

Communication

Effective communication is a critical underpinning of good clinical care. It is the basis on which rapport and trust are built, and therapeutic relationships are developed and maintained. As well as being an important driver of patient experience, it is also essential for patient safety and outcomes as good communication is necessary for patients, families and carers to take an active role in their own care.

Almost 1500 outpatients have now commented on our communication with them, with 77% of these comments being positive. Many (19%) of those positive comments describe the manner in which staff communicated. They describe staff who are friendly, caring, helpful, professional and efficient – all wonderful examples of staff living our values.

What is clear is that staff manner is very important for our patients and families. They want to know that their wellbeing, care and treatment matters to staff. For these patients, good communication is underpinned by empathy, kindness and compassion.

Information is also important; outpatients especially like to be given written or visual information to take with them, either to refer to again or to share with family or other providers.

It's great to see a big improvement for nurses and midwives since our previous report in July 2014. A whopping 9%, nearly an additional 10 patients in every 100, tell us that nurses and midwives ALWAYS listen to what they have to say, and an additional five in every 100 tell us they talk to them about condition and treatment in ways that are easy to understand. That's an amazing result and one our nursing and midwifery teams should be really proud of.

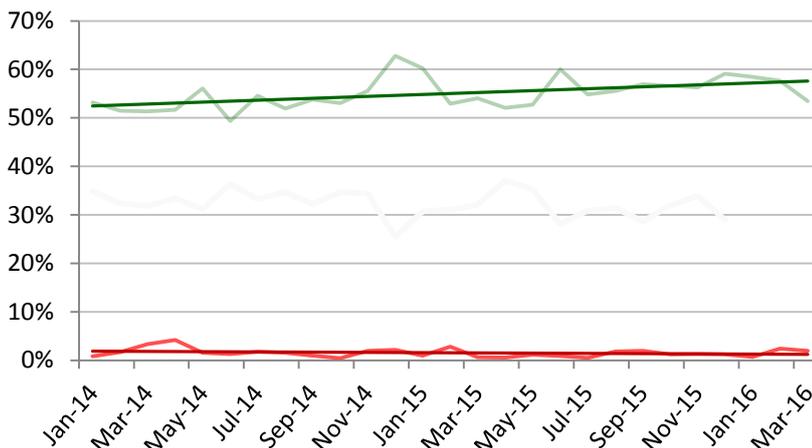
Our values: Welcome *Haere Mai* | Respect *Manaaki* | Together *Tūhono* | Aim High *Angamua*, collectively describe the process of effective communication and it's great to see the commitment of our staff reflected in these results.

Dr Andrew Old
Chief of Strategy, Participation & Improvement

OVERALL RATINGS

Our "excellent" ratings continue to rise, from an average of 53 percent in 2014, to an average of 55 percent to March 2015.

OUTPATIENT OVERALL EXPERIENCE OF CARE RATING, JAN 2014 TO MARCH 2016 (n=9838)



TOP THREE

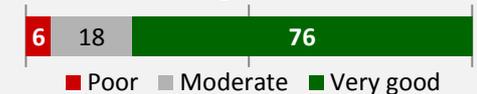
Our outpatients are asked to choose the three things that matter most.

1. Information (67%)

Getting good information is the aspect of our care most patients (67%) say makes a difference to the quality of their care and treatment.

"The main things I wanted to know were about when my operation might be scheduled and what the recovery would look like. All my questions were sympathetically answered. And I was told I could ring the clinic if my condition deteriorated. That was the most important piece of information."

How are we doing on information?

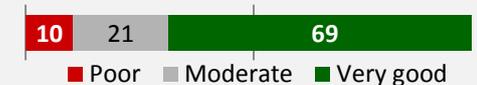


2. Organisation (53%)

For more than half of all our patients (53%), organisation, appointments and correspondence matter to the quality of their care and treatment.

"I am very fortunate to have a breast care nurse to help me liaise on appointments. Without her, it was previously more difficult."

How are we doing with organisation?

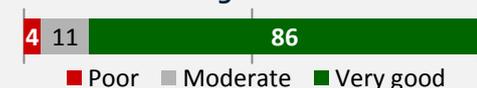


3. Confidence (51%)

Half our patients (51%) rated having confidence in their care and treatment as one of the things that make the most difference.

"Communication with the doctor was good and her explanation of my condition made me able to make a considered decision as to the treatment that I wanted."

How are we doing with confidence?



A focus on Communication

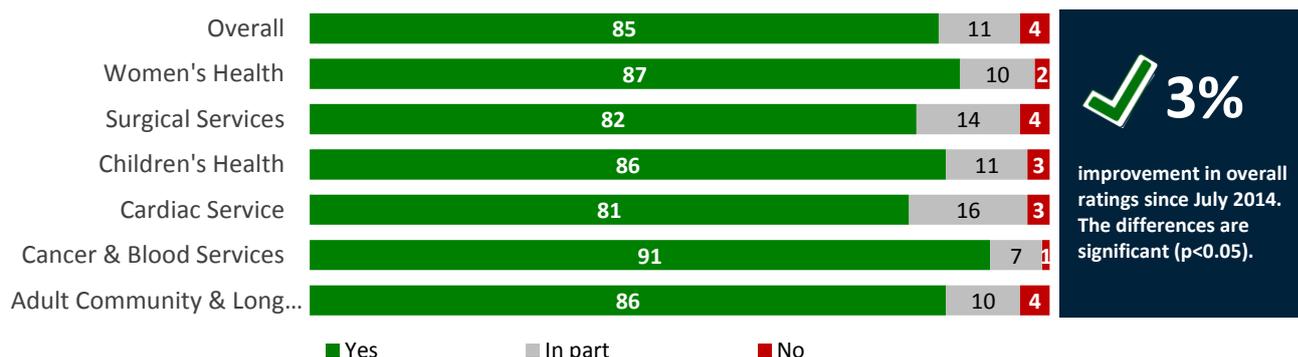
Outpatients who take part in the Outpatient Experience survey are asked if they had time to discuss their health and treatment, if they felt staff listened to what they had to say, and if they thought staff talked to them about their condition and treatment in ways that were easy to understand.

The following data are from the period April 1, 2015 to March 31, 2016. These data have been compared with data from the previous outpatients communication report, in July 2014, in order to establish whether there have been any significant changes.

Time to discuss health and treatment

The percentage of patients who say they were given enough time to discuss their health and treatment has improved by three percent when compared to the previous outpatient communication report in July 2014.

Percentage of patients who say they had time to discuss health and treatment (by directorate)

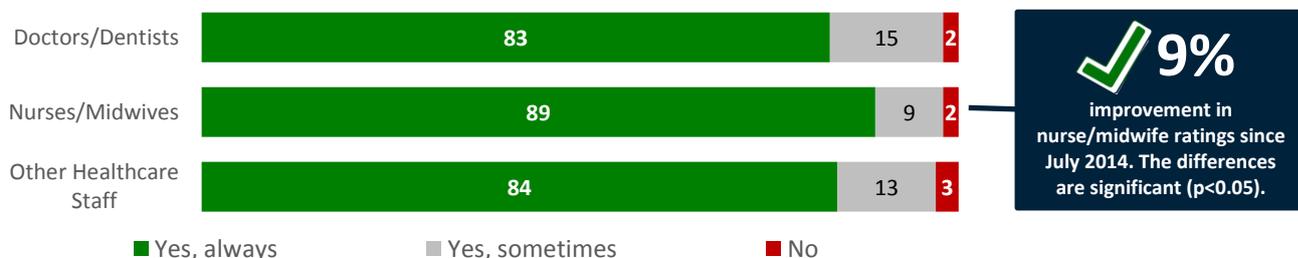


Adult community and long term conditions $n=480$; Cancer and Blood services $n=1027$; Cardiac service $n=180$; Children's health $n=631$; Surgical services $n=2221$; Women's Health $n=672$, Overall $n=5211$

Listening

There has been a nine percentage point increase in the numbers of patients who say that nurses and midwives listen to what they had to say, when compared with July 2014. Note that although there have been small improvements in listening ratings for doctors (2%) and other healthcare staff (2%), the differences are not significant.

Percentage of patients who say they felt staff listened to what they had to say

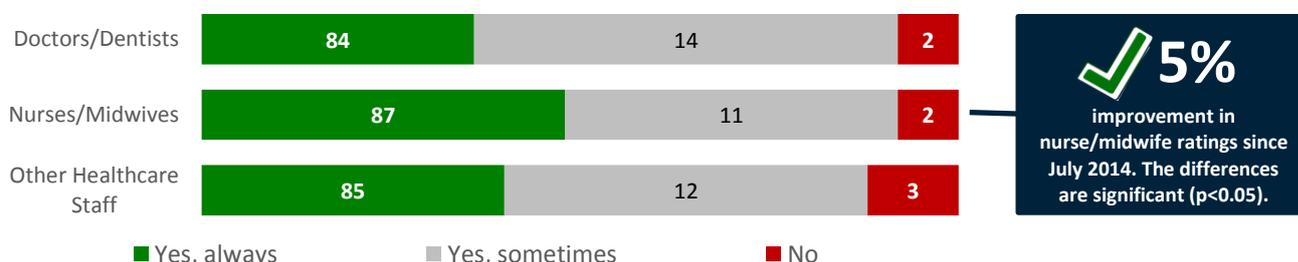


Doctors/Dentists $n=4071$; Nurses/Midwives $n=1034$; Other Healthcare Staff $n=1057$. Note that although there have been increases in doctors (2%) other healthcare staff (2%) ratings since July 2014, the differences are not significant.

Talking in ways that are easy to understand

Five percent more patients say that nurses and midwives talk to them in ways that are easy to understand, than in July 2014 (from 82% to 87%). Note that although there has been increase in other healthcare staff (3%) ratings since July 2014, the differences are not significant.

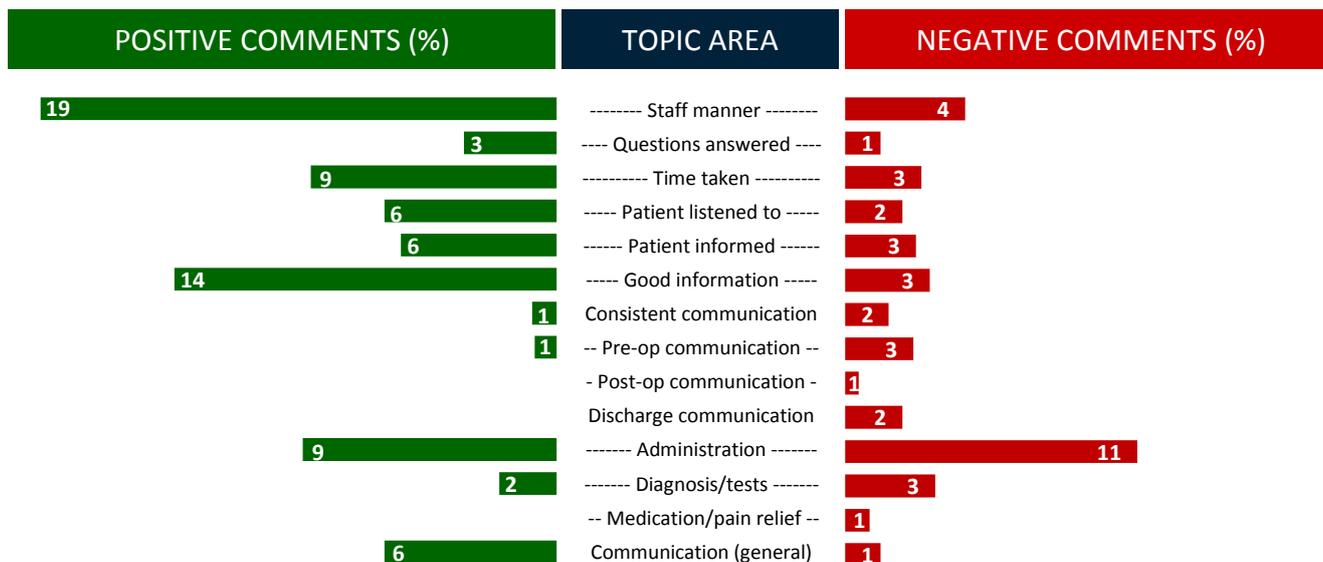
Percentage of patients who say staff talked to them about their condition and treatment in ways that made it easy for them to understand



Doctors/Dentists $n=3910$; Nurses/Midwives $n=974$; Other Healthcare Staff $n=1022$.

A CLOSER LOOK AT PATIENT COMMENTS

A total of 1439 outpatients commented on communication. More than three quarters (77%) of the comments were positive, while 39 percent of the comments were negative (note that some patients made both positive and negative comments, which is why total is greater than 100 percent).



PATIENT COMMENTS

GOOD STAFF MANNER (19%)

Patients were most likely to comment positively on staff manner (19%). A word frequency analysis shows that respondents use words such as friendly (n=148), caring (n=115), helpful (n=115), professional (n=54) and efficient (n=30) to describe the qualities they believe contribute to good staff manner and communication skills.

The [doctor] had a quiet and gentle demeanor thereby enabling me to speak honestly and confidently about my health issue. I felt empowered to join in the decision process.

I felt there was time, care, patience and a fundamental respect for who I was and [what] my needs were in the approach to communicating with me, by everybody.

The receptionist was very friendly and made me feel at ease. The [allied staff member] I saw was an excellent communicator - friendly, easy to talk to, a good listener, and didn't talk down to me. It was like talking to a friend!

GETTING GOOD INFORMATION (14%)

Patients appreciate it when they are given clear explanations about their care and treatment using terminology and language that is easy to understand. Many spoke about feeling more confident and as though they could make more informed decisions when this happened. A number of patients also commented on the value of having written information or diagrams.

Information conveyed in written or oral form was clear, focused and adequate.

Explanations were clear and included visuals to help.

Very clear info in laymans speak, upfront and reassuring.

POOR STAFF MANNER (4%)

Patients who commented negatively on poor staff manner (4%) mostly did so when they felt staff were disinterested, pre-occupied, or not engaged. This includes actions such as staff not introducing themselves, taking phone calls throughout the consultation, or not making eye contact. Several patients spoke about feeling ignored at reception.

The doctor seemed preoccupied and it was difficult to get straight answers from him as though he had decided and that was that.

Reception staff ... are rude look totally disinterested in their role and talk to you and others in the waiting area with no respect...

[The] doctor just read from the screen. he made very little eye contact. I didn't feel like he was interested in really talking through things.

POOR INFORMATION (4%)

Patients felt they were given poor information when the types of language and terms used meant they couldn't understand what was being said, it was not detailed enough or they didn't feel comfortable or confident enough to ask questions.

Consultant used words and descriptions at a high level. Only understandable by people working in the area.

No detail was given by doctor, just a few words.

Doctor spoke to the Nurse on further action required instead of talking to me using medical terms which made it hard to understand.

I did not ask [questions] because I felt intimidated...

PATIENT COMMENTS (cont...)

GOOD ADMIN COMMUNICATION (9%)

Almost one in 10 patients (9%) commented positively on how clear the communication was around appointments, particularly the text or phone call reminders and the details in the appointment letters. Those who had to change appointments found it easy to do so. Patients also appreciated being kept up to date on waiting times whilst at the appointment.

The receptionist was amazing. She came and asked me after a while who I was there to see and then she told me she was very sorry but his clinic is running an hour behind schedule and she would see where they were up to. She followed this up and came back and informed me.

Some examples of good communication I have had are being phoned when my appointment is changed by the hospital then receiving a new letter to confirm this [and] being able to email the appointment receptionist to advise what dates are going to be unsuitable for me prior to my appointment being sent.

TIME TAKEN (9%)

Nearly one in 10 patients commented that staff took time to explain what was happening, and that they were given time to digest explanations and consider questions or choices they needed to make.

Those talking with me did not seem hurried or dismissive in any way, but gave opportunity for further questions if needed.

There was enough time in the appointment to thoroughly discuss my options. I was not rushed at all.

Didn't feel rushed and kept asking questions until I understood.

PATIENTS INFORMED (6%)

Patients appreciate it when they are informed and kept up to date on what is happening. They feel confident when they know what is happening, why it is happening and when it is happening. Patients also appreciated being kept advised on delays or waiting times.

[Staff] always made things clear as to what the next steps would be and how [things were] tracking. It made everything so much easier...

PATIENTS FEEL LISTENED TO (6%)

Patients commented positively when they felt they had been heard, that their care and treatment had been discussed with them, and when they felt in control of the decision-making process.

I was concerned re treatment plan over the long term and the doctor listened very carefully and gave relevant information to help with decision making.

I was spoken to as an adult with the ability to process information and make decisions, my questions were answered, when I left I felt that I had been fully informed.

POOR ADMIN COMMUNICATION (11%)

Most of those who commented negatively on administrative communication did so because of confusion around appointments and scheduling e.g. they were expecting a follow up appointment/letter/phone call but didn't receive one. A number of respondents requested that email is used as well as text and postal communication.

The letter that gives the first appointment at the clinic does not make it especially clear that the appointment is for a preliminary assessment. So far as the patient knows, it could be for the operation itself. This is not a big deal, but it affects mental preparedness.

At follow ups waiting time has been appalling with no explanations (50-60mins before being seen). I work and it is not appropriate to need to take that much time off work.

PATIENT FELT RUSHED (3%)

A small number of patients (3%) felt hurried or rushed. As a result, many of these patients felt that they left their appointment with unanswered questions, or little clarity around next steps.

The staff seemed overwhelmed by the number of patients they had to deal with and did not seem to be interested in me at all.

I felt rushed so don't feel I got all the info I needed & it was all very negative & not very helpful with my recovery.

It sometimes feels rushed, and it is sometimes uncomfortable to ask questions.

PATIENTS UNSURE OR UNINFORMED (3%)

Some patients (3%) felt they were not kept informed or updated about their care and treatment, and were unsure what the next steps were. A number of those who commented negatively did so because of waiting times, with many having to wait more than one hour past their scheduled appointment time.

I would like to see more care given to [children's] needs ... in particular MUCH SHORTER waiting times. Young ones can't handle the 2 hour waits that other patients have to see a clinician.

PATIENTS DO NOT FEEL LISTENED TO (2%)

A small number of patients (2%) felt that they had not been listened to, or that their concerns had been brushed off or were seen as unimportant. Some of these felt as though they had limited say in their care and treatment, and that what they wanted didn't matter.

I felt the doctor wasn't listening or trying to understand my concerns. He seemed disinterested.

[I felt] talked down to and really did not listen as to what I wanted