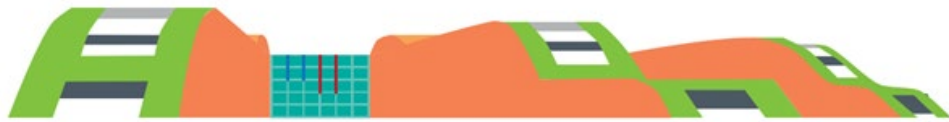


Alder Hey Children's Hospital A+E Listening Event Report



August 2023

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Introduction

Healthwatch Liverpool held a targeted listening event in the Accident and Emergency Department (A+E) at Alder Hey. The rationale for attending the A+E is that we have received more mixed reviews for A+E than other departments. As Alder Hey is such a specialist hospital wards often contain many children that live outside of Liverpool. We thought we may see a greater proportion of local residents by targeting A+E. Finally, we hoped that local feedback from the A+E would inform how patients are being directed by other services such as Walk ins and General Practitioners.

We attended the A+E on three occasions, Tuesday the 29th of August between 9am and 12pm, again between 5pm and 8pm and on Thursday the 31st of August between 9am and 12pm. We attended in pairs with staff members taking lateral flow tests prior. We confirmed our attendance and plans with staff before attending.

Staff facilitated our visit and were keen to support us in getting open and honest feedback. We were given a tour of the facilities, introduced to A+E staff and the reason for our attendance shared.

We spoke to **37** families at Alder Hey A+E. Our survey was focused on feedback about the A+E.



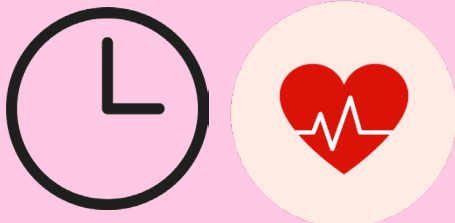
Key Findings

- Patients, Carers & Visitors were **predominantly very happy with their experience** at the Alder Hey A+E with only one family rating their experience as less than 3 stars.
- **The majority of** patients who attended were **directed to A+E by other NHS services**, mostly **GP** and **walk in services** with 3 families being directed by **NHS 111**.
- The majority of families who attended A+E had been there more than once in the last 12 months. Some families commented on improved waiting times and experiences compared to their last visit.
- Alder Hey A+E was a clean and welcoming environment with calming music and toys available. There was a refreshment trolley available with water, cordial, baby milk bottles, spare nappies and vomiting bowls. We were pleased to see there is now a facility for parents to charge their devices as we recommended in a previous report.
- There were some parents who felt that there were not enough toys to occupy the children and others who felt that they did not see the toys cleaned often enough. When we spoke to staff they advised there was unfortunately a common problem of toys being taken from A+E by patients and parents.
- Waiting times for triage were impressive with only one family reporting waiting more than an hour and the majority reported being triaged in under 15 minutes. Only two families rated the triage experience as less than satisfactory.
- Satisfaction rates for staff was extremely high with no family reporting they found staff disrespectful to them or their children. Communication surrounding treatment and wait times was more mixed with a third of families unsure or feeling that these were not communicated well.

- We spoke directly to 6 children and all of them reported they felt safe when they were at Alder Hey all of the time they were there. All the children we spoke to advised that staff were friendly and kind to them all the time. All felt welcomed most of the time and all but one felt that staff listened to them and explained things clearly.
- There are multiple baby changing facilities and also a sensory room that is advertised clearly for patient use. There are ample toilet facilities that are clean but perhaps could have better signage.

Congratulations

97% of patients had waited less than an hour to be triaged (majority triaged within 15 minutes)



'Perfect didn't wait and doctors were amazing'

'Was triaged in about 30 seconds'

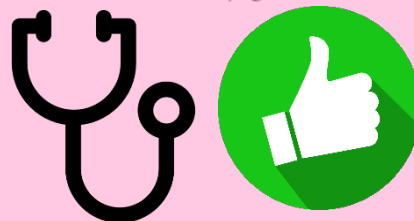
'Been a nice surprise Straightforward and easy'

'Triage nurse was amazing and really good with the baby'

'10 out of 10 every time'

'A really good experience Actually pay attention to the child speaking to them.'

93% of families rated their triage as good or higher with the majority selecting extremely good.



Have your say from patients

(The positives)

Feedback from families and young people about Alder Hey A+E from the survey

'Been a really good experience Actually pay attention to the child speaking to them.'

'Thinks Alder Hey is amazing and lucky to have it. Feels like getting amazing care quickly'.

'Been a nice surprise. Straightforward and easy'.

'5 stars for both mum and dad.'

'Brilliant'

'Been a few times over the past year. Lot better recently than it used to be. '

'They do a great job.'

'Staff always good. Nothing but great times on point with treatment'

'Both parent and child rated the 5 stars, "would have died if not for Alder He".'

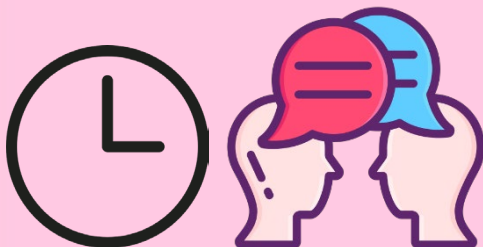
Feedback from parent about Alder Hey direct to Healthwatch Liverpool enquiries team

'I just wanted to feedback some changes here since we last came. There's a refreshment trolley available with water, cordial, baby milk bottles, spare nappies, and vomiting bowls. There are power banks for parents to charge their phones too! Music is playing in the background and every so often a friendly voice updating you on a tannoy. You can tell they've listened to feedback and made some absolutely brilliant changes x'

Recommendations

Overall, most of the comments made about Alder Hey A+E were very positive. However, families did raise some issues and made some suggestions for improvement.

Some families felt that communication could be clearer around waiting times and treatments.



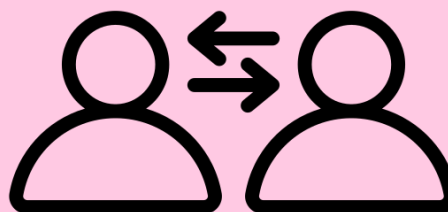
'Not told time/ would be good if they could check estimated triage times online'

'Still waiting to hear about next steps. No idea how to make this better'

'More awareness that parents may know best and more listening to parents expertise'

'Felt palmed off yesterday, felt Dr last night should have referred to someone else rather than just sending us back'

Some families felt that parents expertise was not always valued.



Have your say from patients

(The mixed)

Feedback from families and young people about Alder Hey A+E from the survey

'Concerns about the wait (from previous experiences)'

'Better communication around waiting times.'

'Everything is perfect for me. Waiting times is only concern.'

'The waiting times but understands staff pressures. Previous long waits. Last winter there was only 2 doctors when attended and the waiting lists were chocker.'

'Parking and accessibility could be better as car park closed and having to access A+E via the other end of the building.'

'Should be cleaned more. Especially the waiting area where the toys are. I've never seen it cleaned.'

'X box or more activities. Feels like there was more available before Covid.'

'They were very harsh- you've got to be patient.'

'Not told time/ would be good if they could check estimated triage times online.'

'More awareness that 'parents may know best' and more listening to parents' expertise. Asked for chest X-ray as she's been getting palmed off with 'it's just diabetes'. I know they are up the wall.'

Feedback from families

- Communication about waiting times and treatment was one of the main concerns raised on the day.
- There were screens available that displayed waiting times but on one visit this was not working. This may be mitigated by staff providing estimated verbal waiting times and parents feeling empowered to ask.
- Some families reported that they felt that their expertise around their children and their conditions was not taken into consideration. Another family reported feeling that they were palmed off by a member of staff.
- Treating families as equal partners when possible, in aspects of their child's treatment can help mitigate this. Structuring conversations when delivering information such as allowing input from families and ending with the opportunity to ask questions.
- One family mentions that they felt the toy area should be cleaned more and had not seen it cleaned. It may make parents more confident if either a cleaning sheet nearby or instructions for parents to access cleaning wipes.
- Some families said that they felt that there should be more toys for the children. They felt there was less activities since Covid. Staff did advise that unfortunately toys were often taken from the waiting room and not returned.
- We did notice multiple families trying to get into the two baby changing rooms closest to the reception desk mistaking them for toilets. It may help to put up a sign offering clearer directions to the facilities (something like toilets available in this direction).
- One family asked if it's possible to provide hot drink facilities as they did not feel able to leave the waiting room to get a coffee.

Survey Results

94% of families lived
in the Liverpool
postcode area



Over two thirds of
families had used
Alder Hey A+E more
than twice in 12
months



97% of families had
waited less than an
hour for triage



15% of families felt
staff had not
communicated well
about treatment



Survey Results from children

All children felt safe at Alder Hey A+E



All children felt staff were friendly and kind



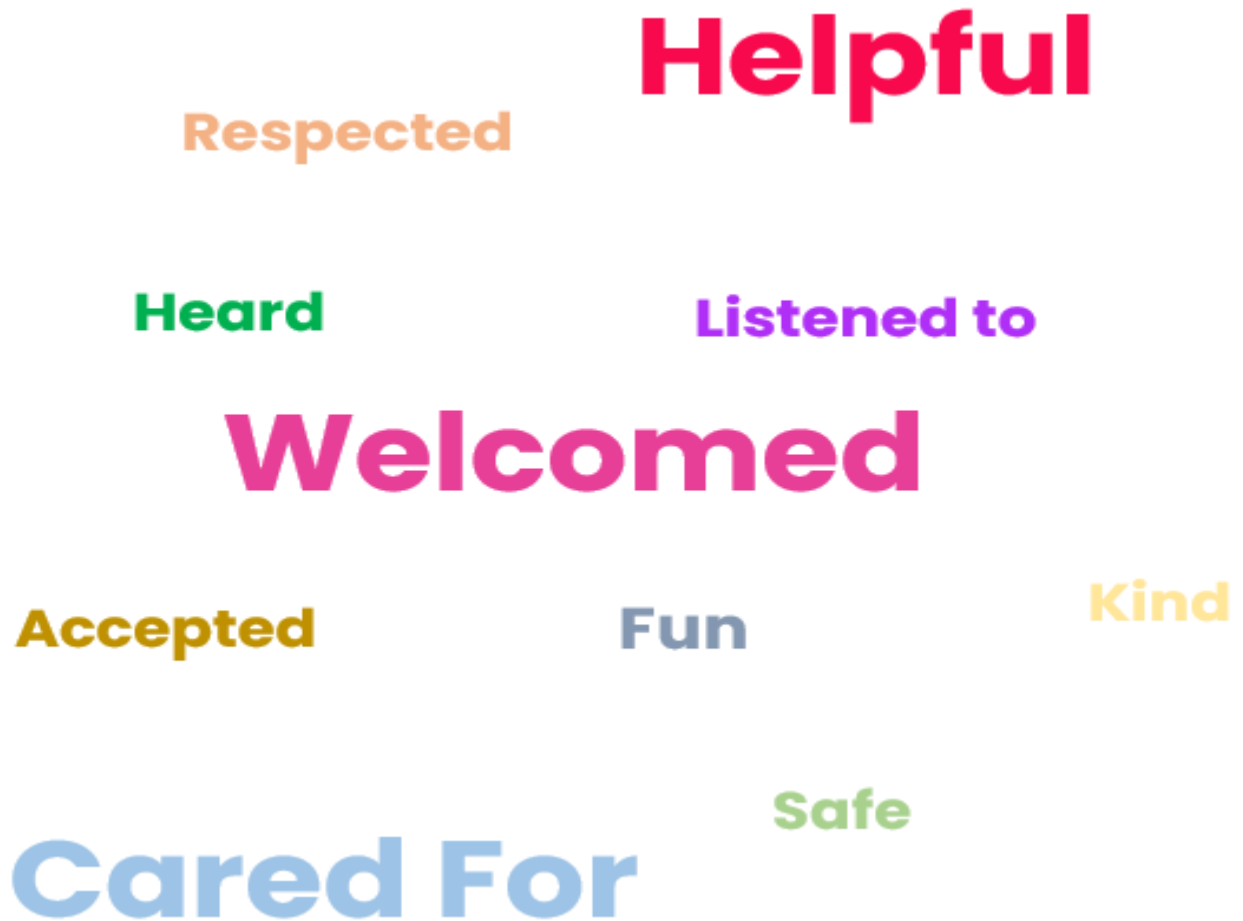
Most children felt staff always listened and explained things clearly (5/6)



Most children felt welcomed when they visit A+E (5/6)



Childrens word cloud responses



Comments from young people

'They are dead nice especially the students'.

'They even had drinks out for the kids'.

How many stars out of 5 would you give Alder Hey?

The average rating of Alder Hey was 4.45 out of 5 stars



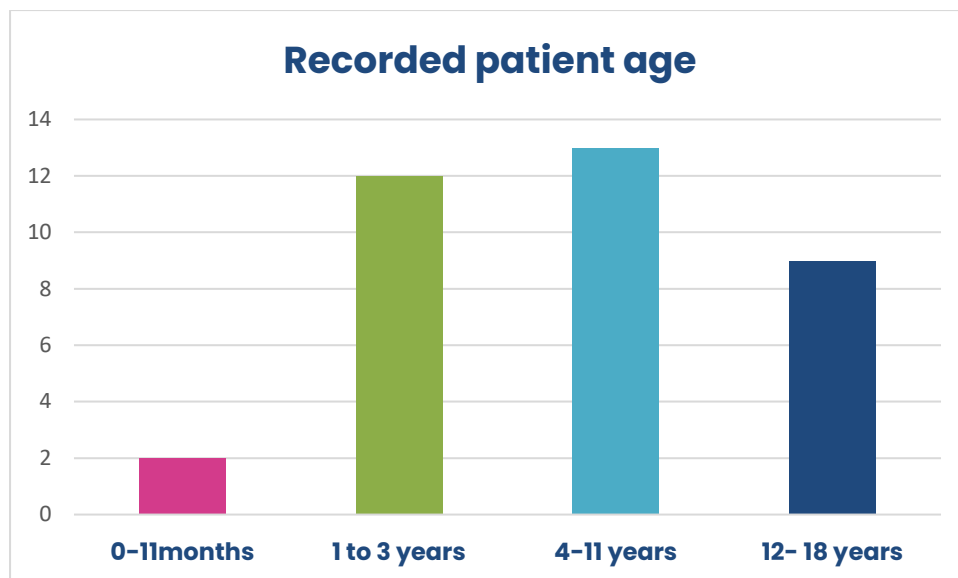
The average rating of Alder Hey that families gave was 4.45 out of 5. The rating system had 5 described as 'very good' with 1 described as 'bad'.

There was only one family that rated the hospital less than 3 stars, and they rated the hospital at 1 star. 90% of families rated Alder Hey at 4 stars and above with 61% rating the hospital at the highest possible score.

We had instances where multiple members of families wanted to make it clear that they rated the hospital at 5 stars but we did not rate the same survey multiple times.

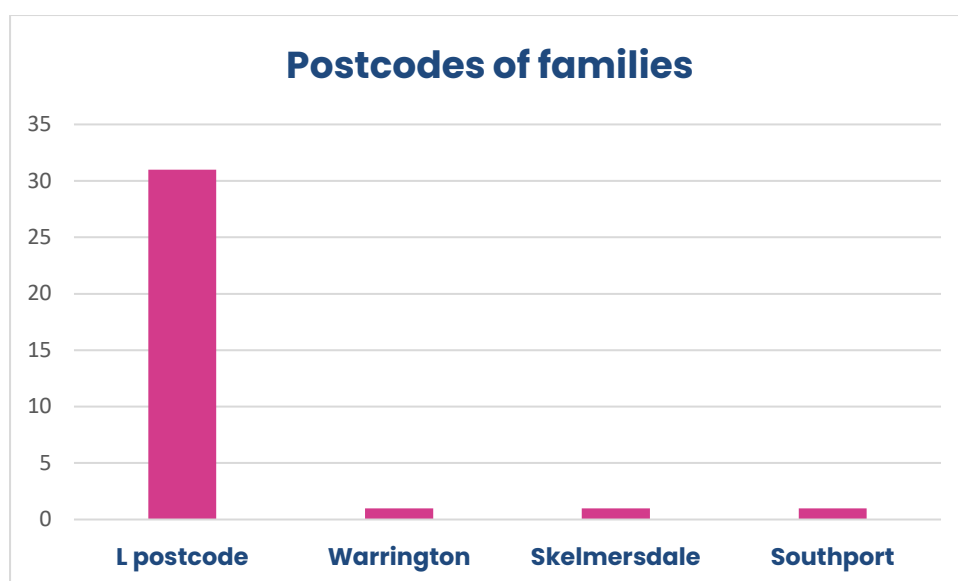
Who did we speak to?

We completed surveys with a total of 37 families.

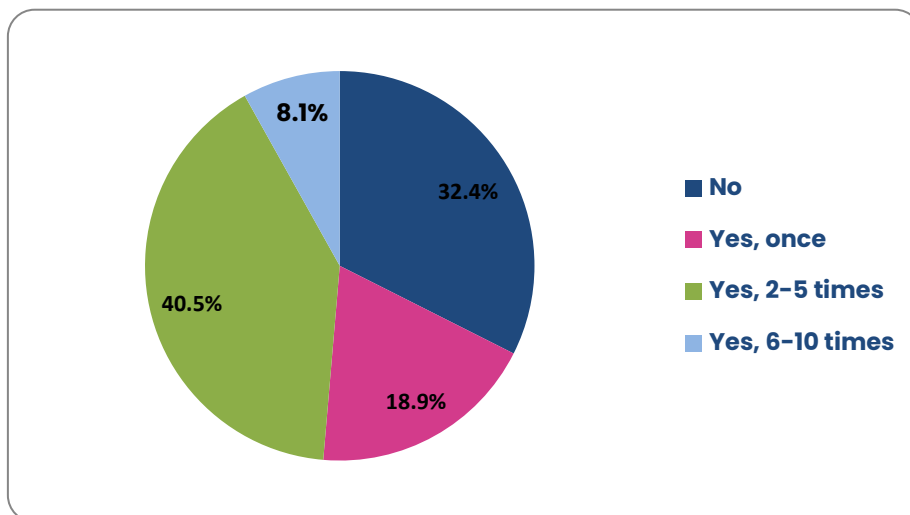


Where are you from?

The vast majority of patients we spoke were from the Liverpool, or Liverpool City Region Area. There was a noticeable difference to our last listening which focused on the whole of Alder Hey where patients attended from a much wider radius.

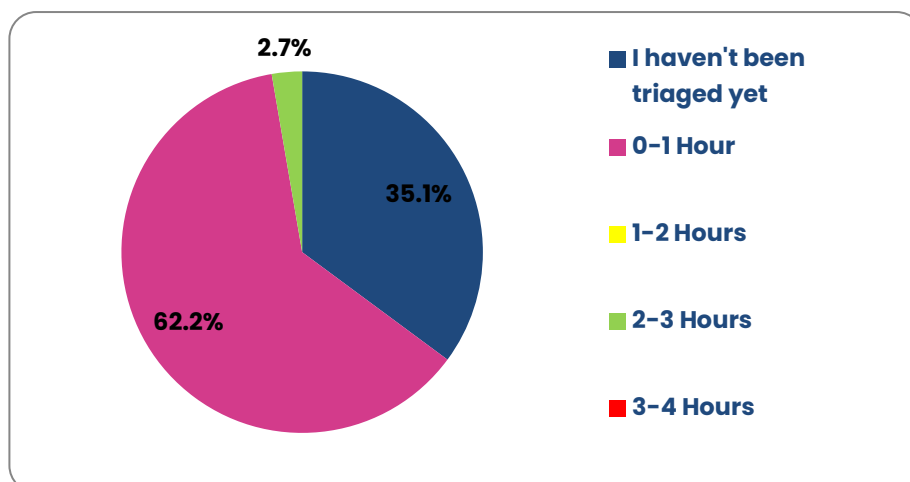


Have you used A&E before in the past 12 months?



More than two thirds of families had attended Alder Hey A+E twice or more (including this visit) in the past 12 months.

How long have you waited to be triaged/assessed today?



*Families were being triaged and treated so promptly that we spoke to a lot of families who had been in A+E less than 15 minutes. Only one family reported waiting more than an hour to be triaged.

Conclusion

Alder Hey accident and emergency department received a great deal of positive feedback every day of our Listening Event this year. Families were particularly impressed by the quality and speed of their triage journey. They were also pleased with the way staff treated and communicated with their children.

Young people reported unanimously that staff were friendly and kind and that they all felt safe at Alder Hey. The overall score for the A+E was 4.45 out of a possible 5 stars which is a fantastic achievement for an emergency ward that manages unplanned admissions.

Staff at Healthwatch noticed the improvements in the environment including resources such as drinks, nappies, baby formula and charging points being available. The use of calming music and screens and announcements to communicate waiting times made the waiting room feel a much calmer environment.

However, there were some areas identified which would benefit from improvement and suggestions received about how things could be made better. The main concerns from families were communication about treatment and waiting times. There were also a few comments about how waiting times have been longer on previous visits to the A+E so patients can have more varied experiences than what we witnessed.

Thanks

Healthwatch Liverpool would like to thank the Alder Hey staff for their commitment to patient satisfaction and for their assistance in arranging and supporting our visit. We would like to thank Anne Doyle and Val Shannon for supporting the listening events teams in their journeys around Alder Hey Hospital ensuring that the event ran smoothly, and that we were able to hear the voice of the patients.

We would also like to thank the Accident and Emergency staff for being welcoming and showing us around the departments. It was clear the pride they take in their work and their commitment to helping their patients.

We look forward to continuing to work together with Alder Hey with both in person events and via the Patient Experience Group to make the hospital the best it can be.

About Healthwatch Liverpool

We are the independent champion for people who use health and social care services in Liverpool. We're here to make sure that those running services, put people at the heart of care. One of our main purposes is to understand the needs, experiences and concerns of people who use health and social care services and to speak out on their behalf.

- We focus on ensuring that people's worries and concerns about current services are addressed.
- We work to get services right for the future.
- We listen to patients of health services and users of social care services, along with their family members or carers, to find out what they think of the services they receive.
- We advise people how to get the best health and social care for themselves and their families.

We provide help and information about all aspects of health and social care provided in Liverpool. We make sure that service user views are heard by those who provide health and social care.

Healthwatch Liverpool Contact details

Call: 0300 77 77 007 between the hours of 09:00 – 17:00 Monday to Friday.
(Calls cost the same as a local rate call – we can call you back to keep your bill down)

Post: 151 Dale Street, Liverpool, L2 2AH

Website: enquiries@healthwatchliverpool.co.uk

Email: enquiries@healthwatchliverpool.co.uk

Text / WhatsApp: 07842552878

Appendix A – copy of survey

What do you think of A&E at Alder Hey Children's Hospital?

healthwatch
Liverpool

1. Are you: a Patient Family a Visitor Staff Other

2. How old are you? I am years old I don't want to say

3. First part of your postcode (eg L8, L22, L36)

Parents/Carers

4. Why did you come to A&E today? (please tick all that apply)

I was advised to come here by another NHS service (please state).

Because of their expertise

I felt it was the right place to come for my child's treatment

Because I've been here before

Because I couldn't get an appointment with my GP

Because it's convenient

Advised by family or friend

Another reason (please tell us more if you'd like to)

5. Have you used A&E in the past 12 months?

No Yes, once Yes, 2-5 times Yes, 6-10 times

6. How long did you wait to be triaged/assessed?

I haven't been triaged yet 0-1 Hour 1-2 Hours 2-3 Hours

3-4 Hours 4-5 Hours 5+ Hours (please state)

7. How would you rate your experience of the triage process?

Extremely Good Good Satisfactory Poor Very Poor

Can you tell us more about your triage?

8. Do you feel like the staff were respectful to you and your child?

Yes No Don't know

9. Do you feel that staff communicated well to you about your child's treatment/
wait time?

Yes No Don't know

10. Do you have any ideas about how to improve this?

11. How many stars out of 5 would
you give the A&E at Alder Hey?

Bad  Very Good

12. Is there anything else you'd like to tell us?

Children



No, not at all No, not always Sometimes Yes, most of the time Yes, all the time Don't Know

- 13. Do you feel safe when you are at Alder Hey?
- 14. Do you feel welcomed when you get to Alder Hey?
- 15. Do you feel that the staff are friendly and kind to you?
- 16. Do you feel that the staff listen to you and explain things clearly?

17. How could they make A+E (this room) better?



18. Would you like to tell us anything more about the staff and how they treat you?




19. Please circle as many words as you like to describe your experience at Alder Hey

Listened to Accepted

Angry Respected Patronised

Ignored Kind Safe

Bored  Equal

Fairly Frightened Fun Heard Welcomed

Cared for Helpful

