

Service Improvement Together



ABDOMINAL FREE FLAP BREAST RECONSTRUCTION

JOHN DICKSON (CONSULTANT PLASTIC & RECONSTRUCTIVE SURGEON)

DERRIFORD HOSPITAL (PLYMOUTH HOSPITALS NHS TRUST).



2nd Oct 2025

With thanks to the many contributors...

Primrose Staff + Admin Team

Katie Hill (Breast Reconstruction Nurse Specialist).
Katie Sleep (Primrose Unit Clinical Psychologist).
Sue Parker (Breast Reconstruction Nurse Specialist).
Michelle Lewis (Bookings Administrator)

Surgeons

James Coelho (Consultant Plastic Surgeon)
John Dickson (Consultant Plastic Surgeon).
Bruno Alcocer (Resident in Plastic Surgery)
Omar Abdelmohsin (Resident in Plastic Surgery)

Theatre & Anaesthetic Staff

Diane Soctt-Melhuish (Sister Plastic Surgery Theatres)
Kim Desborough (Band 6 Sister Plastic Surgery Theatres)
Rowan Cutler (Staff Nurse Theatres)
Ife Ekundayo (Staff Nurse Theatres)
Isabella Melewska (Health Care Assistant)
Chris Sweeting (Consultant Anaesthetist)
Jim Blackburn (Consultant Anaesthetist)

Recovery & Ward Staff

Nikki Thomas (Lynher Sister in charge)
Jemma Bouch (Ward Flap Monitoring Nurse)
Caroline Payne (Ward Flap Monitoring Nurse)

The Primrose Foundation Representatives

Maddy Matthews (Charity Manager)
Kat Dickson (Primrose Foundation Trustee)
Fiona Osmaston (Primrose Foundation Chair)
Helen McHarry (Primrose Foundation Trustee)

The Hospital Managerial Team

Anne-Marie Bruford (PALS Services, PHNT)
Claire Jukes (Patient Services Manager, PHNT)
Cherry Pannell-Berry (Communications & Engagement Manager, PHNT)

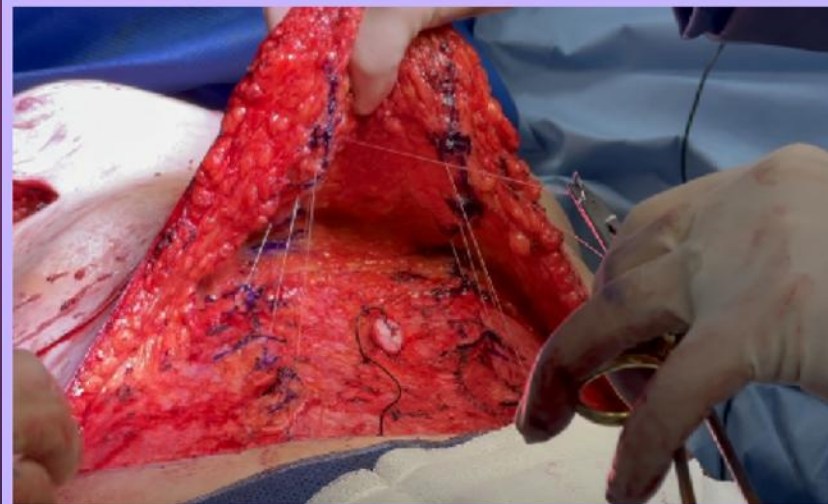
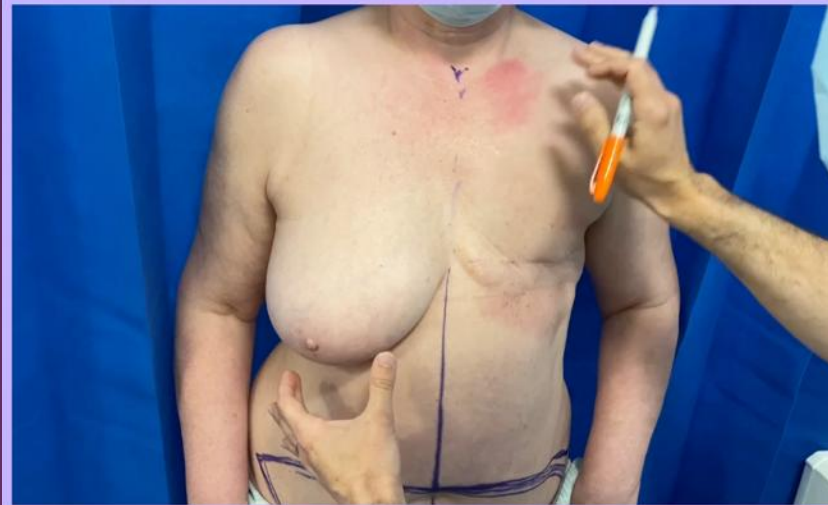
Staff who helped but could not attend the event.

Rebecca Baines (Patient Experience Lead PHNT)
Maria Verroiotou (Consultant Breast Surgeon, PHNT)
Mr Will Beech (Secretary, Plastic Surgery Department)

Why

Abdominally
based Free Flap
DIEP Breast
Reconstruction?

Soft
Warm
Natural
Long-lasting



Challenges

- ▶ Challenges for us in delivering **Breast Reconstruction**
- Complex surgery.
- Many moving variables (e.g. Team-members / Facilities).
- Sometimes exhaustion and fragmentation with our teams.
- Resource and financial pressures.



A Novel Dedicated Feedback Day



► Feedback from - **PATIENTS & STAFF.**

► Wide representation from ...

Patients, Admin, Ward & Theatre Staff

The Primrose Foundation Charity

Hospital Patient Advice and Liaison Team

► **Breakout groups ...**

To generate **coordinated brainstorming** across all staff groups to generate ideas for **problem-solving**.











This event is now planned to occur on a biannual basis.

Key Examples of Feedback Themes

(with solutions generated to help address them)

► **Problematic Ward Stay.**

SOLUTION : - Ward Based "Turbo-Teaching"

► **Paperwork Taking Too Long.**

SOLUTION : - Audit of Discharge Paperwork. Standardization of Protocols.

► **Intimidating Environments.**

SOLUTION : - One to one support for patients as they first enter anesthetic room.

► **Inadequate Pre-habilitation for Surgery**

SOLUTION : - Dedicated prehabilitation systems and post-op recovery programmes.

► **Need to Raise Awareness of the Charity**

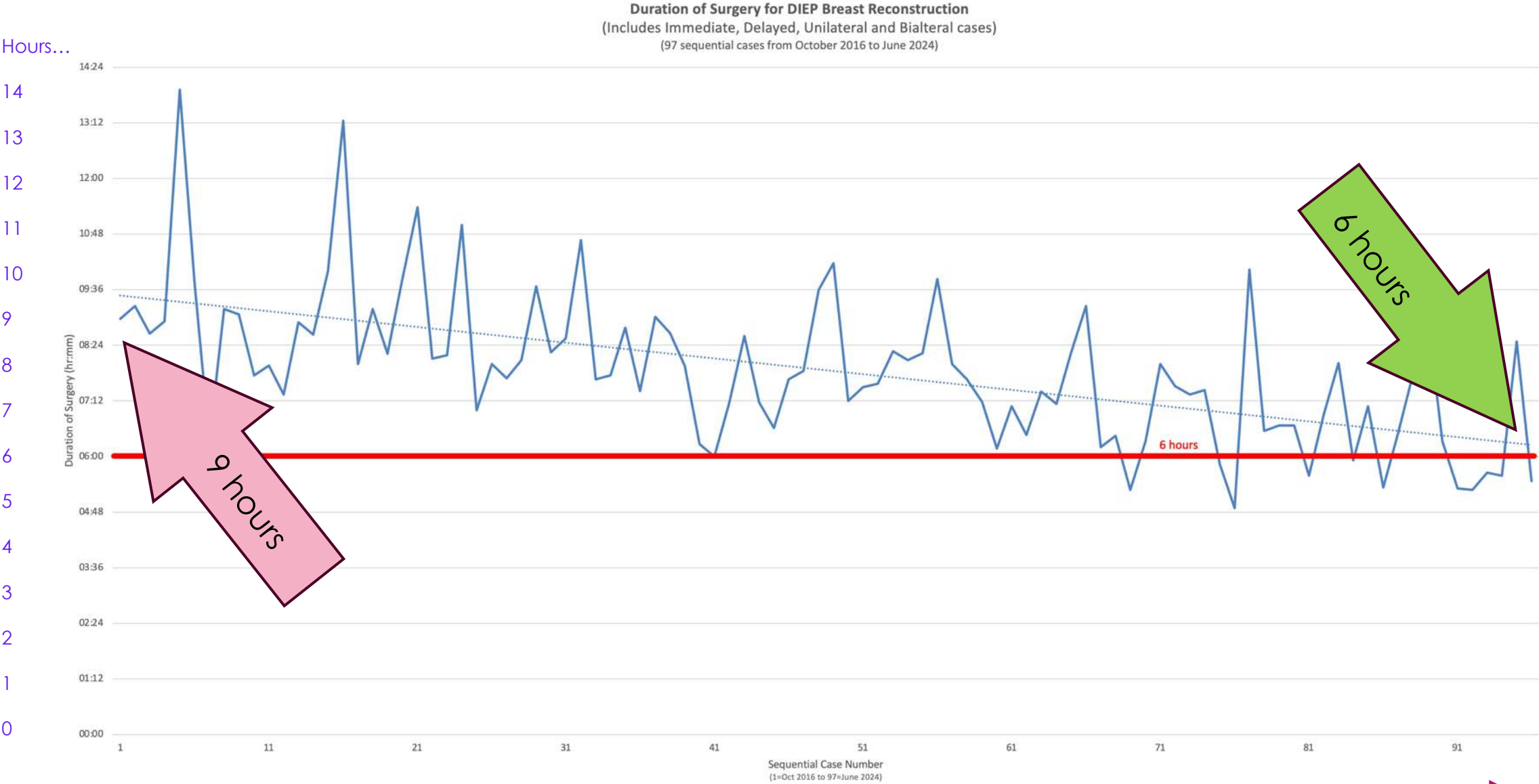
SOLUTION : - Introduce more posters within the breast unit to signpost patients to the charity.

Improving Trends in our Data ...



University Hospitals
Plymouth
NHS Trust

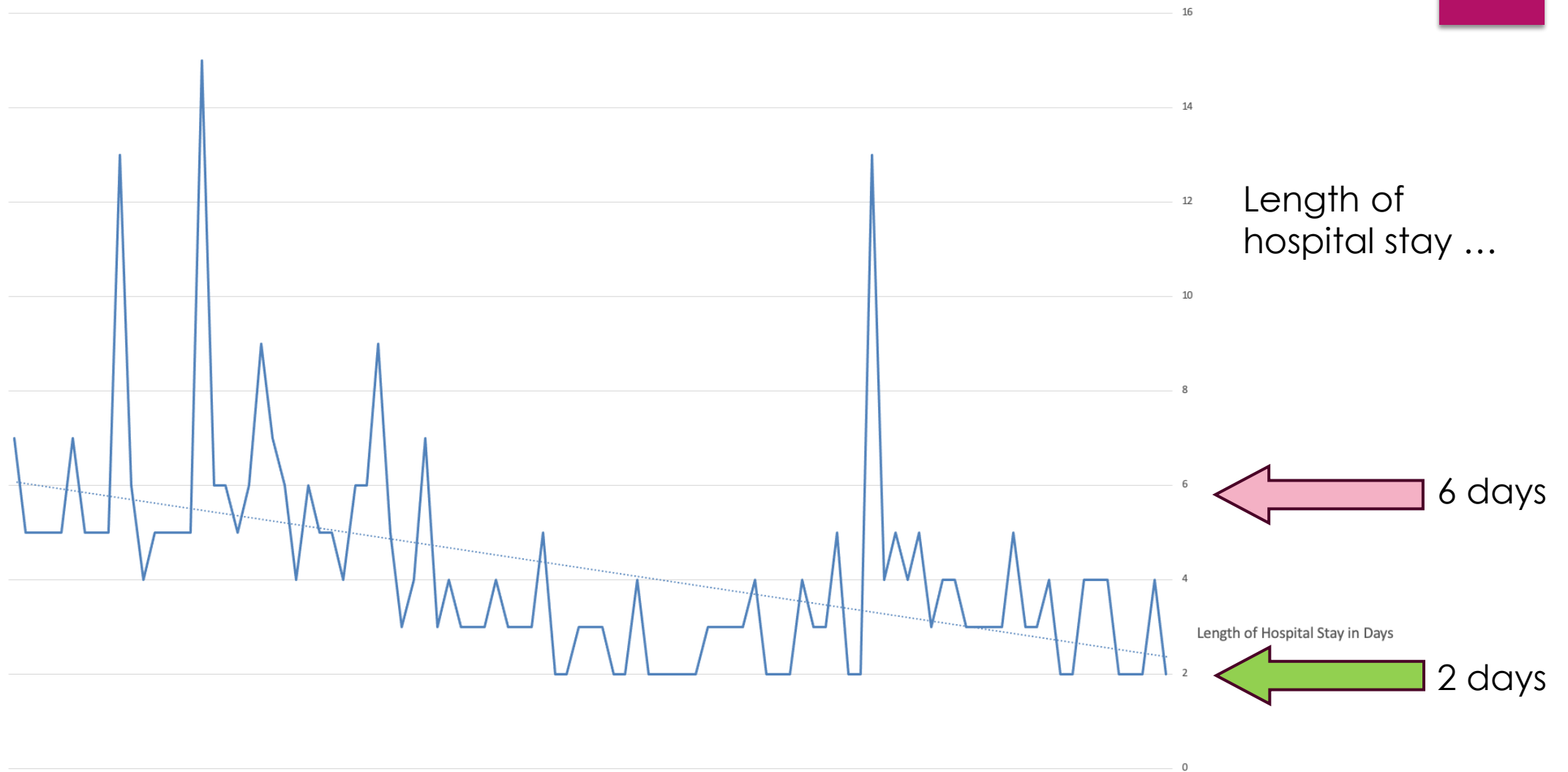
Reduction in the Av. Duration of Surgery From 9hrs to 6hrs



97 sequential patients

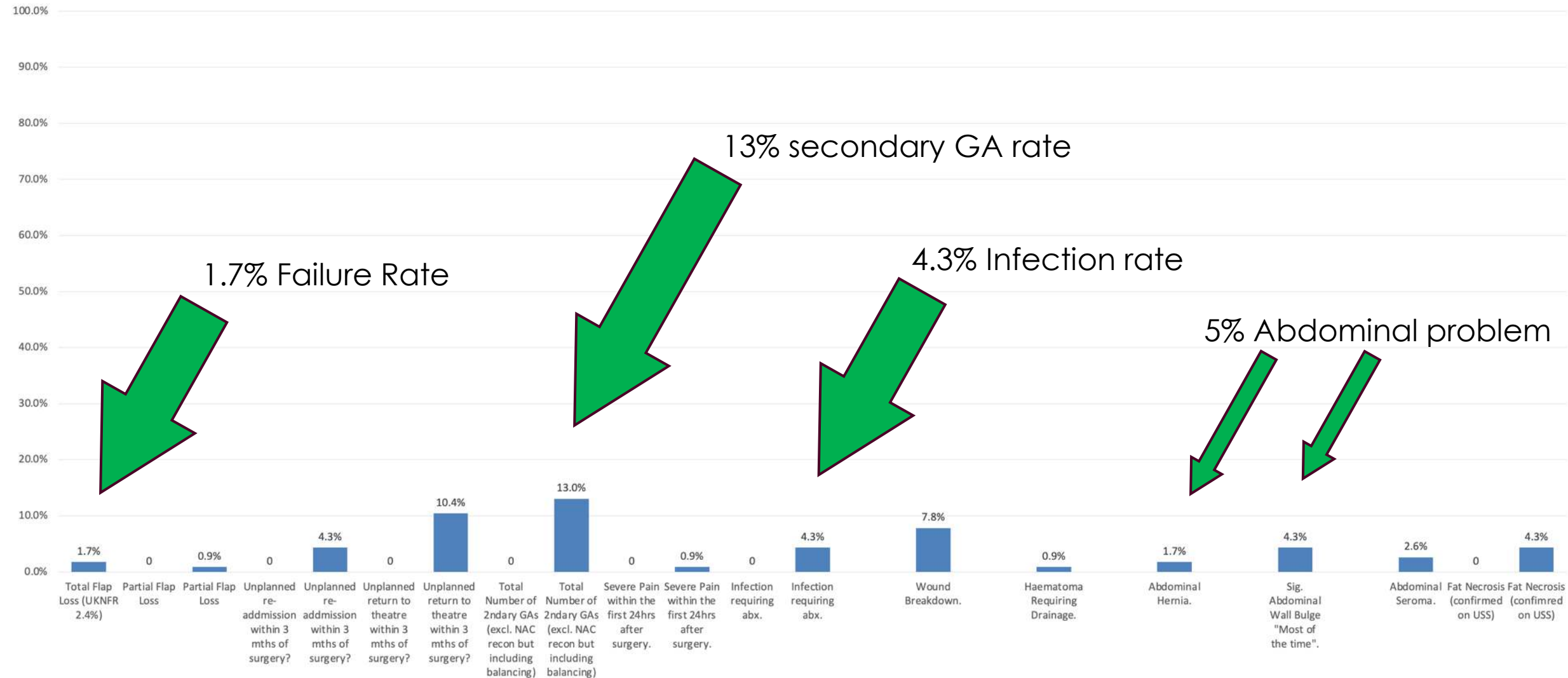
Reduction in the Length of Stay

DIEP Breast Reconstruction - Length of Hospital Stay



Good rates of Success and Low Complications

DIEP Free Flap Breast Reconstruction - Complication Rates
(Includes Immediate, Delayed, Unilateral and Bialteral cases)
(97 sequential cases from October 2016 to June 2024)



This project is about ...



... being **transparent**.

... being **open to feedback**.

... being **patient-centered** in our work.



This project is about ...

... building stronger **relationships**.

... building stronger **networks**.

... building stronger **communities**.



This project is about ...

... **empowering** staff.
... **making a difference.**
... being more aware
of the **impact** our work
has.

- **Sustainability**
- **Wellness**
- **Teamwork.**



This project is about ...

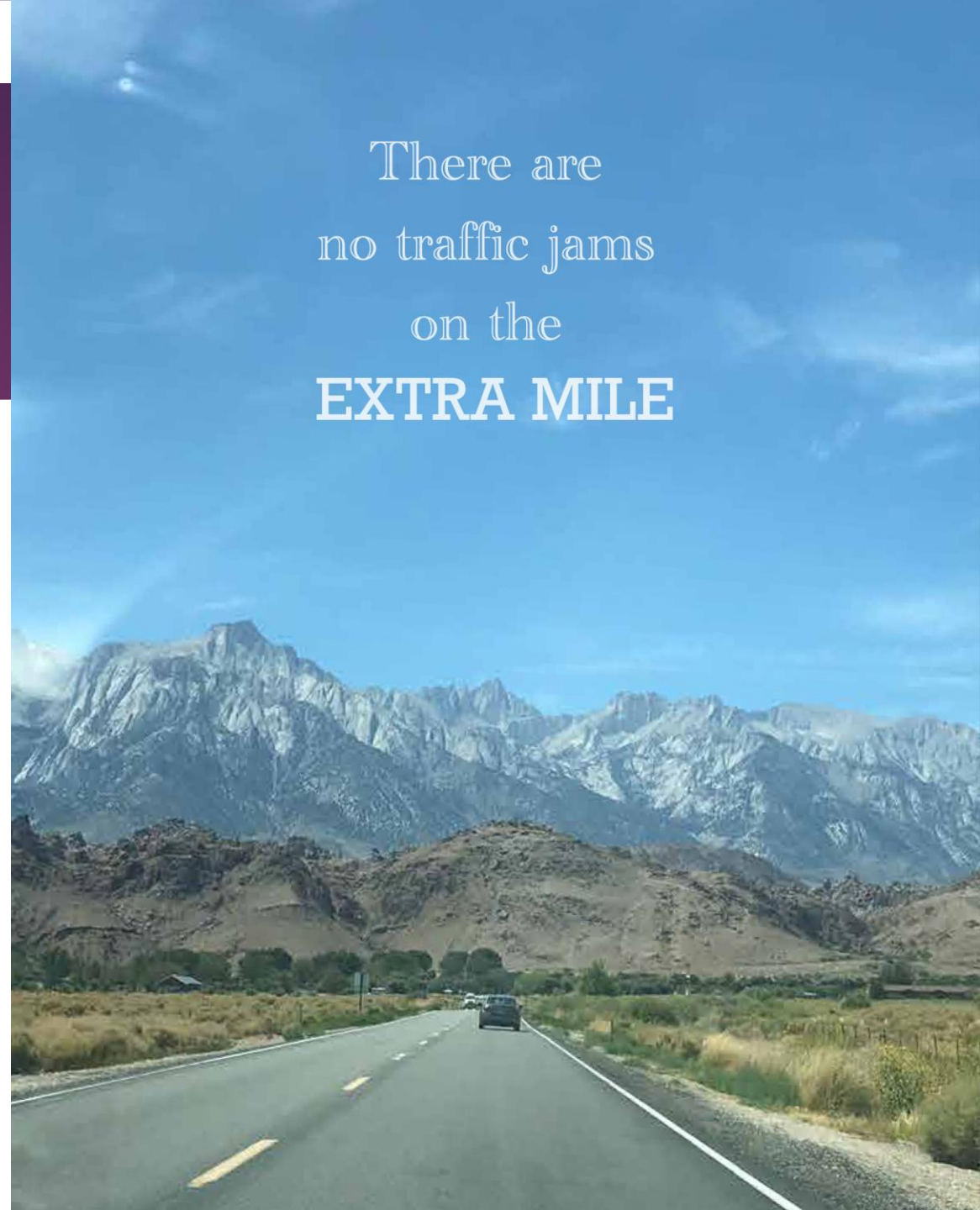
... going the extra mile.

... **having FUN at work.**

“If we are having FUN we will be doing good work.”

“Wouldn't we all want to be looked after by people who are enjoying their work?”

There are
no traffic jams
on the
EXTRA MILE



Thank you so much ...
for recognizing our team.



Thank you so much



... to **The Picker Network**

Which draws attention to and celebrates individuals who are working hard and going the extra mile.

our **NHS**
our **people**
our **country**

two words come to mind...

Kind & Strong



Thank you all for being here today
for your hard work for being kind
and strong.