

A Hospice Night Response Nursing Service audit

Are we providing timely care in the community outside of normal working hours?



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Background

- The Princess Alice Hospice (PAH) Night Response Nursing Team (NRT) visit patients known both to our local District Nursing Services as well as patients under the care of the Hospice.
- The NRT covers a total of 5 District Nursing Teams based within two localities, making the area the NRT covers substantial.
- The NRT does not cover all patients known to PAH overnight as some areas are covered by Night District Nursing Services.
- 2 members (either 1 nurse + 1 healthcare assistant or 2 nurses) work together each night between 21:00 – 08:00.
- **NHS England/NHS improvement guidelines (January, 2022) state that urgent community responses in all parts of England should be covered by 2-hour urgent community response services.**



Aims

- To establish an average wait time for patients from the time they first called the NRT to the time of the NRT's arrival.
- To calculate the number of visits above the NHS England/NHS Improvement recommendations.
- To calculate the number of visits above the PAH average wait time and to understand why delays occurred.

Methods

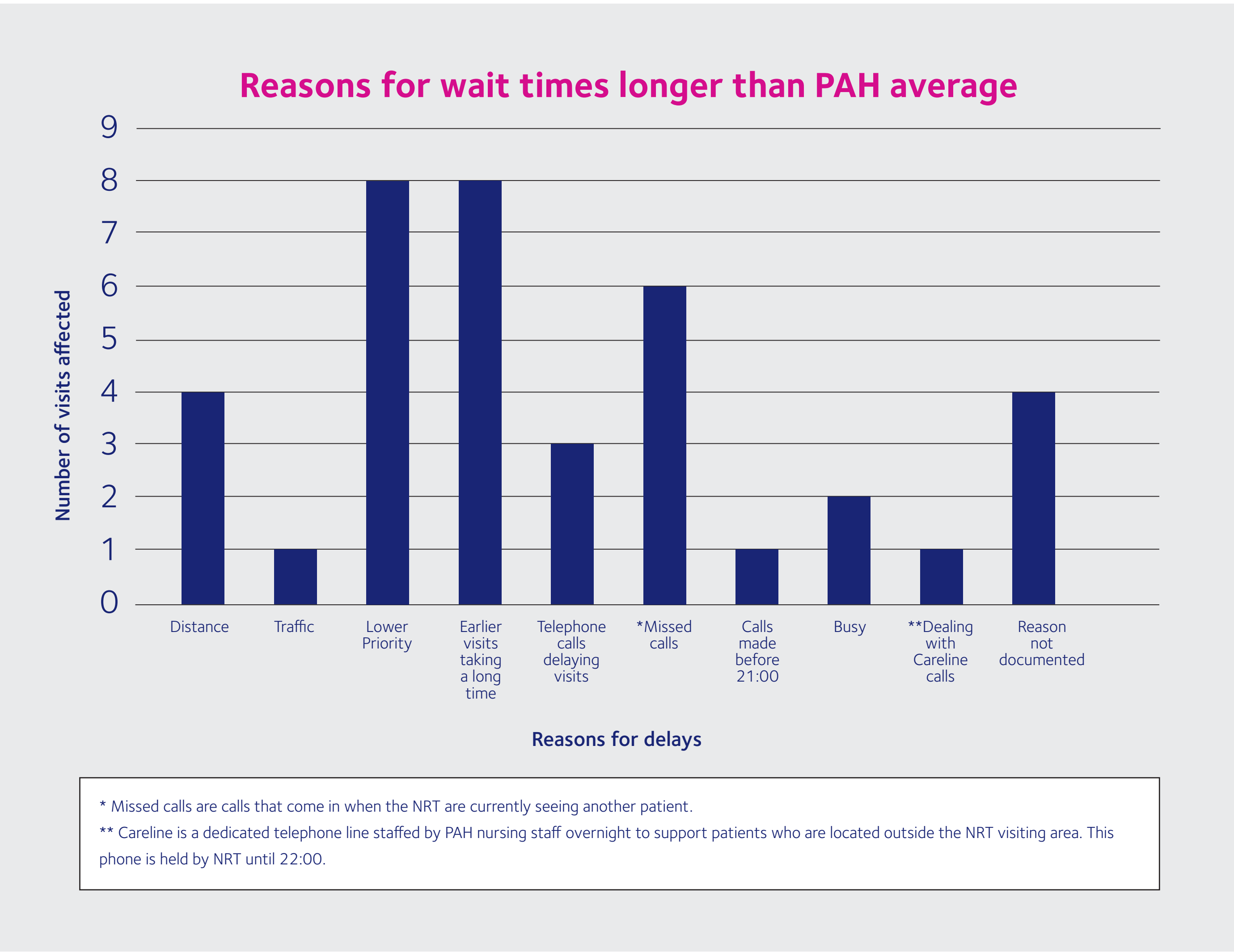
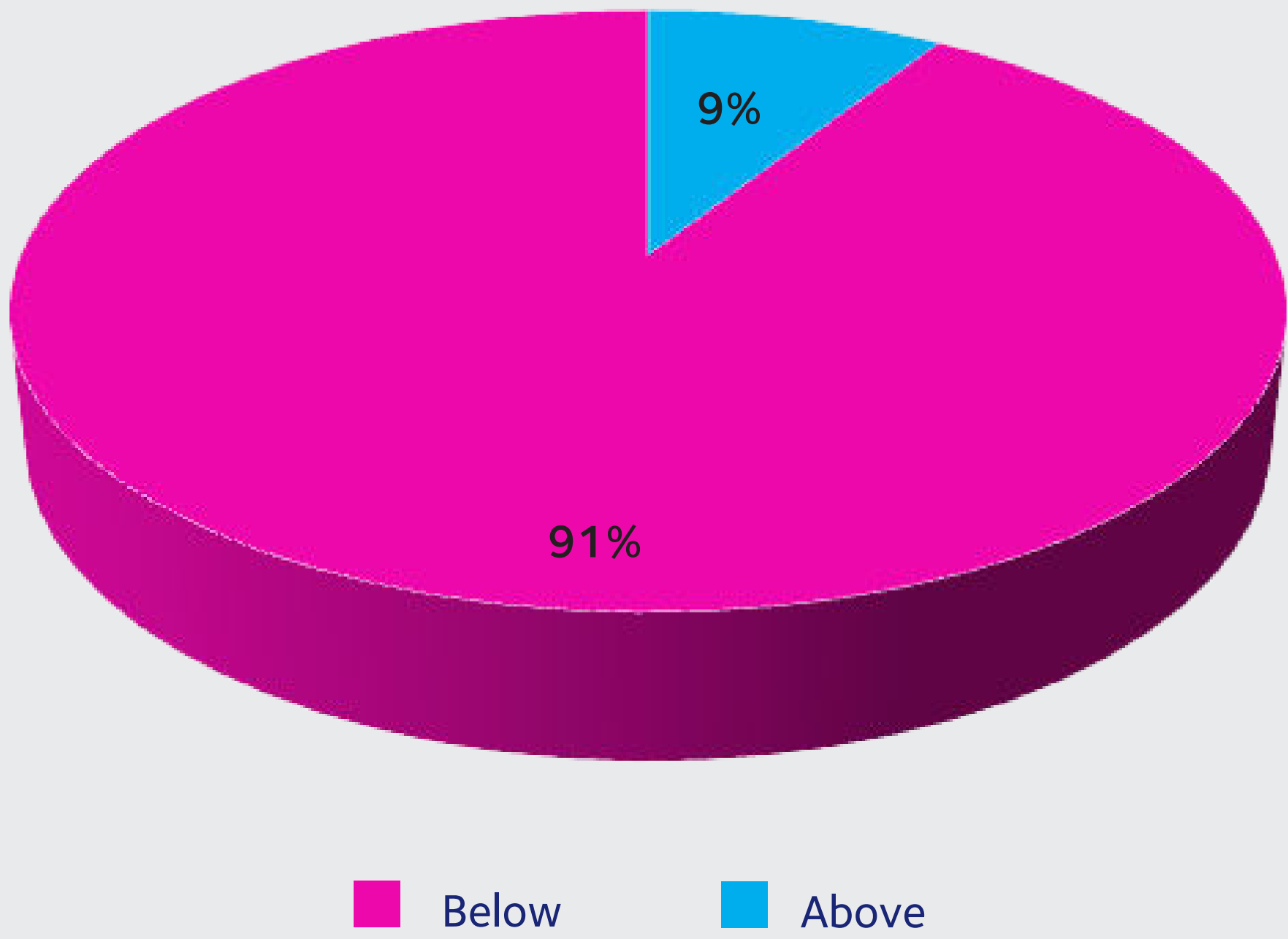
- An audit form was created for staff members to complete during their night shift.
- Data was collected over 25 nights in November/December 2021.
- A total of 104 visits were undertaken during this time period.
- Patients were identified using their EMIS number.
- Times of phone call(s) were recorded along with the location of the visit and time of arrival.
- Reasons for delays were documented.

Findings

- The PAH average wait time from call to arrival time in the time period audited was 1 hour and 4 minutes.
- There was little variation between the two localities covered despite one locality covering a much larger area.
- 63% of visits achieved a wait time below the calculated PAH average.
- The impact of travel distance was difficult to measure as visits often roll from one to another, rather than from a central base.



Percentage of NRT wait times above and below the National 2-hour response target



Conclusions

The average wait time for the NRT to arrive at a patient's home from the time of the patient's call is well within the 2 hour target as recommended by NHS England/NHS Improvement.
Long wait times can cause anxiety and stress. Being able to reassure patients and family members that the NRT are likely to arrive at their home well below 2 hours is encouraging and may help to reduce anxiety and stress associated with waiting.

What next?

- Staff can confidently advise patients and families that wait times are usually less than 2 hours and on average around 1 hour from when their call to the NRT is made.
- A repeat audit will be carried out after a year to ensure the continued standard of the average wait time.
- Additional research could be undertaken to determine the psychological impact on wait times for patients and their families in the community setting.



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