



# National Inpatient Experience Survey 2019

Saolta University Health  
Care Group

## Contents

About the National Inpatient Experience Survey 2019 .....	2
What were the main findings for Saolta University Health Care Group?.....	2
Hospital group profile .....	2
Who took part in the survey?.....	4
Survey results for the stages of care along the patient journey .....	5
Interpreting the results for the stages of care .....	5
Changes in patient experience over time .....	6
Admissions .....	7
Care on the ward .....	10
Examinations, diagnosis and treatment .....	12
Discharge or transfer.....	14
Other aspects of care .....	16
Overall experience .....	17
Areas of good experience and areas needing improvement.....	18
Improvement map .....	18
Conclusion.....	21

## About the National Inpatient Experience Survey 2019

The National Inpatient 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 and 2019.

Nationally, 26,897 people were invited to participate in the third National Inpatient Experience Survey. In total, 12,343 completed the survey, resulting in a response rate of 46%. 2,305 patients from Saula University Health Care Group 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, 2018 and 2019 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 Saula University Health Care Group?

The majority of participants from Saula University Health Care Group reported positive experiences in hospital. 85% of participants said they had 'good' or 'very good' overall experiences, compared with 84% nationally. The hospital group received scores that were similar to the national average for all stages of care, and received significantly higher-than-average patient ratings of the 'discharge or transfer' stage of care.

## Hospital group profile

Saula University Health Care Group is one of seven hospital groups<sup>1</sup> in Ireland. Hospital groups were established in Ireland in 2013 with the aim of integrating hospital networks in order to provide safer, more effective care. The purpose of this report is to compare the results for this hospital group with other groups, and also to explore variation in results between the individual hospitals within the group.

<sup>1</sup> The Children's Hospital Group is the seventh hospital group in Ireland. Paediatric hospitals and children's services were not surveyed on this occasion.

Specific reports on the results of the National Inpatient Experience Survey for all participating hospitals, and associated quality improvement plans are available at <https://yourexperience.ie/>.

The people who responded to the National Inpatient Experience Survey were admitted to a hospital in one of the six hospital groups listed below:

South/South West Hospital Group	
Ireland East Hospital Group	
Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) Hospital Group	
University of Limerick (UL) Hospitals	
Saolta University Health Care Group	
Dublin Midlands Hospital Group	

Six hospitals in Saolta University Health Care Group took part in the survey (Table 1). The hospitals in this group provide emergency as well as elective inpatient care. Participants were asked to answer questions across each stage of care; however, people who were not admitted through an emergency department did not answer the questions on 'admissions'.

**Table 1. Profile of hospitals in Saolta University Health Care Group**

Hospital Name	Number of inpatient beds*	Number of eligible discharges	Number of participants	Response rate	Emergency department
Galway University Hospitals	600	1864	922	50%	Yes
Letterkenny University Hospital	323	771	335	44%	Yes
Mayo University Hospital	269	846	396	47%	Yes
Portiuncula University Hospital	168	423	183	44%	Yes
Roscommon University Hospital	63	115	48	42%	No
Sligo University Hospital	289	864	421	49%	Yes

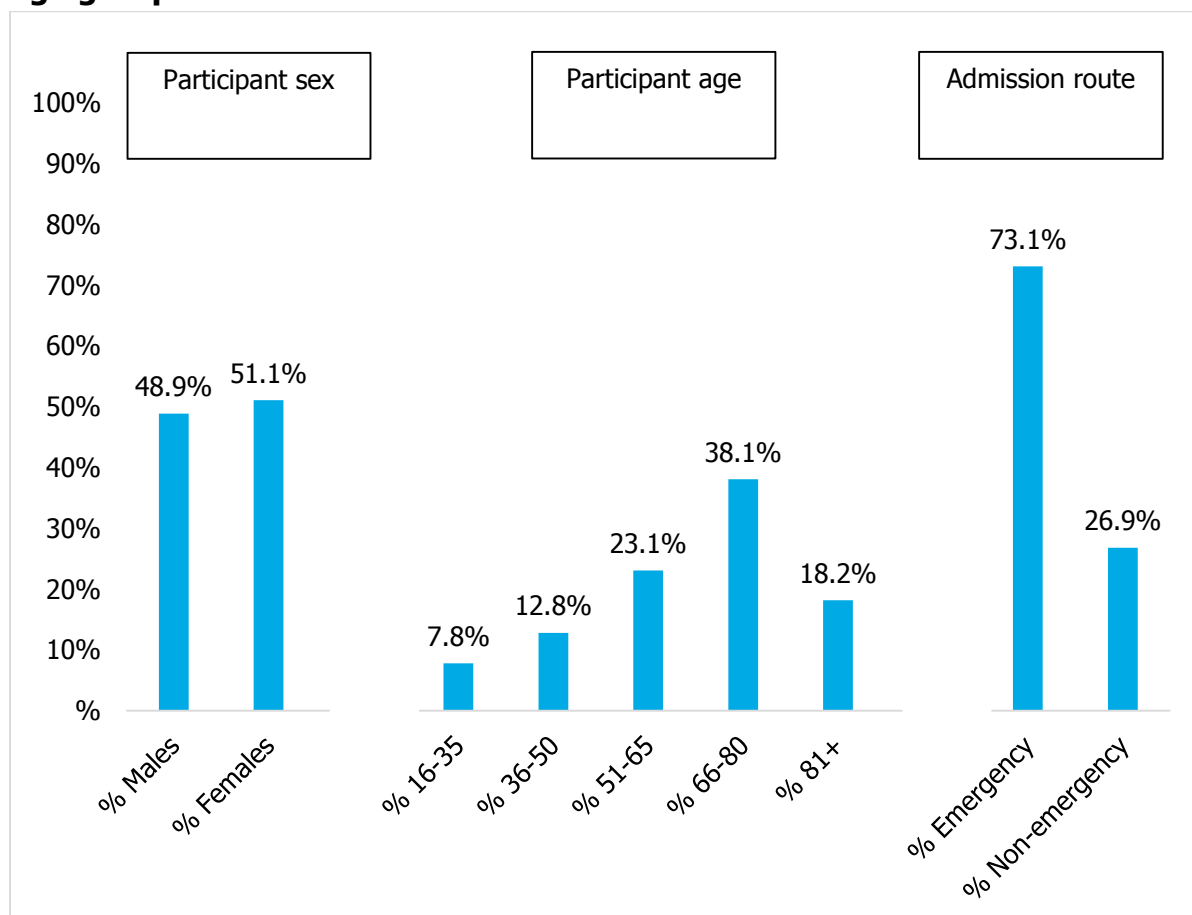
\* Refers to the number of inpatient beds in May 2019.

## Who took part in the survey?

4,883 people discharged from a hospital in Saolta University Health Care Group during the month of May 2019 were invited to participate in the survey. 2,305 people completed the survey, achieving a response rate of 48%. 48.9% of participants were male and 51.1% were female. 1,686 respondents (73.1%) said that their stay in hospital was an emergency.

Figure 1 below provides information on the respondents who took part in the survey from Saolta University Health Care Group.

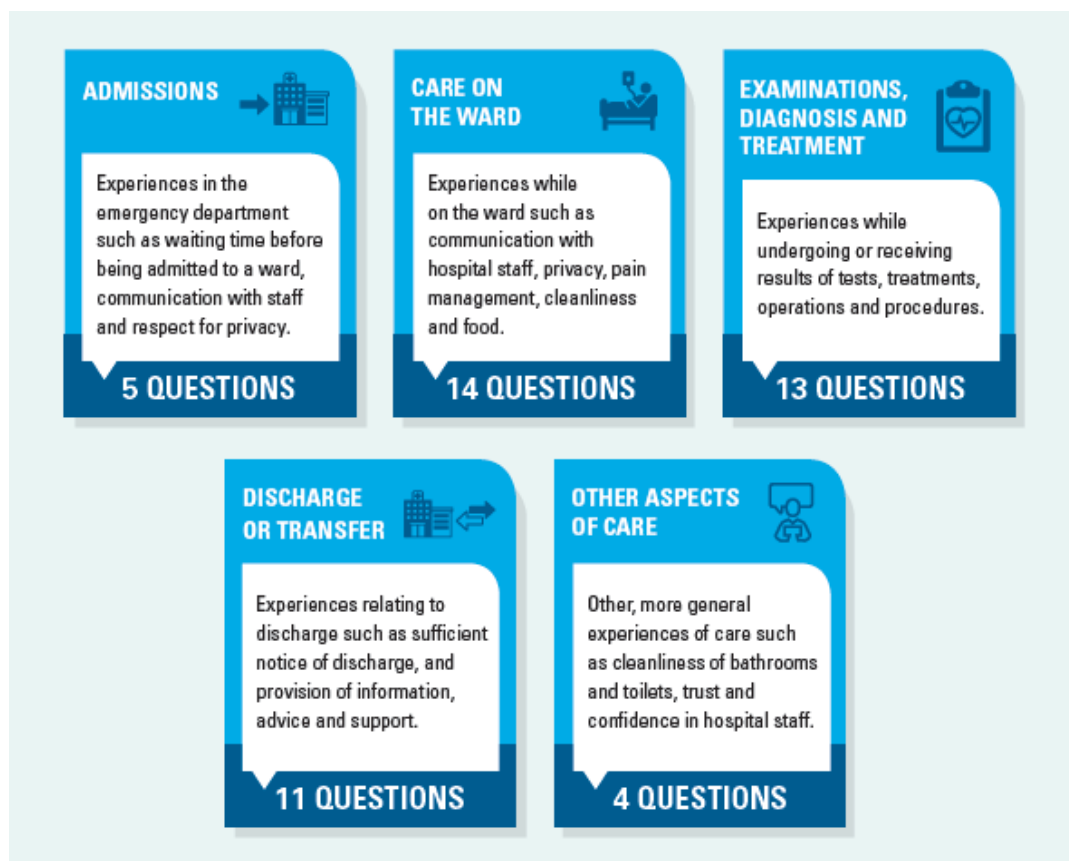
**Figure 1. Participants from Saolta University Health Care Group by sex, age group and admission route**



## 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 <https://yourexperience.ie/inpatient/about-the-survey/survey-model/>.

The survey questions are 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 2018 and 2019, between a hospital and its group, or between a group and the national average. For further information on the analyses please consult Appendix 3 of the 2019 national report, available from <https://yourexperience.ie/>.

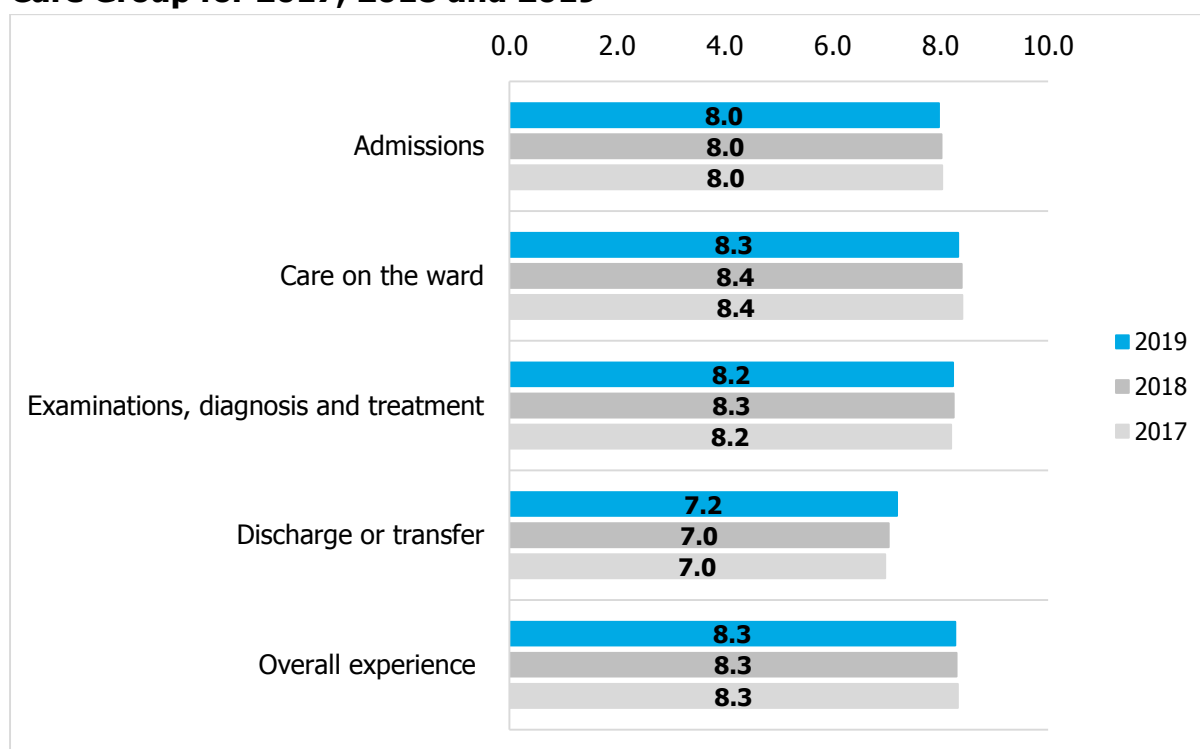
## Changes in patient experience over time

The 2019 stage of care scores were generally similar to last year, with no statistically-significant differences in average patient ratings across any of the stages of care.

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. Comparison of stage of care scores<sup>2</sup> for Saolta University Health Care Group for 2017, 2018 and 2019**

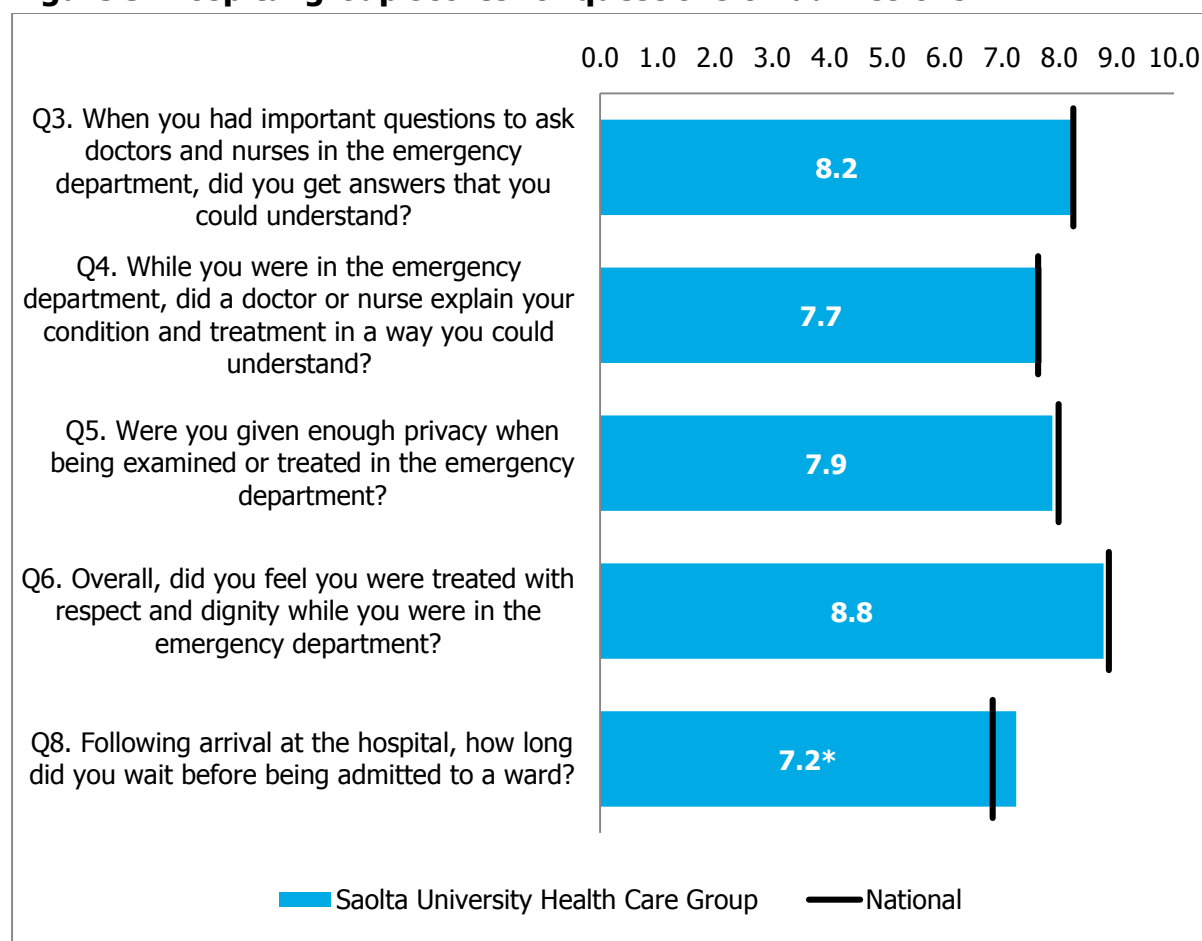


<sup>2</sup> Scores for the stages of care were constructed by calculating the average scores for all the questions belonging to that stage.

## Admissions

Figure 3 shows the hospital group scores for questions on this stage of care. Figure 4 compares 'admissions' scores for the hospitals of Saolta University Health Care Group with the group average. Figure 5 compares the six hospital group scores with the national average.

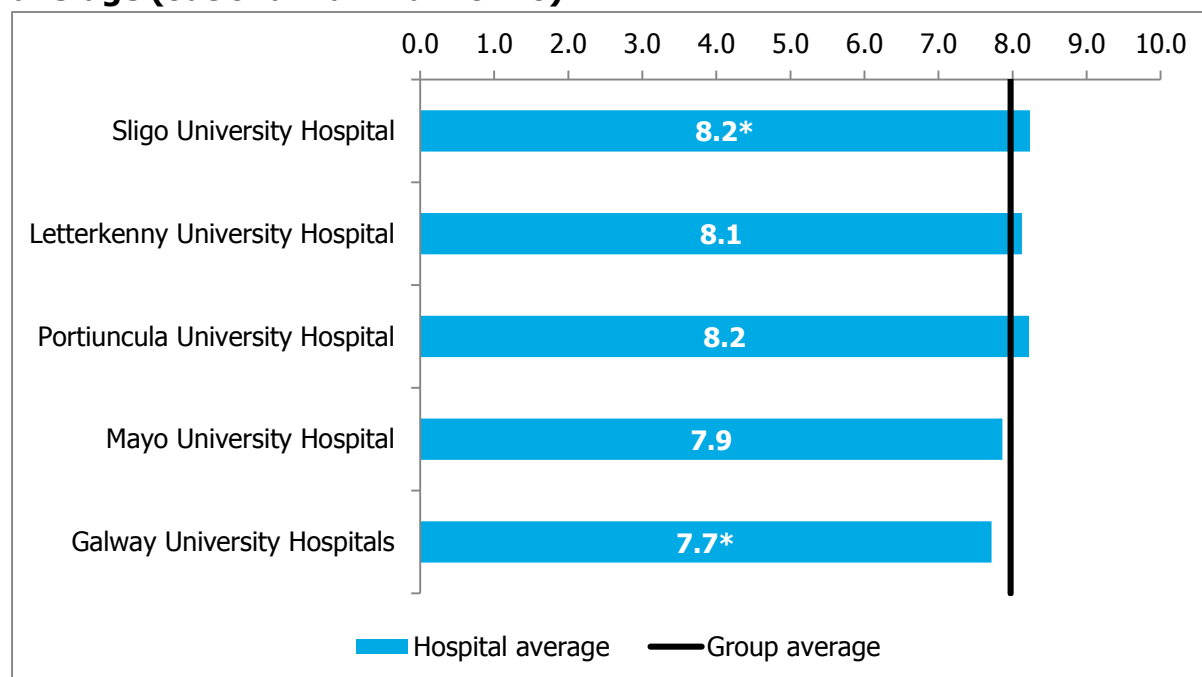
**Figure 3. Hospital group scores for questions on admissions**



\*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

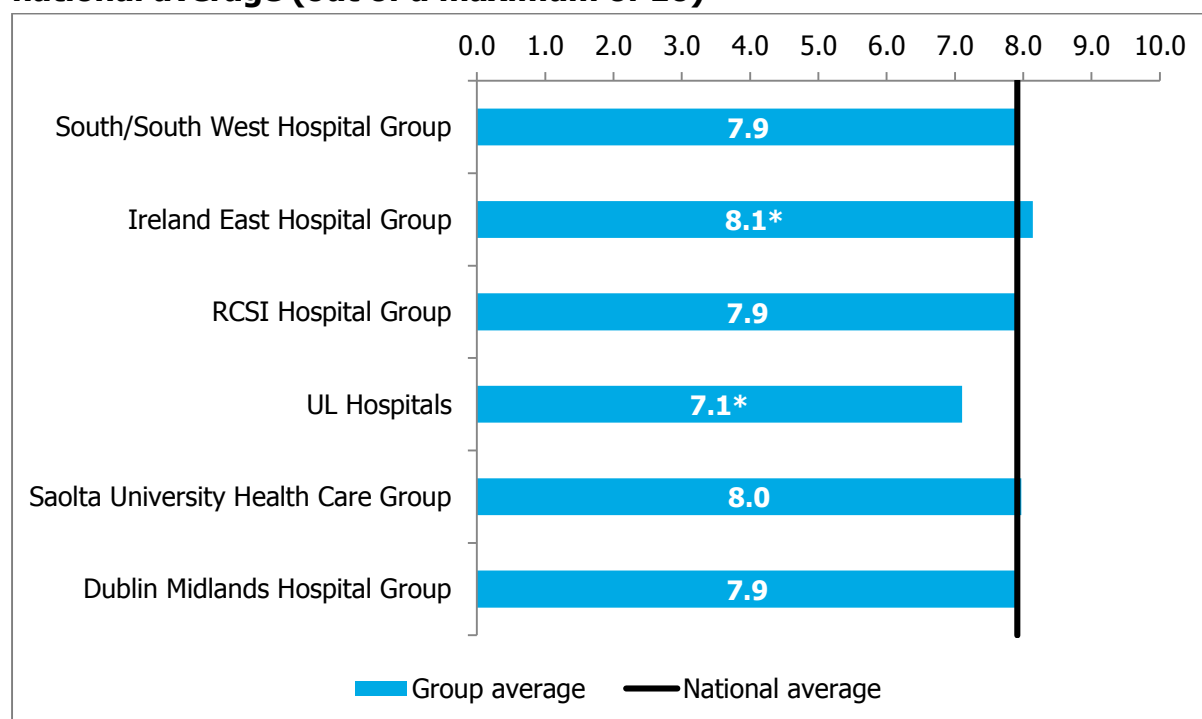


**Figure 4. Comparison of hospital scores for 'admissions' with the group average (out of a maximum of 10)**



\*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the group average

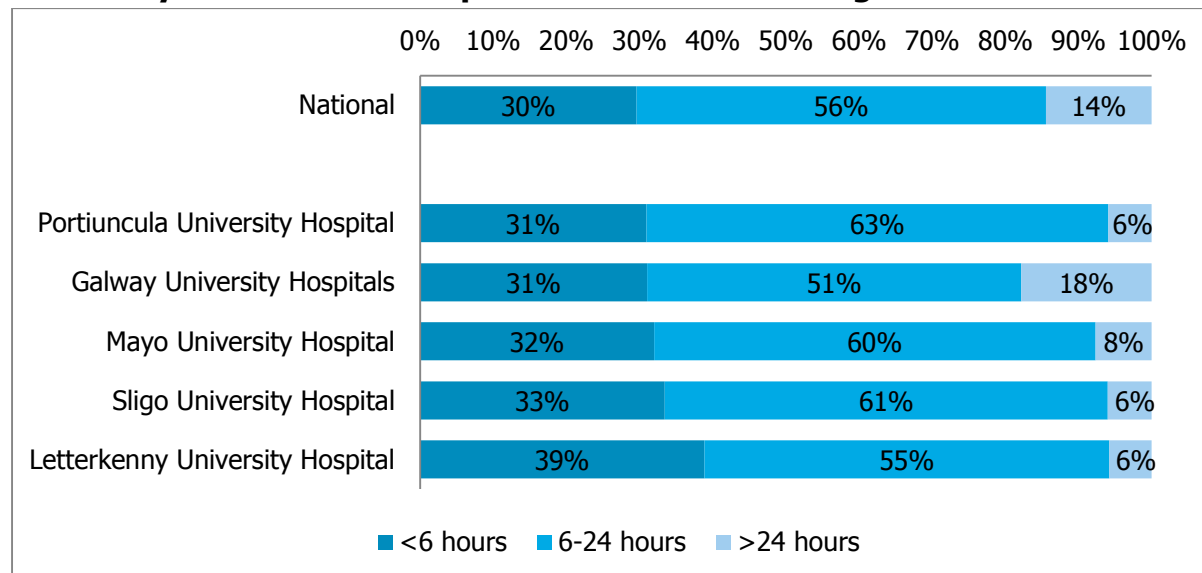
**Figure 5. Comparison of hospital group scores for 'admissions' with the national average (out of a maximum of 10)**



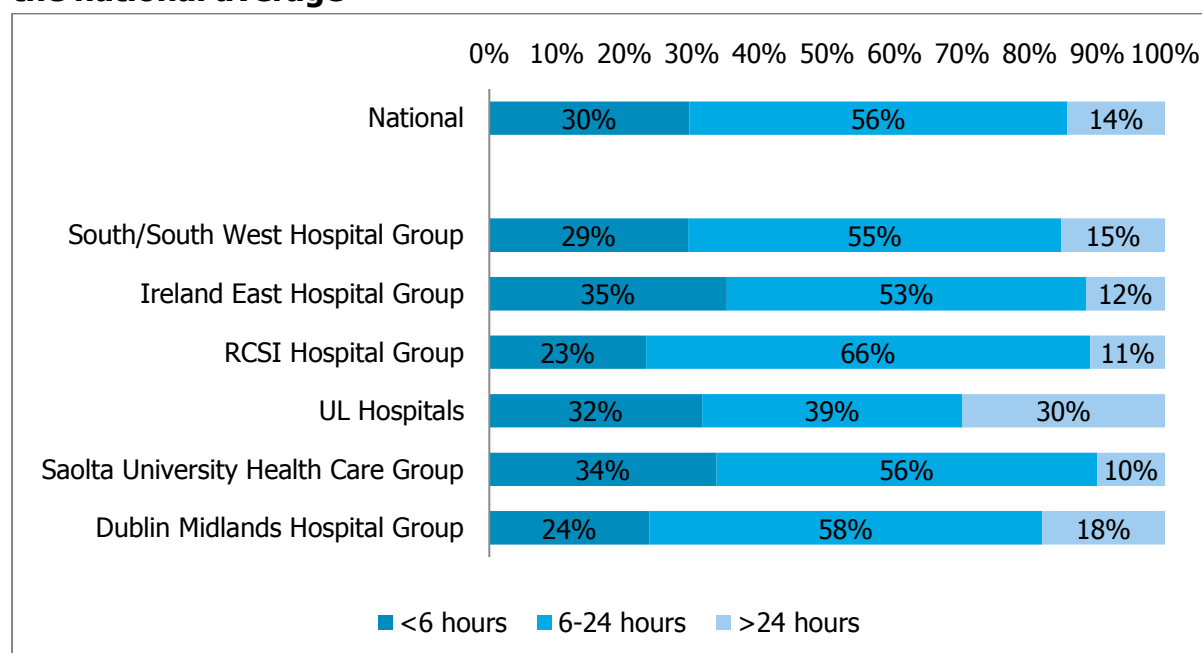
\* Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

Figure 6 shows emergency department waiting times, as reported by patients, at the national and hospital group levels. Figure 7 compares the waiting times for the six participating hospital groups.

**Figure 6. Emergency department waiting times for hospitals of Saolta University Health Care Group and the national average**



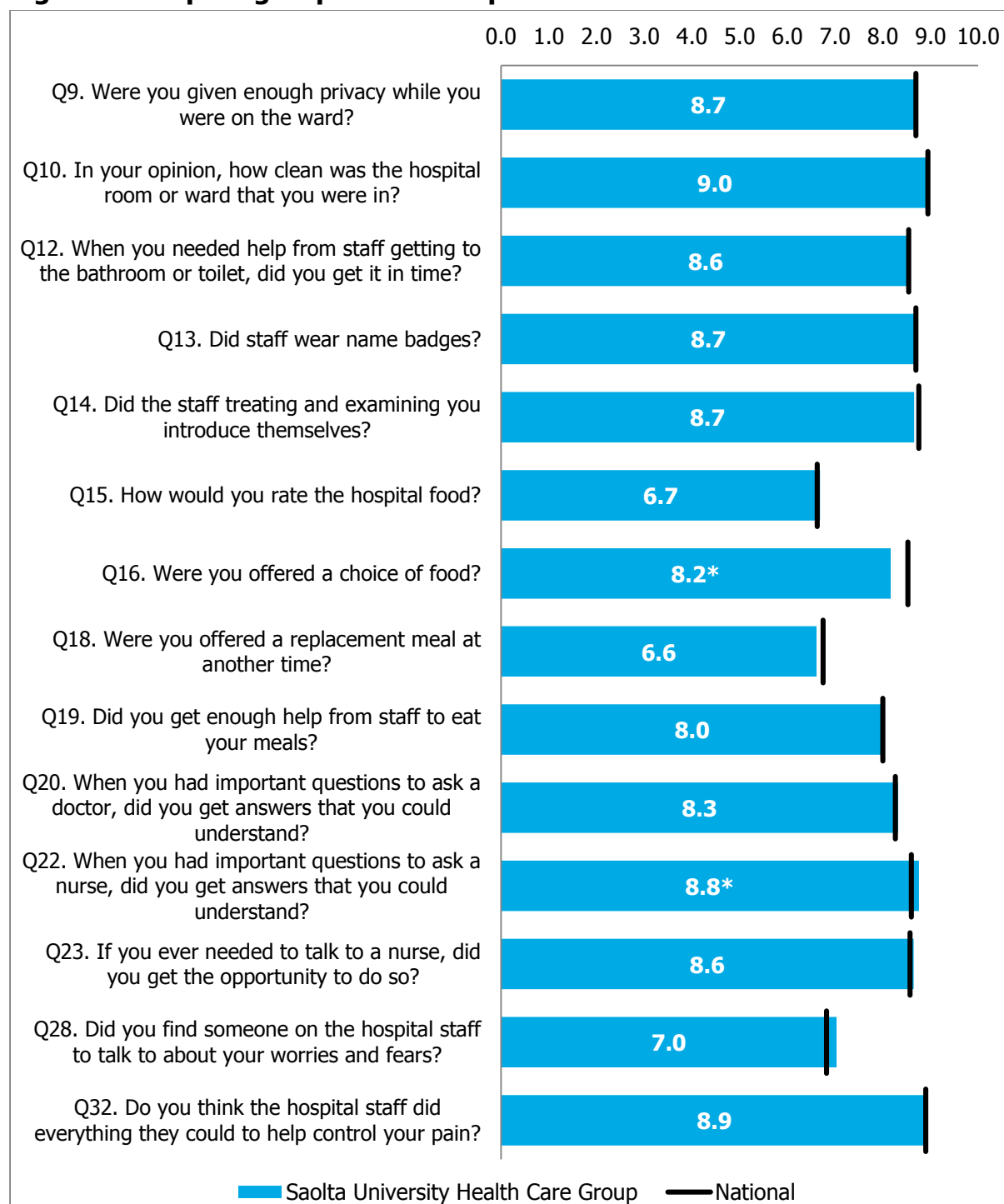
**Figure 7. Emergency department waiting times for the hospital groups and the national average**



## Care on the ward

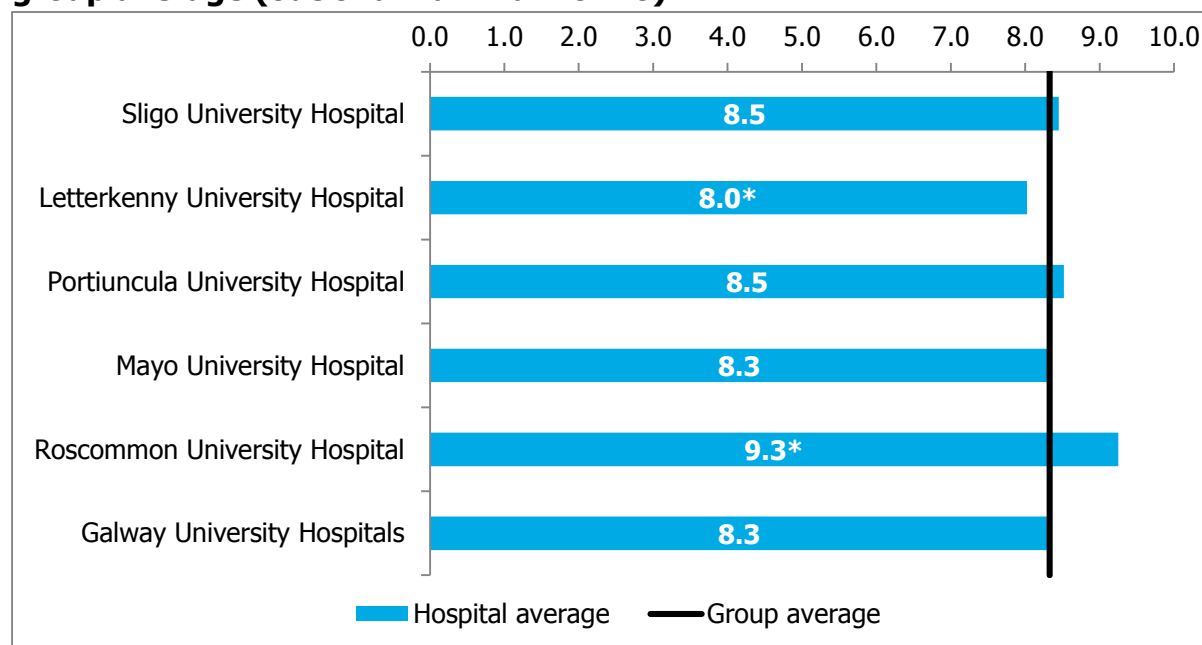
Figure 8 shows the hospital group scores for questions on 'care on the ward'. Figure 9 compares the 'care on the ward' scores for the hospitals of Saolta University Health Care Group with the group average. Figure 10 compares the six hospital group scores with the national average.

**Figure 8. Hospital group scores for questions on care on the ward**

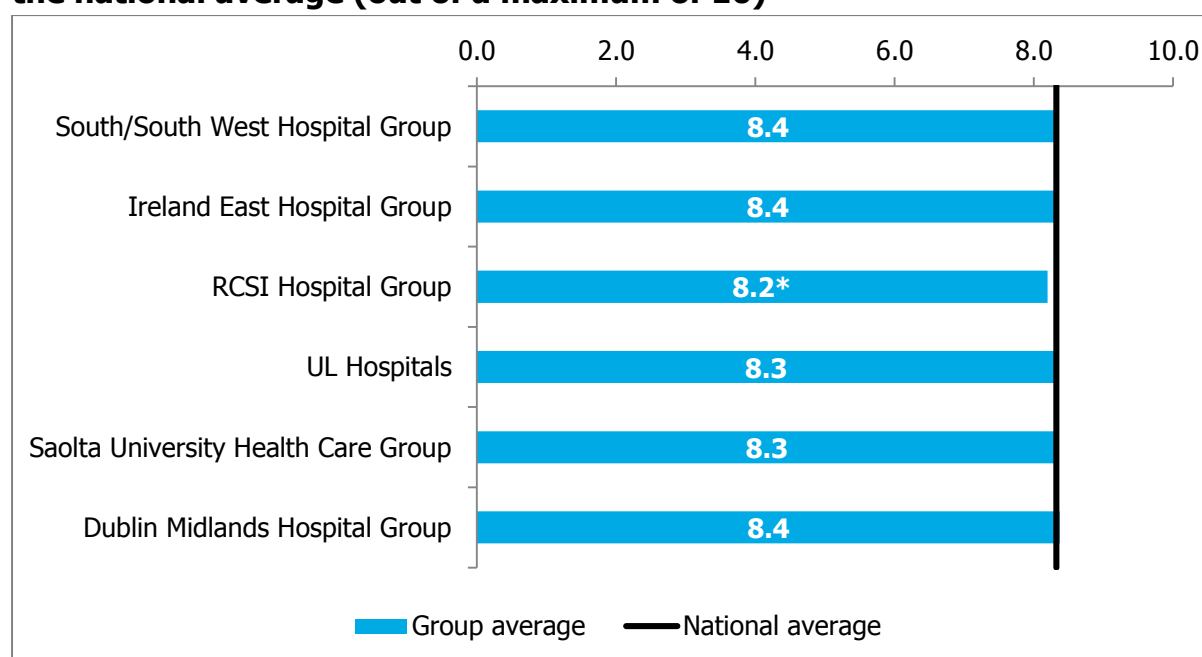


\*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

**Figure 9. Comparison of hospital scores for 'care on the ward' with the group average (out of a maximum of 10)**



**Figure 10. Comparison of hospital group scores for 'care on the ward' with the national average (out of a maximum of 10)**

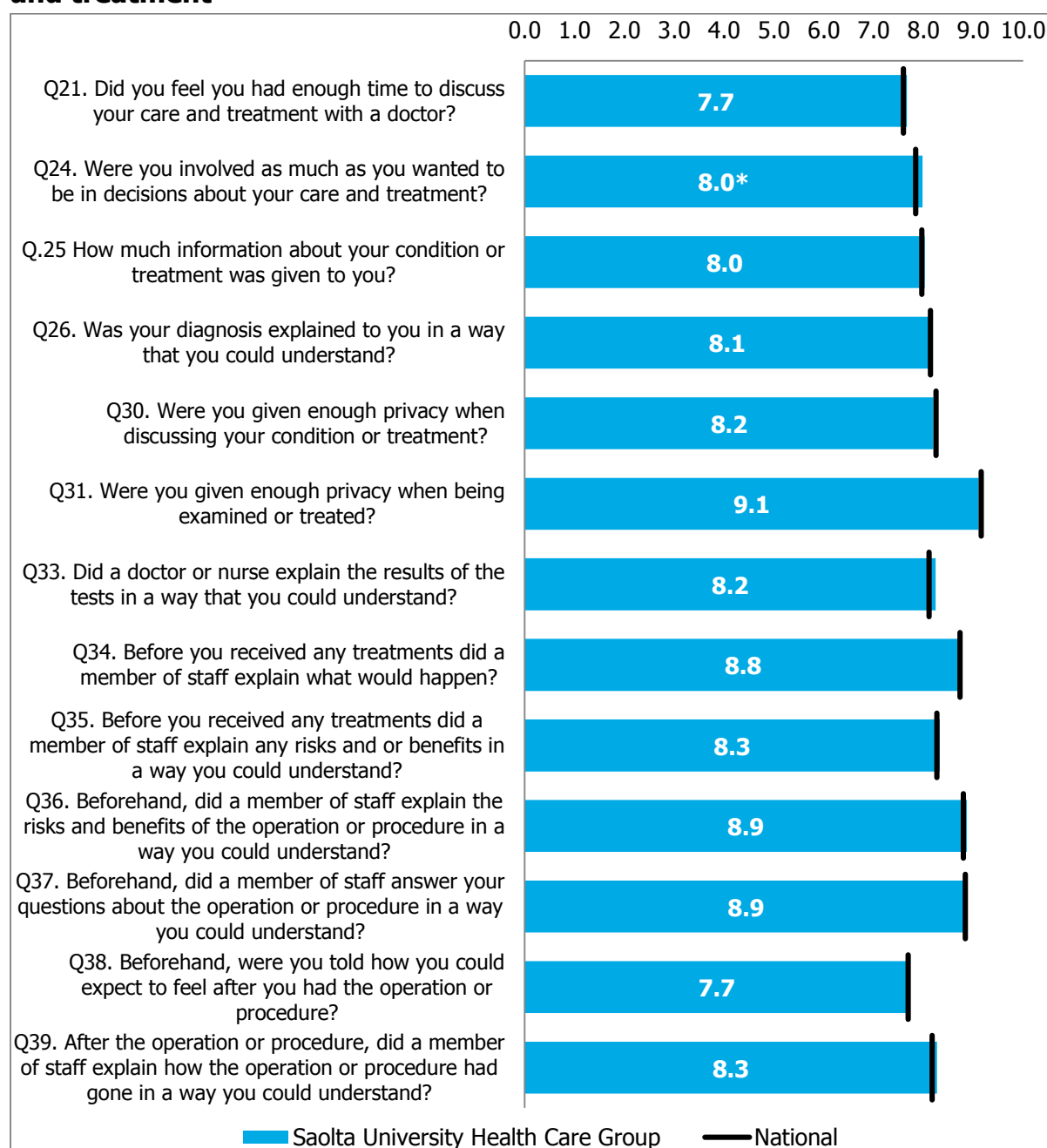


\* Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

## Examinations, diagnosis and treatment

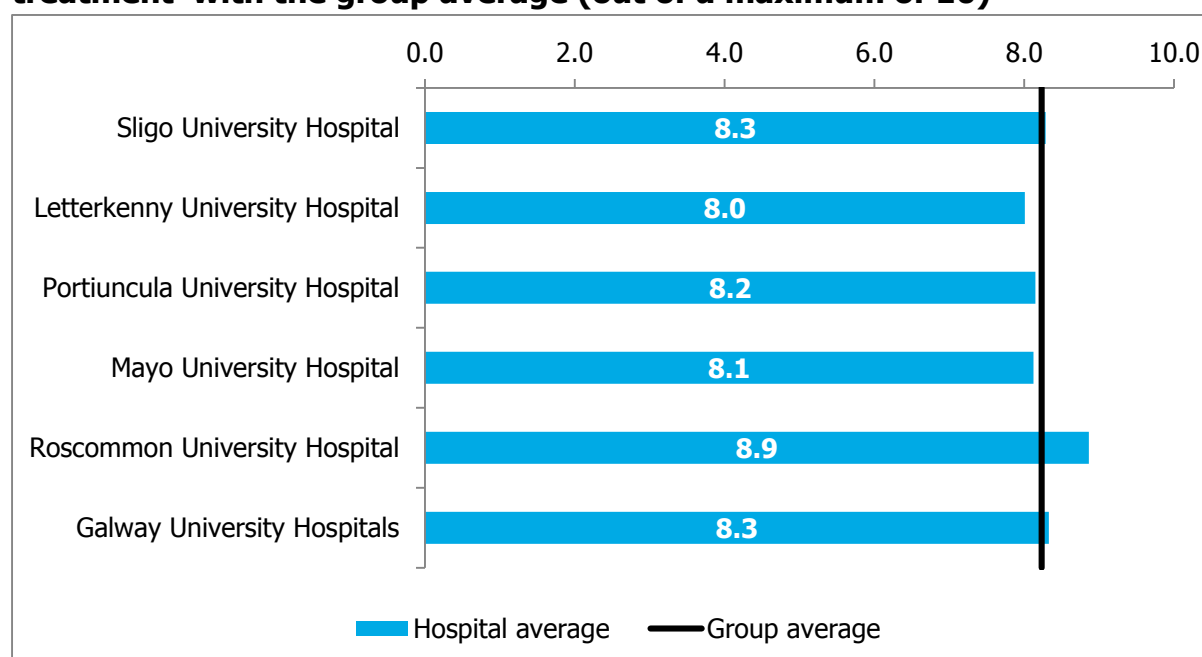
Figure 11 shows the hospital group scores for questions on 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment'. Figure 12 compares the 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment' scores for the hospitals of Saolta University Health Care Group with the group average. Figure 13 compares the six hospital group scores with the national average.

**Figure 11. Hospital group scores for questions on 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment'**

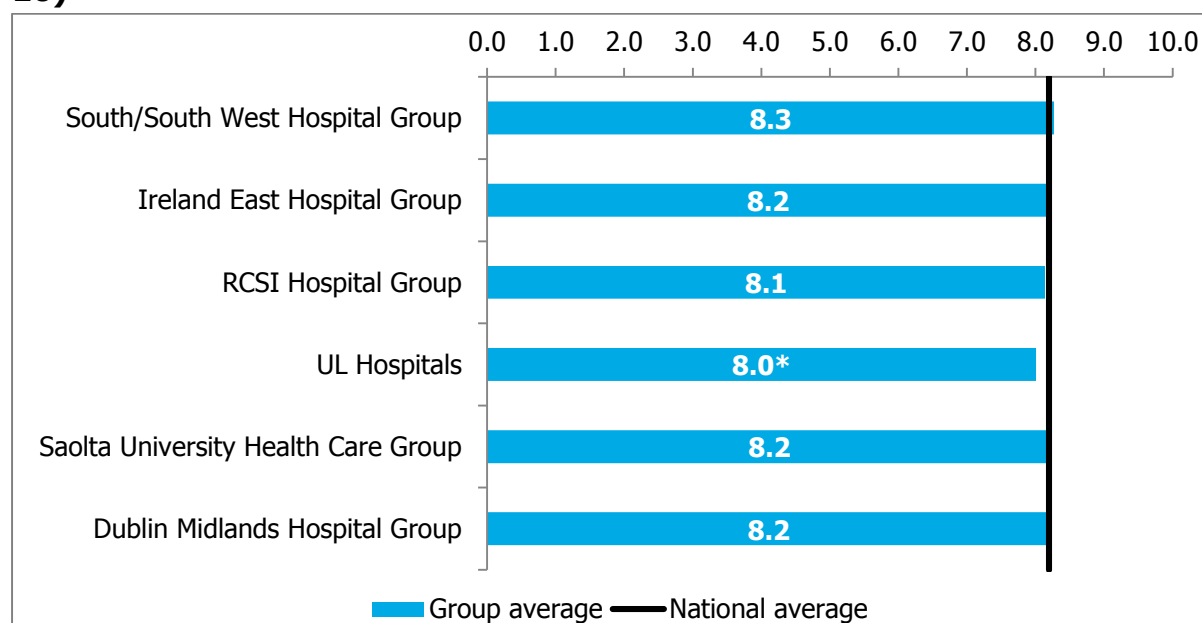


\*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

**Figure 12. Comparison of hospital scores for 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment' with the group average (out of a maximum of 10)**



**Figure 13. Comparison of hospital group scores for 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment' with the national average (out of a maximum of 10)**

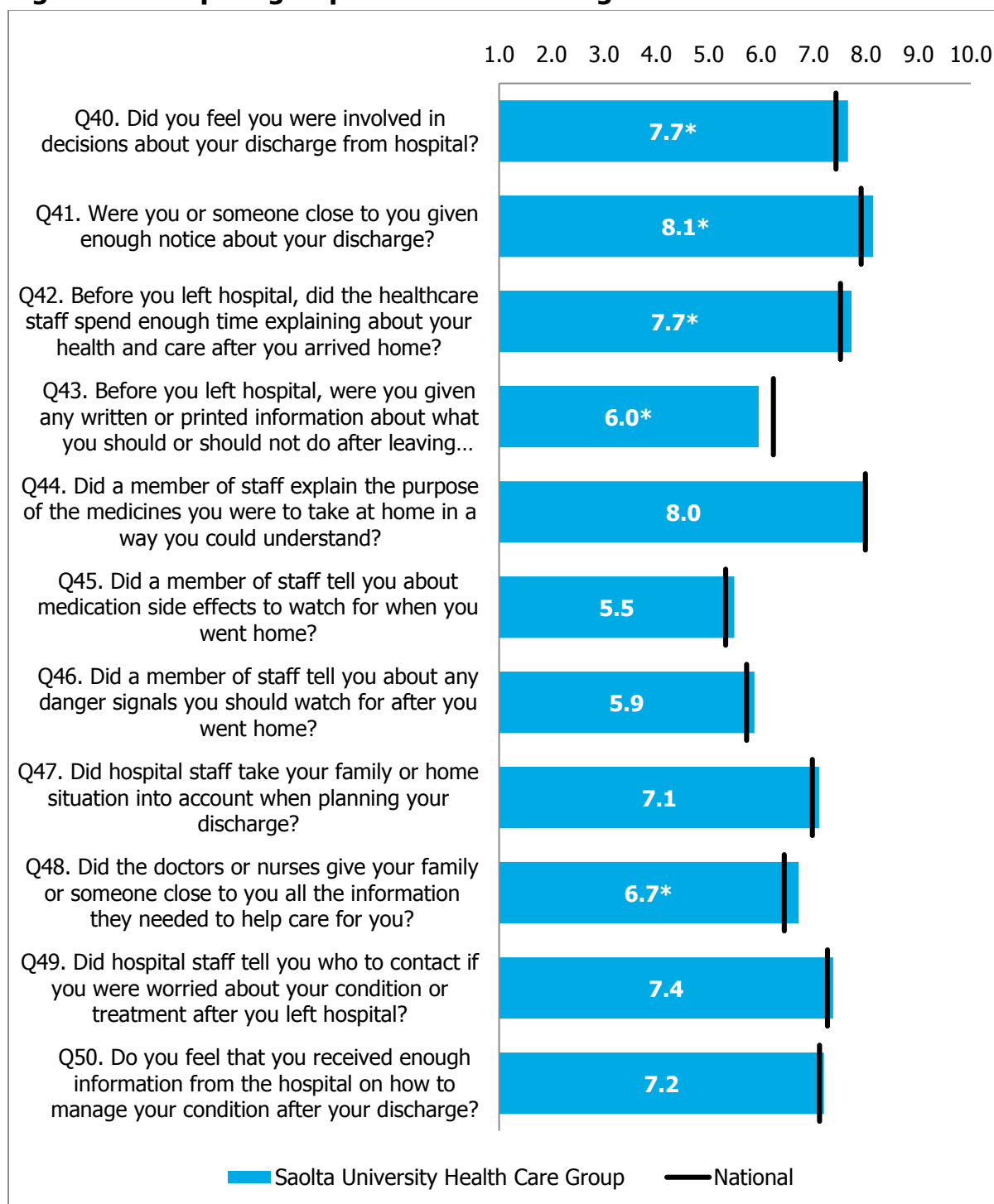


\*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

## Discharge or transfer

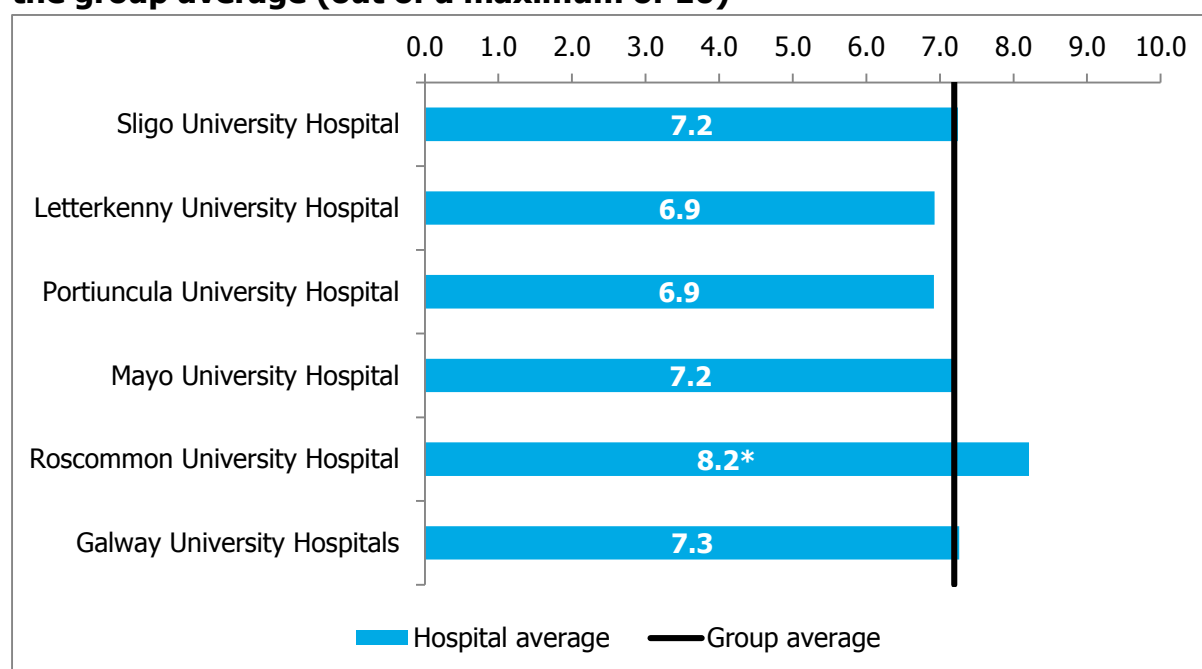
Figure 14 shows the hospital group scores for questions on 'discharge or transfer'. Figure 15 compares the 'discharge or transfer' scores for the hospitals of Saolta University Health Care Group with the group average. Figure 16 compares the six hospital group scores with the national average.

**Figure 14. Hospital group scores for 'discharge or transfer'**



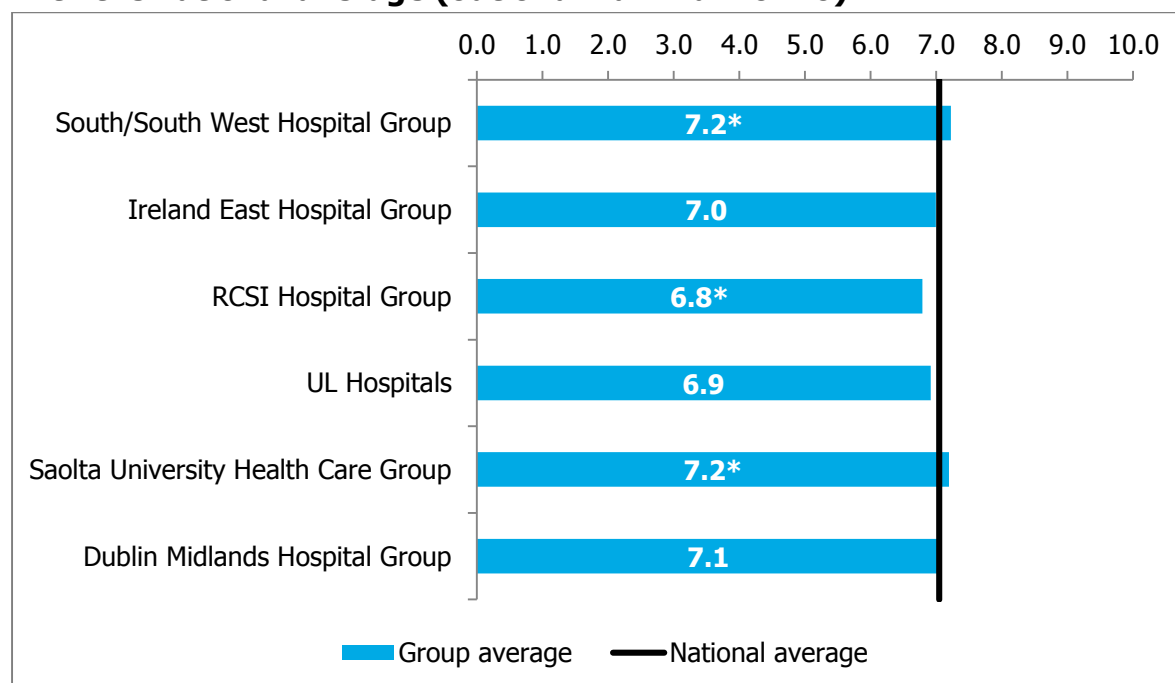
\*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

**Figure 15. Comparison of hospital scores for 'discharge or transfer' with the group average (out of a maximum of 10)**



\*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the group average

**Figure 16. Comparison of hospital group scores for 'discharge or transfer' with the national average (out of a maximum of 10)**



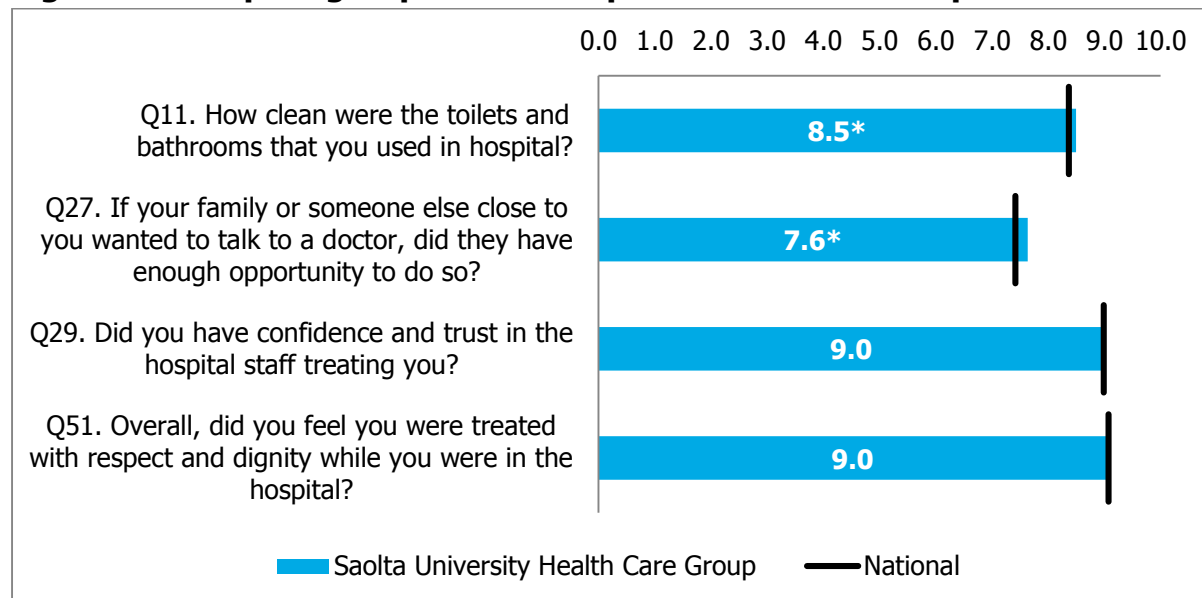
\*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average



## Other aspects of care

Figure 17 shows the hospital group scores for questions on 'other aspects of care'.

**Figure 17. Hospital group scores for questions on 'other aspects of care'**



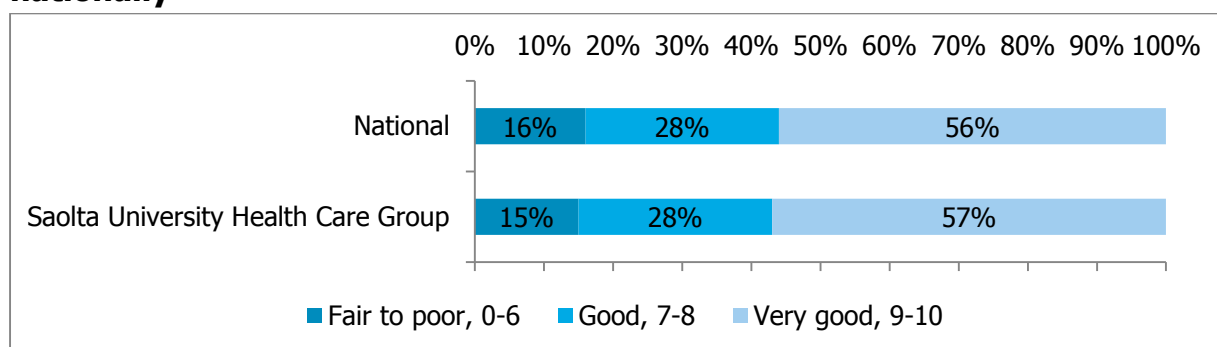
\*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

## Overall experience

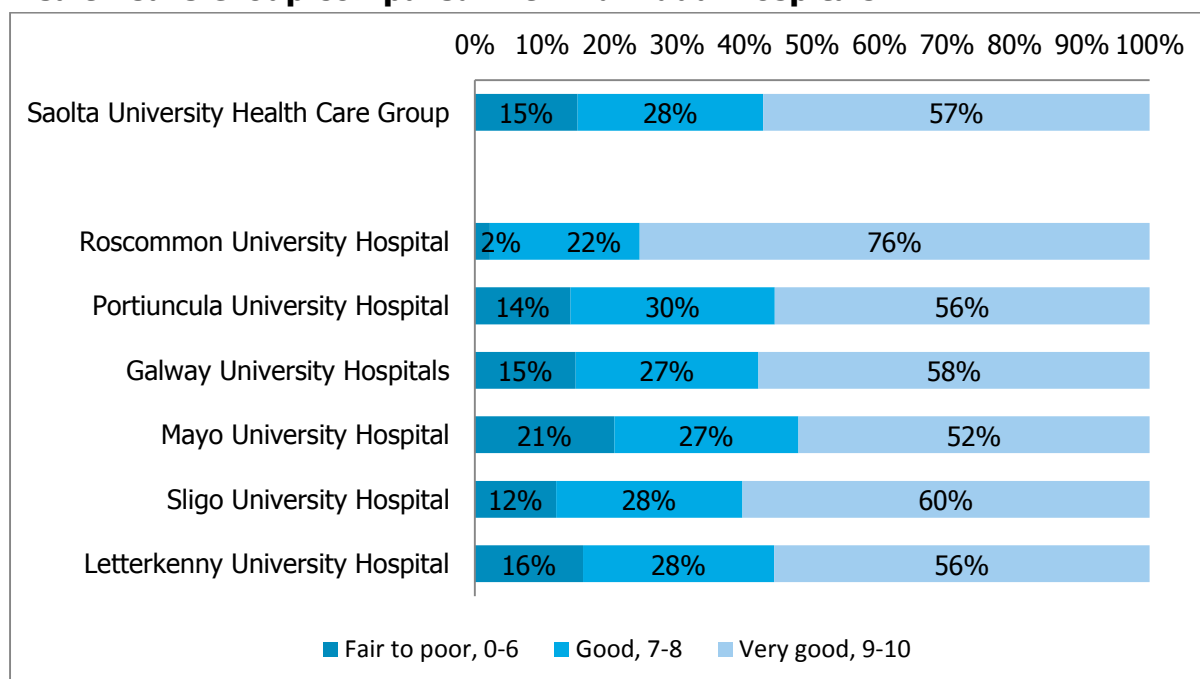
Respondents were asked to rate their overall hospital experience on a scale from 0 to 10, with 10 being the most positive experience, and 0 the most negative experience. 57% of participants from the Saolta University Health Care Group rated their overall experience as very good, which is slightly above the national figure of 56%.

Figure 18 compares the overall ratings of hospital experience for Saolta University Health Care Group with the national average. Figure 19 compares the overall ratings for the group with that of individual hospitals.

**Figure 18. Overall rating of hospital experience for the group and nationally**



**Figure 19. Overall rating of hospital experience for Saolta University Health Care Group compared with individual hospitals**



## Areas of good experience and areas needing improvement

### Improvement map

It is important for hospital groups to know if they scored above or below the national average for a particular question, and this is shown in the improvement map in Figure 20. 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 51, 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 8, which asked patients how long they waited before being admitted to a ward following arrival at the hospital. The relationship between waiting times and patients' ratings of their overall experience was weak. This means that even if a patient was admitted quickly, they may have given negative ratings of their overall experience, or if they waited longer before being admitted, patients may still have given positive ratings of their overall experience.

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

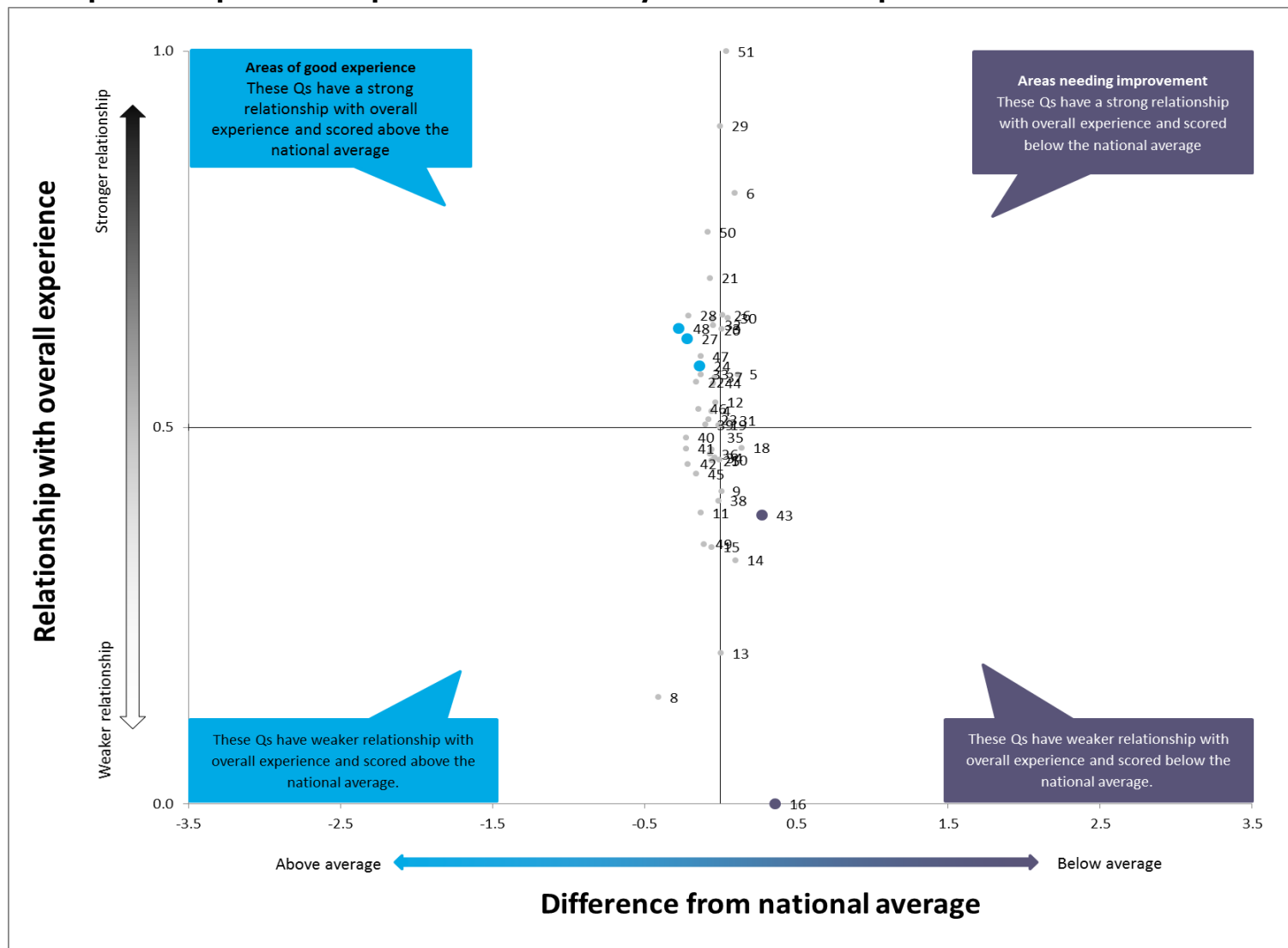
In Figure 20, each dot shows a specific survey question for Saolta University Health Care Group. Questions at the top of the graph are strongly related to overall experience, while those at the bottom have a weaker relationship. Questions to the right of the graph scored below the national average, while 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 group is unique and gives specific information on where a hospital group 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://yourexperience.ie/> along with guidance on how to interpret it.

Figure 20. Overall patient experience map for Saolta University Health Care Group



## Conclusion

### What were patients' experiences of hospital care in Saolta University Health Care Group in May 2019?

The majority of participants said they had a positive overall experience in a hospital of the Saolta Hospital Group. 85% of patients said they had a 'good' or 'very good' experience, compared with 84% nationally. Saolta Hospital Group's performance was similar to last year's, with no significant differences in average patient ratings across the stages of care.

In terms of areas of good experience, patients generally felt that they were involved as much as they wanted to be in decisions about their care and treatment (Q24), and that their family had enough opportunity to talk to a doctor (Q27). Patients were also satisfied with the information given to their family by the doctors or nurses (Q48). Saolta University Health Care Group scored above the national average in these areas.

Patients highlighted a number of areas requiring improvement. Patients reported that they were not always offered a choice of food (Q16), and some patients did not receive written or printed information about what they should or should not do after leaving hospital (Q43). Saolta University Health Care group scored below the national average in these areas.

The National Inpatient Experience Survey provides valuable information on patients' experiences in acute hospitals at national, hospital group and hospital levels. The findings have been used to develop and implement quality improvement initiatives in Saolta University Health Care, intended to address the issues identified by patients. Some examples of these initiatives can be seen at [www.yourexperience.ie/inpatient/hospital-initiatives/](http://www.yourexperience.ie/inpatient/hospital-initiatives/).