

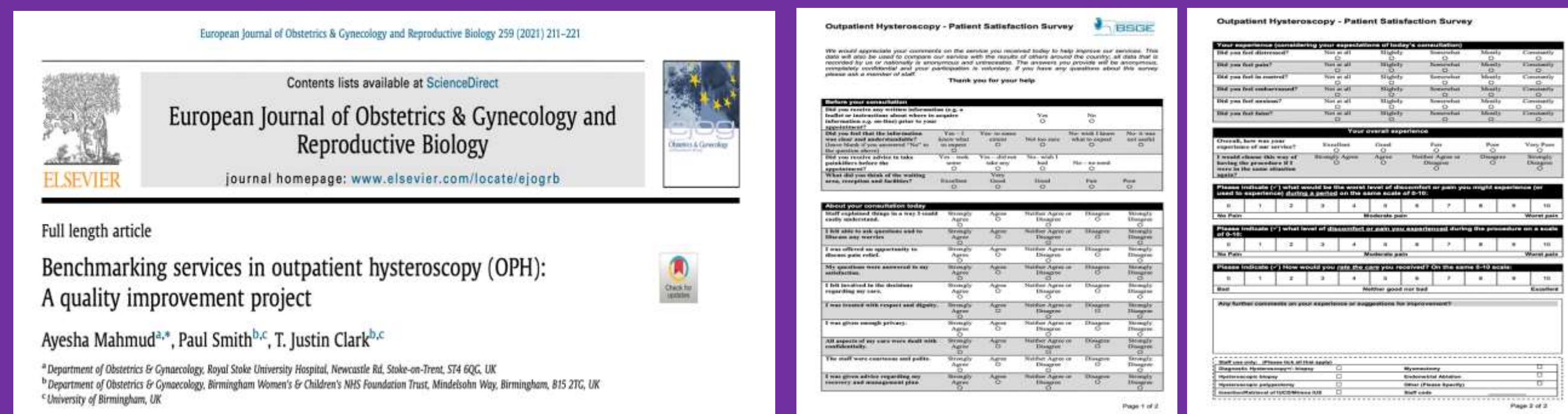
Enhancing Patient Experience in Outpatient Hysteroscopy: A Two-Year Quality Improvement Project Across East Kent Hospitals

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Introduction

Outpatient hysteroscopy (OPH) is a safe and efficient method for diagnosing and treating intrauterine pathology, increasingly used due to its convenience, cost-effectiveness, and high patient acceptability¹. Despite these benefits, pain and procedural anxiety remain common concerns and can negatively impact the patient experience². A national benchmarking survey of 5,151 women across 77 UK hospitals highlighted high overall satisfaction with OPH services. However, over 85% reported some degree of pain, and 26% experienced vasovagal symptoms³. This highlights the importance of ongoing service evaluation. This Quality Improvement Project (QIP) compares patient experience data from 2023 and 2024 across East Kent hospitals to assess the impact of local service changes and ensure alignment with national standards



Methods

patient satisfaction survey was distributed to women undergoing outpatient hysteroscopy at four East Kent hospital sites (QEQM, WHH, KCH, and BHD).

The survey design was based on the nationally validated OPH-Patient Satisfaction Survey (OPH-PSS)³.

Two cycles of data collection were conducted:

Cycle 1 (2023): Baseline data collected pre-intervention.

Cycle 2 (2024): Post-intervention data following changes to service delivery (e.g., improved communication, environmental adjustments, and documentation updates).

The survey assessed multiple domains of patient experience:

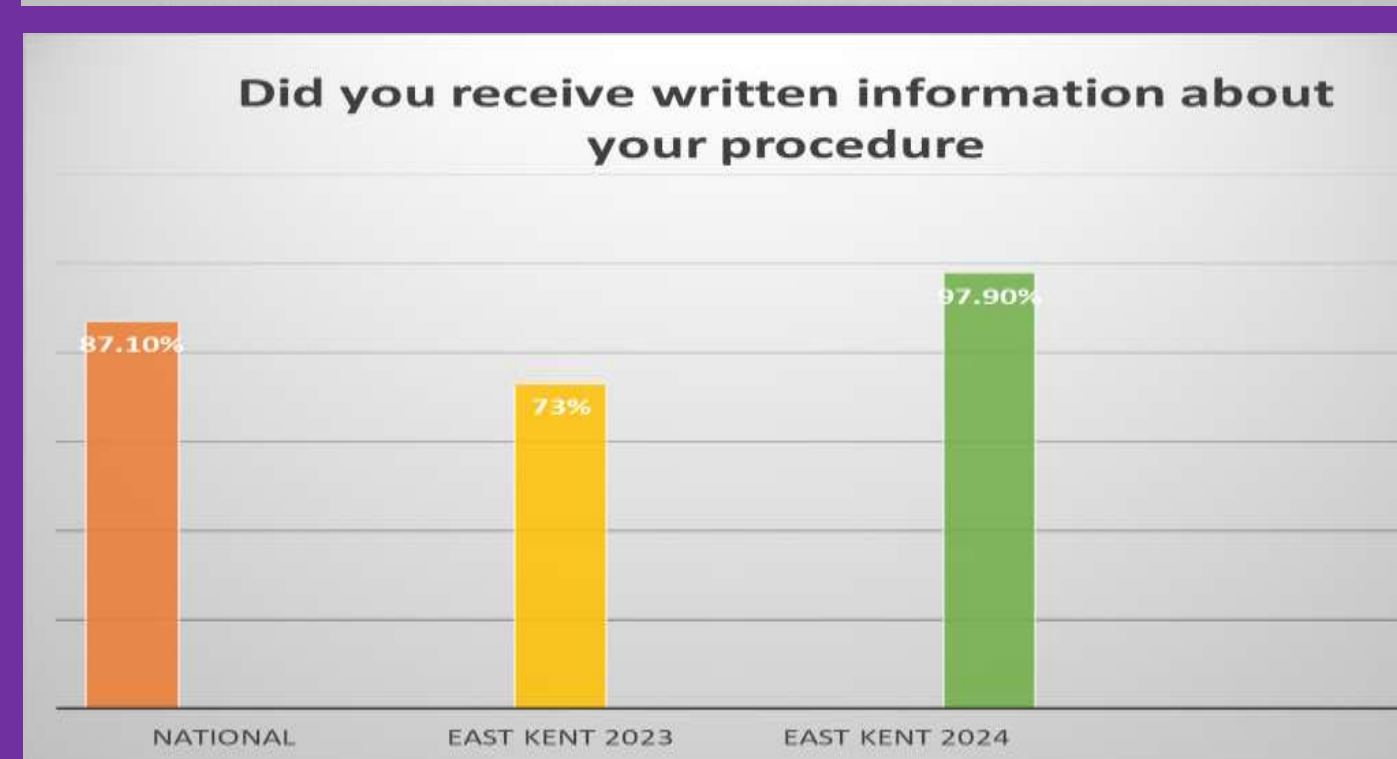
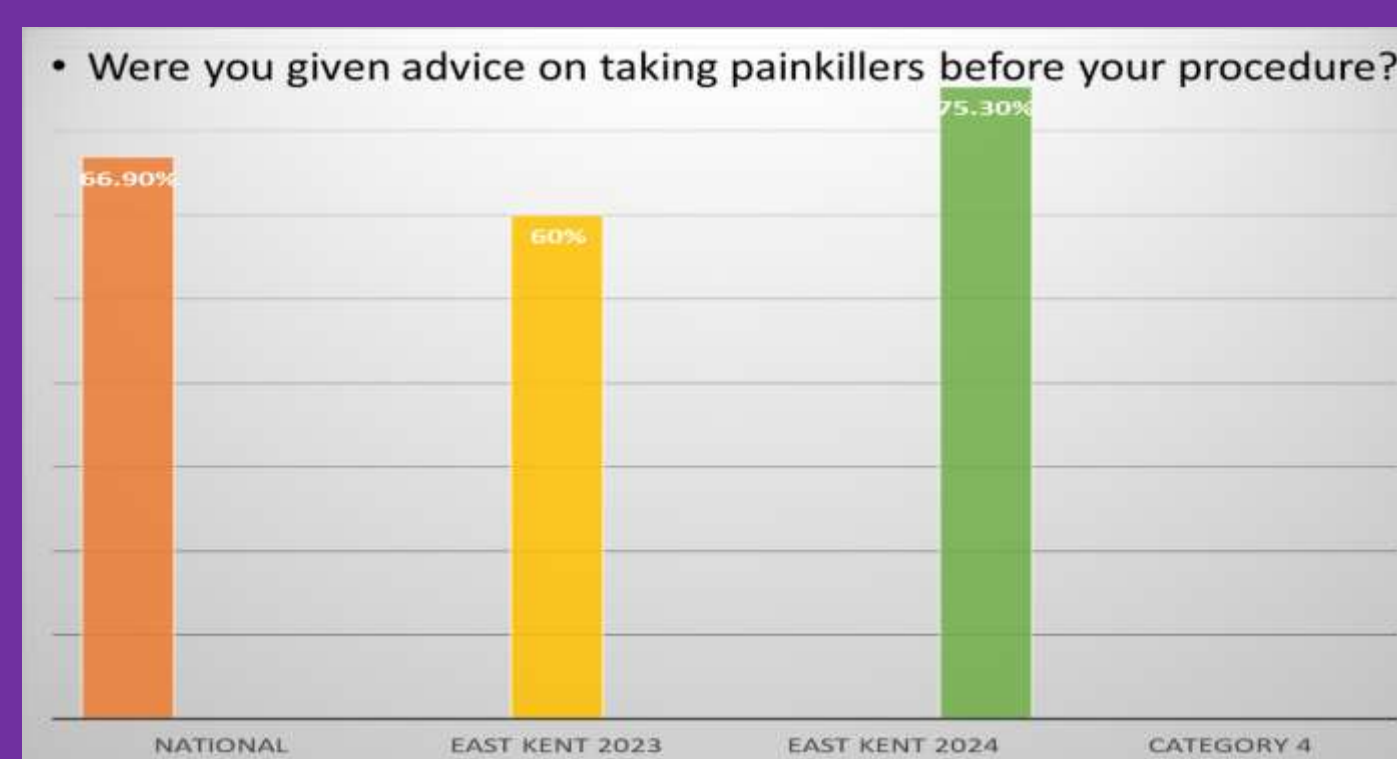
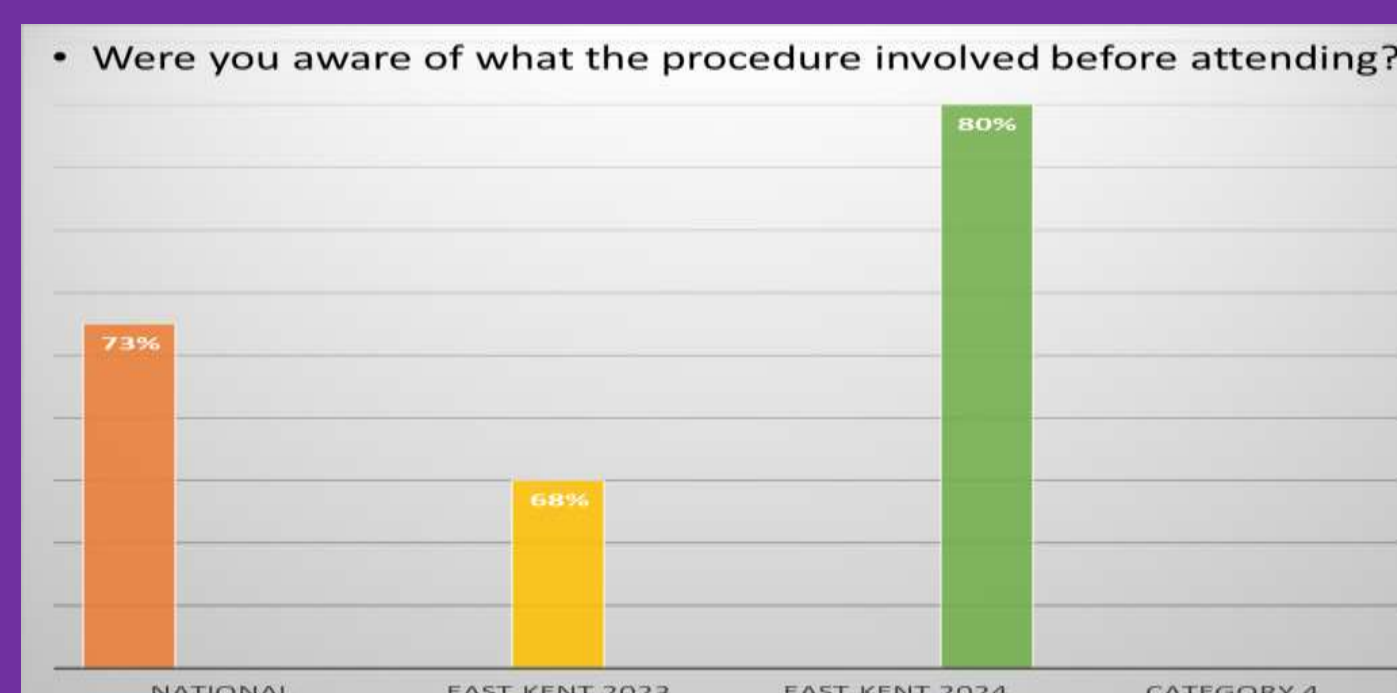
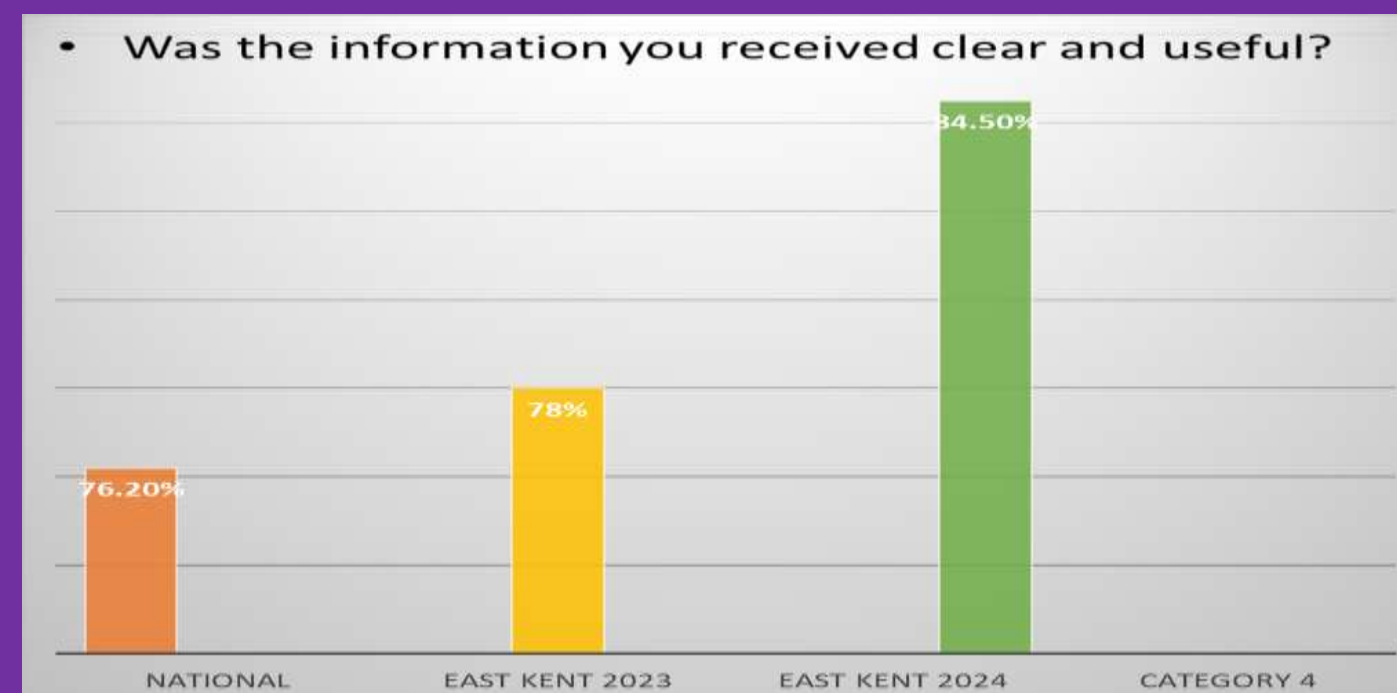
- Quality and clarity of pre-procedure information.
- Pain perception and analgesia counselling.
- Waiting environment and privacy.
- Communication and emotional support.

Data were anonymised and analysed using descriptive statistics. Comparative analysis between 2023 and 2024 was performed to evaluate changes in patient-reported outcomes.

Service Improvements Implemented (2023–2024)

In response to the 2023 survey findings, several changes were introduced across East Kent outpatient hysteroscopy clinics to enhance patient experience:

- Updated patient information leaflets to improve clarity and expectation-setting.
- Introduced structured pain counselling, ensuring all patients received consistent information.
- Enhanced clinic environments, including improved privacy and more comfortable waiting areas.
- Streamlined triage and consent processes to reduce anxiety and waiting times.
- Staff awareness sessions on communication, reassurance, and patient-centred care. These interventions were in place before the 2024 survey and formed the basis for outcome comparison.

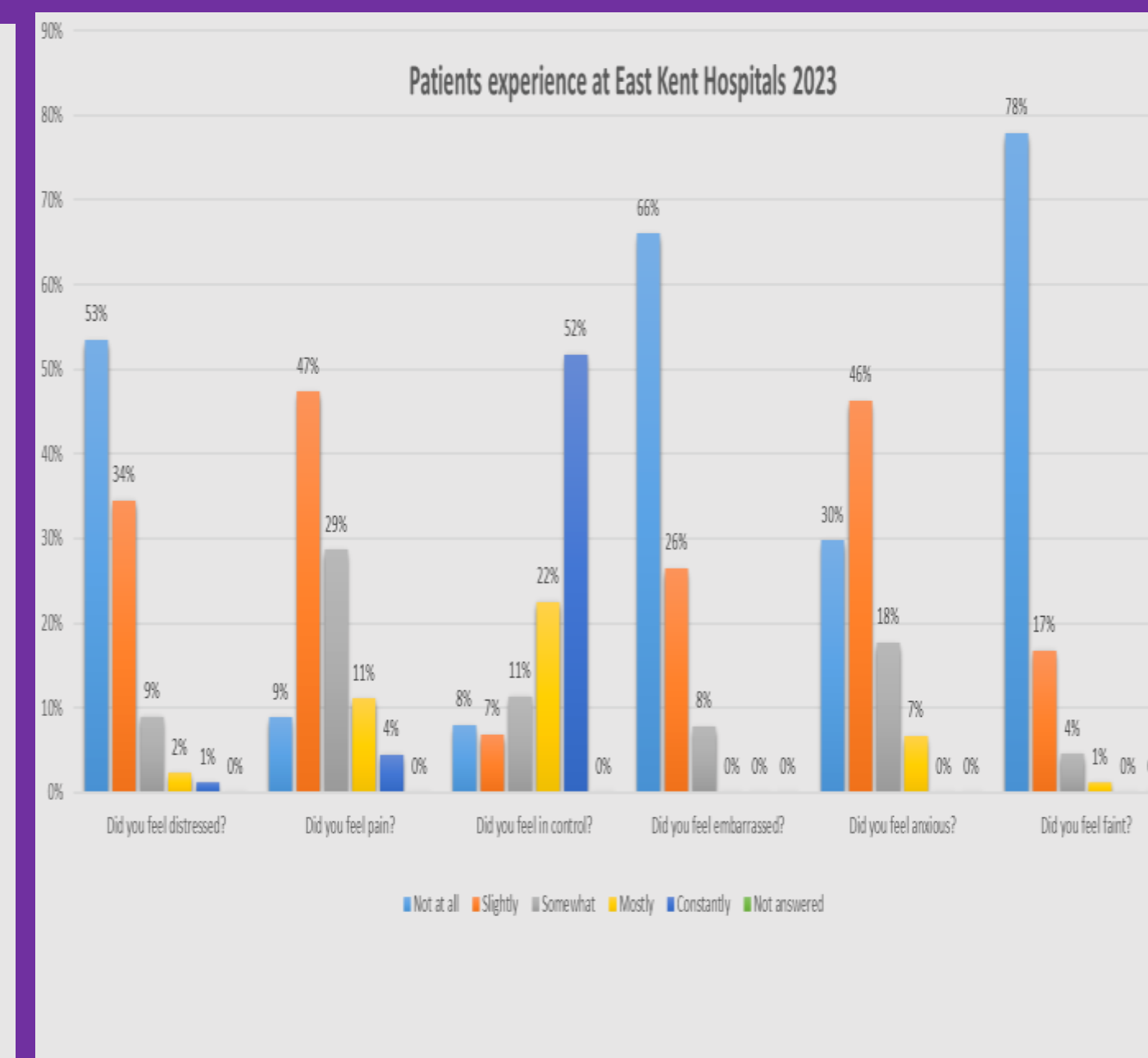
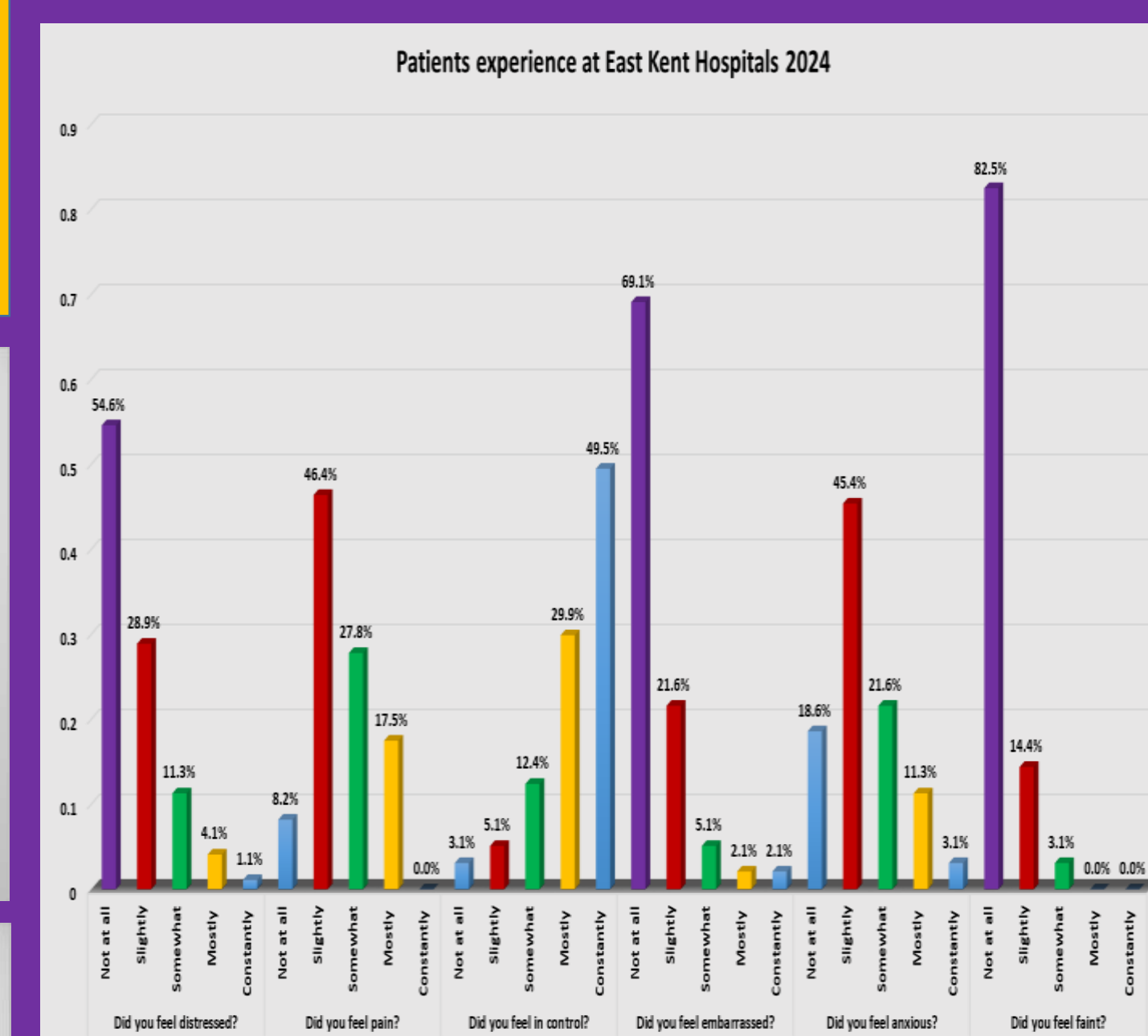
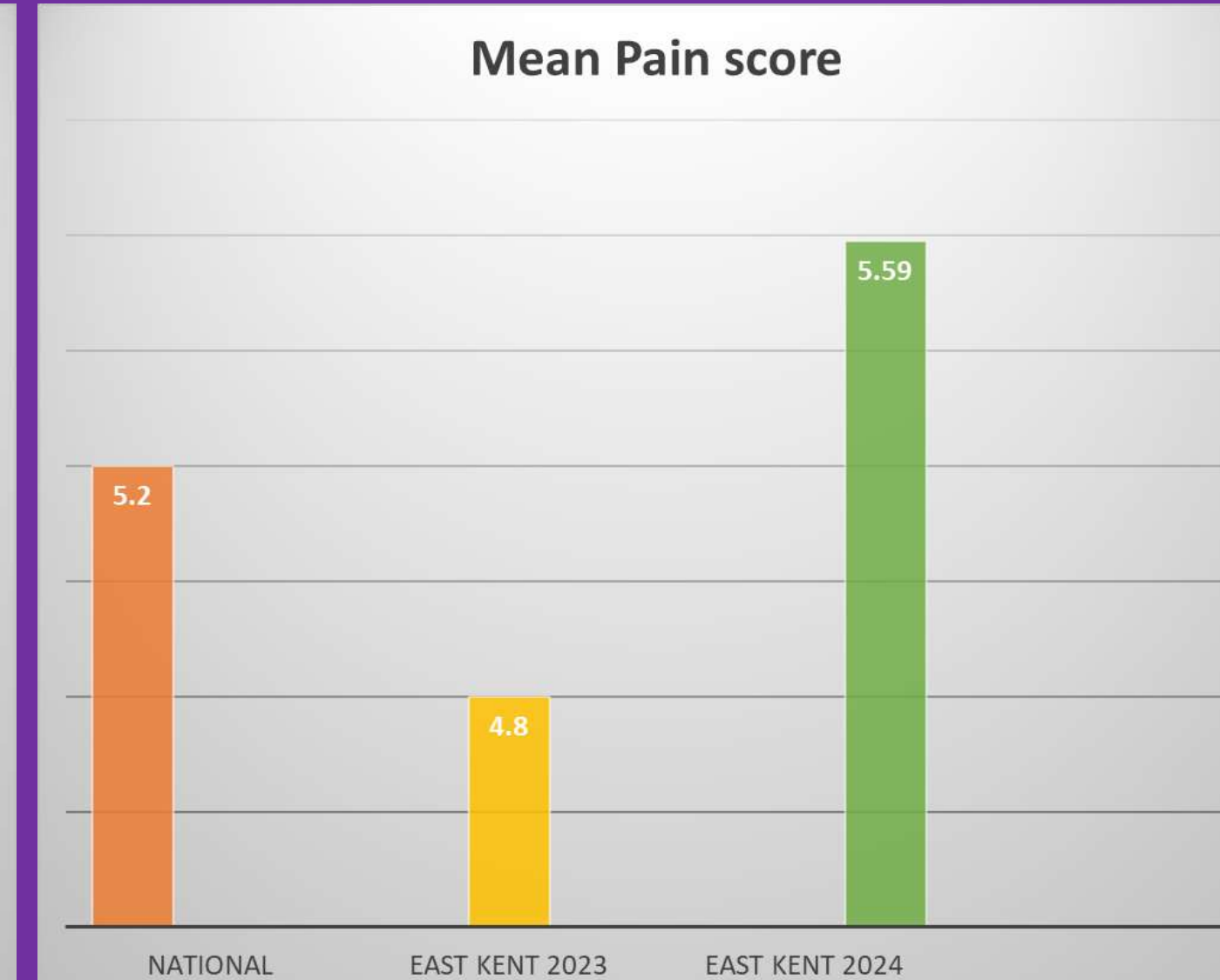
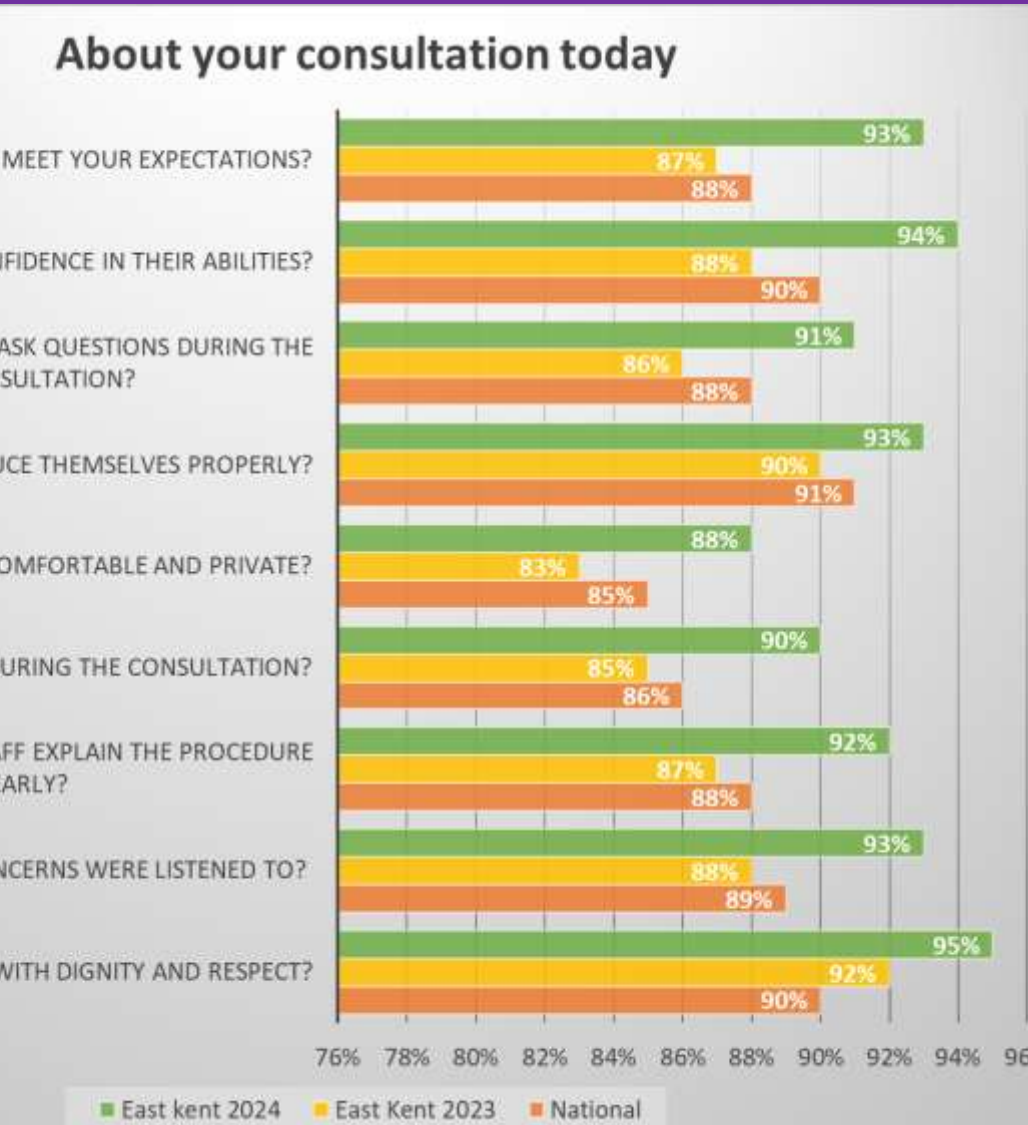


Results

A total of 73 responses were received in 2023 and 84 responses in 2024.

Overall patient satisfaction remained high in both years, with over 85% rating the service as “good” or “very good”.

- Notable improvements were observed in:
- Pre-procedure information (↑ from 78% to 92%).
- Discussion of pain relief options (↑ from 60% to 81%).
- Comfort of waiting area (↑ from 45% to 74%).
- **However, pain during the procedure remained a significant concern in both years, and feelings of anxiety were still commonly reported despite slight improvement.**



Discussion

This two-year QIP demonstrated measurable improvements in patient-reported experience following outpatient hysteroscopy at East Kent hospitals.

Enhancements in information provision, analgesia counselling, and clinic environment contributed to better satisfaction scores in 2024.

Our findings are consistent with national data showing generally high satisfaction with OPH, but persistent issues with pain and anxiety during the procedure remain a challenge^{1,3}.

Evidence-based strategies such as pre-procedure counselling, environment optimisation, and tailored analgesia protocols may further improve patient experience².

Continued use of standardised tools like the OPH-PSS survey supports benchmarking and ensures that local service development aligns with national expectations³.

Conclusion

This two-year QIP highlights the value of structured patient feedback in improving outpatient hysteroscopy services. While overall satisfaction remained high, targeted changes in information delivery, communication, and environment led to measurable improvements. Ongoing evaluation and patient-centred care remain essential to addressing persistent concerns such as procedural pain and anxiety.

Recommendations / Future Steps

- Continue using patient feedback to drive service development.
- Explore additional strategies for managing procedural pain and anxiety (e.g., pre-visit videos, relaxation techniques).
- Incorporate audit results into staff training and departmental governance.
- Maintain annual patient satisfaction surveys to ensure sustained improvement.
- Share learning and outcomes across the Trust and with national benchmarking initiatives.

References

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2. Cingiloglu P, et al. Eur J Obstet Gynecol Reprod Biol. 2024;300:302–8.
3. Mahmud A, et al. Benchmarking OPH Services. Preprint.2020. doi:10.22541/au.160097891.12837344