



Patient Transport Service Patient Experience Report

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EEAST: PTS Hertfordshire
April to June 2023 Q1 2023-24

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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 April to June 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, 73.3% of respondents (22) who answered the FFT question and had used the Trust's PTS within the Hertfordshire area during April to June 2023, rated the service received as either 'good' or 'very good.'

75.0% of respondents (18) felt their transport booking call had been answered 'quickly.' Respondents were generally satisfied (76.9%) with the length of time their journey took, with 81.0% of patients (17) arriving 'on time' (61.9%), 'early' (14.3%) or 'very early' (4.8%) for their medical appointment. 47.4% of respondents (9) had waited between 0 to 60 minutes for their return transport, with 10 respondents (52.6%) advising that they had waited over one hour.

PTS staff were generally rated as 'good' (12.0%) or 'excellent' (84.0%), with 96.0% of respondents 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 were mixed and generally related to transport delays, long waiting times and the uncertainty of transport arriving.

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.

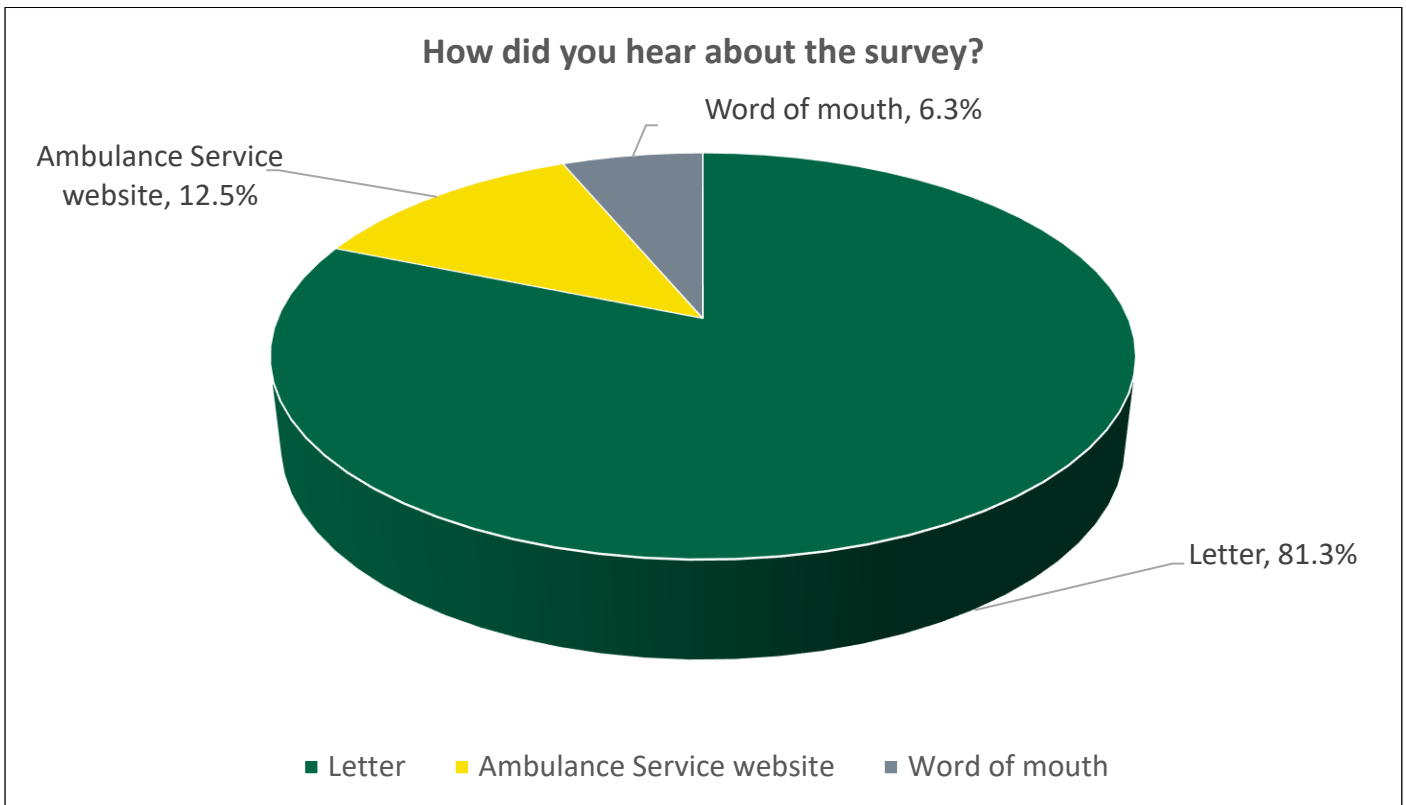
Results

Overall, **32** completed survey submissions were received from patients who had used the PTS within the Hertfordshire area during Quarter 1 of 2023/24: April (7), May (18) and June (7). 22 (81.5%) out of 27 respondents advised that they were the patient.

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.

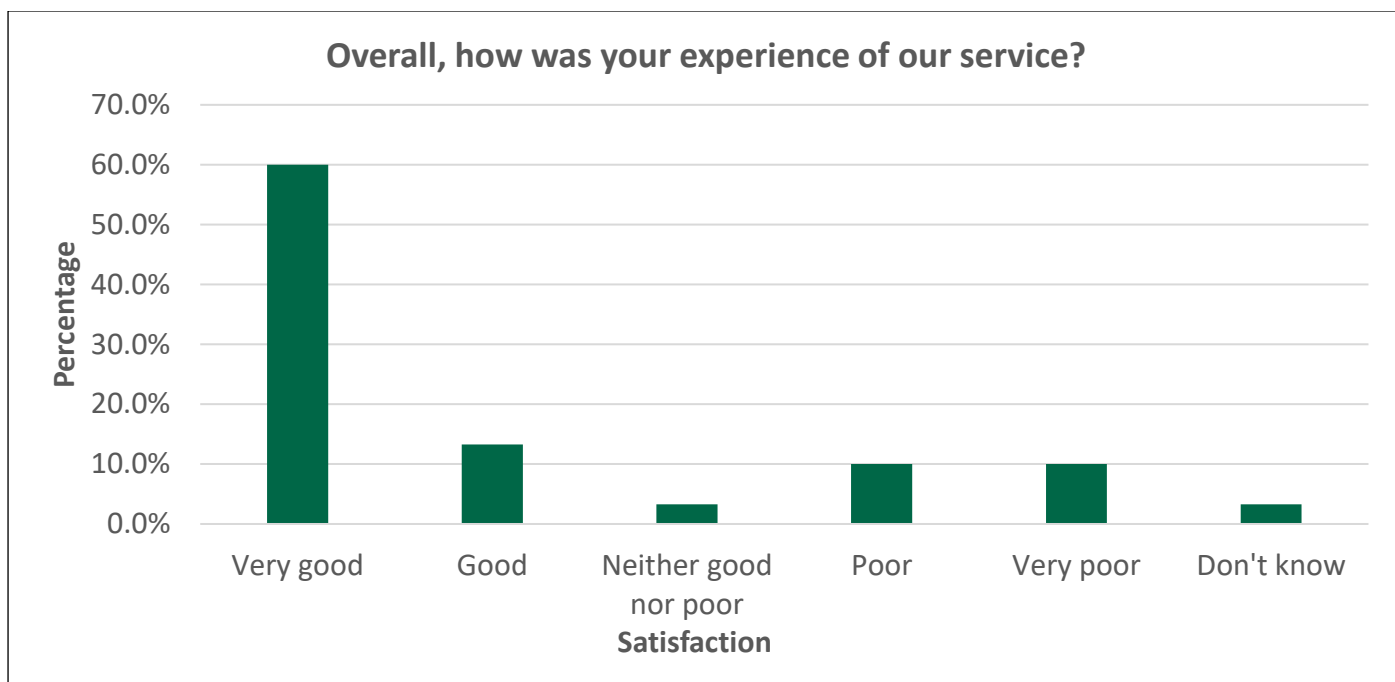
Due to the small number of survey submissions received, **caution** must be taken when interpreting the results which may not be representative.

How did you hear about the survey?



Overall, 26 respondents (81.3%) had heard about the survey through the invitation to feedback letter. Other responses included 'ambulance service website' (12.5%) and 'word of mouth' (6.3%).

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, 30 respondents who used the Trust's PTS within the Hertfordshire area answered the FFT question. 22 (73.3%) of these respondents rated the service received as either 'good' (13.3%) or 'very good' (60.0%). Other responses included: 'neither good nor poor' (3.3%), 'poor' (10.0%), 'very poor' (10.0%) or 'don't know' (3.3%).

The remaining respondents did not complete this question.

Please can you tell us why you gave this answer?

Patient	Month	Positive comments received
2	April	They turn up when they say they do. They are wonderful I feel very confident with them. Always On time.
4	May	Drivers very polite and helpful. Only minimal delay in picking up and return journeys. Very good service.
5	April	Everything was made easy and staff helpful and polite.
6	April	I cannot fault the service I received. Everyone involved was courteous and helpful.
7	April	The service my mother received was excellent, the crew were so compassionate and friendly and showed so much concern for my mother.
9	April	Overall, the service has been good.
10	May	Always on time and very courteous staff.
12	May	Always pleasant and helpful.
15	May	The team arrived quickly & were informative at every stage of my treatment. Very kind & considerate.
16	May	The staff that attended were very kind and helpful.
17	May	Lovely crew who were exceptionally understanding. I felt very safe and respected in their capable hands. They were very prompt in taking me home on both occasions. This service has proved to be so helpful for me and booking the transport was so easy. Thank you to all involved.
20	May	I had to wait a long time on the ward to be picked up but the actual care they showed was very good.
22	May	Because the service was first rate.

Patient	Month	Positive comments received
23	May	Ambulance service was arranged thro A&E at Watford Gen. As far as normal service is concerned I have used service for many trips to A & E each one has been perfect and staff excellent.
26	May	On the 10th May 2023 I went to PAH Haematology for a Blood Test as prep for a Blood Transfusion 2 days later. On this day as I recall the Ambulance arrived on schedule & I was safely delivered to the hospital in advance of my appointment time. Also, the return journey was similarly on time & I got home without delay.
27	June	Because your staff were, as always, very caring and alert to my welfare.
29	June	Because I felt they did the best they could, with the time element etc they have.
31	May	Got me there smoothly and on time.
32	May	It is efficient. The ambulance or car is clean and the drivers are very courteous. Plus you collect and return me back to my home, many thanks.

Patient	Month	Mixed/Neutral comments received
24	June	Only negative I was told to be ready two hours before my appointment which got me to my Hemel Hospital too early...On the plus side, I was seen an hour sooner by my MS Consultant but that gave me a longer wait for my hospital back home transport, which was on another run...so a longer than anticipated waiting around in the cafeteria-reception waiting area. I have to say, the reception staff were brilliant in keeping me up to date-informed on where my ambulance home transport was, when it would arrive.
19	May	Because how many hours it took to get me home.

Patient	Month	Mixed/Neutral comments received
25	June	Because I had to give up driving due to diabetes. My walking is poor and have to use a stick also have had several falls. have used your service for hospital appointments.

Patient	Month	Negative comments received
30	June	We have had 6 appointments and booked transport for each of them. We have managed to attend only 1 appointment. The patient has cancer and is desperate for a CT scan, the issue is not getting a taxi, it is getting up and down the stairs at her residence. She is feeling particularly dejected as she feels that she is on a countdown timer to death and not being able to attend her appointments is impacting drastically on her treatment.
1	April	Took over 3 hours to get joke after dialysis and the journey planning was awful. I had to travel 25 minutes in totally the wrong direction and then track back the same way before heading in the right direction.
8	June	My Father was contacted 2 hours after his specified collection time to be told that he wouldn't be collected despite me already calling twice that morning and being told he was next for collection. Because of this he missed an urgent appointment which he had been waiting for 6 months.
14	May	I use this service alot but it is very hit or miss, today my appointment was for 11 O' Clock, I was still waiting outside my house at 11.10 so my appointment at the hospital was cancelled. This is not the first time this has happened.

Are you the patient?

Overall, 22 (81.5%) of the 27 respondents who answered the above question advised that they were the patient. Five respondents (18.5%) advised that they were answering on behalf of the patient. The remaining respondents did not complete this question.

The below comments were also received:

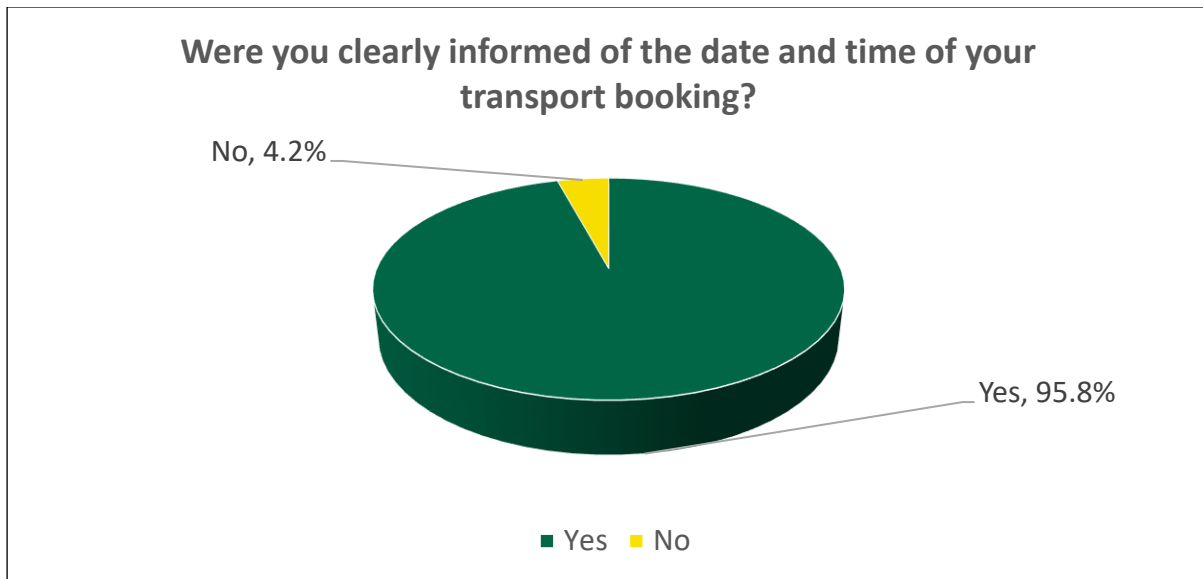
- “*Daughter.*” (Patient 7, April & Patient 11, May)
- “*Close family friend.*” (Patient 30, June)
- “*Daughter-in law and POA.*” (Patient 31, May)

How quickly did we answer your call?



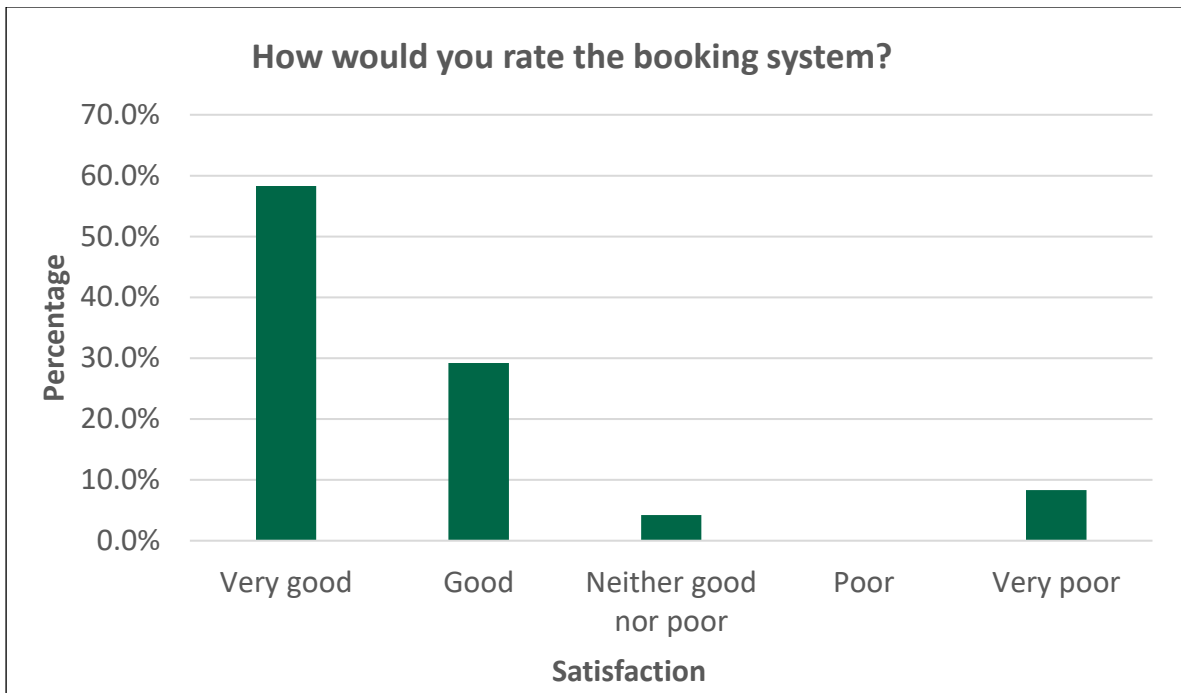
Of the 24 respondents who answered the above question, 18 (75.0%) recalled their call to the PTS as being answered ‘quickly.’ However, five respondents (20.8%) felt that it took ‘a long time’ for their call to be answered and one respondent (4.2%) recalled their call ‘was not answered.’ The remaining 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?



Of the 24 respondents who answered the above question, 23 (95.8%) advised that they had been clearly informed of the date and time of their transport booking. One respondent (4.2%) did not remember being informed. The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

How would you rate the booking system?

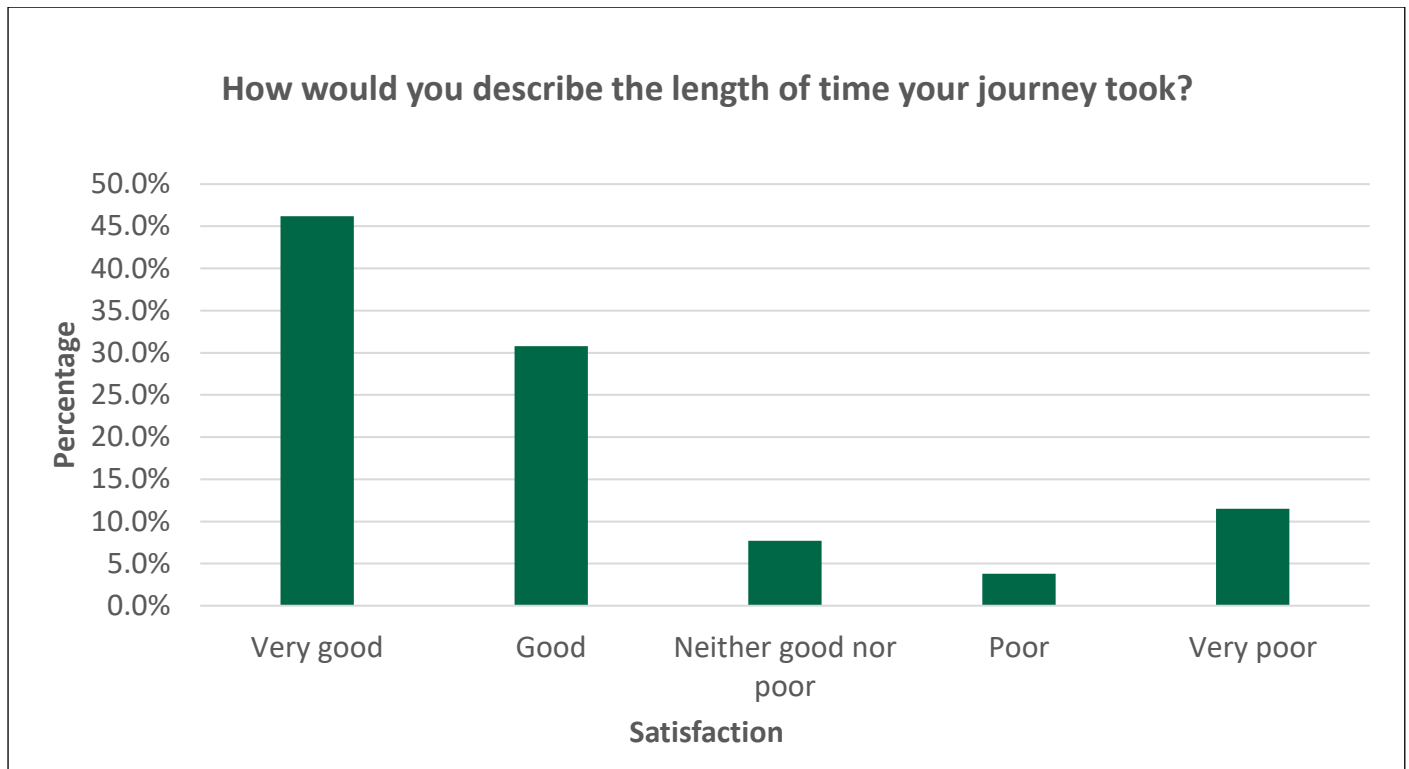


Of the 24 respondents who answered the above question, 21 (87.5%) rated the booking system as either 'good' (29.2%) or 'very good' (58.3%). Other responses included 'neither good nor poor' (4.2%) and 'very poor' (8.3%). The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

Did the service staff introduce themselves?

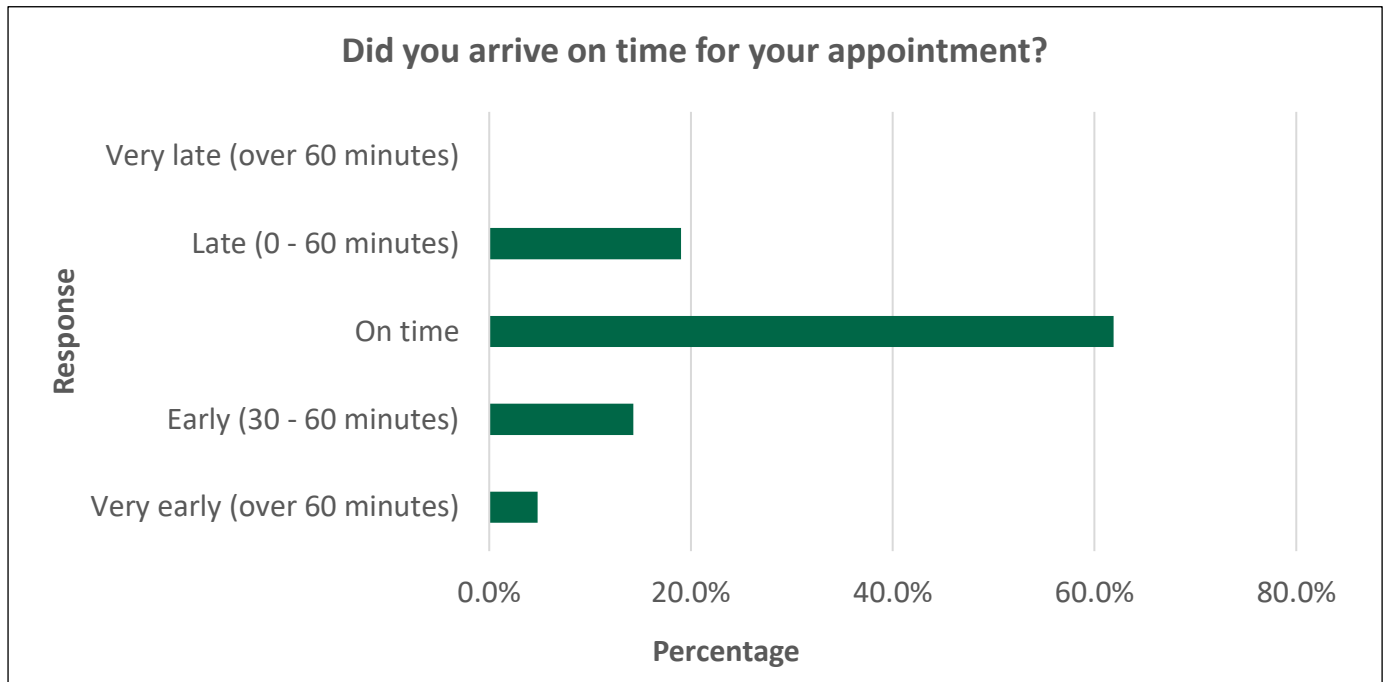
21 (91.3%) out of 23 respondents recalled the PTS staff as having introduced themselves upon their arrival. Two respondents (8.7%) did not remember receiving an introduction. The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

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



Overall, 20 (76.9%) out of 26 respondents who answered the above question were satisfied with the length of time their journey took and provided 'good' (30.8%) or 'very good' (46.2%) responses. However, four respondents (15.4%) described the journey length as either 'poor' (3.8%) or 'very poor' (11.5%). The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

Did you arrive on time for your appointment?

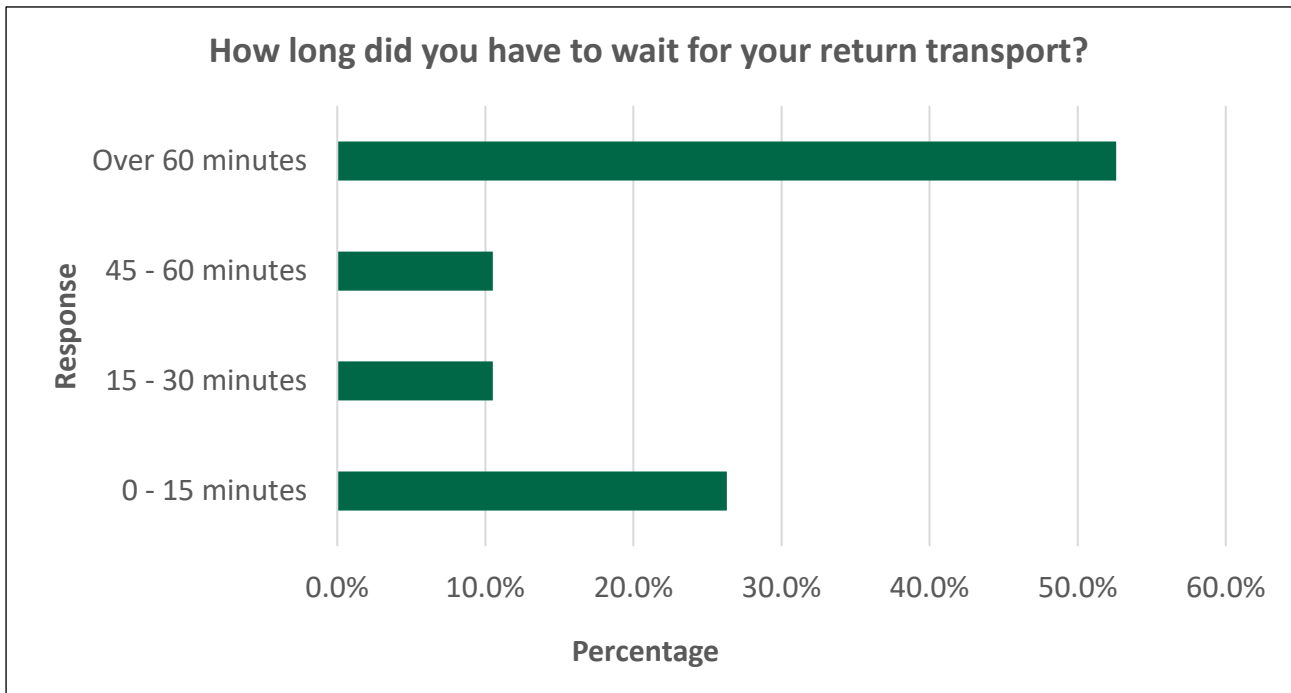


Of the 21 respondents who answered the above question, 17 (81.0%) had arrived either 'on time' (61.9%), 'early' (14.3%) or 'very early' (4.8%) at the hospital/clinic. Four patients had arrived 'late' (19.0%) for their medical appointment. The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or answered, 'not applicable.'

If we were late, did we contact you?

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

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

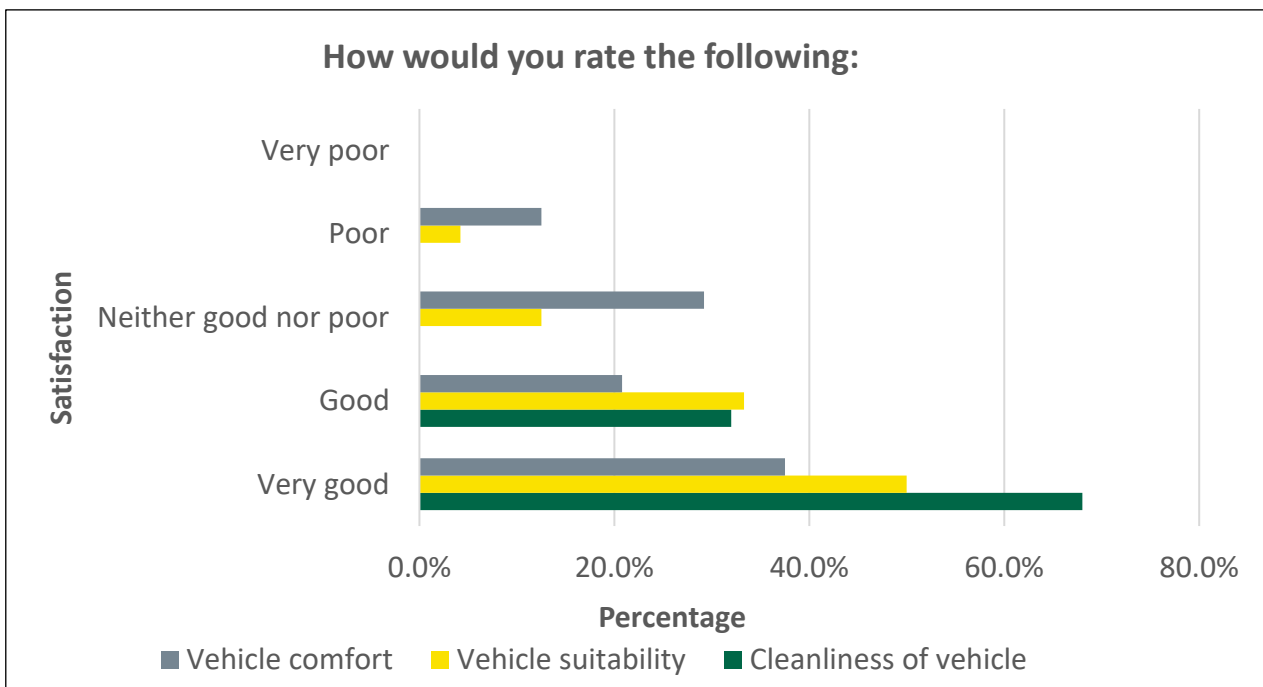


Overall, 47.4% of respondents (9) who answered the above question had waited between 0 to 60 minutes for return transport: 0 to 15 minutes (26.3%), 15 to 30 minutes (10.5%) and 45 to 60 minutes (10.5%). 10 patients (52.6%) had waited over 60 minutes following their medical appointment. The remaining 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, 16 (72.7%) out of 22 respondents rated the communication between the PTS and the hospital/clinic as either 'good' (36.4%) or 'very good' (36.4%). Three respondents (13.6%) felt the communication was either 'poor' (4.5%) or 'very poor' (9.1%). 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. All respondents (100%) were most satisfied and provided 'good' and 'very good' responses in relation to vehicle cleanliness. Vehicle comfort (58.3%) and vehicle suitability (83.3%) were rated less favourably.

How would you describe the attitude of the staff?

Overall, 24 (96.0%) of the 25 respondents who answered the above question rated staff attitude as either 'good' (12.0%) or 'excellent' (84.0%). One respondent (4.0%) rated staff attitude as 'poor.' The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

Did the staff treat you with dignity and respect?

24 respondents (96.0%) who answered the above question recalled being 'definitely' treated with dignity and respect and one respondent (4.0%) recalled being treated respectfully or with dignity to at least some extent. The remaining respondents did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

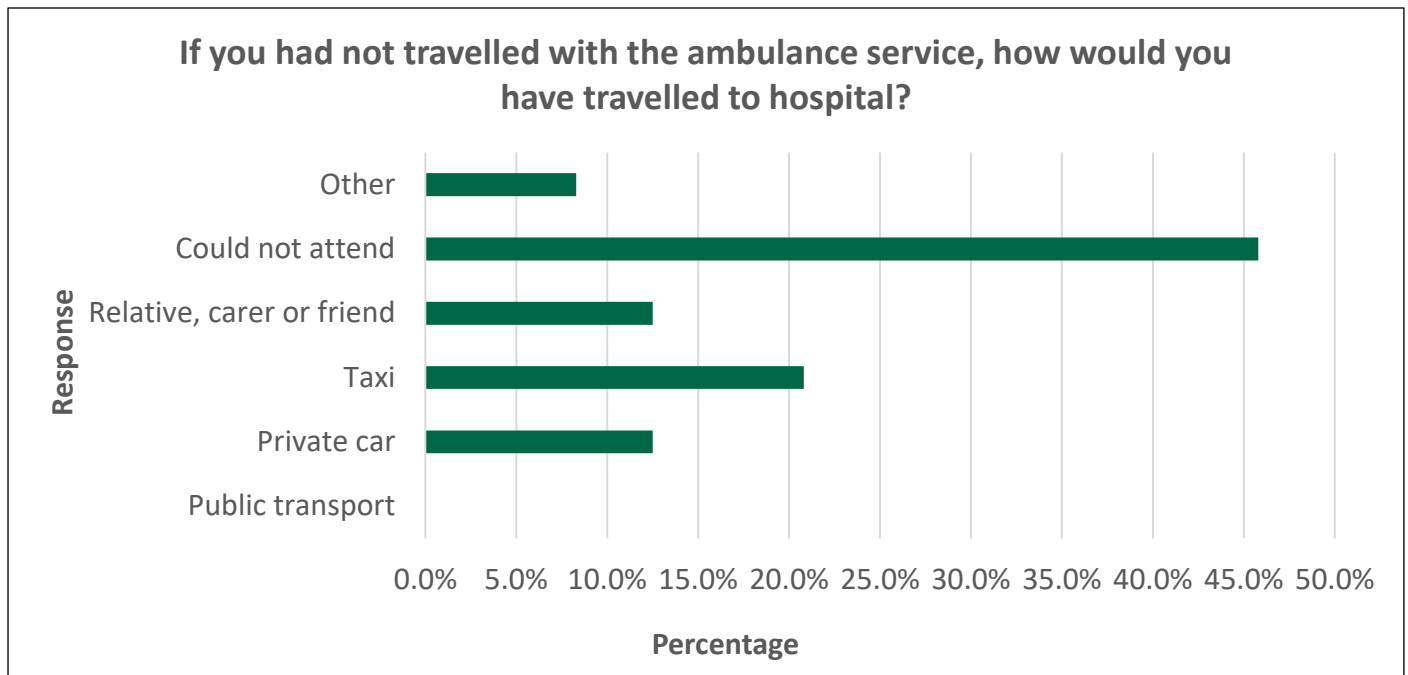
Did the service staff drive safely?

Of the 25 respondents who were able to answer the above question, 24 advised that the PTS staff had driven safely and one respondent felt that they had not been driven safely. The remaining respondents either did not complete this question or were 'unable to say.'

Did the staff offer assistance if required?

Overall, 24 (96.0%) out of the 25 respondents who answered the above question advised that assistance had been offered as and when required. However, one respondent (4.0%) did not recall the offer of any assistance. 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?

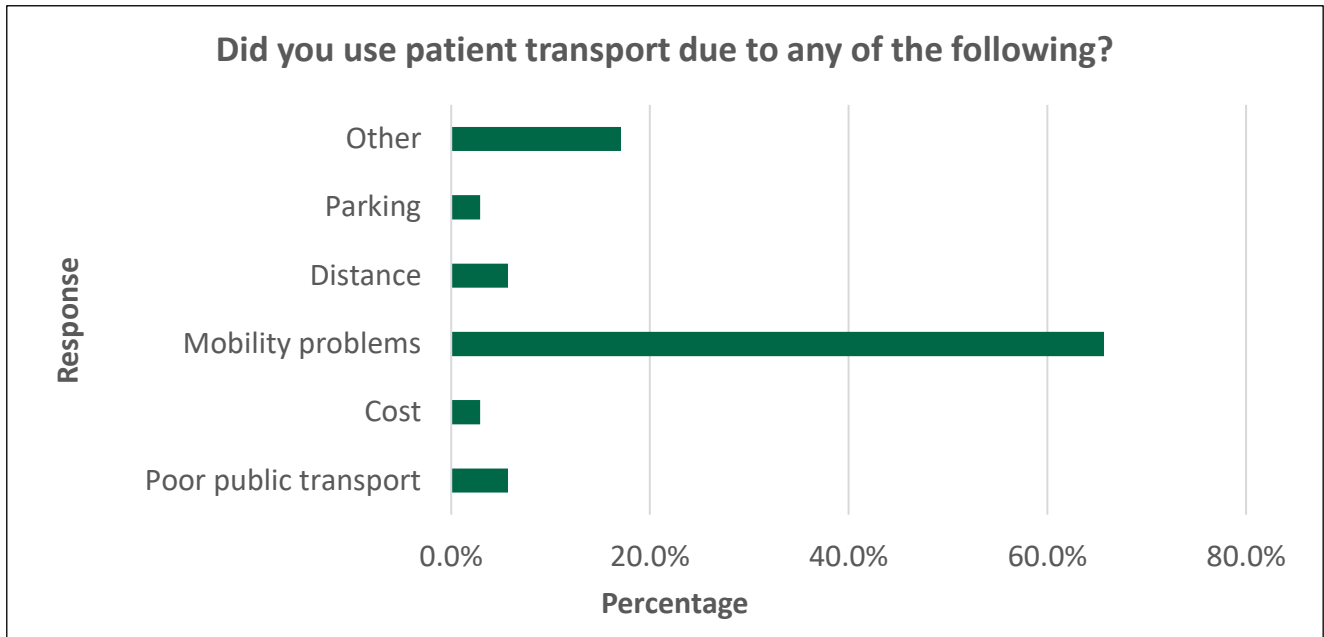


Various responses were provided in relation to how the patient would have travelled to hospital had transport not been provided. 11 (45.8%) out of 24 respondents advised that they **could not** have attended their appointment. Other responses included: 'relative, carer or friend' (12.5%), 'other' (8.3%), 'taxi' (20.8%) and 'private car' (12.5%). The remaining respondents did not complete this question.

The below comments were also received:

- *"No way of getting home from hospital." (Patient 19, May)*
- *"Had no one else to bring me home." (Patient 20, May)*

Did you use patient transport due to any of the following?



Various responses were given in relation to the reason for using patient transport. 23 (65.7%) of the 35 responses received related to 'mobility problems.' Other responses included: 'distance' (5.7%), 'other' (17.1%), 'poor public transport' (5.7%), 'parking' (2.9%) and 'cost' (2.9%). The remaining respondents did not complete this question.

The below comments were also received:

- *"Poor vision makes it difficult to travel without help." (Patient 1, April)*
- *"Nobody to take me." (Patient 19, May)*
- *"No one to bring me home." (Patient 20, May)*
- *"I have anaemia & so when I need blood transfusion I am often short of breath plus I have low immunity & can't walk very well." (Patient 26, May)*
- *"I have had a stroke and my left leg and arm are disabled." (Patient 32, May)*

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

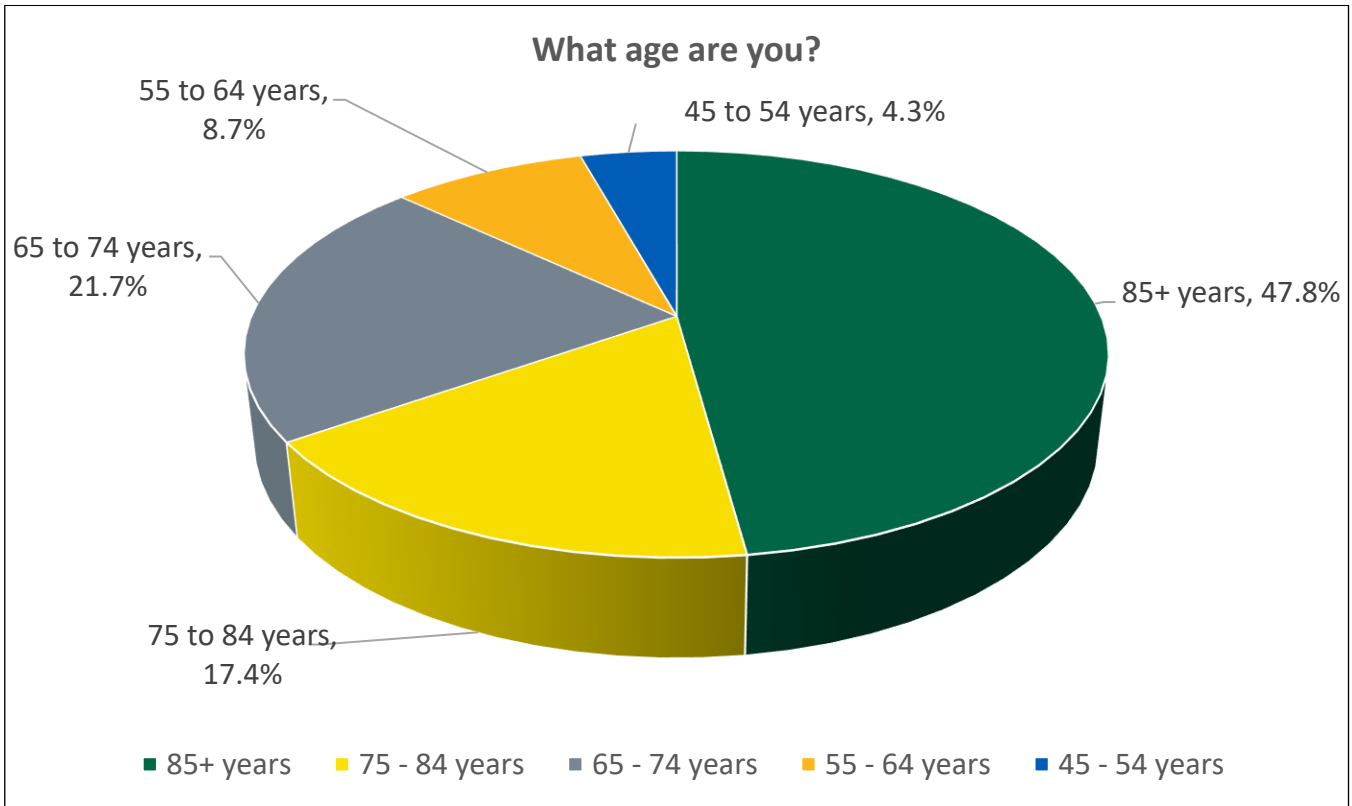
Patient	Month	Comments received
4	May	The service overall was very good.
8	June	Actually turned up and collected my Father.
10	May	All good.
17	May	No.
20	May	No I don't think so. No complaints at all they are doing a good job with what they've been given.
23	May	Nothing can be done. It's an ambulance not private car one doesn't expect it to cater for fussy folks.
25	June	I cannot judge. My knowledge of transport is limited as my days of driving are out of date. I was able to be ready when your ambulance arrived and I was able to be at Watford hospital on time. With thanks (name).
26	May	On 10th May I had no problems. But on other days I can have to wait a while on the return journey home.
27	June	Nothing - as usual your staff were caring and alert to my welfare, I could not ask for more.
31	May	Nothing. Can't comment on the booking etc as that was done by the care home. I am wheelchair bound so the only alternative is a wheelchair taxi.

Patient number	Month	Suggested improvements
1	April	Sorted route planning and patients location in relation to other patients when some were left to wait when the vehicle could have been filled with patients that lived close instead of taking patients in totally different directions.
2	April	Only trouble is we never know what time my husband is going to be picked up could be waiting up to an hour and a half plus but this isn't a complaint as the staff are so kind and nothing is too much trouble for them.
5	April	In my particular case I had a spinal problem and had to use a bed, unfortunately we had to pick a patient up as well from Harpenden which delayed my appointment but the extra travel time was excruciating for me and I was in extreme pain. On the return journey I was dropped off first which really helped. Please next time can I have a pick up on my own to reduce my pain. I know it is extremely hard for you to plan but I was in total agony. I must congratulate everyone you were all brilliant.
7	April	Waiting time for return journey home was what let the service down.
12	May	Why is there no transport to Chell Surgery in Stevenage?
19	May	The waiting time to be picked up to go home was too long. I was told at 10 am that I could go home at 13.00 I was told to go and sit downstairs in the waiting area where I sat for 3hrs plus in an uncomfortable chair. When transport arrived there was me and another lady who were local and a man who wasn't a patient who I think knew the driver. Instead of directly to St Albans to take me and the other lady we ended up going round the houses to take this man home first. It wasn't good when you aren't feeling well!
24	June	The only thing that I found awkward was I was told to be ready two hours before my booked hospital appointment, which transport got me there one to one & a half hours too early. Although I was seen an hour earlier by my MS Consultant but, gave me a longer wait for my transport to take me back home, which was on another run, and taking a little longer than anticipated.

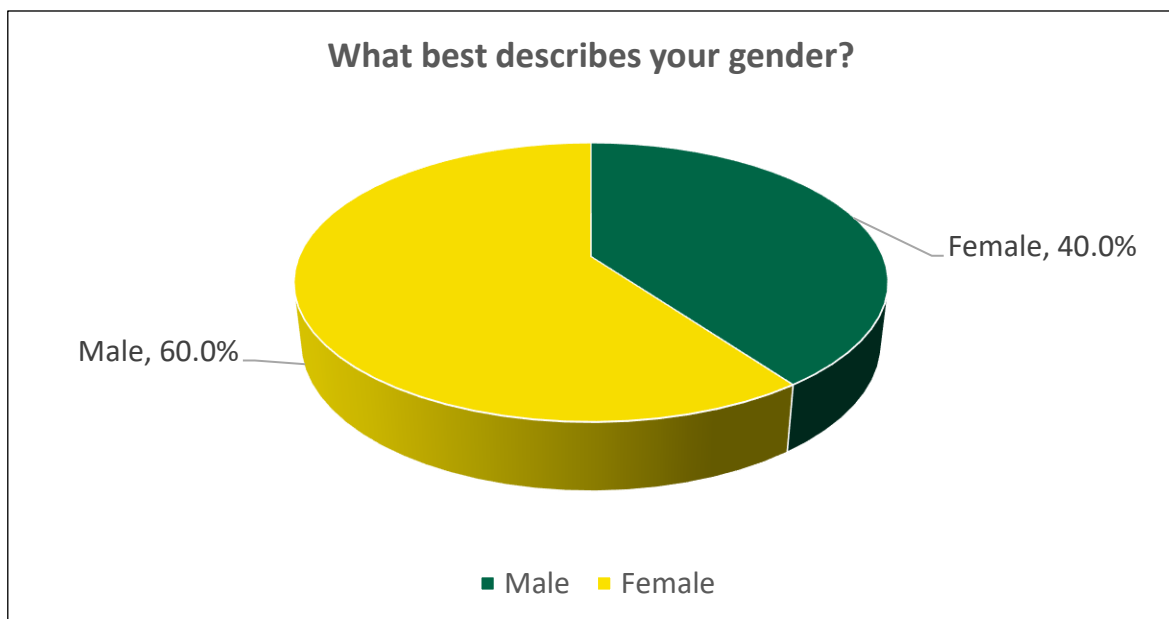
Patient number	Month	Suggested improvements
14	May	Generally, I have no complaints, but as stated previously the ambulances have turned up very early or very late, I am still very grateful for this service without which it would be very difficult for me to get to the hospital.
16	May	My only issue was that I had to wait quite a long time for the transport at the hospital for the return journey to my home.
30	June	As previously mentioned, there have been 6 appointments made and transport arranged and only 1 that proceeded. The transport has been cancelled on every occasion bar one. The patient's treatment for cancer has been severely impacted by this, several scans missed and possible withdrawal of treatment altogether due to non-attendance. This is appalling.
32	May	Try to collect early for the return journey. Once I had to wait for four hours for my return journey.

Equality and Diversity Information

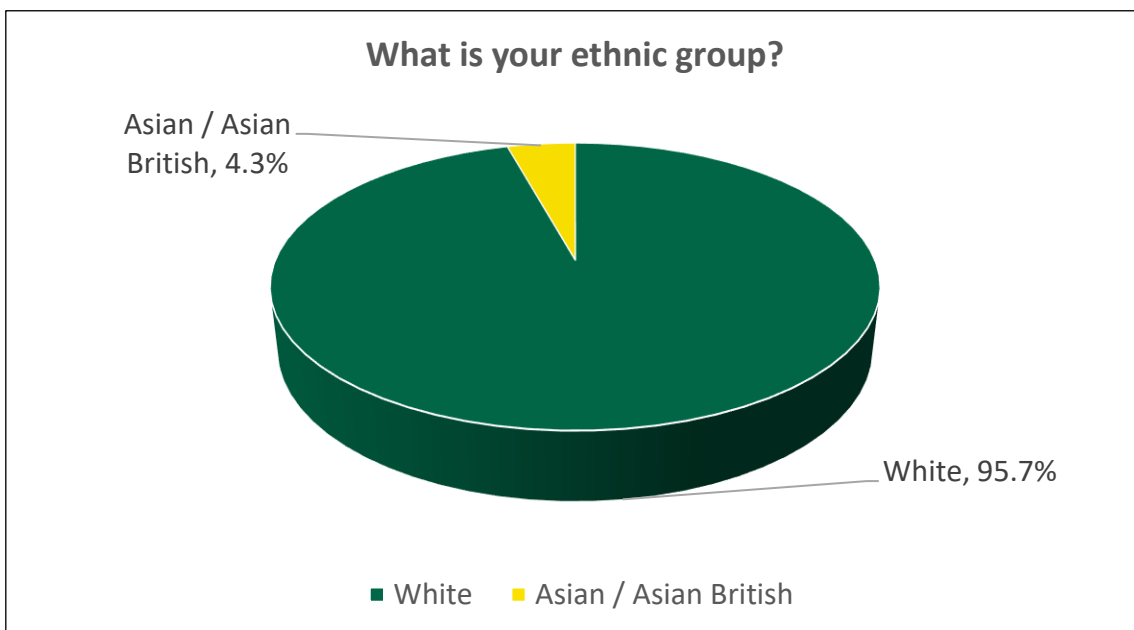
What age are you?



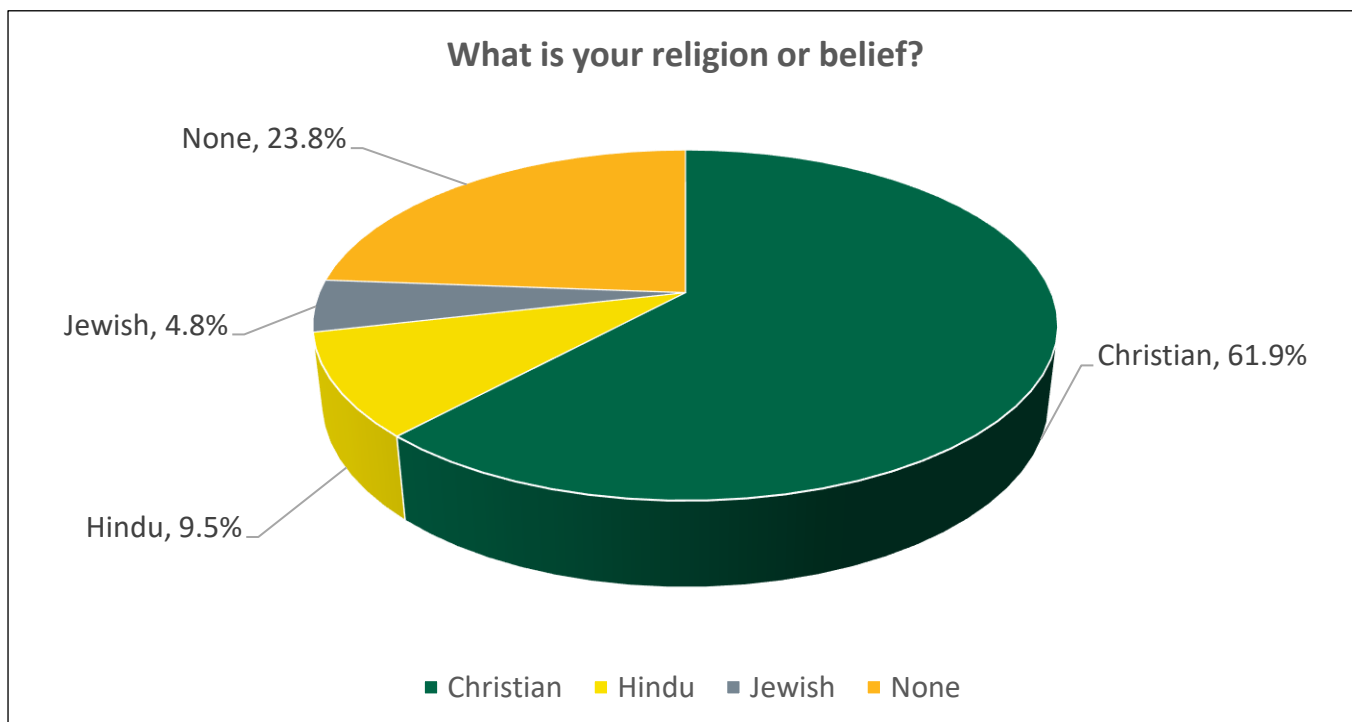
What best describes your gender?



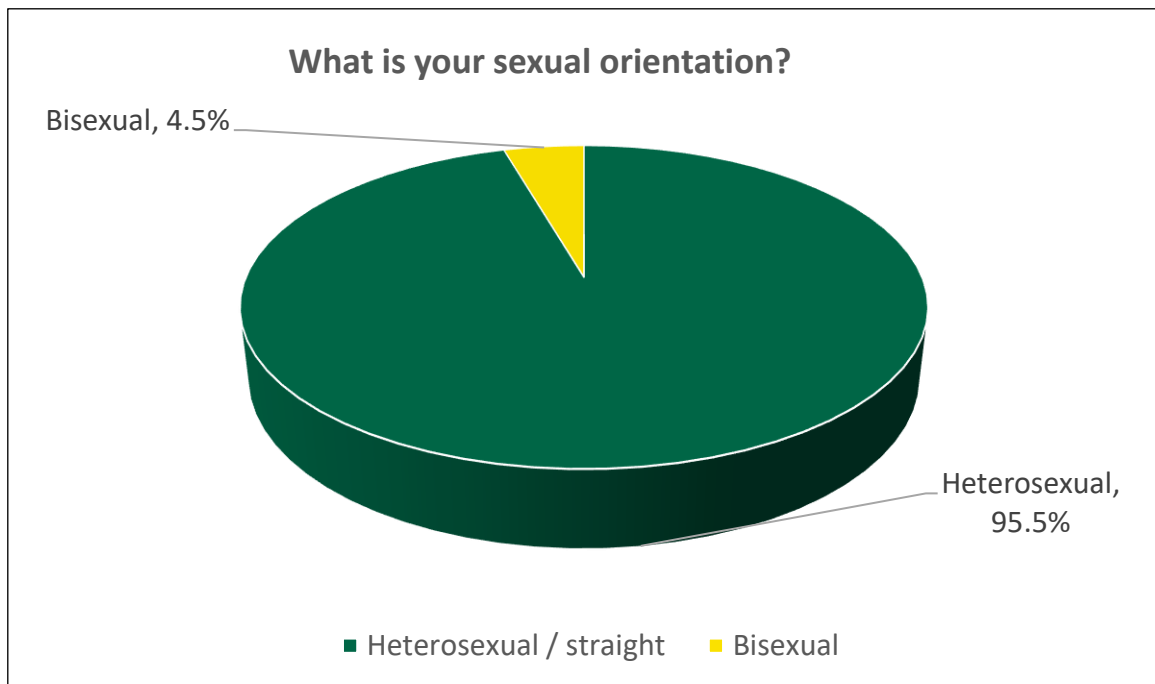
What is your ethnic group?



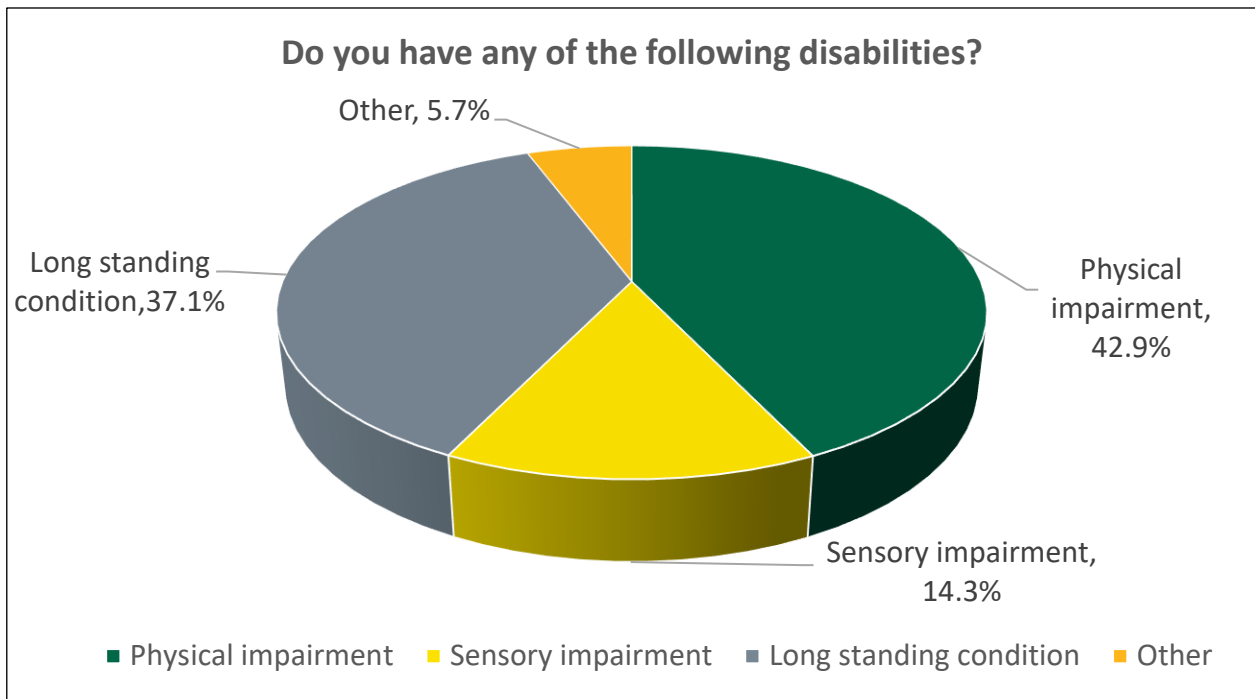
What is your religion or belief?



What is your sexual orientation?



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

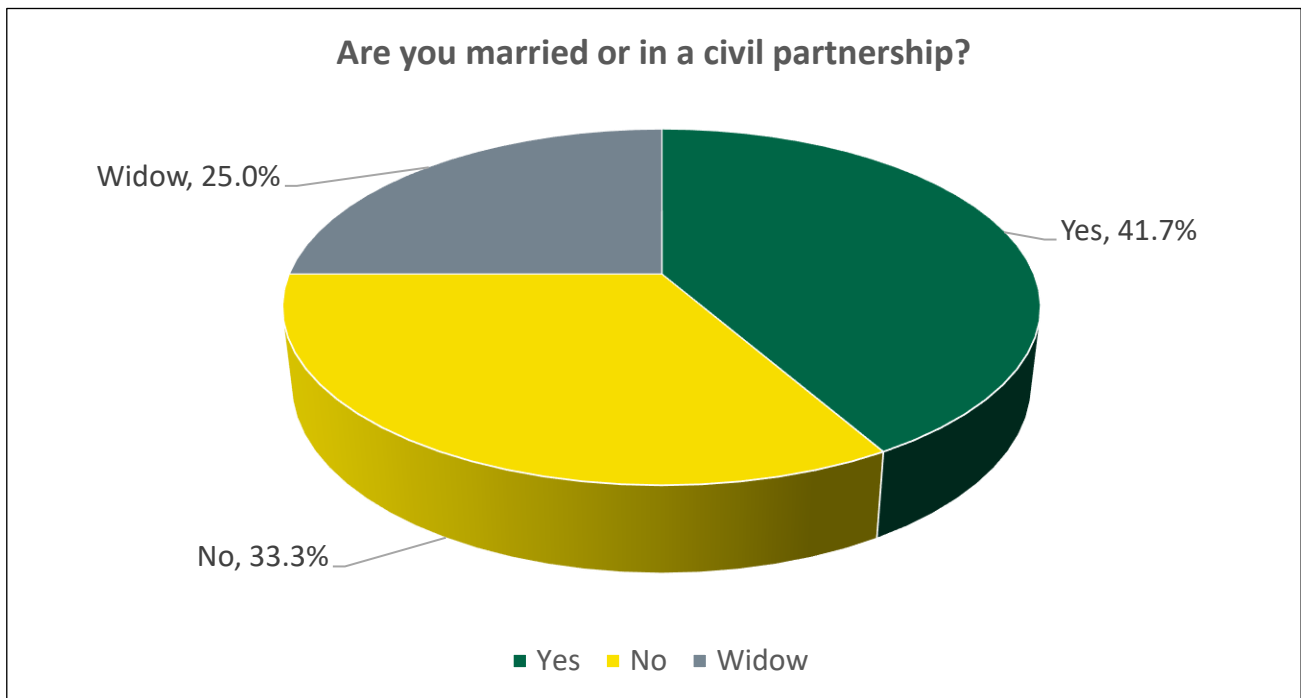


Overall, 15 (42.9%) respondents advised that they had a ‘physical impairment.’ Other responses included: ‘long standing condition’ (37.1%), ‘other’ (5.7%) and ‘sensory impairment’ (14.3%). No respondents advised that they did not have a disability. The remaining respondents did not complete this question.

The below comments were also received:

- *“Speech impediment, No hearing in Right Ear. Get out of breath when walking too far.”
(Patient 26, May)*

Are you married or in a civil partnership?



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

No respondents advised that they 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.