

Royal London Hospital

Community insights report

2018



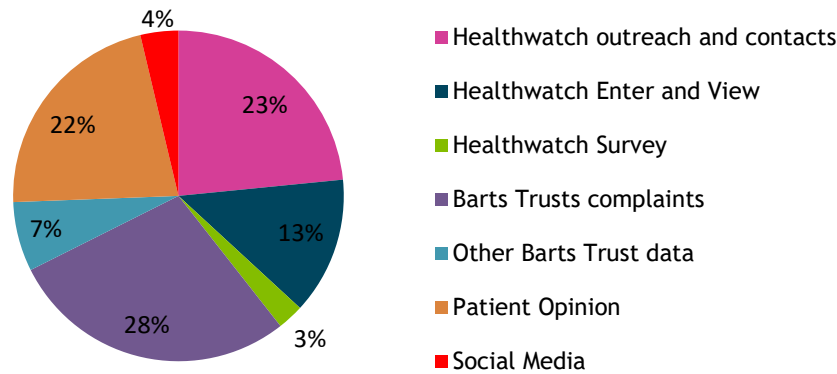
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Summary of findings

In 2018 to date, we have analysed **1406 comments** from service users, identifying a total of **4780 issues**.

Data sources



What we have learned

Aspects praised by patients

The quality of clinical treatment provided at the hospital is good; patients report achieving good health outcomes following treatment; they trust doctors and see them as knowledgeable professionals. The paediatric dentistry team and the neurology department in particular receive praise for not just their competence, but also their kind attitude.

A&E patients and hospital inpatients think the hospital is thorough with investigations and diagnosis, which makes them feel reassured.

Nurses (particularly those in inpatient wards) and midwives are generally praised; they are seen as empathetic, efficient and knowledgeable.

Doctors and nurses communicate well with patients about their symptoms, diagnosis and treatment options, empowering them to make informed choices about their care.

Perinatal community services classes, postnatal midwifery, health visitors, breastfeeding support) are useful for new parents.

Aspects criticised by patients

Admin issues have a strong negative effect on patient experience at every stage of the care pathway. They include:

- Miscommunications regarding patient transport, leading to delays or cancellations.
- Correspondence (including referrals, appointment letters, discharge letters) not being sent or being sent to the wrong address.
- Errors in appointment letters.
- Errors in scheduling appointments, cancellations not communicated to patients.
- Errors in test results; test results lost or not communicated to patients.
- Errors in patient records, medicine charts or prescriptions, potentially putting patients' health at risk.

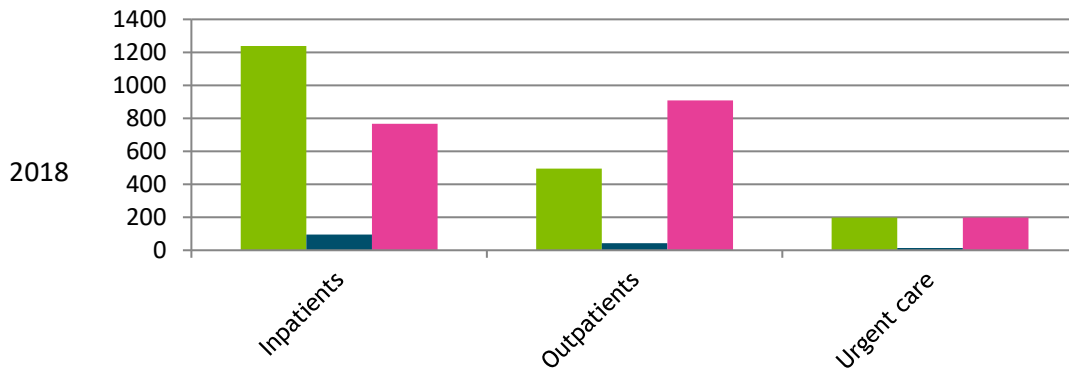
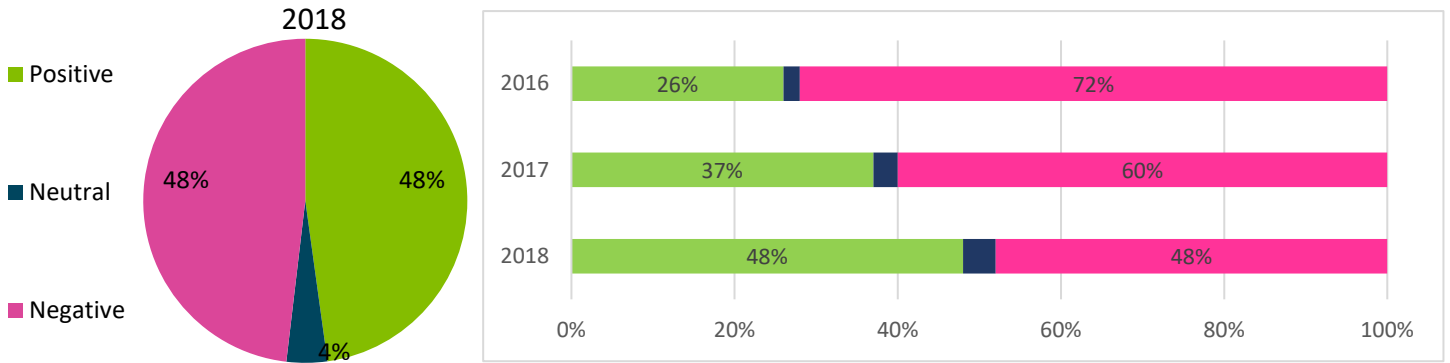
Internal communication between staff members is poor; patient information does not circulate well between professionals, leading to delays in care and further errors.

Repeated cancellations cause severe delays (on multiple months) in receiving care.

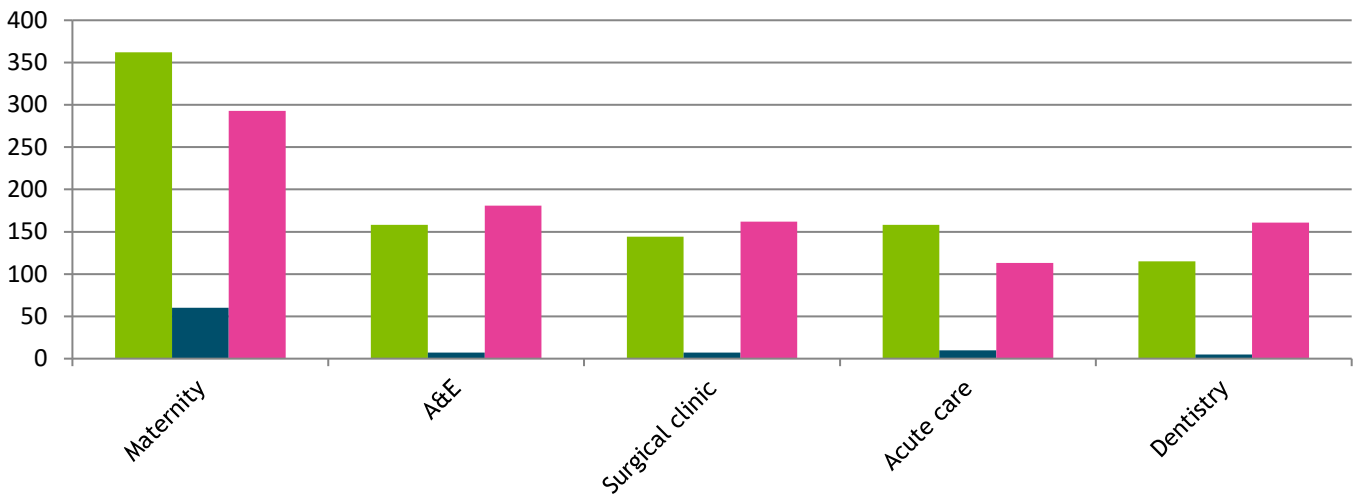
General opinion

Overall, opinion of the hospital is **mixed**.

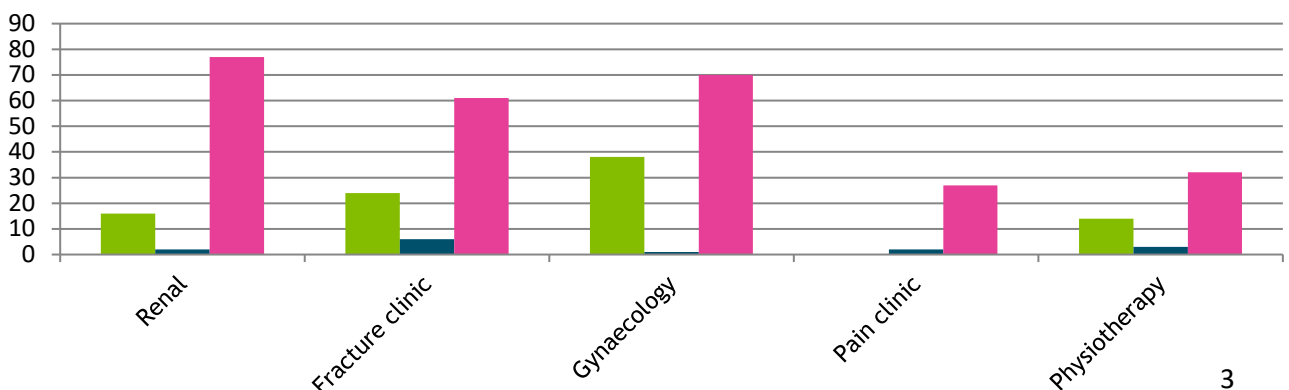
Compared with 2017, it has **improved**.



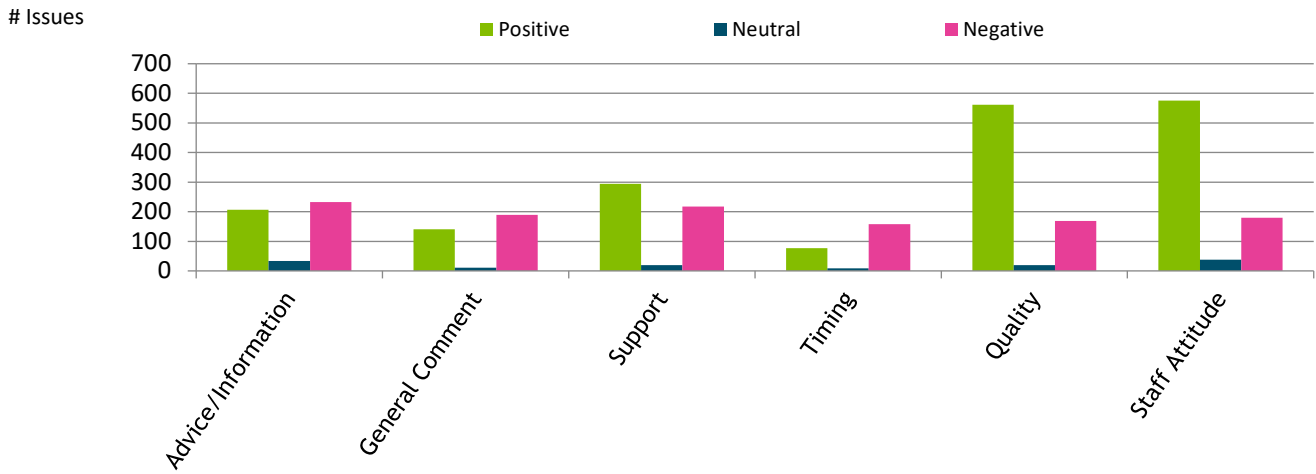
Most discussed departments/ services



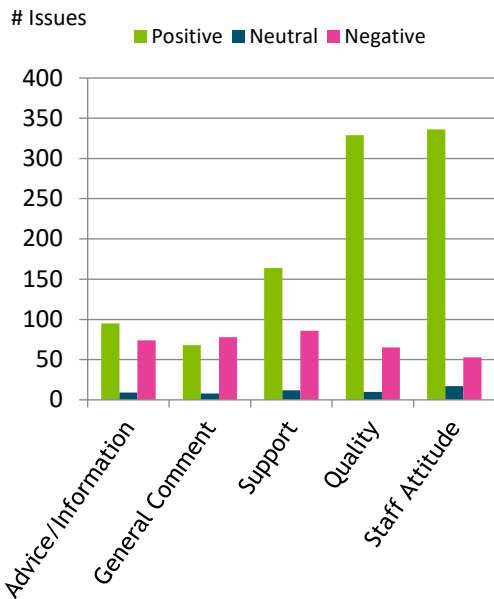
Departments receiving negative feedback



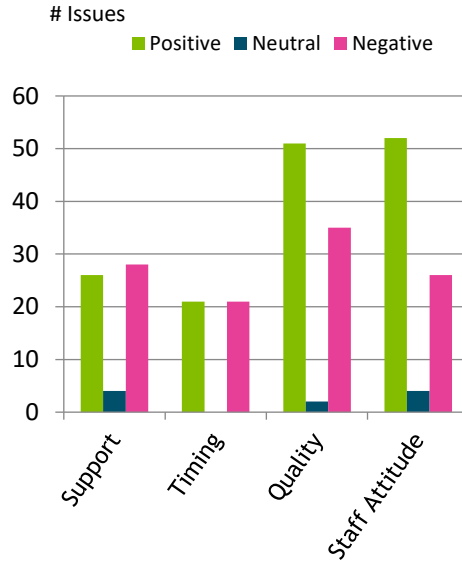
Service aspects most commented upon



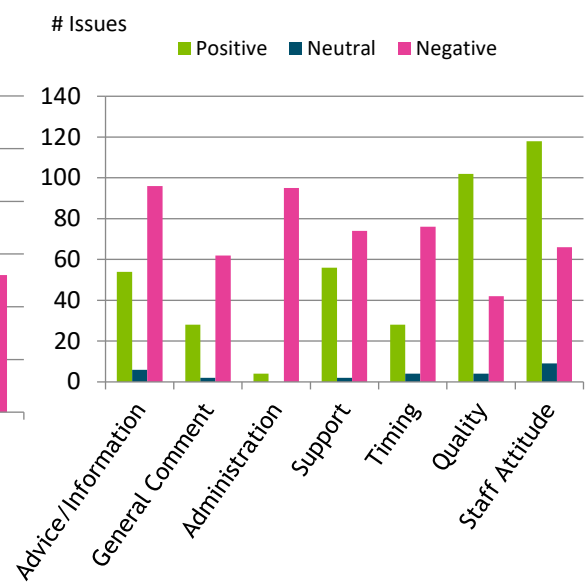
Most commented upon: inpatients



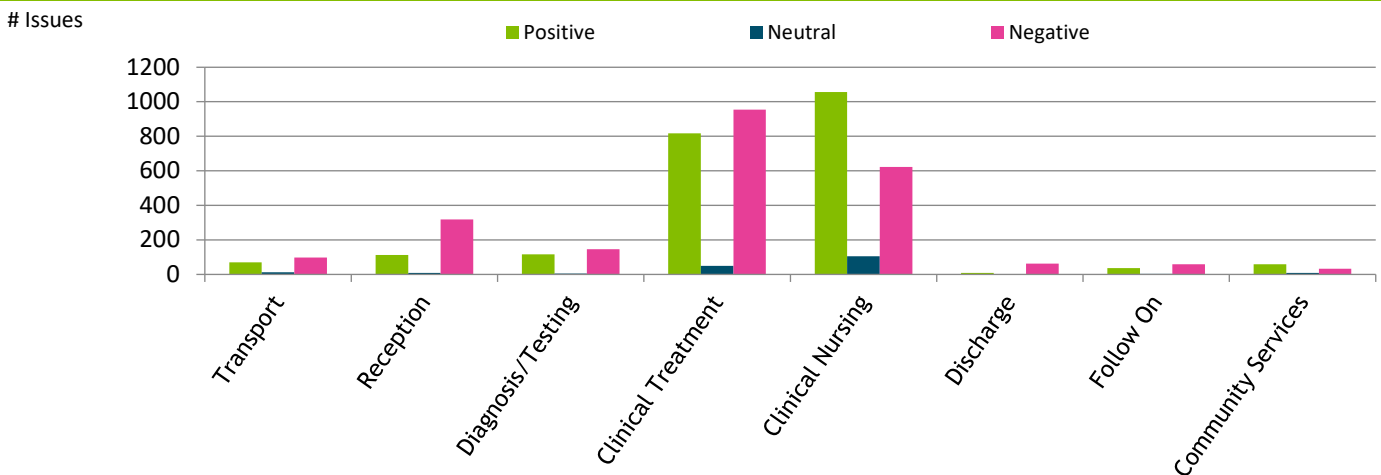
Most commented upon: urgent care



Most commented upon: outpatients

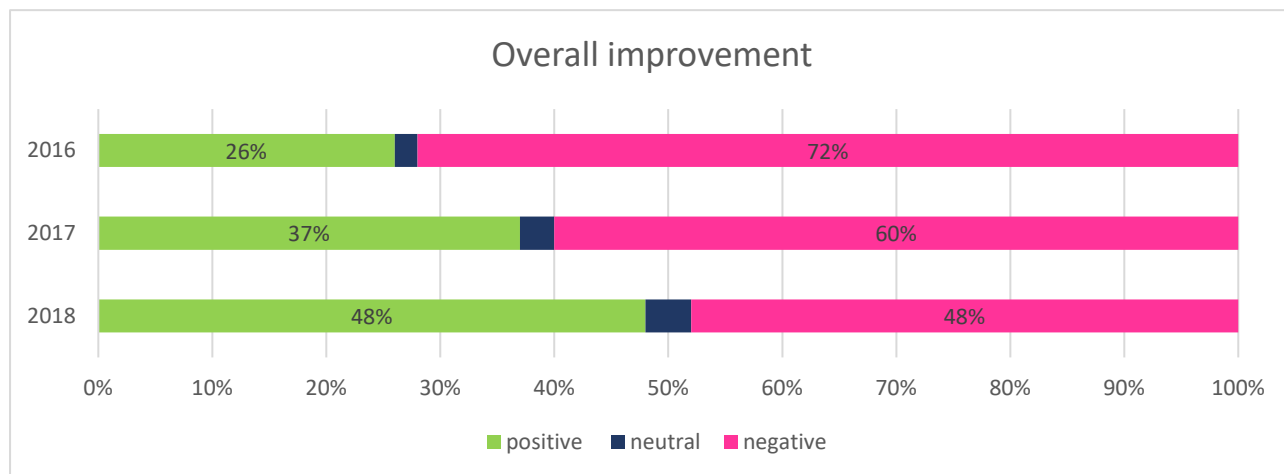


The care pathway



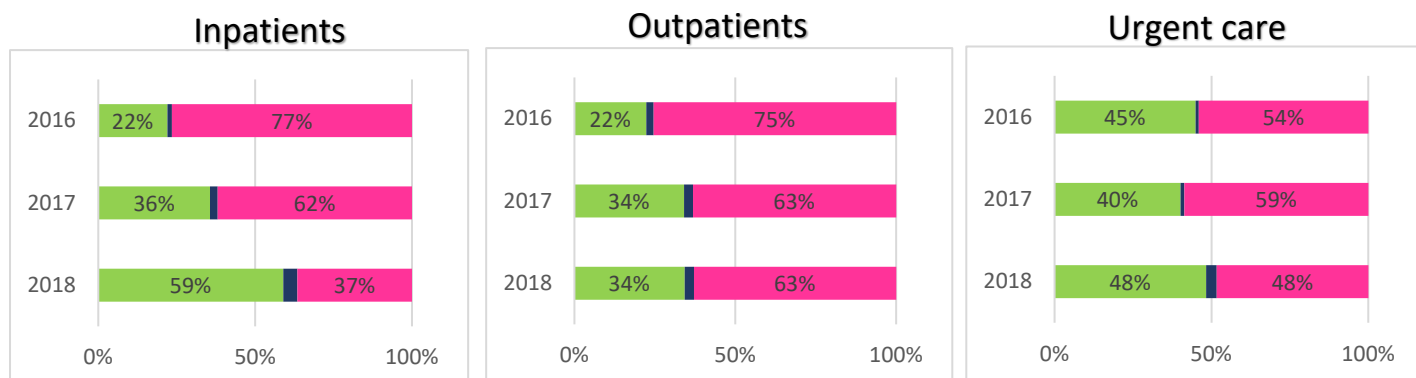
2016-2018 comparison

Between 2016 and 2018, services provided by the Royal London Hospital have **improved**.

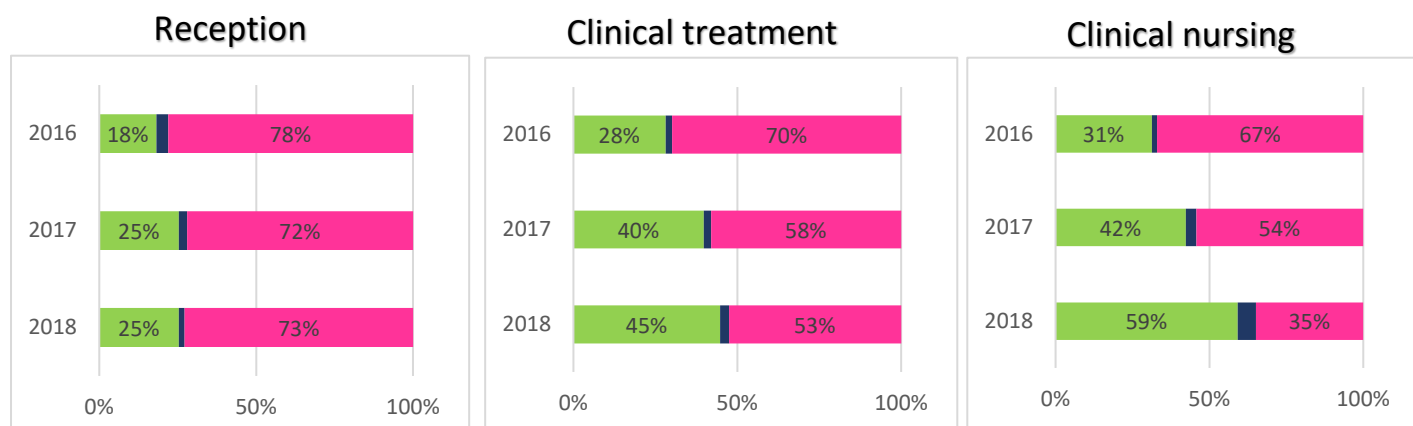


2016: 1533 comments, 4173 issues; 2017: 1579 comments, 4159 issues; 2018: 1405 comments, 4775 issues

Inpatients' opinion shows a clear improving trend. **Outpatients'** opinion has only slightly improved in 2016, then stayed the same. **Urgent care patients'** opinion has slightly improved.



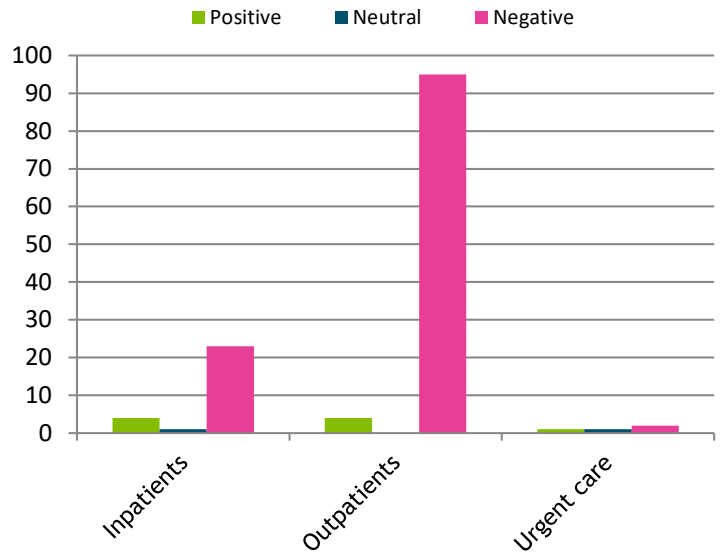
Opinion of **clinical nursing** shows a clear improving trend, while opinion of **clinical treatment** improved between 2016 and 2017, and opinion of **reception services** stayed the same.



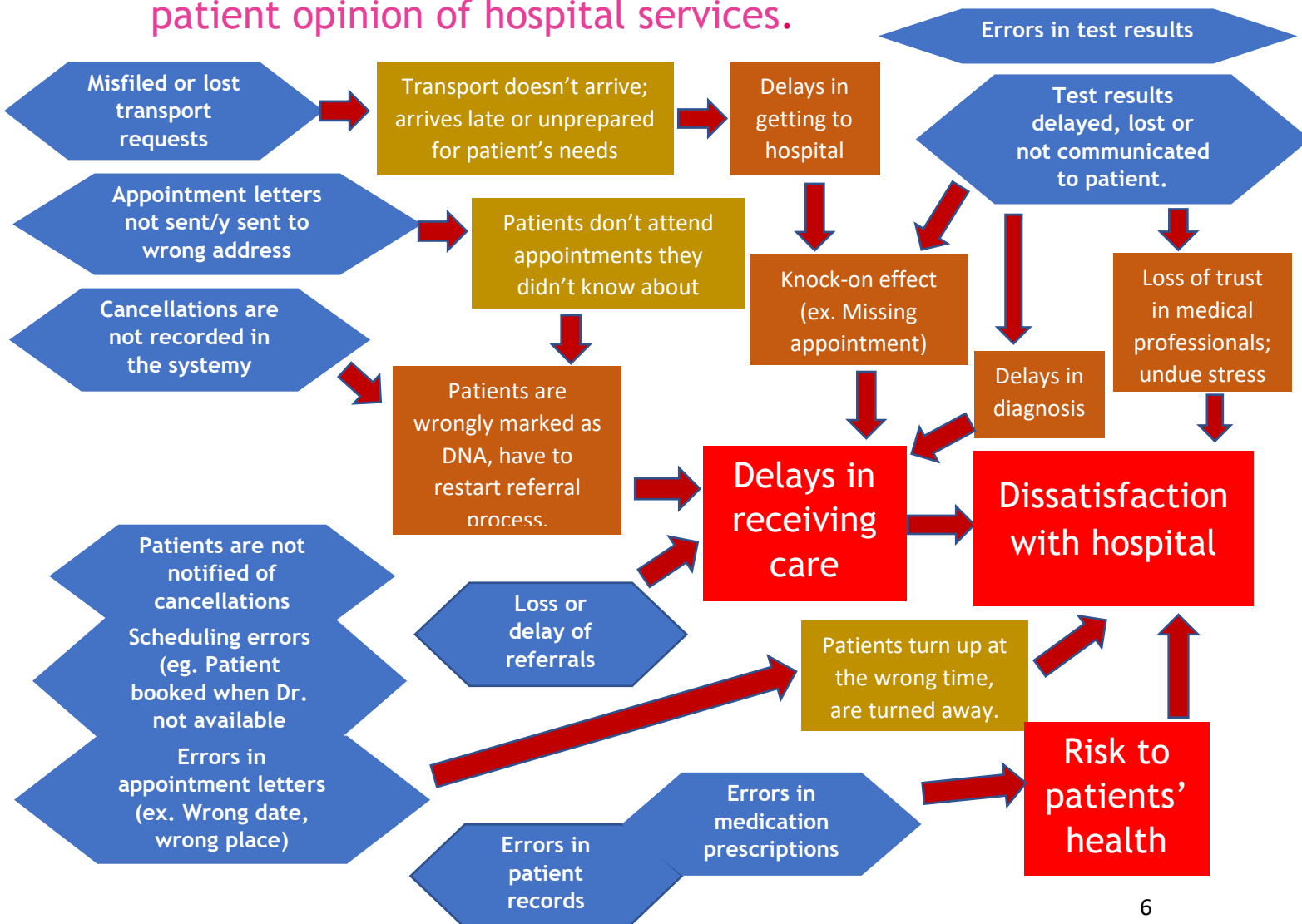
Focus on: admin systems

Administration in the Royal London Hospital is widely criticised by patients. Opinion about admin systems is **93% negative**.

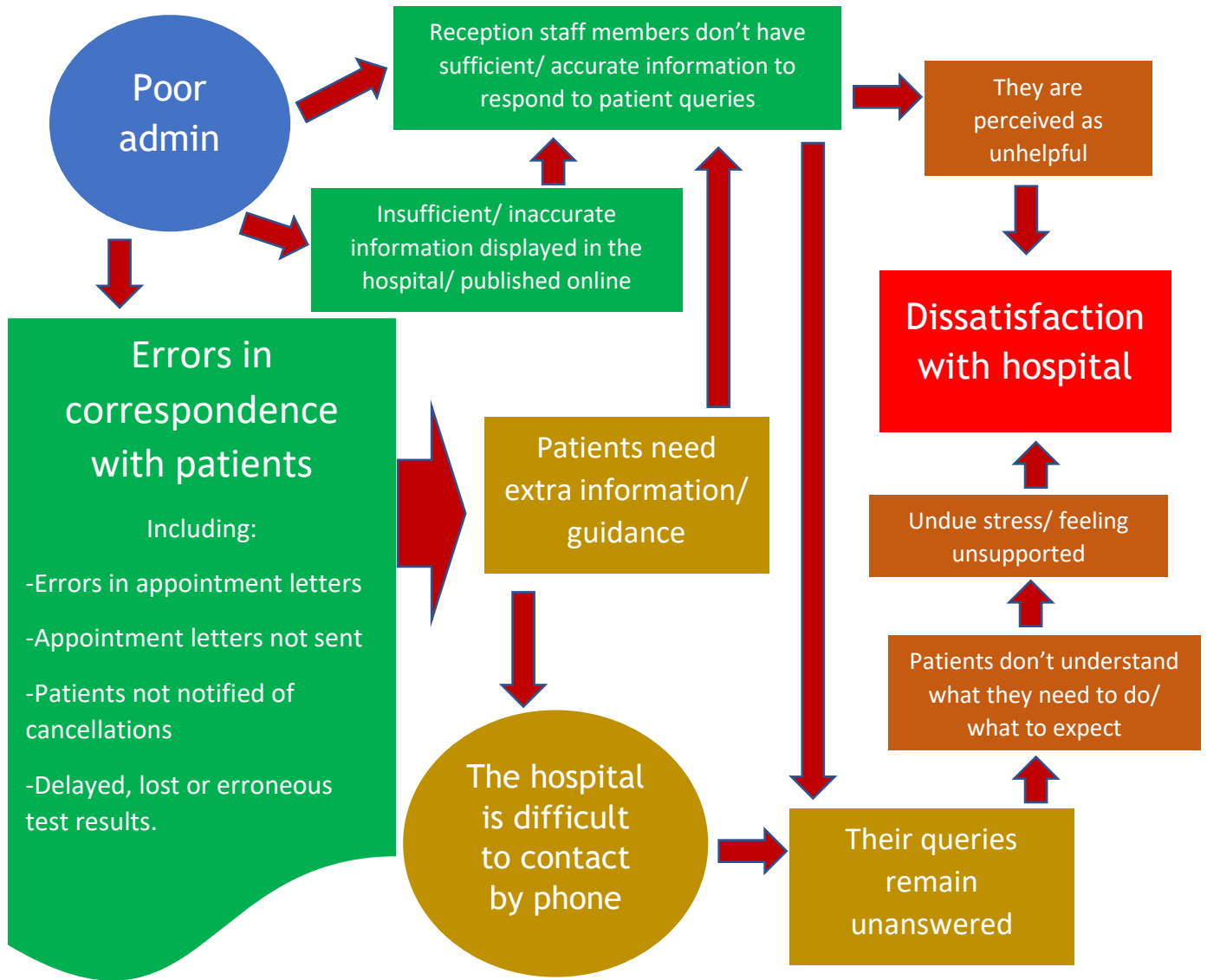
Hospital outpatients are, by far, the group most likely to complain about admin systems, as many of the issues they report pertain to appointments, specialist referrals and test results rather than planning or organisation within inpatient wards.



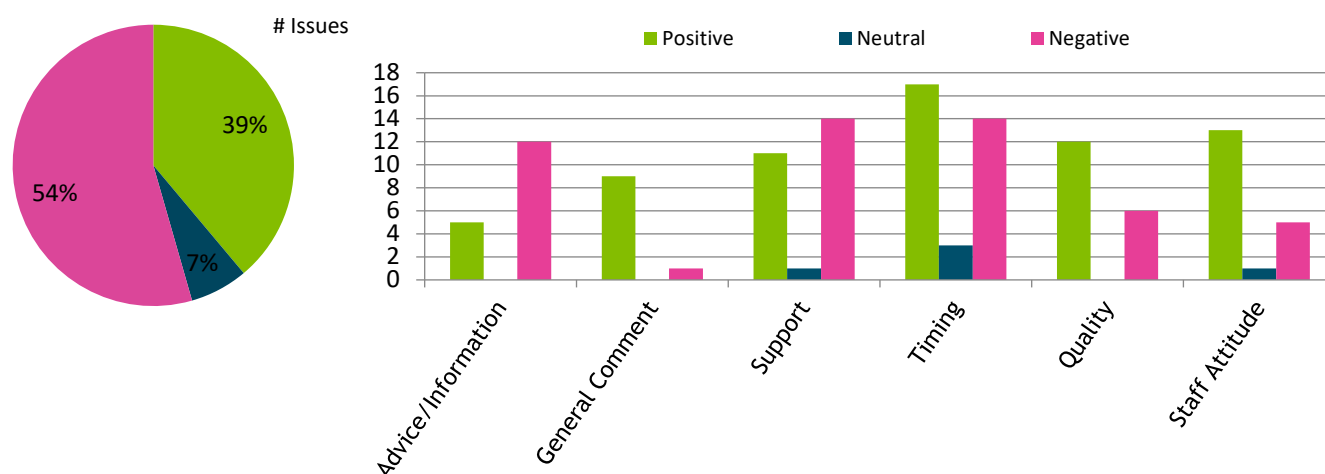
Furthermore, poor admin has a knock-on effect on patient opinion of hospital services.



Poor admin affects communication between patients and staff members, increasing dissatisfaction.



Transport



Aspects praised by patients

The quality and punctuality of transport services have improved, compared to previous reports.

- Talked with 3 patients waiting in Renal Department. All said their transport had been satisfactory recently - needed to be ready for collection 2h before appointment & normally collected on time.
- I was dreading the journey it was in the late afternoon and with multiple problems and needing a PET Scan, but we had the kindest nicest person you could wish to meet and as a bonus she brought us home.
- Hospital transport is improving and efficient. They are very friendly and on time.
- The Patient transport system is very good, could be improved by employing more drivers. I wait for up to half an hour to go home. If I took public transport I would have a relative with me.

Ambulance services are generally praised by patients.

- I had a fall and I had to call an ambulance to help me back up. I waited for two hours on the floor, but I was able to move a bit up and down. There were three blokes who came, one from Eritrea and two from Australia, they were very thorough, performed all sorts of checks, did all the paperwork. In the end, I didn't need to go to hospital.
- I called the ambulance [for my neighbour's infant]. The 999 line was very good, the ambulance was nearby and came very quickly.
- When NHS ambulance staff members arrived within 5mins, we was very impressed and the staff members were very helpful and friendly and most importantly they took ownership and drove us to the nearest Royal London Hospital and was seen straight away.
- I came with a colleague in an ambulance, after they suffered a hypo. The ambulance staff were fantastic as were the hospital staff once admitted.

Aspects criticised by patients

Admin issues cause delays in transport services. Kidney dialysis patients who use transport services regularly are particularly affected by this.

- *One patient said that on one occasion taxi had not arrived 1h after expected. She telephoned and found she had been left off the list, but another taxi was sent.*
- *Patient asked for her dialysis treatment time be changed from AM to PM on 22/01/18 as she wished to attend a funeral. The renal team confirmed this could be done and re-arranged her transportation. However, transport did not attempt to collect the patient as requested.*
- *The transport services attended [the patient's] previous address resulting in him missing his appointment.*

A small number of patients report transport not turning up or having significant delays. In some cases, communication with the control team has also been poor.

- *We had problems with the patient transport a couple of months ago. They said they would come and pick her up [after a hospital stay] but they didn't show. Her husband had to wheel her up in a wheel chair.*
- *Patient's daughter has raised concerns regarding her mother's experience with the patient transport service. Complainant feels as she has made complaints in the past, the mother is now suffering delays. In addition, she raises concerns regarding the communication from the control team.*

Delays in transport can have a knock-on effect, causing further disruptions to care.

- *Another patient reported that dialysis is provided on "first come, first served" basis as equipment becomes available. Thus, delay in transport can result in additional delay waiting for the equipment.*
- *On the last day [as an inpatient at the Royal London, with a heart attack], I was told I will be given breakfast early, at 6 am because I was supposed to be taken to Barts at 8 am. I had the early breakfast, showered, packed my hospital bag and waited. 8 am came and went. 9 am came and went. Transport only showed up at 10. By then, I was really worried I would miss my appointment.*
- *Formal complaint regarding the non-emergency patient transport service which arrived late to transfer the patient into hospital for an operation.*

Not all transport vehicles are appropriate for disabled passengers, and the control team is not always aware of passengers' special needs.

- *Patient wishes to raise formal complaint as she was unable to travel via PTS as her powerchair has no clamping points. Patient had to take taxi to appointment instead. She would like a reimbursement and believes the transport policy requires a review.*
- *Patient's daughter has raised concerns regarding her mother's experience of the patient transport services on 14 March 2018. She would like to know why the service was delayed and why the wheelchair requested was not provided. In addition, she alleges that the driver locked the patient in the ambulance for 20 minutes when searching for a wheelchair at the hospital.*

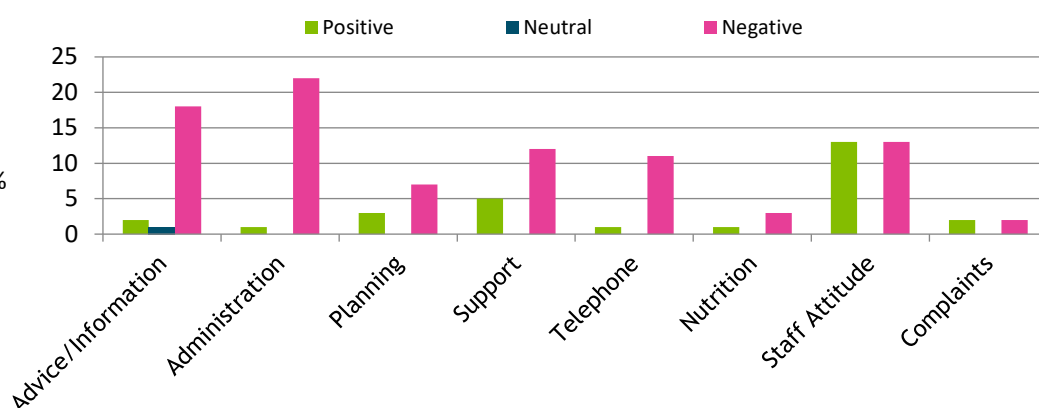
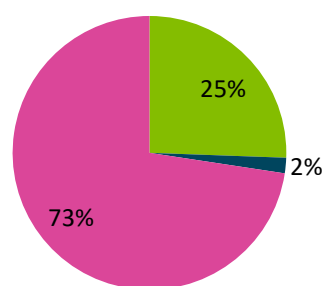
Patients are concerned about cuts and changes to the transport service, as many feel they have no viable alternative.

- *Two of three patients said they would not be able to use public transport inbound and all patients said they were too unwell after treatment to use public transport to go home.*
- *I can't take any public transportation because of problems with retention and learning disabilities. If given an option of volunteers guiding me through the public transportation, I would not be comfortable and wouldn't want to rely on anything other than patient transport. I have tried using public transportation (trains) in the past, but I have been sick for the past 2 weeks.*
- *I don't use patient transport frequently, this is my first time because I came by ambulance from another hospital. I was not aware of the changes to the service but I would have to call an ambulance as I cannot work and taxis would be too expensive. I only use taxis as a last option.*
- *If I had to, I would use a train, but it would be very difficult because of the nature of my injury.*
- *She said that she would be able to travel on public transport, but only if accompanied by her husband, which "would be problematic".*
- *I was not aware of the eligibility criteria for patient transport, but if I was not eligible, I wouldn't be able to attend appointments because taxis are too low and can't request specific taxis. Public transport is not an option for me. I always need to be accompanied and home visits is the only thing the hospital could do to make things easier.*
- *If I wasn't eligible for patient transport, I would not be able to come into treatment. The Train station closest to me is very far and I could not manage the journey. My only option would be a taxi, but it would be too expensive. Using public transport would also be a safety issue for me.*

Some patients were not aware of recent changes to eligibility criteria for hospital transport (although this may be because they were not personally affected).

- *I take patient transport frequently from Basildon in Essex. I was not aware of the changes made to the eligibility criteria and have not received any letters from the hospital.*
- *My son has multiple sclerosis and takes patient transport. He has had the condition for 10 years and has gotten treatment at Royal London Hospital since January 2018. My son lives with me and my wife and needs 24-hour care. We come to the hospital from N11. I am not aware of the changes made to the eligibility criteria and haven't received any letter from the hospital.*

Reception



Aspects praised by patients

Some patients have found reception staff members to be polite and helpful.

- Generally, the appointments with the midwives have been good and the reception team has been nice too. They have all been polite and gave me the information I needed.
- The Staff were very nice and friendly and helped to get to the right area.
- Came here for a blood test, staff were very professional and efficient, staff appeared to be pleasant and friendly, short waiting time (15 minutes), travelled to hospital by taxi, easy to find, easy to navigate inside of hospital, overall satisfied with service provided.
- Every staff member was extremely kind, caring and understanding and made me feel comfortable and welcomed. Everything was explained well and I would like to thank all the staff.
- The whole process flowed smoothly from admission to discharge and at all points of contact, the staff were polite, happy, calming, caring, reassuring. I don't think I could have wanted for better care and I want to say a huge thank you to all the people that I came into contact with during my time there.

Auxiliary staff also receive praise.

- All the people involved in my care from reception staff, nurses, cleaners and catering staff were lovely.
- The play therapist comes every day. My son (3 yrs old) is bed bound, so he can't go to the play room, but the therapist comes to play with him. He provided a TV and the DVDs he wanted and comes to distract him during blood tests and when they're putting in canulas.
- Absolutely top class treatment from @NHSBartsHealth Thank you to everyone from the porters, play specialists, docs and nurses for making us feel so cared for.

Aspects criticised by patients

There are reports of errors in appointment scheduling, as well as inaccurate or contradictory information in correspondence regarding appointments.

- *Patient not happy that they were sent an appointment for dental imaging on a bank holiday and the whole service was closed.*
- *My appointment, on November 13, was cancelled four days before it was scheduled. I then received an SMS reminder for the same appointment, but also a letter from the nutritionist telling me my appointment is on February 11. Yesterday and today I spent two hours trying to get hold of the hospital on the phone trying to understand what's going on and when I am supposed to attend. None of the phone numbers on the appointment letter were working- no one was picking up and they didn't even go to voicemail. I eventually found the right number on the internet.*
- *An appointment was booked on Christmas Day. When this was queried an appointment was booked for almost a year later.*
- *I had two appointments cancelled (this ap. were booked once each month); One of them, I went there and the receptionist said "I am sorry, your physiotherapist (I didn't know I had one) is in a training, he won't be able to see you today" Imagine my face after training (by myself) and waiting one month to see if things are working. Nobody said anything at all, no letter, no SMS, no emails. The second one, I went there (at this point they changed me to another physiotherapist without reason or explaining why and this is especially hard because I worked with the last physiotherapist for three months and I trusted him as a professional a lot) and there was a session just for ladies which meant, I won't be able to be tested again as I couldn't use the gym. This is quite annoying because again this appointment was booked with one month in advance and I was very excited to show my progress so yeah, let's wait one month more.*
- *When my appointment came via post it was at the wrong clinic and with the wrong doctor.*

Patients report not receiving their appointment letters.

- *I had to cancel an appointment that I was unaware of, having received no letter, but which I was told about by a helpful lady at Direct Line Appointments Centre. An appointment was apparently arranged for [a date on a Sunday], which I am unable to attend, knew nothing about, and have been unable to let them know!*
- *My wife broke her foot recently and they discharged her from their care as she never came to her appointment as she never got the letter for her appointment. We had to chase the GP to get her referred again even though her foot was still in plaster. When they finally looked at their system, they admitted that they had forgot to send the appointment letter. There have been times when I've got a text reminding me that I have an appointment when I've never received an appointment letter. The text doesn't have enough information on it to really know where you are supposed to be.*
- *I never received a letter for my MRI appointment, just an SMS.*

Patients also complain about letters sent to the wrong address or mislabelled, which can create confidentiality issues.

- *Patient's parent raised concern about breach of confidentiality. Patient appointment was sent to a wrong address in Bournemouth.*
- *Patient was sent a wrong letter which breach the data protection ACT. Patient is very concern as to where her clinical letter has been sent.*
- *Patient inform of a serious breach of confidentiality over the disclosure of his health status. Patient informed that a letter was sent to his home address marked as confidential however, there was nothing to link the envelop to him at his home address. As he lived in a shared household, one of the resident opened the letter to see who it was addressed to, thus creating a breach of confidentiality.*
- *Complaint from patient who has received two letters addressed to him but with other patient's details. This is despite patient writing to consultant to advise of the error when he received the first letter but did not get a response*

When patients fail to receive appointment letters, often times staff members cannot direct them further.

- *Her consultant referred her for chest x-ray OGD and colonoscopy with a follow up appointment in 6 weeks. She did not receive the appointment for the x-ray or any of the other two. she chased this up with a member of staff but to no avail.*
- *I have been trying for two days on the telephone to contact Dermatology Dept.(ref to Doctors blood test result and other issue). The main switch board have tried several times and I have tried on the given number to me. No one picks the phone up the service is very POOR.*
- *Patient given wrong clinic location in text message. Receptionist was unhelpful in establishing the right location. Patient waited for 2 hours to be seen as a result of the confusion.*
- *When I was unwell and tried to call the [antenatal] clinic, for 3 days I could not get through to them. After 3 days of attempts, I walked directly to the clinic, asked Reception if I was meant to see my midwife of A&E, and I was wrongly sent to A&E, despite the fact that the member of staff at Reception was reading my notes, and the midwife had clearly requested me to go see her.*

When patients don't turn up to appointments they were not informed about, they are marked as DNA, discharged, and forced to restart a lengthy referral process.

- *Patient has raised a number of concerns about the management of his dental appointment which resulted in him being told that he did not attend his appointment and was discharged from the service because he had missed an appointment. He states that he was waiting for the hospital to schedule appointments and has texts stating the clinician could not do the appointment because he had no-one to assist and a further one stating no available slots.*
- *She received a letter informing that she had DNA another appointment, which was not so as the hospital had informed that her appointment has been cancelled.*

- *Patient not happy that they have been discharged from care because of a DNA regarding an appointment that they did not receive.*
- *Complaint regarding appointment letters being sent to a wrong patient. Patient has contacted central appointments three times prior letting them know that the correspondent was going to a wrong patient and now distressed to have received another letter advising she missed an appointment.*

There are even reports of patients marked as DNA after their appointments were cancelled by the hospital.

- *Patient has raised a number of concerns about the management of his dental appointment which resulted in him being told that he did not attend his appointment and was discharged from the service. He states that he was waiting for the hospital to schedule appointments and has texts stating the clinician could not do the appointment because he had no-one to assist and a further one stating no available slots.*
- *Patient informed that her appointment was cancelled without notification. She attended her much awaited appointment only to be told that the appointment had been cancelled and her GP surgery was notified. When patient had her carer requested a copy of this, staff was unable to provide proof of this. When patient attended her GP Surgery, there was a letter informing that she had DNA.*

Patients are also not notified of appointment cancellations, sometimes not until having already turned up and waited to be seen.

- *Patient not happy with the delays in treatment and no communication regarding cancelled appointment.*
- *Patient not happy they he came for appointment which was cancelled and not relayed to the patient until some hours later.*
- *Patient attended his appointment only to discover that it has been cancelled without notification. No follow up appointment was offered.*
- *Patient informed that when she attended the department, she was told by the receptionist that she had come to the wrong department. She waited to be seen and when it was her turn, the doctor informed her that due to shortage of staff she would not be able to have an MRI Scan.*

When patients need to cancel appointments and avoid being marked as DNA, it is difficult for them to communicate with the hospital about it.

Patient complained about not being able to postpone his appointment/ invalid /telephone number/ failure to respond to e-mail.

- *Complainant not happy that she has not been able to get through to the team and cancel her appointment.*
- *Patient was sent two appointment letters despite the fact that she had contact the appointment team to informed of her unavailability. Patient is upset that the department is blaming her for not attending her appointment.*

- *Patient not happy that she has been discharged from physio therapy even though she contacted the team to cancel appointment as unwell.*

It is difficult for patients to get through to the hospital on the phone.

- *I've been waiting on the phone for over 10 minutes on hold with ENT department to get a response and after 10minutes I gave up. Not good enough.*
- *Bearing in mind that it was internal staff giving me the telephone number(s) to dial, it is totally unacceptable to sit for nigh-in 2 hours listening to the ringing tones on two separate telephones, only to be told repeatedly that "There is nobody there is to answer the 'phone" and then be cut off, only for the process to start all over again! Good communications are essential and would reduce the blood-pressure levels of both patients and staff!*
- *The receptionist never answer phone calls! Although when you go to the hospital you see plenty of them having social chats! Seems to me they ignore phone rings!*

The antenatal department and physiotherapy department are particularly affected by this.

- *I have been trying to get in touch with the Antenatal department for over a week and the numbers ring but no one ever ever answers. It is extremely frustrating, no holding message, no call back. Frustrating.*
- *Complained once before about trying to get hold of MFAU to book my 12 week appt and nothing! Had to spend one morning ringing over 100 times for someone to pick up!!*
- *I have been finding it very difficult calling the hospital (antenatal ward), since people don't answer the phone. If I have to change my appointment for some reason, I have to physically come to the hospital to do so, which is quite inconvenient.*
- *Phone line issues with physiotherapy dept. - patient trying to get hold of the department to cancel her apt and is worried she may be referred back to the GP.*
- *I tried to contact the Physio department using the number on your website and your main appointments line - no one answered and there was no voicemail facility.*

There are reports of communications with primary care providers (such as GP or dentists) being sent to the wrong professional, as well as of loss of referrals received.

- *Her clinic letter was addressed to another GP in the same surgery who was not involved with her care.*
- *A letter with her details was sent to a wrong dental practice. Patient would like to know how this could happen as it breaches her patient confidentiality.*
- *I had to keep calling to chase up my 12 weeks appointment too! And they end up saying they didn't receive referral, so I had to call my doctors to resend it!! This is so frustrating!*

Patients waiting in A&E or the surgical clinic are not informed of what to expect in terms of waiting times.

- *The A&E was fairly busy, it was evening. I was put in the chair on the corridor while other paramedics queued more people after me. Nobody spoke to me or let me know what was happening or what to expect- I waited for two hours at least, probably more. Eventually even the two paramedics that brought me in were gone. [I was eventually seen and received good treatment]. My only problem was that waiting has been confusing- in-between doctors, nobody told me where I'm supposed to sit, I had to go and ask at reception several times.*
- *I had an incident, an injury to the leg and went to the emergency after being advised by a call to 11. Arrived around 16.00 at the hospital, which was not crowded at the time. I had a very quick initial assessment with nice doctors [and] was instructed to wait until someone comes to give me something to support my leg [and arrange further care]. I was waiting by myself initially, after 15 minutes more people started coming, being called to proceed and leaving. At about 40 minutes of waiting patiently, I asked the receptionist in the X-ray department to see what the situation is, the only reply that was given was that some people wait 2 hours and someone will call me eventually. [After 2.5 more hours] I asked 2 more times for some info - maybe I didn't hear my name when it was called, maybe i was waiting at the wrong place, maybe there was an emergency and all the doctors were called to surgery, welcome feedback could be to better leave and go home and go to my GP on Monday as it is too congested.... nothing. This created frustration I had to go to the hospital reception crying to ask what was going on, only then to tell me to go to the injuries nurses.*
- *Waited for 6 and half hours for the surgery and not one of the nurses could update us or tell us what was happening. I went up to the reception desk every hour after 11am only to be told we would be called when they are ready for us in the theatre. 13.30 I had to demand an update, 2pm they came to us and told us the surgery was cancelled due to an emergency. Now my child hadn't eaten or drank anything for 17 hours! I am diabetic and hadn't eaten and they couldn't even be bothered to keep us informed or updated all morning?*
- *I have been waiting and have not yet been seen. I was told I would have to wait only 10 minutes and it has been about 30 minutes already.*

Information displayed in reception areas is sometimes inaccurate or out of date. There are also reports of staff members giving inaccurate information.

- *Complaint from patient's husband about delays in clinic. He took a day off to accompany his wife for the appointment. When he enquired at the desk about the delays, he was referred to the board which had Friday's information.*
- *When they do answer they have an attitude and unwilling to help! There was an occasion a lady said I could not book my gtt appointment after 16 weeks cos it will not be accurate, and she took my details saying she will pass it to the gtt team to call me!! Nobody called me and she was so wrong about the test not being accurate after 16 weeks, I'm assuming she just didn't want to help me and wanted sound like she knew it all!*

- *Patient was given a piece of paper with the [sexual health] walk-in centre open hours and none of the time matched with what was displayed on the website. He attended over the weekend and was turned away as the walk-in closed.*

The hospital layout is confusing to navigate and some patients report receiving inaccurate directions from staff members.

- *Like labyrinth but without David Bowie! Took my partner to a clinical appointment one Saturday morning. At main reception were given a poor set of directions that involved us doing several laps of the hospital. Went back to main reception and given the same directions. When we explained we had followed them, we were given additional information including the clinic number this time. Except, it was the wrong clinic number.*
- *Patient wishes to raise concerns about hospital signage as she suffered wayward issues.*
- *I have been waiting for 15 minutes. I walked to the hospital and it was easy to find, however, getting around the hospital is quite confusing. I think it would be good to have more maps around the hospital; ones that are easier to follow.*

There are some issues around accessibility and communication for people with sensory impairments, as well as for those who aren't fluent in English.

- *Lack of hearing loop or other portable assistive system at reception desk within OPD areas including Dental.*
- *Someone I know [who is sight impaired] missed their appointment because it was sent by letter. They knew about his impairment, they should have called! He doesn't have email either. Some of us actually took part in a pilot, about calling people to remind them of their appointments. It was found that calling did, indeed make a difference- but they haven't adopted the practice, so what was the point?!*
- *Not all lifts have audible announcements for notifying floor levels.*
- *The receptionist was good but did not provide enough information on directions as I couldn't understand English fluently. Neglected me and did not help me.*

Some patients have found the behaviour of staff members to be unsupportive and challenging.

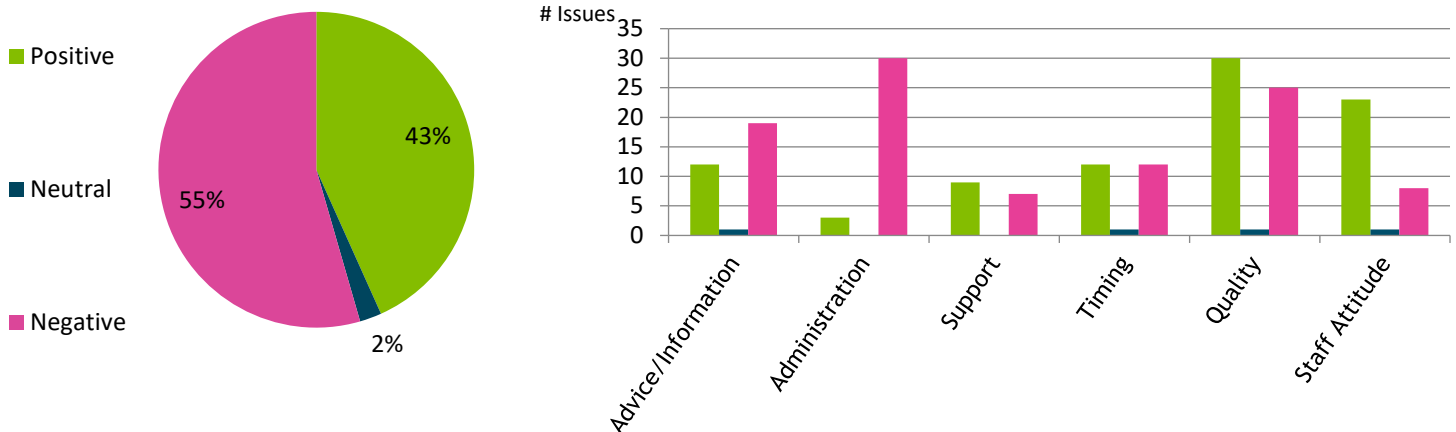
- *The receptionist was loudly chewing gum, refused to make eye contact, and rolled their eyes as we told them [my friend took an unknown substance and became ill]. It seemed that they could not have cared less, and it was incredibly frustrating to be relating what had happened in such a moment of stress to be met with sighs and blatant rudeness and disrespectfulness. It was not busy in the ED at the time either, so I don't think there's any excuse. I went up later to the desk to ask a question but they instead put a finger up and started typing up some paperwork. I waited patiently for two-three minutes whilst they were still clicking away on the computer and then they moved the paper to the side and took a long sip of coffee and looked at their watch, stretching. I assumed they were done and motioned to speak and ask my question but they rudely shook their head and continued to disregard me. It was nothing but insolence.*

- *Patient informed that her doctor referred her for treatment however when she went to book for the appointment, the staff member was extremely rude and unpleasant to her for no reason at all. She questions the consultant's decision to refer the patient and told the patient to get herself a machine to do the treatment herself.*
- *I am absolutely disappointed and disgusted with the level of support and help this hospitals booking/reception have to provide. I called to book an appointment for the first time to be spoken to like a complete alien, the person booking me for an appointment told me specifically to "go and do your own research on a different hospital" when I was enquiring if the Royal London was the only hand specialist? I was spoken to in the most unprofessional way.*
- *The gentleman who schedules the appointments and checks people's details is incredibly rude and patronising. Every time I'm here, I get uncomfortable interacting with him. He never says hi or asks if he could be of assistance. Instead, he just stares at you till you speak. If he doesn't hear you well, he raises his voice and goes "what?!".*

In some of these cases, the staff member's difficult behaviour was directly in relation to either an admin error or having insufficient information.

- *Staff filled in a claim form incorrectly and when this was brought to her attention, she became very rude.*
- *Complaint regarding poor staff attitude from a member of the central appointments team who had discharged patient in error. Patient felt disrespected and would not like other patients to have the same experience.*
- *The only negative feedback is about the reception staff. One particular receptionist was very rude and had a bad attitude. Since I was going to have twins, I got permission from the consultant and the head of the ward to have two birth partners, especially since one of the baby had to go and stay in intensive care. Despite having clarified this to that receptionist and despite the fact that the midwife in charge explained it to the receptionist, she still came to the room after a while telling my sister that she needed to leave since only 1 birth partner was allowed during non-visiting hours.*

Diagnosis and testing



Aspects praised by patients

Receiving explanations about what various procedures entail and prompt follow-on about results give patients peace of mind. The kind attitude of staff members also contributes towards providing a reassuring service.

- I recently attended a weekend appointment for an MRI scan. The check-in process was swift and efficient, I was walked round by the receptionist to the mobile scanner and met very politely by 2 radiography staff. The radiographer introduced himself and explained what to expect in a friendly and professional manner. It was overall a very efficient, professional and reassuring experience.*
- I contacted the on-call gastroenterology registrar for urgent advice. The doctor listened to my concerns, reassured me and arranged tests for my complaint. She then took time to keep me informed by regular phone calls in the following weeks of the findings of my tests. She made a worrying couple of weeks a lot more bearable with her kindness and compassion. Thank you.*
- I came with a child with a broken wrist on a Saturday. Aside from the receptionist and the fact that it took nearly 15 minutes to "check in", the staff in the a&e department were amazing. They made my child feel less fearful and overwhelmed and treated her nicely, especially the radiographers and the plasterer.*

Following emergency admissions, hospital inpatients feel reassured that their issues are thoroughly investigated.

- In casualty, all doctors, nurses were caring helpful and kept me updated every step of the way. The care I received on the ward was exactly the same. All the tests I needed were carried out and the problem fully investigated to make sure there was nothing more sinister going on.*
- [After my mum was mis-diagnosed by her GP] She was supposed to be having a scan anyway but she collapsed and had to come in by ambulance. They do their job properly here. Explained everything well. They are really great here. At the GP we felt like she got brushed off a lot. [...] At the hospital they thoroughly check everything. It feels more thorough. Turns out her kidneys had stopped. She may not have had to come to hospital if they'd checked her properly.*

Aspects criticised by patients

Patients have to wait a long time for their test results, possibly because of admin issues. This may have a knock-on effect causing delays in treatment.

- *I went to get a blood test and the waiting time was very long. Even after I got my bloods done, the waiting time for the results were also very long. This resulted in me missing an appointment place.*
- *Came for a scan staff were really helpful however had to wait for a long time to get the results which wasn't helpful.*
- *I went to RLH 2 months before for pain in the right side of my back, but I haven't gotten my results yet. I asked the doctors at RLH about the problem of my back, but the doctor said they will send report to the GP.*
- *I recently have been experiencing severe pain in my lower abdomen and was referred to this hospital. To make sure I definitely have what they presume I have I was sent for an MRI [After one month of waiting] I did the MRI. [Six weeks later] I went to see the gynaecologist who looked at me and apologised. "I'm sorry we don't have the results of your MRI". (which I forgot to mention was done at the same hospital). I asked her what happens now as the pain is unbearable and she repeated that there is nothing she can do until they get my results. She said she would chase the results and call me. It's been two weeks and I've heard nothing. Did I mention how extreme the pain is?*

Test results have been lost or not communicated to patients.

- *Hospital misplaced patient's blood test result, after several phone calls by the patient's mother, she was told two months after that the blood test results has been misplaced. The mother stated how upset she is and would now have to take time off work again and her daughter will have to take a day off from school to do another blood test. She is very concerned about how the hospital can be very disorganise and irresponsible with little care shown handling a blood sample.*
- *Patient unhappy and disappointed with the discharge process. He was advised that he would be discharged on a Friday and made arrangements for pick up, however, he was advised that his bloods had been lost and had to re do them and ended up staying in hospital for another night. The following day he was discharged and was offered no assistance to pack or carry his bags to the waiting area which had no chair. He ended up walking out of the building in flip flops and was picked up by his brother 30 mins later.*
- *Complaint regarding poor after care following surgery and failure to communicate to patient that she had tested positive MRSA and was resistant to Penicillin and Flucloxacillin and was sensitive to an IV antibiotic.*

There are reports of errors in patients' test results.

- *Patient remains unhappy that he was given the incorrect information about a test resulting in him fasting for 9 hours unnecessarily.*
- *The Antenatal Clinic is very busy and chaotic. I have had my appointments cancelled without notification and erroneous information on my scans.*
- *Complaint regarding patient's medical records being mixed up with another Patient with the same first name but different surname. Patient concerned that this might have led to an incorrect diagnosis based on another's test results.*
- *Patient raised concerns regarding her care and treatment at Barts Health NHS from 2015 to 2106. Patient stated that there was a delayed diagnosis from the MRI, checked by the MRI team and the neurologist team who checked the scan and missed the lump growing which resulted in damage to nerves and significant loss of use of her left hand and a very weak left leg.*

The hospital is generally perceived as disorganised, and there are situations where patients have to wait for a long time past their scheduled appointment for procedures.

- *The ante natal service is awful. No one ever picks up the phone, I had to call for 5 days in order to reschedule an appointment. They booked me a scan without calling me to ask me if the day suits me, and then they don't pick up the phone if I need to re-arrange. Midwives do not take your blood test and urine, I had to wait another 2-3 hours to do those in a separate part of the building; midwives follow process and don't listen much to what you have to say; the midwives make it impossible to receive a scan which you need and which another hospital recommends without asking.*
- *Given an appointment time but they never keep to the time. You wait for ages and then you have your appointment and need a blood test and then you have to wait for ages again. If you're late they turn you away. I saw a man come in late due to his transport being late and they wanted to turn him away. In the end a nurse stepped in and said it wasn't his fault it was a clerical error and that they would make sure he was seen. At the Kidney Department (Urology?) most people need a blood test. Person should be given a ticket just before they see the doctor and then they could be seen 20 minutes later. They have multiple people taking blood. Give the kidney patients their own coloured tickets. It would only be four people at a time as that is how many doctors there are. They could streamline the process much better.*
- *[My father needed an MRI and a CT scan, on the same day]. Whilst we waited an hour and a half for the MRI, I asked at reception whether we should go for the CT scan across the hallway first instead. He said he did not know and made no effort to check for us. Apparently, there is no communication or co-ordination between the two services. When, after the delayed MRI, they told us we had missed our slot, two hours previously!*
- *The booking letter [for my antenatal scan] said to leave 2 hours, but it actually took 5 hours. It was very difficult. Today my appointment was meant to be at 8:30am but it is now 10.57am.*

- *After we were finally taken through [the triage at A&E] - after my friend had been addressed with the correct first name but some other patient's last name - it was evident that the IT system in place at the hospital was incompetent. Extremely important information about my friend's past medical history that had been told to the first doctor who triaged us, whilst seemingly noted down in the online database, had not been passed on to the other healthcare professionals on the case. The same questions was asked several times by different people, and the answers were taken as brand new information to them. After a few repetitions, we really started to worry about whether my friend was going to be receiving the best care possible. Later on in the process, they were handed a jar to give a urine sample in and was told someone would be by immediately to unhook the IV so they could go to the bathroom. After HALF AN HOUR had passed, we eventually had to ask a passing nurse to do so. My friend is young and was conscious so they understood what needed to be done, but I worry for a more elderly, less aware patient in those circumstances.*
- *I have been a patient at the Royal London hospital for about 3 years and I attend regularly for my blood tests, transfusion /exchanges. Initially the system in place was to go in for the blood test and then come back for the transfusion / exchange the following day. E.g. come in for the blood test on a Monday and then return for the blood transfusion/ exchange on Tuesday. However, this changed suddenly without any prior notice [...] to going in for a blood test 2 days prior to the transfusion / exchange. E.g. Blood test on a Monday and transfusion on a Wednesday. I was fine with this also until all of a sudden there was a change again back to the original system without any prior warning or notification. The constant change makes things a bit difficult and I am unable to plan ahead. The same goes for the appointment times for the blood test.*
- *I called to book an MRI scan and they failed to transfer me to the correct department. Then, when I went in for my appointment, the staff were very disrespectful. The staff need to be more respectful.*

Patients are not always told what to expect from procedures.

- *My father went in for the MRI on his own. He was told to just lie down, and nothing more. There was no preparation or explanation of what was about to occur. A hood was banded over his head and he was shoved into the scanner without informing him what they were doing, how long it would last, or that it would be very noisy! Remember, this is an 87-year-old, who is easily disoriented and confused. It must have been terrifying for him. He told me afterwards what they had done, and that he had wanted to scratch his face, but could not, and did not know how long the awful screeching noise was going to last. It was horrendous. This is a form of torture.*
- *My breathing started getting bad and my GP heard a heart murmur, so he referred me for tests at the Royal London Hospital. - an ECG and an echocardiogram ultrasound. I was so frightened; I didn't know what those were. The two technicians (a guy and a girl) fought with me- I asked them to describe the procedures to me and they didn't do it very well. The bloke was getting a bit cross, but I said "I'll stay if the girl is doing it for me"- she was very good, I asked to see the ultrasound, she showed me the screen, but said she can't tell me anything until the report comes from the doctor.*

Clinical treatment



Aspects praised by patients

Most patients generally trust doctors; and see them as competent professionals. They report achieving good health outcomes after being treated.

- I'm waiting for my "hand therapy" [physio?] appointment- good, very good, I trust them, I feel confident about the care they give me and they respect the time of the appointment. The treatments they give me at home are working too.*
- [My husband had a complex gallbladder surgery and] he had no pain or infection after each operation. We were seen soon after our first appointment and everything was explained to us by Dr Q and the nurses. My husband had also had urinary complications after the anterior resection and Dr Q managed to do the op without a catheter for which we were very grateful. We were expecting a lot more complications from such complex surgery and they did not happen.*
- My son went in on Monday to have his back molars removed. He needed to have the surgery, due to some genetic anomaly that made these teeth grow wrong. He is back at school today and had an easy, pain free day yesterday. I am sure that part of his quick recovery is due to the high standard of his surgeon and the gentle handling of the anaesthetist.*
- I would really like to express my gratitude and admiration to all of the team involved in my care for the injuries to my face following an accident in February which required two surgeries and follow up care from the Maxillo Facial Trauma Team. I am so grateful for you being there to facilitate what I consider a brilliant repair. You changed a horrible situation into an interesting experience.*
- The medical care was comprehensive and well-coordinated and my son quickly got better with treatment. This was at the height of the winter flu crisis and the Royal London Hospital far exceeded my expectations. Thank you!*

A kind, compassionate, reassuring attitude from medical staff helps put patients at ease and improves trust.

- *I cannot thank the staff enough. They do such an amazing job and the NHS should be so proud to have such people working for them. They made me feel so at ease and safe. I only had a small procedure done but I have a lot of anxiety about doctors and hospitals, so I was quite stressed to begin with. When I got in, their manner of things completely calmed me down and I really felt I was in safe hands. Surgeon was such a sweet lovely man explain everything that went on, felt comforted by the chat we had. Also the anaesthetist was such a down to earth woman and just lovely to have had helping me.*
- *Fell over drunk and cut my arm. Came into A&E on the Saturday morning and was treated by a doctor. This doctor is the embodiment of what a doctor should be; caring, patient, reassuring and professional.*
- *I am full of admiration for and am massively grateful to the entire incredible team. The anaesthetists were sympathetic and brilliant, the nurses wonderful and the surgeons considerate and great. I woke after the first surgery with my chin reattached and received excellent nursing and post-operative care.*
- *It is extremely difficult to put into words the high regard I have for the doctor and her team. From the moment I was diagnosed with cancer to the aftercare I am still receiving I cannot fault her. Even when I was first diagnosed this incredible woman made me feel at ease and reassured me that I was in good hands ,she explained everything in a professional yet down to earth friendly manner . Although clearly rushed off their feet with patients she still somehow managed to make me feel like I was a priority.*
- *Very efficient and good listener to help. On top of that, they have all the technical materials to help to boost recovery such as laser and other things.*

The paediatric dentistry team and the neurology department in particular receive praise for their kind attitude.

- *Dear R., Many thanks for your patience, understanding and professionalism over the years you have been looking after ***** [my child]. ***** has been challenging at times for you and your team. We cannot thank you enough and appreciate the time you have set aside for her gradually allowing her to accept and undertake treatment needed. She has gained your trust and we hope she will continue with this progress in transition to adult care.*
- *This was no ordinary patient and I really feel [dentist's name] has made a massive difference to her with not only the dentistry but the sensitivity she has shown.*
- *The neurosurgeon who operated on me, explained the operation and risks and gave me complete confidence that I would be okay. Later, he and his staff, checked on me several times to make sure I was doing fine. I received excellent care from everyone and each person was cheerful and kind.*
- *Ward 11D Neurology. All staff very friendly, welcoming knowledgeable, put you at ease. Always around when you need them.*

Doctors offer detailed explanations to patients about their condition and treatment, empowering them to manage their condition long term. Consequently, patients are offered meaningful choices and can make informed decisions about their care

- *I got oesophageal varices and I was throwing up blood, so I went to A&E [from where I was admitted to the HDU]. The nurses there are amazing, they very accommodating, and the doctor was great- he was very honest- he explained stuff, he was attentive.*
- *I came in with an expected stroke. Ambulance took 25 minutes. The nurses and Drs are very good. They explain everything, and I feel I understand what's going on.*
- *I get good information from the Drs here. Staff talk to you nicely. I feel confident to ask questions.*
- *She said she was well looked after, she has a care plan at home and with her GP and her consultant has given her enough information about her condition, she had support and family at home to look after her condition.*
- *The surgeons have been brilliant. They made sure to visit me a number of times to check my progress and fully explained everything and answered all my questions.*
- *Excellent consultant with friendly, considered and informed decision-making providing clear direction of travel for future management and care. Delighted to have transferred care and highly recommend the service. Thank you.*
- *After a failed attempt under a local anaesthetic, I was referred for a cystoscopy under a general anaesthetic. I arrived shortly before the time stated on my letter and was called in on my appointed time, checked in by a lovely HCA, saw the surgeon who explained what was going to happen, met and chatted to the anaesthetist about what the procedure, was taken to the changing rooms and then through to be prepped for theatre. The next thing I knew, I was waking up in recovery where, strangely, I had pain in my shoulder, which they didn't dismiss and provided pain-relief for.*
- *I had a planned caesarean section because I had developed diabetes during my pregnancy. The services that I received were really good. The doctors offered me either C-Section or induction and I chose to have a C-Section, my baby was delivered two weeks before the due date.*
- *I just wanted to thank the NHS and in particular the Royal London Hospital for the excellent care I have received over the past 6 months, I have been treated with the utmost care consideration and total professionalism during 2 major operations that I consider have not only saved my life but given my life back to me. Although a traumatic time I was consulted through the whole process about my care and made to feel I was in control of what was going to happen to me, nobody spoke over my head and my surgeon was a true example of what they call 'bedside manner is all about, my grateful thanks to all concerned.*

Aspects criticised by patients

There are reports of poor communication between medical professionals, including loss of referrals.

- *Patient wrote a letter with concerns regarding his care management at RLH. Patient informed that he has been suffering for 13 years with henia in his stomach. The doctors have said that they cannot do anything for him yet letters are sent to his GP that he DNA his appt.*
- *Dental patient called the department after waiting 6months after a referral to find when her appointment was for. Was told that the doctor had forgotten to add her to the waiting list.*
- *She informed that her consultant referred her for chest x-ray OGD and colonoscopy with a follow up appointment in 6 weeks. She did not receive the appointment for the x-ray or any of the other two. she chased this up with a member of staff but to no avail.*
- *Complaint from patient about delays in care caused by staff not following the correct referral processes. Patient is also questioning why referral process was not explained to him and acted upon by the service in a timely manner.*
- *My neighbours' baby suffers from the DiGeorge syndrome. He spent the first three weeks of his life in St Thomas' Hospital, where he had heart surgery within the first 12 hours of his life. Last night he started having fits (possible side effect of a medication he's taking) so I called the ambulance and was admitted to the Royal London for monitoring. There was no effort made to get the records from St Thomas' Hospital and everything that was known about him.*
- *Staff member poor attitude towards an autistic patient who was referred from Homerton hospital. Patient tried to explain to the registrar why she was referred but he continued to be rude and stated that if he knows nothing about the patient, that he cannot see her. Patient was told that her GP needs to send the reason for her coming to an appointment to the hospital.*
- *My mum was diagnosed with Parkinson in June 2017 since then she has been completely house ridden as her disease has progressed very quickly. Twice she has been told by the consultant who sees her that a Parkinson nurse would be in contact but there was no such contact. Her GP had to chase the Parkinson nurse. An appointment was given and attended with the nurse. Changes to her drugs were made which were not discussed with her. No notes of it was sent to her GP. It was only a few months after when she saw the consultant again that she was asked why she's still on her old medication. If she hasn't been told and if her GP hasn't been alerted then of course she won't know. But no this was the patients fault for not being able to read minds.*

Communication between professionals within the hospital can also be lacking.

- *My father went to the Royal London Hospital [with a hernia], and the Consultant sent him away saying in a letter that she had given him lots of instructions. Either this was not true, or he could not remember any of them. Following a loss of consciousness on 2-3 occasions when he was unable to reduce the hernia, a second opinion was sought. The Registrar asked why he had not had the hernia operated on previously! Well it was because the Consultant had sent him away.*
- *My friend is seeing a mental health nurse, he's been referred by his GP. In July he had a major stroke and was treated at the RLH. He was supposed to be discharged on the 8th, but there were delays with his transport and his medication, so he only went home on the 9th. During the time he was in hospital, he had two appointments pre-scheduled as an outpatient: one with neurology and one with the mental health nurse. They assured me that the issue of the appointments will be dealt with. Instead, he received letters to his house (which he couldn't see, since he was in hospital!) saying "You have missed your appointments, we take these issues seriously, you'll have to go to the back of the queue.*
- *O/S visitor attended A&E with chest pains and was informed that he would need to be kept in and monitored overnight. They claim they were told he would need a procedure at SBH. On arriving doctors said no procedure was necessary. Also not happy with professionalism of staff at RLH communication and cleanliness of the hospital.*
- *She is very disappointed by the lack of communication between departments, contradicting advice and the lack of information(clarity) shared with her.*
- *I come in a couple of times a year and always on this ward. Sometimes it seems like there is a lack of communication, particularly between staff. For instance, a couple of days ago, I was having a line taken out, and the doctors didn't find out the line had been taken out until 36 hours after it had been done. So that got us thinking that maybe procedures were being delayed because the staff wasn't communicating effectively, which is annoying particularly when its painful stuff like lines in your body.*

Such issues arise particularly in relation to pain management and the administration of prescription painkillers. Some inpatients report not receiving painkillers prescribed to them by a medical professional within the hospital, because of poor communication between medical teams. This concern has arisen several times in relation to patients in the Emergency Gynaecology Unit and others presenting with reproductive health issues.

- *Complaint about level of care received after undergoing surgery for cervical cancer. Patient had been advised that she would be given morphine to manage pain, however, this was not done, and both the doctor and the nurses could not confirm why the morphine had not been given to patient.*
- *[Arriving into A&E while pregnant] The staff were rude and just ignored the fact that i was in pain. When i asked for painkillers they just did not seem to care and said they'll be back, which they never did come back with the painkillers.*

- *I suffer from severe endometriosis and take a combination of painkillers including buscopane/opiates; prescribed by the consultant who treats me as an outpatient at RLH. As I came in with extreme pain, the same consultant decided to admit me to the EGU. I wrote down all the medications I was on and gave the list to the ward sister. The medicine they gave me, from the start, was too little- not the dose I had written down and that was prescribed by my consultant. I explained to them my pain was out of control, but they kept me on that dosage for three days- smaller doses than what I would normally take at home! My consultant only saw me once several days later and prescribed intravenous paracetamol (I can't have oral paracetamol because of an intolerance, NOT allergy). Another doctor misunderstood that I was allergic to paracetamol and they changed my medication chart, leaving me again without the painkillers I needed. Then the Pain Team said they can only give me oral paracetamol (specifically the one I couldn't tolerate!) instead of the IV paracetamol I needed.*

The Pain Team is particularly criticised for being unsupportive.

- *1st Advised to "Go home and use same meds (that are not working) and rest" as if this wouldn't occur to someone with 20 years of Fibromyalgia. Took a debate with an A&E consultant to be admitted. Why because "The Pain Team" who are the specialist who advised on pay "do not see patients on A&E". Yes, seeing them and advising treatment with possible quick discharge might be too quick a system and more cost effective.*
- *As I suffer from arthritis, I need a combination of paracetamol, tramadol and fentanyl patches. The fentanyl can only be prescribed by the specialist at the pain clinic- but getting an appointment there is like chicken an eggs- you can't get an appointment for more than 26 weeks! Because of the complicated and repeated process of ordering and reviewing, I'm often in pain because I don't get my medication in time. I feel like I am fighting a losing battle. The pain clinic used to be at Mile End- I think things got worse since, at least at Mile End it was multidisciplinary.*
- *Patient's daughter not happy with the care and treatment her mother is receiving under the Royal London Hospital, Pain Clinic.*

There are reports of patients being prescribed unsuitable medication, possibly because of admin errors.

- *Complaint regarding wrong eye medication being dispensed by pharmacy. Patient noticed there was no improvement and was advised by the consultant that she had been dispensed a wrong drug.*
- *She has been given an anti-depressant medication for her skin condition that she has however she is not depressed.*
- *Patient attended A&E because she was having acute nausea and severe migraines. the care provided was great. She was given medication with instructions. When she got home and started the medication, she felt something was wrong. The package states to drink 3 tablets 3 times a day, the dosage is 500mg! After reading up on Amoxicillin, the maximum dosage is far less per day than the 4500mg per day prescribed to her.*

Some patients report difficulties in accessing their medical records.

- *On 12 June 2018 I requested my dental records by way of a Subject Access Request, as directed by your website. I received a letter dated 16 July saying, "Unfortunately, we are experiencing difficulty locating your dental records." I have been sent my x-rays, nothing more. I have heard nothing since, despite emailing to ask how long this is likely to take. My new dentist requires my records as a matter of urgency.*
- *Patient not happy with his delays in care and loss of medical records.*
- *Family of the patient highlighted issues regarding poor communication and entry of medical records. They would like this to be investigated as well as obtaining the patient records.*
- *Complaint passed over from site patient not happy with her access to medical records request.*

Patients who express a preference for being treated elsewhere have reported rude or condescending treatment from doctors.

- *The Plastics team only saw me once, on the first day. When they said they wanted to operate on my thumb, and I said that I have private insurance and would like to do the procedure privately, the plastic surgeon got very offended, very rude and unprofessional. I explained that I don't doubt his operating skills- the surgeons are often the same - but in a private hospital I could have the procedure done faster and I would be provided with a better room. The doctor just stormed off.*
- *Patient complaining about a doctor whom he felt withheld treatment. Request to transfer patient from NUH to RLH for specialist treatment was refused and NUH was advised that patient should seek treatment at another hospital Patient was discharged despite needing medical attention.*

Interpreters for people who speak insufficient English or are hearing impaired were not always available, possibly because of admin errors.

- *She informed that her daughter had an appointment it was confirmed that a Turkish interpreter would attend the appointment to support them as English is not their first language. Unfortunately, when they arrived for the appointment, the interpreter did not attend. The appointment has to be rescheduled for April, a month later, leaving the family scarde for what could have happened to the patient.*
- *Received a letter from a couple with concerns about their recent experience with Sign Language Interpreter. They informed that everything they book for sign language interpreter, they fail to attend their appointment. This has happened on several occasion at Royal London, Newham and Mile End.*
- *Patient not happy that she twice came to appointment and no interpreter was there when this was booked.*

There are long waiting lists (sometimes multiple months) for seeing a specialist.

- *I have come from the Bow Lane Day Centre. Recently I have been referred for tests for early onset dementia. I have down syndrome. I have had to wait six months.*
- *Would strongly not recommend this hospital. You wait 5-7 months for an appointment to be seen for 5-7 mins. For many years i have had a sinus issue and it is really affecting my lifestyle, it is my second time coming to the ENT and i have to wait another 5 months to be seen. I am struggling to eat due to losing my taste bud and smell and sleep because of my blocked nose.*
- *Patient complains about the referral process in the dental hospital. She complains that she has not been able to receive the treatment that she needs urgently and is in constant pain. She wants to know why the hospital is failing the elderly group in the community.*
- *Patient complain about the delay in getting her 12-week appointment with her consultant. Based on that, she had to go private in order to receive the treatment she desperately needed.*

Waiting is further increased by repeated cancellations, sometimes by multiple months. The departments most affected by this issue are those that typically deal with surgical procedures: dentistry/max fax surgery, orthopaedics and the surgical clinic.

- *[I need to have two wisdom teeth extracted, and because of complex issues the procedure can only be done in the hospital]. I've been to hospital and they gave me appointments in January and February, for both teeth. When I was going for my first extraction on January, they phoned me on same day, cancelled my appointment and rescheduled for the 24th April. I was so disappointed. Then, after a few days, I received a letter that my February appointment has been cancelled and rescheduled in May. I was so stressed about it. In between, I was keep having my tooth pain. I couldn't eat properly because of the sharp pain on both sides, I am losing weight as well. A few days ago, I received another letter from the hospital, that my May appointment is rescheduled in July. Which gave me another panic attack. I phoned them again and asked them not to cancel my April appointment, because I am so desperate for this appointment. But I have still fear that they will cancel this appointment too.*
- *Mother informed that her child's dental care has been compromised to the point where the child is about to lose 2 teeth. The patient appointment has been cancelled so many times, mother now wants the patient to have an urgent appointment to receive the treatment he desperately needs.*
- *We took our 10-year-old daughter today for her ENT surgery at royal London hospital. We arrived at 7am in the morning as the appointment was at 7:30am. Waited for 6 and half hours for the surgery and not one of the nurses could update us or tell us what was happening. I went up to the reception desk every hour after 11am only to be told we would be called when they are ready for us in the theatre. 13.30 I had to demand an update, 2pm they came to us and told us the surgery was cancelled due to an emergency. Now my child hadn't eaten or drank anything for 17 hours!*

- *Patient informed that she attended the [orthopaedic surgery] day care at 7am and all checks were completed. At 4pm she was told to go home as the consultant had run out of time. There was no further explanation. Neither was she given another date to come in.*
- *Outrageous lack of care. a failing system that leaves people NEEDING surgery. 2 weeks my son has been waiting for surgery on a fractured elbow, been given 4 dates to be cancelled. We spent 6 hours there today waiting, then turned away.*
- *It's a failing system, the management and executives are clearly inept. You can't blame the frontline, but they are the people who bear the brunt and feel the wrath.*

Poor planning is sometimes the reason for the cancellation of procedures.

- *Complaint from patient's mother regarding son's dental appointment which they attended and were told on the day that the impressions were not ready. There has been no further communication from dental services and they also want to be reimbursed for travel expenses.*
- *Complaint regarding incompetent management of care which resulted in surgery being cancelled on the day as patient was high risk and needed an HDU bed which was not available.*

Once in hospital, people wait for a long time for their scheduled appointments.

- *I have attended the Ophthalmology appointment on three different occasions after being referred by my GP. I was given a appointment date and time. All three occasions I arrived on time however I was not seen by a consultant until after 2 hours. I'm told each time the clinic is running late. My last appointment was at 10.40 so i don't understand how the clinic could be running so behind.*
- *Waiting time could be better because of the 30 minute delay.*
- *I had my appointment at 10:10 am but I have to wait 2 hours before I can be seen.*
- *Complaint about delays in clinic and poor staff attitude when patient's father enquired about the delays.*
- *Delay to being seen on time, expected it to be about 20 mins, they need a receptionist dedicated to clinic 7, right now clinic 7 shares with clinic 6*

Transparency regarding waiting lists, waiting times and delays is poor.

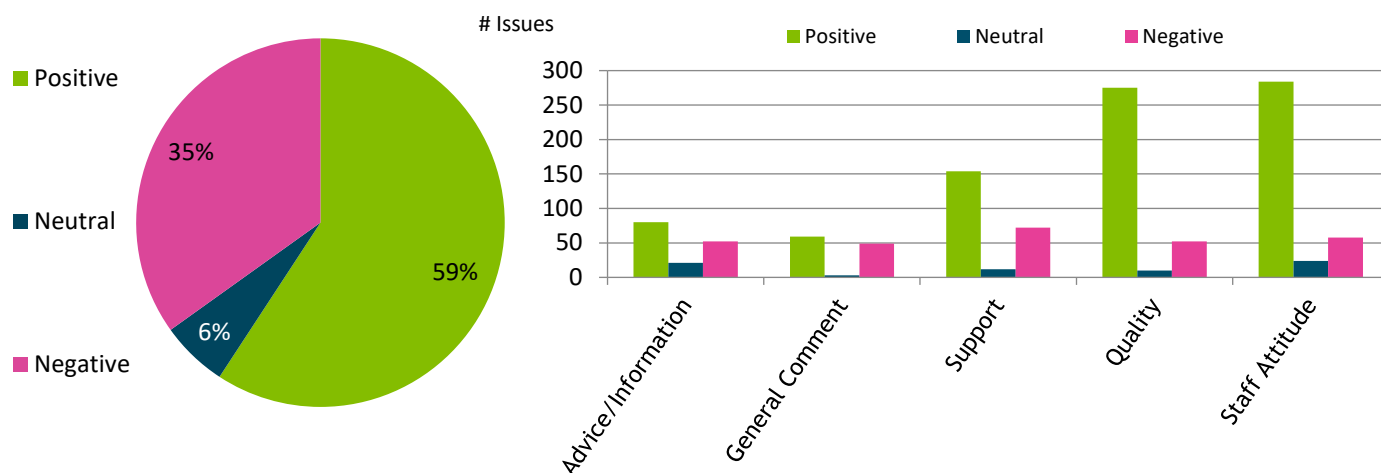
- *I think more shocking than being expected to sit in an A & E corridor for 8 hours beside others who have been there even longer, is that the staff seem to think that this is perfectly normal and acceptable. They do not apologise or keep people informed, except that I was told there was a bed for me upstairs but still waited another hour and a half before being shown to it.*
- *The A&E was fairly busy, it was evening. I was put in the chair on the corridor while other paramedics queued more people after me. Nobody spoke to me or let me know what was happening or what to expect- I waited for two hours at least, probably more. Eventually even the two paramedics that brought me in were gone. [...] I think the A&E is under a lot of pressure- they try their best to prioritise the patients they think are more urgent. I was much more concerned not*

because of the waiting time, but because of the lack of information: nobody came to me to explain what would happen.

Carers of adults don't always feel informed about their loved ones' care in hospital and about how to support them long term.

- *[My father had a fractured hip operated on]. We tend not to see the doctor because of the visiting time restrictions - they're 2 till 5. It would be nice to have someone to talk to about what's going on with him, and have a bit more communication about his health, but we understand that staffing shortages are quite extreme at the moment.*
- *Complaint about lack of communication with family regarding patient's treatment and plans for discharge. There has also been conflicting information from the dietician and the consultant regarding patient's discharge plans. Family are requesting an MDT meeting to discuss patient's discharge and aftercare.*
- *My husband was admitted to the Royal London Hospital- we were told he needs to change his catheter; he didn't really understand how to do it, so they told me I could change it instead. I did tell them I am partially sighted, but they didn't offer any accommodation, they didn't send anyone with him or anything.*
- *The care is good, staff are polite and respectful. I'm happy with the treatment and explanations I'm receiving, I do feel safe and cared for. I'm not sure when I'm going home; the doctors spoke to my wife about my care, but they haven't given any instruction for care after discharge yet.*

Clinical nursing



Aspects praised by patients

Nurses are praised for their knowledge, professionalism and good bedside manner.

- *The nurses are really good, they are well-trained, they listen, they're knowledgeable.*
- *The care was excellent, I was always addressed by my name. The nursing staff always introduced themselves and met all my needs daily.*
- *All staff very friendly, welcoming knowledgeable, put you at ease. Always around when you need them.*
- *She thought the care in RLH was good, particularly praised night nurse A. who was very attentive and kept her company at night.*
- *S**** my nurse at night was very caring and understanding. She was considerate and was sympathetic to my needs. The other nurses were also nice. Thank you to all the medical and nursing team.*

Most notably, the attitude of midwives has improved compared with previous years.

- *I had a positive experience with the staff in maternity triage and the labour ward - although I had to be induced 6 weeks early and then have an emergency c-section due to pre-eclampsia, the staff were amazing, they talked me through everything and dealt with me at my most emotional and stressed, my baby was delivered safely and taken to the neonatal unit.*
- *A. [a senior midwife on the ward] is the greatest person ever! She really loves her job and knows what she's talking about. I wish there will be other people like her, absolutely amazing!*

- *I gave birth at the lotus ward in October my first baby (my birth plan did not have royal london in my plans but at hat minute it was closest thing to me) The staff were amazing - the facilities were clean . They all worked as part of a team to help me have my baby. The aftercare was really good and they were on point and informative.*
- *A big big Thank you for the Postnatal team of the Royal London Hospital for the professional and friendly way that they treated all of us. We are very proud to have had our little one at RLH. Royal London Hospital have the best children/ professional team!*

Midwives provide reassurance to mothers and support them; empowering them to feel in control of their birth experience.

- *The team of doctors/midwives quickly assessed the situation and safely delivered our baby boy 10 minutes later, minimising stress to both mother and baby and ensuring we understood what was happening at every stage.*
- *[Did you feel that medical professionals encouraged and empowered you to make your own informed choices about your birth?] Yes, somewhat . Some just told me what was 'allowed' but we went to see a consultant midwife who was brilliant.*
- *The care we received today at the Royal London Hospital was outstanding. Everyone on the labour ward was fantastic. We had a very positive birth experience and were empowered to make our own decisions and supported fully throughout.*

Similarly, nurses offer patients explanations and updates about their condition, allowing them to make informed decisions and providing peace of mind.

- *Getting through A&E was a bit hectic and a very long process, since I looked generally okay from the outside, but as soon as I met with doctors my emergency situation was seen to. I was immediately sent up to the EGU and taken by a nurse. She did my scan and informed me, ever so politely, professionally and respectably of my emergency situation. At a time when you find out there is a serious issue at hand, I was so thankful to have ended up as her patient. She was so calm, informative, and worked quickly to get me test results, seen by the appropriate people and comfortably in an all-female ward for the night. Throughout my stay, prior to and following my surgery, she continued to check in on me.*
- *Our experience has been great - we transferred from Basildon hospital. The staff have been great, a lot of attention and better than at the old place. They're always helpful, I'm always asking lots of questions and they're always having lots of patience and have all the answers.*
- *The staff go out of their way to help you. S. goes out of her way. I was sick last night, and I'm not supposed to be sick. They stayed two hours into their break to help me. They explain their actions and they involve me. I ask questions and they are happy to listen and answer me.*

Young midwives and student midwives are praised by new and expecting mothers, sometimes even more so than more experienced ones.

- *Birth was great, but just because we had a doula and called the midwives when baby was nearly out. The student midwife was far more caring and considerate than the actual midwife; she paid much more attention to the birth plan etc., and just genuinely seemed to care about me. Post birth was ok, but again birth plan was respected more by the student. If my doula had not been there I would have found it much more overwhelming trying to defend passing my placenta in peace, etc.*
- *I had an amazing antenatal experience. I had a student midwife with me at all appointments since I was her caseload, so it was great.*
- *My experience giving birth wasn't a great start with a grumpy midwife and a very rude Head of Midwives. However, once they switched shifts, midwife and student midwife were absolutely wonderful - very encouraging and support.*

Nurses and midwives take responsibility for ensuring hospital inpatients understand how the ward operates and what to expect.

- *All the staff on the ward have been lovely. I feel safe and well care for. They explain everything.*
- *All nurses and staff very attentive and keep you up to date on all treatment. Very polite and always checking on patient.*
- *Patient was brought in hospital suffering from angina pains, she telephoned Out of hours GP, who then phoned 999, ambulance arrived quickly and taken to Resuscitation for ECG. She explained that she was treated well by staff, fully informed of her medical condition.*
- *[After my mum was mis-diagnosed by her GP] She was supposed to be having a scan anyway, but she collapsed and had to come in by ambulance. They do their job properly here. Explained everything well. They are really great here. Really lovely staff. Always doing things for you and chat. Very good at explaining things.*
- *At first was confused where to go but a kind nurse directed me to the right way. Doctors' explanation was very clear and detailed and said it in way which was easier to understand.*
- *Generally, the appointments with the midwives have been good. They have all been polite and gave me the information I needed.*

In inpatient wards, nurses make sure that patients, including those admitted at irregular hours, receive the food they need.

- *I've only had breakfast since being here and that was nice. When I got on to the ward, I hadn't eaten in quite a while and a meal time wasn't due, so someone went off and got me sandwiches and everything.*
- *They put me in a pre-admission A&E cube temporarily- it had a hospital style bed I could lie down on and they hooked me to an ECG machine. I mentioned I hadn't had any supper, so they got me tea and a sandwich. All in all, I was looked after quite well.*

Aspects criticised by patients

Poor communication within the hospital affects the quality of nursing care.

- *[Meeting with a new midwife the day after giving birth] was ok but mental health concerns were ignored, the midwife attending was not briefed on it so she missed that I was struggling. All she did was ask how I felt. I had previously discussed with the midwife whose care I was under that I would not be in the right space of mind to admit to being low but like I said this new lady just breezed over it.*
- *When I came up from labour ward [after a positive birth experience], they put me in one of the amenity rooms 2 days later, one of the receptionists barged in. She had a terrible attitude. She started shouting at me and telling me that I had to pay £140 per night to be there. She shouted at me and gave me 5 minutes to get out. I was so upset. I had not asked to be put there. I was made to be extra upset. My baby had gone to special care, so I was feeling even more worried and then this lady was shouting at me. A midwife came and was really calm and sensible and explained that as I was not paying and there were free beds on the ward, I would need to move there. This was fine. I was a bit upset that it is all about the money and how much they can make, but I understood. She told me to finish my food and come over afterwards so they could show me where to go. It was fine as long as I moved that afternoon. About 5 minutes later another midwife came and started shouting me about why I had not moved yet. She shouted that I had to get out.*
- *Patient was here for a fractured hip. Spend 9 days at the hospital. Complaints: Not good communication amongst staff. No clear understanding of what should be dealt with appropriately. Not happy with the way the staff was showing empathy.*
- *Everything [about the birth of my child] has been really good. The only issue has been about food. My wife ended up left with no food for about 24 hours. She does not speak English and there was a problem with handover, so everyone thought someone else was giving food.*
- *She spent 9 Dys in hospital, mainly complaining about lack of proper communication between staff, no clear understanding of what should be dealt with appropriately. She was not happy about being told one thing and then another.*

A small number of patients have experienced a shortage of beds.

- *I was admitted into hospital on Wednesday. I was told there was no beds for the twins I was expecting, yet I was kept in. I could have gone home. Unfortunately, due to a check-up that was not necessary, I had to stay in. The next few days were a nightmare. I got sepsis so had to go for an emergency c-section. After which I couldn't move due to long doses of epidural. For 5 days, I hadn't my bowel, but I wasn't given the medication when I asked for it.*
- *I had a C-section. According to their policy I was supposed to stay in the recovery room between 30 minutes and 1 hour but had to stay there 7 hours since they said that there were no beds available. The staff have been lovely though and have been checking on both myself and the baby.*

- *I was taken to ward 3D (short stay surgery)- I should have been in orthopaedics but they were out of beds.*

There are a small number of reports of nurses or midwives filing patient records or charts inaccurately.

- *Father informed nurses had documented on the patient drug chart that he had refused his medication, which was untrue and so wants this to be investigated.*
- *Complaint about level of care received during and after childbirth including unhelpful staff, poor staff attitude, incorrect records and a poor service received from midwives post-natal.*
- *I asked to be referred to the Gateway team because of prior perinatal mental health issues. They were brilliant but there were loads of problems referring me to a psychologist in the perinatal mental health team. Instead, without my consent I was referred to a family support worker at the Children's Centre. I did not give my consent to this and the poor worker - who was very young and inexperienced - had my medical notes which were clearly wrong.*
- *They gave me the wrong medication because they were not tracking it properly on the chart-it was ridiculous!*
- *I am so stressed but there are so many things going wrong everywhere. I ended up screaming at the hearing test lady. She was lovely but casually mentioned that she would have to re-test as my notes indicated that the baby had had suspected meningitis. I was so shocked. No one had mentioned it to me. After I was crying and worrying about my baby, it turned out that they had written it down on the wrong notes. They were not surprised. "Sorry about that" they said. I asked if this meant someone else had not had it on their notes. They just shrugged.*

A minority of maternity patients report unsupportive treatment from midwives or postnatal ward nurses (it is noteworthy however that even in these cases patients typically specify having received a poor standard of care from some midwives, but better from others).

- *The midwife who was assigned to me (the horrible one) was a real 'Jack of all trades, master of none'. She wouldn't let my partner near me even though I was asking for him to help me. She also wouldn't let my mother help (even though she is a nurse) and kept making her move out of the way. She kept telling me I did not want gas and air without discussing or explaining anything. Eventually a senior midwife came in - and thank goodness she did. She brought with her a sense of calm. She explained about pushing and supported me.*
- *After 3 days of labour pain I finally had my baby only through the emergency c-section. However, the staff on the labour ward were just fantastic. Extremely patient and generally cared about me and my health. Made me feel safe and calm. However, the after-birth care was horrid nurses were rude and constantly ignored my calls for help.*

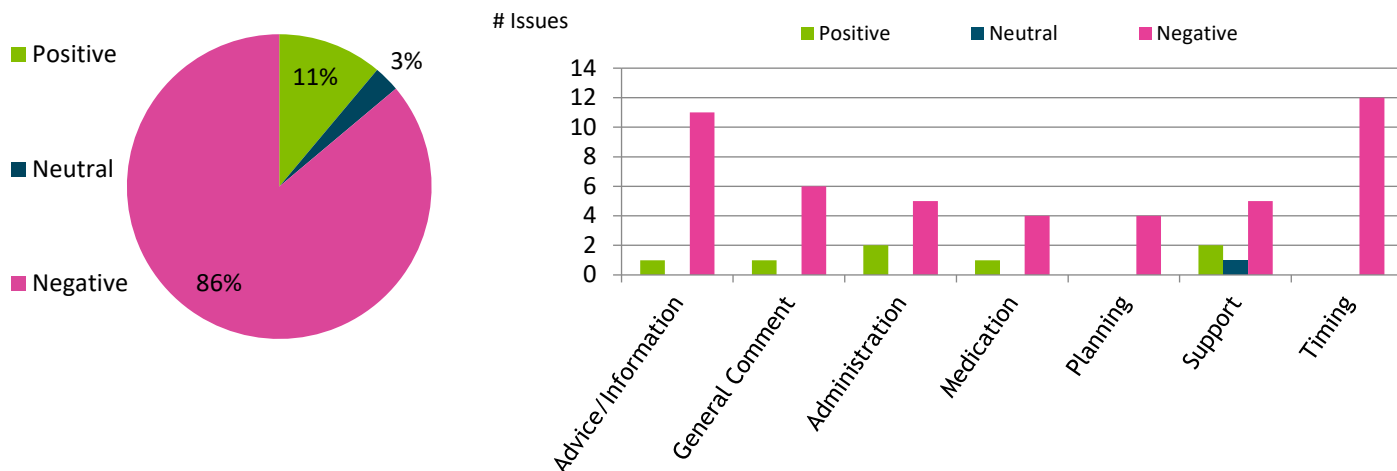
Some carers of family members admitted as inpatients feel insufficiently supported.

- *She raised concerns regarding the poor handling of her mother on the ward. Also the patient was transferred to another ward without informing the family.*
- *A suggestion for future would be to think about flexibility for siblings to visit. I wanted my son to visit his new sister immediately when I was on labour ward but they would not let us and then he was restricted when he could come here.*
- *My sister had a baby. Her husband stayed in hospital with her and they didn't provide him with a bed. It would be good if they could provide smaller beds for carers on the side of patient beds.*
- *Sister of patient transferred from MEH, is concerned she is not being engaged with by medical staff in regard to her sister's care on the ward.*

A few patients complained about the catering staff.

- *I was admitted to ward 10E after supper. I was hungry, and I asked if I could get some hot food, but they said, "only sandwiches". I wasn't happy with that, but everything apart from the food is fine- but food is very important, it's our organism's fuel. I never received a menu from the woman who orders the food, I got this menu from the man opposite. The woman has memorised the 5 main dishes and only that, she would just say those (the menu included options for starters, mains, daily specials, sandwiches, jacket potatoes, omelettes, salads and dessert). I'm diabetic, I asked if there was a diabetic menu and she said no. [This is inaccurate, special menus for people with medical and faith-based dietary restrictions are available]. The family next to me in the bay are Muslim, they've been here for a week and they were never told about halal menus. When I pointed it out to her, she got all snooty with me, she never apologised or anything, she just turned and walk away- I think that's laziness, and I think that she has an attitude problem.*
- *Patient was not happy with the attitude of the catering staff on ward 9E who refused to give patients a menu and then would not let them have what they asked for.*
- *The ward is very bad, there are people here who don't care- they put my breakfast out of my reach and didn't care if I could get to it.*

Discharge



Aspects praised by patients

As noted in an Enter and View visit in January 2018, receptionists at the outpatient discharge lounge are particularly personable and attentive.

- Upon arrival at the discharge lounge, receptionist immediately asked her questions about her travel needs, including whether she would need transport with two people, and taking stock of her walking aids (she sat in a wheelchair but also carried a walking stick).
- About an hour after their arrival, a patient and his daughter were still waiting for transport. The person at the reception approached them to check on them and asked them if they would like a cup of tea or coffee.

A small number of patients remark upon good communication with other professionals.

- I got an official diagnosis and all paperwork and recommendations were sent to my GP in a timely manner and dealt with accordingly, I couldn't be more thankful to the doctor and all of the staff

Aspects criticised by patients

Patients experience delays in being discharged, because of poor planning, admin or paperwork issues.

- *So Saturday morning [after spending some time in hospital with a suspected stroke] ,I was told I'd be discharged in afternoon and this is where it all started going downhill, 12 hours later still waiting to be discharged and after a stroke they say stay stress free will sorry that stress started rising when still there at 9.30pm still waiting for a simple signature that should of been easily done 5-6 hours earlier.*
- *The Plastics team did not facilitate my discharge- they keep brushing me off and ignoring me. The head nurse told me "I'm trying to get a hold of the plastics team to sign you off, and they're not doing it!". Because of those delays, I lost my private bed and had to spend one more night in the Royal London using NHS resources- while they complain about having a shortage of beds! The second nurse had to do my discharge paperwork- the first one had lied about having done it.*
- *He was advised that he would be discharged on a Friday and made arrangements for pick up, however, he was advised that his bloods had been lost and had to re do them and ended up staying u=in hospital for another night.*
- *Discharge was nightmare waiting 7 hours for a doctor to sign prescription DISGUSTING.*

Some patients failed to receive their discharge letters; and some found inaccurate information in them.

- *Patient raised concerns about his care plan at RLH. He was told that a discharge letter would be sent to his home address following a review at the team meeting the next day. Almost a month later, he has not received the letter or any form of correspondence and would like to raise this as a formal complaint.*
- *Complaint regarding incorrect information included in the discharge letter about patient going against medical advice regarding discharge.*

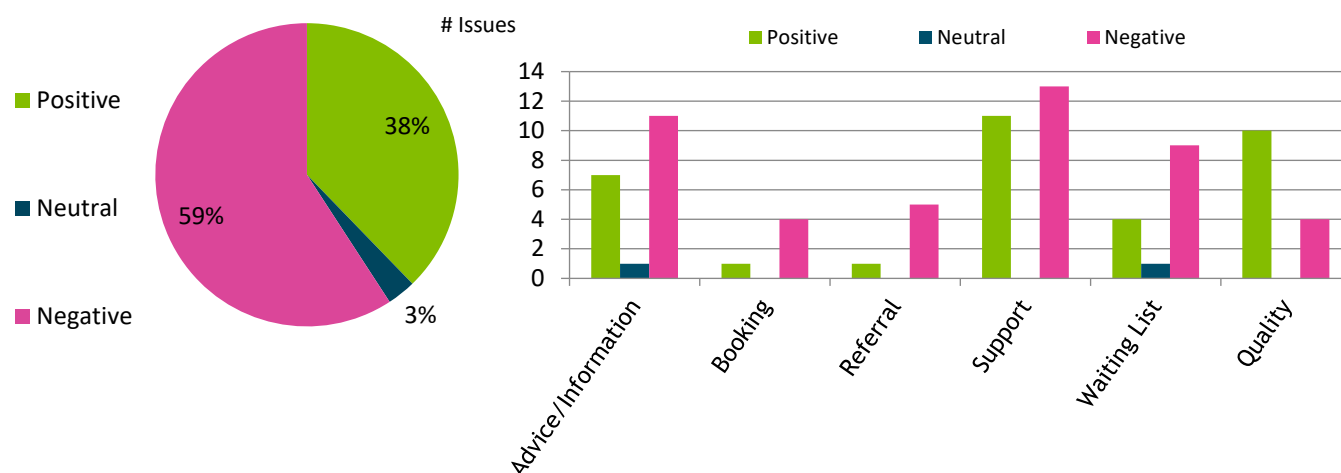
Generally, communication around the discharge process is poor.

- *Patient started crying as she thought she was going home and now she wasn't sure. They hadn't told her to get ready and it was after lunch.*
- *Patient mother raised concerns regarding the care and management of the patient. Mother informed that the patient has been discharged from clinic without any further treatment or discussion. She has tried to contact the department to discuss this but to no avail.*
- *Complaint about lack of communication with family regarding patient's treatment and plans for discharge. There has also been conflicting information from the dietician and the consultant regarding patient's discharge plans. Family are requesting an MDT meeting to discuss patient's discharge and aftercare.*

Patients don't feel supported to continue their care after discharge. Checks performed upon discharge are insufficient, leaving patients worried about their health.

- *I was not massively impressed with the way I was discharged - I had previously had a hemi-colectomy in Whipps Cross, so comparing the two: I was not informed of several things, which I only happened to know because of my previous discharge e.g. you're supposed to keep wearing the surgical stockings until you're finished taking blood thinners. I am doing it but was not informed. My wound was not checked on the day of discharge, or anything else e.g. bloods, bp, oxygen. I was not given instructions as to what I should eat or drink (I am assuming again myself, because it was a liver or I should cut out alcohol). Also, I had no idea how long my wound would take to heal. It would be quicker to say I got no information whatever, possibly I should have got a bunch of questions ready, but my brain was a bit mush from painkillers and lack of sleep at that stage!*
- *The nurses failed to check the patient blood sugar level before discharging her. Nurses failed to communicate with the family about the patient evening medication.*

Follow-on



Aspects praised by patients

Maternity patients reported receiving good aftercare following birth.

- The aftercare was really good, and they were on point and informative: the birth rooms are very large (the one where I was) 'my partner was able to stay- the next day they sent me to a breastfeeding workshop with my baby.*
- The only experience I had at Royal London Hospital was postnatal. We had a very good experience using the breastfeeding support team; they were very knowledgeable and gave a diagnosis of Tongue Tied and treatment for it very quickly. The aftercare support was also excellent.*

Surgical patients also receive good follow-on care.

- Not only the pre-surgery care was amazing the aftercare was on par. Surgeon was such a sweet lovely man explain everything that went on, felt comforted by the chat we had.*
- Last year when I've been to hospital- 6 months ago I was severely injured in an accident, they have been amazing. Very good follow-up from trauma, orthopaedics, ophthalmology- I wouldn't be alive without the doctors here. Now I have follow-up appointments already scheduled- one for ophthalmology, they may need to operate on my eye.*
- I had a surgical abortion at the Barts Health - The London Royal Hospital when I was 7 weeks pregnant. This was a very difficult time for me full of guilt and pain but the staff made me feel so comfortable and at ease. After the surgery I was taken to the recovery room. There I got tea, biscuits and water, my blood pressure was checked and heart rate multiple times, taken to make sure I was passing urine and not bleeding too heavily too. I was taken care of so wonderfully and I can't thank you all enough...*

Aspects criticised by patients

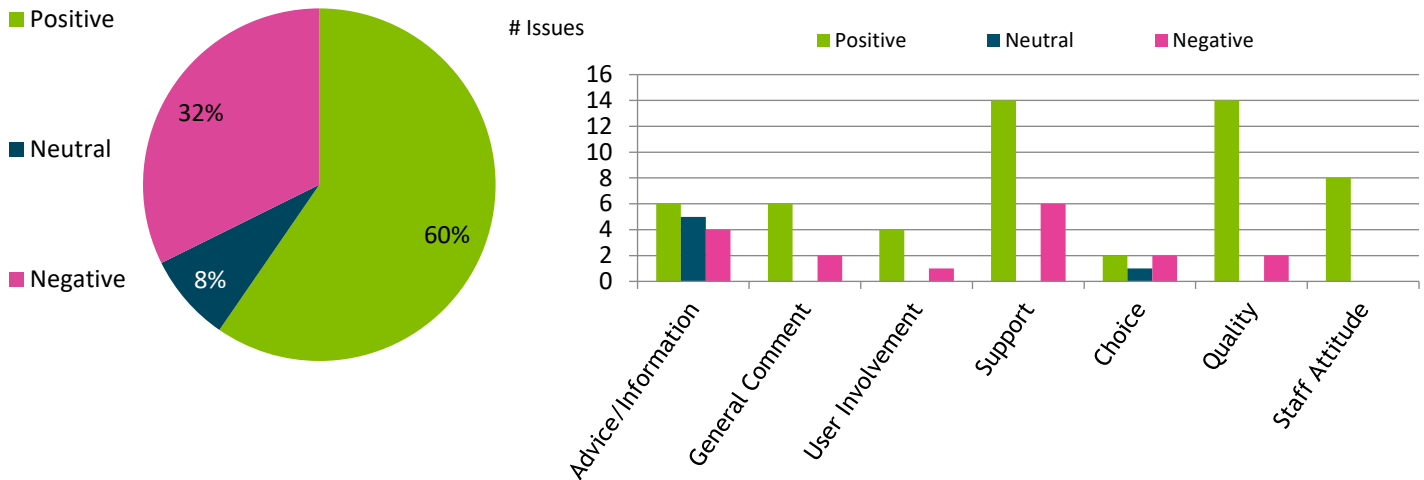
Some patients don't feel supported to continue their treatment outside the hospital.

- *Mother informed that the patient has been discharged from clinic without any further treatment or discussion. She has tried to contact the department to discuss this but to no avail.*
- *Patient not satisfied with outcome of surgery and woke up in ICU requiring an emergency tracheotomy which left him unable to eat, drink or speak. Patient was not given an explanation at the time about what had gone wrong and why. Patient's concerns were not addressed in follow up appointments either.*
- *After my friend was discharged from hospital (after a stroke) the wheelchair people came and installed a ramp, but they didn't give him a wheelchair! What is the point of a ramp without a wheelchair??*

Some have experienced difficulties booking follow-up appointments.

- *Doctor was very nice. After appointment, we were told he needs to be seen in 1 month. Receptionist was unable to do this. She wouldn't go see the doctor to ask what to do, she couldn't overbook. She snapped when I suggested something. She said only the secretary of Dr. B. can over book. I will be given appointment by post. When my appointment came via post it was at the wrong clinic and with the wrong doctor.*
- *[During a stay in hospital for a stroke, doctors noticed some bone anomalies which they believed may have been cancer so plenty of tests and appointments were going to be needed for this and my stroke aftercare, well after several weeks and the immediate blood and bone tests/scans had not materialised, wife started making phone calls and after several times being told things were in post and arrangements being made she finally got hold of someone who knew what they were doing and that's when we found out NO bone scans had been booked NO stroke aftercare had been booked NO nothing. I finally got cancer all clear 8 weeks after originally being told of possibility, after irate calls to stroke ward and staff ended up having a follow up check over the phone. After a stroke they say stay stress free -well my stress levels are not helped when this hospital give so little assistance and advice of which I'm still waiting for now.*
- *Complain regarding inadequate aftercare information provided to patient following surgery and delays in sending a post op therapy appointment.*
- *83383 Patient not received a physiotherapy f/u apt - no referral has been made when she was told it was going to take 2 weeks, it has now been more than a month*

Community services



Aspects praised by patients

Women who gave birth at home (or planned to) were happy with the experience.

- Very happy with my experience giving birth. Best midwife and homebirth team, who were there for me before during and after the birth. I had an opportunity to meet the whole team before giving birth.
- So far everything is fine. The homebirth team service is fantastic, and they come to see you at home. It seems too good to be true and it's great that it's a free service!

Antenatal classes for expectant parents are useful.

- Antenatal classes at RLH: Very good, informative and comprehensive. Very clear uptake about birth preparation and what to do when contraction/water break happens.
- I feel that attending the antenatal classes has been very helpful.

Breastfeeding support is a valuable community service for new parents.

- Was seen very quickly. Given lots of advice. Everyone was very helpful. We felt that they cared.
- Good... very involved. Calling to support over the phone. There was no need for me to chase them they willingly called to make sure I was getting in ok.

Postnatal midwives, health visitors and the tongue tie clinic generally offer good care.

- *Had debrief with nurse consultant and community midwife personally called to understand what issues I had and very supportive.*
- *Tongue tie clinic: he had pretty severe tongue tie which took 2 appointments to fix - both times we were given great care by the 2 ladies there who were friendly and did a great job.*
- *Postnatal midwives: Amazing, when I was stressed or down my midwife was happy to come visit and chat and I felt comfortable with her.*

Aspects criticised by patients

Awareness of the Community Homebirth Team is low.

- *I did not know about homebirth. I have not heard about new homebirth team in Tower Hamlets. My midwife discussed with me on all options available on the NHS where I can give birth, but I cannot remember being told anything about a homebirth option.*
- *I didn't know about the new Homebirth Team. I think not many people know about Homebirth Team because nobody is discussing it.*
- *Even during the antenatal classes I attended at the hospital they did not go into any detail about homebirth, while they gave details about the other options.*

There is limited support for parents of babies over six months old, compared with the first months of life.

- *Postnatal midwives/ health visitors Visits should be more spread throughout the first year. It felt there were too many at the beginning and then none after 3 months. More information should be given about introduction to solids.*

Elderly people discharged from hospital are not aware of their options regarding care in the community. This may contribute to longer hospital stays.

- *Staff are okay - so far so good. I don't want to speak negative if I did identify. I live alone at home and not confident enough to look after myself.*
- *The nurses are very competent here [in ward 14F], I'm looked after well, and I feel safe. Treatment is explained. I need people to come for brain problem immediately. I need care fulltime when at home for organising treatment.*

Request for further information and recommendations

- Staff should be congratulated on the positive feedback from patients on clinical outcomes, knowledge and good communication.
- Further investment in hospital administration is required for improvement in patient experience to be achieved particularly within outpatient clinics. Administration issues have a strong negative effect on patient experience at every stage of the care pathway including appointments, test results, patient records, internal staff communication, treatment cancellations and discharge.
- We understand that changes are currently under way to improve the appointments process at the Royal London Hospital. Could we please have an update on the nature of those changes and the impact that you expect that they will have on patient experience. When would you expect us to start seeing improvements?
- Are there areas where new admin processes are being implemented where the targeting the collection of patient experience data would be useful?
- Please keep us informed of when and how this report is being used by the Trust to help improve services and patient experience. It is very important for us to be able to demonstrate how taking the time to feedback on personal experience can help improve services for others in the future.