

# Brief Insights

Perth City Medical Centre worked with Healthcare Improvement Scotland over seven weeks using quality improvement methods to improve access to general practice.

## The challenge

The practice was booking routine appointments two weeks in advance. They offered same-day urgent appointment slots; however, the uptake of these slots varied depending on the day and they were not consistently filled. The practice wanted to offer more routine appointments to allow for flexibility in the booking system.

## Understanding

The practice collected data about patient requests over two days:

- The date and time of each request
- What the patient asked for
- The outcome of the call
  - a. The type of appointment made (routine, urgent, home visit, bloods, etc.), or
  - b. The patient was asked to call back for an appointment another time

# What they found

34%

of patients were able to access routine appointments

57%

of patients were asked to call back because all routine appointments were filled for the following two weeks

# Making a change

The practice changed up to 15 urgent appointments per week to routine only, same day appointments.

# Impact



access

61% of patients were able to access routine appointments.



queue

The number of patients asked to call back decreased by 27%.

# What people said

Reception staff reported that being able to offer more routine appointments made them feel less stressed at work.

GP

“We are limited in the appointment numbers we have, but we did find a little bit of give in the system and it has helped.”

GP

## Next steps

1. The practice plans to offer more routine appointments, including some that can be booked 48 or 72 hours ahead.
2. They are collecting more data to explore how many telephone appointments lead to a face to face appointments.

To start your own access improvement journey, you can join our [Primary Care Access Programme](#), download our [GP access tools](#), or email us for more information at [his.pcpteam@nhs.scot](mailto:his.pcpteam@nhs.scot).

*Thanks to Perth City Medical Practice for working with us to share this learning.*

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