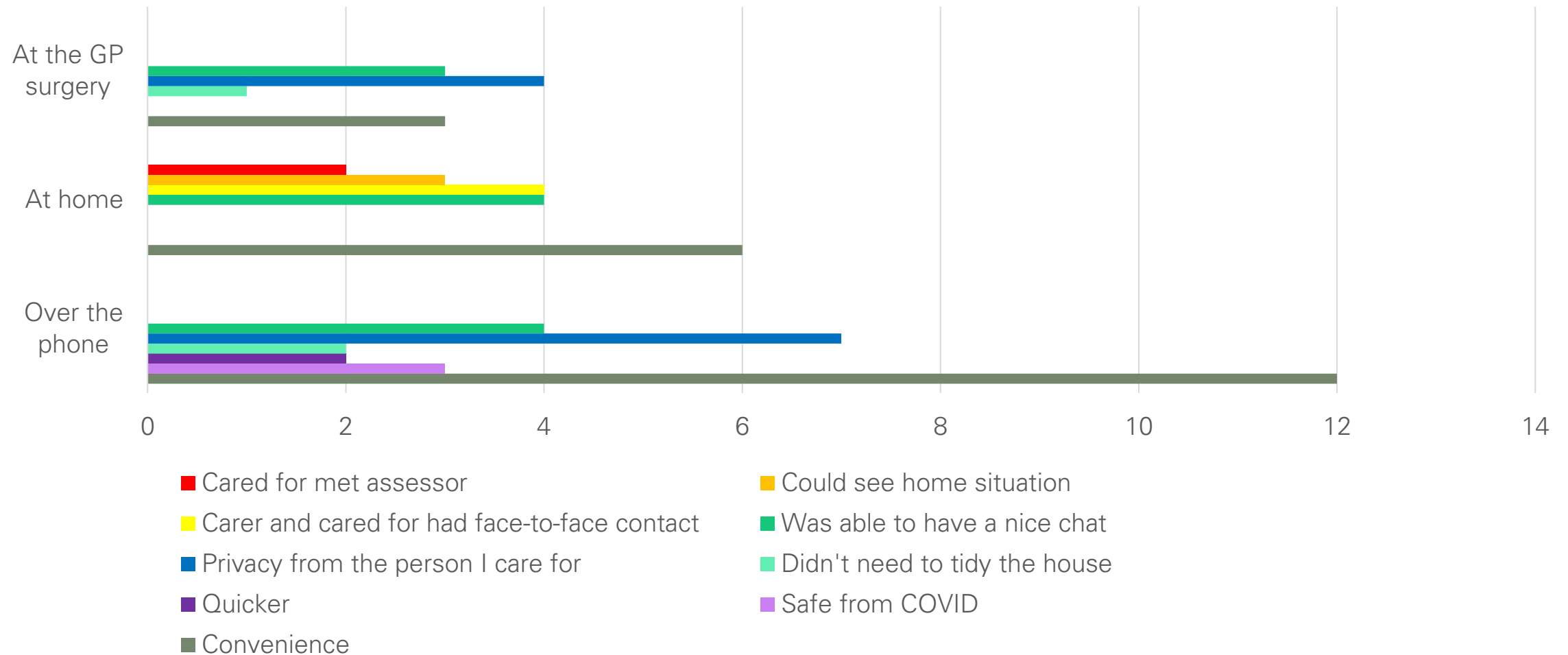
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## Opportunity to have a combined assessment (included in the assessment of the person they care for)

- Adult Social Care can offer Carers' assessments either combined with the assessment with the cared for person, or on their own.
  - Two respondents were offered both, three were only offered a combined assessment and two were only offered an assessment on their own.
  - One Carer reported that they did not have the opportunity to have the assessment separately. They fed back that they would have preferred having the conversation away from the person they care for to avoid upsetting them. This assessment took place at the Carer's home.
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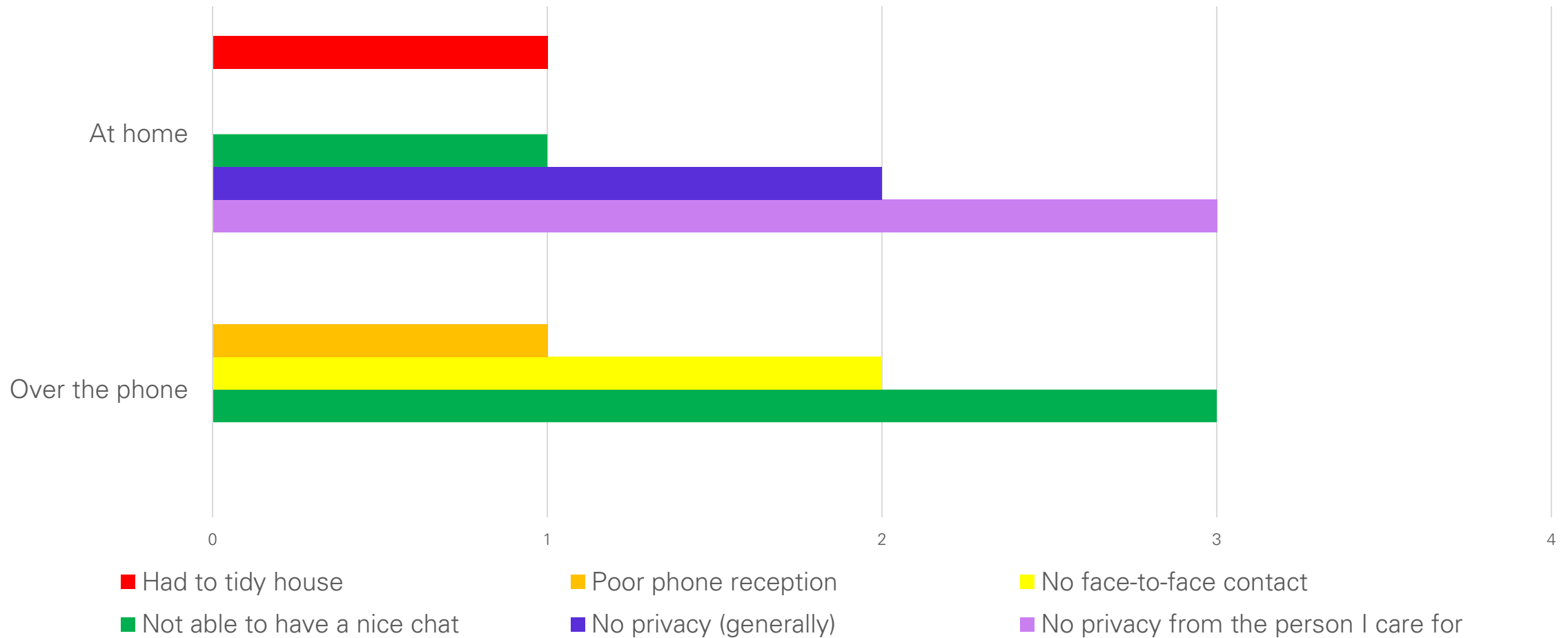
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# Advantages of Assessment locations



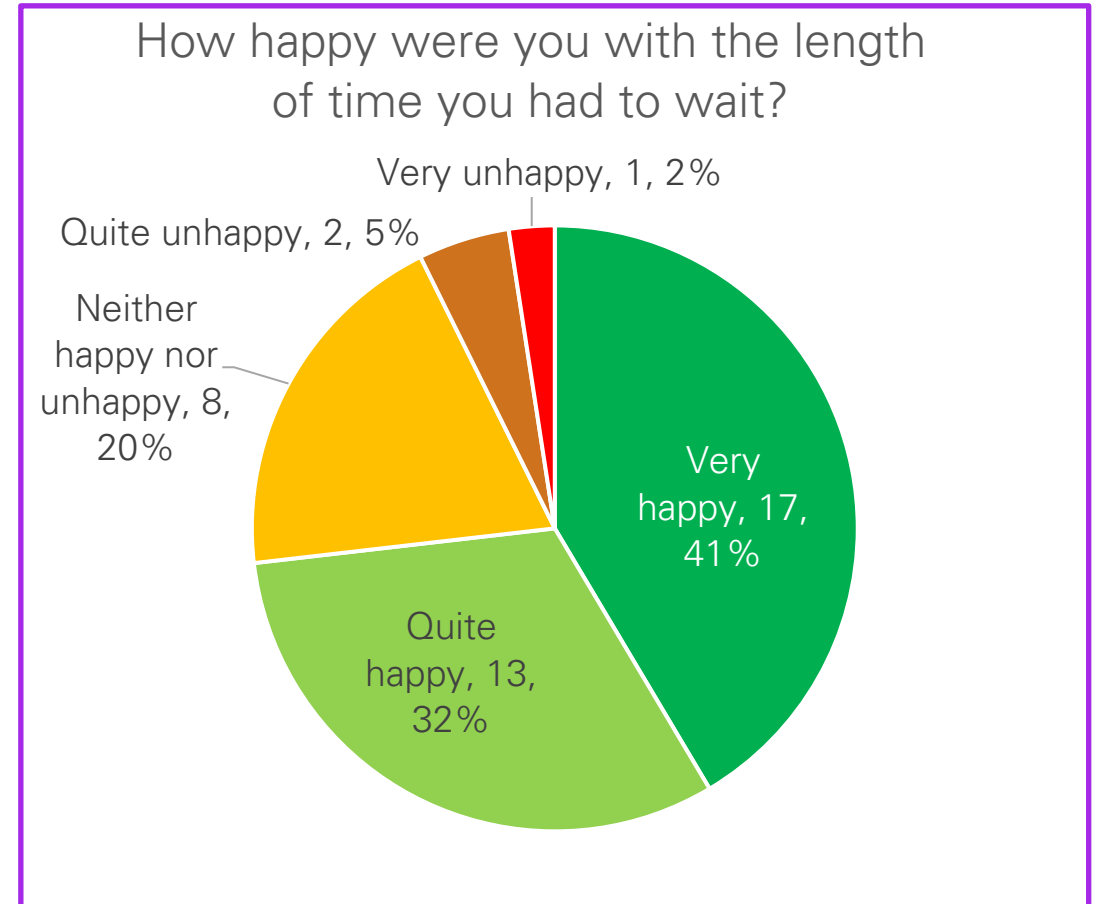
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# Disadvantages of Assessment locations



# Waiting times

- Most people (73%) were very happy or quite happy with the time they had to wait.
- 18 Carers waited between 1-2 weeks for their Assessment (53%).
- Four waited less than a week (12%).
- Eight waited 2-3 weeks (24%).
- The remaining four waited longer than this, but some at their request.
- The 'very unhappy' response was 3-4 weeks, 'unhappy' responses were 2-3 weeks and 'several' weeks.

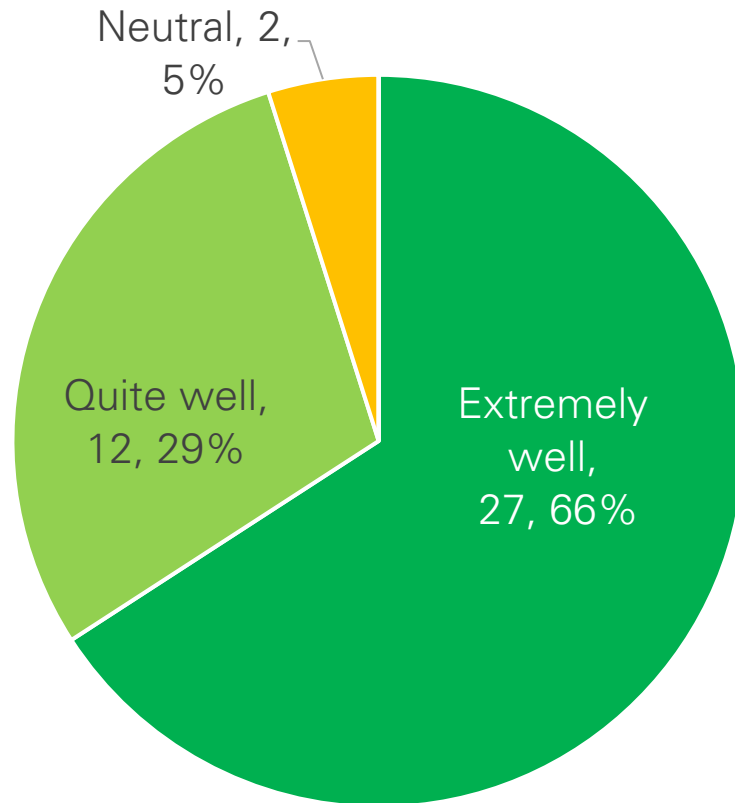


*"Happened immediately. I was desperate and was offered immediate discussion at GP surgery with both Carer Support Worker and Mental Health Carer Support Worker to discuss both of my caring roles" (0 week wait – Working age mental health team)*



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# How well did you feel the assessor understood your needs?



*"[The Assessor] introduced herself and was easy to talk to. Within ten minutes I felt really relaxed and could open up to her"* (GP based Carer Support Worker)

*"Very understanding and offered us the chance to talk away from each other if needed"* (Other Carer Support Worker)

*"Understood needs but couldn't do anything"* (Working age mental health team)

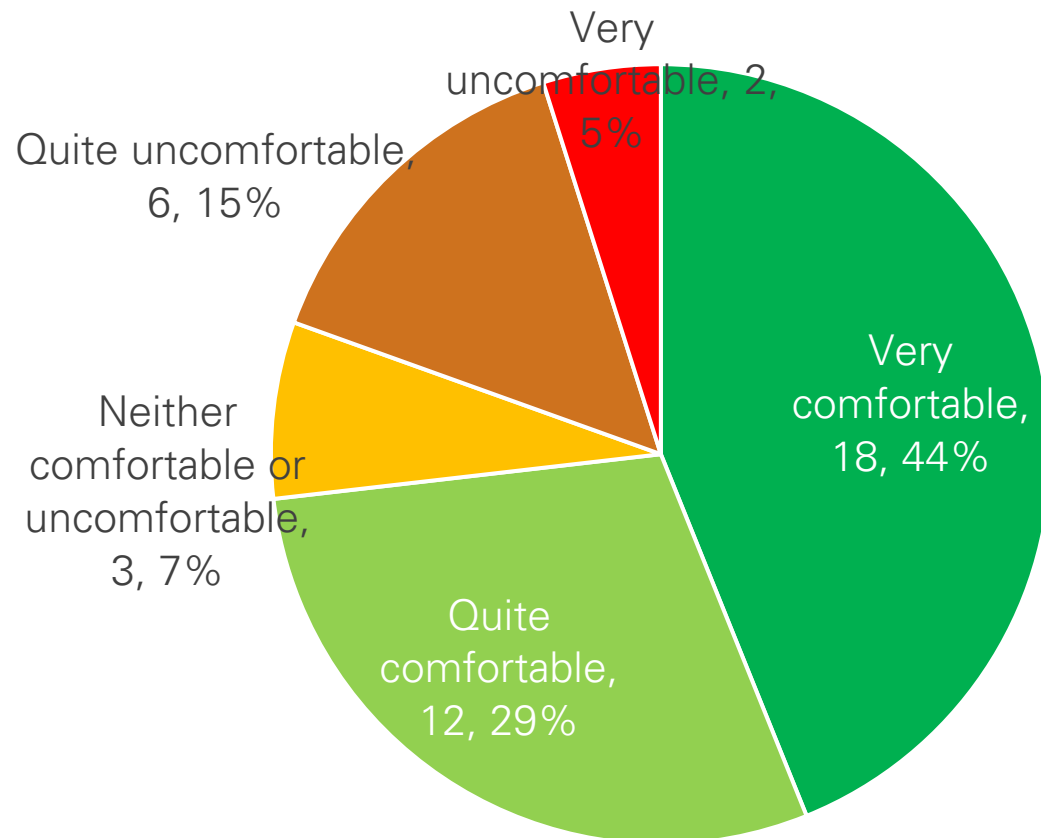
*"I felt my husband was still the one that was important, not me having to care for him"* (I don't know which team they worked for)

Not very well, 0, 0%  
Not at all well, 0, 0%

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# How comfortable did you feel discussing things openly with the assessor?



*"My true personality and feelings were able to come out. [I] Could speak to a human being about how I had been let down. Out of all the people (professionals) who have been involved this is the first time I could talk openly"* (GP-based Carer Support Worker – had assessment on their own)

*"Lack of privacy was a problem for me"* (Other Carer Support Worker, in hospital with cared for person)

*"Always helps when someone has been through similar and 'gets it'"* (Carers Aid Torbay – assessment on own)

*"Very comfortable as it hits your self-esteem and self-worth when you have to ask for help when you have always been so very independent"* (Other Carer Support Worker – joint assessment)

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# How well were key areas considered?

## Areas that were well-considered as much as Carers hoped:

- Support for your caring role (73% either extremely well or well)
- Support for the person you care for (90% either extremely well or well)
- Support with finances / benefits (85% either extremely well or well)
- Support with a break from caring / time for yourself (65% either extremely well or well)
- Planning ahead if something happens to you (63% either extremely well or well)
- Planning ahead for the person you care for (71% either extremely well or well)

## Areas that were not considered as much as Carers hoped:

- Whether Carers were willing and able to continue caring (52% either not at all or slightly)
- Support for your physical health (43% not at all or slightly – better in GP CSW assessments than Adult Social Care)
- Support for your mental / emotional health (45% not at all or slightly – better in GP CSW assessments than Adult Social Care)
- Support for your employment / training / education (53% not at all or slightly)

*“Offered a Direct Payment, but no solution for a break away from Mum as she wouldn’t go into respite care” (GP-based Carer Support Worker)*

*“Emergency card [is] a great idea. Will make me more confident to leave home at times” (Torbay Family Carers for Adults with a Learning Disability)*

*“Being told about Power of Attorney was particularly important. Have now put in place” (Adult Social Care Team)*

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## Feedback on what the Assessment covered

- 28 Carers (68%) said the Assessment covered everything that was important to them.
  - 10 (25%) were unsure.
  - 3 (7%) said the Assessment didn't cover everything. One person referred to needing to discuss Lasting Power of Attorney. Another focused on how they are going to cope managing their own health problems alongside caring.
  - 12 (29%) said they were given opportunities to say what was going well for them. 13 (32%) were unsure and 16 (39%) said they weren't.
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# Action planning

- 44% of Carers made an action plan as part of their assessment, with a further 34% saying they were unsure and 22% didn't.
- Most Carers who had an action plan found it useful. 17% said it was very useful, 72% said it was useful and 11% said it was OK.

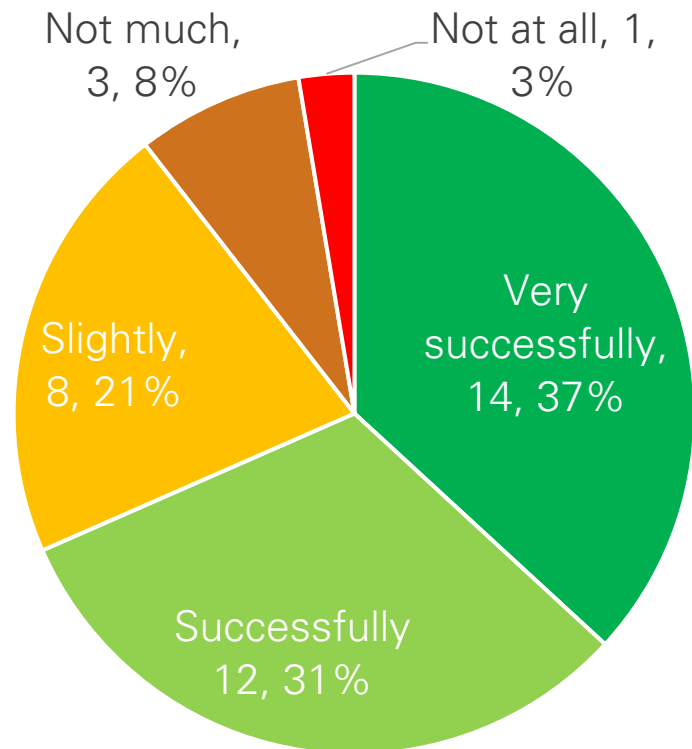
*“Actions confirmed by phone then received letter about direct payment. she was clear about actions over the phone” (Carer Support Worker at the doctor’s surgery)*

*“Thought provoking”  
(Carer Support Worker at the doctor’s surgery)*

*“I felt less guilty at the thought of planning time just for me and [it is] useful to refer to” (Carer did not know which team the Assessor worked for)*

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# Did the assessment help you to achieve your desired outcomes?



*"Hard, challenging journey, but now things are working well and it was good to discuss."* (Carer Support Worker at the doctor's surgery)

*"Put in a claim for benefit, thought more about the future, making a will etc."* (Carer Support Worker at the doctor's surgery)

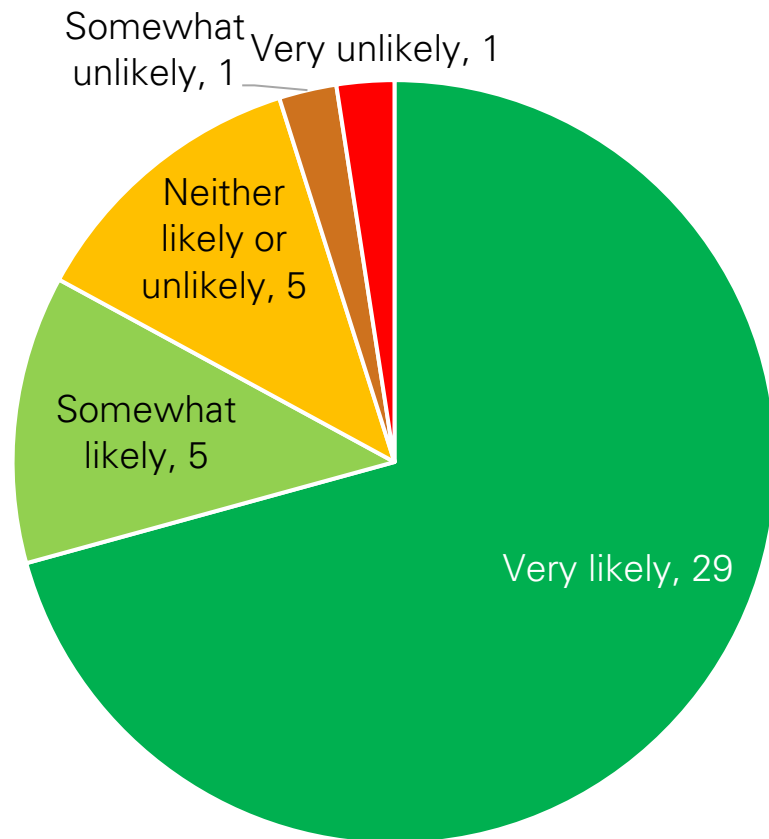
*"Made me realise I can think about myself sometimes and not feel so guilty when I want to run away"* (Mencap – Torbay Family Carers)

*"Very helpful. Put my mind at rest about a few things. Helped me to think of possible outcomes and achieve them"* (Carer Support Worker at the doctor's surgery)

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# How likely would you be to recommend a Carers' Assessment to other Carers?



*"A lot of info, particularly for someone new to being a Carer" (Carers Aid Torbay)*

*"Very helpful and I appreciate the ongoing support" (Working Age Mental Health Team)*

*"A lot of insight as to possible help. So much money unclaimed etc. Also know there may be more help if and when I need it" (Carer Support Worker at the doctor's surgery)*

*"Any information is good. At least I can go from here. I would not have known what / where otherwise. I do not use the internet, no access, no knowledge, and no money for it, but I will talk to someone soon now" (Team unknown)*

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# How could the assessment have been improved?

The majority of responses replied saying the assessment could not have been better (9) or could not think of any improvement (5).

Constructive comments are quoted below:

*“On my own, without my husband I could have spoken more freely and that may have helped. I could not say in front of him that I wanted to talk without him hearing”* (Not sure which team, assessment at home)

*“More time”*  
(Adult Social Care assessment at home)

*“To know about it before it happened. I could have been a bit more prepared then”*  
(Not sure which team)

*“Privacy”* (Other Carer Support Worker, in hospital)

*“To have had the pack that came in an email after the interview before. I would have known what would be covered and would have had time to work out what questions I had”*  
(Adult Social Care assessment at home)

*“Information before and time to think about it”* (Do not know which type of assessor, but assessment took place over the phone)

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# Conclusion

- Carers appreciated the assessment of their needs. 83% would recommend the assessment to another Carer.
- Most Carers said they liked the convenience and privacy of doing the assessment over the phone. Some preferred a face-to-face meeting, but some could not speak openly in front of the person that they care for.
- Most Carers (73%) were happy with the time they had to wait for an assessment. Usually this was no more than 1-3 weeks.
- The assessment met the desired outcomes of most Carers.
- Most Carers said the assessment covered what was important to them. However, many did not have the opportunity to say what was going well for them in their caring role.
- Carers valued an action plan of 'what to do now' as an outcome of their assessment.

## Next steps:

- Carers Services will amend the Carers Health & Wellbeing Checks and prompts for Adult Social Care to ensure assessments explore what is going well for Carers. They will also cover employment, training and education options, and identify whether Carers are willing and able to continue caring.
  - In addition to the above, Adult Social Care need to do clear action plans, and consider Carers' physical and mental health.
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