

# An evaluation of a near real-time survey for improving patients' experiences of the relational aspects of care: a mixed-methods evaluation

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## Plain English summary

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## Plain English summary

Good-quality hospital care includes both clinical treatment and personal care. 'Relational' aspects of hospital care are the parts of care that involve the relationships between staff and patients. These include communication, treating patients with dignity, compassion and offering emotional support.

The report of the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Inquiry (of 2013), often referred to as the 'Francis Report', described serious problems with the 'relational' aspects of hospital care. These problems were a particular issue for older patients and those visiting accident and emergency (A&E) departments. The Francis Report recommended wider use of 'real-time' patient experience data collection, which means asking people about their experience of care while they are still in hospital or very shortly after they have been discharged.

This research investigated the recommendations outlined in the Francis Report by:

- developing a questionnaire that measures relational aspects of care for use with a near real-time feedback (NRTF) approach
- working with six hospital trusts to introduce the survey on a tablet computer using trained volunteers (surveys were administered on wards that primarily provide care for elderly patients and in A&E departments)
- working with NHS staff to understand what helps and hinders them in using NRTF results to improve care
- publishing the findings, including a survey toolkit and a set of 'best practice' recommendations, to enable NHS staff to make improvements to relational aspects of care.

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