

Report:
**Survey of Patients - Royal Oldham
Hospital**
Haematology Day F11 Ward
Published: June 2018



**← Haematology Unit
(Ward F11)**

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Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Oldham would like to thank the following for making this project possible;

- All the patients and their families and friend who completed HWO Haematology Day Unit Questionnaires for their time, patience, honesty and willingness to share their experiences
- The Staff Team on the Haematology Day Unit for making us feel welcome
- Healthwatch Oldham Volunteers who are always professional in their delivery

Disclaimer

Please note the stories within the report are subjective accounts of individuals interviewed for this report on the day they were interviewed and do not necessarily represent the views of Healthwatch Oldham

Executive Summary

“Over the years things have become less institutionalised, less formal and friendlier” *Relative of patient attending F11 Haematology Day Unit at ROH*

This report contains the findings of the Healthwatch Oldham Team resulting from an engagement exercise we carried out on F11, Haematology Day Unit at Royal Oldham Hospital with 41 patients and 15 relatives and friends over four three hour sessions during February and March 2018.

The Clinical Haematology Service at Royal Oldham Hospital provides a full range of services for the diagnosis and management of all types of blood disorders including cancers of the blood. This service is hosted by Oldham Care Organisation and includes Inpatient and Day Case facilities. For this report we only interviewed those patients using the F11 Day Unit whose treatment included; Blood Tests and Reviews, Chemotherapy, Blood Transfusion, Bone Marrow biopsy (diagnostic) and other treatments required on the day they attended.

The report set out to gain feedback on the following areas:

- Patients experiences of using the Waiting Room and Treatment areas
- Support offered to patients during their visit
- Patients view of the service they received
- View from family and friends accompanying patients
- Quality of information prior to using the service
- What advice patients and family/friends would offer to future service users

Key Findings

There is much to be celebrated in this department. The overall experience of patients and their family and friends of the Haematology Day Care Unit was very positive. Patients and family and friends felt well informed and if in doubt felt confident to ask a member of staff. Everyone had something positive to say about the whole staff team and overall patients were happy with the medical treatment they had received enjoying the relaxed atmosphere in the Treatment Area.

However, the following areas of concern were consistently raised by the majority of patients and their family and friends:

- **Overcrowded Waiting Area** - both the waiting room and corridor are regularly full resulting in patients and family/ friends having to lean against the wall or sit on the shelf blocking the reception booking in area. Some of the seating rows were blocked causing a problem for wheelchair users as this was the only area for them to wait and created a blockage for others trying to get past those in wheelchairs.
- **Long Waiting Times** - congestion in the waiting area is exacerbated by the long waiting times many patients and their relatives experience. All patients at the time of interviewing were given the same appointment time of 10.00am. This added to the overcrowded waiting area, as did waiting for blood test results coming back prior to treatment. Some patients also experienced long waiting times for the blood results to come back, up to 3 hours for one patient, and sometimes it is hard to get information on what is happening.

- **Low Levels of Qualified Staff** - patients felt that there were not enough trained nursing staff available and, on some days, there appeared to be only one nurse for 6 patients. Patients and family/friends felt that the staff that were there were rushed off their feet and were concerned that very vulnerable patients could be missed.
- **Not Enough Car Parking Spaces** - Whilst patients understood the car parking pressures faced by the hospital this was a particular issue. Patients had to arrive 2 hours before their appointment or park on the roads surrounding the hospital to guarantee an all-day parking spot. Patients found that arriving so early to park, combined with the long waiting times for the blood results, then undertaking treatment resulted in a very long day for patients, family and friends.

Main Recommendations

1. **Waiting Areas** - Urgently address the lack of adequate seating and overcrowding of patients in the waiting area and adjacent corridor to the Haematology Day Unit
2. **Waiting Areas** - Introduce Simple adjustments to the waiting area to improve the environment, for example this could include a water machine, magazines, TV with subtitles etc.
3. **Waiting Times** - Introduce staggered appointments to reduce overcrowding and waiting times
4. **Waiting Times** - Introduce a portable buzzer system similar to that used at Christies in Manchester. This involves patients taking a portable machine that buzzes when it is their turn, but allows patients to sit elsewhere, for example in the café
5. **Qualified Staffing** - Consider ways to increase ratios of qualified staff to patients or increase numbers of reception able to deal with/process blood test enquiries
6. **Car Parking** - Improve accessible parking facilities for patients required to attend all day at the Haematology Day Unit

Detailed Findings

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- Quality of information prior to using the service
- What advice patients and family/friends would offer to future service users

The overall experience of patients and their family and friends of the Haematology Day Care Unit F11 was very positive. Patients and family and friends felt well informed and if in doubt felt confident to ask a member of staff. Everyone had something positive to say about the whole staff team and overall patients were happy with the medical treatment they had received enjoying the relaxed atmosphere in the Treatment Area.

When I first visited I was surprised by the layout of the room (treatment area), people facing each other but I like this now as I can chat to people

Extremely friendly all the staff know your name, treated as a person

Looked after as a treasured relative. Very inclusive, family like atmosphere

The following sets out the detailed findings

1. Patients experiences of using the Waiting Room and Treatment areas

Each patient books into the clinic to have a blood test. They then await the results before starting treatment or seeing the consultant. The blood tests are carried out by one Phlebotomist who finishes at the clinic at 11.30am.

Patients and staff explained that everyone is booked in for a 10.00am appointment and so the majority of patients arrive at the same time. This causes overcrowding in a small waiting area with limited seats in close proximity. Wheelchairs get parked at the end of the seating rows so it is difficult to manoeuvre around them due to lack of space. Patients and family and friends often have to sit in a cold, drafty corridor, or stand leaning against a wall in a busy waiting room. Concerns were raised by both patients and the staff team about potential

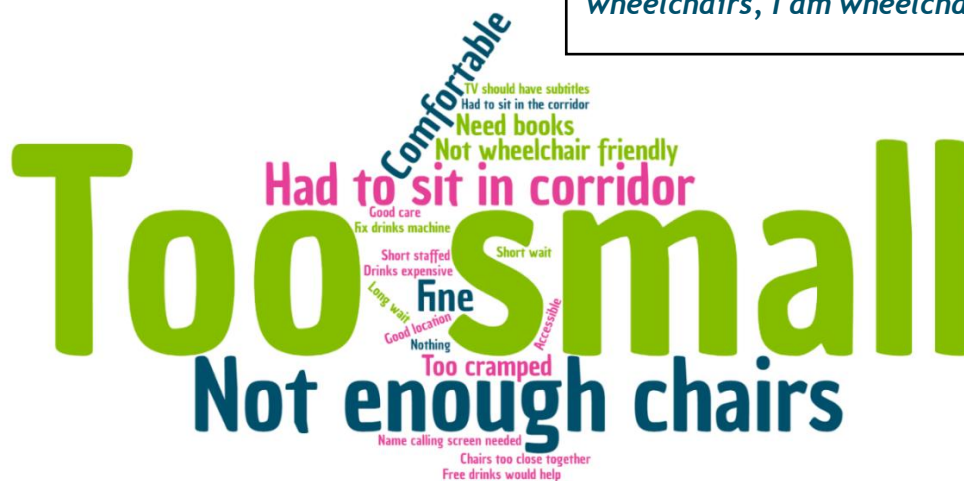
infection in a group of patients with an already low immunity in a cramped waiting room where waiting times can be an hour plus.

Patients who have been attending the department long term have started to arrive over an hour early both to ensure they can find somewhere to park and to avoid the appointments system that offers only one time slot. Patients who arrive early try to get their bloods done so they can start their treatment on time. The staff have started opening the doors to try to ease the situation as they are concerned about the risk of infection. The overcrowding and limited appointments system needs addressing urgently.

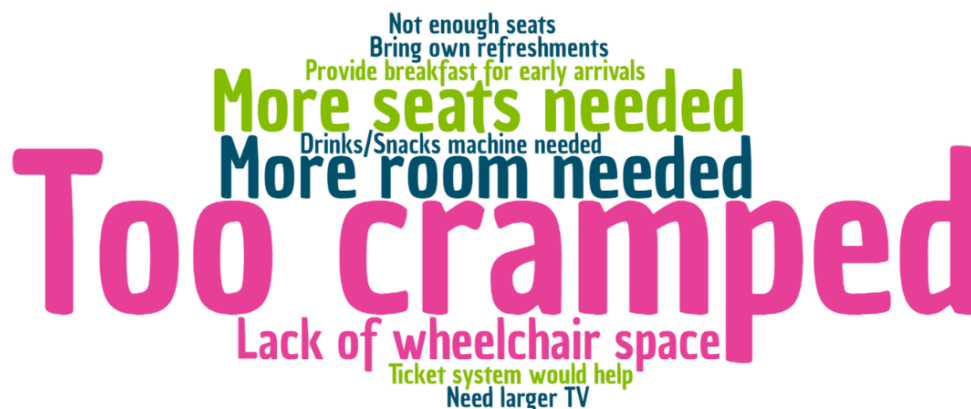
Too Small, everyone in too close proximity, scared of catching something as have low immunity

Too cramped, too small need more seats. Had to stand today for half an hour - starting my treatment today

Needs to be bigger and space for wheelchairs, I am wheelchair user



Word cloud based on the feedback we received from Patients



Word cloud based on the feedback we received from Family and Friends

More room and seats especially when 2 to 3 wheelchairs in room

Could be bigger can be a problem with the wheelchair Nan uses

2. Support offered to patients during their treatment

Patients told us they were regularly checked on by staff in the Treatment Area but there seemed to be no checks or updates in the Waiting Area. This is based on feedback gathered from patients and their friends and relatives across the questionnaire and in particular from the additional comments section.

3. Waiting Times

Patients commented on the long wait for blood analysis to come back whilst in the waiting area with no staff member updating them on the situation. Some patients did ask the receptionist who was very helpful but one patient commented on having to wait three hours for the results to come back from the Lab. Patients and their family and friends would all welcome regular updates which meant they knew what was happening during what can often be a very long wait.

When in waiting room need more updates as to progress, sometimes in error your name isn't put on the board

Long waiting time awaiting blood results from lab which is the worst time but then understand it can't be helped

Staff don't check on you until you come into the Treatment Area

4. Levels Of Qualified Staff

Some patients who have been attending F11 long term and regularly have expressed concern that there is an inconsistency of staff levels at appointments. At times they feel that there are not enough trained staff on duty, that the staff who are on duty are often rushed off their feet not having time for lunch breaks and administration wise patients feel things can sometimes be forgotten. One patient commented that there are times when there is one nurse to six patients where they understood there should be one nurse to three patients. This causes concern in relation to vulnerable patients who are not well.

The Ward could be better managed - there are specialist nurses and it seems when everything running smoothly they get moved off the ward to somewhere else

Staff can be frustrated at times as very busy. Something administration wise can be forgotten

More staff needed particularly on reception sometimes you can be missed form tests etc if they haven't been recorded

5. Access and Car Parking

Patients were aware of the parking challenges at the hospital but even with the Free Parking for Cancer Patients (which everyone who used the scheme appreciated) the only way patients who drive can guarantee a parking spot was to arrive up to 2 hours before their appointment. A few patients said they parked on the roads surrounding the hospital to guarantee them an all day parking spot but found the walk up the hill tiring. Patients pointed out that having to arrive this early in the day to park, combined with the uncertainty of how long they would have to wait for the blood results, then undertaking treatment resulted in a very long day for patients.

Using the Ambulance service can also be problematic when patients do not know how long they are going to be.

Parking is a problem, arrived 8.00am knew it would be difficult to get parked so parked on the street outside the hospital but concerned as my mobility is getting worse

I have a free parking pass but usually get the bus or pay to park on an external car park as difficult to get a space on the hospital car park

Car Park - finding a space and not knowing how long going to be

I use the ambulance service and waiting for them to take me home can be exhausting. Yesterday arrived at 9.00am was 8.00pm before I was picked up

6. Patient Experiences and concerns

- Some expressed feeling uncomfortable having to walk past the treatment area to the consulting rooms
- Waiting times were further delayed due to waiting for a prescription post treatment from the ROH Pharmacy

Sometimes I'll have to wait up to 2 hours for my prescription from handing in 'script which I can only hand in after my treatment

- Not being told to bring someone with you when being told news of diagnosis at first appointment just a mention in the letter saying you may want to bring someone with you would be helpful

I had no indication that I was going to be told this (had a diagnosis of Cancer) at my first appointment so went on my own - it was so frightening to be told and have no one with me

What information and advice could you offer someone new attending the HDU?

We asked Patients and their relatives and friends to think back to what it was like for them the first time they attended the HDU and what advice they could offer someone new attending. The following is their suggestions.

1. Everything will be fine

Have no reservations, couldn't go anywhere better to get yourself sorted

Not to worry about anything, it will be alright, don't get stressed

Don't be afraid it's nothing like you can imagine

You are drip fed information over a period of time which is a good thing otherwise it could be too frightening if told everything at the beginning

2. Bring Someone with you on the first visit

Would be advisable to bring someone with you to your first appointment particularly if it is a possible diagnosis of cancer

3. Be prepared to wait

Be prepared to write the day off

Book the day off!

Could be there for a while so be prepared - bring your own refreshments

4. Parking

Parking is difficult

Parking hard to find spaces and costly

Recommendations

Patients and their friends and relatives cannot talk highly enough of the whole Staff Team with 'Peter the Volunteer' getting an especial mention as patients relate to the fact he has undergone treatment in the department himself so is a positive role model who can relate to the patients and their family and friends and reassure them. Everyone liked the Treatment area saying it was friendly, they felt looked after and they were checked on regularly by staff. The majority enjoyed the radio playing in the background and enjoyed the opportunity to chat to other patients in what for many is a long day. All patients and

relatives and friends felt able to talk to staff about any concerns they had or if they did not understand anything, no one was made to feel stupid for doing so.

However we strongly recommend that the concerns around the **Waiting Area** be addressed as soon as possible. On two of our visits the waiting room and corridor were full. Patients and family and friends were leaning against the wall or sitting on the shelf in front of the reception booking in area and had to keep getting up so patients could book in. Everyone was unhappy with this situation. Whilst a bigger TV with subtitles on, a water fountain and some magazines would ease the wait, the lack of seating and close proximity of patients needs to be urgently addressed.

The waiting area is exacerbated by the **long waiting times** many patients and their relatives experience. All patients were given the same appointment time of 10.00am which added to the over crowded waiting area as did waiting for blood test results coming back prior to treatment. Patients suggested introducing staggered appointments and one patient recommended a portable buzzer system tag like the one used at Christies in Manchester which sends an alert when the person before you is due. This they suggest would ease the situation for patients and reduce the need for staff to provide regular updates.

Low levels of qualified staff were an issue for some patients particularly those who had been attending long term. Some patients suggested changes in the appointment system could ease this situation.

Not enough Car Parking Spaces. This has come up time and again every time we undertake research at ROH, however for these patients the situation is even more problematic as they never know how long they will need to wait.

Main Recommendations

1. **Waiting Areas** - Urgently address the lack of adequate seating and overcrowding of patients in the waiting area and adjacent corridor to the Haematology Day Unit
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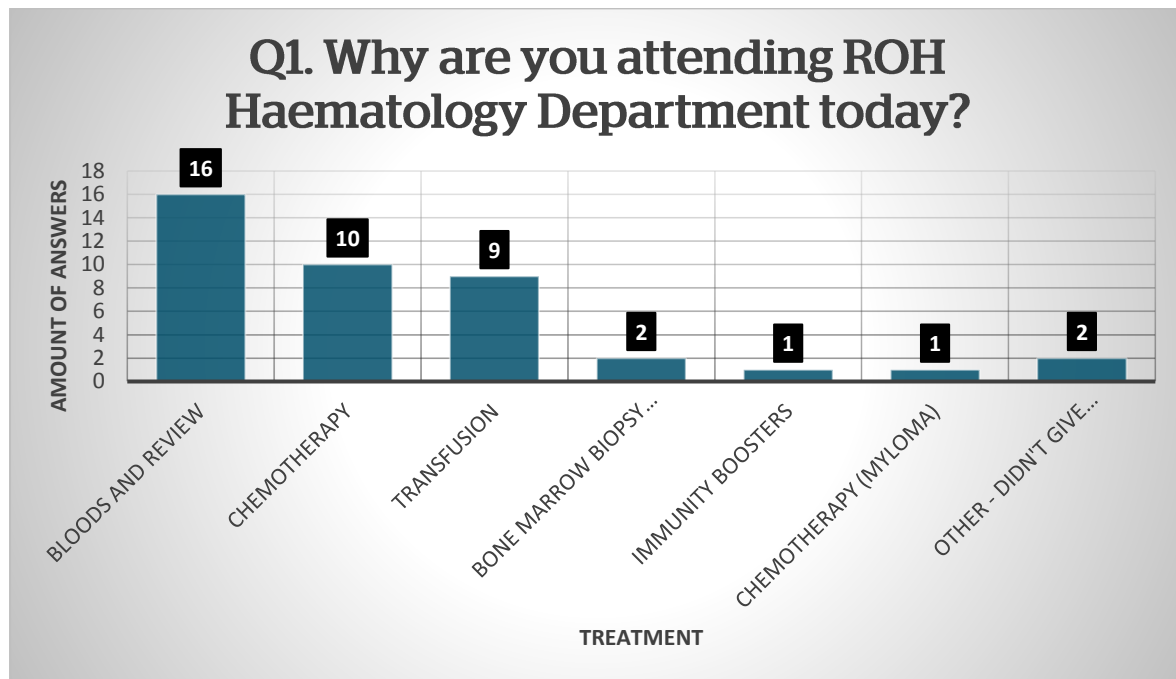
Provider Response Action Plan

Recommendation	Response/Actions	Lead	Anticipated Completion Date
1. Waiting Area - Address overcrowding in waiting area and corridor to Haematology Day Unit			
2. Waiting Area - Introduce simple improvements to waiting area to improve patient experience			
3. Waiting Times - Introduce staggered appointment times to reduce overcrowding and long waiting times			
4. Waiting Times - Introduce portable buzzer system to improve experience of waiting times and overcrowding			
5. Qualified Nursing Staff - Consider ways to increase the ratio of qualified nursing staff to patients			
6. Access - Improve accessible transport and parking facilities for patients			
7. Waiting Times - Speed up waiting times for pharmacy prescriptions			
8. Patient Experience - Consider ways to separate treatment areas from consulting rooms			

ROH Haematology Day Ward F11 Questionnaire Data Analysis

The following is a statistical analysis of all of the questionnaires completed with 41 patients and 15 Relatives and Friends on the above ward over four three hour sessions.

Part 1 Patients



The survey asked all patients why they were attending the Haematology Department that day. The most common answer was 'bloods and review' with 16 answers. 'Chemotherapy' and 'transfusion' were also highly answered with 10 and 9 responses respectively.

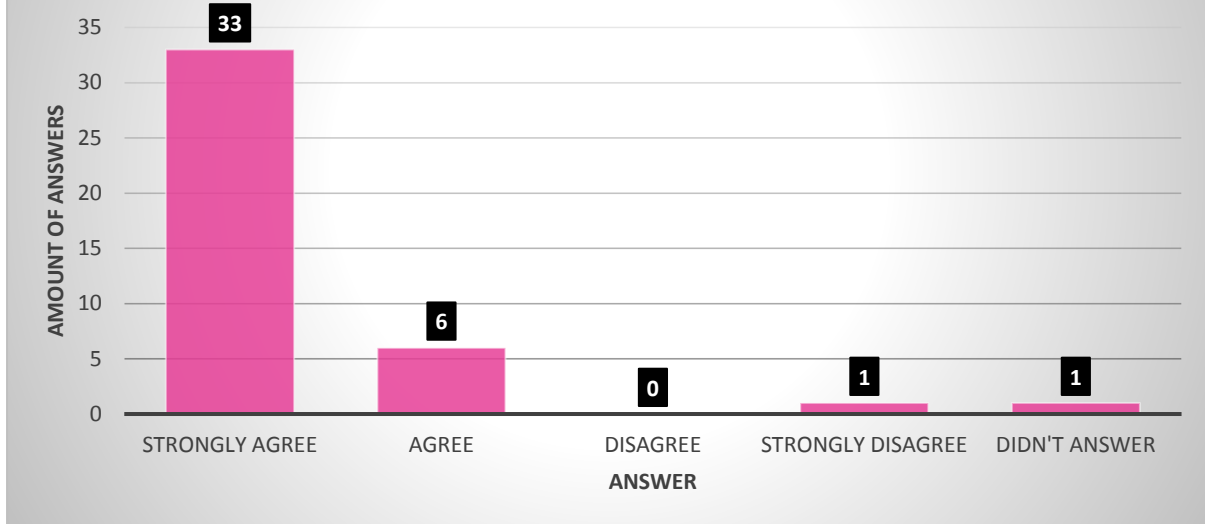
Q2. How many times have you visited the HDU?

It was difficult to chart statistical data in relation to this question as the length of time attending and regularity of attendance varied patient to patient. Twenty plus years was the longest attendance recorded and 3 times the least

Too numerous to remember I have attended (the HDU) for over 3 years

Twice a week for the past eighteen months

Q3. Do you feel you were given enough information before your appointment to know what to expect?



Patients were asked whether they were given enough information before their appointment to know what to expect. 33 people stated that they strongly agreed with this compared to one who strongly disagreed. Only one person didn't answer this question.

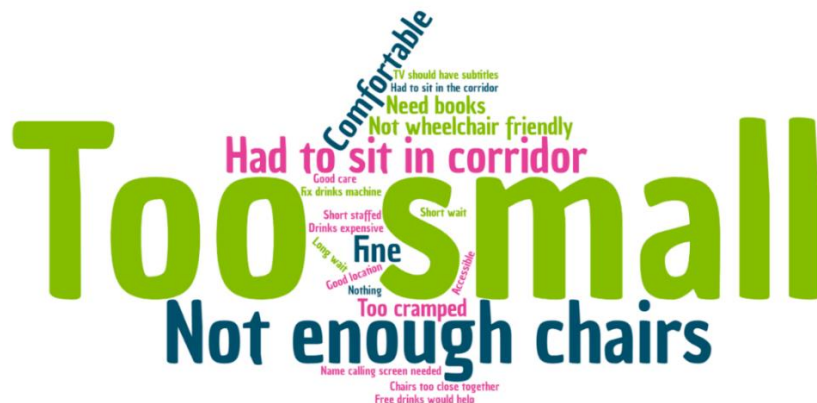
Q4. If you disagreed in any way, what would have helped you?

There was very little feedback on this question as the majority of patients and their family and friends agreed that they had enough information. A few patients mentioned they checked information out on the internet in addition to the information by the staff team.

Q5. Thinking about the HDU environment is there anything you feel could improve your experience

As there was so much feedback on both the **Waiting Room** and the **Treatment Room** we have produced a word cloud that reflects the most used words to summarise what patient's views were on this issue.

Waiting Room



Q7. Is there anything the Staff Team could do to improve your wait

The suggestions that came up in this section of the Questionnaire are covered in the main body of the report.

Q8. Thinking about the whole Staff Team on the HDU what do you think is Good about the Team and what can be improved

The suggestions that came up in this section of the Questionnaire are covered in the main body of the report.

Q9. Based on your experience is there any information or advice you could offer someone new attending the HDU

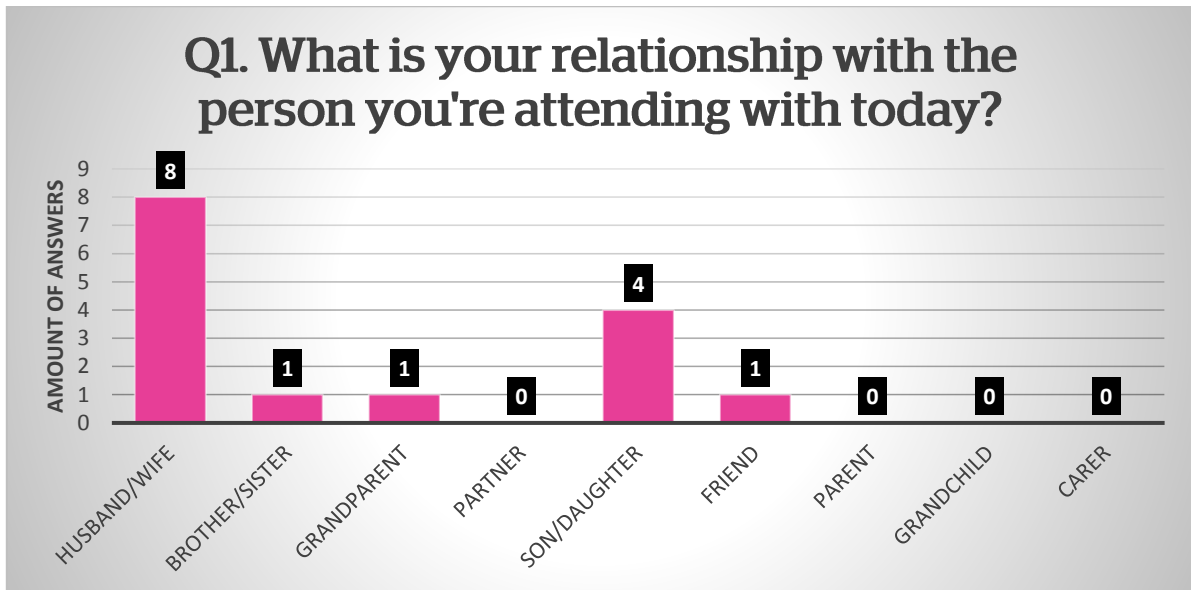
The suggestions that came up in this section of the Questionnaire are covered in the main body of the report.

Q10. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

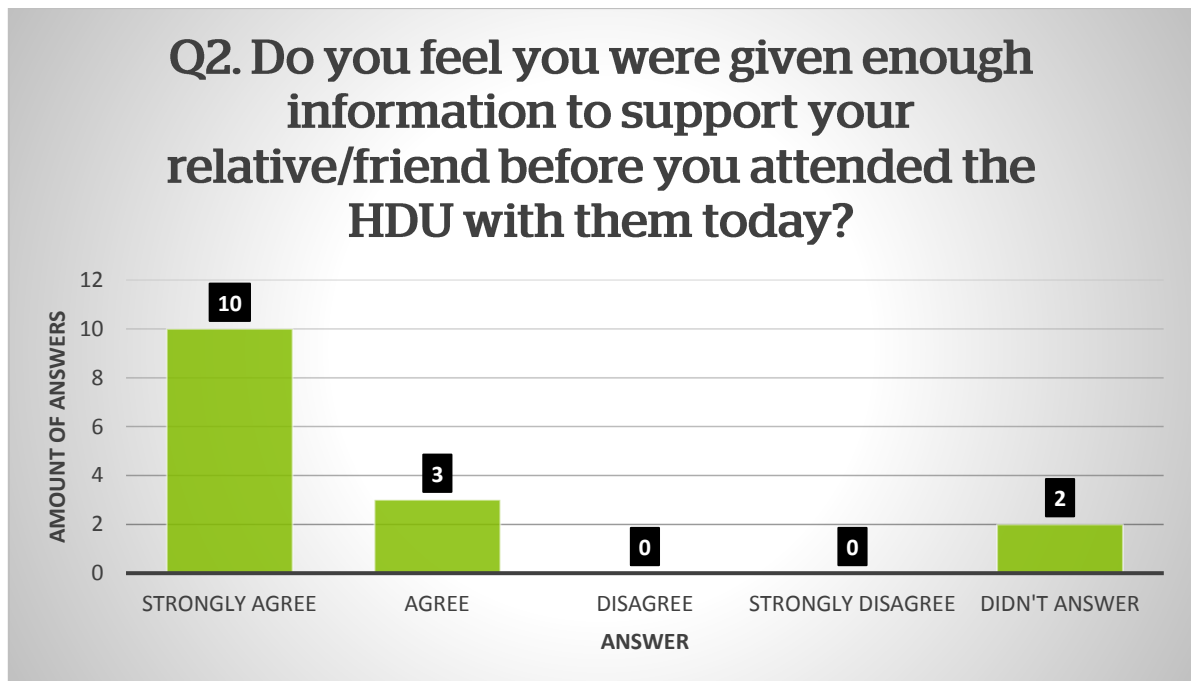
The suggestions that came up in this section of the Questionnaire are covered in the main body of the report.

ROH Haematology Day Ward F11 Questionnaire Data Analysis

Part 2. Family and Friends



Relatives/Friends were asked what relation they were to the patients who attended the Haematology Department. The most common relation was 'Husband/Wife' with eight answers and the second most common was 'Son/Daughter' with four answers.



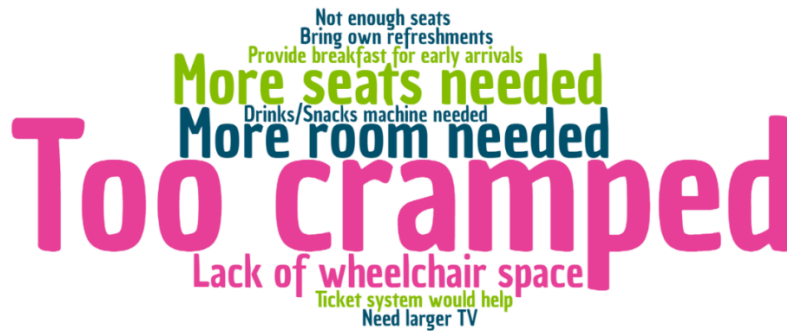
Family/Friends were asked whether they felt that they were given enough information to support their relative/friend before they attended the Haematology Department. The highest response was 'strongly agree' with 10 answers. No Relative/Friend answered negatively to this question.

Q3. If you disagreed in anyway, what would have helped you?

There were no negative responses to this question

Q4. Thinking about the HDU environment is there anything you feel could improve your experience?

A word cloud was created using the key words from family and friends with regards to the Waiting Room.



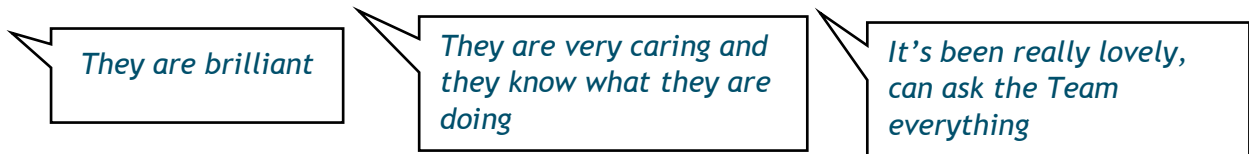
Treatment Room

A word cloud was created using the key words from family and friends with regards to the Treatment Room. The feedback here largely revolved around the size of the room. Most people gave feedback that the room was spacious, but it was mentioned that it was that there was not enough room. Feedback here was mostly positive with praise for staff and that the area didn't feel too clinical.



Q5. Thinking about the Staff Team on HDU ward can you tell us what you feel is Good about the team and what could be improved?

The feedback from Family and Friends on the Staff Team overall was extremely positive.



The suggestions that came up in relation to improvements in this section of the Questionnaire are covered in the main body of the report and are the same as those proposed by Patients.

About Healthwatch Oldham

Healthwatch Oldham (HWO) is the local independent champion for Health and Social Care and has four main areas of work:

1. Listening to local people
2. Influencing services
3. Providing an information signposting service
4. Help with NHS Complaints

HWO would be happy to hear from you to find out about your experiences of health and care services (positive and negative) and can be contacted on:

Phone: 0161 622 5700

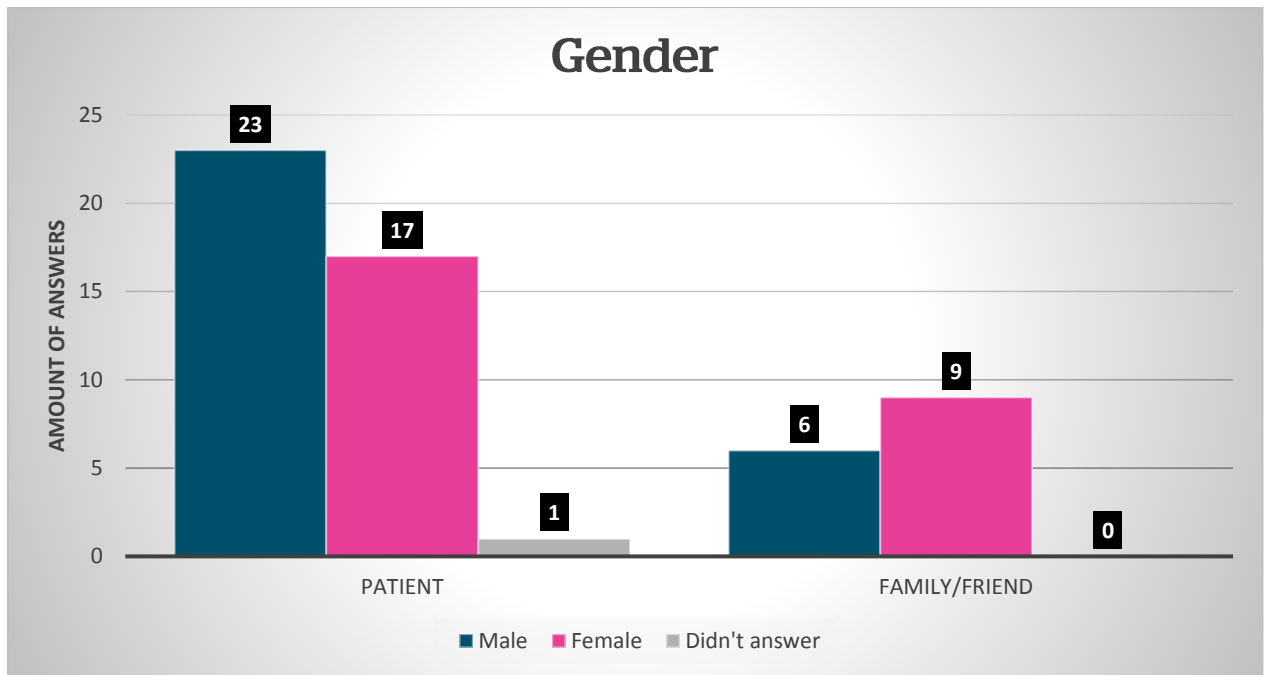
E-mail: info@healthwatcholdham.co.uk

Appendix 1 - Timetable of Survey Sessions

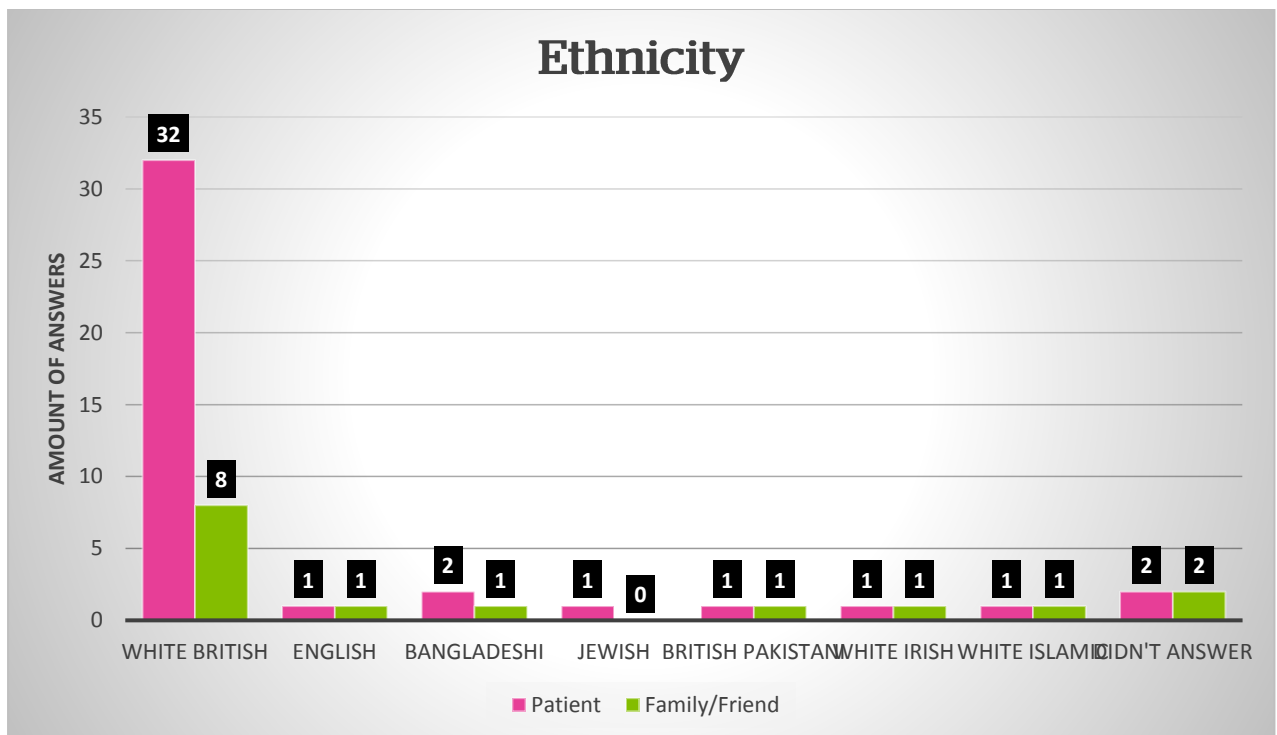
Timetable of sessions with number of Surveys undertaken at each session broken down by Patients and Family and Friends surveys completed.

Date	Day	Time	Patient surveys completed	Family and Friends surveys completed
21.2.18	Wed	10.30 to 13.30	10	3
26.2.18	Mon	10.30 to 13.30	11	3
27.2.18	Tue	10.30 to 13.30	7	4
6.3.18	Tue	09:00 to 12:00	13	5
			Total 41	Total 15

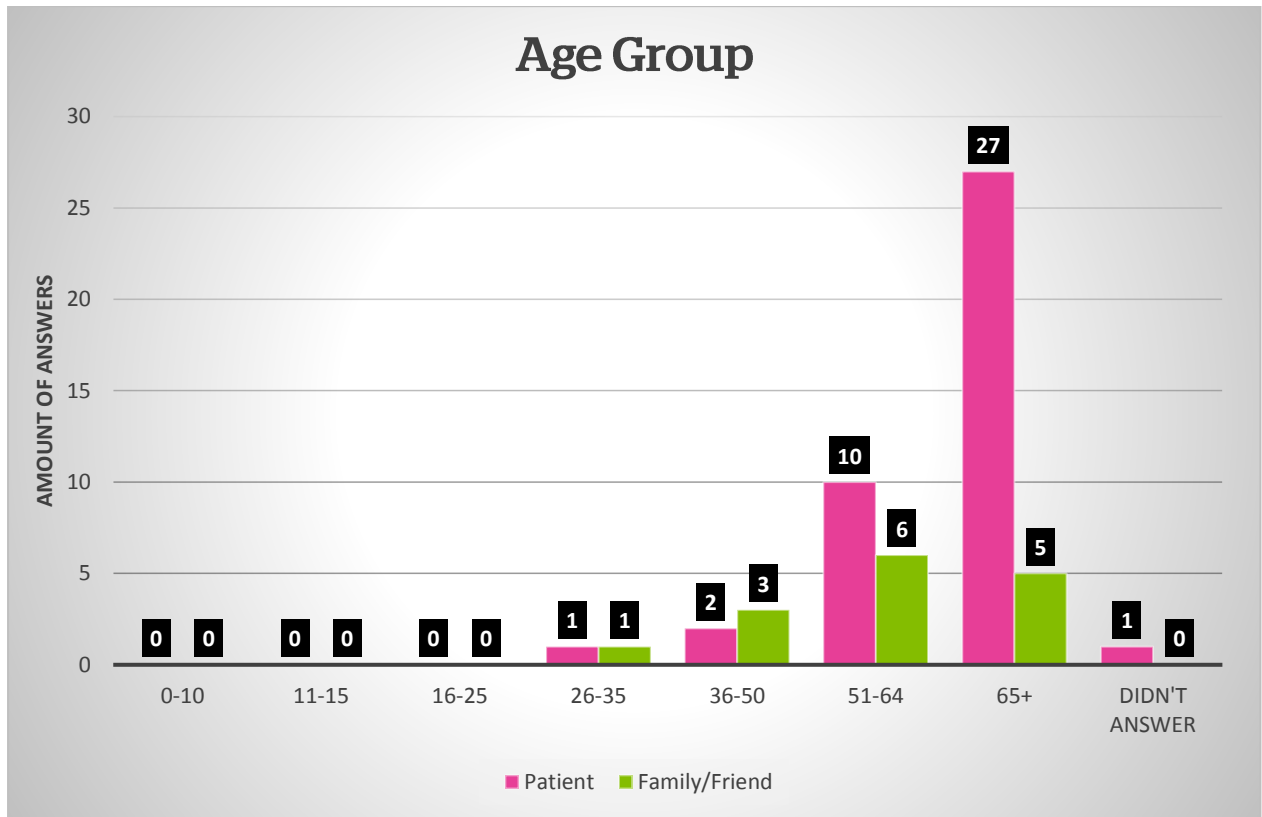
Appendix 2 - Equalities Monitoring: Patient and Family and Friends



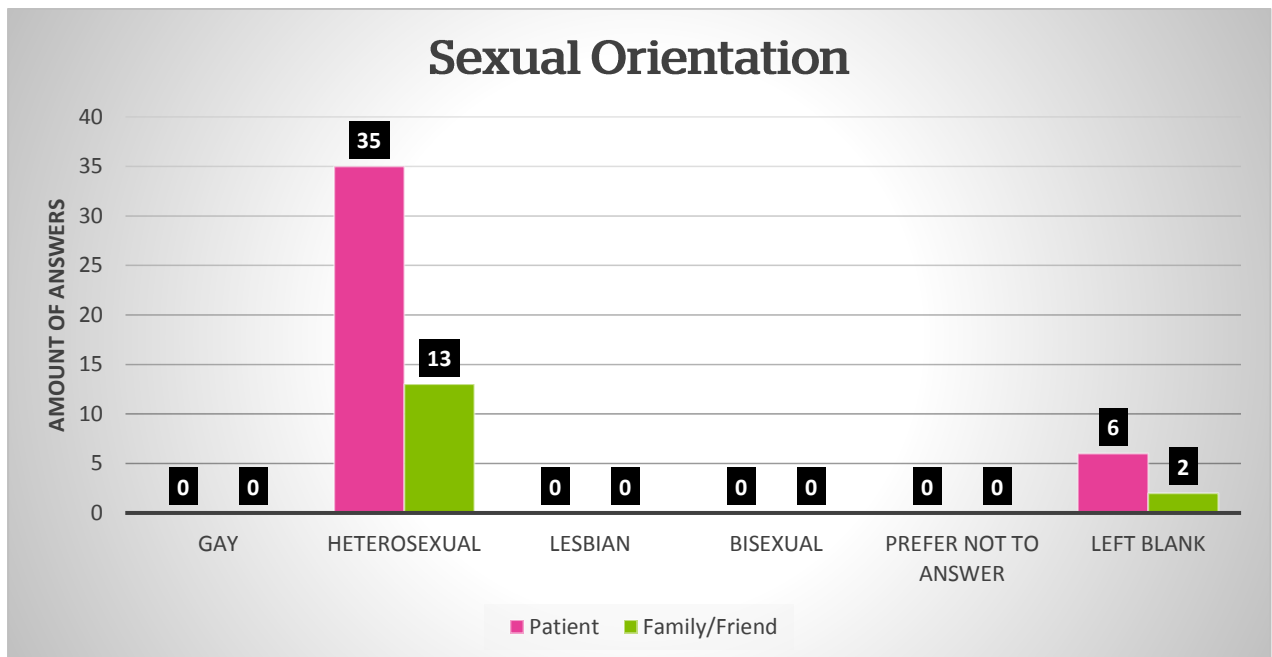
There were 23 male patients compared to 17 female patients. There were nine female friends/relatives in comparison to six male friends/relatives. One patient didn't answer this question as they didn't have time to stay and complete the survey.



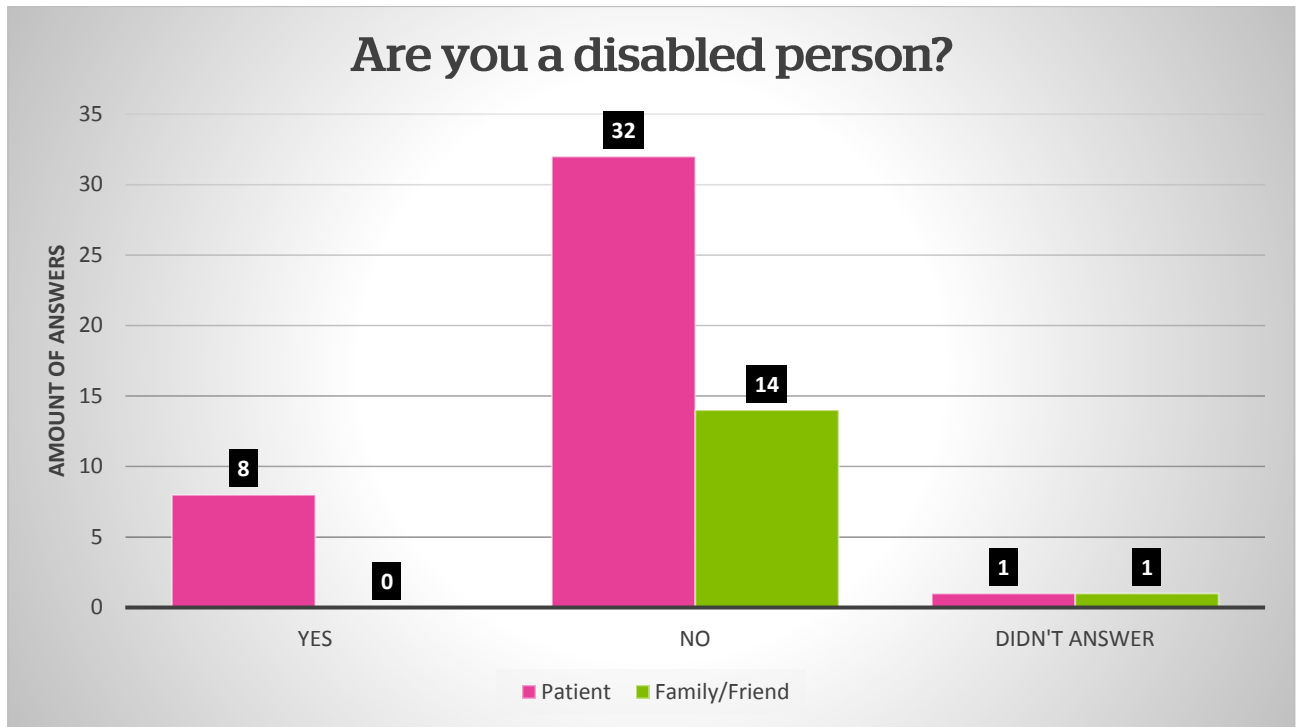
The most common ethnicity was 'White British' with 32 answers from patients and eight answers from friends/relatives. Excluding White British, there was an equal representation between those who completed the survey with four people not providing an answer.



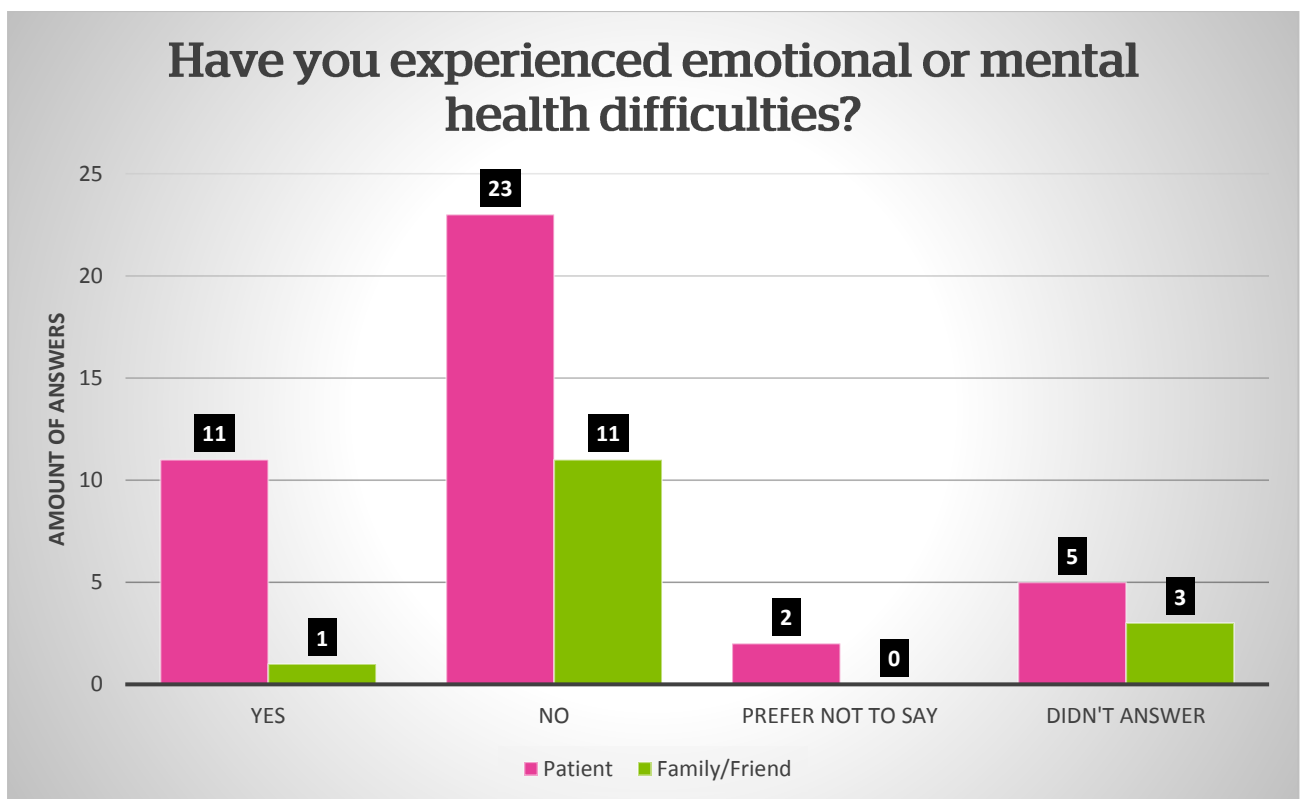
The most common age group answered in this survey was 27 patients who stated they were 65+ followed by 10 patients who stated they were between the age of 51-64. Six Friends/Relatives stated they were aged between 51-64. One patient didn't answer this question as they were unable to complete the survey.



The most common sexual orientation stated was heterosexual with 35 patients and 13 friends/relatives. Six patients and two friends/relatives didn't answer this question.

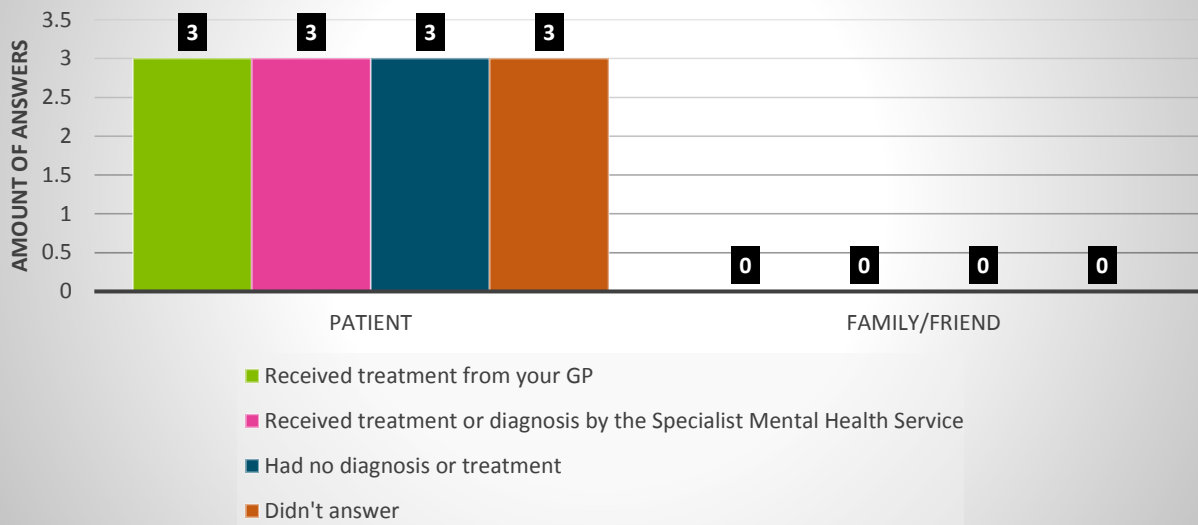


The most common answer is 32 patients who stated that they were disabled compared to the eight patients who stated that they were. There was one patient and friend/relative who didn't answer this question.



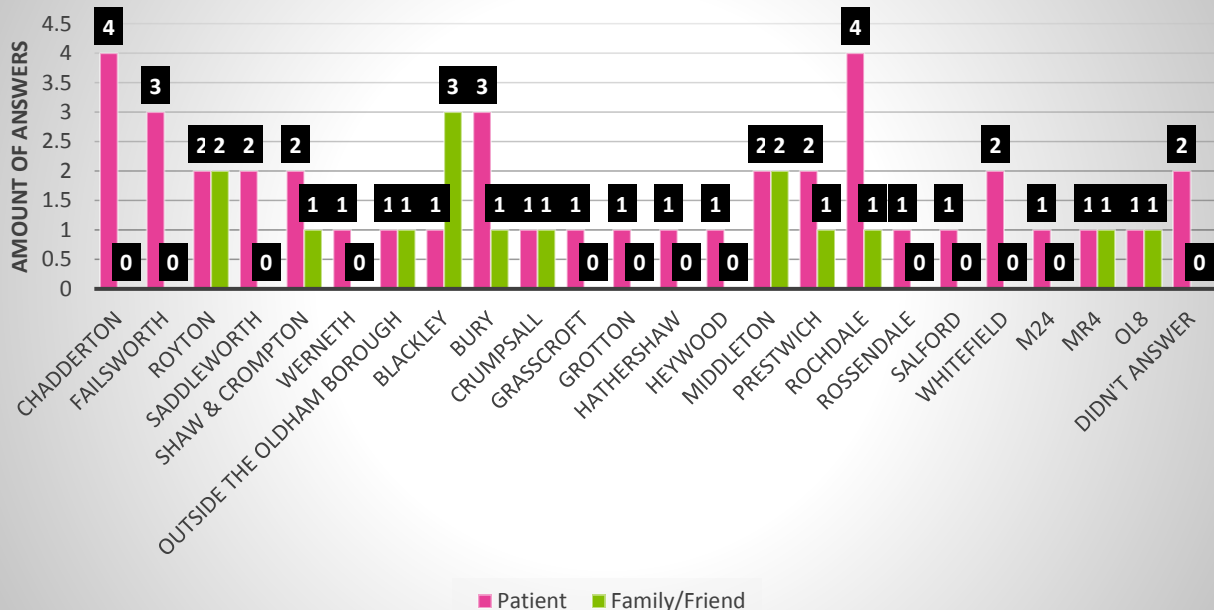
Most people stated that they hadn't experienced emotional or mental health difficulties. Of those that did, 11 patients and one friend/relative stated that they had. Eight people in total didn't answer this question.

If you've experienced any mental health difficulties, in the past year have you;



For those which answered yes to the previous question regarding emotional and mental health difficulties, we asked what treatment they have received. In equal amount, each category received three answers from patients. This number doesn't match the amount who answered yes to the previous question as people could have received more than one form of treatment.

Town or area that you live in



Patients and friends/relatives were asked where they lived. The two most common areas for patients were Chadderton and Rochdale with four answers each. There was a wide geographic area that the Haematology Department serve