



National Inpatient Experience Survey 2019

UL Hospitals

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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%. 1,037 patients from UL Hospitals 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 UL Hospitals?

The majority of participants from UL Hospitals reported positive experiences in hospital. 80% 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 most stages of care, but received significantly lower than average patient ratings for 'admissions' and 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment'. In addition, the group recorded significantly lower scores for the 'admissions' stage of care compared with 2018.

Hospital group profile

UL Hospitals is one of seven hospital groups¹ 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. Specific reports on the

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

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	

Five hospitals in the UL Hospitals 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 all five stages 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 UL Hospitals

Hospital Name	Number of inpatient beds*	Number of eligible discharges	Number of participants	Response rate	Emergency department
Croom Orthopaedic Hospital	41	125	81	65%	No
St John's Hospital Limerick	82	233	122	52%	No
Ennis Hospital	50	149	65	44%	No
Nenagh Hospital	49	101	47	47%	No
University Hospital Limerick	436	1638	722	44%	Yes

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

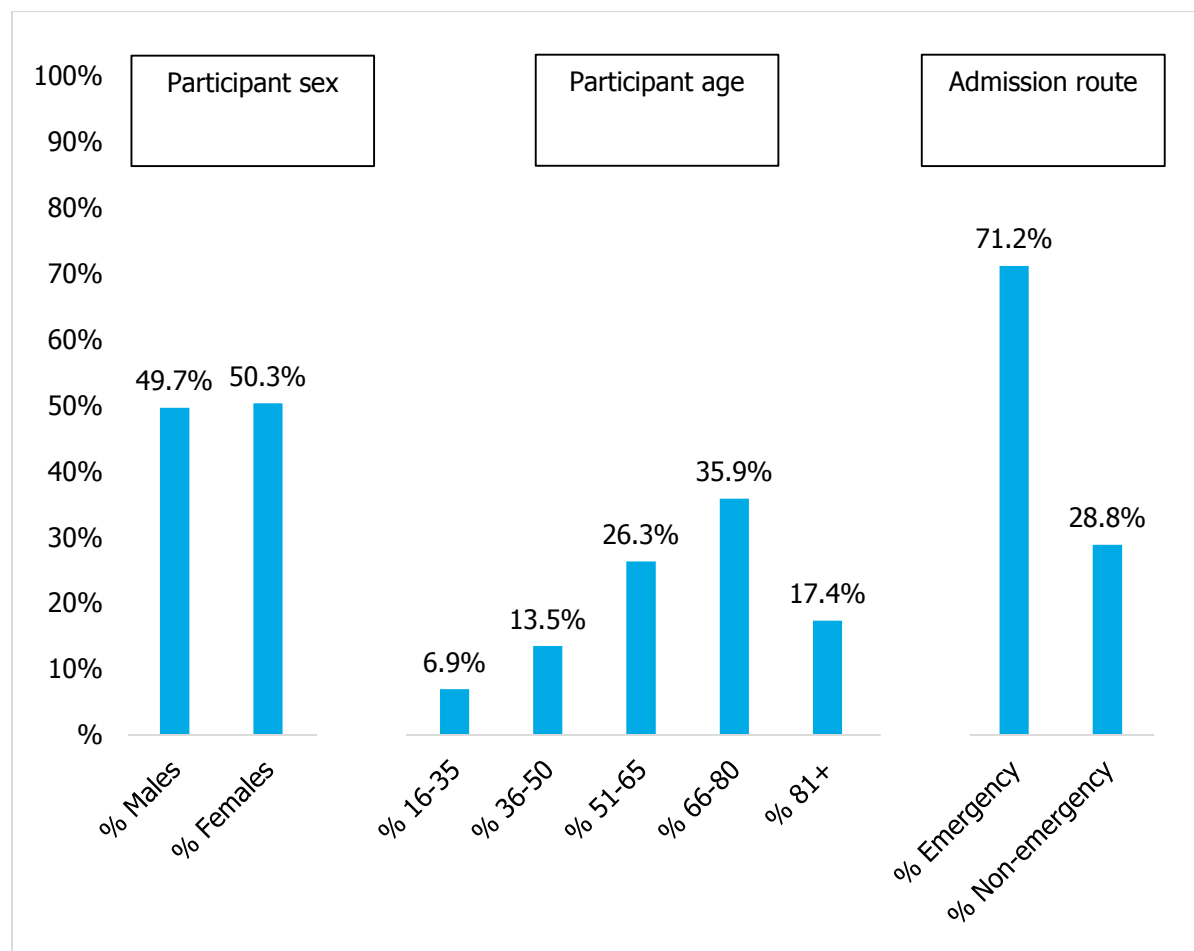
Who took part in the survey?

2,246 people discharged from a hospital in UL Hospitals during the month of May 2019 were invited to participate in the survey. 1,037 people completed the survey, achieving a response rate of 47%. 49.7% of participants were male and 50.3% were

female. 738 respondents (71.2%) 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 UL Hospitals.

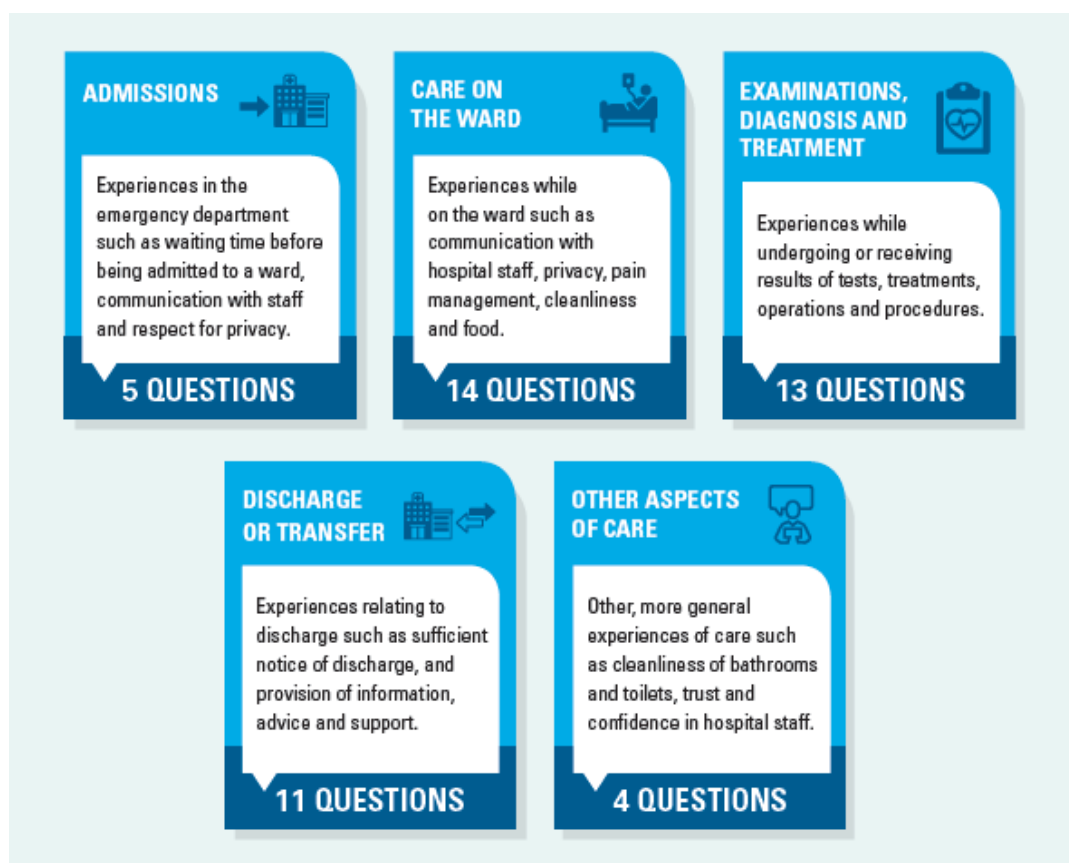
Figure 1. Participants from UL Hospitals by sex, age group and admission route



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/>.

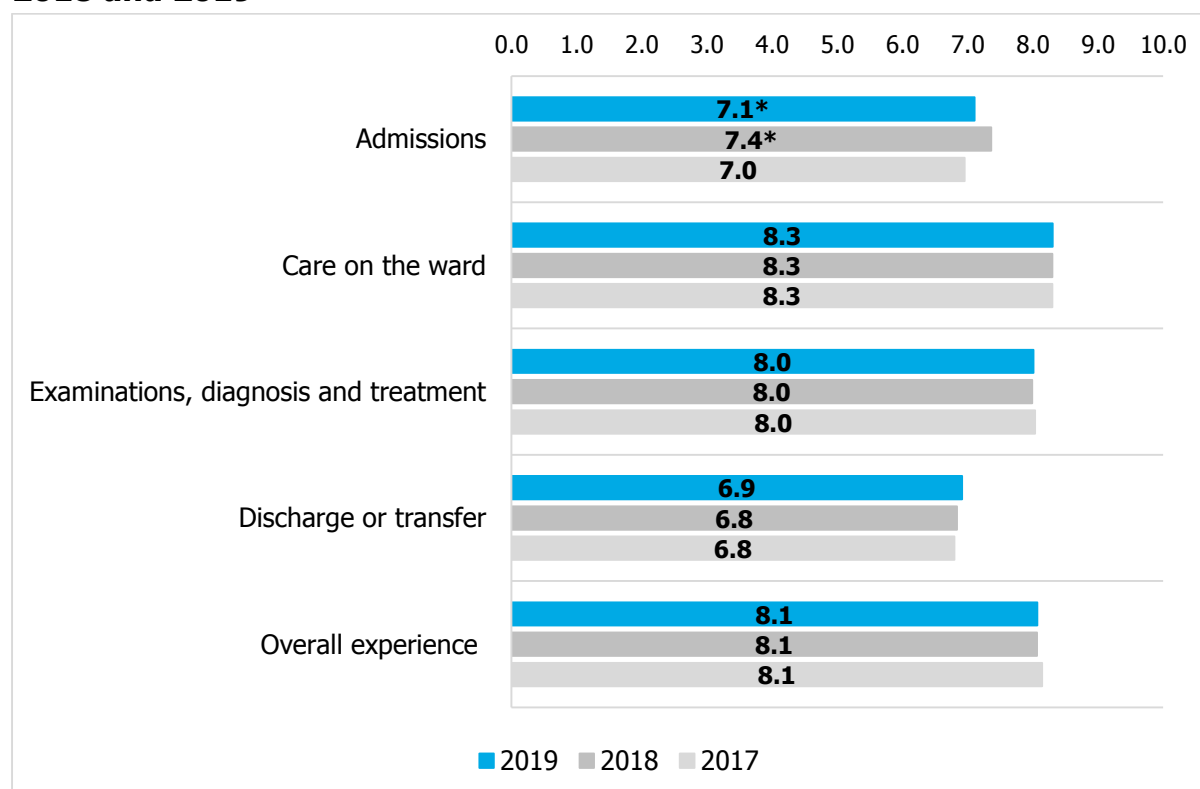
Changes in patient experience over time

The 2019 stage of care scores were generally similar to last year. However, average patient ratings of 'admissions' were significantly lower in 2019.

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 for UL Hospitals for 2017, 2018 and 2019²

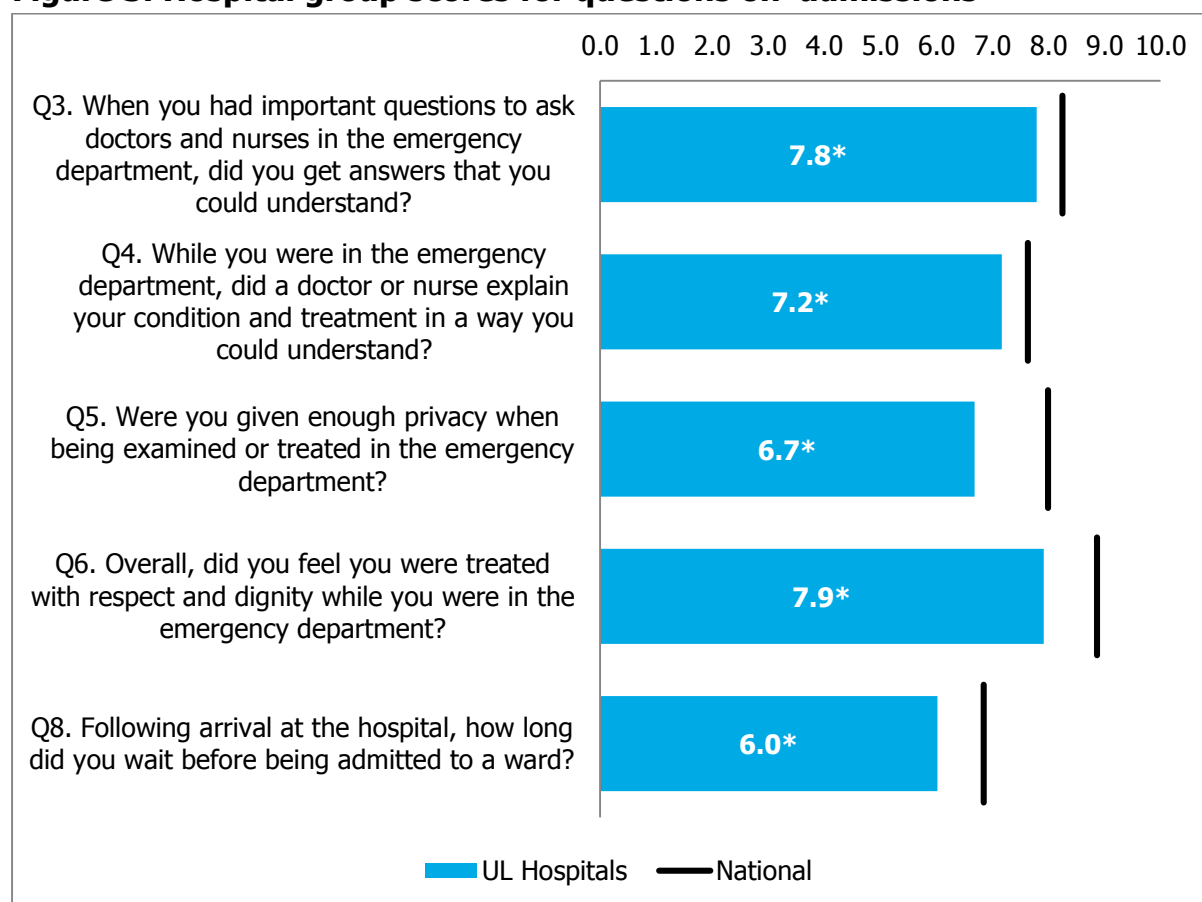


*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the previous year

Admissions

Figure 3 shows the hospital group scores for questions on this stage of care. Figure 4 compares 'admissions' scores for the hospitals of UL Hospitals 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)³

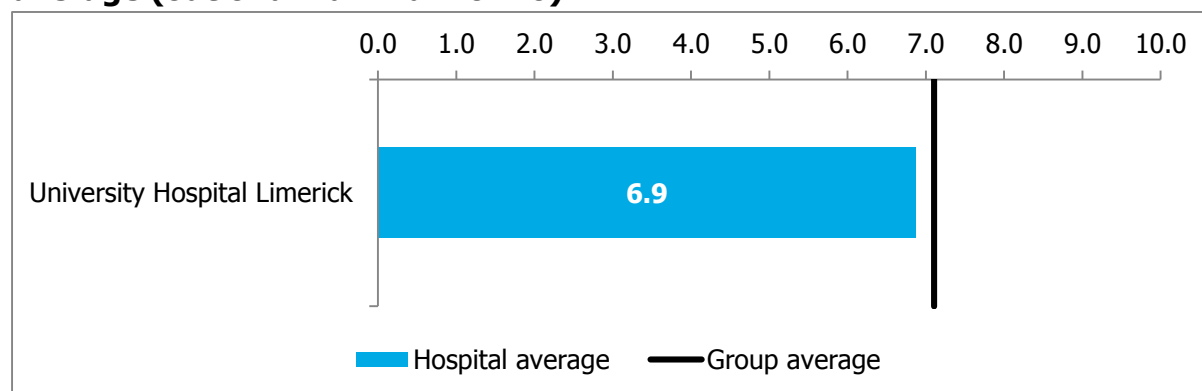
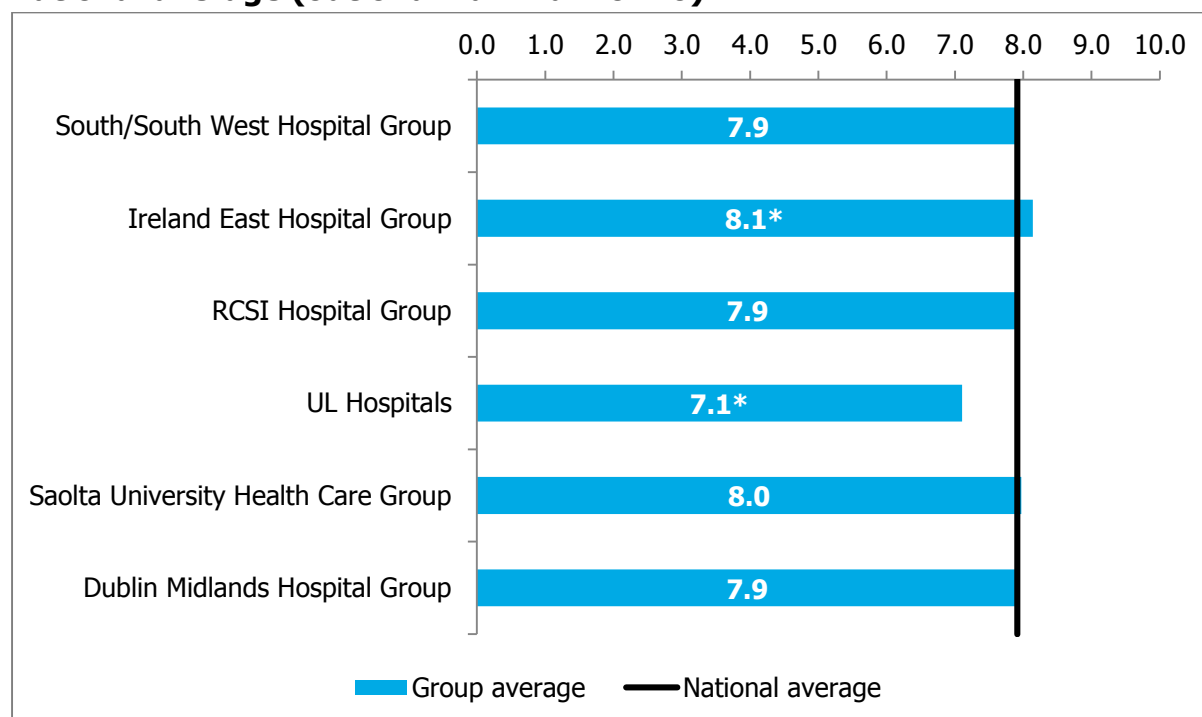


Figure 5. Comparison of hospital group scores for 'admissions' with the national average (out of a maximum of 10)



* Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

³ While UHL is the only hospital with an emergency department in the UL Hospitals group, patients discharged from the other hospitals in the group may have been admitted on an emergency basis to another hospital, so would still have answered the questions on 'admissions'. This is why there is some disparity between the UL Hospitals score for 'admissions' and the UHL score.

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 UL Hospitals and the national average

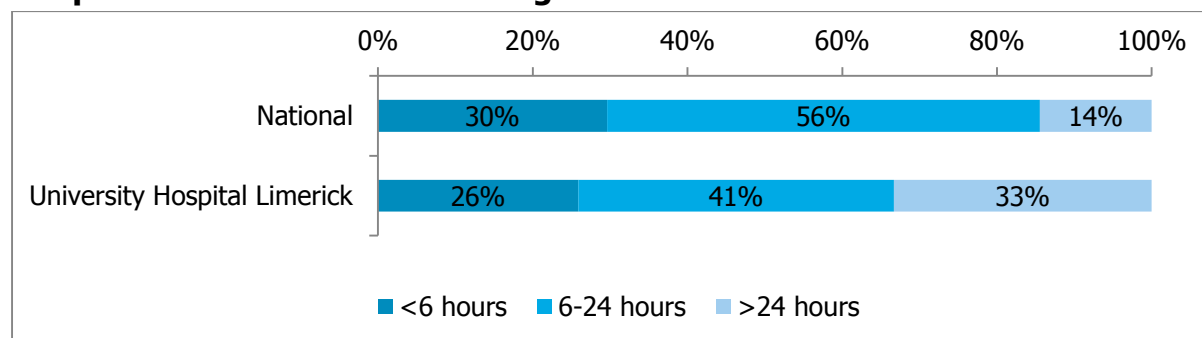
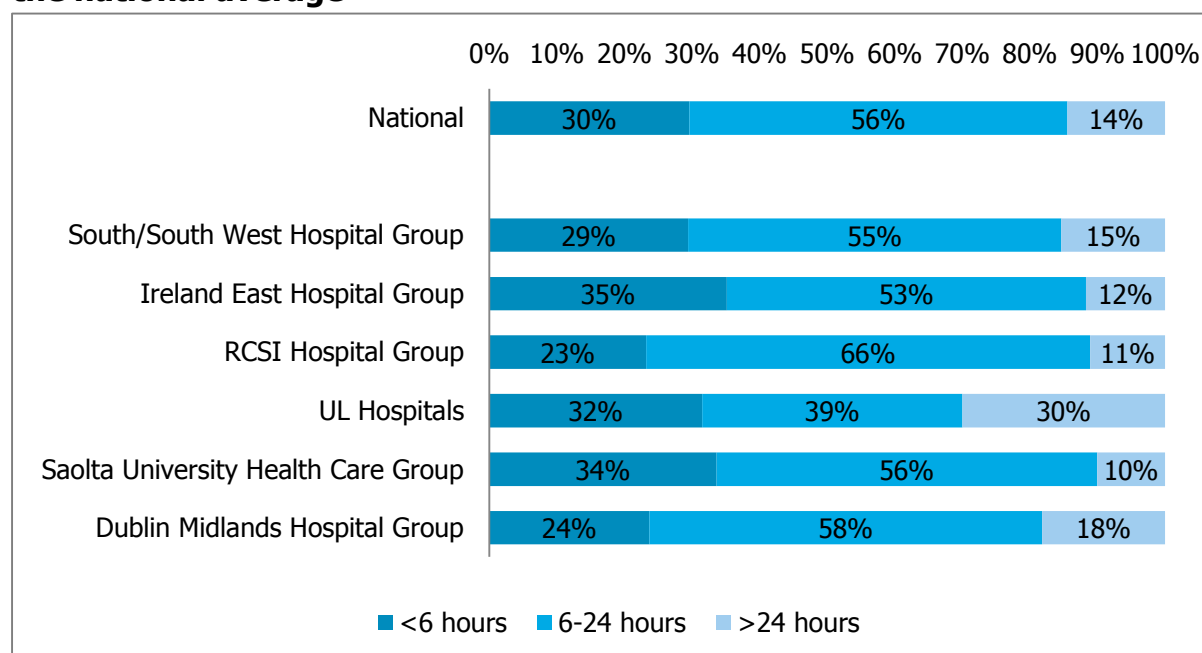


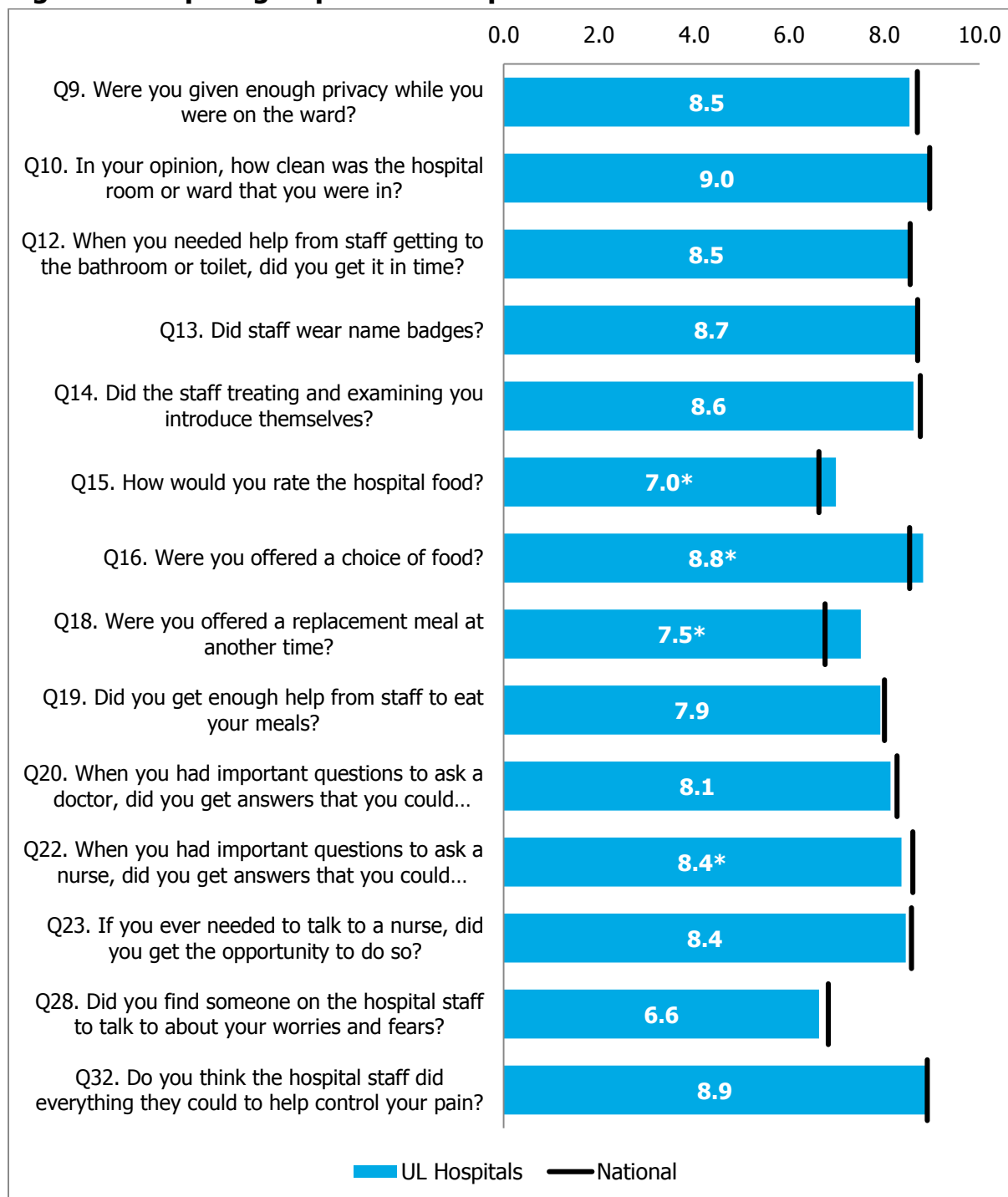
Figure 7. Emergency department waiting times for the hospital groups and the national average



Care on the ward

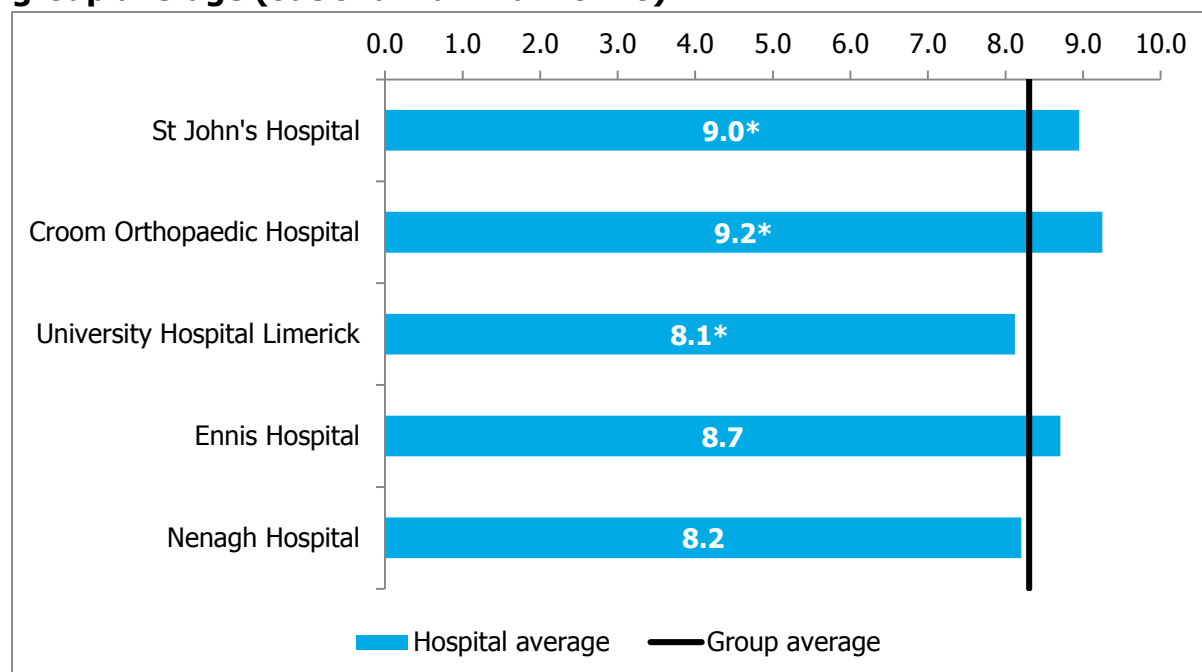
Figure 8 shows the hospital group scores for questions on 'care on the ward'. Figure 9 compares the 'care on the ward' scores for the hospitals of UL Hospitals with the group average. Figure 10 compares the six hospital group scores with the national average.

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



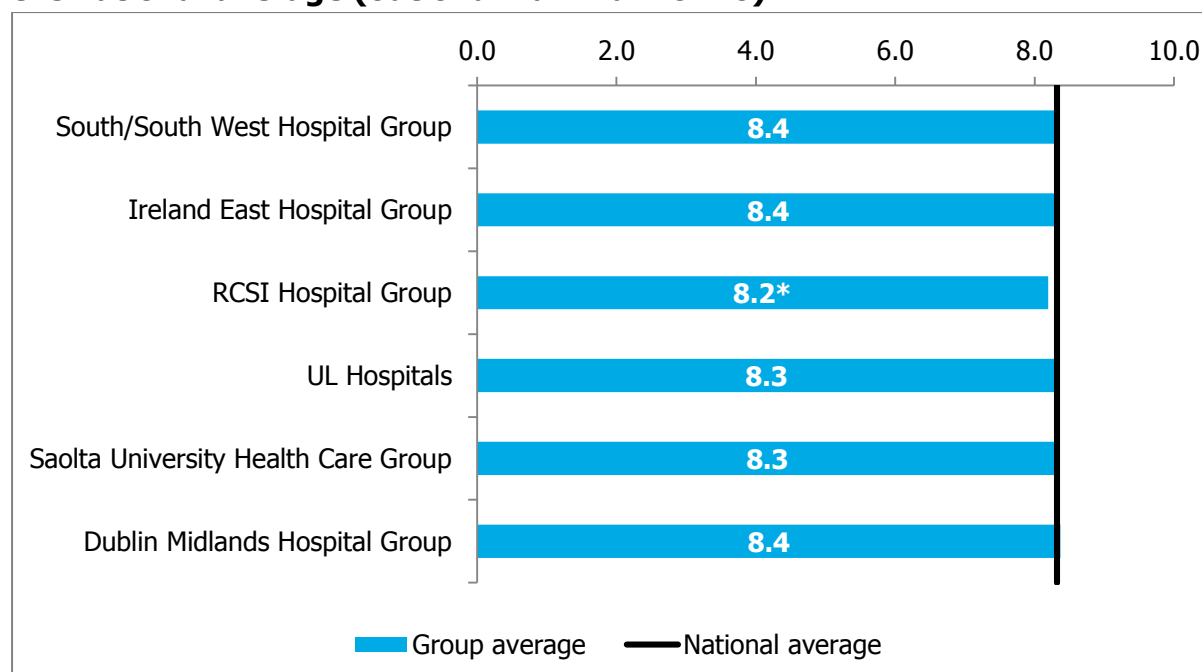
*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

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



*Denotes a statistically significant difference from group average

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

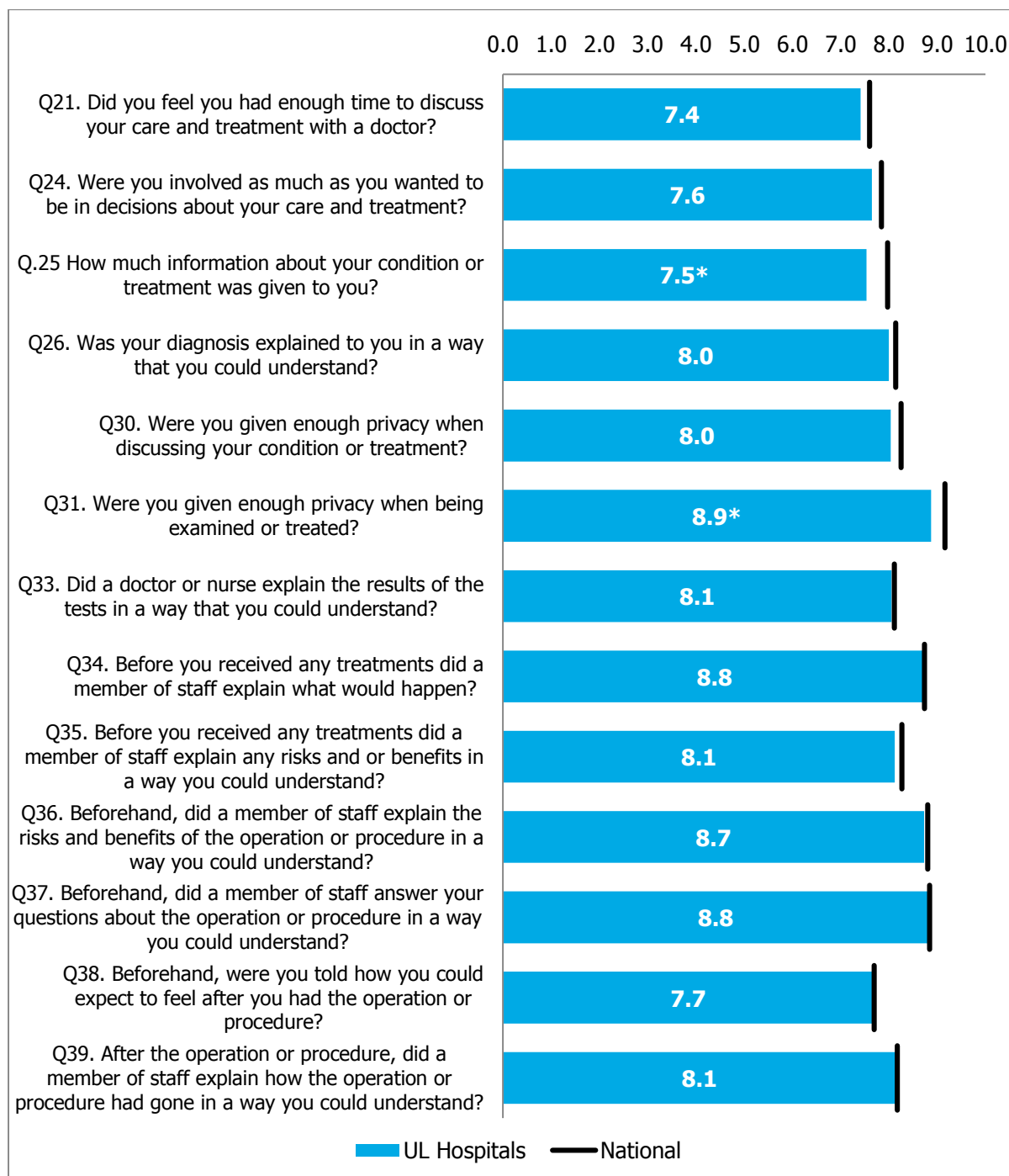


*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

Examinations, diagnosis and treatment

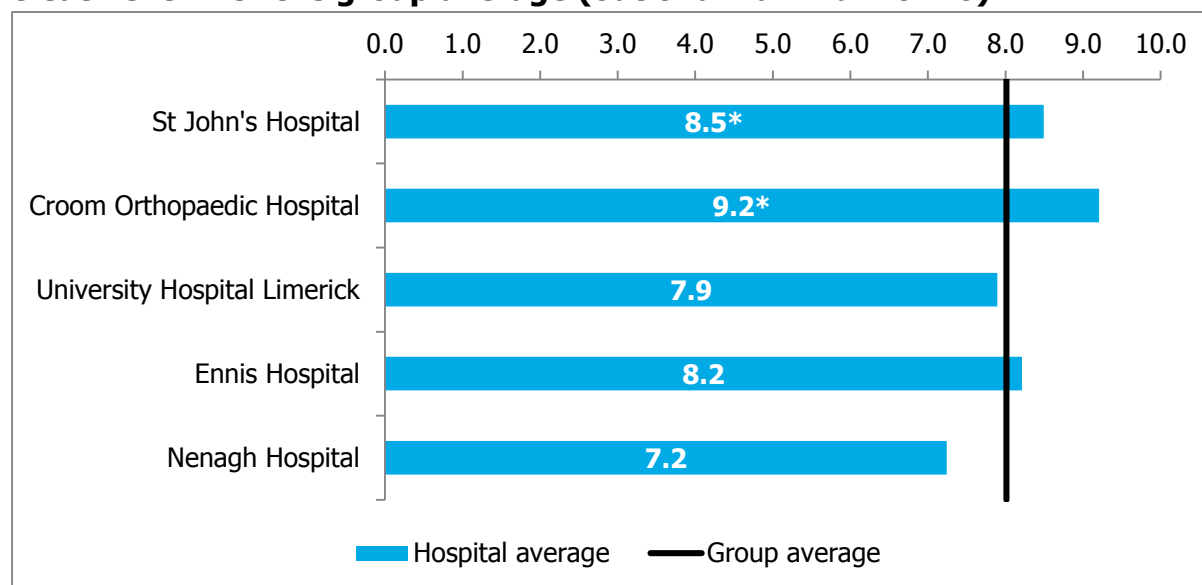
Figure 11 shows the hospital group scores for questions on 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment'. Figure 12 compares the 'examinations, diagnosis and treatment scores' for the hospitals of UL Hospitals with the group average. Figure 13 compares the six hospital group scores with the national average.

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



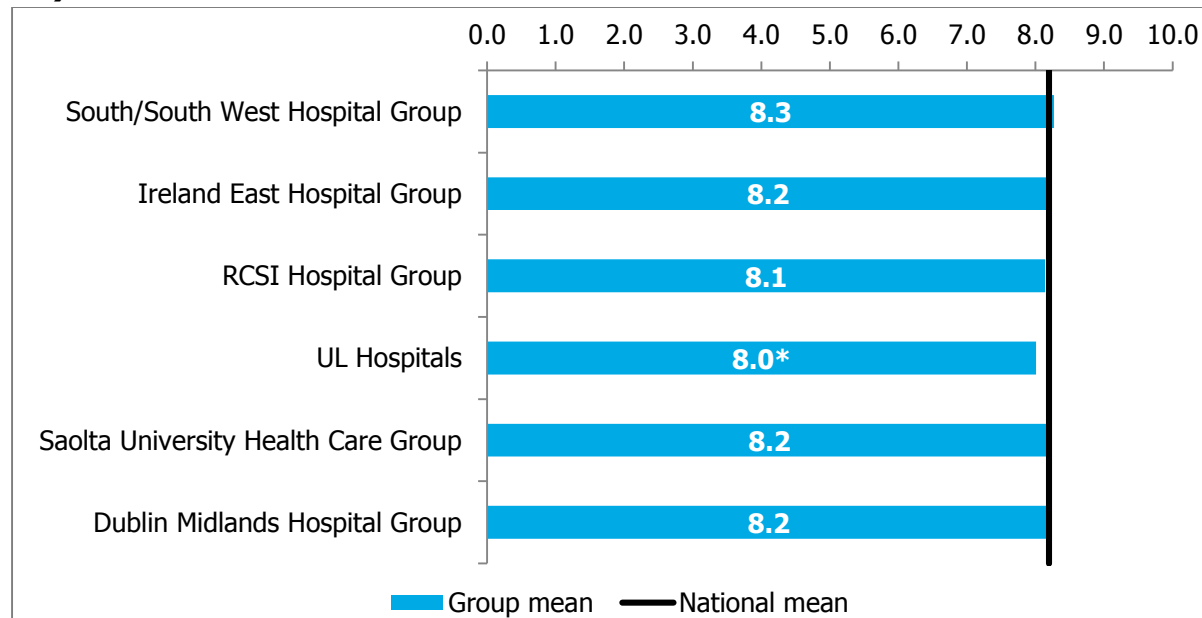
*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

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



*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the group average

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 UL Hospitals 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'

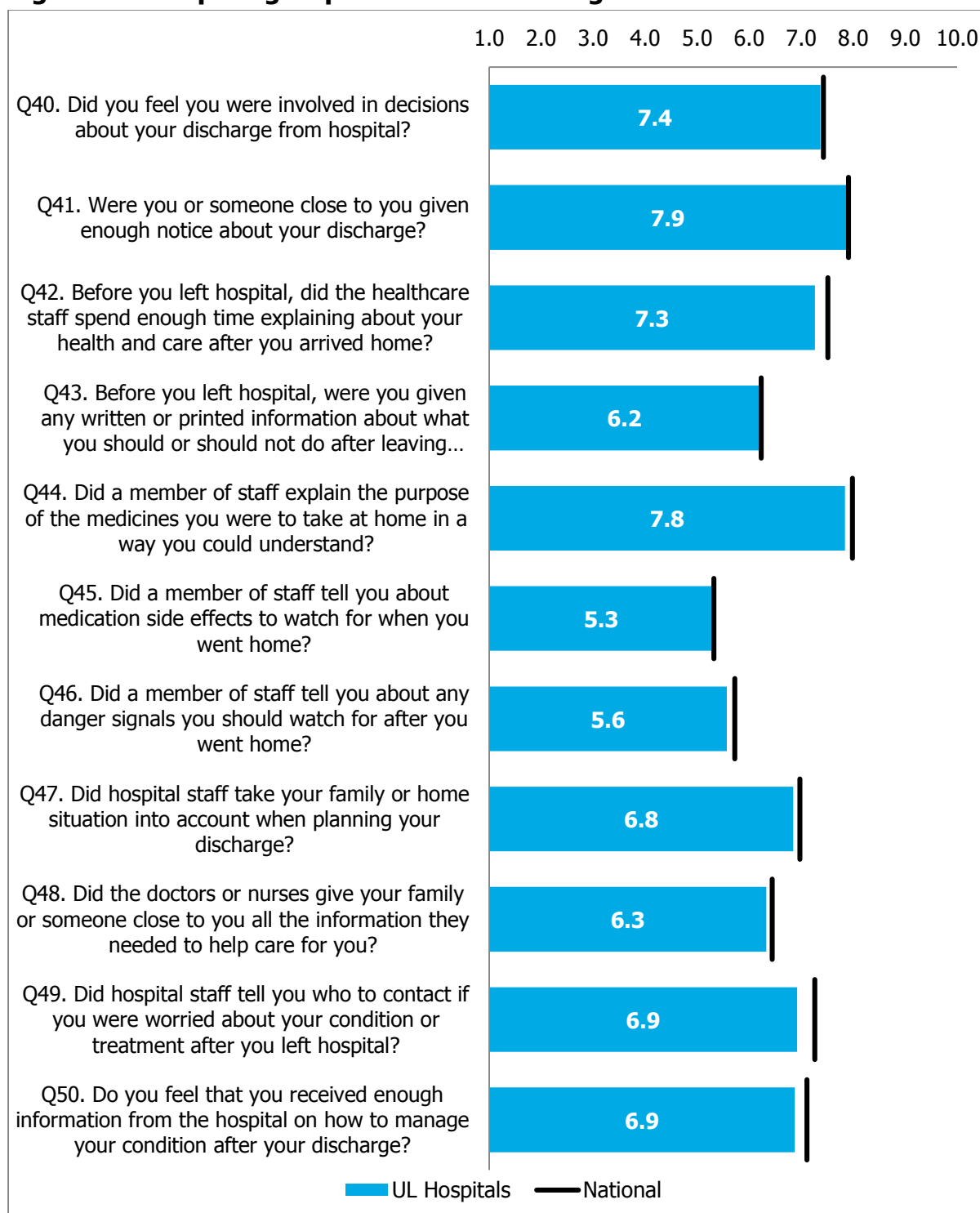
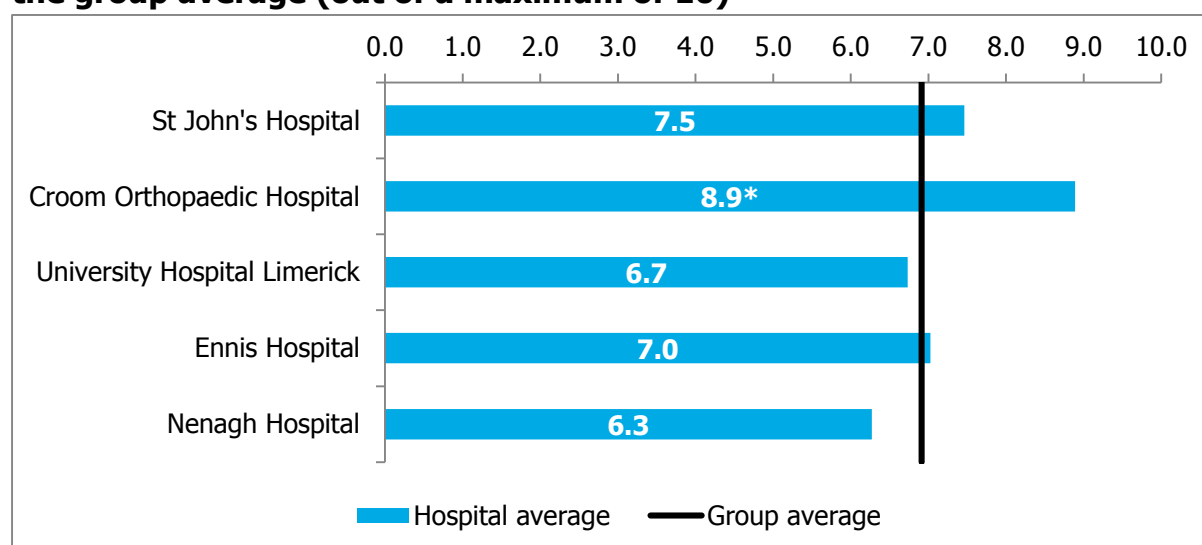
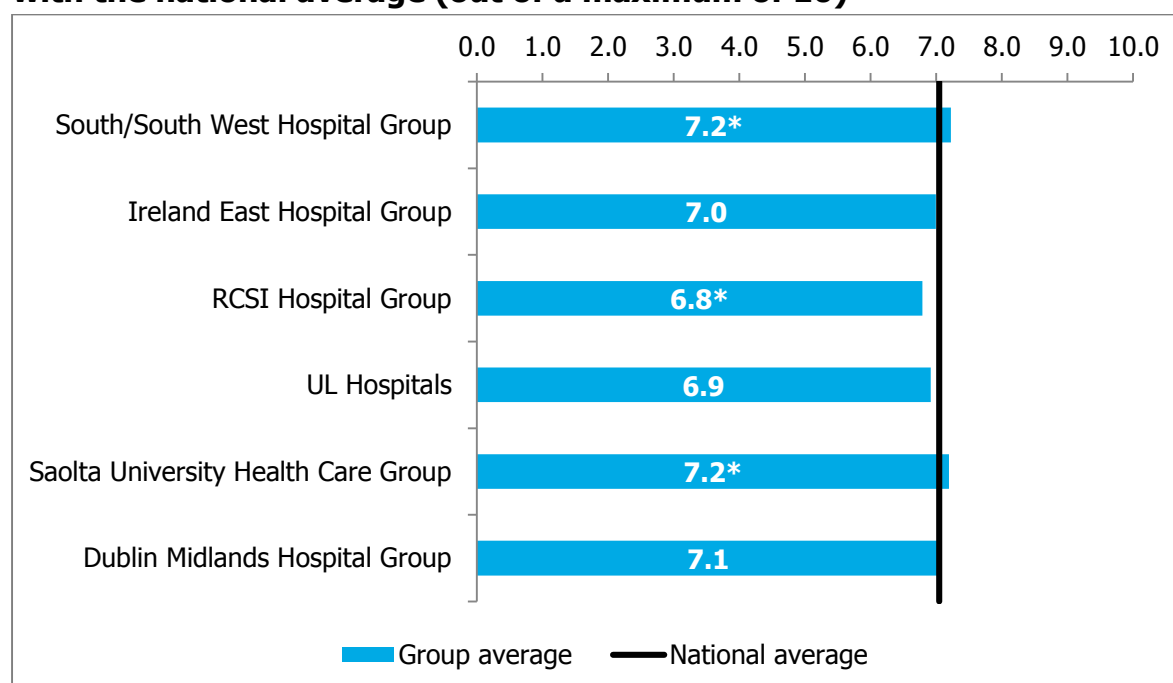


Figure 15. Comparison of hospital scores for 'discharge or transfer' with the group average (out of a maximum of 10)



*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)

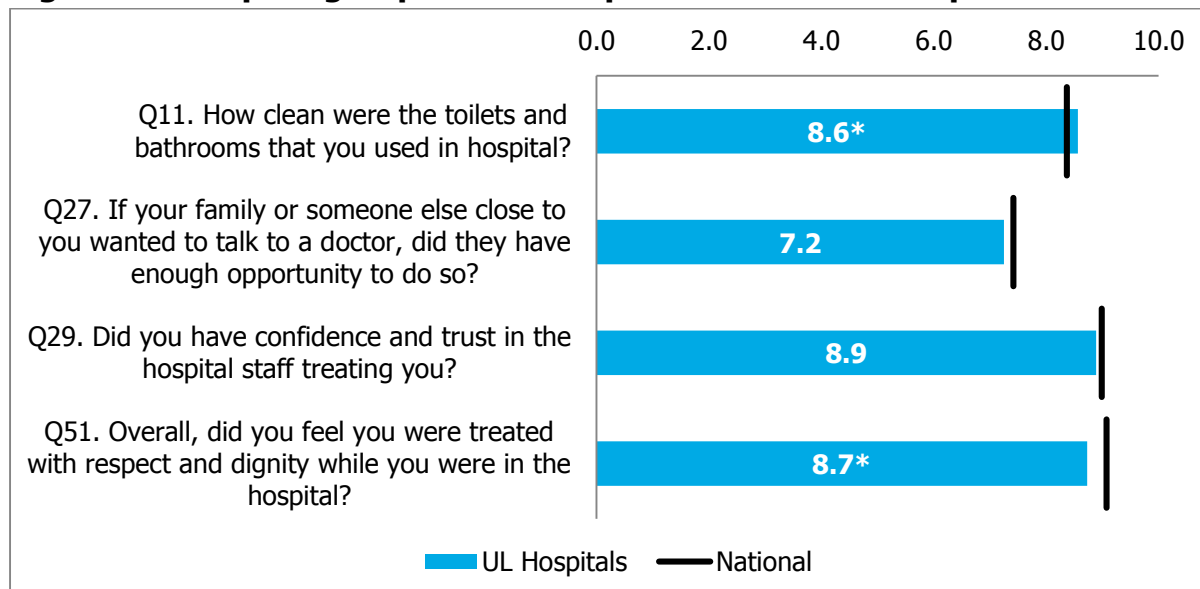


*Denotes a statistically significant difference from the national average

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 UL Hospitals 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 UL Hospitals 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

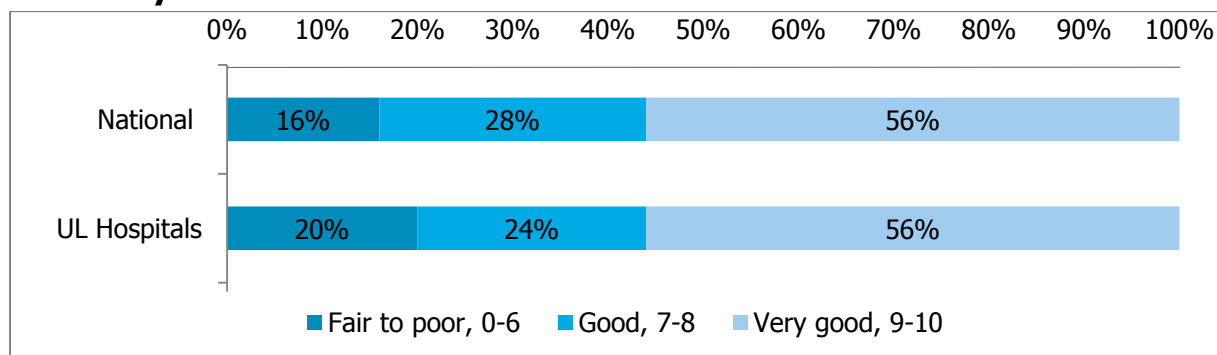
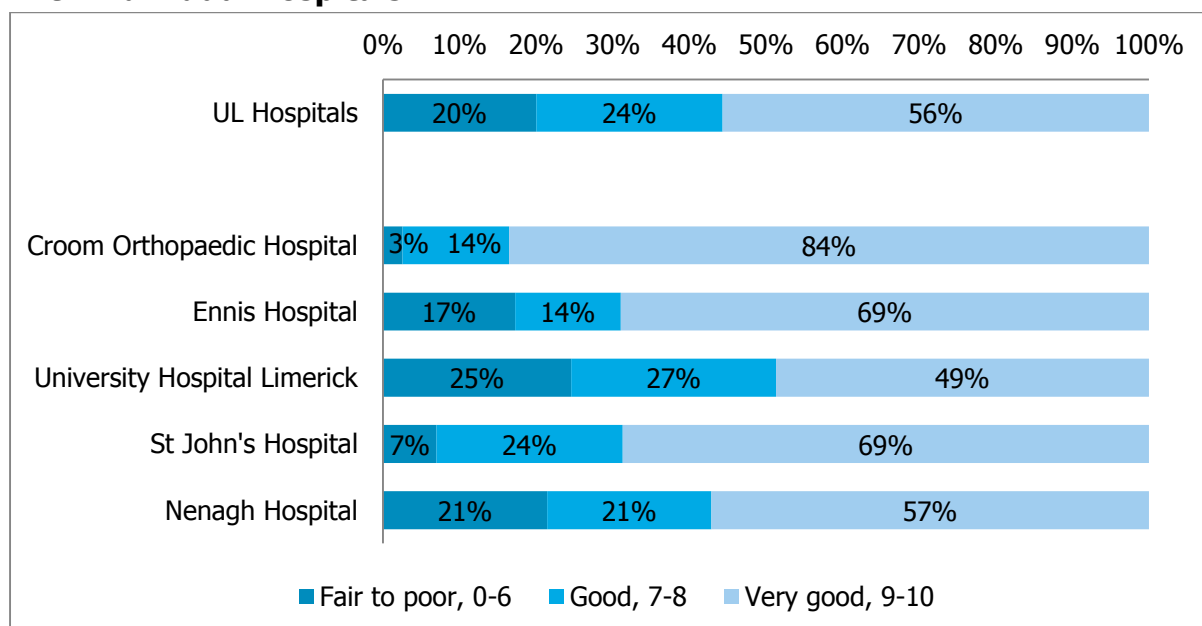


Figure 19. Overall rating of hospital experience for UL Hospitals compared with individual hospitals



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.

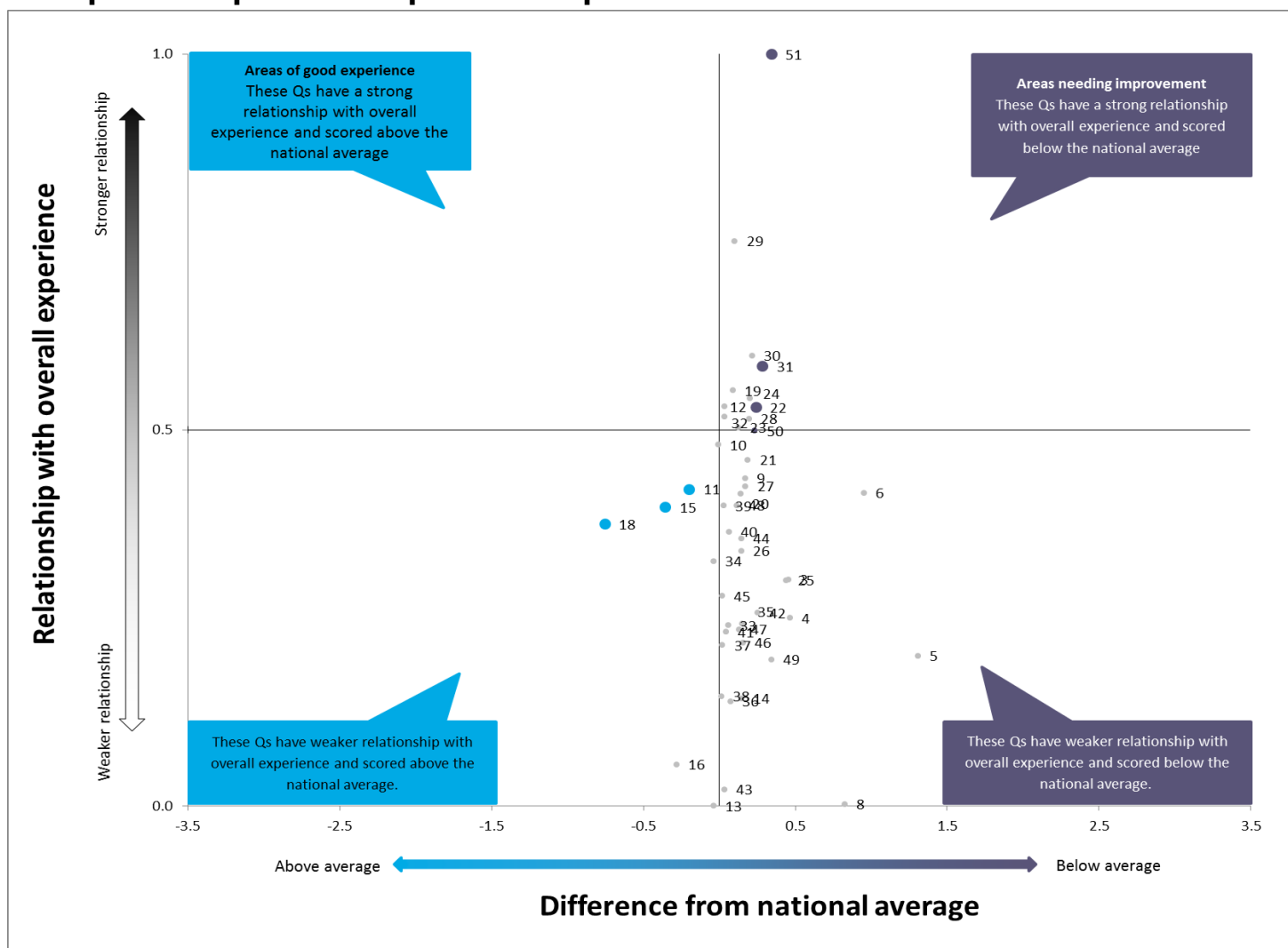
In Figure 20, each dot shows a specific survey question for UL Hospitals. Questions at the top of the graph are strongly related to overall experience, while those at the bottom have a weaker relationship. Questions to the right of the graph scored below the national average, while those on the left 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 UL Hospitals



Conclusion

What were patients' experiences of hospital care in UL Hospitals in May 2019?

The majority of participants said they had a positive overall experience in a hospital of the UL Hospitals. 80% of patients said they had a 'good' or 'very good' experience, compared with 84% nationally. UL Hospitals's performance was similar to last year's across most of the stages of care. However, average patient ratings for admissions were significantly lower in 2019, compared to 2018.

In terms of areas of good experience, patients were generally satisfied with the cleanliness of the toilets and bathrooms in hospital (Q11), with the hospital food (Q15), and the availability of replacement meals at other times (Q18). UL Hospitals scored above the national average in these areas.

Patients highlighted a number of areas requiring improvement. Patients reported that when they had important questions to ask a nurse, they did not always get questions they could understand (Q22). Some patients also felt that they were not given enough privacy when being examined or treated (Q31), and that they were not always treated with respect and dignity (Q51). UL Hospitals 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 UL Hospitals, intended to address the issues identified by patients. Some examples of these initiatives can be seen at www.yourexperience.ie/inpatient/hospital-initiatives/.