

# National Inpatient Experience Survey 2019

## Wexford General Hospital

## 2019 survey results

### Respondents



**280**

Number of respondents



**64.9**

Average age



**46%**

Participation rate

### Overall experience

#### 2019

Very Good  
**55%**

Good  
**29%**

Fair to Poor  
**16%**

#### 2018

Very Good  
**49%**

Good  
**32%**

Fair to Poor  
**20%**

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

### Stages of care

**8.3**  
out of 10

#### Admission to hospital

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



**8.4**  
out of 10

#### Care on the ward

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



**8.1**  
out of 10

#### Examination, diagnosis and treatment

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



**7**  
out of 10

#### Discharge or transfer

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%. 280 patients from Wexford General 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 Wexford General Hospital?

The majority of participants from Wexford General Hospital reported positive experiences in hospital. 84% of participants said they had 'good' or 'very good' overall experiences — the same as the national average.

The hospital scored above the national average for questions on 'admissions'. Ratings of the other stages were about the same as the national average<sup>2</sup>.

Three 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, many patients said that while they were in the emergency department, they were treated with respect and dignity and were given

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

<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'.

enough privacy when being examined or treated. Most patients also said that the ward they were in was very clean.

There was also one area needing improvement. While the majority of patients said that all of the staff wore name badges, the hospital still scored below the national average for this question.

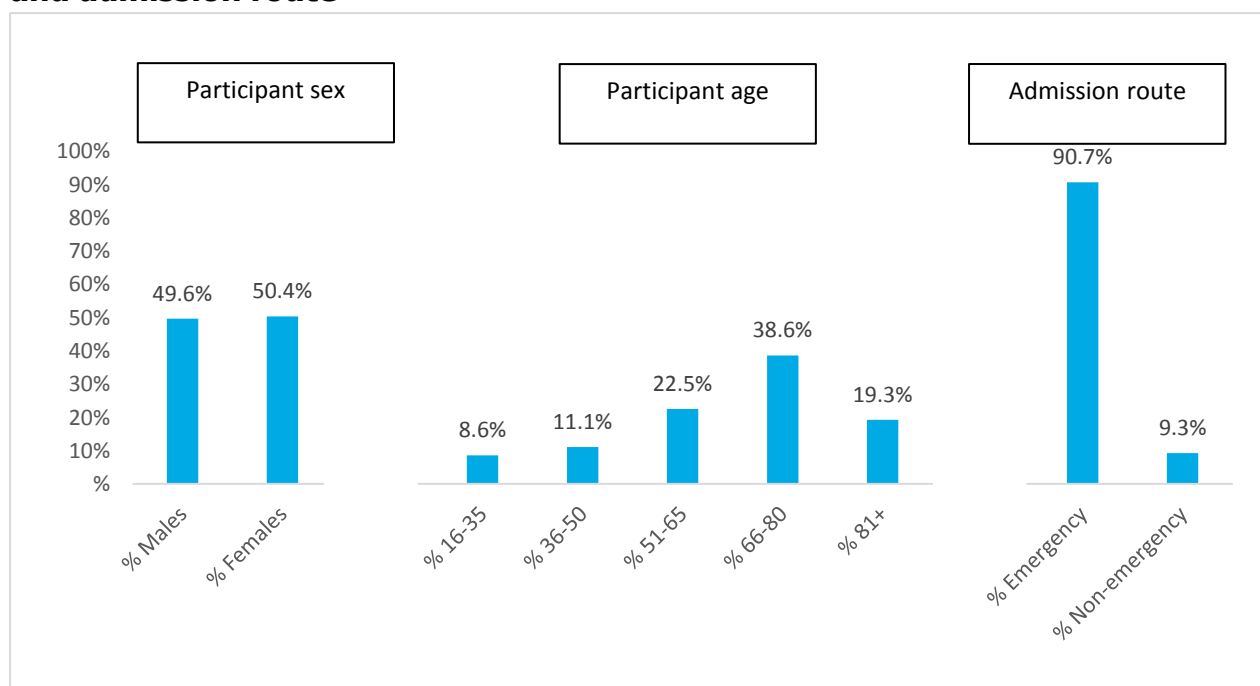
There were no significant differences from the 2018 survey. The findings of the 2019 survey will help Wexford General Hospital to improve patients' experiences of care in hospital.

## Hospital and participant profile

Wexford General Hospital is located in Co. Wexford. There were 225 inpatient beds available in the hospital during the survey period of May 2019.

617 people discharged from Wexford General Hospital during the month of May 2019 were invited to participate in the survey. 280 people completed the survey, achieving a response rate of 46%. 50% of participants were male and 50% were female. 254 respondents (91%) 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 Wexford General Hospital

**Figure 1 Participants from Wexford General 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 Wexford General Hospital are:

### Admissions

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

191 (81%) of the 237 people who answered this question said that they were always given enough privacy when being examined or treated in the emergency department.

### Admissions

#### Respect and dignity in the emergency department | Q6

Of the 238 people who answered this question, 208 (87%) said that they were always treated with respect and dignity while in the emergency department.

### Care on the ward

#### Cleanliness of room or ward | Q10

Of the 273 people who answered this question, 209 (77%) said that the room or ward they were in was very clean.

## The areas needing improvement in Wexford General Hospital are:

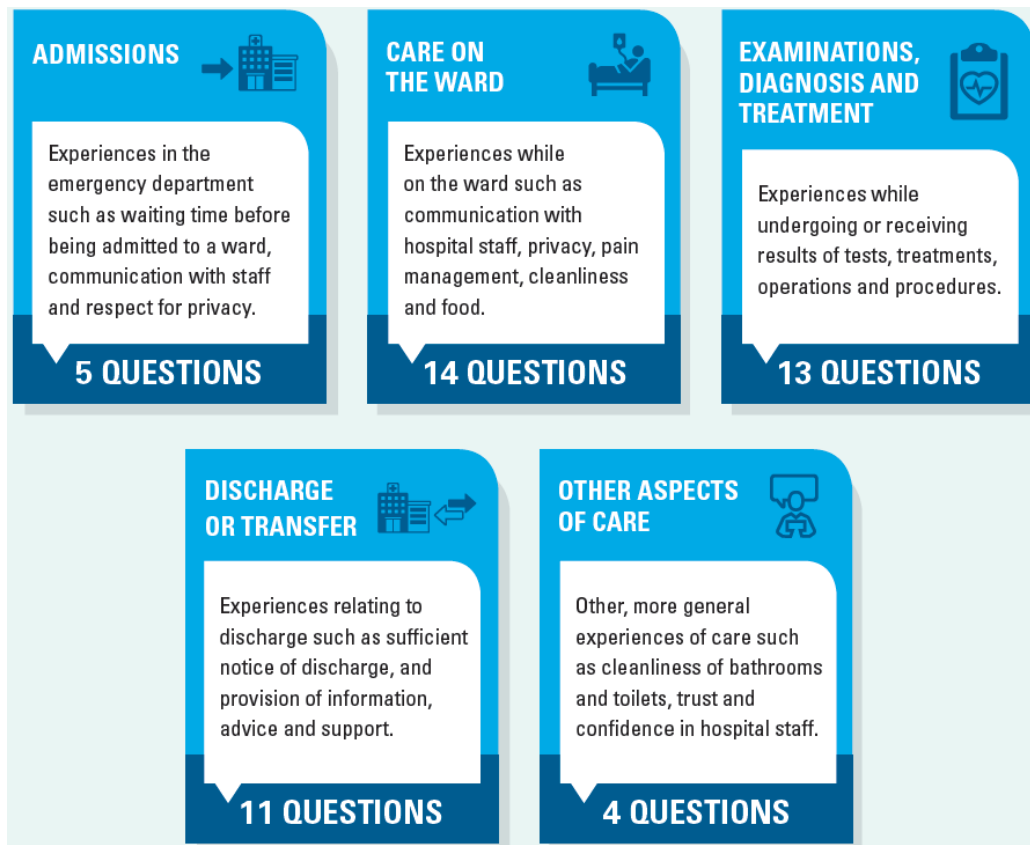
### Care on the ward

#### Staff name badges | Q13

Of the people who answered this question, 164 (71%) said that all of the staff wore name badges. 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

There were no significant changes in patient experience from the 2018 survey. Figure 2 shows a comparison of scores for individual stages of care.

It is important that any 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<sup>3</sup> for Wexford General Hospital**



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

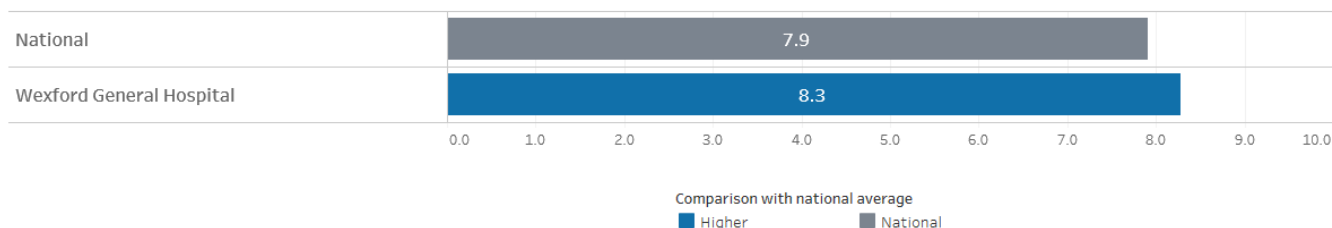




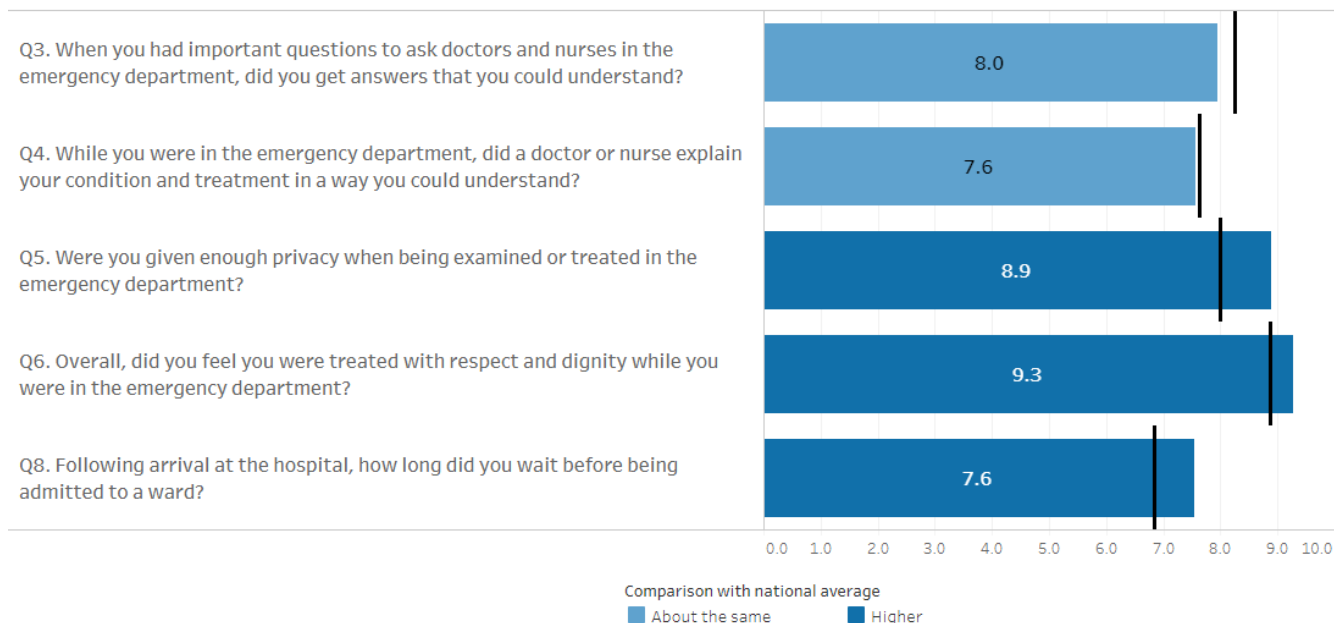
## Admissions

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



**Figure 4 Wexford General Hospital scores for questions on 'admissions'\***



\*The black line represents the national average

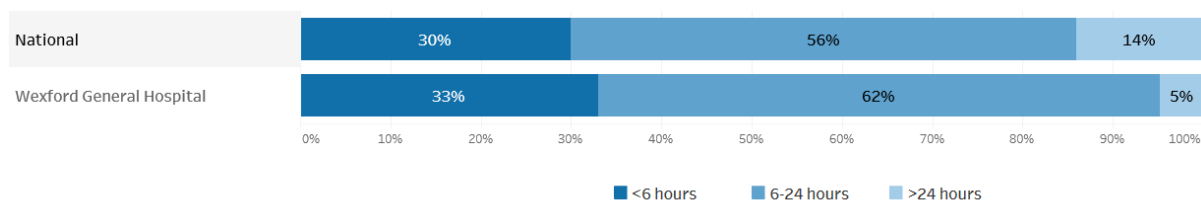
## Emergency department waiting times<sup>4</sup>

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 Wexford General Hospital, 76 respondents (33%) said they were admitted to a ward within six hours of arriving at the emergency department, while 143 respondents (62%) waited between six and 24 hours. 11 respondents (5%) said that they waited 24 hours or more before being admitted to a ward, with three of these waiting 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 Wexford General Hospital, compared with the national average.

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



### Admissions: what do these results mean?

Patient ratings of admission to Wexford General Hospital were higher than the national average and similar to the hospital's 2018 score. Most patients said they were treated with respect and dignity in the emergency department. The joint-lowest scoring questions for this stage related to the explanations patients received of their condition or treatment, and their waiting times for admission. Nevertheless, waiting times were significantly shorter than the national average.

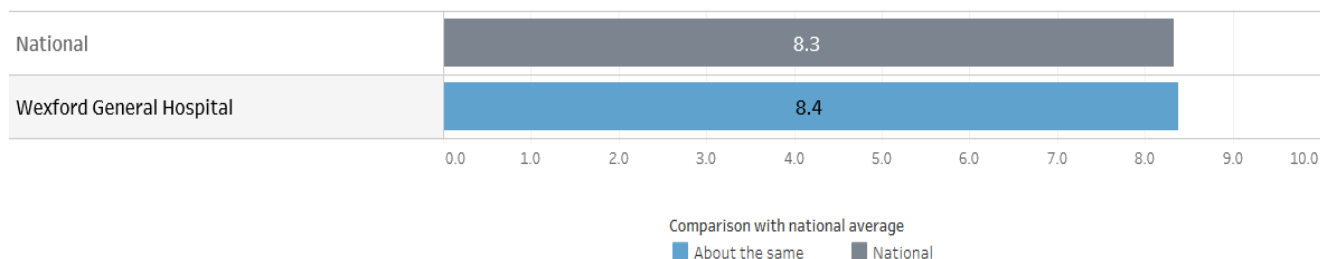
<sup>4</sup> The HSE measures emergency department waiting times differently to the survey, namely from the time a patient registers at the emergency department until they leave it. It is likely that there are some differences between survey findings and the official HSE figures. The HSE 2019 targets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



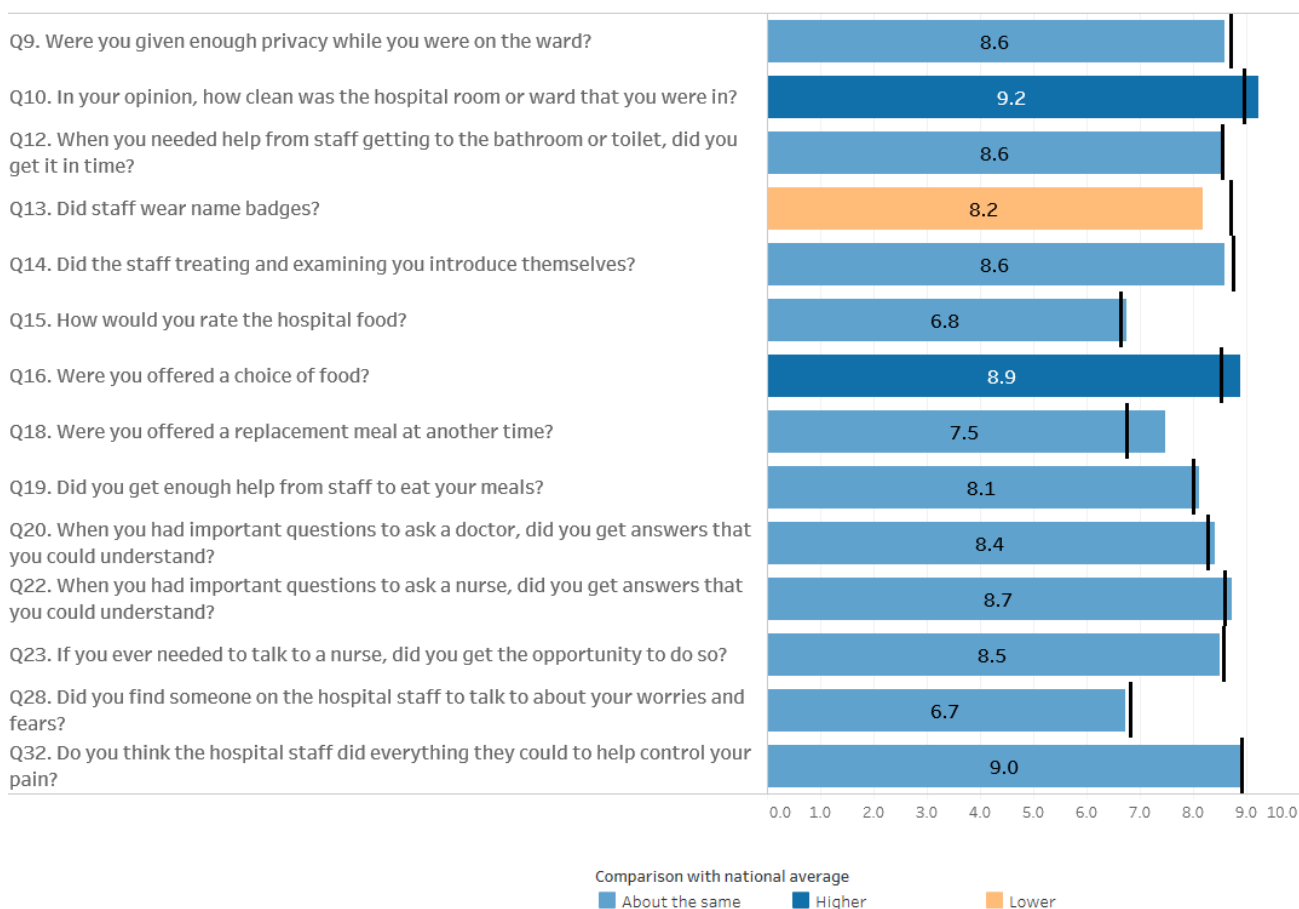
## Care on the ward

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



**Figure 7 Wexford General 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?

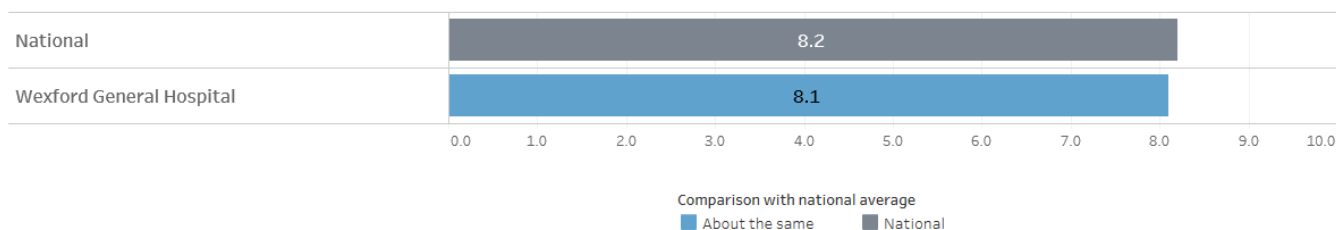
Patient ratings of 'care on the ward' in Wexford General Hospital received were about the same as the national average and similar to last year's survey. Most patients said that the room or ward they were in was very clean. The lowest scoring question for this stage related to whether patients could find someone to talk to about their worries and fears.



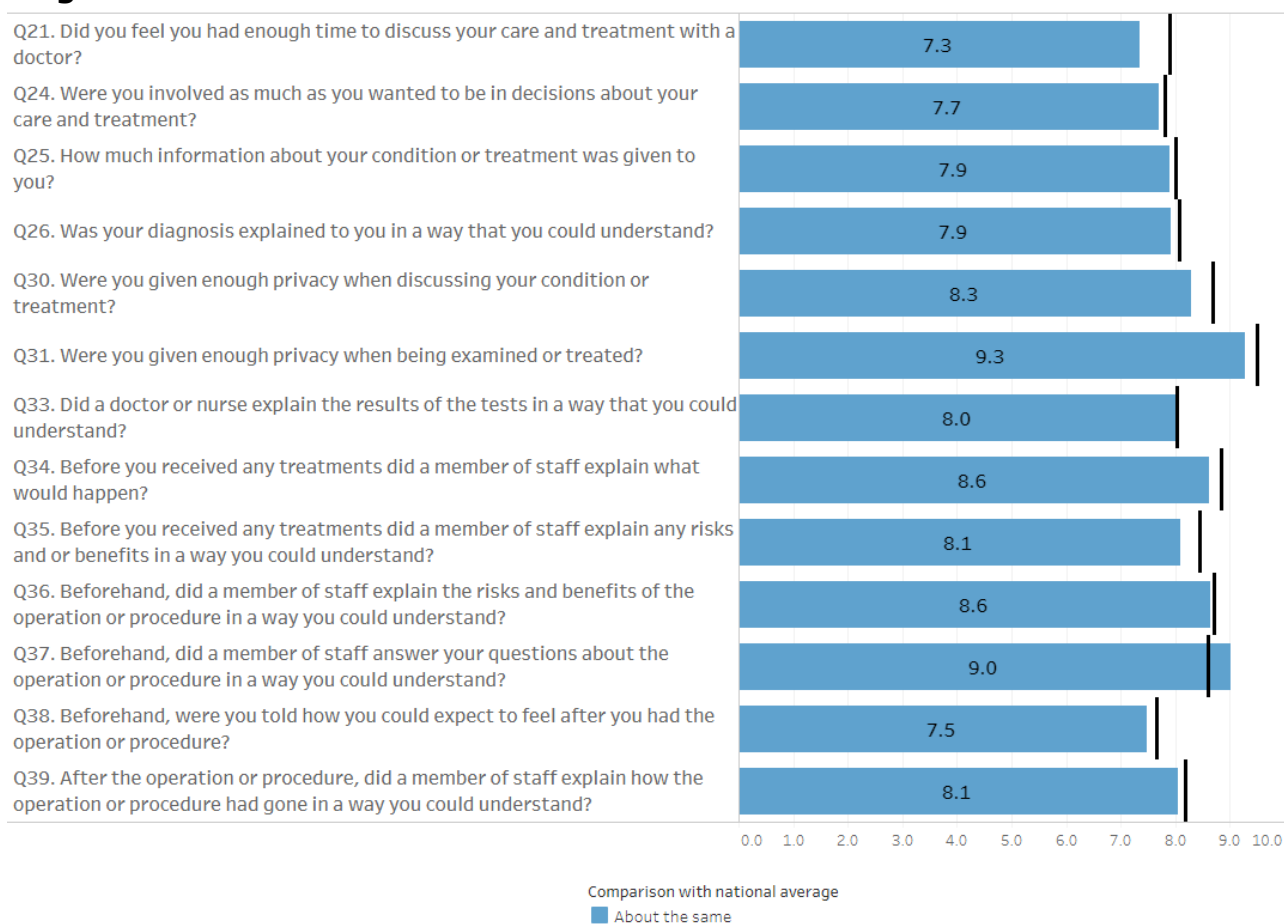
## Examinations, diagnosis and treatment

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

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



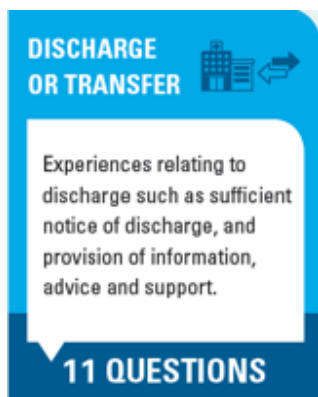
**Figure 9 Wexford General Hospital scores for questions on 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment'\***



\*The black line represents the national average

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

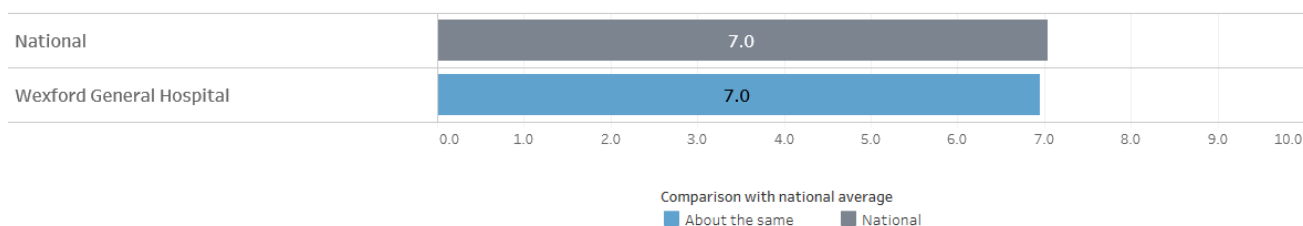
Ratings of 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment' were about the same as the national average and similar to last year's survey. Most patients said that they were given enough privacy while being examined or treated. The lowest scoring question related to the time patients had to discuss their care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



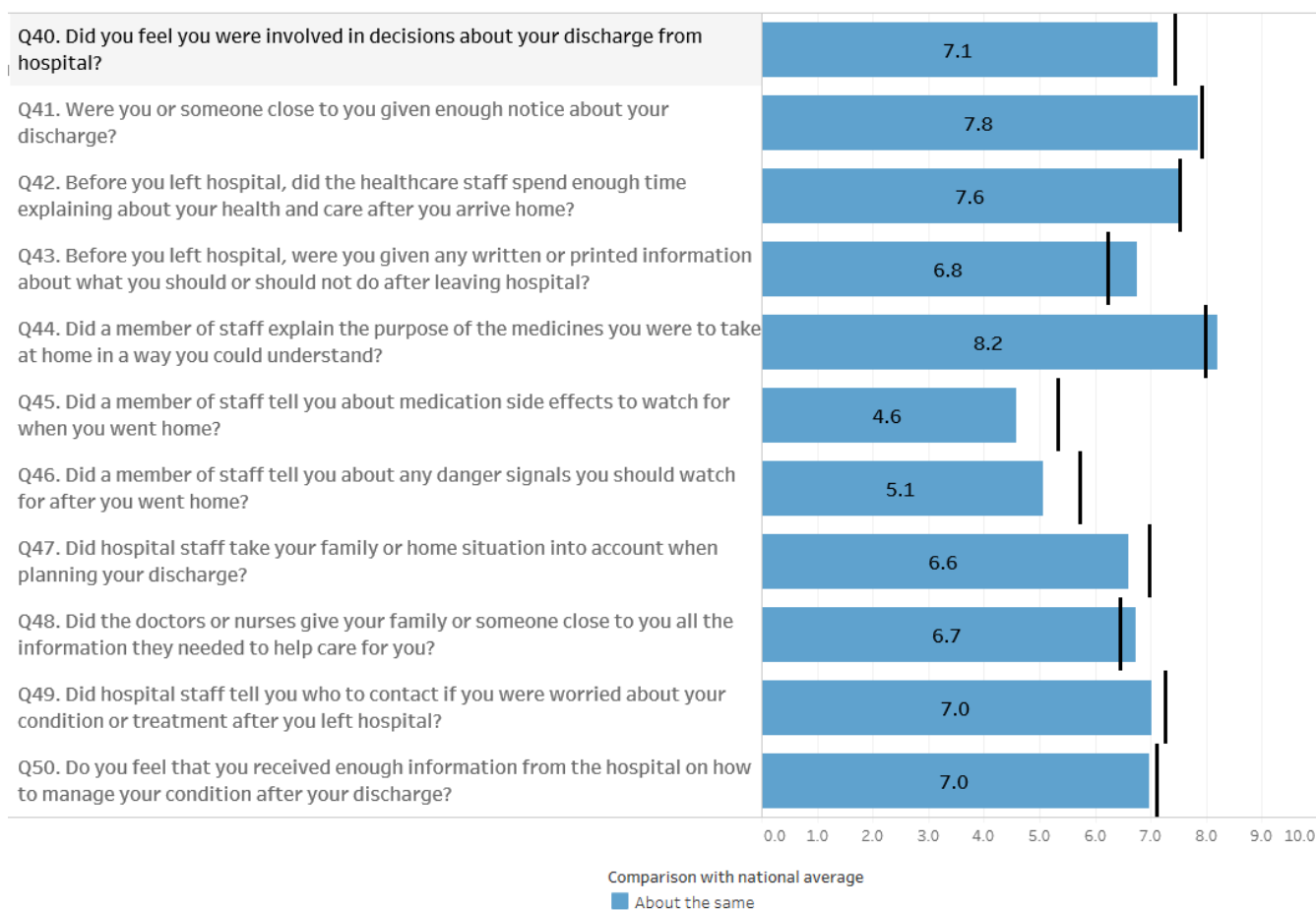
## Discharge or transfer

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



**Figure 11 Wexford General 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 a member of staff explained the purpose of medications they were to take at home. The lowest scoring question for this stage related to explanations of the potential side effects of medications.



**OTHER ASPECTS  
OF CARE**

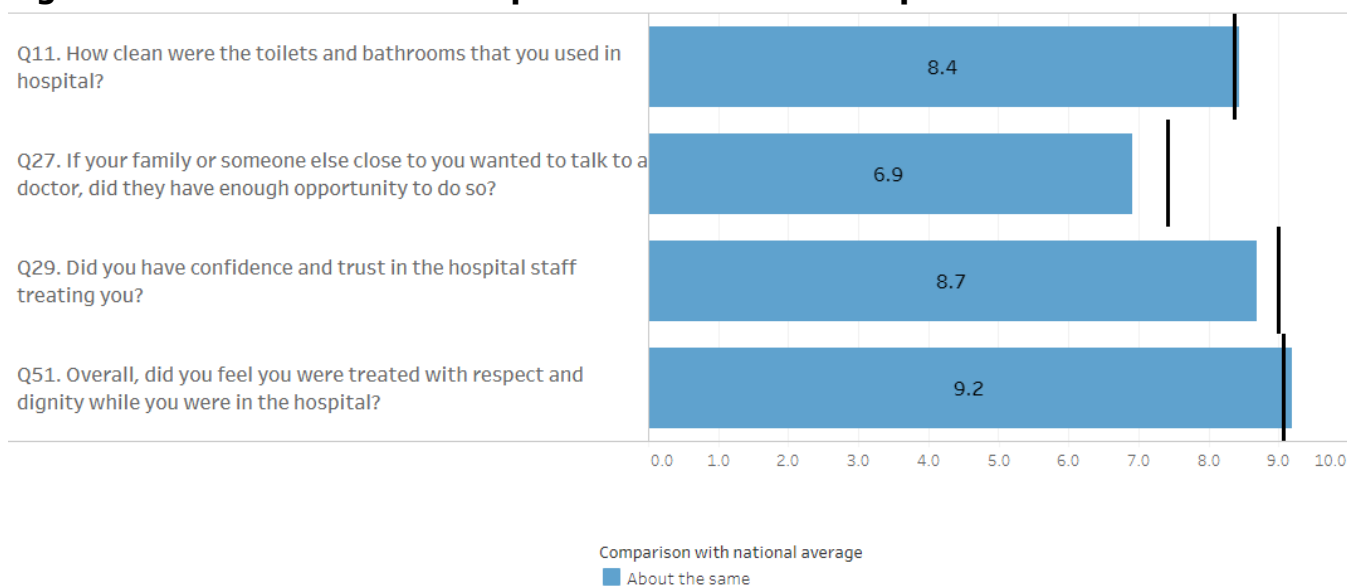
Other, more general experiences of care such as cleanliness of bathrooms and toilets, trust and confidence in hospital staff.

**4 QUESTIONS**

## Other aspects of care

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

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



\*The black line represents the national average

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

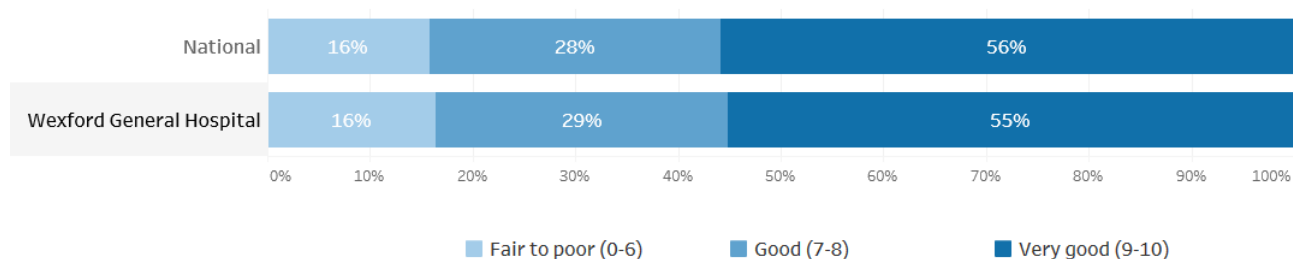
Most participants said they were treated with respect and dignity while they were in Wexford General Hospital. However, a number of patients said that there were insufficient opportunities for their families to talk to a doctor.

## 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. 55% of participants from Wexford General Hospital rated their care as very good, slightly below the national figure of 56%.

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

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



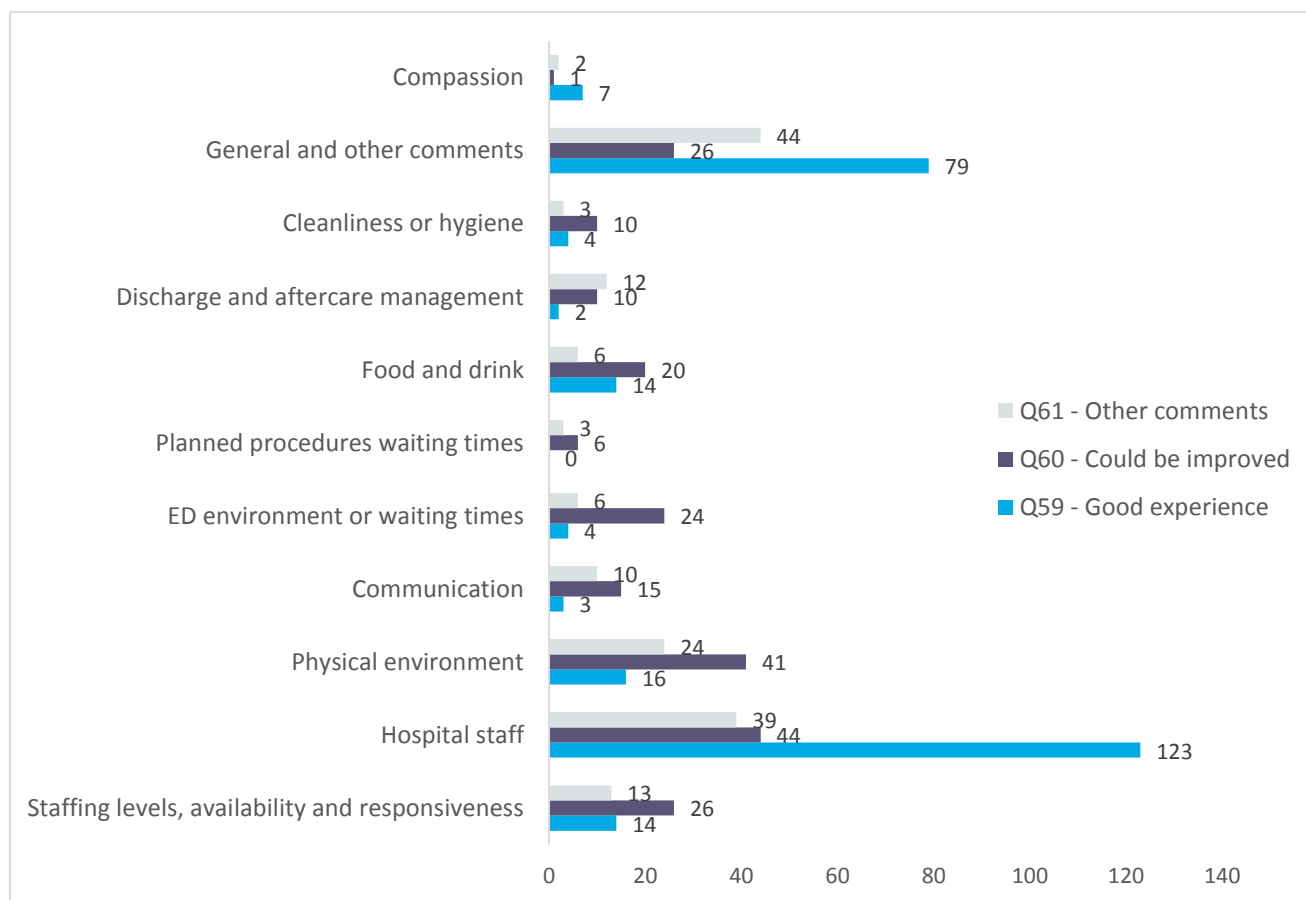
## In their own words: analysis of patients' comments

The last three questions (questions 59-61) of the survey asked patients to provide additional information, in their own words, on their experiences in 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, 405 comments were received from patients of Wexford General 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' and 'hospital staff' 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

"Staff were excellent — doctors waiting for ambulance. I have been looked after in a most compassionate way and I wish to thank them most sincerely."	"In light of the extremely busy workload of all nurses and ward assistants, they couldn't have been more kind or caring to me during my hospital stay."
"I took particular note of food served at lunch time and dinner was of excellent quality."	"I was looked after very well, and was treated with respect and dignity at all times. The nurses, doctors, catering staff were all lovely."
"Within 15 minutes of arriving at A&E I was being attended to by a triage nurse, and by two doctors within 20 minutes. I couldn't fault their level of care and courtesy shown to me."	"I had privacy when I started getting treatment in A+E. The antibiotics and tablets they used on me did largely get rid of my pain. The food was nice."

### Suggestions for improvement

"Nighttime I felt there wasn't enough staff. I was needing to go to the bathroom a lot with help and I found it sometimes difficult to get a nurse as they were busy."
"Communication re. update on what was happening in plain English and the next step/what was happening next and timeline."
"On the ward, although curtains are drawn for examination and consultation, every patient's business becomes public. Perhaps consultants and their teams should be more aware of this and speak more quietly."

## Conclusion

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

The majority of patients said that they had positive overall experiences in Wexford General Hospital. 84% of patients said they had a 'good' or 'very good' experience—the same as the national average.

Wexford General Hospital received a similar score to the national average for all stages of care apart from the 'admissions' stage, where participant ratings were above the national average. In general, ratings of care for each stage of care were similar to those received in 2018.

Three 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 that while they were in the emergency department, they were treated with respect and dignity, and were given privacy when being examined or treated. A number of patients also reported that the ward they stayed in was very clean.

There was also some room for improvement. While the majority of patients said that staff members wore name badges, the hospital scored below the national average for this question.

The findings of the 2019 survey will be used to help Wexford General 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 6 which asked patients if they were treated with respect and dignity had a strong relationship with overall experience. This means that patients who said they were treated with respect and dignity were very likely to give a positive rating of their overall experience. Patients who felt they were not treated with respect and dignity 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 relationships between being offered a choice of food and patients' ratings of their overall experience was weak. This means that even if patients were offered a choice of food, patients may have given negative ratings of their overall experience, or if patients were not offered a choice, they may still have given positive ratings of their overall experience.

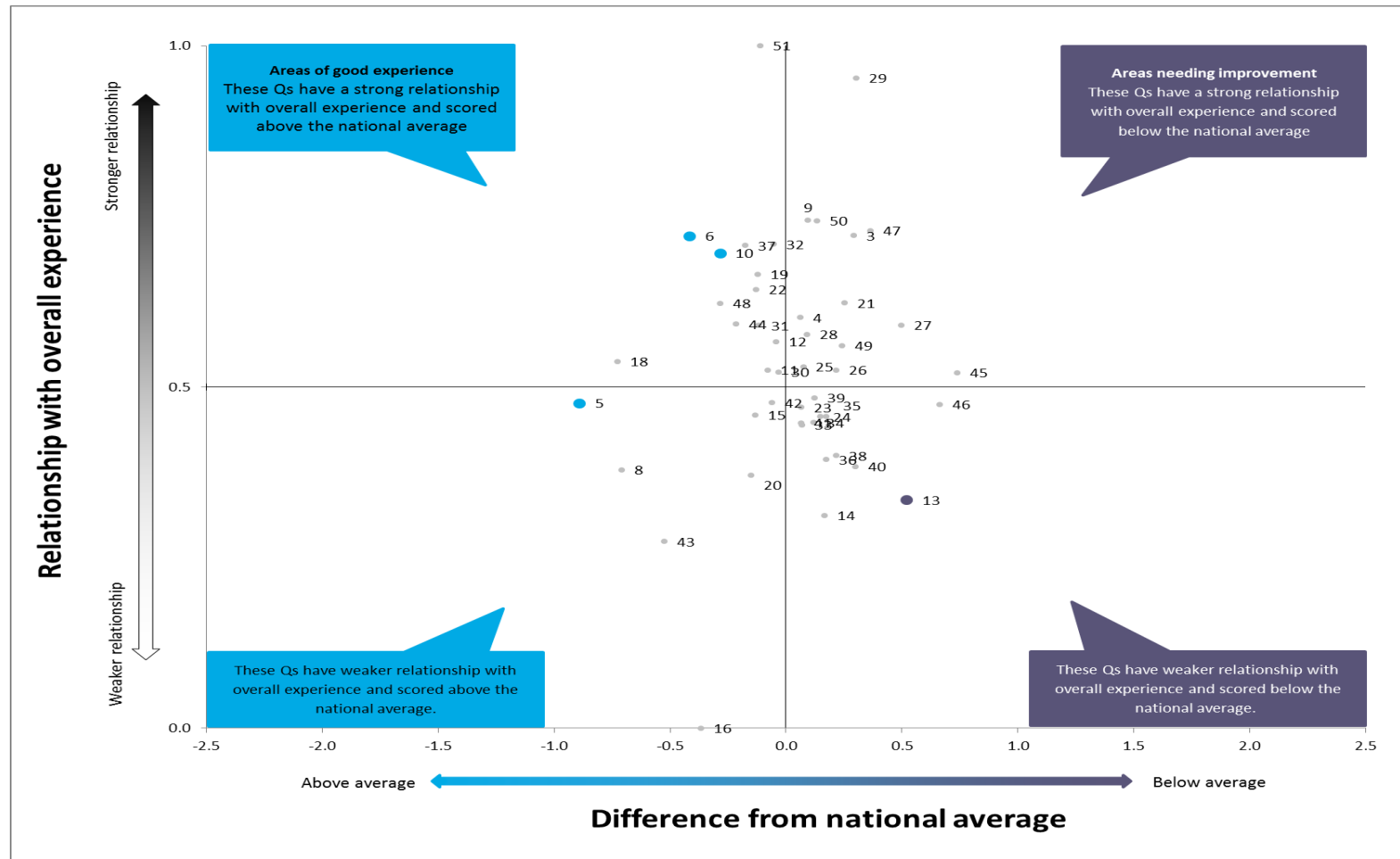
It is useful for hospitals to know which questions strongly relate to their patients' overall experience as these are the areas on which they should focus their improvement efforts.

In Figure 16, each dot shows a specific survey question for Wexford General 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 Wexford General 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.