

Development of the Adult Admitted Patient Survey 2016

Background

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) undertakes reviews of all recurrent surveys before repeating these. The purpose is to ensure the questionnaire is still appropriate for the NSW context and that all questions remain optimal. In January and February 2016, BHI reviewed the questionnaire used in the 2015 Adult Admitted Patient Survey (AAPS) to prepare for the collection of experience data from patients hospitalised from January to December 2016. This document summarises the changes to the AAPS questionnaire from the 2015 to 2016 survey years.

Method

Analysis of historic AAPS data

An analysis of the first quarter of AAPS 2015 survey data was undertaken to support the questionnaire review. This analysis determined the following for each question:

- Responses patterns for each question, including rates of item non-response (not answering a question when they should have), invalid responses (selecting more than one answer to a single response question or answering a question they should have skipped past) and non-specific responses, such as 'don't know', 'can't remember' or 'not applicable to me'.
- Ceiling and floor effects of response categories (responses where almost all patients are very positive or very negative, with little variation between hospitals) using the scored mean, standard deviation and skewness of responses.
- Correlations between questions (using the most positive response option) to understand if any questions appear to be duplicating the same aspect of care (using the Pearson method).

Approval of changes

A final version of the draft questionnaire was approved by the Director, Surveys, and the Chief Executive, BHI. The questionnaire was sent to design for layout prior to printing and scanning. Following review of the design file, the Chief Executive gave final approval to the questionnaire and for the survey to begin. The questionnaire was then provided to the external contractor for printing and mailing.

Summary of changes to the Adult Admitted Patient Survey

The following is a list of the changes. The rationale and evidence can be found in the following section.

Q number (2015)	Question	Change
NA	Last bullet point in 'How to complete the survey' instructions, i.e.: 'If you have misplaced the "Reply Paid" envelope, please use a plain envelope (no stamp is necessary) and address to:'	Changed to: 'If you have misplaced the "Reply Paid" envelope, please mail to our survey processing centre at the following address (no stamp is required):'
New	Was your sleep ever disturbed due to noise at night?	Added to 'The Hospital and Ward' section
17	Did you need help from staff to eat your meals?	Removed question
18	Did you get enough help from staff to eat your meals?	Removed question
32	Did the health professionals explain things in a way you could understand?	Added routing instructions
New	Why did you have difficulty understanding the explanations of health professionals?	Added to 'Your Treatment and Care' section
37	If your family or someone else close to you wanted to talk to a doctor, did they get the opportunity to do so?	Removed question
New	During your stay in this hospital, did staff assist you when you needed help for any of the following?	Added to 'Your Treatment and Care' section
45	While in hospital, did you receive or see any information about how to comment or complain about your care?	Removed question
74	Did you receive a copy of a letter from the hospital doctors to your family doctor (GP)?	Replaced with: Did the hospital provide you with a document summarising the care you received in hospital (e.g. a copy of the letter to your GP or a discharge summary)?
83	Why didn't you make a complaint? [for those who wanted to make a complaint]	Removed question
New	In the month following your discharge, did you go to an <u>emergency department</u> because of complications that occurred during your recovery?	Added to 'Outcomes' section
New	In the month following your discharge, were you <u>re-admitted</u> to any hospital because of complications that occurred during your recovery?	Added to 'Outcomes' section
92	Was an interpreter provided when you needed one?	Changed question to ask about hospital-provided interpreters and added response option 'I did not need the hospital to provide an interpreter'
94	What is the highest level of education you have <u>completed</u> ?	Combined first two response options to 'Less than Year 12 or equivalent'

Details of changes

'How to complete the survey' instructions

Current wording

'If you have misplaced the "Reply Paid" envelope, please use a plain envelope (no stamp is necessary) and address to:'

Action

Change wording to:

'If you have misplaced the "Reply Paid" envelope, please mail to our survey processing centre at the following address (no stamp is required):'

Rationale

Focus group and interview participants have at times commented on the fact that the surveys are being sent to Victoria and wonder why a NSW Health survey is going to Victoria. This change aims to clarify that this address is just for survey processing.

New Question

Was your sleep ever disturbed due to noise at night?

- Yes
- No

Action

Add to 'The Hospital and Ward' section.

Rationale

This question was cognitively tested within a range of potential new questions and was shown to be relevant and important to patients and easy to understand.

Questions 17-18**Current questions**

Q17. Did you need help from staff to eat your meals?

- Yes
- No

Q18. Did you get enough help from staff to eat your meals?

- Yes, always
- Yes, sometimes
- No

Action

Removed these two questions.

Rationale

Only 5% of respondents needed help from staff to eat their meals (AAPS 2015) making these questions unreportable for most facilities and of limited use. These questions were removed to allow for the addition of new questions.

Question 32**Current questions**

Q32. Did the health professionals explain things in a way you could understand?

- Yes, always
- Yes, sometimes
- No

Action

Add an instruction to skip the next question if respondent answers 'yes, always'.

Rationale

A new question about why the respondent found it difficult to understand the health professionals has been added after this question (see p8).

New Question

Why did you have difficulty understanding the explanations of health professionals?

- I did not have enough time with them
- They used complicated medical language
- I do not speak English well enough
- They did not speak English well enough
- Other issue

Action

Add to 'Your Treatment and Care' section after the question asking patients whether they found health professionals explanations easy to understand.

Rationale

Question collects data that allows better understanding of the reasons patients might have in not understanding health professionals. This information can be used to allocate interpretation services for the hospital and to plan actions based on the results.

Question 37

Current question

Q37. If your family or someone else close to you wanted to talk to a doctor, did they get the opportunity to do so?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, to some extent
- No, they did not get the opportunity
- Not applicable to my situation

Action

Removed this question.

Rationale

Testing with patients identified interaction between this question and the following question about how much information was given to family. There was also a moderately high correlation between the two questions (0.511). To allow for addition of new questions, this question was removed from the 2016 survey.

New question

During your stay in this hospital, did staff assist you when you needed help for any of the following?

	Yes, always	Yes, sometimes	No	I did not need assistance with this
Eating or drinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Taking medication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Going to the toilet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjusting your position in bed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Standing up or walking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Getting dressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Getting in or out of a wheelchair or chair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Using the telephone or television	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action

Add to 'Your Treatment and Care' section.

Rationale

This question aims to collect data on whether the patient felt they needed assistance and, if so, whether they got the help at the time it was needed.

Question 45

Current question

Q45. While in hospital, did you receive or see any information about how to comment or complain about your care?

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

Action

Removed this question.

Rationale

This question has a high proportion of patients answering 'don't know/can't remember' (>35%). It also correlates strongly to the question about whether patients wanting to make a complaint, suggesting that those who have reason to complain are more likely to see this material, thereby skewing the results to hospitals that have more complaints. To allow for addition of new questions, this question was removed from the 2016 survey.

Question 74

Current question

Q74. Did you receive a copy of a letter from the hospital doctors to your family doctor (GP)?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know

Action

Replace with:

Did the hospital provide you with a document summarising the care you received in hospital (e.g. a copy of the letter to your GP or a discharge summary)?

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

Rationale

This question has always had high levels of respondents answering 'don't know' (more than 10% in 2014). This change is to help define what is meant by the letter and address the fact that this may be supplied via email or as a hard copy letter.

Questions 83

Current question

Q83. Why didn't you make a complaint?

Action

Removed this question.

Rationale

This question was removed as only a small percentage of respondents (9% of respondents) went on to answer it. Because of this, this question is not reportable for most hospitals and was considered to be of limited use. To allow for addition of new questions, this question was removed from the 2016 survey.

New Question

In the month following your discharge, did you go to an emergency department because of complications that occurred during your recovery?

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

Action

Add to the 'Outcomes' section of the survey.

Rationale

This question tested well in the 2015 Small and Rural Hospitals Survey and provides an additional assessment of complications that occurred after discharge, which may not be recorded in incident management systems.

New Question

In the month following your discharge, were you re-admitted to any hospital because of complications that occurred during your recovery?

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

Action

Add to the 'Outcomes' section of the survey.

Rationale

This question tested well in the 2015 Small and Rural Hospitals Survey and provides an additional assessment of complications that occurred after discharge, which may not be recorded in incident management systems.

Question 92

Current question

Q92. Was an interpreter provided when you needed one?

- Yes, always
- Yes, sometimes
- No

Action

Replace with:

Did the hospital provide an interpreter when you needed one?

- Yes, always
- Yes, sometimes
- No
- I did not need the hospital to provide an interpreter

Rationale

Feedback received from advisory committee members and patients indicated that patients often get this help from family or friends. This change makes the question more targeted to hospital-provided services, hence a better performance measure. This change also increased consistency across surveys.

Question 94

Current question

Q94. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Still at secondary school
- Less than Year 12 or equivalent
- Completed Year 12 or equivalent
- Trade or technical certificate or diploma
- University degree
- Post graduate/higher degree

Action

Combine first two response options to “Less than Year 12 or equivalent”

Rationale

In the AAPS and EDPS, we saw that age distribution of patients answering ‘still at secondary school’ option was similar to those answering ‘less than year 12 or equivalent’. Very few respondents were of an age to still be at school supporting the hypothesis that this response is incorrectly used by older patients to indicate that they did not complete secondary school. For this reason, the question will revert to an earlier version where both options are covered under ‘still at secondary school’.