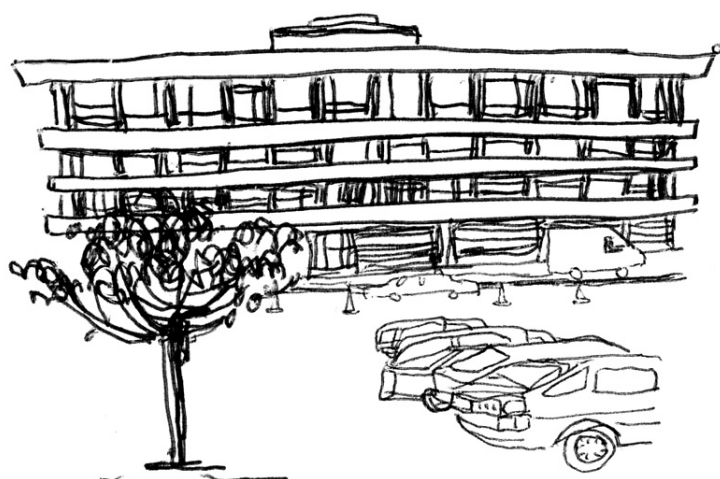


The Lanarkshire HIV, AIDS and Hepatitis Centre Patient Survey 2008



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INTRODUCTION

The needs of people living with HIV are changing. Advances in treatment mean that people living with the condition can now enjoy longer and healthier lives. With this however, comes a new set of challenges in securing the best possible health and well-being outcomes for individuals and developing a framework in which HIV is understood as a long term manageable condition.

In order to develop high quality services in this environment, providers have to be responsive to not only clinical demands but also to the wider range of social care needs of patients. The impact of factors such as HIV stigma and discrimination and the barriers these create also mean that accessibility and confidentiality within services remain paramount for people living with HIV.

In Lanarkshire there are 238 people who are diagnosed with HIV, (Health Protection Scotland 2008). A third of those living with HIV in the UK are unaware that they have the virus, meaning that this number is likely to increase. The majority of those that are tested and/or receive treatment in Lanarkshire attend the Lanarkshire HIV, AIDS and Hepatitis Centre. Clinics operate on a Tuesday and Thursday all day (9am to 6.30pm) and a Wednesday morning (9.45am to 12pm). Most of the patients who attend the LHAHC reside in Lanarkshire but the clinic can be accessed by people out with the NHS board area.

For additional support, patients are often referred to other health services within Lanarkshire, (GUM for example). Patients also seek support, advice or alternative therapies from the voluntary sector such as Terrence Higgins Trust Scotland (THT Scotland), Princess Royal Trust (PRT) and the Haven Centre.

An audit undertaken in 2004 by Liz McCann and Dr N Kennedy found levels of satisfaction among patients to be high. In response to this audit, a designated waiting area was provided for patients.

Similarly this patient survey aims to find out the level of satisfaction amongst patients accessing the clinic. The questionnaire contained specific questions on transport, the new waiting area, the main treatment rooms and the staff in the clinic. Questions were also included on the patients' use of other departments and health services, including the voluntary sector. The findings from this survey will also help identify any unmet support needs of those living with HIV in Lanarkshire.

The survey was carried out jointly by LHAHC and THT Scotland.

METHOD

A questionnaire was drafted by Liz McCann and Katrina McCourt and was then submitted to Katrina Mitchell (THT Scotland) for formatting. Questionnaires were distributed to service users at LHAHC via the HIV and Hepatitis C clinics or by post from June 2008 until mid-August 2008.

Most of the questions required a yes / no answer or a rating on a numerical scale (1 to 10). It was split into 7 different sections; travel, consultants, nurses and counselling staff, rooms, additional services, voluntary services, pharmacy and information. Spaces for comments were also made available at the end of each section. For an example of the questionnaire please contact Katrina McCourt using the details provided.

The surveys were returned to Liz McCann. Katrina McCourt collated the results and analysed the data using Microsoft Excel.

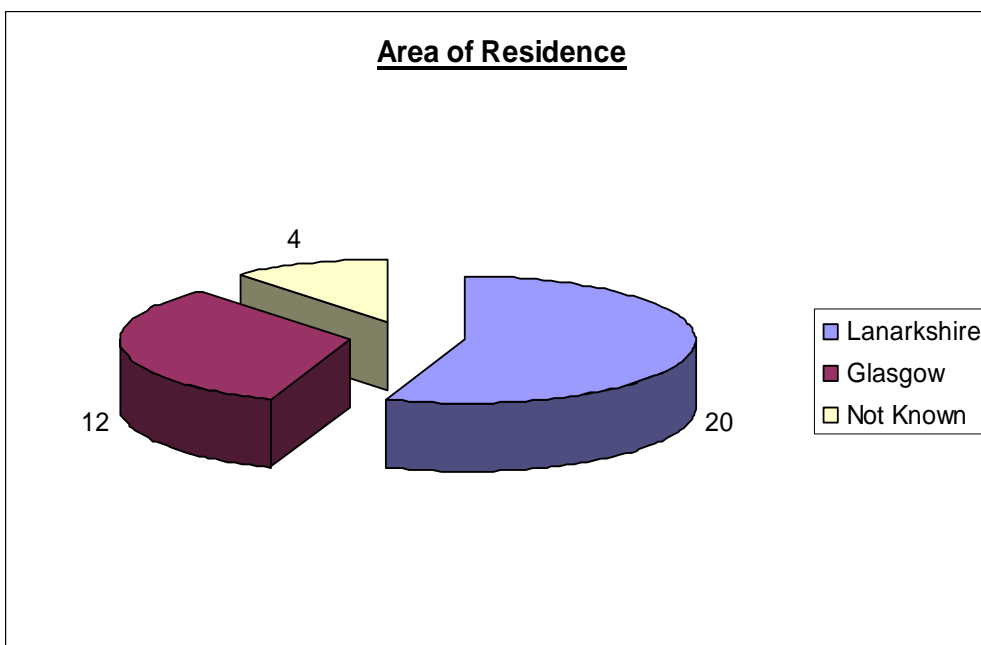
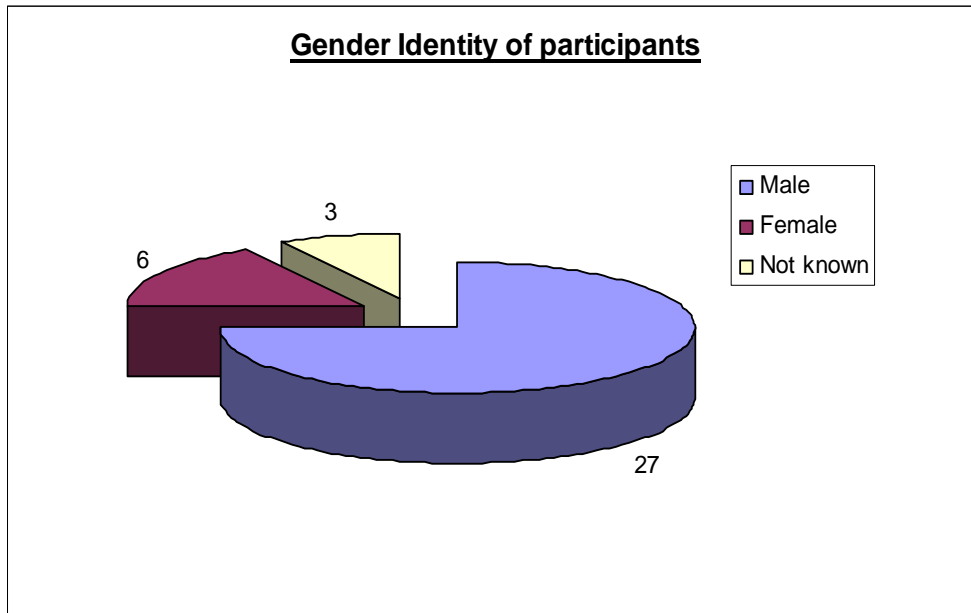
RESULTS

A total of 86 questionnaires were handed out and 36 returned. The breakdown of the results is as shown below. Demographic statistics for the participants are also provided.

The results are presented section by section in either tabular or graphical form and a selection of participants' comments has been included. A number of these sections, namely 4 and 5, were not completed by all of the participants. However the feedback that they did provide has been analysed.

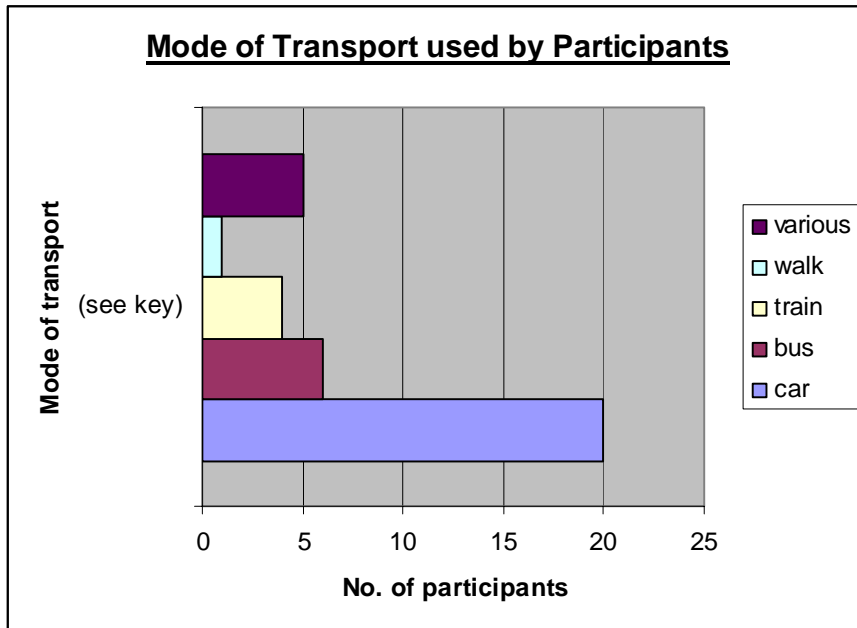
Summaries of these results can be found in the discussion section.

Demographic Statistics



Section 1: Travel

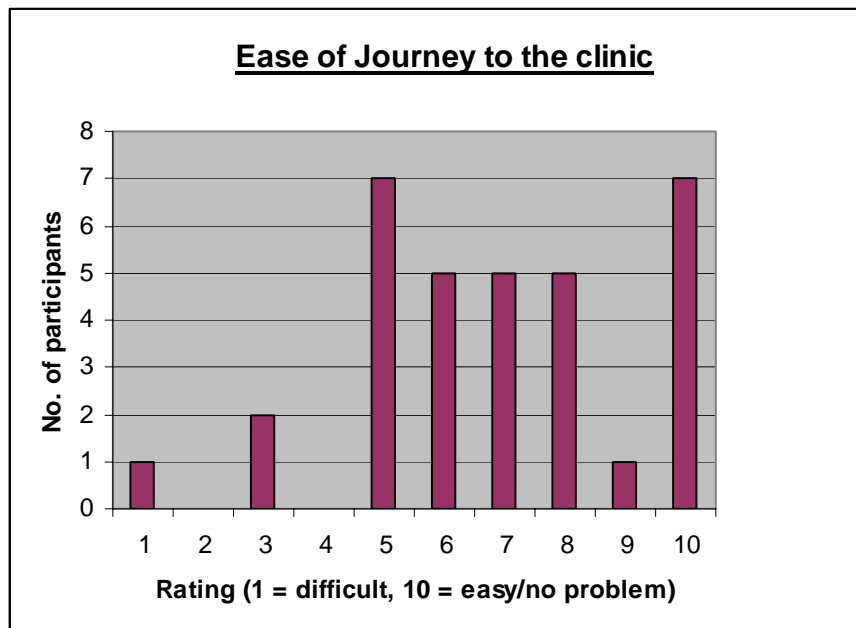
Do you travel by: car/ bus/ train/ walk/ other



If you travel by car, do you have a problem with parking?

	Always	Never	Sometimes
No. of participants	15	0	6

Please rate the ease of your journey to get to the clinic (33 responses):

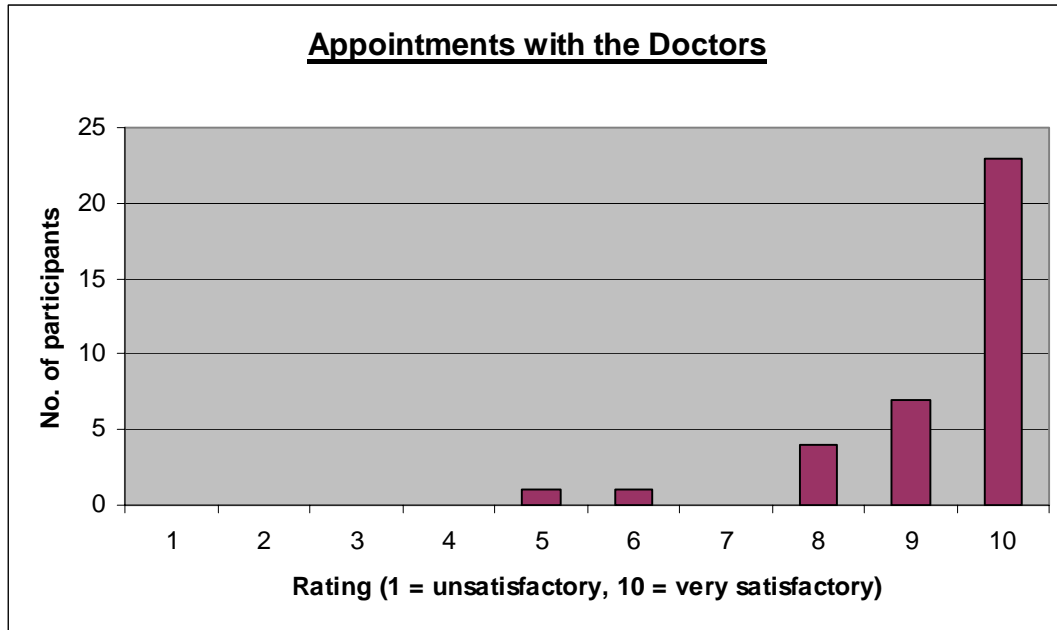


Patients' comments on their journey to the clinic:

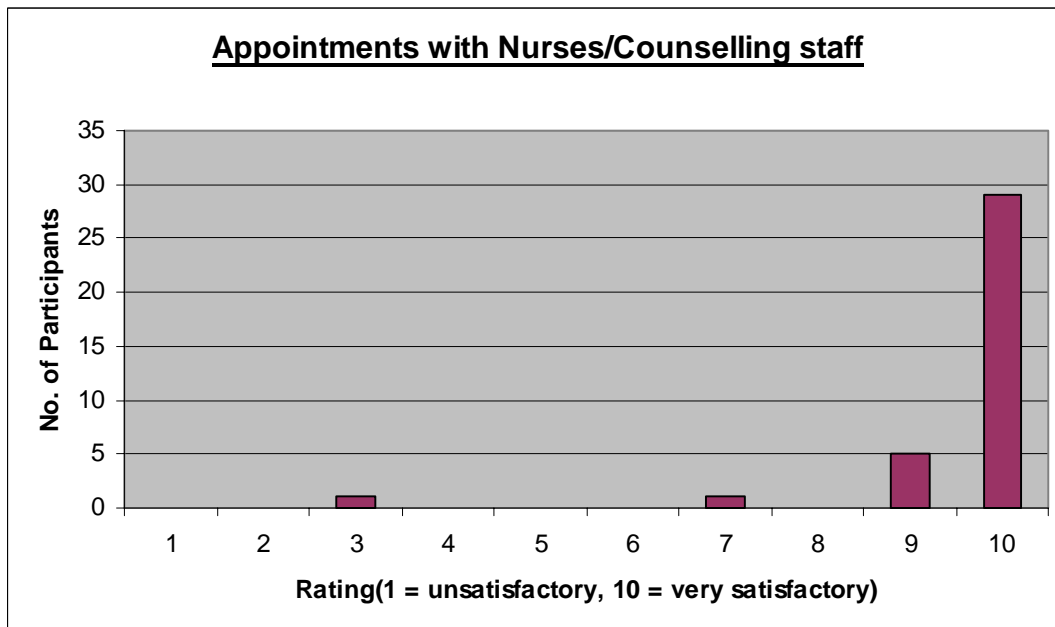
- *"Never any parking spaces"*
- *"No problem"*
- *"As I have difficulty travelling because of another illness, the hospital provides transport for me. I am very grateful as it has taken a lot of pressure off me."*
- *"I come from East Kilbride which is 2 hours via bus.....)"*
- *"Journey is very long"*
- *"Parking is very difficult"*
- *"I have a disability badge that helps with parking"*
- *"Depending on the time of day, parking is very difficult"*
- *"Journey requires two bus/train rides each way or use of a car- it is always difficult to find a parking space"*
- *"Parking is always impossible when attending the clinic"*
- *"long"*
- *"Parking a nightmare"*

Section 2: Consultants, Nurses and Counselling staff

How satisfied are you with your appointments with the doctors?



How satisfied are you with your appointments with the nurses and counselling staff?



Have you seen any staff out with the doctors' clinic?

	Yes	No
No. of participants	27	9

If so did you have to wait for an appointment?

	Yes	No
No. of participants	6	30

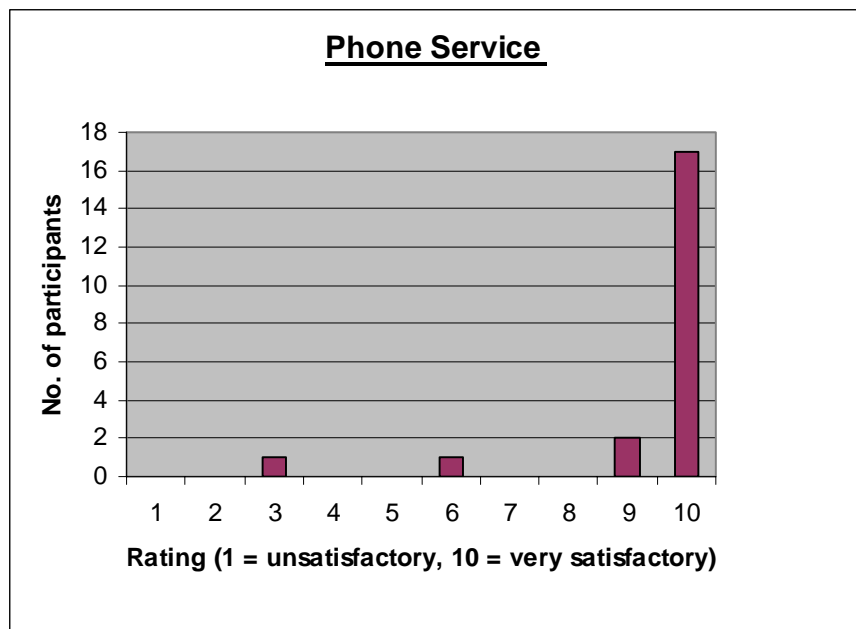
If yes (6 people), how long did you have to wait?

Of the 6 answers given, responses ranged from 5 mins to 2 days.

Have you used the phone service?

	Yes	No
No. of participants	21	15

If yes, do you think the phone service was satisfactory?



Patients' comments on appointments and staff at the clinic:

- "Someone always available to help"
- "I'm grateful to all staff for helping me and how pleasant they make my visit to the hospital"
- "Extremely helpful and pleasant"
- "Nurses or secretaries always available to speak to"
- "The staff always make me feel at ease"
- "A terrific group of people who provide an excellent service"
- "Clinic staff always very helpful and make you feel very welcome"
- "Great"
- "Not happy with waiting time especially when booked an appointment in advance"

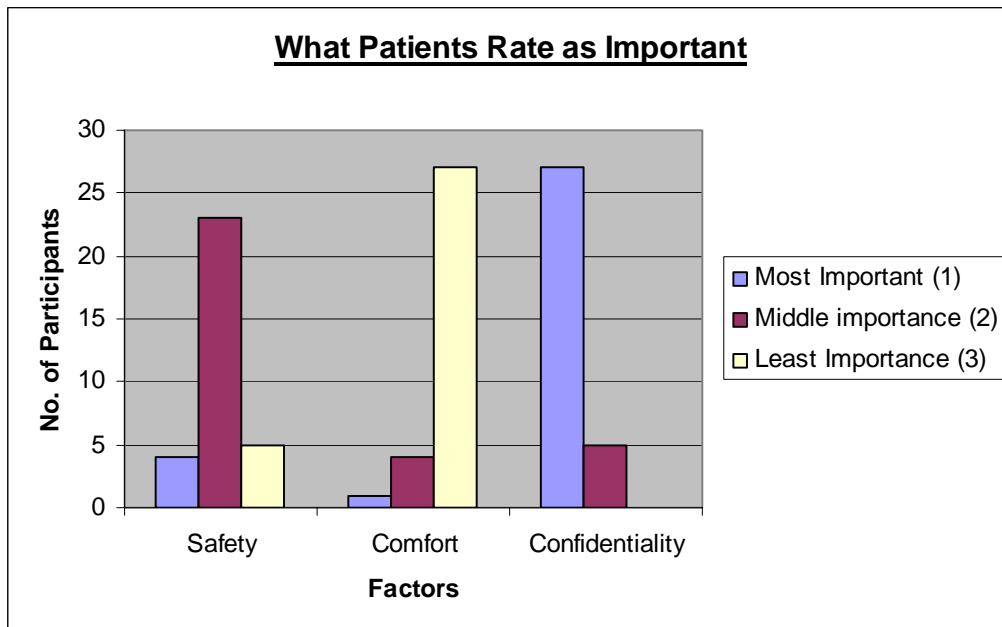
Section 3: Rooms

Overall do you feel that the premises are clean and adequately maintained?

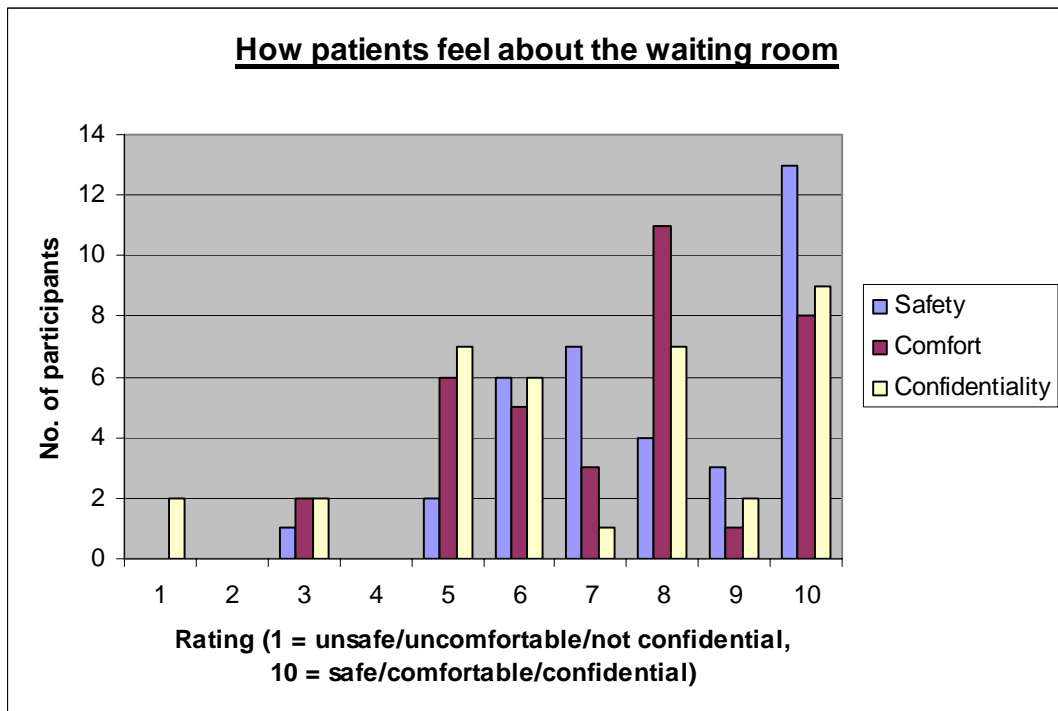
	Yes	No	No Response
No. of participants	33	1	2

Please rate the following in terms of importance (1 is most important, 2 middle importance, 3 least important):

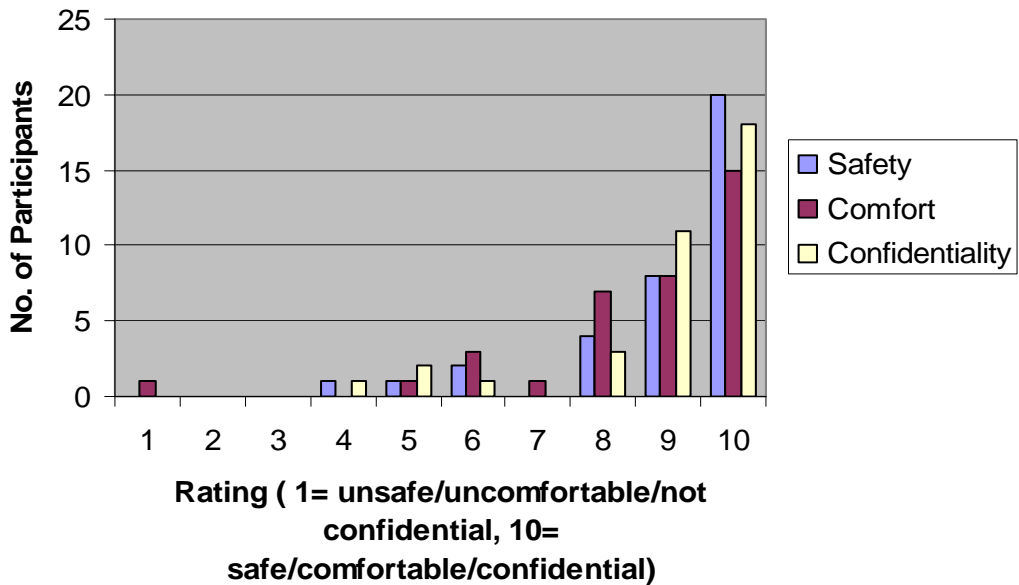
safety/ comfort/ confidentiality



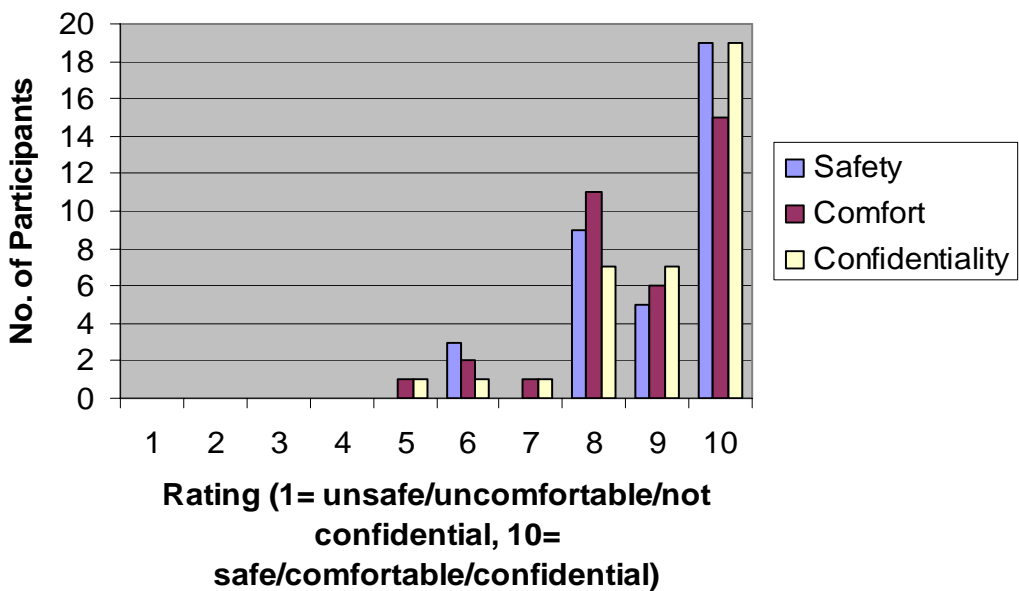
Patients were asked to rate how they felt in terms of (safety, comfort and confidentiality) when using the waiting, counselling and treatment rooms. Their ratings (of 1 to 10 for each factor) are displayed in the following graphs:



How patients feel about the main counselling rooms



How patients feel about the clinic treatment rooms



Two additional comments were provided by participants about rooms they had used at the clinic:

- "Sometimes awkward"

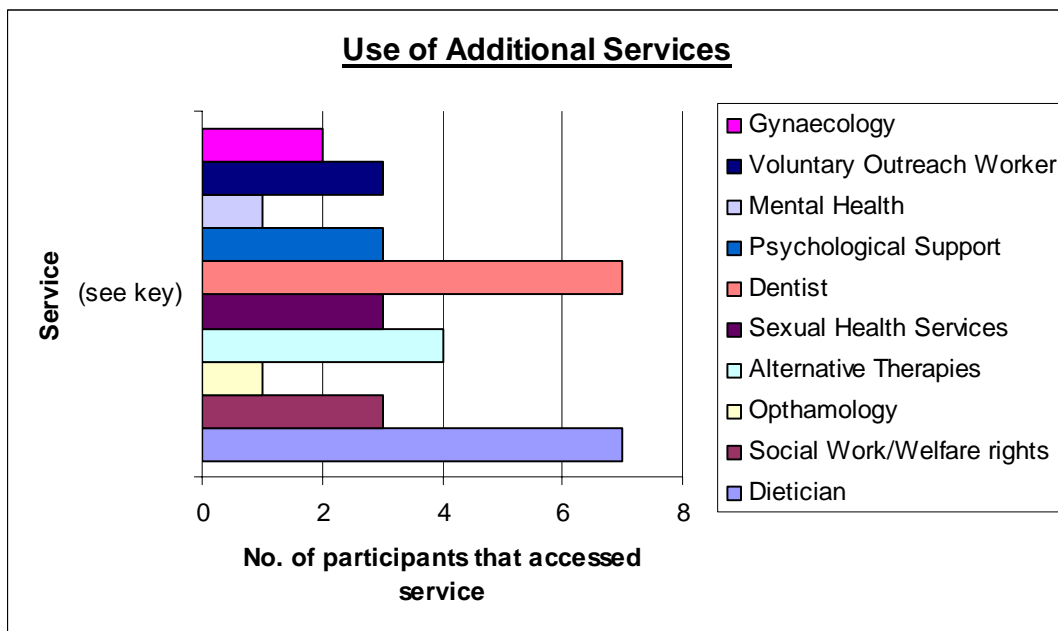
- "All the rooms I have been in are adequate and comfortable"

Section 4: Additional Services

14 of the participants stated that they had used additional services. Of these, 10 had accessed more than one service.

14 services were listed in the survey and participants had accessed 10 of these. The remaining 4 services (dermatology, neurology, oncology and maternity) were not accessed by any of the participants.

The frequency of access to services that people had used is highlighted in the graph below:



14 participants answered the question, **have you had any difficulty in accessing any of these services?**

	Yes	No	No Response
No. of participants	1	11	3

Participants' comments about additional services include:

- *"I've never felt the need to use them but I would if I needed to"*
- *"Not used any of the other services in the 8 years I've been seeing the clinic"*

Section 5: Voluntary Services

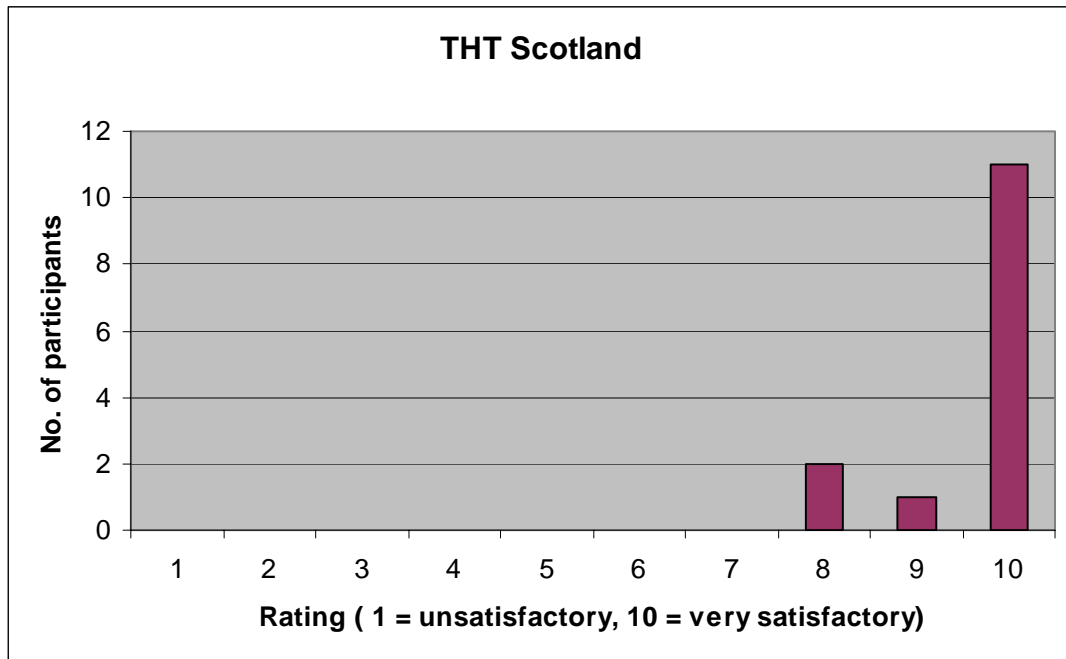
Are you aware of the following organisations and the services that they provide?

Voluntary Organisation	Yes	No	No Response
THT Scotland	17	7	12
Princess Royal Trust	12	12	12
The Haven	14	10	12

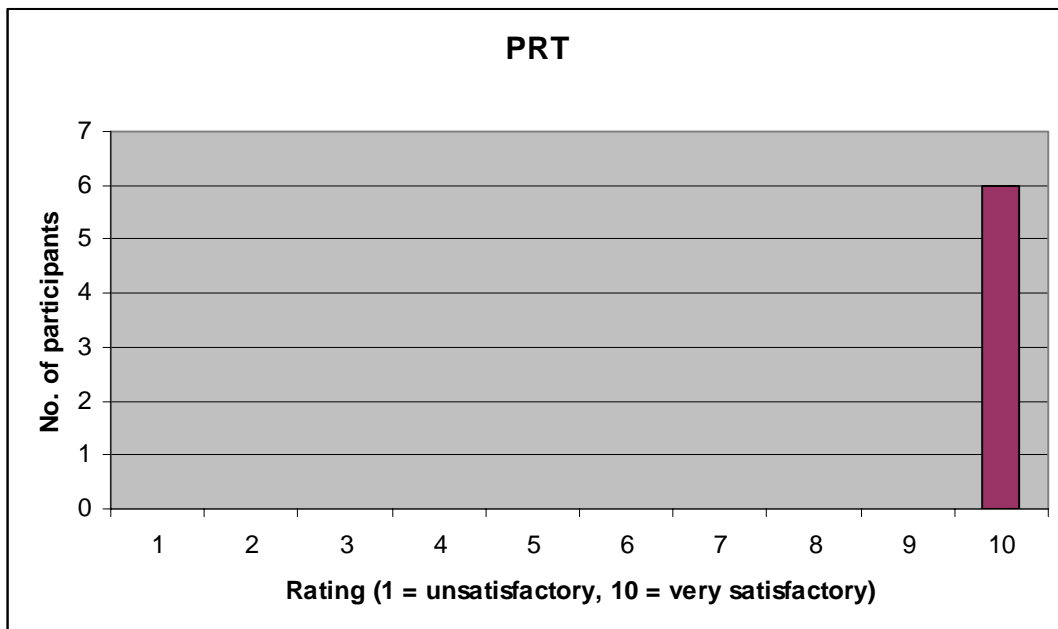
Which services have you used by the voluntary sector?

Voluntary Organisation	Services used by Participants
THT Scotland	Positive men's support group Outreach worker (one to one support) Welfare rights service General advice and support Buddy Service Weekend Retreat (Pitlochry 2007)
Princess Royal Trust	Alternative therapies <i>Including massage</i>
The Haven	Alternative therapies <i>Including sports massage, reiki, aromatherapy and reflexology</i> Venue for support group

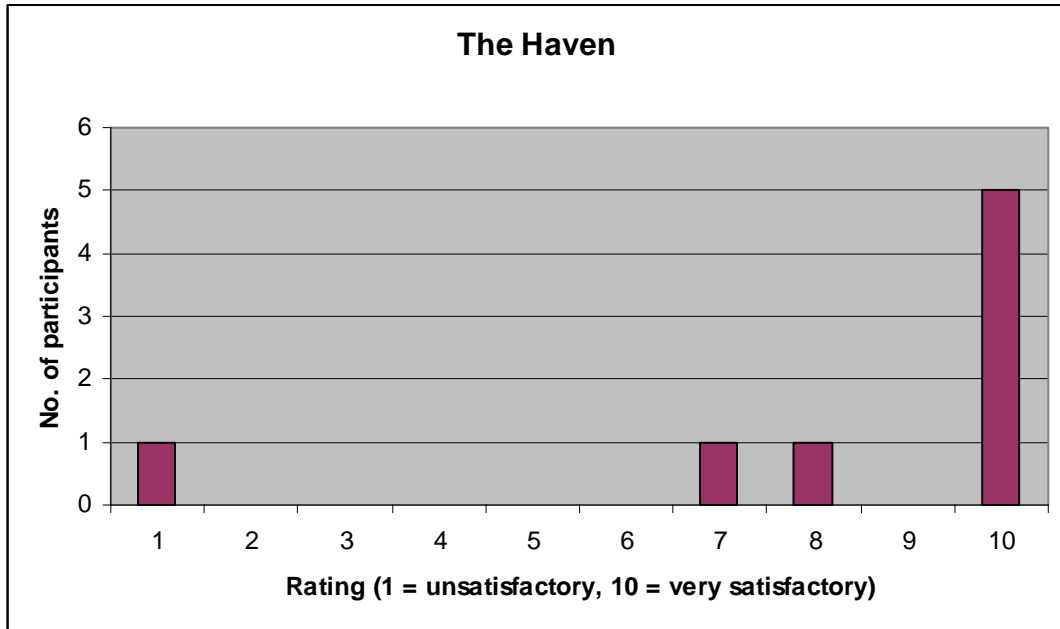
How satisfied were you with the service provided by THT Scotland? (14 responses)



How satisfied were you with the service provided by the Princess Royal Trust? (6 responses)



How satisfied were you with the services provided by the Haven? (8 responses)



Would you like to know more about the services that these organisations provide?

	Yes	No	No Response
No. of participants	5	10	21

Are you at present going to a support group?

	Yes	No	No Response
No. of participants	6	13	17

If no, is this something that you would consider?

	Yes	No	No Response
No. of participants	4	5	4

If yes would you prefer this to be a same sex group? (positive men's group / positive women's group)

	Yes	No	Possibly
No. of participants	9	3	1

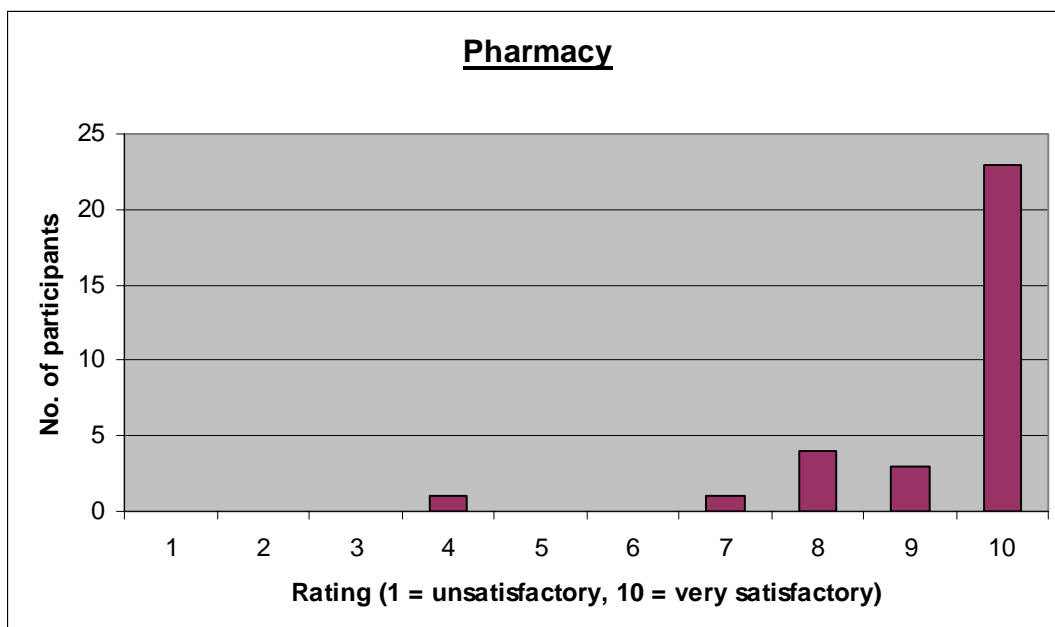
Participants' comments about the voluntary services:

- "Depends (if would use service) if it were taken from a female angle, ie problems pertinent to my sex"
- "It's great to meet in safe circumstances and place"
- "I've not yet used the PRT or the Haven but will do so before long"
- "I attend Princess Royal Trust and the Haven for holistic therapies which are great and help me a great deal"
- "The Haven is very hard to get suitable appointments"

Section 6: Pharmacy

A total of 32 out of the 36 participants that completed the questionnaire use the pharmacy service.

How satisfied are you with the service that the pharmacy provides?



Have you discussed your treatment with a specialist pharmacist?

	Yes	No	No response
No. of participants	23	8	1

Do you feel that you have been given sufficient information regarding your medication?

	Yes	No	No response
No. of participants	29	1	2

Participants' comments about the pharmacy service:

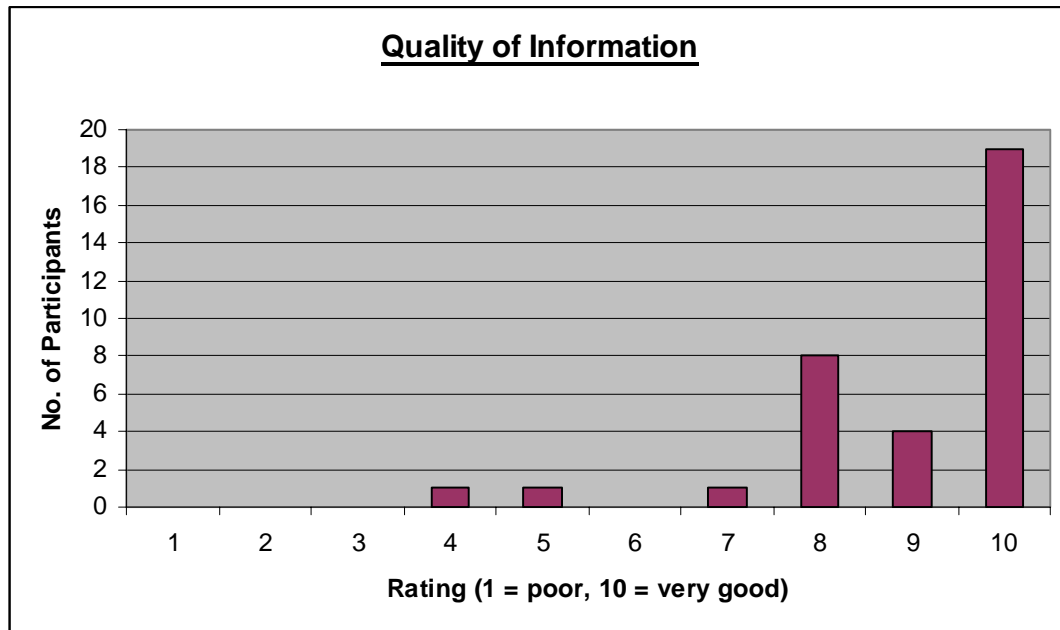
- *"I've found anyone I've had to be very helpful and it's run very well"*
- *"Long waiting time- often"*
- *"(Staff) are really nice"*
- *"Waiting time sometimes too long"*
- *"The pharmacy service at the hospital is great, very approachable and easy to talk to"*
- *"It's always good and reassuring to talk about drug regimes"*

Section 7: Information

Do you receive adequate information about the clinic and your treatment?

	Yes	No	No Answer
No. of participants	33	1	2

How do you feel about the quality of information resources that are available to you?
(34 responses)



Are these available in different formats and/or languages if you require them?

	Yes	No	Don't Know	No Answer
No. of participants	2	0	9	25

Additional comments left by the participants:

- "I would like to give thanks to reception staff for arranging all transport and appointments"
- "I find the waiting room claustrophobic but I am otherwise fine"
- "Been coming to the clinic for years. Pleased with the improvements although I feel weight and OBS should be taken before seeing consultant"
- "Staff always friendly, helpful and attentive, interested in your progress... directing you to doctors when they think you need extra medication. I cannot complain, I have seen the progress that can be made"
- "Since moving to Monklands I am happier, as there is more communication and support from good doctors, receptionists and nurses"
- "The service is friendly and welcoming. It seems that the staff know all patients by their first names"
- "Staff are brill"

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Travel

The mode of transport that is used by most patients is car. The majority of these patients do not have an issue with their journey to the clinic but have encountered problems with parking when they get there. This is reflected in their written comments.

For those that use public transport, the train proves to be less problematic than using the bus which can often be a long journey and in some cases requires two buses. However, this may be due to the fact that Lanarkshire covers a large geographical area.

Consultants, Nurses and Counselling staff

Participants' satisfaction levels with the appointments for both the doctors and nurses/counselling staff were very high, this was also evident in the written comments which were very positive.

Most patients indicated that they had seen staff outwith a doctor's clinic without having to wait a long time for an appointment. The purpose of this question was to find out how soon participants were able to get an appointment and not how long they had to wait once they got there. However, it is worth noting that participants may have been confused about this question because answers ranged between five minutes and two days.

Over half of the patients stated that they had used the phone service, which also received high levels of satisfaction.

Rooms

Overall, the bulk of participants felt that the premises were clean and adequately maintained.

Patients were asked to reveal what factor was most important to them when accessing the clinic, out of safety, comfort and confidentiality. This was in order to gain a better understanding of how patients feel when using the rooms at the clinic. It was clearly indicated that confidentiality was most important, safety next and then comfort.

With regards to the counselling and main treatment rooms, most patients do feel that they are confidential. Also, that they are safe and comfortable within them. There are mixed views about the waiting room, although this may be due to patients feeling more exposed in this area. However, it was noted that the situation has improved.

Additional Services

This section was poorly answered with less than half of the participants completing it. This could be a consequence of patients not accessing these services or that the questionnaire was too long.

The dentist and dietician were accessed the most from those that completed this section. The majority of these patients had used more than one of the services and stated that they had no difficulty in accessing them.

Voluntary Services

Parts of this section were also left uncompleted. A number of participants were aware of the organisations but had not used any of the services.

Satisfaction levels were high for THT Scotland, but there were too few replies for the other organisations to make a proper assessment. However, comments were positive made from those who had used them.

Pharmacy

The levels of satisfaction from the patients that use the pharmacy service are high. The majority indicated that they are pleased with the service and provided a number of comments to reflect this. However, there were some complaints about the waiting times.

Information

Patients stated that they do receive adequate information about the clinic and their treatment. Also, that the quality of the information available is very good.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The overall satisfaction levels from LHAHC patients of the current HIV and Hepatitis C services appear to be positive. There are high satisfaction levels with the clinic staff, pharmacy service and information resources in particular. As the needs of people living with HIV and Hepatitis C are changing, they do require more support and up to date information about their condition, which the clinic clearly provides.

One of the main issues for service users relates to their journey to the clinic. Parking is a problem for nearly all of those who come by car. It can often be a long and difficult journey for those patients that use the train and/or bus. This may be a consequence of the size of Lanarkshire and the standard of the public transport services available.

Confidentiality has been identified as a significant issue while using the rooms at the clinic. Although patients do feel that their confidentiality is preserved most of the time, it is worthwhile to note how important this factor is to patients. Therefore it must be considered in any developments that take place within the clinic premises.

With regards to the voluntary sector, awareness levels were high for THT Scotland. As this section was not completed by all of the participants, there is now scope to work with the clinic in order to raise awareness and inform patients of what these organisations can provide. This could be done through a poster/leaflet campaign and interaction with the patients themselves. A further assessment could then be done to evaluate these services.

Overall, the survey provided some interesting insights into patients' experiences of the clinic. The questionnaire format worked well although response rates may have been better if it was shorter and distributed over a longer period of time.

Contact Details

If you have any questions about this report or require further information please contact Katrina McCourt at the THT Scotland Glasgow office on 0141 332 3838 or via email at katrina.mccourt@tht.org.uk

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THT Scotland

References

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Monklands Hospital drawing by Alison Mitchell

