

National Audit of Dementia 2022

Guidance for the flexible patient feedback tool

This is a newly developed tool for the National Audit of Dementia, designed to be used on an ongoing basis.

Background

Audit leads previously requested inclusion of a direct patient voice in this audit. NAD consulted people with dementia with experience of hospital admission about priorities and format, and hospital leads about their experience of data collection. The result is a short flexible tool which can be used to collect feedback in either questionnaire or structured interview format from 3-5 patients per month. This was used successfully in pilot to collect feedback from patients with dementia or cognitive difficulties.

The tool can be used either as an online survey response tool or completed during a short interview. It is available in English and other languages and with plain text or emoji responses.

Approaching patients:

Patients approached to answer this survey should be:

1. Medically fit for discharge.
2. Have had a stay of at least one night in the hospital.
3. Capable of giving verbal consent.

They can be assisted by family members/carers, or by volunteers or dedicated support staff (e.g. members of the Dementia Team, PALS etc). They should not be assisted by staff from the ward they are on.

Patients answering this survey may be based anywhere in the hospital.

We suggest that you look at your list of patients and see which of them is eligible, using the criteria above. Begin with these patients and randomise them by sorting in order of patient number. If patients do not want to complete the survey, or are unable to do so, on the next day that you have allocated to collecting survey responses, check your list again and eliminate anyone who has already refused. Continue this process until you have a completed survey for up to five patients over a month. Repeated over the course of a year this will provide you with feedback from 36-60 patients. A summary report will be produced every six months, if sufficient data is received.

The survey explains in the introduction text that this data is being collected on behalf of a national clinical audit, to look at care for people who have experienced confusion or memory problems while they are in hospital. If you have reason to believe that any patient is unaware of their problems with confusion or memory, do not approach this patient as it may cause distress.

Use as a survey tool:

For this, you will need to open the online link on an iPad or similar which the patient (or a family member or volunteer supporting them or answering on their behalf) can use to answer and submit the responses.

Or, if the patient has a mobile phone, they can scan the QR code on the information sheet and answer it on this.

There are only 9 questions about care, and 3 about demographic information. It should take a maximum of 15 minutes in total to complete. All questions are optional, and there are comment boxes available for brief comments.

Begin with explaining to the patient what the survey is for, what happens to the information and how their confidentiality will be respected (this is the introduction to the survey and is also on the information sheet which has been sent to you as a PDF). If they are happy to continue, they can be given the iPad or device to answer the questions.

Explain, if relevant, that they can answer in English or another language, and that there are plain text or emoji (smiling/ neutral/ sad face) options. Explain that you will return and collect the device in 10 or 15 minutes if they are using a device that you have supplied.

Use as an interview tool:

You will need to open the online link on an iPad or mobile. Ensure that you have some privacy so that other staff and patients cannot overhear the answers given. As above, begin with explaining to the patient what the survey is for, what happens to the information and how their confidentiality will be respected.

If they are happy to continue, then you can commence to ask each question. You can record any brief comments in the boxes provided. You can skip any of the questions that the patient does not want to answer. If the patient changes their mind during the interview, please end the interview without submitting their responses and explain this to them.

Paper versions of the tool:

You have been sent a PDF version of the tool which you can print out to assist you when using it as an interview.

If you have used the tool for an interview and noted responses on paper, you can enter the responses yourself using the online tool. Do not give the responses to anyone who is directly involved in the care of the patient, e.g. ward staff or administrators. Do not write the patient's name anywhere within your notes.

Also do not include any other identifying details mentioned by the patient, e.g. family members name or address, in the comment boxes.

Please note that as this is data collection for audit, ethics approval is not required.