

NHS Inpatient Survey 2015 results show significant improvements in key care areas but discharge processes remain a concern

Newly published results from the [NHS Adult Inpatient Survey 2015](#) show that small but vital improvements have been made in key areas such as communication, involvement, and personal care. However, discharge planning and at-home support are lacking by comparison. In general, people's experiences of care in hospital are markedly more positive than their feedback on the discharge process and at-home support.

The survey of over 83,000 inpatients has revealed statistically significant improvements in a number of important questions designed to reflect the aspects of care that matter most to patients. Improvements included:

- 84% (up from 81% in 2014) reported that they were “always” treated with respect and dignity in hospital.
- A growing majority said that they “always” had confidence and trust in doctors (82%; up from 80% in 2014) and nurses (79%; up from 78% in 2014).
- 71% (up from 69% in 2014) said that when they had important questions for doctors or nurses they “always” got answers that they could understand.
- 60% (up from 57%) said that they were “definitely” involved as much as they wanted to be in decisions about their care and treatment – a big improvement on the 57% in 2014.

By contrast, results around people's experiences of post-treatment discharge planning were less encouraging. 41% of people responded that they were not told about medication side effects to watch for when they went home, and only 62% felt that hospital staff completely took their family or home situation into account when planning their discharge process.

The survey results also flag self-management, an area integral to person centred care, as needing urgent improvement, with only 56% of people who needed it agreeing that they received enough support from health and social care professionals to help them manage their condition after leaving hospital.

Taken together, these results underline the need for continuity of care, and for enough time and attention to be given to the care delivered both within and beyond the hospital wards. Sustained effort must be made and given to both understand the potential impact of improving care quality and deliver on the critical aspects of person centred care.

Commenting on the results, Dr Andrew McCulloch, Chief Executive of [the Picker Institute](#), who developed and coordinated the survey on behalf of the Care Quality Commission, said: *“It is fantastic to see so many improvements in people's experiences of hospital care. It is particularly encouraging that some of the most notable improvements are in areas that are of particular importance to patients, including communication, involvement, and respect for people as individuals. NHS staff work tirelessly and these improvements are not only testament to their commitment but a reflection of the efforts made in the last year to understand and improve on 2014 findings.*

Nevertheless, the survey highlights areas that still need improvement. An effective person centred service is streamlined and continuous, and while strides have been made in hospital treatment, the results around discharge planning and self-management are cause for concern. For patients to have the best chance of recovery – and for providers to minimise the risk of readmissions – patients need to leave hospital with good, clear information and understanding about their ongoing care and

medicines. Too often this is not happening, and improvement is needed to benefit patients and the NHS alike.”

Notes for editors

- NHS Inpatient Survey 2015 is developed and co-ordinated [by the Picker Institute](#) on behalf of [Care Quality Commission](#). The 2015 survey was the 13th time the survey has been conducted.
- Further information about the survey, including detailed results, are available at <http://www.cqc.org.uk/content/adult-inpatient-survey-2015>
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