

# Accurx Booking Module: Self-Book Evaluation

## Context

Launched in September 2022, Self-Book by Accurx is intended to support practices to schedule and book appointments online, without the need for phone calls to facilitate the process. Practices can offer a range of appointment slots through a link sent directly to the patient. The intervention seeks to help address growing pressure within primary care and declining patient satisfaction with access to GPs.

Unity Insights and Prova Health have collaborated to conduct a mixed-methods evaluation into the benefits experienced by users of Self-Book, following its launch in September 2022.

## Health Economic Findings

Through both qualitative and quantitative analysis, it is likely that Accurx's Self-Book facility will provide good value to primary care organisations, once it is an established part of operating processes. Benefits are expected to be mainly experienced by practices themselves, although some knock-on benefits are anticipated at a system level. Projected estimated benefits are presented below at Net Present Value (NPV).

### Scenario 1: PCN Level (5yr)

**£105k**

Gross estimated benefits

**£35k**

Reduction in calls

### Scenario 2: ICB Level (5yr)

**£3.19m**

Gross estimated benefits

**£1.07m**

Reduction in calls

### Scenario 3: National Level (5yr)

**£123.1m**

Gross estimated benefits

**£41.2m**

Reduction in calls

## Key Findings



All staff interviewed stressed the time-saving benefits of Self-Book



Self-Book's main benefit was found to be a reduction in time spent on the phone



Self-Book also supported efficient scheduling of routine appointments, and a scalable approach to support seasonal vaccination campaigns

## Organisational Benefits

All interviewed staff reported that Self-Book made a significant difference in their work. This felt especially true over the preceding few months of increased demand due to winter pressures and a scarlet fever outbreak.

Many reported struggling to imagine managing that demand without access to Self-Book. Practices designed their workflows around Self-Book due to the improvements in efficiencies and time savings it enabled.

**All interviewed sites had plans to expand Self-Book to more use cases and booking flows.**

Practices were previously spending considerable time arranging appointments for patients. This was a combination of inbound calls from patients and outbound calls/letters/SMS asking patients to book appointments.

**“It is something that is beneficial to both us and the patients. I think people are starting to realise that using Self-Book is quicker and easier than having to do it the old way.”**

## Patient Access

All staff interviewed agreed that Self-Book had improved access to primary care services for their patients. Self-Book was seen as a better alternative to phoning for non-English speaking patients.

All staff reported that age was the most common factor affecting a minority of patients. They also all felt that Self-Book indirectly created time to support this minority due to the reduced phone queue lengths and lower levels of staff stress.

## Staff Perception

Participants reported a range of benefits to both practices and staff, feeling that the service saved them time, and enabled them to deliver more as a result. All participants interviewed said that they would recommend Self-Book to other organisations. A breakdown of the themes that emerged is provided below.

### IMPROVED EFFICIENCY

Ability to plan recalls

Streamlined follow-up

Assurance

Upskilling of reception Staff

Reduced unused capacity

### STAFF SATISFACTION

Impact on ways of working

Reduction in stress

Improved job satisfaction

### TIME SAVING

Quicker bookings

Reduced call volume

### DIGITAL BARRIERS

Helps Non-english speakers

Age is a consideration

### PATIENT SATISFACTION

Modernised access to GP

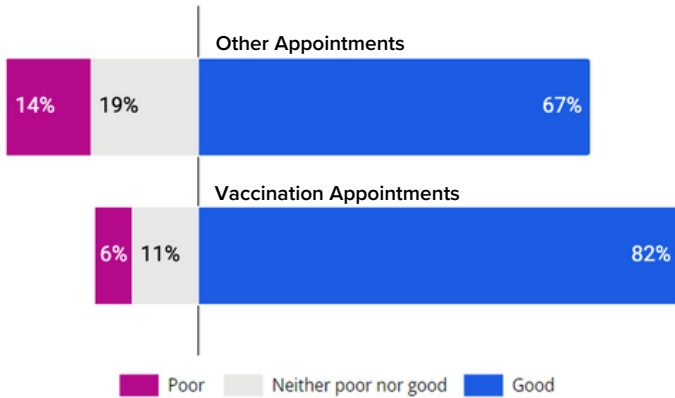
**“[Self-Book] helps us fill in appointments now... If we have any empty ones, then we just use Self-Book... I send 50 messages and by the next morning when I come in, the nurses have a nicely filled clinic.”**

## Patient Perception

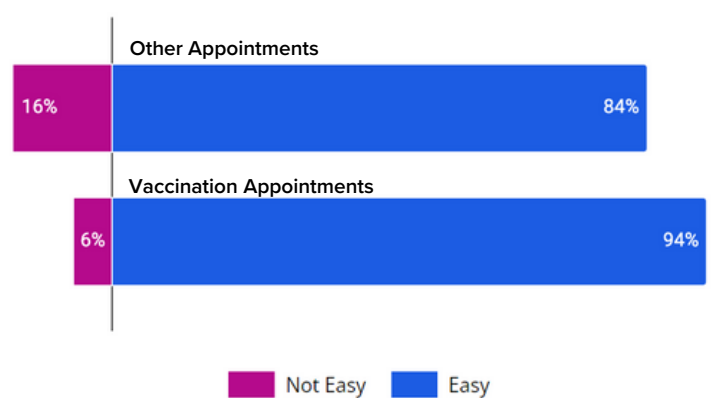
The survey results show that patients had a positive experience using Self-Book. As noted by one of the interviewees, Self-Book presents a contemporary way of accessing services for patients. Most patients found Self-Book easy to use and would recommend it to others.

This feedback should be considered in the context of worsening national satisfaction with primary care, dropping from 84% in 2018 to 72% in 2022 (NHS England, 2022). Specifically, only 53% of patients found it easy to get through on the phone at their GP surgery in 2022.

"Overall, how would you describe your experience of making an appointment using the online booking service?"



"How easy was it to book an appointment using the online booking service?"



## Conclusions

Accur's Self-Book facility is likely to provide value to primary care organisations once it is an established part of operating processes. Health economic analysis on a small number of potential benefits suggests that the time saved supports greater efficiencies in adopting organisations.

## Recommendations

Conduct further analyses to observe long-term benefits



- potential cash-saving benefits identified from efficiencies
- impact upon QOF attainment and time required to undertake triage processes

£105,000

PCN-level

Five-year total benefits at Net Present Value

£3.19m

ICB-level

Five-year total benefits at Net Present Value

Through qualitative engagement, staff reported time-saving efficiencies, increased job satisfaction, and reduced stress. While patients reported that Self-Book was easy to use and would recommend it to others.

This evaluation demonstrates positive feedback in relation to the impact of Self-Book within practices. It is still a young system and an understanding of the full benefits will no doubt develop over time. Ultimately, the system appears successful in delivering the intended benefits, reducing the time required to schedule appointments and releasing pressure on primary care.

Develop case studies to share best practice



To support effective adoption, sharing knowledge and success across organisations to support a consistent set of benefits for practices

Further development of the platform



Staff were enthusiastic about the potential for future improvements and the additional benefits these might yield. Accur have been receptive to this feedback, proactively looking for such opportunities