

Bristol Health Services Plan Research Public Attitudes Survey

Research study for:
BHSP

December 2004
(J1477)

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Introduction

This survey has been undertaken to help assess the impact of BHSP communications on public awareness and attitudes to proposals to reorganise the provision of health services in Bristol, South Gloucestershire and North Somerset.

In total, 654 telephone interviews were conducted amongst a cross section of adults aged 18+ in Bristol, North Somerset and South Gloucestershire.

Fieldwork was undertaken between 1st - 17th November 2004.

Interviews were conducted in the following proportions:

- Bristol 250
- North Somerset 200
- South Gloucestershire 204

After fieldwork, data was re-weighted to reflect the relevant proportions of each of these areas.

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Summary

- ▶ Awareness of the proposed changes in local health care provision is relatively high – 57% spontaneously aware of changes and 87% aware of at least one proposal when these were described to them.
- ▶ Awareness is focussed on hospital provision - with the highest levels of awareness being for plans to build a new hospital on the Frenchay or Southmead sites.
- ▶ When prompted, four out of ten were aware that Bristol General was to close (but this was not reflected in the spontaneous comment, where awareness was negligible).
- ▶ Articles and discussions in the media were the most common communication channels for people having heard about the plans. Almost half had seen or heard advertisements.
- ▶ With the exception of access related concerns, people generally feel the changes will have a positive impact. This is particularly the case for quality of hospital treatment for serious and minor illnesses and children.
- ▶ After being prompted with the specific details of the plans, people's belief that the changes would lead to improvements was reinforced. There was also some improvement in terms of perceptions of access.
- ▶ Residents in South Gloucestershire were the least convinced that the proposed changes would lead to improvements in healthcare in their 'local' area. (However, after having been given details of the plans they were somewhat more positive).
- ▶ When presented with two options for providing for the best health services within limited resources, a large majority (74%) opted for concentrating services into fewer major hospitals with additional community services. This preference was consistent across all the different areas.
- ▶ Frenchay Hospital was the preferred choice for the major new hospital. This sentiment was particularly strong amongst South Gloucestershire residents (reflecting their greater proximity to the site).
- ▶ Reasons given for this preference were mainly access related, with half stating it 'is more accessible' and a third 'closer/ nearer to where I live'.

Communication

Communication - Summary

Communications on the BHSP have been relatively effective. Fifty seven percent of residents were spontaneously aware of some proposed changes, and (when proposals were described) 87% claimed to have heard of at least one of these proposals.

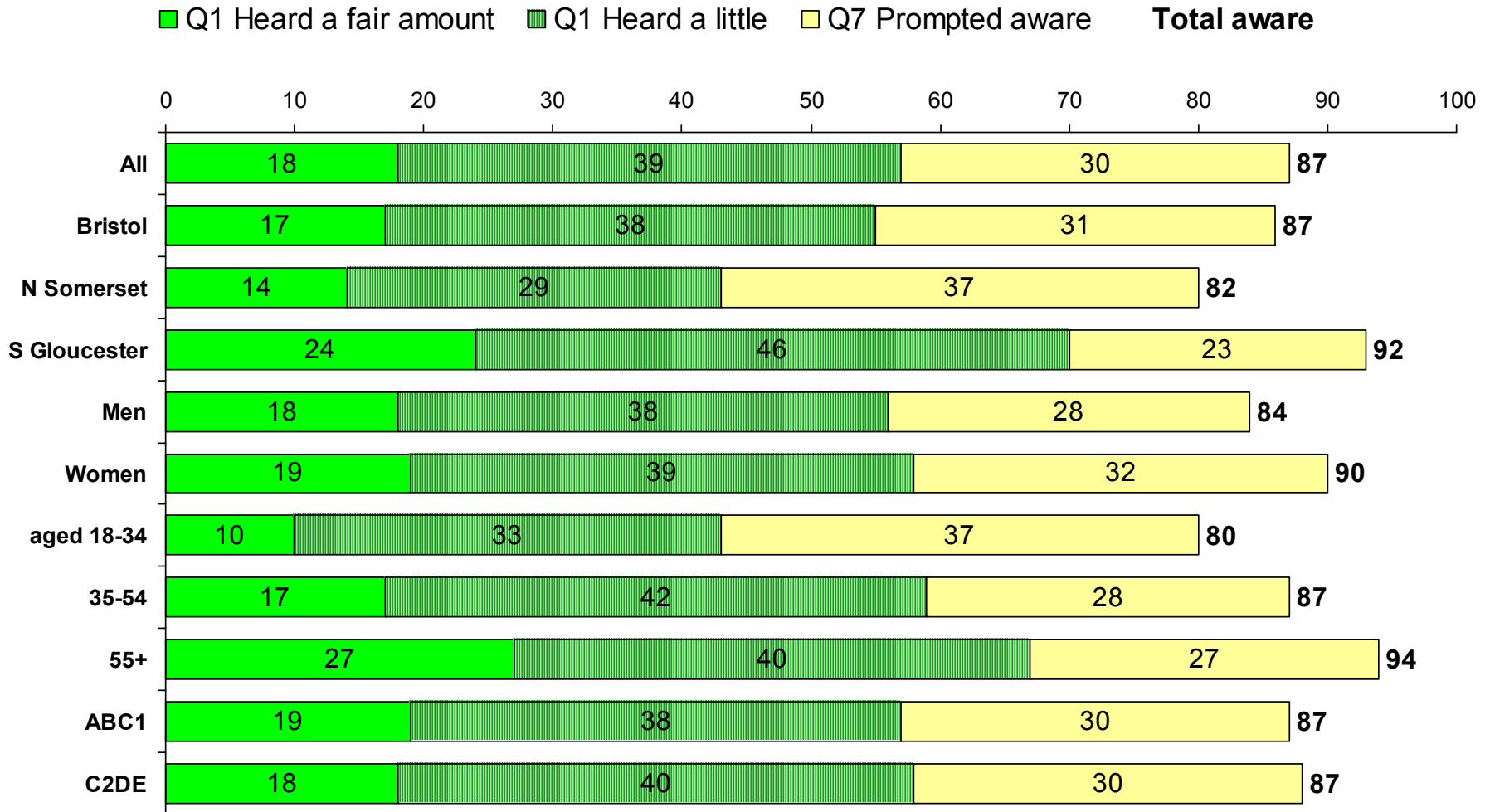
Awareness is markedly higher in South Gloucestershire (70% spontaneous) and at its lowest in North Somerset. Awareness is related to age (the older are more aware). Residents in South Gloucestershire seemed more aware of most aspects of the proposed changes.

Knowledge of the changes is very much focussed on hospital development – particularly the choice between Frenchay and Southmead. Encouragingly, comments tended to refer to mergers to produce bigger or better hospitals, rather than to a downgrading of provision. There were relatively few spontaneous references to community hospitals, children's health, the elderly, or even Bristol General – although 40% claimed to have heard of proposals to close the latter (when prompted). Bristol residents were the most aware of the proposals for this hospital.

In terms of communication channels, people were most likely to have heard of the proposed changes from articles and discussions in the media. Almost half had seen or heard advertisements. Residents in Bristol and South Gloucestershire were more likely to recall advertising on the TV or radio, whilst those in South Gloucestershire were least likely to have seen advertisements in newspapers. Word of mouth (from either friends or NHS professionals) was not a major source of information.

Communication: How much have you heard about proposals?

Q1 There have recently been a number of proposals made to change the way hospital and health services will be provided in Bristol.....How much have you heard about these proposals?
 Q7 I am now going to read out details of some of the changes and I would like you to tell me whether you have heard anything about this aspect of these plans



Base: all respondents

Awareness of proposed changes (prompted)

Q7 I am now going to read out the details of some of the proposed changes and for each I would like you to tell me whether you have heard anything about this aspect of these plans. Have you heard of any plans to

| | TOTAL | BRISTOL | SOMER | GLOUCS |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------|-------|--------|
| Base: All | 654 | 250 | 200 | 204 |
| | % | % | % | % |
| Build new hospital on site of Frenchay/ Southmead | 65 | 62 | 60 | 72 |
| Close Bristol General. Move services to community hospital and BRI | 40 | 45 | 39 | 32 |
| More local community hospitals for outpatients etc | 36 | 37 | 27 | 40 |
| Centralise children's in-patient / specialist services at Royal Hospital | 34 | 31 | 30 | 43 |
| Cossham hospital will close etc | 30 | 31 | 19 | 36 |
| Move elderly care and rehabilitation etc | 20 | 23 | 9 | 25 |
| Centralise ENT / breast surgery etc in single locations | 20 | 20 | 14 | 23 |

Base: all respondents

Awareness of proposed changes (spontaneous)

Q2/Q3 What proposals are you aware of to change the way hospital and health services are provided for Bristol and the surrounding area /What else have you heard about these proposals?

| Base Q2/Q3: | TOTAL | BRISTOL | SOMER | GLOUCS |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| All heard fair amount / little at Q1: | 368 | 138 | 88 | 142 |
| | % | % | % | % |
| Hospital Developments (unspecified) | 52 | 51 | 39 | 59 |
| Any mention of closing / downgrading hospitals (unspecified) | 18 | 17 | 13 | 22 |
| Any mention of building / merging one / new / bigger / better superhospital (unspecified) | 40 | 38 | 32 | 45 |
| Reference to Frenchay AND Southmead | 42 | 42 | 28 | 49 |
| Frenchay and Southmead being merged into one big hospital | 18 | 20 | 15 | 18 |
| Frenchay or Southmead being closed / downgraded | 12 | 12 | 5 | 14 |
| Any reference to Southmead Hospital closing | | | | |
| Southmead Hospital closing / downgrading | 4 | 1 | 1 | 11 |
| Southmead A&E / casualty closing | 4 | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| Any reference to Frenchay Hospital closing | | | | |
| Frenchay Hospital closing / downgrading | 6 | 7 | 3 | 6 |
| Frenchay other changes | 4 | 3 | 6 | 6 |
| Mentions of new cottage or community hospitals | 8 | 11 | 8 | 6 |
| Mentions of changes to children's hospitals / care | 5 | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| Mentions of closing Bristol General Hospital | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |

Base: all spontaneously aware at Q1 (369)

Awareness of proposed changes (spontaneous)

When respondents were asked what proposals they had heard of, typical comments were:

“Merge Frenchay and Southmead to build a super hospital”

“Concentrating on A&E services and the possible change to Frenchay or Southmead hospital services”

“Want to have a number of cottage hospitals, centralise children’s services into one place”

“Doing away with two hospitals, Frenchay and Southmead, and making another one on one of those sites”

“Possibly combining the children paediatric facilities at one site”

“They’re considering closing Southmead Casualty”

“Planning to change Frenchay and Southmead hospitals and have more local community hospitals”

“Closing Frenchay or Southmead”

“New hospital and possibly getting rid of Frenchay or Southmead hospital and having community hospitals in places like Yate, a town called Thornbury closing a ward there as well ”

“I have heard about plans to renovate and maybe rebuild the hospital in the south Bristol area.”

Sources of information about BHSP

Q4 Thinking about the proposed changes, have you seen or heard anything about these from

| | TOTAL | BRISTOL | SOMER | GLOUCS |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Base: All heard a fair amount / a little at Q1 | 369 | 139 | 88 | 142 |
| | % | % | % | % |
| ANY ARTICLES / DISCUSSIONS | 67 | 65 | 61 | 72 |
| Articles in newspapers | 46 | 48 | 44 | 45 |
| Discussions / features on the TV or radio | 42 | 37 | 42 | 48 |
| ANY ADVERTISEMENTS | 48 | 53 | 43 | 44 |
| Advertisements on the TV or radio | 35 | 36 | 27 | 37 |
| Advertisements in newspapers | 25 | 30 | 26 | 17 |
| ANY WORD OF MOUTH | 27 | 27 | 30 | 26 |
| Friends and family | 15 | 15 | 14 | 16 |
| Doctors or other medical professionals who work in NHS | 9 | 8 | 13 | 8 |
| Public meetings | 5 | 6 | 7 | 4 |
| Voluntary and local community groups | 5 | 4 | 5 | 5 |
| ANY LEAFLETS/INFORMATION STANDS | 16 | 14 | 17 | 20 |
| Leaflets/newsletters delivered to your door | 14 | 11 | 16 | 18 |
| Information in supermarkets / public | 3 | 4 | 1 | 2 |
| None / Don't know | | | | |

Perceived Impact of Changes

Perceived Impact of Changes

Reactions to the proposed changes were largely positive.

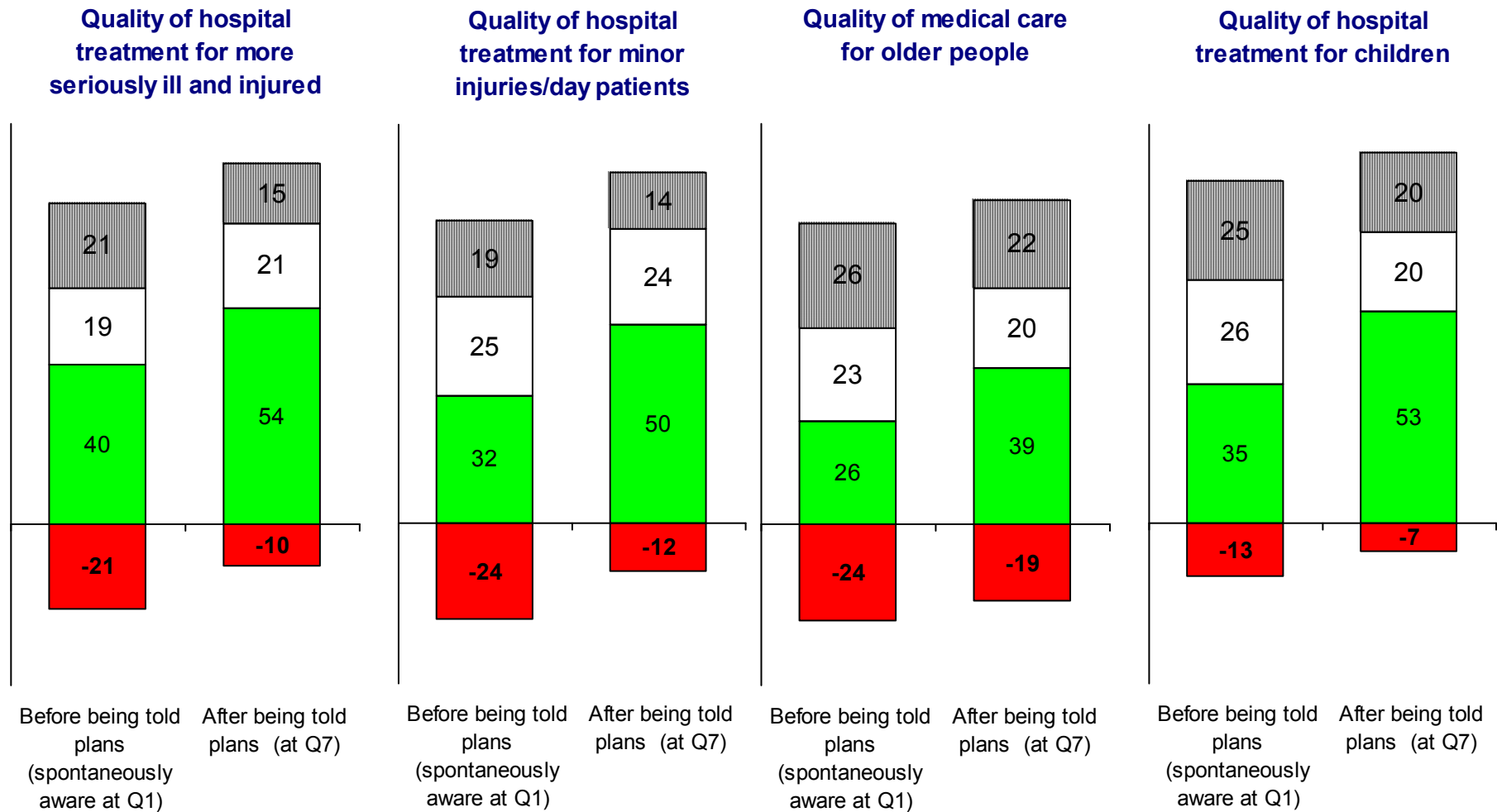
People generally felt that the proposed plans will lead to improvements in healthcare. The greatest improvements were anticipated for hospital treatment (for serious and minor illnesses and children's healthcare). However, people were a little worried about the impact of the changes on transport and access to treatment facilities.

After having been given the specific details of the plans, people's belief that the changes would lead to improvements was reinforced. There was also a positive shift regarding the issue of access (particularly in the case of access to local healthcare facilities).

Residents in South Gloucestershire were the least convinced that the proposed changes would lead to improvements in healthcare in their 'local' area. However, after having been given details of the plans they became more positive in this regard (although still less so than other residents interviewed).

Impact: Shift in Attitudes before / after being given details

Q5 From what you've heard, do you think the proposed changes will result in better or worse or make no difference to....?
 Q8 If the plans we have just talked about were implemented, can you tell me whether you think they would result in....?

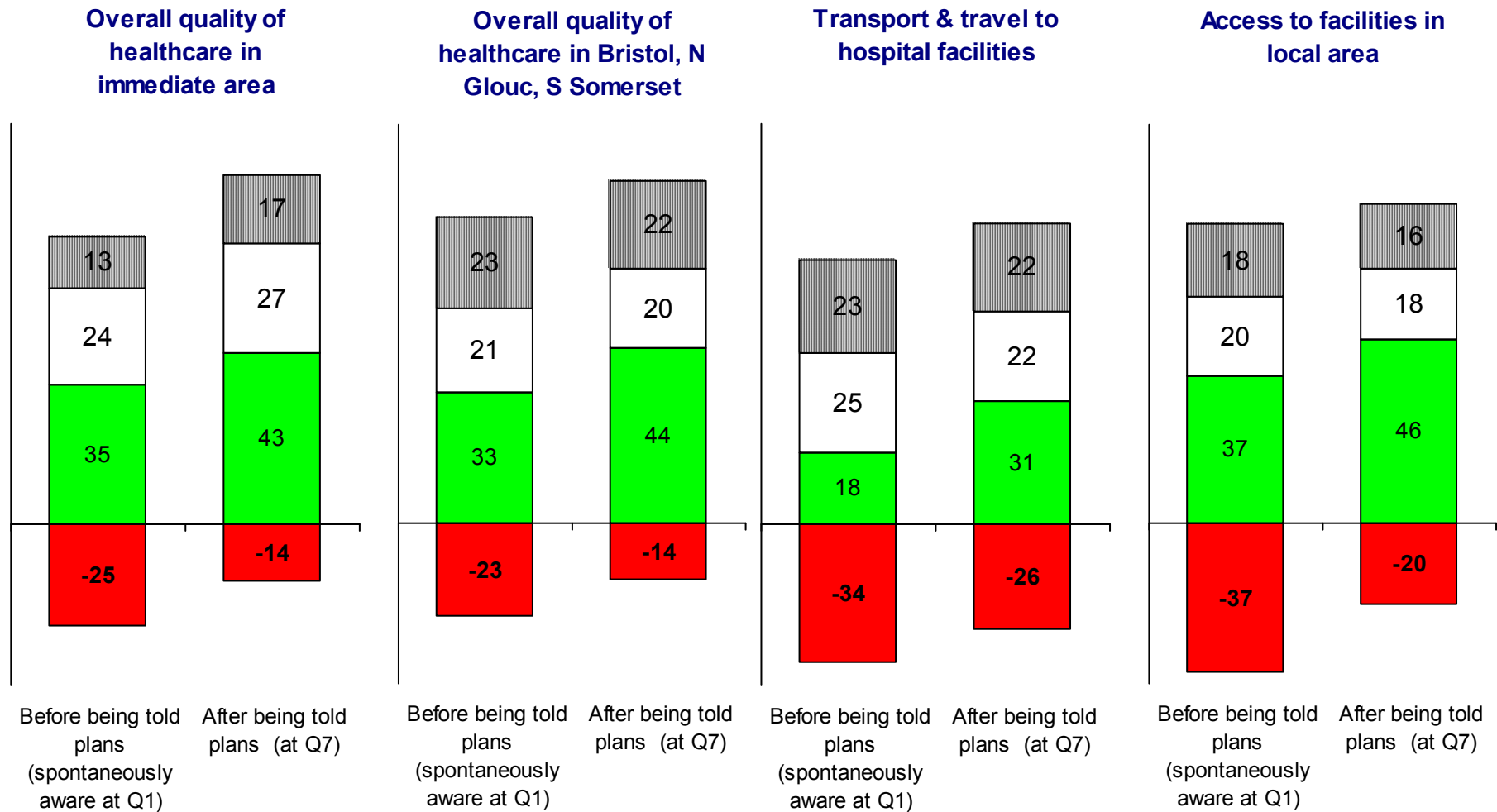


Base: all spontaneously aware Q1 or all respondents (Q7)

■ Better ■ Worse □ No different ■ Don't know

Impact: Shift in Attitudes before / after being given details

Q5 From what you've heard, do you think the proposed changes will result in better or worse or make no difference to....?
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Base: all spontaneously aware Q1 or all respondents (Q7)

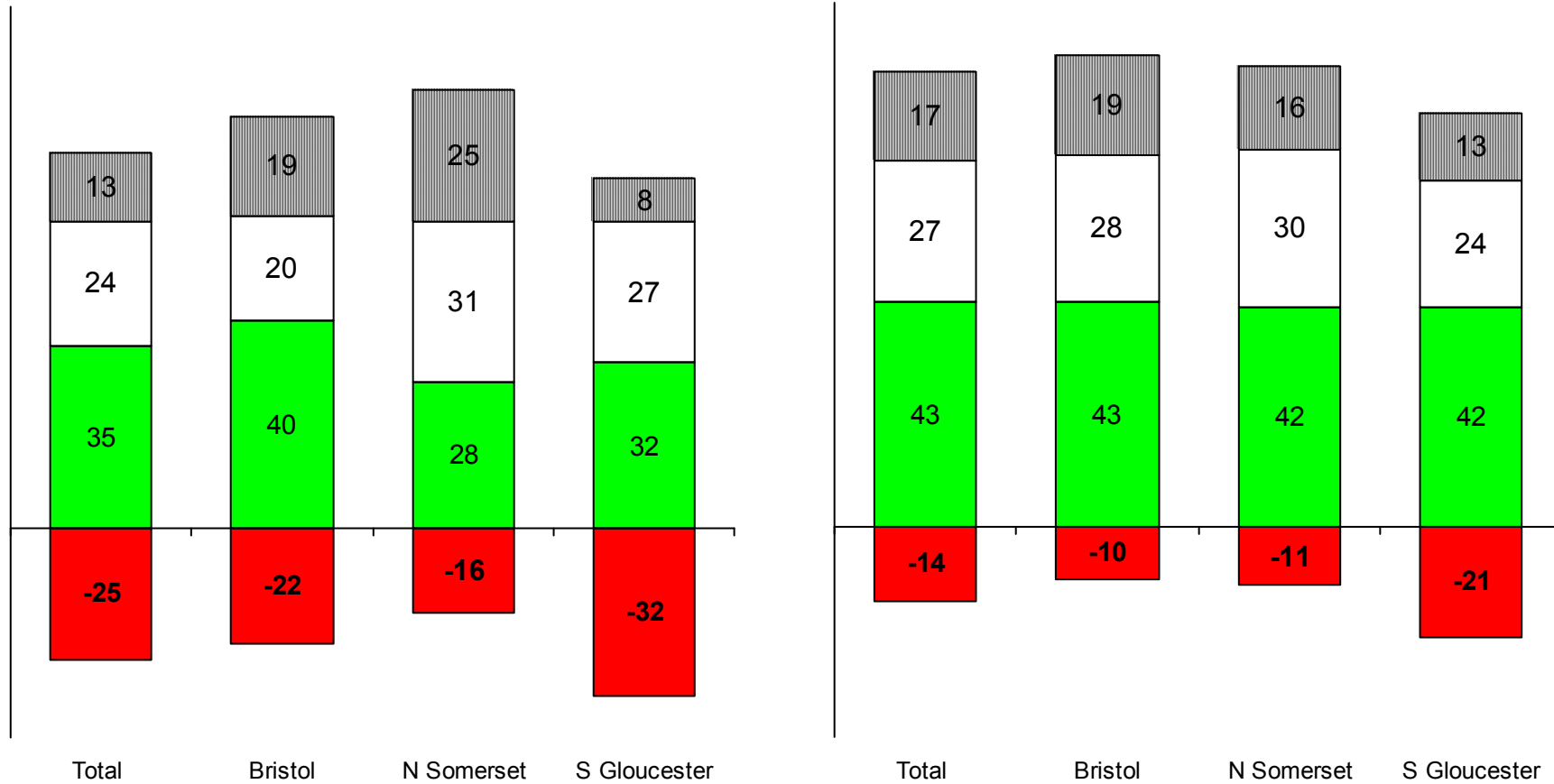
■ Better ■ Worse □ No different ■ Don't know

Views on Impact on overall quality of health care in local area

Q5 From what you've heard, do you think the proposed changes will result in better or worse or make no difference to....?
 Q8 If the plans we have just talked about were implemented, can you tell me whether you think they would result in....?

Before being told plans (spontaneously aware at Q1: 369)

After being told plans (at Q7: 654)



Base: all spontaneously aware Q1 or all respondents (Q7)

■ Better ■ Worse □ No different ■ Don't know

Preferences of Different Options

Preferences of Different Options - Summary

People were presented with two choices for providing the best health services with the money available. These were:

- *“Firstly to concentrate treatment of serious illnesses and injuries into fewer major hospitals. Alongside this, the treatment of outpatients and minor illnesses will be provided closer to people’s homes, through additional community hospitals and healthcare centres.*
- *Alternatively, they could retain all the existing major hospitals. This would mean that there would be less money to provide as many local community hospitals and healthcare centres”*

Responses were clearly in favour of the 1st option – 74% would prefer to concentrate treatment of serious illnesses and injuries into fewer major hospitals and treat more minor illnesses and injuries through community hospitals and healthcare centres. People in North Somerset were slightly stronger in their endorsement of this option.

People were then asked to think specifically about which site they would prefer the major new hospital to be built on. Almost half (46%) preferred the Frenchay site, whilst three out of ten (29%) opted for Southmead. However, a quarter were not able to express a preference. The strongest preference for Frenchay was evident amongst those living in South Gloucestershire reflecting its geographical position in North Bristol.

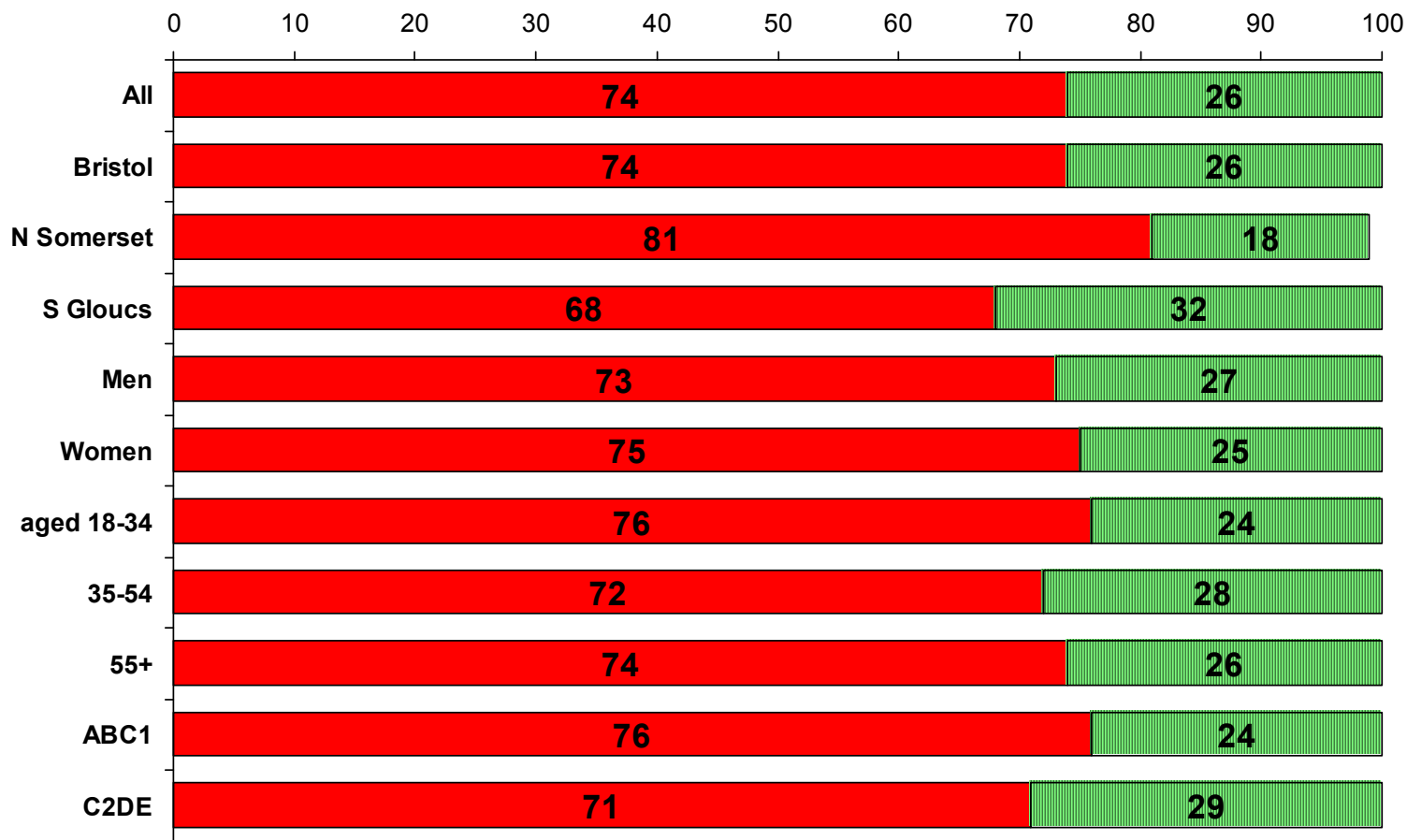
There was very little difference among men and women, the different ages and social classes in terms of their preference of the site for the new hospital. However, those with children aged between 11 and 15 were slightly more likely to favour Frenchay and those with children between 5 and 10 opted for Southmead.

Access and proximity to their home are by far the most important issues for people’s choice of a particular hospital site.

Preferences of different options

Q6 ... In broadest terms, the managers of your local health service have two choices Which of these two options do you feel they should adopt?

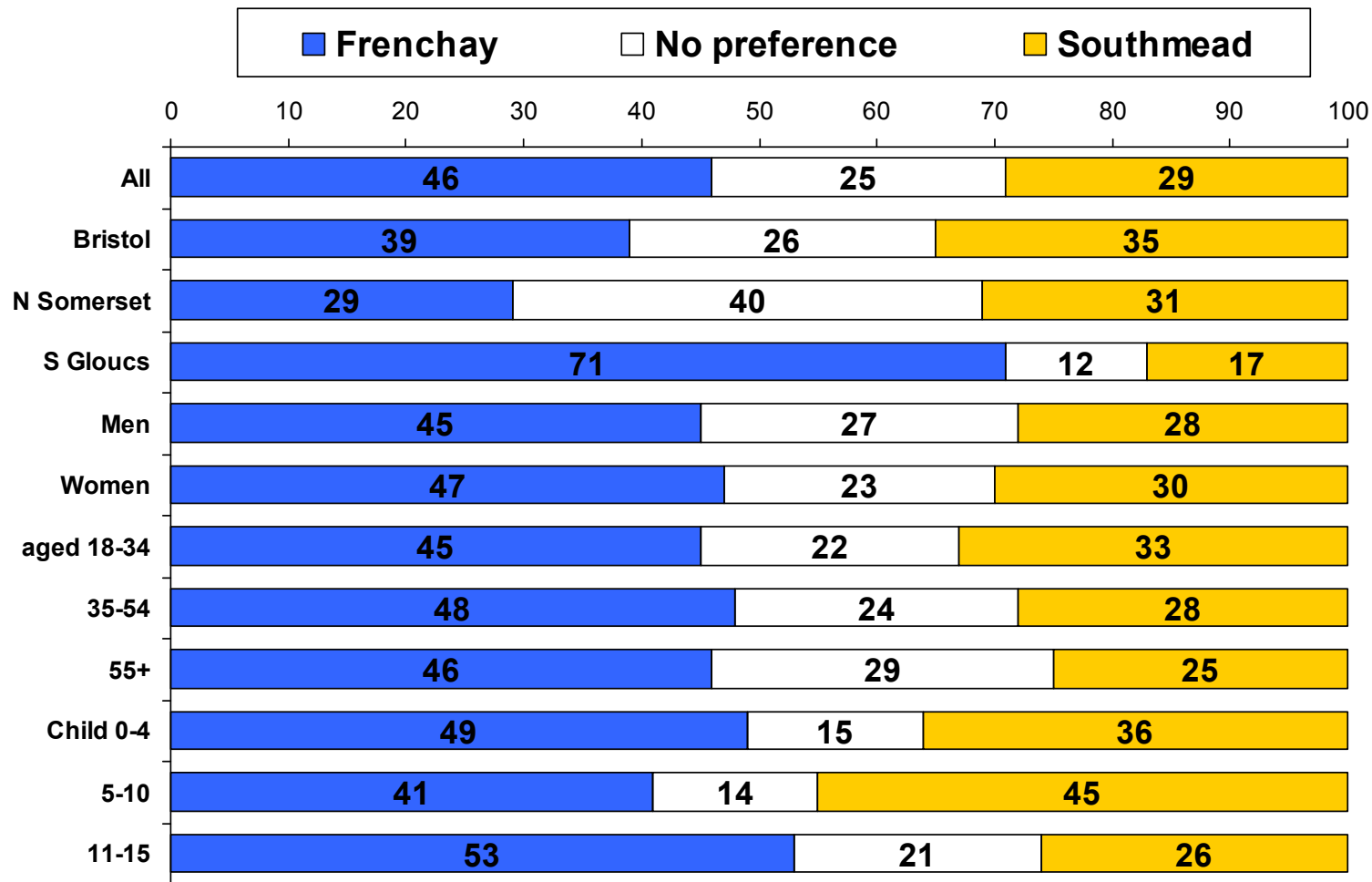
- **Option A (concentrate in specialists + community hospitals)**
- **Option B (retain existing hospitals, so less for local community hospitals)**



Base: all respondents

Frenchay v Southmead

Q9 Thinking specifically about the plans to build a major new hospital, would you prefer this new hospital to be built on the site of the existing Frenchay hospital or on the Southmead hospital site?



Base: all respondents

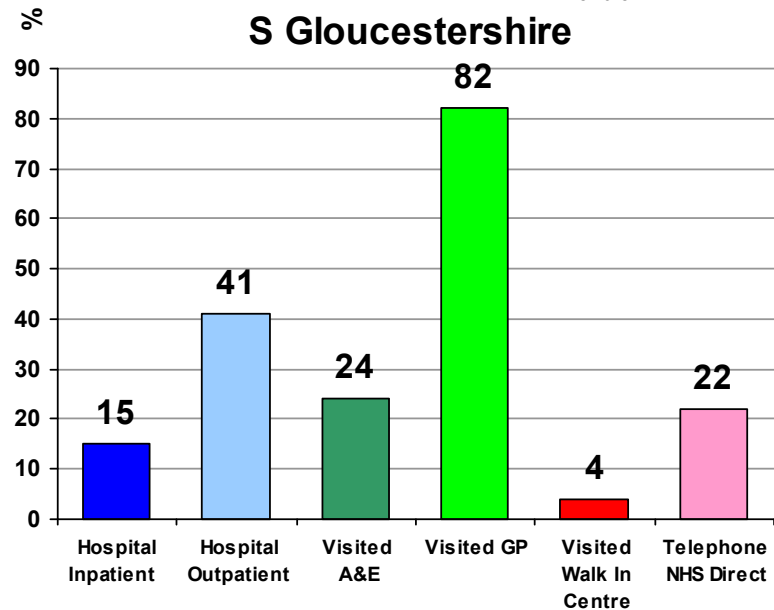
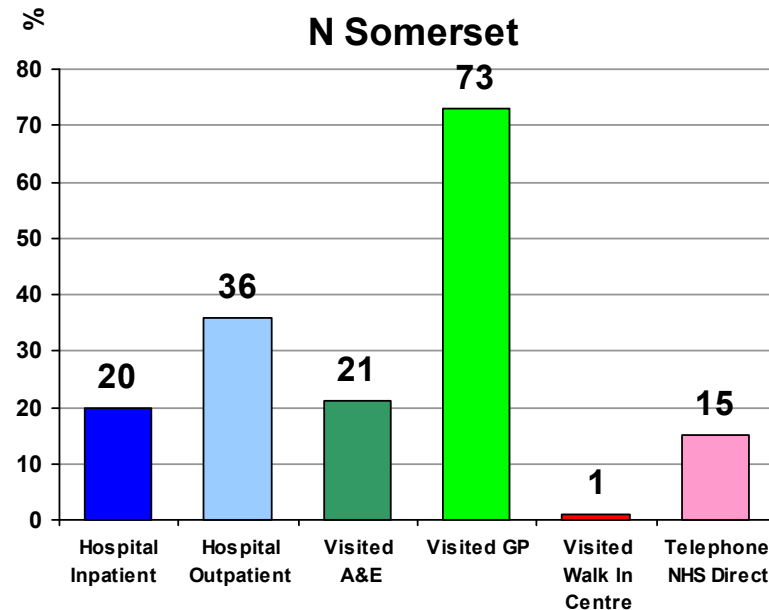
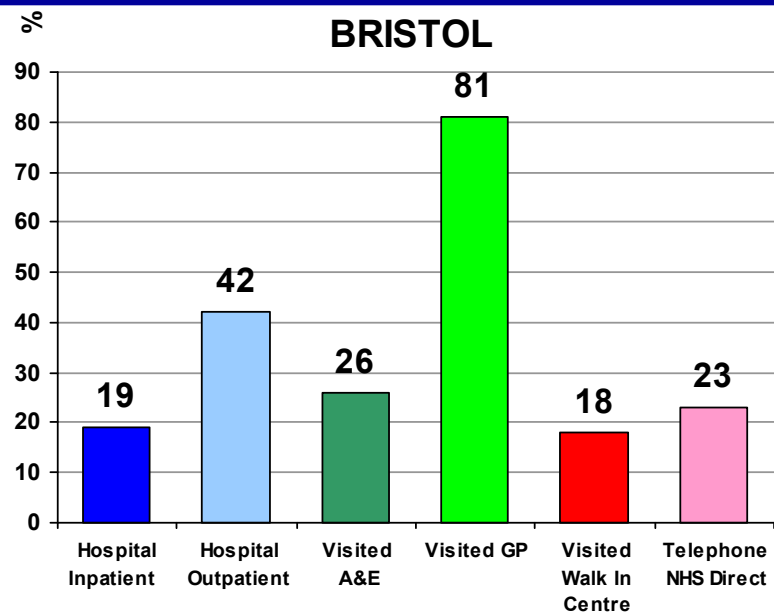
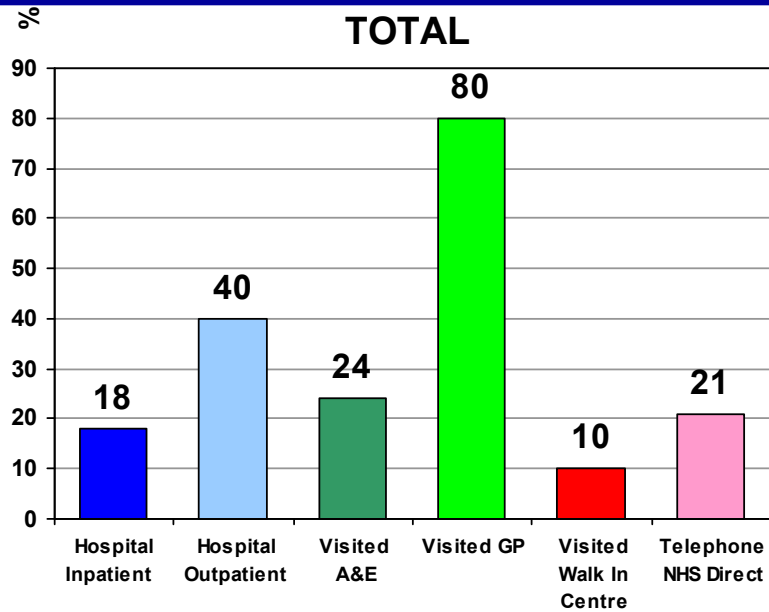
Reasons for preferences for site of new hospital

Q10 Why would you prefer it to be built there?.

| Q10 | Total | Frenchay | Southmead |
|-----------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Base (all who have a preference): | 484 | 300 | 184 |
| | % | % | % |
| ACCESS RELATED (NET) | 84 | 83 | 85 |
| More accessible / easier to get to | 44 | 50 | 35 |
| Closer / nearer to where I live | 40 | 34 | 50 |
| Better / easier to park | 5 | 7 | 2 |
| Buses are more regular | 4 | 2 | 6 |
| More central to Bristol | 4 | 2 | 8 |
| Less traffic congestion | 3 | 2 | 3 |
| OTHER (NET) | 31 | 39 | 17 |
| It's bigger / larger site | 11 | 14 | 6 |
| It's a better / very good hospital | 10 | 11 | 8 |
| It's nicer area / pleasant surroundings | 8 | 11 | 2 |
| Out of town / city | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| Don't know | 1 | 1 | 0 |

Awareness & Usage

NHS Usage (past 12 months)



Base: all respondents