

Appendix to A&E briefing

February 2020



Appendix 1: Methodology and demographics

Methodology

Patient interviews

In total, six local Healthwatch were grant-funded by NHS England to conduct this work exploring what positive and negative A&E performance looks like for patients. These six Healthwatch were:

- Healthwatch Cambridgeshire
- Healthwatch Central West London
- Healthwatch Dorset
- Healthwatch Portsmouth
- Healthwatch Suffolk
- Healthwatch Wakefield

Each local Healthwatch conducted between 40 and 60 interviews with patients, family members and carers in A&E departments, all using the same interview guide (Appendix 2).

Interviews were conducted in the A&E departments of the following Trusts:

- Cambridge University Hospitals
- Imperial College Healthcare
- Poole Hospital
- Portsmouth Hospitals
- West Suffolk Hospital
- Mid Yorkshire Hospitals

All interviews were conducted over an eight-week period between late September and early November. To ensure a variety of conditions in the A&E department were observed, timings of the visits at each site included, at a minimum:

- Two weekday mornings
- One weekday afternoon
- Two weekday evenings
- One weekend day

Patients were interviewed at a variety of points on their pathway. At each of the six trusts visited, at least some patients who had been admitted to wards were interviewed, though most patients were interviewed in waiting areas. Some patients were interviewed while they were still waiting for further treatment or consultation, while others were interviewed as they were departing and were able to reflect on the entirety of their experience.

Some patients refused to be interviewed, and common reasons given for this were needing to get back to the car park urgently (parking fees), not wanting to inconvenience a family member who was waiting for them, or simply a desire to get home quickly, whether because they had already spent a long time in the department, or because the experience had been otherwise taxing.

Our findings are not a representative portrayal of the experiences of all service users, but rather a qualitative account of over 300 individual experiences collected while proposed new performance measures were being trialled. Further research, particularly involving a greater proportion of admitted patients, would be useful for validating our findings.

Analysis

Healthwatch England conducted a thematic and sentiment analysis of patient interviews across all six test sites.

Using Microsoft Excel, comments were initially coded by sentiment (positive, neutral, mixed or negative) and theme. Initial themes were developed based on the standard theme guide used by Healthwatch England to analyse all patient comments received nationally on health and social care. Themes which were not relevant to A&E services were removed, and additional themes were identified through reading a sample of responses from each Trust to ensure each comment could be suitably coded.

The following is a comprehensive list of themes which were identified for this project:

Access

Building and Facilities

Car parking

Communication (clarity, kept informed)

Continuity of care

Crowding

Discharge

Expectations

Follow-up

Food/drink

Gratitude

Integration of services

Overall satisfaction

Pain relief

Patient transport

Privacy

Quality of care

Service closure

Staff attitude - empathy

Staff attitude - listening/patient involvement

Staff attitude (general)

Staff levels

Waiting time

General trends in volume of comments across theme and sentiment were considered to draw conclusions about the experiences of patients interviewed. Our interpretation of the findings was partly informed by patient feedback about A&E shared with Healthwatch England directly or through local Healthwatch outside of this project.

Polling

Alongside this research we are releasing the full data tables for two sets of national polling we commissioned in July and October 2019 to support the NHS Access Standards Review. A summary of the findings from this polling was first [published on our website](#) in October 2019.

Both polls were conducted by Populus, reaching a national representative sample of 2,000 UK or GB adults 18+ online. Quotas were set on age, gender, region and social grade and the data weighted to the known profile of Great Britain using age, gender, government office region, social grade, taken a foreign holiday in the last 3 years, tenure, number of cars in the household and working status. Targets for quotas and weights were taken from the National Readership Survey, a random probability F2F survey conducted annually with 34,000 adults.

Our reporting of findings excludes respondents living outside of England, as all questions asked were to do with public opinion of NHS services in England.

The polling questions asked were developed by Healthwatch England, with some input from NHS England to ensure that the wording of questions remained relevant to the clinical standards review. We also sought advice from Populus to ensure questions were presented appropriately.

The questions and choice options were developed with reference to previous research conducted by Healthwatch England, drawing primarily on evidence from:

- Feedback gathered by the Healthwatch network from almost 6,500 people between January 2016 and September 2018, covering A&E departments in 25 different local areas.
- National polling of a representative group of 2,000 adults from across the country on what they think matters most when visiting A&E (conducted in January 2019).

We recognise that polling question design has limitations when investigating complex topics. Additional investigation of the themes explored through our polling utilising more advanced quantitative research methods would be valuable.

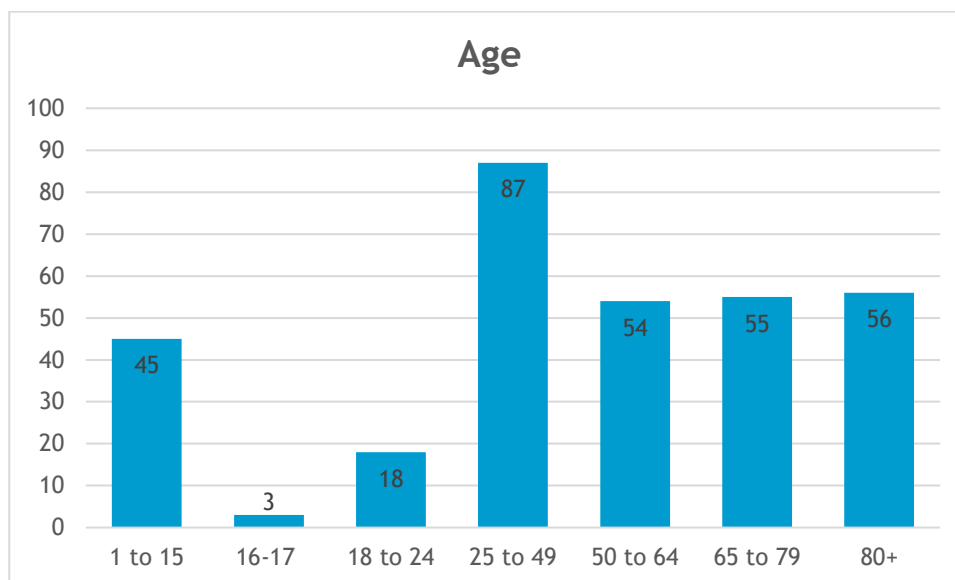
Demographics

A total of 330 patients or family members were interviewed by local Healthwatch for this project. The local Healthwatch participating in the project were not required to reach a specified representative sample, though they were asked to seek a range of views to ensure a diverse sample.

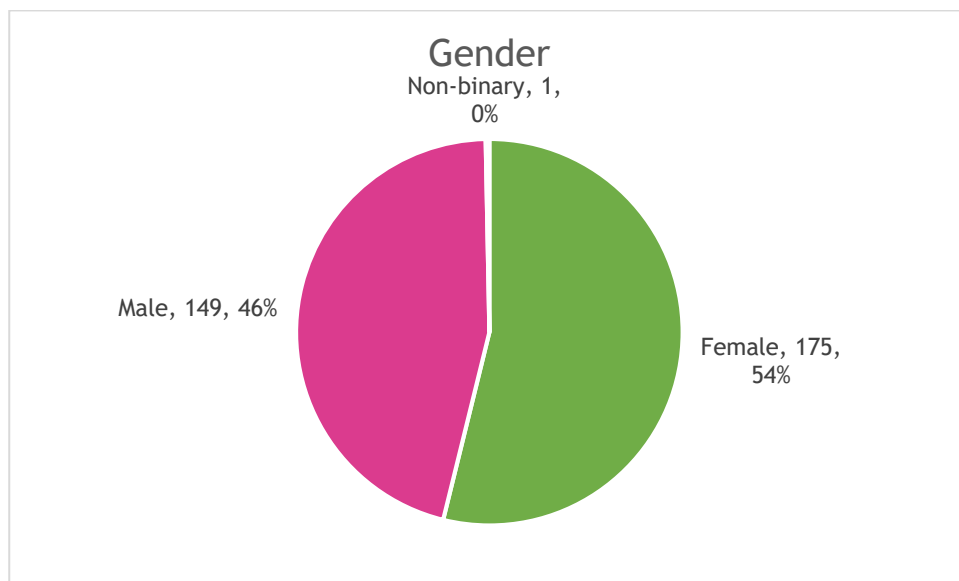
Below we set out basic demographic information for the people whose experiences have informed our briefing. Demographic information for all 300 respondents is displayed as one sample, since our findings are set out using a thematic approach spanning all six test sites.

Not every person answered every demographic question, so in some cases the sample is smaller than the total number of people interviewed.

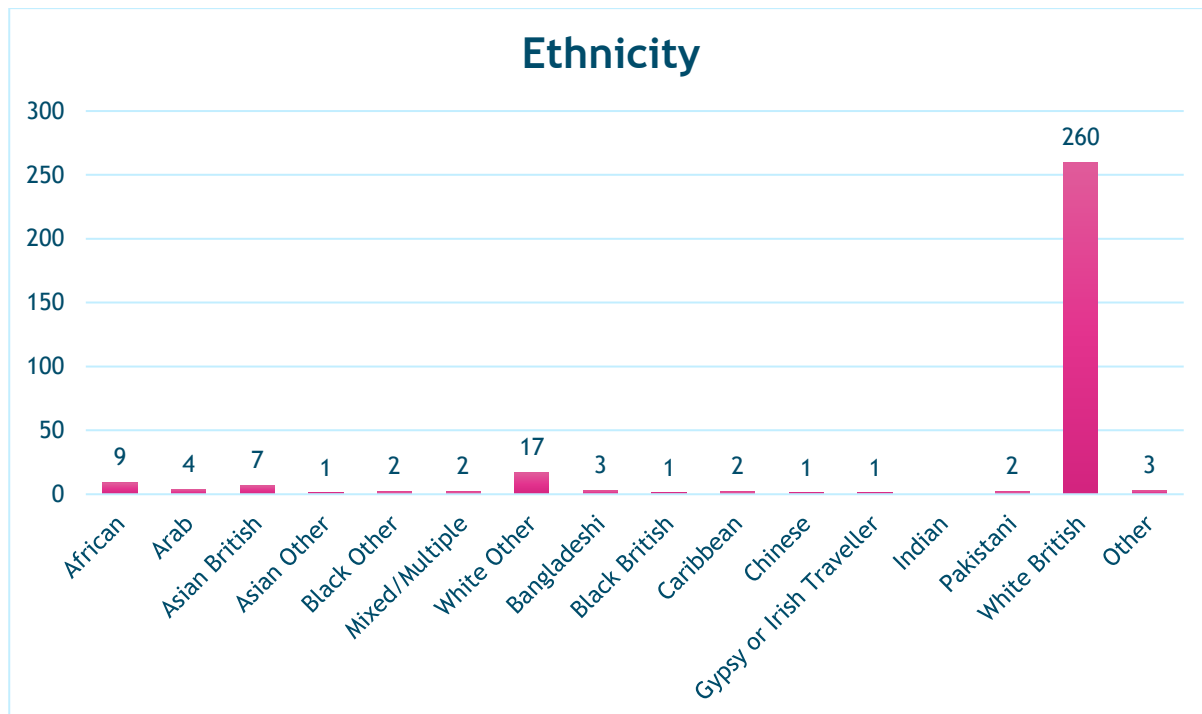
Age



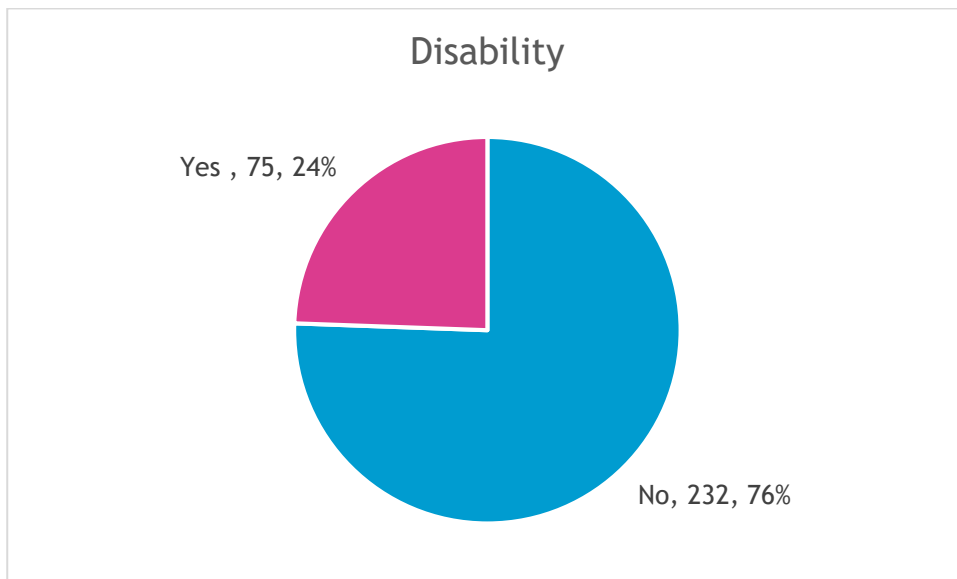
Gender



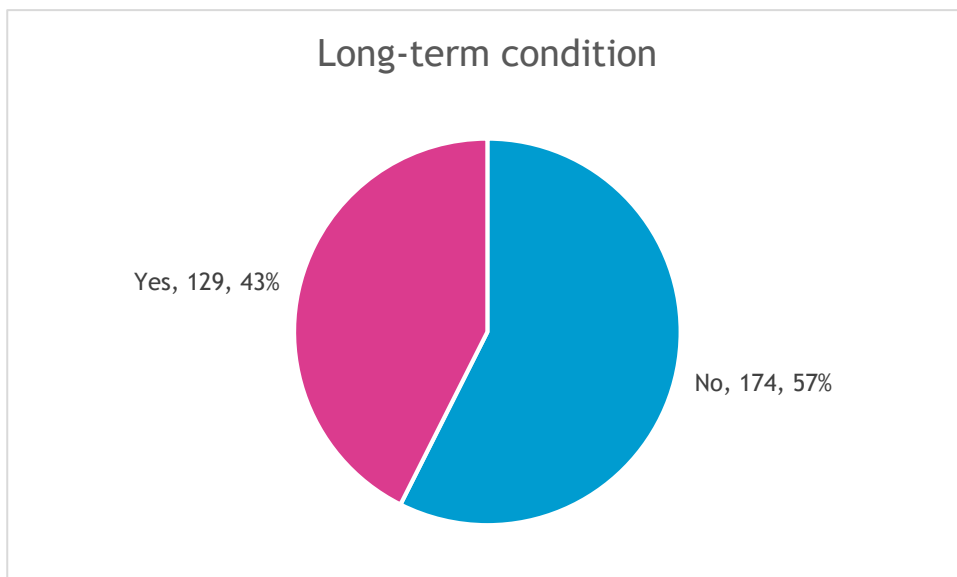
Ethnicity



Do you consider yourself to have a disability?



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



Appendix 2: Topic Guide – Urgent and Emergency Care Access Standards Evaluation

This interview guide was used by all six local Healthwatch to conduct the research.

Objectives

- Explore how satisfied patients are with their experience of care
- Develop an understanding of the potential effect of the new clinical standards on patient experience

Participants

Patients, family members and carers in A&E

- Both those in minors and majors (or locally used terminology)
- Patients (or their family / carers) awaiting admission to a bed
- Patients (or their family / carers) following admission (i.e. at a later stage in the patient journey)

Note: Adjust questions below as necessary when engaging with family members or carers to capture their experiences supporting someone else's care and as a lay person visiting A&E.

Introduction

Healthwatch is the independent champion for people who use health and social care services. We work to find out what matters to people and make sure their views shape the support they need. Today we are here to observe how care is being delivered in A&E, and to collect the views of people attending the department.

There are seven questions and they should take around 15 minutes, depending on the length of your answers. All your responses will be anonymised, meaning that no one should be able to identify you from your responses.

You don't have to answer any questions if you'd prefer not to and if at any time you want to stop just let me know.

Healthwatch is independent, meaning that we are not part of the NHS or hospital staff. Your anonymised responses will be used to inform changes in how A&E performance is measured and how emergency care is delivered.

Interview questions

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

2. Just to help us understand which services you've used today, would you mind briefly telling us how you came to be in A&E?

Prompts: By ambulance, referred by 111, GP, 111 online, or decided to come in.

Could you please tell us about why you came to be in A&E today?

How would you rate your time in department?

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

3. Can you tell me what's happened since you've arrived in Hospital? We are interested in your experience of A&E / the department, rather than anything personal about your medical health.

Prompts: What happened when you first arrived - who did you speak to first? What did they say to you? Do you feel you were treated with empathy?

Where did you go next? When did you first see a health professional?

What else happened before you were discharged / admitted to a ward / sent to another department? Do you feel you were kept informed about what was happening?

How would you rate staff attitude?

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

How would you rate the quality of communication?

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

4. Can you please tell me how satisfied you have been with your experience of care since you've been in A&E?

Prompts: Do you feel that staff have understood why you are here and what your needs are, and that you have received the appropriate clinical care?

How would you rate the quality of care?

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

5. How does your experience today compare with what you expected when you decided to go to A&E?

Prompts:

How long did you expect to wait?

Has the communication about what is happening/what would happen met your expectations?

6. Is there anything else about your experience of being in hospital that you'd like to add?

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

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

How would you rate the cleanliness of the department?

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

How would you rate the quality of food at the department?

Poor	Fair	Average	Good	Excellent
1	2	3	4	5

Demographics

1. What is your age?

- 1-15 years
- 16-17 years
- 18 to 24
- 25 to 49
- 50 to 64
- 65 to 79
- 80+
- Prefer not to say

2. Are you:

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Transgender
- Other
- Prefer not to say

3. How would you describe your ethnic origin?

- African
- Arab
- Asian British
- Any other Asian background: (Please describe)
- Any other Black background: (Please describe)
- Any other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background: (Please describe)

- Any other White background: (Please describe)
- Bangladeshi
- Black British
- Caribbean
- Chinese
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller
- Indian
- Pakistani
- White British
- Other: [Please describe]
- Prefer not to say

4. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

5. Do you consider yourself to have a long-term condition?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say