

# Thirsty for Change: Is it time to Sip 'til Send?

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## PATIENT SATISFACTION AUDIT



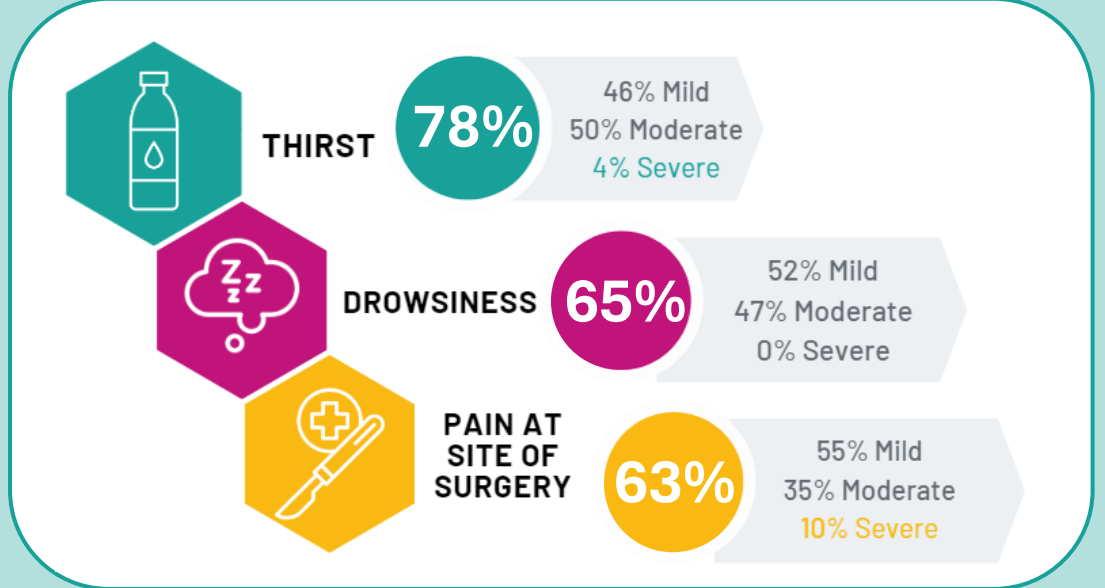
Patient satisfaction with anaesthetic services at The Countess of Chester Hospital (COCH) was assessed in March 2024. Whilst satisfaction was high, it was identified that thirst was a major issue faced by our patients in the perioperative period.

### Were you satisfied with the following?

- The information provided by the anaesthetist before surgery
- The anaesthetist answering your questions
- Your pain therapy after surgery
- The care provided by the department of anaesthesia in general
- Waking up from anaesthesia
- The treatment of nausea and vomiting after surgery

**100%**

### Most prevalent anaesthetic related discomforts:



**WOULD YOU RECOMMEND THIS ANAESTHETIC SERVICE TO FRIENDS AND FAMILY?**

**100%**

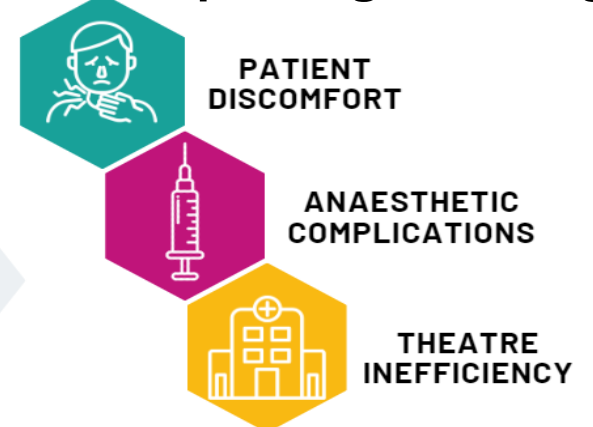
## THE PROBLEM WITH FLUID FASTING

The two-hour fluid fasting rule has been in practice since 1999 and remains in our national guidance today. However, UK trusts report that the two-hour rule has failed to reduce the average fasting time.

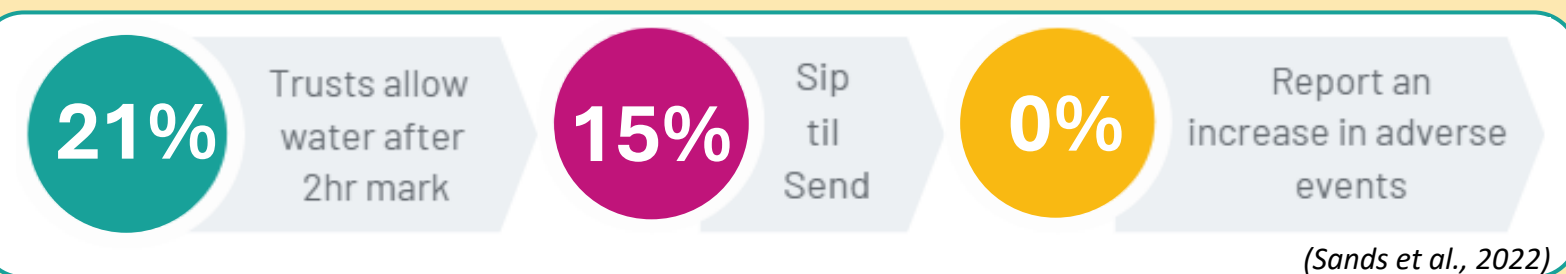


(Perera et al., 2023) (El Sharkawy et al., 2021) (Falconer et al., 2014) (Cestonaro et al., 2014)

### Effects of prolonged fasting



## WHAT ARE OTHER UK TRUSTS DOING?



**What is Sip 'til send ?**  
Patient drinks clear fluids until 2hrs then sips water only until called to theatre

### Supporting Literature



- Patients who follow Sip til Send are not at increased risk of pulmonary aspiration when compared with 2 hour rule (Daly et al., 2023)
- Sip til send was non-inferior compared with standard fasting in terms of residual gastric volume (Harett et al., 2024)
- Sip til send was associated with increased patient satisfaction (Wiles and Macdonald, 2024)

## ACTION PLAN

**Default is Sip til send**  
Policy drafted standardising pre-procedural fasting across COCH. Currently being ratified.

**Encourage clear fluids until 2h**  
Active encouragement of clear fluids up until 2hr mark. Staff awareness & education.

**Improved patient information**  
New patient information leaflets incorporating unambiguous language to encourage plenty of clear fluids until the cut of time.

**Improved documentation**  
New digital record of when patients last ate or drank so that fasting times can be accurately audited in the future.

## OUTCOMES

