



# National Patient Experience Survey 2018

## South Tipperary General Hospital

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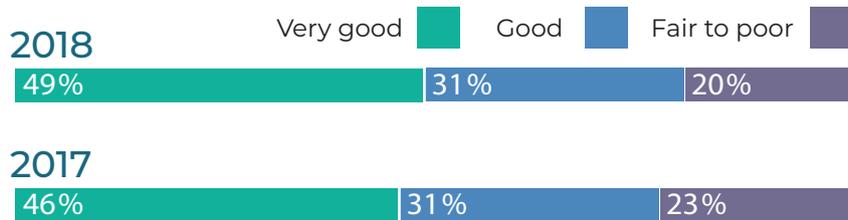
An Roinn Sláinte  
Department of Health



# South Tipperary General Hospital

2018 survey results

## Overall experience



response rate

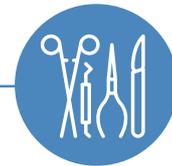
## Areas of good experience



Consideration of home/family situation



Information on the expected outcome of an operation or procedure



Clear explanation of the risk/benefits of an operation or procedure

## Areas needing improvement



Respect and dignity



Confidence and trust in hospital staff



Information on how to manage a condition

## The patient voice

“Overall the care I received was excellent. The only downfall was that I spent the night on the corridor on a bed with no privacy whatsoever.”



“I felt that doctors could have a better bedside manner and talk to their patients and include them in their conversation and not ignore them”

[www.patientexperience.ie](http://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%. 246 patients from South Tipperary General 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](http://www.patientexperience.ie).

## What were the main findings for South Tipperary General Hospital?

The majority of participants from South Tipperary General Hospital reported positive experiences in hospital. 80% 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 each stage of care except for care on the ward, where patients gave below-average ratings.

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, patients said that staff explained operation and procedures to them in a way they could understand. Hospital staff also took their home situation into account when planning their discharge.

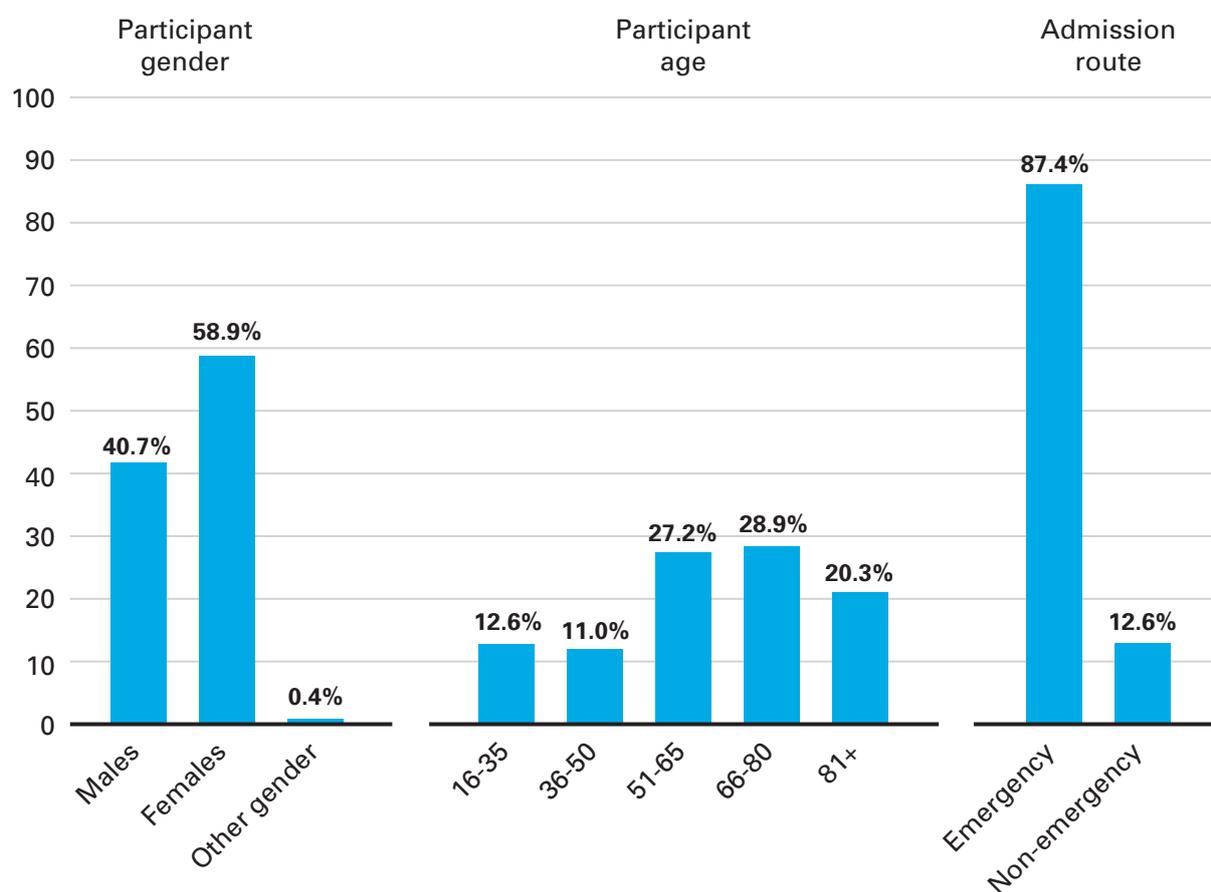
There were also several areas needing improvement. Some patients said they did not have confidence and trust in hospital staff, and were not treated with respect and dignity. In addition, a number of patients felt that they did not receive sufficient information on managing their condition after discharge.

# Hospital and participant profile

South Tipperary General Hospital is a public acute hospital, located in Clonmel, County Tipperary. There were 178 inpatient beds available in the hospital during the survey period of May 2018.

532 people discharged from South Tipperary General Hospital during the month of May 2018 were invited to participate in the survey. 246 people completed the survey, achieving a response rate of 46%. 40.7% of participants were male and 58.9% were female and 0.4% were another gender. 215 respondents (87.4%) said that their stay in hospital was an emergency. Figure 1 below provides information on the respondents who took part in the survey from South Tipperary General Hospital.

**Figure 1 Participants from South Tipperary General 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 South Tipperary General Hospital are:

<p><b>Examinations, diagnosis and treatment</b></p>	<p>93 (92%) of the 101 people who answered this question said that staff completely or to some extent explained the risks and benefits of a procedure in a way they could understand.</p>
<p><b>Clear explanation of the risk/benefits of an operation or procedure   Q36</b></p>	
<p><b>Examinations, diagnosis and treatment</b></p>	<p>87 people (91% of those who answered this question) said that they were either completely or to some extent told how they could expect to feel after an operation or procedure.</p>
<p><b>Information on the expected outcome of an operation or procedure   Q38</b></p>	
<p><b>Discharge or transfer</b></p>	<p>118 people (78% of those who answered this question) said that staff either completely or to some extent took their home situation into account when planning their discharge.</p>
<p><b>Consideration of home/family situation   Q47</b></p>	

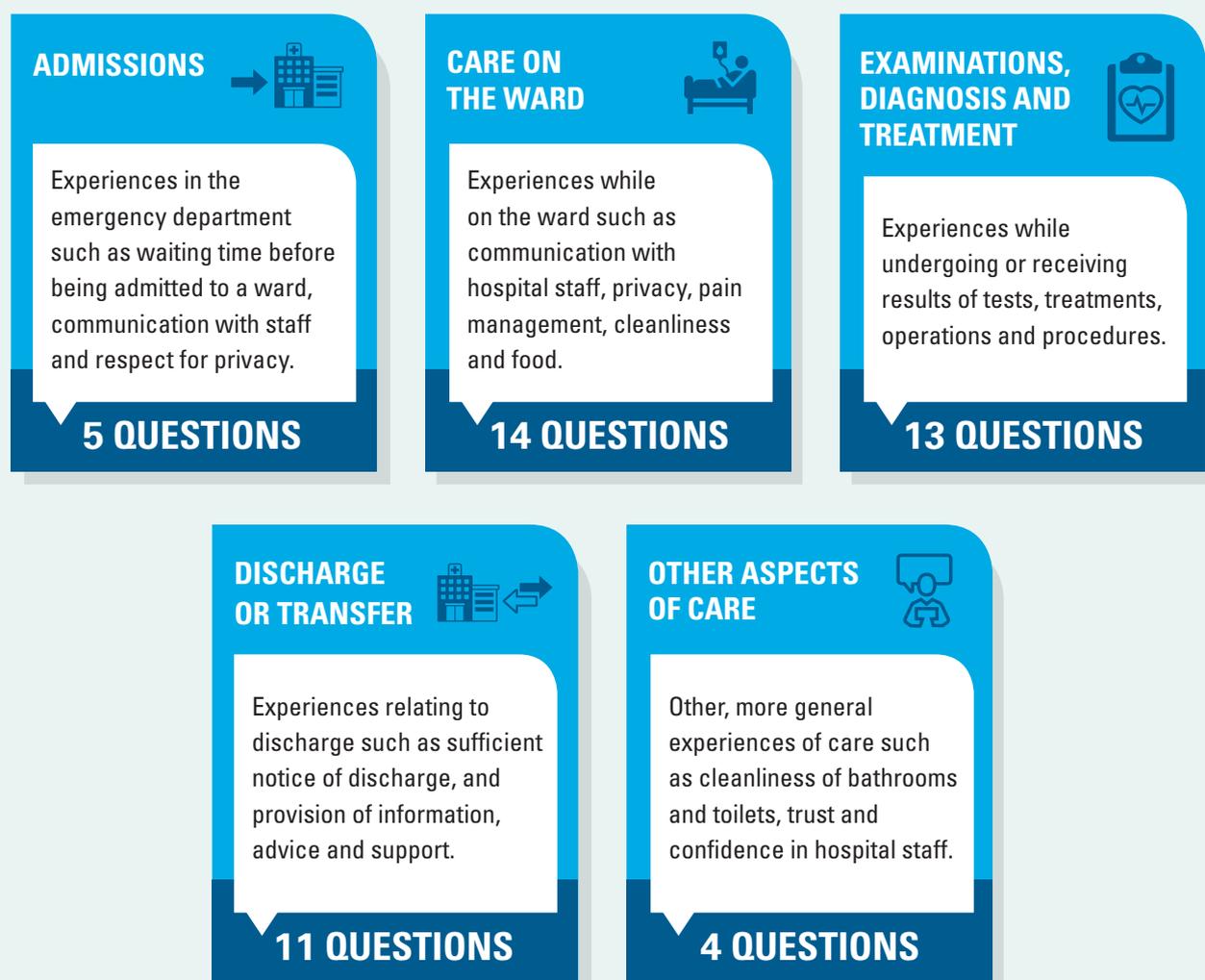
## The areas needing improvement in South Tipperary General Hospital are:

<p><b>Other aspects of care</b></p>	<p>Of the 218 people who answered this question, 47 (22%) said that they did not have, or only sometimes had, confidence and trust in the hospital staff treating them.</p>
<p><b>Confidence and trust in hospital staff   Q29</b></p>	
<p><b>Discharge or transfer</b></p>	<p>78 people (42% of those who answered this question) said that they did not receive, or only to some extent received, enough information on how to manage their condition after discharge.</p>
<p><b>Information on how to manage a condition   Q50</b></p>	
<p><b>Other aspects of care</b></p>	<p>43 people (19% of those who answered this question) said that they were not, or were only sometimes, treated with respect and dignity while in the hospital.</p>
<p><b>Respect and dignity   Q51</b></p>	

# 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](http://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.

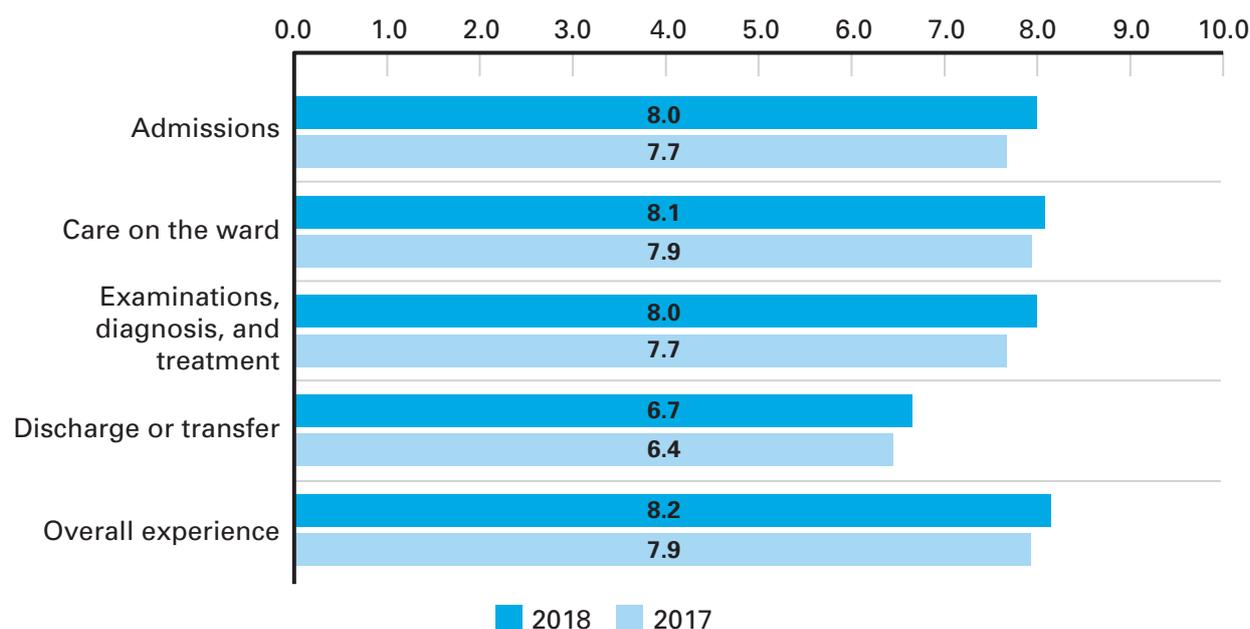
Statistical tests were carried out to examine if there were significant differences in patient experience between 2017 and 2018, as well as between a hospital and the national average. For further information on the analyses please consult Appendix 3 of the 2018 national report, available from [www.patientexperience.ie](http://www.patientexperience.ie).

## Changes in patient experience over time

Participants' average rating of their overall experience improved slightly from 2017 to 2018. Improvements were seen across each stage of care, though these changes were not statistically significant. 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 scores<sup>1</sup> for South Tipperary General 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

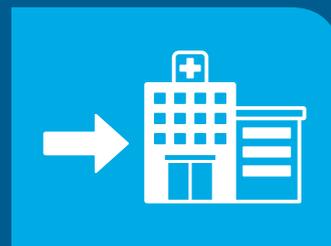
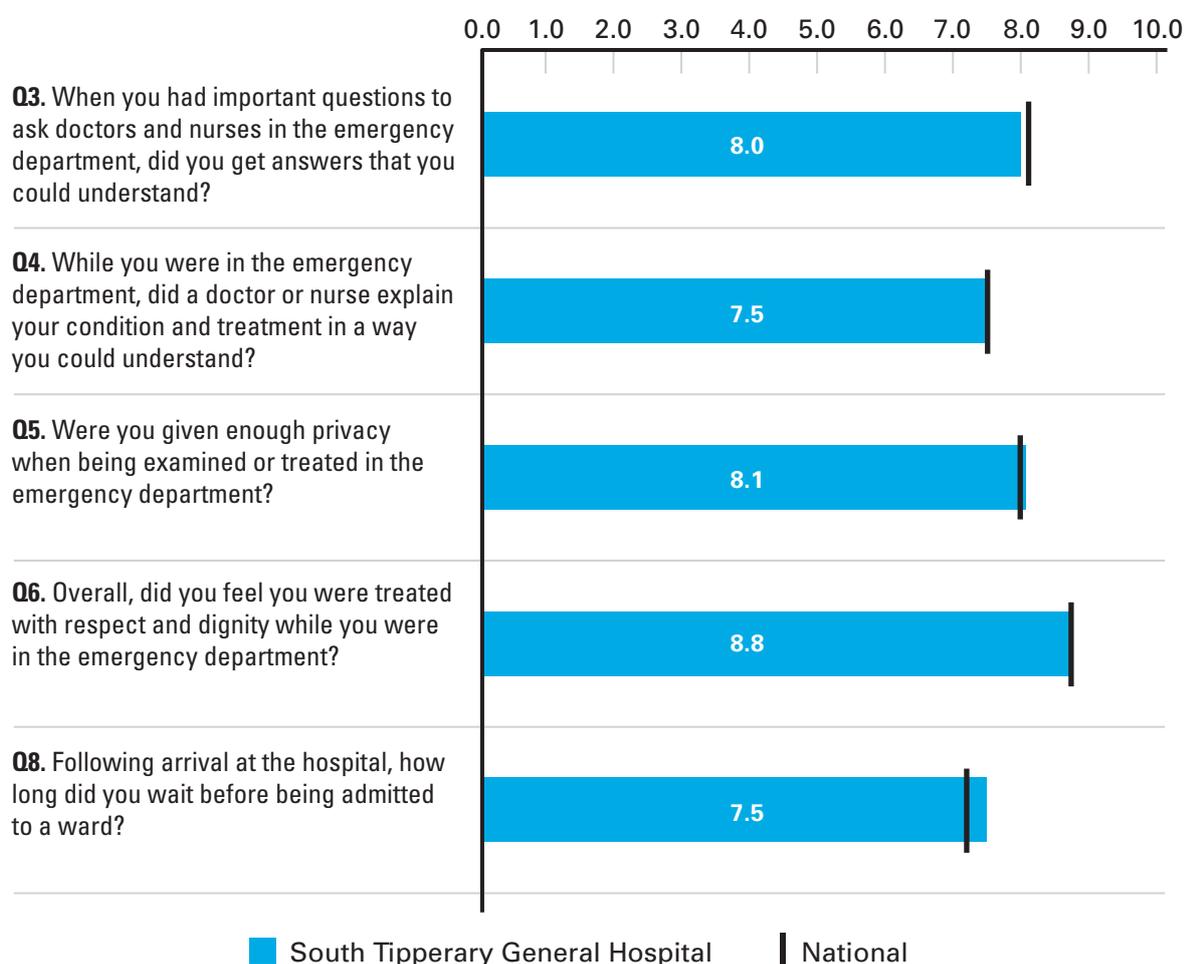


Figure 3 compares the hospital's overall score for admissions with the national average. Figure 4 shows the hospital's scores for questions on this stage of care.

**Figure 3 Comparison of South Tipperary General Hospital with the national average score for admissions (out of a maximum of 10)**



**Figure 4 South Tipperary General Hospital scores for questions on admissions**



## Emergency department waiting times<sup>2</sup>

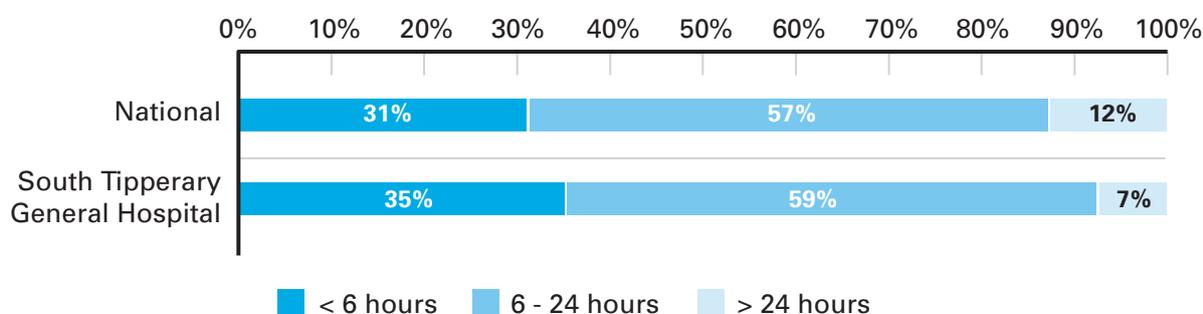
The HSE sets targets for the performance of acute hospitals, including targets on waiting times in emergency departments, such as:

- 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 South Tipperary General Hospital, 62 respondents (35%) said they were admitted to a ward within six hours of arriving at the emergency department, while 105 respondents (59%) reported waiting between six and 24 hours. 12 respondents (7%) reported waiting 24 hours or more before being admitted to a ward in South Tipperary General Hospital, with two of these saying they waited more than 48 hours.

Figure 5 outlines the patient-reported waiting times in South Tipperary General Hospital, compared with the national average.

**Figure 5 Patient-reported emergency department waiting times for South Tipperary General 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

"It was good; I was able to be transferred to a ward so quickly."

"Waiting times in A&E is dreadful. Much too long, lying on an uncomfortable trolley."

"Having to spend the night on a trolley after waiting 11 hours for admission is not good enough. The overcrowding puts too much strain on both patients and front-line staff."

"The nurses and doctors in A&E were excellent and were inundated with constant stream of patients presenting at. The day I arrived they had 3 urgent accidents (motor) cases and I like others sat in for 10 hours waiting but when I was eventually seen the medical teams though exhausted took great care of me."

### Admissions: what do these results mean?

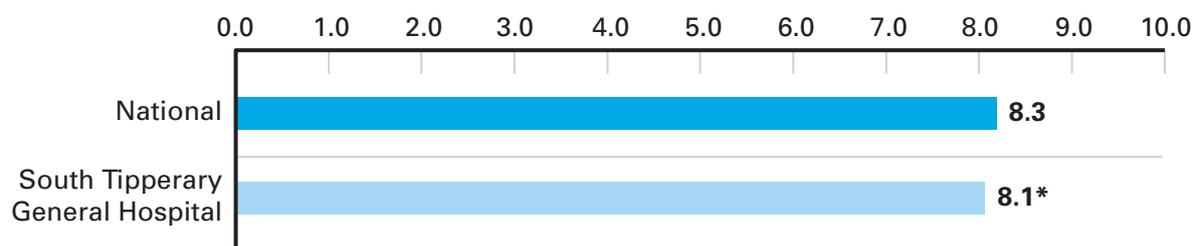
Patient ratings of admission to South Tipperary General Hospital were similar to the national average and were slightly higher than the 2017 score. Patients said that they were generally treated with respect and dignity in the emergency department. However, some patients said that they did not understand the explanations staff provided of their condition. The hospital performed slightly above the national average on emergency department waiting times but well below the recommended level. Only 35% of participants said that they were admitted to a ward within the recommended six hours. This is an important issue, as lengthy waiting times are associated with poor outcomes for patients.<sup>(1, 2)</sup>

# 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 on this stage of care.

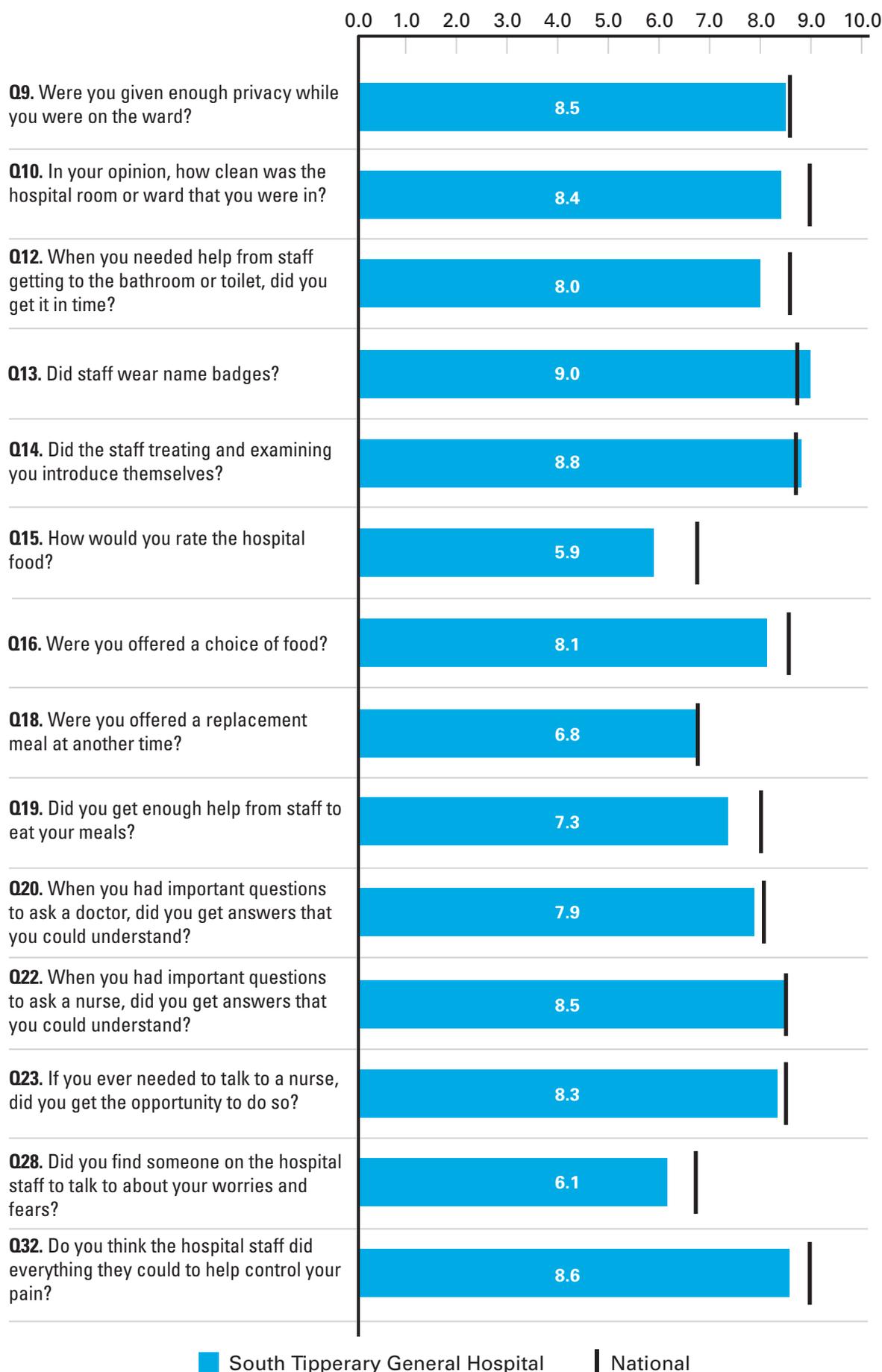


**Figure 6 Comparison of South Tipperary General Hospital with the national average score for care on the ward (out of a maximum of 10)**



\* Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average.

**Figure 7 South Tipperary General Hospital scores for questions on care on the ward**



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

"The ward was spotlessly clean and the nursing staff were excellent, very informative and more than willing to help."

"The staff were absolutely brilliant, caring and informative."

"More nurses required. The nurses that were on duty were exceptional but I feel that more staff would ease the work load for them."

"Food is terrible. It was cold. I never ate anything for the few days I was in, except cornflakes. Day one post op. offered cold scrambled eggs. Nothing else. I lost 2kgs in my short stay."

### Care on the ward: what do these results mean?

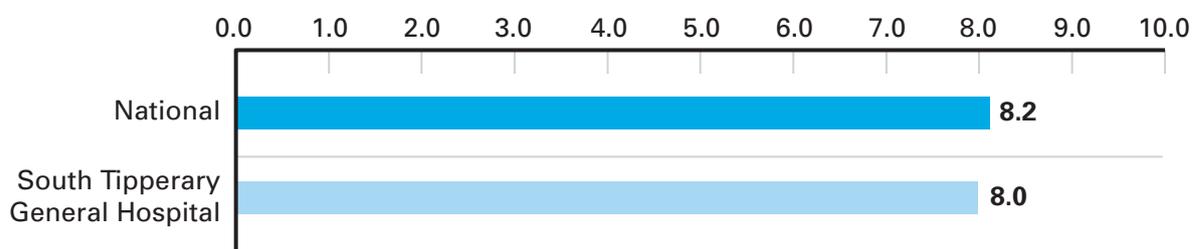
South Tipperary General Hospital received lower ratings of care on the ward than the national average, although the ratings were slightly higher in 2018 than in last year's survey. Patients said that staff generally wore name badges and introduced themselves. However, a number of patients gave poor ratings for the hospital food and commented on the poor availability of staff.

# Examinations, diagnosis and treatment

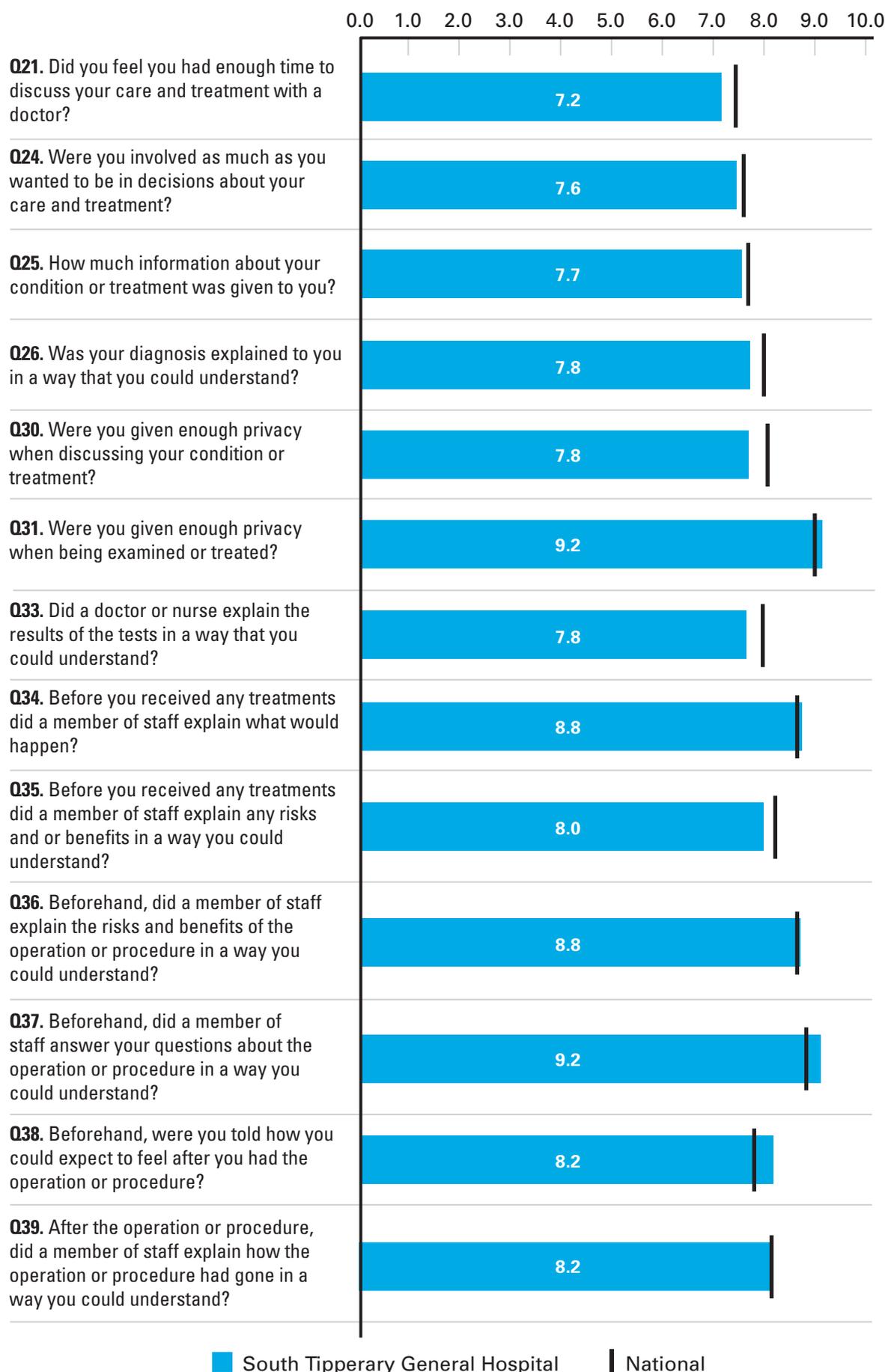


Figure 8 compares the hospital's overall score for examinations, diagnosis and treatment with the national average. Figure 9 shows the hospital's scores for questions on this stage of care.

**Figure 8 Comparison of South Tipperary General Hospital with the national average score for examinations, diagnosis and treatment (out of a maximum of 10)**



**Figure 9 South Tipperary General Hospital scores for questions on examinations, diagnosis and treatment**



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

"The staff at Clonmel were amazing. My specialist [doctor's name] was very clear and told me all I needed to know. The head nurse [nurse's name] has followed up with me several times since I left Clonmel."

"I felt that doctors could have a better bedside manner and talk to their patients and include them in their conversation, and not ignore them."

"I was treated with respect by the nurses and doctors who explained everything to me while they were looking after my injury."

"The consultant was very hard to meet, not very informative, there was no privacy when my daughter arranged to meet the consultant - 'on the corridor of ward' and very little time given."

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

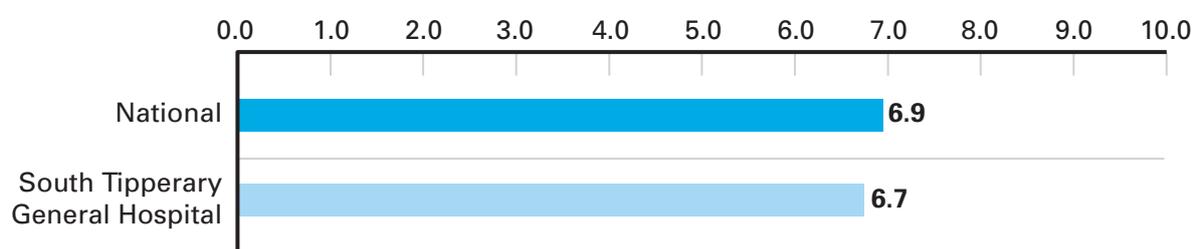
Ratings of examination, diagnosis and treatment were similar to the national average and slightly higher than the hospital's 2018 ratings. Patients generally said that they received enough privacy and understood the explanations they were given about their care. Some patients said that they were not given enough time to discuss their care and treatment with a doctor.

# Discharge or transfer

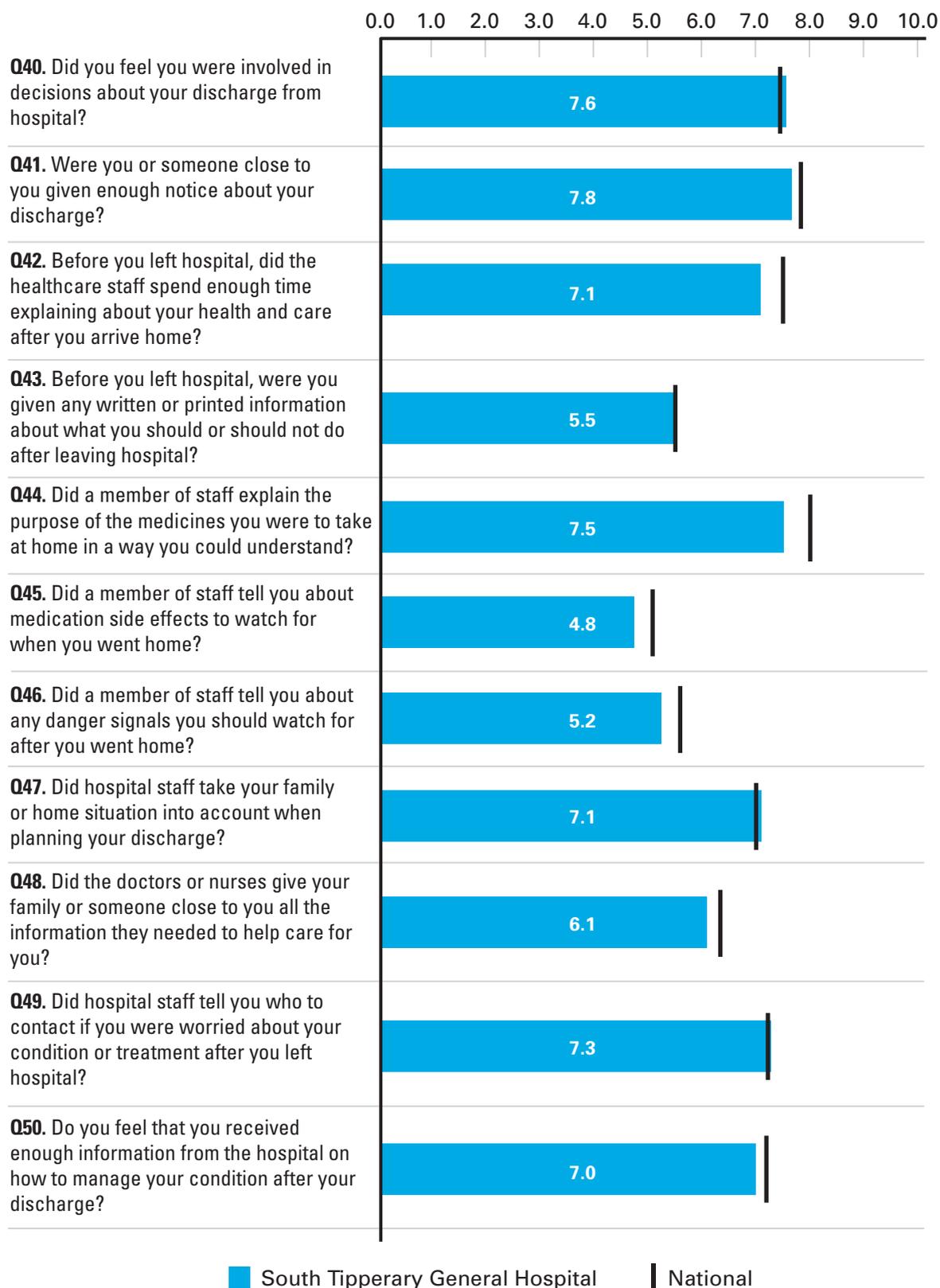
Figure 10 compares the hospital's overall score for discharge or transfer with the national average. Figure 11 shows the hospital's scores for questions related to discharge or transfer.



**Figure 10 Comparison of South Tipperary General Hospital with the national average score for discharge or transfer (out of a maximum of 10)**



**Figure 11 South Tipperary General Hospital scores for questions on discharge or transfer**



## The patient voice: what patients said about discharge or transfer

"Doctors and nurses were very articulate when going through the procedure for my surgery. My aftercare was terrific."

"I was allowed to walk to the theatre so I felt in control until the last minute. I was discharged a day earlier than predicted."

"More information on my discharge pain relief would have been helpful. Got no written information on post-operative care."

"Discharge was a joke was told at 10am that I was being discharged. Brought down to discharge area rang for someone to collect me was then told I would have to wait 5 hours for a discharge letter. Family member had travelled an hour and was left waiting."

### Discharge or transfer: what do these results mean?

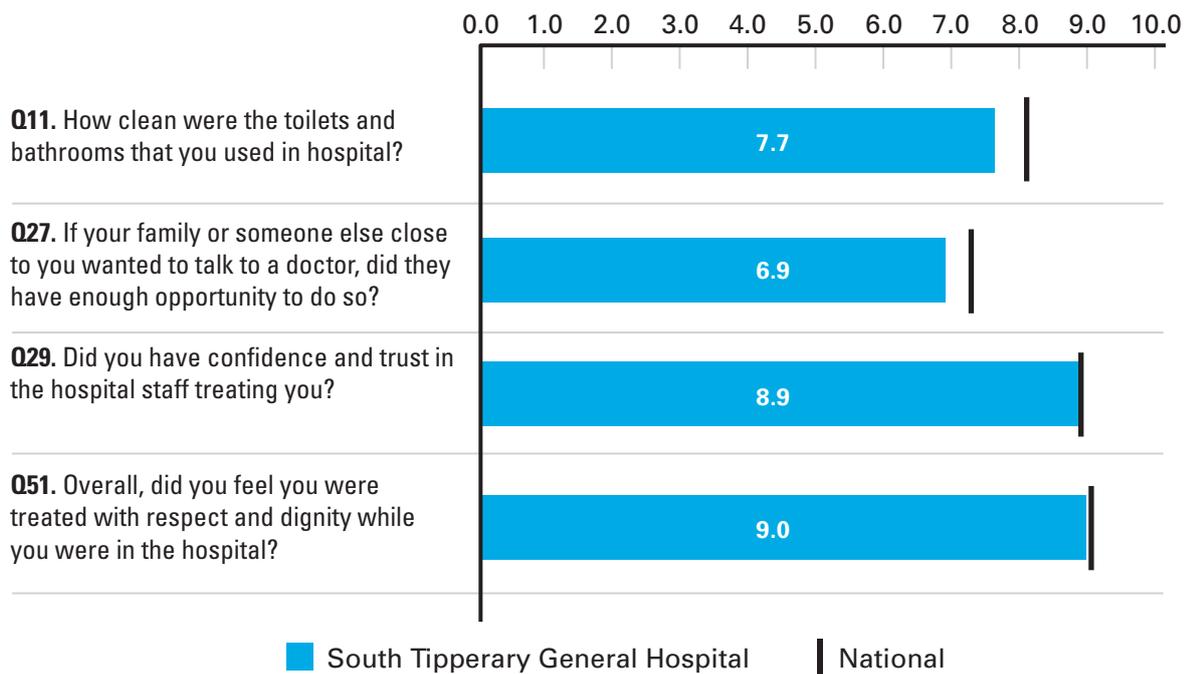
Participant ratings for this stage of care were similar to the national average and slightly higher than the hospital's score in the 2017 survey. Patients were generally involved in decisions about their discharge. However, a significant number of people said that they did not receive information on medication side effects to watch out for at home.

# Other aspects of care



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

**Figure 12 South Tipperary General Hospital scores for other aspects of care**



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

"Overall the care I received was excellent. The only downfall was that I spent the night on the corridor on a bed with no privacy whatsoever."

"I was treated with care and great respect, and staff were very nice!"

"The cleanliness of the South Tipperary General leaves a lot to be desired, most of the toilets are so bad, I would not use them."

"My parents found it very hard to get to speak with doctors unless they stayed with me 24/7. Maybe a set time to speak to patient/parents in so far as is possible may be an idea."

### Other aspects of care: what do these results mean?

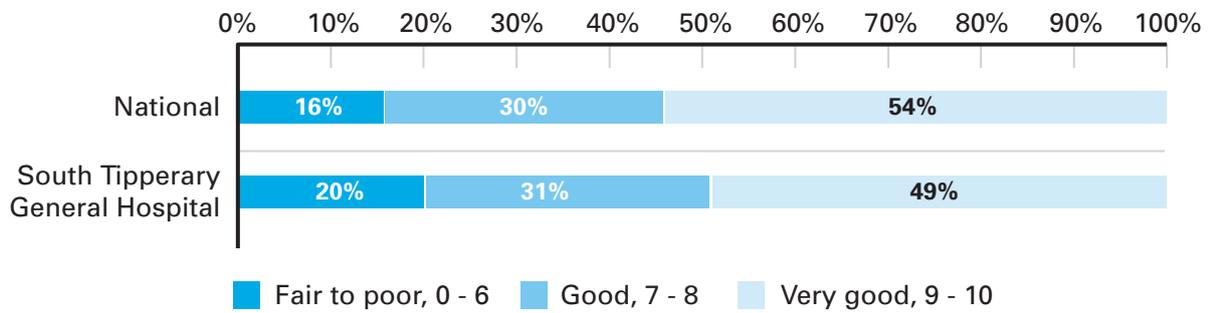
The ratings for the questions on other aspects of care were at, or slightly below, the national average. For example, while most participants said they were treated with respect and dignity, a significant number did not give a positive rating in this area. A number of patients gave poor ratings of the cleanliness of bathrooms. In addition, some patients felt that their families did not have the opportunity to talk to a doctor.

# 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. 49% of participants from South Tipperary General Hospital rated their care as very good, slightly below the national figure of 54%.

Figure 13 compares the average overall rating of hospital experience for South Tipperary General Hospital with the national average.

**Figure 13 Overall rating of hospital experience for South Tipperary General Hospital and nationally**



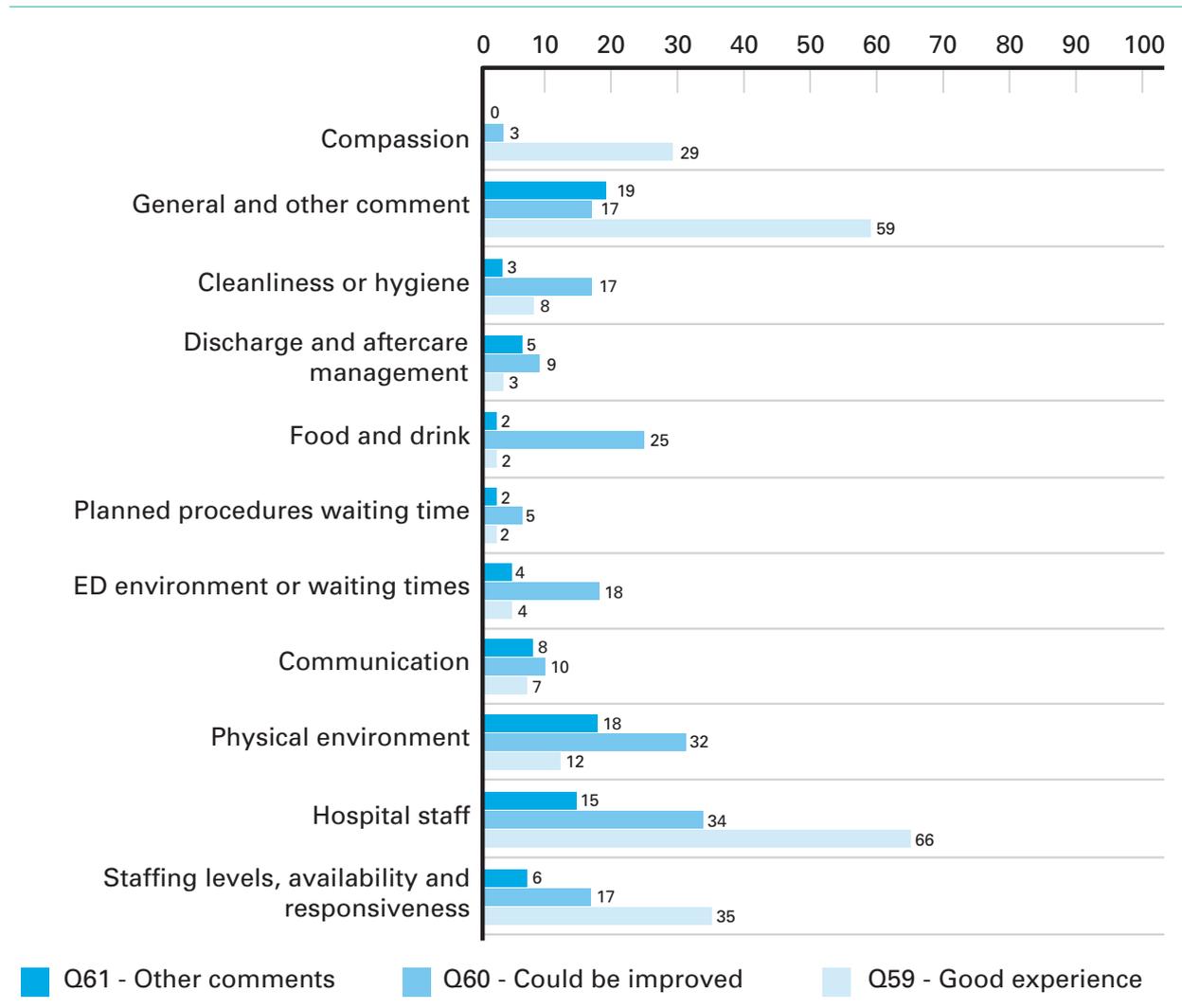
# In their own words: analysis of patients' comments

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, 496 comments were received from patients of South Tipperary General 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 about what was particularly good about their hospital care, Q60 asked participants about what 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 'hospital staff' and 'physical environment' themes. For Q61, most of the comments related to the 'hospital staff' and 'general and other comment' themes.

**Figure 14 Participant comments by theme**



# Conclusion

## What were patients' experiences of hospital care in South Tipperary General Hospital in May 2018?

Patient ratings of their overall experience in South Tipperary General Hospital were slightly below the national average. 80% of patients at the hospital said they had a 'good' or 'very good' experience, compared with 84% nationally.

South Tipperary General Hospital received similar scores to the national average across every stage of care, with the exception of care on the ward which was below-average. Participant ratings of care were generally more positive than those received in 2017.

The hospital had a number of areas of good patient experience. For example, patients generally understood explanations and answers they were given in relation to their treatments. In addition, most patients said their home situation was taken into account when planning their discharge.

Several areas needing improvement were identified. Some patients said that they were not treated with respect and dignity, and did not have confidence and trust in hospital staff. In addition, a number of patients said that they did not receive sufficient information on managing their condition after discharge.

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 felt that they were not treated with respect and dignity were less likely to give a positive rating of their overall experience.

The findings of the 2018 survey will be used to help South Tipperary General Hospital improve the experiences of patients in the hospital, continuing the good work done in response to the 2017 survey.

# 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 South Tipperary General 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.

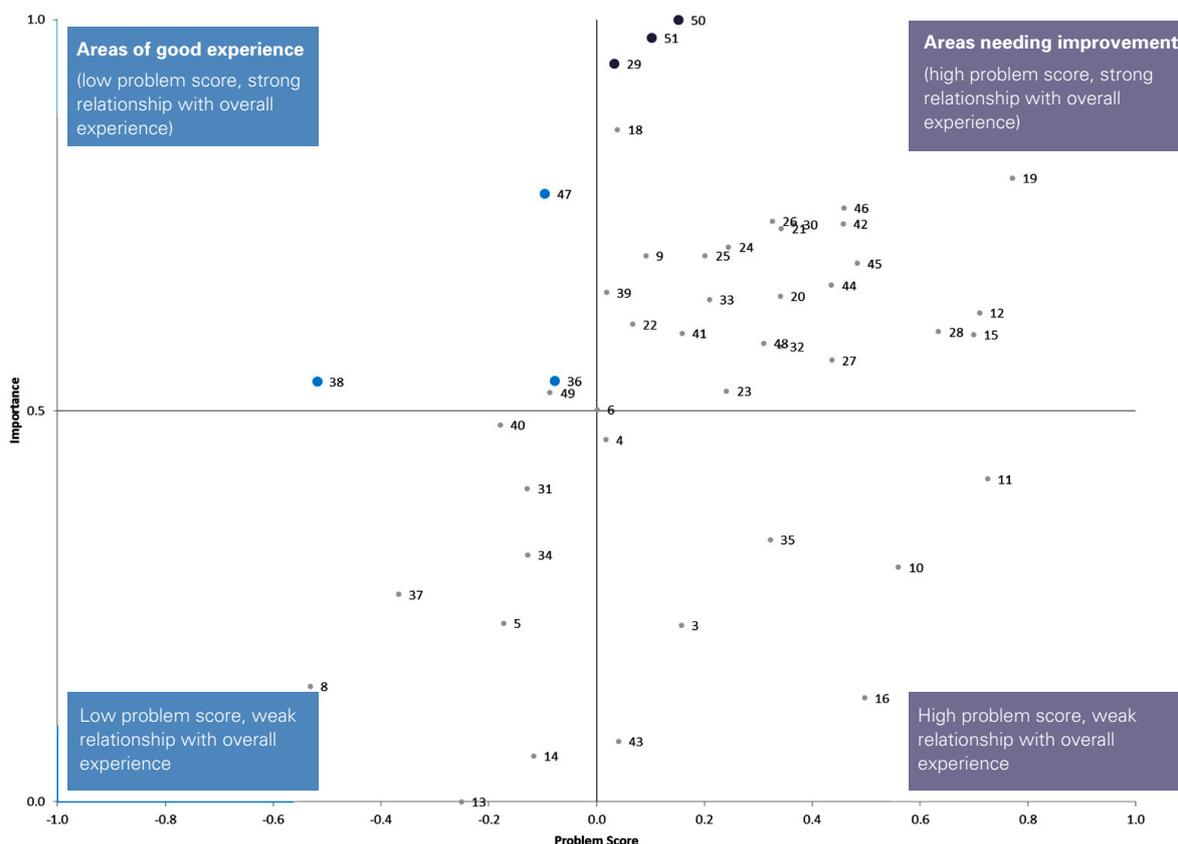
### Interpreting the improvement map

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.