



# Customer Satisfaction Survey 2022



Final Report

By Opinion Research Services

October 2022



## Customer Satisfaction Survey 2022

### Opinion Research Services

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# 1. Executive Summary

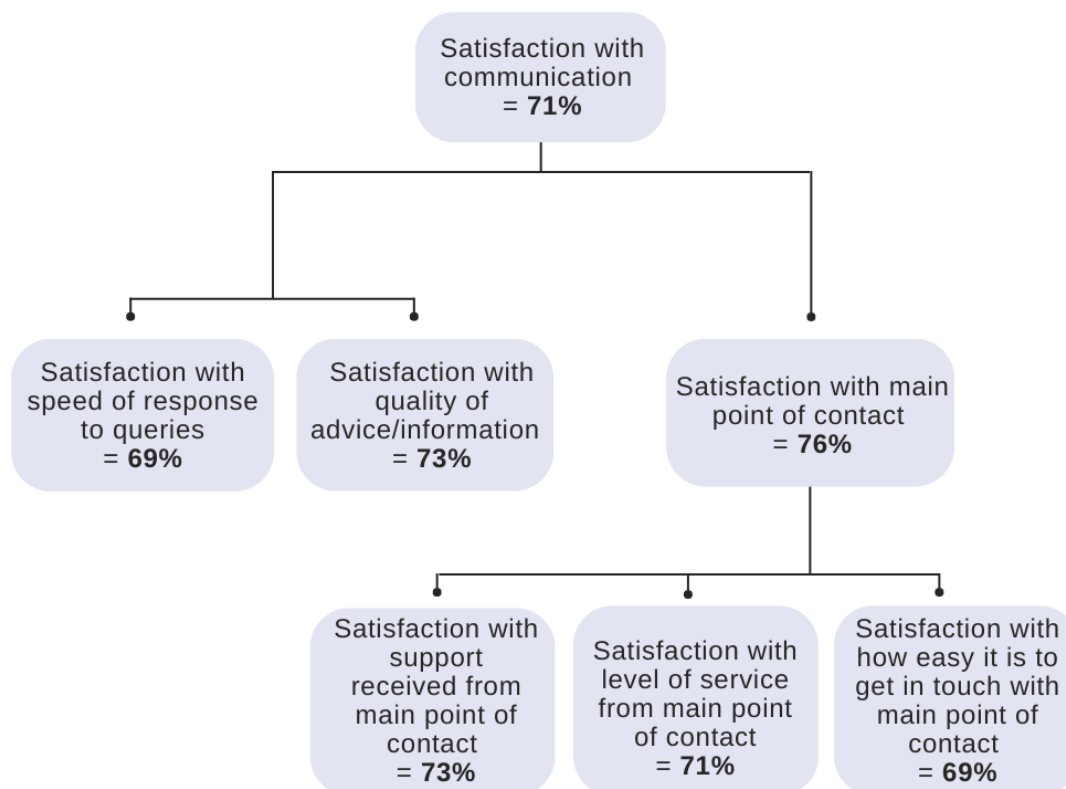
## Key Quantitative findings from Customer Satisfaction Survey

- <sup>1.1</sup> Wessex NHS Procurement Limited (WPL) appointed Opinion Research Services (ORS) to undertake a Customer Satisfaction Survey and follow-up in-depth interviews with the aim of gathering insight from WPL's customers about their experiences and views on WPL and the service it provides. The following paragraphs highlight some key findings; however, readers are referred to the detailed graphics for more details.

### Communication & Customer Service

- <sup>1.2</sup> The surveys' findings on attitudes towards WPL's communication and customer service show high levels of satisfaction among respondents. As Figure 1 shows, around seven in ten (71%) respondents were satisfied with WPL's overall communication. Respondents were particularly satisfied with their main point of contact at WPL with over three quarters (76%) satisfied.
- <sup>1.3</sup> Figure 1 also highlights some room for improvement in the speed of response to queries (69% satisfied) and the ease of getting in touch with customer's main point of contact (69% satisfied). Once customers get in contact with WPL there is a high level of satisfaction in the quality of advice/information (73% satisfied) and the support received from their main point of contact (73% satisfied).

**Figure 1: Satisfaction with WPL's communication, customer services, and main point of contact**

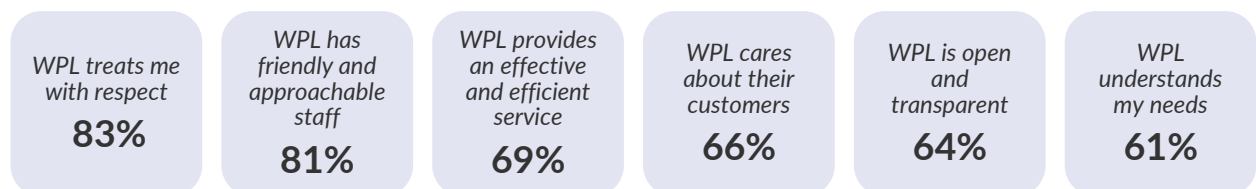


- 1.4 Respondents' satisfaction with some aspects of communication and customer service significantly varies depending on the respondent's customer group. Satisfaction levels of HHFT Requisitioners were significantly lower for the three statements about their main point of contact while UHS Requisitioners had significantly higher levels of satisfaction for two statements about their main point of contact.

### Opinions of WPL

- 1.5 Respondents were asked the extent they agreed with six statements about WPL. As Figure 2 shows, all statements received over 60% agreement. "WPL treats me with respect" and "WPL has friendly and approachable staff" gained the highest level of agreement with over four in five (83% and 81% respectively) agreeing with both statements.
- 1.6 The other four statements were agreed with by between 60% to 70% of respondents. The statement "WPL understands my needs" had the lowest level of agreement (61%) and highest level of disagreement (17%). This indicates WPL has some room to improve in making customers feel that they are listened to and that their needs are being taken into account by WPL.

**Figure 2: How much do you agree or disagree that... Percentage agreeing with each statement**



- 1.7 Respondents in Requisitioner roles were significantly less likely to agree with the statements "WPL treats me with respect" and "WPL is open and transparent".

### Change over the last 12 months

- 1.8 A quarter (25%) of respondents thought the service provided by WPL had improved over the last year while 16% of respondents thought the service had worsened. While it is positive that a higher proportion think the service is improving rather than worsening, most respondents (59%) thought the quality of the service has remained about the same over the last year.

**Figure 3: Compared to 12 months ago, would you say that the service you now receive from WPL is ....? Group responses.**



- 1.9 Those respondents working at UHS were significantly more likely to think WPL's service has improved over the last year while those working at HHFT are significantly less likely to think the service had improved.

### Overall satisfaction

- 1.10 The survey found a high level of overall satisfaction in WPL with around three quarters (73%) satisfied and only 13% were dissatisfied.

**Figure 4: Thinking about everything we've talked about today, overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with WPL? Grouped responses**



- 1.11 Those respondents working in HHFT were significantly more likely to say they were dissatisfied with WPL while those working at UHS were significantly less likely to say they were dissatisfied. This finding (combined with similar findings in other questions) indicates a worse opinion of WPL among HHFT employees compared to UHS.
- 1.12 When respondents were asked why they were satisfied/dissatisfied, nearly three fifths (59%) commented on topics related to communication and over a third on WPL's staff (35%). This reflects the importance of communication in influencing customer's satisfaction with the service.
- 1.13 At a more detailed level, the most common theme was about how WPL's staff were helpful, knowledgeable, and professional (25%). This was followed by comments expressing that they were generally satisfied with the service (22%) and then negative comments about how difficult it is to get in contact with WPL (15%).
- 1.14 When respondents were asked how they feel about WPL, a higher proportion of respondents said they would speak highly of WPL (46%) compared to the proportion that would be critical (11%). However, over two fifths (43%) of respondents would be neutral about WPL, potentially indicating a level of ambivalence or unfamiliarity towards WPL.
- 1.15 As with other results, respondents who work at HHFT are significantly more likely to be critical of WPL while those working at UHS are significantly less likely to be critical when describing WPL.

#### Key Qualitative insights from In-depth interviews

##### Responsiveness:

- 1.16 Depth interview participants were generally 'very satisfied' with the speed of response from WPL when they had a named contact, and a good working relationship with them, when they receive speedy responses and observe WPL being pro-active. Those who were 'fairly satisfied' felt that they get good responses from queries made to WPL and gave examples of effective support with procurement and training and swift responses. However WPL responses are not consistently swift, and sometimes it is a struggle to get hold of the right person. The perceived benefits to customers of good responses from WPL were saving time and money, reducing stress and building confidence in the support provided by WPL.
- 1.17 Participants who said that they were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' mainly complained that WPL was not consistently responsive; they were frustrated at not receiving answers to their queries or having to seek out urgently needed essential items themselves and commented that WPL lacks visibility. Weaknesses around invoicing and payments cause reputational damage as well as practical issues.
- 1.18 Those who were fairly or very dissatisfied with WPL's responsiveness to queries said that they struggled to get through to the right person on a regular basis or described a total lack of response to their queries, particularly regarding communications about orders and deliveries. Negative experiences of WPL's responsiveness included delays, escalations, loss of budget, and frustration at not knowing who to contact or how. Participants described how delays can negatively impact on clinical delivery and patients' health.

1.19 Depth participants gave a range of suggestions as to how WPL could improve their responsiveness, including:

- Responding to e-mails
- Having a WPL presence at divisional and departmental meetings to improve stakeholder engagement
- Notifying about items that are out of stock, and always offering alternatives when items are unavailable
- Supporting clinical staff who are struggling to navigate the system or need products to be unmasked
- Introducing IT based solutions (for example developing the electronic ordering system and a better online directory)
- Communicating more effectively by, for example, having dedicated contacts and notifying staff about changes of e-mail addresses
- Increasing clarity on responsibility for service contracts

### Communication

1.20 Participants who were satisfied with WPL's communications cited that WPL gave clear responses, maintained continuity of service, provided a named contact, and gave regular updates. Other benefits of good communication included WPL responding effectively to questions, using Docusign, offering support in communicating with suppliers, being 'ahead of the game' on a COVID Booster campaign and providing alternative product information. Participants identified the benefits of good communication to be improved learning and speed of working; effective risk management and financial reporting; increased understanding and reduced stress.

1.21 Participants who were less than satisfied complained of finding themselves in a communication 'loop'; not having ever met key colleagues in stores; slow responses, and not having someone at WPL with whom to discuss issues and concerns.

1.22 Participants who were dissatisfied with communications mainly complained of a 'total lack of response' or described serious ongoing issues with the payment of invoices and a lack of clarity, pro-activity and forward planning. The negative impacts were wasting time and money and causing frustration. Participants complained of holding on to patients for months while waiting for equipment and delays in payment creating reputational harm.

1.23 Participants suggested a number of ways to improve communications, including speaking to customers instead of relying on e-mail; providing named contacts for specific tasks; providing regular updates; improving WPL's organisational visibility; providing more clarity about required actions, immediate acknowledgment of enquiries, updates on the expected time of arrival of deliveries, informing of any issues arising with orders; having a presence at meetings, and taking ownership of issues when problems arise without those issues first having to be escalated.

### Understanding needs

1.24 Participants in the depth interviews who agreed that WPL understands their needs identified their reasons. WPL focuses on best value, has experience, expertise, an understanding of internal processes, customer needs and the patient journey, is quick to respond in identifying needs and requests, has supportive staff in the stores and WPL staff are present in meetings. All of which creates confidence in the service provided by WPL, results in efficient and swift procurement, generates cost savings and reduces patient stays in hospital.



- 1.25 Those who gave less than positive responses to the survey suggested a need for closer working between senior management in HHFT and WPL; the need for pro-active responses when items are unavailable; for clearer communication; fewer automated e-mails; for more training or support with using ordering systems and clearer instructions when actions are needed.
- 1.26 Examples of negative experiences of WPL's understanding of customer needs, and the resulting impacts of were: receiving unclear e-mails; dealing with a 'faceless entity'; taking time to chase items, resolve issues and unmask items and staff losing their places on training courses. These issues generate significant levels of stress and frustration and reveal that WPL lacks an understanding of particular customer needs including those working in virtual wards or those who commission and organise staff training.
- 1.27 Participants were asked for suggestions on what WPL could do to build upon and improve their understanding of customer needs. These included the following:
- Practise 'common sense' in communication; clearer instructions and responses
  - Better training and support for requisitioners
  - Training WPL staff on the specific needs of different customers
  - Build an 'urgency rating' into ordering systems

### Service Provision

- 1.28 The majority of depth interview participants thought that service provision had remained consistent, a third felt it had declined and a couple suggested they had seen an improvement. Participants who felt there had been a decline attributed this to broader national supply chain issues, but several participants also felt that the quality and regularity of their communication with WPL had declined over the previous 12 months.
- 1.29 Suggestions on how to improve service provision largely echoed suggestions already made including improving communications; allocating named contacts to customers and providing clearer guidance on procurement and updating catalogue prices. Other suggestions were for pro-active flagging of contract opportunities; increased engagement with stakeholders, WPL involvement in organisational strategy; increased staffing and IT based solutions.
- 1.30 Participants identified the elements of WPL's service provision they consider most important to retain as their 'personable service'; their expertise; their experience in procurement; their knowledge; good stock management and swift payment of invoices.

### Perceptions of WPL

- 1.31 There was a fairly even split between depth interview participants who would speak positively, negatively or neutrally about WPL.
- 1.32 Those who would speak positively have confidence in the team, their skills, professionalism; financial competitiveness; communications skills; responsiveness; visibility and for making life easier for their customers.
- 1.33 Those who were less positive about WPL felt there is room for improvement in responsiveness or were aware that not everyone in the Trust receives a good level of support from WPL.
- 1.34 When asked what WPL could do to be spoken of more highly, participants suggested the following:
- Speed up response times
  - A more personal approach

- Consistency of service provision across Trusts and different departments within Trusts
- Better organisational visibility
- Improved training
- Better communication

## 2. Project Overview

### Background

- 2.1 In July 2021, Opinion Research Services (ORS) was commissioned by Wessex NHS Procurement Limited (WPL) with aims including:
- Measuring satisfaction with the service provided by WPL.
  - Understanding how WPL is perceived by its customers.
  - Understanding how WPL can improve its service delivery.

### Methodology

- 2.2 The research was conducted in two stages. The first involved a Customer Satisfaction Survey to quantitatively measure the opinions of WPL's customers overall and different subgroups of customers. This was followed up with 25 in-depth interviews to explore topics in greater depth.

#### The Survey

- 2.3 The Customer Satisfaction Survey was primarily an online survey, with data collected between the 8th of June and 22nd of July. 828 email invitations were successfully sent on the 8th of June 2022. This was followed up by three reminder emails that were sent out on the 15th of June, 28th of June, and 20th of July.
- 2.4 To fully maximise the response rate, the survey also used a telephone booster stage running from the 5th to the 21st of July. 236 (70%) responses were achieved in the online survey while 103 (30%) responses were gained by telephone giving a total number of 339 responses. This yields an approximate response rate of 41%. In ORS' experience, this is a very high response rate for this type of survey, which is likely explained by the combination of 3 email reminders along with the telephone booster stage.
- 2.5 Full details of the profile characteristics of participating customers are shown in the table below.

**Table 1: Response profile to the survey compared to sample**

Characteristic	Count	Valid %	Sample %
<b>Hospital Trust</b>			
University Hospital Southampton (UHS)	208	61	59
Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (HHFT)	131	39	41
<b>Customer Type</b>			
Strategic	87	26	37
Supply	47	14	16
Requisition	205	60	47
<b>Hospital Trust &amp; Customer Type</b>			
HHFT Requisitioners	87	26	19
HHFT Strategic	33	10	14
HHFT Supply	11	3	7
UHS Requisitioners	118	35	28
UHS Strategic	54	16	23
UHS Supply	36	11	8

## In-depth Interviews

- 2.6 At the end of the customer satisfaction survey, respondents were asked if they would be willing to take part in an in-depth interview for a more detailed discussion of their views on the WPL, 172 respondents said they would be willing to do so, and 25 of those participants were re-contacted to undertake a short depth interview, which referred back to some of their responses in the survey and explored the topic areas of 'Responsiveness', 'Communication', 'Understanding Needs', 'Service provision', and 'Perceptions of WPL' in a more conversational manner.
- 2.7 Depth interview participants were recruited to achieve a range of participants across Requisitioning, Strategy and Supply in both HHFT and UHS. Within each stakeholder group participants represented a range of satisfaction ratings with WPL based on their answers to overall satisfaction in the initial survey. Interviews took 20 minutes and were conducted by telephone or via Teams, according to the preference of the participant.

**Table 2: Spread of 'Overall satisfaction with WPL' amongst the 25 depth participants**

HHFT Requisitioners	HHFT Strategic	HHFT Supply	UHS Requisitioners	UHS Strategic	UHS Supply
Fairly satisfied	Very satisfied	Very satisfied	Very satisfied	Very satisfied	Very satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly satisfied	Very satisfied
Fairly dissatisfied	Fairly satisfied		Fairly dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied
Fairly dissatisfied	Fairly satisfied		Very dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied				
	Very dissatisfied				

## Structure of the Report

- 2.8 This report presents the quantitative findings and a selection of qualitative responses from the survey and the depth interviews. In terms of the qualitative findings, the responses reported here gave a diverse range of stakeholders the opportunity to comment in detail on the WPL's performance in many areas.
- 2.9 Verbatim quotations are used, in indented italics, for their vividness in capturing recurrent and representative or otherwise important points of view. Sequences of quotations in the text are typically from a range of contributors, not several quotations from a single person. As far as possible, by using quotations, we have tried to let the stakeholders speak for themselves.
- 2.10 In respect to the qualitative findings, the views expressed might or might not be supported by available evidence; that is, they may or may not be accurate as accounts of the facts. ORS cannot arbitrate on the correctness or otherwise of people's views when reporting them. This should be borne in mind when considering the findings.

## Interpretation of the Data

- 2.11 The study was not designed to provide a statistically representative set of results for all customers. As such, the quantitative results presented here have not been weighted and the report refers to 'respondents' rather than 'customers' when discussing quantitative data. Similarly, some subgroup results are based on low number of respondents and should therefore be interpreted with some caution.

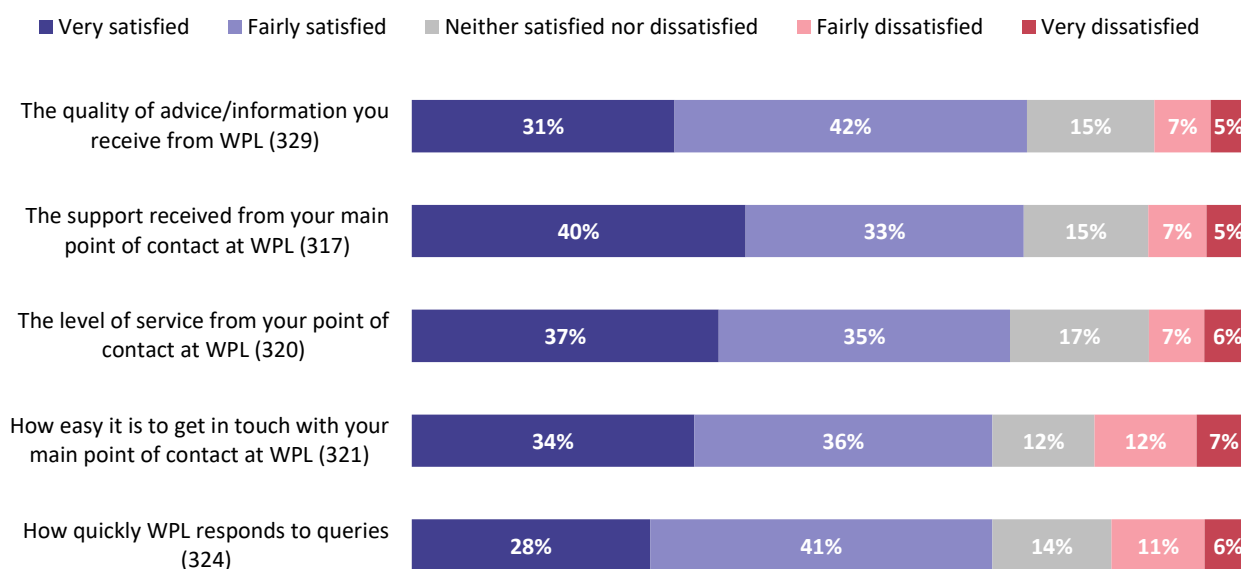
- 2.12 Significant differences between groups have been highlighted in the text throughout the report. Where differences between demographic groups have been highlighted as significant there is at least a 90% probability that the difference is not due to chance. If we were to redo the research 100 times with 100 similar sized samples, we would expect the same difference to be observed in at least 90 of those 100 samples. In effect, differences highlighted as significant are more likely to reflect actual differences and not be a product of random sampling variation.
- 2.13 Please note that where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to rounding, the exclusion of 'don't know' categories.
- 2.14 In some cases, figures of 2% or below have been excluded from graphs.
- 2.15 Graphics are used extensively in this report to make it as user friendly as possible. The graphics show the proportions (in percentages) of respondents making relevant responses, and, where appropriate, they indicate positive responses in blue, negative responses in red and neutral responses in grey.

### 3. Survey Findings

#### Communication & Customer Service

- 3.1 Figure 5 shows the level of satisfaction with five statements concerning different aspects of customer service. All statements had high levels of satisfaction (ranging from 69% to 73%).
- 3.2 The statement with the highest level of satisfaction was concerning “the quality of advice/information” (73% satisfied), while the lowest level of satisfaction concerned “How quickly WPL responds to queries” (69% satisfied).
- 3.3 While all statements had similar levels of satisfaction, two of the statements had notably higher levels of dissatisfaction. These were “How quickly WPL responds to queries” (17% dissatisfied) and “How easy it is to get in touch with your main point of contact at WPL” (19% dissatisfied). Both these statements concern the ease of communication with WPL rather than the quality of the communication.

**Figure 5: Overall, thinking about your experience of WPL over the last year, to what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the following...?**



#### All respondents (Base numbers in brackets)

- 3.4 Table 3 overleaf shows the significant variation in the level of satisfaction across the five statements. Of particular note, is that the customer group HHFT Requisitioners were significantly less likely to be satisfied with three of the five statements. In particular they were less likely to be satisfied with the statements concerning their main point of contact.
- 3.5 On the other hand, UHS Requisitioners were significantly more likely to be satisfied with two of the five statements, namely: “the support received from your main point of contact” and “the level of service from your point of contact at WPL”.
- 3.6 Respondents working at HHFT were significantly less likely to be satisfied with two of the five statements while respondents working at UHS were significantly more likely to be satisfied with those same

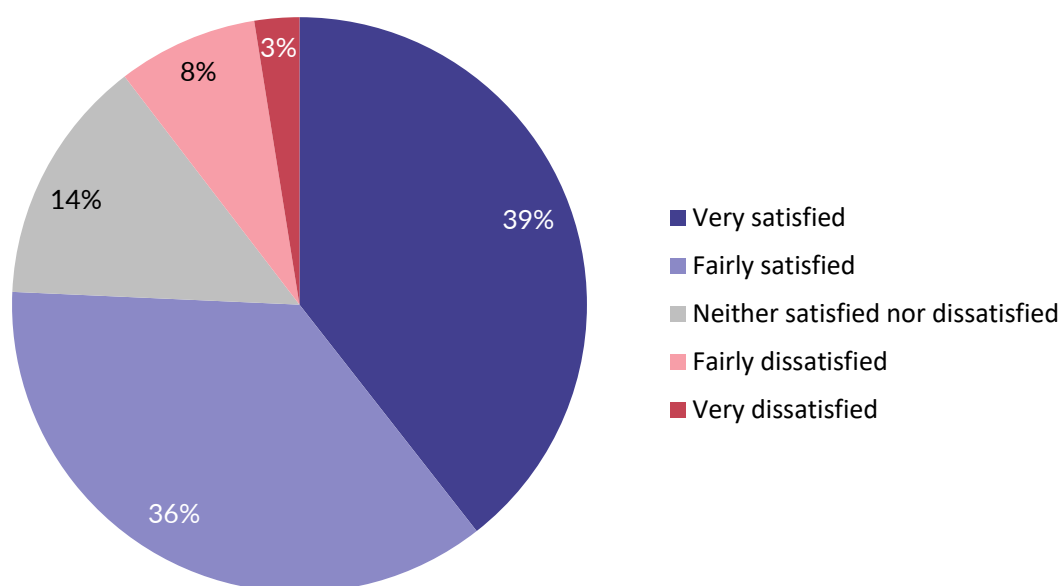
statements. This significant difference in Hospital Trust is primarily driven by different levels of satisfaction among those in Requisitioner roles.

**Table 3: Overall, thinking about your experience of WPL over the last year, to what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the following... Significant differences in the level of satisfaction**

	Significantly Higher Satisfaction	Significantly Lower Satisfaction
The quality of advice/information you receive from WPL		
How quickly WPL responds to queries		
How easy it is to get in touch with your main point of contact at WPL		- HHFT Requisitioners
The level of service from your point of contact at WPL	+ UHS Requisitioners + UHS	- HHFT Requisitioners + HHFT
The support received from your main point of contact at WPL	+ UHS Requisitioners + UHS	- HHFT Requisitioners + HHFT

- 3.7 Figure 6 shows the overall level of satisfaction with customers' main point of contact. In all, around three quarters (76%) of respondents were satisfied with their main point of contact, while a tenth (10%) were dissatisfied.
- 3.8 HHFT Requisitioners had the lowest level of satisfaction at 72% while HHFT Supply had the highest level of satisfaction at 82% (although this was only based on 11 respondents). UHS Requisitioners were significantly less likely to be dissatisfied with their main point of contact, which further supports the findings of Table 3.

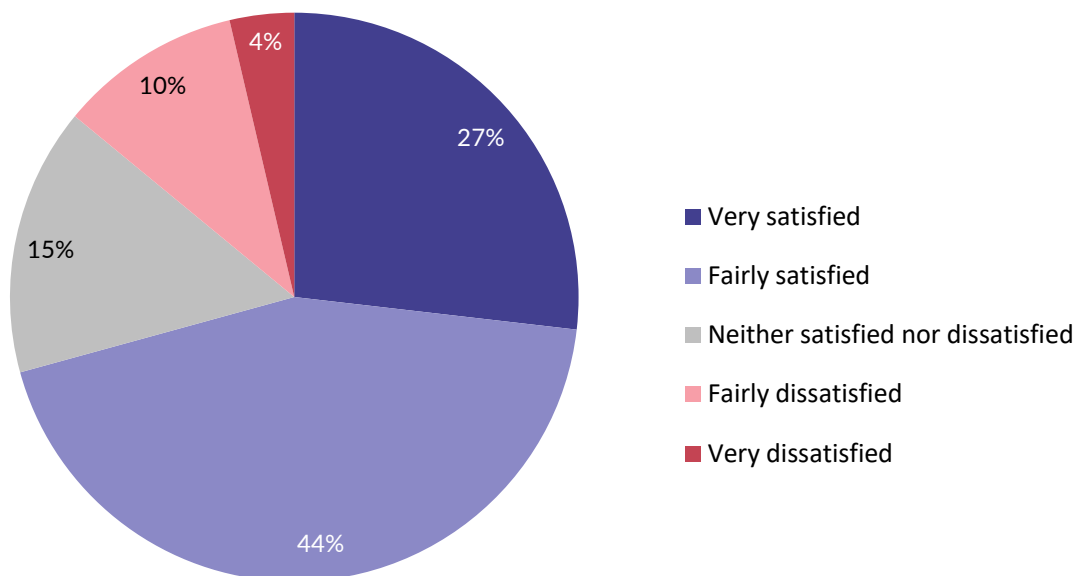
**Figure 6: Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your main point of contact at WPL?**



**All respondents (Base = 317)**

- 3.9 Around 7 in 10 (71%) respondents were satisfied with WPL's communication (including over a quarter, 27%, that were very satisfied). 14% were dissatisfied (with only 4% being very dissatisfied) and 15% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

**Figure 7: Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall communication from WPL?**

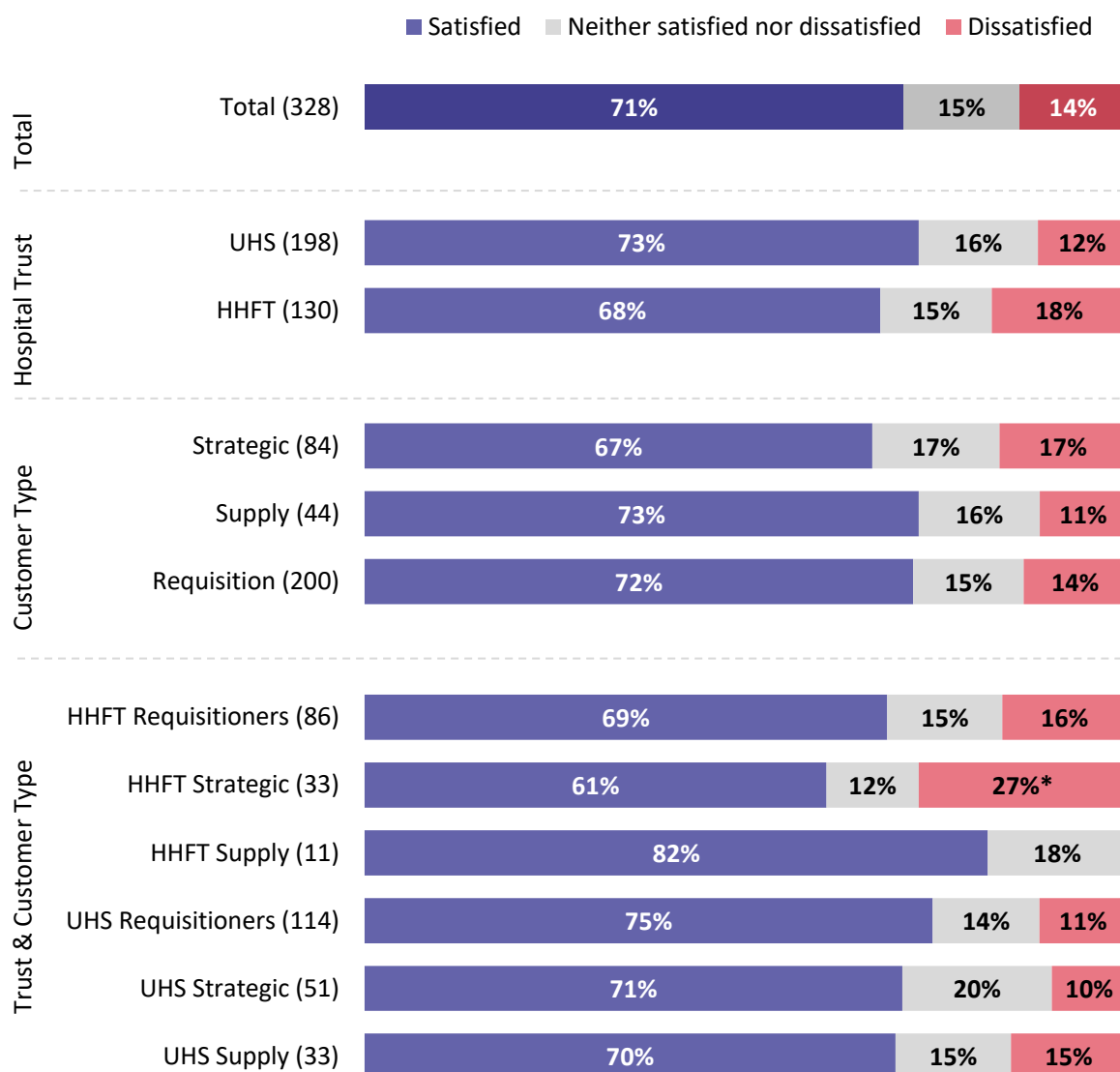


**All respondents (Base = 328)**

- 3.10 Figure 8 overleaf shows this result broken down by subgroup. Looking at the result by Hospital Trust, HHFT respondents had slightly lower levels of satisfaction (68%) compared to UHS respondents (73%). In terms of customer type, those respondents with Strategic roles had slightly lower levels of satisfaction (67%) than those in Supply (73%) or Requisition roles (72%).
- 3.11 The only statistically significant difference, however, was HHFT Strategic customers who had significantly higher levels of dissatisfaction in overall communication (27% dissatisfied) than the overall level (14% dissatisfied).



**Figure 8: Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall communication from WPL? Result by subgroup**



**All respondents (Base numbers in brackets). The \* symbol indicates a result is significantly different from the overall level.**

#### Qualitative insight - Responsiveness & Communication

- <sup>3.12</sup> The 25 depth interview participants were asked to comment further on the responses they had given in the survey around responsiveness and communication.

#### Responsiveness

- <sup>3.13</sup> Just under half of the 25 depth participants had responded with very, or fairly satisfied with regard to WPL's responsiveness in the survey. Where respondents were very satisfied it was generally because they had a named contact, and a good working relationship with that individual. They also mentioned speed of response and pro-activity (which one respondent felt had considerably improved over the last couple of years).

*If I have any questions the people who help with the procurement are quite easily accessible. In the last couple of years, it's been a lot better, because before it would just be people at desks in procurement and it was really difficult to get them and get access to them. (HFFT Supply)*

*I can pick up the phone and I can speak to [named contacts] anytime, they're always available to take calls and they're always on emails as well. We're almost next door to them, so we can pop in there; we're in and out of there most days as well. (HFFT Supply)*

*We work quite closely with them. Every day I'm emailing them about something. They're very responsive, I think we've got a really good set up. But we procure a lot. We've got a dedicated person basically, and we get good support from that. (UHS Strategic)*

*The other day I contacted them and said, 'I want to look at some furniture for the ward. Can you recommend any companies?' Literally in under a day, they'd responded with a couple of companies. (UHS Supply)*

*I put in a request to the buy-in team about three days ago. They replied within an hour. They said, 'Have a look at this, and this. What do you want? We'll go back and look at all the alternative suppliers'. They did that for me. I'm now just waiting to hear about the actual company with price and quotes. Then I'll have all the information just to quickly put on to the Oracle. (UHS Supply)*

- 3.14 Those who were 'fairly satisfied' felt that they get good results from queries made to WPL, but that responses are not consistently swift, or that sometimes it is a struggle to get hold of the right person.

*There have been a few occasions where I've had to prompt a response, particularly if it's a product I'm quite low on stock on anyway and I need another idea of what I can get hold of. Then I've had to prompt to follow up, chase a little bit. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*It can be quite difficult to sometimes get hold of the stores team down there, or to get hold of the order code. But generally, I'm able to resolve the issue within a couple of days. Some products can be challenging to try to get unmasked. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*Sometimes when you need a quick answer, it's not always easy to identify the person to get the answer from. (HHFT Strategic)*

- 3.15 Specific examples of good responsiveness included having a key contact, supporting an individual who was new to their role, swift responses, adapting the process so that a senior manager did not have to request the same information again the next time round, going out of their way to work with partners in the Trust to cover an urgent shortfall in stock and good support with a large energy procurement programme:

*I was in charge of a lot of digital transformation so using procurement a lot. In a case like that where you have a large single programme of work, then we settled quite quickly into a routine of there being one key contact for a programme, so that was very helpful. (HHFT Strategic)*

*I was new to the organisation at that point, and she came down to the office and had a face-to-face discussion with me, walked through every single element and then was available constantly for any follow up queries and even chased me, so she was brilliant. (HHFT Strategic)*

*If I've had to sign something off which I wasn't quite sure about, they come back really quickly with answers. Recently they came back with an answer and then said, 'Actually on reading this, I can see why you needed to ask that question so I will make sure it's clear from the paperwork so you don't need to ask next time'. So, that responding to feedback. (HHFT Strategic)*

*We were unable to get a supply of a certain item from Basingstoke, and Ian had to work around and get urgent emergency orders coming though so he was ordering them into the Winchester site to*

*support the Basingstoke site and sending small orders across each day. That was invaluable. (HHFT Supply)*

*The big thing I'm doing at the moment is with an energy procurement programme, and we've got tens and tens of millions of pounds of procurement programme with three suppliers. We're getting clarification through daily, so we'll get stuff that's sent to them and then they're sending it through to us and picking stuff up. There's a whole range of things where I get a pretty good response. (UHS Strategic)*

- 3.16 The perceived benefits of a good response rate from WPL for customers were mainly around saving time and money. Some participants also mentioned reducing stress and building confidence in the process, or the benefits of having a named contact and a 'personal touch':

*It's huge because procurement is a risky business. If it goes wrong, then it can cost you a lot of money, a lot of delays and a lot of issues. It's invaluable being able to run things past and get some clarification about whether something is the appropriate thing to do. (UHS Strategic)*

*It's saving that time. It's getting the product or a similar product in here quicker because I can then order it quicker. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*You waste no time thinking about who you have to contact, and you waste no time explaining what's going on to three different staff members. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*It just saves time. Things speed up, and you can resolve whatever it is quickly and move things along. Responding quickly means everything in the process hurries along and doesn't get delayed. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Confidence with regards to the procurement method ... If a query crops up during the tender stage you can direct them back through the Delta portal, so that everybody who is bidding for it gets the same information back. When we get tenders through then it's to do with providing the tender reports that go with the request for the order to be raised to the actual contractor. So, it's the whole-process support. (UHS Strategic)*

*For me, it's having confidence that something is being dealt with. You know that if I've raised a query, I will get an answer. If it is something to do with the stock level, they will look at the alternatives. The confidence raising is very high because I know that they will try and find a suitable replacement, and they will discuss it before they introduce it. (UHS Strategic)*

*It was the personal touch and the level of reassurance knowing that when I wasn't sure of something that was that important, someone would take the time to come and see me and walk me through each element; to be there as a whole hand-holding exercise throughout to make sure it was done correctly was brilliant. It was probably the best experience I've had. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Our board has been concerned about the need to go to a single tender because we've run out of time. So WPL pro-actively looking ahead to flag, 'We're going to need to do something about this now, or else we're going to run out of time to run a proper process' is important. It has become clearer that actually WPL has a really important role to play in that. In an ideal world individual managers and contract holders would know when their contract is going to expire. But actually, it's a very small part of everything they're doing, so WPL holding the ring on that can be really helpful. (HHFT Strategic)*

- 3.17 Where respondents said that they were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with WPL's responsiveness, it tended to be because they felt that responsiveness was variable. One expressed frustration that WPL does not respond when unable to answer a question, not even to say, 'We don't know', which would be more helpful than silence. One described having to walk from ward to ward to find urgently needed

essential items and one strategic manager described WPL as having, “A total lack of visibility and a really unclear directory.”

*It varies. Either very good interactions or very bad ones. I've had one set of receipts going around and around for months and I keep trying to receipt it, and they keep putting it onto my SBS as, 'this needs receipting' and I've said 'I've receipted it once, I've done all this. What do you want me to do?' And I just get the same message. It never gets resolved, even though I've emailed numerous people. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*I generally get responses from WPL, although they don't necessarily fix the issues we have. I'm able to get timely responses out of varying people – they just don't help anything ... Or point me to a different person. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Sometimes I don't hear back because they don't have any answers, but they don't say they don't. (UHS Supply)*

*Trying to chase issues with them and not getting anywhere, trying to get onto the website and trying to get on to various links and things and just getting nowhere. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*If we try to contact the guy allocated to our ward, he's difficult to locate. If I escalate it to his boss or somebody higher, they are very responsive and do fix the problem. But it is difficult to actually contact them to get it sorted. It's frustrating when nobody's responding to your phone calls. (UHS Supply)*

*It is frustrating; we can't take care of the patients we need ... Then you're having to wander around different wards to find out if they've got what we want. (UHS Supply)*

*I found a couple of contacts within WPL who I find quite helpful, but on the whole, I am not entirely sure who I should be contacting about certain things and I don't get responses for everything, so it's a bit mixed. I think it's a total lack of visibility and a really unclear directory. The way we have worked with some other services, we have business partner type relationships; we meet every Tuesday and people come to the meetings and bring stuff, but we have never really had that with WPL. (UHS Strategic)*

- 3.18 Respondents described problems around invoicing and payment, the impact of which they considered to be harmful to reputation (with suppliers not being prepared to commit to delivery until unpaid invoices have been resolved):

*My issues have been when the invoices have been put on twice. I've come across this four or five times and it leads to absolute headaches. It's on there twice, but it looks to them like two different things. So, then they won't pay it because it looks like it's been invoiced for too much. ... And it leads to us not getting things that are important for people's samples. With the service invoice for microscopes quite often the suppliers have to add on extras because there's been a teaching head that hasn't been quoted for or they need new bulbs or a couple of little parts for repairs, minor repairs and servicing. Sometimes they have to ask me for more money, so I adjust the purchase order. But then because there's been some sort of issue between the purchase order and two invoices, even though they've been receipted, even though they come to the same amount, the invoice doesn't get paid. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*Quite rightly, suppliers hold on to things when you haven't paid their invoices and you can understand them doing that. So, I can see where it's coming from, but we don't get notified if we're on hold. That's one of the issues. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

- 3.19 Those who said they were fairly or very dissatisfied with how responsive WPL are to queries also said that they struggled to get through to the right person on a regular basis or described a total lack of response to their queries, particularly communication about orders and deliveries. One respondent complained

that they had not been trained to use the procurement system, and another described submitting orders on large capital purchases which were not processed by WPL, an issue exacerbated by the fact that they were not notified and had waited some time expecting the items to arrive. Another described the loss of a significant amount of budget due to capital purchases not being processed, and not being notified within the same financial year.

*I think in part because if it's a general query, I have no idea who to go to. So, my default is just to email random people until somebody gets back to me because I don't know who I'm meant to be liaising with, because I don't know who my link person is. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Previously we could pick up the phone and call and you can't do that anymore – the only communication you have is via email ... and that doesn't do the job all the time. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*For some reason, WPL didn't actually process capital purchases that had been approved; the paperwork was done and requisitions raised. But nobody told us. So, we didn't know they hadn't been ordered until after the end of the financial year, by which time it was too late because the money wasn't approved through to the next financial year. (HHFT Strategic)*

*I have had no training on Oracle or whatever it's now called, SBS. Anything I've learnt, I've picked up on the way. What I need is a person to come and show me how to do it. They're using some sort of other system that I don't understand the language of. It's because I'm a clinician I suspect. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*There is a serious lack of communication around when items will be delivered. Someone should let us know if they are backlogged and that there's a possibility I won't be getting the order in. It happens an awful lot. I've looked at my spreadsheet, and there are at least five orders outstanding which I made two weeks ago. I've had no sight of them. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*They take quite a long time to come back. I know they're probably pushed for time, the same as the rest of us. But when you're sat there and you know something's got to be here within a certain time for the training course, you need a slightly quicker response. It really can vary. I can get a response within a couple of hours, or I may not get one for a couple of days. (UHS Requisitioners)*

- 3.20 Some examples and impacts of a less than positive experience of WPL's responsiveness included delays, escalations, loss of budget, frustration at not knowing who to contact or how and spending time sorting out issues created by WPL rather than focusing on their own work. One participant complained that they were not informed when e-mail addresses had been changed, and others identified a need to be trained:

*It means I can't do my job. I have been trying to order a fairly significant piece of kit for the ward, and I have been trying to order it for about six weeks. I keep being bounced around between the manufacturer and WPL and back and forth and it's like, 'Why can't you two speak to each other? Why do I have to send you a message and send you a message? That's your job and not mine.' (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*If I order something and it's not coming, I need to find out why it's not coming so that I can report back to my seniors if we're really starting to run down. No one can really tell me how long it's going to be, where it is in the system, or how long I've got to wait. (HHFT Supply)*

*I've got emails saying, 'This is approved, the CPW is done bish, bash, bosh. We're waiting for it to be delivered'. Then we find out it wasn't even blinking ordered, despite the fact the requisition was raised. Someone in WPL decided not to process the order. Now I've lost that money. (HHFT Strategic)*

*That's actually causing serious delays in your ability to treat and deal with patients. (HHFT Strategic)*

*It impacts me all day, because I'm having to do that instead of doing my other work. I send an email expecting it to be dealt with, then it comes back, and I get the same email and I'm like, 'Oh god, can't this just be dealt with at some point?'. It's unclear sometimes who to send things to. They'll send me some things, then change the addresses. So initially it was WPL enquires, then they changed it to HHFT enquires and no one told us that, I only found that out in a conversation I had with someone in procurement. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*One example was stoma bags for a patient; no action on our requests until I explain that this patient cannot be treated at home without them. I was asking where else I could get some and being told, 'We don't know what you need', so I tell them again what I need and nothing. Until I escalate it. (UHS Supply)*

- 3.21 Participants described how delays can materially impact on clinical delivery and be detrimental to their patients' health. One participant thought that the reason for this might be the nature of the service they provide and a lack of understanding of the needs of a 'virtual ward':

*A couple of people might have gone blind. We had to refer them on to different hospitals, because we were holding them while we were expecting a delivery of a particular type of laser that's used in emergency eye care, but it never came. So, we were holding on to patients that we shouldn't have been holding on to, because we were told it was imminent but then it was weeks, and weeks, and weeks. It's just frustrating. (HHFT Strategic)*

*If these items aren't going to turn up, I do need to find alternative suppliers. But if they won't turn up for two or three weeks I can try and get in touch with the supply team here. Unfortunately, I very rarely get a reply. It's very difficult. If I can't get the equipment for our labs, then there is a shortage and with stock not being available for long amounts of time, in those laboratories there are incredibly urgent specimens that need to be processed. Unfortunately, there have been times where we have actually had to wash out our own equipment and use it again. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*Possibly it is because we're a virtual ward. If we were a physical ward, we could just go to another ward to find what we needed. And perhaps we don't come up on their radar. But we have been running for 12 years now. Cost and time, and we may have to reschedule visits to patients. Patients may have to go without care or be admitted. (UHS Supply)*

- 3.22 Depth participants gave a range of suggestions on how WPL could improve their responsiveness: respond to e-mails; provide WPL presence at divisional and departmental meetings; improve stakeholder engagement; always offer alternatives to unavailable items and support clinical staff who are struggling to navigate the system or need products to be unmasked:

*They could respond to the email that I sent for starters. If I say I need to speak to someone then I expect at least an email back to say, 'Someone will be free at this time today or tomorrow and will call you. What's the best number please?' There probably is a training need but their go-to is to send you a 90-page document to read and I just haven't got time to do that in order to do this one thing. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*We have divisional and departmental senior management meetings, and it would be good to have some sort of periodic WPL conversation with us because we spend a fortune through them ... and to know who is in charge of what for example. (HHFT Strategic)*

*It may be overkill but IT have a service desk model which is a smarter way of communicating and you can get click links and things like that and that works well – that could work with WPL. (UHS Strategic)*

*There's always room to improve the stakeholder engagement and to increase visibility. One thing is how can WPL engage in what's coming up in the future and in the organisation? I have a huge project*



*pipeline, but actually we don't really talk to WPL about that. Improvements in that conversation. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Be less hit and miss with providing the information of alternatives, always coming back with them. Don't just say 'I haven't got it'. The ones that work well are the ones that say 'I haven't got it, but I've got this'. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*I guess just for them to be a bit more aware of the pressure we have within our departments for the ordering. And maybe we don't all have access to the catalogue or know where to get the information from, so just to be a bit more supportive. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*What's available to the Trust should be available on Oracle. You shouldn't be having these issues with not having something unmasked that the procurement team and top up team can actually just go and slap a code on. If you don't have access to the top-up barcode system, you're a bit stuck really. (UHS Requisitioners)*

- 3.23 Some suggested IT based solutions, for example developing the electronic ordering system, and a better online directory.

*Maybe develop electronic order, so we can click on the things we need and also we'll be audited if they get sent to us or not. Also, we have stuff we don't really need on the ward that he's ordered, and I've kept them in the storeroom for him to take them back because it's something we don't want, but they're sat there for weeks. (UHS Supply)*

*[A directory on the website] might help, so you can call what broadly looks like the right number. They might feel that their description of a person's portfolio is perfect, but actually to someone who is less familiar with the jargon of procurement it might not be so obvious to them who they need to talk to. (HHFT Strategic)*

- 3.24 Others emphasised the need for better communication; having dedicated contacts, notifying staff about changes of e-mail addresses, clarity on responsibility for service contracts and notification about items that are out of stock. One participant felt that WPL staff need more knowledge about the items they are trying to source.

*I'd like them to have a dedicated email person or department that I could email and get feedback from. Beforehand I've had to try and go through what customers go through to get their invoices paid. There is nothing I can get hold of, nobody I can phone. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*When they make changes to email addresses for general inquires or anything like that, inform the users in some way. So, anyone who's on the system, inform them to say, 'Please use this in future' or send an updated list out. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*Another big, massive factor for me is service contracts. Every single time we have a piece of kit that needs something, I have to raise an order. I'm like, 'Where are the service contracts?' We've got massively expensive pieces of equipment, and nobody seems to be responsible for managing their maintenance. I spend hours trying to track down who I'm meant to be speaking to about getting this piece of kit serviced because it's broken, and I've got clinics I have to cancel because this piece of kit is broken. And nobody can tell me, which is the really annoying thing; nobody seems to know. (HHFT Strategic)*

*If an item I have ordered isn't in stock, it would be wonderful to know. Just to get some sort of idea that item isn't turning up in the next week or two. With NHS Supply Chain, I really expect the item to be with me within hopefully a week. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*It would help if they had more knowledge of the stuff they're being asked to source, which is difficult with us because we are so varied. And a bit more knowledge of the equipment that's used, and why it's used. (UHS Requisitioners)*

## Communication

- 3.25 Over half of the depth participants scored themselves as very, or fairly satisfied with WPL's communications in the survey. The reasons they gave included WPL giving clear responses, maintaining continuity of service, providing named contacts, and sending regular updates.

*On specific procurement activities their communication is good; responsive, timely and clear. Sometimes I suspect that I find things out because people know me rather than it being a bit more structured though. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Particularly where we're doing tender processes, we get very clear responses although sometimes it's in the language of procurement and commerce. They do a standing report into the finance and investment committee for competitive procedure waivers, and they responded to the request to improve that reporting, which they did pretty quickly, and it's landed well. I'm pleased with the start-up communication. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Just because of the quick responsiveness to returning to enquiries. Or if there's an issue with the system and I don't know how to do it, they get back to me very quickly. (UHS Supply)*

*It's good continuity through the team. If it's not [named individual] it will be one of his team and you can get the same response from the whole team. (HHFT Strategic)*

*They always inform us of any issues they have, any constraints in terms of staffing. Although they provide the distribution service for the IV fluids, we also cover sickness and holidays and things like that as well. As soon as there's an issue, they inform us, and we'll work around it. (HHFT Supply)*

*Because we have a named person ... then you can make them part of the team so you can build on that relationship whether it's email communication or verbal communication. It's effective. If I don't know who to go to, then I know I will be signposted. (UHS Strategic)*

*We get a monthly update as well as specific things on topics. We have a group meeting where we go through all of the procurement exercises and have an update. (UHS Strategic)*

- 3.26 Specific examples of the benefits of good communication included support when there's something a requisitioner doesn't understand, the use of Docusign, support in communicating with suppliers, being 'ahead of the game' on a COVID Booster campaign and providing useful information when an alternative needs to be found for an essential regularly used item.

*A lot of the time they communicate well. Sometimes though I don't understand what they're talking about. I'm probably not trained very well with this stuff, and I probably need to learn more...so they help me through sometimes. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*DocuSign is a good process for signing off things, and it's so much better than when we used to have bits of paper that were all floating around and putting into mail .... So as a communication mechanism, that's really good. It's really easy, works every time, and things are expedited faster. And they've amended it so where I electronically sign, there is a little comments box, which is really helpful. (HHFT Strategic)*

*A good example is an item we use in paediatrics. I'd ordered them only to find they were on delay, and they were chasing them up for me. It was getting to a stage where even consultants were asking what the delay was. They came straight back and said, 'I have spoken to the company, and the company*



*has said that they don't deal with them, but this is another alternative'. Done and dusted. (HHFT Supply)*

*We're just about to launch a COVID booster campaign and we were asked to make sure there were consumables to administer the injections at all three sites. I reached out to WPL and they informed me that it had already been done. (HHFT Supply)*

*Heparin syringes - something you use on a daily basis in a critical care unit - we had to change what we were using. They give you that information, but also with a, 'This is the alternative product we're going to use'. (UHS Strategic)*

- 3.27 Participants considered the benefits of good communication to be; learning and an improved speed of working, risk management, financial reporting, increased awareness and reduced stress:

*It helps me to learn, and to make my orders, and move faster. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*You're well briefed on any risks and issues, anything that's going to hold you up or anything that's going to have a potential impact on what you're trying to do, either the timescale or the cost. So having really good and regular communication from them on whichever procurement project it happens to be keeps a project manager or programme director well informed. (HHFT Strategic)*

*With the FIC reporting, because our Finance Investment Committee is shared by the non-execs it makes that report get received, people note it and there are very few questions. (HHFT Strategic)*

*It just means we've got awareness. If I'm aware of what's going on, I can look at it from a sustainable procurement perspective as well. (UHS Strategic)*

*It just makes my life easier, which then in turn benefits the staff here and the patients. If I know I'm going on annual leave and can get it sorted out in a quick fashion, I know my patients have the equipment they need while I'm away. (UHS Supply)*

- 3.28 A couple of participants gave a neutral response (Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied) on WPL's overall communication and the remainder said that they were fairly or very dissatisfied with it. Reasons for being less than satisfied included being in a communication 'loop', having never met key colleagues in stores, the 'pressure which everyone is under' resulting in slow responses, and an unmet need to access someone at WPL to discuss issues of concern.

*I've got this constant thing going around in the loop and I've put things into SBS to give comments and I just keep getting a repeated email back saying, 'this has not been receipted' and there's no comment against it. Rather than someone emailing me saying, 'This is what you need to do to get it cleared'. I'm trying to do the best I can. I've emailed procurement and everyone else to say 'I've done this, what do you want me to do? As far as I'm concerned, it's cleared'. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*I don't see [our store manager]. Also, he never has introduced himself because he's new. I've never met him ... Also, this store should be reviewed once a year to ask, 'Do you still need this amount of things?'. Because if we are constantly ordering items, that means we actually need to increase the store order we've got. (UHS Supply)*

*It's just the speed of response is the main thing. I know they're under pressure as well, so I don't blame the individuals as such, but I think it's the whole system. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*I'm not a digital native, and I do better being able to speak to a person. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

- 3.29 Examples of poor communications given by participants included very similar feedback to that on responsiveness: a 'total lack of response' in the main. One participant had also experienced some serious

ongoing issues with the payment of invoices, whilst another described a lack of clarity, pro-activity and forward planning.

*Not telling me they've not ordered something. It's a lack of action. I don't know what I don't know, until I find out I don't know about it. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Around contacting people to get an account set up ... they can be a bit sluggish. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*A consistently poor response (UHS Supply)*

*I had a really negative experience spanning over a number of months on the payment side of things. We really struggled over a really long period of time to pay invoices on time and as a result we were accruing interest to those suppliers, and I could never seem to get anybody to take it seriously or actually come down and get involved in what was going wrong. We would address the non-payment at the time, have it paid and then the next month we would revisit the exact same issues. It was extremely frustrating and no matter who I went to throughout that period, no one seemed to take the initiative as to why there was the problem. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Lack of clarity around structure and no clear links for us – no one attending regular meetings and no proactive sending of information to us (if we ever want to find out what's happening we have to contact them) and no part in forward planning. (UHS Strategic)*

- 3.30 The main impacts of a less than positive experience of communication were wasting time and money, and participants experienced high levels of frustration. They described the knock on-impacts for patients and surgical staff holding onto patients for months while waiting for equipment which had not been ordered for example, or having to hire equipment, despite there being a service contract in place. Where issues relate to payments to suppliers, a reputational risk was also identified as a barrier to procurement.

*Time. I'm having to push it all the time and I'm not getting responses. I'm saying, 'Have you sorted this? What's going on with this?'* (HHFT Requisitioners)

*Well, it just delays being able to get stock. Then you're either having to borrow stock from other areas or see how you can source getting that quickly. It starts getting very time consuming when actually you should be doing other tasks, and it should be a very quick process of, 'Right, I need to order this. Let's place the order. Done and dusted in five minutes'. But making the phone calls, searching for new codes takes a lot of my time. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*It's criminal. Capital funding in the NHS is refreshed annually, so you only have the money for a year. So, it's gone. I've lost £150,000 worth of kit that I did order last year that was never actually processed. (HHFT Strategic)*

*We are not saving what we could financially and so we are missing opportunities from that. That is probably the biggest issue for me. (UHS Strategic)*

*I've got massively pissed off surgeons that have held on to patients for much longer than they should've done because the order had been placed for this piece of equipment. Three months later we're still waiting for it, then we find out it was actually never ordered. There's no excuse for it in my view. We've had to rent pieces of equipment rather than just purchase them because they haven't been processed. Then just general frustration about the sheer amount of time it takes me to track down what I'm meant to do. I'm placing orders for a service that very possibly does have a service contract. I'm used to having a list of, 'These are the pieces of kit in my service, and these are the service contracts' but I don't have that. (HHFT Strategic)*

*We don't have the things we need to treat our patients. Which causes frustration and stress and means we have to rearrange our timetables. (UHS Supply)*

*It also did a lot of damage to our reputation with those suppliers. At the time we were about to enter into an additional contract with one of the suppliers for another mobile MRI van and they were very reluctant to do business with us initially because we still had quite a large sum outstanding and basically it was time dependent because we were getting external funding to fund it. They were very reluctant to enter into any additional contracts with us until that was resolved. (HHFT Strategic)*

- 3.31 Participants suggested a number of ways to improve on communications including WPL speaking to people instead of relying on e-mail, providing named contacts for specific tasks (e.g. deleting duplicate invoices), providing regular updates, and improving WPL's organisational visibility.

*Please just give us a contact for someone that can delete a duplicate invoice. That would make my life a hell of a lot better, and probably everybody else's. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*A weekly 'digest' or update could be really helpful. Communicating more widely to the hospital perhaps about how WPL structure themselves. Do they have people that deal with particular specialties? Even just a, 'Here's our organisation chart. Here are the people that look after you. Here are the telephone numbers and emails of these people' would be a help. I only know the people I know because I've dug around and found an email, or somebody has said 'try so-and-so because I emailed them once and they emailed back'. (HHFT Strategic)*

- 3.32 Many of the suggestions related to the very nuts and bolts of operational communication; more clarity about required actions, acknowledgment of enquiries when an immediate response is not forthcoming, updates on the expected time of arrival of deliveries, letting people know if there is an issue with an order or an invoice, being present at meetings, and taking ownership of issues when problems arise (without them having to be escalated first).

*Get back to me, respond to queries in a more prompt manner really. Actually say, 'You've got this. This is what you need to do to clear it and make it clear', because very often it's not clear what I have to do, it just says, 'This is outstanding' not, 'It's outside the remit, and something in the PO doesn't match so we can't do it'. It doesn't tell you what that is, you have to do it yourself. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*A priority is to let us, the people that order the equipment, know that the equipment is in stock and an ETA of delivery. Possibly if it was going to be over five days late, they could inform us that it's going to be five days late. If it wasn't in stock, if it was on backlog it would be great to let us know that this order won't be coming in for two weeks or so. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*Let us know if and when things have been ordered and know if they've been delivered. Even to get an automated e-mail showing an order has been placed would be good. (UHS Supply)*

*I would like them to come and check a list with me once every couple of weeks to see if things are ok. And find a better way of when we need extra items, they actually get delivered. I know they're having problems with certain items because of shortages everywhere. But it's frustrating when they don't get back to you. The response you get is, 'Well go and look somewhere else for it'. I haven't got time. Then the nurses ask where things are then you have to say, 'Well I'm sorry, we haven't got any. Where do you get it from?' (UHS Supply)*

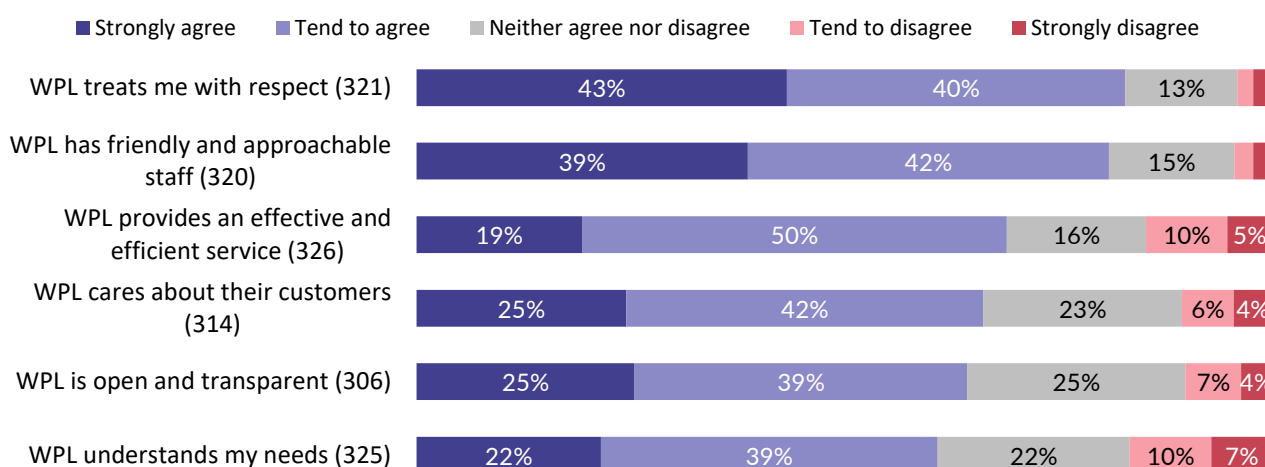
*Attend meetings, send information before it's requested and have click links. (UHS Strategic)*

*It just would have been good to have someone from their side take ownership of the issue. The fact that it had to be escalated through four or five different people all the way up to director level before anything happened was really frustrating. Also, no-one seemed to know from their side who the go-to person was to escalate to, which was bizarre. [WPL need] clearly defined lines of responsibility and have that communicated out to the Trust or at least a senior level in the Trust so when our team comes to us with issues we could say contact that person or this person. (HHFT Strategic)*

## Opinions of WPL

- 3.33 Figure 9 shows the extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed with six statements about WPL and the service it provides. The statement with the highest level of agreement was “WPL treats me with respect”, over four fifths (83%) of respondents agreed with this statement while less than a twentieth (4%) disagreed. “WPL understands my needs”, received the lowest level of agreement and the highest level of disagreement with around three fifths (61%) agreeing.

**Figure 9: How much do you agree or disagree that...**



### All respondents (Base numbers in brackets)

- 3.34 Significant differences in the level of agreement across the six statements are highlighted in Table 4. Those working in Requisition roles were significantly less likely to agree that “WPL is open and transparent” and “WPL treats me with respect”.
- 3.35 The statement with the lowest level of agreement: “WPL understands my needs” had no significant variation by subgroup indicating it is relatively low scoring across all the customer groups.

**Table 4: How much do you agree or disagree that... Significant differences in the level of agreement**

	Significantly Higher Agreement	Significantly Lower Agreement
WPL provides an effective and efficient service		- UHS Supply
WPL understands my needs		
WPL is open and transparent	+ Strategic	- Requisition
WPL cares about their customers	+ UHS	- HHFT
WPL has friendly and approachable staff		- HHFT Requisitioners
WPL treats me with respect	+ Supply + UHS Supply	- Requisition

## Qualitative insight - Understanding customer needs

- 3.36 In the survey nearly half the depth interview participants said that they ‘Strongly agree’ or ‘Tend to agree’ that WPL understands their needs, and this was because early communication had facilitated a good understanding of what was needed, because WPL is focussed on the core objective of ‘best value’, or thanks to WPL’s experience of the sector and expertise and an understanding of ‘the whole patient journey’.

*My experience of it means if we’ve had an early communication from them on something then they’re already going into that with good context, and they know what we need. (HHFT Strategic)*

*They do understand what we’re trying to achieve as an organisation which is to extract best value from the taxpayer’s money. The core objective, which is to secure best value for taxpayers - I would say they certainly get that core basic need. (HHFT Strategic)*

*They’ve got a lot of experience in our sector. They know what the estates project managers need. They’re open to trusting different frameworks we can use to speed up procurement. They also look for potential contractors to tend the list. They basically just take our compliance on for us really. They undertake all the due diligences .... You can ask for advice and you get good advice from people who have obviously been in the industry a while. (HHFT Strategic)*

*They understand the whole patient journey, and obviously how we’re all part the same machine, making sure there’s no issues be it with drugs or any of the consumables we get. So, they’re very patient focussed. (HHFT Supply)*

- 3.37 Participants gave specific examples of WPL understanding participants’ needs; responding to requests from colleagues outside the Trust, understanding the complexity of a digital ICU procurement exercise and the ‘added value’ of that, finding a swift route to market on a catheter lab project, and having a supportive member of staff in stores.

*We had a request from a nearby independent sector hospital that wanted to work with us and wanted to know about a particular product and whether we could do some supply and cross charging. WPL were able to step in and understand what was going on there brilliantly, and also get all that information for me. (UHS Strategic)*

*When we were doing a project on the digital ICU, it was good because early involvement meant they were able to understand the scale of what we wanted; they understood the complexity. They were able to help us administrate what was quite a complex procurement exercise, which also had quite a lot of ongoing impacts as well as just procuring and implementing the system. There were lots of things that we needed to understand about the added value of the system of the supplier. They were very good with that. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Probably something like the Basingstoke catheter lab project is a good example. It’s a particularly tricky one with tight timescales. They got a route to market quite quickly. (HHFT Strategic)*

*When I’ve had some issues, I’ve tried to speak to the guy that comes up for the other half of the department and get them to see if they’ve got any other codes. They’ve been quite helpful. There’s only so much you can do over the phone and through email. When the stores department are very busy, they’re not able to answer the phone, so you have to rely on something being sent via email. Actually, they just changed over to a different guy, and he seems very responsive to helping us so hopefully that relationship with him and his team will continue. (UHS Requisitioners)*

- 3.38 Participants identified the following benefits of WPL having a good understanding of customer needs: being present in meetings meaning so that matters do not need to be explained several times; better

procurement exercises; swift procurement; effective savings and reducing the time spent in hospital by patients. Several participants stated the importance of being confident in the support they receive from WPL.

*I think that was really important for us in this project and in other projects, actually having them around. It wasn't a passive relationship. So, it wasn't just them telling us something when something had changed or us going and asking them a question when they needed it. They were there in a lot of those project meetings. So, it's important because the amount of time you would otherwise spend explaining things to one another didn't need explaining because they were there in all the discussions. (HHFT Strategic)*

*It means we're able to procure quite quickly, so we're able to start quite quickly. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Being able to really help us make savings we need to make. (HHFT Strategic)*

*For us, it makes our lives a lot, lot easier, and obviously it reduces the amount of time the patient is in hospital. Every day in hospital costs a lot of money, and it's better for the patients once they're ready to get them out of the hospital. (HHFT Supply)*

*Again, just that confidence ... I don't then have to think about chasing someone as well. I asked for something, and they give me the information, and then with that information I can make the decision and respond to the original question. (UHS Strategic)*

- 3.39 A few participants gave a neutral response when asked how well WPL understands their needs, and the remainder gave negative responses. They gave the following reasons: a need for closer working between senior management in HHFT and WPL; the need for a more pro-active response when items are unavailable; for clearer communication and fewer automated e-mails. Some participants expressed a need for more training or support with using ordering systems and clearer instructions if action needs to be taken. One participant felt that WPL staff need a better understanding of the procurement needs in education and training, as they differ from other departments.

*They are all trying to manage really tight budgets and when it comes to savings they can be really helpful, or they try and drive that down which is good to see. The only criticism is I wish they would be a little bit more involved. I am not a procurement specialist but if someone would come in and have a look at things with us to be able to identify potential savings instead of having someone with no procurement experience to try and do it on the back of a fag packet. There needs to be a little more close working between the senior levels of HHFT and the senior levels of WPL. (HHFT Strategic)*

*If you're telling me I can't have it, give me something else because my need is obviously that I need that product or I never would've ordered it ... give us some more information about the deliveries that are coming in and where they've gone. That would save me a lot of time. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*If you want me to do something, clearly communicate it to me and I will do it. But don't just send me an automated email that says, 'This is out of range and can't be receipted or paid', the invoice ... It doesn't give me any information. I have to then go and do a lot of work in the background to find out what I need to do. If it was clear in the first place ... I could do it in a few minutes. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*As our ward manager said, 'If they came around and spoke to somebody and asked if there's anything we desperately need, that would be better', but ... we write it in a book for them. There could be 10 things on this list we haven't got, but we've got stuff we don't want. (HHFT Supply)*



*We're in parallel universes. I am a clinician and I have clinical commitments, and they are spreadsheets and all those things. Probably all I need to do is tick a box. But I need to understand. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*Because we are in education, sometimes when we want to pay something back as a one off, they don't quite get it that it's not quite the same as a supplier which they're going to be contacting regularly for a piece of equipment. This is like someone who's a consultant and it's a different thing entirely. They just need a bit more knowledge of the difference of procurement from an education side rather than a clinical side, and I don't think that gels quite often. (UHS Requisitioners)*

- 3.40 Examples of WPL's lack of understanding of customer needs, and the resulting impacts include participants being bombarded with unclear e-mails; having to deal with a 'faceless entity'; taking time to chase items, resolve issues and unmask items, and their staff losing their places on training courses, all of which generate significant levels of stress and frustration:

*They keep bombarding me with emails. I had three emails three weeks ago, two emails two weeks ago. It's still pending. My stock that I've ordered still has not arrived, then that makes me worry that that's because I haven't ticked something, or my supplier hasn't been paid and therefore that will have a knock-on effect. I'm expected to receipt the exact quantity shown in the invoice quantity ... But is that quantity received, quantity billed or hold quantity? I'm afraid that I don't understand, and I'm afraid I don't have the time to become an expert on the supply chain. The impact is that it worries me. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*It's just the frustration and added stress and the time I have to take out of my day to write another email to say, 'I don't know what to do about this – please, please, please' and then to try and phone. I have actually walked round to where a couple of them sit but they have the doors on security lock now and so you can't even go in there to speak to them. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*We have to end up ordering through external suppliers because the Supply Chain doesn't have the items available, or they aren't providing the goods. In terms of unlocking goods, as an example I had someone with haemophilia and they kept asking for a larger ice pack, and on the website there was a very small ice pack. They eventually managed to unmask this item for me because it was on the NHS within their catalogue, but it was difficult to do. And by that time, the ward had gone through another route with an external supplier and managed to get a larger ice pack. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*There are training courses and there are timeframes. If people have to get the course paid before people can attend then they're dillydallying about getting paid then people have lost their places on courses .... That can be an issue ... Someone has got a deadline where they've got to attend that course. If we don't pay for it, they can't attend that course. (UHS Requisitioners)*

- 3.41 Some participants felt strongly that WPL shows a lack of understanding of their particular needs; for example the needs of those operating virtual wards who have to travel some distance to scheduled appointments at patient's homes, and an urgent need for IVU kits in an acute surgical ward.

*They don't seem to understand the difference between us and normal wards. Our supply needs are urgent; we have to drive for an hour to some people's homes. That has to be scheduled, and if we don't have what we need for a call, it throws everything out, causing a great deal of disruption and cost and stress. (UHS Supply)*

*Just one example from Monday; I had six in an acute surgical ward, six IVU last me an hour. They don't understand the urgency of that request. We really needed those. It impacts on nursing time; it impacts*

*on quality of care for our patients, and often it's not safe because instead of working with a patient you're busy trying to locate stuff. (UHS Supply)*

- 3.42 Participants were asked for suggestions on what WPL could do to build upon and improve their understanding of customer needs. These suggestions are included the following:

#### **'Common sense' in communication; clearer instructions and responses**

*It's about having common sense. If I've ordered something, I need it or I need something. Just improve that communication. So, they say they're unavailable, but unavailable could mean they're not stocking it anymore at all, or it's coming back but it's not coming back in stock for three months. That would be helpful to know. Then it would stop me ordering the same products. If I know that item is gone, I'm not going to order it again and I'll take it off my list and put something else in its place. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*Ask me. So, if I've got an issue like that and I email someone, be clear in the response and say, 'This is what you need to do'. Or ask me if I need advice on what to do, because sometimes it's really not clear what they're asking me to do, and I have to go through finance and everyone else before I get to the point where I actually get things cleared. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*Let's just have a department we can contact who can sort this stuff out for us without having to go through our purchasing department to try and sort these queries out. And tell us when something is on hold, let us know it's on hold. Let the person who raises the requisition know that it's on hold. Without that feedback, we can't even start to engage with it. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

#### **Better training and support for requisitioners**

*Take over all my ordering or give me a person who will support me for a few orders so I can actually speak to them, share my screen and say, 'Show me what I'm meant to do here'. I've got other things I consider to be more suited to my skills. I have one colleague, but I'm the only one doing the ordering. There's nobody else doing it. It's not as if we can all sit down and say, 'Ooh if we press this button, what will happen?'. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

#### **Training WPL staff on the specific needs of different customers**

*They just need a little bit of training on the differences between the education department needs for services and supplies and the clinical side, because they are different. (UHS Requisitioners)*

#### **Build an 'urgency rating' into ordering systems**

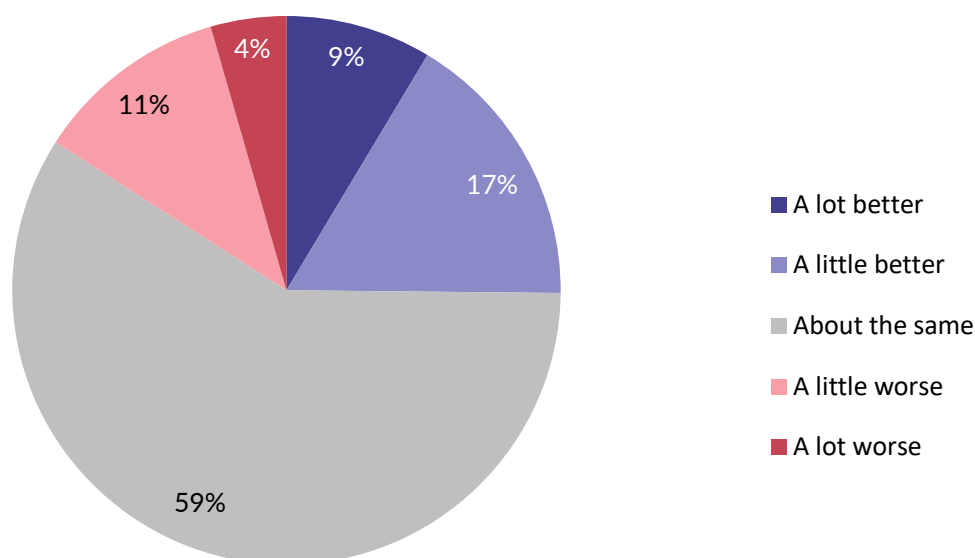
*If you managed to get a programme where you request what you need, maybe you can grade it on how urgently you need it. Something like that. (UHS Supply)*



## Change over the last 12 months

- 3.43 When asked if WPL's service had improved or not over the last year, a quarter (25%) of respondents thought the service had improved while 16% of respondents thought the service had worsened. While it is positive that a higher proportion think the service is improving rather than worsening, most respondents think the service provided by WPL has remained about the same over the last year.

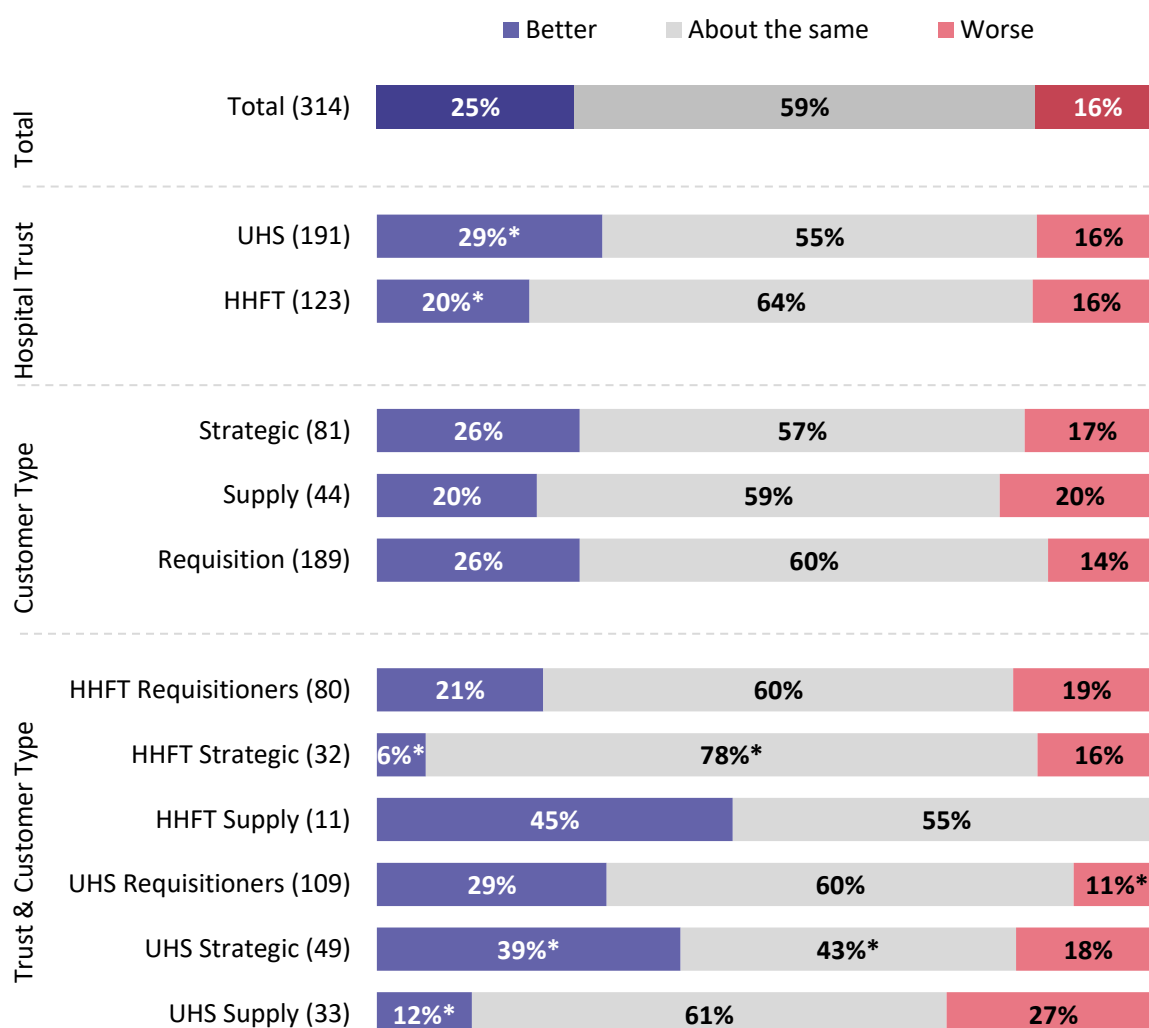
**Figure 10: Compared to 12 months ago, would you say that the service you now receive from WPL is ....?**



### All respondents (Base = 314)

- 3.44 Figure 11 overleaf shows the result when broken down by subgroup. There is a significant variation by Hospital Trust with those working at UHS significantly more likely to think WPL's service has improved over the last year while those working at HHFT are significantly less likely to think WPL's service has improved.
- 3.45 UHS Strategic respondents were significantly more likely to think WPL's service had improved over the last year while HHFT Strategic and UHS Supply respondents were significantly less likely to think WPL's service had improved.

**Figure 11: Compared to 12 months ago, would you say that the service you now receive from WPL is ....? Grouped results by subgroup**



All respondents (Base numbers in brackets). The \* symbol indicates a result is significantly different from the overall level.

## Qualitative insight - Service provision

<sup>3.46</sup> The Survey asked whether participants felt that WPL's service provision is better, worse, or the same compared to 12 months ago. Of the 25 depth participants, the majority said they thought that service provision had remained consistent, a third felt it had declined and a couple suggested they had seen an improvement. One participant had only been in post for six months and didn't feel they could answer.

<sup>3.47</sup> Participants who felt that current service provision was much the same as a year ago commented that:

*It was pretty good, and it's still pretty good. (HHFT Strategic)*

*It's consistent. Same people, same faces. No drop off in performance. It's just nice and consistent. You get a response when you need it. (HHFT Strategic)*

*In terms of how responsive they are it's about the same. In terms of their communication, it is worse, because obviously they're having to do the job of supply. (UHS Supply)*

- 3.48 Participants who felt there had been a decline in service provision attributed this in part to broader national supply chain issues, but there was also a strong message from several participants that the quality and regularity of their communication with WPL had declined over the last 12 months.

*I think it's just response time. Everywhere across the world suppliers have been disrupted, you can't get hold of things you want. That's definitely got worse since COVID. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*Because of not being able to get the items through the NHS Supply Chain; not being able to get the codes and the national stock availability issues that the whole country are having problems with. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*It is again that overall supply issue that every Trust is experiencing. I don't know whether there is scope to have a faster response to it or not. When I talk to colleagues and other organisations, they're all saying the same thing. We see it on the news; we've run out of blood bottles and that's an NHS issue not a UHS issue. (UHS Strategic)*

*Previously I had more contact with them and that has completely disappeared. I don't really know [why]. (UHS Strategic)*

*It has just become even more chaotic, and unresponsive, unless we kick off. (UHS Supply)*

*With SBS you could contact somebody; they could sort it out for you. But now, I haven't even got someone I could contact. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

- 3.49 Participants were asked to suggest 'One element of service provision to improve'. Suggestions largely echoed themes which had already been raised throughout the depth interviews, namely improving communications, updating catalogue prices, providing named contacts and offering clearer guidance. Other suggestions included the pro-active flagging of contract opportunities increased engagement with stakeholders and involvement in organisational strategy, increased staffing and IT based solutions.

### **Better communications**

*Better communications and paper/audit trail. (UHS Supply)*

*Just communicate better with the ward managers. (UHS Supply)*

### **Updating prices on the catalogue**

*Updates of the prices. I don't know how they do that.... I do tell companies to get in touch with procurement to let them know that the prices on a product have been updated. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

### **Clearer guidance / training**

*If they've requested something, give clear guidance on when it's expected to be resolved .... You need a clear idea, 'Ok so for that period I have to do this, I can do that'. Then after that response, you can say it's all done now. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*There are some things where I might need training, to get a bit more understanding of it. Or a help button to take you through to someone who can assist. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

### **Dedicated named contacts / a better way to find out who to contact**

*Give us a website, give us an email address we can contact that isn't designed for suppliers, isn't designed for purchasing. Something that's designed for following up our requisitions. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*The biggest thing is that visibility – I am the person who is responsible for x, y and z – this is my team – something clear for us. Looking at my diary today I don't have time to be chasing people or to find*

*the appropriate person. I should just be able to click on the link on the Trust intranet that says, 'This person is responsible for y' and 'this person is responsible for payments' and so on, that would be a game changer. (HHFT Strategic)*

#### **Pro-active flagging of contract opportunities**

*It would be the upfront flagging of contract opportunities and just contracts that are due to expire. The really pro-active - the really horizon scanning side. (HHFT Strategic)*

#### **Engagement with stakeholders and with organisational strategy**

*Engaging with the organisation in its strategy. You mentioned earlier stakeholder engagement and maybe improving on that a bit. (HHFT Strategic)*

*We've probably got some way to go to make sure we're working effectively as a contract managers group on both sides to make sure we really understand our roles and responsibilities properly. That's not supposed to be their side, that's the other contract manager in UHS. It's a joint endeavour. (HHFT Strategic)*

#### **Increased staffing**

*They probably could benefit from more staff, but that's right across the board. (HHFT Supply)*

#### **Better IT systems**

*Better IT Oracle systems that support and maybe link with the NHS Supply Chain. Then you're just not having to waste your time getting new codes and finding out if they're valid codes or not. (UHS Requisitioners)*

- 3.50 Participants were also asked the element of WPL's service provision they consider to be most important to retain. Several participants lauded WPL for their 'personable service', overall knowledge and expertise, experience in procurement, good stock management and swift payment of invoices.

#### **Expertise and a personable approach**

*For me, it's the human relationship bit. It's the fact we know the people and the people are good. I wouldn't want it to just become some anonymous corporate entity. (HHFT Strategic)*

*WPL knowing us all on first name terms. They know us all; they know our strengths and weaknesses. It's the way they treat us all as individuals ... Maintain that relationship with first name terms, speak freely and openly to us and we do back. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Just all of their knowledge, sharing their knowledge. (UHS Requisitioners)*

*The expertise and rapport, and managing the tender process is obviously quite key. (UHS Strategic)*

#### **Stock management**

*If I order something, when it comes it's well packaged. They don't have a short expiry date and they try to get you as long as possible. If it is going to be short lived or they've got me something that is going to expire in the next year, they'll make it known to me.. (HHFT Supply)*

*The supply and management of the IV fluids and the enteral feeds. (HHFT Supply)*

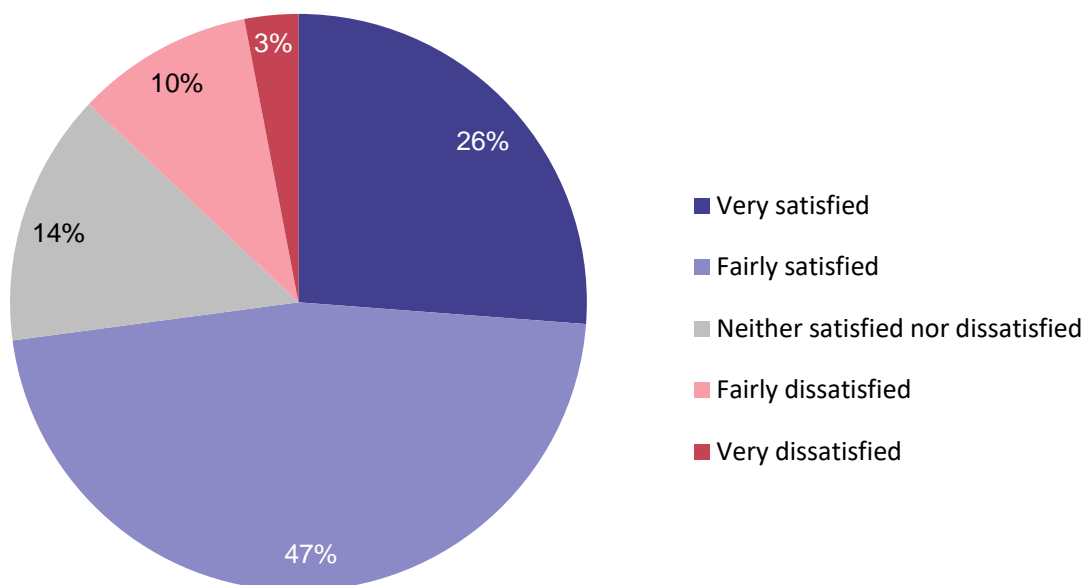
#### **Swift payments**

*I like the fact that when it goes smoothly, it's paid really quickly. When the delivery is being receipted, and the invoice matches the purchase order, it's all set up and seems to get paid quickly. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

## Overall satisfaction

- 3.51 Respondents were asked, at an overall level, how satisfied they were with WPL. Figure 12 shows a high level of satisfaction with around three quarters (73%) of respondents satisfied with WPL. Only 13% were dissatisfied (including 3% who were very dissatisfied) and 14% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

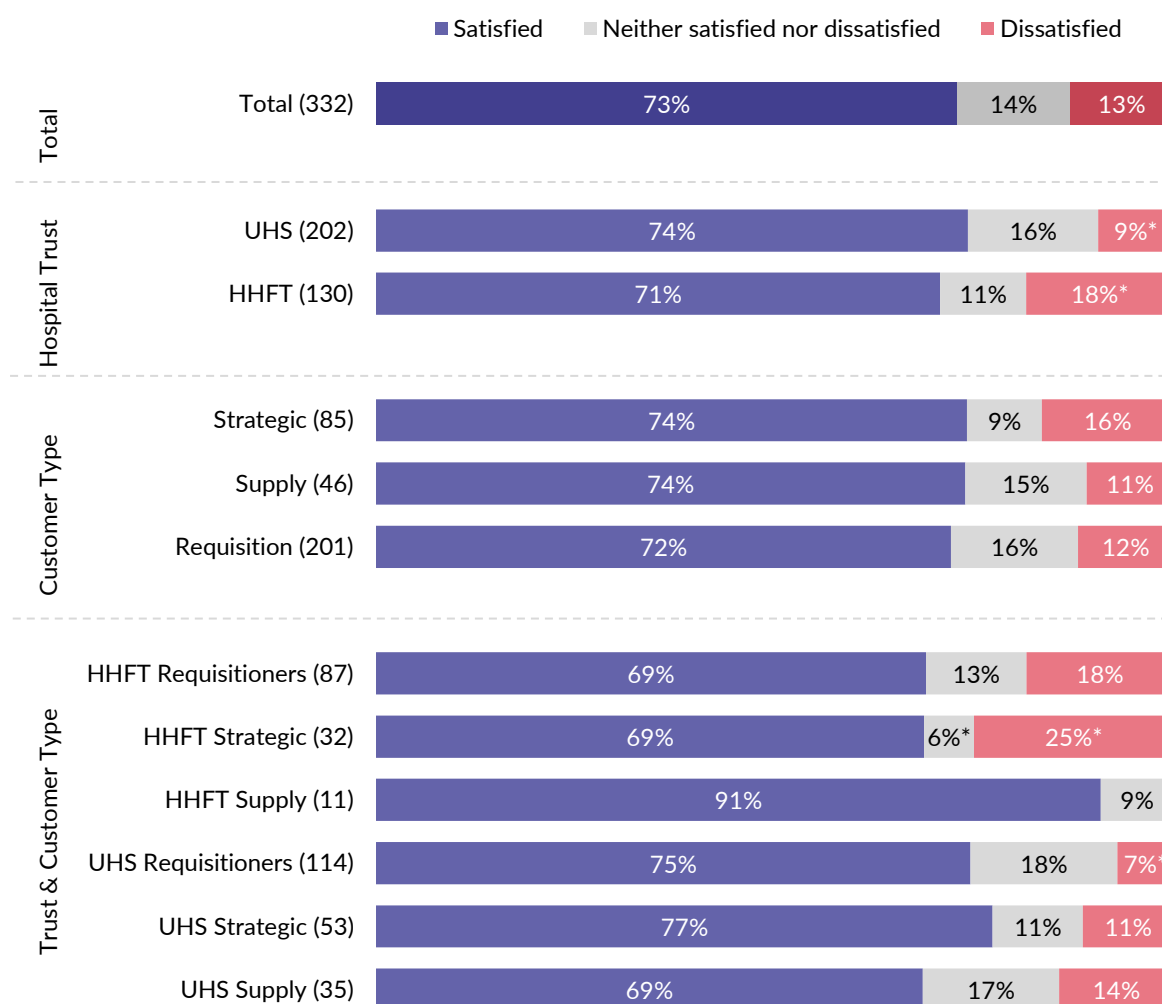
**Figure 12: Thinking about everything we've talked about today, overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with WPL?**



### All respondents (Base = 332)

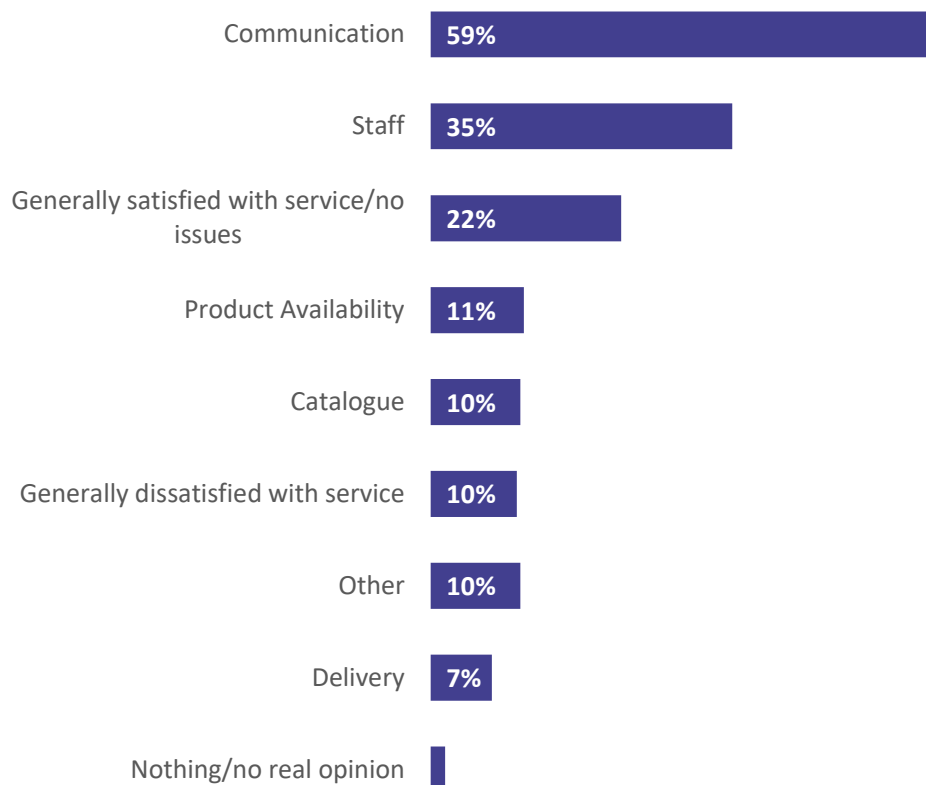
- 3.52 Looking at Figure 13 overleaf, while there are no significant differences in the level of satisfaction, there are some significant differences in the levels of dissatisfaction. In terms of Hospital Trust, those respondents working in HHFT were significantly more likely to say they were dissatisfied with WPL, while those working at UHS were significantly less likely to say they were dissatisfied.
- 3.53 Those respondents in the HHFT Strategic group had significantly higher levels of dissatisfaction, while UHS Requisitioners had significantly lower levels of dissatisfaction.

**Figure 13: Thinking about everything we've talked about today, overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with WPL? Grouped responses by subgroup**

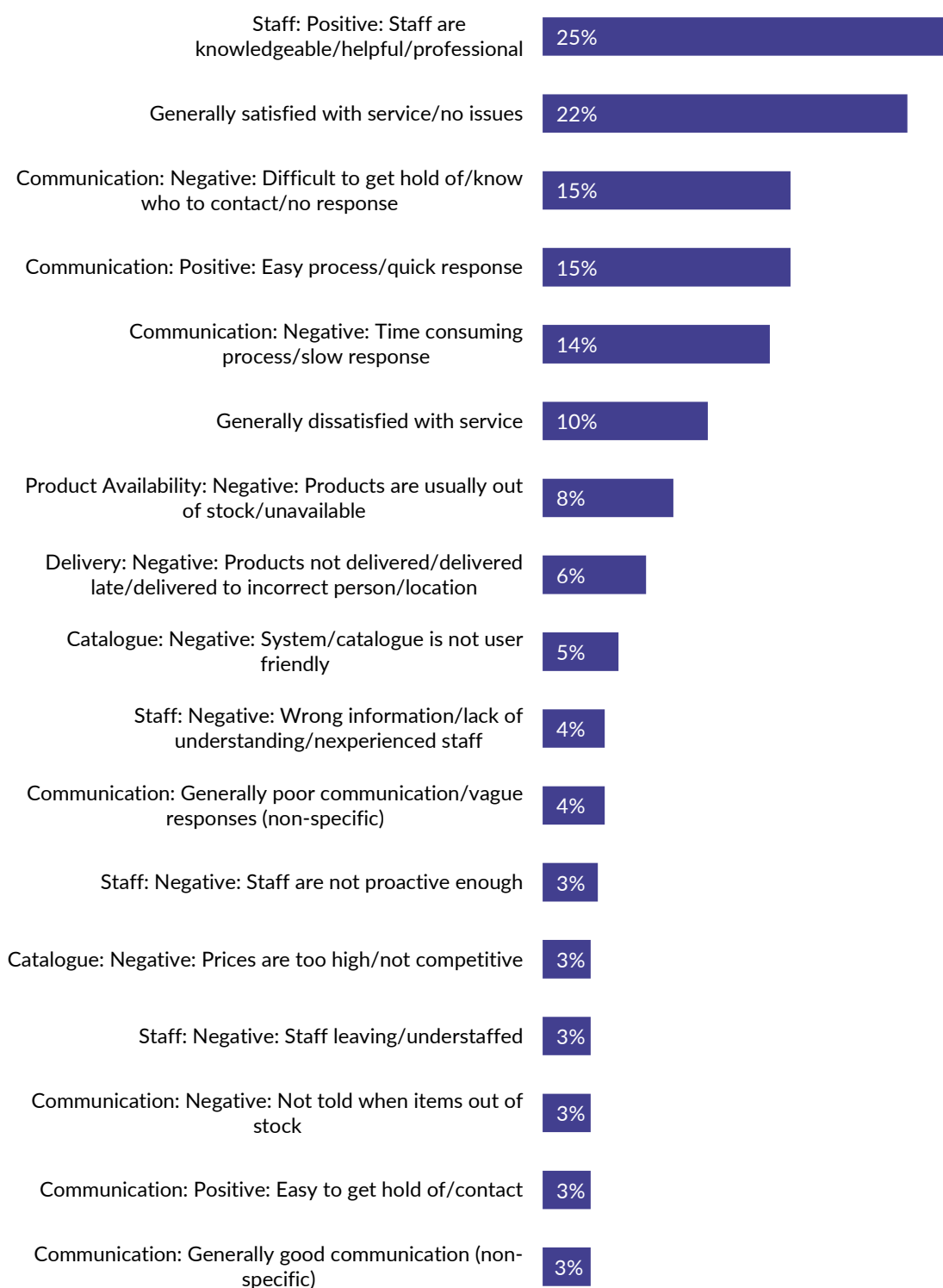


**All respondents (Base numbers in brackets). The \* symbol indicates a result is significantly different from the overall level.**

- 3.54 Respondents were asked a follow-up open question to better understand why they were satisfied or dissatisfied. Figure 14 shows the responses grouped into general themes. As shown, the majority of comments (59%) concerned topics relating to communication, this was followed by comments about WPL's staff (35%) and then comments expressing that they were generally satisfied with the service / had encountered no issues (22%).

**Figure 14: Why do you say that? General themes****All respondents (Number of respondents – 242, number of responses – 400)**

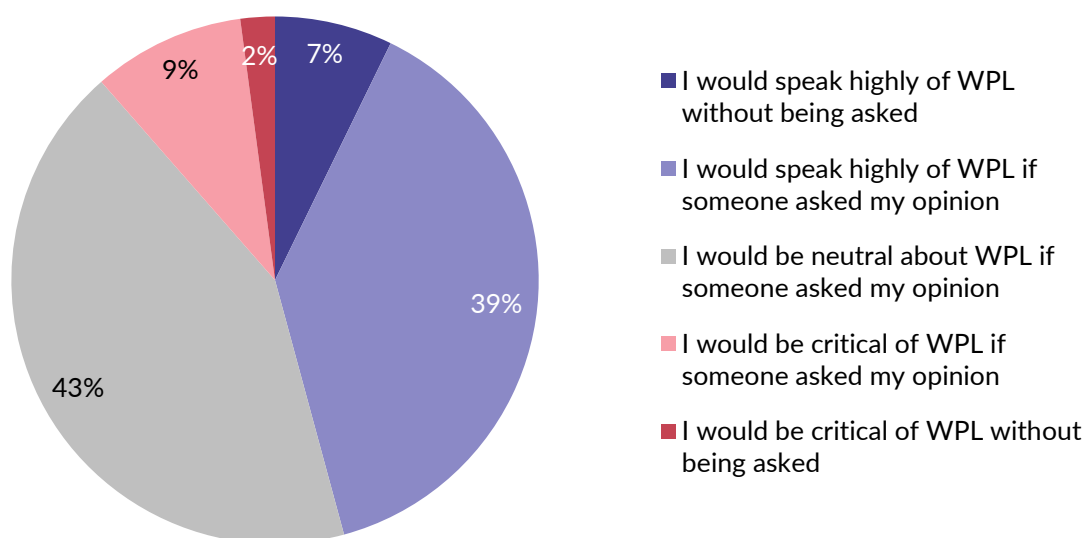
- <sup>3.55</sup> To give a more detailed breakdown of the themes, Figure 15 shows a more detailed coding of the comments (only themes containing at least 3% of the comments are shown). The most common theme here is how the staff were helpful, knowledgeable, and professional (25%). This was followed by comments expressing that they were generally satisfied with the service (22%) and then negative comments about how difficult it is to get in contact with WPL (15%).
- <sup>3.56</sup> While 15% of respondents commented that it was difficult to get in contact with WPL, another 15% highlighted that communication with WPL was easy and quick – this potentially indicates a range of experiences of WPL's communication.
- <sup>3.57</sup> Analysing this by subgroup, those working at UHS were significantly more likely to comment that communication with WPL had an easy process/quick response. Those working at HHFT were significantly more likely to comment that WPL was difficult to get hold of/know who to contact/no response.
- <sup>3.58</sup> This split by Trust was most evident among Requisitioners, with UHS Requisitioners were significantly more likely to say communication with WPL had an easy process/quick response while HHFT Requisitioners more likely to comment that WPL was difficult to get hold of/know who to contact/no response.

**Figure 15: Why do you say that? Detailed themes**

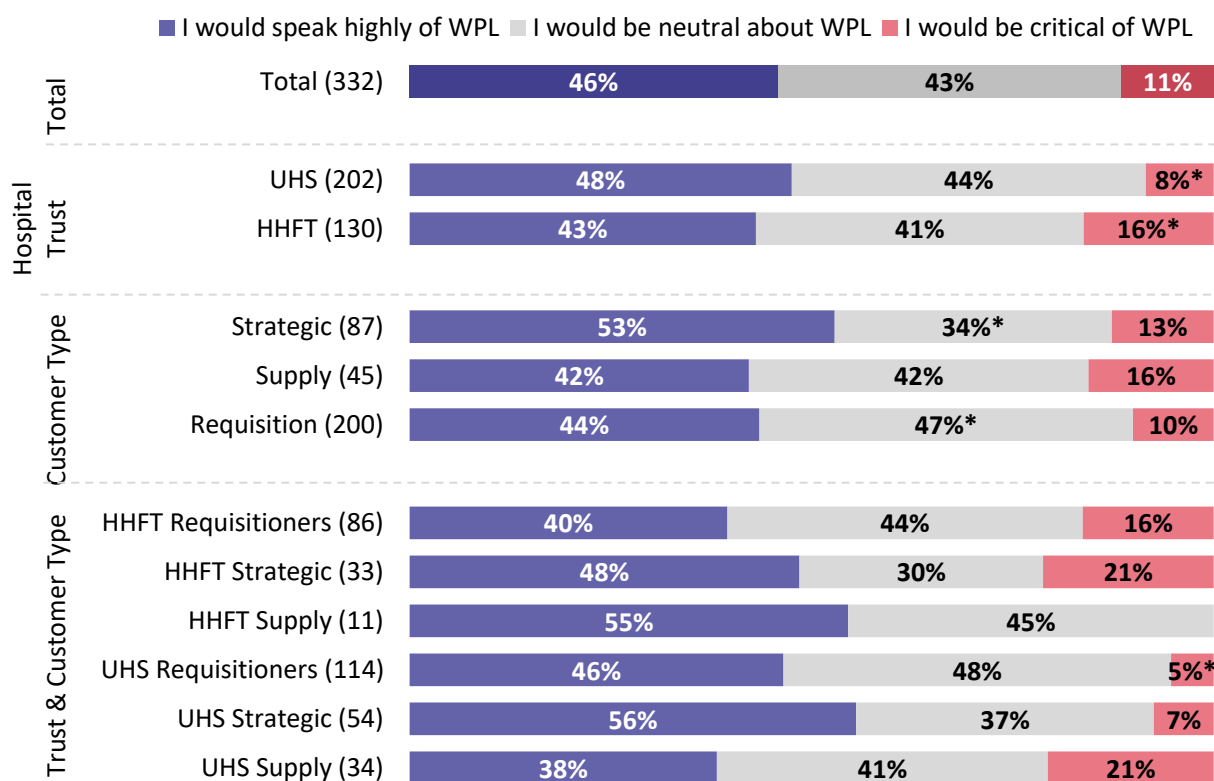
**All respondents (Number of respondents – 242, number of responses – 400). Only themes with mentioned by at least 3% of respondents are shown**

3.59 Figure 16 shows how respondents describe how they feel about WPL. A higher proportion of respondents would speak highly of WPL (46%) compared to the proportion that would be critical (11%). However, over two fifths (43%) of respondents would be neutral about WPL, potentially indicating a level of ambivalence or unfamiliarity towards WPL.



**Figure 16: Which of these five statements best describes how you feel about WPL?****All respondents (Base = 332)**

3.60 As was a feature throughout the survey, Figure 17 overleaf illustrates that respondents who work at HHFT are significantly more likely to be critical of WPL while those working at UHS are significantly less likely to be critical when describing WPL. Those respondents who are UHS Requisitioners are also significantly less likely to be critical when describing WPL.

**Figure 17: Which of these five statements best describes how you feel about WPL? Grouped responses by subgroup**

All respondents (Base numbers in brackets). The \* symbol indicates a result is significantly different from the overall level.

## Qualitative insight - Perceptions of WPL

3.61 Of the 25 depth interview participants there was a fairly even split between those who would speak positively, negatively or neutrally about WPL.

3.62 Participants who said that they would speak positively of WPL did so because they have confidence in the team, their skills and their professionalism. WPL were described as being competitive financially, and making life easier for their customers. They also complimented WPL for their communication, responsiveness and visibility.

*We want people in the division to engage with WPL, so when we're looking at budget setting and when people are looking to procure or tender for services then we'll always make sure they're linking in with WPL because we think they've got a professional team with the right skills to add value to that process. (HHFT Strategic)*

*They're not going to let you down. You're not just a number, you're special to them. They tell you you're special. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Because they make life that bit more easier for you. Years and years ago when I did this, I was working with the sales people to get the products. Nowadays, all the research is done for me. (HHFT Supply)*

*It seems to be very competitive. Supply Chain used to be a little bit more expensive. You'd pay an on cost, but they'd do that for some time. They seem competitively priced. Quality of service is fine; we don't have any missing deliveries ... Couldn't really fault them. (HHFT Supply)*

*Everything has been positive, which is all due to the communication. They've always been very quick in their response and have helped if I have had issues with the system, they've gone through it in person with me. They've just been very supportive and good at communicating. (UHS Supply)*

*I guess I've been in a relatively privileged position. They live in the office next door to me, so to me they're really visible ... I guess the whole home working thing makes them less visible to some people. That does get commented on. So, if they were going to do something I suppose then it might be that visibility is important. (HHFT Strategic)*

3.63 Participants who said they would speak neutrally about WPL said there is room for some improvement in responsiveness and in environmental concerns or because they know people in their Trust who do not receive a good level of support.

*They are fairly quick at responding usually, maybe a day sometimes, it is never instant. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*I wouldn't be negative about it, because it's not dire at all by any means. There are a lot of good points about it. But then again, it's not perfect. So I suppose it is neutral .... (UHS Requisitioners)*

*Because there's a mixture of things. There's some really good stuff, and I personally have really good support. But there are areas in the environmental sense that are at the beginning of the journey. Then sort of adjacent to that, some of my colleagues maybe don't get the same level of support that I get because they come under a different procurement area of WPL and they've had some issues. (UHS Strategic)*

3.64 Very few participants who spoke negatively about WPL in the survey made further comment about this in the depth interview. One participant again raised the issue of unpaid invoices.

*Paying invoices on time should be relatively simple if you follow the process ... It literally over a six month period we had issues and apparently before I even joined there were the same problems ... I*

*mean eyewatering amounts of money and for it to have to go all the way up to our Chief Finance Officer before anything happened was really frustrating. (HHFT Strategic)*

*They're just a bit rubbish. (UHS Supply)*

- 3.65 When asked “What could WPL do to be spoken more highly of?” depth participants gave a range of responses which echoed previous comments:

### **Speed up response times**

*Be more responsive, without us always having to escalate. (UHS Supply)*

*Just be more responsive. It's responsiveness and understanding .... (UHS Requisitioners)*

*It all ties in with everything else – their responsiveness and the whole system is based on the people using it for something, and if they are not people-orientated in their customer service then they are never going to get anywhere are they? (HHFT Requisitioners)*

### **A more personal approach**

*Support me with a phone call. I don't want another 30-page instruction booklet, that doesn't support me. I need a personal approach. (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*Having a relationship with us. I'm not saying we need to speak every week even, it's just if I have a problem, I know who I'm meant to speak to. (HHFT Strategic)*

*Be more engaged. Again, I know every Trust is different but as a contractor I've worked at probably about 20 different Trusts. There's a variety of external procurement and internal procurement. But in all instances, I would have an ongoing relationship ... I would be involved in some of the negotiations when we were reviewing a contract with somebody. (HHFT Strategic)*

### **Consistency of service provision across Trusts and different departments within Trusts**

*That consistency. If I had had the same level of service across the board as I have explained in the positive elements, I would be singing their praises every day. But the lack of consistency – you know what it's like – you are drawn to the more negative experiences than you are the positives. (HHFT Strategic)*

### **Better organisational visibility and training offers**

*I did get training at the very start, and all I've done is enhanced on my own training as time has gone on. Sometimes they upgrade it and a lot of the girls I deal with, they go to training sessions. But we never go to them, so we just learn as we go along. (HHFT Supply)*

*Something showing ... how they are saving money for our organisation ... There are a number of communication channels in the Trust and using a combination of them to try and get the message out and generally – having a theme or something that catches people's attention. (UHS Strategic)*

*It's just the visibility element. I speak to my colleagues in other departments who have similar issues, and the response is always, 'We don't know who to go to'. (HHFT Strategic)*

### **Better communication**

*They just need to maintain communication with the customer. And being patient with us. We are only human too and if we don't understand the system, we might be talking nonsense! (HHFT Requisitioners)*

*Communicate better and be more available and perceptive of people's issues and requirements and needs. (UHS Requisitioners)*

- 3.66 Participants in the depth survey were asked to describe WPL 'In three words'. Some gave three separate words, others chose to find a three word phrase. The individual words are shown in the word cloud below:



- 3.67 The three-word (and in one case four-word) phrases were as follows:



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# Appendix: Questionnaire

## SCREENING QUESTIONS

**(Ask all) S1:** Firstly, have you dealt with your Procurement or Supply Chain function in the last 12 months?

- Yes – **Continue**
- No – **TERMINATE INTERVIEW**

## MAIN BODY QUESTIONS

**(Ask all) Q1:** Overall, thinking about your experience of WPL over the last year, to what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the following...?

- The quality of advice / information you receive from WPL
- How quickly WPL responds to queries
- How easy it is to get in touch with your main point of contact at WPL
- The level of service from your point of contact at WPL
- The support received from your main point of contact at WPL

Very satisfied	1
Fairly satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5
<i>Not applicable</i>	96

**(Ask all) Q2:** Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your main point of contact at WPL?

Very satisfied	1
Fairly satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5
<i>Don't know</i>	97

**(Ask all) Q3:** Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall communication from WPL?

Very satisfied	1
Fairly satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5
<i>Don't know</i>	97

**(Ask all) Q4: How much do you agree or disagree that...**

- WPL provides an effective and efficient service
- WPL understands my needs
- WPL is open and transparent
- WPL cares about their customers
- WPL has friendly and approachable staff
- WPL treats me with respect

Strongly agree	1
Tend to agree	2
Neither agree nor disagree	3
Tend to disagree	4
Strongly disagree	5
<i>Don't know</i>	97

**(Ask all) Q5: Compared to 12 months ago, would you say that the service you now receive from WPL is ....?**

A lot better	1
A little better	2
About the same	3
A little worse	4
A lot worse	5
<i>Not applicable</i>	96
<i>Don't know</i>	97

**(Ask all) Q6: Thinking about everything we've talked about today, overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with WPL?**

Very satisfied	1
Fairly satisfied	2
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3
Fairly dissatisfied	4
Very dissatisfied	5

**(Ask if Q6=1-5) Q7: Why do you say that?****[Freetext response]****(Ask all) Q8: Which of these five statements best describes how you feel about WPL?**

I would speak highly of WPL without being asked	1
I would speak highly of WPL if someone asked my opinion	2
I would be neutral about WPL if someone asked my opinion	3
I would be critical of WPL if someone asked my opinion	4
I would be critical of WPL without being asked	5