



# Patient Transport Service Patient Experience Report

Patient Transport Service  
Hertfordshire: Q2 July to September 2023

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Report Period: July to September 2023  
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# Summary

## Introduction

The East of England Ambulance Service (EEAST) has a comprehensive annual patient survey programme, which includes the continuous patient experience survey for the Patient Transport Service (PTS). This online survey is signposted using a variety of methods and is available for patients to feedback on their experience at any time.

The objective of the PTS survey is to establish patient satisfaction, to involve patients in the healthcare and service received and to monitor the quality of the care and service provided by the Trust. Listening to patient feedback enables the Trust to identify what is working well and to highlight areas for service improvement.

This report summarises the results of the PTS experience survey, for patients who used the service in the Hertfordshire area during July to September 2023.

## Methodology

The online survey is available on the Trust's public website for patients to complete at any time. The survey has been promoted using various methods, including the Trust's social media channels and patient information cards (which include the web address and QR code to the survey). The information cards have been distributed across the region and PTS staff have been asked to provide these to patients following their contact with the service.

The Patient Survey Team also post invitation to feedback letters to a random sample of PTS patients each month (obtained through Cleric and provided by the Trust's Information Management Team). The patient samples are traced using the Demographic Batch Trace Service, with any patients who do not trace removed from the sample prior to mail out. The invitation letter provides a unique reference number for the patient to enter upon completion of the survey,

which enables the survey results to be separated by contract area. Patients can also provide the first half of their postcode if preferred. The contract area is recorded as unknown if this information is unavailable.

## Sample

The PTS online survey is undertaken by way of a self-selected sample via EEAST's public website. However, a random sample of PTS patients is also collated each month (approximately 150 patients who have used transport within the Hertfordshire area), with these patients posted an invitation to feedback letter.

Most patients complete the survey online, although paper versions of the questionnaire are available if preferred. It is not possible to calculate the overall response rate for the online survey, as although the number of invitation letters posted is recorded, it is not clear how many information cards have been provided. Some surveys may also have been completed by patients who found the survey through alternative means.

## Conclusion

Overall, **94.7%** of respondents (36) who answered the FFT question and had used the Trust's PTS within the Hertfordshire area during July to September 2023, rated the service received as either 'good' or 'very good.'

76.7% of respondents (23) felt their transport booking call had been answered 'quickly,' although 23.3% of respondents (7) felt their call had taken a long time to be answered. Respondents were generally satisfied (81.1%) with the length of time their journey took, with 75.8% of patients (25) arriving in good time for their medical appointment. 48.3% of respondents (14) had waited between 0 to 60 minutes for their return transport. However, 15 respondents (51.7%) had waited over one hour.

PTS staff were rated highly as 'good' (18.4%) or 'excellent' (83.8%), with respondents also advising that they had been treated with dignity and respect.

The majority of additional comments received were positive and highlighted the professionalism, kindness and care provided by staff. Areas of dissatisfaction related to **delays, communication, and vehicle suitability/comfort.**

The continuation of collecting and reporting on patient feedback will enable the Trust to ensure that it meets the community it serves and for patients to receive a high standard of service.

## Results

Overall, **42** completed survey submissions were received from patients who had used the PTS within the Hertfordshire area during Quarter 2 of 2023/24: July (12), August (13) and September (17).

Please note that the percentages in the below tables/charts do not include the patients who either did not respond to the question or who were 'unable to say.' Some patients may also have provided multiple answers to questions.

Due to the small number of survey submissions received, **caution** must be taken when interpreting the results which may not be representative.

### How did you hear about the survey?

Overall, 35 respondents (83.3%) had heard about the survey through the invitation to feedback letter. Other responses included 'ambulance service website' (2.4%), 'word of mouth' (7.1%), 'Social media' (4.8%) and 'Text message' (2.4%).

## Overall, how was your experience of our service?



The Friends and Family Test (FFT) score is calculated in line with NHS England guidelines: providing the percentage of patients who responded that their experience of the service was either 'good' or 'very good.'

Overall, 38 respondents who used the Trust's PTS within the Hertfordshire area answered the FFT question. 36 (94.7%) of these respondents rated the service received as either 'good' (21.1%) or 'very good' (73.7%). Other responses included: 'neither good nor poor' (2.6%) or 'very poor' (2.6%).

The remaining respondents did not complete this question.

## Please can you tell us why you gave this answer?

Patient	Month	Positive comments received
2	July	Because I feel safe and cared for when using patient transport.
4	July	Arrived on time, very helpful and waited and cared for me.
6	August	Staff are always very friendly and professional, service overall reliable.

Patient	Month	Positive comments received
7	August	Because without this service I could not have got to my Chemotherapy and my dialysis sessions.
10	July	Staff very professional have a sense of humour and very kind.
11	July	Quick to scene of accident. Caring staff at scene.
12	July	My experience was in the main good. The staff were all very friendly. However, the first appointment was missed as the transport only turned up at the time of the appointment and the hospital refused to delay the time. At my last appointment I had to wait several hours for the transport home, which was upsetting as I was on my own and I am 86 years old.
13	July	Good going, not so good coming back. As they are so busy, but I have no complaints about anything or the staff, they are brilliant.
14	July	Ambulance driver was really kind and helpful.
15	August	Polite and efficient.
16	August	Good service performed by good staff.
18	August	Excellent, understanding staff and generally on time for the home to hospital journey. However, the wait for return from appointments is quite long and discharge from hospital collection is many hours which is disappointing.
19	August	I was treated with respect by the ambulance staff. Felt safe during the journey, as the seating arrangement was double checked before starting the journey.

Patient	Month	Positive comments received
21	August	The ambulance girls were efficient, patient and understanding both to myself and to the very elderly gentleman who was also being transported. I cannot praise them highly enough. It was not an emergency as such but an iron therapy treatment for renal problems but the call to book hospital transport was helpful and efficient. Having had similar problems many years ago and then needed transport, I was amazed by just how quick, easy, and efficient it is now.
23	August	Drivers are helpful and friendly.
25	September	I left hospital with badly swollen feet and could hardly walk, which is why the hospital arranged transport. The crew were courteous, caring and efficient, both with me and another, rather more frail passenger. They were also quick and efficient getting me out of the ambulance and in my front door, where my family took over.
26	September	I was at ease and comfortable considering I was on my way to a minor op. The driver was polite and courteous.
30	September	Perfect.
31	September	Caring and timely.
32	September	Fantastic paramedics!
33	September	I was picked up at home and monitored straight away, then driven to hospital.
34	September	They looked after me every time and got me home ok no problems at all.

Patient	Month	Positive comments received
36	September	On most Tuesdays, I got to my appointment either on time - or not more than 15 minutes late. Coming home, most weeks in September I didn't have to wait more than 1.75 hours after Transport were called following my treatment.
39	August	The staff/drivers were helpful, kind, caring and cheerful.
40	September	The staff are always friendly and helpful.
41	September	Always prompt. Very friendly. Very helpful.
42	September	I had to have transport to bring me home from hospital the driver was very pleasant and helpful.

Patient	Month	Mixed/Neutral comments received
28	September	Overall good but sometimes PT drivers are given incorrect appointment times.

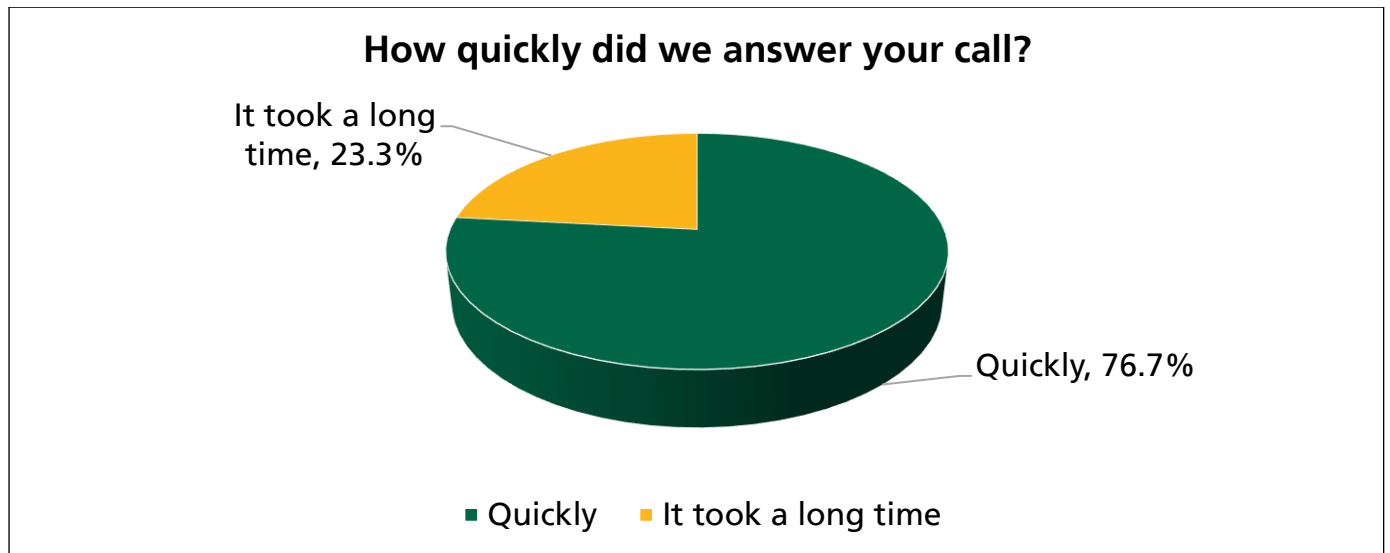
Patient	Month	Negative comments received
1	July	Not sending correct ambulance, putting safety at risk of wheelchair users, cancelling ambulances at the last minute missing critical hospital appointments.
24	August	My main problem was with the discharge lounge. My husband was told to go home at mid-day as I was being sent home. I eventually arrived home at 7.30 in the evening. Bad communication between your service and discharge lounge.



## Are you the patient?

Overall, 32 (82.1%) of the 39 respondents who answered the above question advised that they were the patient. Seven respondents (17.9%) advised that they were answering on behalf of the patient. The remaining respondents did not complete this question.

## How quickly did we answer your call?



Of the 30 respondents who answered the above question, 23 (76.7%) recalled their call to the PTS as being answered 'quickly.' However, seven respondents (23.3%) felt that it took 'a long time.'

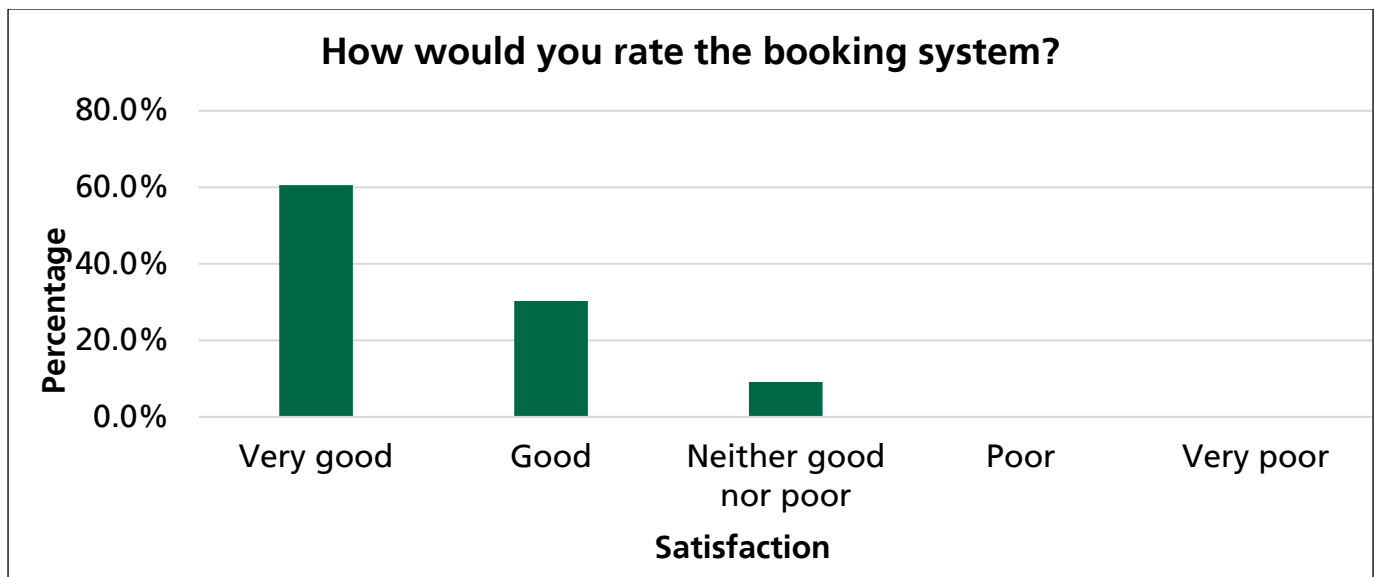
The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say'.

## Were you clearly informed of the date and time of your transport booking?

All 34 respondents who answered the above question advised that they had been clearly informed of the date and time of their transport booking.

The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

## How would you rate the booking system?



Of the 33 respondents who answered the above question, 30 (90.9%) rated the booking system as either 'good' (30.3%) or 'very good' (60.6%). Three respondents (9.1%) rated the booking system as 'neither good nor poor.'

The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

## Did the service staff introduce themselves?

36 (94.7%) out of 38 respondents recalled the PTS staff as having introduced themselves upon their arrival. Two respondents (5.3%) did not remember receiving an introduction. The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

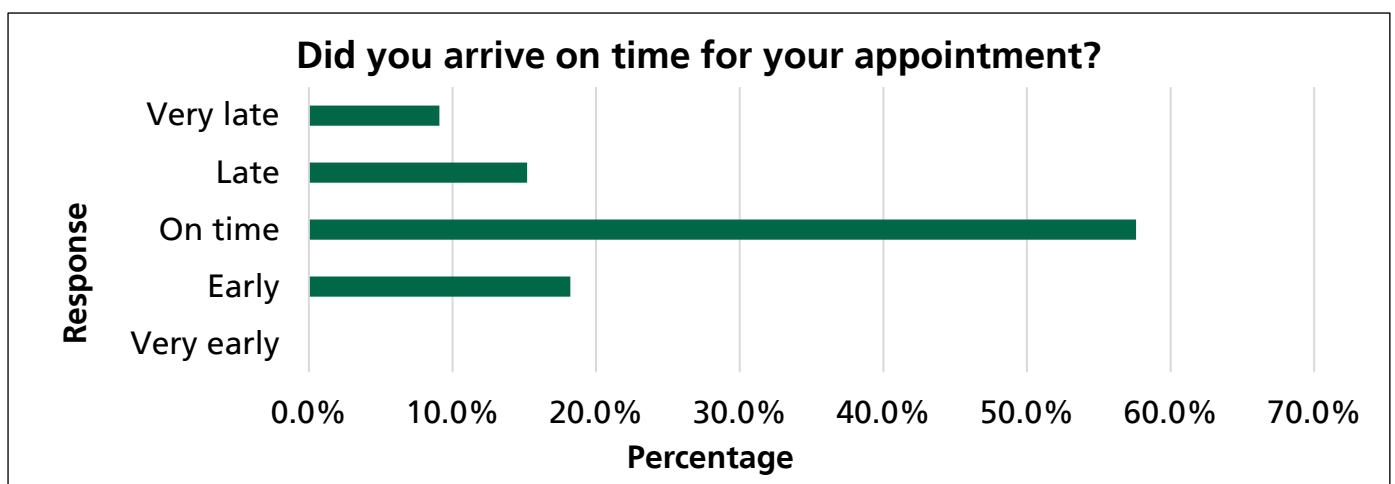
## How would you describe the length of time your journey took?



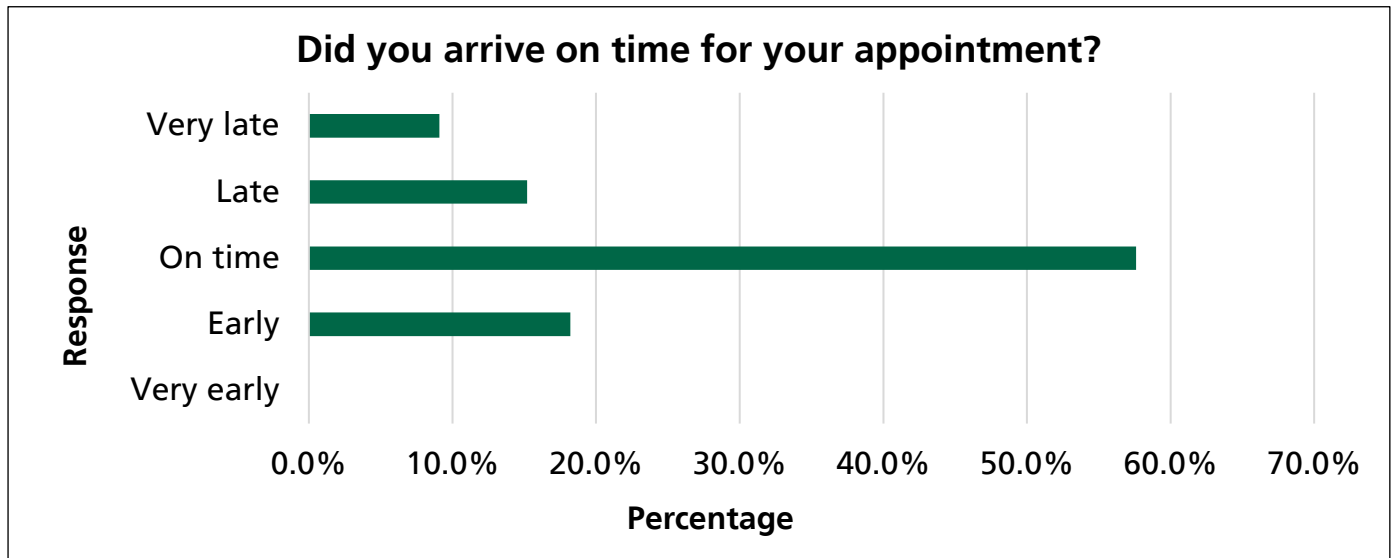
Overall, 30 (81.1%) out of 37 respondents who answered the above question were satisfied with the length of time their journey took and provided 'good' (32.4%) or 'very good' (48.6%) responses. Six respondents (16.2%) described the journey length as 'neither good nor poor.' One respondent rated the journey as 'very poor' (2.7%).

The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

## Did you arrive on time for your appointment?



## Did you arrive on time for your appointment?



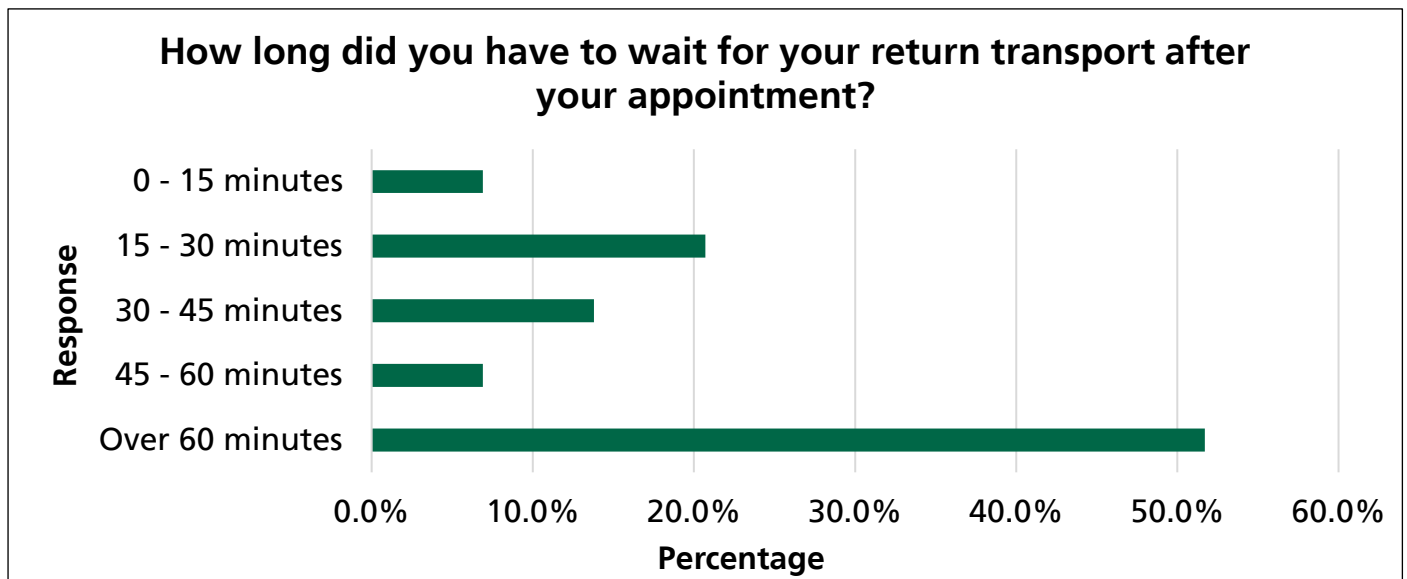
Of the 33 respondents who answered the above question, 25 (75.8%) had arrived either 'on time' (57.6%) or 'early' (18.2%) for their medical appointment. Five patients had arrived 'late' (15.2%) or 'very late' (9.1%).

The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or answered, 'not applicable.'

## If we were late, did we contact you?

Five respondents advised that they had not been informed and three respondents advised that they had been informed of any transport delay. The remaining respondents did not complete this question.

## How long did you have to wait for your return transport after your appointment?



Overall, 48.3% of respondents (14) who answered the above question had waited between 0 to 60 minutes for return transport: 0 to 15 minutes (6.9%), 15 to 30 minutes (20.7%) 30 to 45 minutes (13.8%) and 45 to 60 minutes (6.9%). 15 patients (51.7%) had waited over 60 minutes following their medical appointment.

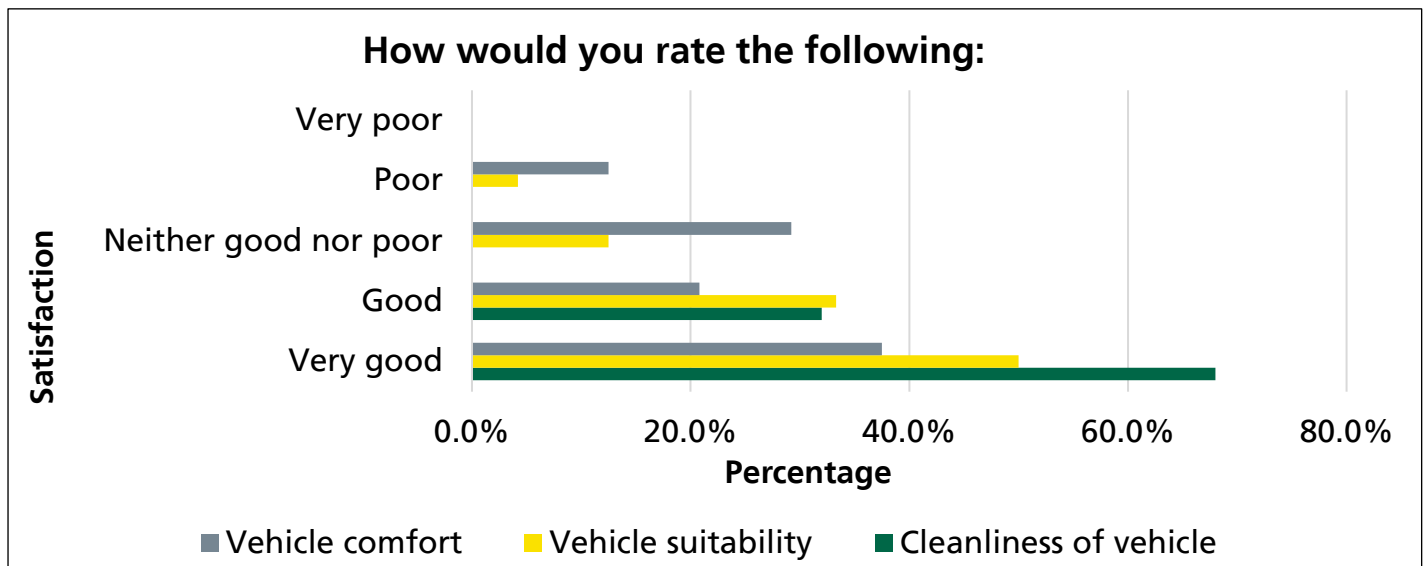
The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or answered, 'not applicable.'

## How did you find the communication between the Patient Transport Service and the hospital / clinic?

Overall, 24 (77.4%) out of 31 respondents rated the communication between the PTS and the hospital/clinic as either 'good' (35.5%) or 'very good' (41.9%). Two respondents (6.5%) felt the communication had been 'poor' (3.2%) or 'very poor' (3.2%).

The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

## How would you rate the following?



Some variance was seen in relation to satisfaction with the PTS vehicle. Vehicle cleanliness was rated most highly, with 97.3% of patients providing 'good' (37.8%) and 'very good' (59.5%) responses.

Vehicle suitability and vehicle comfort were rated less favourably, with overall satisfaction scores of 81.1% and 78.4% respectively.

The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

## How would you describe the attitude of the staff?

All 38 respondents who answered the above question rated staff as 'good' (18.4%) or 'excellent' (83.8%).

The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

## **Did the staff treat you with dignity and respect?**

All 38 respondents who answered the above question recalled being treated with dignity and respect.

The remaining respondents did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

## **Did the service staff drive safely?**

All 36 respondents who answered the above question felt that the PTS staff had driven safely.

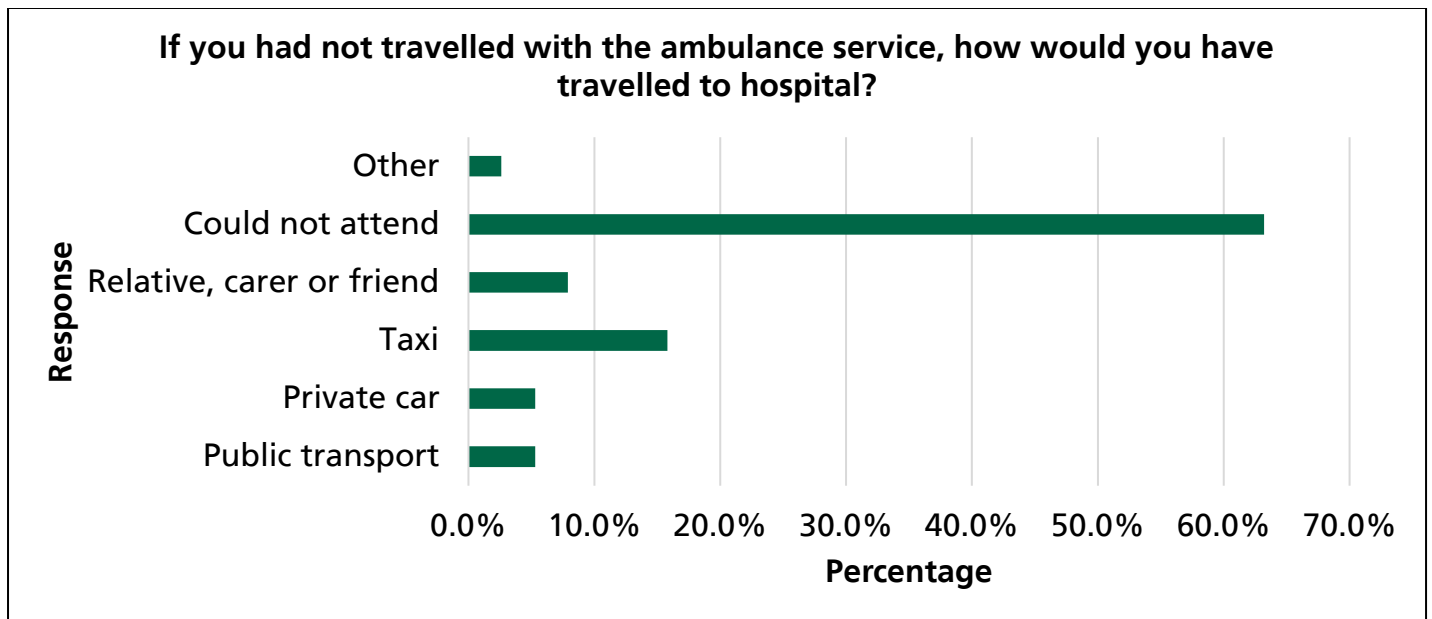
The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say' how the PTS vehicle had been driven.

## **Did the staff offer assistance if required?**

Overall, all 37 respondents who answered the above question advised that assistance had either been offered (97.3%) or had not been required (2.7%).

The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

**If you had not travelled with the ambulance service, how would you have travelled to hospital? (All answer types are listed, some multiple answers)**



Various responses were provided in relation to how the patient would have travelled to hospital had transport not been provided.

24 (63.2%) out of 38 respondents advised that they could not have attended their appointment. Other responses included: 'taxi' (15.8%), 'relative, carer or friend' (7.9%), 'public transport' (5.3%), 'private car' (5.3%) and 'other' (2.6%).

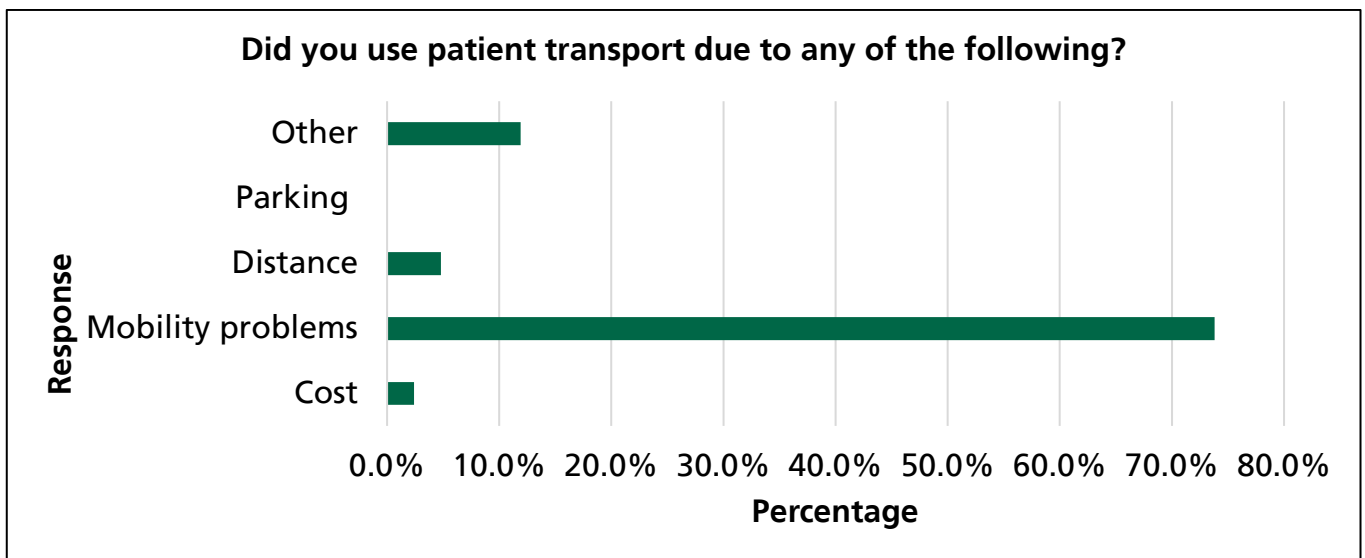
The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

The below comment was also received:

- *"Medical reasons, on chemo - feeling weak and lacking in confidence."*  
(Patient 39, August)



**Did you use patient transport due to any of the following?** *(All answer types are listed, some multiple answers)*



Various responses were given in relation to the reason for using patient transport. 31 (73.8%) of 42 responses cited 'mobility problems.' Other responses included: 'other' (11.9%), 'distance' (4.8%) and 'cost' (2.4%).

The below comments were also received:

- *"Unable to attend appointments as no one to take me." (August, 23)*
- *"Returning from stay in hospital." (September, 31)*
- *"My local surgery booked the service there due to my poor health. As I was being treated for Covid, I was not allowed to get public transport back home after 2 days treatment." (September, 33)*
- *"I'm registered blind." (September, 41)*

**Please tell us about anything that we could have done better:**

Patient	Month	Comments received
4	July	All perfect, wouldn't need to change anything.
7	August	Every time I was transported to or from any appointment I'm always made to feel comfortable, well looked after and we do have a good laugh - which I think all of the above is great as it calms you down if you're nervous.
16	August	Nothing, we are so grateful you are there for us.
19	August	I was an in patient and was being transferred to a rehab hospital, the transport was arranged by the hospital staff.
31	September	Everything went smoothly.

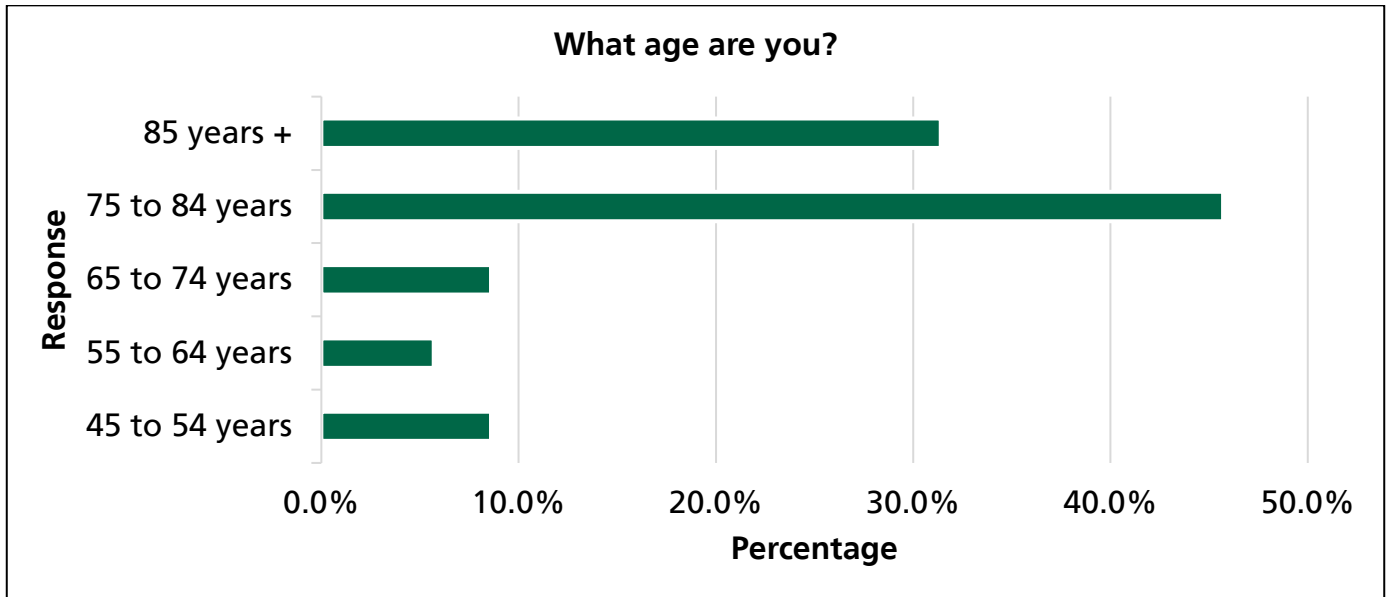
Patient	Month	Suggested improvements
1	July	Notified patients when you have a vehicle off the road when you call to verify whether a patient is going for an appointment. Better planning, planners need to read notes, get planners who are trained better in communication skills.
3	July	The crew were clearly overbooked and could not possibly meet the timings of their schedule. I was not contacted to be advised that there was a problem.
13	July	I don't think so, it's just the wait to come home again sometimes is so long.
14	July	Would have liked to not have had to wait so long to come back.

Patient	Month	Suggested improvements
6	August	<p>The new vehicles are mainly unsuitable and uncomfortable for wheelchair users especially if you are unable to transfer. The seats are in the wrong position to strap a (singular) chair per ambulance into position as not enough leg space in the new vehicles and if a stretcher vehicle, the driver has to remove half the ambulance to perform party tricks over fixtures to get you onboard.</p> <p>Also, ramps are very steep as is sidestep with no grab handles on either entries making it both difficult and unsafe to get both on and off the vehicle. So overall new vehicles not suitable or cost effective for service.</p> <p>Having said that, I am extremely grateful and cannot give enough praise and admiration for the service you provide. I would not be alive without your assistance as a renal patient requiring multiple journeys per week. Your staff are all so amazing regardless of their roles and all try to do their very best for us. Thank you.</p>
18	August	Collection from hospital after discharge is the most important service to get right - many hours late is not acceptable.
23	August	Shorter wait time for return journeys.
24	August	<p>1st problem - Appointment for transport booked for 12.30. Phone calls between your service and clinic resulting in missing my appointment, which was for plastics changing a dressing.</p> <p>August, taken in as an emergency by ambulance. Told at mid-day I could go home. Sent to discharge lounge. Eventually got home 7.30. New appointment for plastics. In view of past experience, booked an adapted taxi at a cost of £124 return journey.</p>

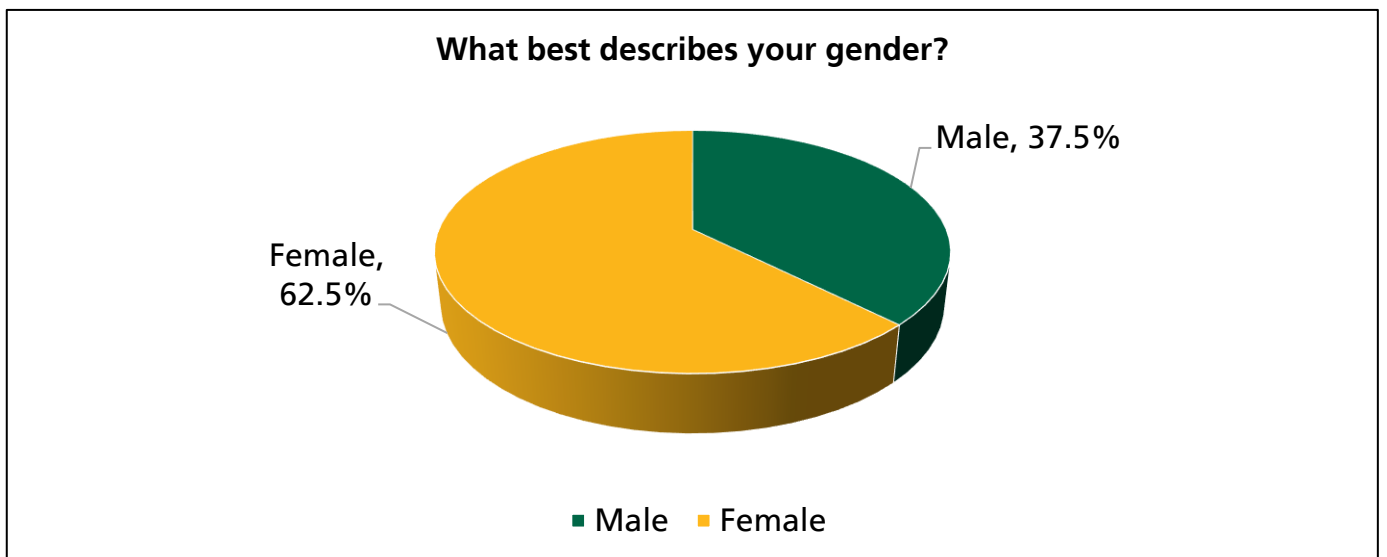
Patient	Month	Suggested improvements
39	August	It would have been useful to be warned about traffic problems causing late arrival of transport.
28	September	Correct appointment details being given to drivers.
30	September	No nothing excellent but sometimes I've experienced problems getting transport back home.
36	September	I need to visit the hospital for treatment every week, and it would be great if the wait for transport home was a bit shorter (it customarily varies between 1 hour and 2.5 hours) - though I do appreciate that all things in life are just not possible.
40	September	I have found the seats too high for me. I am only 5ft tall, so my feet don't touch the floor. I need a hip replacement and have problems with the base of my spine. So my legs hurt. Sorry, I don't like complaining, as I really appreciate being able to get to appointments.
42	September	I am worried about using hospital transport as stated if it doesn't turn up I can't get to my appointment. I have been getting a taxi to make sure I get to my appointment on time

# Equality and Diversity Information

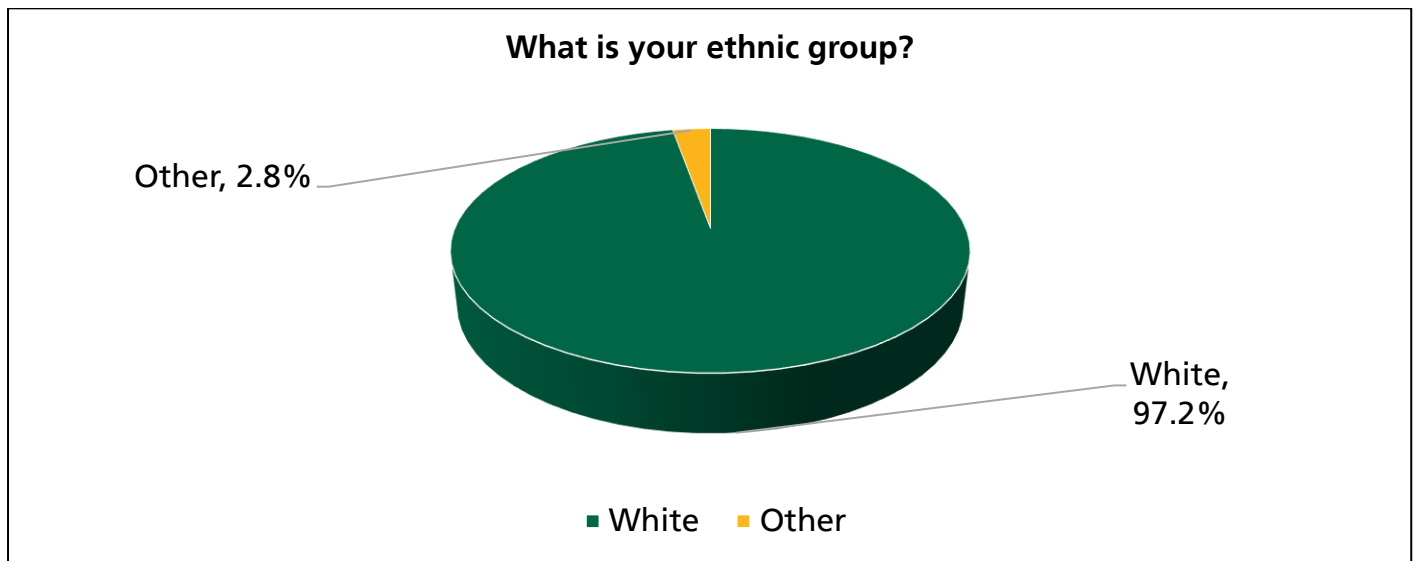
## What age are you?



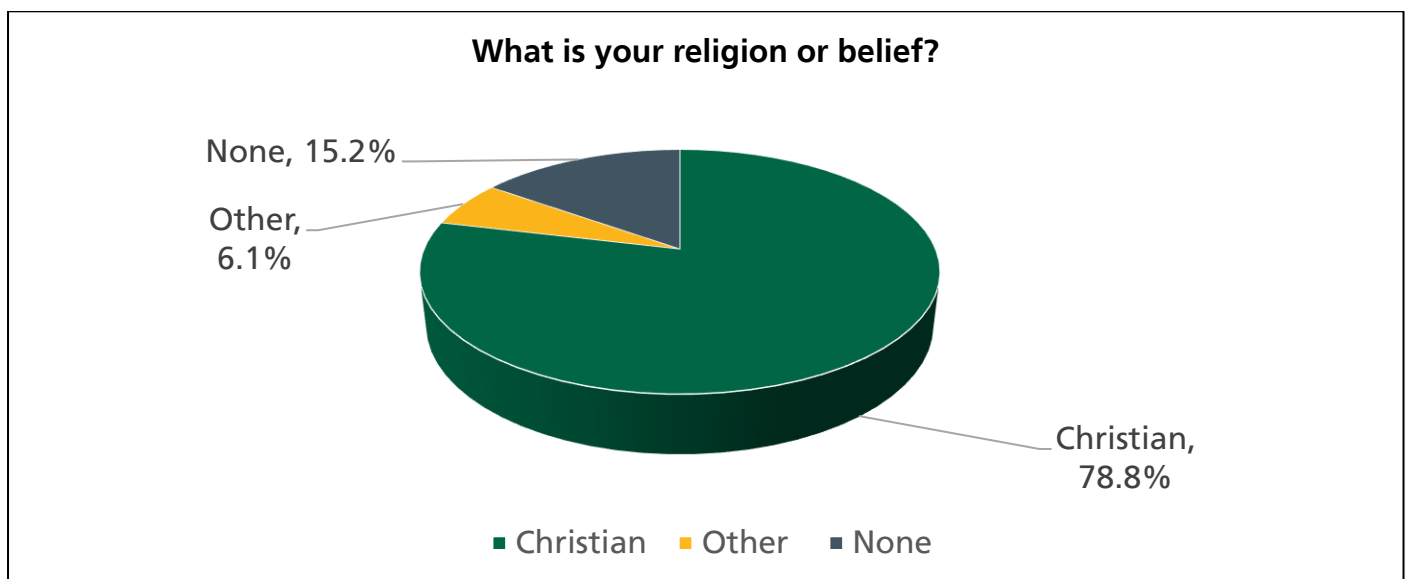
## What best describes your gender?



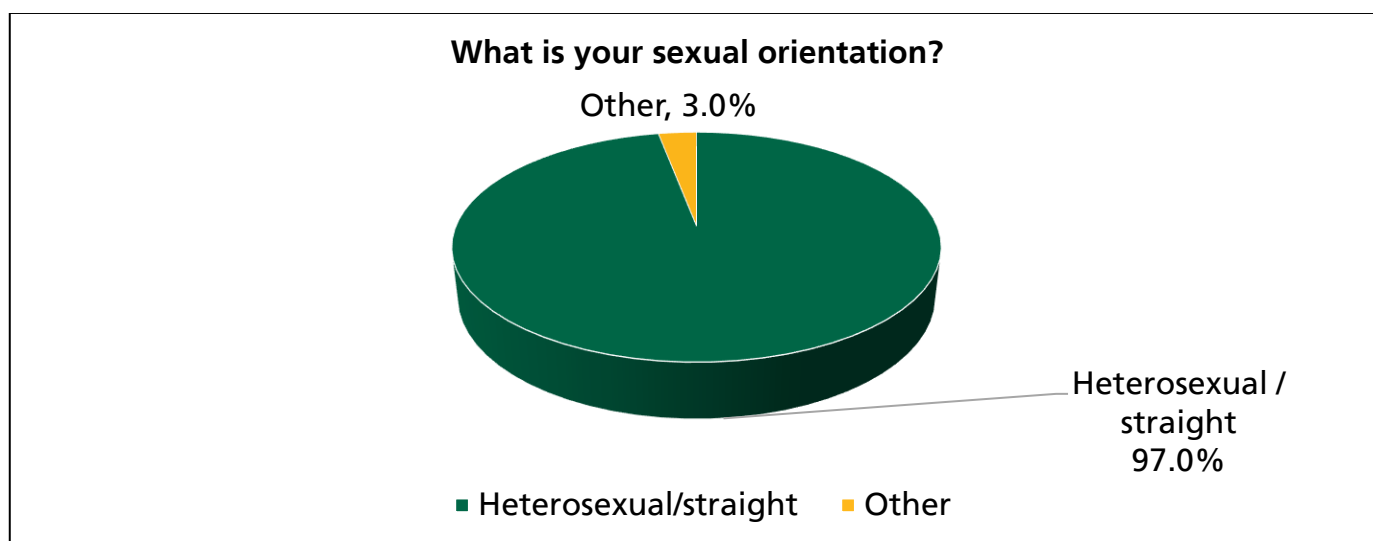
## What is your ethnic group?



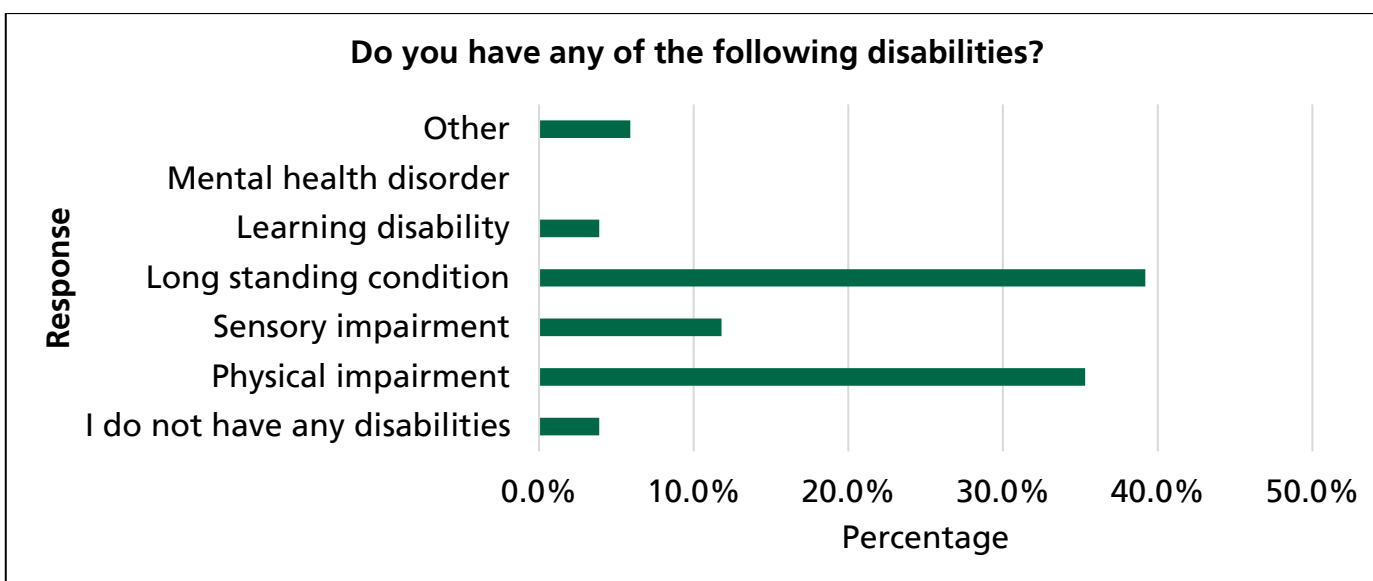
## What is your religion or belief?



## What is your sexual orientation?

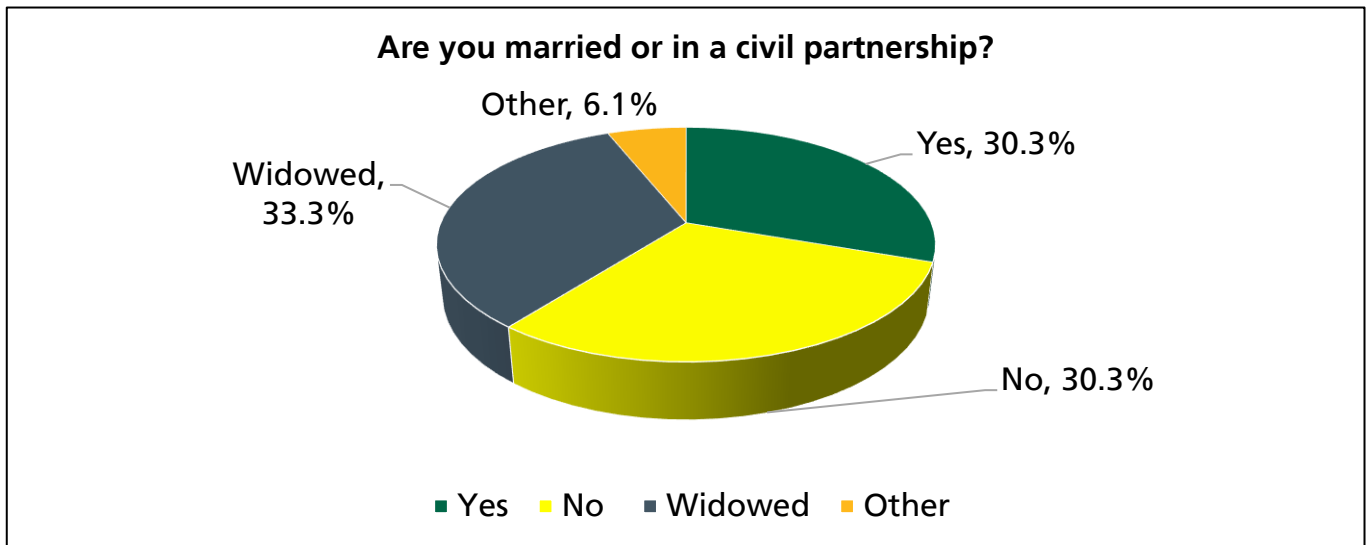


## Do you have any of the following disabilities? (All answer types are listed, some multiple answers)



Overall, patients were most likely to have a 'long standing condition' (39.2%) or physical impairment (35.3%). Other responses included: 'sensory impairment' (11.8%), 'other' (5.9%) and 'learning disability' (3.9%). Two patients did not have a disability.

## Are you married or in a civil partnership?



## Are you currently pregnant or have had a child within the last 12 months?

No respondents were either pregnant or had a child under 12 months old.

## Aftercare

Following this survey, any letters of appreciation or comments of concern were passed to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) for logging and actioning as appropriate.