

# Brief Insights

Moray Coast Medical Practice worked with Healthcare Improvement Scotland over eight weeks using quality improvement methods to improve access to general practice.

## The challenge

Due to the lack of available routine appointments, patients with non-urgent requests were being added to the duty team's urgent daily triage list and taking up urgent appointment slots. The practice wanted to reduce their triage list and free up the clinical duty team's time to ensure patients could access the appropriate appointment.

## Understanding

Before changing anything, the practice was supported to gather appointment data over four days. This helped them understand their demand. They collected:

- Date and time of each request.
- What the patient requested (urgent appointment, prescription, fit note).
- What the patient should have been offered.

# What they found

46%

Urgent

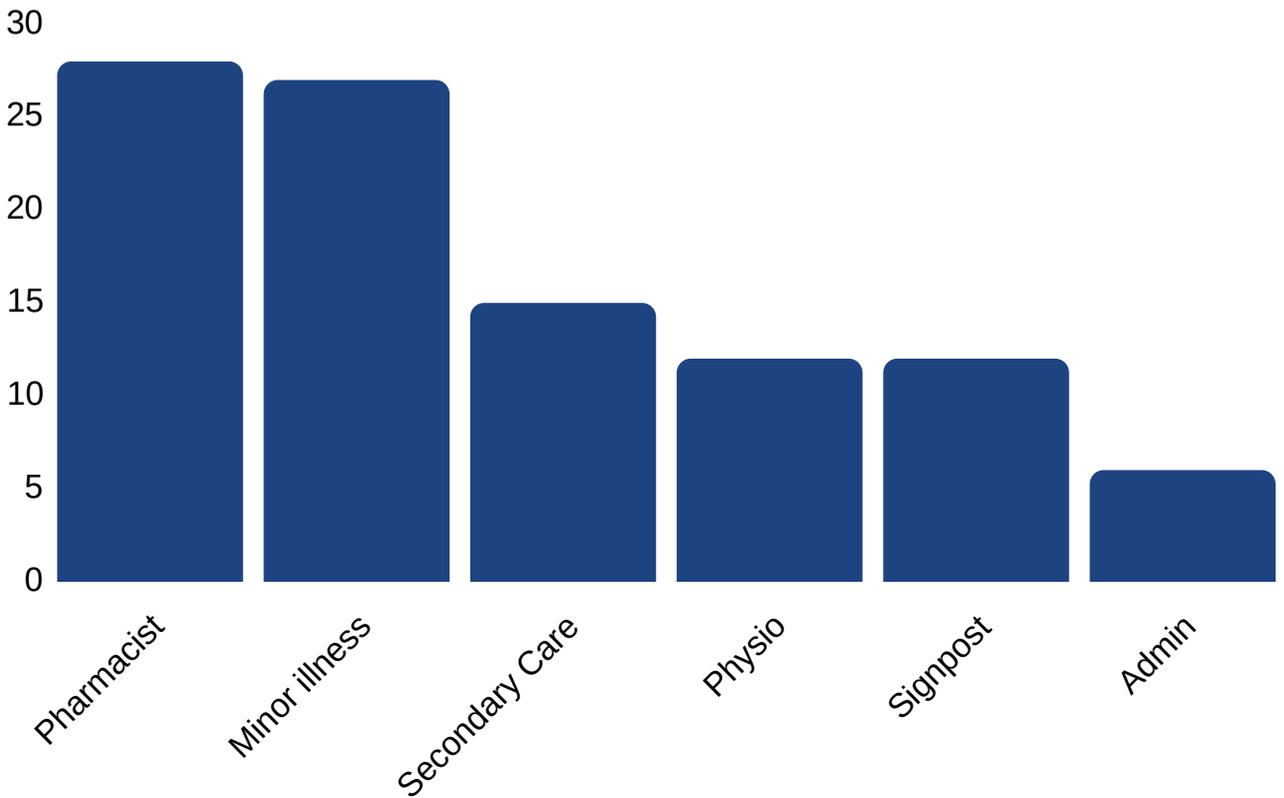
36%

Not urgent but needed to see a GP or Advanced Nurse Practitioner (ANP)

18%

Could have been seen by someone else, freeing up space on the urgent list

## Number of patients who could have been seen by someone else



# Making a change

To remove some patients from the urgent triage list, the practice decided to test a minor illness clinic. Before starting, the ANP made sure it was possible to address one minor illness complaint per patient in a 10-minute appointment slot.

## Impact



capacity

The practice created 15 minor illness appointments per day, or 75 over the week.



demand

In the last week of testing, 62 patients were seen in the clinic instead of using an urgent GP appointment.

## What people said

"Amazing service. Phoned last night, seen this morning, prescription sorted."

-patient

"[It] wasn't what I expected to focus on, but the data analysis brought us to that. That's the bit we would have struggled with...It has been really useful having the [HIS] team direct us on that."

-GP

"Our admin staff love it, they still love it today. They were very much involved in deciding how they could triage patients into that pool."

-practice manager

# Next steps

1. The practice predicted that the clinic would handle 5% of all patient requests. With the addition of more conditions to the minor illness clinic, it may actually address up to 14%.
2. The learning from the programme helped the practice decide to hire another minor illness ANP.
3. The practice now has the tools, skills and knowledge to work through other issues, one at a time.

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*Thanks to Moray Coast Medical Practice for working with us to share this learning.*

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