

## **Moorfields Eye Hospital NHS Foundation Trust: Understanding the impact of “hand-holding volunteers” providing theatre support during surgery - The patient perspective**

**April 2022**

### **Background**

Eye surgery is usually undertaken using local anaesthetic and can be uncomfortable for patients and make them feel anxious. Not only is this an unpleasant experience for patients, but it can also be a cause of added complexity and stress for staff. 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 we now have 15 trained volunteers providing the service. To help evaluate this volunteer intervention data collection was introduced during the Volunteering Innovators Programme (VIP)<sup>1</sup> and has continued ever since. This paper includes analysis of patient survey data collected up to March 2022.

### **About the survey**

The patient survey analysis set out below is based on the VIP Patient outcomes survey<sup>2</sup> and includes both the data collected as part of the original project in 2019/20 and more recent data collected by the service, up to March 2022. In order to compare outcomes for patients who have received volunteer support with outcomes for patients who have not received volunteer support Moorfields gives the same survey to both groups of patients as they wait to return home after their operations.

### **Responses included in the analysis**

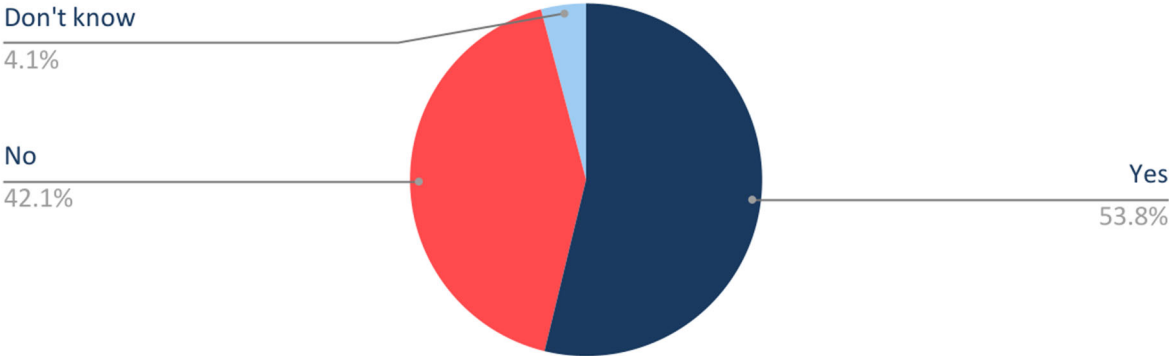
This analysis covers responses received between the following dates December 2019 and March 2022. Responses were received from 156 patients who had received volunteer support and 122 who had not.

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<sup>1</sup> [Volunteering Innovators Programme | Helpforce](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Helpforce | Theatre Support Patient Survey](#)

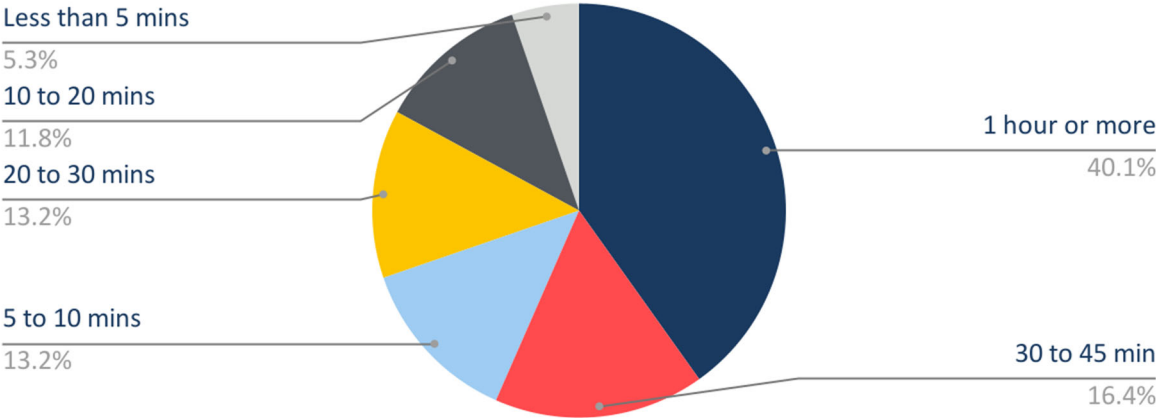
Percentage of surveyed patients supported/not supported by a volunteer



n=290

Those patients who received volunteer support were asked how long the volunteer had spent with them (the length of the “volunteer visit”). As can be seen from the chart below responses were quite varied, but on average across the 152 responses received to this question the average amount of time spent with a volunteer was approximately half an hour.

Length of volunteer visits

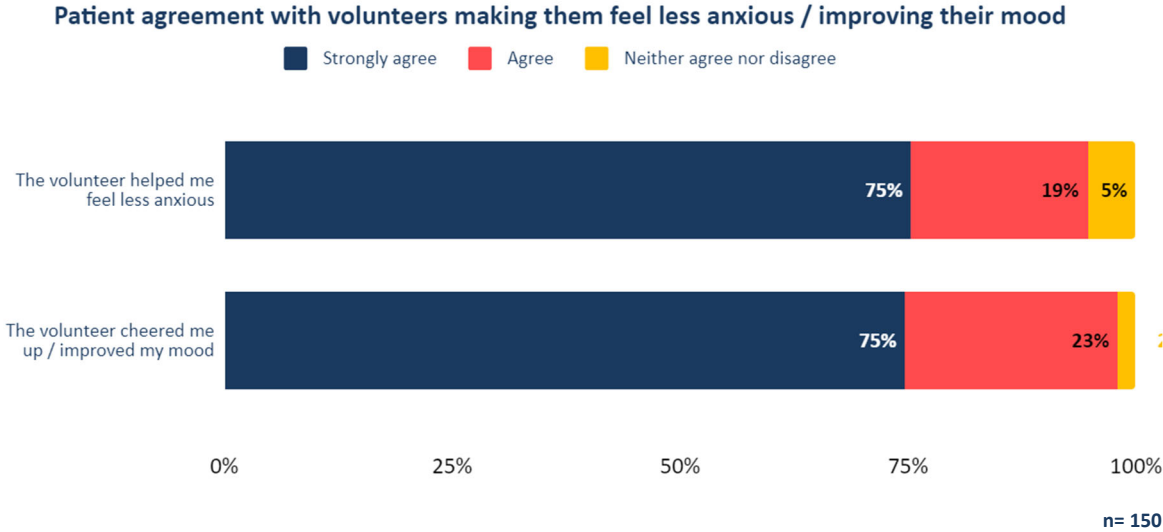


n=152

**Do patients feel that volunteers have a positive impact on their anxiety levels and their mood?**

Those who received volunteer support were asked to reflect on the difference that having volunteer support had made to them in relation to helping them feel less anxious and in relation to cheering them up and improving their mood.

The overwhelming majority of respondents (94%) believe that volunteers have helped to reduce their anxiety and none of the respondents view the impact of volunteers on their anxiety level negatively.



The volunteer impact on patient mood is similarly positive. 98% of respondents agree or strongly agree that volunteers improve their mood.

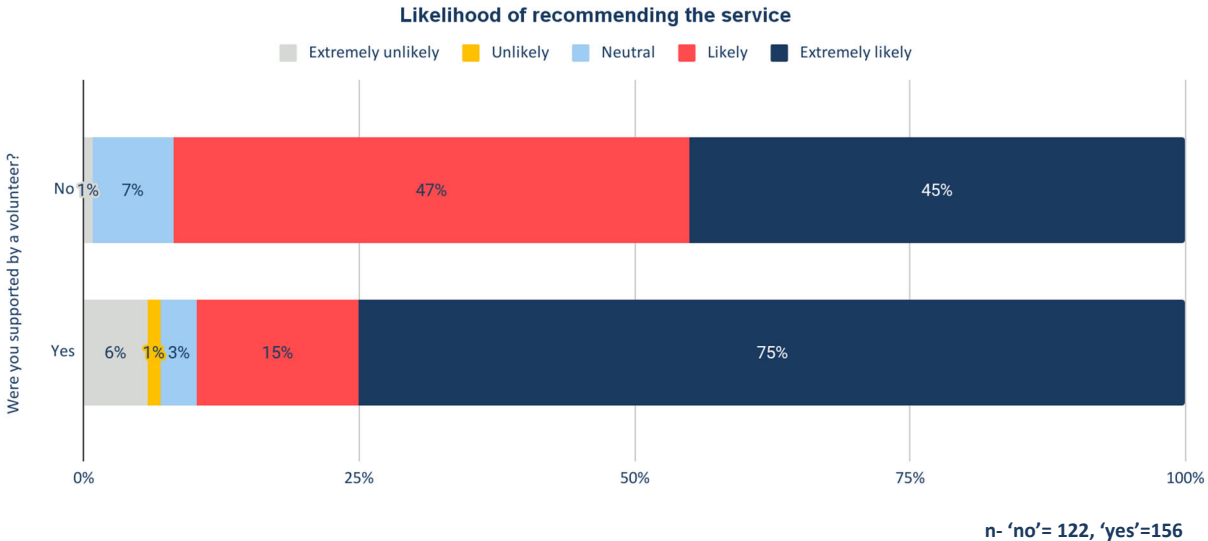
### What impact do volunteers have on the likelihood that patients will recommend the hospital?

Both patients supported by volunteers and those who did not receive volunteer support were asked about the extent to which they would recommend the hospital. As can be seen from the chart below there do appear to have been some negative responses to this question from both those who have and have not received volunteer support - however, when reviewing their responses further it appears this may have been an error, as the individual rated all their care components positively, and left positive comments about the services received, for example:

***“Very good service. Everyone has been good today”***  
Moorfields patient who received volunteer support

***“I have been attending Moorfields Eye Hospital for a very long time, each time I have always been really well cared for and felt that staff were interested in enhancing my sight and wellbeing.”***  
Moorfields patient who received volunteer support

Most patients who responded to the survey appear likely or extremely likely to recommend the service the most interesting variation between the responses from the two groups is the proportion who are extremely likely to recommend the service. Whilst 75% of those who received volunteer support were extremely likely to recommend the service only 45% of those who did not receive volunteer support were extremely likely to recommend the service.

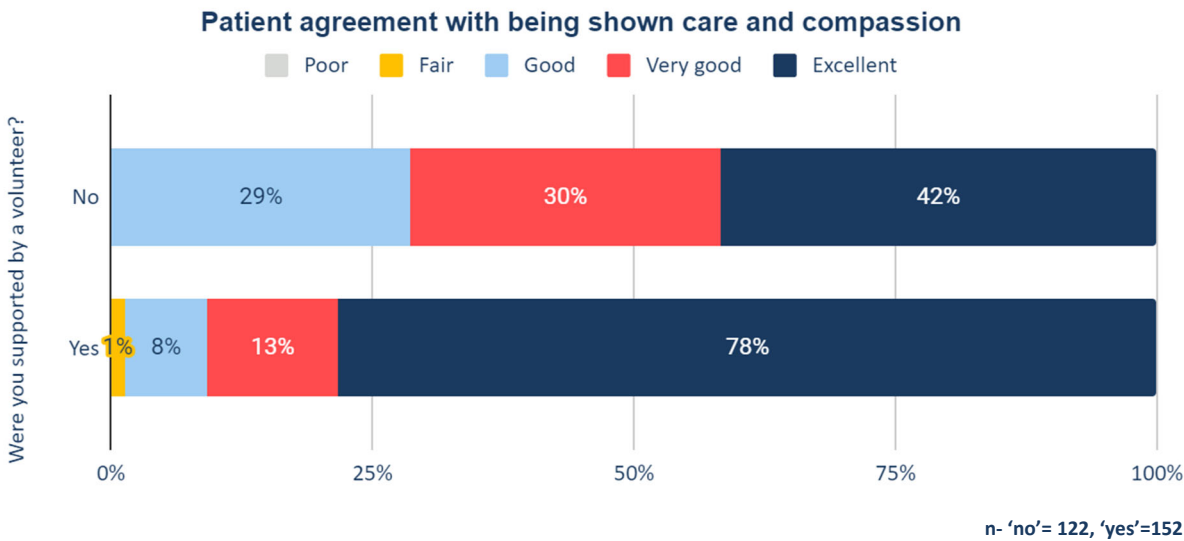


**What impact do volunteers have on patient centred care?**

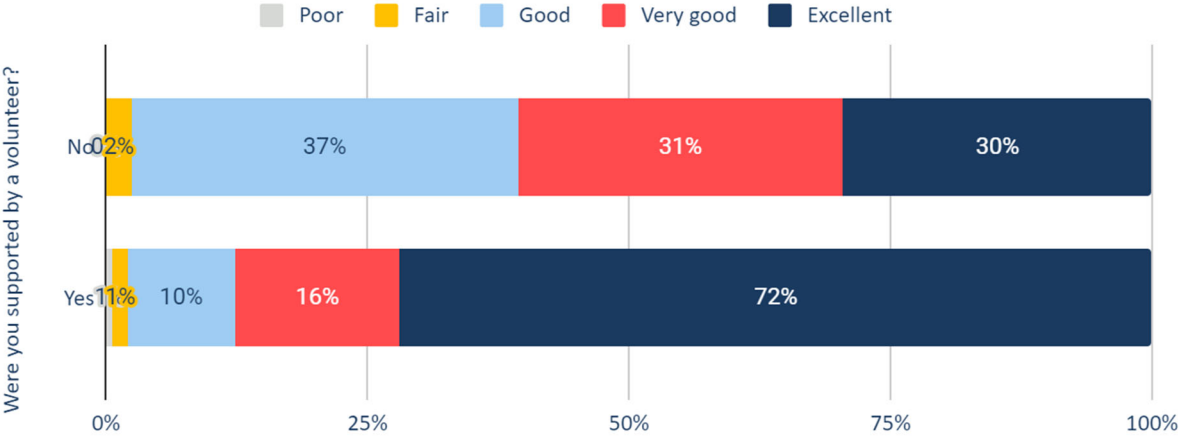
Survey respondents were asked to rate their healthcare provider in four areas based on their current hospital stay or support:

- Showing care and compassion
- Being interested in you as a whole person
- Being really listened to
- Being put at ease

As can be seen from the four charts below those supported by volunteers at Moorfields are more likely on average to provide positive feedback in relation to these indicators of patient centred care than those who have not received volunteer support at Moorfields.

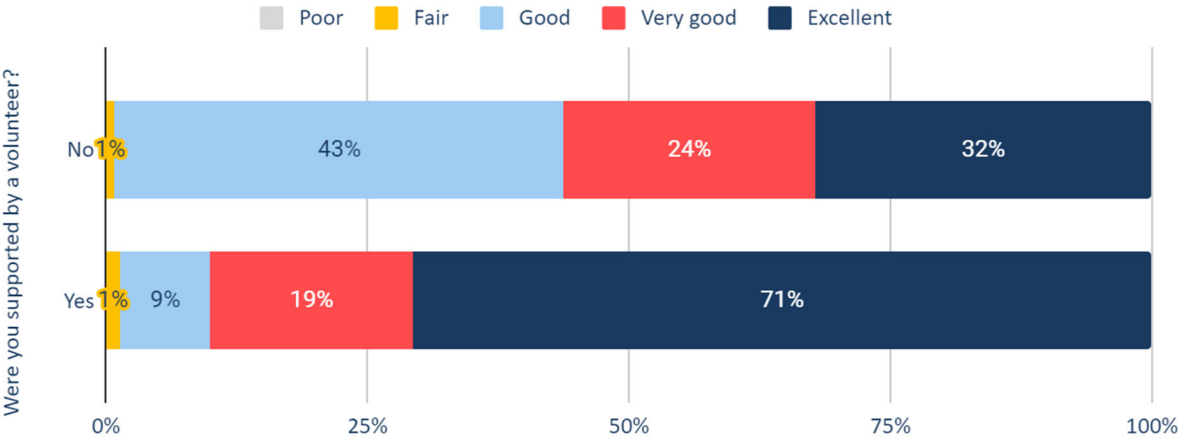


**Patient agreement with being interested in them as a whole person**



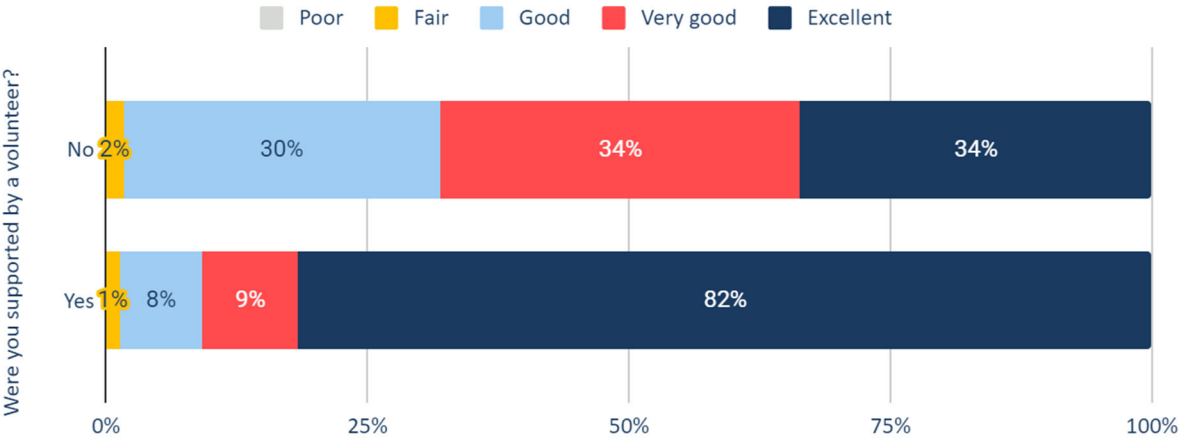
n- 'no'= 122, 'yes'=146

**Patient agreement with being really listened to**



n- 'no'= 121, 'yes'=150

**Patient agreement with being made to feel at ease**



n- 'no'= 122, 'yes'=152

## Patient feedback

Finally, participants were asked if there was anything else they would like to say about the support they had received. Below are some quotes from the patients at Moorfields and their family members.

***“As a fellow healthcare professional I was amazed at how kind the volunteer was and how wonderful the service is... It is a truly amazing service so keep up the fabulous work!”***

Moorfields family member, who’s relative received volunteer support

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\$

***“Handholder helped enormously throughout [a] long operation. So thankful for her.”***

Moorfields patient who received volunteer support

***“Care from everyone in [the] clinic was excellent and caring. The volunteer programme is excellent... the volunteer is amazing and kindly went with my father to the operating theatre to support him during the procedure. It was very reassuring for him and he appreciates this and the family is very grateful”***

Moorfields family member, who’s relative received volunteer support

***“Thank you for the excellent support throughout, it really made me feel less anxious”***

Moorfields patient who received volunteer support