

4 More information-driven decision-making

All decisions will be based in some part on information and our study highlights the growing importance of data as a source of information at all levels.

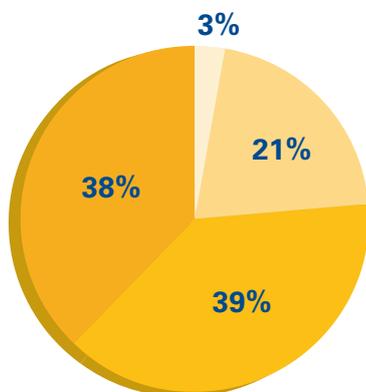
More than half of people at a board level indicate that data has more than some influence over their decisions. This contrasts slightly with frontline decision-makers, where about a third say it has more than some influence. However, the people we spoke to were sure that information had a bigger role to play. In particular, it was suggested that not enough time was currently spent using information to evaluate decisions and learn lessons. Most of the people we asked said they spent little or none of their time monitoring and evaluating the decisions they made.

An important part of this is understanding how comfortable staff are with using data and information in their decision-making. Clinicians are certainly content with data and information guiding clinical decisions, but the role it plays at an organisational level seems less reliable. When we asked how comfortable decision-makers were with using data to guide these types of decisions, although most people were comfortable overall, we found frontline clinical staff less so.

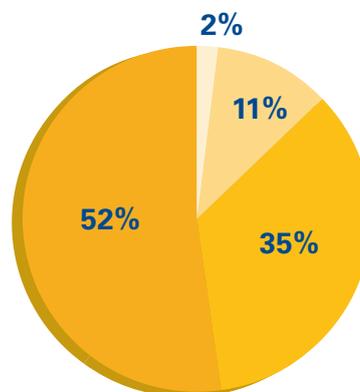
Three key messages

- 1 Data and information is playing a bigger role in decision-making at all levels but still holds greater influence at board level rather than on the front line.
- 2 Encouraging staff to use information as intelligence allows greater confidence about decision-making with a view to driving improvements in care.
- 3 Greater clarity is needed to inform staff of why data is collected and how it acts as a means to improving care rather than criticising organisations.

Please indicate, for a typical decision, what proportion of influence data and information has?



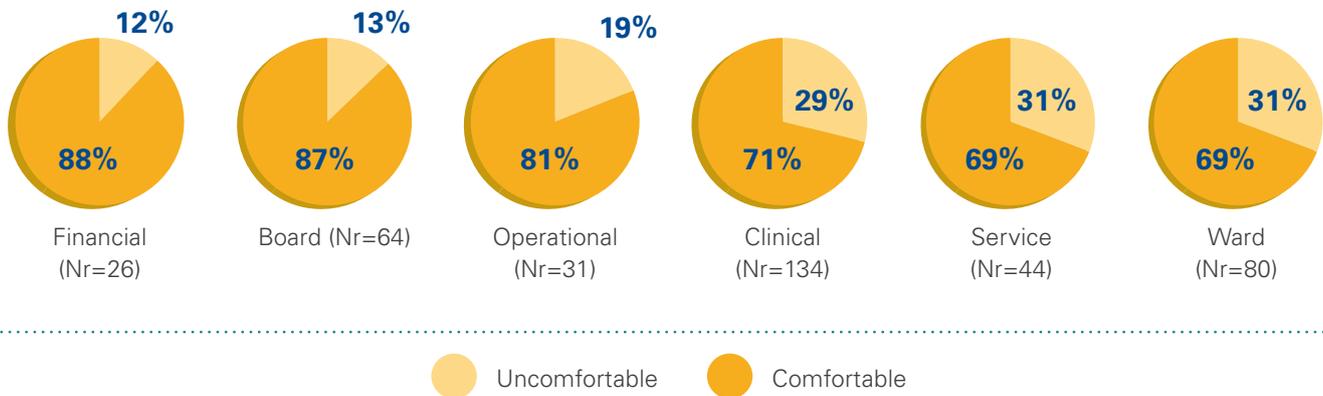
Frontline (Nr=80)



Board or service-level (Nr=107)

No influence
 Little influence
 Some influence
 More than some influence

How comfortable do you feel with reliability of data to influence decisions?



Mindset can be a big challenge for improving the use of data and information. Clinical staff do largely understand the value of the data they collected and its relevance to patient care, but many feel more could be done to increase the value of what is already collected. Data has a natural tendency to appear detached from specific contexts and as a result people can fail to recognise what it is telling them against their own experience on the ground.

We also observed how a desire for information might in fact inhibit people to make decisions. We were told of delays in making decisions because the 'right' information wasn't available and that in some instances a decision could be better made promptly and instinctively. What was important for most people was understanding the point at which information becomes intelligence.

An apprehension that data and information could be used against them was another common concern from clinical staff. This was not necessarily an accusation against their own organisation, but rather an example of the impact of external factors, such as regulation and sometimes media. While staff recognise the fact that information can be a powerful tool to understand how their services can improve them, there is a disjoint with the way this information can be used to single out particular wards and organisations.



Sharing comparative data from different wards stimulates the question – what is being done differently?

Chief executive officer

