

Patient Experience in A&E: Local Testing of Potential New Standards for A&E

NHS England ran a [Clinical Review of Access Standards](#) in the summer of 2018. In particular, patient access to Urgent and Emergency Care in hospitals, with an idea to consider using potential new targets designed to improve patient experience. The research wanted to find out what matters most to patients when accessing A&E. A selection of 14 hospital Trusts were chosen by NHS England to run some pilot testing, Portsmouth Hospitals Trust being one, so Healthwatch Portsmouth was approached to run patient experience feedback gathering (below) using a standard set of questions. The hospital trusts in which local Healthwatch were invited to undertake patient surveys were:

Cambridgeshire, Central West London, Dorset, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Wakefield.

Results from these areas were collated by Healthwatch England into a national report:

What Matters to People Using A&E

The Healthwatch England report also includes recommendations which are currently being considered by NHS England before a decision is taken whether to introduce new national patient access standards for Urgent and Emergency Care which may no longer include the 4 hour wait target. **The headlines from the Healthwatch national report are:**

Time alone doesn't dictate how people feel about their experience of A&E. Overall patient experience is also shaped by:

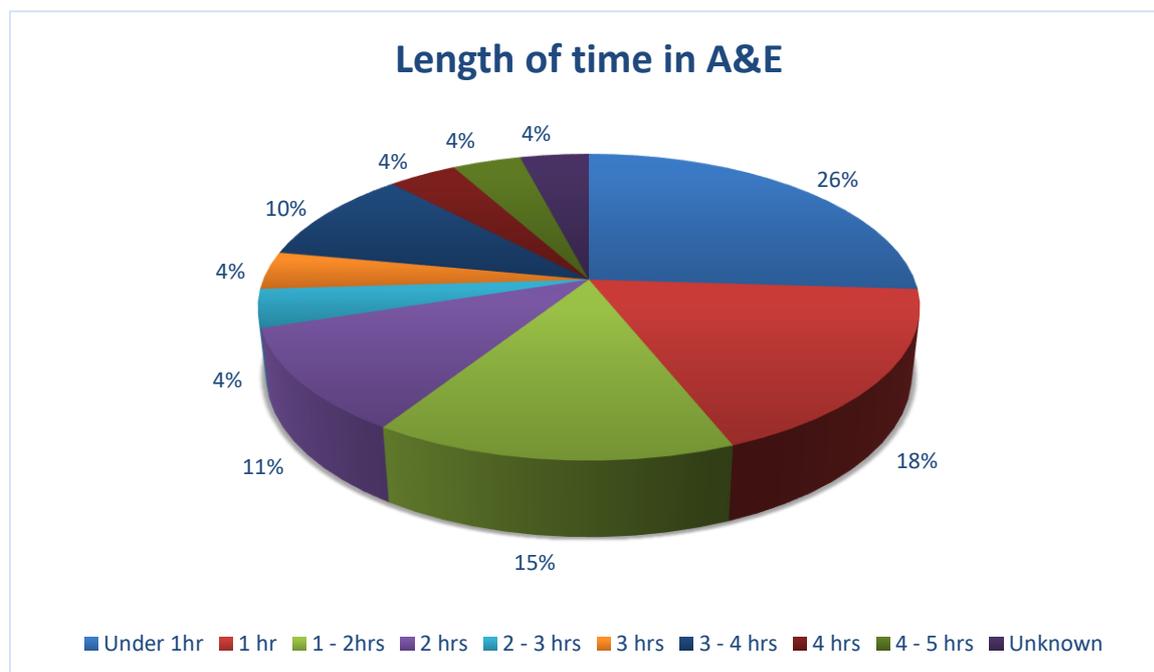
- The quality of clinical care they receive
- The quality and frequency of the communication
- The attitude of staff and whether they have time to offer empathetic care
- Whether the A&E is working well with other services, such as NHS 111 and GPs
- The quality of the A&E facilities themselves, including things that can make the experience of long waits easier on people, such as access to food and drink.

The Local Context:

Patient Experience Feedback at Queen Alexander Hospital, Portsmouth A&E department Sept to Oct 2019 Data Analysis

Number of responses received = 56

QUESTION 1: Can you tell us how long you have been in the A&E department thus far? For admitted patients: Can you tell us approximately how long you spent in the A&E department before you were admitted?



Length of Time	Number of Respondents
Under 1 hr.	15 (26%)
1 hr.	10 (18%)
Between 1 & 2 hrs.	9 (15%)
2 hrs.	6 (11%)
Between 2 & 3 hrs.	2 (4%)
3 hrs.	2 (4%)
Between 3 & 4 hrs.	6 (10%)
4 hrs.	2 (4%)
Between 4 & 5 hrs.	2 (4%)
Unknown	2 (4%)

Question 1 Summary:

The majority of respondents (70%) waited in the department 2 hrs. or less. From the data it is not possible to tell how many of the respondents were admitted although 2 advised:

- “Waited briefly in A & E and was transferred directly to ward yesterday between 2 & 3 pm.”
- “In ward since 1200 Friday”

QUESTION 2: Just to help us understand which services you've used today, would you mind briefly telling us how you came to be in A&E? Prompts: By ambulance, referred by 111, GP, 111 online, or decided to come in.

Condition	Number of Respondents
Fall	5 (9%)
Illness (includes anything other than injury)	10 (18%)
Injury	12 (21%)
Unknown	29 (52%)

How did the patient arrive at A&E	Number of Respondents
Via referral from Royal SouthHants	1 (2%)
Via referral from St Mary's	1 (2%)
Via ambulance	2 (3%)
Self-referred (attended via own means)	52 (93%) 3 via bus, 3 via train or taxi

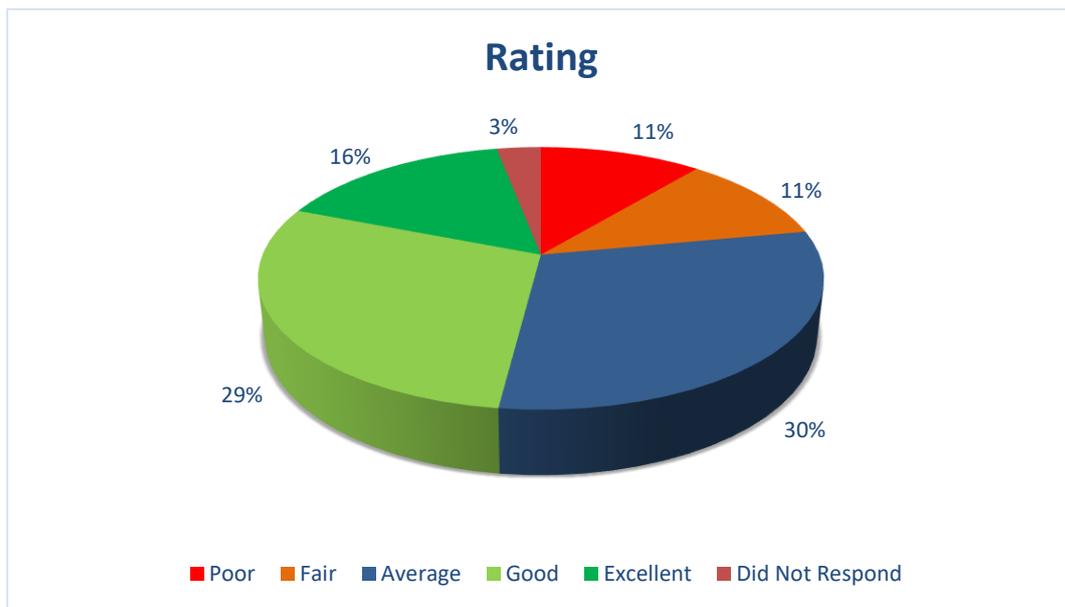
Of those who arrived via their own means:

	Number of Respondents
Advised by Optician to attend	1 (2%)
Advised by Paramedic to attend	1 (2%)
Arrived by own means because GP appointment unavailable	1 (2%)
Advised by St Mary's to attend	2 (3%)
Arrived by own means because wait for ambulance was too long	2 (3%)
Advised by 111/999 to attend	5 (9%)
Advised by GP to attend	11 (20%)
Attended on own accord (no advice or referral)	33 (59%)

Question 2 Summary:

- Falls have been separated from injuries to show whether there is a correlation between falls and age. Of the 5 respondents who advised they attended because of a fall all were female. 2 were under 65 yrs, 1 between 65 and 70 and 2 were 80+. However, respondents may have attended because of a fall and only advised that it was an injury so there may be more unknown falls in the data.
- The majority of respondents attended due to an unknown issue (52%).
- The majority of respondents arrived at A&E via their own means (93%). Of those, 59% attended A&E as a self-referral (i.e. with no advice or signposting).

QUESTION 3: How would you rate your time in department?



Rating	Number of Respondents
Poor	6 (11%)
Fair	6 (11%)
Average	17 (30%)
Good	16 (29%)
Excellent	9 (16%)
Did Not Respond	2 (3%)

Question 3 Summary:

- The majority of respondents rated their stay as Average (30%) or Good (29%). There does not appear to be any correlation between this rating and the length of time respondents were in the department.

QUESTION 4: Can you tell me what’s happened since you’ve arrived in Hospital? We are interested in your experience of A&E / the department, rather than anything personal about your medical health. Prompts: What happened when you first arrived – who did you speak to first? What did they say to you? Do you feel you were treated with empathy? Where did you go next? When did you first see a health professional? What else happened before you were discharged / admitted to a ward / sent to another department? Do you feel you were kept informed about what was happening?

Question 4 Summary:

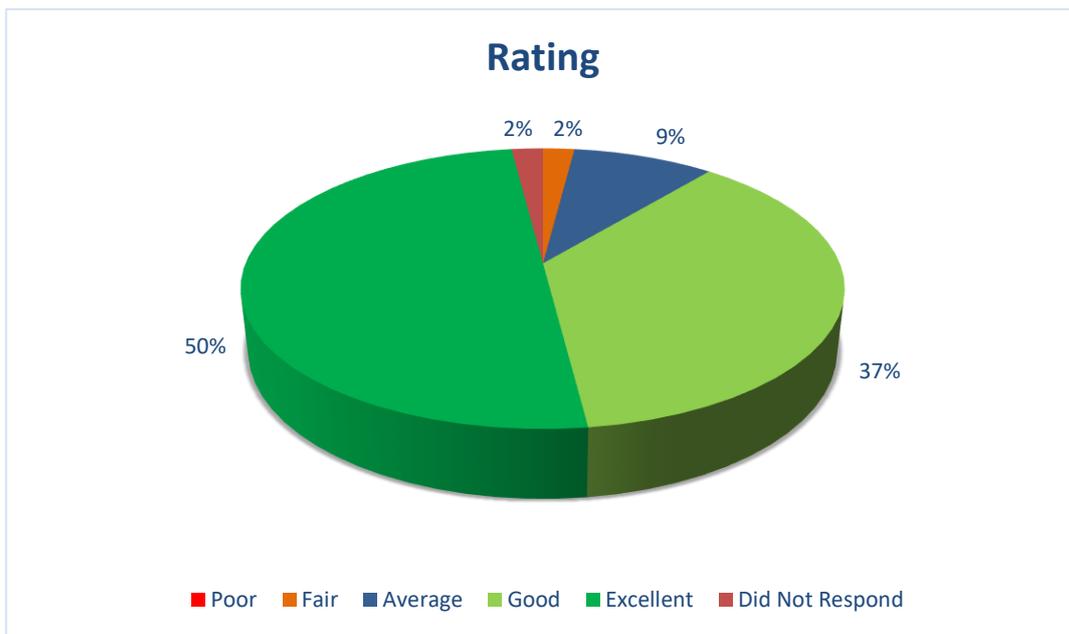
- The following table shows all the free text comments received for this question. Not all respondents answered in terms of the prompts therefore limiting the amount of useful quantifiable analysis of this question.

- However, some analysis shows that 36 (64%) respondents were seen by a Navigator Nurse (although it could be more as some respondents referred to a “nurse” or a “triage nurse” rather than a “Navigator Nurse”)
- 13 (23%) respondents had some issues or negative comments. These are highlighted in the table below.

Didn't know what to do. Signage not good. Navigator nurse seen.
Queued for ages. Standing. Lot of pain. Nurse – not full details taken. 2 hrs later, temp and BP taken. On Red now.
Nurse navigator, straight through to resuscitation. Was kept informed. Slightly deaf – could help if this was added above the bed.
Triage nurse took information, BP. Gave painkillers. No clear direction of what to do.
Nowhere to sit. Stood in doorway. Navigator nurse – had documents from doctor. Has to see senior doctor for back problem.
Know there will be a long wait. Bit confused as to what to do. Signs everywhere. Someone told me where to go. 25 mins wait to see navigator nurse. Took details and papers from St Mary's and took an ECG
Triage. ECG done in another room – told to wait. Not informed as to what was happening.
Spoke to the navigator nurse. Yes, was treated with empathy. [daughter's voice – Does not feel she is kept informed about what is happening]
Spoke to reception who referred her to the navigator nurse. Does not feel that she was treated with empathy. She was kept informed about what was happening and referred to wait in the waiting room to see a health professional.
Saw the navigator nurse first and was treated with empathy. The nurse contacted the eye specialist consultant who said they won't come and see the patient until the same tests done today at Specsavers are repeated by a health professional in the hospital. Kept informed about what is happening but not happy about it, they are worried about the extent of vision loss in one eye and the immediate referral by Specsavers.
Navigator nurse, checked in at desk – mistake on form 'Alleged' was added, but it was a full 'attack'.
Navigator nurse. Treated with respect. Offered painkillers. Didn't examine knee.
Sat down in red area. Quickly seen by navigator nurse. Possibly seen quickly to get statistics as high as possible ?! – manipulation. Nurse very understanding. Took BP & pulse. Anxiety phobia of hospitals.
Nurse. Very helpful. Given tablets and told you have to wait. Called up to reception. Waiting to be seen.
Front desk. Navigator nurse. After 3/4 hour. Very helpful & polite.
All been ok.
Spoke to the navigator nurse first who asked what had happened, and was treated with empathy. Then saw the receptionist. Now waiting to see health professional to have arm stitched. Will then need to see practice nurse at home GP for dressings. Has been kept informed about what is happening.
She has been treated with empathy. Son says she is confused, probably due to bang on the head – she is not normally confused. The ambulance crew were excellent, the nurse practitioner has been very good with her. Now waiting to see a health professional.
Treated very well. Navigator nurse. Reception first, very helpful. Saw health professional after a few minutes. Told to wait.
Spoke to the navigator nurse first who asked what had happened, what pain she had. Yes, was treated with empathy. Now waiting to see health professional.

Navigator nurse seen first and treated with empathy. She said you have ruptured your bicep and am now waiting to see a professional.
Spoke to navigator nurse first who was polite and nice and gave some painkillers and ibuprofen. Treated with empathy, kept informed about what was happening. Waiting to see professional.
Spoke to the receptionist first, who referred her to the navigator nurse. Was treated with empathy, now waiting to see health professional.
Triage first. Waiting since about 10 mins. Navigator nurse. Nursing staff fantastic.
First spoke to receptionist who referred him to the navigator nurse. There was a 10 min wait to see her. Yes, was treated professionally and with empathy and now waiting to see a health professional.
Spoke to the navigator nurse. Yes, was treated with empathy. Waiting to see a health professional.
Can't remember much about the admission, no idea who I spoke to first. Yes, I was treated with empathy.
Spoke to the navigator nurse, was treated with empathy. She took blood pressure and temperature and said take a seat.
Booked in after seeing nurse. Saw nurse after 1/2 hour.
Navigator nurse seen. Waiting now.
Queue up. Saw nurse quite quickly (5mins) and took details, minor injury.
Waited to see navigator nurse who took details and did observations.
Navigator nurse. Waiting to see a gynaecologist.
Red area – waited. Nurse called in quickly. Checked BP, gave a number.
To reception counter. Back to red zone. Navigator nurse took details.
Straight in to see nurse who took details and gave painkillers and a number.
Navigator nurse. Booked in – waiting to be seen.
Should have more doctors on duty. Red sector, called into nurse. Told to sit and wait. Given 2 co-codamol tablets.
Navigator nurse
Queued up. Navigator nurse – best to wait to see a doctor. Now waiting to be seen.
Son has seen navigator nurse, no treatment given. Now checking in with reception.
Saw triage nurse. Not too long queue. Took BP.
Saw notice. Sat and waited. Navigator nurse took details and BP.
Sat down for about 20 minutes. Saw Navigator nurse. Gave a number to wait
Daughter saw navigator nurse then receptionist
Navigator nurse saw me quickly. Painkillers given.
Navigator nurse, reception. Nurse said – take blood pressure etc.
Triage nurse. ECG. Waiting for result.
At main reception told to see nurse who took notes and gave Ibuprofen
Nurse – triage. Waiting for x-ray.
Triage nurse. Painkillers straight away. Asked about injury, any allergies, etc. Waiting for further assessment.
Waiting in line. Navigator nurse took details.
Bit daunted by number of people here. Saw nurse, no tests. Waiting now to be seen by doctor.
Navigator nurse seen. Waiting to see a doctor.
Comfortable in high chair. Assessed by nurse. 1/2 hr wait. Took BP & sugar. No waiting. Red file – EMERGENCY!
Seen at St Mary's first where there was a 2 hr wait. Hurt head, nose and wrist/hand. Taking blood thinners so had to come to QA. Had a scan.

QUESTION 5: How would you rate staff attitude?

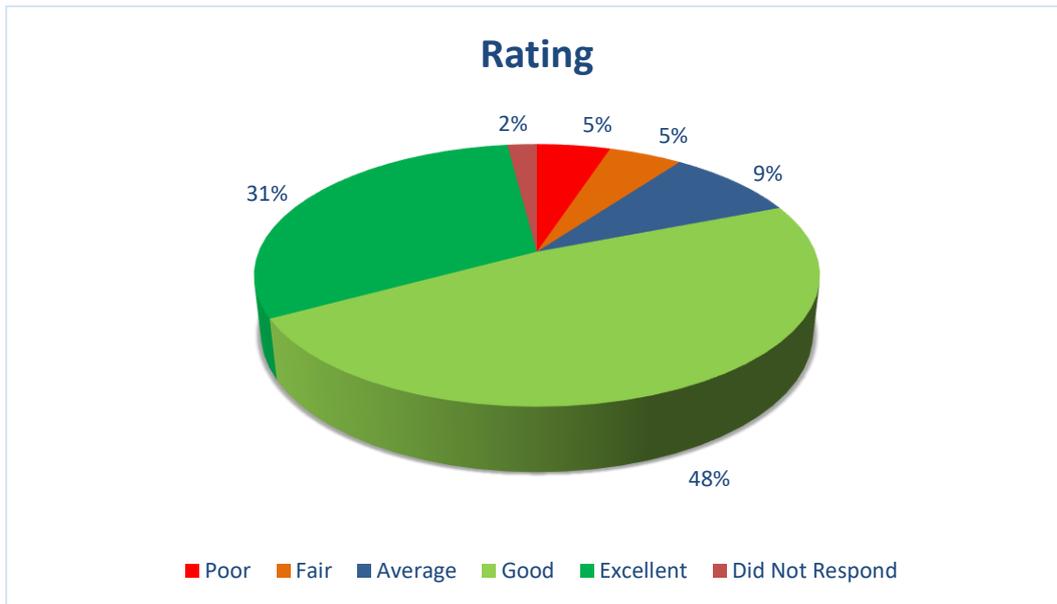


Rating	Number of Respondents
Poor	0
Fair	1 (2%)
Average	5 (9%)
Good	21 (37%)
Excellent	28 (50%)
Did Not Respond	1 (2%)

Question 5 Summary:

- The majority of respondents rated staff attitude Good (37%) or Excellent (50%)

QUESTION 6: How would you rate the quality of communication?



Rating	Number of Respondents
Poor	3 (5%)
Fair	3 (5%)
Average	5 (9%)
Good	27 (48%)
Excellent	17 (31%)
Did Not Respond	2 (2%)

Question 6 Summary:

- The majority of respondents rated quality of communication as Good (48%) to Excellent (31%)

QUESTION 7: Can you please tell me how satisfied you have been with your experience of care since you've been in A&E? Prompts: Do you feel that staff have understood why you are here and what your needs are, and that you have received the appropriate clinical care?

Question 7 Summary:

- The following table shows all the free text comments received for this question. Not all respondents answered in terms of the prompts therefore limiting the amount of useful quantifiable analysis of this question. (Note – most respondents would not be able to advise if they had “appropriate” clinical care unless they were clinically trained)
- 15 (27%) respondents had some issues or negative comments. These are highlighted in the table below.

Not satisfied. Have a head injury but not seen as a priority.
Not at all satisfied. They know why I'm here.
Standard of A&E bit of a shambles. Bad layout.
Shocking system. Queuing out the door. Area too small.
Very long wait. High level patient. Should be prioritised and seen by now.
Satisfied that needs have been understood regarding why they are here, but have not received the appropriate clinical care yet.
Staff have understood why she is here and what her needs are but not happy at this point about receiving the appropriate clinical care.
His mother has not received the appropriate clinical care, seeing a health professional, in a suitable time frame. The care by ambulance staff and nurse has been excellent.
Staff work very hard. But restrictions in staffing levels, waiting times are longer.
Initial care impressive. Long wait now.
A & E ok. Gosport Medical Centre said could not assist and referred to QA. Gentleman told at QA that you could have been seen at Gosport!
Thought there would be more examination by Triage
Generally good. No idea of how long to wait. Waiting area very small.
Waiting time not on board. Staff are understanding.
Doing best they can. Too many patients.
Yes, staff have understood.
Satisfied with level of care received so far, needs have been understood.
No problems, feels understood.
Yes, staff have understood. Waiting to see a doctor, concerned about return of sepsis.
Yes, staff have understood. Everything I've asked for I got.
Satisfied with level of care received so far, needs have been understood.
Staff have understood why she is here and what her needs are and she has received appropriate clinical care so far. Waiting to see health professional.
Yes, staff have understood why he is here, what his needs are and has been given pain relief meds. Has received appropriate clinical care.
Experience has been solid and good. Staff have understood and what her needs are and she has received the appropriate clinical care.
Staff have understood why she is here and what her needs are and she has received appropriate clinical care so far.
All ok.
All ok
Pretty satisfied. Seen straight away!
Ok
Good. Still waiting for treatment.
Perfectly adequate
All ok
Fantastic.
All good
Better than seeing a GP.
Very good
All ok.

Still waiting to see doctor/nurse- minor wound. X rays taken in Derby – not sure if they are here yet.
No misunderstood. All good.
Fine, Brilliant. No complaints.
Seems ok. Given pain relief.
Very well. Efficient.
Fine
Good. No trouble. Staff understand.
Know what to expect.
Understood, very much.
Happy with it, so far.
No problems
ok
All ok.
None received yet.
Just got to wait. In a lot of pain.
N/A – I am here with my son.
No had any care yet. Just waiting.

QUESTION 8: How would you rate the quality of care?



Rating	Number of Respondents
Poor	0
Fair	3 (5%)
Average	8 (14%)
Good	26 (47%)
Excellent	13 (23%)
Did Not Respond	6 (11%)

Question 8 Summary:

- The majority of respondents rated the quality of care as Good (47%) to Excellent (23%)

QUESTION 9: How does your experience today compare with what you expected when you decided to go to A&E? Prompts: • How long did you expect to wait? • Is the communication about what is happening or what would happen met your expectations?

Expected experience/waiting time	Number of Respondents
1 hr.	3 (5%)
2 hrs.	2 (4%)
2 – 3 hrs.	3 (5%)
3 hrs.	3 (5%)
4 hrs.	3 (5%)
4 – 5 hrs.	1 (2%)
5 hrs.	1 (2%)
A few hrs.	2 (4%)
As Expected	13 (23%)
Expected long wait	8 (14%)
Longer wait than expected	1 (2%)
Quicker than expected	12 (21%)
Unknown/not answered	4 (8%)

Question 9 Summary:

- Most respondents did not say whether their answer related to their expectations in terms of their experiences or in terms of their expected waiting time so this question needs to be viewed with some caveats (from the wording of the question and the prompts used there is a reasonable assumption that the answers relate to the expected waiting time).
- However, 21% of respondents said they were seen quicker than expected.
- 33 (59%) did not respond to the question about communication. However, 18 (32%) said communications met their expectations and 5 (9%) said it did not meet their expectations.
- The following free text comments relate to issues experienced by respondents.

Expect 4 hour wait. The board is saying 1 hr.
As expected. Have to wait your turn. Some people watching videos – off-putting for some very ill people. One small sign to 'switch off'. Not good to hear mobile phones. didn't expect that.
Wait was what I expected. People who arrived after go in before me. Waiting time board not kept up to date (last done 7.30, now 3.45 pm!)
Don't know how long it would be. Timing's a little vague. I'm quite accepting of the wait.
Don't know how long wait will be. Written sign, put up at 11.30 says the wait is 3 yrs. It is now 3.40pm, the sign is out of time?

QUESTION 10: Is there anything else about your experience of being in hospital that you'd like to add?

Question 10 Summary:

- The following table shows all the free text comments received for this question.
- Themes (more than 1 comment received) from the comments are:
 - There should be free access to water (2 comments)
 - There should be better/more/healthier food options (4 comments)
 - There could be clearer signage explaining the Navigator Nurse/Red Area process (4 comments)
 - Communication could be better (5 comments)
 - General praise for staff (5 comments)

No, it's hunky dory. A cup of builder's tea, 2 sugars would be nice. And not have to pay for it. Need to have healthy foods on offer in the vending machines.
To remember to bring a bottle of water and a book
Staff are under rated here
Ongoing communication about what is happening needs to be better.
The red chair/navigator nurse process and access needs to be easier. Today was good but patient has asthma and been to A&E previously battling to breathe and it took a long time to be referred to resus.
I've been waiting a long time for patient transport to take me home. I saw a physio today after dinner, I had a sandwich for lunch. [3pm now] It's been a long wait.
It would be good to know whether to go to the receptionist or the red area (navigator nurse office) first.
Better, realistic communication about when you will be seen will help understanding and make you more aware and be patient.
Car park is very expensive. Shouldn't have to pay. Frustrated because specialist refuses to see patient until tests done by Specsavers today are repeated again by a healthcare professional and Specsavers test results are verified. The food options on offer in the automated dispenser in the department are not healthy.
Increase funding for higher staffing levels. Credit to the staff who have to handle issues such as conflict resolution.
Glad that research is being done by Healthwatch.
Could let you know what is happening - feel I've been forgotten
Water cooler needed. No aircon here.
Some confusion at entry point.
Department is clean but worn (from comment made on pg. 4 of survey)
Navigator signage could be moved to be clearer. Number system could be electronic
Patient had to go back with more important details. Needs to have a catheter.
All good. No complaints. Professionally run. Everyone knows their job.
Awkward if going on own. Might miss hearing your number called.
Staff are excellent. Very calm. Polite. Efficient.
Vending machine very expensive. Can't go out. Have to wait your turn. Husband is diabetic. Only Quavers available.
Need to have card payment option on the vending machine
I could do with lying down. But not available.

What will the waiting time be? (Patient has not been told she will see an eye doctor. The receptionist told her they will bleep one.)

Do a good job. Keep an eye on everyone.

Don't want to come here again. No one tells you what to do.

QUESTION 11: How would you rate your overall experience in A&E?

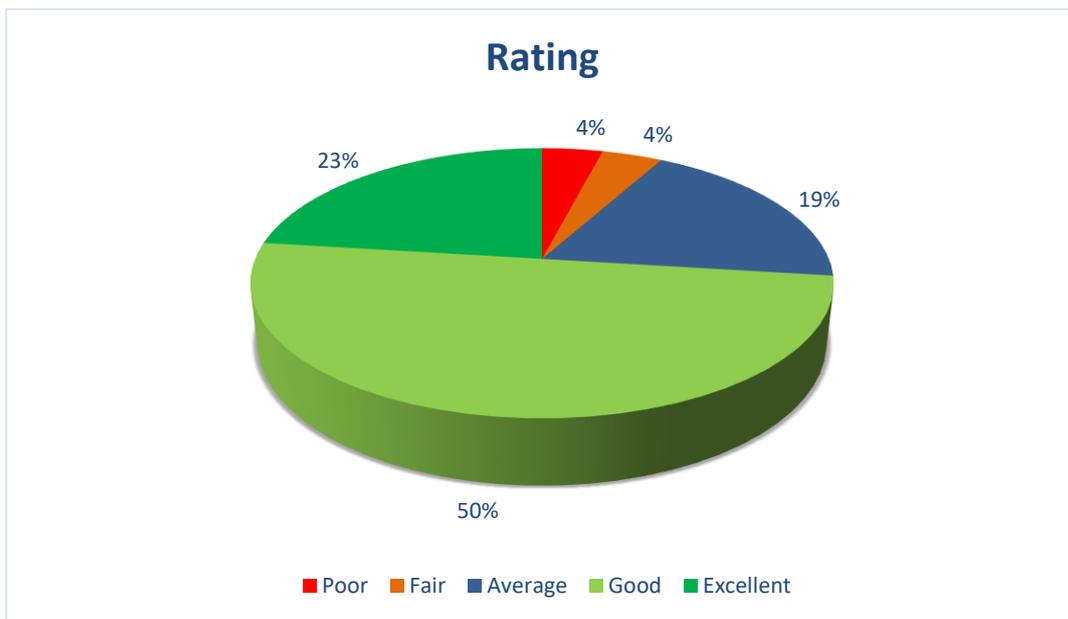


Rating	Number of Respondents
Poor	4 (7%)
Fair	4 (7%)
Average	14 (25%)
Good	24 (43%)
Excellent	9 (16%)
Did Not Respond	1 (2%)

Question 11 Summary:

- The majority of respondents rated their overall experience as Good (43%) to Excellent (16%)

QUESTION 12: How would you rate the cleanliness of the department?

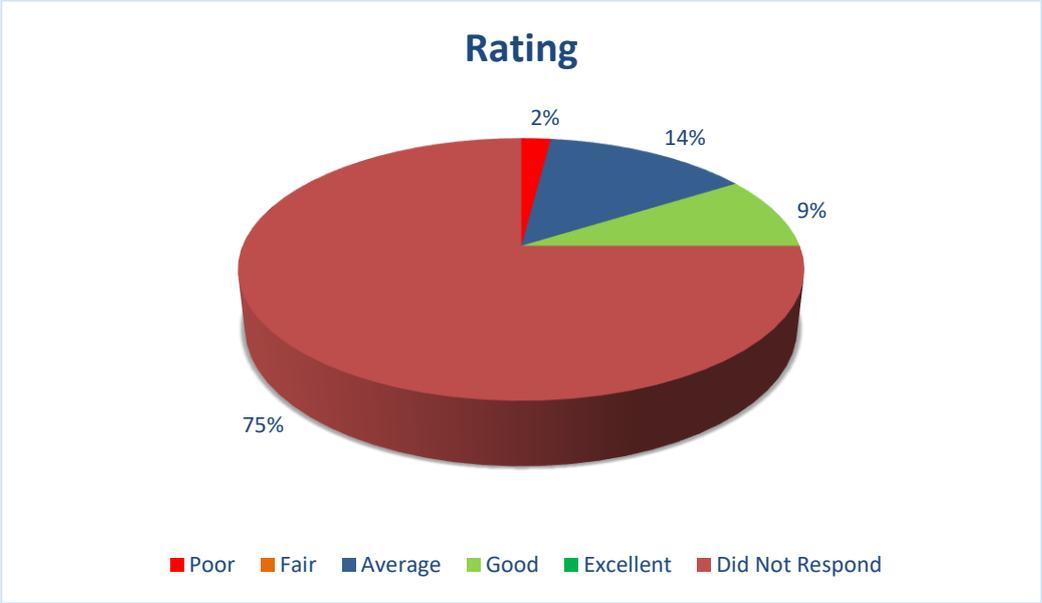


Rating	Number of Respondents
Poor	2 (4%)
Fair	2 (4%)
Average	11 (19%)
Good	28 (50%)
Excellent	13 (23%)
Did Not Respond	0

Question 12 Summary:

- The majority of respondents rated cleanliness of the department as Good (50%) to Excellent (23%).

QUESTION 13: How would you rate the quality of food at the department?



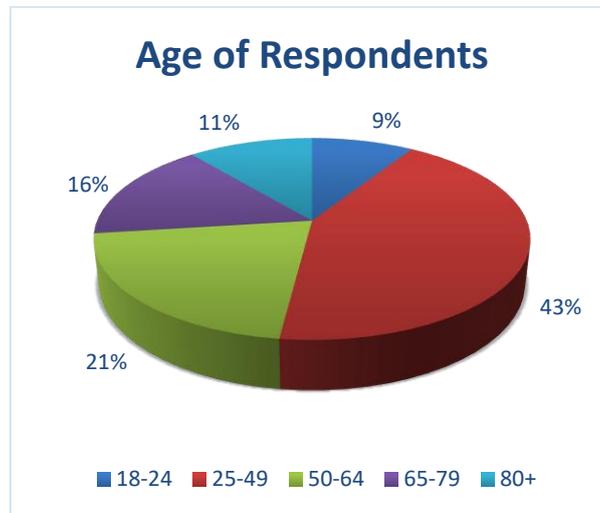
Rating	Number of Respondents
Poor	1 (2%)
Fair	0
Average	8 (14%)
Good	5 (9%)
Excellent	0
Did Not Respond	42 (75%)

Question 13 Summary:

- The majority of respondents (75%) did not respond to this question.

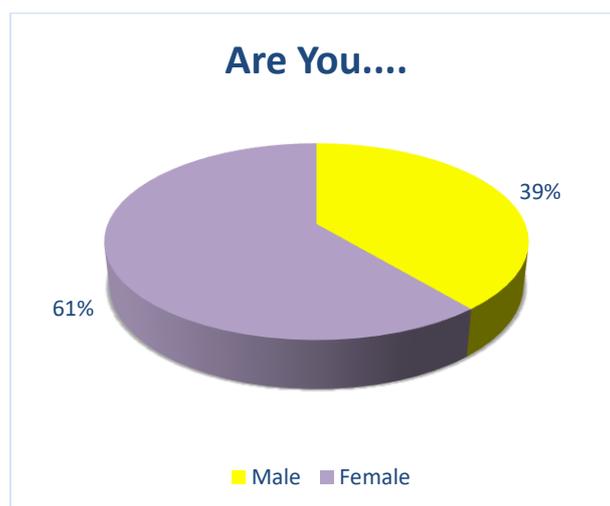
DEMOGRAPHICS (where stated)

QUESTION 14: Age



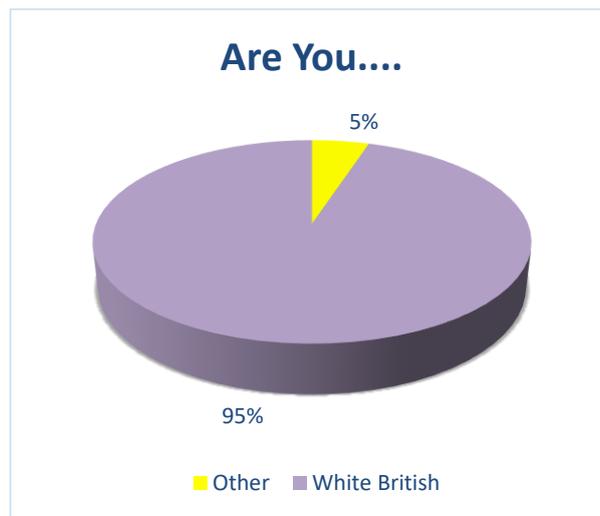
Age	Number of Respondents
1 to 17 yrs.	0
18 to 24 yrs.	5 (9%)
25 to 49 yrs.	24 (43%)
50 to 64 yrs.	12 (21%)
65 to 79 yrs.	9 (16%)
80+	6 (11%)
Prefer not to say	0

QUESTION 15: Are You....



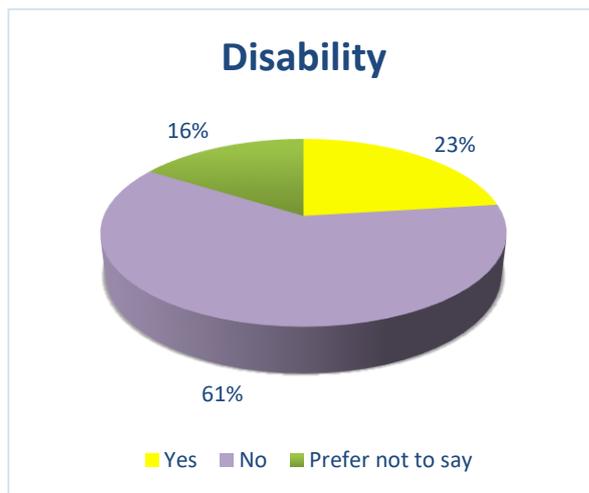
Are You...	Number of Respondents
Female	34 (61%)
Male	22 (39%)
Non-binary/Trans/Other/Prefer not to say	0

QUESTION 16: How would you describe your ethnic origin?



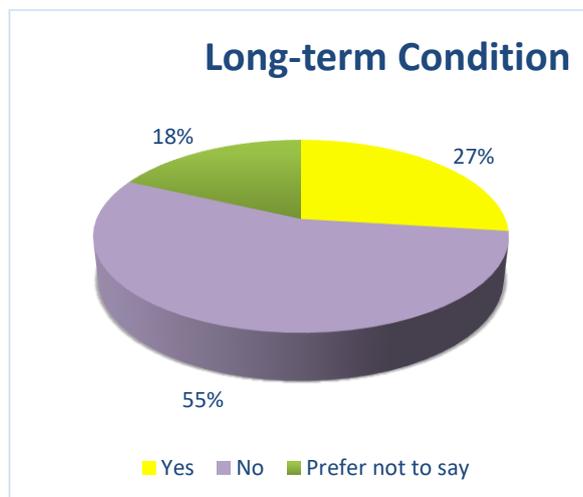
Are You...	Number of Respondents
African	0
Arab	0
Asian British	0
Any other Asian background	0
Any other Black background	0
Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background	1
Any other White background	1
Bangladeshi	0
Black British	0
Caribbean	0
Chinese	0
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
White British	53 (95%)
Other	0
Prefer not to say	1

QUESTION 17: Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



Response	Number of Respondents
No	34 (61%)
Yes	13 (23%)
Prefer not to say	9 (16%)

QUESTION 18: Do you consider yourself to have a long-term condition?



Response	Number of Respondents
No	31 (55%)
Yes	15 (27%)
Prefer not to say	10 (18%)

Additional Summary:

The following questions could easily be perceived/interpreted by respondents as asking for the same information (ambiguity) (learning point for the survey design?):

- Q3. How would you rate your time in the department?
- Q7. How satisfied have you been with your experience of care since you have been in A&E? (freetext)
- Q8. How would you rate the quality of care?
- Q11. How would you rate your overall experience in A&E?



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Published February 2020

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