

“Despite big improvements, issues around waiting times and care co-ordination persist” Picker Institute Europe responds to the publication of the 2014 national survey of accident and emergency (A&E) department attendees

The [Care Quality Commission](#) have today published the results of the 2014 national survey of accident and emergency (A&E) department patients in England. The survey, designed and co-ordinated by the [Picker Institute](#), is the fifth of its kind and is the largest systematic collection of evidence about the experiences of people using A&E services.

Responding to the publication, the Picker Institute’s Chief Executive, Dr Andrew McCulloch said: *“We welcome the publication of today’s results, which show some encouraging improvements in people’s experiences of care in emergency departments. Many of the biggest improvements relate to patients’ experiences with front line NHS staff, which is a testament to the hard work and commitment of NHS professionals.”*

Compared with previous years, patients were more likely to report that staff ‘definitely’ listened to them (77%, up from 75% in 2012); that they ‘definitely’ had confidence and trust in doctors and nurses (75%, up from 73% in 2012); and that staff ‘completely’ told them about danger signals to watch for after leaving A&E (44%; up from 40% in 2012). There were also signs that A&E environments were improving: patients were far more likely to describe departments as ‘very clean’ (59%; up from 55% in 2012 and 44% in 2008).

In spite of these improvements, the survey shows continued issues around waiting times and care co-ordination. One in four patients (25%) taken to hospital in an ambulance waited with the ambulance crew for more than a quarter of an hour before their care was passed to A&E staff; one in twenty (5%) waited for more than an hour. Waiting times in the A&E departments themselves have improved since a historic low in 2012, but have not yet recovered to the level reported in 2004 and 2008. This year, 27% of patients said that they waited more than one hour before being examined by a doctor or nurse (down from 29% in 2012, but up from 25% in 2004). And one in three (34%) of patients reported that they spent more than four hours in A&E overall.

Dr McCulloch continued: *“The pressures faced by A&E departments are well documented. Numbers of patients are rising at a rate that outstrips investments in services, and changing populations only increase the challenges. But delivering high quality person centred care must remain the top priority, and these pressures must never be an excuse for falling short of the standards that patients want and expect. Today’s results show the commitment of NHS staff to delivering good care in spite of pressures: the challenge now is for people at all levels of the service to work together to find ways to accelerate improvement in a challenging climate. We urge all NHS providers to study their survey results carefully and work with patients to identify areas for immediate improvement.”*

ENDS

[The Picker Institute have published an infographic summarising some of the key survey findings– please see the image on page 2](#)

NOTES TO EDITORS:

- Further information and survey results are available on the CQC website at <http://www.cqc.org.uk/content/accident-and-emergency-survey-2014>
- The survey was designed and co-ordinated by the Picker Institute on behalf of the CQC.
- The survey was developed with extensive input from service users and stakeholders, and we acknowledge the kind support of all of those who contributed their views and experiences to this process.
- The 2014 survey involved 142 acute and specialist NHS trusts with a major accident and emergency department.
- The survey had 39,320 responses – a national response rate of 34%. Patients were eligible to be included in the sample if they had visited A&E in January, February or March 2014, were aged 16 or above and were not staying in hospital at the time the survey was sampled.
- For all **Picker Institute Europe** media enquiries, speaker opportunities and recent news please contact: Lanisha Butterfield on Lanisha.butterfield@pickereurope.ac.uk or 01865 208166 / Out of hours: 07825952160
- For further information visit <http://www.pickereurope.org/>

NHS National Accident & Emergency Survey 2014

Every year, patients make 14 million visits to England's major A&E departments, with 27 people arriving at these departments every minute*. This marks a 12% increase in the number of attendances at major A&E services in the last 10 years**.

The NHS National Accident and Emergency Survey is the biggest source of data on people's experiences of A&E departments - and the results of our 2014 survey are in.

72% of respondents 'definitely' felt that they had enough time to discuss their health or medical problem with a doctor or nurse



34% reported that their visit to A&E lasted longer than four hours



59% reported that a member of medical or nursing staff was 'always' available to help if they needed attention



25%

who arrived by ambulance reported that they waited with the ambulance crew for more than 15 minutes before their care was handed over to A&E staff



27% reported that they waited more than one hour before being examined by a doctor or nurse



So what does this tell us?

A sizable proportion of people visiting A&E departments are reporting long waiting times and problems with care co-ordination. This may reflect the pressures faced by busy services, but, nevertheless, these issues must be addressed for accident and emergency care to be truly person centred.

How should we do this?

- IDENTIFY where people are reporting poor experiences of care.
- SHARE examples of excellence and best practice.
- IMPLEMENT plans to improve A&E services.

Providers must strive to ensure the highest quality care for all, always.

Find out more online
www.pickereurope.org

An average of 27 people arrive at major A&E departments in England every minute.

This year, there were 1.5 million more visits to major A&E departments compared to ten years ago

