

# National Inpatient Experience Survey 2019

## Connolly Hospital

## 2019 survey results

### Respondents



**339**

Number of respondents



**63.3**

Average age



**40%**

Participation rate

### Overall experience

#### 2019

Very Good  
**52%**

Good  
**34%**

Fair to Poor  
**13%**

#### 2018

Very Good  
**52%**

Good  
**31%**

Fair to Poor  
**17%**

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

### Stages of care

#### Admission to hospital

**8.2**

out of 10

Patient ratings of admission to the hospital were higher than the national average and higher than the hospital's 2018 score.



#### Care on the ward

**8.2**

out of 10

Patient ratings of 'care on the ward' in the hospital were similar to the national average and to last year's survey.

#### Examination, diagnosis and treatment

**8.2**

out of 10

Ratings of 'examination, diagnosis and treatment' were similar to the national average and to last year's survey.



#### Discharge or transfer

**6.8**

out of 10

Participant ratings of 'discharge or transfer' were similar to the national average and to last year's survey.



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## About the National Inpatient Experience Survey 2019

The National Inpatient Experience Survey<sup>1</sup> 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. It was conducted for the first time in 2017 and repeated in 2018 and 2019.

Nationally, 26,897 people were invited to participate in the third National Inpatient Experience Survey. In total, 12,343 people responded, resulting in a response rate of 46%. 339 patients from Connolly Hospital took part.

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 and 2018 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 <https://yourexperience.ie/inpatient/hospital-initiatives/>.

## What were the main findings for Connolly Hospital?

The majority of participants from Connolly Hospital reported positive experiences in hospital. 86% of participants said they had 'good' or 'very good' overall experiences, compared with 84% nationally. The hospital scored above the national average for 'admissions' and about the same as the national average for all others stages of care.<sup>2</sup>

Three areas of good experience were identified. For example, many patients said that, while they were in the emergency department, they received clear answers from a doctor and a clear explanation of their condition or treatment. In addition, the majority of patients had privacy while being examined or treated in the emergency department.

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<sup>1</sup> The survey was previously entitled the 'National Patient Experience Survey'. The name was updated in 2019 to more accurately reflect the nature of the survey.

<sup>2</sup> When there is no statistically significant difference between the hospital's score and the national average, it is described as 'about the same'.

There were also two areas needing improvement. The hospital scored below the national average for patient ratings of the food, and on the provision of a choice of food.

There was a statistically significant improvement in the patient experience rating for the 'admissions' stage of care, whilst ratings for other stages of care remained largely the same as in 2018.

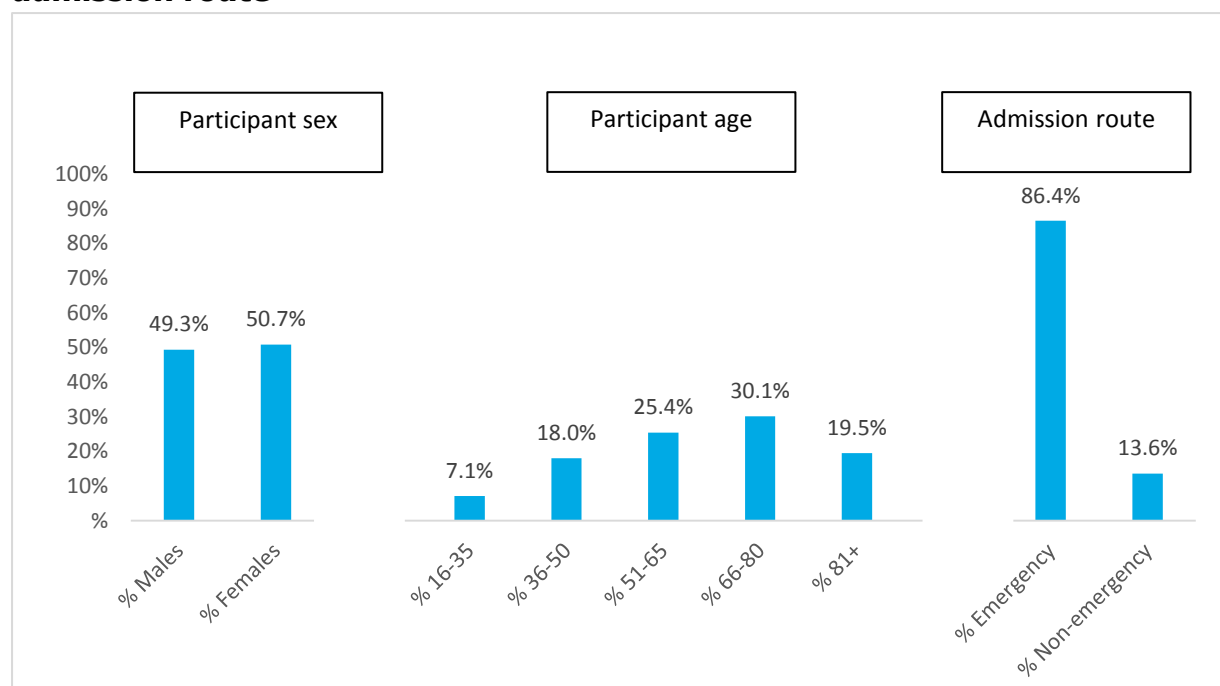
The findings of the 2019 survey will help Connolly Hospital to improve patients' experiences of care in the hospital.

## Hospital and participant profile

Connolly Hospital is located in Dublin. There were 243 inpatient beds available in the hospital during the survey period of May 2019.

881 people discharged from Connolly Hospital during the month of May 2019 were invited to participate in the survey. 339 people completed the survey, achieving a response rate of 40%. 49.3% of participants were male and 50.7% were female. 293 respondents (86.4%) said that their stay in hospital was due to an emergency. Figure 1 below provides information on the respondents who took part in the survey from Connolly Hospital.

**Figure 1 Participants from Connolly Hospital by sex, 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. The list includes the relevant stage of care and question number for each area. Appendix 1 explains how these areas were identified.

### The areas of good experience in Connolly Hospital are: Admissions

#### Clear answers from a doctor in the emergency department | Q3

195 (78%) of the 250 people who had questions to ask while in the emergency department said that they always received answers they could understand from a doctor.

#### Admissions

#### Clear explanation of a condition or treatment in the emergency department | Q4

Of the 269 people who needed an explanation, 180 (67%) said that a doctor or nurse explained their condition or treatment in a way they could completely understand.

#### Admissions

#### Privacy while being examined or treated in the emergency department | Q5

Of the 278 people who answered this question, 209 (75%) said that they definitely had enough privacy when being examined or treated in the emergency department.

### The areas needing improvement in Connolly Hospital are:

#### Care on the Ward

#### Food rating | Q15

Of the 310 people who rated the food, 213 (69%) said that it was good or very good. The hospital scored below the national average on this question.

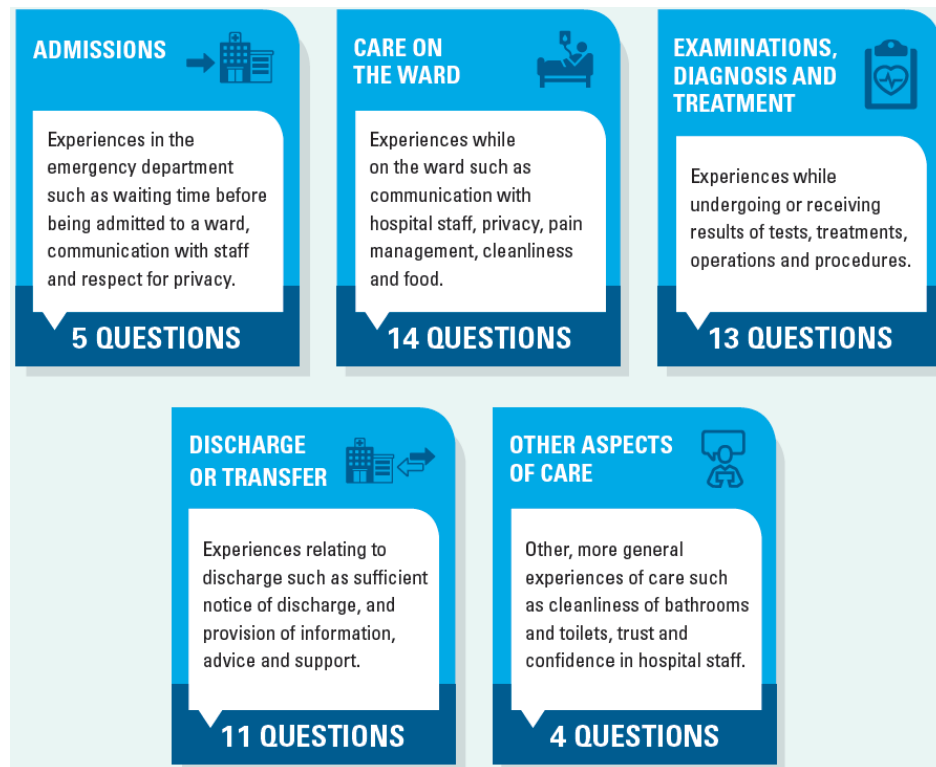
## Care on the Ward

### Choice of food | Q16

210 people (68%) said that they were always offered a choice of food. This was below the national average for this question.

## Survey results for the stages of care along the patient journey

The National Inpatient Experience Survey 2019 follows the patient journey through hospital from admission to discharge. The 2019 questionnaire is available to download from [www.yourexperience.ie](http://www.yourexperience.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 to a stage as a 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 2018 and 2019, as well as between a hospital and the national average. Throughout this report, when the hospital scored significantly above the national average, this is described as 'higher'. When a hospital scored significantly below the national average, it is described as 'lower'. When there is no statistically significant difference between the hospital's score and the national average, it is described as 'about the same'. For further information on the analyses



please consult Appendix 3 of the 2019 national report, available from [www.yourexperience.ie](http://www.yourexperience.ie).

## Changes in patient experience over time

Participants' average rating of their overall experience in Connolly Hospital in 2019 was around the same as it was in 2018. However, there was a significant improvement in the 'admissions' stage of care. Scores for the other stages of care were similar to last year. 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>3</sup> for Connolly Hospital for 2018 and 2019**



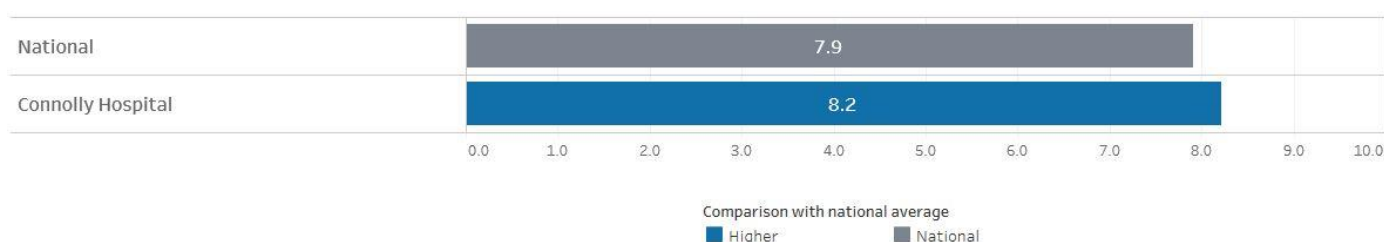
<sup>3</sup> Scores for the stages of care were constructed by calculating the average scores for all the questions belonging to that stage.



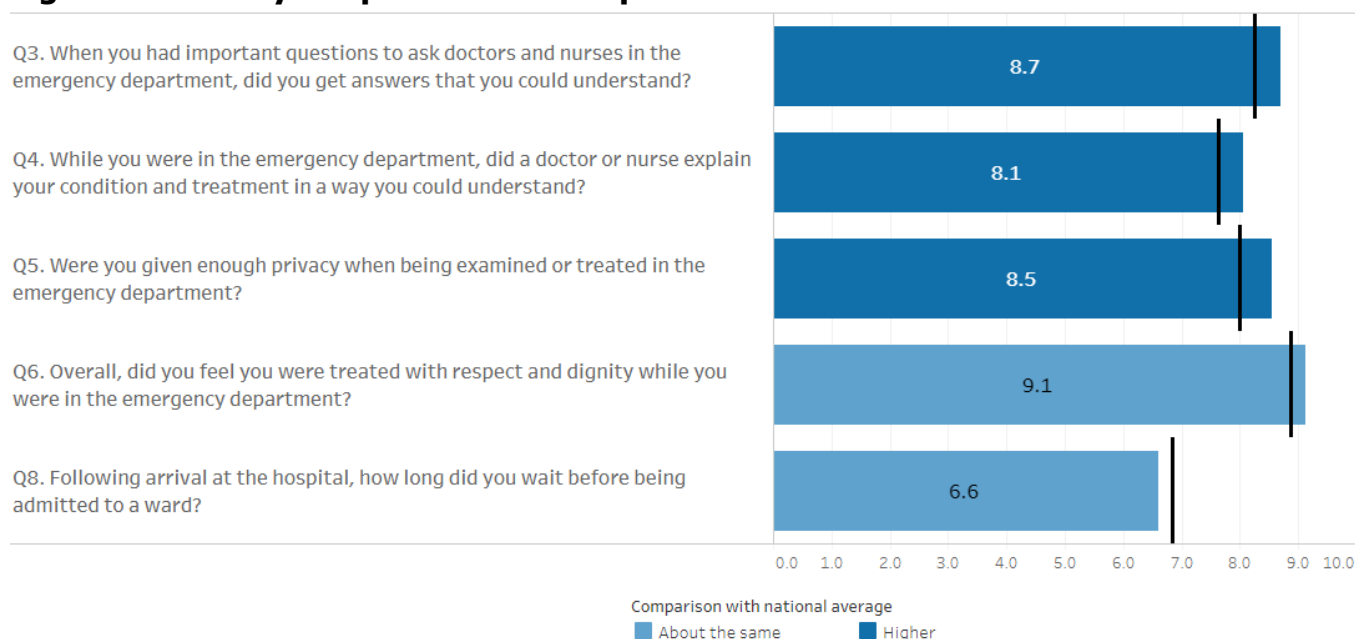
## Admissions

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 Connolly Hospital with the national average score for 'admissions' (out of a maximum of 10).**



**Figure 4 Connolly Hospital scores for questions on 'admissions'\***



\*The black line represents the national average

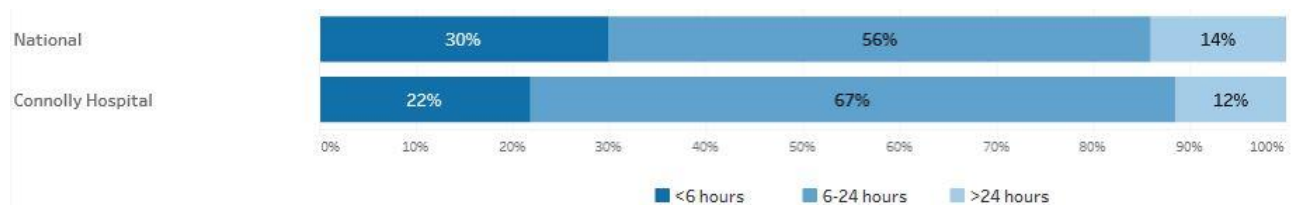
## Emergency department waiting times<sup>4</sup>

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 Connolly Hospital, 57 respondents (22%) said they were admitted to a ward within six hours of arriving at the emergency department, while 173 respondents (67%) reported waiting between six and 24 hours. 30 respondents (12%) said that they waited 24 hours or more before being admitted to a ward in Connolly Hospital, with four of these saying they waited more than 48 hours. As outlined in Appendix 1, the relationship between waiting times and overall experience was relatively weak. This means that patients who had long waiting times did not always say they had a negative overall experience. Figure 5 outlines the emergency department waiting times, as reported by patients in Connolly Hospital, compared with the national average.

**Figure 5 Emergency department waiting times, as reported by patients for Connolly Hospital and nationally**



### Admissions: what do these results mean?

Patient ratings of admission to Connolly Hospital were higher than the national average and higher than the hospital's 2018 score. Most patients said they were treated with respect and dignity in the emergency department. The lowest scoring question for this stage related to waiting times for admission to a ward.

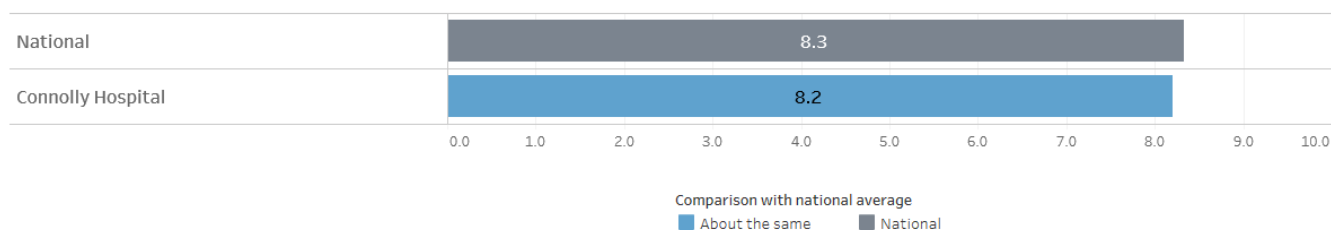
<sup>4</sup> The HSE measures emergency department waiting times differently to the survey, namely from the time a patient registers at the emergency department until they leave it. It is likely that there are some differences between survey findings and the official HSE figures. The HSE 2019 targets can be viewed at: <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/kpis/acute-hospitals-metadata-2019.pdf>



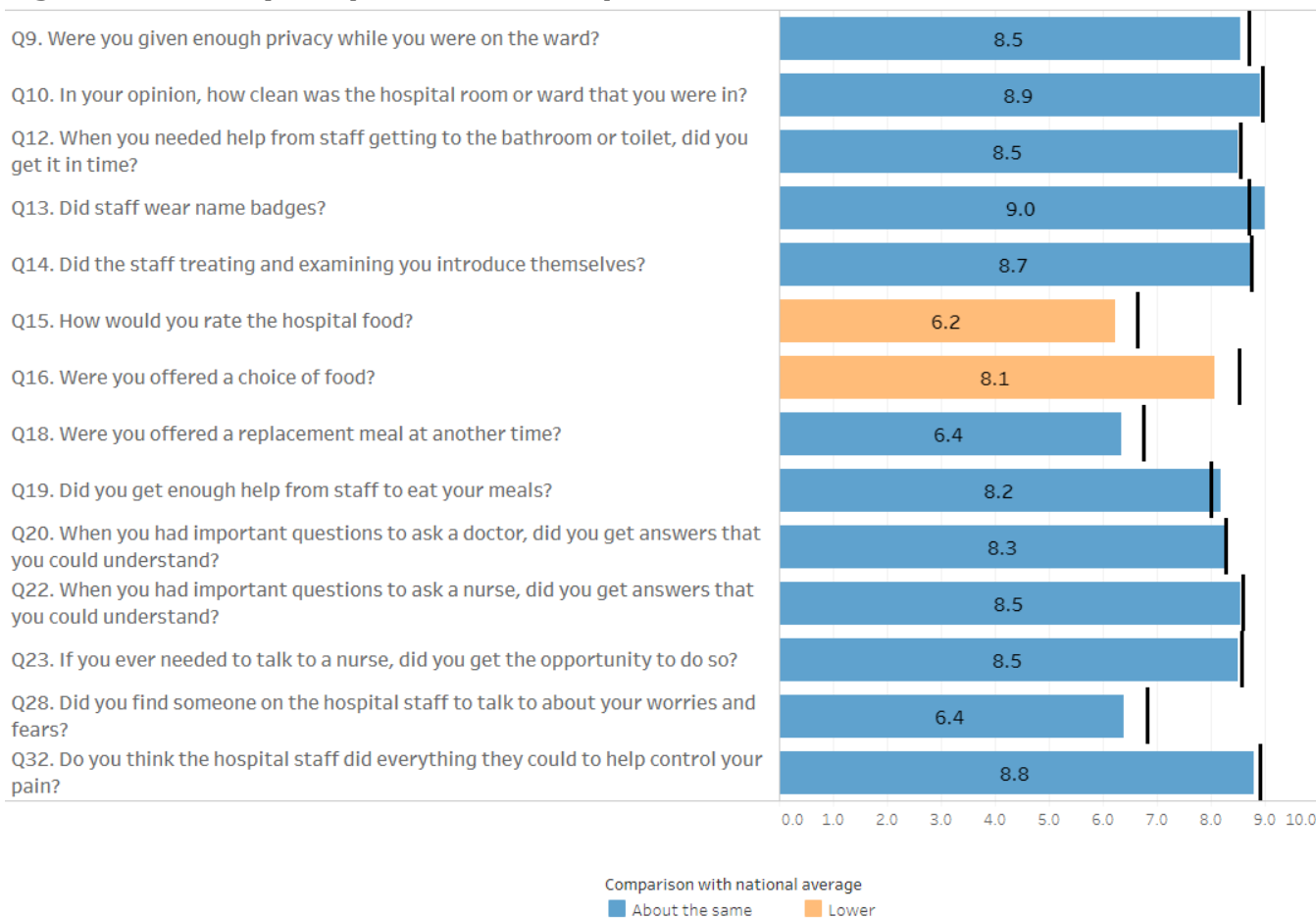
## Care on the ward

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 Connolly Hospital with the national average score for 'care on the ward' (out of a maximum of 10).**



**Figure 7 Connolly Hospital scores for questions on 'care on the ward'\***



\*The black line represents the national average

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

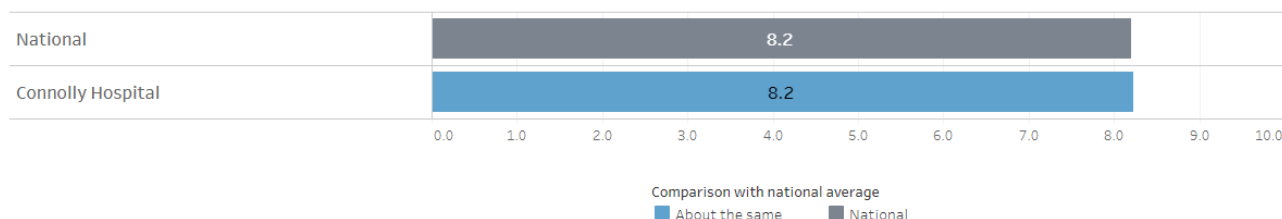
Patient ratings of 'care on the ward' in Connolly Hospital were similar to the national average and to last year's survey. Most patients said that staff wore name badges. The lowest scoring question for this stage related to ratings of the hospital food.



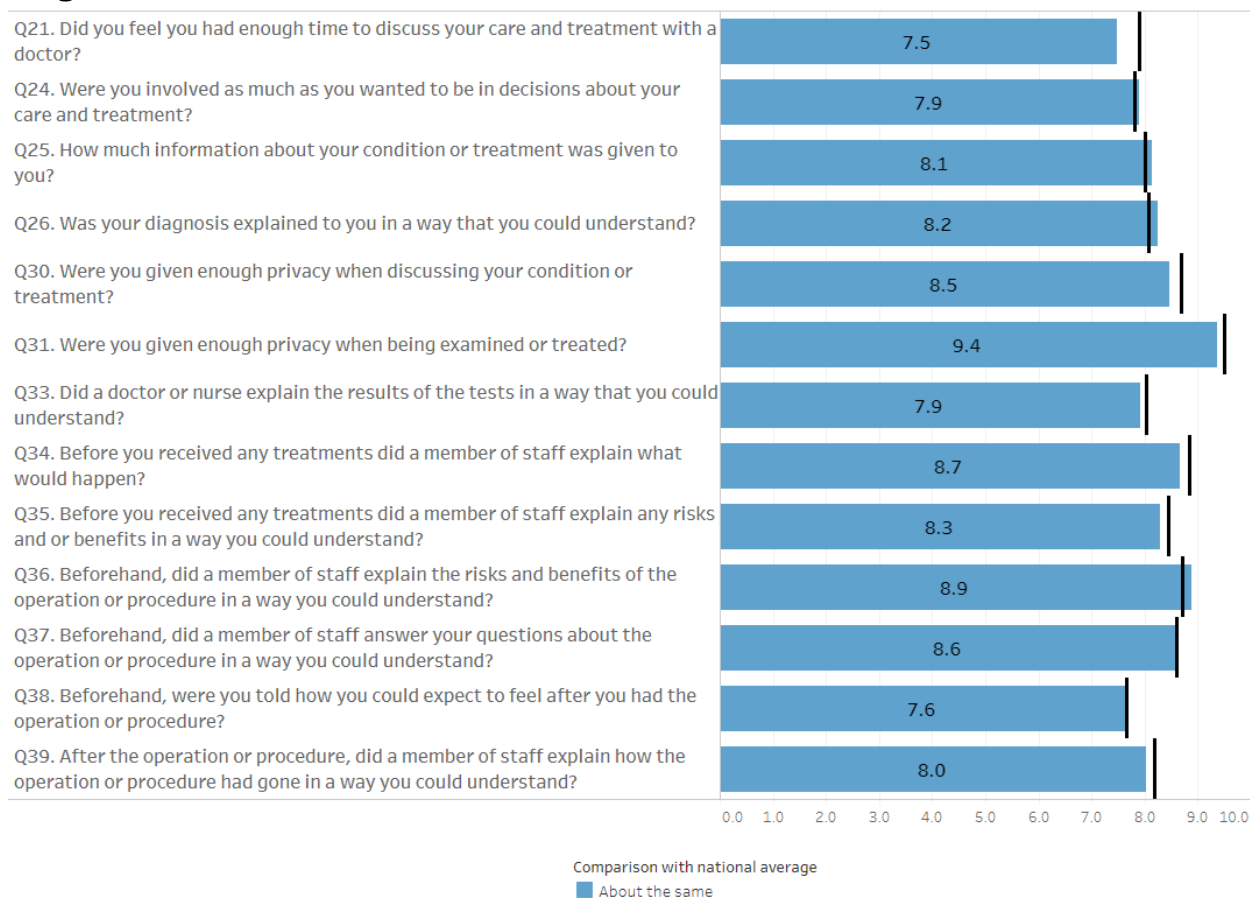
## Examinations, diagnosis and treatment

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 on this stage of care.

**Figure 8 Comparison of Connolly Hospital with the national average score for 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment' (out of a maximum of 10).**



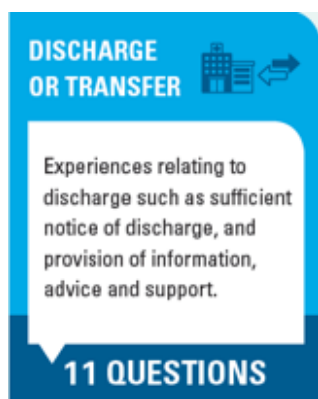
**Figure 9 Connolly Hospital scores for questions on 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment'\***



\*The black line represents the national average

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

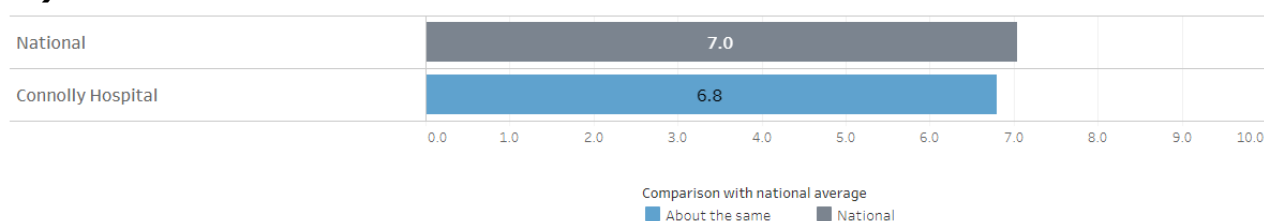
Ratings of 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment' were similar to the national average and to last year's survey. Most patients said they were given enough privacy while being examined or treated. The lowest scoring question for this stage related to the time patients had to discuss their care and treatment with a doctor.



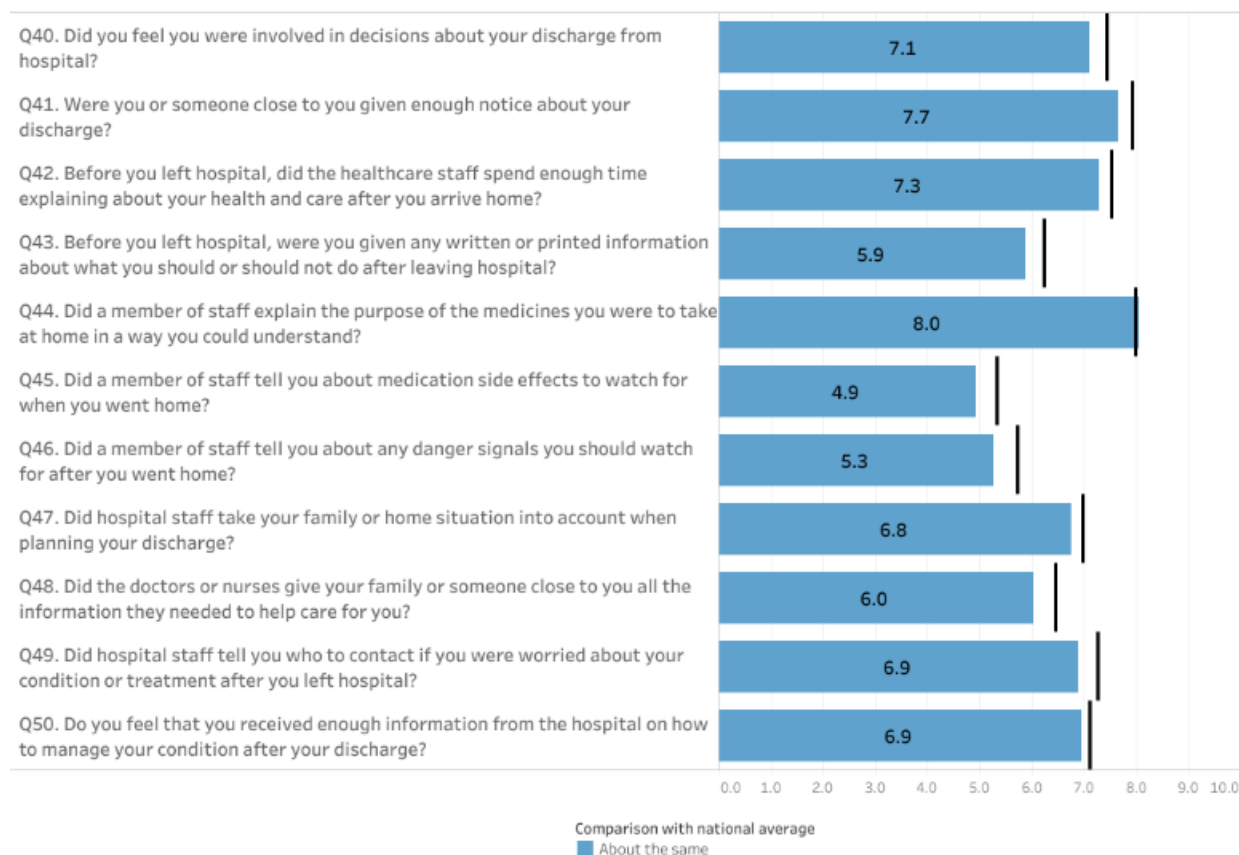
## Discharge or transfer

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 on this stage of care.

**Figure 10 Comparison of Connolly Hospital with the national average score for 'discharge or transfer' (out of a maximum of 10).**



**Figure 11 Connolly Hospital scores for questions on 'discharge or transfer'\***



\*The black line represents the national average



**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 survey. Most patients said that staff explained the purpose of medications they were to take at home. The lowest scoring question for this stage related to whether the potential side effects of medications were explained.

**OTHER ASPECTS  
OF CARE**

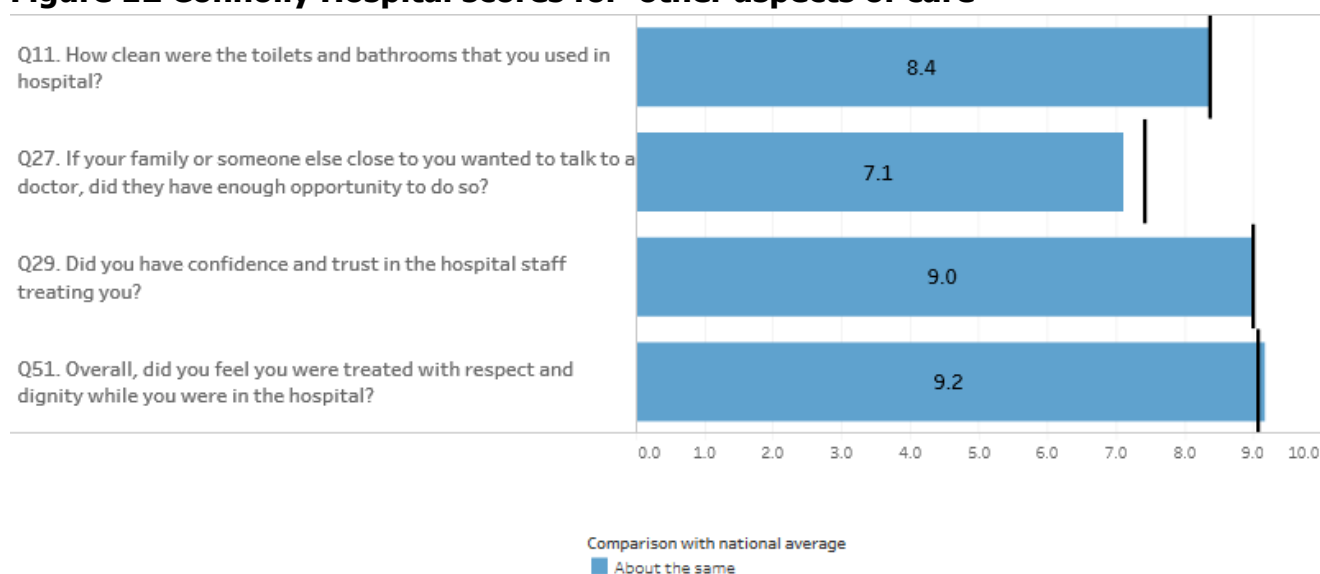
Other, more general experiences of care such as cleanliness of bathrooms and toilets, trust and confidence in hospital staff.

**4 QUESTIONS**

## Other aspects of care

Figure 12 shows the hospital's scores for questions on this stage of care.

**Figure 12 Connolly Hospital scores for 'other aspects of care'\***



\*The black line represents the national average

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

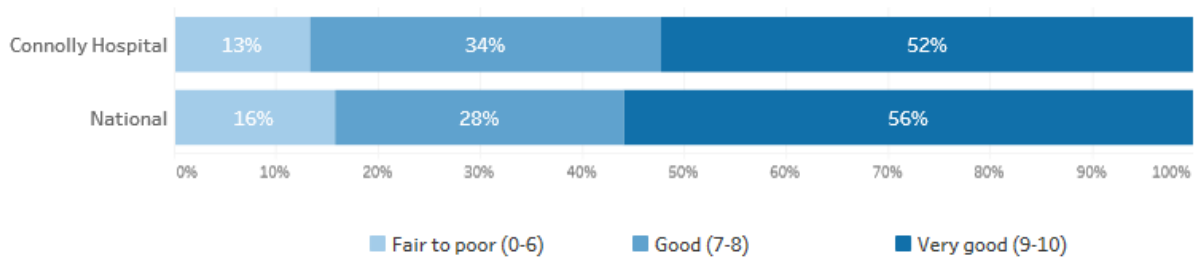
Most participants said they were treated with respect and dignity, and had confidence and trust in the staff that treated them. On the other hand, a number of patients said that there were insufficient opportunities for their families to talk to a doctor.

## 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. 52% of participants from Connolly Hospital rated their care as very good, slightly below the national figure of 56%.

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

**Figure 13 Overall rating of hospital experience for Connolly Hospital and nationally**



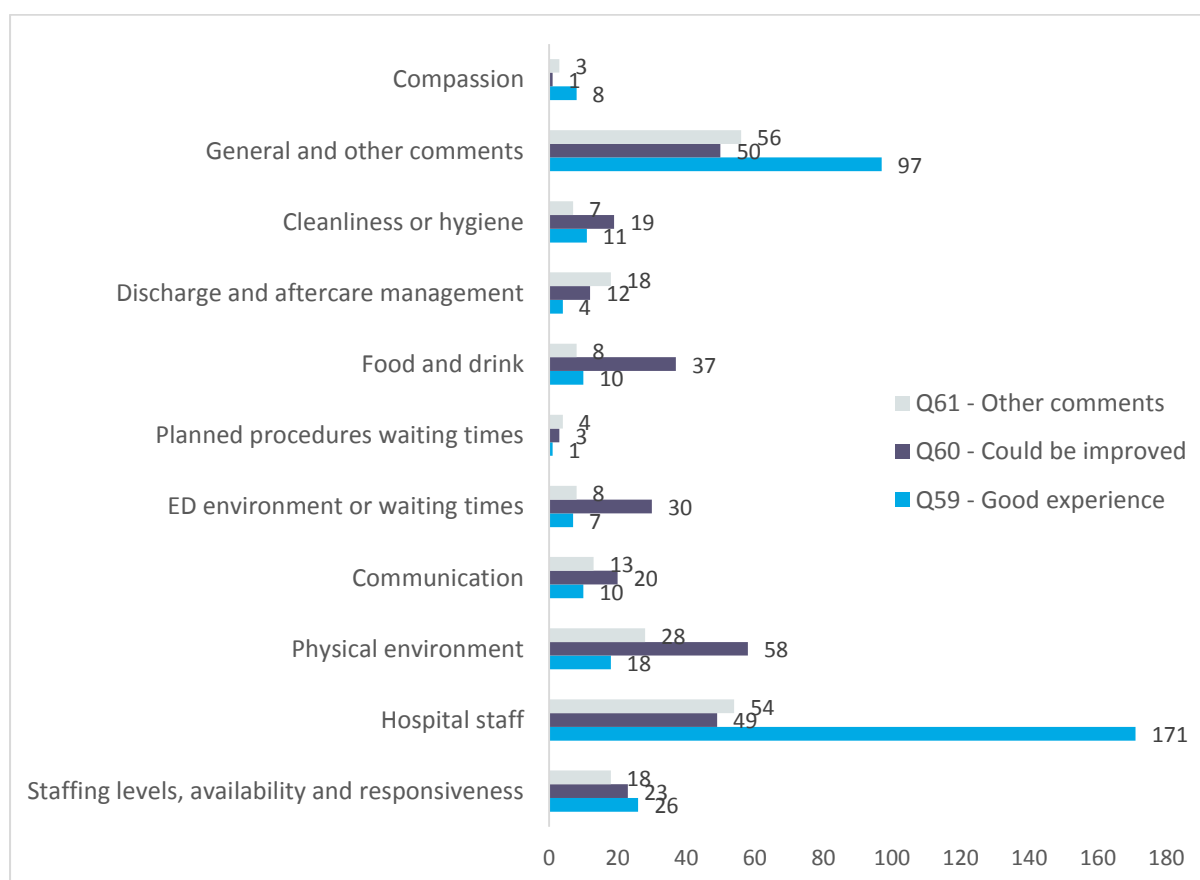
## In their own words: analysis of patients' comments

The last three questions (questions 59-61) of the survey asked patients to provide additional information, in their own words, on their experiences in hospital. 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, 541 comments were received from patients of Connolly Hospital in response to the free-text questions in the 2019 survey.

Figure 14 shows the breakdown of 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 what could be improved, and Q61 asked participants for any other comments or suggestions.

When asked what was good about their care, most patient comments related to the 'hospital staff' and 'general and other comments' themes. Most of the comments suggesting improvements related to the 'physical environment', 'hospital staff' and 'general and other comments' themes. Responses to Q61 covered various themes. A selection of relevant comments from these themes is provided in Figure 15.

**Figure 14 Participant comments by theme**



**Figure 15 Example comments**

**Positive comments**

"Nursing staff were exceptional, kind and caring."	"Excellent service, I was delighted. A doctor, nurses and other staff of the hospital looked after me very well."
"I found that I was treated and taken care of very well, everything for me was done very quick, out-patient appointments also."	"Staff are very good, explained everything properly."
"Each one of the staff were amazing, so professional and caring - regardless of grade - The care and attention I got was wonderful and my sincere thanks to each and everyone"	"I found the Accident and Emergency staff excellent and the fact that I was given a bed in a ward within a couple of hours excellent."

**Suggestions for improvement**

"The hospital could be a bit cleaner and the food could be improved big time."
"Space around bed very limited especially for walking aid and wheelchair, which were necessary for my use."
"More comfortable seating in the Emergency Ward. I was sitting on a chair for 8 hours before getting a bed to lie on and a softer chair would have been a great help. Also the mattresses in the emergency and day wards are too thin. I couldn't get to sleep in either ward. It was like sleeping on a wooden board."

## Conclusion

### What were patients' experiences of hospital care in Connolly Hospital in May 2019?

The majority of patients said that they had positive overall experiences in Connolly Hospital. 86% of patients said they had a 'good' or 'very good' experience, compared with 84% nationally.

Connolly Hospital received an above average score for the 'admissions' stage of care and scores that were similar to the national average for all other stages of care. There was a significant improvement in participant ratings of the 'admissions' stage of care since 2018, whilst ratings for the other stages of care were generally similar to last year.

Three areas of good experience were identified. These were areas where participants gave significantly above-average ratings. For example, many patients said that they received clear answers from a doctor and a clear explanation of their condition or treatment whilst in the emergency department. In addition, the majority of patients felt that they were given enough privacy while being examined or treated in the emergency department.

There were also two areas needing improvement. While the majority of patients rated the hospital food positively, the hospital still scored below the national average in this area. In addition, fewer patients than average said they were always offered a choice of food.

The findings of the 2019 survey will be used to help Connolly Hospital improve the experiences of patients in hospital.

## Appendix 1: Areas of good experience and areas needing improvement

### Improvement map

It is important for hospitals to know if they scored above or below the national average for each question, and this is shown in the improvement map in Figure 16. The improvement map also shows which questions are related to patients' overall experience in hospital. Some questions had a stronger relationship with overall experience than others.

For example, Question 29 which asked patients if they had confidence and trust in hospital staff had a strong relationship with overall experience. This means that patients who said they had confidence and trust in staff were very likely to give a positive rating of their overall experience. Patients who did not have confidence and trust tended to give more negative ratings of their overall experience.

Other questions had a weaker relationship with overall experience – this means that patients' experiences in these areas had little bearing on how they rated their overall experience. An example is Question 13, which asked patients if hospital staff wore name badges. The relationship between [example, change as required - staff wearing name badges and patients' ratings of their overall experience was weak. This means that even if all staff wore name badges, patients may have given negative ratings of their overall experience, or if no staff wore name badges, patients may still have given positive ratings of their overall experience.

It is useful for hospitals to know which questions strongly relate to their patients' overall experience as these are the areas on which they should focus their improvement efforts.

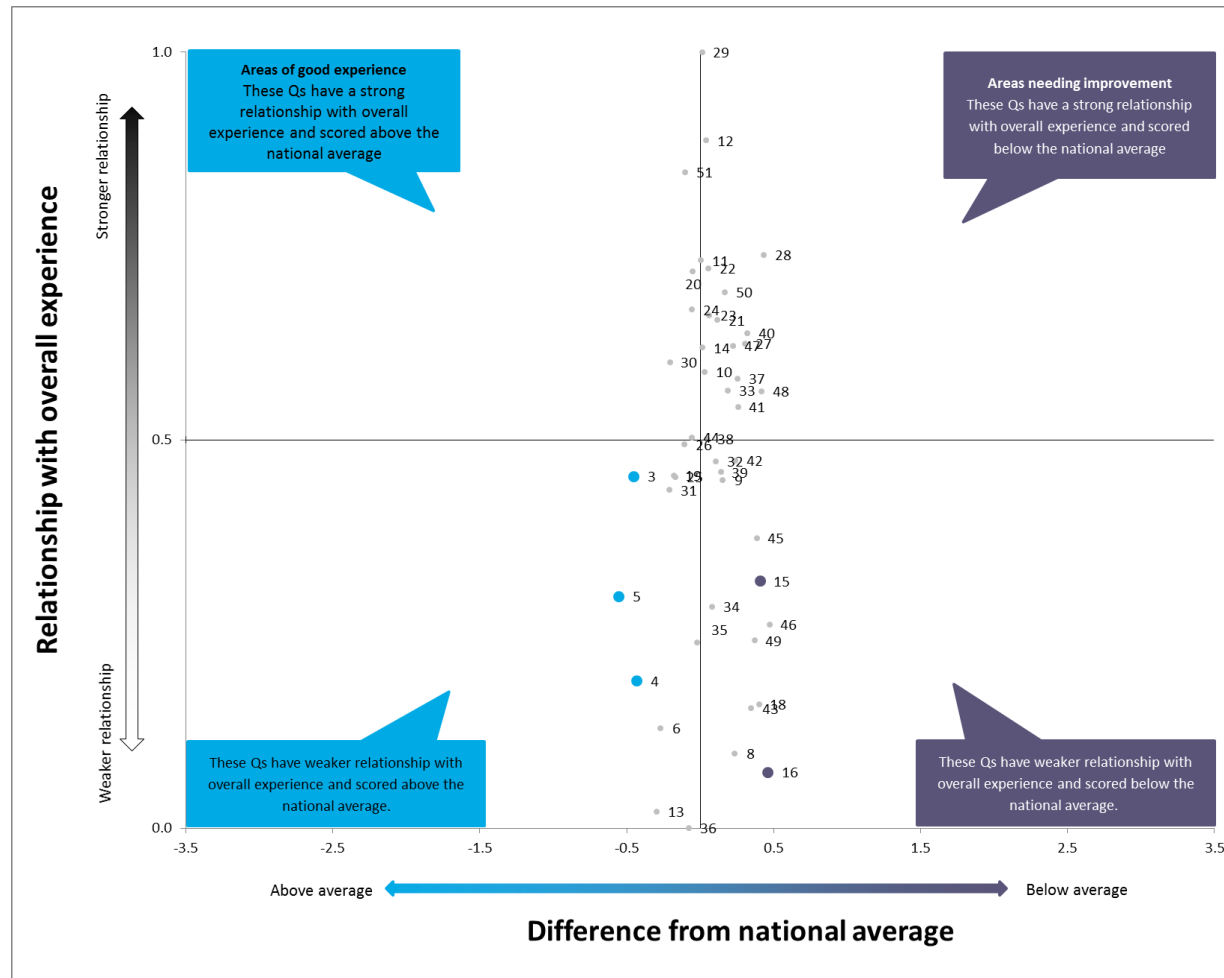
In Figure 16, each dot shows a specific survey question for Connolly Hospital. Questions at the top of the graph are strongly related to overall experience, while those at the bottom have a weaker relationship. Questions to the right of the graph scored below the national average, while those on the left scored above it.

Questions that scored significantly above average and had a stronger relationship with overall experience are areas of good experience. Questions that scored significantly below average and had a stronger relationship with overall experience are areas needing improvement.

The improvement map for each hospital is unique and gives specific information on where a hospital is doing well, and areas where improvements are needed. More information on the science behind the improvement map is available below. An interactive version of the improvement map is also available at <http://www.yourexperience.ie/> along with instructions on how to interpret it.



**Figure 16 Improvement Map for Connolly Hospital**



## How the improvement map is constructed

The improvement map is constructed by charting the normalised correlation between each question and overall experience on the vertical axis, against the difference between the hospital average and national average for each question on the horizontal axis.

### What is correlation?

Correlation is a measure of the relationship between two variables. For example, in general there is a strong correlation between patients saying they were treated with respect and dignity, and patients giving a positive rating of their overall experience in hospital. It can thus be said that there is a strong correlation between respect and dignity, and overall experience. A 'correlation coefficient' is a number between 0 and 1 that represents the strength of a relationship, with 1 being the strongest possible relationship and 0 indicating that there is no relationship. Correlation does not tell us if a change in one variable is caused by a change in the other.

### How do we calculate the correlation coefficient?

The first step in calculating the correlation coefficient between two variables is to calculate their 'covariance'. Covariance is a simple measure of the relationship between two variables and is calculated using the formula below:

$$\text{COV}_{xy} = \frac{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{n - 1}$$

While covariance does measure the relationship between variables, it does so in an unstandardised way, depending on the scale of measurement used. This makes comparing covariances measured on different scales problematic. In order to get around this issue, 'standardisation' must be carried out. In order to do this, the covariance for both variables must be divided by the product of the standard deviations for each variable. The formula below shows how standardisation is carried out, resulting in  $r$ , known as the 'Pearson correlation coefficient'.

$$r = \frac{\text{COV}_{xy}}{s_x s_y} = \frac{\sum (x_i - \bar{x})(y_i - \bar{y})}{(N - 1) s_x s_y}$$

The final step in the analysis is to normalise the correlation coefficients between 0 and 1 using the below formula:

$$r = \frac{r - r_{\min}}{r_{\max} - r_{\min}}$$

In Figure 16, we plot the correlation coefficients between each question and overall experience on the vertical axis. Each question's difference from the national average is plotted on the horizontal axis.

### How do we calculate difference from the national average?

Statistical tests were carried out to examine if there were significant differences between a hospital's score for each question and the national average for that question. A z-test was used to compare question scores at the 99% confidence level. A z-test is a statistical test used to examine whether two population mean scores are different. A statistically significant difference means it is very unlikely that results were obtained by chance alone if there was no real difference. Therefore, when a score is significantly 'higher than' or 'lower than' the national average, this is highly unlikely to have occurred by chance.