

Survey: Delayed or Difficult Hospital Discharge

Patient paper copy

Have you, or someone you support, had a delayed or difficult experience leaving hospital? If yes – we want to hear from you.

Your feedback can help the NHS understand if everyone leaving hospital is getting the support they need.

This survey asks about what it was like for patients being discharged from an NHS hospital in the last 12 months. Being discharged means leaving the hospital ward where you were being treated.

This survey is for people who have had a difficult experience of leaving hospital in the last 12 months, including where discharge was delayed, happened before they felt ready, or where support, equipment, information or follow-up arrangements were not in place.

Please answer about your most recent discharge experience. If you do not know the answer, please select “Don’t know / can’t remember”. The survey should take around 10 minutes.

For further information on the project, please read our information sheet

Section 1: Screening questions

Q1. Which of the following best describes you?

Tick one

- ☐ I am answering about my own hospital stay
- ☐ I am a family member, friend or carer answering with or on behalf of someone I support

Q2. In the last 12 months, did you stay at least one night in an NHS hospital in England?

Tick one.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No [Survey ends here]
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember [Survey ends here]

Q3. Thinking about the time in hospital, did any of the following happen?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ I stayed longer in hospital than expected, even though I no longer needed any hospital treatment
- ☐ I was sent home before I felt well enough to leave
- ☐ I was sent home before all of the care, support, equipment, medication, transport or housing arrangements that were needed were in place
- ☐ Something else happened that made discharge difficult
- ☐ None of the above – [Survey ends here]
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember – [Survey ends here]

Section 2: About you

Q4. What is your gender?

- ☐ Man
- ☐ Woman
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe:

Q5. Are you from a minority ethnic background?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Q6. What was the main reason for the hospital stay?

Tick one.

- ☐ Emergency admission (for example after becoming suddenly unwell or after being in an accident)
- ☐ Planned surgery or treatment
- ☐ Maternity care
- ☐ Mental health care
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Don't know / prefer not to say

Section 3: Delayed discharge

Only answer this section if you selected "I stayed longer in hospital than expected" in Q3. If not, skip to section 4 (on page 5).

Q7. How long did you stay in hospital after you were told you no longer needed hospital treatment or support?

Tick one.

- ☐ I left hospital the same day (Skip to section 4)
- ☐ 1 extra day
- ☐ 2 to 6 extra days
- ☐ 7 to 13 extra days
- ☐ 2 to 3 weeks
- ☐ More than 3 weeks
- ☐ I was not told when I was medically ready to leave
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

Q8. How clear or unclear was the explanation you were given for the delay?

Tick one.

- ☐ Very clear
- ☐ Somewhat clear
- ☐ Neither clear nor unclear
- ☐ Somewhat unclear
- ☐ Very unclear
- ☐ No explanation was given to me
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

Q9. What was the reason you could not leave hospital?

Choose up to three.

- ☐ My medication was not ready
- ☐ My discharge paperwork was not completed
- ☐ My transport was not arranged
- ☐ Final checks were not completed
- ☐ My referrals or funding were still being worked out
- ☐ Support at my usual home was not ready, such as carers, equipment or rehabilitation
- ☐ A care home, nursing home, rehab bed or mental health bed that I needed was not ready
- ☐ I was homeless and I needed temporary accommodation to be arranged for me
- ☐ I, my family or carers did not feel ready
- ☐ There were concerns about me leaving from social care staff
- ☐ No reason was given to me
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Other
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

Q10. Do you think staying in hospital longer than expected caused any of the following for you?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ My existing health condition got worse
- ☐ I developed an infection while waiting to leave hospital
- ☐ I developed another health problem while waiting to leave
- ☐ My mental wellbeing got worse
- ☐ I felt less confident managing at home on my return
- ☐ I found it harder to walk or move around
- ☐ I needed help with everyday tasks, such as washing or dressing, that I could manage on my own before this hospital stay
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

Q11. Do you think staying in hospital longer than expected caused any of the following?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ I needed to go back into hospital shortly after leaving
- ☐ I needed to move into a care home or other long-term care, when I might not otherwise have needed to
- ☐ It made me less likely to go to hospital in future if I needed help
- ☐ It reduced my confidence in NHS care generally
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

Q12. Do you think the delay in leaving hospital caused any of the following?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ I lost income from my job or work
- ☐ I lost benefit income
- ☐ I had extra costs I did not expect, such as transport or temporary accommodation
- ☐ I could not carry out my caring responsibilities
- ☐ I needed more paid or private care than I would have expected before this hospital stay
- ☐ A family member or carer had to take on more caring responsibilities than expected
- ☐ A family member or carer lost income or had to take time off work
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

Q13. While you were waiting to leave hospital, which, if any, of the following happened?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Hospital staff encouraged me to get out of bed or move around
- ☐ Hospital staff helped me to move around safely
- ☐ Hospital staff helped me to do personal care as independently as possible, such as washing or dressing
- ☐ I was offered exercises, therapy or rehabilitation
- ☐ I was offered support for my mental wellbeing
- ☐ I did not need this kind of support
- ☐ None of these happened
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

[survey continues on the next page]

Section 4: Discharge arrangements

Everyone answers this section

Q14. When you were told you were leaving hospital, how ready did you feel to leave?

1 means "not at all ready" and 5 means "completely ready". Please tick one box.

1	2	3	4	5	Don't know / can't remember
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Not at all ready				Completely ready	

Q15. When you left hospital, to what extent were the arrangements you needed for care, support or recovery in place?

This could include care at home, equipment, medication, transport, housing, or follow-up appointments. Tick one.

- ☐ All arrangements I needed were in place [\[go to Q18\]](#)
- ☐ Most arrangements I needed were in place
- ☐ Some arrangements I needed were in place
- ☐ None of the arrangements I needed were in place
- ☐ No arrangements were needed [\[go to Q18\]](#)
- ☐ Not sure / don't know [\[go to Q18\]](#)

Q16. Which of the following arrangements were not ready or not in place when you left hospital?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ Care at home
- ☐ A care home place
- ☐ Equipment or adaptations for the home
- ☐ Medication or prescriptions
- ☐ Transport home
- ☐ Follow-up appointments or referrals
- ☐ Clear information about what would happen next
- ☐ Housing or accommodation arrangements
- ☐ Support from family or carers
- ☐ Community health support, such as nursing, therapy or rehabilitation
- ☐ None of the above [\[go to Q18\]](#)
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember [\[go to Q18\]](#)

Q17. What impact did leaving without these arrangements in place have on you?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ It had no impact
- ☐ It caused me anxiety or distress
- ☐ I could not return safely to my own home
- ☐ Family or carers had to provide more help than expected
- ☐ My health got worse
- ☐ I had to contact NHS services for help
- ☐ I had to return to hospital
- ☐ It caused extra financial costs
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

Q18. To what extent did you feel involved in the decisions around your discharge?

Tick one.

- ☐ Very involved
- ☐ Fairly involved
- ☐ Neither involved nor uninvolved
- ☐ Fairly uninvolved
- ☐ Not very involved at all
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

Q19. Before you left hospital, were you told who to contact if you had concerns about your health or care after leaving?

Tick one.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

Q20. If there is anything else you wish to tell us about your discharge experience, please share below.

Tell us a bit more about you

By answering the following questions, you can help us understand how some people may experience things in different ways. However, if you'd prefer not to answer, you can select "prefer not to say".

Please note that your data is always stored and used in line with data protection law

QD1. What is your age?

Tick one.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| ☐ 16-17 | ☐ 75 to 84 |
| ☐ 18 to 24 | ☐ 85 or over |
| ☐ 25 to 49 | ☐ Prefer not to say |
| ☐ 50 to 64 | ☐ Don't know / not known |
| ☐ 65 to 74 | |

QD2a. What is your ethnicity?

Tick one.

- | | |
|--|--|
| ☐ Arab | ☐ Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: Black Caribbean and White |
| ☐ Asian / Asian British: Bangladeshi | ☐ Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups background |
| ☐ Asian / Asian British: Chinese | ☐ White: British / English / Northern Irish / Scottish / Welsh |
| ☐ Asian / Asian British: Indian | ☐ White: Irish |
| ☐ Asian / Asian British: Pakistani | ☐ White: Gypsy, Traveller or Irish Traveller |
| ☐ Asian / Asian British: Any other Asian / Asian British background | ☐ White: Roma |
| ☐ Black / Black British: African | ☐ White: Any other White background |
| ☐ Black / Black British: Caribbean | ☐ Any other ethnic group |
| ☐ Black / Black British: Any other Black / Black British background | ☐ Prefer not to say |
| ☐ Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: Asian and White | ☐ Don't know |
| ☐ Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups: Black African and White | |

QD2 b. If you would like to describe your ethnic background in your own words, please write it here.

QD3. Which of the following statements apply to you?

Tick all that apply.

- ☐ I have a disability
- ☐ I have a long-term condition
- ☐ I have a mental health condition
- ☐ I have dementia, memory problems or cognitive impairment
- ☐ I am neurodivergent, for example autistic, ADHD/ADD, dyslexic or Tourette's
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Don't know / not known

QD4. What area do you live in? (*Tick one*)

Barking and Dagenham	Cumbria	Islington	Northumberland	Stockport
Barnet	Darlington	Kent	Nottingham	Stockton-on-Tees
Barnsley	Derby	Kingston Upon Hull	Nottinghamshire	Stoke-on-Trent
Bath and North East Somerset	Derbyshire	Kingston upon Thames	Oldham	Suffolk
Bedford Borough	Devon	Kirklees	Oxfordshire	Sunderland
Bexley	Doncaster	Knowsley	Peterborough	Surrey
Birmingham	Dorset	Lambeth	Plymouth	Sutton
Blackburn with Darwen	Dudley	Lancashire	Portsmouth	Swindon
Blackpool	Ealing	Leeds	Reading	Tameside
Bolton	East Riding of Yorkshire	Leicester	Redbridge	Telford & Wrekin
Bracknell Forest	East Sussex	Leicestershire	Redcar & Cleveland	Thurrock
Bradford and District	Enfield	Lewisham	Richmond upon Thames	Torbay
Brent	Essex	Lincolnshire	Rochdale	Tower Hamlets
Brighton & Hove	Gateshead	Liverpool	Rotherham	Trafford
Bristol	Gloucestershire	Luton	Rutland	Wakefield
Bromley	Greenwich	Manchester	Salford	Walsall
Buckinghamshire	Hackney	Medway	Sandwell	Waltham Forest
Bury	Halton	Merton	Sefton	Wandsworth
Calderdale	Hammersmith & Fulham	Middlesbrough	Sheffield	Warrington
Cambridgeshire	Hampshire	Milton Keynes	Shropshire	Warwickshire
Camden	Haringey	Newcastle	Slough	West Berkshire
Central Bedfordshire	Harrow	Newham	Solihull	West Sussex
Central West London	Hartlepool	Norfolk	Somerset	Wigan and Leigh
Cheshire East	Havering	North East Lincolnshire	South Gloucestershire	Wiltshire
Cheshire West	Herefordshire	North Lincolnshire	South Tyneside	Windsor, Ascot & Maidenhead
City of London	Hertfordshire	North Somerset	Southampton	Wirral
Cornwall	Hillingdon	North Tyneside	Southend	Wokingham
County Durham	Hounslow	North Yorkshire	Southwark	Wolverhampton
Coventry	Isle of Wight	Northamptonshire North	St Helens	Worcestershire
Croydon	Isles of Scilly	Northamptonshire West	Staffordshire	York

QD5. Which of the following best describes your current financial situation?

Tick one.

- ☐ Very comfortable (I have more than enough money for living expenses, and a lot spare to save or spend on extras or leisure)
- ☐ Quite comfortable (I have enough money for living expenses, and a little spare to save or spend on extras or leisure)
- ☐ Not very comfortable (I have just enough money for living expenses and little else)
- ☐ Not at all comfortable (I don't have enough money for living expenses and sometimes run out of money)
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Don't know / can't remember

QD6. Which of the following best describes your current (main) employment status?

Tick one.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ☐ Working full time (employed or self-employed) | ☐ Carer to a member of the household with additional needs |
| ☐ Working part-time (employed or self-employed) | ☐ Student |
| ☐ Unemployed and looking for work | ☐ Doing unpaid work / volunteering |
| ☐ Unemployed and unable to work (health issues / disability) | ☐ Don't know / can't remember |
| ☐ Retired | ☐ Prefer not to say |
| ☐ Stay at home parent | |

QD7. Would you like to share your story with others?

When we publish a press release about our research, the media (newspapers, radio or TV) sometimes ask if we know of anyone who would want to share their story. We also produce case studies in our published material and in campaigns.

Would you be happy for us to contact you about your experience for media purposes? We won't pass on your name and contact details to the media without speaking to you first to explain what it involves.

- ☐ I am happy to be contacted by Healthwatch to discuss whether my story could be a case study for a campaign or to be passed onto the media
- ☐ I don't want to be contacted by Healthwatch about being a case study for a campaign or for the media.

If yes, please leave your contact details

Name:

Email/mobile:

Thank you for completing this survey for Healthwatch