

King George Hospital – Patient Handover Case Study

Final Version

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1. King George Hospital and Patient Handovers

Summary. Over the past 12-months King George Hospital has seen its proportion of hour-plus patient handovers decrease from well above the national average, to account for just one percent in the most recent data. This case study outlines the measures and initiatives that have helped achieve this transformation.

Context: 1. About King George Hospital

- Located in Ilford, London, the hospital is part of the Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust.
- The hospital has 333 beds.
- Volume of patient handovers has grown steadily across the year, increasing from an average of 35 a day in early April to 43 a day in late November, excluding priority calls. (Fig 1. source: King George Hospital).
- This compares with an average of 50 patient handovers each day across England (source: NAIG/NDOG).

Context: 2. Hour-plus Handovers at King George Hospital

- The proportion of King George’s handovers taking an hour or longer tracked the average for England until the second half of 2022 (Fig 2).
- Between August and December 2022, the hospital’s hour-plus handovers increased sharply. They peaked at 38% in December 2022, while the national average was 23%.
- Since July the hospital’s hour-plus delays have dropped sharply, most recently accounting for 1% of all the hospital’s handovers: over the same time the national figure has increased, doubling from 6% in July to 13% in October 2023.
- For the first three months of 2023, the hospitals’ average handover time was around 50-minutes, 18-minutes slower than the national figure. Over the last three months of 2023, the hospital’s average handover time had decreased to 23-minutes, ten minutes faster than the national figure for that period (source: NAIG/NDOG).

Figure 1. King George Handover Volumes: April to December 2023 (weekly data, source KGH)

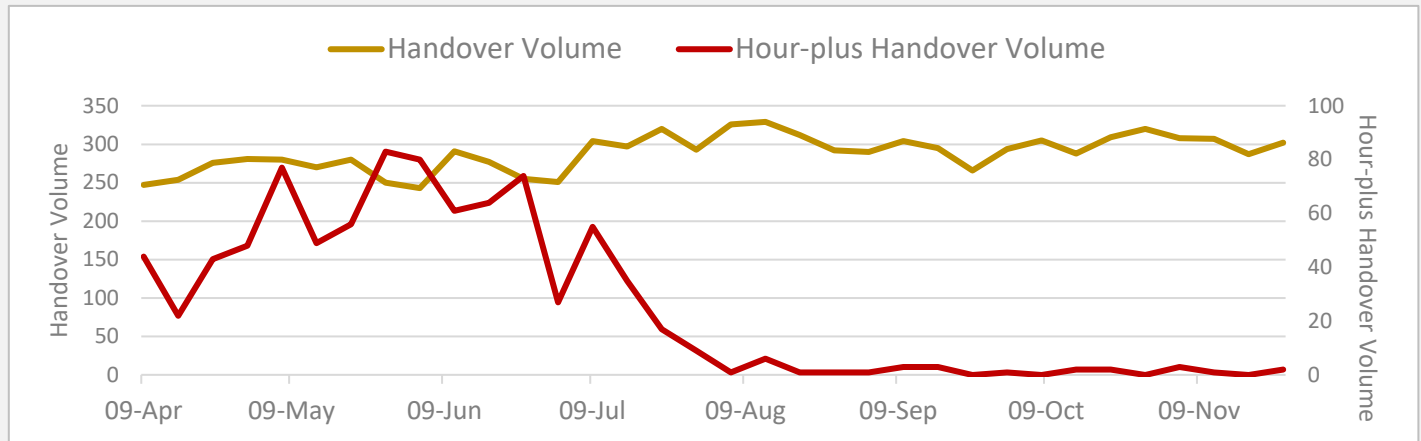
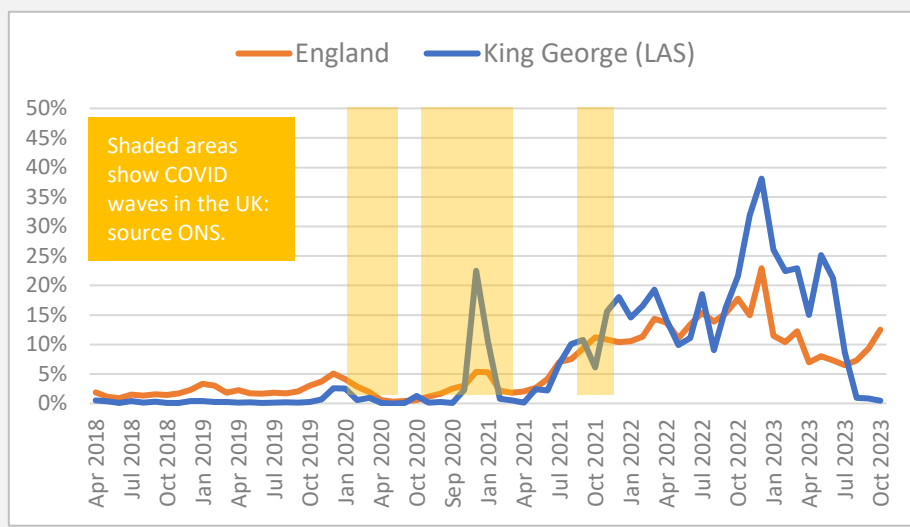


Figure 2. Proportion of Hour-plus Handovers: King George and England



Snapshot: Proportion of Hour-plus Handovers

Last 12 months (average)	
Eng = 11%	KG = 18%
↓	
Last three months (average)	
Eng = 10%	KG = 1%

Source: NAIG/ NDOG

2. Effective Interventions at King George Hospital

Summary. A number of ongoing initiatives have resulted in the reduction of handover delays at the hospital. These include close collaboration with the ambulance trust, pre-emptive information sharing, roles dedicated to improving patients' handover experience and integration of W45 into standard practice.

Culture and Leadership

- The hospital has recently appointed a new Managing Director who has embraced close working with the ambulance trust as well as taking a whole hospital approach – from admission to discharge – in reducing the risks held in the community, with LAS and within their ED.
- This has helped infuse a culture of collaboration and proactive intervention, designed to reduce patient handover delays while also focusing on the broader patient journey.

Communication

- Regular meetings between the hospital's MD and LAS' Associate Director of Ambulance Operations have fostered a collaborative approach to reducing delays, ensuring resources from both sources are deployed efficiently and directly related to demand.
- Early-alerts are communicated via a specifically created WhatsApp group, in addition the management teams from the emergency department and local ambulance station also meet on a regular basis to talk through issues and solutions.

Pre-emptive information sharing

- The hospital has adopted the Cambridge Model for rapid handover, combined with the approach used by Homerton Hospital (also featured in AACE's case studies).
- This helps ensure the hospital has a clear understanding of the patient's medical needs pre-arrival, resulting in a more effective handover once the ambulance arrives.

Dedicated role-allocation

- There are four (ICB funded) Improvement Managers now in place, dedicated to focus on improving patient handover experience.

Integration of W45 into standard practice

- The hospital has embraced the practice, launched nationally in January 2023, which sees complete and safe patient handover within 45-minutes of the ambulance's arrival at the emergency department.
- The hospital has also considered moving to a 30-minute target.

Focus on patient wellbeing

- The demographic profile of the population served by King George hospital means that they are - by necessity - reliant on a high degree of social care.
- Diverting local patients to hospitals other than King George will delay patient discharge, and reducing handover delays at the hospital ensures patients are treated in their local ED, that patient flow is improved and that individuals are discharged appropriately.

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