

## Clinical commissioning groups: Supporting improvement in general practice?

### Survey of CCG member practices - summary of findings

This survey was conducted between February and March 2013, as part of an ongoing research programme being conducted by The King's Fund and Nuffield Trust. The research is exploring the evolution of clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) in six case study sites in England between 2012 and 2015.

The summary presented here is designed to accompany the report *Clinical commissioning groups: Supporting improvement in general practice?*

The full report can be downloaded from the websites of The King's Fund and Nuffield Trust.

#### Characteristics of survey respondents

An online survey was sent to all GP practices in each of the six case study sites participating in the research, and promoted using CCG internal distribution lists and intranet systems. A total of 232 responses were received. The method of circulation means that it is not possible to determine a precise response rate relative to the number of individuals receiving the survey, but it is possible to calculate that across our six sites, responses were received from approximately 20 per cent of all GPs, and a similar proportion of practice managers.

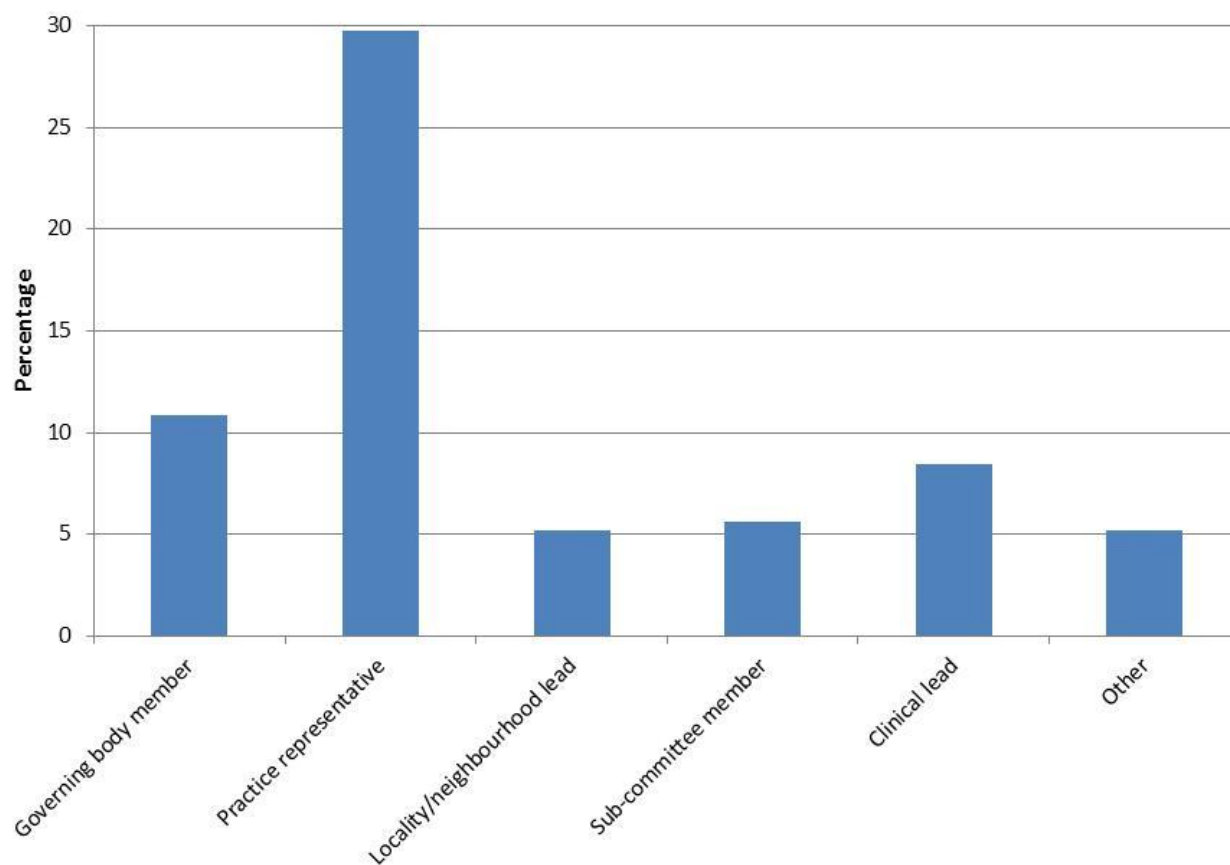
Responses received per site ranged from 14 to 73, in part reflecting variation in CCG size. In most sites 30–40 responses were received. The numbers of different professional groups responding to the survey are listed in table A1.

**Table A1** Professional roles of respondents

	Number of respondents (all sites)	% of all respondents	% range between sites
GP principal	149	65	48 – 85
Salaried GP	16	7	3 – 19
Practice manager	47	21	0 – 44
Other/ no response to question	20	9	0 – 33
<b>Total</b>	<b>232</b>		

Just over half of respondents (52 per cent) had taken on some form of formal responsibility within the CCG, most commonly acting as a practice representative or as a clinical lead for a specific clinical area. The percentage of the total sample in different roles is shown in figure A1 (omitting those who skipped the question, taken as 'no formal responsibility').

**Figure A1** Roles taken on by respondents with formal responsibilities within the CCG (Percentage of all respondents to the survey, n=232)



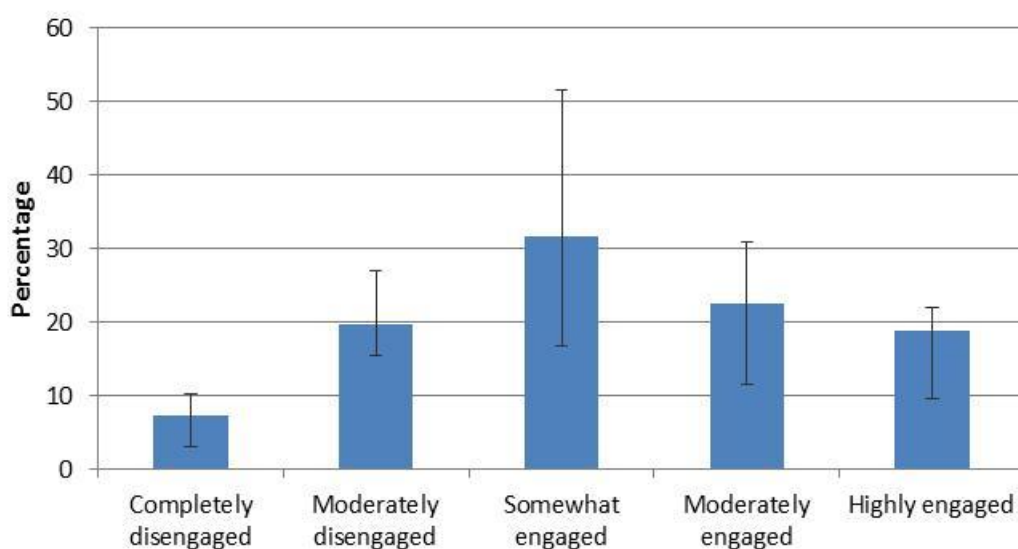
Overall, 58 per cent of respondents had previously been actively involved in clinical commissioning (38 per cent of all respondents in practice-based commissioning, 17 per cent in GP fund-holding, 2 per cent in total purchasing pilots, and 2 per cent in multi-funds).

### Engagement with and ownership of the CCG

Around three-quarters of respondents felt at least somewhat engaged (somewhat/ moderately/ highly engaged) with the work of their CCG. Responses are illustrated in Figure A2, in which error bars show variability in responses between sites. As given in Table A2, almost half of respondents agree (agree/ strongly agree) that CCG decisions reflect their views, and that the organisation feels like ‘their’ organisation. Around six in ten feel that they are informed about the CCG’s aims and intentions, and four in ten agree that they could influence the work of the CCG if they chose to (compared to slightly more than one in ten who felt the same about the primary care trust. However, a significant minority (between one in three and one in six) disagree with these statements, with a substantial proportion not expressing either agreement or disagreement (between one-fifth and one-third).

The full report provides a breakdown of these findings by respondent type, showing that levels of engagement, ownership and influence were significantly lower among GPs with no formal role in the CCG.

**Figure A2** Responses to the question: *How engaged do you feel with the work of the CCG?* (Percentage of responses to the question, n=208; error bars represent range of percentages in individual sites)



**Table A2** Responses to the question: *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements*” (n= total number of responders, calculated as percentage of all responders)

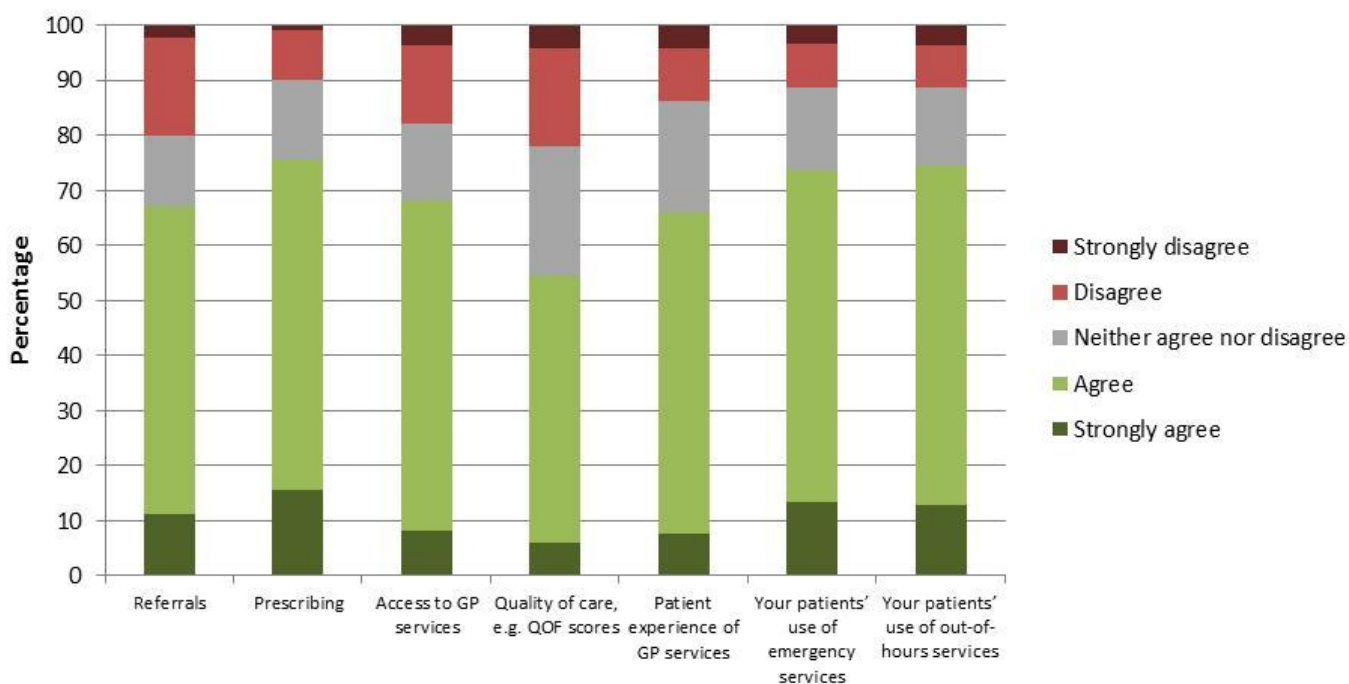
	n	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
		Average % (Range across sites %)				
<i>Decisions made by the CCG reflect the views of me and my colleagues</i>	21 8	8 (0–21)	40 (20–67)	33 (3–38)	15 (8–18)	3% (0–7)
<i>The CCG is owned by its members and feels like our organisation</i>	21 7	11 (6–25)	35 (20–59)	26 (10–33)	22 (7–34)	7% (0–17)
<i>I feel well informed about what the CCG is trying to achieve</i>	21 6	19 (11–33)	43 (30–63)	21 (14–24)	15 (5–23)	3% (0–10)
<i>I am aware of my CCG’s commissioning intentions</i>	21 4	16 (8–30)	43 (25–60)	20 (13–33)	17 (7–29)	4% (0–10)
<i>I can influence the work of the CCG if I choose to</i>	21 6	11 (6–17)	31 (23–59)	27 (7–36)	20 (10–28)	11% (0–20)
<i>In the past I could influence the PCT if/when I chose to</i>	21 6	1 (0–3)	11 (0–25)	24 (18–50)	43 (8–54)	22% (11–45)

### The role of the CCG in primary care development

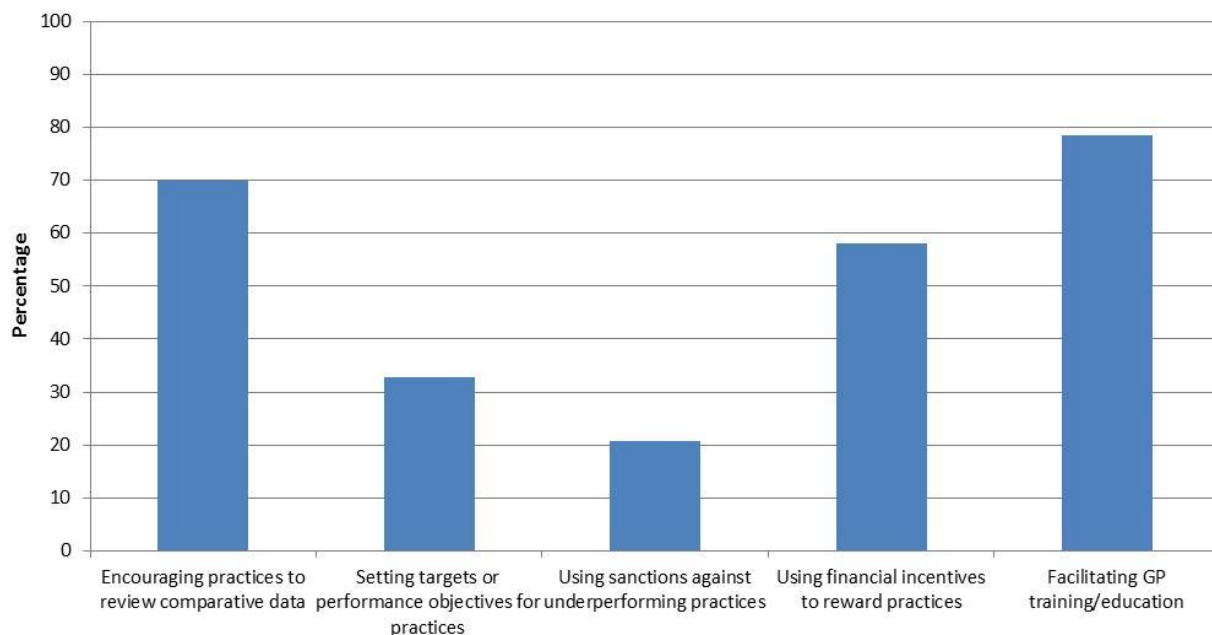
The majority of respondents agreed (agree/ strongly agree) that the CCG had a legitimate role in all of the aspects of clinical practice asked about, as shown in Figure A3. There was least agreement in the case of quality of care, for which slightly more than half of respondents agreed. For other aspects of practice, agreement was between two-thirds and three-quarters of respondents. Between 1 in 10 and 1 in 20 disagreed (disagree/ strongly disagree) in each case, with the remainder not being sure.

As illustrated in Figure A4, there was strong support for the CCG supporting improvement in general practice through use of comparative data review and education, with least support (just 1 in 5 respondents) for sanctions against underperforming practices. Slightly more than a quarter of respondents felt most accountable to the CCG, of a list of organisations shown in figure A5. This was more than felt accountable to NHS England, the Department of Health, the CQC or the GMC. A further quarter were not sure who they were most accountable to.

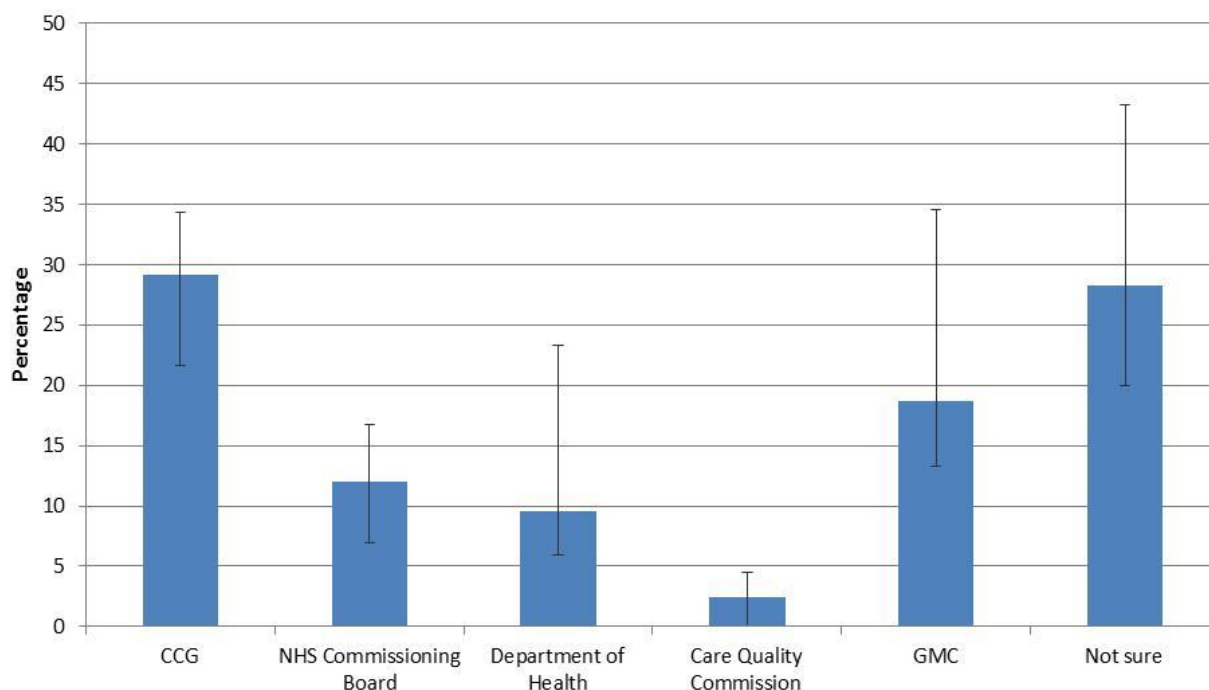
**Figure A3** Responses to the question: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that the CCG has a legitimate role in trying to influence the following aspects of your clinical practice*” (Percentage of all respondents to each question; n=211–213 for each question)



**Figure A4** Responses to the question: *In your view, which of the following mechanisms, if any, should the CCG use in order to support improvement in general practice?* (Percentage of all responses to the question; n=206)



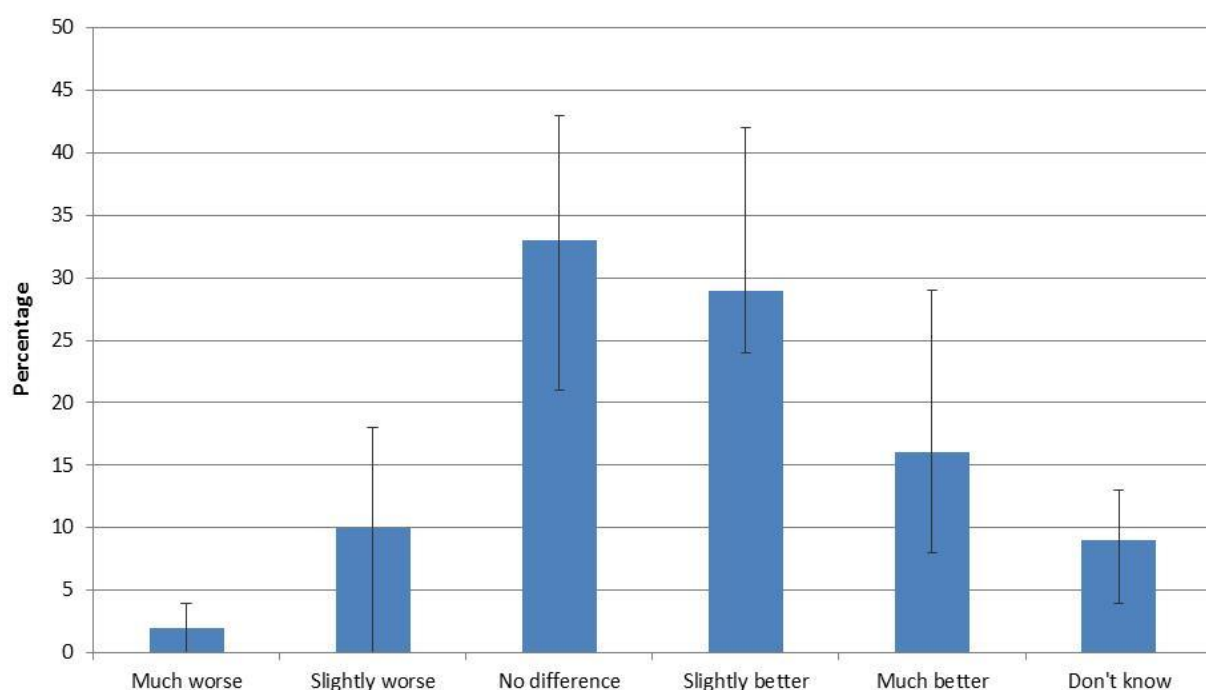
**Figure A5** Responses to the question :*Which of these organisations do you feel most accountable to for the services your practice provides?"* (Percentage of all responses to the question, n=206; error bars represent range of percentages in individual sites)



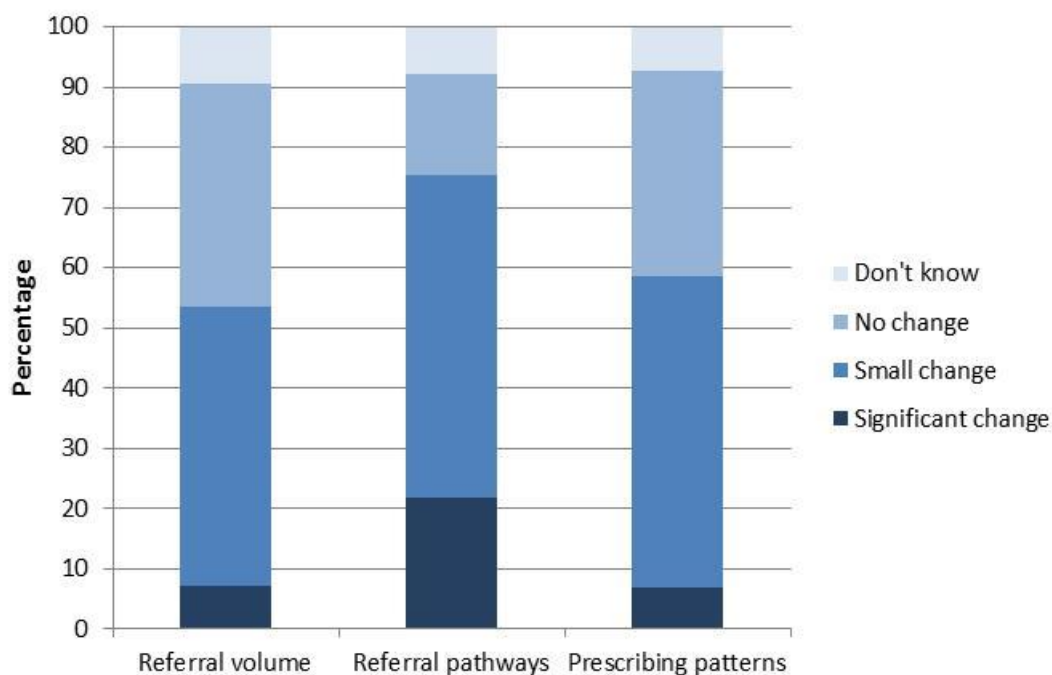
### Perceived impact of the CCG

Almost half of respondents felt that the formation of the CCG had improved clinical relationships between GPs, with a further third seeing no difference, as shown in Figure A6. Slightly more than one in ten reported worse relationships. Between half and three-quarters of respondents reported that being part of their CCG has changed their clinical practice in prescribing and referring, as shown in Figure A7. However the majority (half overall, but up to three-quarters in one site) thought it was too early to tell what impact this would have on patients over the year ahead, illustrated in Figure A8. Similar proportions (around one in six or seven) thought there would be positive and negative impacts. Almost half of respondents agreed (agree/strongly agree) that the CCG will be more effective than the PCT at helping GPs improve the services they provide to their patients, as shown in Figure A9. A further third neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and the remaining minority disagreeing.

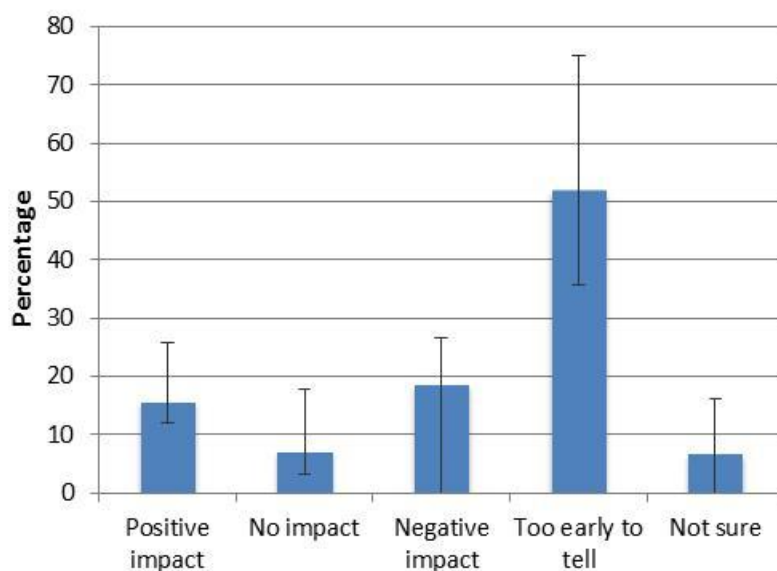
**Figure A6** Responses to the question: *What impact has the formation of the CCG had on clinical relationships between GPs?* (Percentage of all responses to the question, n=211; error bars represent range of percentages in individual sites)



**Figure A7** Responses to the question: *Has being part of the CCG changed your clinical practice in any of the following ways* (Percentage of all responses to the question, n=205–207)



**Figure A8** Responses to the question *Overall, what impact will the changes described have on patients over the next 12 months?* (Percentage of all responses to the question, n=210, error bars represent range of % in individual sites)



**Figure A9** Responses to the question: *To what extent do you agree or disagree that 'The CCG will be more effective than the PCT at helping GPs improve the services they provide to their patients'?*  
(Percentage of all responses to the question, n=211, error bars represent range of percentages in individual sites)

