

# WELSH HEALTH CIRCULAR



Llywodraeth Cymru  
Welsh Government

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**Title:** Validated core service user questions and updated Framework for Assuring Service User Experience

**Date of Expiry / Review** N/A

**For Action by:**

Chief Executives of Health Boards and NHS Trusts  
Nurse Directors of Health Boards and NHS Trusts

**For information:**

Members of the National Quality and Safety Forum  
Members of the Listening and Learning from Feedback Group

**Action required by:**

Immediately

**Sender:** Professor Jean White, Chief Nursing Officer, Nurse Director NHS Wales  
Janet Davies, Head of Healthcare Quality

**DHSS Welsh Government Contact(s) :**

*Teresa Bridge, Population Healthcare, Welsh Government, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ*  
Tel: 03000 256797 e-mail: [teresa.bridge@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:teresa.bridge@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

**Enclosure(s):** Annex 1 - Validated core service user questions

Annex 2 - Framework for Assuring Service User Experience

Dear colleagues,

**Validated core service user questions and updated Framework for Assuring Service User Experience**

The Framework for Assuring Service User Experience was first issued in 2013, followed by a national set of core service user experience questions to support the real time method of gaining feedback across NHS Wales.

The Framework was updated in 2015 (WHC/2015/061), following 'Trusted to Care' and 'Using the Gift of complaints' and in the light of the revised Health and Care Standards. The core service user experience questions were not updated and it became apparent that they also required validation.

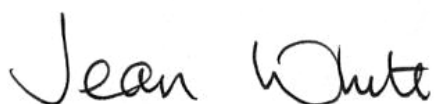
The Patient Reported Outcomes Measures (PROMs), Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREMs) and Effectiveness Programme (PPEP) was keen to use the core service user experience questions within its programme as PREMs. However, one of the criteria for the programme's patient reported measures is the validation of all tools. As a result, the PPEP agreed to the validation of the core service user experience questions.

In 2017, the PPEP, in partnership with NHS Wales, delivered four focus groups with members of the public to validate questions. The validation process led to the removal of seven core questions, the addition of one question and an amendment to the wording of one question. It was agreed that the two original qualitative questions were a rich source of information and should be included in the national set of core questions. A final set of eleven validated core service user experience questions were recommended as at Annex 1.

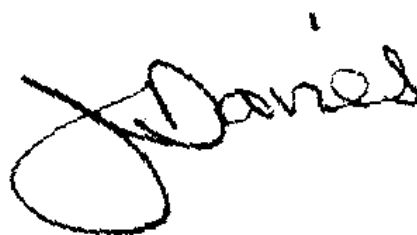
These validated core questions are to be used in all NHS Wales organisations to obtain real time feedback. They may be complemented by service specific questions as appropriate, to ensure applicability across different settings of care. A number of equality monitoring questions are included and guidance on their application should be sought from organisation's equality leads.

The Framework for Assuring Service User Experience has been updated to reflect the validated core questions as at Annex 2. NHS organisations are expected to report annually on how they are gathering service user experience and using it to improve services through the patient experience measure in the NHS Wales Delivery Framework.

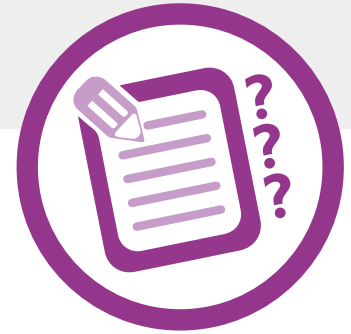
Yours sincerely



Professor Jean White  
Chief Nursing Officer  
Nurse Director NHS Wales



Janet Davies  
Head of Healthcare Quality



# Your NHS Wales Experience

Questionnaire (Version 2)

## Your NHS Wales Experience

The experience that you have of care is important to us. This might be an appointment with your doctor or health visitor, a hospital stay, an outpatient visit or something else. We would be grateful if you could complete this survey so that we can understand this better.

The questions are based on the things that patients have said matter most. We will ask you questions about your latest experience of healthcare. Please help us by giving your honest opinion.

The questions mostly have 4 options and you are asked to tick the answer that you feel best describes how you feel.

Some of the questions have 'not applicable'. Please tick this if the question is not relevant to your experience.

We do not need to know your personal details but have asked some general questions at the end about who you are. This is so we can make sure we are asking all groups of people about their experience.

If there is anything we have not asked you, please use the space at the end of this survey to tell us.

If you would like to discuss this survey or ask any questions about it please contact:

### How recent was the experience you are thinking of?

In the last 6 months

Between 1 and 2 years ago

Between 6 months and 1 year ago

More than 2 years ago

#### OFFICE USE ONLY

Area and location code:

Date of distribution:

## Thinking about your overall first impressions of the care you received

1 Did you feel that you were listened to?

- Always       Usually       Sometimes       Never

2 Were you able to speak in Welsh to staff if you needed to?

- Always       Usually       Sometimes       Never
- Not applicable

3 From the time you realised you needed to use this service, was the time you waited:

- Shorter than expected       About right       A bit too long       Much too long

## Thinking about the place where you received your care

4 Did you feel well cared for?

- Always       Usually       Sometimes       Never

5 If you asked for assistance, did you get it when you needed it?

- Always       Usually       Sometimes       Never
- Not applicable

## Thinking about your understanding and involvement in care

6 Did you feel you understood what was happening in your care?

- Always       Usually       Sometimes       Never

7 Were things explained to you in a way that you could understand?

- Always       Usually       Sometimes       Never

8 Were you involved as much as you wanted to be in decisions about your care?

- Always       Usually       Sometimes       Never

## Overall Experience

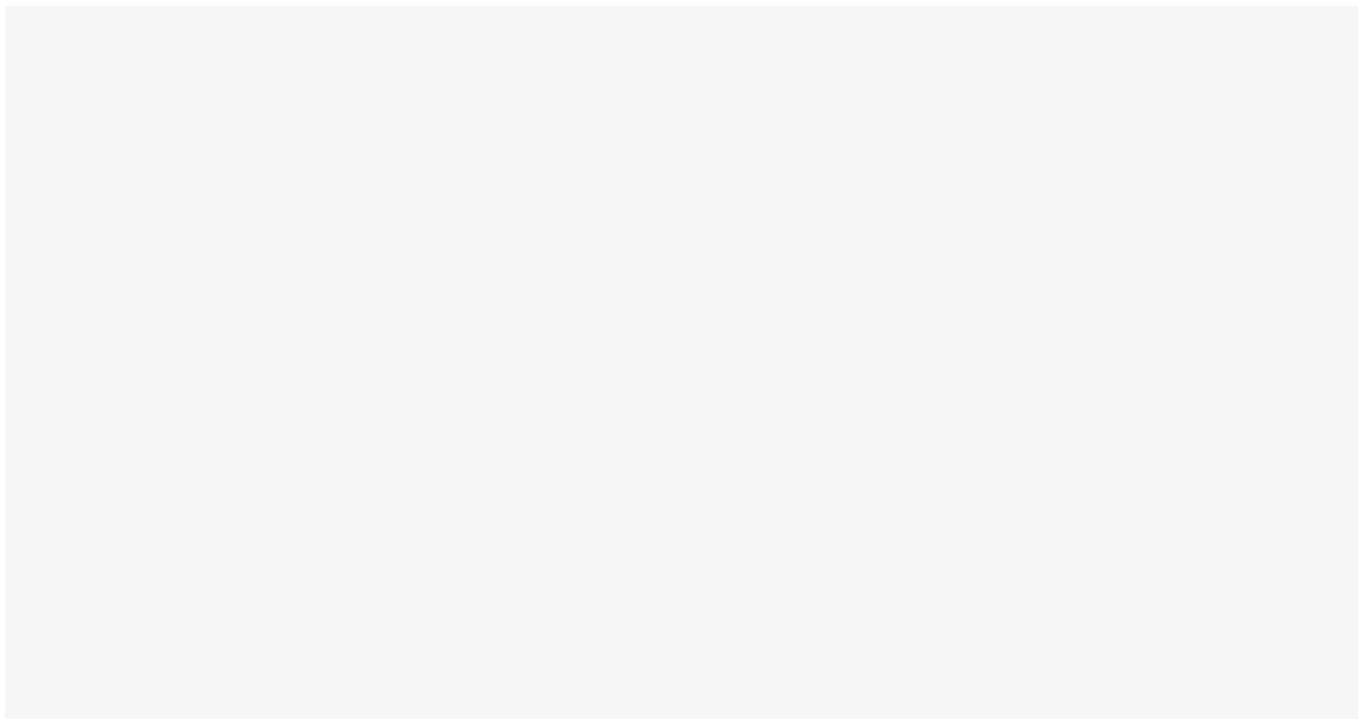
9 Using a scale of 0 – 10 where 0 is very bad and 10 is excellent, how would you rate your overall experience?

- 0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10
- 
- Very Bad      Average      Excellent

## Thinking of your responses

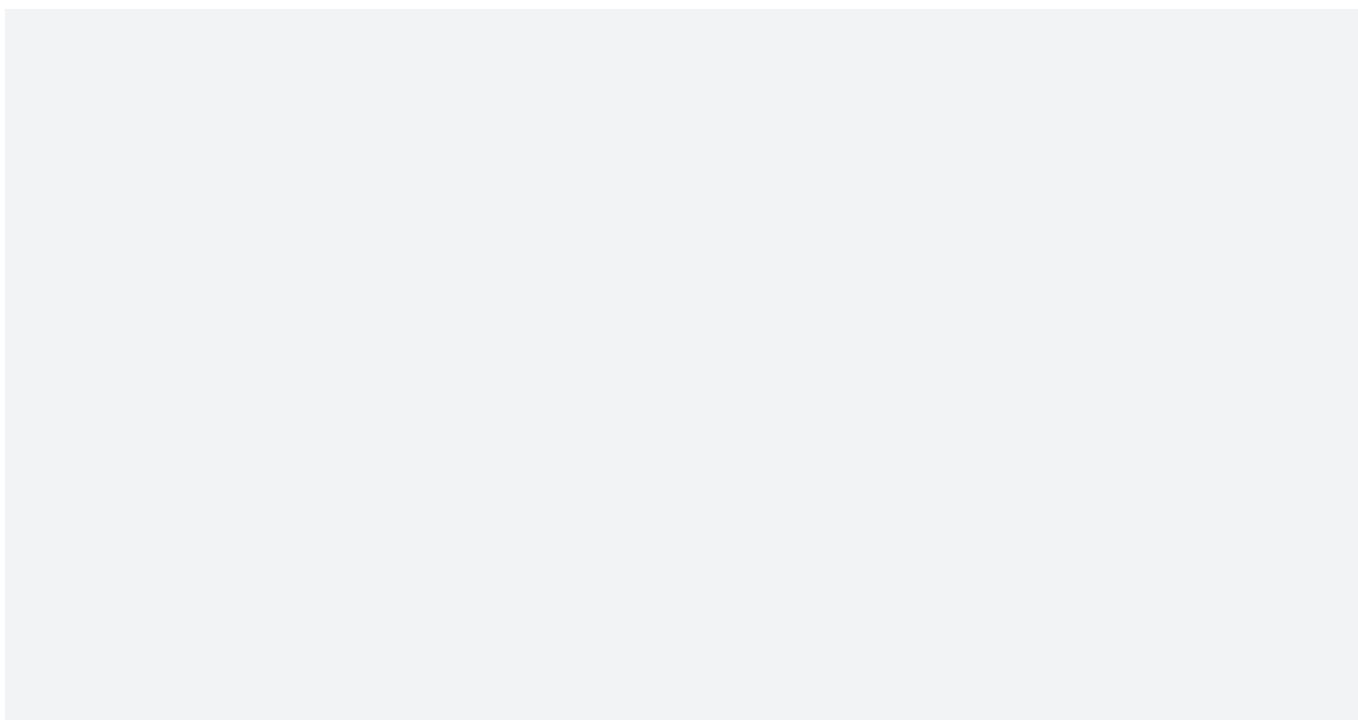
10

Was there anything particularly good about your experience that you would like to tell us about?



11

Was there anything that we could change to improve your experience?



## Equality monitoring

We are committed to ensuring that everyone receives fair and equal respect.

Whatever your age, disability, ethnicity, faith, gender reassignment or sexual identity, you can expect to be treated with dignity. We can only achieve this with your help by providing the information below.

Data will be used for monitoring purposes only and held in strictest confidence. Your identity will not be disclosed to anyone.

1 What is your age?

- 0-15 years     35-44 years     55-64 years     75+ years
- 16-24 years     45-54 years     65-74 years     I prefer not to say
- 25-34 years

2 What is your gender?

- Male     Female     Other     I prefer not to say

3 At birth, were you described as:

- Male     Female     Other     I prefer not to say

4 Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

- Yes, a lot     Yes, a little     Not at all     I prefer not to say



**5** Which of the following options best describes how you think of yourself?

- Heterosexual or straight     Gay or lesbian     Bisexual     Other
- I prefer not to say

**6** What is your religion?  
(Please choose one option that best describes your religion)

- No religion     Hindu     Muslim     Any other religion
- Christian (all denominations)     Jewish     Sikh     I prefer not to say
- Buddhist

7

## What is your ethnic group?

(Please choose one option that best describes your ethnic group or background)

### White:

- Welsh       English       Scottish       British
- Irish       Northern Irish       Gypsy or Irish Traveller

Any other white background, please describe:

### Mixed / multiple ethnic groups

- White and Black Caribbean       White and Black African       White and Asian       Any other Mixed / multiple ethnic background

### Asian / Asian British

- Indian       Pakistani       Bangladeshi       Chinese
- Any other Asian background

### Black / African / Caribbean / Black British

- African       Caribbean       Any other Black / African / Caribbean background

### Other ethnic group

- Arab       Any other ethnic group       I prefer not to say

## Thank you for completing this questionnaire

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.  
This document is also available in Welsh.



# Listening and Learning from Feedback

Framework for Assuring Service User Experience 2018

## Introduction

The Framework for Assuring Service User Experience was updated in 2015 to include the need to gain feedback from concerns, complaints, compliments and clinical incidents.

This development was as a result of Keith Evans' report 'Using the Gift of Complaints' (July 2014) which looked at the way NHS Wales handles concerns/complaints through the Putting Things Right process. The report emphasised the

need for the NHS to see complaints as a gift and an opportunity to improve.

The Framework also links with the Health and Care Standards 2015 which include a standard to promote listening and learning from feedback. They set out the criteria for health services to demonstrate how they respond to user experience to improve services and ensure feedback is captured, published and demonstrates learning and improvement.



## Service User Experience Framework

Service user experience can be defined as 'what it feels like to be a user of the NHS in Wales'. A service user can be defined as someone who uses or has access to health services in any setting, including their families and unpaid carers. NHS Wales provides services across a wide range of patients both in the community and in hospital settings therefore there cannot be a generic approach to determining service user experience.

The specifics of what is important to service users and how this influences their experience will need to be defined for each group and clinical setting, although there are common themes which cross all service boundaries.

The NHS in Wales has adopted a service user experience framework which describes the evidence based key determinants of a good service user experience and identifies the key attributes and uses of a range of feedback methods. This includes a set of validated core questions which will be used in all NHS organisations in Wales as part of their implementation of the framework. Independent contractors and other stakeholders are invited to use the framework whenever seeking feedback on service user experience.

Use of the framework will enable the service user voice to be heard at all levels in NHS Wales. An effective feedback programme will aim to:

- Ensure that clinical teams have methods available to allow all service users (and their families and carers) to provide feedback on the care they receive;
- Allow speedy resolution of issues raised by individual service users;
- Allow identification of key themes and trends arising from feedback of all types (including concerns) and the actions taken.
- Provide assurance to the Board that the key components of the service user experience are being assessed and that action is taken to deliver improvements.

# Key Determinants of a Good Service User Experience

The key determinants of a good service user experience, based on national and local published evidence, include:



## First and Lasting Impressions

For example:

- Being welcomed in an appropriate manner;
- Being able to access services in a timely way;
- Being treated with dignity and respect.



## Receiving care in a Safe, Supportive, Healing Environment

For example:

- Receiving care in a clean, clutter free environment;
- Receiving good, nutritious, appropriate food;
- Having access to drinks;
- Having rigorous infection control practices in place.



## Understanding of and Involvement in Care

For example:

- Receiving appropriate, timely information;
- Being communicated with in an appropriate, timely manner;
- Involvement of service users, carers and families in decisions about choice of treatment options and care plans, including discharge and transfer.

These three domains can be used to support the use and design of feedback methods and be used to classify feedback from all sources.



## Service User Feedback Methods

Service users, families and carers can give feedback in a wide variety of ways. Some may be specifically designed by organisations to encourage feedback, however there are other sources. It is important that service users, families and carers feel that their views, positive, negative or neutral, are welcomed, that notice will be taken and improvements made where necessary.

A range of feedback methods are available to gain user feedback. Much of the published experience relates to hospital service users although most of them are also applicable to

service users in other settings. It is important that organisations use feedback from all sources to gain a balanced view of experience. A summary of methods is shown below:

### Real Time

Service users should be given opportunities to give feedback (eg surveys) whilst in our care so that action can be taken to resolve issues.

### Proactive / Reactive

A range of opportunities should be made available to service users / families / carers to provide feedback at any time to demonstrate that feedback is welcomed. This can include paper and online methods, text and social media.

### Retrospective

In-depth feedback should be sought from service users after they have left our care to allow more detailed analysis of issues. This can incorporate quality of life and Patient Reported Outcomes Measures (PROMs) / Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREMs).

### Balancing

Narrative feedback adds balance to survey-based feedback. Sources include concerns and compliments, clinical incidents, patient stories, third party surveys such as Community Health Council and voluntary organisations.

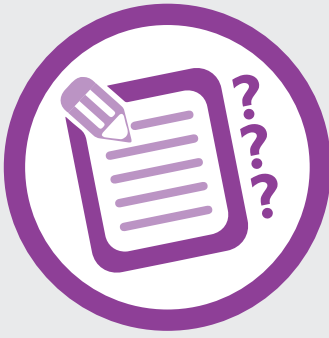


## Using the Framework to Assure and Improve Service User Experience

It is strongly recommended that a mixture of methods is used wherever possible, to gather views of each of the three key domains, in order to obtain a balanced understanding of 'what it feels like to be a service user'.

The feedback obtained should also be considered in the light of feedback obtained through other sources including complaints and compliments (which can also be classified

using the key domains). In this way, areas for improvement can be identified and lessons learned from areas that are performing well.



## Core Questions

In 2013 a set of core questions were developed to support the introduction of real time methods. These covered each of the three domains with the addition of qualitative questions. The core questions were validated in 2017 by the PROMs, PREMs and Effectiveness Programme in partnership with NHS Wales. The eleven validated core questions are to be used in all NHS Wales organisations to obtain real time feedback. To ensure applicability across different settings of care, they may be complemented by service specific questions as appropriate.

At the frontline they can support real time resolution of issues at local level, whilst providing the Board with greater understanding of the quality and safety of the service provided.

A number of equality monitoring questions have been included and guidance on the application of the equality monitoring questions should be sought from each NHS organisation's equality leads.

Domain	Questions
<b>First and lasting impressions</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Did you feel that you were listened to?</li> <li>2. Were you able to speak in Welsh to staff if you needed to?</li> <li>3. From the time you realised you needed to use this service, how long did you wait?</li> </ol>
<b>Receiving care in a safe, supportive, healing environment</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. Did you feel well cared for?</li> <li>5. If you asked for assistance, did you get it when you needed it?</li> </ol>
<b>Understanding of and involvement in care</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. Did you feel you understood what was happening in your care?</li> <li>7. Were things explained to you in a way that you could understand?</li> <li>8. Were you involved as much as you wanted to be in decisions about your care?</li> </ol>

**The core questions include a Likert scale rating of service user experience**

9. Using a scale of 0 – 10 where 0 is very bad and 10 is excellent, how would you rate your overall experience?

**Two qualitative questions enable service users to provide narrative feedback on their experience**

10. Was there anything particularly good about your experience that you would like to tell us about?  
 11. Was there anything that we could change to improve your experience?