

FOREWORD



Events of recent years have demonstrated the vital importance of listening to patients in ensuring the delivery of safe, high quality services.

Since the introduction of the NHS Friends and Family Test (FFT) in April 2013, initially to A&E and inpatient services and then maternity services, over three million

responses have been collected by providers of NHS funded care.

The introduction of the FFT provides patients, the public and staff with feedback about our NHS which can be used in a similar way to Tripadvisor which informs other choices in our lives.

We are already seeing many examples of the ways in which the valuable free text comments are being used to make improvements to the experiences of patients in our hospitals and communities. As we roll out the FFT to the whole of the NHS the value of the FFT as a real time improvement tool will be further strengthened.

By April 2015, we will have introduced the FFT to millions of patients across thousands of providers of NHS funded services including GP and dental practices, ambulance, mental health and community services, as well as outpatients.

This reinforces our commitment to give every patient the opportunity to provide feedback on the care they have received.

I hope that the introduction of the FFT across the NHS will create a culture where patients expect to be given the opportunity to feedback and NHS staff value and act upon patient needs and wishes.

The FFT is based on the premise that patients have a right to participate in giving feedback to the NHS, and in relation to their possible future care, they have a right to see what others have said to inform their choices and decisions.

In meeting that vision, the FFT will be used to:

- gather useful feedback from people who use services that can be fed directly to the staff that provide their care, in a simple format, in near real time;
- provide a broad measure of patient experience that can be used alongside other data to inform patient choice; and
- identify areas where improvements can be made so practical action can be taken.

In the design of this guidance, we have listened to the views of many stakeholders, including patients and NHS Trusts who are already using the FFT to gather feedback in a variety of settings. We have sought to understand how the FFT has worked to date and seek views on how the FFT might best work in the future - particularly for those services not yet using it. Thanks to all of you who have participated in the FFT review, provided advice on our approach to implementing the FFT in all services and to those organisations who have been early adopters in testing the FFT within and across a variety of pathways. I hope that you find this guidance clear, practical and helpful.

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