

What's On The Menu?

**Survey
of
Patient
Satisfaction
with Food at
Craigavon
Area Hospital
and Daisy Hill
Hospital**

September 2008

SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

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SOUTHERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

The Southern Health and Social Services Council (SHSSC) was set up to represent the views and opinions of the public in the Southern Board area. The SHSSC is independent from those who plan, manage and provide health and social care services.

Our main functions are to:

- act on your behalf to improve the range, type and quality of services
- continually monitor the quality of local services
- represent public opinion about changes to existing services and the introduction of new services
- find out what people think about services
- provide you with sources of information on health and social care issues
- offer advice and help if you wish to complain about a service.

A special word of thanks to all those members of the SHSSC who participated in the survey. Thanks are also extended to staff at Craigavon Area Hospital and Daisy Hill Hospital for their assistance and co-operation in making this exercise a success.

SHSSC members and staff who took part in the survey were:

Members: Florence Mc Mahon, Jim Mc Cart, Eileen Wright,
Sylvia Mc Roberts, Peter Kearns

Staff: Stella Cunningham, Colette Hart, Eleanor Doherty

RATIONALE

Towards the end of 2007 the DHSSPS, in conjunction with The Royal College of Nursing, published 'Get your 10 a day' - The Nursing Care Standards for Patient Food in Hospital. In the foreword Health Minister Michael Mc Gimpsey states:

"Adequate food and fluids are as essential to good care in hospital as the medicines patients are prescribed and the treatment they receive... patients rightly expect that during their stay in hospital they will be provided with food that is both nutritious and appetising".

The SHSSC decided to carry out a survey of patients in both Craigavon Area (CAH) and Daisy Hill Hospitals (DHH) to find out what they thought of the food and the catering service generally, and to determine whether the new nutritional standards for patient food were being adhered to.

METHODOLOGY

Questionnaires were formulated to gather data on patients' views regarding their satisfaction with the food they were being served in hospital, as well as the standard of catering services. Where possible, questions were designed to reflect the indicators put forward by the new Nursing Care Standards for Patient Food in Hospital.

In total **102** interviews were conducted with patients (**61** in CAH and **41** in DHH), with a questionnaire completed by the interviewer for each patient. It was felt that leaving questionnaires with patients to complete themselves would be inconvenient and time consuming for both patient and interviewer. Also, this method provides good qualitative data in the form of comments from patients, which they may otherwise be reluctant to make.

The survey was carried out on the following dates:

Daisy Hill	03/06/08 10am to 11am
Daisy Hill	18/06/08 12pm to 1.15pm
Craigavon	05/06/08 10am to 11am
Craigavon	17/06/08 12pm to 1.30pm

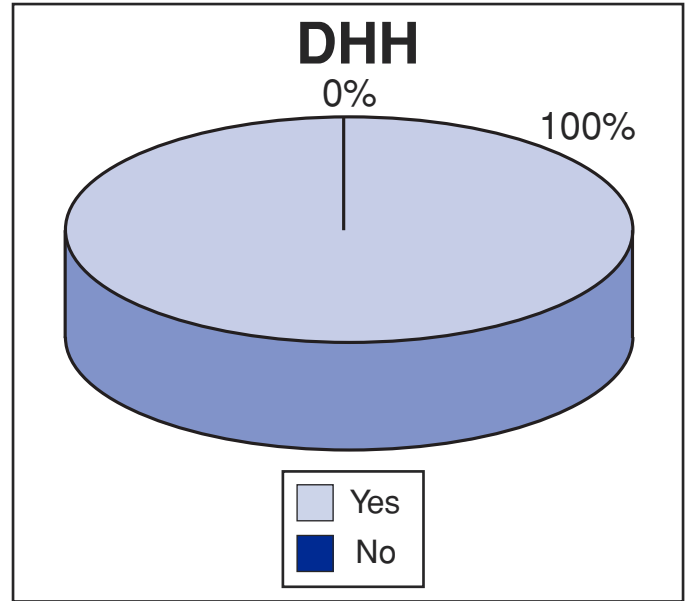
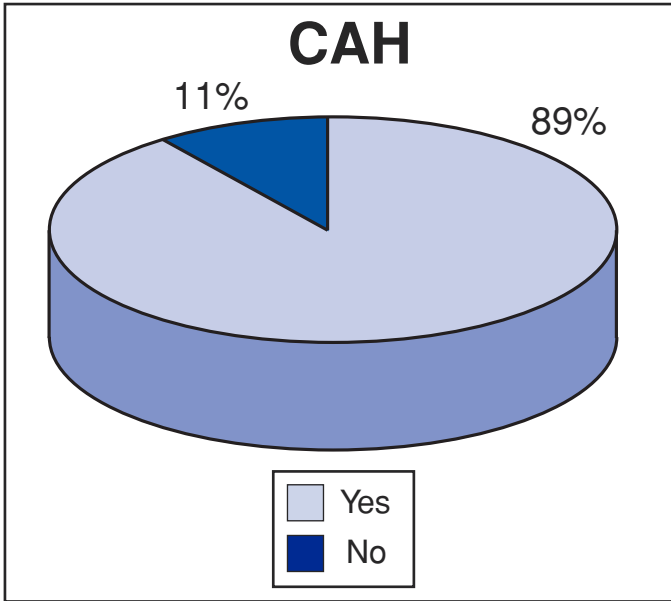
Wards visited by interviewers were:

Daisy Hill	Craigavon
Male Surgical	1 North
Female Medical	1 South
Elderly Care	4 North
Stroke / Rehabilitation	4 South
	1 Medical
	2 Medical

SURVEY RESULTS

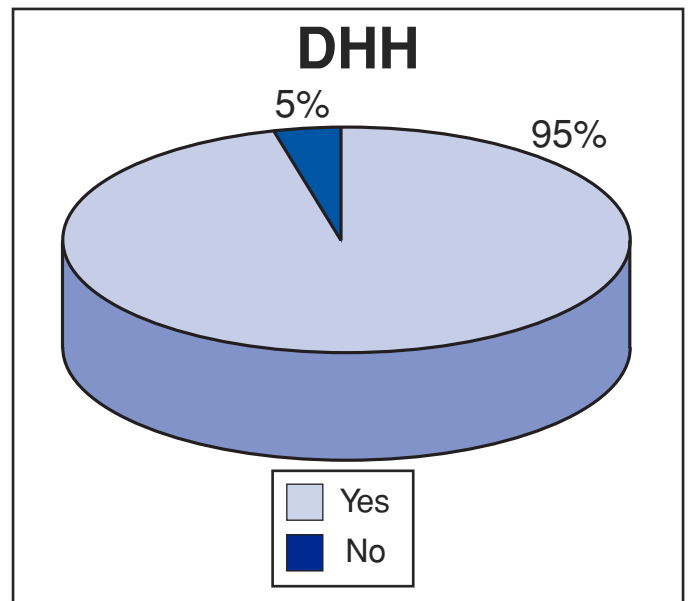
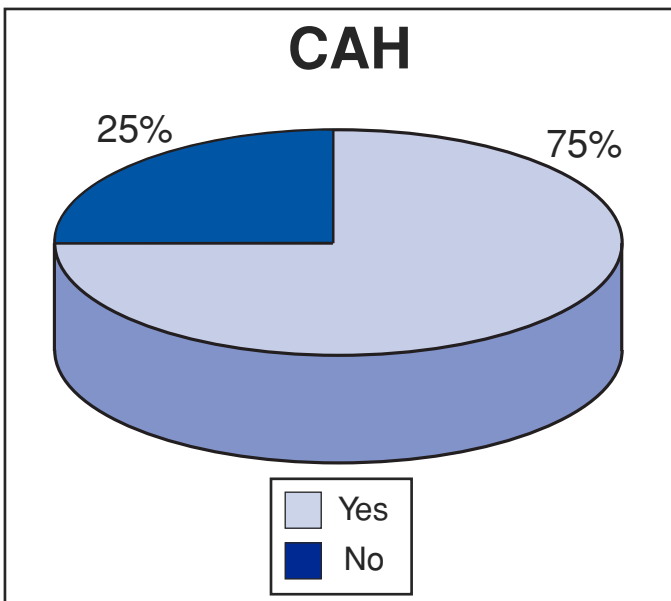
1 Is the menu easy to understand?

	Yes	No
CAH	54	7
DHH	41	0



2 Are you offered the kinds of meals you like to eat?

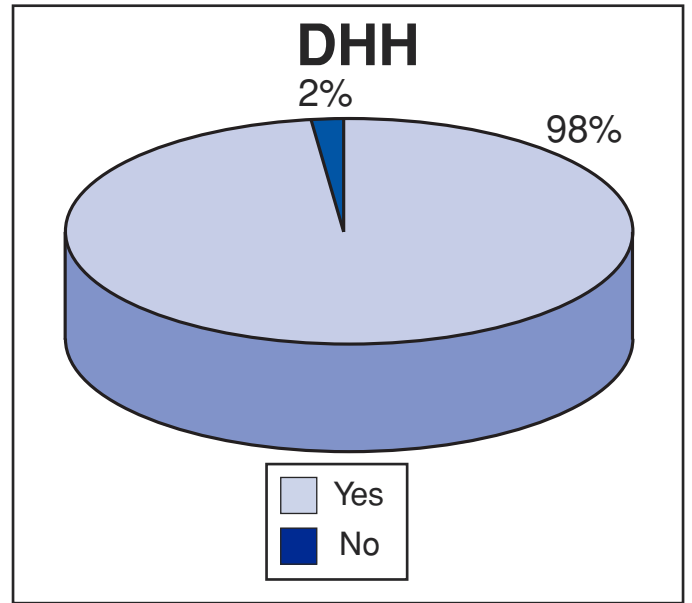
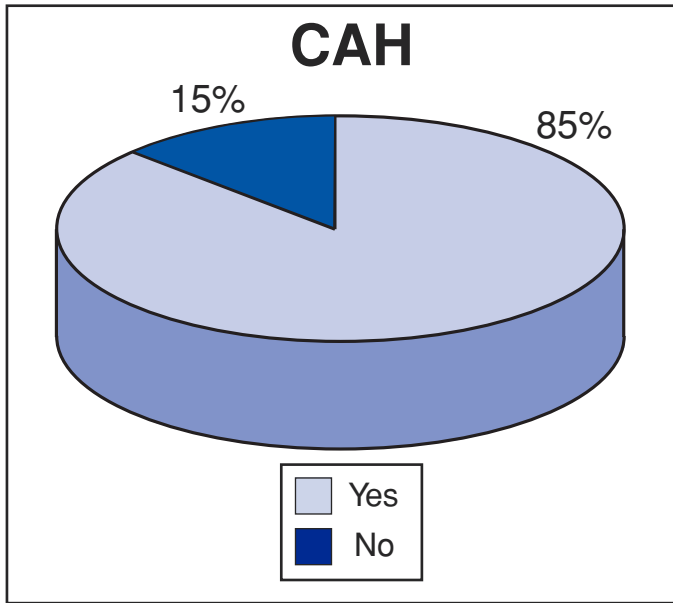
	Yes	No
CAH	46	15
DHH	39	2



3 Is there enough choice for:

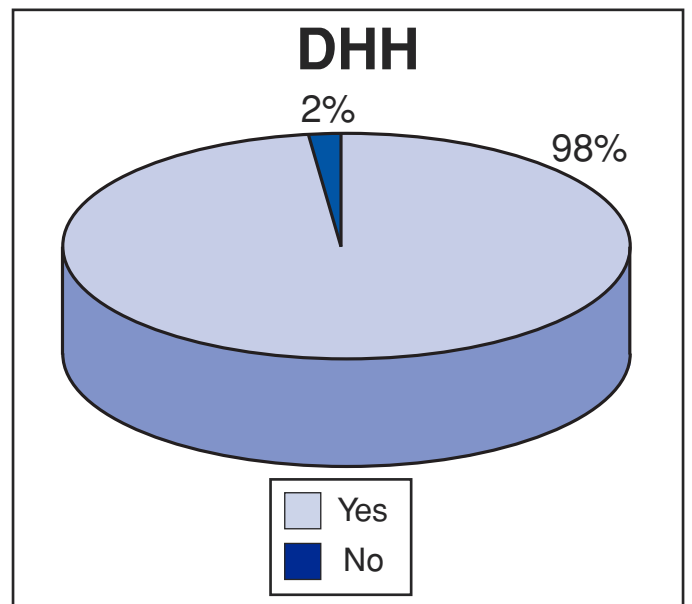
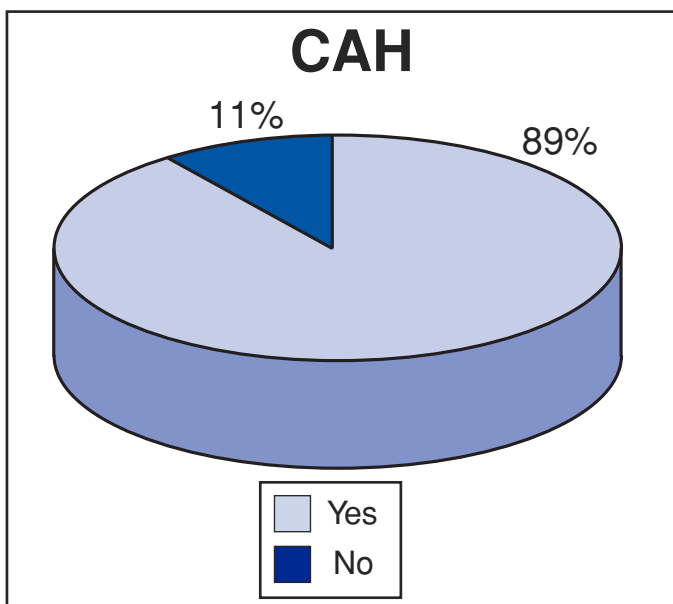
a) breakfast

	Yes	No
CAH	52	9
DHH	40	1



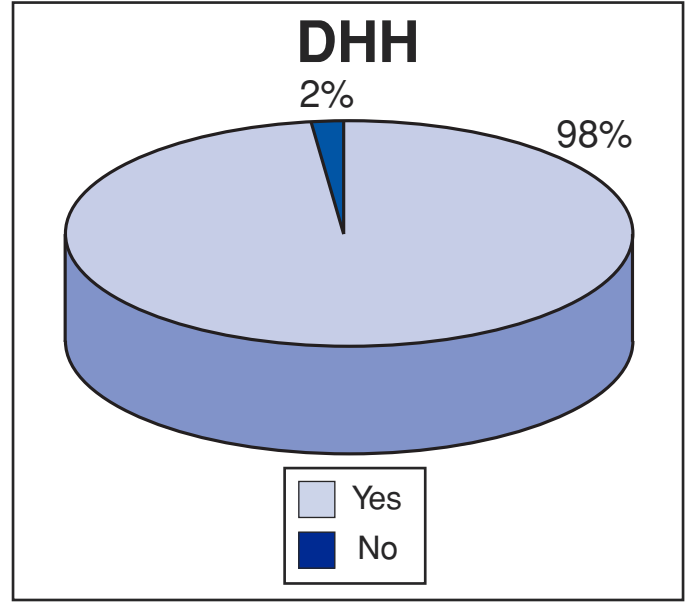
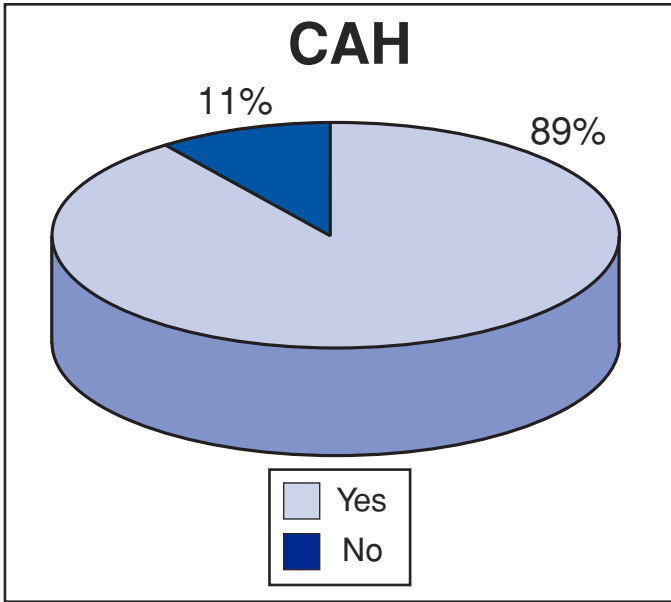
b) midday meal?

	Yes	No
CAH	54	7
DHH	40	1



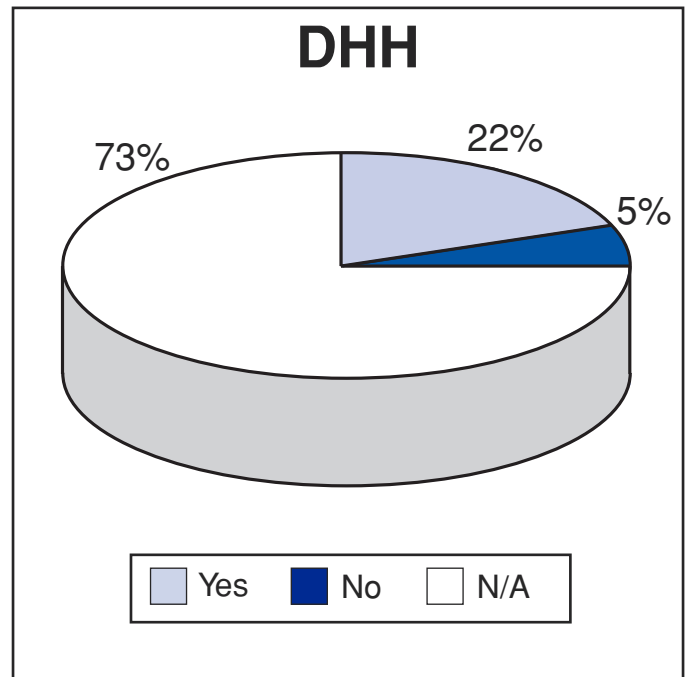
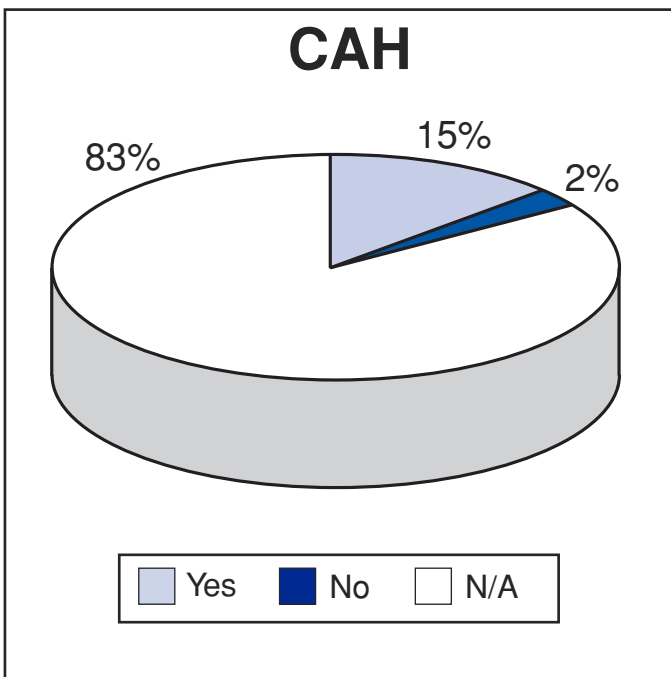
c) evening meal?

	Yes	No
CAH	54	7
DHH	40	1



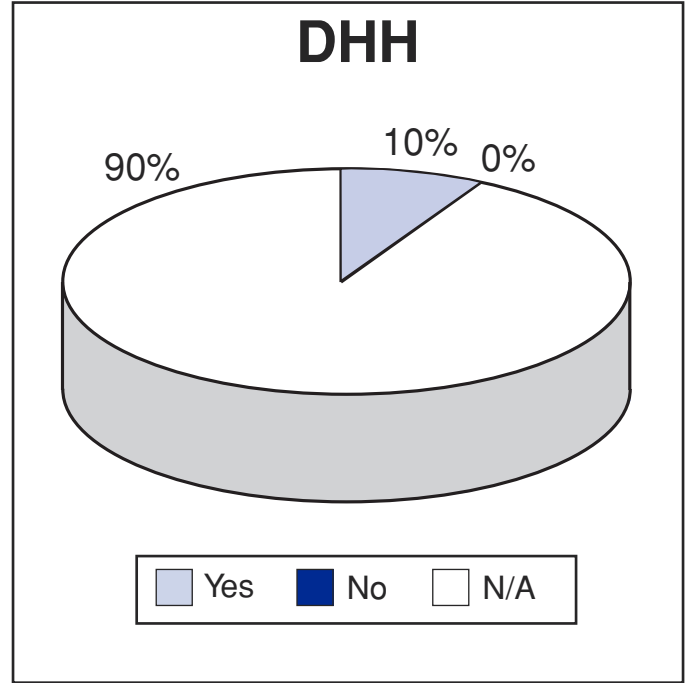
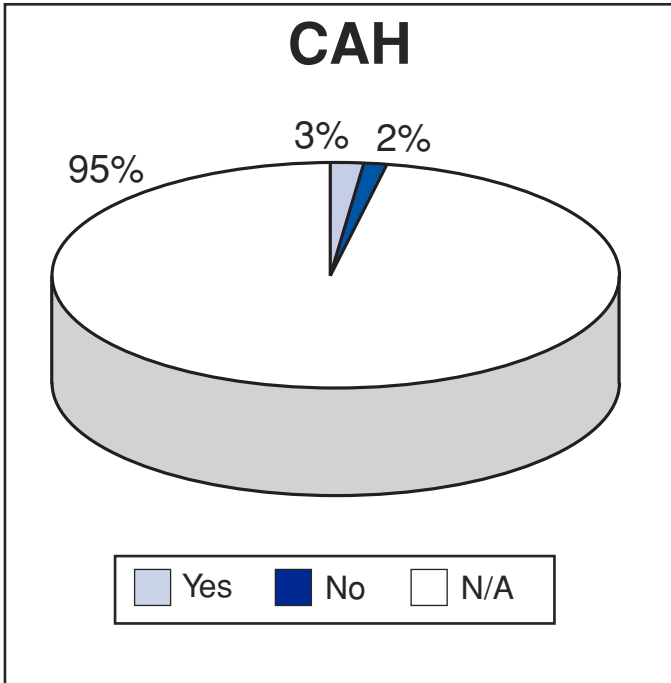
4 Are your special dietary requirements being catered for?

	Yes	No	N/A
CAH	9	1	51
DHH	9	2	30



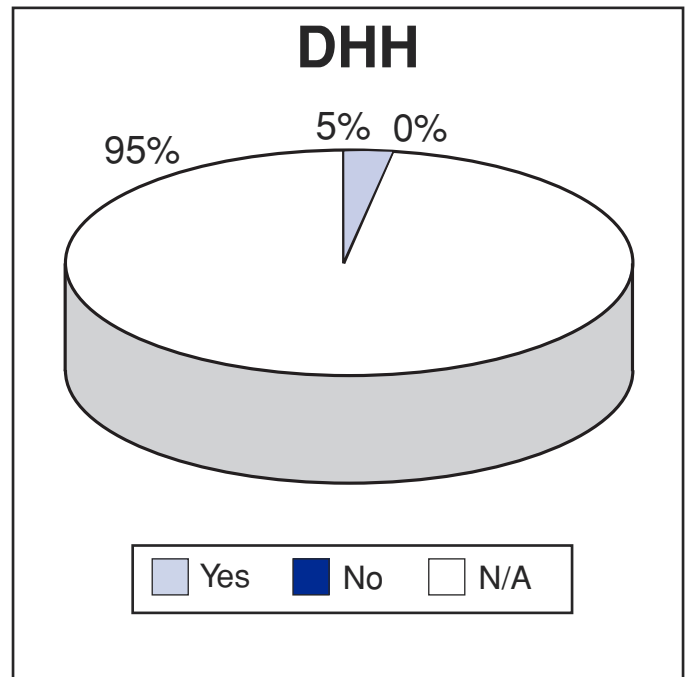
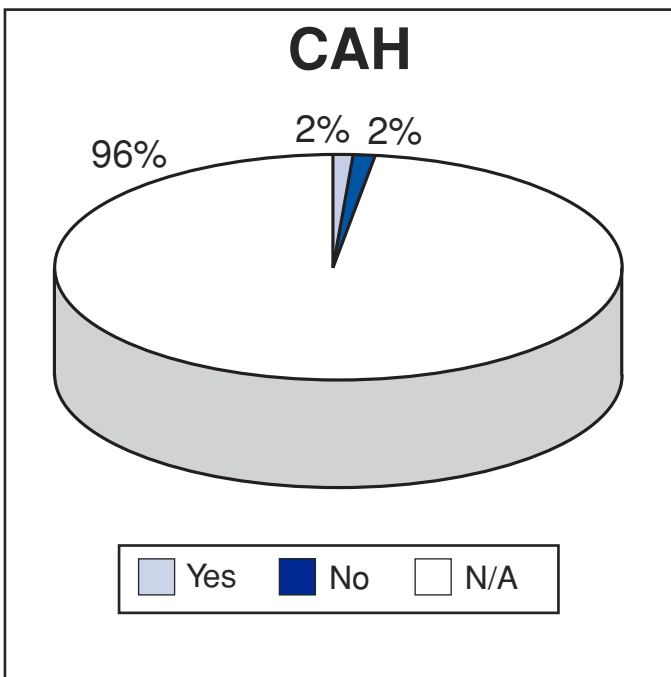
5 Are there enough choices to suit your religious beliefs?

	Yes	No	N/A
CAH	2	1	58
DHH	4	0	37



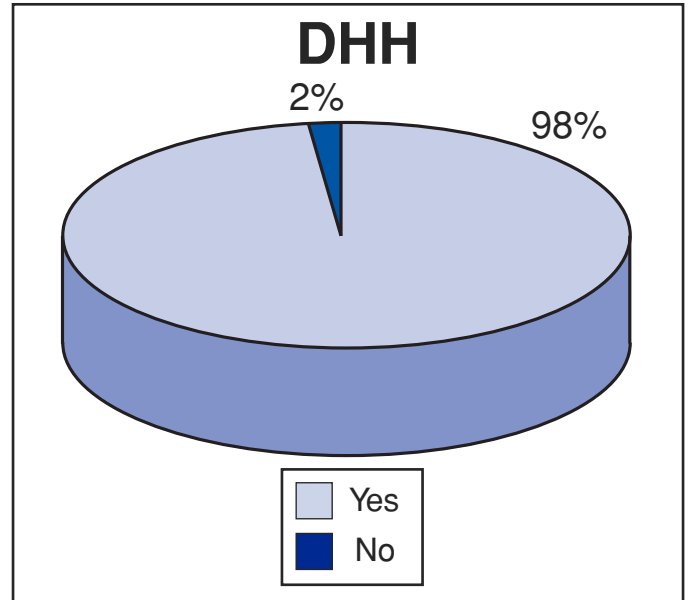
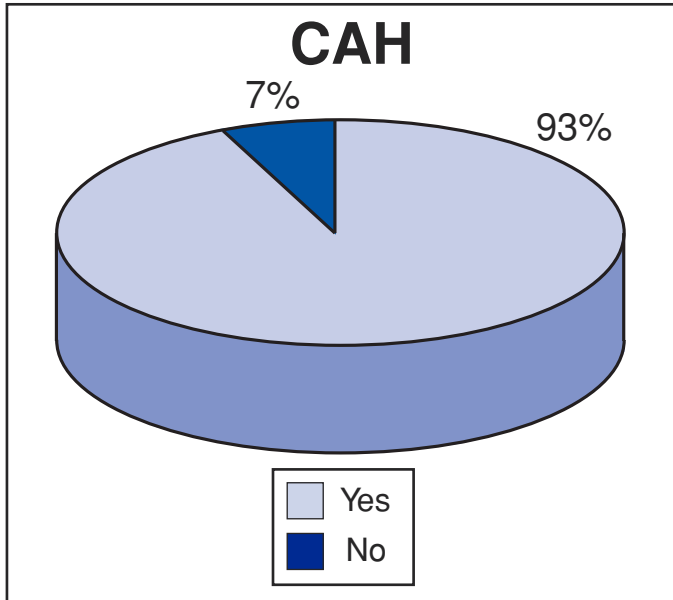
6 Is there enough choice of vegetarian / vegan food?

	Yes	No	N/A
CAH	1	1	59
DHH	2	0	39



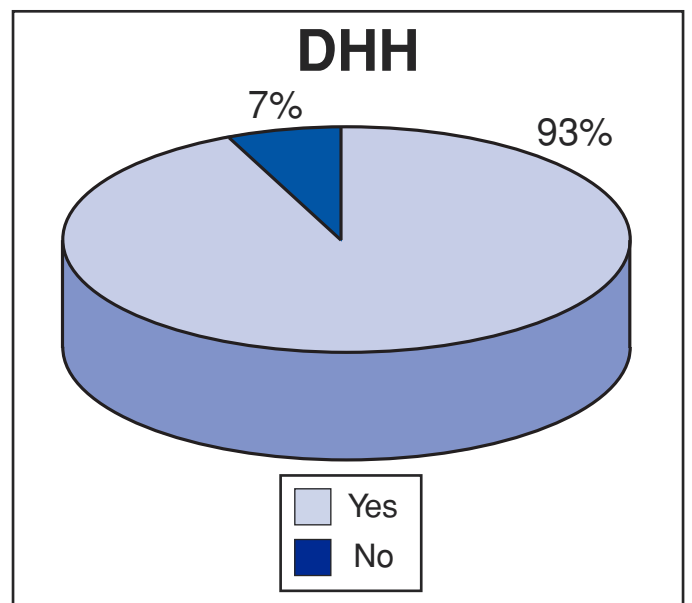
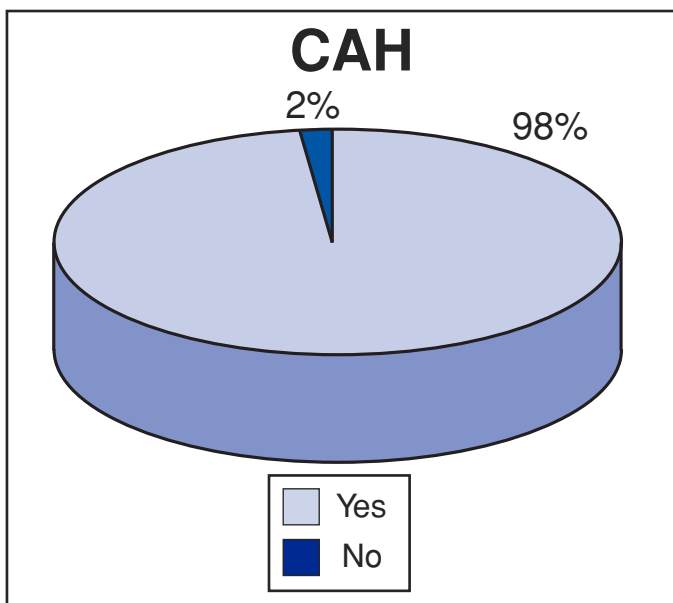
7 Are you made comfortable before the meal service?

	Yes	No
CAH	57	4
DHH	40	1



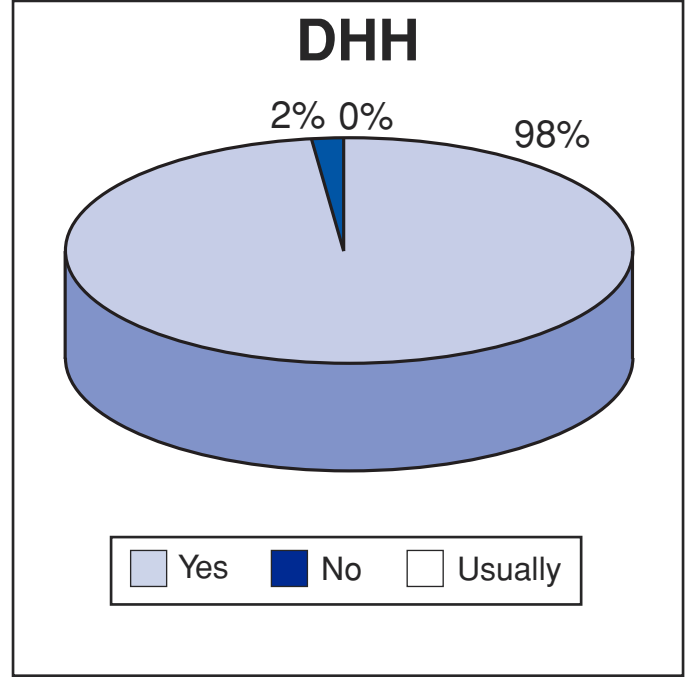
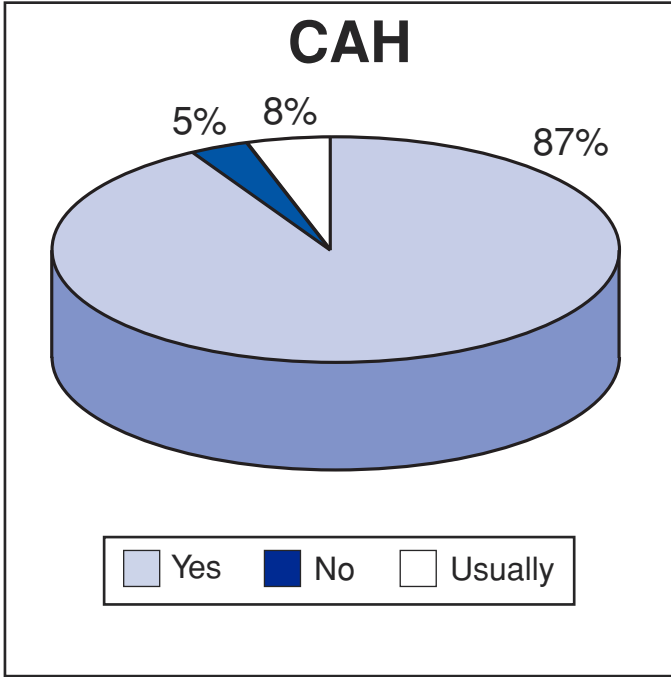
8 Are you given the chance to freshen up before the meal?

	Yes	No
CAH	60	1
DHH	38	3



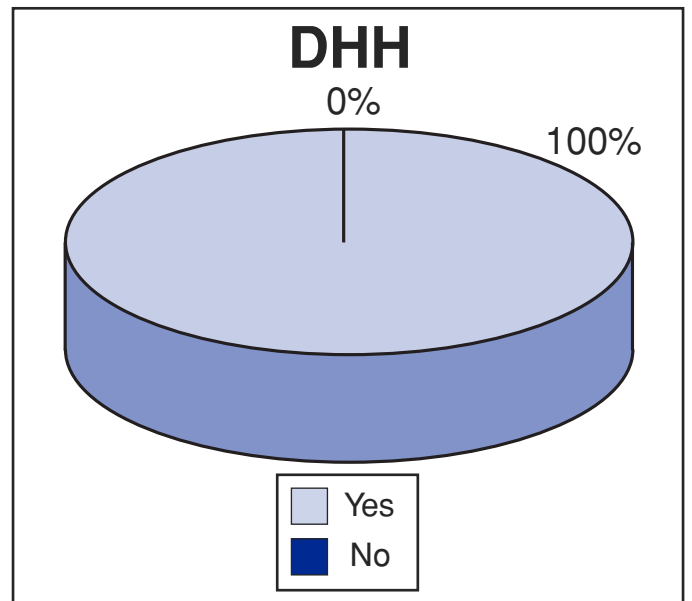
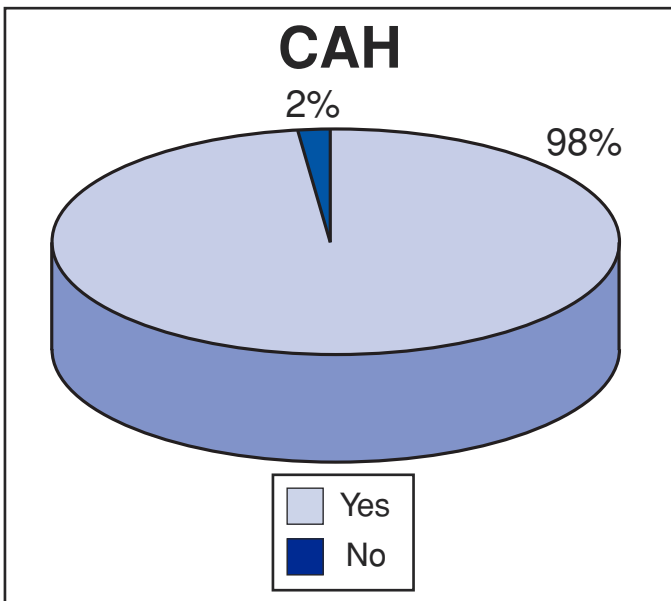
9 Are you allowed to eat your meal without disruption?

	Yes	No	Usually
CAH	53	3	5
DHH	40	1	0



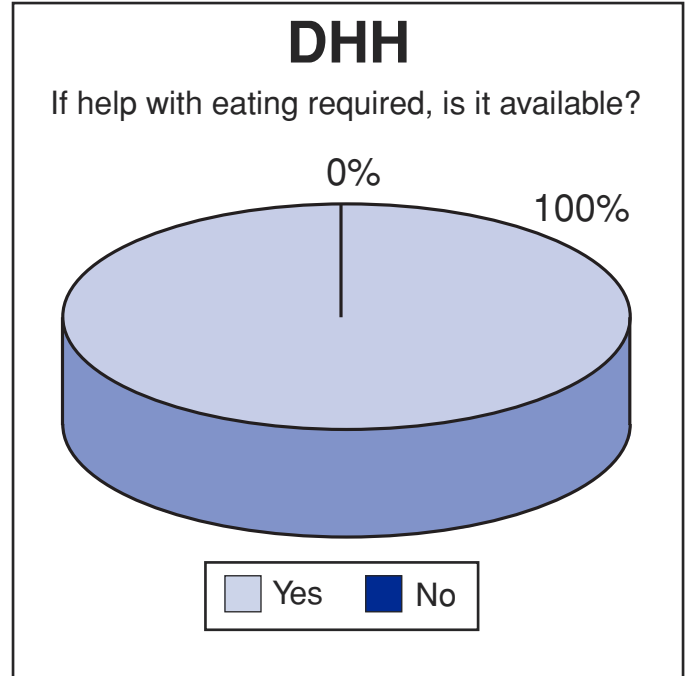
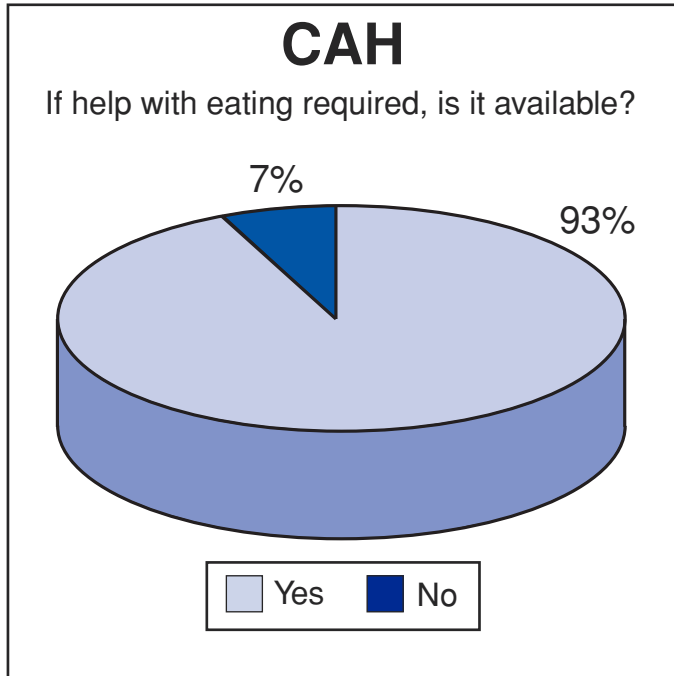
10 Are the staff serving the meals friendly and helpful?

	Yes	No
CAH	60	1
DHH	41	0



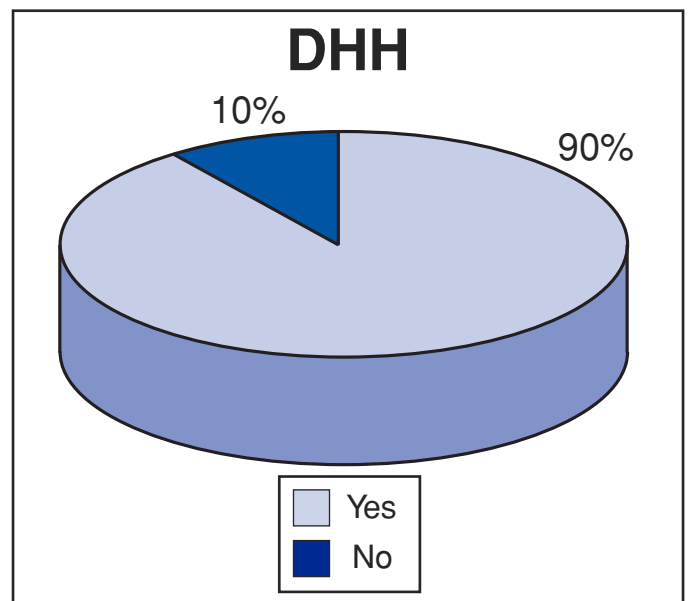
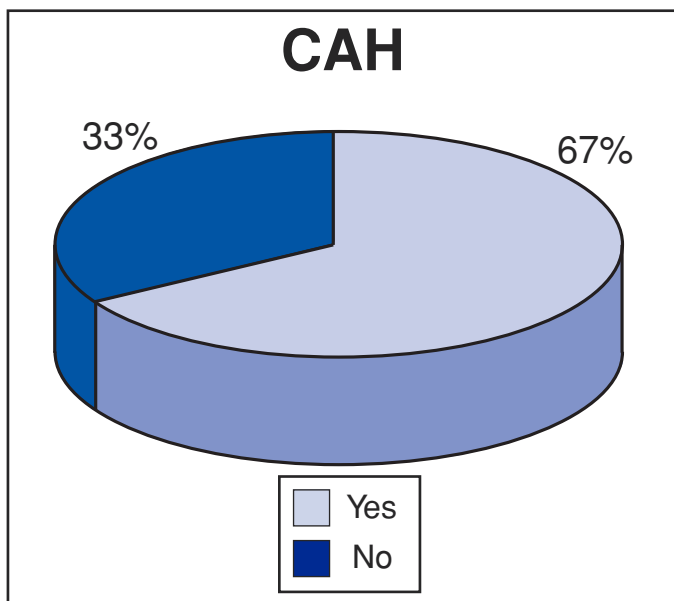
11 If you need help with eating, is it available?

	Yes	No	(N/A)	
CAH	26	2	(33)	Not illustrated in charts below
DHH	13	0	(28)	



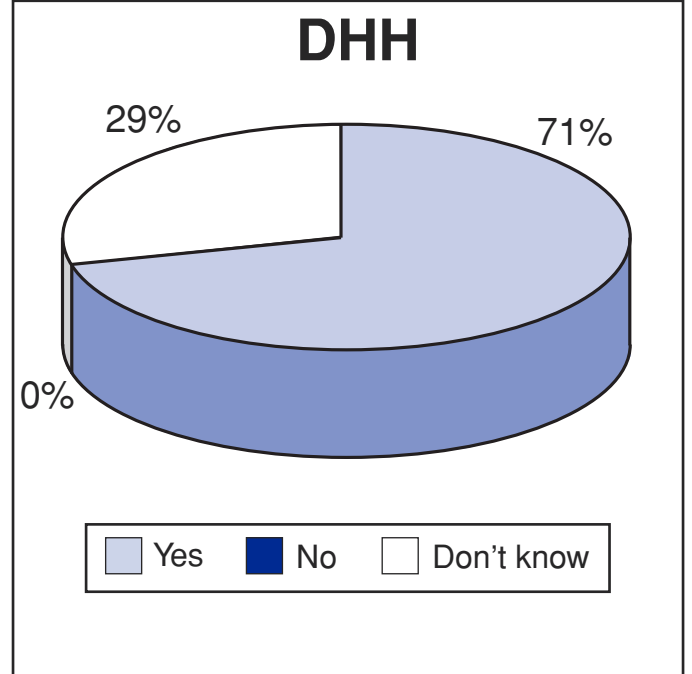
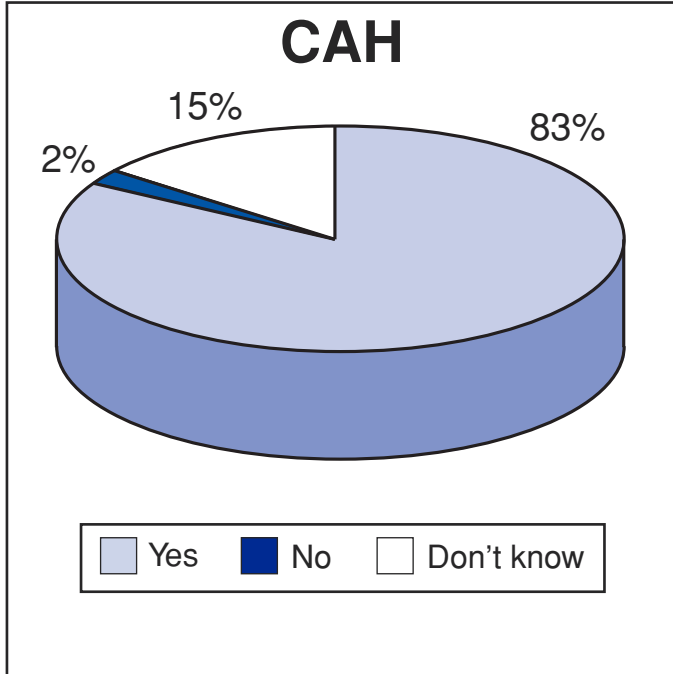
12 Do you always get the meal you wanted from the trolley or ordered from the menu?

	Yes	No
CAH	41	20
DHH	37	4



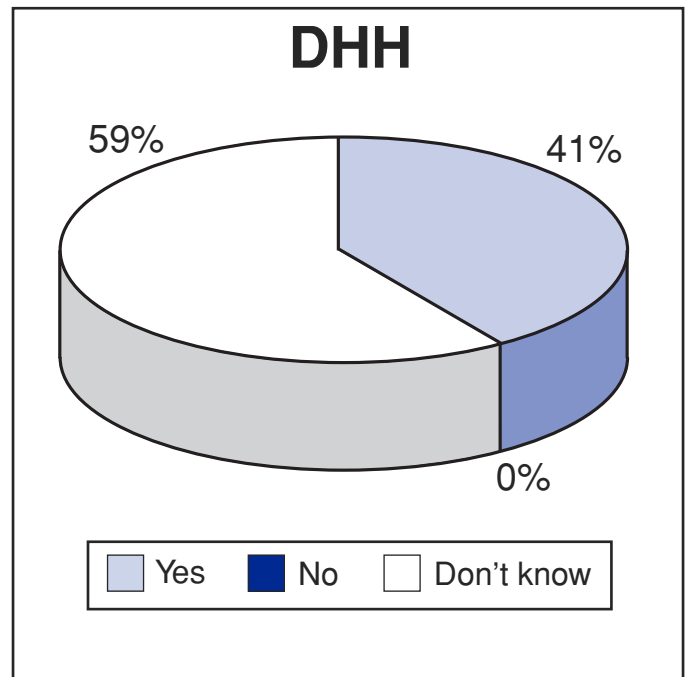
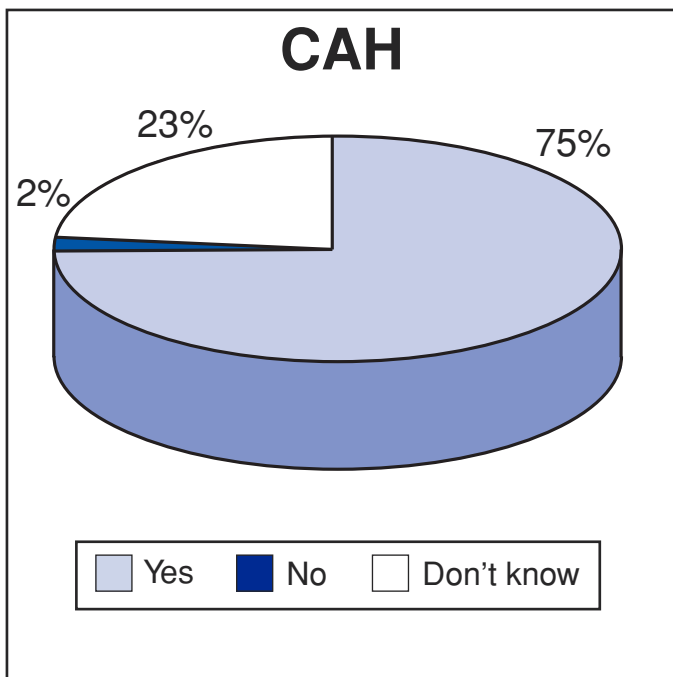
13 Can you get a drink or snack when you want?

	Yes	No	Don't know
CAH	51	1	9
DHH	29	0	12



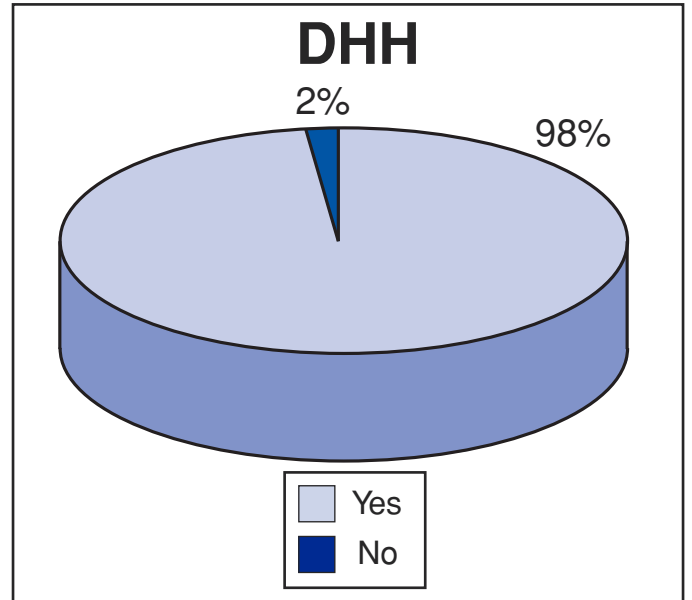
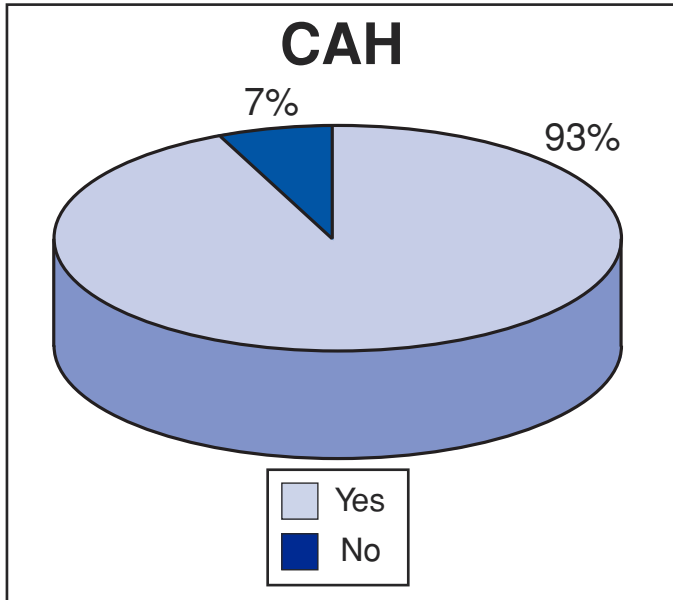
14 If you miss a meal, is a replacement offered?

	Yes	No	Don't know
CAH	46	1	14
DHH	17	0	24



15 Do you think the portion sizes are adequate for you?

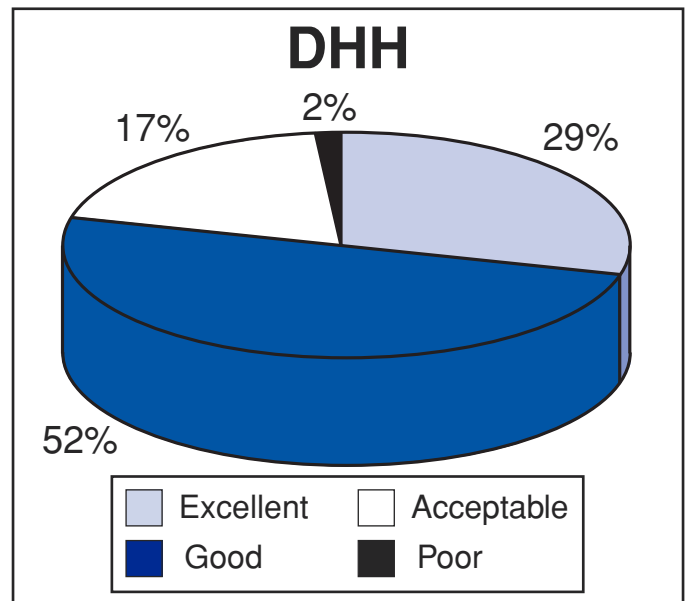
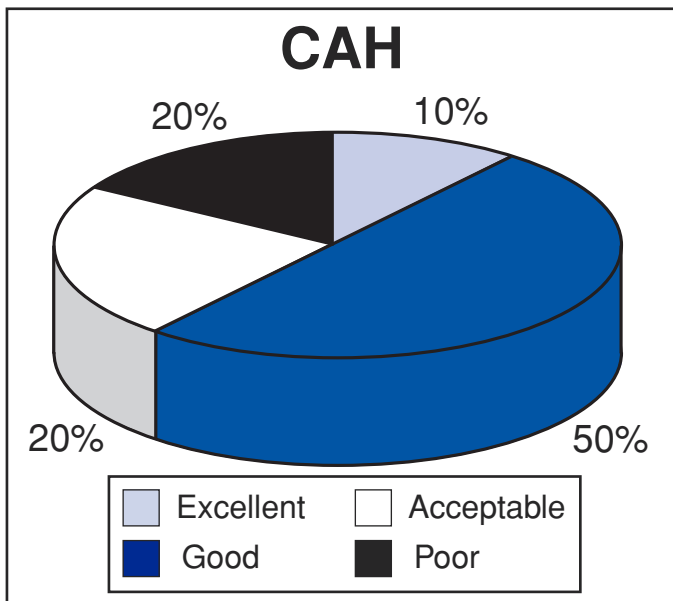
	Yes	No
CAH	57	4
DHH	40	1



16 How would you rate:

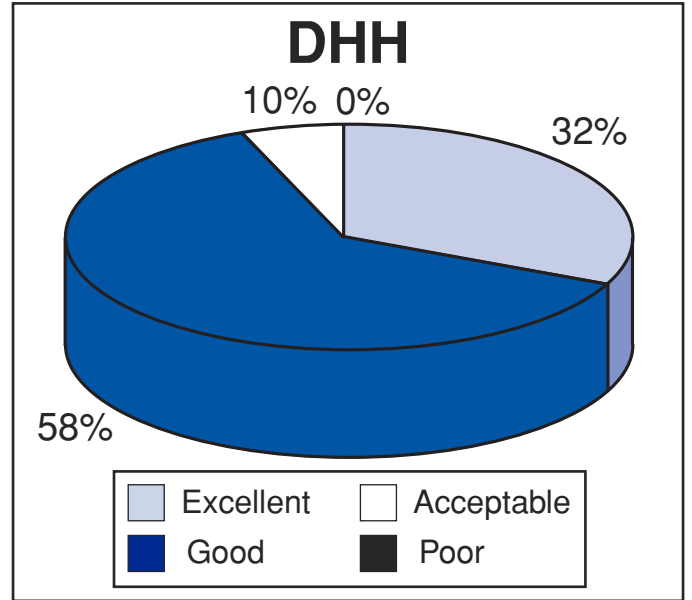
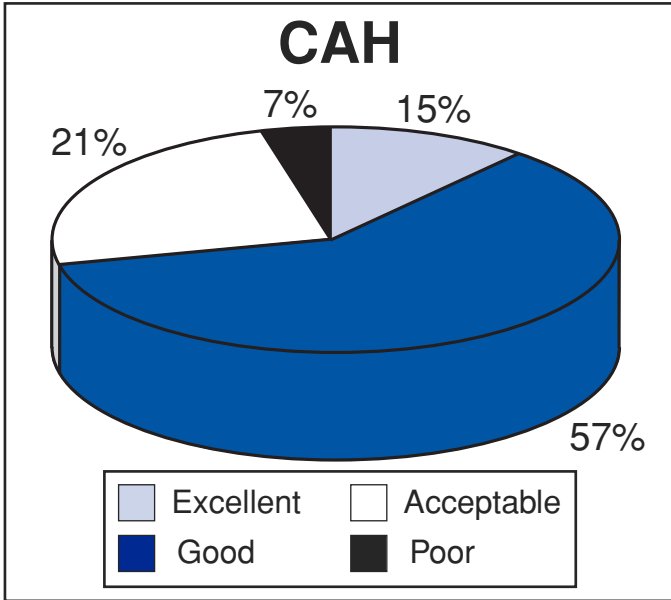
a) the taste of the meals?

	excellent	good	acceptable	poor
CAH	6	31	12	12
DHH	12	21	7	1



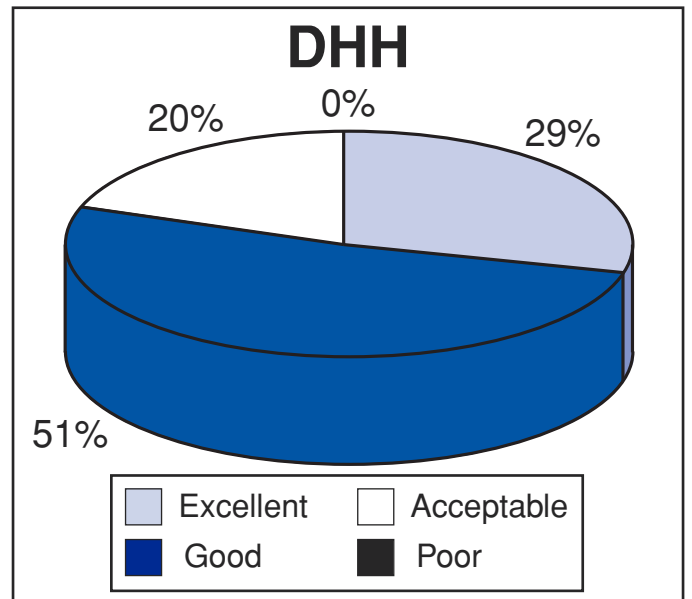
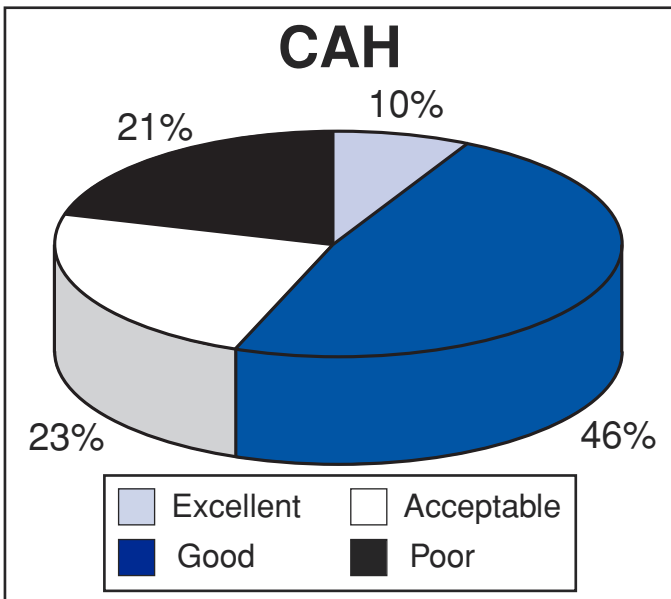
b) the temperature of the food?

	excellent	good	acceptable	poor
CAH	9	35	13	4
DH	13	24	4	0



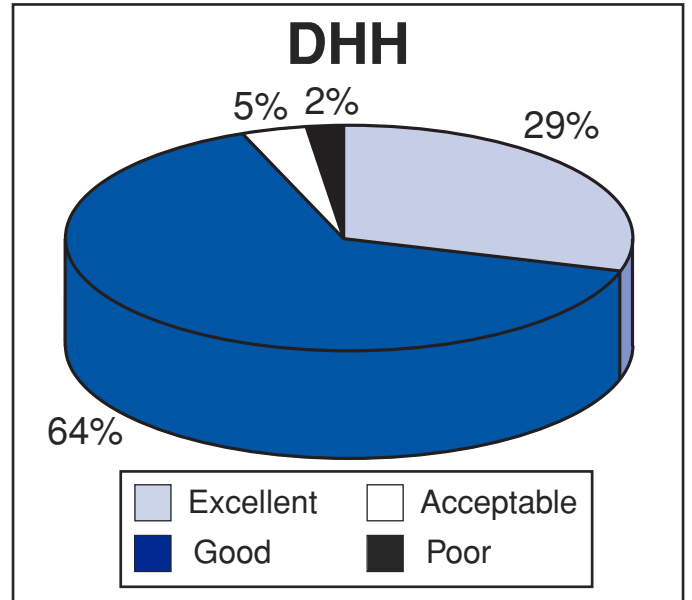
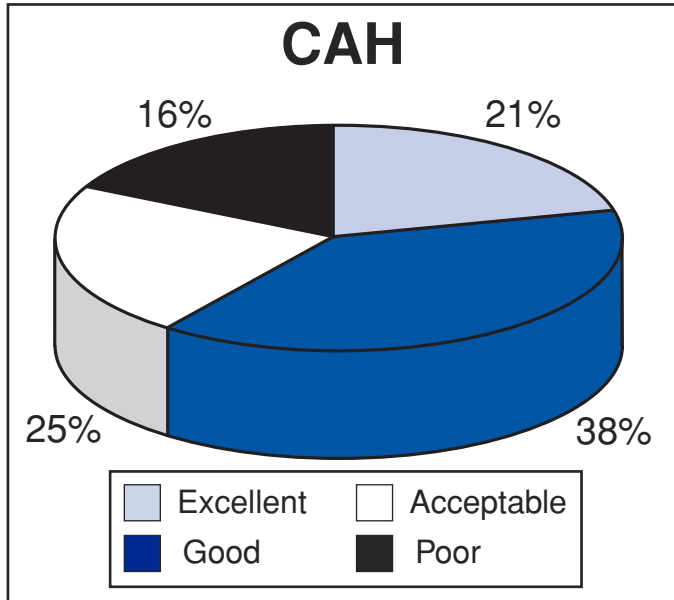
c) the appearance of the meals?

	excellent	good	acceptable	poor
CAH	6	28	14	13
DHH	12	21	8	0



17 How would you rate the overall satisfaction with the catering service?

	excellent	good	acceptable	poor
CAH	13	23	15	10
DHH	12	26	2	1



SUMMARY

- All the patients surveyed at DHH believed that the menu was easy to understand, and 89% of those asked at CAH felt similarly.
- The majority of patients said they were being given the kind of meals they liked to eat (75% at CAH, 95% at DHH)
- Regarding choices for the three main meals served each day, most patients agreed that the range available was sufficient. 98% of patients at DHH were happy with the menu choices, with a similarly high number saying the same at CAH.
- Most of the patients surveyed did not have special dietary requirements (84% CAH and 73% DHH), but the majority of those who did felt that their needs were being met. One lady at DHH was being served meals suitable for a diabetic diet, though she wasn't diabetic herself.
- The issue of special diets associated with a particular religion only affected a very small proportion of the patients surveyed – 3% and CAH and 10% at DHH.
- Only 2 % of patients at CAH and 5% at DHH required vegetarian meals; 1 patient at CAH and 2 at DHH felt that vegetarian choices on the menu were limited.
- The majority of patients were made comfortable or allowed to freshen up before a meal, but most were able to do these themselves. Patients were generally allowed to eat a meal without disruption, and some mentioned that they accepted interruptions – e.g. from doctors – were unavoidable.
- Staff serving the meals were viewed as friendly and helpful by 100% of patients at DHH and 98% at CAH. Most patients couldn't praise them highly enough.
- 54% (33) of patients at CAH and 68% (28) at DHH did not require help with eating. However, only 7% of those who did (CAH only) felt that this help was not forthcoming.
- A significant number of patients (33%) at CAH said they did not always get the meal they ordered. This figure was only 10% at DHH.
- On the subject of being able to get a drink or snack or a replacement meal if necessary, the questions were originally designed with 2 possible answers – 'yes' or 'no'. The 'don't know' category was added during the interviews with patients as some had never asked for drinks/snacks/replacement meals, so were unsure if these were available. The majority of patients were confident that they could have something to eat outside of the normal meal times.
- Overall patients were very happy with the portion sizes, 93% at CAH and 98% at DHH; some DHH patients mentioned that they had a choice of small, medium or large portion sizes – though it appeared that not all patients were aware of this.

- When it came to taste, temperature and appearance of the meals, opinions were more divided. Roughly half of those interviewed in each hospital described the taste, temperature and appearance of the meals they received as 'good'. Only 2% of patients at DHH said the taste was 'poor', while this figure was 20% at CAH. Around a third of those asked at DHH thought the taste, temperature and appearance of the meals were excellent; fewer CAH patients believed this to be the case with an average of 11% describing these aspects of the meals as excellent. At CAH, taste, temperature and appearance of meals were rated as acceptable by 20%, 21% and 23% respectively, whilst at DHH 17%, 10% and 20%, found the taste, temperature and appearance to be acceptable.
- Overall satisfaction with the catering service was higher at DHH than CAH. The proportion of DHH patients describing their level of satisfaction as 'excellent' or 'good' was 63% and 29% respectively; the figures for CAH patients were 38% ('good') and 21% ('excellent'). The proportion of DHH patients describing their level of satisfaction as 'acceptable' or 'poor' was 5% and 2% respectively; the figures for CAH patients were 25% ('acceptable') and 16% ('poor').

PATIENT COMMENTS

CAH – Positive Comments

- The staff are very helpful and I am satisfied with the service overall; you'll always get complainers!*
- It's like being in a hotel! The porridge is great*
- Very happy with food and helpfulness of staff, couldn't praise them enough; it's like a home from home*
- I eat very little; if I don't eat my meal staff will always enquire if I didn't like the food. The hospital should be very proud of it's staff – if I had a special prize I would give it to them*
- Can't understand why anyone would complain about the food; particularly like the sausages!*
- Happy with the catering service, no complaints x 9*
- Happy with the help I get to eat my meals (MS patient)*
- If the food is not hot enough I can get it heated up*
- Staff are excellent and do their best*
- I enjoy the tossed salads; I don't expect home cooking*
- I see nothing wrong with hospital food; the good variety of meals suits me as I like to*

try something different every day

- Vegetable soup is first class; everyone is served so well*
- Carrot and lentil soup lovely but bit salty; salads excellent*

CAH – Negative Comments

- Food often looks and tastes like it is prepared much earlier in the day and left sitting somewhere; this doesn't work with things like chips which were tough, rubbery and inedible*
- Domestic staff should not be serving meals; I was served a cup of tea without a saucer by someone who held the cup by the rim and not by the handle so I didn't drink it; I don't always see aprons on staff serving the meals; I prefer the old system where patients sat at dining tables and were served by auxiliaries*
- Not happy with the taste and appearance of the food*
- Menu well thought out but a bit complicated – needs simplified; more choice needed for breakfast*
- Fish in cheese sauce looked like it had been welded on to the plate by the time I got it*
- I've tried a wide variety of meals and none of them have had any real taste, in fact many have been inedible – eg chicken curry was revolting, broccoli looked like wet grass*
- I'm concerned about what would be happening with my mother if I wasn't here – am not impressed by the treatment I have observed of other elderly people in this ward (patient's relative)*
- Choice could be better for vegetarians (this patient was served scrambled eggs while I was there which looked very dry and pale – she gave them 4/10) x 2*
- Not impressed at all*
- Combinations not good – e.g. can't get cauliflower cheese as a side dish, it is listed as a main dish; I like fish but it tends to be very dried up by the time I get it*
- The choice is good but the taste and appearance of the meals is very poor*
- The portions are often too large for me x 2*
- Can't get drinking chocolate at night as no facility for heating milk*
- Would like an individual teapot so the tea doesn't get too strong before I am served, and would love to have tea from a china cup/beaker*
- On an odd occasion I do not get what I've ordered*

- Would like more variety in sandwich fillings; can be difficult to get enough choice for soft diet*
- Would like supplements – e.g. flax seed*
- Prepared sandwiches are terrible; food often burnt e.g. shepherds pie; food generally terrible – better in Lurgan hospital*
- Would be nice if menu changed – always have same choices; I have my favourites and stick to them; evening meal is best*
- I get food brought in; I'm not a national and don't like Irish food – I just eat what I need*
- I'd like full fat milk, butter and sugar – not Splenda; menu is fine but food is not that good when you get it e.g. soup tastes like it has been sitting in an oven; only brown bread is wheaten; don't always get the sandwiches I ordered; fish is edible*
- After 23 days diabetics tend to be eating the same things over and over (though food allowed is nice); allergic to eggs and salads so limited choice for sandwiches*
- Cottage pie a bit dry; a little more effort would help*
- Dietician should advise on the individual type of food that should be eaten*
- Food reheated too often – arrives dried up / cremated*
- Breakfast choice could be better – e.g. boiled egg*

DHH – Positive Comments

- Meals not great but happy enough with what I get*
- Happy with food – no complaints x 8*
- I would like more salt! (patient understood why this wasn't offered!)*
- The staff put my soup / porridge in a mug, which is handier for me*
- I am always able to pick something I like from the menu*
- Can get large, medium or small portions*
- The staff are always encouraging me to eat and what I get is always very good*
- The staff serving the meals are so very helpful, they must have had special training x 3*
- I have only eaten a little food due to my illness but everything I have had has been excellent; the nurses are "tops", really friendly and helpful*
- The fish is usually good*
- I have been here since January and find everything excellent – food and standards of cleanliness; the staff are not paid enough for the work they do*

DHH – Negative Comments

- Meals reasonable enough but I'm getting diabetic diet and I'm not diabetic! (patient didn't know why and hadn't asked)*
- Breakfast and dinner ok but lunch is poor (patient had not touched his lunch)*
- Soup is a bit too salty*
- Some days food is better than others*
- Food is not always hot enough*
- The fish is not good – a bit plastic*
- More simple food would be good, I like very plain food*
- Cereal I would normally eat is not on the menu*
- I find the tables a bit awkward – too high*
- Taste of meals depends on the choice ordered, some are tasty, others are very bland*
- Sometimes the portions are too large for me*

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Both hospitals fared relatively well in this survey in terms of the meals provided to patients and the standard of the catering service generally. However, based on the data collected and the comments from patients, several areas for improvement have been identified:

- Ensure patients always get the meal they ordered - around one third of patients questioned at CAH said they did not.
- Look at methods of preventing food from drying up if being kept hot for long periods.
- Review menu to consider providing foods that do not deteriorate with being kept warm.
- Look at providing a wider range of sandwiches – such as a greater variety of breads and fillings – as an alternative to hot meals at lunch time, for example; these are relatively easy to prepare and store, and do not need to be kept warm.
- Vegetarian choices could be expanded.
- Make all patients aware that drinks, snacks or replacement meals are available if required.
- Make all DHH patients aware that small, medium or large portion sizes are available. Establish if this is the case at CAH and if so, make patients aware.



SOUTHERN HEALTH & SOCIAL SERVICES COUNCIL

Hospital Food Satisfaction Survey

Ward Number or Name _____

Male or Female patient? (please circle)

How many days have you been in hospital? _____

Date of survey _____

(Please tick ✓)

1. Is the menu easy to understand?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
2. Are you offered the kinds of meals you like to eat?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
3. Is there enough choice for: a) Breakfast? b) Midday meal? c) Evening meal?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
4. Are your special dietary requirements being catered for? (e.g. if diabetic etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No N/A
5. Are there enough menu choices to suit your religious beliefs?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No N/A
6. Is there enough choice of vegetarian or vegan food?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No N/A
7. Are you made comfortable before the meal service?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8. Are you given the chance to freshen up before the meal service?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
9. Are you allowed to eat your meal without disruption?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
10. Are the staff serving the meals friendly and helpful?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
11. If you need help with eating, is it available?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No N/A

What's On The Menu

12. Do you always get the meal you wanted from the trolley or ordered from the menu?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
13. Can you get a drink or snack when you want?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
14. If you miss a meal is a replacement offered?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
15. Do you think the portion sizes are adequate for you?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Poor
16. How would you rate;				
a) the taste of meals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) the temperature of food?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) the appearance of meals?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. How would you rate your overall satisfaction with the catering service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

THE 10 NURSING CARE STANDARDS FOR PROVISION OF PATIENT FOOD IN HOSPITAL

1. All patients admitted to hospital are screened for risk of malnutrition.
2. Following screening by nurses, patients who are identified as malnourished or at risk of malnutrition are referred for and receive a nutritional assessment appropriate to their level of need.
3. Patients who require intervention will have a nursing care plan devised, implemented, evaluated and renewed to reflect the patient's nutritional and physical care needs and which documents both the dietetic plan and the nursing care assessment.
4. Patients who require food and / or fluid intake to be monitored will have that activity carried out in a way that is informative, accurate and up-to-date.
5. Patients who require support with eating and drinking are clearly identified.
6. Patients who require support with eating and drinking receive assistance when it is required.
7. Patients will be served their food and allowed to eat their meals without disruption.
8. Patients receive their meals in a physical environment that is conducive to enjoying their food.
9. Patients are offered a replacement meal if they miss their meal for whatever reason and can access snacks at ward level.
10. The patient receives food presented in a way that is appealing and appetising.

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Southern Health & Social Services Council
Quaker Buildings, High Street, Lurgan BT66 8BB

Tel: 028 3834 9900 Fax: 028 3834 9858 Minicom: 028 3834 6488
E-mail: Reception@shssc.n-i.nhs.uk Website: www.shsscouncil.net

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