

## GP Manager Says Long Wait Times 'Not the Case'



Chris Stocks, practice manager at Grenoside Surgery.

A local GP practice manager has said that negative press surrounding GP waiting times is “not the case.”

Chris Stocks, 46, practice manager at Grenoside Surgery believes that perceived weeks-long patient waiting times to see a doctor are unfounded and there has been a shift in attitude for the NHS this year.

“The NHS, every year, focuses on different things and this year’s major theme is access. Papers like the Daily Mail say you can’t get appointments but that’s not the case.

“Last month we had 5,450 appointments available in one practice and they all got filled.”

A study by the Office for National Statistics conducted from 15 to 26 November found 35% of all people found it difficult to make contact with their GP practice.

However, Mr Stocks said since the Covid-19 pandemic, the number of patients seeking appointments for acute illnesses such as coughs and colds has increased dramatically leading to changes in the way patients access care.

Patients at Grenoside Surgery are more concerned about access to the surgery than waiting for appointments, citing disappointment at phone appointments and the lack of face-to-face appointments.



Grenoside Surgery.

Mr Stocks said he often gets patients calling asking why they cannot have same day appointments but he says that this is not often possible due to the busy nature of running a local surgery.

Diane Johnson, 63, said: "Ringing up at 8.30am is often a waste of time as you can't get through and when you do you can't get an appointment anyway. One receptionist told me there are only 14 appointments available in any one day, unless made by a doctor working triage."

In October, Grenoside Surgery averaged just over 175 appointments in a day, a considerable amount for a practice with only 8,000 registered patients which is considered to be below average in patient size.

Not every patient was critical of the practice. Annie Moushtie said: "I like Grenoside Surgery. There can be a bit of a wait on the phones in the morning, but they've usually been able to sort me out really promptly."

A survey from GP Patient Survey found 71% of patients were satisfied with the service they received at Grenoside Surgery.