

Healthwatch Blackpool

Maternity service review, July 2015

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Introduction – Why did we do this?

Healthwatch Blackpool has a duty to the people of Blackpool to collect their views and represent them when it comes to health and social care. Following a CQC inspection on the 2nd April 2014 the maternity services at Blackpool Victoria were given an inadequate rating. When Healthwatch Blackpool ran a ‘concerns’ survey in May-June 2015 to collect data and voices of people who use Blackpool’s health and social care services, the results and feedback we received told us that residents were both concerned about maternity services but also praised them since the CQC report and the recent changes. Healthwatch Blackpool decided that a consumer review developed in conjunction with groups, stakeholders and service users would be a good strategy to collect quantitative and qualitative data to gauge community experiences of maternity services.

Our Aim:

To bring to light stories and experiences of individuals who have used maternity services in the past 12 months to identify any issues and to highlight good practice.

What we did:

During our initial planning session we developed a set of questions and a plan to collect views from a range of sources. Our consultation was open throughout the month of July to collect data from parents who have accessed maternity service within the last 12 months. We contacted children’s centres directly to share our survey, promoted it through our newsletter and social media platforms and visited local baby & toddler groups, weigh-ins and other groups to speak to new Mum’s attending the session. We also visited the Maternity and Anti-natal departments of Blackpool Victoria and the Fylde Coast Birth Centre on the 24th of July and spoke to new Mums (and Dad’s) and “soon to be” parents.

Healthwatch Blackpool would like to thank:

Zoe Walsh from Maternity Matters, Blackpool Victoria Hospital and its staff and Carol Whiteside at Mereside Children’s centre. This report couldn’t be generated without your input.

Disclaimer

Please note that this report relates to findings observed over the specific dates stated. Our report is not a representative portrayal of the experience of *all* patients, new parents and parents to be but is an account of the information that was observed and contributed during the month of July.

Antenatal - The views of parents before giving birth

Midwives

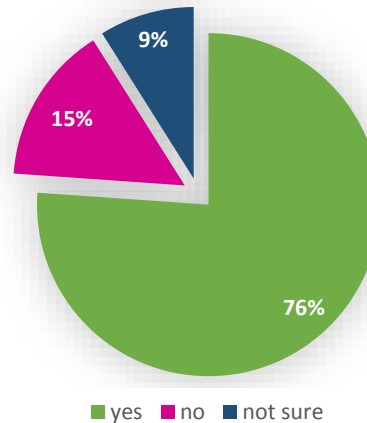
Were they the main point of contact?

44% - Yes they were
35% - No they weren't
21% - Mostly

"My midwife was really good and supportive"

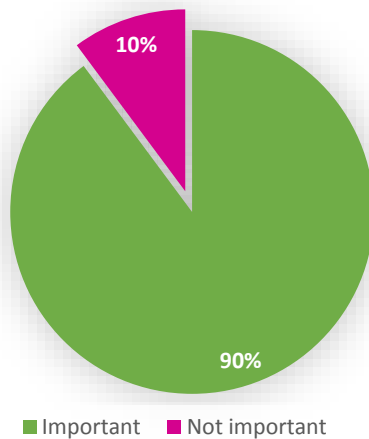
Most people said that having a named midwife to contact was very important to them.

Were you assigned a named midwife?



NICE guidelines state that for continuity of care pregnant women should be assigned a named midwife. www.nice.org.uk/guidance/qs22/chapter/quality-statement-2-services-continuity-of-care

How important to you is it you have a named midwife?



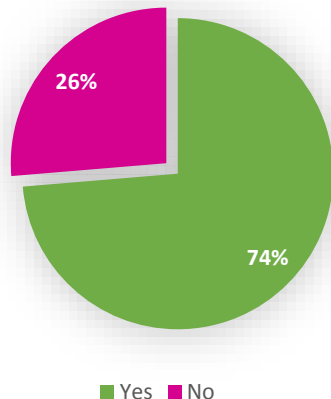
Of the people who said it wasn't important to have a named midwife many said they weren't bothered because it was their second or third child.

"She was lovely, it was reassuring to have a single point of contact"

"I saw different people every time. I felt that they didn't give much support or build a relationship with me where I felt I could ask for support. I was in and out of appointments in minutes where they just checked the heartbeat. I timed one appointment and it was less than 7 minutes"

Information & Choice

Were you given enough information?



We asked people if they felt they had enough information to make decisions and plans for the birth of their child.

“I’ve been listened to. It’s been above and beyond”

“I did feel that I could ask anything I wanted and they would give me the answers. But you don’t always know what you need to know or ask.”

“We went to all the antenatal classes. As it was our first [Child] they really helped.”

The parents we spoke to were all very keen to be involved and make their own decisions. Being listened to and supported to make a choice was a priority for everyone we spoke to.

Blackpool’s mums have 3 options to choose from for the delivery of their child (ren). Fylde Coast Birth Centre (Midwife led unit), Blackpool Victoria (Consultant led unit) or a home birth.

Choice

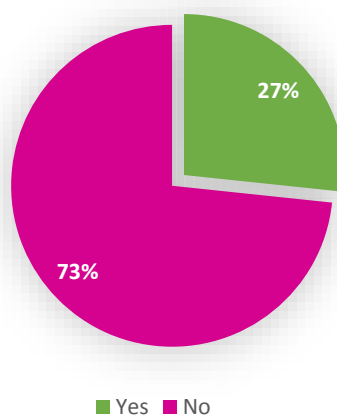
We asked about the amount of choice and control patients have when choosing their care. Many women we spoke to didn’t have any say where their ante-natal appointments were to be held.

73% had no choice

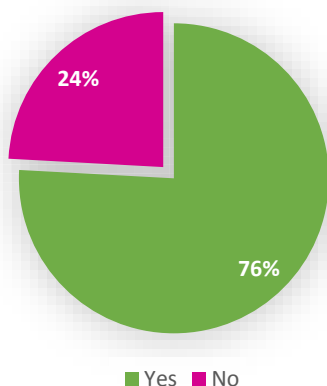
Most of the women we spoke to didn’t know they had a right to choose, many were assigned appointments at their GP surgery but they were happy with this as it was generally convenient.

For some their appointments were held at the hospital for medical reasons and didn’t mind not having a choice.

Did you get to choose where your antenatal appointments were held?



Were you able to choose the delivery method and venue you preferred?



Overall the majority (76%) of the parents we spoke to both were able to choose both the method and venue they preferred.

The vast majority told us that if they weren't allowed a choice, it was down to medical reasons.

"I was told where the birth would take place, I wasn't given any options"

"I didn't have a choice for medical reasons"

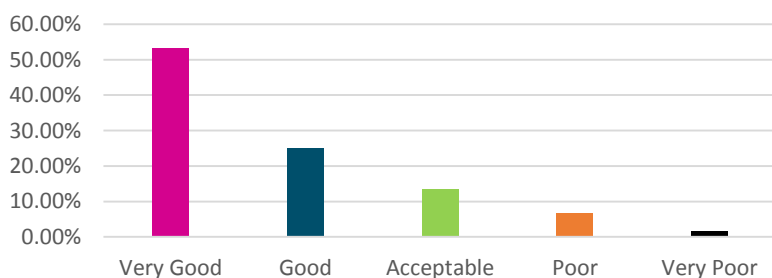
"Very much so, supported by perinatal mental health team and health visitor"

"I had limited choices because it was twins which was fine"

How would you rate the care?

We asked people how they rated the overall care provided to them by the hospital, consultants and midwives.

How would you rate the antenatal care you received?



Very good – 54%

Good – 25%

Acceptable – 13%

Poor – 7%

Very Poor – 1%

As you can see a large majority feel their antenatal care has been either good or very good (79%) 21% told us that their care was poor or acceptable.

Case Study

"I'd rather see one midwife at the antenatal appointments to build up a relationship, which would be nice. If they then delivered your baby too rather than a stranger but I know it doesn't work like that. They are all great at what they do and do endless hours, some will stay on just to deliver your baby after their shift has finished which I think is lovely. I know things are stretched with all the cuts going on recently and in the future. Keep up the good work."

Birth & Labour – Support & Response

Birth

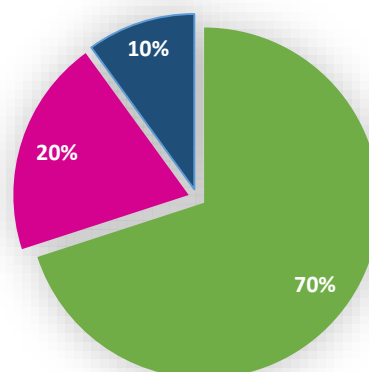
85% of the people we consulted with gave birth at Blackpool Victoria, 10% gave birth at the Fylde Coast Birth centre and 5% at home. 45% of the births went smoothly and as planned but 55% of our new Mum's told us that the delivery and birth didn't go as planned for a variety of reasons.

When things don't go to plan

Often midwives and consultants need to make decisions quickly and efficiently or the health and wellbeing of the mother and baby could be at risk.

70% of new Mum's told us that they were supported to understand what was happening when things were not going to plan. And felt happy with the care and treatment they received

Were you supported to understand what was happening?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Somewhat

"The midwives were great. My baby arrived within 40 minutes of getting to hospital so it was all very frantic and scary but the midwives kept me calm and reassured me"

"My choices were limited somewhat because of medical reasons so I just went with what they told me needed to happen"

"The midwives were really understanding and made me feel comfortable"

"I felt left to it as it was my second child"

Dignity, privacy and respect

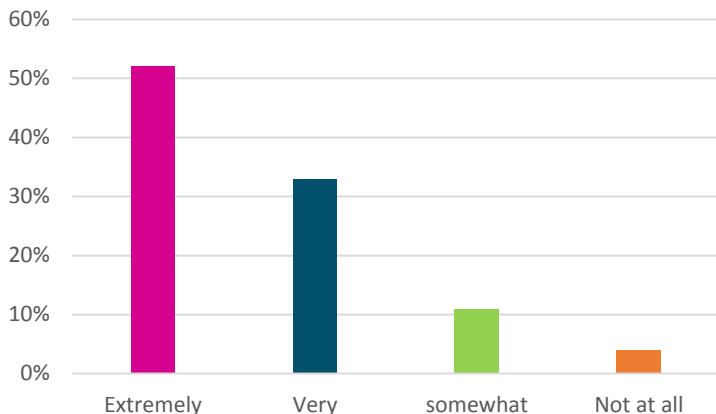
A massive 95% of the overall people who we spoke to said they were treated with dignity, respect and privacy during childbirth.

"I had an excellent birth experience and felt very well supported."

"My baby arrived safely and naturally this wouldn't have been possible without her [Midwife]"

Staff responsiveness

How responsive were the staff to your needs?



86% of respondents told us the staff were very or extremely responsive to the needs of them while in labour. The majority we talked to spoke very highly of the staff, who they felt worked really hard and were really caring. There were some differences in staff attitude and approach reported with many new Mum’s telling us that some members of the team “went over and above”, whereas others didn’t seem as interested in them as an individual.

“Some were absolutely exemplary whilst others made my experience unhappy and more time spent in pain. Thankfully the good outweighs the bad!”

“The Junior Doctor wasn’t very empathic towards me. I was in a lot of pain and was asking her to wait between contractions to examine me but she did it at the same time which was agony”

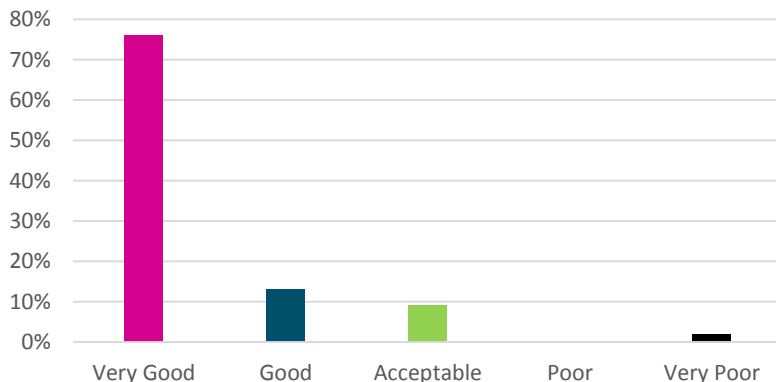
How would you rate the experience?

“From consultants, anaesthetists, midwives and healthcare assistants’ customer service was exemplary.”

“Susan who delivered our daughter was amazing.”

“Excellent care from the anaesthetist and Jenny [midwife]”

How would you rate the care during labour and childbirth?



Comments and suggestions from parents:

“More explanations”

“Couldn’t have been better”

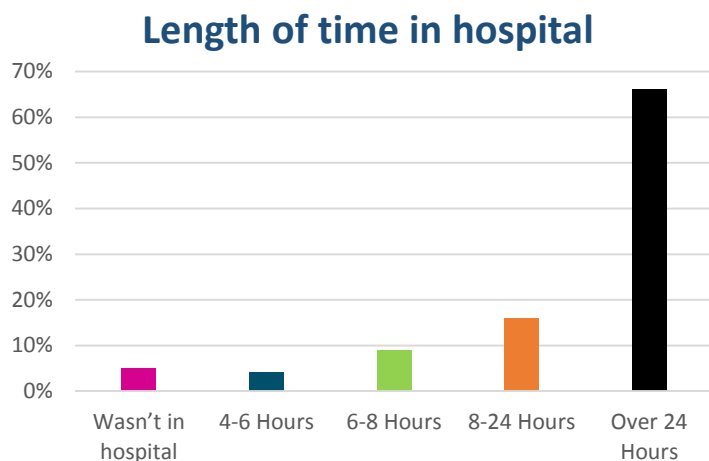
“Partner being able to stay and support me throughout induction process”

“We were on the midwife led unit and they were spot on”

“I don’t think it could have been improved.”

Post Natal Care – Information, Support and Discharge

Length of stay, quality of information and support.



Of the parents we spoke to 65% told us they spent over 24 hours in hospital. We asked how they felt about the length of time they spent before being discharged.

65% - It was the right amount of time in hospital

8% - It wasn't long enough

27% - It was too long

Information

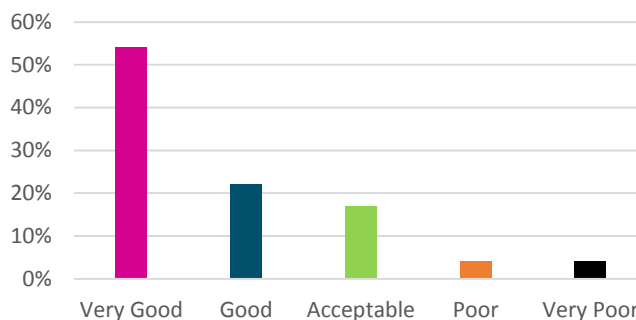
91% of woman surveyed were given help with breast feeding.

70% said the information given to dads and partners was either good or very good.

76% said the information and advice given to them was either good or very good when they left

6% said the information was poor

How was the support you received?



We spoke to several parents who told us that:

"The midwives were really understanding and made me feel comfortable"

"Everyone on ward D at BVH were brilliant, they helped me and my family immensely. I came home feeling capable and confident due to them, despite a few setbacks"

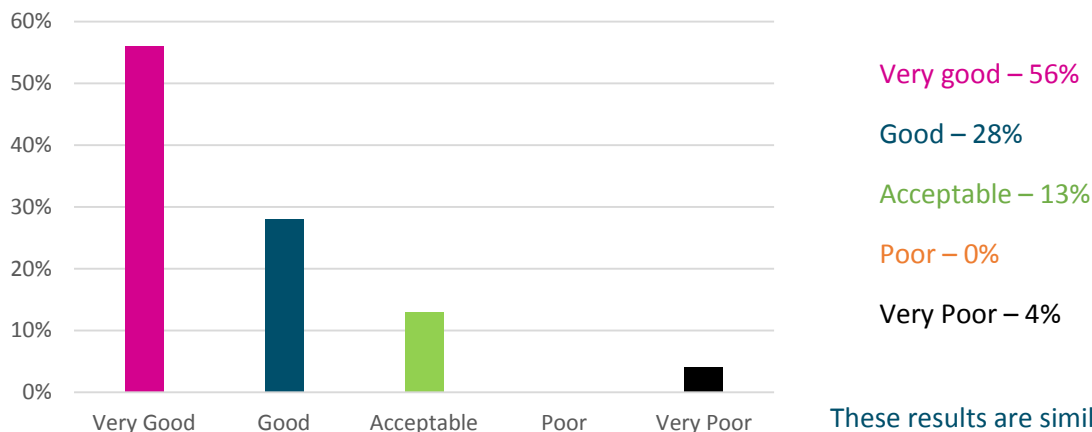
"Saw a Star buddy (Breastfeeding support worker) in hospital but once home struggled for support due to not having the correct postcode for extra help"

"I don't think he (Partner) received any information himself"

"Baby was in neo-natal unit for 2 1/2 weeks. They were amazing, they gave me loads of support and advice and taught us how to look after her properly. They looked after my baby as if she was their own child"

Postnatal Care

How would you rate the postnatal care you received?



These results are similar to the Antenatal care results (Page 6)

Conclusion & Findings.

Overall the feedback we received was really positive (84% reported a very good or good overall experience) from the majority of the people who completed our on-line survey or who we spoke with directly and there were no major concerns highlighted.

The following are the key findings;

90% felt that having a named midwife was important, yet only 44% reported seeing their named midwife consistently throughout their pregnancy.

73% did not know they could have or were offered a choice of where their ante natal appointment could be held.

27% of new Mum’s felt they were in hospital too long.

Response rate

There were 90 responses

Respondent age:

18-24	18%
25-34	59%
35-44	23%

Respondent ethnicity:

White British	94%
White Other	4%
Mixed white & Asian	2%