



National Patient Experience Survey 2018

Letterkenny University Hospital

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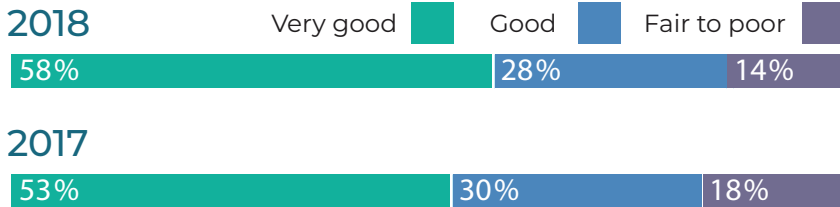
An Roinn Sláinte
Department of Health



Letterkenny University Hospital

2018 survey results

Overall experience



52% response rate

Values in figures do not always add up to 100% due to rounding.

Areas of good experience



Respect and dignity



Someone to talk to about worries and fears



Privacy when discussing condition or treatment

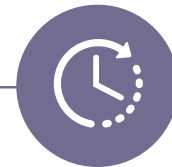
Areas needing improvement



Clear answers from a doctor



Confidence and trust in hospital staff



Time to discuss care and treatment with a doctor

The patient voice

"I was treated at all times with respect by everyone and got as much attention & care as that given to a younger patient — age didn't matter"



"Possibly maybe the doctors could be more clear in their discussions. Not everyone has attended medical school."

www.patientexperience.ie

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About the National Patient Experience Survey 2018

The National Patient Experience Survey is a nationwide survey that offers patients the opportunity to describe their experiences of public acute healthcare in Ireland. The survey is a partnership between the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Department of Health. The survey was conducted for the first time in 2017 and repeated in 2018.

Nationally, 26,752 people were invited to participate in the second National Patient Experience Survey. In total, 13,404 completed the survey, resulting in a response rate of over 50%. 388 patients from Letterkenny University Hospital took part in the survey.

The aim of the survey is to find out about patients' experiences in public acute hospitals and to use their feedback to identify areas of good experience, and areas needing improvement. The HSE responded to the 2017 survey results by producing detailed quality improvement plans at national, hospital group and hospital levels. The implementation of these plans is coordinated by an oversight group, and a wide range of initiatives have already been introduced across Ireland's public acute hospitals. Some examples of these initiatives can be seen at www.patientexperience.ie/improvements-in-care.

What were the main findings for Letterkenny University Hospital?

The majority of participants from Letterkenny University Hospital reported positive experiences in hospital. 86% of participants said they had 'good' or 'very good' overall experiences, compared with 84% nationally. The hospital achieved similar scores to the national average across every stage of care, with the exception of admissions, which was above the national average.

Several areas of good experience were identified. These were areas that were related to participants' overall experiences and where participants gave above-average ratings. For example, most patients said they could find someone to talk to about their worries and fears when required. Patients were generally given enough privacy when discussing their care and treatment. In addition, most patients said they were treated with respect and dignity.

There were also several areas needing improvement. For example, some patients said that they were not always able to understand answers from doctors. A number of patients also said that they didn't have sufficient time to discuss their care and treatment with a doctor. In addition, some patients said that they did not always have confidence and trust in the hospital staff that were treating them.

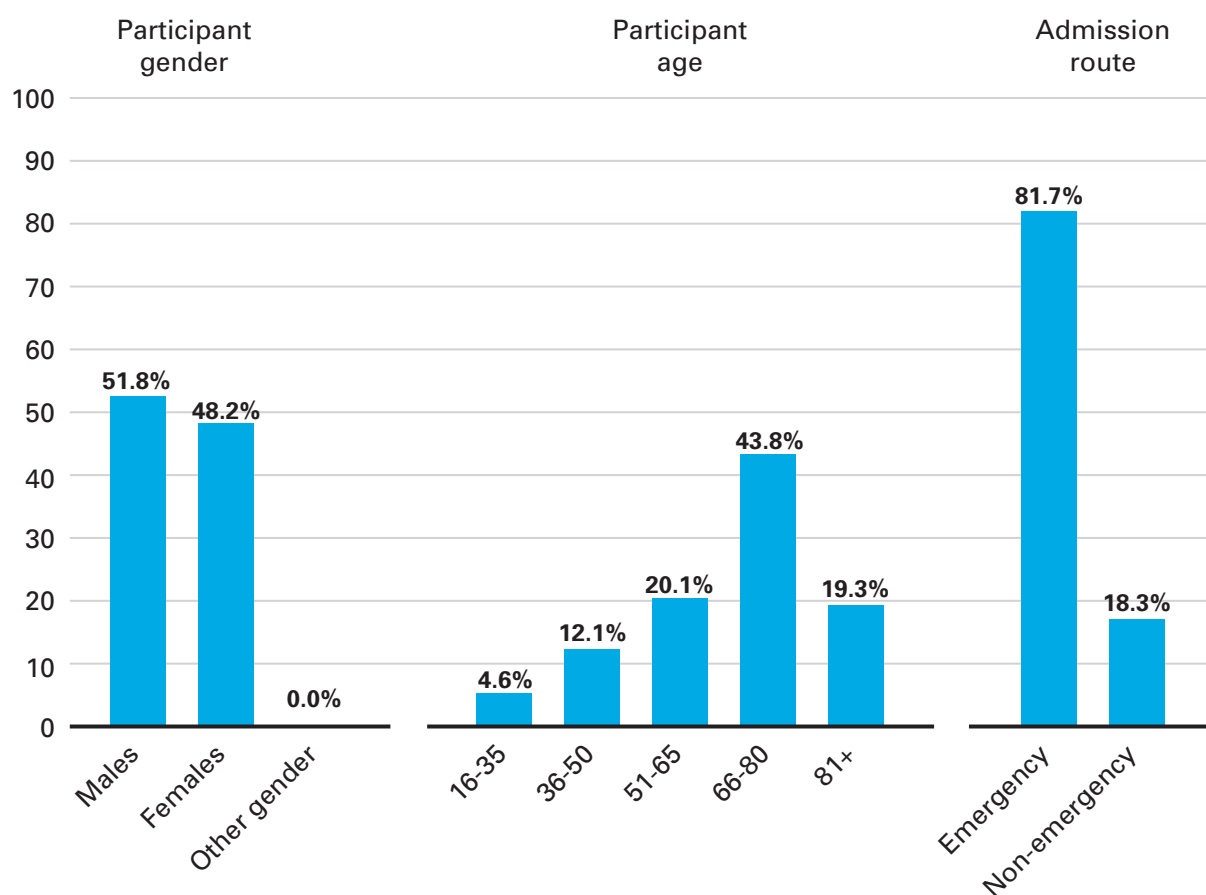
Patient experience ratings were generally similar to those of the 2017 survey. The findings of the 2018 survey will help Letterkenny University Hospital to improve patients' experiences of care in the hospital.

Hospital and participant profile

Letterkenny University Hospital is a public acute hospital located in Letterkenny, Co. Donegal. There were 330 inpatient beds available in the hospital during the survey period of May 2018.

749 people discharged from Letterkenny University Hospital during the month of May 2018 were invited to participate in the survey. 388 people completed the survey, achieving a response rate of 52%. 51.8% of participants were male and 48.2% were female. 317 respondents (81.7%) said that their stay in hospital was an emergency. Figure 1 below provides information on the respondents who took part in the survey from Letterkenny University Hospital.

Figure 1 Participants from Letterkenny University Hospital by gender, age group and admission route



Areas of good experience and areas needing improvement

This section lists the areas where most patients had positive experiences, and those areas where there is the most room for improvement. Appendix 1 explains how these areas were identified.

The areas of good experience in Letterkenny University Hospital are:

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Care on the ward</p> <p>Someone to talk to about worries and fears Q28</p> | <p>212 (87%) of the 243 people who answered this question said they “definitely” or “to some extent” found a member of hospital staff to talk to about their worries and fears.</p> |
| <p>Examinations, diagnosis and treatment</p> <p>Privacy when discussing condition or treatment Q30</p> | <p>356 people (94%) said that they were either always or sometimes given enough privacy when discussing their condition or treatment.</p> |
| <p>Other aspects of care</p> <p>Respect and dignity Q51</p> | <p>320 people (85%) said that they were always treated with respect and dignity while in the hospital.</p> |

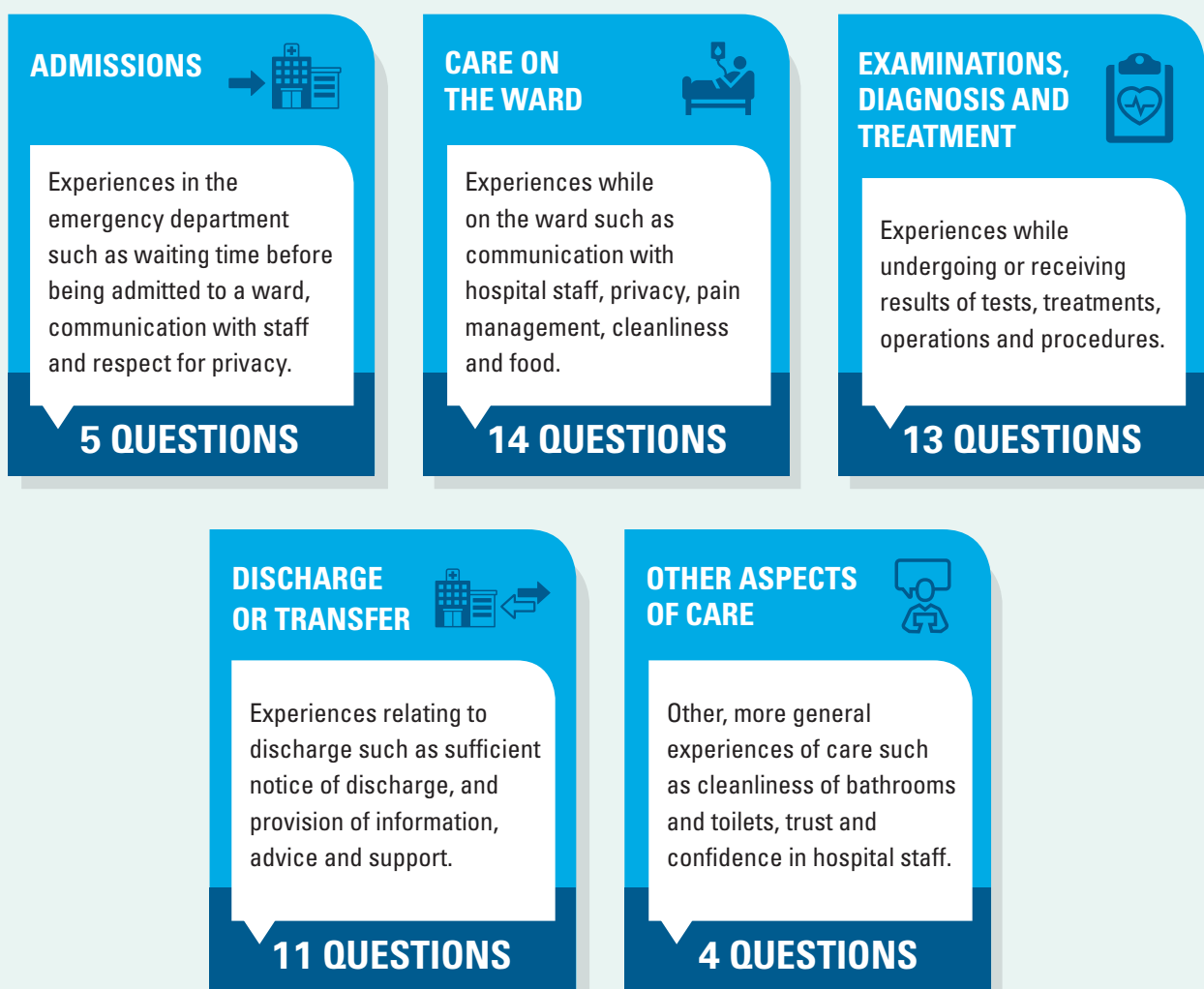
The areas needing improvement in Letterkenny University Hospital are:

| | |
|---|--|
| Care on the ward | Of the 355 people who answered this question, 131 (37%) said that they did not get, or only sometimes got, answers they could understand from a doctor. |
| Clear answers from a doctor Q20 | |
| Examinations, diagnosis and treatment | 165 people (44% of those who answered Q21) said that they did not have, or only had to some extent had, enough time to discuss their care and treatment with a doctor. |
| Time to discuss care and treatment with a doctor Q21 | |
| Other aspects of care | 69 people (18% of those who answered this question) said that they did not have, or only sometimes had, confidence and trust in the hospital staff treating them. |
| Confidence and trust in hospital staff Q29 | |

Survey results for the stages of care along the patient journey

The National Patient Experience Survey 2018 follows the patient journey through hospital from admission to discharge. The 2018 questionnaire is available to download from www.patientexperience.ie.

The survey questions were grouped into five stages along the patient journey:



Interpreting the results for the stages of care

Scores out of 10 are given for each question belonging to a stage of care or a stage as whole. A score of 0 indicates a very negative experience and a score of 10 indicates a very positive experience. Sometimes questions are described as high or low ranking questions. These are questions with the highest or lowest score when compared to a set of questions.

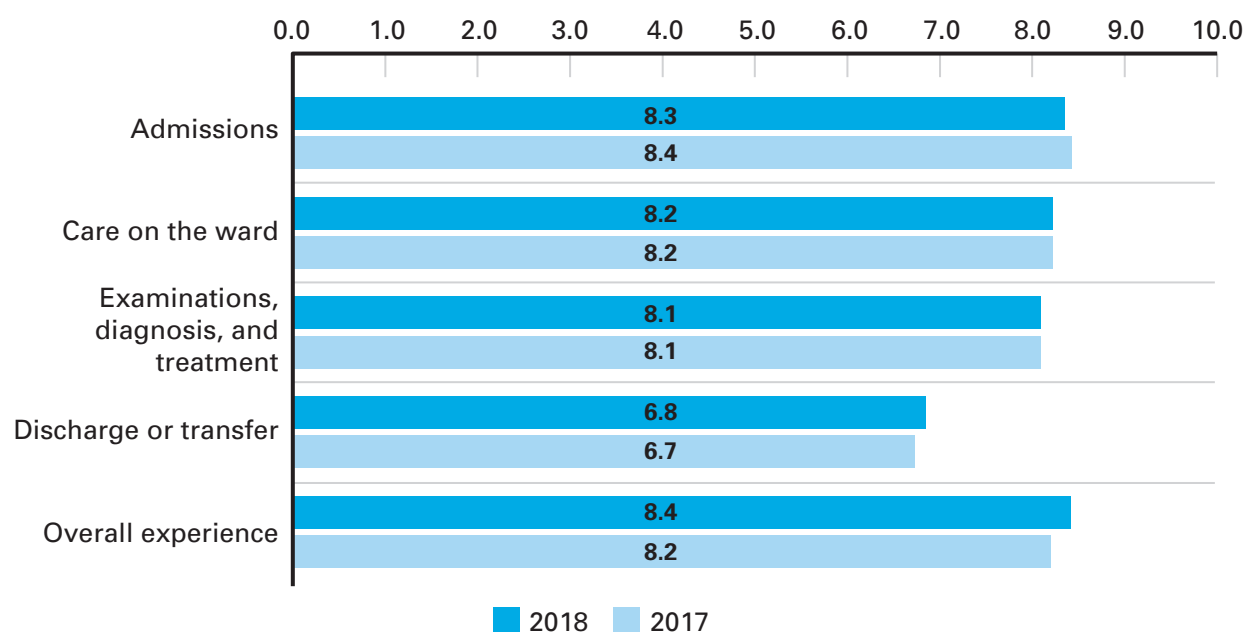
Statistical tests were carried out to examine if there were significant differences in patient experience between 2017 and 2018, as well as between a hospital and the national average. For further information on the analyses please consult Appendix 3 of the 2018 national report, available from www.patientexperience.ie.

Changes in patient experience over time

Participants' average rating of their overall experience improved slightly since last year's survey. There were no statistically significant changes in patient experience ratings between 2017 and 2018. Figure 2 shows a comparison of scores for individual stages of care.

It is important that these changes are interpreted with caution as scores will naturally vary from year to year for a variety of reasons. Several rounds of survey data will be required before meaningful trends and changes in patient experience can be accurately identified.

Figure 2 Comparison of stage of care scores¹ for Letterkenny University Hospital for 2017 and 2018



1 Scores for the stages of care were constructed by calculating the average scores for all the questions belonging to that stage.

Admissions

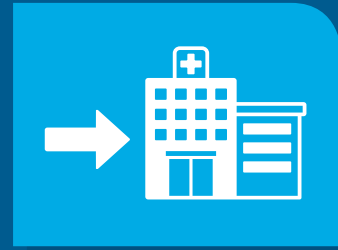
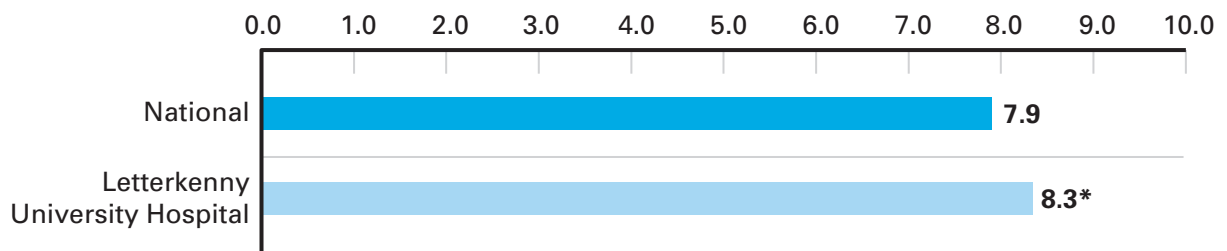


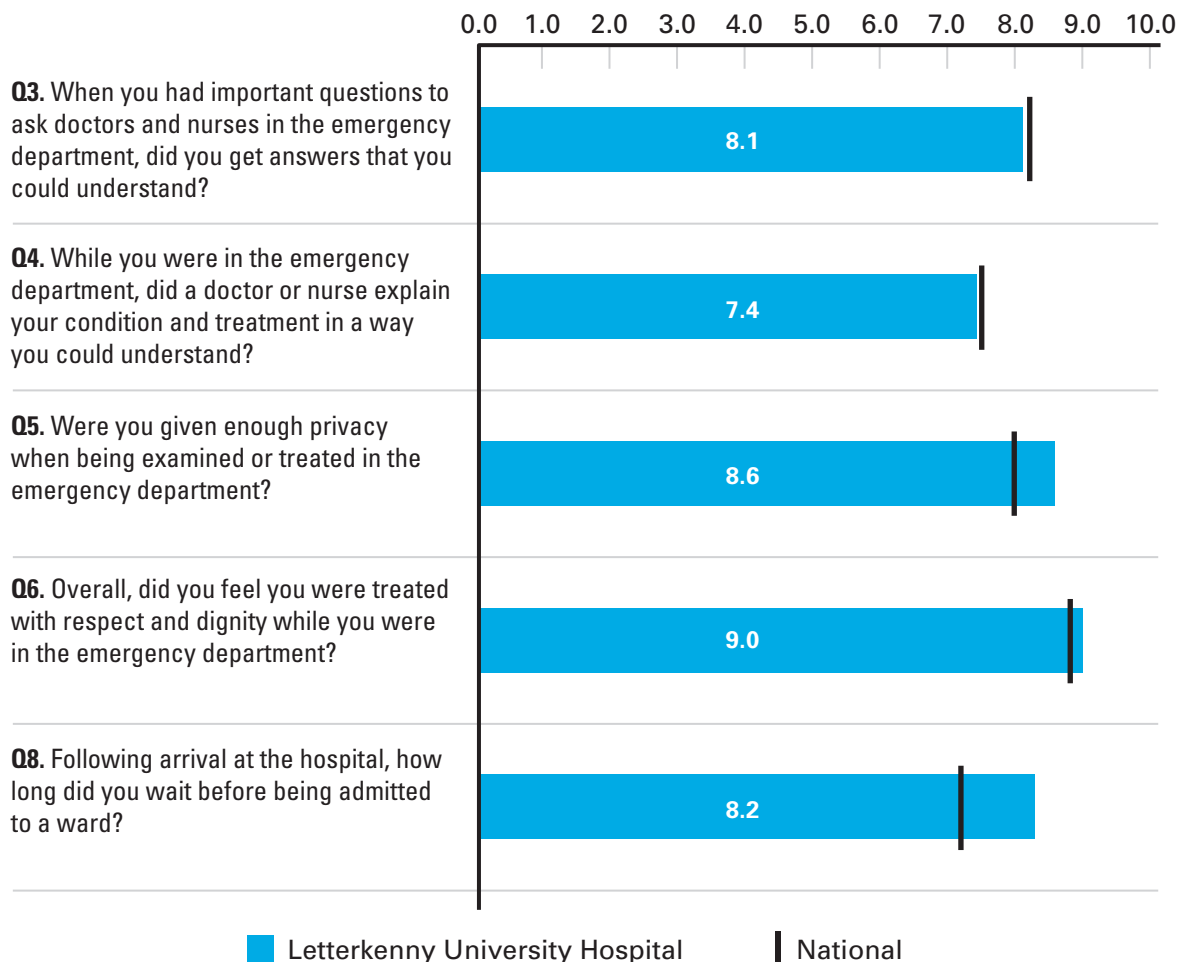
Figure 3 compares the hospital's overall score for admissions with the national average. Figure 4 shows the hospital's scores for questions related to this stage of care.

Figure 3 Comparison of Letterkenny University Hospital with the national average score for admissions (out of a maximum of 10)



* Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average.

Figure 4 Letterkenny University Hospital scores for questions on admissions



Emergency department waiting times²

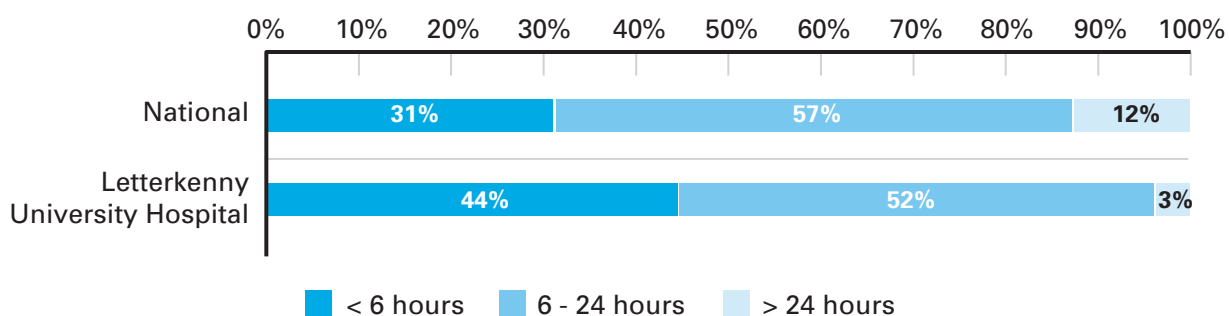
The HSE sets targets for the performance of acute hospitals, including targets on waiting times in emergency departments, such as:

- 75% of people attending the emergency department are discharged or admitted to a ward within six hours of registration and none should wait for longer than nine hours.
- 95% of people attending the emergency department aged 75 years or older are discharged or admitted to a ward within six hours of registration and none should wait for longer than nine hours.

In Letterkenny University Hospital, 136 respondents (44%) said they were admitted to a ward within six hours of arriving at the emergency department, while 161 respondents (52%) reported waiting between six and 24 hours. 10 respondents (3%) said that they waited 24 hours or more before being admitted to a ward in Letterkenny University Hospital, with five of these saying they waited more than 48 hours.

Figure 5 outlines the patient-reported waiting times in Letterkenny University Hospital, compared with the national average.

Figure 5 Patient-reported emergency department waiting times for Letterkenny University Hospital and nationally



2 The HSE measures emergency department waiting times differently to the survey, namely from the time a patient registers at the emergency department until they leave it. It is likely that there are some differences between survey findings and the official HSE figures. The HSE 2018 targets can be viewed at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/performance-reports/2018-acute-hospitals-metadata.pdf>.

The patient voice: what patients said about admissions

"My experience at A&E was positive. I was filtered through reasonably quickly."

"A&E was very good and they explained everything as we went on. The food in the ward was nice. The nurses were very nice."

"Time waiting in A&E. Left sitting on chair and blood pressure etc. was taken in the corridor in front of other patients and their families."

"Waiting time in A&E — I sat on a plastic chair for seventeen hours without as much as a cup of tea before I was seen to. In this day and age that is downright crazy and should be looked into."

Admissions: what do these results mean?

Patient ratings of admission to Letterkenny University Hospital were higher than the national average but were similar to the 2017 score. Most patients said that they were treated with respect and dignity in the emergency department. However, a number of patients said that they could not always understand explanations about their condition or treatment. The hospital performed above the national average on emergency department waiting times; however, although 44% of participants said that they were admitted to a ward within the recommended six hours, this is still below the HSE target level. This is an important issue, as lengthy waiting times are associated with poor outcomes for patients.^(1,2)

Care on the ward



Figure 6 compares the hospital's overall score for care on the ward with the national average. Figure 7 shows the hospital's scores for questions related to this stage of care.

Figure 6 Comparison of Letterkenny University Hospital with the national average score for care on the ward (out of a maximum of 10)

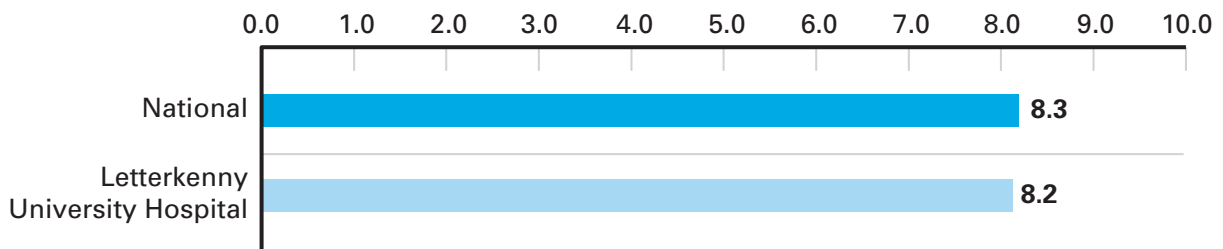
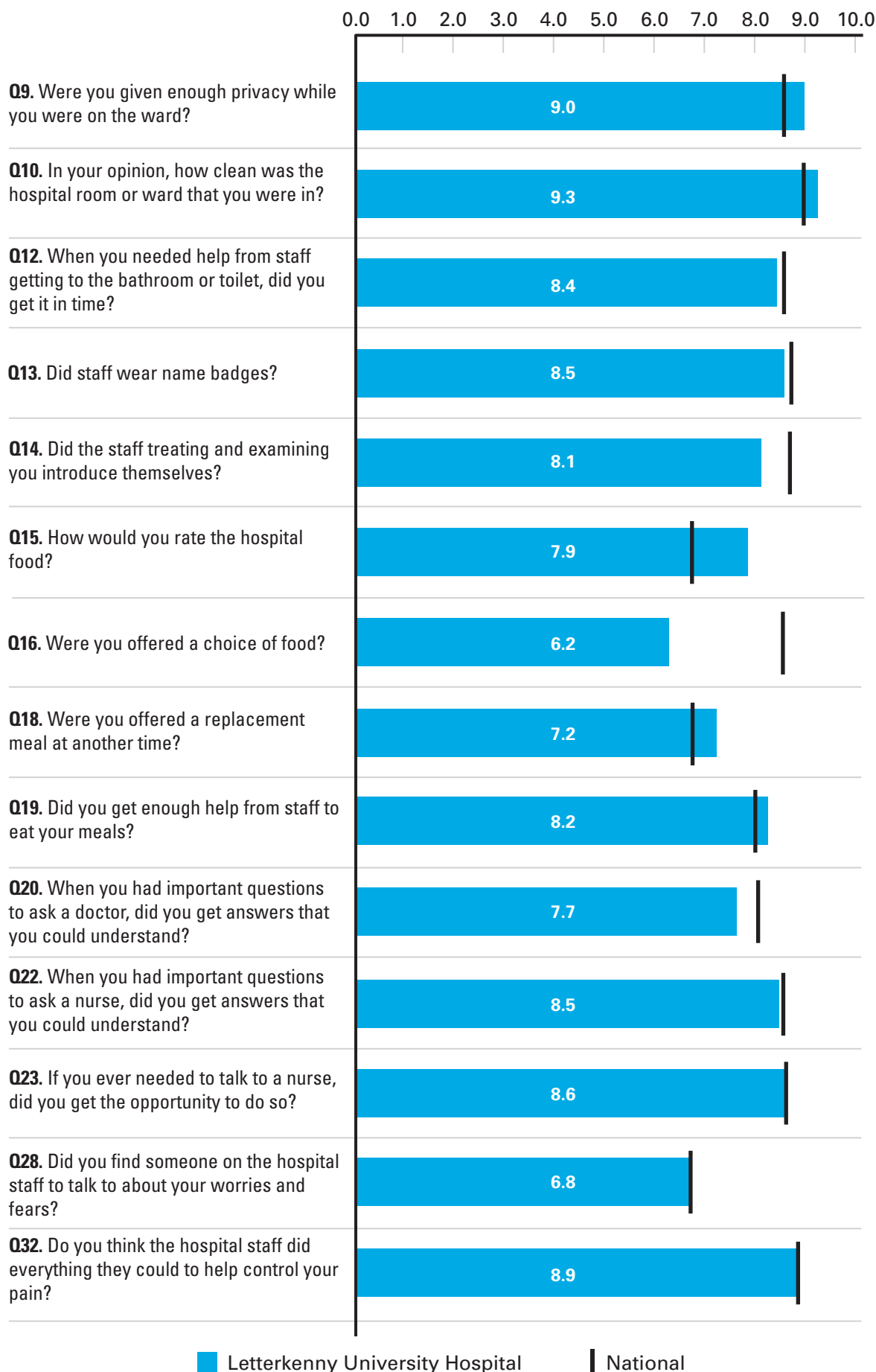


Figure 7 Letterkenny University Hospital scores for questions on care on the ward



The patient voice: what patients said about care on the ward

"Once I got onto the ward most of the staff were lovely and the ladies doing the food were great and very helpful. The cleaning staff were fantastic — they work so hard."

"Kind, courteous & very caring nursing staff and doctors — despite being short/under staffed & overworked."

"Food — possibly a menu choice of daily meals on offer, also more substantial meal choice at supper time."

"Nurses are good, I know they are busy, I feel they come around very late at night with medication trolley, very hard to get to sleep. I know they have to do their job, but I feel staff could be a little quieter at night, and remember that patients are trying to sleep."

Care on the ward: what do these results mean?

Letterkenny University Hospital received similar ratings of care on the ward to the national average, and to last year's survey. The majority of patients said that their room or ward was very clean. Patients generally gave positive ratings of the food, although many said that they were not always given a choice of food.

Examinations, diagnosis and treatment



Figure 8 compares the hospital's overall score for examinations, diagnosis and treatment with the national average. Figure 9 shows the hospital's scores for questions related to this stage of care.

Figure 8 Comparison of Letterkenny University Hospital with the national average score for examinations, diagnosis and treatment (out of a maximum of 10)

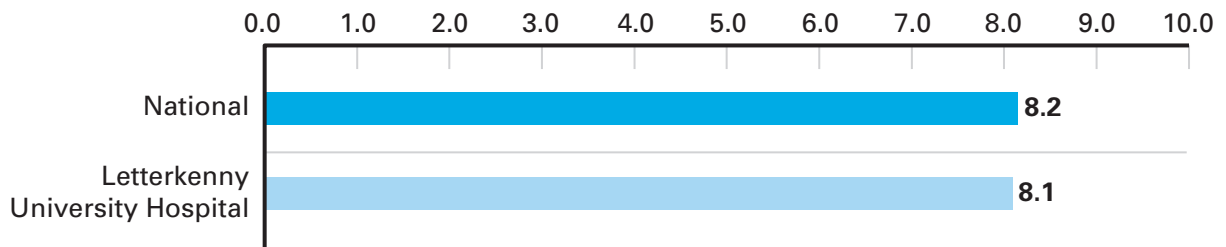
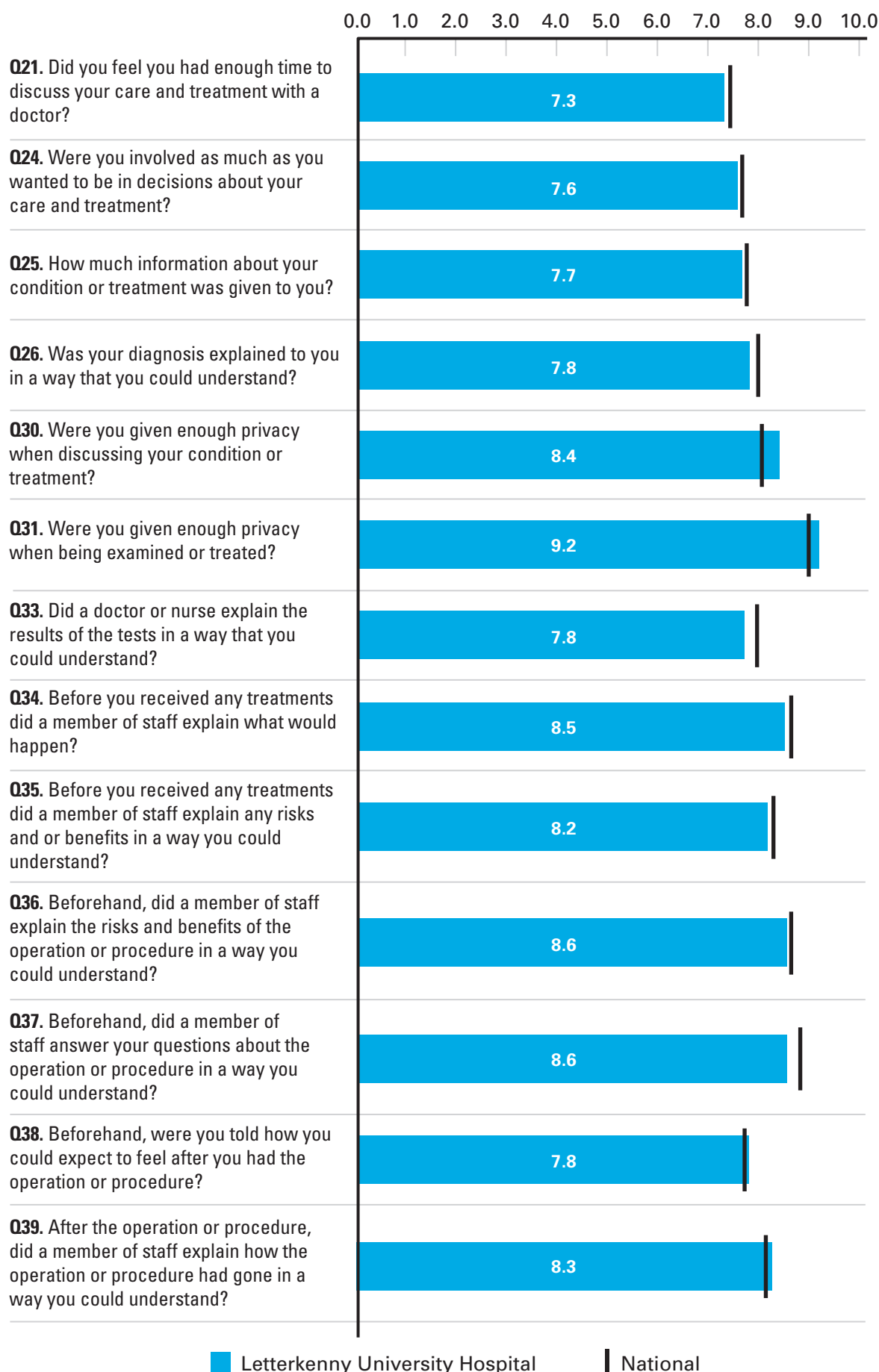


Figure 9 Letterkenny University Hospital scores for questions on examinations, diagnosis and treatment



The patient voice: what patients said about examinations, diagnosis and treatment

"I was very ill when I arrived. I was taken in immediately and treatment started. My condition was evaluated and explained to me. I was given treatment to alleviate the situation and to avoid having surgery. When this did not work I was operated on the following day."

"Possibly maybe the doctors could be more clear in their discussions. Not everyone has attended medical school."

"I had a very nice ward & a lot of privacy."

"Patients should be talked to more by the doctors and involved in decisions."

Examinations, diagnosis and treatment: what do these results mean?

Ratings of examination, diagnosis and treatment were similar to the national average and also to last year's survey. Most patients said they were given enough privacy while being examined and treated. However, a number of patients felt that they were not given enough time to discuss their care and treatment with a doctor.

Discharge or transfer

Figure 10 compares the hospital's overall score for discharge or transfer with the national average. Figure 11 shows the hospital's scores for questions related to this stage of care.

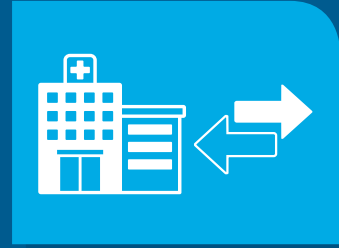


Figure 10 Comparison of Letterkenny University Hospital with the national average score for discharge or transfer (out of a maximum of 10)

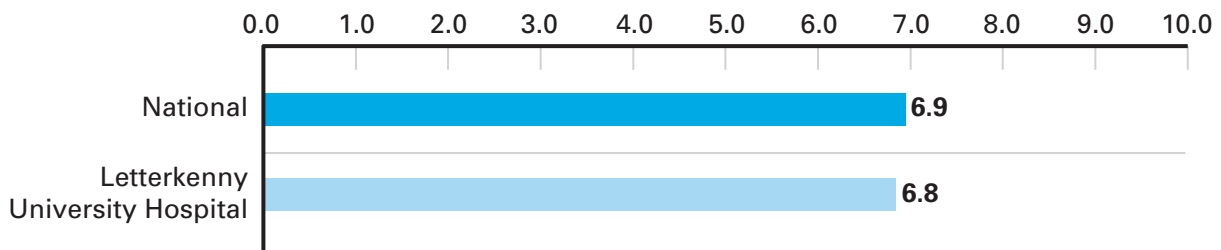
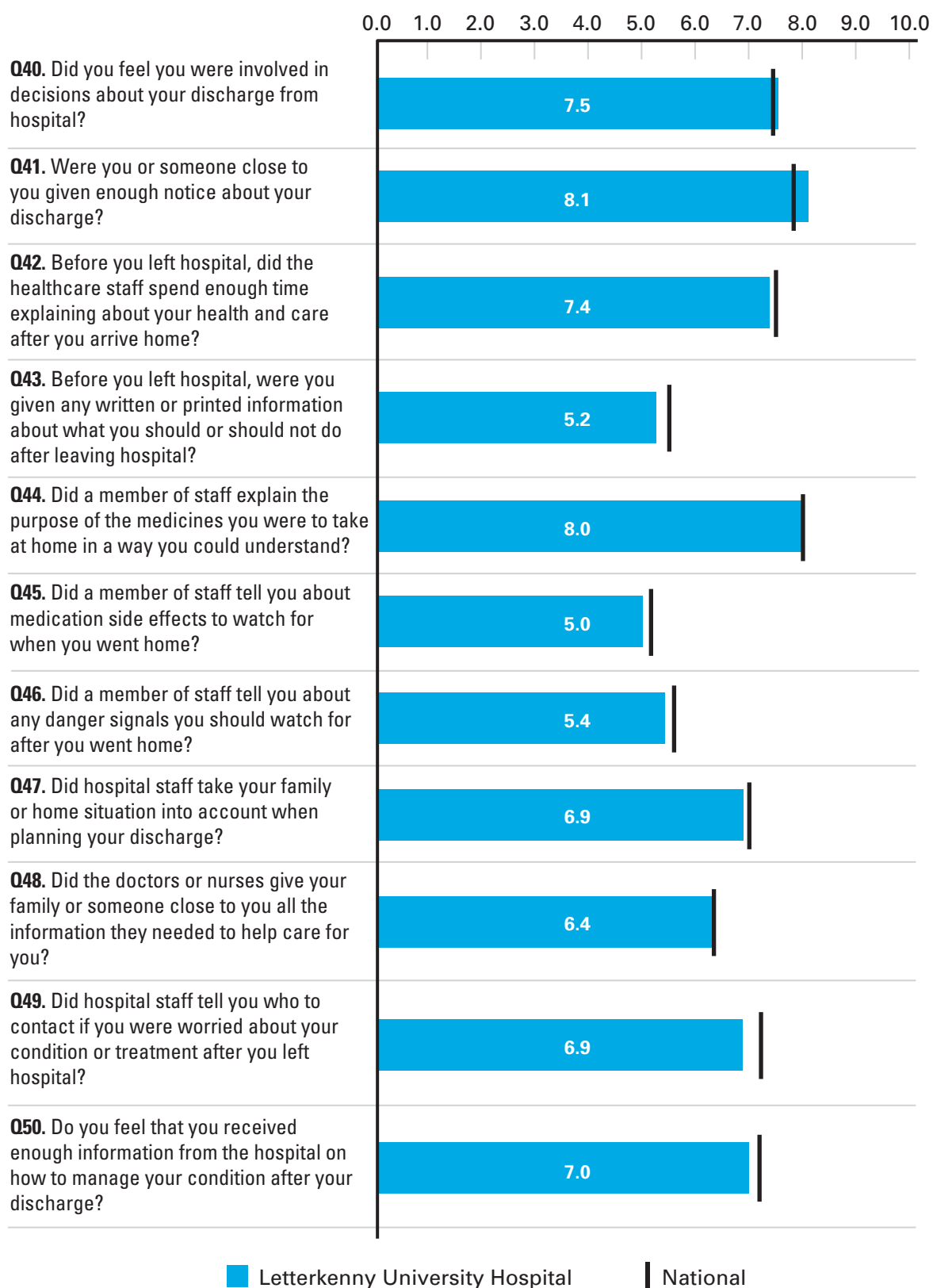


Figure 11 Letterkenny University Hospital scores for questions on discharge or transfer



The patient voice: what patients said about discharge or transfer

“Delighted that I was admitted to the orthopaedic ward, as there was no bed on the surgical ward. Home the day after surgery, no problem. Very happy with the experience.”

“Fortunately my daughter who had to come over from the UK is a trained nurse — otherwise I would not have known what to worry about and what was normal. Even my GP was astonished that I had no discharge letter.”

Discharge or transfer: what do these results mean?

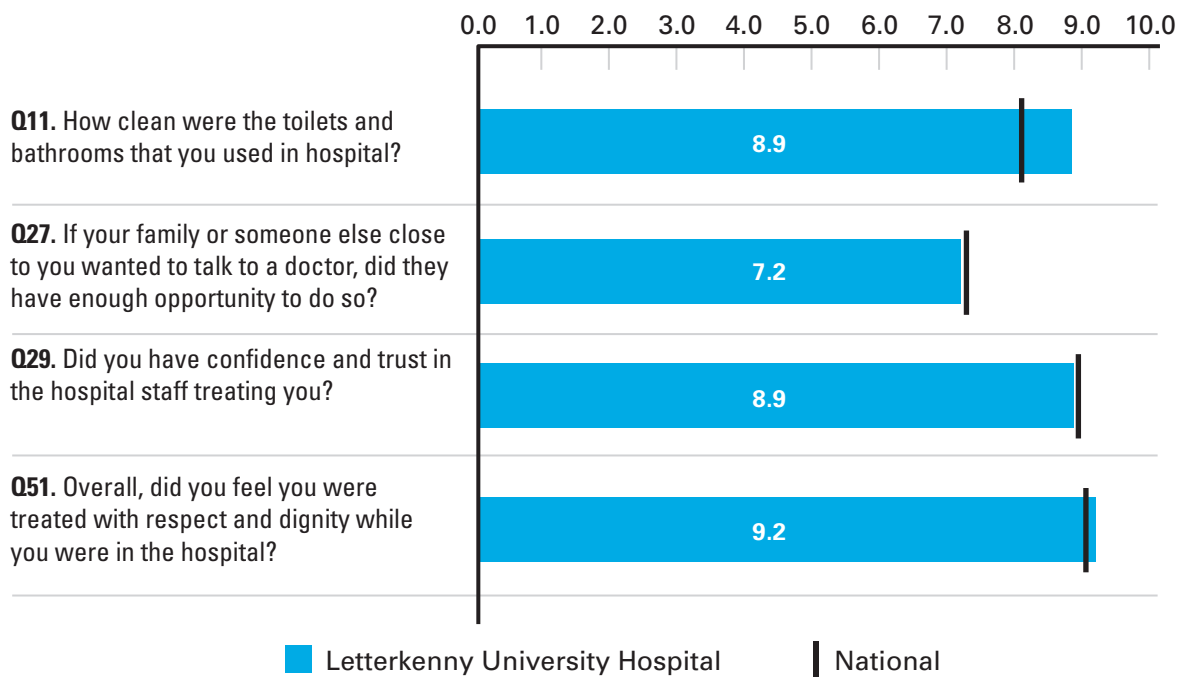
Participant ratings for this stage of care were similar to the national average and to last year’s score. Most patients said that they (or someone close to them) were given enough notice of their discharge. However, a number of patients said that they were not told about the potential side effects of medication to watch out for when they went home.

Other aspects of care



Figure 12 shows the hospital's scores for questions related to other aspects of care.

Figure 12 Letterkenny University Hospital scores for other aspects of care



The patient voice: what patients said about other aspects of care

"The beds are clean and comfortable, the shower room clean and comfortable."

"I was treated at all times with respect by everyone and got as much attention & care as that given to a younger patient — age didn't matter."

"My family found it difficult to get information regarding my care/treatment. No nurse available to talk to them, or they were busy."

"Consultants should communicate daily (even via subordinates) to next of kin as to what is going on with a patient as I was confused & my family were often frustrated as to what tests were done/were going to be done & what the results were."

Other aspects of care: what do these results mean?

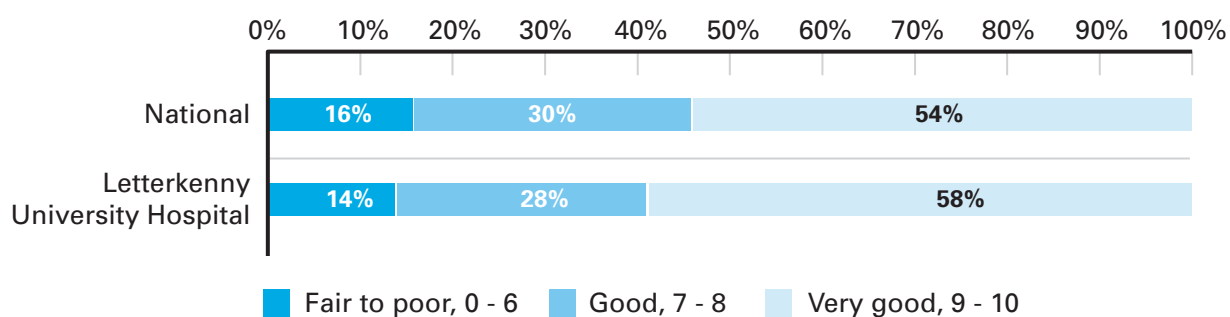
The ratings for the questions on other aspects of care were mixed, with some above the national average and some below. Most participants said that they were always treated with respects and dignity while in the hospital. However, a number of patients said that their families were not always able to talk to a doctor when they needed to.

Overall experience

Respondents were asked to rate their overall hospital experience on a scale from 0 to 10, with 10 being the most positive experience, and 0 the most negative experience. 58% of participants from Letterkenny University Hospital rated their care as very good, slightly above the national figure of 54%.

Figure 13 compares the average overall rating of hospital experience for Letterkenny University Hospital with the national average.

Figure 13 Overall rating of hospital experience for Letterkenny University Hospital and nationally



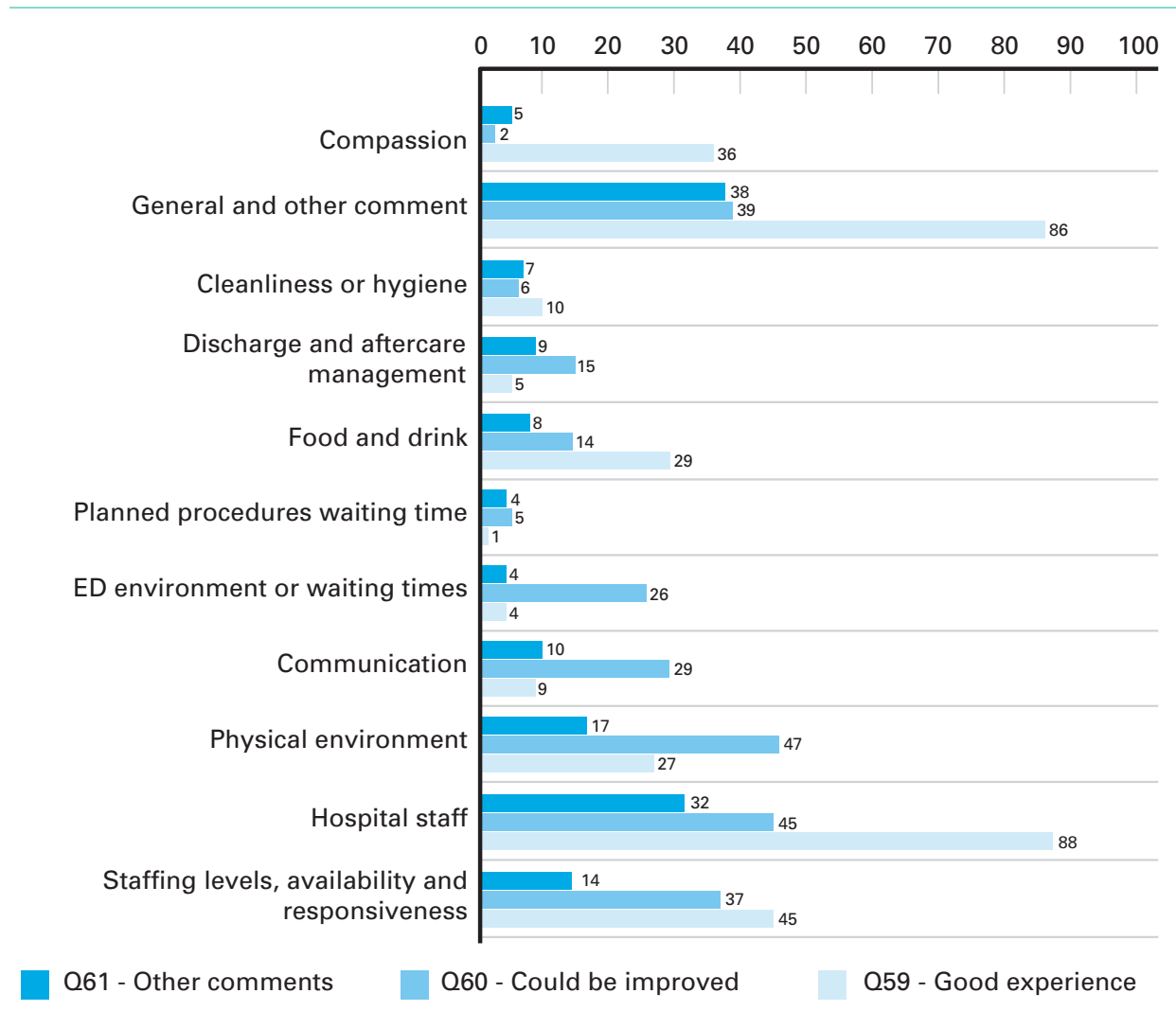
In their own words: analysis of patients' comments

The last three questions (questions 59-61) of the survey asked patients to provide additional information, in their own words, on their experiences in hospitals. These free-text questions allowed people to give a more in-depth description of specific aspects of their care. It also allowed them to talk about various things (good or bad) that could not be captured by the structured questions. In total, 753 comments were received from patients of Letterkenny University Hospital in response to the free-text questions in the 2018 survey.

Figure 14 shows the breakdown of participant comments by theme for each of the three open-ended questions. Q59 asked participants what was particularly good about their hospital care, Q60 asked participants about could be improved, and Q61 asked participants for any other comments or suggestions.

For Q59, most of the comments related to the 'hospital staff' and 'general and other comment' themes. For Q60, most comments related to the 'physical environment' and 'hospital staff' themes.

Figure 14 Participant comments by theme



Conclusion

What were patients' experiences of hospital care in Letterkenny University Hospital in May 2018?

The majority of patients said they had a positive overall experience in Letterkenny University Hospital. 86% of patients at the hospital said they had a 'good' or 'very good' experience, compared with 84% nationally.

Letterkenny University Hospital received similar scores to the national average across every stage of care, with the exception of admissions, which was above-average. Participant ratings of care were similar to those received in 2017.

A number of areas of good experience were apparent. For example, most participants said they could find someone to talk to about their worries and fears when they needed to. Most patients also said that they were given enough privacy when discussing their condition or treatment. The majority of patients said that they were treated with respect and dignity while in the hospital.

Several areas needing improvement were identified. For example, some patients could not understand the answers they were given by doctors. A number of patients felt that they did not have sufficient time to discuss their care and treatment with a doctor. In addition, some patients did not always have confidence and trust in the hospital staff treating them.

These three areas for improvement are of particular importance as they are strongly related to patients' ratings of their overall experience. For example, patients who did not have confidence and trust in hospital staff were less likely to give a positive rating of their overall experience.

The findings of the 2018 survey will be used to help Letterkenny University Hospital improve the experiences of patients in the hospital.

Appendix 1: Areas of good experience and areas needing improvement

Improvement map

The map below helps to identify areas of good experience and areas needing improvement in Letterkenny University Hospital. Questions that have a strong relationship with overall ratings of experience (Q52) are selected as areas of good experience or areas needing improvement respectively. Three areas of good experience (highlighted in blue) and three areas needing improvement (highlighted in purple) are identified on the map.

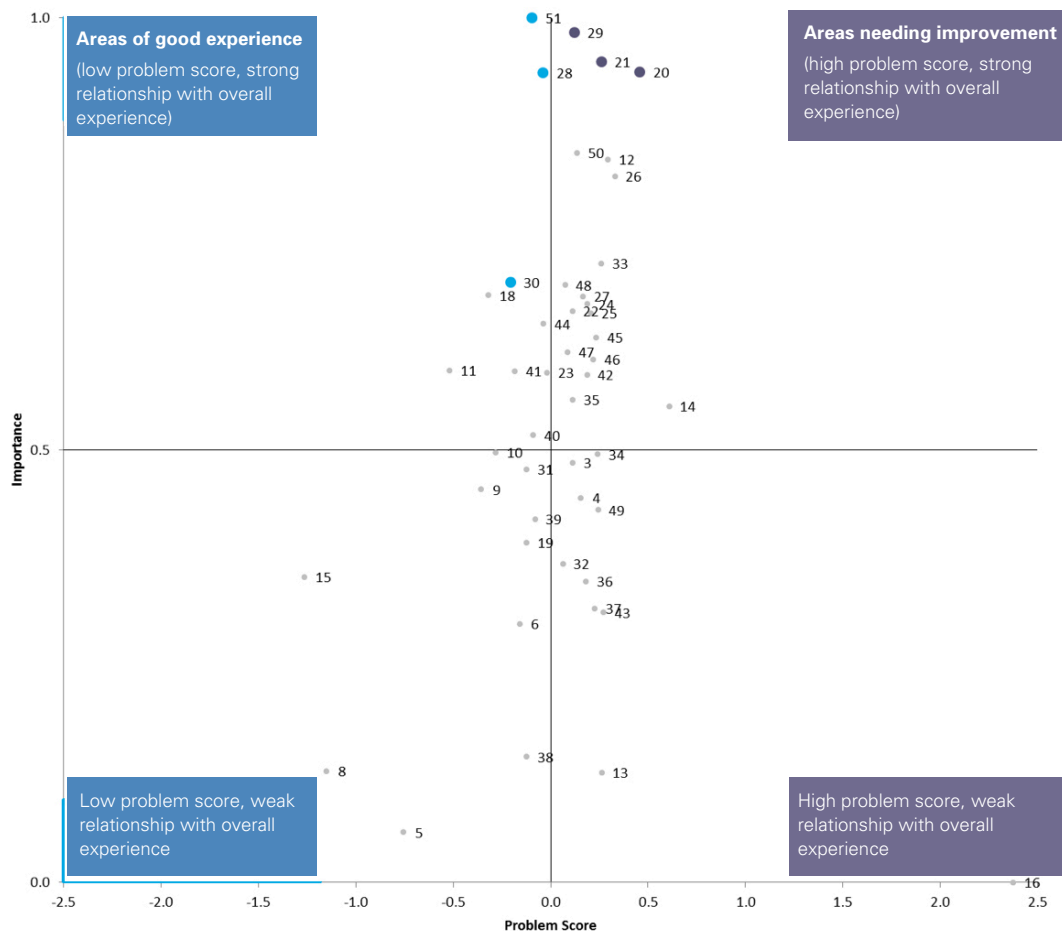
Interpreting the improvement map

The **importance** of the relationship between each question and overall experience is given on the vertical axis as a number between 0 and 1, with 1 being the strongest possible relationship.

Problem scores show the difference (positive or negative) between the national average and a question score (out of 10). These are given on the horizontal axis.

Questions that have high problem scores and are important to patients' overall experiences appear in the **top right section** of the map — these are **areas needing improvement** in this hospital.

Questions that have low problem scores and are important to patients' overall experiences can be found in the **top left section** of the map — these are **areas of good experience** in this hospital.



References

1. Singer AJ, Thode Jr HC, Viccellio P, Pines JM. The Association Between Length of Emergency Department Boarding and Mortality. *Academic Emergency Medicine*. 2011;18(12):1324-9.
2. Plunkett PK, Byrne DG, Breslin T, Bennett K, Silke B. Increasing wait times predict increasing mortality for emergency medical admissions. *European Journal of Emergency Medicine*. 2011;18(4):192-6.