

**Regional Emergency Department and  
Out Patient Experience  
October to December 2013**



**Western  
Health**

**Prepared by:  
Darlene Welsh  
Regional Manager Research and Evaluation  
Quality Management and Research Branch**

## **Emergency Department and Out Patient Experience Background**

### **Survey Instrument**

The validated emergency department and out patient experience survey that was administered throughout the Western region was an Accreditation Canada Client Experience Survey based on the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS). The Accreditation Canada Client Experience Survey was modified to meet the needs of Western Health (See Appendix A).

### **Method**

Emergency department and out patient experience surveys were mailed to the sample. This package included a cover letter, survey, and preaddressed and postage paid return envelope.

### **Participants**

A list of patients, 16 years and older, utilizing emergency and out patient services from facilities within Western Health between October and December of 2013 was obtained from Information Services. These patients were categorized by site. Patients excluded from these data were patients residing in long term care facilities, respite patients, palliative care patients, and all patients under 16 years of age. Also, measures were taken to ensure that surveys were not sent to patients who were deceased. Some surveys were returned unopened as the address was incorrect, incomplete or the person had moved.

## **Sample**

Based on emergency/outpatient visits from October to December of 2013, a 95% confidence level, a 5% confidence interval, and considering a 35% response rate, a random sample was calculated. The total number of those patients receiving emergency and outpatient services across the region in this time period, and excluding the patients as described in the previous section, was 18,429. A random sample of 891 surveys were distributed per month for a total sample of 2673.

## **Privacy, Confidentiality, Data Security**

Privacy and confidentiality were achieved as the patients voluntarily completed the survey and returned the completed survey in a postage paid, preaddressed envelope with no identifying information or codes on the envelope or survey to identify the person. Any information that could potentially identify the patients was deleted. The data was stored on a password protected computer and surveys were stored in a locked office in the Western Memorial Health Clinic used by Quality Management and Research staff.

## **Data Analysis**

A student completed the data entry for all surveys using Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Descriptive statistics were calculated on regional data to obtain a general perspective of patient experiences with emergency department and outpatient services at Western Health. Statistics were also calculated for each site to assist in quality improvement initiatives and planning at a site level. The following report provides survey results for the region.

## Results

### Demographics

A total of 2673 surveys were distributed. Of these, 73 were returned as the address was incorrect, the individual had moved, or died. Over the three month period, 785 of the 2600 surveys were completed for a response rate of 30.2%.

Survey respondents were asked to indicate at which hospital they visited (See Table 1).

Table 1. Frequency and Percentage of Respondents by Site

<b>Hospital</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Western Memorial Regional Hospital	364	46.4%
Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital	221	28.2%
Rufus Guinchard Health Centre	32	4.1%
Bonne Bay Health Centre	41	5.2%
Calder Health Centre	17	2.2%
Dr. Charles LeGrow Health Centre	90	11.5%
Missing	20	2.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>785</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

To gain a more thorough understanding of the demographics and health of the survey respondents, they were asked to report their age group (See Figure 1) and their highest grade or level of school completed (See Figure 2). They were also asked to rate their overall health. The majority of the respondents were over the age of 50 (66.9%). 38.3% had less than high school, 20.0% had high school or equivalent, 35.0% had some college, college graduate or higher, and 6.8% did not indicate. When asked to rate their overall health, 43.8% reported very good or excellent, 47.4% reported good or fair, 6.8% reported poor, and 2.0% did not indicate.

Figure 1. Age of Respondents

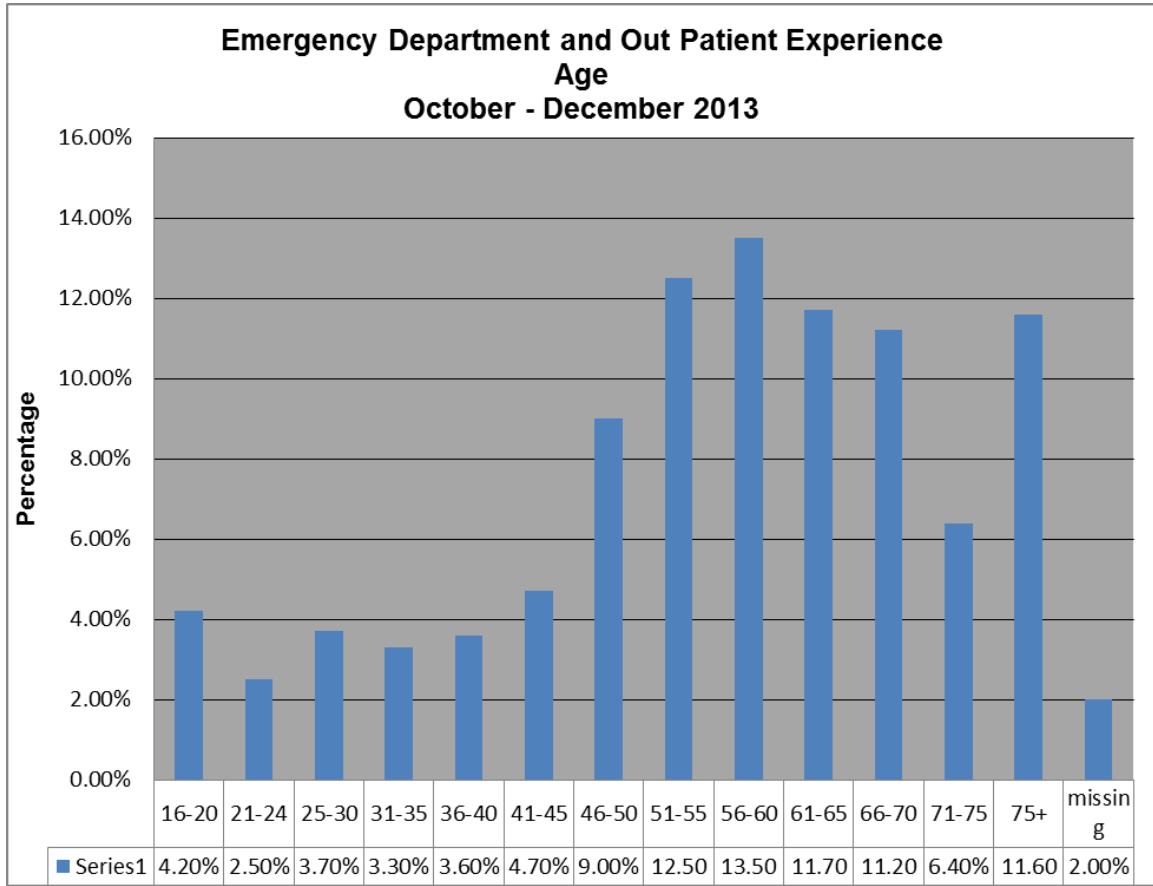
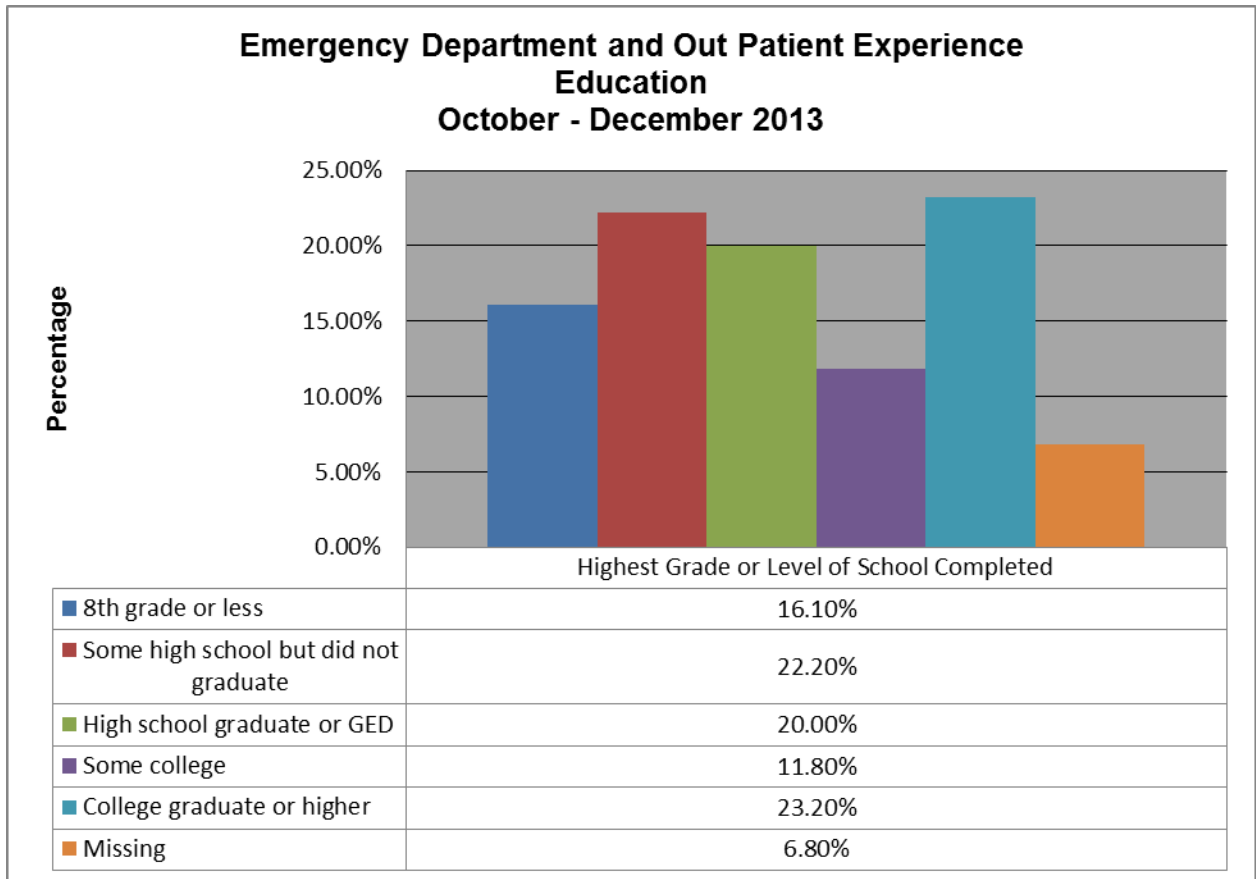


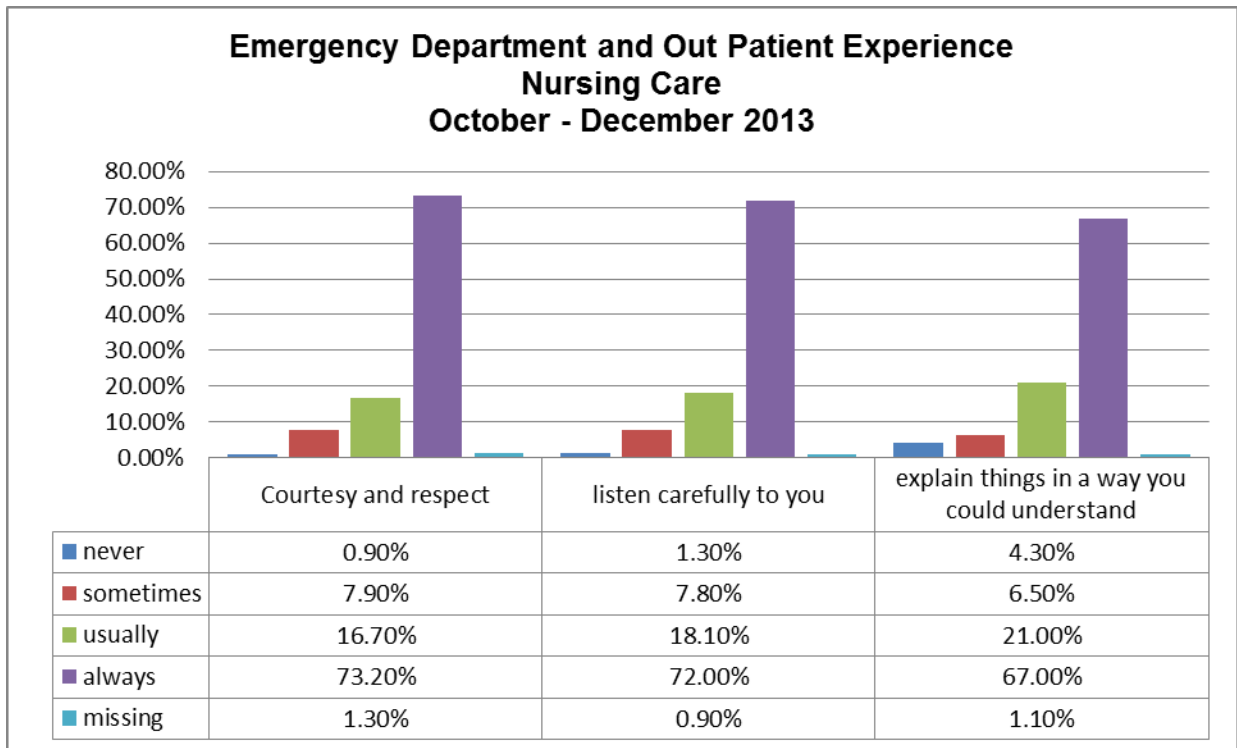
Figure 2. Highest Level of Education



## Nursing Care

Patients were asked about nursing care. Most patients reported that nurses always or usually treated them with courtesy and respect (89.9%), listened carefully to them (90.1%), and explained things in a way they could understand (88.0%) (See Figure 3).

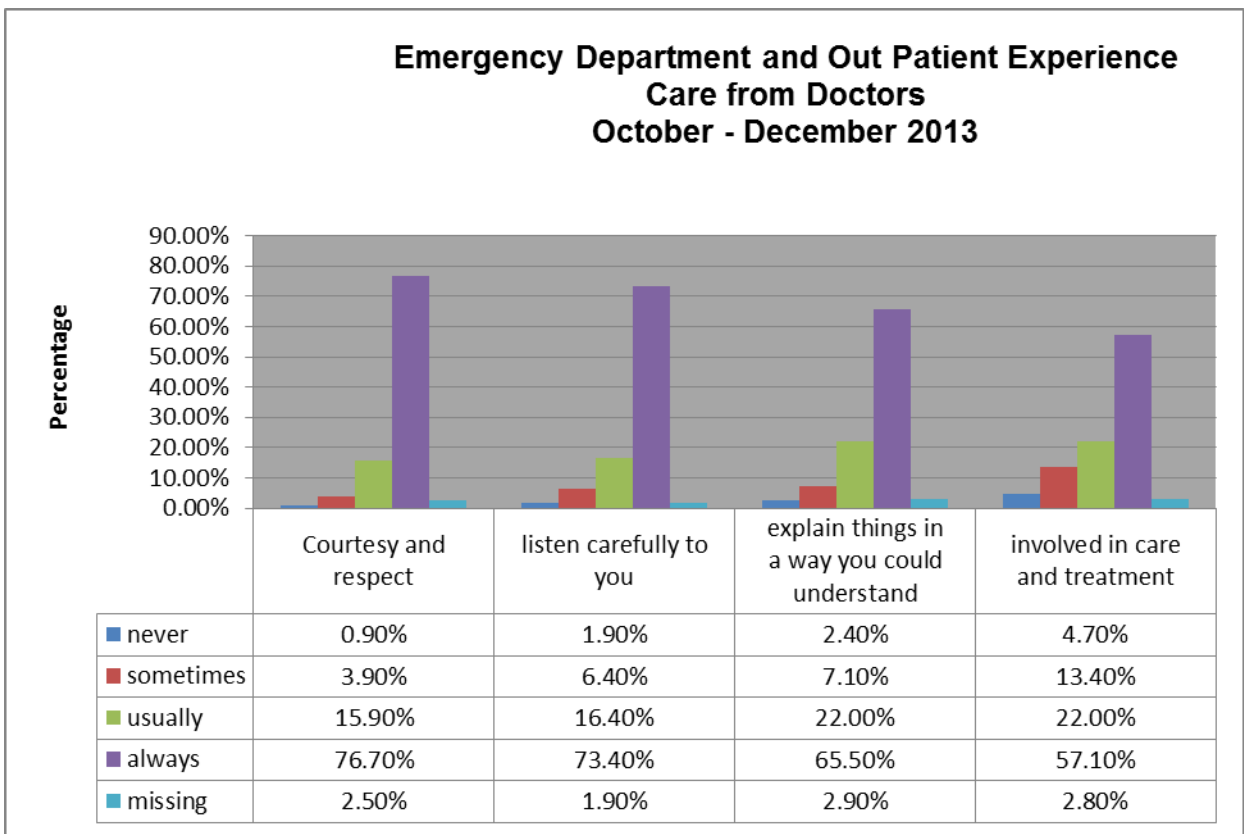
Figure 3. Nursing Care



**Care from Doctors**

Patients were also asked about the care they received from doctors (See Figure 4). Consistent with the feedback about nurses, most patients reported that doctors always or usually treated them with courtesy and respect (92.6%), listened carefully to them (89.8%), and explained things in a way they could understand (87.5%). When asked how often they felt involved in decisions about their own care and treatment, 79.1% reported always or usually. Ten of the patients commented that they did not see a doctor during their visit.

Figure 4. Care from Doctors

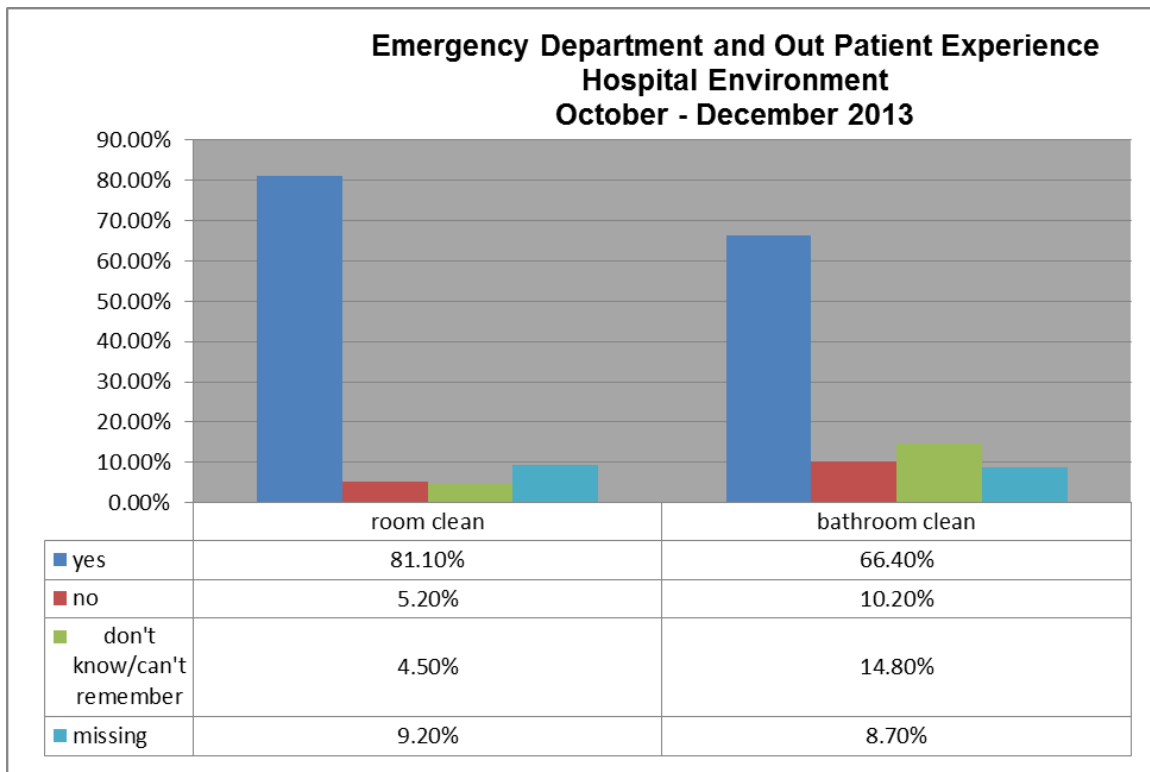




## Hospital Environment

Patients were asked about hospital environment including cleanliness, quietness, and privacy (See Figure 5). Most patients reported that their rooms were kept clean (81.1%), while 66.4% reported that the bathroom was kept clean. Seventy nine point six percent of patients indicated that they always or usually had enough privacy. Four of the respondents commented that they were in a room with other individuals and therefore, having a private conversation was not possible.

Figure 5. Hospital Environment



### **During the Wait**

Patients were asked if they were told how long they would have to wait to be examined (See Figure 6). Nearly 51% reported that they were told, 40.1% were not told, 5% did not know or could not remember and 4.1% did not report. When asked if they were told why they had to wait, 33.2% reported yes, 22.2% reported no, but would have liked an explanation, 35.7% reported no, but they did not need an explanation, 5.1% that they did not know or could not remember, and 3.8% did not report. Ten of the respondents reported that they did not have to wait, while others indicated that they waited specified periods of time prior to being examined.

Patients were also asked if the hospital staff checked on them while they waited (See Figure 7). Thirty seven point four percent reported that they were checked on, 55.8% reported no, 2.4% reported that they did not know or could not remember, and 4.3% did not report. Patients were also asked whether they considered leaving before they were seen and 15.8% reported yes, definitely, 15.3% reported yes, to some extent, 66.2% reported no, and 2.7% did not report.

Figure 6. During the Wait

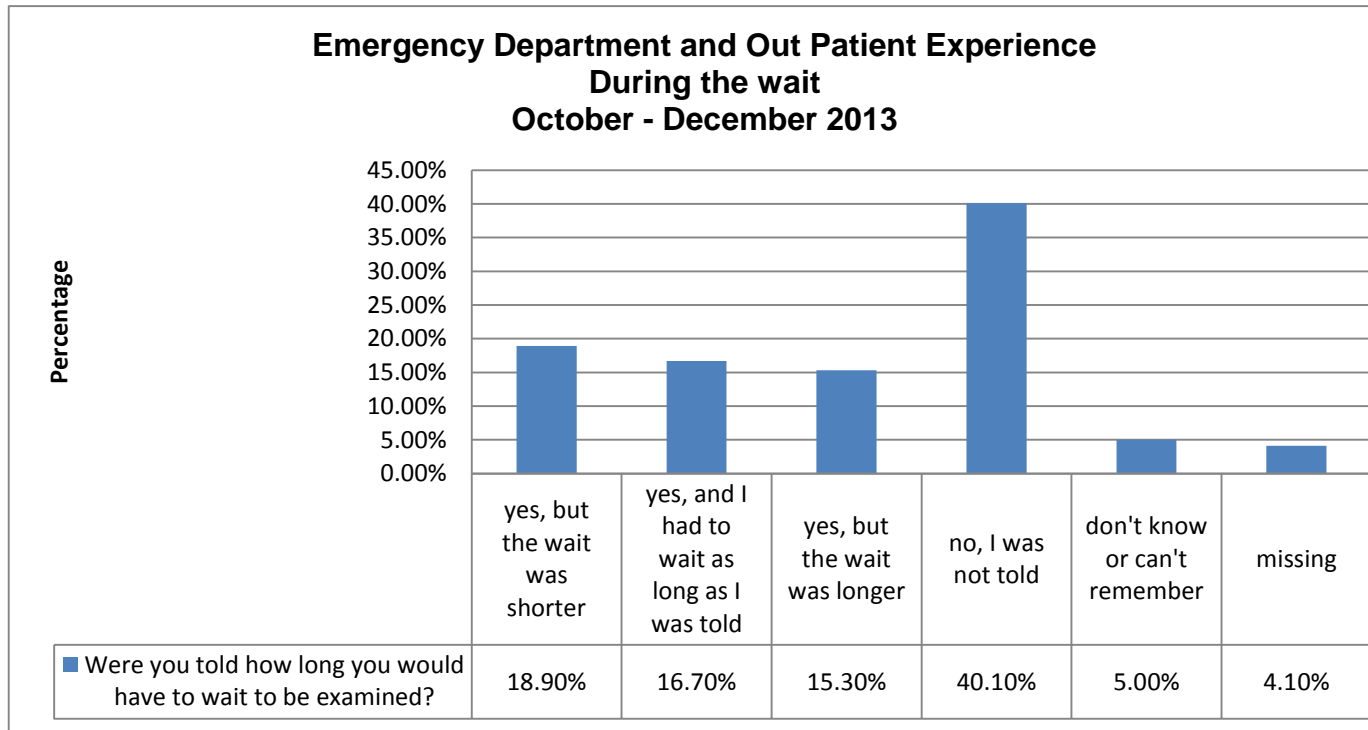
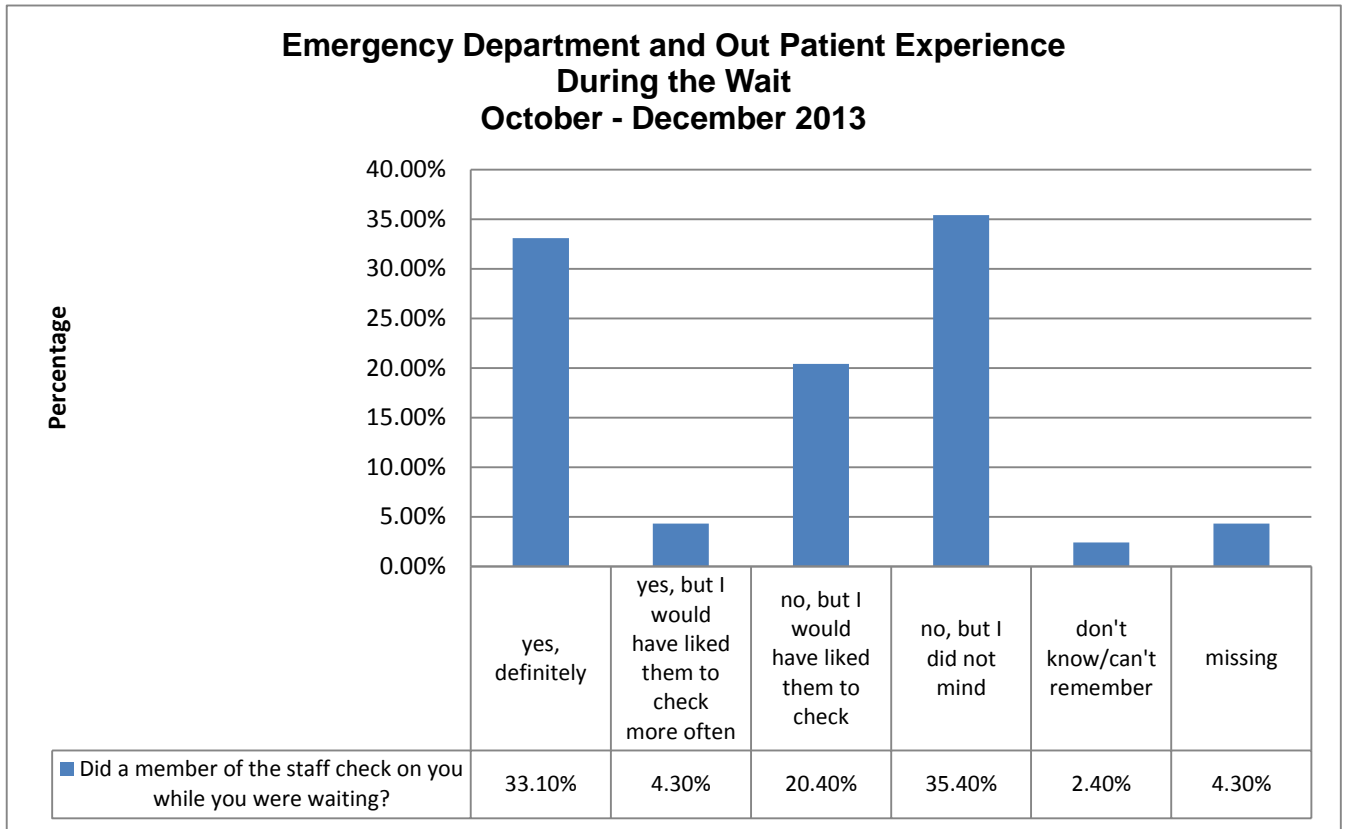


Figure 7. During the Wait

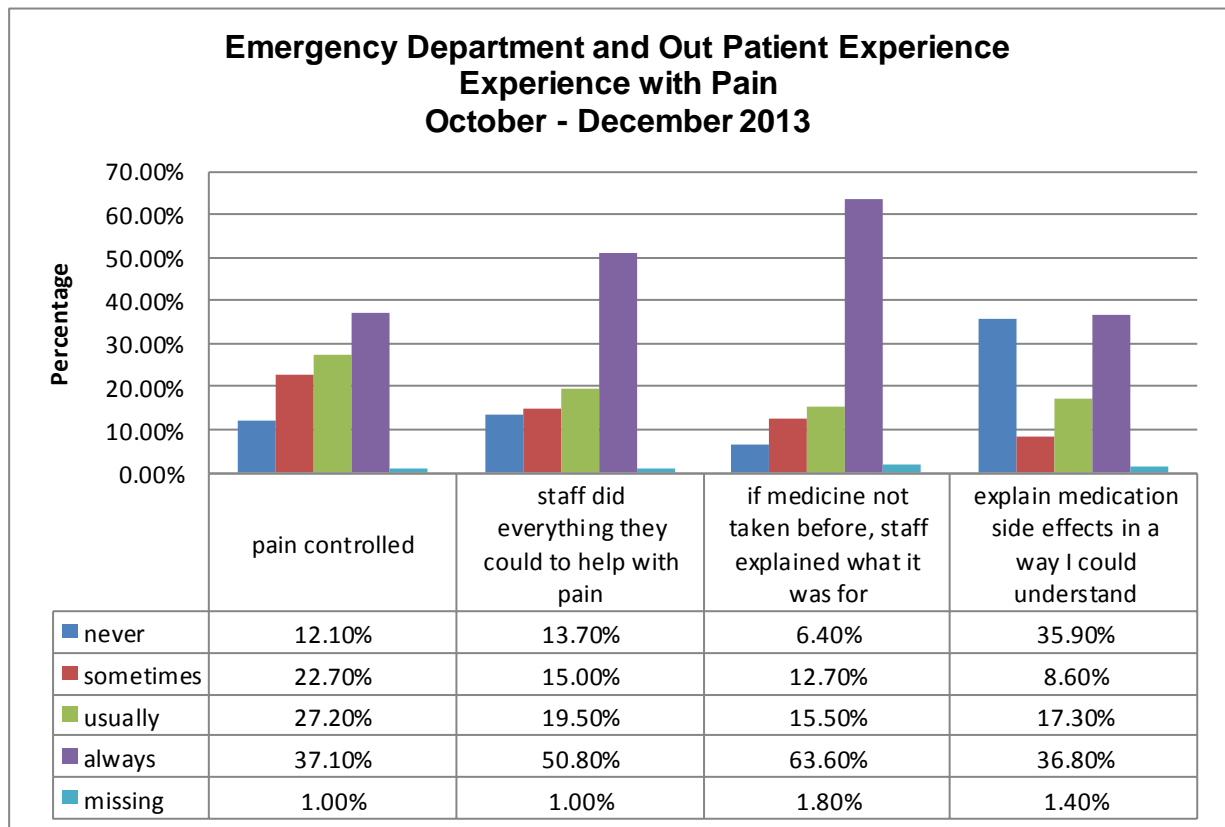


### **Patient Experience with Pain**

Patients were asked if during their hospital visit they needed medicine for pain and 313 patients reported yes. The patients who indicated that they needed medicine for pain were asked to indicate how often their pain was well controlled and how often staff did everything they could to help with pain (Figure 8). Just over 64% reported that their pain was always or usually well controlled and 70.3% reported that staff always or usually did everything they could to help with pain.

Patients were also asked if they were given any medicine that they had not taken before and 220 reported yes. These 220 patients were asked to report how often they were told what the medicine was for and how often staff described possible side effects in a way they could understand (Figure 8). Just over 79% reported that they were usually or always told what the medicine was for and 54.1% reported that staff usually or always described possible side effects of the medication in a way they could understand.

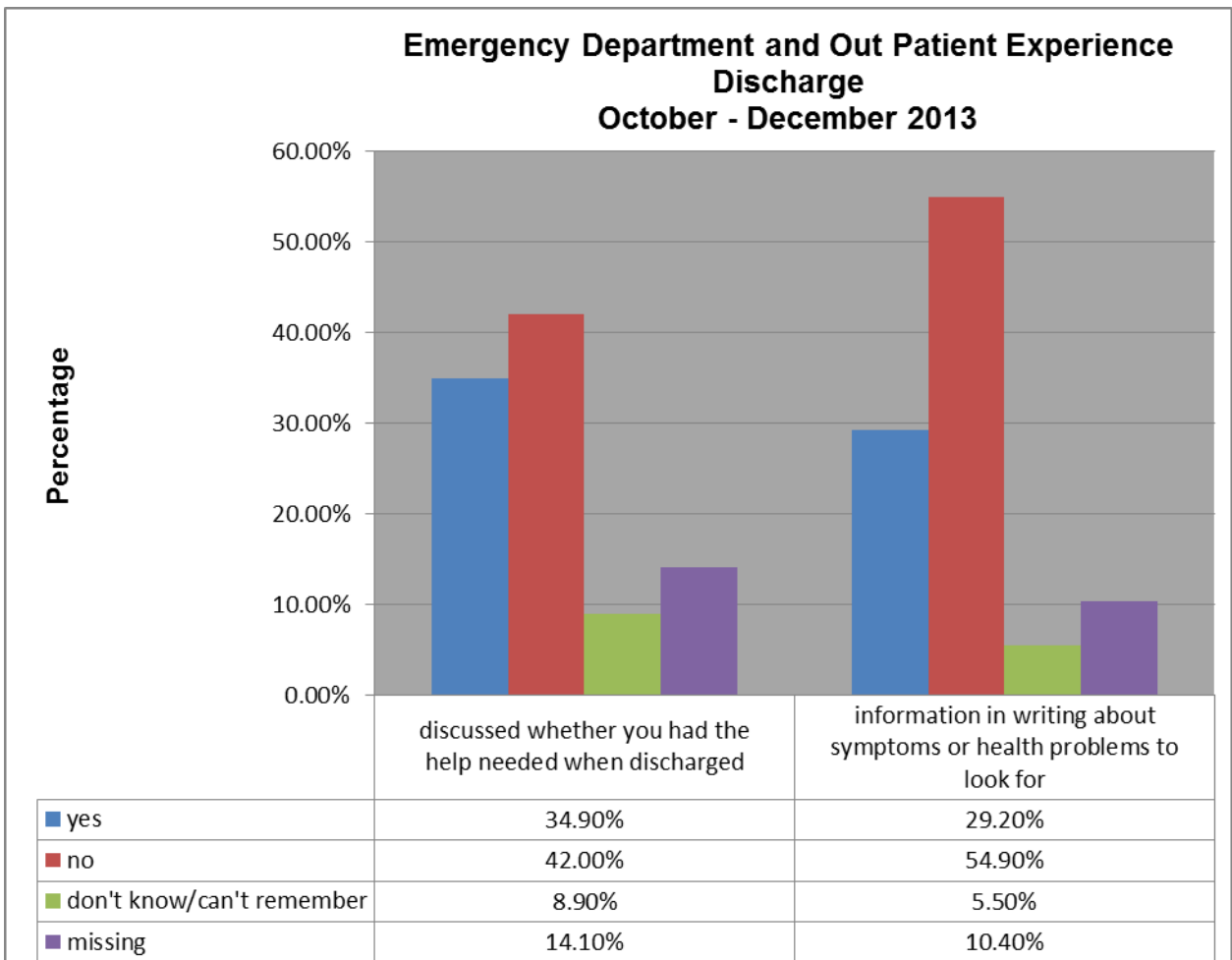
Figure 8. Patient Experience with Pain



**Discharge**

Patients were asked whether they had the help they needed when discharged from the hospital and whether they had information in writing about symptoms or health problems to look for after they left the hospital (See Figure 9). Nearly 35% reported that they had a discussion with hospital staff about whether they had the help needed when they left the hospital and 29.2% reported that they were given information in writing about what symptoms or health problems to look out for after they left the hospital.

Figure 9. Discharge



## **Overall Hospital Experience**

Patients were asked to rank their hospital visit on a scale of 1 to 10 with 10 being the best. On average, patients ranked their hospital visit at 7.60. Patients were also asked whether they would recommend the hospital to friends and family and 51.8% reported that they definitely would, 36.1% said they probably would, 6.4% said probably no, 3.3% said definitely no, and 2.4% did not respond.

## **Opportunities for Improvement**

Overall results indicate that Western Health's emergency and out patient services have many strengths, highlighting the care received from nurses and doctors.

Regionally, opportunities for improvement include;

- Explore opportunities to enhance patients' involvement in decisions about their care and treatment.
- Explore opportunities to ensure bathroom cleanliness.
- Enhance patients' opportunities for privacy.
- Enhance communication with patients about approximate wait times.
- Ensure that patients are monitored while they are waiting to be examined.
- Enhance pain control.
- Enhance communication with patients regarding the purpose and possible side effects of medications.
- Enhance communication with patients about whether they have the help they need when they are discharged.
- Provide written information about symptoms or health problems that patients should look for when they are discharged.

Results vary somewhat across the region and therefore, site specific information should be reviewed. Opportunities for improvement should be identified for those questions that have less than 80% of respondents reporting a positive response (i.e., always and usually combined or yes).



## **Appendix A**

### **Emergency Department and Out Patient Experience Survey**

**Emergency/Outpatient Patient Experience Survey  
Survey Instructions**

- **You should only fill out this survey if you were the patient named on the envelope. Do not fill out this survey if you were not the patient.**
- **Answer all the questions by placing an X in the square to the left of your answer.**
- **Answer all questions based on your last visit from October, November, or December 2013.**
- **You are sometimes told to skip over some questions in this survey. When this happens you will see an arrow with a note that tells you what question to answer next, like this:**
  - Yes**
  - No → If No, Go to Question 1**

1. Please indicate at which hospital you last visited:

- Western Memorial Regional Hospital
- Sir Thomas Roddick Hospital
- Rufus Guincharde Health Centre
- Bonne Bay Health Centre
- Calder Health Centre
- Dr. Charles L. LeGrow Health Centre

**YOUR CARE FROM NURSES**

2. During this hospital visit, how often did nurses treat you with courtesy and respect?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

3. During this hospital visit, how often did nurses listen carefully to you?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

4. During this hospital visit, how often did nurses explain things in a way you could understand?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

## YOUR CARE FROM DOCTORS

5. During this hospital visit, how often did doctors treat you with courtesy and respect?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

6. During this hospital visit, how often did doctors listen carefully to you?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

7. During this hospital visit, how often did doctors explain things in a way you could understand?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

8. During this hospital visit, how often did you feel involved in decisions about your care and treatment?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

## DURING THE WAIT

9. During this hospital visit, were you told how long you would have to wait to be examined?

- Yes, but the wait was shorter
- Yes, and I had to wait as long as I was told
- Yes, but the wait was longer
- No, I was not told
- Don't know/can't remember

10. During this hospital visit, were you told why you had to wait to be examined?

- Yes
- No, but I would have liked an explanation
- No, but I did not need an explanation
- Don't know/can't remember

11. During this hospital visit, did a member of the staff check on you while you were waiting?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, but I would have liked them to check more often
- No, but I would have liked them to check
- No, but I did not mind
- Don't know/can't remember

12. During this hospital visit, did you consider leaving before you had been seen and treated?

- Yes, definitely
- Yes, to some extent
- No

#### THE HOSPITAL ENVIRONMENT

13. During this hospital visit, was your room kept clean?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/can't remember

14. During this hospital visit, was the bathroom kept clean?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/can't remember

15. During this hospital visit, how often did you feel you had enough privacy?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

## YOUR EXPERIENCES WITH PAIN

16. During this hospital visit, did you need medicine for pain?

- Yes
- No → If No, go to Question 19
- Don't know/can't remember → If Don't know/can't remember, go to Question 19

17. During this hospital visit, how often was your pain well controlled?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

18. During this hospital visit, how often did the hospital staff do everything they could to help you with your pain?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

19. During this hospital visit, were you given any medicine that you had not taken before?

- Yes
- No → If No, Go to Question 22

20. Before giving you any new medicine, how often did hospital staff tell you what the medicine was for?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

21. Before giving you any new medicine, how often did hospital staff describe possible side effects in a way you could understand?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Usually
- Always

## WHEN YOU LEFT THE HOSPITAL

22. After you left the hospital, did you go directly to your own home, to someone else's home, or to another health facility?

- Own home
- Someone else's home
- Another health facility → If Another, Go to Question 25

23. During this hospital visit, did doctors, nurses or other hospital staff talk with you about whether you would have the help you needed when you left the hospital?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/can't remember

24. During this hospital visit, did you get information in writing about what symptoms or health problems to look out for after you left the hospital?

- Yes
- No
- Don't know/can't remember

## OVERALL RATING OF HOSPITAL

25. Using any number from 0 to 10, where 0 is the worst hospital possible and 10 is the best hospital possible, what number would you use to rate this hospital during your visit?

- 0 Worst hospital possible
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10 Best hospital possible

26. Would you recommend this hospital to your friends and family?

- Definitely no
- Probably no
- Probably yes
- Definitely yes

#### ABOUT YOU

There are only a few remaining items left.

27. What is the highest grade or level of school that you have completed?

- 8th grade or less
- Some high school, but did not graduate
- High school graduate or GED
- Some college
- College graduate or higher

28. Age

- 16-20
- 21-24
- 25-30
- 31-35
- 36-40
- 41-45
- 46-50
- 51-55
- 56-60
- 61-65
- 66-70
- 71-75
- 75+

29. In general, how would you rate your overall health?

- Excellent
- Very good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

**THANK YOU** Please return the completed survey in the prepaid, preaddressed envelope.