# National Inpatient Experience Survey 2019

# South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital

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# South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital

## 2019 survey results

## Respondents

**229**
Number of respondents

**58.2**
Average age

**63%**
Participation rate

## Overall experience

### 2019

| Very Good 80% | Good 18% | Fair to Poor 2% |

### 2018

| Very Good 70% | Good 24% | Fair to Poor 5% |

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

## Stages of care

**9.1** out of 10

**Care on the ward**
Patient ratings of 'care on the ward' in the hospital were above the national average. The hospital received a comparable score in last year's survey.

**9.2** out of 10

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

**9** out of 10

**Discharge or transfer**
Participant ratings of 'discharge or transfer' were above both the national average and last year's score.

# Structure and content of this report

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# About the National Inpatient Experience Survey 2019

The National Inpatient Experience Survey[1] 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%. 229 patients from South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital (SIVUH) 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 South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital?

The majority of participants from South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital reported positive experiences in hospital. 98% of participants said they had 'good' or 'very good' overall experiences, compared with 84% nationally. The hospital scored above the national average for all stages of care and also for overall experience.

Several areas of good experience were identified. These were areas that were related to participants' overall experiences and where participants gave significantly above-average ratings. For example, most patients said their room or ward was very clean. Patients also felt that they were generally as involved as they wanted to be in decisions about their care and treatment. In addition, most patients said that their family, or someone close to them, were given enough information on how to care for them.

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[1] The survey was previously entitled the 'National Patient Experience Survey'. The name was updated in 2019 to more accurately reflect the target population.

One area needing improvement where the hospital scored significantly below the national average was identified. A number of patients said they were not always offered a choice of food.

Compared with last year's survey, the hospital received significantly higher scores for the 'discharge or transfer' stage of care and also for overall experience. Scores for the other stages of care were similar to last year's results.

The findings of the 2019 survey will help South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital to improve patients' experiences of care in hospital.

# Hospital and participant profile

South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital is located in Cork city. There were 107 inpatient beds available in the hospital during the survey period of May 2019.

363 people discharged from South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital during the month of May 2019 were invited to participate in the survey. 229 people completed the survey, achieving a response rate of 63%. 39.7% of participants were male and 60.3% were female. 57 respondents (24.9%) said that their stay in hospital was due to an emergency[2]. Figure 1 below provides information on the respondents who took part in the survey from South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital.

**Figure 1 Participants from South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital by sex, age group and admission route**



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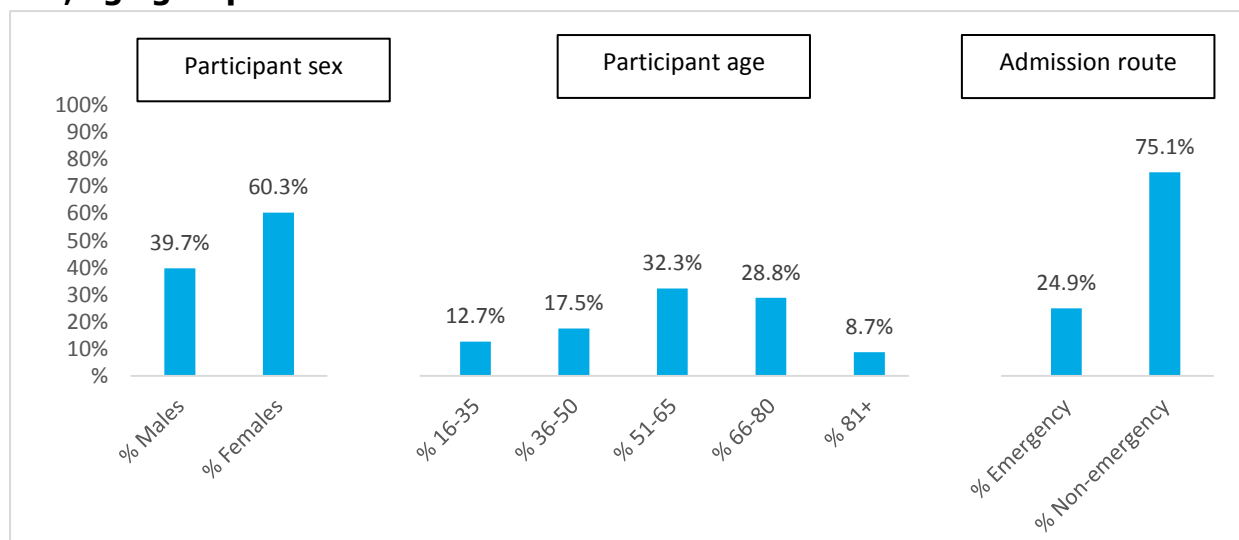
[2]   Patients were asked if their hospital stay was planned in advance or an emergency. While South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital does not have an emergency department, patients may have felt that their condition was an emergency. It is also possible that these patients were originally admitted to a hospital with an emergency department before being transferred to South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital.

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# 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 South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital are:

### Care on the ward
### Cleanliness of room or ward | Q10
195 (86%) of the 227 people who answered this question said that the room or ward they were in was very clean.

### Examinations, diagnosis and treatment
### Involvement in decisions about care and treatment | Q24
Of the 228 people who answered this question, 194 (85%) said that they were definitely as involved as they wanted to be in decisions about their care.

### Discharge or transfer
### Provision of information to family members | Q48
Of the 170 people who answered this question, 139 (82%) said that their family, or someone close to them, was definitely given the information they needed to help care for them.

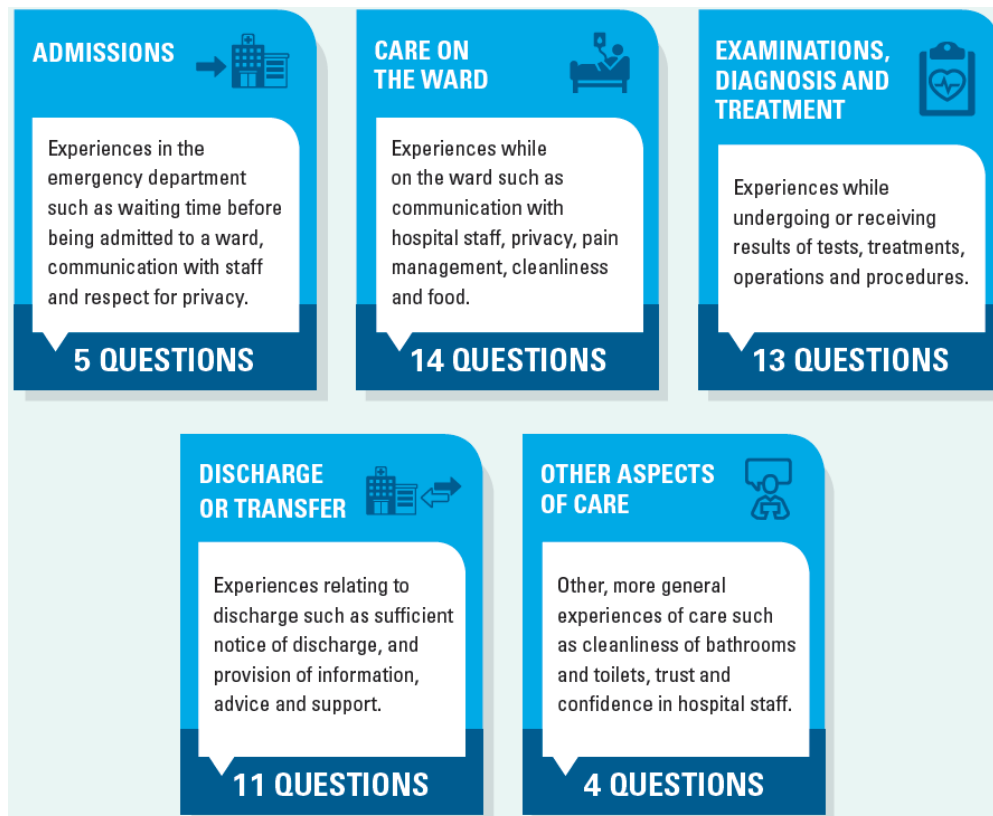## The areas needing improvement in South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital are:
### Care on the ward
### Choice of food| Q16
Of the 215 people who answered this question, 157 (73%) said that they were always offered a choice of food. The hospital scored below the national average on this question.

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# 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. The survey questions were grouped into five stages along the patient journey[3]:

| ADMISSIONS | CARE ON THE WARD | EXAMINATIONS, DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT |
|---|---|---|
| Experiences in the emergency department such as waiting time before being admitted to a ward, communication with staff and respect for privacy. | Experiences while on the ward such as communication with hospital staff, privacy, pain management, cleanliness and food. | Experiences while undergoing or receiving results of tests, treatments, operations and procedures. |
| **5 QUESTIONS** | **14 QUESTIONS** | **13 QUESTIONS** |

| DISCHARGE OR TRANSFER | OTHER ASPECTS OF CARE |
|---|---|
| Experiences relating to discharge such as sufficient notice of discharge, and provision of information, advice and support. | Other, more general experiences of care such as cleanliness of bathrooms and toilets, trust and confidence in hospital staff. |
| **11 QUESTIONS** | **4 QUESTIONS** |

## 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

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[3] As South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital does not have an emergency department, survey participants did not answer the questions on Admissions.

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.

## Changes in patient experience over time

The hospital received significantly higher scores for 'discharge or transfer' and for overall experience, compared with the 2018 survey. Scores for the other stages of care were similar to last year's results. 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 Annual comparison of stage of care scores[4] for South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital**



Comparison with previous year
■ About the same   ■ Higher   ■ N/A

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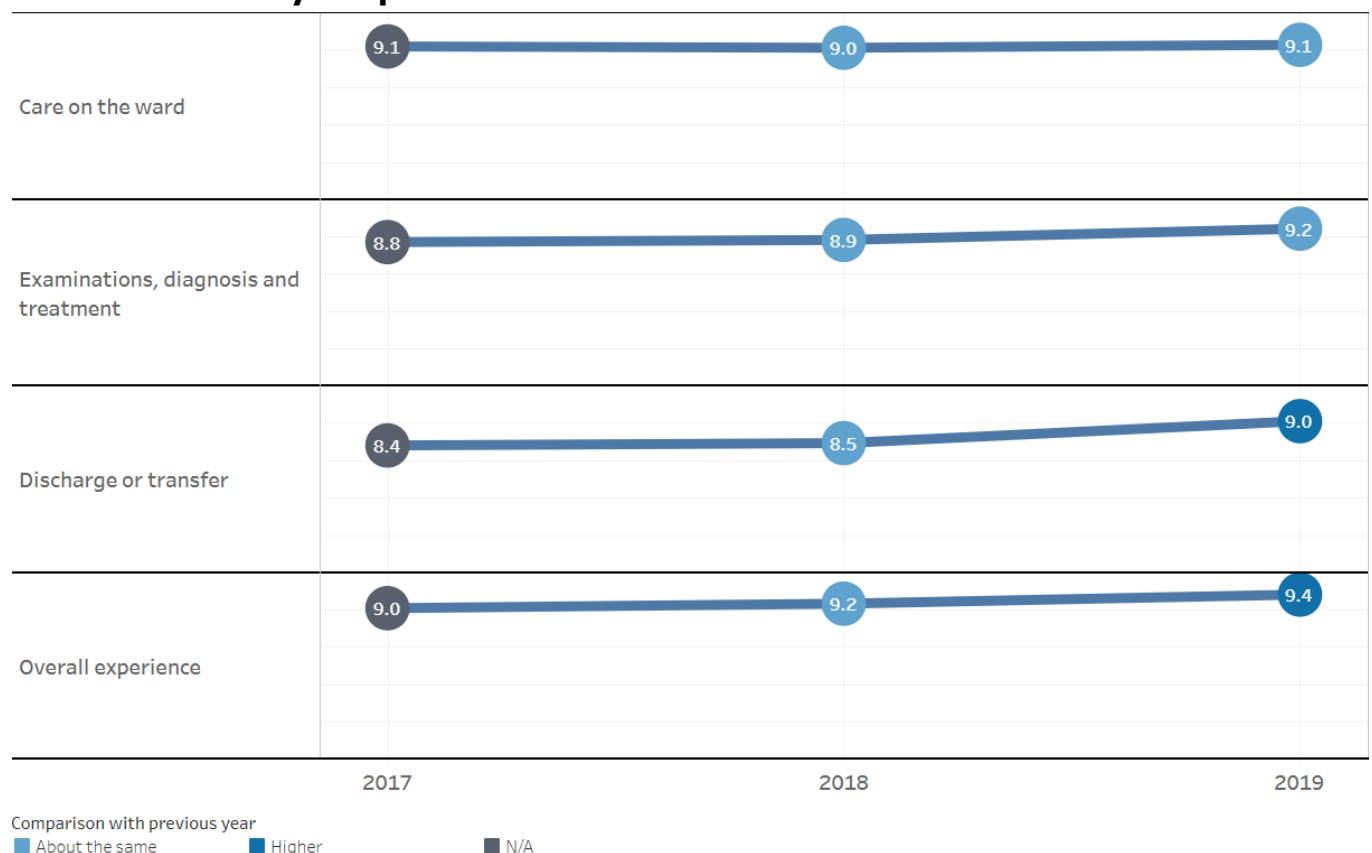
[4] Scores for the stages of care were constructed by calculating the average scores for all the questions belonging to that stage.

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**CARE ON THE WARD**

Experiences while on the ward such as communication with hospital staff, privacy, pain management, cleanliness and food.

**14 QUESTIONS**

# Care on the ward

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

**Figure 3 Comparison of South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital with the national average score for 'care on the ward' (out of a maximum of 10).**

| | |
|---|---|
| National | 8.3 |
| South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital | 9.1 |

Comparison with national average
■ Higher  ■ National
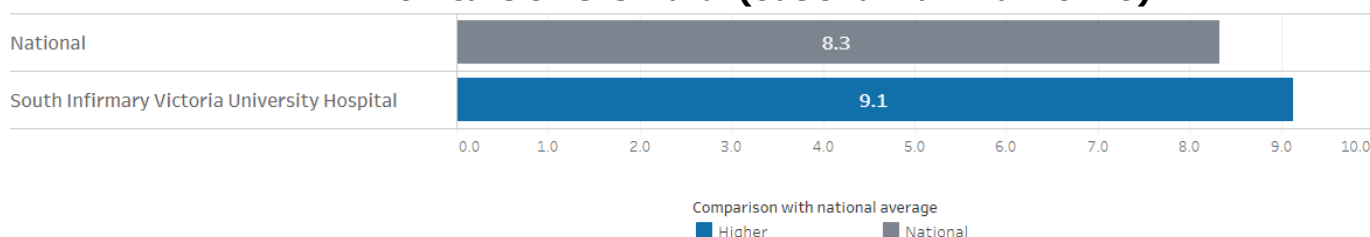
**Figure 4 South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital scores for questions on 'care on the ward'***

| Question | Score |
|---|---|
| Q9. Were you given enough privacy while you were on the ward? | 9.6 |
| Q10. In your opinion, how clean was the hospital room or ward that you were in? | 9.7 |
| Q12. When you needed help from staff getting to the bathroom or toilet, did you get it in time? | 9.6 |
| Q13. Did staff wear name badges? | 9.3 |
| Q14. Did the staff treating and examining you introduce themselves? | 9.5 |
| Q15. How would you rate the hospital food? | 7.7 |
| Q16. Were you offered a choice of food? | 7.9 |
| Q18. Were you offered a replacement meal at another time? | 8.6 |
| Q19. Did you get enough help from staff to eat your meals? | 9.2 |
| Q20. When you had important questions to ask a doctor, did you get answers that you could understand? | 9.2 |
| Q22. When you had important questions to ask a nurse, did you get answers that you could understand? | 9.4 |
| Q23. If you ever needed to talk to a nurse, did you get the opportunity to do so? | 9.5 |
| Q28. Did you find someone on the hospital staff to talk to about your worries and fears? | 8.9 |
| Q32. Do you think the hospital staff did everything they could to help control your pain? | 9.7 |

Comparison with national average
■ Higher  ■ Lower

*The black line represents the national average

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

Patients rated 'care on the ward' at South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital as above the national average. The hospital received a comparable score in last year's survey.  Most patients gave a positive rating of the cleanliness of rooms and wards, and also of pain management. The lowest scoring question for this stage related to patients' ratings of the food, though the hospital scored above the national average for this question.

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**EXAMINATIONS, DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT**

Experiences while undergoing or receiving results of tests, treatments, operations and procedures.

**13 QUESTIONS**

# Examinations, diagnosis and treatment

Figure 5 compares the hospital's overall score for 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment' with the national average. Figure 6 shows the hospital's scores for questions on this stage of care.

**Figure 5 Comparison of South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital with the national average score for 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment' (out of a maximum of 10).**
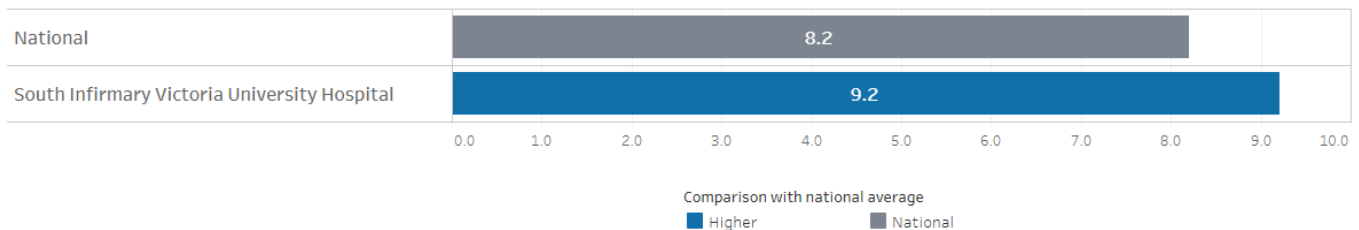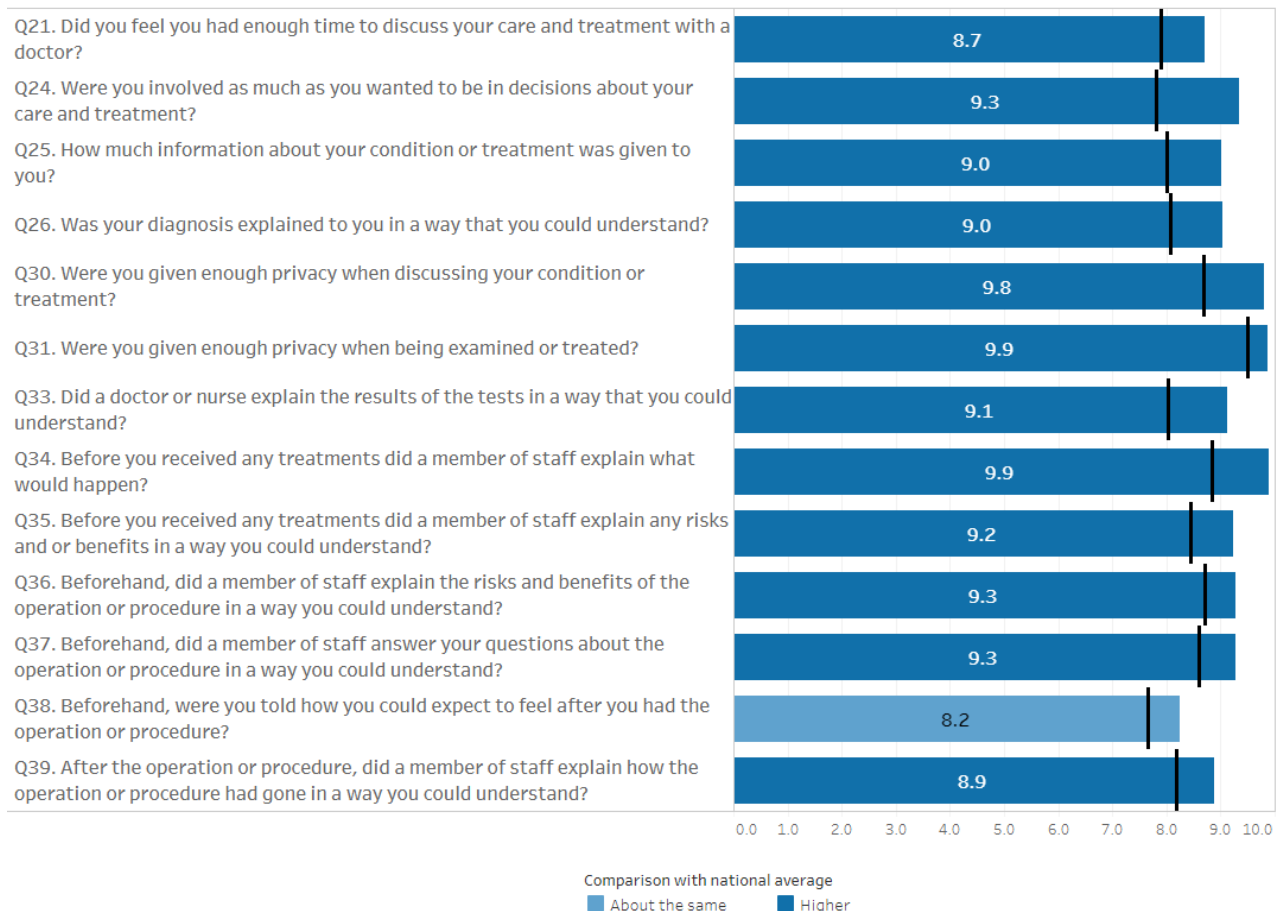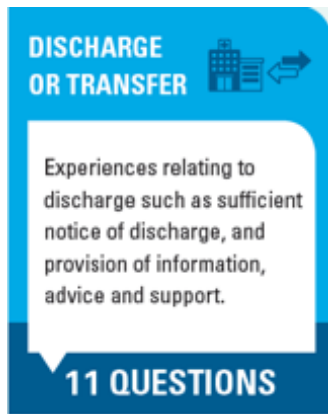


| | Score |
|---|---|
| National | 8.2 |
| South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital | 9.2 |

Comparison with national average
■ Higher  ■ National

**Figure 6 South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital scores for questions on 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment'***



| Question | Score |
|---|---|
| Q21. Did you feel you had enough time to discuss your care and treatment with a doctor? | 8.7 |
| Q24. Were you involved as much as you wanted to be in decisions about your care and treatment? | 9.3 |
| Q25. How much information about your condition or treatment was given to you? | 9.0 |
| Q26. Was your diagnosis explained to you in a way that you could understand? | 9.0 |
| Q30. Were you given enough privacy when discussing your condition or treatment? | 9.8 |
| Q31. Were you given enough privacy when being examined or treated? | 9.9 |
| Q33. Did a doctor or nurse explain the results of the tests in a way that you could understand? | 9.1 |
| Q34. Before you received any treatments did a member of staff explain what would happen? | 9.9 |
| Q35. Before you received any treatments did a member of staff explain any risks and or benefits in a way you could understand? | 9.2 |
| Q36. Beforehand, did a member of staff explain the risks and benefits of the operation or procedure in a way you could understand? | 9.3 |
| Q37. Beforehand, did a member of staff answer your questions about the operation or procedure in a way you could understand? | 9.3 |
| Q38. Beforehand, were you told how you could expect to feel after you had the operation or procedure? | 8.2 |
| Q39. After the operation or procedure, did a member of staff explain how the operation or procedure had gone in a way you could understand? | 8.9 |

Comparison with national average
■ About the same  ■ Higher

*The black line represents the national average

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

Ratings of 'examination, diagnosis and treatment' were above the national average and similar to last year's survey. Most patients said that they were given enough privacy while being examined or treated, and that staff explained procedures in advance. The lowest scoring question for this stage related to whether patients were told how they could expect to feel after an operation or procedure.

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**DISCHARGE OR TRANSFER**

Experiences relating to discharge such as sufficient notice of discharge, and provision of information, advice and support.

**11 QUESTIONS**

# Discharge or transfer

Figure 7 compares the hospital's overall score for 'discharge or transfer' with the national average. Figure 8 shows the hospital's scores for questions on this stage of care.

**Figure 7 Comparison of South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital with the national average score for 'discharge or transfer' (out of a maximum of 10).**
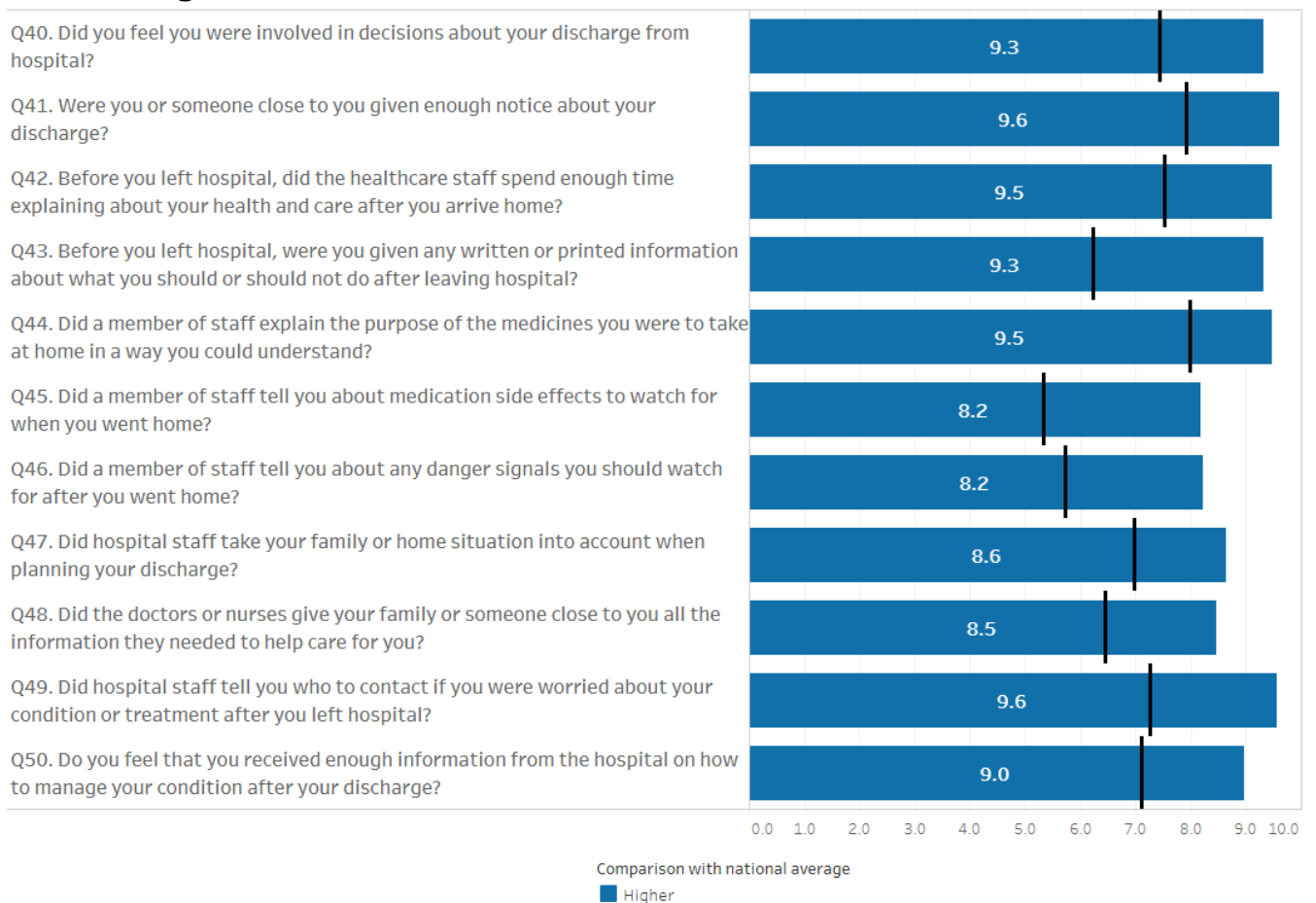
| | |
|---|---|
| National | 7.0 |
| South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital | 9.0 |

Comparison with national average
■ Higher ■ National
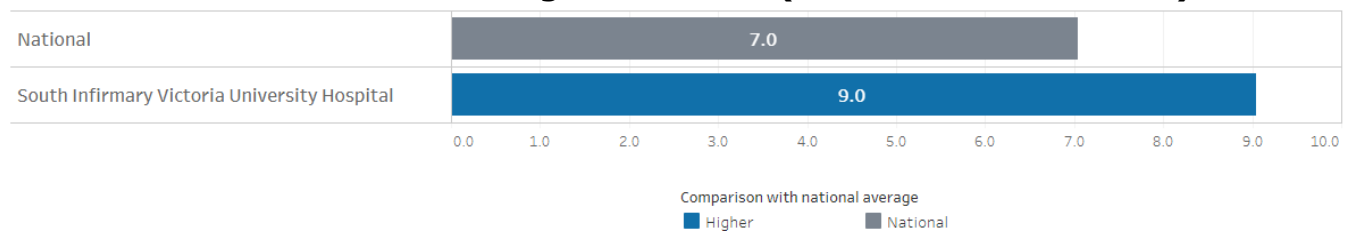
**Figure 8 South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital scores for questions on 'discharge or transfer'***

| Question | Score |
|---|---|
| Q40. Did you feel you were involved in decisions about your discharge from hospital? | 9.3 |
| Q41. Were you or someone close to you given enough notice about your discharge? | 9.6 |
| Q42. Before you left hospital, did the healthcare staff spend enough time explaining about your health and care after you arrive home? | 9.5 |
| Q43. Before you left hospital, were you given any written or printed information about what you should or should not do after leaving hospital? | 9.3 |
| Q44. Did a member of staff explain the purpose of the medicines you were to take at home in a way you could understand? | 9.5 |
| Q45. Did a member of staff tell you about medication side effects to watch for when you went home? | 8.2 |
| Q46. Did a member of staff tell you about any danger signals you should watch for after you went home? | 8.2 |
| Q47. Did hospital staff take your family or home situation into account when planning your discharge? | 8.6 |
| Q48. Did the doctors or nurses give your family or someone close to you all the information they needed to help care for you? | 8.5 |
| Q49. Did hospital staff tell you who to contact if you were worried about your condition or treatment after you left hospital? | 9.6 |
| Q50. Do you feel that you received enough information from the hospital on how to manage your condition after your discharge? | 9.0 |

Comparison with national average
■ Higher

*The black line represents the national average

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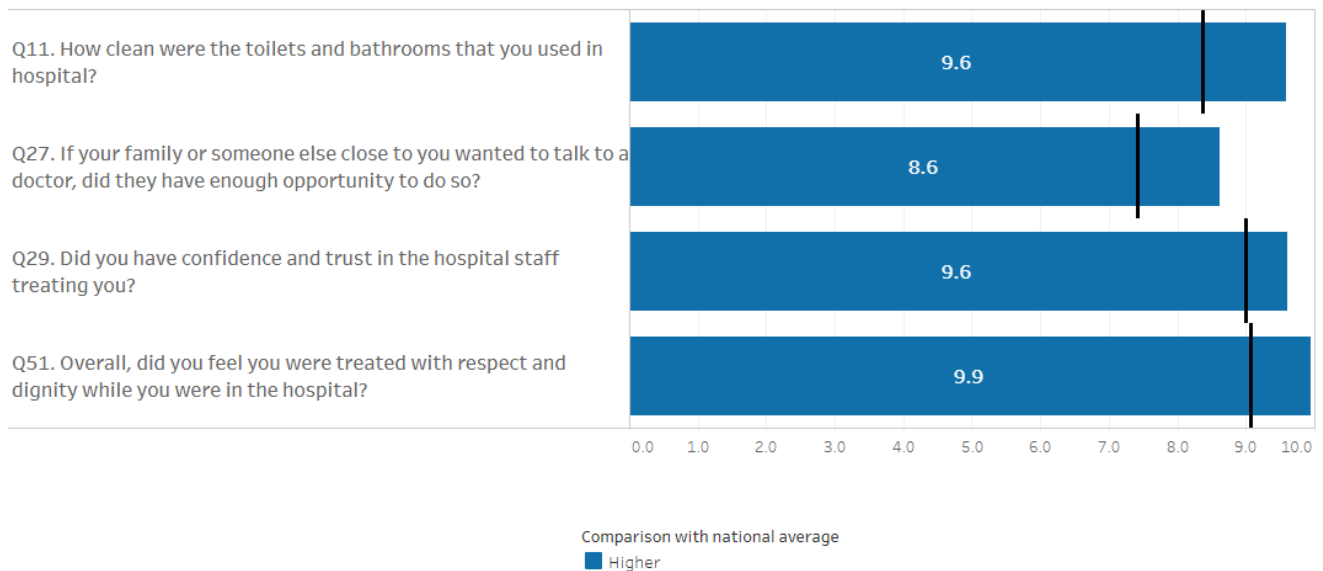## Discharge or transfer: what do these results mean?

Participant ratings for this stage of care were above both the national average and last year's score. Most patients said that they were given sufficient notice of their discharge and were told who to contact if they were worried about their condition after leaving hospital. The lowest scoring questions for this stage related to whether patients were fully informed about medication side effects and potential danger signals to watch out for at home. However, the hospital still scored above the national average for both of these questions.

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**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 9 shows the hospital's scores for questions on this stage of care.

**Figure 9 South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital scores for 'other aspects of care'\***



Q11. How clean were the toilets and bathrooms that you used in hospital? — 9.6

Q27. If your family or someone else close to you wanted to talk to a doctor, did they have enough opportunity to do so? — 8.6

Q29. Did you have confidence and trust in the hospital staff treating you? — 9.6

Q51. Overall, did you feel you were treated with respect and dignity while you were in the hospital? — 9.9

Comparison with national average
■ Higher

\*The black line represents the national average

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

Most participants said they were always treated with respect and dignity while in the hospital. Despite scoring significantly above the national average for Q27, a number of patients said that that there were insufficient opportunities for their families to talk to a doctor.

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# 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. 80% of participants from South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital rated their care as very good, well above the national figure of 56%.

Figure 10 compares the average overall rating of hospital experience for South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital with the national average.

**Figure 10 Overall rating of hospital experience for South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital and nationally**

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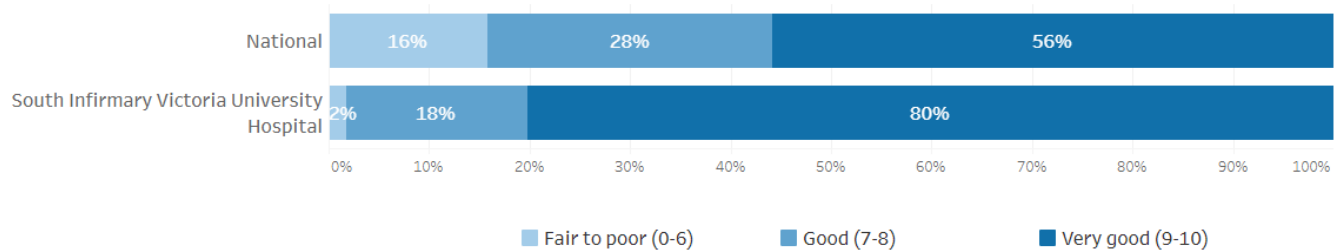
# In their own words: analysis of patients' comments

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, 301 comments were received from patients of South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital in response to the free-text questions in the 2019 survey.

Figure 11 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.

In relation to good aspects of care, most of the comments related to the 'hospital staff', 'general and other comments' and 'physical environment' themes. Most patient suggestions for improvement also related to these three themes. Responses to Q61 covered various themes. A selection of relevant comments from these themes is provided in Figure 12.

## Figure 11 Participant comments by theme

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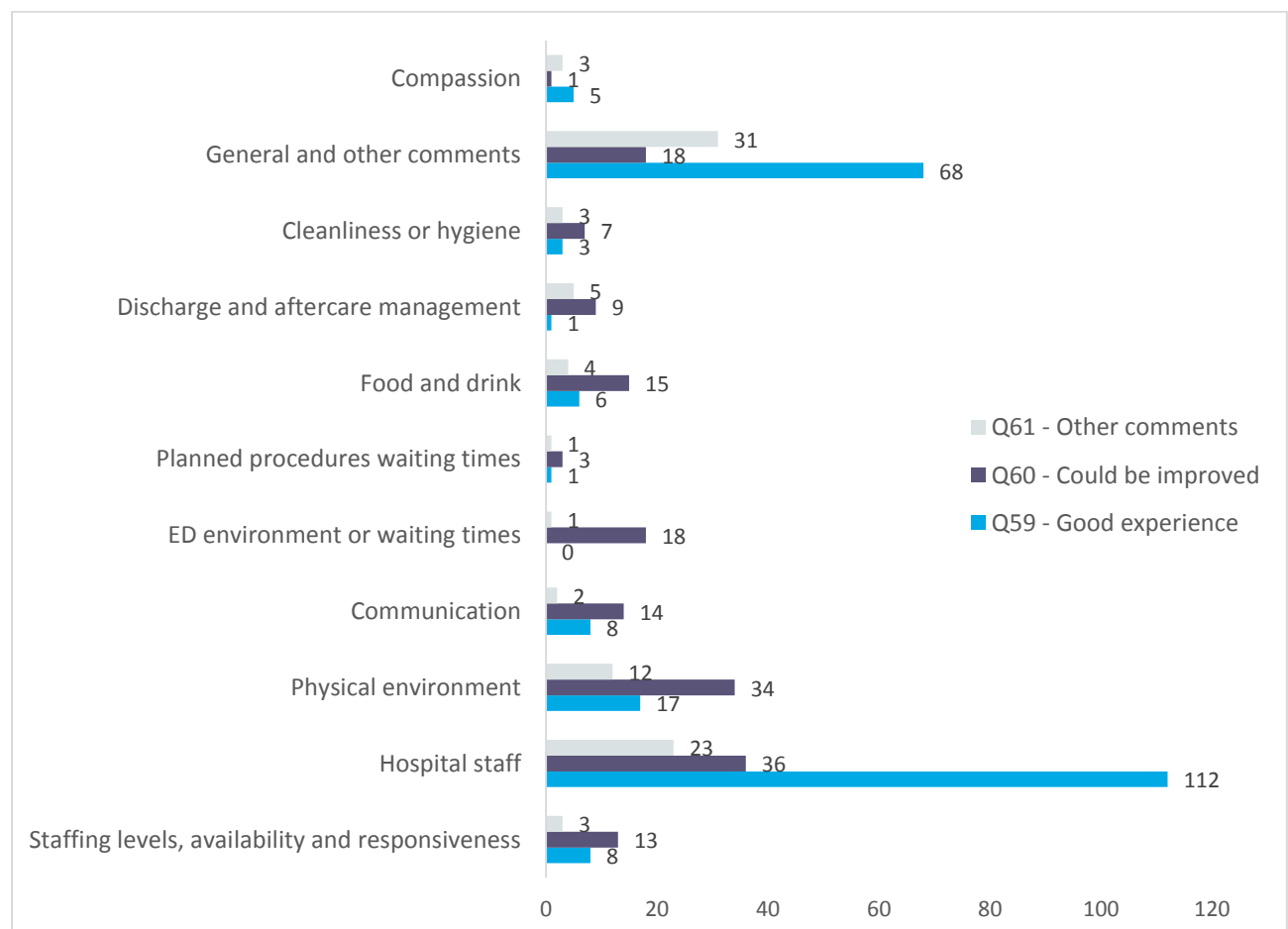
**Figure 12 Example comments**

## Positive comments

| | |
|---|---|
| "All the nursing and care staff including those who brought meals were exceptionally kind and helpful. The doctors also were very kind and my surgeon was absolutely brilliant. I cannot praise too greatly the care I received and I think this is the best hospital in Cork." | "My hospital care was most satisfactory. My "wound care" post procedure was excellent." |
| "All the staff with whom I had contact were extremely, friendly and helpful. I was particularly impressed by the excellent morale." | "The doctors, nurses and all staff were at all times professional. My room was spotless. I cannot fault anything about my stay." |
| "Nurses were very kind. I really like that they were calm, peaceful pictures in the hospital. These allowed me to take my mind off of things. Scenic views and long sketching paintings into the distance were wonderful. More of these would be ideal." | "The consultants number one doctor, she managed my op and care including explanations, information and discharge details. The lady who looked after my meals was kind, gentle and caring and excellent in her role." |

## Suggestions for improvement

| |
|---|
| "The discharge procedure. There appeared to be a lack of communication between nursing staff, OT's, discharge co-ordinator and community." |
| "Information about when and how to take pain medication - I phoned the ward and they answered clearly but it would have been better if I was more sure of meds when I left." |
| "My only complaint was the lack of vegetarian food. Definitely more variety is needed." |

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# Conclusion

## What were patients' experiences of hospital care in South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital in May 2019?

The majority of patients said that they had positive overall experiences in South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital. 98% of patients said they had a 'good' or 'very good' experience, compared with 84% nationally.

South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital received above-average scores for each stage of care and also for overall experience. Participant ratings of care were significantly higher than in last year's survey for both the 'discharge or transfer' stage of care and for overall experience. Ratings of 'care on the ward' and 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment' were largely similar to those received in 2018.

Several areas of good experience were identified. These were areas that were related to participants' overall experiences and where participants gave significantly above-average ratings. For example, most patients said their room or ward was very clean. Patients also felt that they were generally as involved as they wanted to be in decisions about their care and treatment. In addition, most patients said that their family, or someone close to them, was given enough information on how to care for them.

On the other hand, a number of patients said they were not always offered a choice of food. The hospital scored below the national average for this question and it is an area that requires improvement.

The findings of the 2019 survey will be used to help South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital improve the experiences of patients in hospital.

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# 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 13. 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 38 which asked patients if they were they were told how they could expect to feel after a procedure, was strong related to overall experience. This means that patients who said they were told how they could expect to feel were likely to give a positive overall rating of their care. Patients who said they were not told how they could expect to feel 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 16 which asked patients if they were offered a choice of food. The relationship between being offered a choice of food and patients' ratings of their overall experience was weak. This means that even if patients were always offered a choice of food, they may have given negative ratings of their overall experience, or if patients were never offered a choice of food, they 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 13, each dot shows a specific survey question for South Infirmary Victoria University 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.

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The improvement map for each hospital is unique and gives specific information on where the 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.

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**Figure 13 Improvement Map for South Infirmary Victoria University Hospital**
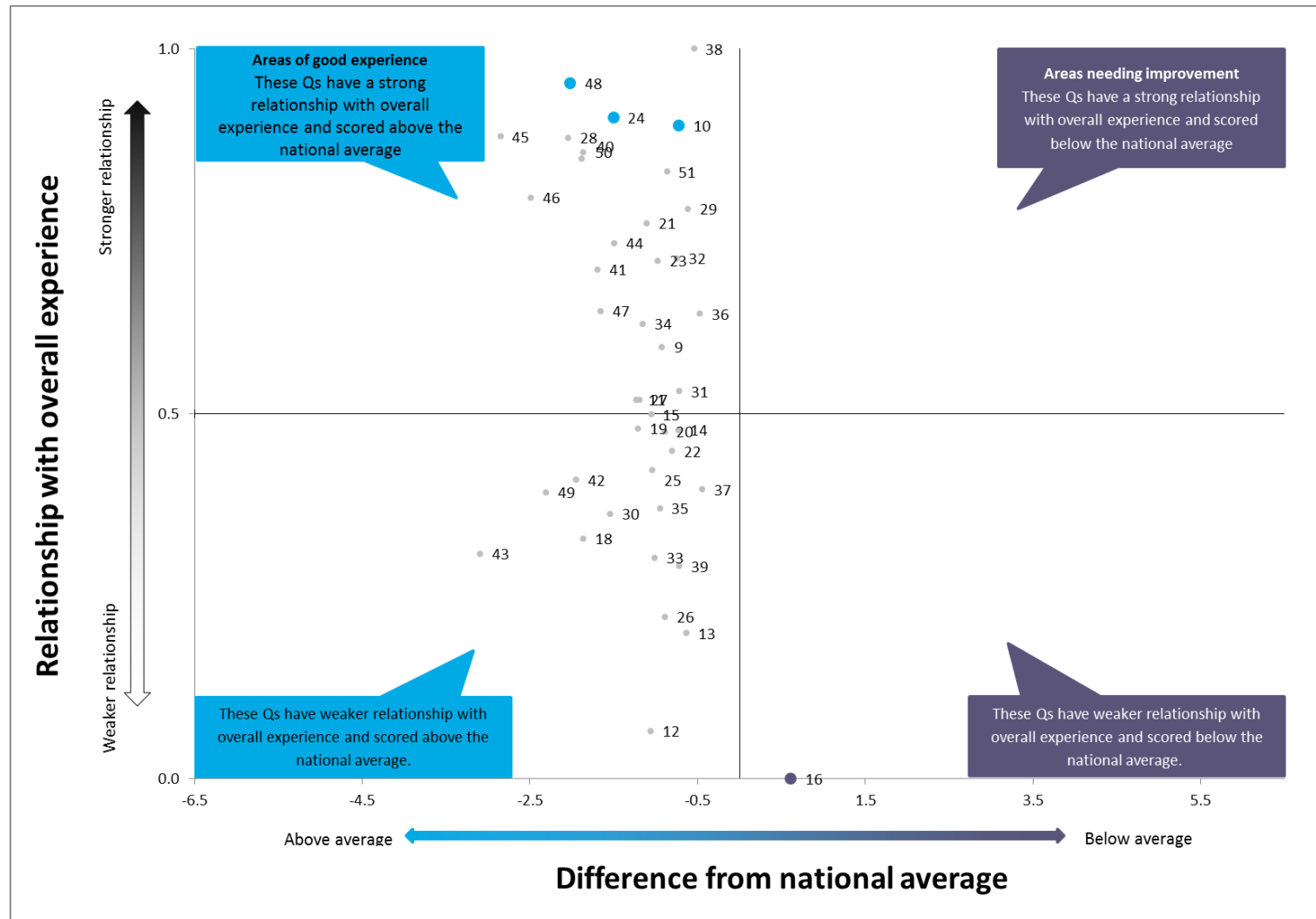
## How the improvement map is constructed

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:

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

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'.

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

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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.

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