

# building a caring future

HOSPITAL | COMMUNITY | HOME

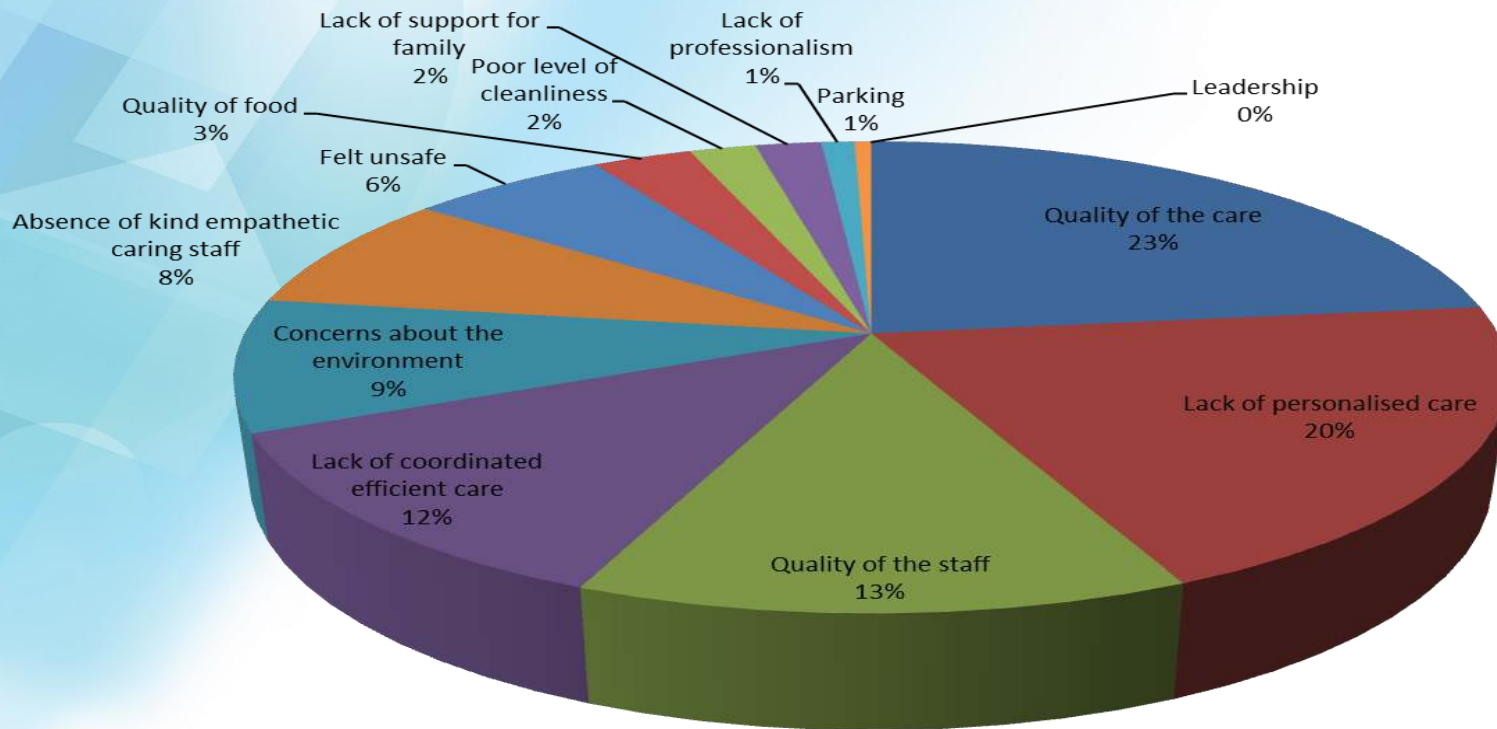
## Maternity Services – Compassion Based Training

# Background

- Maternity Services – Birthing Centre, Pregnancy Assessment Unit, Inpatient Wards, Community and Medical Staff
- September 14 - Identified variation in quality of care for one of maternity sites
- Nature of complaints and NHS choices raised concerns
- Theme identified within comments/complaints - highlighting staff attitude

# Rationale

- Needed baseline – analysed 201 free text comments
- FFT, complaints, social media, face to face
- 38% of themes negative
- 49% of negative comments associated with relational aspects of care – focus efforts here



**Negative Patient Experience Themes - WGH Maternity**

# Patient Comments

*'Was made to feel guilty one night for buzzing for help when I couldn't attend to my son'.*

*'Requested a water birth was told it wasn't possible with no explanation as to why. Was given a bouncy ball to juggle about in instead, only to have it taken off me 15 minutes later as someone needed it more than me!'.*

*'Staff seemed stressed which affected the way they care. I'm just glad my husband was there so I wasn't on my own for hours on end in pain!'.*

*'Staff were rude, abrupt, and ignorant; no two gave the same instruction'.*

# Action

- Key was to identify the real issue
- Baseline data gave us important information to take back to staff
- Many concerns focussed on staff attitude including a lack of compassion
- Staff on ward exposed to emotionally challenging experiences - targeted support absent
- Psychology staff suggested problem was compassion fatigue rather than poor communication skills.
  - requested to provide compassion based training

# Compassion Based Training

- Trained over 120 people
- Involved collaboration between Health Psychology, Patient Experience, Maternity Team and Business Unit Management
- Over 6 month period
- Included inpatient and community services
- 122 staff attended 5 half day workshops in 2015

# Content Of Training

- ‘Big Picture’ context around compassion: Post Francis report, Compassion in Practice, NHS policy etc.
- Defining sympathy, empathy and compassion
- The neurosciences contribution to understanding attachment and relationships
- Applying the above to pregnancy, giving birth and parenthood
- Applying self compassion and identifying our own self critic



# Impact

- 96% of participants identified that their knowledge and confidence in applying compassion skills increased
- 95% of participants identified the workshops would have an impact on their clinical practice
- 80% - any fears relating to compassion had been reduced
- Turn around in patient experience scores striking
- Positive to negative split now 74%:26%
- Significant change in what women are now saying about the service
- Changes sustained 2 years on

# Pledges From Staff Following Training

*Self to self –  
pull myself out  
of threat first*

*I pledge to read  
cues in others to  
help them move  
out of threat*

*No dog fights! Time out to  
think what circle I'm in. Put  
myself in a better place and  
go back to my patient.*

*I'm going to try not to judge –  
and I'm going to smile more!*

*I'm going to  
keep an eye  
on my self  
critic*

*I'm going to ask  
people what they  
need rather than  
what they want*

*I'm going to try and be more aware of when  
others are in threat. I can help them get out  
even if I don't know why they are there.*

# Staff Comments

*'Challenges how you think about situations that are difficult to understand'.*

*'The session has encouraged me to think more about compassion/self to self compassion'.*

*'I think it's been really enlightening'.*

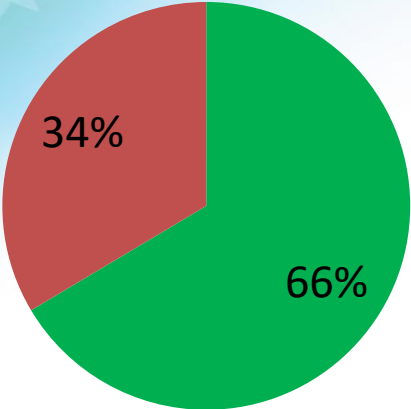
*'Very interesting and has defined compassion in an understandable way'.*

*'helped me greatly to understand feelings both at work and at home'.*

# Real Time Themes

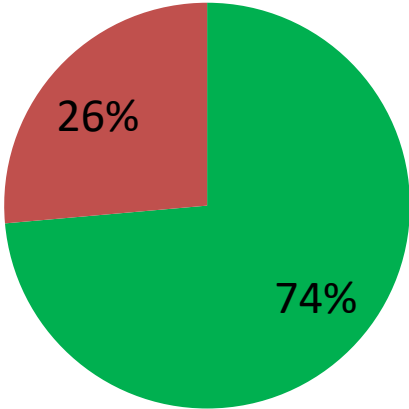
**Maternity Positive / Negative Themes 2015**

■ Positive (115) ■ Negative (305)



**Maternity Positive / Negative Themes 2016**

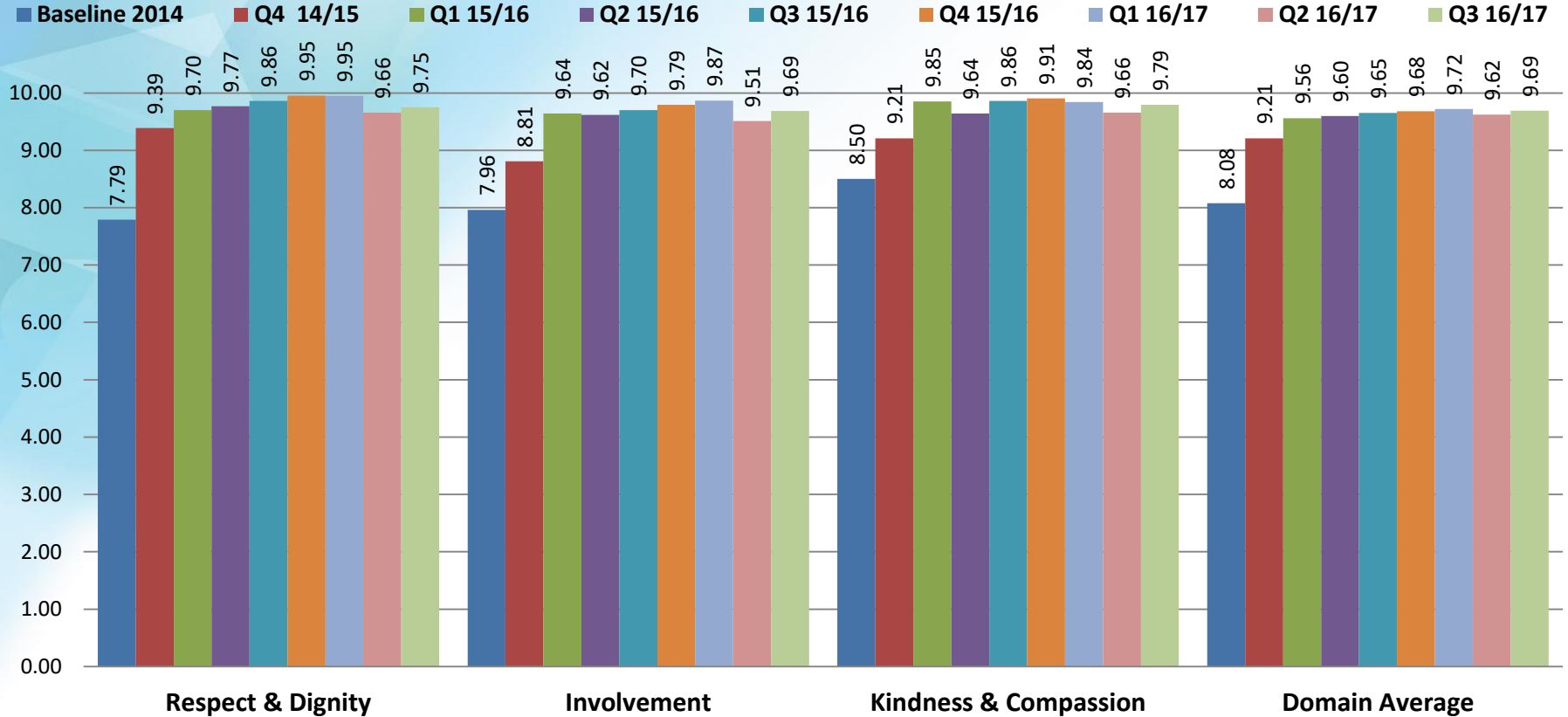
■ Positive (474) ■ Negative (170)



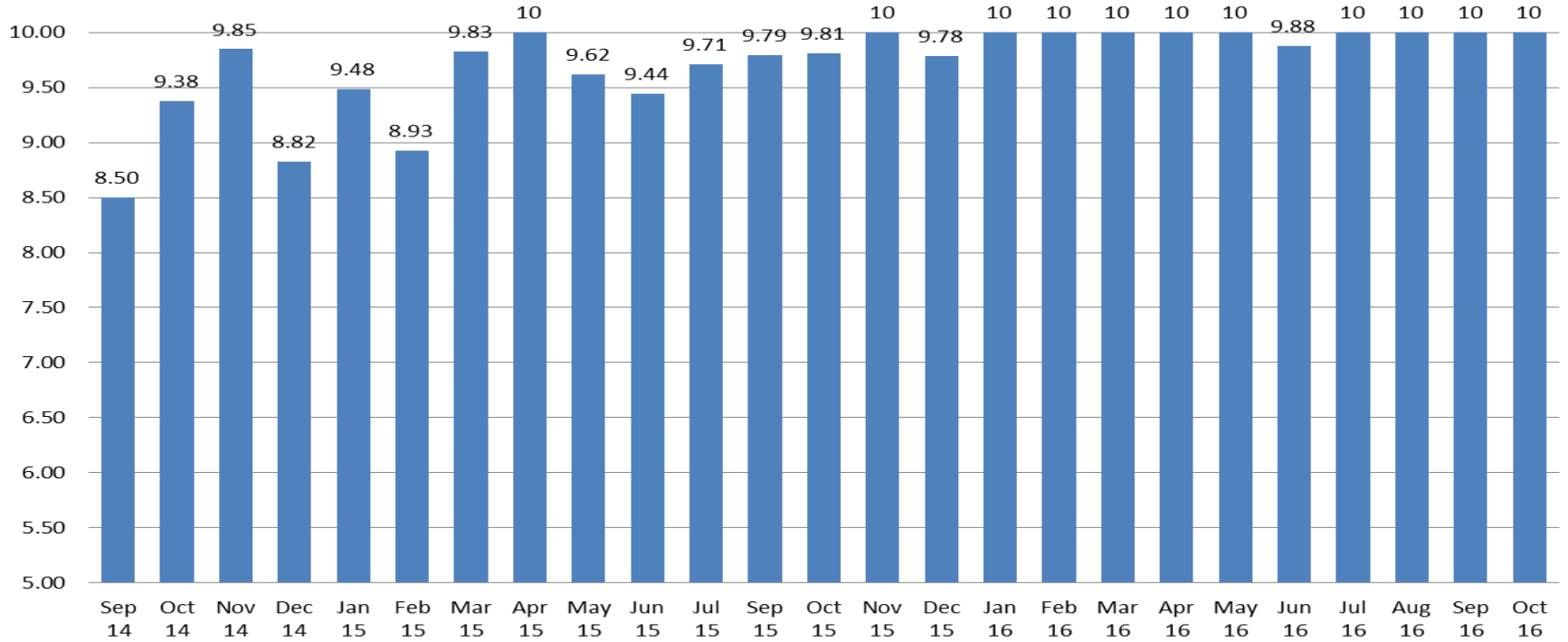
# Since compassion training, women accessing maternity care are reporting statistically improved care in:

- Coordination and consistency
- Involvement in decision making
- Responsiveness to pain
- Kindness and compassion
- Communication and medicine side effects
- Overall score

# Care Domains Over Time



## Maternity Real Time Kindness & Compassion score over time



# Patient Comments

*'I was admitted on the 1st December with severe back pain and they have been brilliant – they are kind, considerate and reassuring and nothing seems to be a problem for the staff – they told me not to hesitate calling on them as that is what they are here for '.*

*'I am absolutely happy with everything on the Ward – the staff are a delight – they are friendly, they are there if needed and they have so far answered all my questions. My husband has stayed every night for the past two nights that I have been here and they have been really nice to him as well '.*

*'I would give the whole system – birthing centre and this Ward, 9 out of 10 purely because of the staff – they are caring and helpful '.*

*'I told my mum how amazing the staff are here – both, in the Delivery Suite and on here. My son is now in the Special Care Unit and is well looked after and so am I here. I feel the staff have been there for me when I needed them '.*



# What Makes It Stand Out

- Programme engaged staff and secured their commitment
- Quality of compassion training
- Robust patient experience measures for improvement
- Consistency and support of patient experience staff
- Focus on staff experience and self compassion
- The support for staff in promoting a culture that upholds compassion and dignity in care

# Key Learning

- Building and maintaining good relationships with staff is crucial
- Keep focus narrow
- Compassion fatigue is more likely in clinical areas with high compassion obstacles
- Understand importance of both patient and staff experience
- Invest in high quality training
- Executive management support crucial



# Future Successes

- This is just the start – on-going programme
- Entire maternity workforce will be trained
- On-going improvement programmes within the Maternity Service



# And finally...

- This isn't just about maternity
- Compassion fatigue is normal
- The organisational responsibility is to:
  - expect it
  - notice it
  - normalise it
  - respond to it
  - adopt prevention strategies
- Staff will only be able to care for patients to the best of their ability if they look after themselves first

**Thank You**  
**Any Questions?**