

What are the attitudes and behaviours of frontline NHS staff to online feedback? Survey of health professionals to understand practice, attitudes and use of online feedback.

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INQUIRE

‘Improving NHS Quality Using Internet Ratings and Experiences’

Aims to improve NHS capability to interpret online feedback from patients and the public, and to understand whether and how to act on this to improve services.



Background

- ▶ Online feedback from patients about their experiences of health services is an emerging phenomenon.
 - ▶ Rise in the amount of online commentary from patients and carers about their care experience being received via the internet.
 - ▶ Structured, unstructured, solicited or unsolicited feedback.
 - ▶ NHS England has committed to using internet feedback as part of its vision for a digital NHS.
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Why healthcare professionals?

- ▶ Issues of quality and patient experience are relevant to all NHS staff, and especially to frontline clinical staff.
- ▶ Healthcare professionals may be the subject of online commentary which may or may not be moderated.
- ▶ Attitudes of healthcare professionals towards new technologies have a strong influence on the speed and success of adoption by the health service.

Aim

Determine the current attitudes, behaviours and experiences of frontline NHS staff to online feedback from patients.



Methods

- ▶ Participants:
 - Registered doctors, nurses and midwives
 - Currently practising in the United Kingdom
 - Involved in direct patient care

- ▶ Three elements to the survey:
 - Attitudes to online patient feedback
 - Behaviours to using online patient feedback in practice
 - Experiences of online patient feedback



Methods

▶ Recruitment

- Doctors: online survey administered via doctors.net to a quota-sampled representative group of doctors.
- Nurses: survey questions included in a wider online survey about how nurses use online technologies, distributed via multiple routes.

▶ Data collection & analysis

- Two datasets merged using SPSS.
- Descriptive statistics and Chi-squared associations between doctors and nurses.
- Multi-variate analysis to investigate doctors' vs nurses' use/attitudes/self-reported behaviours regarding online comments from patients and relationship with age, gender and setting.



Characteristics of participants

	All % (n=1750)	Doctors % (n=1001)	Nurses & Midwives % (n=749)	Overall difference (P value)
Male	41.0 (717)	64.8 (649)	9.1 (68)	p < 0.001
Female	59.0 (1033)	35.2 (352)	90.9 (681)	
Under 30	4.0 (71)	0.9 (9)	8.3 (62)	p < 0.001
30-39	25.5 (446)	33.7 (337)	14.6 (109)	
40-49	31.5 (551)	36.1 (361)	25.4 (190)	
50-59	32.0 (559)	22.6 (226)	44.5 (333)	
60 or over	7.0 (123)	6.8 (68)	7.3 (55)	

Characteristics of participants

	All % (n=1750)	Doctors % (n=1001)	Nurses & Midwives % (n=749)	Overall difference (P value)
Full-time	70.1 (1227)	74.2 (743)	64.6 (484)	p < 0.001
Part-time	29.9 (523)	25.8 (258)	35.4 (265)	
Time in practice				
Less than 5 years	6.6 (115)	2.9 (29)	11.5 (86)	p < 0.001
5-10 years	13.4 (234)	17.3 (173)	8.1 (61)	
11-20 years	34.6 (606)	45.0 (450)	20.8 (156)	
21-30 years	24.4 (427)	24.0 (240)	25.0 (187)	
31-40 years	18.2 (319)	10.0 (100)	29.2 (219)	
More than 40 years	2.8 (49)	0.9 (9)	5.3 (40)	

Attitudes

'Online patient feedback on experiences of NHS care which is captured on internet reviews and ratings sites is useful to help the NHS improve services'

- Similar proportions of doctors either *somewhat* or *strongly agreed* it was useful and *somewhat* or *strongly disagreed* it was useful.
- Majority of nurses either *somewhat* or *strongly agreed* and <10% either *somewhat* or *strongly disagreed*.
- Overall significant difference between doctors and nurses ($p < 0.001$)

Attitudes

'Online feedback on experiences of NHS care which is captured on internet reviews and ratings sites is generally negative'

- Over half of doctors either *somewhat* or *strongly agreed*, and less than a fifth either *somewhat* or *strongly disagreed*.
- Most nurses *neither agreed nor disagreed*. A third either *somewhat* or *strongly agreed*.
- Overall significant difference between doctors and nurses ($p < 0.001$)



Attitudes

'Online patient feedback on experiences of NHS care which is captured on social media is useful to help the NHS improve services'

- Over half of doctors either *somewhat* or *strongly disagreed*.
- Over half of nurses either *somewhat* or *strongly agreed*.
- Overall, there was a significant difference between doctors and nurses ($p < 0.001$)



Attitudes

'Online feedback on experiences of NHS care which is captured on social media is generally negative'.

- Most doctors either *somewhat* or *strongly agreed*, compared with very few who either *somewhat* or *strongly disagreed*.
- For nurses most *neither agreed nor disagreed*.
- Overall significant difference between doctors and nurses ($p < 0.001$)



Attitudes

Views on representativeness of online patient/carer feedback

Most doctors felt it was unrepresentative, yet most nurses thought it was representative. There was a significant difference between doctors and nurses.



Behaviours

Encouraging patients/their carers to leave feedback

Most doctors had never or rarely done this. The same applied to nurses.



Behaviours

Making a change to practice as a result of feedback

More nurses than doctors reported this. Overall, there was a significant difference between doctors and nurses ($p < 0.001$)



Experiences

Experiences of receiving online patient/carer feedback on an episode of care in which they were involved

- A quarter of doctors experienced this; similar proportion had not.
 - Nearly half of doctors *did not know*.
 - Half of nurses *did not know*.
 - Overall significant difference between doctors' and nurses' ($p=0.004$).
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Experiences

Experiences of receiving online patient/carer feedback on them as an individual practitioner

- One fifth of doctors had experienced this.
- Around one in ten nurses had experienced this.
- Half of nurses *did not know*.



Implications

- ▶ The low proportions of healthcare professionals that actively encourage patients to leave feedback may have implications for the successful introduction of feedback systems.
- ▶ Experiences of being subject to comment highlight the need for healthcare professionals to understand how to react to and act upon this.
- ▶ However we currently lack such processes within NHS settings.
- ▶ Important for future research and the development of policy, particularly if we want to close the policy-practice gap.



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