

Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Trust,  
King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust  
and  
Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust

Lewisham Hospital,  
Queen Elizabeth Hospital,  
Princess Royal University Hospital,  
and  
Darent Valley Hospital  
Maternity Departments

*Enter and View visits carried out 31 March and 6 May 2014*



## Contents

Introduction	3
Methodology	4
Findings	
Lewisham Hospital	5
Queen Elizabeth Hospital	9
Princess Royal University Hospital	12
Darent Valley Hospital	14
Comparative Overview	16
Conclusions	18
Recommendations	18
Authorised Enter & View Representatives	19
Acknowledgements	19
Contacts	20
Appendix 1	21
Appendix 2	22
Appendix 3	27
Response from Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Trust	31
Response from Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust	34
Response from Kings College Hospital NHS Trust	35

## Introduction

Healthwatch is made up of 152 local Healthwatch organisations that were established throughout England in April 2013, under the provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The dual role of local Healthwatch is to champion the rights of users of health and social care services and to hold the system to account for how well it engages with the public.

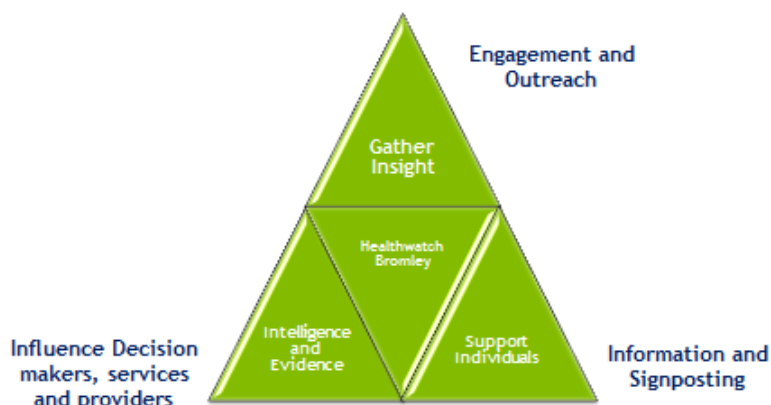
The remit of local Healthwatch is to be an independent health and social care watchdog to be the voice of local people and ensure that health and social care services are safe, effective and designed to meet the needs of patients, social care users and carers.

Local Healthwatch gives children, young people and adults in each borough a stronger voice to influence and challenge how health and social care services are purchased, provided and reviewed within the borough.

Local Healthwatch core functions are:

1. Gathering the views and experiences of service users, carers, and the wider community,
2. Making people's views known,
3. Involving locals in the commissioning process for health and social care services, and process for their continual scrutiny,
4. Referring providers of concern to Healthwatch England, or the CQC, to investigate,
5. Providing information about which services are available to access and signposting,
6. Collecting views and experiences and communicating them to Healthwatch England,
7. Work with the Health and Wellbeing board on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and Joint Health and Wellbeing strategy (which will influence the commissioning process).

The following triangle is a useful way of seeing how the different parts of local Healthwatch form together to make the whole.



Following the changes to local hospitals that came with the dissolution of the South London Healthcare NHS Trust in October 2013, local Healthwatch from Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, and Lewisham agreed to conduct Enter and View visits within the hospitals where there had been a cross-over of services, and to monitor the impact of the transition across the boroughs. As part of the Healthwatch work programmes, each local Healthwatch set one of its priorities to monitor the transition of services since the changes to the local Hospital Trusts.

The purpose of the report was to assess the data collected on patients' experiences of the maternity departments, on how supported they felt by the staff and how comfortable they felt in their surroundings. On Monday 31 March 2014, local Healthwatch from Bromley, Greenwich and Lewisham carried out Enter and View visits, to observe Princess Royal University Hospital, Queen Elizabeth and Lewisham Hospitals' Maternity Departments, respectively. Healthwatch Bexley carried out an Enter and View visit to Darent Valley Hospital's Maternity Department on 6 May 2014.

## Methodology

The Authorised Enter and View Representatives (ARs) gathered information through observation and informal conversations with staff members, relatives, carers and patients. Each Authorised Enter and View Representative was given an observation tool (see Appendix 1), which was written and designed collaboratively by local Healthwatch Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich and Lewisham, in order to rate the maternity department in terms of the environment.

ARs also carried out interviews with maternity patients logging all data with an interview sheet (see Appendix 2), also written and designed collaboratively by local Healthwatch Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich and Lewisham.

The ARs interviewed 36 people in total across the four hospitals. Throughout the visits there were opportunities to speak with staff and visitors in the waiting, inpatient and clinical areas.

## Findings

### Lewisham Hospital

#### *Observations*

##### Birth Centre -

Staff informed the ARs that it had been one of the busiest months with over 70 births however on the day of the visit there were no patients staying in the birth centre.

The ARs were extremely impressed with the birth centre and rated everything as excellent. The décor was described as 'homely' and the bright artwork throughout the ward was complemented by ARs. Private rooms in the centre for patients were described as 'spotless' and 'comfortable'. The temperature in the centre was described as 'just right'. Folders of parent's feedback from their time in the birth centre were available in waiting areas and ARs said it was comforting to see photos of previous parents with their new born children.

The ARs felt staffing level was low but adequate as there were no patients on the ward. The ARs agreed the ward was odourless and had a 'home from home' environment.

The ARs were pleased to see refreshments provided in the waiting areas including hot drink dispensers and biscuits. Staff informed the ARs that snacks were readily available 24 hours a day including juice, toast, cereal and sandwiches.

##### Labour Ward -

The ARs were disappointed that some of hand sanitizer dispensers were empty however rated the ward highly in terms of décor, tidiness, cleanliness, lighting and noise level. ARs saw a small amount of clutter from hospital equipment however this was neatly stored and non-obstructive. The ARs felt there was a good amount of information displayed across the ward including friends and family results, details of ward staff, infection control and breast feeding. The ARs agreed that the thank you cards displayed were a nice touch and comforting to other patients on the ward. The toilets were described as adequate however it was noted that in one

there was dried blood on the wall and the toilet brush was very dirty and filled with excrement.

The ARs thought that the environment of the ward was calm and agreed that staffing levels were acceptable and that staff worked well as a team.

Antenatal Clinic -

The ARs were again disappointed that hand sanitizer dispensers in the ward were empty. Tidiness was rated by ARs as acceptable; ARs saw that there was litter scattered around the waiting area including wrappers and empty cups on the floor, dirty tissues on empty chairs, a left over fast food bag, and empty cups on tables. The leaflet stands were described as 'sparse' and ARs agreed that information displayed could be neater and better utilised. Vending machines were provided however were stocked with unhealthy snacks.

The noise level and temperature was appropriate and patients seemed to be being called promptly. The clock in the waiting area displayed an incorrect time, and two lights were not working.

Maternity 5 (postnatal) -

The entrance to the ward was described as wide and the corridor as clear, décor was pleasant and the cleanliness of the ward was appropriate. The noise level was referred to as 'peaceful' and tidiness as good although there was clutter of equipment in some corridors.

The ARs felt there was enough information displayed and were impressed with the 'who's who on the ward' information.

The ceiling in the breast feeding room was damp and peeling. However, ARs were pleased to see lots of colourful information and pictures displayed on the walls.

Antenatal Day Assessment Unit -

It was generally felt that this unit was clean and tidy, with appropriate lighting and noise level. There were no bad odours in the unit and information displayed was described as adequate. It was commented that the unit was in an inconvenient location however this was identified by staff and ARs were advised this was being looked in to by the hospital.

### ***Interviews***

The ARs spoke to 15 people across the Maternity Services at Lewisham Hospital. Over half of the people spoken to were from the London Borough of Lewisham, two were from the Royal Borough of Greenwich and five people did not provide details of which borough they lived in. Half of the people were driven to the hospital by family, friends or partners, one person arrived by taxi, one by bus, one by

ambulance and one had walked to the hospital. Five people did not provide details of how they arrived to hospital.

Ten patients answered a question relating to their overall experience of maternity services; seven rated their experience as excellent, one rated as good, one rated as average and one person rated their overall experience as poor. The person that rated their experience as poor commented that the facilities at the hospital were good however the communication between staff was poor. The patient said that staff were overstretched, 'each midwife has 10 high risk Mum's and there isn't enough support', she also commented that there was an inconsistency of care and that the handover process was poor.

Four of the patients told ARs that they had previously given birth in Lewisham Hospital; two patients commented that their experience had significantly improved and two people felt that services were good both times. Four patients told ARs that it was their first time giving birth and another said that they had previously given birth at Queen Elizabeth, commenting 'I have had a much better experience here, the staff are nicer and I would choose to come here again'. Other patients did not provide information to ARs on any previous births.

Seven patients said that they had received support with breast feeding from staff. Two patients felt that they had not been given enough support although felt confident that staff would provide support, 'No one has helped me yet but the midwife said she will'. One patient felt that breast feeding was 'pushed' upon patients. Some patients indicated that support from a nursery nurse or healthcare assistant would be beneficial to new mums.

ARs received mixed views on visiting times, particularly in Maternity 5. Some patients felt visiting times were good however others commented that they needed improving, 'The visiting slots are not right', 'I don't like the visiting times', 'The visiting times finish too early'. Some patients felt staff on Maternity 5 are very limited and that having better visiting times would mean more support for patients. Four patients on Maternity 5 suggested that one person should be allowed to stay with them for extra help and support, currently visiting times are between 10am - 1.30pm (one visitor only) and 3.30pm - 8pm.

Table 1 indicates that most patients felt supported, listened to and understood. Two patients said they were not comfortable or able to relax; one patient felt she could relax better if her partner was able to stay with her and another said that she did not have time to rest as the staff kept disturbing her for various appointments and checks. Staff did tell ARs that in some instances partners could stay however this had not been communicated to one patient. If this had been communicated her experience would have been a more relaxed and comfortable one. Another patient commented that she had been in considerable discomfort however stressed that this was not the hospital's fault.

	During your stay have you felt....?				
	Comfortable	Able to relax	Confident in staff ability	Supported	Listened to and understood
Patient 1	Very	Quite	Quite	Very	Very
Patient 2	Not Very	Not very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 3	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 4	Quite	Not very	Quite	Not very	Not at all
Patient 5	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 6	Not Very	Not at all	Very	Very	Very
Patient 7	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 8	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 9	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 10	Very	Quite	Very	Very	Very

Table 1

	Do you feel staff have been....?				
	Cooperative	Helpful	Respectful	Friendly	Clear when communicating
Patient 1	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 2	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 3	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 4	Quite	Quite	Very	Quite	Not at all
Patient 5	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 6	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 7	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 8	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 9	Quite	Quite	Quite	Quite	Quite
Patient 10	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very

Table 2

Table 2 shows that largely patients felt that staff were cooperative, helpful, respectful, friendly and clear when communicating. One patient commented,



'some staff are not very helpful', another commented 'some nurses I see and I feel confident and others I don't; it depends what staff are on'. Another patient commented that a staff member made her husband feel 'uncomfortable'. Some staff were described by patients as going the extra mile to make them feel comfortable, 'The nurse got me a side room when I was upset and offered me a hot chocolate; I don't take that for granted'.

Seven of the patients spoken to offered no recommendations or suggested improvements for Maternity Services at Lewisham Hospital however eight patients did provide feedback to improve services. Suggestions included, 'There should be information about what pain to expect so you know when things are going wrong', 'Staff handover needs to be improved', 'The food needs improving, it all tastes the same', 'Visiting times in Maternity 5 need improving', 'Hospital parking needs improving; I had to leave my wife to move my car as rushed to get her into the hospital', 'staff need to communicate with each other', 'Women should have a choice to have a side room'.

## **Queen Elizabeth Hospital**

### ***Observations***

Maternity ward -

The Entrance and Reception areas in the Maternity Wards, were bright clean and very welcoming. The ward was very tidy and the toilets clean. Hand sanitizer dispensers were available to all patients, visitors and staff of which use was encouraged by staff and notices. There were no bad odours that the ARs could smell and the ward was peaceful, calm and quiet.

The ARs were very pleased to see that the information board displayed lots of useful information about caring for a baby and details of how the maternity department has responded to patient feedback. The box to leave Family and Friends forms were also very visible with clear efforts made to encourage patients and visitors to submit their forms before leaving the hospital.

The ARs observed that call bells were within patients reach and nurses available to address any problems or queries. Patient privacy was well upheld with all patients appropriately dressed.

All staff appeared approachable, confident and happy to chat with the patients about any concerns they may have. The ARs were pleased to see the security guard placed at the entrance/ exit of the maternity ward which provide patients peace of mind on their safety and the safety of their baby.

The ARs were also pleased to see that refreshments were available to patients and visitors with tea and coffee making facilities.

The ARs were particularly impressed with the discharge process for patients whereby discharge sessions were delivered each morning for mums to be providing them with information needed when leaving hospital. The information pack provided upon discharge included information on deep vein thrombosis and pulmonary embolus, group b strep, screening tests for babies, registering the baby's birth, cot death, jaundice, breastfeeding support and caring for the baby. The ARs found this pack very comprehensive and useful.

### ***Interviews***

The ARs spoke to six patients; one in the private postnatal side room, three in the postnatal ward, one in the antenatal ward and another in the labour suite.

Of the six patients interviewed, five were from the Royal Borough of Greenwich and one was from the London Borough of Bexley. Three patients arrived at the hospital by car, two by ambulance and one by bus. All patients were accompanied by the partners.

All patients were asked for a rating of their overall experience of maternity services. Four rated their experience as excellent and two were average. Of the two that rated their experience as average, one explained it was due to the difficult birth of her child and the anxiety felt by the numerous tests that her new baby was subject to. She felt that the paediatric consultants did not provide enough information and any information given was hard to understand. The other patient that rated her experience as average felt that there was too much noise in the postnatal ward which disturbed both her and her baby and that she would have been more comfortable in a private room.

All patients felt that they had received enough support from the staff during their stay. The ARs were very pleased to hear such glowing testament to the treatment received by the patients by the nurses and ward staff. One patient noted that:

*"I'm not one to praise but I can honestly say that the staff here have been exceptional. The doctors tell it to you straight, the midwives hold your hand and even the student nurses who were observing were brilliant"*

All postnatal patients interviewed rated the support and guidance to support and care for their baby as excellent. Particular emphasis was given to the breastfeeding class that is available to all patients each morning. The new mums found the class to be incredibly useful and encouraging without being too forceful.

All but one patient interviewed felt that visiting hours were good as it gave them time to rest and not be disturbed. The one patient who was unhappy felt that the time of the visiting hours excluded certain people who were only able to visit earlier in the day. n.b. The visiting hours are 3pm-8pm.

Table 1 shows that in general patients felt comfortable, relaxed and able to place confidence in those caring for them. Of those that rated less satisfied than 'very' explained that it was because they were staying overnight in a ward with the noises of other people and their babies disturbing them and that they would have been more comfortable in a private room. Also for first time mums, they felt anxious with a new baby and preferred to be looking after their child in their own home. All patients however were very pleased that their partners were able to stay overnight to help them and their baby.

	During your stay have you felt...?				
	Comfortable	Able to Relax	Confident in staff ability	Supported	Listened to and understood
Patient 1	Not very	Not at all	Quite	Quite	Quite
Patient 2	Quite	Quite	Very	Very	Very
Patient 3	Quite	Quite	Quite	Very	Very
Patient 4	Very	Not very	Very	Very	Quite
Patient 5	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 6	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very

Table 1

Table 2 shows that all patients bar one were very satisfied with the care they had received from staff. The one patient who was less satisfied had had a difficult birth and felt that staff could have been more attentive to her and her baby. She also felt that the consultants relayed information in a manner that was difficult to understand and would have preferred for information to be written so that she and her partner could refer back and ask questions or clarification at a later time.

	Do you feel staff have been...?				
	Cooperative	Helpful	Respectful	Friendly	Clear when communicating
Patient 1	Quite	Quite	Quite	Quite	Not very
Patient 2	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 3	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 4	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 5	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 6	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very

Table 2

## Princess Royal Hospital (PRUH)

### *Observations*

Maternity ward -

The ARs were disappointed with the Entrance and Reception areas in the Maternity Ward, describing them as 'cluttered' and 'not very welcoming'. The overall group impression was that the décor was 'dull' and the lighting was 'too dim'. They were more positive about the ward's tidiness and cleanliness, including the toilets, though they noticed some nappies on the floor in one place. There were no bad odours that the ARs could smell and the ward seemed quiet.

ARs felt there was not enough information on display in the Maternity Ward for patients.

Though impressed by the method for ordering food, ARs noted that the portions were small.

The ARs thought staffing levels were acceptable and the staff seemed to work well as a team. Patients had 'only positive feedback about staff' and all appeared satisfied with the care they had received. Call bells were within patients' reach and those asked said their calls were responded to. Patient privacy was well upheld with all patients appropriately dressed.

Oasis Birthing Centre -

ARs were very impressed with the Oasis Birthing Centre finding the whole area 'Peaceful, organised, calm' and 'clean'.

The information on display was 'clear' and 'comprehensible'.

Once again, ARs felt that the patients' meal portions were too small.

Staffing levels seemed, again, acceptable with all staff treating the patients in a 'kind, caring' manner. ARs spoke to one off-duty midwife who explained that the staff adhere to strict cleaning rotas to ensure that no patient is ever left in dirty clothes or a dirty environment.

The only concern ARs noted about the Oasis Birthing Centre was that apparently it can be difficult getting extra midwives during busy periods.

## Interviews

The ARs spoke to eight patients over the two wards and one member of staff. Half of the patients spoken to were from the London Borough of Bromley, while one was from Bexley, one from Croydon, one from Kent County and the other from Lewisham. Seven out of the eight were driven to the hospital by a family member, with the eighth getting a taxi from her home. Only one of the patients spoken to (who came with her mother) arrived at the hospital with someone other than her partner.

Four of the patients had given birth previously in the PRUH's Maternity Ward. One had been unhappy with the services at Mayday University Hospital the last time she gave birth, one was giving birth for the first time and two people did not respond to this question. Of the four who had given birth at the PRUH before, two felt that their experience this time had been better, one commenting that this time she felt 'more supported.'

A good example of the sort of support offered is the interpretation service for non-native English speakers. One patient explained that she sometimes struggles to understand English and that the PRUH provided her with an interpreter who explained the Caesarean Section process and its impact to her before she gave birth and returned after to offer support.

Six patients rated their experience as 'Excellent', and two rated theirs as 'Good'.

Four patients told the ARs that they were experienced enough not to need any help with breast feeding, while all of those who felt they needed support said they received it.

From the tables below it is clear that everyone spoken to felt comfortable, relaxed and able to place confidence in those caring for them.

	During your stay have you felt...?				
	Comfortable	Able to Relax	Confident in staff ability	Supported	Listened to and understood
Patient 1	Quite	Quite	Very	Quite	Quite
Patient 2	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 3	Quite	Quite	Very	Very	-
Patient 4	Quite	Quite	Very	Very	Very
Patient 5	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 6	Very	Quite	Very	Very	Very
Patient 7	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 8	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very

Table 1

	Do you feel staff have been...?				
	Cooperative	Helpful	Respectful	Friendly	Clear when communicating
Patient 1	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 2	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 3	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 4	Quite	Quite	Quite	Very	Very
Patient 5	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 6	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 7	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 8	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very

Table 2

Asked whether they had been able to get enough rest during their stay, four patients answered that they had, while one felt she had not been in hospital long enough to judge. Three patients responded that they had not, one complaining about temperatures, one about too much noise and too bright lights, while the third explained that she had been in considerable discomfort since giving birth, stressing that this was not the hospital's fault.

Four of the patients spoken to offered no recommendations or suggested improvements for the PRUH's maternity services. The woman who had felt too hot during her stay suggested that the heating be turned down throughout the ward, while another felt the hospital needed more staff on Sundays. Two of the patients suggested larger portion sizes at meal times.

### Darent Valley Hospital

#### *Observations*

Maternity ward -

The Entrance and Reception areas in the Maternity Wards, were bright clean and very welcoming'. The ward was very tidy and the toilets clean, though a small puddle of water was spotted on the floor. There were no bad odours that the ARs could smell and the ward was peaceful, calm and quiet.

Information boards were clear and displayed lots of useful information. A feeding room was available for mothers to express milk and for fathers to bottle feed. This room was clean and tidy with facilities to sterilise and make up feed.

Mothers were given a choice of food although portions were quite small and one patient was informed that she would have to wait for a gluten free meal option (the staff did in fact find cater to her needs quicker than expected).

A Parker Knolls reclining chair was made available to every patient so that their birthing partner could stay throughout the entire experience and which was seen as a very positive step. A washroom was also available for partners to use.

Call bells were within patients reach and nurses available to address any problems or queries.

On duty at the time of the visit were 4 Midwives, 1 Ward Manager and 1 Midwife Assistant. All staff appeared approachable, confident and happy to chat with the patients about any concerns they may have. Patient privacy was well upheld with all patients appropriately dressed.

### ***Interviews***

The ARs spoke to seven patients over the two wards and members of staff. Five patients spoken to were from the Kent County and two were from the London Borough of Bexley. All patients were driven to the hospital by their partners

Four of the patients had given birth previously at Darent Valley Hospital. All four felt that the experience was much improved since they last gave birth at the hospital (credit was given by some to the fact that they were able to have their partner stay with them).

All patients answered a question relating to their overall experience of maternity services as excellent. All patients were asked how they would rate the support and guidance given to support and care for their baby. Four patients rated this as excellent, one rated as good and one felt unable to answer as was new to the ward. All but one patient asked felt that visiting times were good.

Four patients told the ARs that they were experienced enough not to need any help with breast feeding, while all of those who felt they needed support with breast feeding said they received it.

From the tables below it is clear that everyone spoken to felt comfortable, relaxed and able to place confidence in those caring for them.

	During your stay have you felt...?				
	Comfortable	Able to Relax	Confident in staff ability	Supported	Listened to and understood
Patient 1	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 2	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 3	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 4	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 5	Very	Very	Very	Not Very	Quite
Patient 6	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 7	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very

Table 1

	Do you feel staff have been...?				
	Cooperative	Helpful	Respectful	Friendly	Clear when communicating
Patient 1	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 2	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 3	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 4	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 5	Very	Very	Very	Very	Quite
Patient 6	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very
Patient 7	Very	Very	Very	Very	Very

Table 2

Asked whether they had been able to get enough rest during their stay, six patients answered that they had, while one partner said that the door to the obstetrics theatres banged every time it closed disturbing mothers and babies and that the cleaners spoke in loud voices very early in the morning.

### Comparative Overview

Across Lewisham, Queen Elizabeth, Princess Royal and Darent Valley hospital sites, 31 out of the total 36 people who were interviewed provided responses around how they felt during their stay and how they felt about the staff. The below tables look at comparative data around how comfortable patients were and how supported they felt. Further comparative tables can be found in Appendix 3.



**Table 1.**

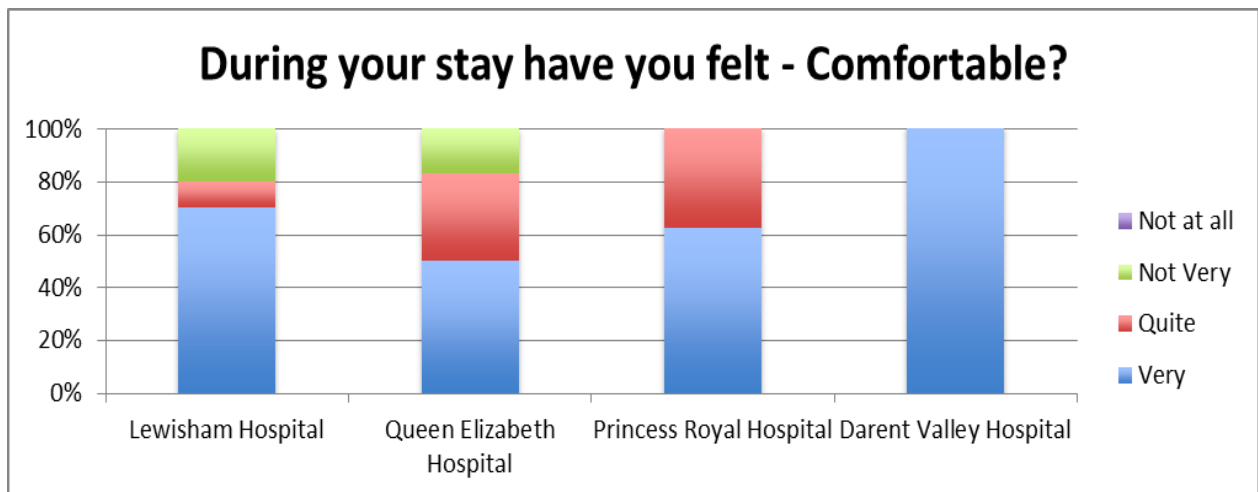


Table 1 compares data collected from patients across the four hospitals on how comfortable they felt during their stay. All seven patients at Darent Valley Hospital told ARs that they felt very comfortable during their stay. At Lewisham Hospital six people said they were very comfortable however two patients said they were not very comfortable and the remaining patient told ARs that they were quite comfortable. Seven patients provided responses at Queen Elizabeth with one saying they were not very comfortable, two patients were quite comfortable and three said they were very. Five patients at the PRUH told ARs they were very comfortable with the remaining two patients saying they were quite comfortable.

**Table 2.**

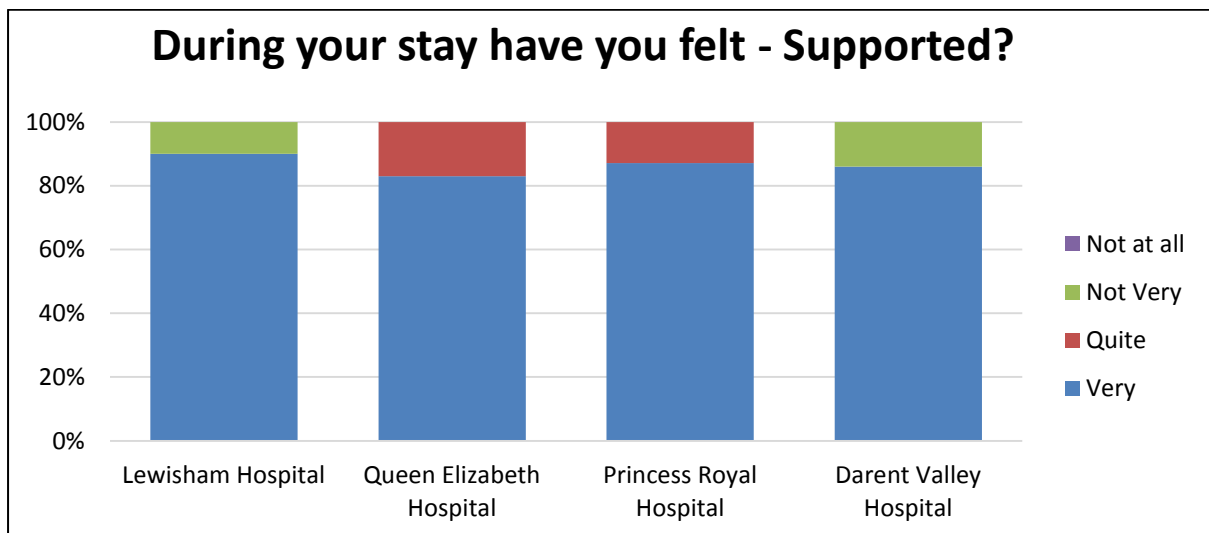


Table 2 compares data from the four hospitals around how supported patients felt during their stay. The table shows that on the whole patients across the four hospitals felt supported however one patient from Lewisham Hospital and one patient from Darent Valley Hospital told ARs that they were not very supported.

## Conclusions

Responses from patients across the Maternity Departments of the four hospitals were generally positive. Most patients told ARs that staff members were polite, respectful, friendly and helpful.

All four Enter and View teams were happy with the staff conduct they observed during their visits, finding staff members welcoming and engaging.

The ambience in the areas visited was reported as calm and interactions observed between staff and patients suggested that patients are treated with kindness and respect.

Cleanliness across the four hospitals was rated well however the ARs visiting the PRUH felt the entrance and reception areas in the Maternity Ward could have been more welcoming.

ARs visiting Queen Elizabeth Hospital were very impressed with their discharge process, praising the discharge sessions provided to mums and the 'comprehensive' and 'useful' packs handed out. ARs felt that this discharge process is a good example of best practice.

Local Healthwatch will be working with the providers to address areas of concern identified in this report and will use our position as an independent consumer champion for health and social care to exert an effective and responsible influence on services to secure improvements.

## Recommendations

Issues raised by ARs across the four Enter and View teams have been grouped into the following nine recommendations:

1. Ensure that all information boards and stands are utilised
2. Ensure that hand sanitizer dispensers across the wards are always filled
3. Recruit more maternity staff and ensure there is enough cover for shifts at weekends
4. With patients who have been through a difficult birth, to communicate clearly with updates on the progress of tests and if possible to provide written information allowing the patient the opportunity to ask questions and points of clarification at a later time
5. Ensure patients are informed of overnight stay policy if appropriate
6. Review to ensure appropriate visiting times are in place

7. Review décor if dated, and repairs if necessary
8. Review food portion sizes and choice of food available
9. Continue the good work provided by the staff in general.

### Authorised Enter and View Representatives

Jade Fairfax (Healthwatch Lewisham)

Miriam Long (Healthwatch Lewisham)

Denver Garrison (Healthwatch Lewisham)

Joyce Sutton (Healthwatch Bromley)

Sue Fielder (Healthwatch Bromley)

Gerda Loosemore-Reppen (Healthwatch Bromley)

Leslie Marks (Healthwatch Bromley)

Rosaline Mitchell (Healthwatch Greenwich)

Vivian Camara (Healthwatch Greenwich)

Nicola Rigby (Healthwatch Bexley)

Anne- Hinds Murray (Healthwatch Bexley)

### Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich and Lewisham would like to thank the Lewisham & Greenwich, King's College and Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trusts for allowing us to carry out these Enter and View visits, as well as the staff, patients and carers at Lewisham, Queen Elizabeth, Princess Royal and Darent Valley Hospitals for their co-operation and assistance during these visits.

Local Healthwatch would also like to express gratitude to all our Authorised Enter and View Representatives for the work they put in to helping us engage with and improve services.

## Contacts

For further information on this report or on local Healthwatch, please contact:

### **Healthwatch Lewisham**

Miriam Long, Manager

[Miriam@healthwatchlewisham.co.uk](mailto:Miriam@healthwatchlewisham.co.uk)

020 7998 7796

### **Healthwatch Bromley**

Folake Segun, Coordinator

[FolakeS@healthwatchbromley.co.uk](mailto:FolakeS@healthwatchbromley.co.uk)

020 8315 1916

### **Healthwatch Bexley**

Anne Hinds-Murray, Manager

[ahmurray@healthwatchbexley.co.uk](mailto:ahmurray@healthwatchbexley.co.uk)

020 8304 9344

### **Healthwatch Greenwich**

Rosline Mitchell, Manager

[rosaline@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk](mailto:rosaline@healthwatchgreenwich.co.uk)

020 8305 5008

## Appendix 1

### Observation of Maternity Services

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

Princess Royal University  
Hospital

Lewisham Hospital

Darent Valley Hospital

Waiting Area

Clinical Area

From 1-5, how would you rate the following areas?

(1 = Unacceptable, 2 = Poor, 3 = Acceptable, 4 = Good, 5 = Excellent)

Area	Score	Comment
Entrance / reception		
Information displayed		
Lighting		
Odour		
Cleanliness		
Bathroom facilities		
Noise level		
Safety		
Temperature		

## Appendix 2

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Time \_\_\_\_\_

Queen Elizabeth Hospital

Princess Royal University  
Hospital

Lewisham Hospital

Darent Valley Hospital

### Area visited

### Q1. How did you arrive here?

Comments

### Q2. Who came with you to the hospital?

Comments

### Q3. If previously given birth; did you use any of the below hospitals?

Queen Elizabeth  
Hospital

Princess Royal  
Hospital

Lewisham Hospital

Darent Valley  
Hospital

Home birth

Other

Comments

**Q4. Are there any significant differences you've experienced this time?**

Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

**Q5. How would you rate your satisfaction of the experience you have had?**

Excellent  Good   
Average  Poor

Comments

**Q6. Have you had enough support from the staff during your stay?**

Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

**Q7. Has the support and guidance to support and care for your baby been...**

Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good	<input type="checkbox"/>
Average	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments

**Q8. Have you had any support with breast feeding?**

Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

**Q9. How do you find the visiting times?**

Comments

Q10. During your stay have you felt...	Not at all	Not very	Quite	Very	Don't know
Comfortable					
Able to relax					
Confident in staff ability					
Supported					
Listened to and understood					



Q11. Do you feel staff have been...	Not at all	Not very	Quite	Very	Don't know
Cooperative					
Helpful					
Respectful					
Friendly					
Clear when communicating					

**Q12. Have you been able to get enough rest whilst you have been here?**

Yes  No  Don't know

Comments

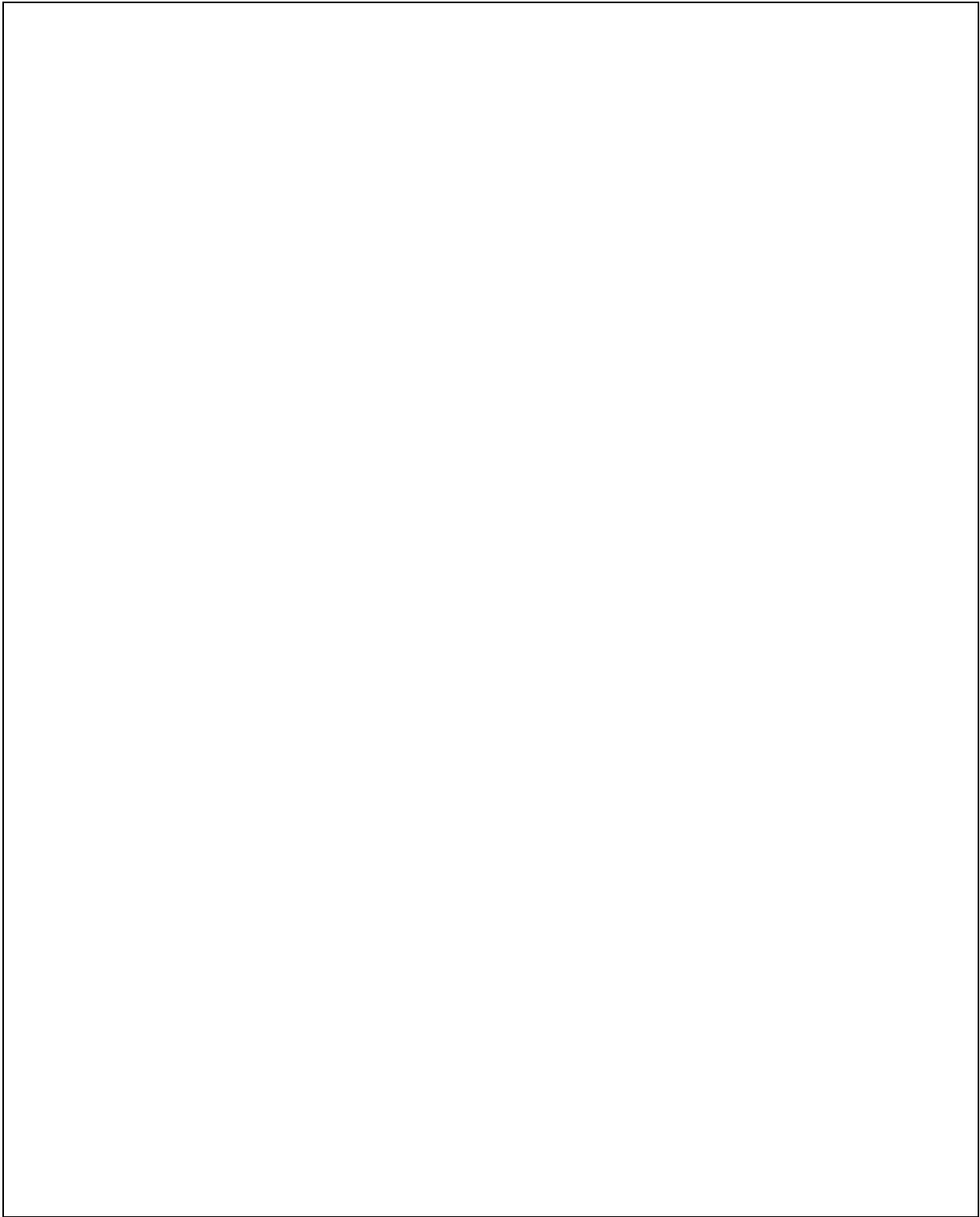
**Q13. What recommendations or improvements would you make to the maternity services here?**

Comments

**Q14. Are you a resident of.....?**

Royal Borough of Greenwich  London Borough of Bromley  London Borough of Bexley   
 London Borough of Lewisham  Kent County  Other

**Q15. Further comments / observations**

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for providing further comments or observations. The box is currently blank.

### Appendix 3

Table 1

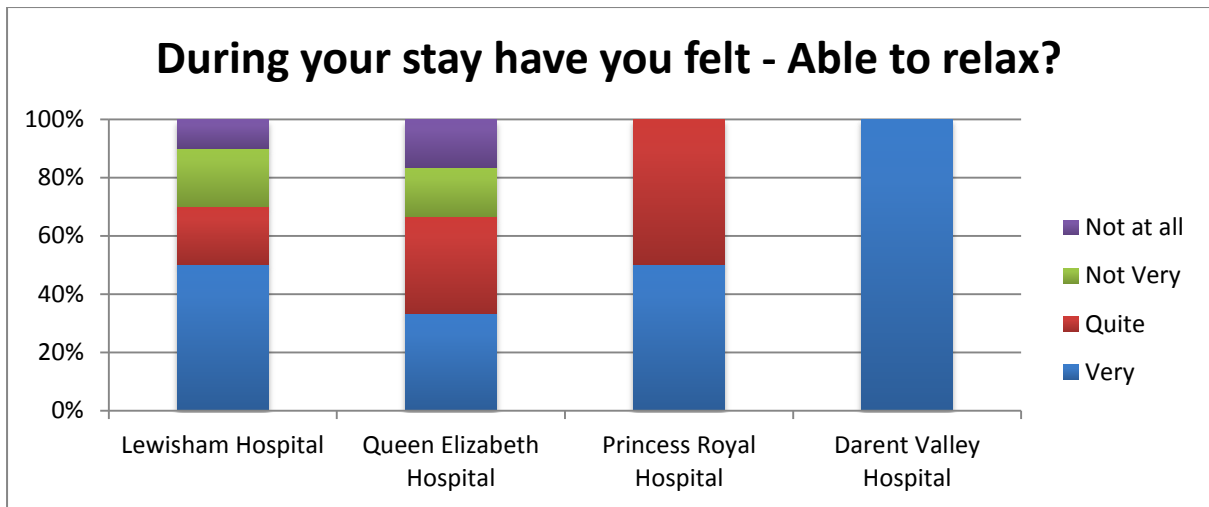
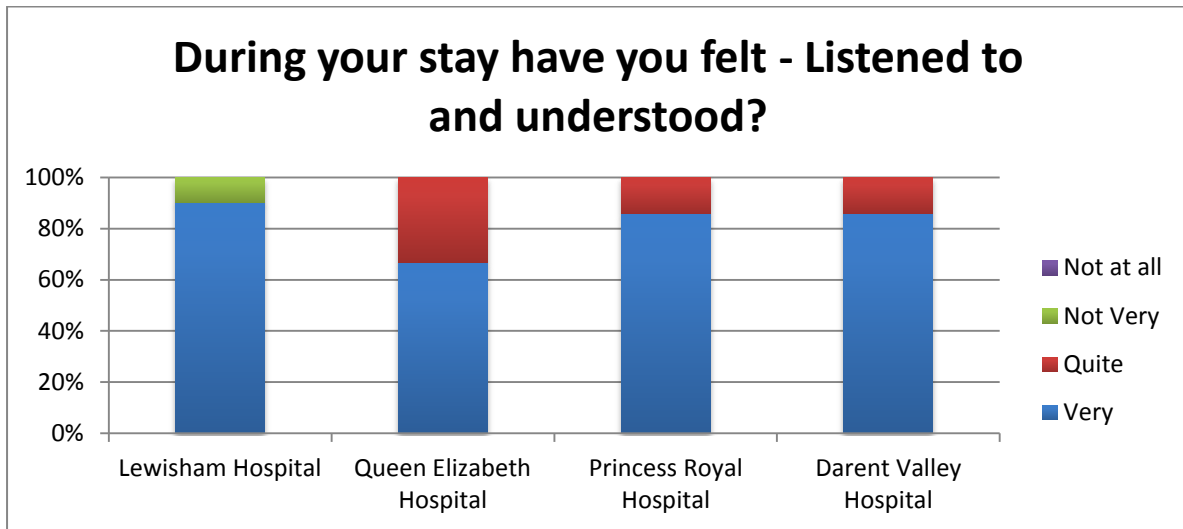


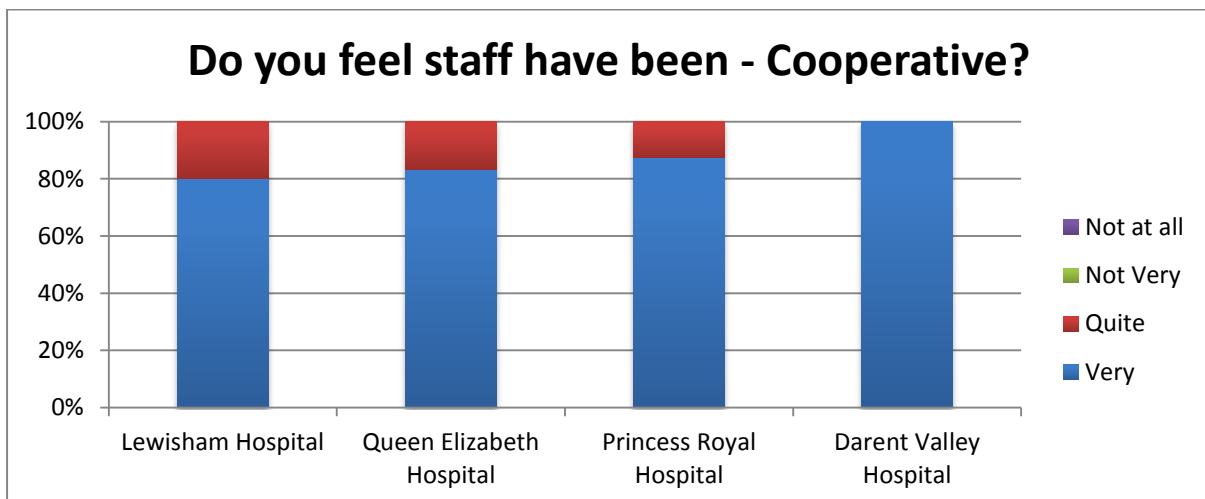
Table 2



**Table 3**



**Table 4**



**Table 5**

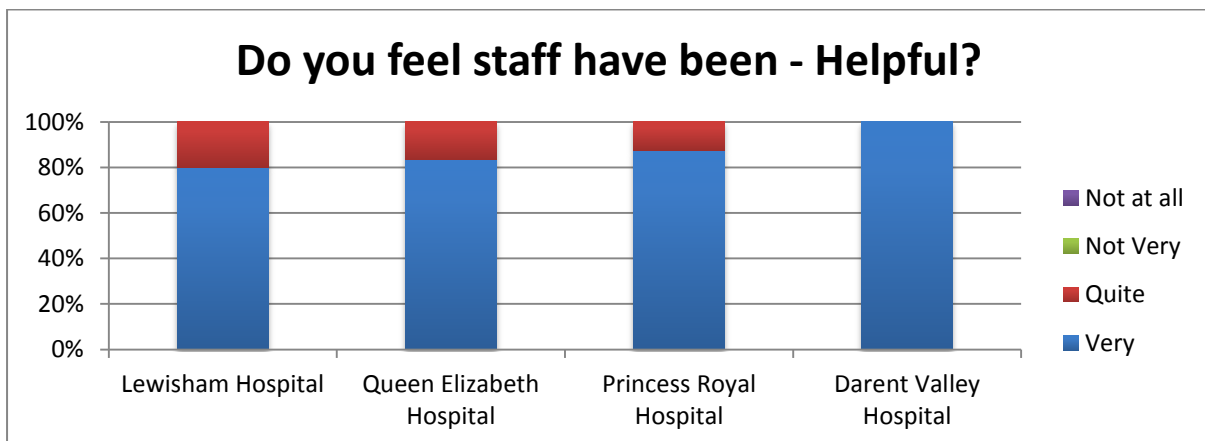


Table 6

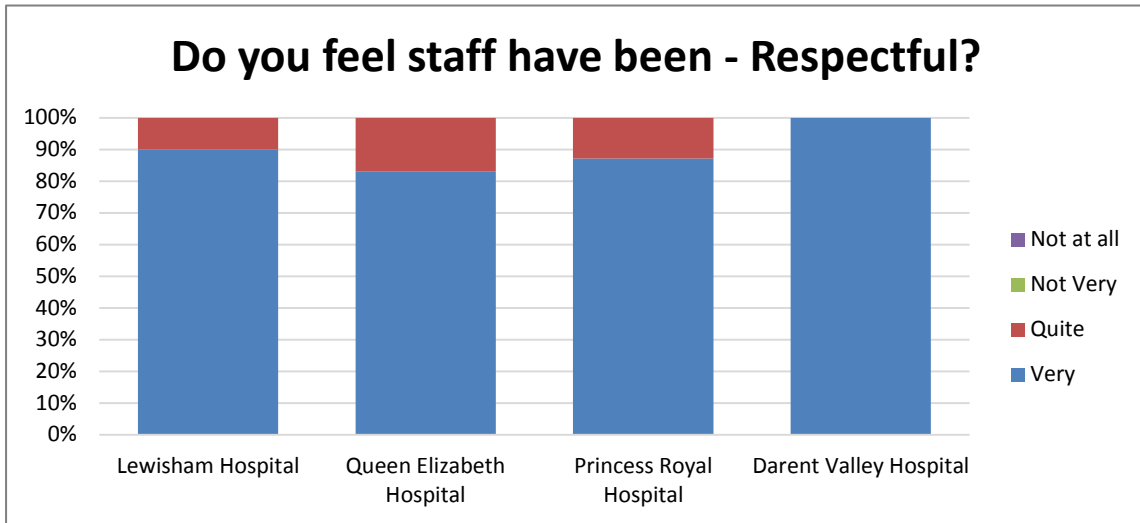


Table 7

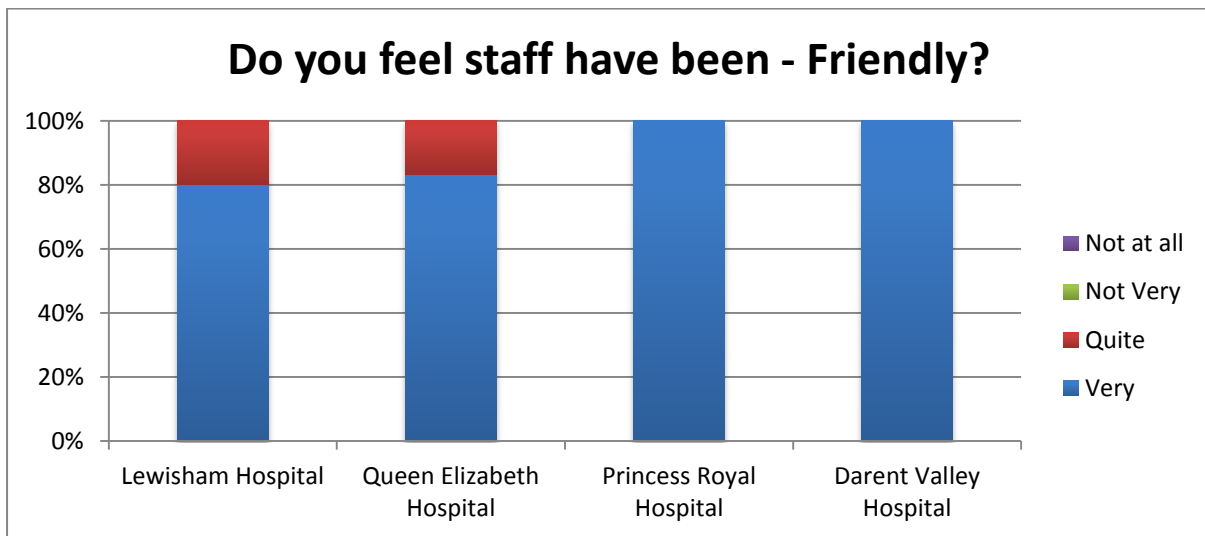


Table 8

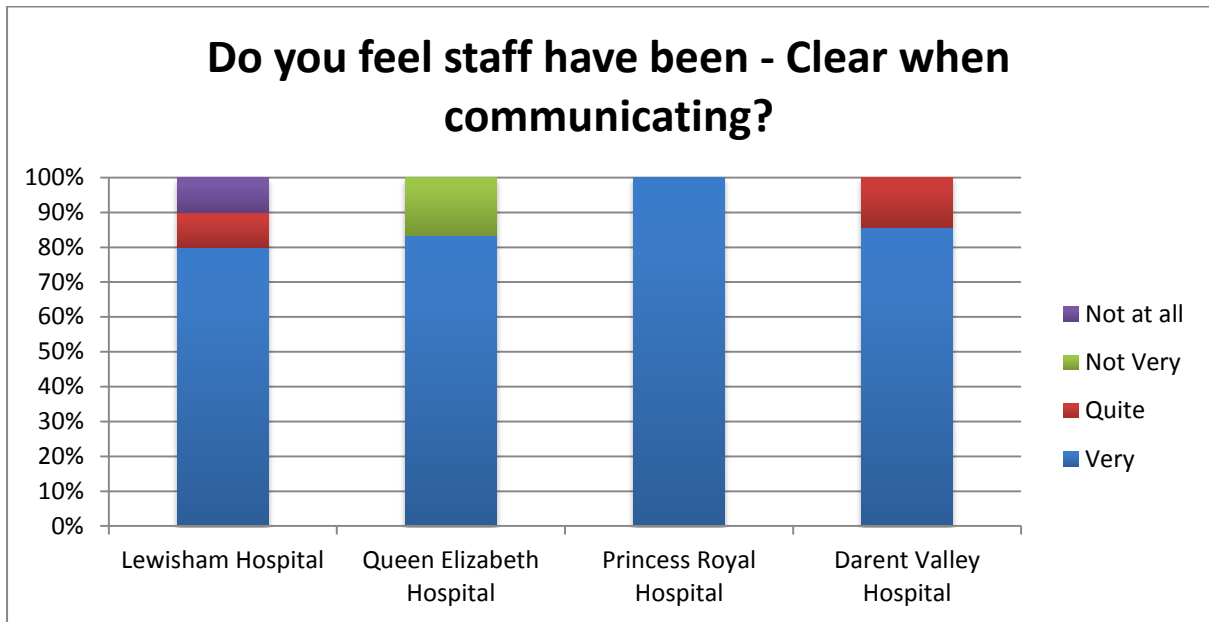
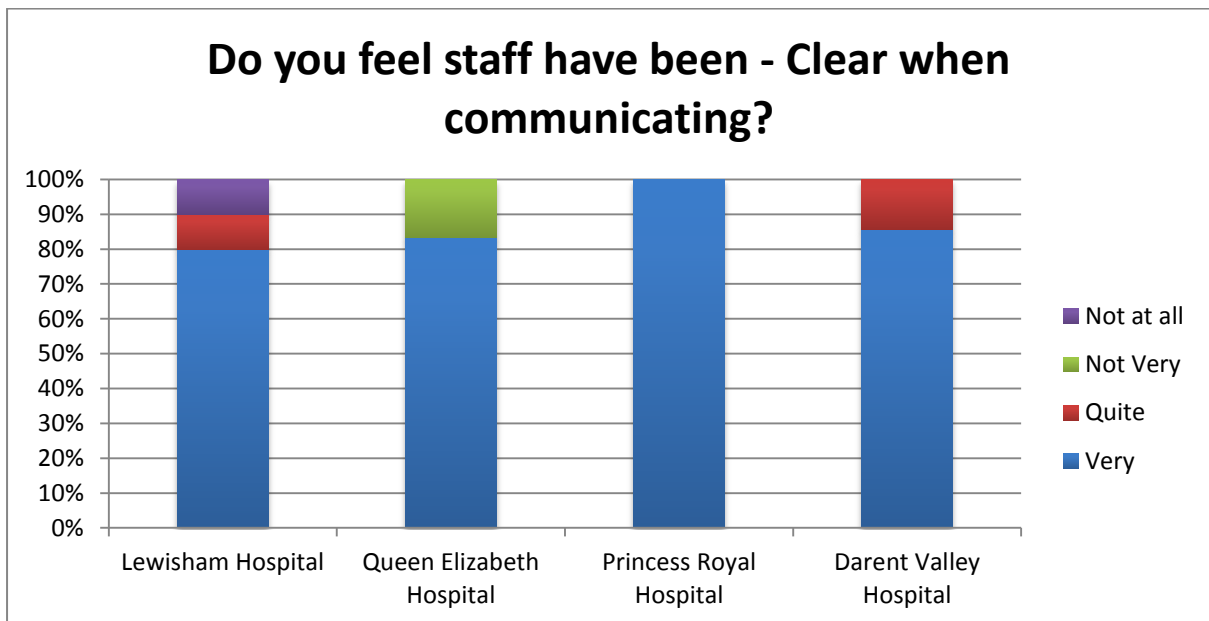


Table 9



## **Healthwatch Enter and View visit to UHL and to QEH Maternity Departments 31st March 2014**

### **Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Trust Response to the Recommendations**

This is a response to the recommendations set out in the report 'Lewisham & Greenwich NHS Trust, King's College Hospital NHS Foundation Trust and Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust Lewisham Hospital, Queen Elizabeth Hospital, Princess Royal University Hospital, and Darent Valley Hospital Maternity Departments Enter and View visits carried out 31 March and 6 May 2014. The report was written by the local Healthwatch organisations of Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, and Lewisham.

Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust welcomed the report by Healthwatch which we received on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014. We were very pleased to note the many positive comments about our services on both the UHL and QEH sites, including the rating of 'excellent' for the UHL Birth Centre, the general tidiness and cleanliness of the environment on the wards, that most of the women interviewed felt "supported, listened to and understood", and the description of "approachable and confident" staff at the QEH. We also noted the concerns highlighted in the report, in particular issues with empty hand sanitizer bottles and comments about the food and the provision of information.

#### **Response to the recommendations:**

1. Ensure that all information boards and stands are utilized

We expect that all information boards are regularly updated and re-stocked. The Matron for the Antenatal clinic and Community services at UHL has reminded the Lead midwife in the antenatal clinic to ensure that the information boards are updated and the leaflets are regularly re-stocked in the clinic waiting room. We will ensure that staff are reminded of the need to tell women and their families about the information boards when they arrive on the ward.

2. Ensure that hand sanitizer dispensers across the wards are always filled.

All Lead midwives have been reminded to ensure that the checking of the sanitizer dispensers is part of the daily checklist and that a member of staff is given the responsibility of ensuring that all the checks on the list are carried out on a daily basis.

3. Recruit more maternity staff and ensure there is enough cover for shifts at weekends

Recruitment in maternity is on-going. Since the Healthwatch visit, nine midwives have been recruited to the UHL site. These midwives will be based in the hospital. All Birth Centre vacancies have been recruited to and two community midwives

have also been appointed. Employment checks are underway and it is anticipated that the new members of staff will take up their posts within the next two to three months. Administrative staff vacancies have been filled and 24 hour cover on the labour ward has been achieved. Vacant support worker posts have been advertised and interviews are scheduled to take place by the end of May. Senior midwifery posts have been recruited to: Deputy Head of Midwifery QE site, Community and Birth Centre Senior Matron, and Consultant Midwife. Other senior midwifery posts have been advertised and shortlisted: Deputy Head of Midwifery UHL site, Labour Ward Matron QE site, Inpatient Matron UHL site.

4. With patients who have been through a difficult birth, to communicate clearly with updates on the progress of tests and if possible to provide written information allowing the patient the opportunity to ask questions and points of clarification at a later time.

The following statement is on page 10 of the report and relates to women's experience of the QEH: "Of the two that rated their experience as average, one explained it was due to the difficult birth of her child and the anxiety felt by the numerous tests that her new baby was subject to. She felt that the paediatric consultants did not provide enough information and any information given was hard to understand."

Normal practice when a woman has had a difficult birth will be for her to have a debrief with a doctor or midwife usually the following day so that she can ask any questions that she might have about her experience. We understand that this debrief may not provide everything that she needs at that moment in time, and it is important that the midwife caring for her is available if she has further questions. We have given this feedback to the paediatricians, and will remind staff of the need to ensure that women have all the information that they require about their care and the care of the baby. It is very important that the health professionals provide verbal information and written information, and we have patient information leaflets available covering a range of topics.

Women who have had traumatic birth are usually also sent an appointment to meet with their consultant at six weeks after the birth. Results of any tests are usually made available and discussed at the meeting, and the family given the opportunity to ask any questions they may have.

5. Ensure patients are informed of overnight stay policy if appropriate.

Partners or another family member of the woman's choice are welcome to stay overnight. This applies to both the antenatal and postnatal wards. A polite notice is displayed in each room providing guidance on the process and advising on the practicalities of overnight staying.

6. Review to ensure appropriate visiting times are in place.



Visiting times are constantly under review and have recently been extended on both the antenatal and postnatal wards. Women offer feedback during matron's quality ward round that they value the 'quiet time' during the early part of the afternoon as it gives them an opportunity to rest.

7. Review décor if dated, and repairs if necessary

The Labour Ward at UHL underwent refurbishment early in 2013. The Trust has a planned improvement programme. Repairs are reported to the Estates department for inclusion in their planned works.

8. Review food portion sizes and choice of food available.

Issues about food were reported under the UHL section, this response is from Initial who provide the catering services on the UHL site: "All the food portions and menus are agreed with the Trust dieticians. All the menus have to be approved by the Trust and work on a two week cycle to ensure change.

We are presently reviewing the current menu to alleviate any snags and problems and will issue new menus in the coming weeks."

9. Continue the good work provided by the staff in general.

The Trust would like to thank the Healthwatch organisations who took part in the enter and view visits for a useful report and for their support.

**Joy Ellery**

**Director of Knowledge, Governance and Communications**

**12<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

## **Dartford & Gravesham NHS Trust Response to the Recommendations**

Once we have published the final report, I intend to fully accept all three recommendations, create an action plan and implement change.

This document will be widely shared across the team and taken to the next Maternity Services Liaison Committee.

Once again many thanks for your 'fresh eyes' on our service.

Deborah McAllion

Head of Midwifery

11<sup>th</sup> June 2014

Princess Royal University Hospital

Farnborough Common

Orpington

Kent

BR6 8ND

Tel: 01689 863000

Ms Folake Segun  
Coordinator  
Healthwatch Bromley  
Community House  
South Street  
Bromley  
BR1 1RH

Dear Ms Segun

**Re: Joint Healthwatch *Enter & View* visit on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014**

Thank you very much for your email of 15<sup>th</sup> May 2014, in which you attached the joint local Healthwatch report following the *Enter and View* visit carried out in the maternity department at the Princess Royal University Hospital on 31 March 2014.

First of all I would like to take this opportunity to thank the joint team for the way in which they carried out their visit which was thoughtful and considerate to the needs of the women. We appreciate the candid and helpful feedback on our services and we will be using this to make improvements.

We have already begun working with colleagues from Bromley Maternity Services Liaison Committee [MSLC] which as you know has strong user representation, to help us identify ways in which to address areas such as the ward environment, which the report quite rightly highlighted.

We were very pleased to learn that woman felt that our staff were respectful, helpful and communicated well with them during their pregnancy. This is very much in line with our Trust Values and the importance we place on patient experience across all our sites. Once again, thank you for your valuable feedback. Please don't hesitate to come back to me if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely



Natilla Henry

Head of Midwifery







Cc: Jane Walters, Director of Corporate Affairs

Kathryn Dean, Associate Director of Operations

Julie Stevenson, Divisional Manager Women & Children's Services

Maxine Spencer, Director of Midwifery

Gibson Akpobome, Obs & Gynae Consultant, Clinical Lead