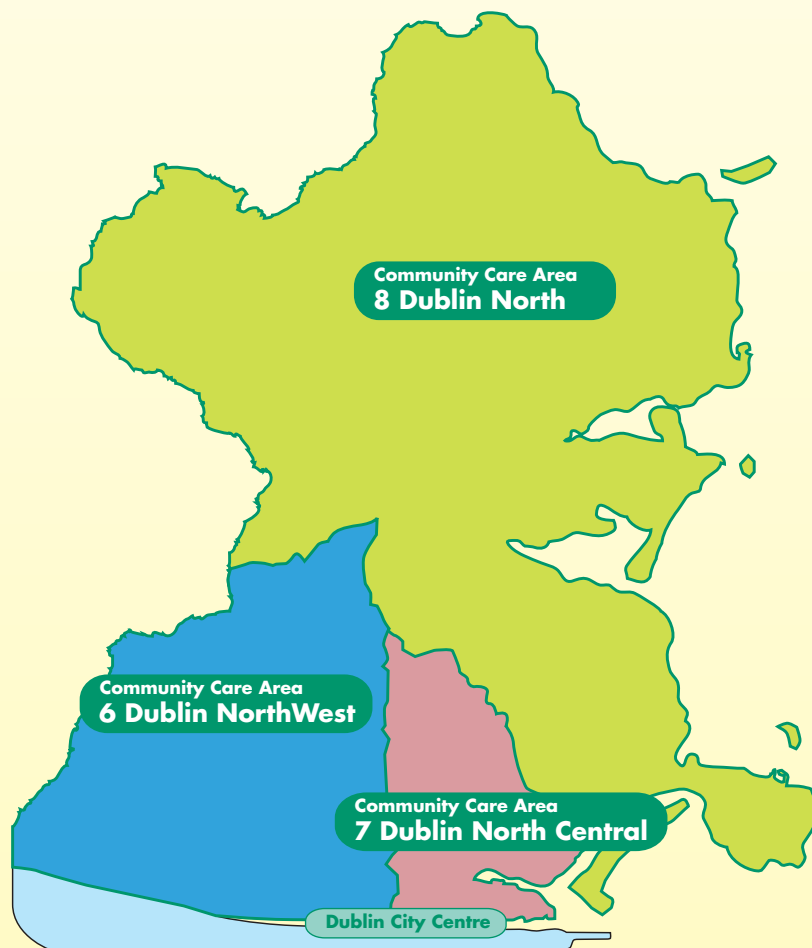


Summary of main findings of the Traveller Health Survey



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Oak House,
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Summary of main findings of the Traveller Health Survey

Introduction

The following section reports the summary of the main findings from the Traveller health survey. The survey was carried out in the Northern Area Health Board (NAHB). All the Traveller organisations and health staff working with the Travellers in the NAHB managed the whole study. The analysis was done by the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. There were 367 responses to this survey, however not all respondents answered every question. Therefore, the results are reported with responses noted so that the reader is aware that percentages quoted are of those that responded and not the total that were included in the survey. The results are presented in two different ways. In some cases a combined result was presented. In other cases it was felt that an area wise breakdown would give a better picture of the health status and needs of the Travellers in the area.

Area and Population Breakdown

367 people responded to the questionnaire. There was an overall response rate of 74.9%. The breakdown is as follows:

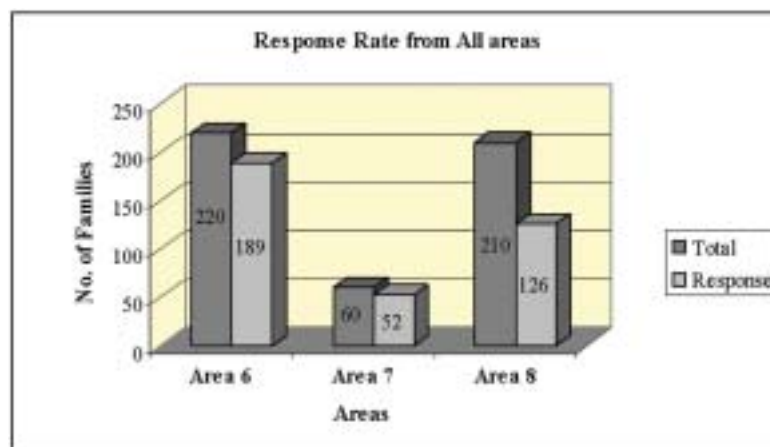


Figure 1: Table of response rate from all areas

Gender

A total of 364 answers were recoded of which only 32 (8.8%) were from the male.

Education

The following table shows that the education of the respondents and their spouses in terms of mean years of schooling was almost the same (7.8 years and 7.7 years). The children's mean year of schooling was slightly lower than their parents (6.5 years). The mean age when the respondents and the spouse left school was exactly the same for both groups (13.1 years) but for their children it was slightly higher (13.5 years). Only 452 (45.2%) children were still in school out of a total of 999 children.

Table 1: Education profile

Family Member	No. of years schooling: Mean (SD)	Age left school (years): Mean (SD)	Still in School: N
Yourself	7.8 (2.8)	13.1 (1.7)	3
Husband/Wife	7.7 (2.8)	13.1 (1.4)	2
Children (Range)	6.5 (3.1) (0–15)	13.5 (1.3) (9–17)	452

Accommodation

The following chart reveals the type of accommodation people were living in, in each area.

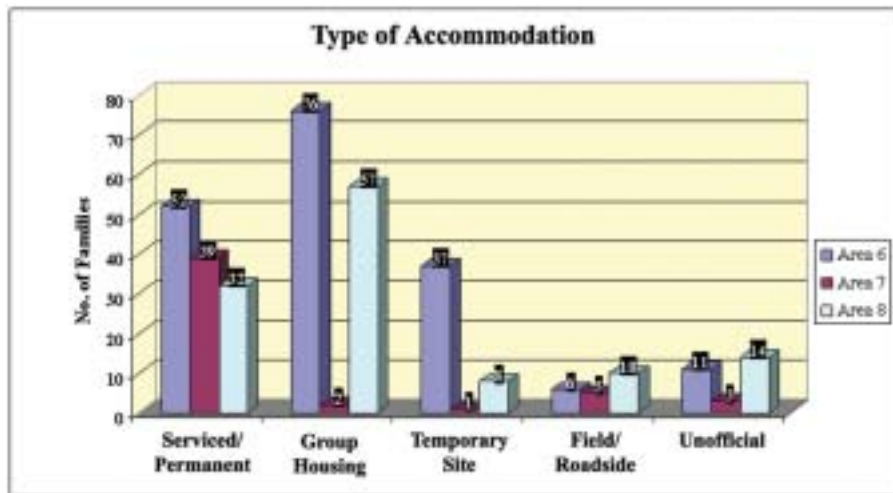


Figure 2: Type of Accommodation people were living in

Duration of living in same accommodation

The highest proportion of respondent (21.2%) said they were living in the same accommodation for 2–5 years followed by 19.3% who said they were living in the same accommodation for 1–2 years. A slightly lower proportion (16.1%) reported a longer period (6–10 years).

Environment

Water Supply

It was found that a very high percentage of people have access to water. However 5.2% of respondents reported having no access to water.

Sanitation and Electricity

The majority of people reported having access to sanitation and electricity supply. However, respondents also reported that this access could be shared and some had no access.

Facilities on Sites

Fire Prevention

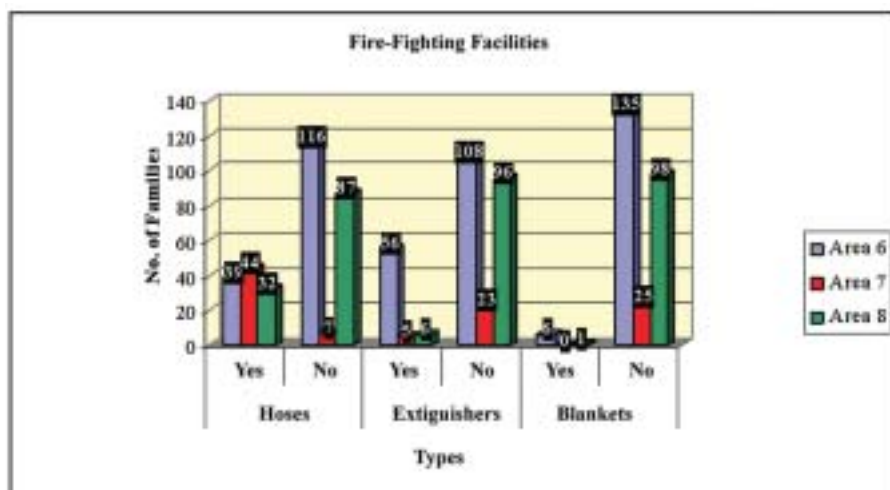


Figure 3: Fire prevention facilities

Play Areas

Over four-fifths of the respondents (81%) out a total of 352, reported that there were no play areas on the sites. Out of 229 respondents, a total of 93.5% said that there should be play areas on sites. The reason given was that children needed a safe place to play.

Health Issues

Sickness in the Family in the last month

A total of 353 respondents answered the question. More than half (54.7%) of these said they had somebody in family who was/were sick during the last month.

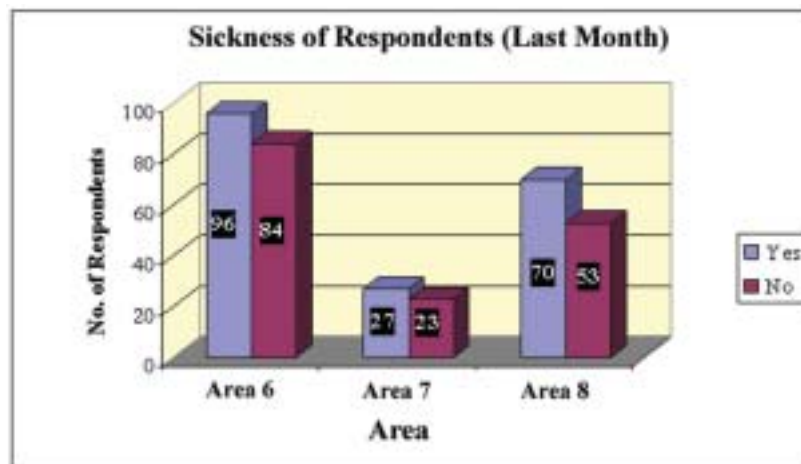


Figure 4: Sickness in last month

The top five sicknesses reported are presented below in descending order. It should be noted that some family member may have suffered from more than one problem:

Table 2: Type of sickness in the family (last month)

Sickness	No.
Chest Problems	37
Flu	35
Ear and Throat problems	30
Stomach problems	11
Chicken Pox	10

Sickness in the Family in the last year

A total of 653 members were reported to be sick in the year before the survey. More than half (55.0%) of those who were reported were female. The top five sicknesses were as follows. It should be noted that some family member may have suffered from more than one problem:

Table 3: Type of sickness in the family (last year)

Sickness	No.
ENT	128
Chest Infections	120
Coughs and Colds	89
Bladder and Kidney	37
Gastric/Colitis	33

Which services did people use when they were sick?

The following health services were reported to be used by the respondents.

Table 4: Type of health services people used

Service	No.
G.P.	464
A&E	124
Healer	117
Outpatients	116
Health Centre	97
Bureau Doctor	40

Long Term Illness

More than a fifth of the respondents (21.66%) who answered this question (n=360) reported a long term illness in their family.

Out of a total of 302 people who responded to this question, only 11.2% said they have a long term illness book.

Healers and Cure

Out of a total of 359 respondents, a total of 86.6% reported to visit healers for cure when somebody in the family was sick. The following table depicts the top five illnesses people seek a cure for:

Table 5: Sicknesses Travellers seek a cure for

Sickness	No.
Everything	78
Skin	73
Thrush	64
Whooping Cough	29
Arthritis	23

Medical Cards and GP Services

Who holds the Medical Card?

A high proportion of respondents (91.1%) out of a total of 67 said that their GPs hold their Medical Card for them, followed by those (4.5%) who said their relatives hold these for them. A further 4.4% mentioned others (leave it home, Nurse Etc).

Used GP in the last month

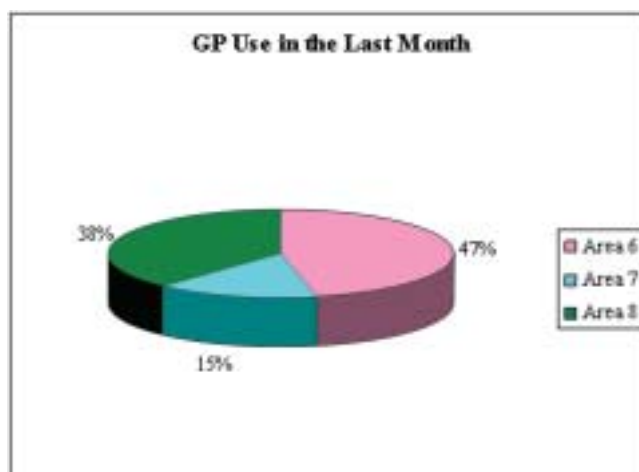


Figure 5: Percentage of use of GP in the last month

Out of a total of 357 respondents, 13.4% reported that they were refused by a GP. The following is a graphic representation of area wise breakdown of the responses:

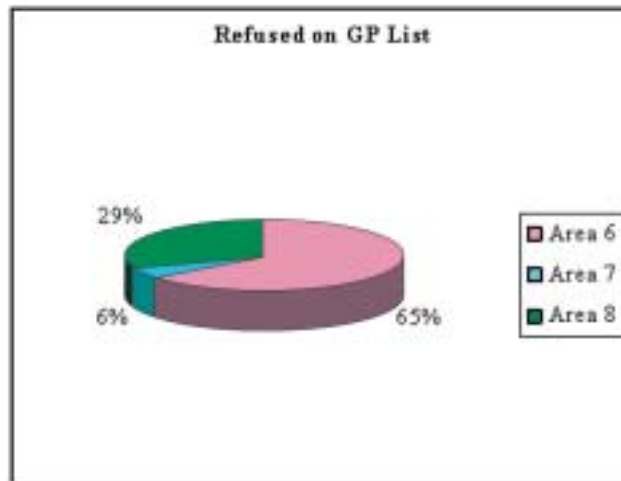


Figure 6: Refusal on GP list

Reasons for refusal

The following were the reasons given by the respondents as to why they were refused by GPs

Table 6: Reasons given for refusal by GPs

Reason	No.
List Full	19
No reason given	5
Refused	5
Do not remember	2
Others*	9
Total	40

*Others =Thinks they don't like Travellers, missed appointments because of bus, no medical cards, blamed as using him too much and pestering (2), so many in the family, because of address, medical card for different doctor (2)

Causes of problems re-access Health Services

The following multiple answer analysis chart highlights the main reasons forwarded by the respondents for not availing Health services:

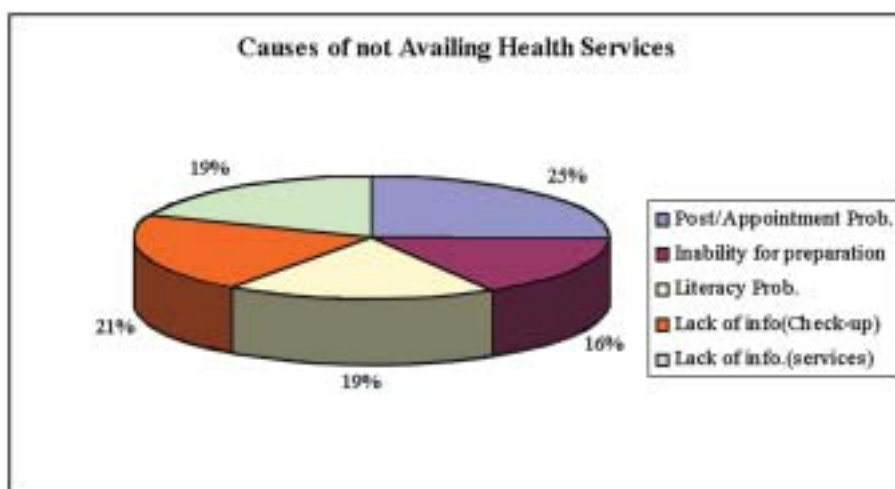


Figure 7: Causes of not availing of Health Services

Use of A&E service in the last month

A total of 33.4% respondents out of a total of 362 said that they accessed the A&E service in the last month

Reasons given for using A&E

Table 7: Reasons for using A&E

Problem	No.
Accidents	28
Childhood Illnesses	18
ENT	9
Chest Infection	7
Joint pain	5

Castle Street

Opinion about the services provided by Castle Street

Respondents reply for the question was sometimes more than one but the following top five answers summarise the general feeling about the services provided:

Table 8: Opinions about services provided by Castle Street

Response	No.
Very Bad	57
Bad	55
Good	32
Alright	30
Too Far	26

Women’s Health

Ante-natal/Post-natal Care

The following figure shows the proportion of respondents from all the three areas, who received Ante-natal care:

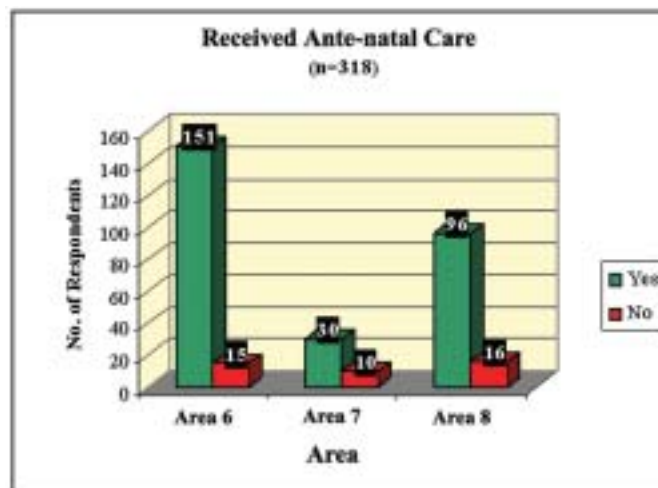


Figure 8: Ante-Natal Care

The following figure demonstrates the post-natal care received by the respondents in all the three areas:

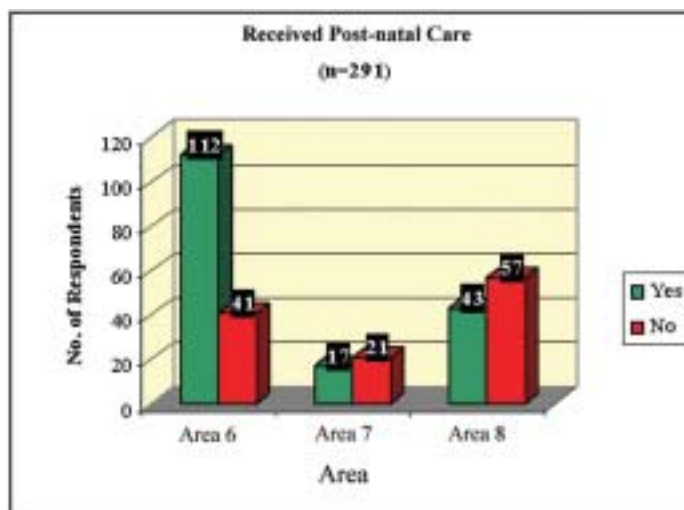


Figure 9: Post-natal Care

Men’s Health

Slightly more than a quarter (25.9%) of the respondents who answered this question said that there were specific health problems with the men in their family. The total number of responses recorded for this was 312.

When asked about the particular health problems for Traveller men, the following were the top five answers in descending order. It is to be noted that the answers were multiple answers:

Table 9: Particular health problems for Traveller men

Problem	No.
Diabetes	13
Heart Problems	12
G.I. Tract Infection	11
Back Pain	7
ENT Problems	6

The following chart depicts that the majority of men (78%) do not seek medical advice for their health problems, according to the respondents:

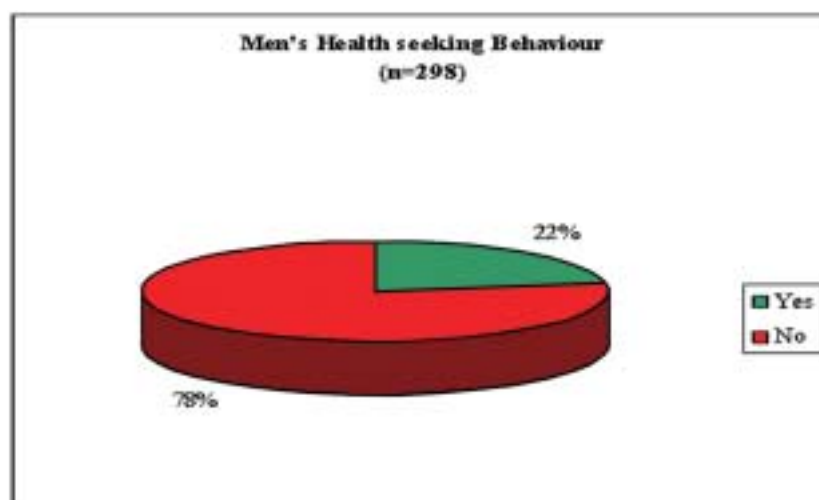


Figure 10: Men’s Health seeking Behaviour

When asked how these issues should be approached with men, the following answers were prioritised by the respondents:

Table 10: How health issues should be approached with men

Response	No.
Wives and families	52
Men clinic and health programme	28
Health info/video/talk	28
Don't know	24
Male GP/Nurse	20

Depression

One third, out of a total of 365 respondents, reported depression in their family

Symptoms of Depression

The following figure shows some selected symptoms of depression faced by the respondents and/or their family members as reported by the respondents.

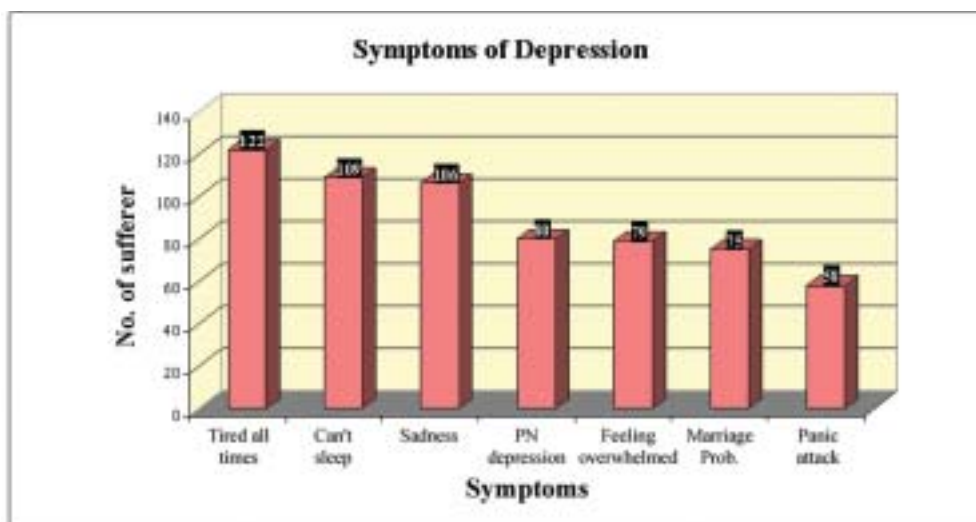


Figure 11: Symptoms of Depression

Perception about PHC workers visit

A high level of confidence was reported in relation to PHC workers visits (89%). When asked why they think that the visits from the PHC workers were a good idea, the following multiple answers were given:

Table 11: Why PHC workers visit was a good idea

Response	No.
Give advice, help, information and appointments	206
Traveller to Traveller good, understandable	34
Don't know	19
Enjoy them visiting	3

Ideas for improving the Health Service

The following answers were provided by the respondents when asked how the health services could be improved for Travellers. The answers were multiple answers:

Table 12: How Health Services could be improved

Ideas	No.
Health service providers need Training and better understanding re-Travellers	46
Better Accommodation/Living conditions	44
Explain things more clearly	30
More information	30
Stop using big words	28
Doctors/clinics on site	22
Reduce waiting time list	18
Stop discrimination	14
Visit GP more often	12

