

In November 2022, we undertook an Enter and View at the **Elizabeth Ward** of Whipps Cross hospital, where cardiology patients are being treated.



We spoke to seven patients there.

Patients praised the quality of care they received from doctors, nurses and auxiliary staff as well as their warm, friendly bedside manner.

"They're very thorough, not ruling anything out- they do loads of testing, they're not complacent. They do daily monitoring and keep you in the loop. I'm able to give feedback and voice any concerns, and if I don't understand something I can always go back to them and ask- they will explain and elaborate."

"The nurses here have the greatest respect for each other [...].I got to know all the cleaners, saw them cleaning every day. They are all very proud of what they are doing."



While the competence of doctors is highly trusted and they provide comprehensive explanations to patients on most occasions, **honest communication** is an aspect that can be improved.

"I would have meetings with the doctors- the doctor in the morning would tell me one thing then the doctor in the afternoon would tell me a different one. It didn't add up and I felt like they were withholding the truth from me- that I'm likely to die and they're not comfortable telling me. Eventually, we went into the quiet room and we had a real honest conversation - after that, things have changed; but I feel like I had to push them to be honest with me."

"It's a teaching hospital... Doctors sometimes have an awful habit of talking about you to medical students, as if you're not in the room. it would be a good habit to instead introduce themselves and explain what's going on. I felt like waving "Hey, I'm right here!". At first it's very jarring, but you get used to it- when they're talking about you you're trying to hear bits of information- and you get anxiety because you're not understanding."



While people report receiving good care in the cardiology ward itself, they may not experience similarly good levels of care across the NHS



GP surgeries- difficult to get appointments, especially in person-problems may not be caught before becoming acute.



Ambulance-
mostly positive
feedback

A&E- long waiting times,
not always well
organised, over-
stretched service

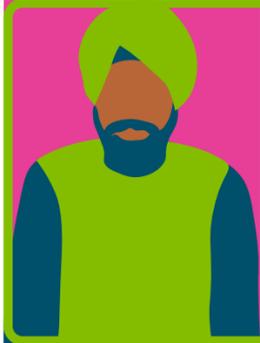


Post-discharge, patients continue to suffer from poor GP access. Services don't always work well together and, for some, info on living with heart disease is insufficient.



Cardiology
inpatients
Whipps Cross
and/or Barts-
mostly positive
feedback.





"Sanjay*" 's story

**name changed to protect anonymity*

Sanjay had been living with back pain for months; his GP, after an online consultation and seeing a picture of his back, determined the cause must be tendon inflammation. In reality, Sanjay suffered from heart disease. After multiple trips to the Whipps Cross A&E, it was discovered he had two missed heart attacks.

After a stay in Whipps Cross, where he says he was very well looked after, he was discharged- to wait at home until he would be admitted to Barts for a bypass; despite not feeling ready to be discharged. At home, he suffered a third heart attack; he was brought by ambulance straight to Barts, where he had emergency surgery. Sanjay was very happy with his surgeon, who explained the procedure thoroughly.

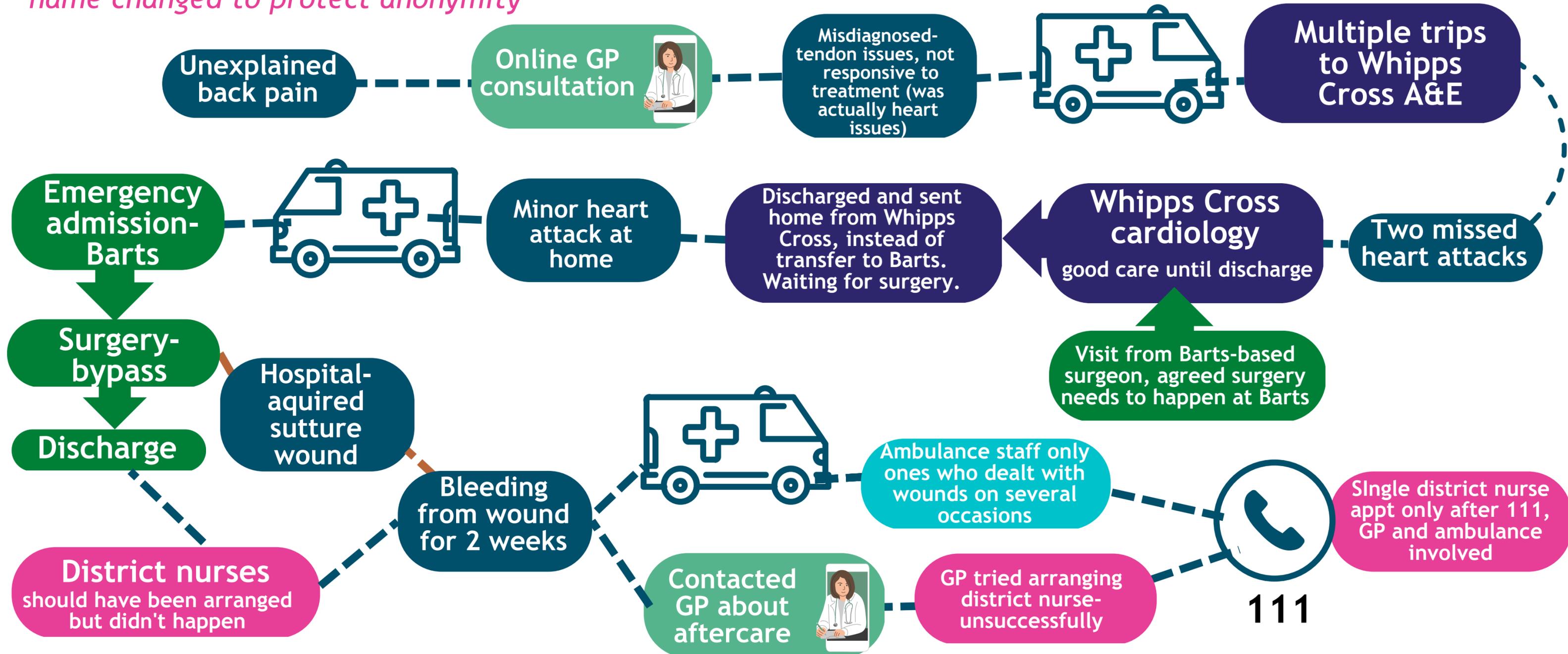
He returned home with a suture wound- he was supposed to receive care from district nurses, but it didn't happen. Despite repeatedly trying to liaise with his GP about it, he was only able to get help with dressing his open, bleeding wound by calling an ambulance, on multiple occasions.

More recently, as he started to experience a cough, he was told by his GP surgery that no appointments are available; despite being a vulnerable patient with heart disease. After insisting, he received a telephone consultation and a prescription for antibiotics; he feels distrustful of his diagnosis and treatment.



Patient journey "Sanjay*" 1

**name changed to protect anonymity*





Patient journey "Sanjay*" 2

**name changed to protect anonymity*

Cough/ respiratory symptoms shortly after bypass heart surgery

Called GP- told no appointments available

Called 111- advised he needs F2F GP consultation



111

Second call to GP- told no appointments available again

Only after arguing and pointing out he is high-risk (which GP should have known- given same-day telephone appointment

Prescribed antibiotics without an in-person consultation

Concerned about quality of care/ antibiotic prescription without proper assessment

