



Getting there

Patient experience of using patient transport
to get to Kidney Dialysis appointments

December 2019

Introduction

A patient can be offered the best care in the world, but they must be able to get to that treatment in the first place. For those who rely on Non-Emergency Patient Transport this is a vital part of their overall treatment package.

Patient transport has been flagged up as a priority for many patients who do not live near a service they use or if they have limited mobility. This was seen in our recent joint work with Healthwatch Rutland on the NHS Long Term Plan, as it likely to be an area of focus for Healthwatch England in 2020.

Healthwatch was approached by Thames Ambulance Service Ltd (TASL), who provide Non-emergency Patient Transport locally, to talk to patients being transported for Dialysis to Loughborough Hospital. This is part of their review of the service.

This work was not looking to delve deep into all aspects of the patient experience using this service but rather ask a few questions and give a general sense of things.

Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire with support from Healthwatch Rutland spoke to patients in the Renal Dialysis clinic on the 19th and 20th of December. Members of staff gave evening patients on the 20th December the survey to complete.

Over the two days 26 surveys were completed by patients attending the outpatient clinic out of a total 42 patients treated.

Within the survey information, no personal information was captured as this was felt to be unsuitable for such a known small sample group. Anonymisation would have been very difficult.

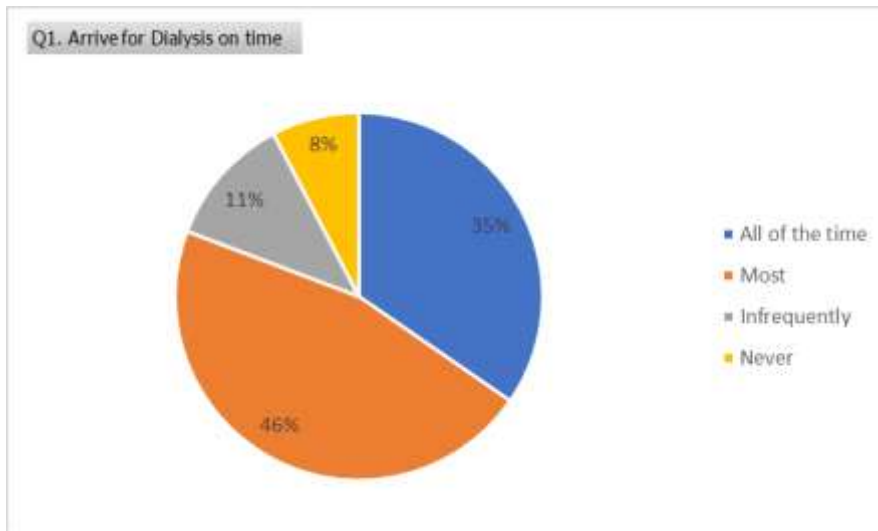
The survey questions were designed between TASL, Healthwatch and clinical staff from the Renal service.

Special thanks are given to all patients who gave their responses, to the staff on the Renal Dialysis ward, to Healthwatch staff and volunteer Nazmin Pirbhai, Ellen Thomas and Kim Marshall-Nichols.

Results

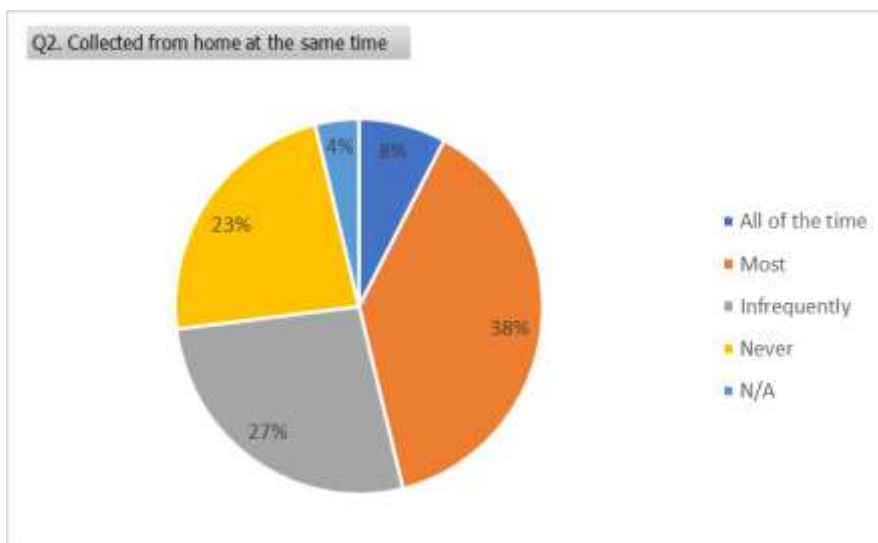
How the questions were rated is different between questions 1-3 and questions 4-9. In questions 1-3 we wanted to know how often things happened and for questions 4-9 it was how satisfied patients were. The last question in our survey asked patients to rank 4 statements in order of priority.

Graph 1.



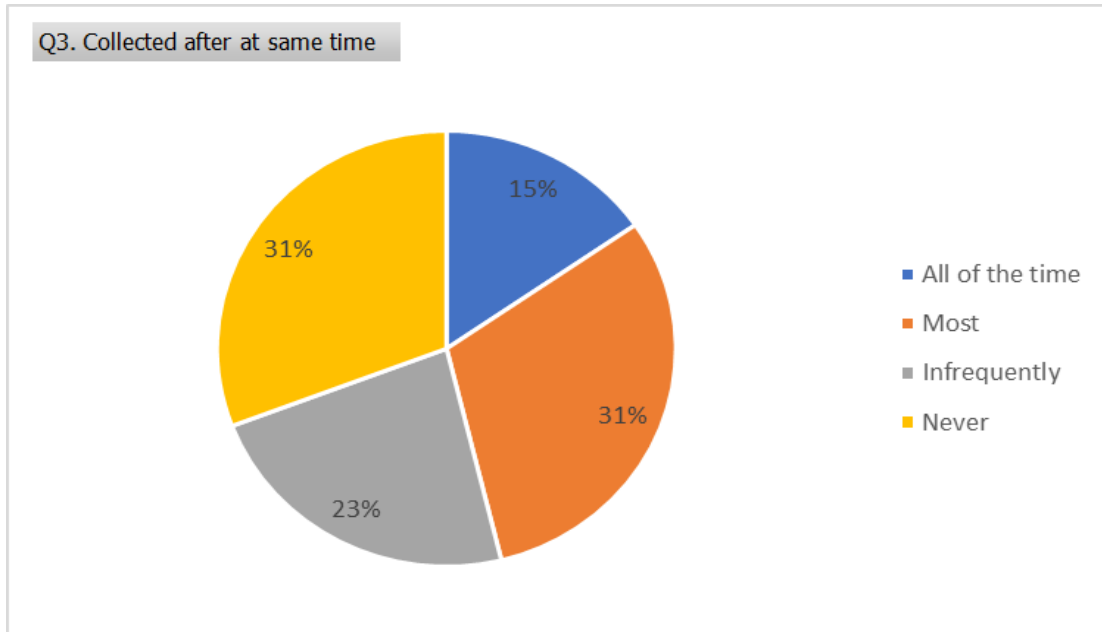
Most of the patients surveys get to their appointments on time. 81% arrive on time for Dialysis either most of the time (46%) or all of the time (35%)

Graph 2.



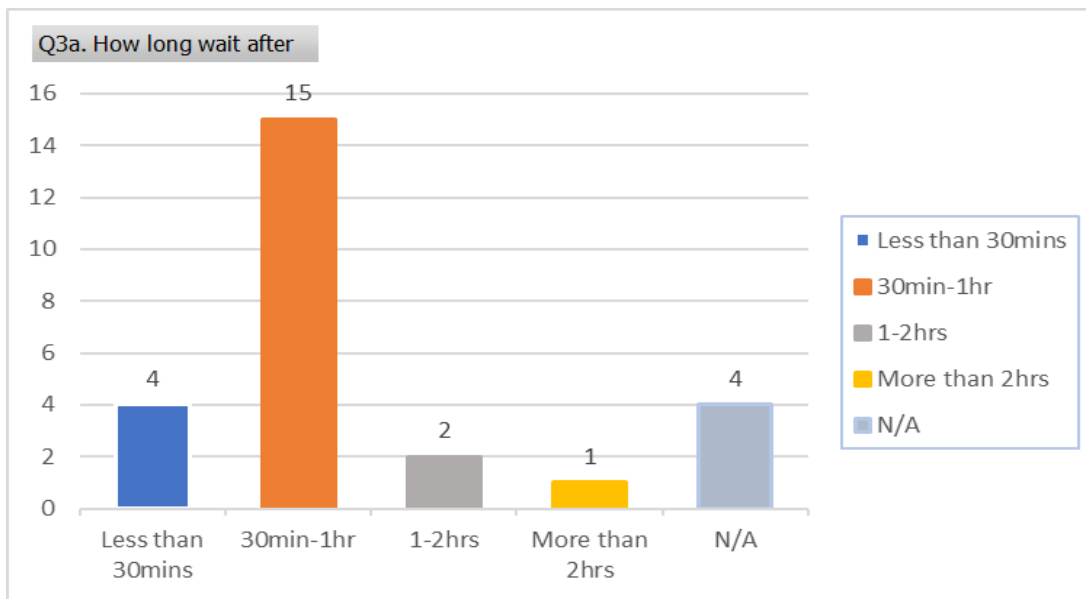
The time patients are collected appears largely split - 38% most of the time, Infrequently 27% and never 23%.

Graph 3.



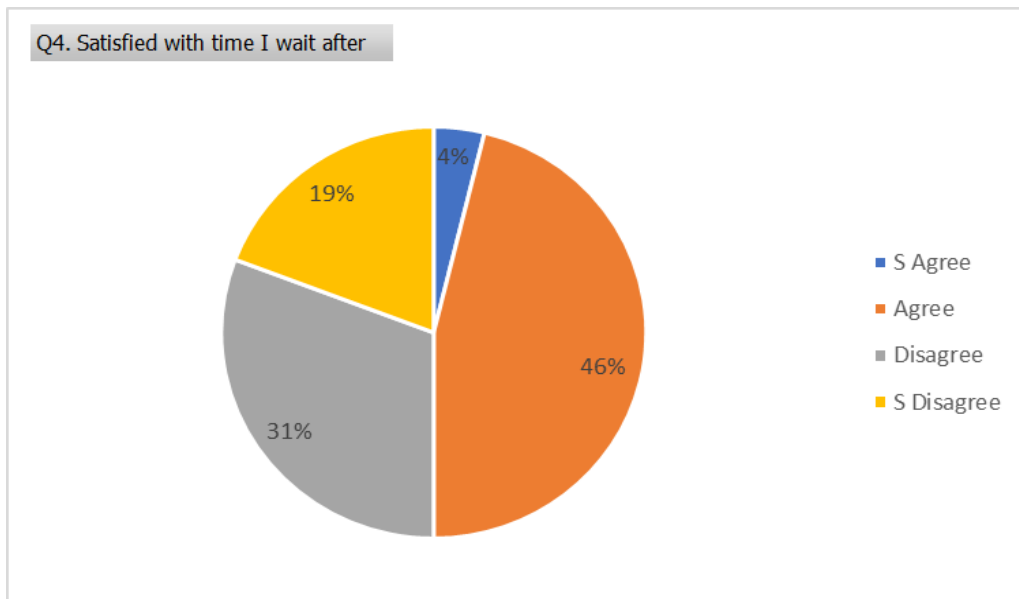
Patients being collected at the same time after their appointment shows very little consistency, with the biggest responses either most of the time 31% or Never 31%

Graph 4.



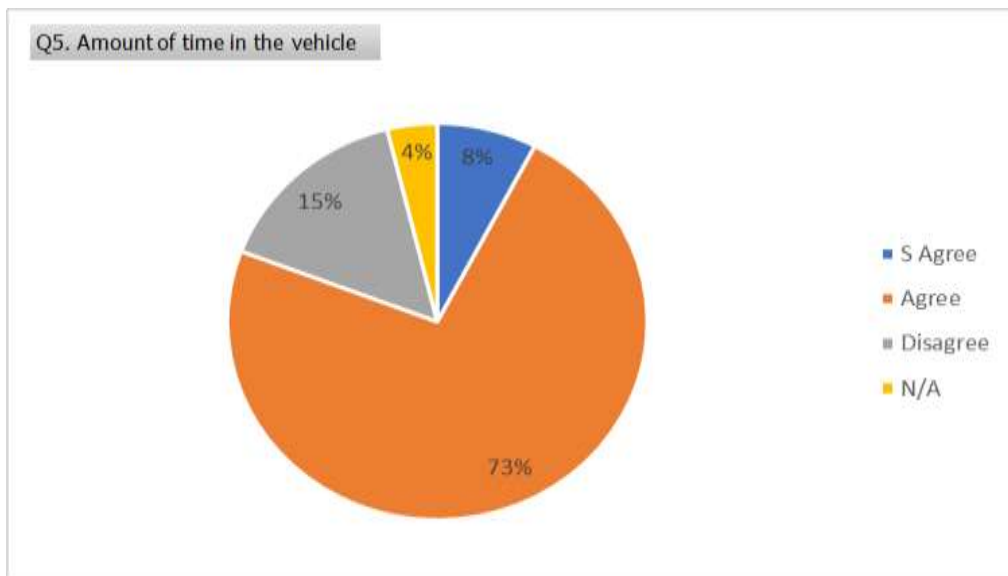
A lot of the Patients surveyed are waiting between 30mins and 1 hour after their appointment

Graph 5.



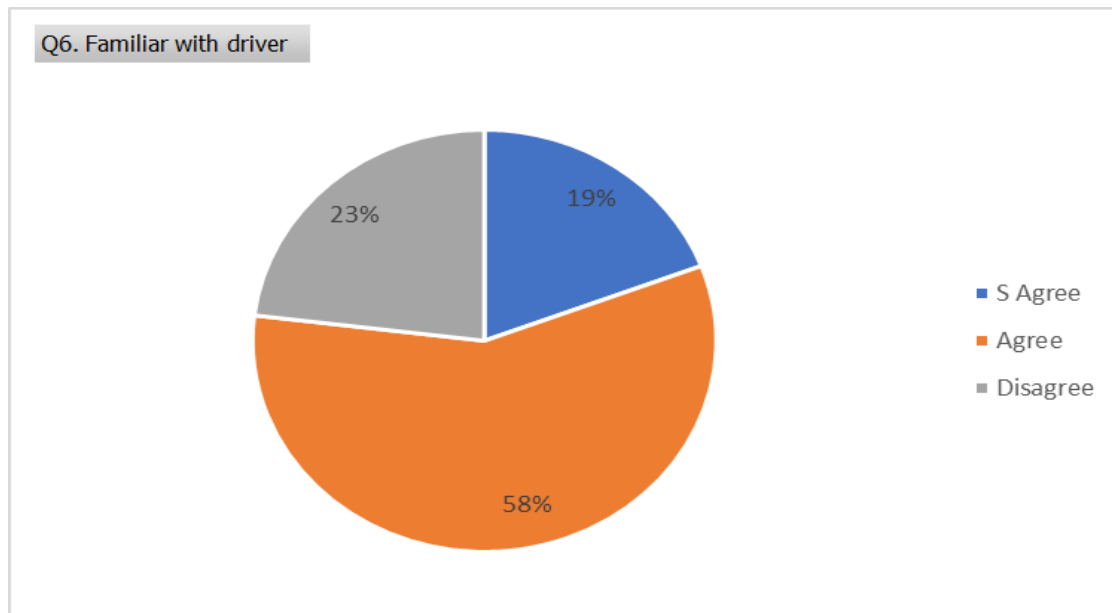
The waiting time after appointment is split between those who either Strongly agree or agree and those who Strongly disagree or disagree.

Graph 6.



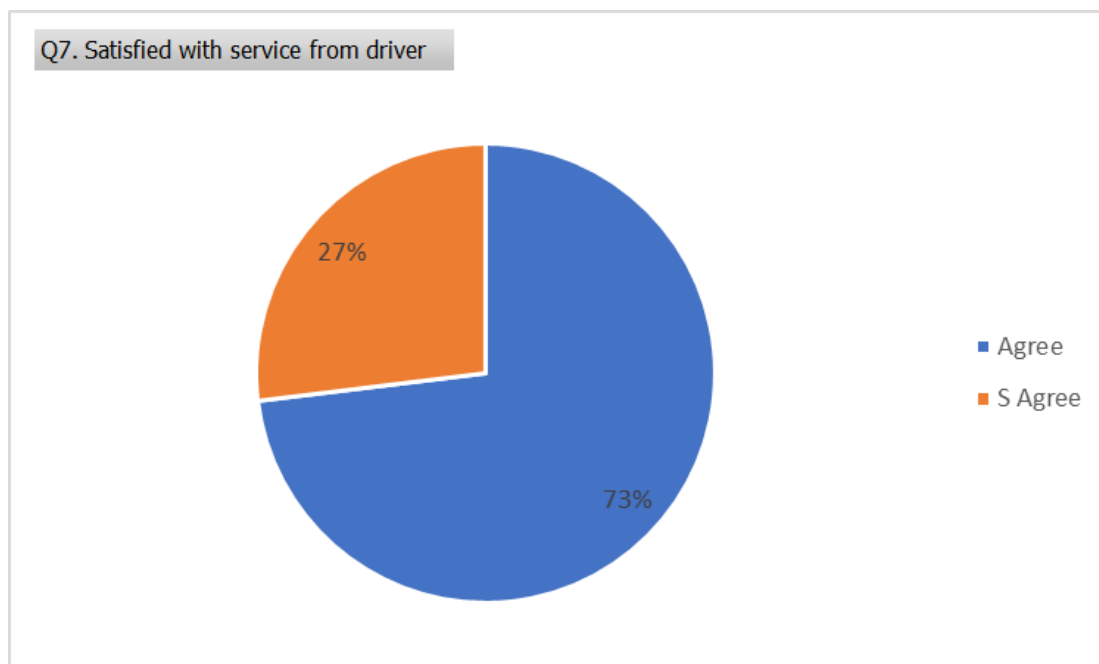
Time in the vehicle does not appear an issues for majority 73% agree

Graph 7.



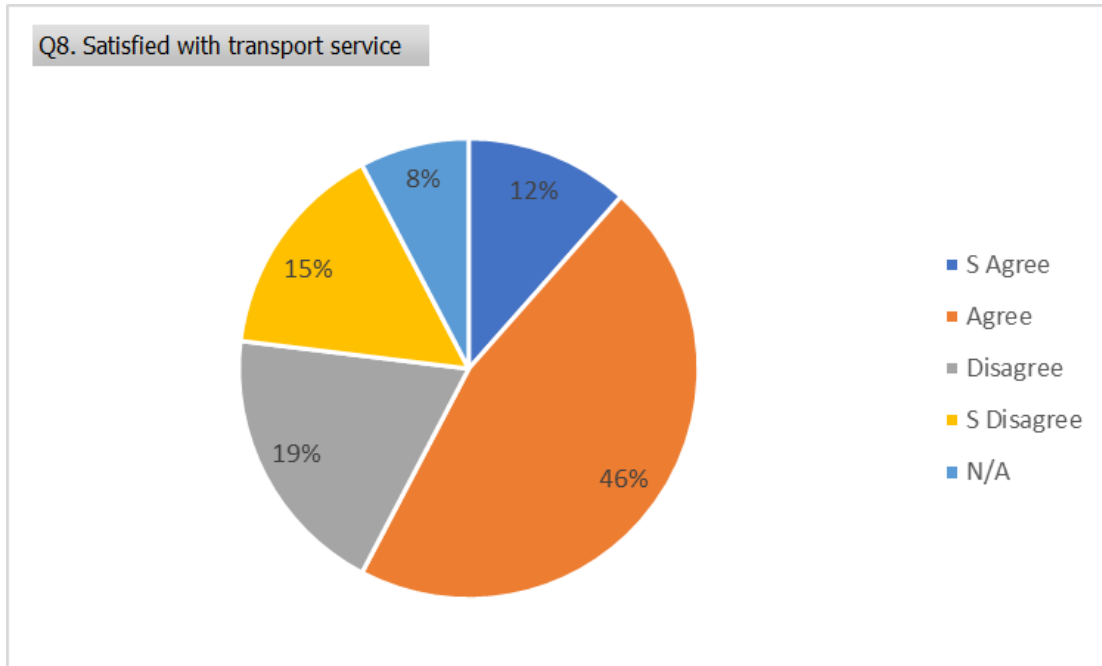
Most patients felt familiar with the Driver.

Graph 8.



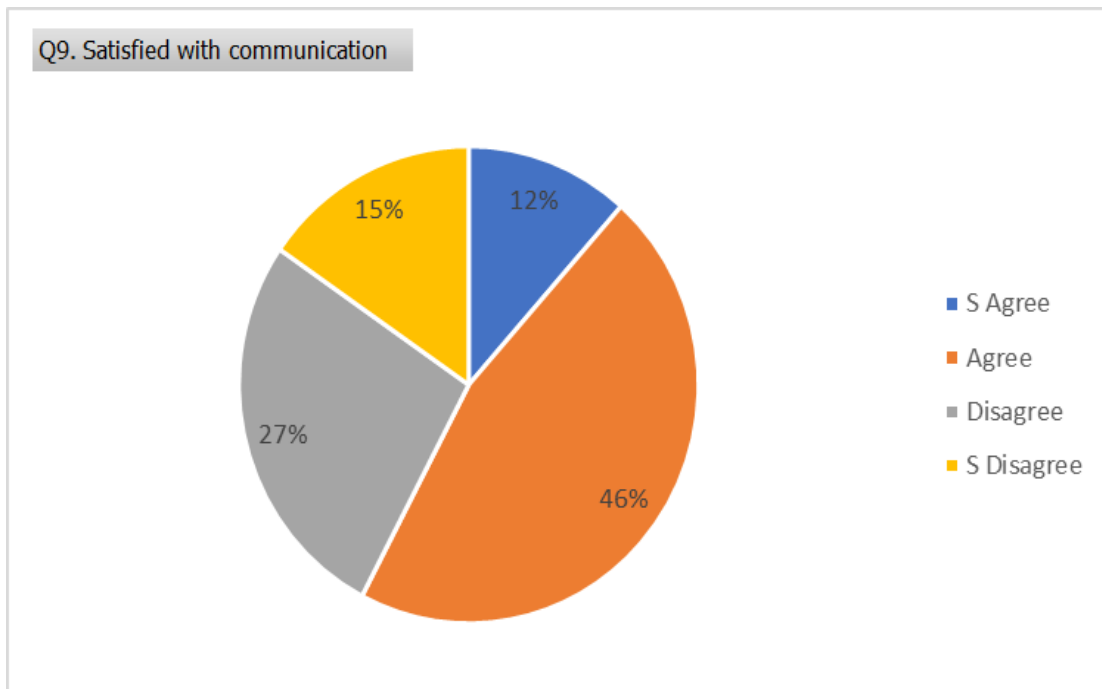
And all patients felt they were satisfied with their driver.

Graph 9.



However not all patients were satisfied with the service from the patient transport service itself.

Graph 10.



And patients satisfaction with the communication from TASL was similarly scored.

What is important ?

Number of responses 9 felt that all 4 options were as important as each other but looking at patients who ranked the options.

Very little difference between arriving on time and being picked up shortly after Dialysis

	Arriving on Time for appointment	Being picked up shortly after appointment	Consistent and punctual journey times	Shorter travelling time in vehicles
1 st Priority	7	7	2	2
2 nd Priority	6	6	2	2
3 rd Priority	2	1	9	3
4 th Priority	1	2	3	9

Patient comments -

“Familiarity depends on who the driver is. Not happy with TASL service as having to wait a lot of time”

“Happy with time on vehicle if alone, upset if shared as takes longer”

“Satisfaction varies”

Conclusion and recommendation

Whilst it is important to repeat that this was not intended as a substantial review of patient transport, from the patients we spoke to there are some clear points we can see.

Getting to an appointment and being picked up after the appointment is what is most important to the patients we spoke to. Patients said that they get to their appointments on time (mostly) but getting picked up soon after their appointment is less common. With a lot of patients we spoke to waiting between 30 minutes and an hour.

The length of time spent in the vehicle was not an issue for the patients we spoke to. As 73% were satisfied with the time in the vehicle as well as it being ranked as the lowest priority.

Patients were satisfied with their drivers and less so with TASL as a service and its communication.

Taking into account all the questions set and how patients ranked the different issues, from this survey we can say that patients want to get to their appointments on time and they want to be picked up soon after the appointment has finished.

Key Recommendation -

TASL to review the planning for patient transport to seek to reduce the length of time patients have to wait after their appointment has finished.

Provider response

TASL is committed to providing an excellent patient transport service for all our patients and we welcome the valuable feedback contained within this report.

We are aware of the impact that renal dialysis treatment can have on patient's life styles and understand that the unpredictability of a patient transport service can contribute to frustrations and affect the quality of the patient experience. We have invested in an 'Innovation Team' dedicated to develop new ideas for the delivery of patient transport services in a way that meets the priorities of patients, the healthcare system and that is also affordable and sustainable. As such, the feedback within this report will be used by the TASL Innovation Team while preparing future operational models.

We would like to thank Healthwatch, volunteers and the patients at Loughborough Renal Unit for taking time to contribute and compile this report.



Healthwatch Leicester and Healthwatch Leicestershire

www.healthwatchll.com
t: 0116 2518313
enquiries@healthwatchll.com
tw: @HealthwatchLeic

Clarence House
46 Humberstone Gate
Leicester
LE1 3PJ