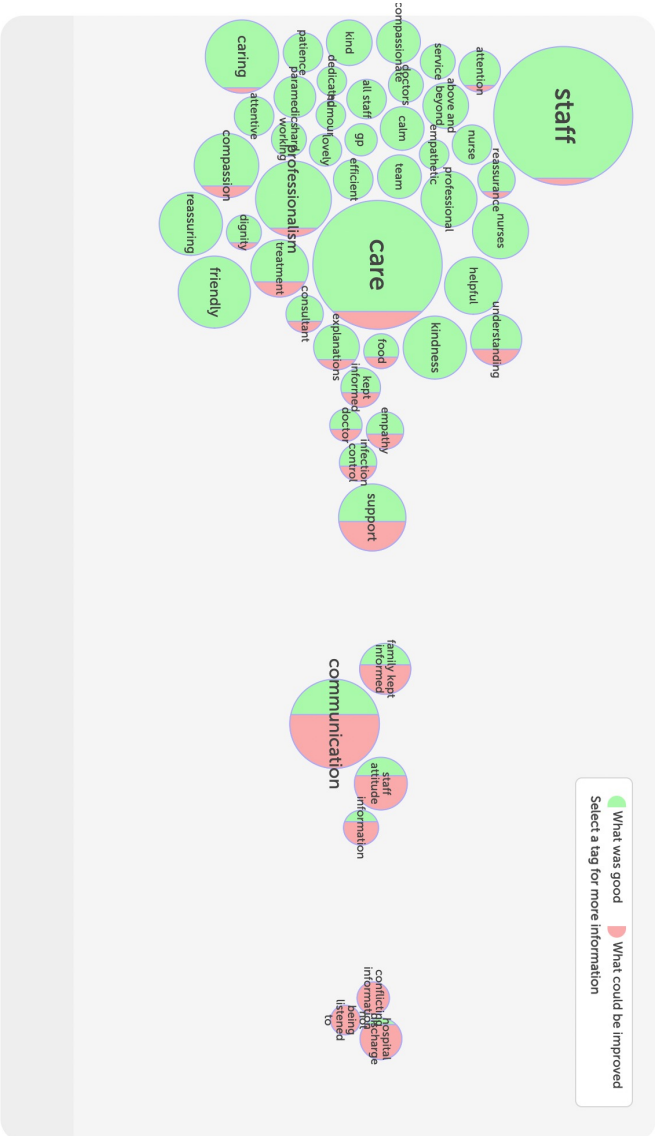


The experiences of patients and their relatives of communication during the Covid- 19 pandemic

Andrew Blain & Dan Newton



Why communication?



COMPARISON – PRE-PANDEMIC VS. DURING THE PANDEMIC

Parameter	Pre-Covid (Apr '19 - Mar '20)	During Covid (Apr '20 - Mar '21)
Information & decision-making shared appropriately	4.45/5	4.04/5
Clear information	4.4/5	4.1/5
Being listened to	4.53/5	4.27/5



Data & methodology

What stories did we search for?

Communication, Covid-19, General Medicine, NHS Scotland

We split the stories based on the groups involved:

1. Healthcare staff and patients
2. Healthcare staff and relatives
3. Patients and relatives

Communication between healthcare staff and patients

“I would like to say that this poor communication was new and that I could put this down to Covid and the new pressures, but it was like this last time”

Healthcare — Relative

Healthcare — Patient

Patient - Relative

“It was obvious to me that staff had been under great pressure given the current situation [...] I cannot commend highly enough the skill and the very positive and caring attitude of every one of them”

“Everyone I came into contact with from the tea lady to the surgeons was equally supportive and helpful. This is amazing at what must be one of the most stressful times for the NHS ever”

“Despite all of the NHS putting themselves at risk on the front line for people like me on a daily basis, they just never stop sharing their care about everyone no matter the ailment”

“In a very strange world, in very strange times, the professionalism, care, and attention provided by the staff in these departments has to be praised and commended”

Healthcare — Relative

Healthcare — Patient

Patient - Relative

Communication between healthcare staff and relatives

Four main talking points emerged:

1. Frequency of communication
2. Visiting
3. Discharges
4. End of life discussions

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative



Frequency of communication

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

Frequency of communication

“I will never be able to thank the nurses and doctors that cared for him in his final days enough. They updated my family daily (who unfortunately could not visit).”

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

Frequency of communication

“My mother suffers from dementia which always makes us anxious when she has to come into hospital. This was exacerbated by the fact that visiting was suspended due to covid-19. Despite us not being able to visit, my family were involved and consulted throughout her stay.”

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

Frequency of communication

“... we found it frustrating waiting at home. We phoned regularly, often with the phone ringing out.”

Healthcare – Relative

“... his wife has repeatedly tried to phone but is cut off or unable to get any answer...”

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

Discharges



Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

Discharges

“...We (the relatives) found it frustrating waiting at home... When we did manage to speak with a Nurse we were told that our relative would be possibly discharged that day. We waited for the phone call to say our relative was being discharged home however this didn't happen. Instead, we phoned in the early evening to be told that our relative would be staying in.”

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

Discharges

“Mum was discharged with no information given to us and we discovered at home that she had two fractured vertebrae! She had travelled home by private car”

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

End of life discussions



Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

End of life discussions

“During this health crisis, they showed compassion and consideration by allowing us to be with her during her last hours of her life. They also went out of their way to check on our wellbeing and offer emotional support.”

See also [758987]

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

Communication between patients and
their relatives

Mental health



Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

Patients

“I suffer with severe anxiety which is made worse being in situations I find upsetting/stressful without one of my family members with me.”

“The hospital has allowed visits as my dad is calmer when he sees me and isn't so anxious.”

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

Relatives

“It is truly heart-breaking not being able to visit your family member or speak to them directly”

“Given my mother's medical history and language barrier, I am extremely anxious leaving her in this ward where she is unable to communicate her own needs”

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

The importance of clear and consistent messaging



Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative



Healthcare — Relative

Healthcare — Patient

Patient - Relative

“My mother has asked to see my grandmother one last time. She was first told this would not be possible but then was told she would be allowed 1 hour at some point when they see fit. [...] She went to A&E and asked to see my grandmother, the nurse said no [...] I have read on NHS Greater Glasgow that there are exceptions allowed for visiting: 1. End of life care. 2. Birthing partners. 3. Children in hospital. I understand Greater Glasgow is not NHS Tayside.

However, this is basic human rights.”

But then...

“My granny passed away at 4am this morning. My mum spent the night with her and was there with her.

Thank you for making it possible for her to spend as much time as she could with my granny”

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative



The positive impact of small adaptations

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

“When I first arrived in ward 6, there was no phone signal from the bed. [...] In all, it felt utterly peculiar and disturbing that when I most wanted the comfort of my husband and children, I was unable to see, text or talk to them.”

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

“Within the constraints of Covid-19, the nursing team found ingenious ways to make my stay more bearable. For example, realising that a room with a lower window where I could sit and prop my phone up to make a call would be better, they moved me to a new room. Being on the ground floor, they then arranged for my husband to visit outside the window, so I could see him.

What a difference that made!”

Healthcare – Relative

Healthcare – Patient

Patient - Relative

Thank you

cheerful
frustrated
well cared for
in control
given up on
gratitude
good
valued
brilliant
very upset
grateful
at ease
relaxed
forgotten
delighted
amazing
disappointed
welcome
uncomfortable
mised
appalling

appreciative
very concerned
not worried
feel very lucky
very pleased
proud of the nhs
positive
fear
unhappy
terrified
stressed
no hope
care about
ignored
embarrassed
very frustrated

very disappointed
traumatic
in good hands
worry
fantastic
stress
happy
care for
let down
thankful
lucky
horrible
wonderful
impressed
concerned
unsafe
appalled

disgusted
saved
hope
frightened
supported
amused
nervous
relieved
vulnerable
confident
helpless
abandoned
helped
put off

in safe hands
not listened to
dreadful
like family
marvellous
appreciated
pleased
fortunate
helpless
angry
horrible
wonderful
impressed
concerned
unsafe
appalled

like family
marvellous
appreciated
pleased
fortunate

smiling
glad
alone
care about
ignored
embarrassed

Any questions?