

The Hospital Discharge Survey



Patient experiences of hospital discharge - June 2017

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Acknowledgements

The following project was led by Healthwatch Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead in close collaboration with Healthwatch Buckinghamshire, Slough, Wokingham, Bracknell Forest, Hampshire and Surrey.

1. Introduction

As part of the health and social care reforms in 2012, each local authority in England is now required to have a local Healthwatch, acting as a consumer champion for local people using health and social care services. The Healthwatch network work independently and in partnership to share information and expertise, with the aim of improving health and social care services for local people.

Local Healthwatch has the following functions:

- Gather the views and understand the experiences of people who use local health and social care services through living, working and caring for others
- Make known local peoples' views about the services they use and for their views to influence decisions about local health and social care services
- Promote and support the involvement of local people in commissioning local care services and how they are monitored for quality
- Recommend investigation of services by Healthwatch England or the Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Provide local people with information about access to local services and support them to make informed choices
- Make the views and experiences of local people known to Healthwatch England
- In the case of a complaint about NHS services, we can support a referral to the local NHS Complaints Advocacy service on your behalf

The Hospital Discharge Survey has been conducted by a number of local Healthwatch working collaboratively, in part fulfilment of these duties.

2. Background

NHS Choices¹ states that once a patient is admitted to hospital, their care plan (including information about their discharge) is developed. During a patient's stay in hospital, a discharge assessment is undertaken to determine if a patient needs more care after they leave the hospital.

Every patient should be fully involved in the discharge assessment and, where a patient consents, family or carers should also have the opportunity to contribute to this. However, it is suggested that a patient should not be discharged from hospital until²:

- They are medically fit (this is decided by the consultant or someone the consultant has said can make the decision on their behalf).
- They have had an assessment to look at the support the patient may need to be discharged safely.
- They have been given a written care plan that sets out the support the patient will get to meet their needs.
- The support described in the patient's care plan has been put in place and it is safe for the patient to be discharged.

There are many factors that can lead to a patient experiencing a delay in being discharged from hospital. In the year 2015/16, the most common reason for a patient experiencing a delay in being discharged from hospital in England was having to await further non-acute NHS care (e.g. community support, mental health care, intermediate care or rehabilitation services). This made up 18.3% of all delays³.

¹ <http://www.nhs.uk/NHSEngland/AboutNHSservices/NHShospitals/Pages/leaving-hospital.aspx>

² <http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/social-care-and-support-guide/Pages/hospital-discharge-care.aspx>

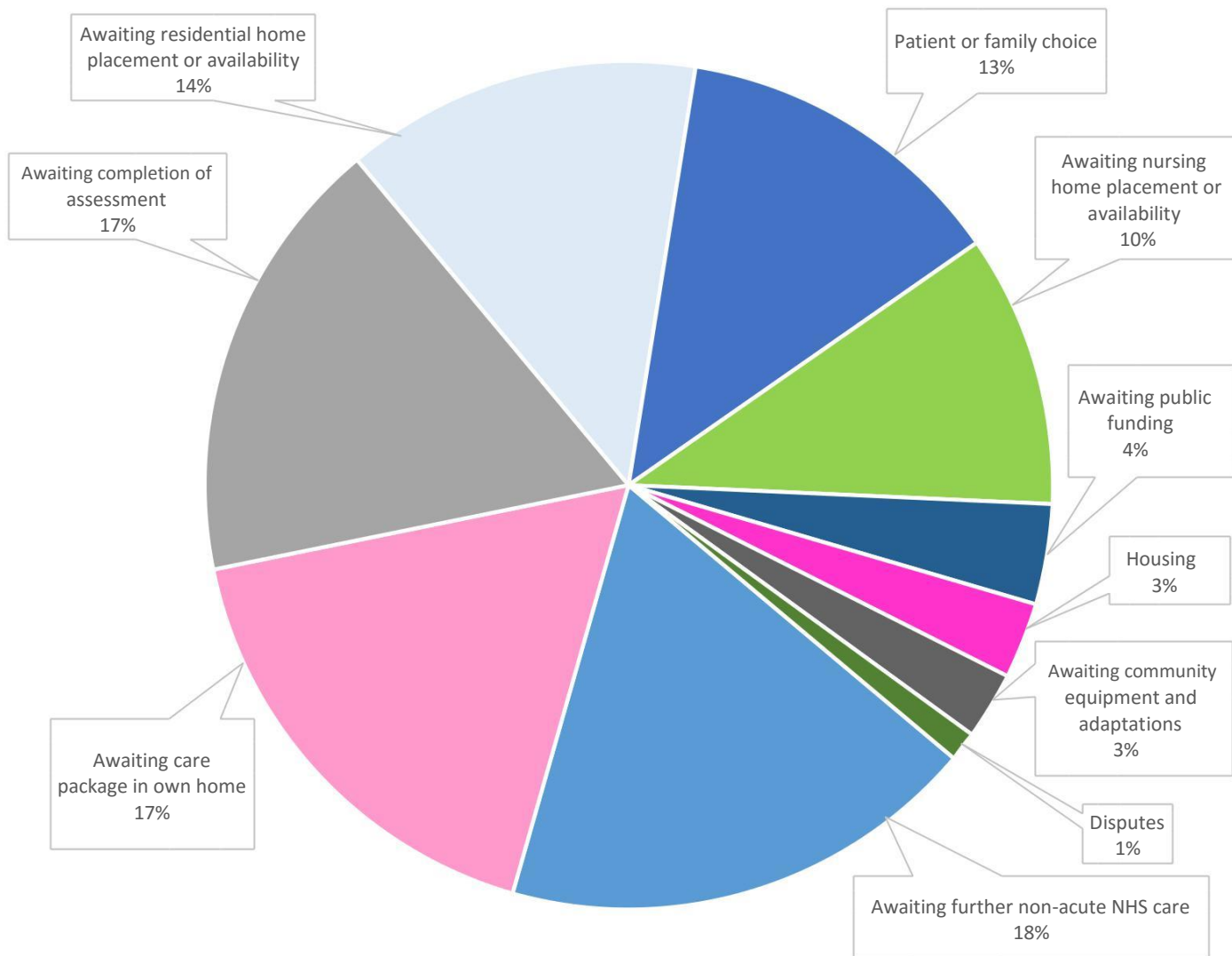
³ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2013/04/2015-16-Delayed-Transfers-of-Care-Annual-Report-1.pdf>

A breakdown of the reasons of all the delayed days experienced by patients in England for 2015-16, as reported by NHS England⁴.

Reason	Delayed Days	Proportion of Total Delays
Awaiting further non-acute NHS care	330,606	18.3%
Awaiting care package in own home	314,049	17.4%
Awaiting completion of assessment	309,874	17.1%
Awaiting residential home placement or availability	245,719	13.6%
Patient of family choice	231,449	12.8%
Awaiting nursing home placement or availability	188,780	10.4%
Awaiting public funding	69,364	3.8%
Housing	53,041	2.9%
Awaiting community equipment and adaptations	46,199	2.6%
Disputes	20,802	1.1%

⁴ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2013/04/2015-16-Delayed-Transfers-of-Care-Annual-Report-1.pdf>

Reasons for Delayed Transfer of Care in the year 2015-16



The services offered to patients following their discharge from hospital will vary depending on which local authority the patient resides in and which hospital they have been discharged from.

For example, at Wexham Park Hospital, a discharge lounge is provided for the patients who are being discharged to wait for transport, medication or any other information they may require before they are able to leave the hospital.

Transport services are provided by the ambulance service, Age Concern Slough & East Berkshire to residents of Berkshire and by the British Red Cross to residents of Buckinghamshire.

Age Concern Slough & Berkshire East and the Red Cross provide short-term support to enable people to settle in at home and help with the things that may prove difficult in the first few weeks after discharge, such as shopping and collecting prescriptions.

There are locally agreed targets in each hospital for the maximum time that a patient should wait for transport, which is four hours, or for medication, which is two hours from the time a the prescription is received by the pharmacy, however waiting times are variable.

For example, we were informed by the Wexham Park pharmacy department that there may sometimes be delays in prescription services after having clinically screened the prescription to ensure it is safe, as a doctor may have to be contacted for confirmation. Peak hours of work, such as before lunch and at the end of the working day, can result in delays. We were informed that work is underway to alleviate this problem and that pilot schemes have already commenced, for example the role of 'medication runner' at Wexham Park to collect medication from the hospital pharmacy prior to discharge.

3. Aims of the Study

Healthwatch WAM and collaborating local Healthwatch from other areas wanted to hear from local people who had experienced being discharged from hospital. The aims of the discharge survey were to identify:

- Do patients experience delays in their discharge from hospital? If so, what are the common reasons for this?
- Do patients feel involved in the decisions made about their discharge from hospital?
- Do patients feel that their discharge plan is tailored to their needs?
- Are patients receiving the services that they need following their discharge from hospital and are these services of high quality?
- How do patients feel that their discharge from hospital could be improved?

The findings have been used to highlight areas of good practice and to identify further improvements that could be made.

4. Summary of Findings

The following key findings are informed by the data provided by respondents through the discharge survey:

- The majority of respondents reported that they felt involved in decisions about their discharge from hospital and that a discharge plan was made with them and/or their family. However, over a quarter of respondents reported that this did not take place.
- The majority of respondents felt that their discharge plan met their needs 'definitely' or 'to some extent'. However, 15% of respondents reported that hospital staff did not discuss with them whether they needed any further health or social care services after leaving hospital, although they would have liked this to happen.
- 61% of respondents reported that their discharge was delayed. The most common reason given for delayed discharge was waiting for medication. Most commonly, respondents reported that the delay in their discharge lasted 'longer than 2 hours but not longer than 4 hours'.
- The majority of respondents reported that they felt that they were treated with dignity and respect during their stay in hospital. 67% of respondents reported that a member of staff explained the purpose of the medicines they were taking home in a way that they could understand. However, just over half of all respondents reported that they had to repeat their medical history several times.
- 15.5% of respondents reported that when they left hospital, they did not know what would happen next with their care. 22.4% of respondents who required further services following their discharge from hospital reported that they did not get the planned services. Of the respondents who did receive planned services, 51.1% reported that they were satisfactory. Furthermore, 50.9% of respondents reported that they needed ongoing support but that this was not happening.

5. Methodology

Residents of Windsor, Ascot and Maidenhead, and of the boroughs and counties served by the Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust, were invited to share their experience of being discharged from hospital through the completion of a survey.

The survey was advertised online and through three press releases in local newspapers. Respondents were able to complete the survey through 'SurveyMonkey'.

Face to face interviews were also carried out at Wexham Park Hospital and Frimley Park Hospital by Healthwatch staff and volunteers.

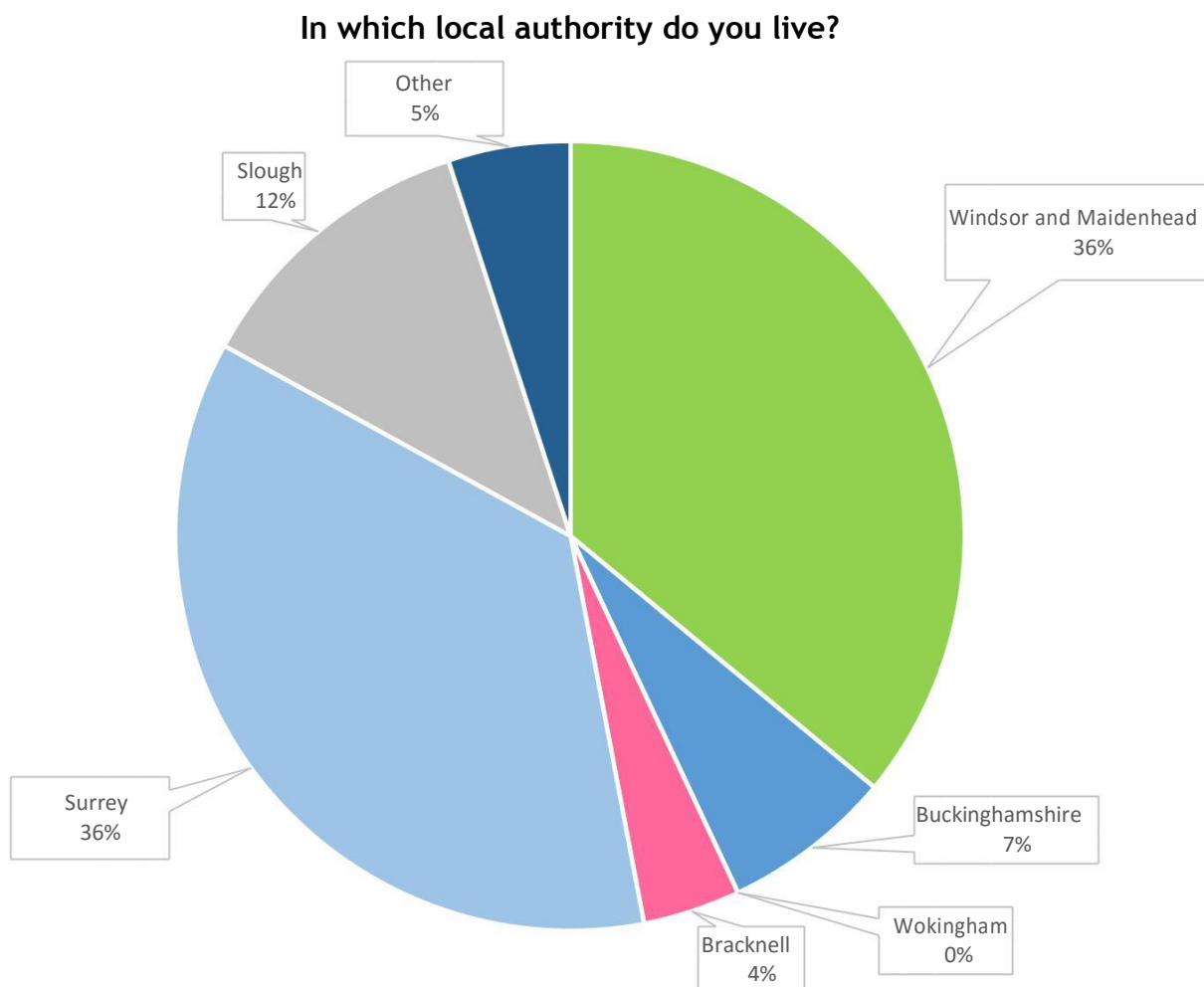
The questions asked focussed on the patient's stay in hospital, the assessment process during their hospital stay, their discharge from hospital and the services provided following discharge.

People were asked to identify the hospital they stayed in, however all information collected through the survey was anonymous.

A full list of the survey questions is available in Appendix A.

6. Respondents

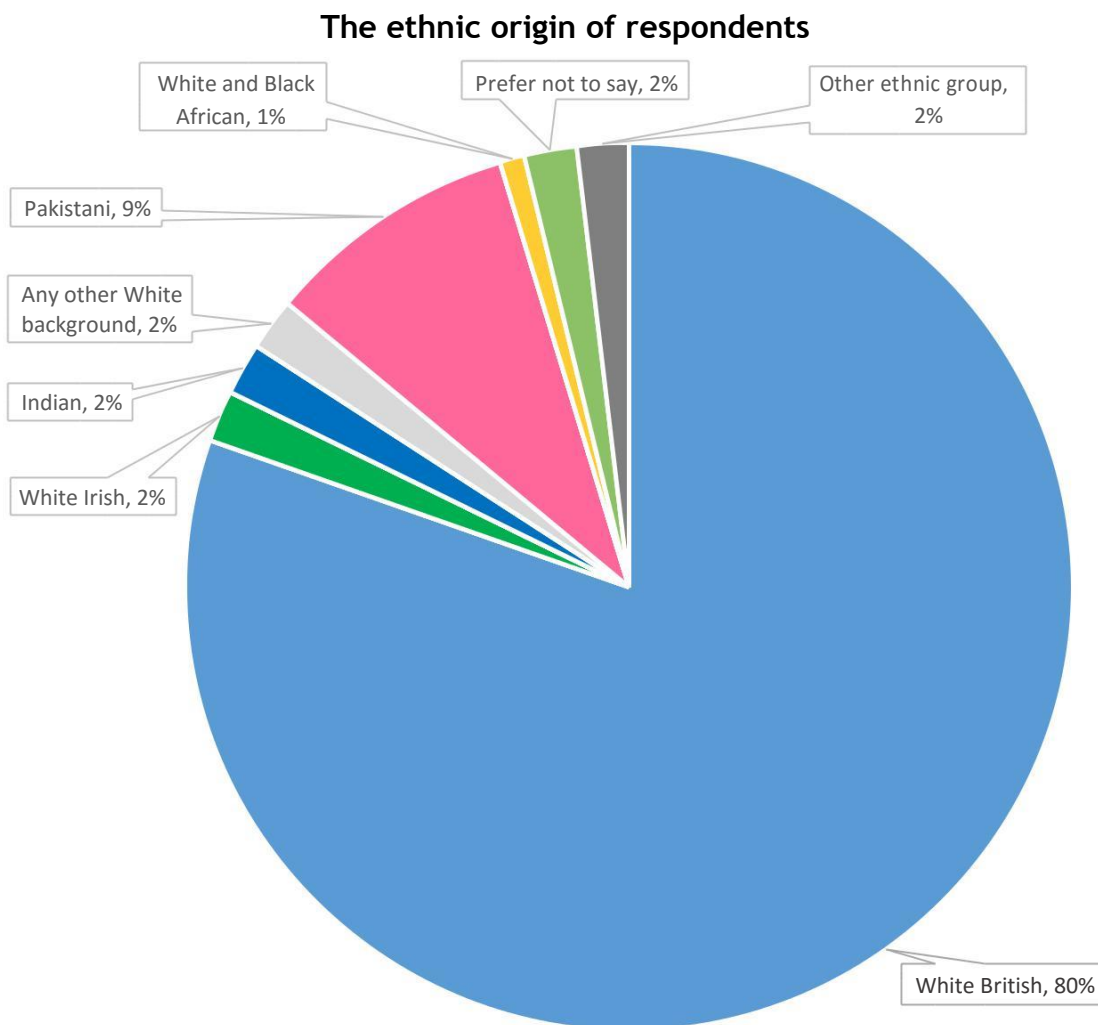
- The Hospital Discharge Survey has reached a total of 114 people. Of the 114 respondents, 79 completed the survey as a patient.
- The majority of respondents were from the areas of Windsor and Maidenhead or Surrey.



* 'Other' local authorities that respondents reported they lived in:

'Other' local authority	Response (%)	Response (number)
Hampshire	2.7%	3
Berkshire	0.9%	1
West Sussex	0.9%	1
Hillingdon	0.9%	1

- Of the 114 people surveyed, 26 considered themselves disabled.
- The majority of respondents were female (64.8%), in comparison to male (35.2%) and transgender (0.0%).
- The people surveyed ranged between the ages of under 18 to 75+, but the majority of respondents were aged 75+.
- The people surveyed identified with a broad range of ethnic origins, but the majority identified as White British (80%).
- Respondents shared their experiences of being discharged from a number of different hospitals, although the most common was Wexham Park Hospital (53.5%).
- Of the people we surveyed, 20.8% were readmitted to hospital following their discharge.



In which hospital were you an inpatient?

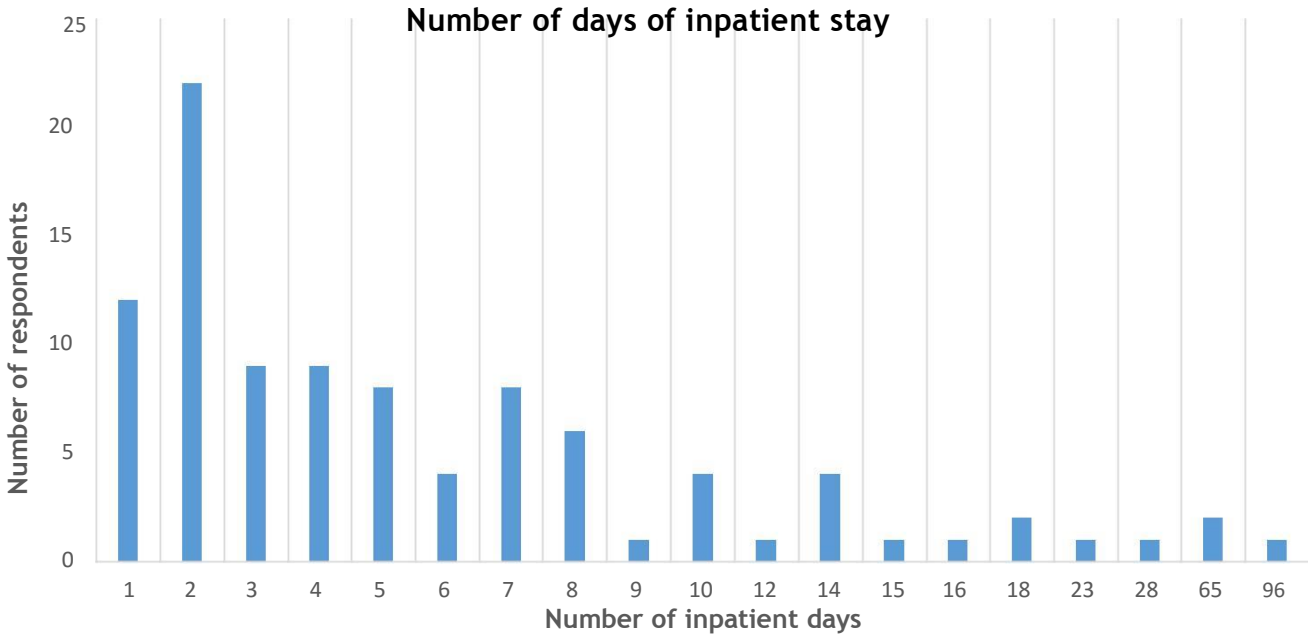
Hospital in which respondent was an inpatient	Response (%)	Response (number)
Wexham Park Hospital	53.5%	61
Frimley Park Hospital	18.4%	21
Heatherwood Hospital	2.6%	3
Royal Berkshire Hospital	0.9%	1
Other (please specify)*	24.5%	28

*** 'Other' hospitals in which respondents reported they were an inpatient:**

'Other' hospital	Response (%)	Response (number)
Royal Surrey County Hospital	7%	8
East Surrey Hospital	6.1%	7
Epsom Hospital	3.5%	4
St Peter's Hospital	2.6%	3
Saint Marks Hospital	1.8%	2
The Royal Marsden Hospital	1.8%	2
North Downs Hospital	0.9%	1
Farnham Hospital	0.9%	1
St George's Hospital	0.9%	1
Queen Mary's Hospital	0.9%	1
Kingston Hospital	0.9%	1

7. What you told us

We asked respondents how many days they were an inpatient in hospital. Answers ranged from 1 - 96 days, but the most common answer was 2 days.



Discharge Plan

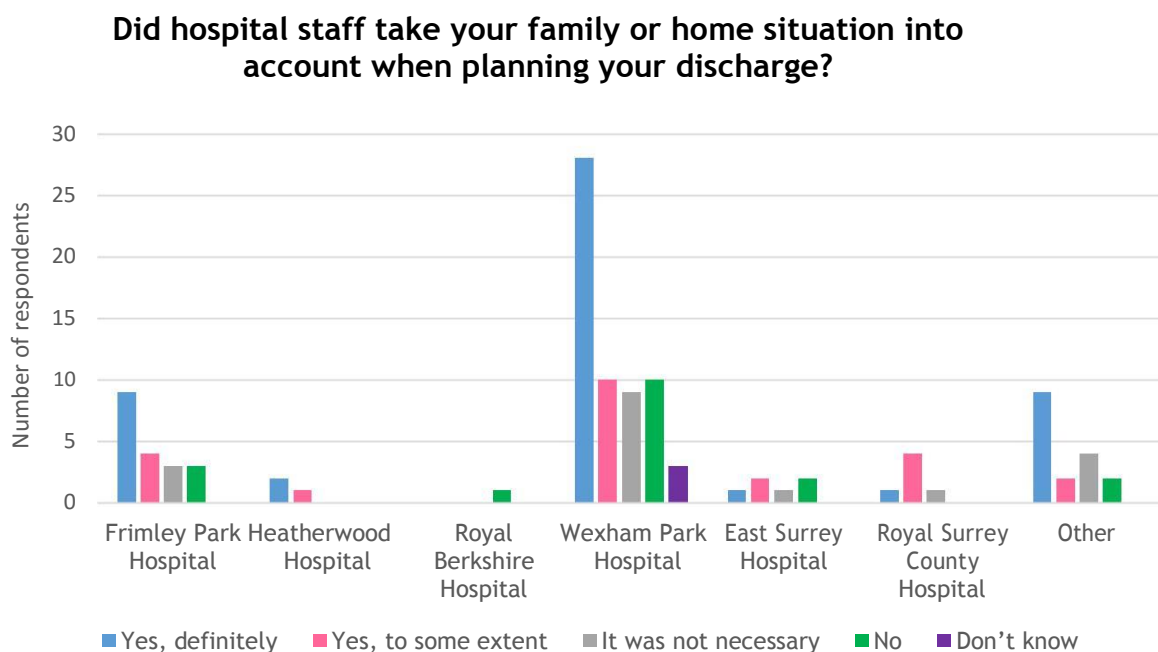
The majority of respondents (68%) reported that a discharge plan was made with them and/or their family (73 of 108). This was reported at all hospitals, with the exception of East Surrey Hospital. However, almost a quarter of respondents (26 of 108) reported that a plan was not made with them and/or their family. This suggests that whilst many hospitals are involving patients and their families in the decisions made about their care, there is still the need for practice to improve in this area.

Was a plan for your discharge made with you and/or your family?

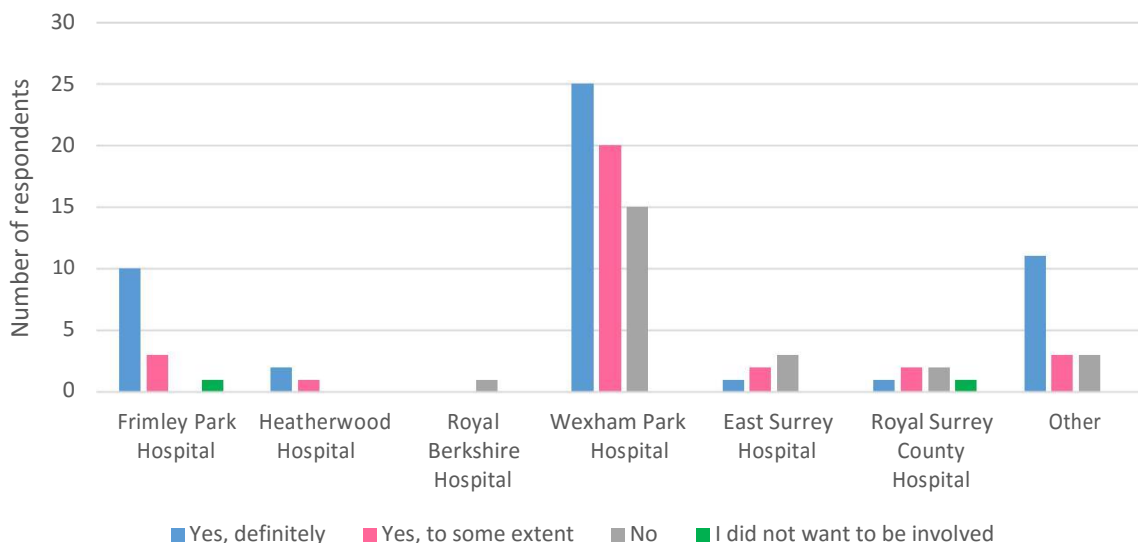
Hospital	Response		
	Yes	No	Not Sure
Frimley Park Hospital	9	6	2
Heatherwood Hospital	2	0	0
Royal Berkshire Hospital	1	0	0
Wexham Park Hospital	41	13	5
East Surrey Hospital	2	3	1
Royal Surrey County Hospital	4	2	0
Other	14	2	1
Total	73	26	9

Almost half of respondents responded ‘yes, definitely’ when asked if staff took their family or home situation into account when planning their hospital discharge. However, 18 of 112 respondents (16%) reported that this did not occur. In addition, almost half of respondents responded ‘yes, definitely’ when asked if they felt involved in decisions about their discharge from hospital. However, 29 of 112 respondents (26%) reported that they had not been consulted.

Although 2 respondents reported that they did not want to be involved in decisions made about their discharge from hospital, the majority of responses here highlight the importance of involving friends and/or family (with the prior consent of the patient) in the discharge process to ensure that the decisions made are in the best interests of the patient.



Did you feel you were involved in decisions about your discharge from hospital?

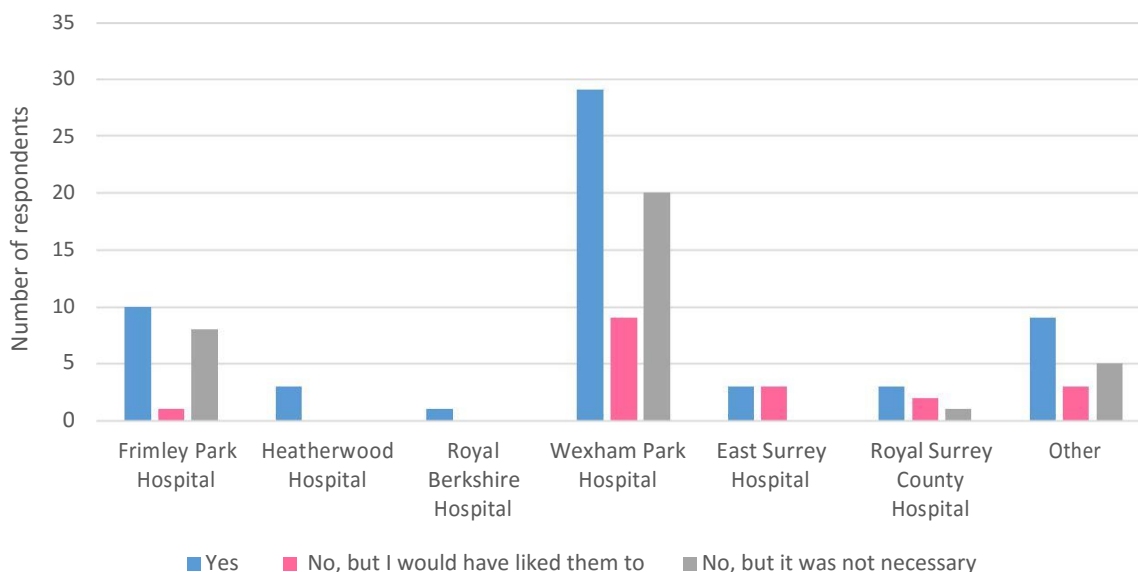


Over half of respondents (58 of 110) reported that hospital staff discussed with them whether they needed any further health and/or social care after leaving hospital. However, 17 of 110 respondents (15%) reported that further health or social care services were not discussed with them, although they would have found this useful. Of these 17 respondents, the majority had been discharged from Wexham Park Hospital.

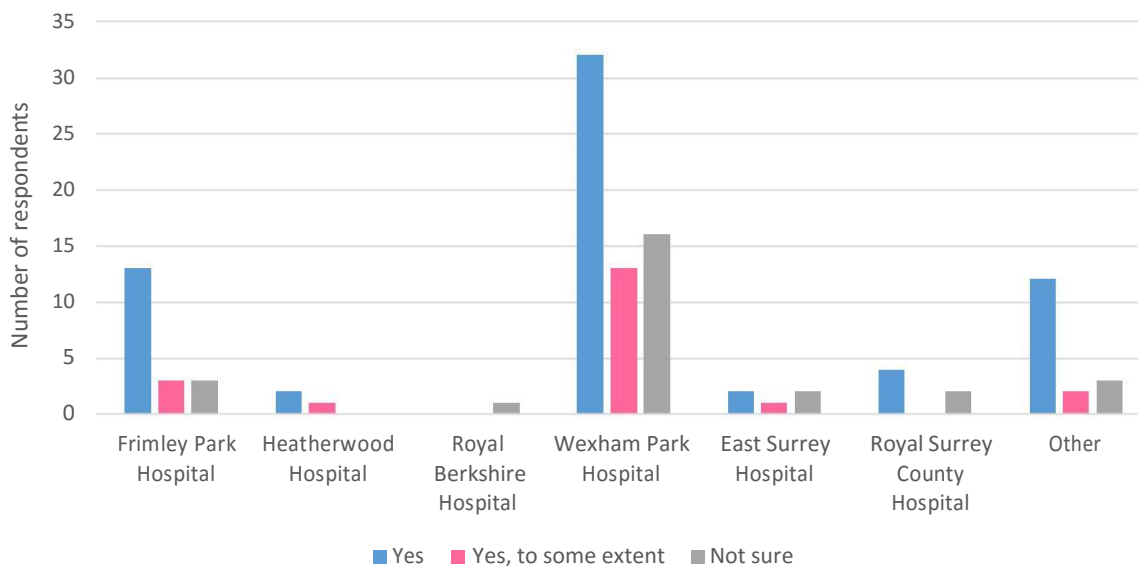
Of 112 respondents, 65 (58%) reported that their discharge plan met their needs and a further 20 (18%) reported that it met their needs 'to some extent'. Of the respondents who were discharged from Royal Surrey County Hospital or Wexham Park Hospital, half reported that they were 'not sure' if their discharge plan met their needs.

These findings suggest that, in many cases, hospital staff are discussing with patients' their health and/or social care needs in preparation for discharge from hospital. However, this is not true for all staff and there is room for improvement, particularly at Wexham Park Hospital. The majority of people did report that their discharge plan met their needs, but this could have been improved at both Royal Surrey County Hospital and Wexham Park Hospital.

Did hospital staff discuss with you whether you may need any further health or social care services after leaving hospital, such as home care, community nurses, rehabilitation, physiotherapy?



Do you feel that your discharge plan met your needs?



Further comments that respondents made about their discharge plan

“I am a full time carer for a 95 year old mother and at no stage was my home situation discussed”

Frimley Park Hospital

“Co-ordinated discharge with adult services”

“Discharged without support, with low blood pressure, very weak and unsteady on my feet and diarrhoea, told to take a walking frame to get around, no question of an assessment regarding the layout of my home and how I was going to be able to get upstairs....which I can't so have to sleep on the sofa....very angry”

Heatherwood Hospital

“There was no plan, no follow-up appointment and I had a lot of questions”

“I was discharged without a plan or discussion with my wife or myself. I am disabled and the need for home care, rehabilitation or physiotherapy was not discussed”

“The discharge was not coordinated or planned”

East Surrey Hospital

“There (was) no plan made I had to do all the planning”

“Hospital/Social Services follow-up arranged for every week”

Royal Surrey County Hospital

“I was moved from one ward to another at 9.00 the evening before my discharge. This led to confusion from both the doctors and the ward sister. The doctors did not sign my prescription, so in order to prevent me waiting around for the rest of the day before it could be signed, the sister suggested I could go home, but would need to return to collect my prescription and discharge papers at the end of the day... Unfortunately, this made the discharge process very disjointed... Had I stayed on the original ward I feel this would have been avoided”

“Whilst the treatment of (my son's) physical health was faultless there was no mention of his mental/emotional well-being on discharge”

“Staff went out of their way to help with the discharge process”

“Very pleased with the speed at which I was discharged. And although it was quick, I didn't feel under pressure to leave before I was ready”

“Not happy as plan decided by a relative”

“Patient had a good understanding of discharge arrangements”

Wexham Park Hospital

Being Discharged from Hospital

When people were asked if they were given a written copy of their care plan/written instructions on leaving hospital about what to do/not do, overall 52 of 110 people (47%) responded 'yes', with others responding 'no' (43%) or 'not sure' (10%). Of the patients discharged from East Surrey Hospital and Wexham Park Hospital, over half of people responded 'no' or 'not sure' to this question.

The majority of people responded 'yes, definitely' (47 of 105) or 'yes, to some extent' (34 of 105) when asked if they were given enough notice about when they were going to be discharged from hospital.

More respondents reported that the time of their discharge was satisfactory and in accordance with their wishes (64%), in comparison to those who did not (36%). Of the hospitals that respondents were discharged from, the hospital with the highest majority of people responding 'yes' to this question was Frimley Park Hospital (82%).

These responses indicate that the majority of people were given enough notice about when they were going to be discharged and that the timing of their discharge was satisfactory and in accordance with their wishes, particularly for patients treated at Frimley Park Hospital. However, not all patients, particularly those treated at either East Surrey Hospital or Wexham Park Hospital, received a written copy of their care plan.

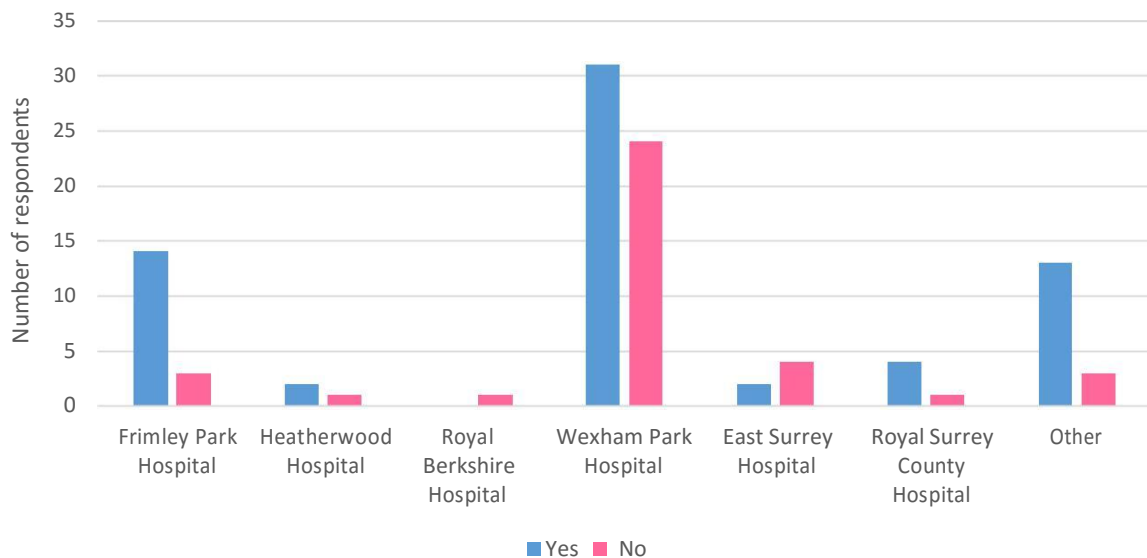
Were you given a written copy of your care plan/written instructions on leaving hospital about what to do or not to do?

Hospital	Response		
	Yes	Not sure	No
Frimley Park Hospital	9	1	7
Heatherwood Hospital	3	0	0
Royal Berkshire Hospital	1	0	0
Wexham Park Hospital	25	8	28
East Surrey Hospital	1	1	4
Royal Surrey County Hospital	3	0	3
Other	10	1	5
Total	52	11	47

Were you given enough notice about when you were going to be discharged?

Hospital	Response		
	Yes, definitely	Yes, to some extent	No
Frimley Park Hospital	10	5	3
Heatherwood Hospital	1	1	1
Royal Berkshire Hospital	0	0	1
Wexham Park Hospital	22	21	11
East Surrey Hospital	2	1	3
Royal Surrey County Hospital	2	2	2
Other	10	4	3
Total	47	34	24

Was the time of your discharge satisfactory and in accordance with your wishes?

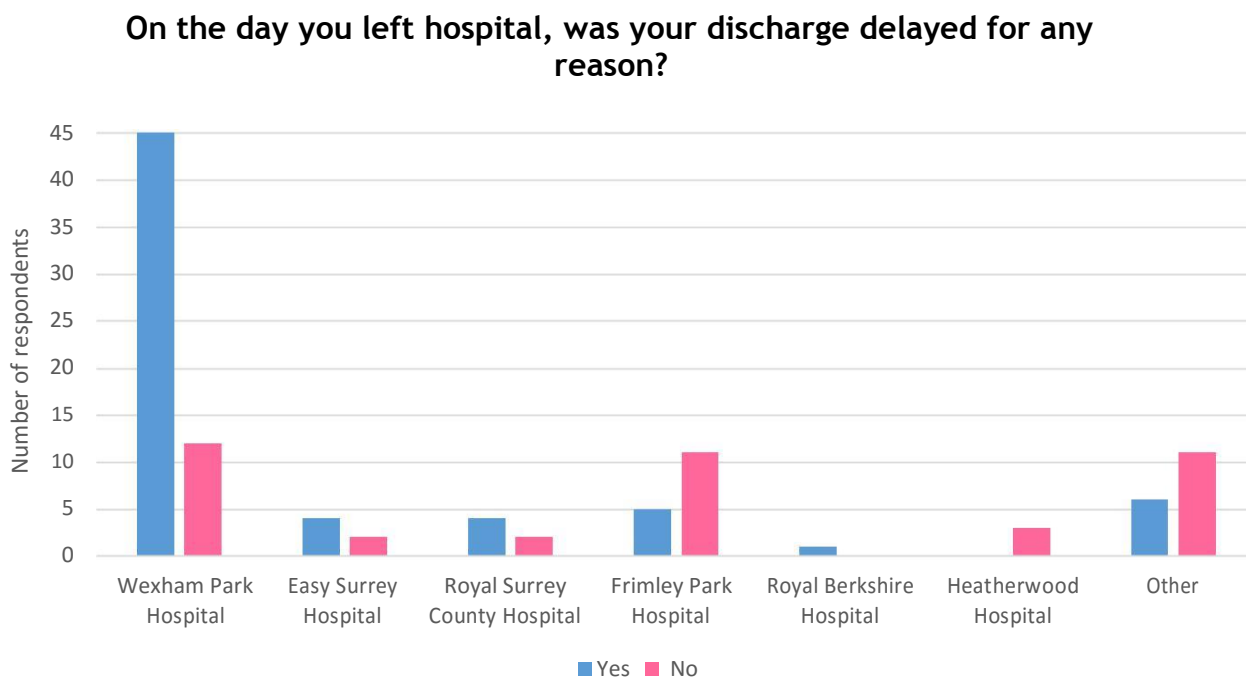


Delayed Discharge

We asked respondents if, on the day that they left hospital, their discharge was delayed for any reason. Overall 65 of 106 respondents (61%) reported ‘yes’. At Wexham Park Hospital, 45 of 57 respondents (79%) reported that their discharge was delayed, and 67% of respondents reported that their discharge was delayed at both East Surrey Hospital and Royal Surrey County Hospital.

Overall, the most common reason that respondents reported for their delayed discharge was waiting for medication. The second most common was having to wait to see to doctor.

At all hospitals, with the exception of Royal Surrey County Hospital and ‘other’ hospitals, respondents most commonly reported that the delay in their discharge lasted ‘longer than 2 hours but not longer than 4 hours’.



What was the main reason for the delay?

Hospital	Response			
	I had to wait for medication	I had to wait to see a doctor	I had to wait for an ambulance/transport	Something else
Frimley Park Hospital	6	0	1	0
Heatherwood Hospital	0	0	0	0
Royal Berkshire Hospital	0	0	0	0
Wexham Park Hospital	31	7	5	8
East Surrey Hospital	2	2	0	0
Royal Surrey County Hospital	4	0	0	0
Other	3	1	0	2
Total	46	10	6	10

How long was the delay?

Hospital	Response			
	Up to 1 hour	Longer than 1 hour but not longer than 2 hours	Longer than 2 hours but not longer than 4 hours	Longer than 4 hours
Frimley Park Hospital	1	0	5	0
Heatherwood Hospital	0	0	0	0
Royal Berkshire Hospital	0	0	0	1
Wexham Park Hospital	4	13	19	13
East Surrey Hospital	0	0	3	1
Royal Surrey County Hospital	1	0	1	2
Other	0	0	2	3
Total	7	13	30	20

Further comments that respondents made about their delayed discharge

“Pressure on beds expedited discharge. Moved to discharge lounge to await medications”

“Does feel a long time from leaving the ward and through discharge lounge”

Frimley Park Hospital

“Waiting for pharmacy”

Royal Surrey County Hospital

“They had no staff/ wheel chairs available, and my transportation had to wait hours for me to be discharged. I should have stayed longer, but they discharge you as they need beds”

“I was lucky to get a discharge on Sunday but there was only one doctor on duty who could authorise it”

East Surrey Hospital

“Had to wait 10 hours”

“It took hours to actually get discharged. We waited for the paperwork to be done. In the meantime there was a shift change and no information was passed to the new shift which further delayed our discharge”

“Patient would have liked to have been kept updated about the delay”

Wexham Park Hospital

“Delay getting BFC Social services to sort out start of the required intermediate care”

Other Hospital (Saint Marks Hospital)

During the Hospital Stay

We asked respondents a number of questions relating to their experience during their stay in hospital. The following findings were identified:

- 67% of respondents reported that a member of staff explained the purpose of the medicines they were taking home in a way that the respondent could understand.
- 94% of respondents reported that all of their property was available for them to take home. However, some respondents did report that their personal property or prescribed medication/equipment was not made available to them when they were returning home.
- Overall, 76% of respondents (80 of 105) stated that they felt that they were 'always' treated with dignity and respect and a further 20% (21 of 105) reported that they felt this 'sometimes'. However, 4% of respondents reported that they felt that they were not treated with dignity and respect.
- Just over half of respondents (52%) reported that they had to repeat their medical history several times.
- 38% of respondents rated the hospital food as 'good' and a further 14% as 'very good'. However, 21% reported that it was 'poor'.

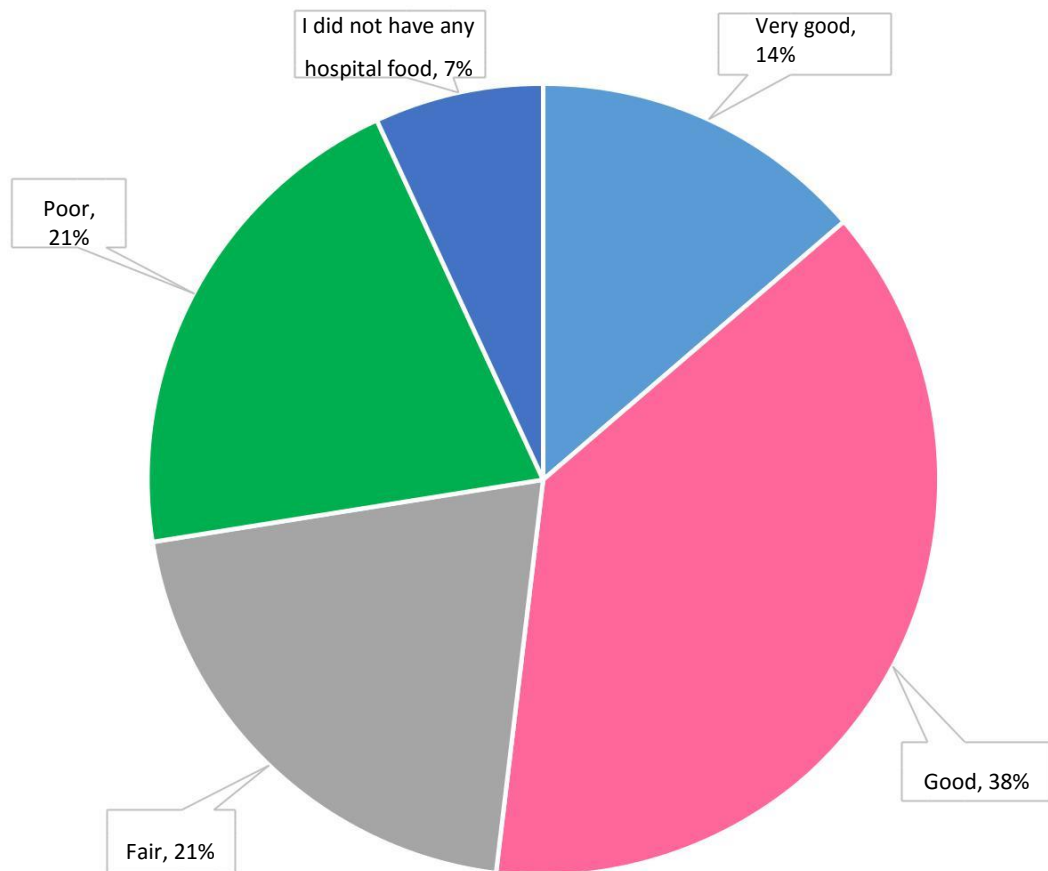
“My shoes were lost at some point and I had to travel in my slippers”

“All items were packed and sent home with my husband except for the conveyers which were crucial!”

Overall, did you feel you were treated with dignity and respect?

Hospital	Response		
	Yes, always	Yes, sometimes	No
Frimley Park Hospital	15	4	0
Heatherwood Hospital	1	2	0
Royal Berkshire Hospital	1	0	0
Wexham Park Hospital	42	8	3
East Surrey Hospital	5	1	0
Royal Surrey County Hospital	3	3	0
Other	13	3	1
Total	80	21	4

How would you rate the hospital food?



The mix of responses collected in relation to inpatient stays reflects the variability of patients' experiences both within and between hospitals. At all hospitals, the majority of patients did feel that they were treated with dignity and respect, and reported that their property was available for them to take home. However, patient experience could be improved by patients not having to repeat their medical history, having their medicine explained to them in an appropriate manner and by the provision of better quality food.

Following Discharge

Just under half of respondents (47%) reported that they ‘definitely’ knew what would happen next with their care. 27% of respondents who were discharged from Frimley Park Hospital and 33% of respondents who were discharged from East Surrey County Hospital reported that they were not aware of what would happen next with their care. This highlights the need for better communication with patients who are being discharged from hospital regarding what will happen with their care and any services that they may expect to receive.

When you left hospital, did you know what would happen next with your care?

Hospital	Response		
	Yes, definitely	Yes, to some extent	No
Frimley Park Hospital	6	5	4
Heatherwood Hospital	2	1	0
Royal Berkshire Hospital	1	0	0
Wexham Park Hospital	19	19	5
East Surrey Hospital	1	3	2
Royal Surrey County Hospital	2	4	0
Other	11	2	3
Total	42	34	14

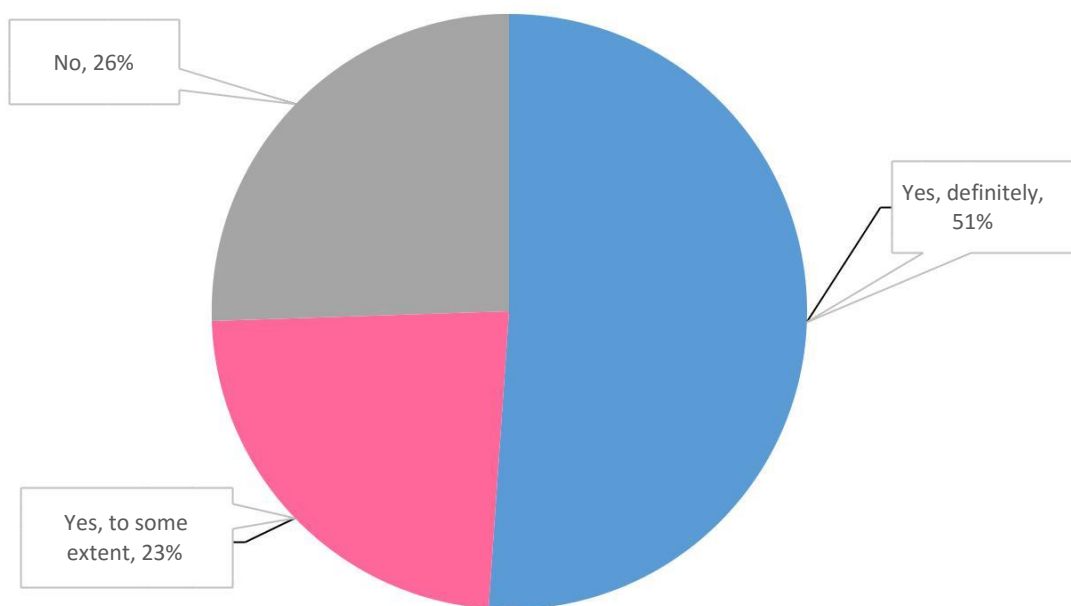
In addition, 13% of all respondents (22% of respondents who required further services), reported that they did not get the planned services. Of the respondents who did receive planned services following their discharge, 51% reported that they were satisfactory but, 25% disagreed that they were satisfactory. Furthermore, 51% of respondents reported that they needed ongoing support but that this was not happening.

This highlights that there has been a lack of adequate support for some people once discharged from hospital, both in the form of poor quality service provision or a lack of service provision altogether. Such issues have the potential to harm patient health and wellbeing and prolong recovery.

Did any services come to you as planned?

Services	Response (%)	Response (number)
I didn't require any further services	41.0%	34
Other	21.7%	18
No, I didn't get the planned services	13.3%	11
Homecare	8.4%	7
Community / district nurses	8.4%	7
Equipment	3.6%	3
Physiotherapist	3.6%	3

Were those services satisfactory?



Overall Experience

We asked respondents how they felt that their stay in hospital and their discharge from hospital could have been improved. The following comments were made:

“The staff being more aware of my home situation”

“Doctors to discuss changes to your treatment, rather than it just happening and you’re not told why”

“Less rushed on the ward. Staff didn’t take my notes so all information had to be repeated, as well as the operation consent forms being filled out again which had previously been completed in out patients”

“The food was inedible”

Frimley Park Hospital

“Food too cold”

“Would have been positive to see a dietician. Would have liked a medical certificate for seeking job seekers allowance”

“Delayed discharge is a big issue with medication and transport”

“Greater concern and care”

“Better coordination between clinical staff, Occupational Therapy and admin staff. I felt caught in the middle of what seemed to be a conflict”

“I had to repeatedly explain that my daughter was autistic”

“If I had someone who could speak my language”

Wexham Park Hospital

“All staff should be aware of the specific requirements of the Care Act 2014 for supporting DeafBlind adults”

Other Hospital (Farnham Hospital)

“Discharge delays due to Pharmacy are a frequent problem. I have on previous occasions been told to go home and return the next day (a return trip of 30 miles) to collect TTO (To Take Out) drugs. The delay caused by Pharmacy or the doctor writing the discharge summary has a knock on effect and effectively blocks a bed. The alternative is to be moved to the Discharge Lounge which is the most unpleasant experience and not one which a patient being discharged from hospital should endure for very long”

Royal Surrey County Hospital

We asked respondents to tell us about their positive experiences in hospital and they highlighted the following:

“Staff very caring and kind”

“The nurses were nice”

“Liaison between care home and hospital excellent. Care has been excellent. Kept well informed of what was happening very understanding staff”

Frimley Park Hospital

“A&E were exceptional”

“Information was very forthcoming and I was involved and consulted at every stage”

“Ward was well run and very clean. Staff all very polite and efficient”

“Nurse was very helpful”

“Hospital room was clean”

Wexham Park Hospital

“Nurse was very good to me. She helped me to sit up, wash and assisted me to the toilet. That was very positive for me”

“Brilliant staff; availability of necessary equipment”

East Surrey Hospital

“Discharge process was quick”

Heatherwood Hospital

“Staff were very nice”

Royal Surrey County Hospital

We also asked respondents if there was anything else that they would like to tell us about their experience and they reported the following:

“I would choose Heatherwood over any other hospital in the area”

“Information was not provided in a timely and appropriate manner. Staff do not know who is responsible for what within the borough and send you round the houses if you ask for information”

Heatherwood Hospital

“Patients should be treated well and have a say in what happens to them. I had my waters broken without even being warned about it let alone asked if I was ok with it”

“I am very fond of Wexham Park Hospital”

“Bedpans made out of paper, rather than original metal. Leaked in the bed and the nurse was angry which made the patient feel anxious”

Wexham Park Hospital

“Provide an advocate at the hospital discharge meeting”

East Surrey Hospital

“I wasn't happy about having to take off my bra for an x-ray in front of 2 people”

Frimley Park Hospital

8. Recommendations

The following areas of good practice have been identified from the information collected through the discharge survey:

- The majority of respondents reported that they felt that they were treated with dignity and respect during their stay in hospital.
- Many respondents from various hospitals reported that hospital staff were caring, kind and supportive. Respondents frequently identified that nursing staff had positively contributed to their stay in hospital.
- 82% of patients at Frimley Park Hospital reported that the time of their discharge was satisfactory and in accordance with their wishes. Frimley Park Hospital to consider sharing best practice in this matter with other hospitals in the Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust and with Healthwatch WAM.

Based on the key findings the following recommendations have been made:

- Hospitals should consider reviewing their methods of record keeping to prevent patients from having to repeat their medical history to hospital staff.
- Hospitals should consider reviewing the way in which they are providing medicine to patients upon discharge, with the aim of discharging patients in a more timely fashion.
- Hospital staff should discuss with all patients, as appropriate, the need for health and social care services after leaving hospital.
- Hospital staff should communicate to all patients their care plan, including any services that they may expect to receive and any services that may not be provided, and ensure that this information has been understood.

Appendix A. Survey Questions

1. Are you completing this survey as a patient? Yes / No

2. If on behalf of someone else, please specify your relationship Relative / Friend / Professional

3. Do you have their permission?
Yes / No

4. In which hospital were you/they an inpatient?
Frimley Park / Heatherwood / Royal Berkshire / Wexham Park / Other
(please specify)

5. Please state which ward/department

6. Length of inpatient stay
Year of inpatient stay
Month of inpatient stay
Length of stay (days)

7. Age category of person who stayed in hospital
0-18 years / 19-60 years / 61+ years

8. In which Local Authority area do you live?
Bucks / Bracknell / Slough / Surrey / Wokingham / Windsor & Maidenhead / Other
(further information if relevant)

9. Was a plan for your discharge made with you and/or your family? Yes / No / Not sure

10. Did hospital staff take your family or home situation into account when planning your discharge?

Yes, definitely / Yes, to some extent / No / It was not necessary / Don't know

11. Did you feel you were involved in decisions about your discharge from hospital?

Yes, definitely / Yes, to some extent / No / I did not want to be involved

12. Did hospital staff discuss with you whether you may need any further health or social care services after leaving hospital, such as home care?

Yes / No, but I would have liked them to / No, it was not necessary

13. Do you think your discharge plan meet your needs? Yes / Yes, to some extent / Not sure

14. Please give us some further information about your discharge plans if applicable

15. Were you given a written copy of your care plan/written instructions on leaving hospital about what to do or not to do?

Yes / No / Not sure

16. Were you given enough notice about when you were going to be discharged? Yes, definitely / Yes, to some extent / No

17. Was the time of your discharge satisfactory and in accordance with your wishes?

Yes / No

18. On the day you left hospital, was your discharge delayed for any reason? Yes / No (if no, please go to question 22)

19. What was the MAIN reason for your discharge?

I had to wait for medication / I had to wait to see a doctor / I had to wait for an ambulance/transport / Something else

20. How long was the delay?

Up to 1 hour / Longer than 1 hour but not longer than 2 hours / Longer than 2 hours but not longer than 4 hours / Longer than 4 hours

21. Please give us further information if applicable

22. Did a member of staff explain the purpose of the medicines you were to take home in a way you could understand?

Yes / No / To some extent

23. Was all of your property available for you to take home?

Yes / No

24. Please give us further information if relevant

25. When you left hospital, did you know what would happen next with your care?

Yes, definitely / Yes, to some extent / No

26. Did any services come to you as planned?

Homecare / Equipment / Community/district nurses / Physiotherapist / Other / No, I didn't get the planned services / I didn't require any further services

27. Were those services satisfactory?

Yes, definitely / Yes, to some extent / No

28. If you need ongoing support, is this happening?

Yes / No

29. Were you
readmitted? Yes / No

30. Please give us more information if applicable

31. Overall, did you feel you were treated with dignity and
respect? Yes, always / Yes, sometimes / No

32. How would you rate the hospital food?
Very good / Good / Fair / Poor / I did not have any hospital food

33. Did you feel you had to repeat your medical history several
times? Yes / No

34. Please tell us how your stay and your discharge could have been improved

35. Please tell us about your positive experiences in the hospital?

36. Anything else you would like to tell us?

37. Would you like Healthwatch to contact you to talk to you further
about your experiences?

Yes / No

38. If so, please give us your details:

Name

Address

Phone No

Email address

39. Are you?

Male / Female / Trans / Prefer not to say

40. How old are you?

Under 18 / 18 - 24 / 25 - 34 / 35 - 44 / 45 - 54 / 55 - 64 / 65 - 74 / 75+ / Prefer not to say

41. Ethnic Origin

White British / White and Asian / Caribbean / White Irish / Any other mixed background / African / Gypsy/Traveller / Indian / Any other Black background / Any other White background / Pakistani / Chinese / White & Black Caribbean / Bangladeshi / Arab / White and Black African / Any other Asian background / Prefer not to say / Other ethnic group

42. Do you consider yourself disabled?

Yes / No / Prefer not to say