

Handholding volunteers

Patient feedback analysis

Moorfields Eye Hospital

September 2023

Service Overview

- Eye surgery is usually undertaken using local anaesthetic and can be uncomfortable for patients and make them feel anxious.
- Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust uses volunteers in a 'hand-holding' role to provide comfort and support to patients undergoing operations.
- This role was introduced in 2018, and there are currently 42 trained volunteers providing the service. 30 of these volunteers are active at the main City Road hospital site, while 12 are at network sites.
- To help evaluate this volunteer intervention, data collection was introduced during Helpforce's Volunteering Innovators Programme (VIP)¹ and has continued ever since.



¹ Volunteering Innovators Programme | Helpforce

Evaluation approach: Outcomes

Helpforce's approach to evaluating...

Using its established [*Insight & Impact*](#) evaluation service, Helpforce follows a consistent methodology to **determine the impact of volunteering roles on health outcomes**. Target outcomes are identified across a range of beneficiaries representing the people and organisations involved, and then the necessary data is collected to prove and evidence the outcomes.

For Moorfields' handholding role, the **key patient outcomes** it aims to achieve are:

- Patients have their **anxiety reduced and feel better** about/during surgery.
- Patients **feel better about the service overall** and the hospital itself.

These outcomes are **measured through a survey which is completed by patients** while they are waiting to go home after surgery. **Patients who received volunteer support and those who didn't are both asked to complete the survey** to compare their responses. All respondents are asked about how likely they would be to recommend the hospital and how they would rate the hospital on four patient-centred measures, while those who received volunteer support are also asked specific questions about the support.

This report combines data from the original VIP project in 2019/20 with data that has continued to be collected since. It covers the period from **December 2019 to August 2023** and analyses **almost 800 patient responses**. The surveys are currently only carried out at the **City Road site**.

Throughout the report, data findings are linked back to the data collection method using icons at the top right-hand side of the screen. Evidence strength is also rated using icons. These icons are shown to the right.

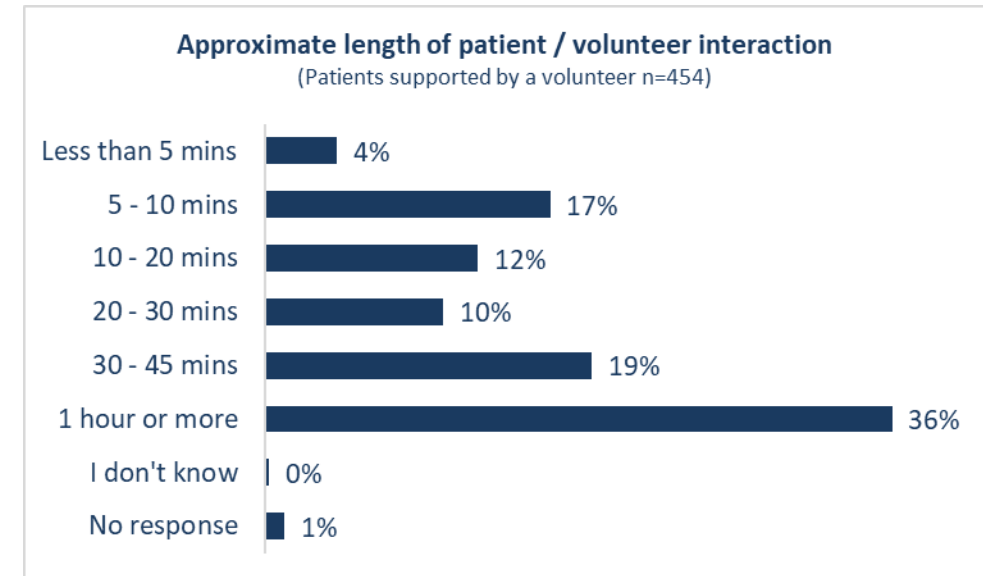
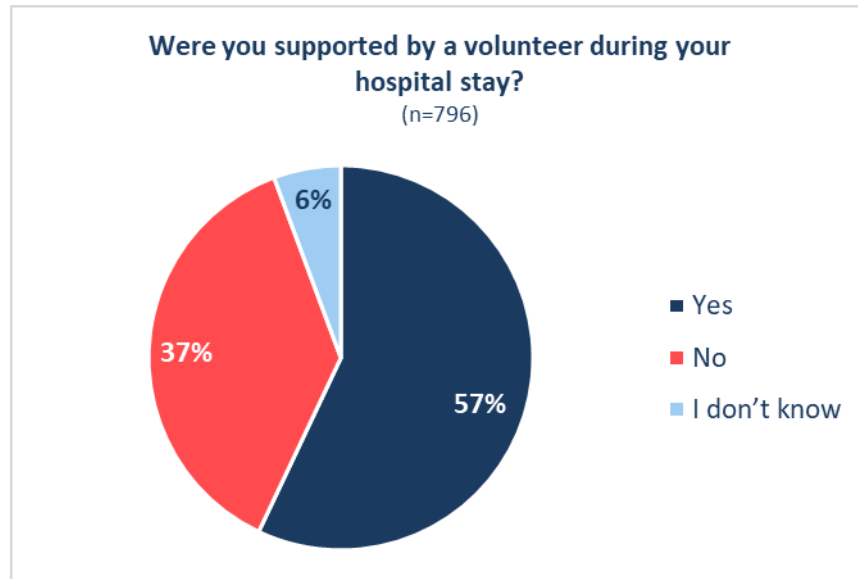
Throughout the report, chart labels under 4% have been removed to aid the readability of the chart.





Insight: Support provided and time spent

57% of patients who completed the survey had received volunteer support during their stay at Moorfields, whilst 37% had not. 6% (equating to 45 patients) were unsure whether they had received volunteer support, and therefore have been excluded from the remainder of the analysis.

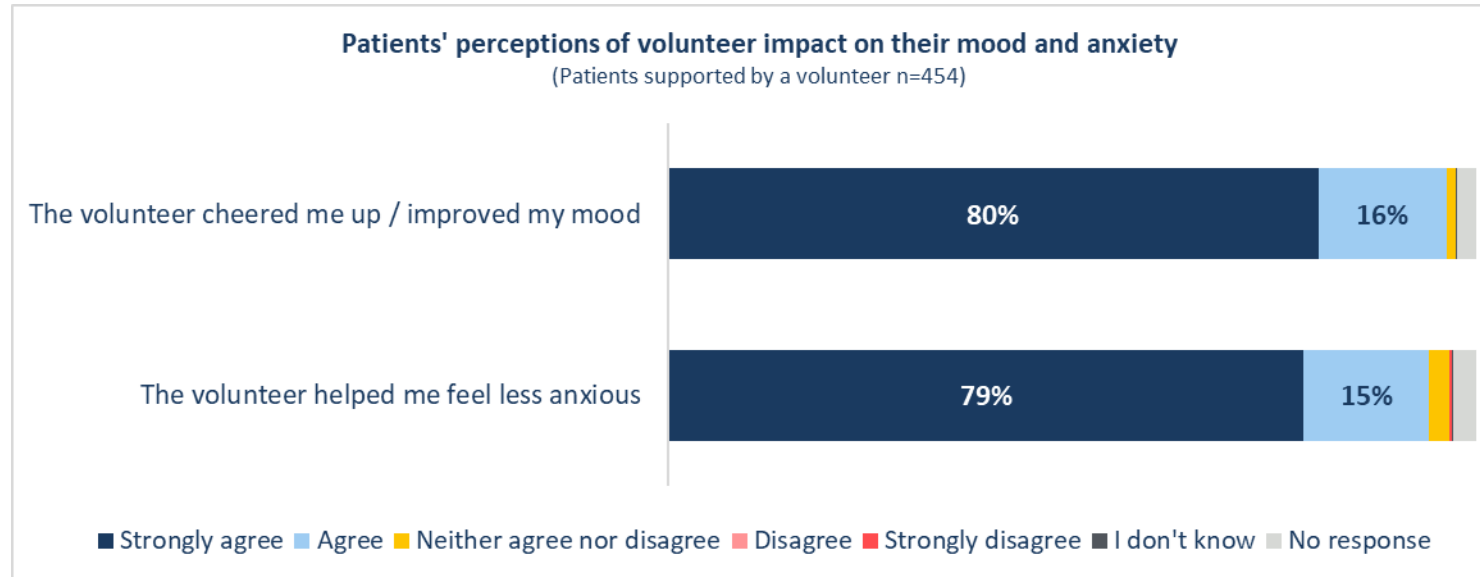


Amongst those who received volunteer support, there were a range of time lengths of the interaction, although the largest proportion (36%) said the volunteer had spent at least an hour with them. The average length of time spent with the volunteer was approximately half an hour.



Impact: Perceptions of volunteer impact

Patients who had volunteer support were asked to what extent they felt that the volunteer had helped to improve their mood and make them feel less anxious.



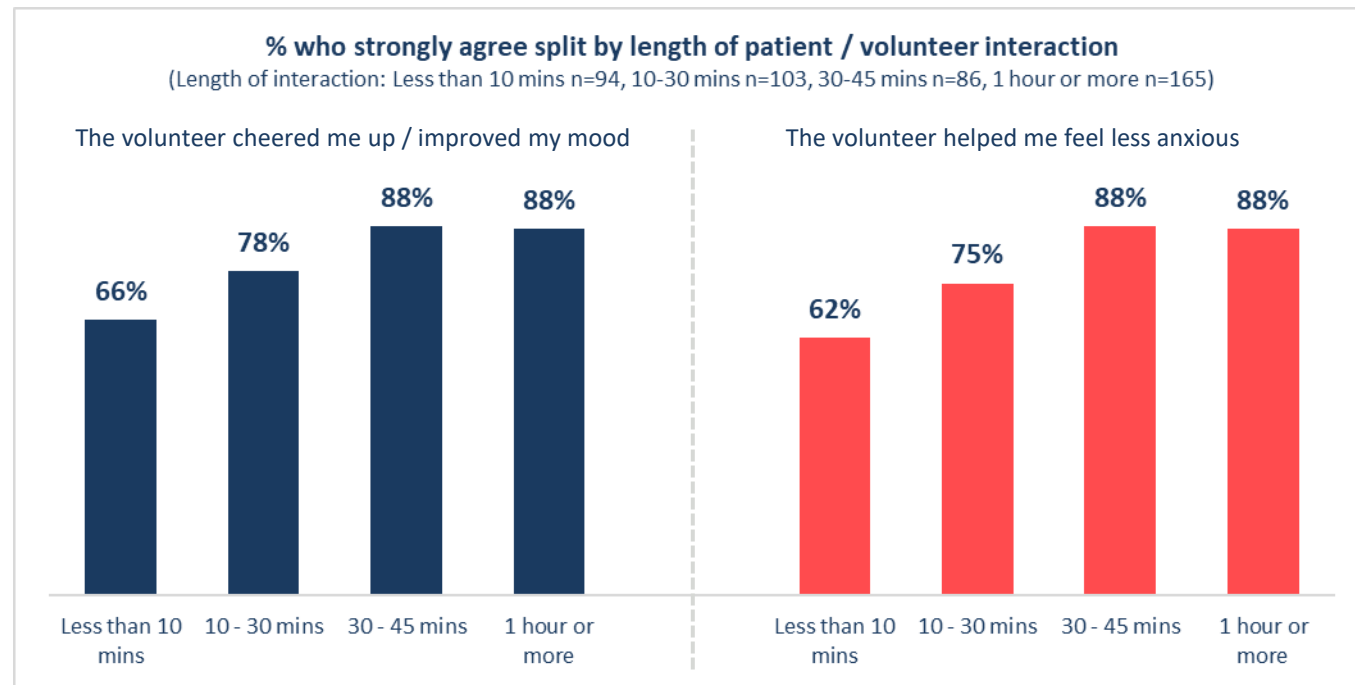
Feedback from patients was **overwhelmingly positive**. **96% agreed or strongly agreed that the volunteer cheered them up / improved their mood, while 94% agreed or strongly agreed that the volunteer helped them to feel less anxious.** The majority strongly agreed with each statement, and three quarters strongly agreed with both.

344 of 454 patients who had support strongly agreed with both statements.



Impact: The effect of time spent

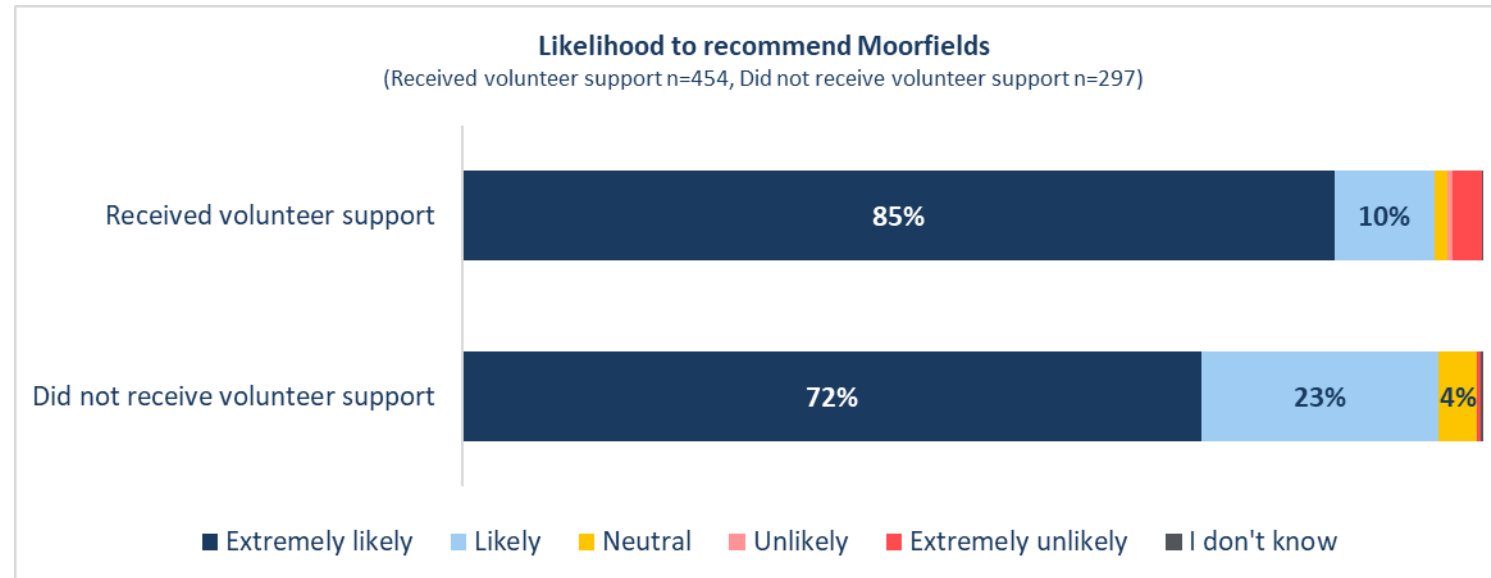
There appears to be a positive connection between the amount of time the volunteer spent with the patient and how likely the patient was to strongly agree with the statements. Patients who spent 30 minutes or more with the volunteer were significantly more likely to strongly agree that the volunteer cheered them up / improved their mood and helped them to feel less anxious, than those who spent up to 30 minutes with the volunteer.



The following lengths of patient / volunteer interaction were combined in the chart to give sufficient base sizes for analysis: Less than 5 mins with 5 – 10 mins, 10 – 20 mins with 20 – 30 mins. Significance testing performed at 95% confidence level, using a two-tailed z-test. Comparison of patients who had support for up to 30 mins vs those who had support for more than 30 mins.

Impact: Likelihood to recommend

Patients who were supported by a volunteer and those who weren't were both asked how likely they would be to recommend Moorfields to friends or family if they needed similar care or treatment.



Both groups had very similar proportions who said they were likely or extremely likely to recommend Moorfields (95% and 96% respectively). However, **patients who received volunteer support were significantly more likely to say that they would be extremely likely to recommend** (85% vs 72% for patients who did not receive volunteer support). While some negative responses can be seen amongst those who received volunteer support, it appears that the majority of these responses have been selected in error. 12 out of the 15 who selected 'extremely unlikely' had only positive comments about their experience, while the remaining three commented on waiting times.

Significance testing performed at 95% confidence level, using a two-tailed z-test.



Impact: Patient-centred care

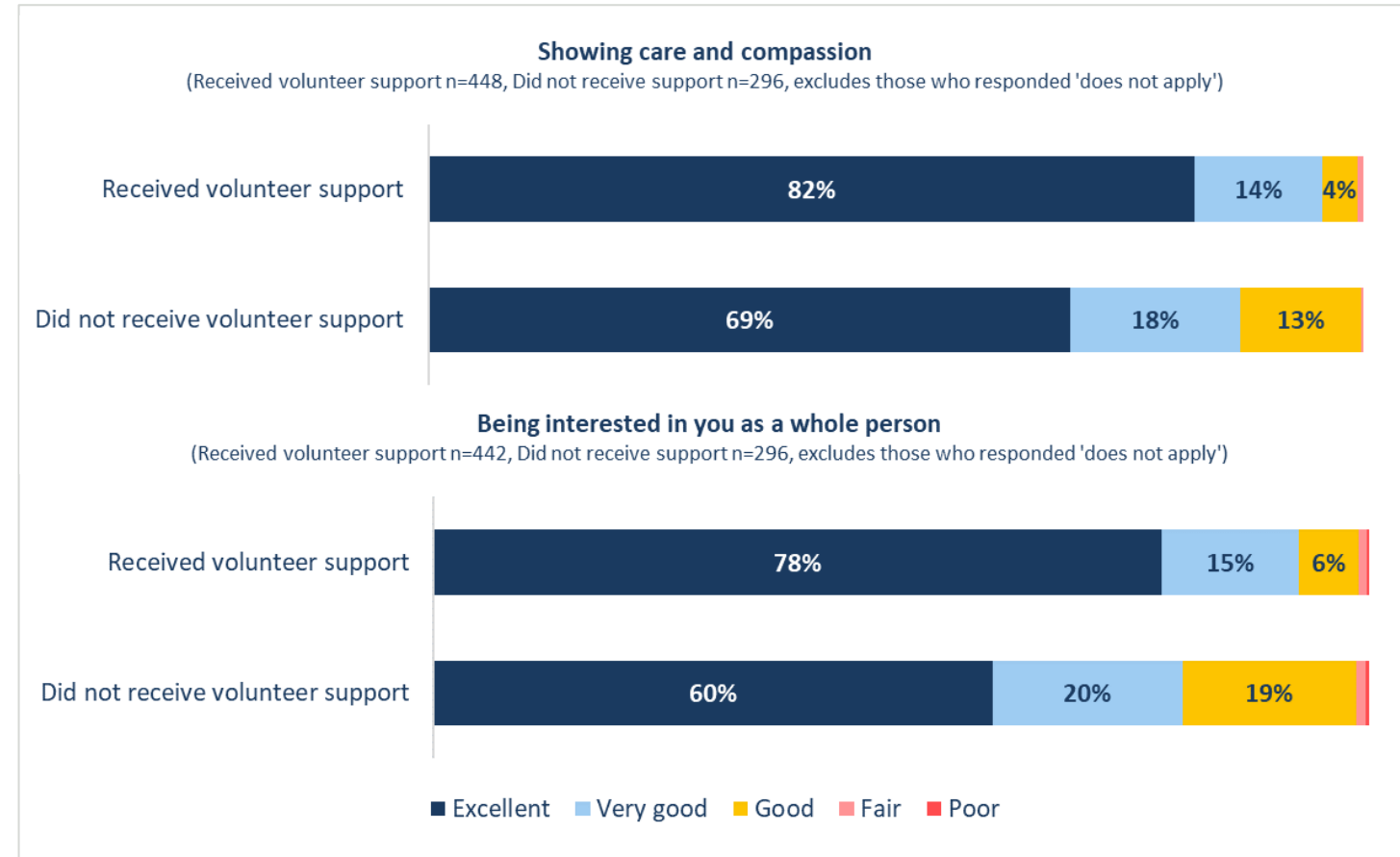
All patients who completed the survey were also asked to rate Moorfields on four indicators of patient-centred care based on their latest stay:

- Showing care and compassion;
- Being interested in you as a whole person;
- Really listening;
- Making you feel at ease.

A **significant difference** can be seen in the proportion rating Moorfields as 'excellent' on each indicator between those who received volunteer support and those who did not.

82% of patients who had volunteer support rated their experience of being shown care and compassion as excellent, compared to 69% of those who did not.

Similarly, **78% rated their experience of interest in them as a whole person as excellent**, compared to 60% of those without volunteer support.



Base sizes for each indicator differ because respondents reporting that the indicator 'does not apply' to them have been excluded.
Significance testing performed at 95% confidence level, using a two-tailed z-test.

Impact: Patient-centred care

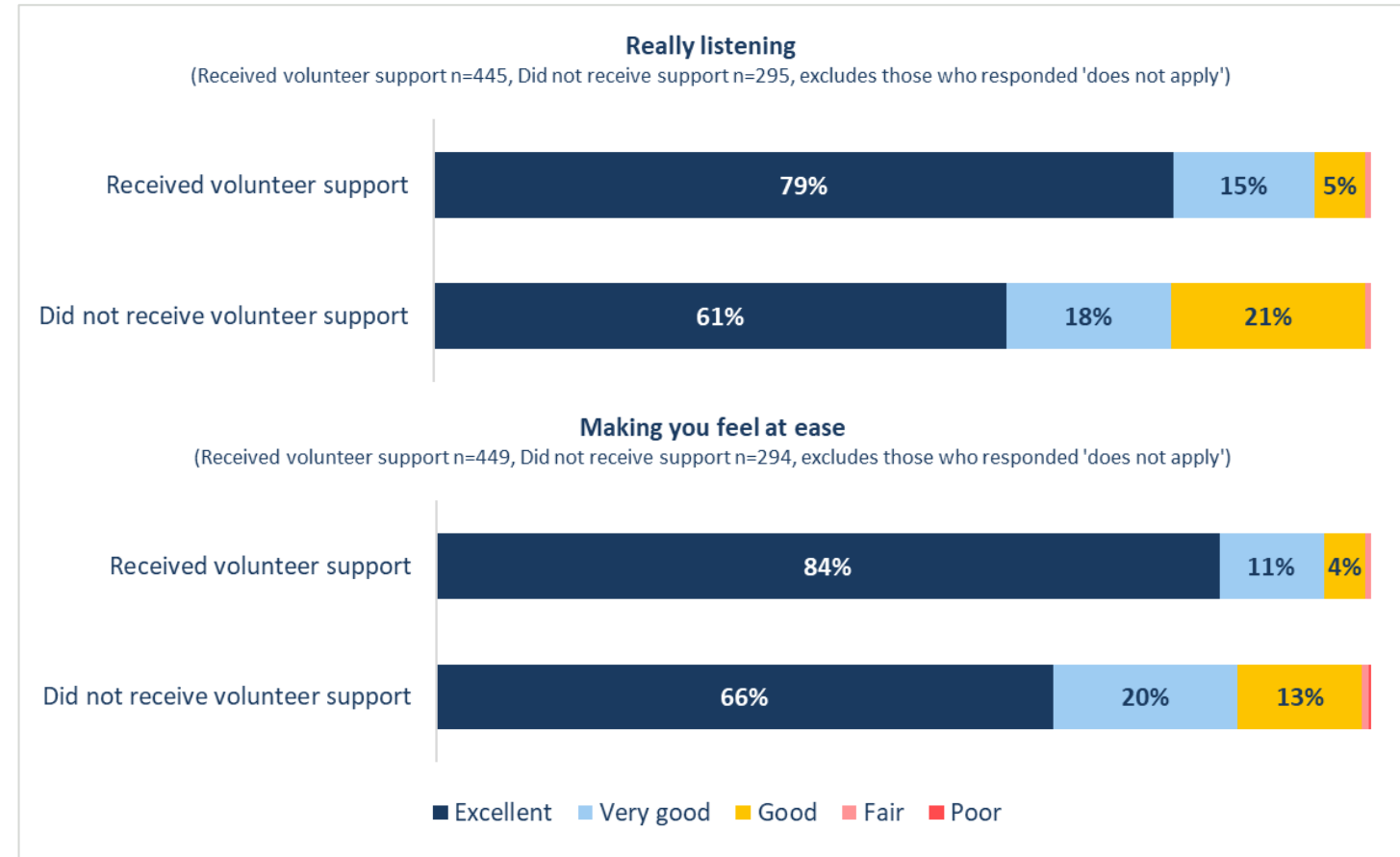
A similar picture is seen across the remaining two indicators.

79% of patients who received volunteer support rated their experience of Moorfields really listening as excellent, compared to 61% of those who did not.

Similarly, **84% rated their experience of being made to feel at ease as excellent**, compared to 66% of those without volunteer support.

For all four indicators, the differences between those with and without volunteer support who scored their experience as excellent are **statistically significant**.

Across all indicators, a greater proportion of those who did not receive volunteer support rated Moorfields as 'good' compared to those who had support.



Base sizes for each indicator differ because respondents reporting that the indicator 'does not apply' to them have been excluded.
Significance testing performed at 95% confidence level, using a two-tailed z-test.

Impact: Patient feedback

"I am terrified of clinic invasive procedures and could not have coped without the hand holder. Thank you so much."

Patient who had volunteer support

"A similar Op was carried out ten years ago without option of handholding, was very pleased with decision to take up offer. Really nice to have [the volunteer] there as op was long and tedious."

Patient who had volunteer support

"I would recommend everyone had a volunteer like these ladies."

Patient who had volunteer support

"To feel the support of the hand holder throughout 16 operations was a great comfort. I was very grateful to her."

Patient who had volunteer support

"The volunteer held my hand during my surgery and made me feel very relaxed and comfortable. My anxiety level went down a lot! Thank you for the support."

Patient who had volunteer support

"This idea with volunteers is excellent. I am very satisfied and would love this service to continue at NHS!"

Patient who had volunteer support

"As a fellow healthcare professional, I was amazed at how kind the volunteer was and how wonderful the service is. My 88-year-old mother was very anxious about her surgery, and the hand holding service meant she felt supported during surgery, as I could not be with her. It is a truly amazing service so keep up the fabulous work!"

Family member whose relative had volunteer support

Conclusions and recommendations

Conclusions

- Feedback from patients who have received handholding volunteer support are very positive, with almost all agreeing or strongly agreeing that the volunteer helped to cheer them up and to feel less anxious.
 - There appears to be a relationship between time spent and strong agreement with these statements: those who had longer interactions with the volunteer were more likely to strongly agree.
- Clear differences can be seen in feedback on Moorfields as a whole between patients who had and did not have volunteer support. While perceptions of the hospital are positive amongst both groups overall, those who had volunteer support were significantly more likely to:
 - Rate Moorfields as 'excellent' across four indicators of patient-centred care;
 - Say they would be extremely likely to recommend Moorfields to family or friends who needed similar care.

Recommendations

- Continued provision of high-quality volunteer support.
- Consideration of how to ensure patient / volunteer interactions are of an optimal length to deliver strong impact.
- Development of data collection methods for staff and volunteer feedback, to ensure the full impact of the role across all beneficiaries can be evidenced.
- Expansion of data collection to other sites where handholding volunteers are active, where appropriate.

help*force*

Thank you

help@helpforce.community
www.helpforce.community

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