

# **Patient stories: Experiences of Frimley Park Hospital**

July 2015



# Acknowledgements

We would like to thank our local healthwatches; Surrey, Slough, Wokingham and Hampshire for taking the time to look at the report and provide comments.



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# Executive Summary



**Frimley Park Hospital are in a challenging and unique situation as they border a number of Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG), local authorities and a number of local healthwatches gathering feedback and listening to patient voices.**

We recommend that Frimley Park review this feedback and comment on any actions taken as a result of our recommendations.

Due to the shared support arrangements between the four local healthwatches (Hampshire, Slough, Surrey and Wokingham) we are able to present our feedback in one unified report that others can comment on. We have decided to present the trust with our joint feedback over the past year for comment.

The feedback that we have received about Frimley Park Hospital have shown that the hospital has many good services that patients value. For example the outpatients department. Because of the nature of our work to gather feedback we are likely to receive more negative than positive responses. The two issues we have identified in need of review are; the complaints procedure and waiting times.

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**“Frimley Park Hospital are excellent, I have the relevant support in place for my treatment. The parking is not good”**

Anonymous

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# About Healthwatch

**We are here to make health and social care better for ordinary people. We believe that the best way to do this is by designing local services around their needs and experiences.**

Everything we say and do is informed by our connections to local people and our expertise is grounded in their experience.

We are uniquely placed as a network, with a local Healthwatch in every local authority area in England.

As a statutory watchdog our role is to ensure that local health and social care services, and the local decision makers, put the experiences of people at the heart of their care.

Healthwatch is the independent consumer champion for health and social care in England

Healthwatch's function is to engage with local people to seek views about locally delivered services, signpost service users to relevant information and influence the design of local health and social care provision.

There is a Healthwatch in every local authority area in the country. Each one works with its community to improve patient engagement make sure that services listen to the views of patients.

More information is available at:

[www.healthwatch.co.uk](http://www.healthwatch.co.uk)





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# Methodology

## **Aims of the report**

The main objective of this report is to gain an understanding of how patients feel about their care and treatment at Frimley Park Hospital. To analyse the feedback from the patients to identify where improvements could be made and to make recommendations to Frimley Park Hospital where appropriate. Our intention is to lay out the feedback we have received for Frimley Park to view and respond to if appropriate.

## **Who we spoke to?**

The participant sample are individuals who have provided Healthwatch with feedback about Frimley Park Hospital, either by contacting their Healthwatch directly or through Healthwatch engagement work within the area. This feedback has been collected and stored on the Healthwatch Customer Relationship Management system (CRM). The data that has been identified within the CRM is anonymous and therefore the demographics of this participant sample is unknown.

## **Procedure**

The shared support arrangements behind Healthwatch Surrey, Hampshire, Slough and Wokingham make it possible for their information to be combined into a single report. This report contains the feedback from these areas. Frimley Park hospital, of course, offers services to a much wider area than the four areas above and those Healthwatch's will be invited to comment separately.

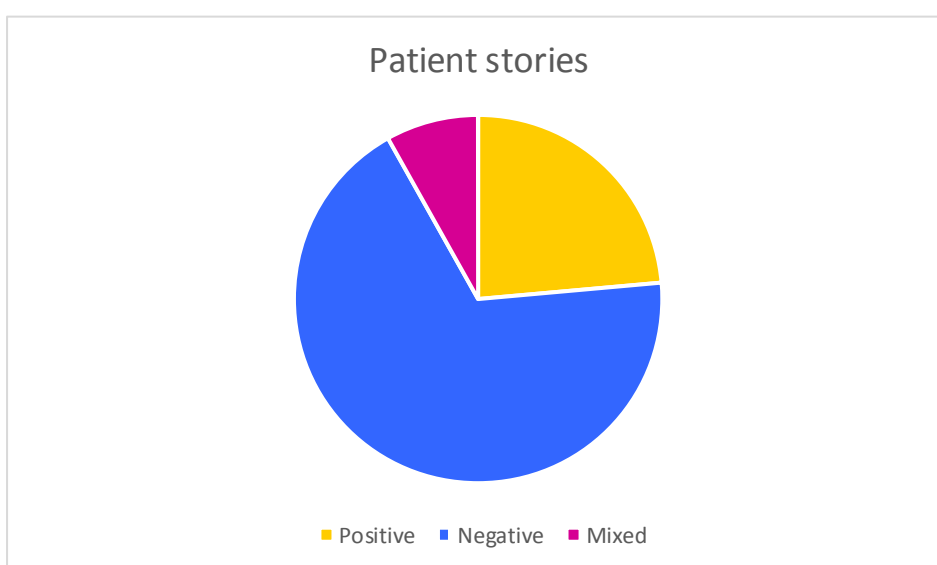
We have made only limited effort to correct any grammatical mistakes in the experiences/feedback received. The stories that you read are what the patients have told us in their own words.



# What have we heard?

The stories that people have told us have been primarily around the complaints procedure, waiting times, Accident and Emergency, staff attitudes, communication, discharge, transport, interpretation and other relevant services. The most common story involved the complaints procedure and waiting times with the least common story involving interpretation services and communication between staff and patients.

The graph below shows that of all the stories, 84 were negative, 29 were positive and 10 were a mixture of both.



We have identified that the two most common stories from patients at Frimley Park Hospital related to the complaints procedure and waiting times. The stories from these patients are included in this report.

## Complaints procedure

The complaints procedure(s) were one of the most common stories from patients at Frimley Park Hospital. The stories from the patients regarding the complaints procedure are listed below.

### Feedback

“I would like to make a formal complaint about the treatment I received, but I don't know how to go about it”

“I have tried to make a complaint about my treatment, I asked the doctor and it took him months to give me a response. I am not happy with the response and will be putting in a formal complaint”



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“I feel that the letter to Frimley Park Hospital has not been dealt with appropriately in terms of the response. I was told that my letter was one of the longest complaints letter they had received”

“I could not find any improvements in care”

“I have put in a complaint about the treatment of one of my relatives. The staff behaved unprofessionally and I was disgusted”

“I have made a complaint to Frimley Park Hospital and received a response from the chief executive and my complaint is being investigated”

“Complaint was made, they did say they were sorry but they didn’t have to tell me everything”

“I wanted to make a complaint but I asked the health professional to no longer be present but she continued to be. The discharge papers stated that my daughter was at fault and Frimley Park Hospital took no responsibility or accountability for their mistake.”

“Frimley Park Hospital admitted their mistakes and I hope lessons have been learnt. I have been grieving for my relative as well as making this complaint. I am not happy with the response or how long it has taken to get it. I want to know how they have improved and further acknowledgement of their mistakes.”

“I would like to make a complaint as I felt that I was discharged from hospital too early”

“I am not happy with the response to my complaint”

“Nobody is calling back, I need help to pursue a complaint”

## **Waiting times**

Waiting times were one of the most common themes to emerge within the stories of patients from Frimley Park Hospital. Therefore, we included the stories in this report to illustrate what patients are saying about the waiting times at the hospital.

## **Feedback**

“I waited six hours in a hospital bed. I was told that a doctor would be with me shortly but no-one came. I was on my own, I was in a lot of pain and ended up discharging myself”

“It took 4/5 weeks to have an appointment with a specific doctor”

“I arrived early for my appointment but I had to wait 3 and half hours to be seen. I know this can happen but I specifically asked to have my appointment at this time due to personal reasons”

“It took 4 to 5 hours to see CPN”





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“I am in need of an operation, it has been cancelled at the last moment multiple times and this causes me stress because I have to be nil by mouth. I still do not have a date for my operation.”

“I waited 1 hour for an x-ray and then 3 hours to see a doctor and I found this incredibly difficult due to my health condition”

“I waited months for my appointment at Frimley Park Hospital. I think reminders would be useful for appointments that are far away”

“I was told the wait to see a doctor would up to 2 hours, it ended up being four hours and with no call back about my results”

“I had to wait for a long time in A&E and was asked to come back the next day and then asked to come back a few weeks later. I don't think staff understand the stress factors involved in waiting in A&E”

“I was told I would be contacted in 2 weeks. I had to make several phone calls to be given my appointment. What about the more vulnerable patients that are unable to phone?”

“It took 5 hours to see me, I was in a lot of pain and the medication they gave me did not work and then I had to wait 4 hours to have the cast removed.”

“Patient waited two hours to be seen in A&E, he was seen by three different people, the nurse sent him home with his medications.”

“My appointment to see the specialist is being delayed. I want to put in a complaint about the department. My appointments keep getting cancelled!”

“My urgent operation keeps getting cancelled”

“I waited 2 hour for an x-ray and a further 3 hours to see a doctor. This is difficult for a patient with ADHD”

“I had to keep chasing for my appointments and the receptionist was not polite”

“I had an operation at Frimley Park Hospital which ended up with me having more operations. I felt that I was kept waiting for help for far too long and the treatment was subsequently delayed.”

“I have to have treatment fairly regularly and my appointments kept getting cancelled.”

***Please note: All feedback is located within the appendices.***



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# Conclusion

It can be concluded from this report that many patients do feel positive about their care and treatment at Frimley Park Hospital; with many patients stating that they have received excellent treatment and care. However, the findings from this report have identified that this is not always the case as many patients have also reported having a negative experience in regards to their treatment. We felt it was important to provide the hospital with feedback so that they can see what we have been hearing.

We have identified that the complaints procedure and waiting times specifically in relation to appointments have been a common negative experience, and because of this we focused our attention on these two areas. Healthwatch has included recommendations within this report regarding the complaints procedure and waiting times.

The above suggests that patients have experienced a mixture of positive and negative experiences at Frimley Park Hospital with some giving recommendations for improving patient experience for example, having an illuminated sign in the hospital outpatients department so that patients who have hearing disabilities can see when they are being called by a member of staff.

Overall, this report concludes that the patient experiences of Frimley Park Hospital are mixed with many patients stating that the hospital was fantastic and they felt they had received the highest amount of care. Others were not as satisfied with their experiences and reported problems with the complaints procedure and waiting times. Healthwatch has proposed recommendations relating to patient experiences where appropriate.



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# Recommendations

1. The hospital should make patients more aware of the complaints procedure through an easy to read leaflet and ensuring that complaint information is easy to identify on the website. This will mean that patients can make a complaint with little distress.
2. Inform patients before if operations are to be cancelled to ensure that health and medications are not affected.
3. To send out reminders to all patients about upcoming appointments as patients have told us that they sometimes forget.
4. To have illuminated screens within the hospitals outpatients departments so that patients who have a hearing impairment are able to see when they are called.
5. To develop a leaflet explaining the discharge process to allow all patients to better understand the process to reduce distress.

We ask that the trust respond to us after considering these recommendations.



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# Appendix One:

## Positive feedback

“Frimley Park have a separate children’s A&E Department. This is a very good service, would definitely use the service again”

“I went to Frimley Park Hospital yesterday for a physiotherapy session. The service was fantastic, really good and no complaints”

“Yateley medical centre is excellent”

“Frimley Park Hospital is excellent”

“I was happy with the treatment I received. The ambulance arrived and I received good care at hospital.”

“The optician was really good and I now have regular eye tests at Frimley Park Hospital and hospital transport is provided”

“The hospital is good, I was treated really well and St Lukes GP are really good”

“We have frequently visited over the past 7 years, we cannot praise the care we receive from the hospital enough”

“The drop in centre is good, it can present people going into hospital, there is always someone to see here straight away”

“Years ago, it would take hours of waiting to see a doctor”

“GP Southwood was really good, really good service”

“Yes, it was ok!”

“I need to have regular hospital appointments and I was given one in the early morning. I called up Frimley Park Hospital to change the appointment so that I could use my bus pass. The outpatient department agreed to change the date and I was very pleased”

“After having been turned away from other hospitals, I felt Frimley Park A&E were perfect in every way”

“The wellbeing centre is very good and makes me feel safe because I have somewhere to turn to when needed.”



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“Frimley Park Hospital made me feel looked after even when I’m not comfortable in hospitals”  
“I had a successful operation. Frimley is brilliant”

“Excellent hospital treatment and follow up.”

“Caring and efficient service in the surgical assessment service and maternity unit. If I need to use the hospital again, I will use Frimley Park Hospital”

“Pleased with all my care from Frimley Park Hospital”

“Neurology technician was reassuring”

“Frimley Park were brilliant in finding me somewhere to live”

“I attended the A&E department, I was quickly sent for an x-ray and then had a short wait before seeing the duty doctor. The staff were caring and attentive and less than 4 hours later I had an operation”

“I attended two appointments at the fracture clinic. I was seen promptly on both occasions and this allowed for an x-ray. The consultant was very good. I was referred to physiotherapy and my first appointment was one week after referral and I was seen on time in all my other appointments”

“I had a very good experience at Frimley Park Hospital and would recommend it”

“I was referred to Frimley Park Hospital via my GP and this worked well, after having treatment I have found no further deterioration”

“I had used the NHS 111 and a doctor from Frimley Park Hospital called me back and they made an appointment for me that afternoon. I was diagnosed the same day. Having not used the NHS for several years, during which I had heard many horror stories about not being able to get an appointment, I have nothing but praise for the service I received”

“We are so lucky to have a wonderful NHS. I cannot fault Frimley Park for all their help in looking after me. Everything was superb and all the staff too!”

“I received very good care, I was released in a timely manner and so when my partner arrived to collect me, I was ready to leave. A very good experience!”



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## Appendix Two:

### Negative feedback

“I was not told that I could go to a community hospital for my assessment. I have to go to Frimley Park Hospital for treatment and it costs me money each time on public transport and it means I’m there all day!”

“I have to have treatment at Frimley Park Hospital every couple of weeks and it costs me £17 to get community transport each time.”

“It took 5 hours to see me, I was in a lot of pain and the medication they gave me did not work and then I had to wait 4 hours to have the cast removed.”

“I waited six hours, I was told a doctor would be with me shortly but no-one came. I was on my own and so I discharged myself because I never received any treatment and I was in a lot of pain”

“We found out about a diagnosis after we had attended Frimley Park Hospital, we had good treatment but things went missing. On discharge, I had to sort out a place for my relative to live which was stressful and I had no support. There is not enough information about the support for care homes”

“Communication needs to improve, discharge was diabolical”

“Complaint was made, they did say they were sorry but they didn’t have to tell me everything”

“I had put on a tourniquet on my arm and told the ambulance crew, they ignored me and I continued to bleed.”

“Frimley Park Neurology - the doctor has no bed side manner, cut you off and I felt discharged too early. I won’t go there again”

“Patient waited two hours to be seen in A&E, he was seen by three different people, the nurse sent him home with his medications.”

“I wanted to make a complaint but I asked the health professional to no longer be present but she continued to be. The discharge papers stated that my daughter was at fault and Frimley Park Hospital took no responsibility or accountability for their mistake.”

“Frimley Park Hospital admitted their mistakes and I hope lessons have been learnt. I have been grieving for my relative as well as making this complaint. I am not happy with the response or how long it has taken to get it. I want to know how they have improved and further acknowledgement of their mistakes.”

“The doctor told me I had to live with it”



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“I would like to make a complaint as I felt that I was discharged from hospital too early”

“I have unanswered questions about whether the care provided was appropriate for my relative. I am concerned that they receive the appropriate care and attention.”

“I believe that my daughter did not receive the correct support and care. I would like a copy of the medical records”

“I have limited English language and poor literacy skills. I do not have internet access at home and I cannot understand my letters. “

“I would like to make a formal complaint about Frimley Park Hospital, but I do not know how to go about it”  
“I have concerns about my daughter’s medical needs”

“The care park is not very good. It takes me so long to find a parking space that it uses up my visiting hours. The care park is badly managed and an expansion should be considered”

“The reception staff are difficult and do not take into account who I want to see”

“Client speaks very little English and has difficulty speaking and hearing and was discharged after 2-3 outpatient appointments”

“I wanted the facts about the operation my relative had and I want to know about the bad care they received afterwards. The hospital was very lax in their treatment.”

“My relative had an operation and during that time her hearing aids were misplaced”

“I need to ring Frimley Park Hospital to get an appointment but I am not able to understand any English”  
“I am still waiting to see a specialist at Frimley Park Hospital”

“My appointment to see the specialist is being delayed. I want to put in a complaint about the department. My appointments keep getting cancelled!”

“I am not happy with the response to my complaint”

“I arrived early for my appointment and I had to wait 3 and half hours to be see. I understand that this can happen but I specifically asked for an appointment to be made where I would not have to wait due to my daughter”

“The care I received was really poor, I was discharged too early”



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“The care I received was really poor, I was discharged too early”

“I feel that poor treatment and incorrect drug regimen were used and the doctor did not write up his medical notes. I would like to make a complaint as my relative could have had a serious accident.”

“I was misdiagnosed and will be putting in a complaint

“My child was to be assessed for a diagnosis. The consult paediatrician did not even look nor speak to my child. I was told that I needed parenting classes and to discipline my child.”

“I have a sight impairment and find it hard to sign consent forms, I would like to know if there is an option for verbal consent?”

“My operation went badly wrong. I had already made a complaint but I was told I never had an operation there.”

“The staff are encouraging my relative to eat even when she doesn't want to eat. They have been calling her a bag of bones and threatened her. They don't help her get out of bed nor take her to a nice garden”

“I went down to hospital, it took 4 to 5 hours to see a CPN.”

“Patient needs to see another doctor regarding her operation. The doctors are currently being unhelpful and they have said they are not prepared to go down that route.”

“I am distressed about my operation in which something was lost. I want to complain”

“I could not find any improvements in care. The nurse did not know where the patient was. I will be writing to Frimley in my own time”

“The medication given to my daughter was not explained, I had to keep asking for the staff to do certain things it was as if they were not on the ball or bothered”

“Nobody is calling back, I need help to pursue a complaint”

“My urgent operation keeps getting cancelled”

“I am very concerned about my relative being discharged due to family problems”





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“I waited 2 hour for an x-ray and a further 3 hours to see a doctor. This is difficult for a patient with ADHD”

“A reminder for when my appointments are would be useful. Especially if they are in the future!”

“I had to keep chasing for my appointments and the receptionist was not polite”

“I was told the wait time would be 1-2 hours, it ended up being 4 hours. The doctor promised to call me back with my results but never called”

“I have had to wait 3 weeks to be able to speak to a doctor”

“I was not monitored during my labour. My child was distressed, when myself and the baby were discharged I was told the baby was developmentally okay and only now I have been told that my baby has slight brain damage. I was not told this previously.”

“I have been completely deaf in one ear, please have illuminated screens in the hospital outpatients department so that it's easier to know when we are being called. Additionally calling to make an appointment is difficult”

“I have received a terrible service, I have had an operation that has left me suffering, my GP said that he didn't know what could be done to improve my situation.”

“I have been suffering with flashbacks, I was assessed as needing psychological help. I was psychologically-assessed at Frimley Park. I have not had a follow up appointment”

“I was referred to A&E by another health professional. I had a long wait to be seen by a nurse who then contacted a consultant. I was then told that the consultant had too many patients to see me that day and I would have to return the next day. I was not seen until late in the morning. I was then referred to another department which was another hour of waiting. I felt that the department worked in a less than efficient way and there seems little understanding of the stress factor involved in waiting around for hours especially in A&E”

“My husband was taken to Frimley Park Hospital A&E, when I arrived I was told he had no arrived yet. I kept asking but I was given the same response each time. After a period of time, I was then told by a nurse that where my husband was. It took too long for Frimley Park Hospital to acknowledge their attendance”

“I was discharged from hospital in a taxi with no after care and no place to live”

“Nobody has offered any help to me regarding my return home after an operation as I live alone. I don't know how I'm going to manage”

“I had an operation at Frimley Park Hospital which ended up with me having more operations. I felt that I was kept waiting for help for far too long and the treatment was subsequently delayed.”

“The ward was noisy and another patient was being disruptive to patients and staff. I had to remind night staff to give me my medication.”



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“Patient has to travel to receive treatment at Frimley Park Hospital. The previous hospital refunded the travel but the patient has not managed to get this at Frimley Park”

“The consultant decided that my partner needed to be transferred to a specialist hospital and advised me not to go with my husband. I was upset in the delay in finding a hospital which was far away from home and also being told I was not able to go up to the hospital with my partner”

“I was referred to Frimley Park Hospital and had several appointments and treatments. I then had a scan and I asked my GP to contact Frimley Park Hospital to find out the results and I was told I needed to have another scan done. It's been 14 months since the start of treatment.”

“I felt ‘fobbed off’ and I think my partner would have been in a better situation now if the condition has been diagnosed earlier”

“I will be making a long complaint against Frimley Park Hospital about how they treated my father”

“There is a lack of parking on site and there is no adequate parking available for the number of outpatients and the queues go out onto the main road which affects local traffic and additionally the staff smoke around the edges of the car park which they should not be doing”

“I overheard two health professionals discussing their concerns, my partner was told they would need tests done, 12 weeks have passed and they have not heard anything from the hospital and no written letters have been made to the GP about the findings.”

“I have lost hope in the hospital.”

“I was worried about the approach to my father's care, I felt that there had been a palliative undercurrent to the staff's attitudes which is upsetting.”

“I received a letter from Frimley Park Hospital and I was not happy with it”

“My partners stay was less than satisfactory, we were not told what the prognosis was or what treatment they were receiving. Eventually had an appointment with the doctor to be told they were on holiday, it was rearranged and were told the same thing at the rearranged appointment.”

“I have to have treatment fairly regularly and my appointments kept getting cancelled.”

“I went to Frimley Park Hospital A&E and had a long wait although this was a Saturday evening. I feel that NHS in Surrey where there is a high population of ticks needs to be better prepared”

“My minor operation at Frimley Park Hospital was cancelled, I kept receiving post-operation appointments which I didn't need despite advising the hospital.”



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“I felt I was misdiagnosed and have put in a complaint.”

“I have medication prescribed for me by Frimley Park Hospital or my local surgery. I always read the leaflets and usually it states do not take this medication if you are taking such and such. I phone up and I’m told either throw them away or take them to the pharmacy to be destroyed, what a total waste”

“I was told to have a scan following my appointment but I was informed that the appointment had been made but there was no appointment for the scan but I was not told that both had to be booked. I then tried to make another appointment but the first person said she would call back but never did and the second lady said the scan was not needed. They are now trying to fit me in to have a scan. The medical staff were fine but the admin system appears totally incompetent causing distress and inconvenience for patients”

“The ward visiting hours have changed and stops at 6:30. This is unhelpful to working people.”

“The duty social worker I spoke to was rude with regard to the package of care that was set up upon discharge and I want to complain about the alleged treatment my partner received while staying at Frimley Park Hospital”  
“I don’t feel that I received the appropriate aftercare.”

“I had a male consultant for a physical examination with no nurse or female HCA present. I felt uncomfortable”

“I’m worried about doctors and nurses not having acceptable levels of English to communicate with patients”

“I was told that I would be contacted within two weeks. I had to make several phone calls myself and I was eventually given an appointment. This has caused great anxiety. What about the more vulnerable patients that are unable to phone?”

“The staff were poorly coordinated and gave poor care. The staff assumed that I knew about the diagnosis which I did not. There was an overall lack of person-centred care throughout and negligence in some areas were terrible.”



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# Appendix Three:

## Mixed feedback

“Frimley Park Hospital are excellent, I have the relevant support in place for my treatment. The parking is not good.”

“The health professionals at the beginning of care and support were really good until afterwards”  
“Talk plus was good, need more sessions”

“This is a very good hospital. Most of the staff are genuinely caring and good at their jobs. The issue is health screening, I do not get screened on risk factors of my family”

“Patient has two letters about his wife’s hospital appointment. He was wondering whether there would be any interpreters present at the appointment as they are unable to understand any English”

“The nurses were great but I was never able to speak to the doctor dealing with my relatives care”

“The service was very quick and efficient, I feel there is room for improvement in the communications about the treatment and the long term outcomes”

“I was taken into Frimley Park Hospital. It was an unpleasant experience due to lack of information and inability to provide the very special diet which I require. I saw many health professionals but none informed me or my partner of the likely cause of confusion. I did see a speech and language therapist which was very helpful and a positive experience”

“I had to wait until early afternoon for discharge because physiotherapist was not available so I felt I was taking up a bed for longer than necessary. The ward staff were helpful and pleasant and they were very keen to change bedding that had been used for less than 24 hours and that was only going to be used for a few hours. This was very wasteful.”

“I had an appointment with a delightful consultant who explained what needed to be done. The surgeon drew diagrams to show what they were going to do and was helped by an equally pleasant nurse and the procedure was carried out most competently. Although I did not see the surgeon for the follow up appointments the assistants were excellent. The above experiences show the different sides of Frimley Park Hospital. I also received very good physiotherapy treatment. Although the GP receptionists were rude and unhelpful.”

“I thought the process was very quick and efficient. I feel there was some room for improvement in communications about the treatment and the long term outcome”



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## References

Healthwatch (2015). Our vision, mission and values. Accessed at: <http://www.healthwatch.co.uk/our-values-and-behaviours>. Accessed on: 23/6/2015

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