Using the ASSIST model in the management of complaints in Connolly Hospital

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ASSIST model of communication

- The ASSIST model of communication was developed by MPS to assist staff in the discussion of adverse events with patients

ASSIST model of communication

- A   <u>Acknowledge</u> – Empathise with the complainant ie "I understand that you are disappointed about what has happened" "I realise that this has caused you upset" " I can only imagine how upset you are" "I think I would feel the same way".

- S   <u>Sorry</u> – Apologise i.e. "I am sorry that this happened… I regret that this happened…" "I am truly sorry for the anxiety this has caused you"

- S   <u>Story</u> – Listen to their story and summarise back what they have said.

- I   <u>Inquire</u> – "Do you have any questions?" "How do you feel" "Is there anything you want to clarify"

- S   <u>Solutions</u> – "These are your options now in relation to managing this issue."

- T   <u>Travel</u> – "We will be taking steps to learn from this from this event… If you have any further concerns do not hesitate to contact me."

Background

- Quality and Safety (Q&S) Patient Liaison Officer, responsible for supporting patients and staff in dealing with complaints

- Open Disclosure (OD) trainer since May 2015

- Both roles complimentary to one another

OD training

- Facilitated briefing sessions and OD workshops

- Following the rollout of OD training, a reduction in the level 2 complaints was evident

- This combined with feedback from staff who attended OD training identified that the use of the ASSIST model used in OD training could also be used when dealing with complaints

Benefits of using the ASSIST model

- ASSIST model helps staff to understand what is important to patients and to prepare adequately for the meeting

- Provides a framework for staff to communicate with patients effectively while having a difficult conversation

- Opportunity presented to adapt the ASSIST model in complaints training
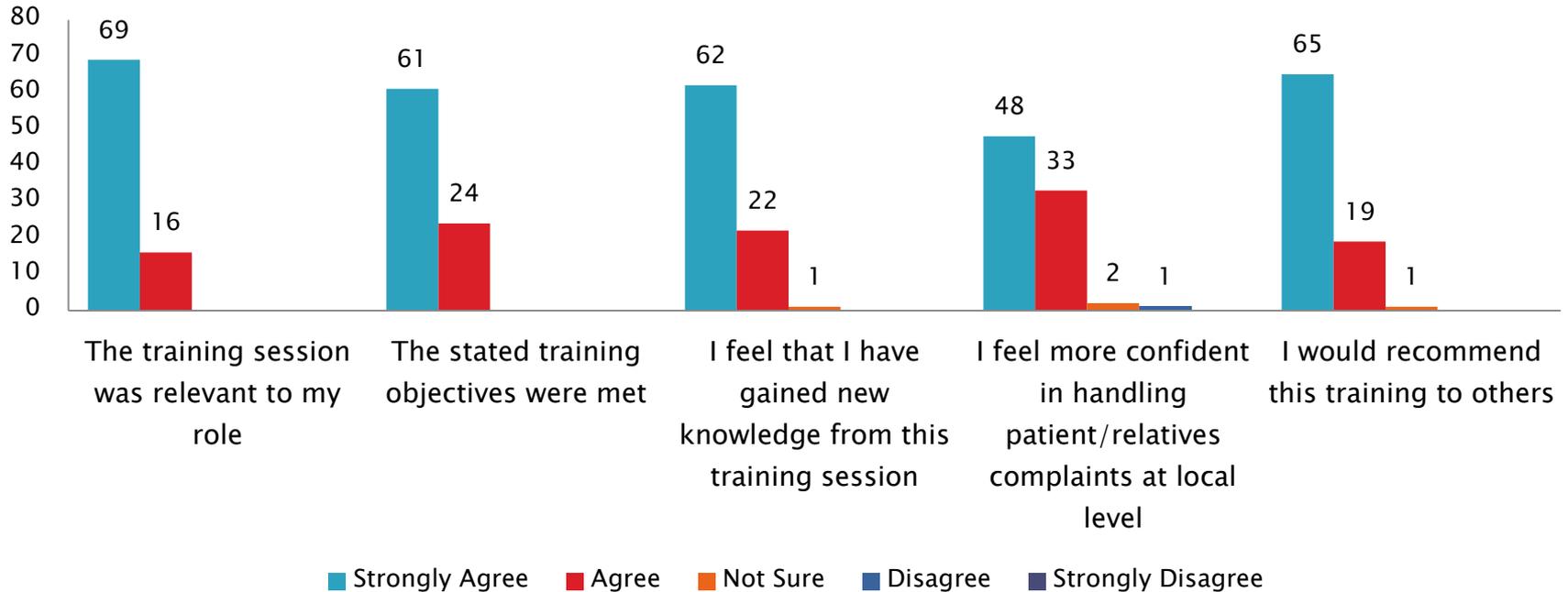
Quality Improvement Pilot Project in ED

- **Aim**: Promote empathy in resolving complaints effectively at local level using the ASSIST model

- **Objectives**: Using specific scenarios the ASSIST model was used to demonstrate how it could be applied in practice

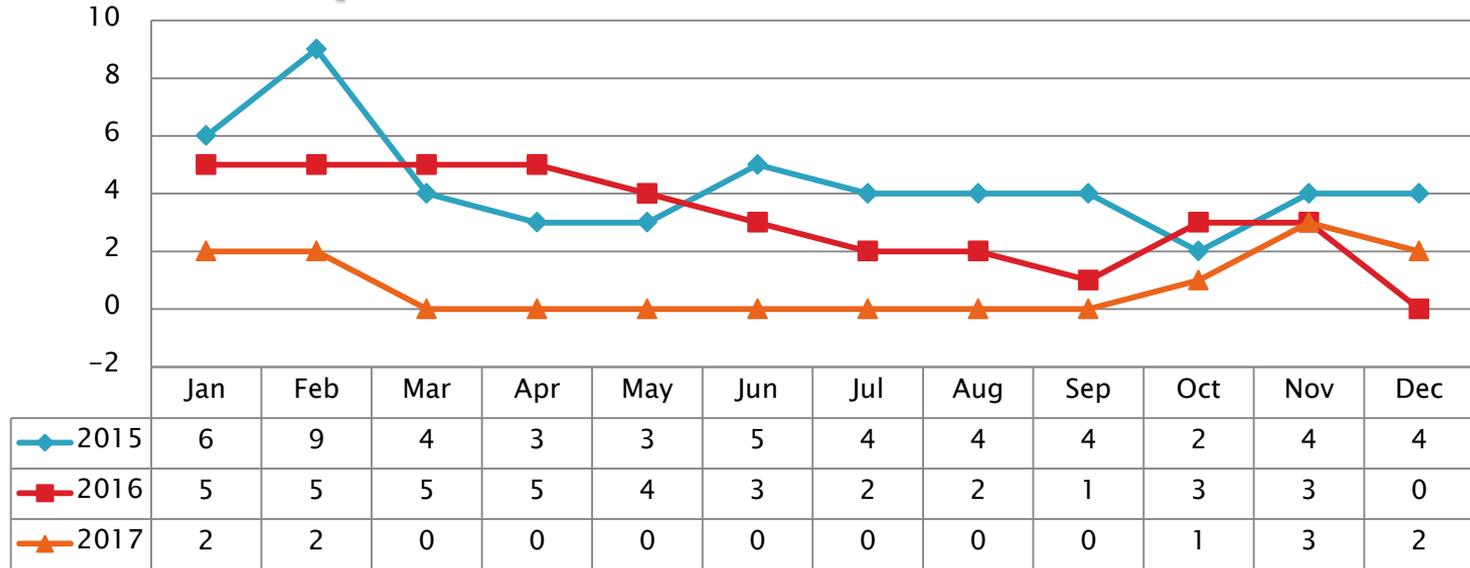# Pre training evaluation survey
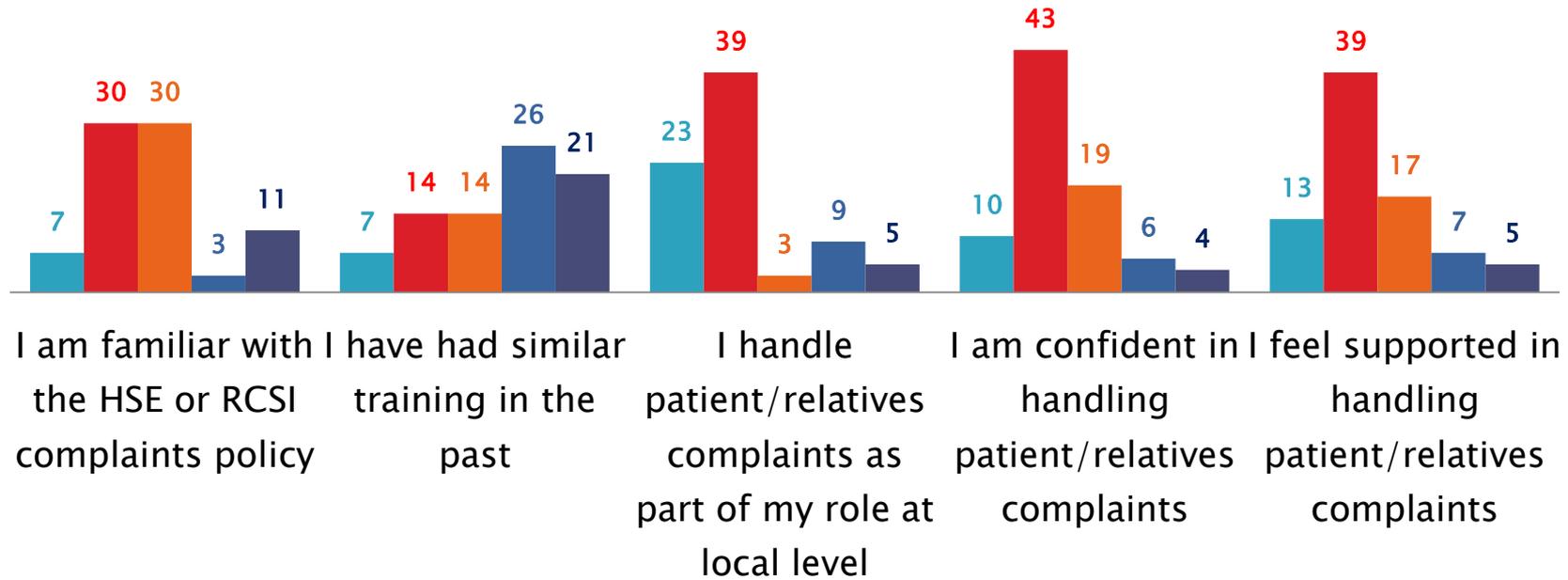
Post evaluation of the training

35% increase in staff confidence in handling complaints post training

Feedback from training

- *"ASSIST is a very simple solution to use when dealing with complaints, will use it in future"*

- *"Good information on how to locally resolve complaints"*

- *"I feel better able to deal with complaints and communication is key"*

Impact of training with ASSIST model on formal complaints in ED

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
2015	6	9	4	3	3	5	4	4	4	2	4	4
2016	5	5	5	5	4	3	2	2	1	3	3	0
2017	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	2

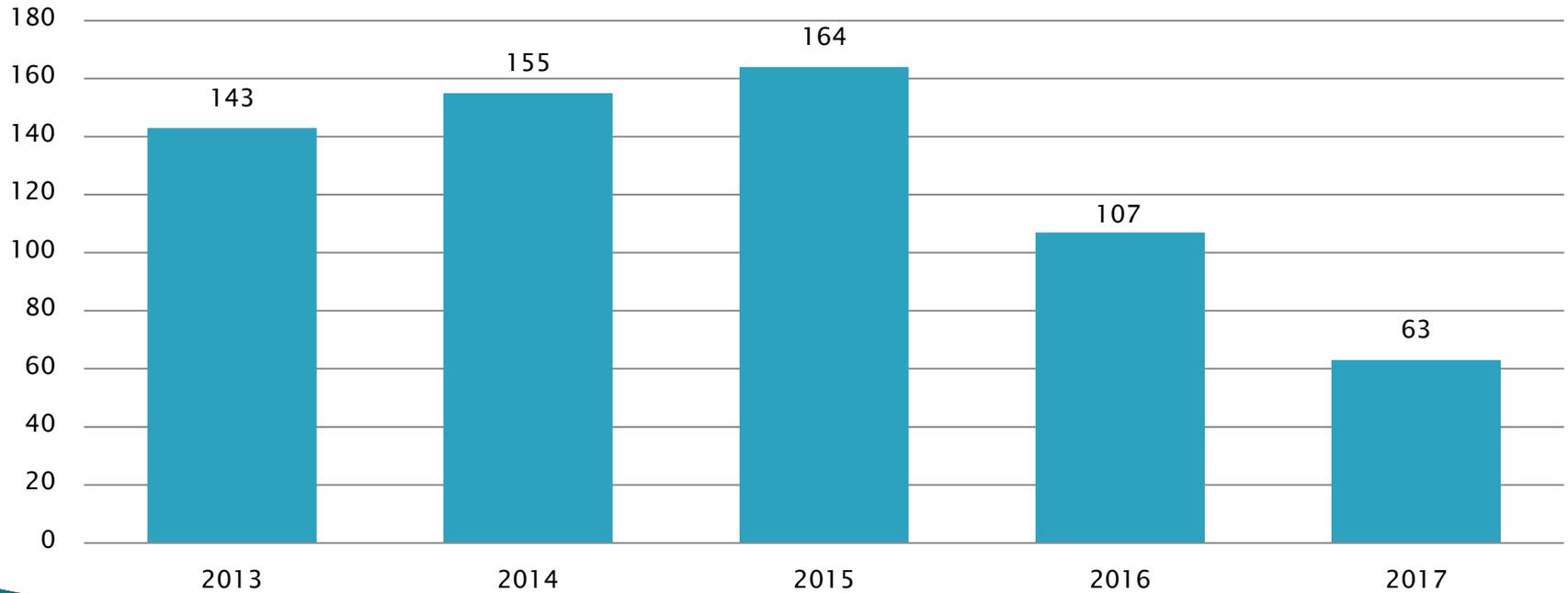➢ Significant reduction in level 2 complaints in the Emergency Department.

Evaluation 2 months after training

Post evaluation having used the ASSIST model
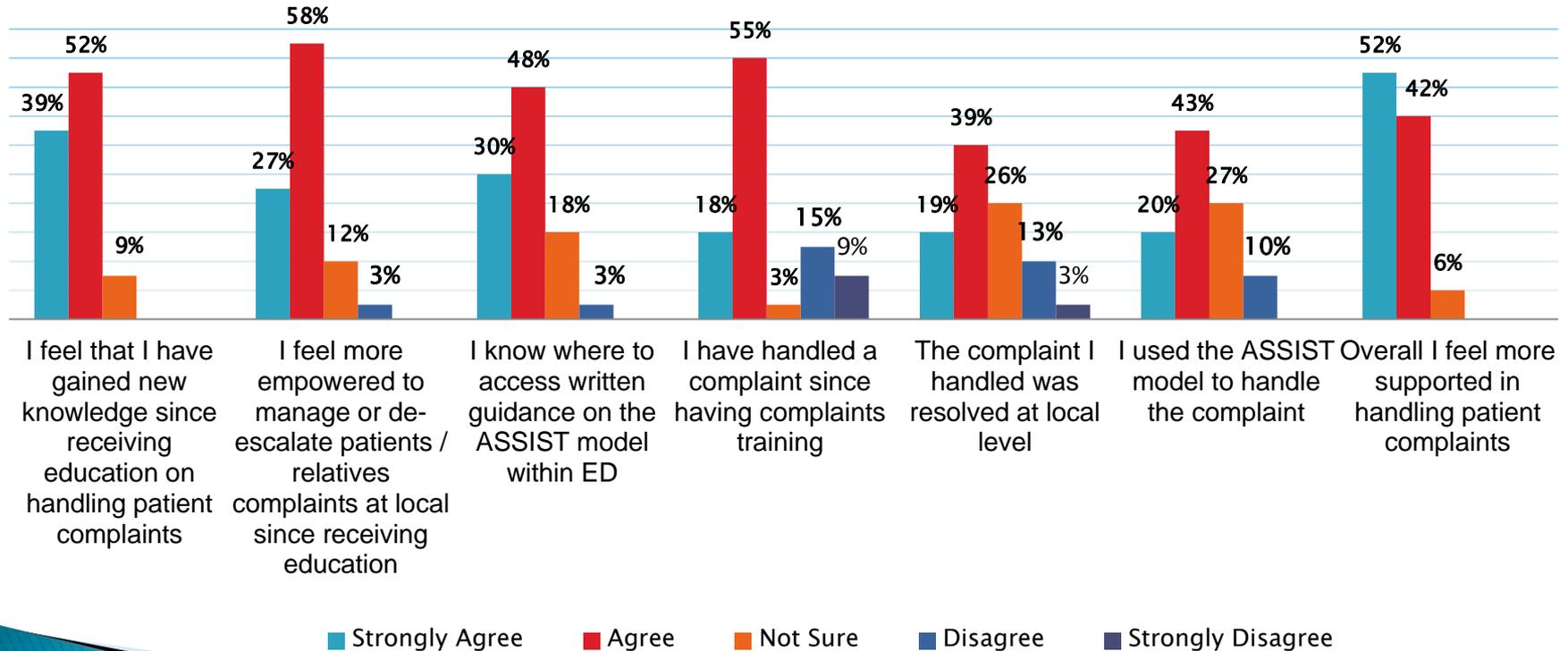
Formal Complaints

Number of level 2 complaints Connolly Hospital

Summary

Using the ASSIST model when dealing with complaints has led to:

- Improved patient satisfaction through effective resolution of complaints

- Overall positive impact on the culture of the Hospital in terms of staff dealing with complaints at local level

- Reduction in the number of level 2 complaints hospital wide