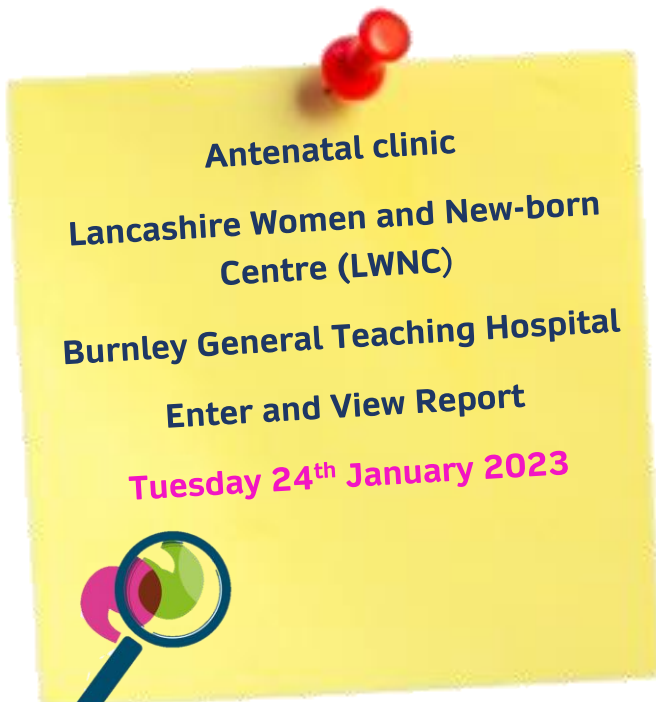




healthwatch

Blackburn with Darwen



DISCLAIMER

This report relates only to the service viewed at the time of the visit and is only representative of the views of the staff and patients who met members of the Enter and View team on that date.



INTRODUCTION

On Tuesday 24th January 2023 commencing 10.00am Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen undertook an Enter and View visit to the antenatal clinic at Burnley General Teaching Hospital.

This was an announced visit undertaken by authorised representatives from Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen who have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced, to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the view of those people using the services. The visit was arranged in cooperation and agreement with the hospitals relevant NHS managers.

This visit was arranged as part of Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen's Enter and View programme. The aim is to observe services, consider how services may be improved and disseminate good practice. The team of trained Enter and View authorised representatives record their observations along with feedback from patients and staff. This together with an environmental assessment, staff and patient questionnaires and online research forms the basis of the report.

This Enter and View has a focus on Maternal Mental Health to support the launch of a national survey in October 2022 by Healthwatch England. This survey (which is currently live) was prompted by research conducted by Healthwatch England between April 2021 and March 2022 where a key findings was: ***"People told us they need more support for mental health throughout the perinatal period"***.

The relevance of which is underlined by guidance from NICE published in September 2019

"Asking women about their emotional wellbeing provides an opportunity to identify potential mental health problems. It also gives women an opportunity to talk about any concerns they might have, such as fears around childbirth, multiple pregnancy, or past experiences, such as loss of a child or traumatic childbirth. This enables healthcare professionals to provide appropriate support and signpost to services as required ."NICE (Sept 2019)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen would like to thank the staff and patients at the Ante-Natal clinic on the 24th January 2023, for making us feel welcome and taking part in the visit.

In particular we would like to thank Melissa Almond(Patient Experience) and Natalie Woodruff (Midwife Perinatal Mental Health) for hosting us on the day

A big thank you to "Lesley" for sharing her story with us too.

METHODOLOGY

An Enter and View visit was arranged to speak to patients and staff attending Burnley General Hospital antenatal clinic at the Lancashire Women and New-born Centre(LWNC) on Tuesday 24th January 2023 between the core hours of 10.00am till 2.00pm.

This was an announced visit on Tuesday 24th January 2023 commencing at 10.00am, contact being made in advance by letter, telephone and an individually produced poster for display in the clinic reception.

We had 5 fully trained representatives present on the day. These were clearly identifiable by a Healthwatch uniform and ID badge.

Representatives were sensitive to the issues that may arise from the visit, and signposting to NHS mental health services was printed on all communication. All responses were anonymous.

We spoke to 14 patients and 9 staff where possible within the constraints of the clinics routine, people's willingness, and ability to engage and access to people in public areas. Discussion was structured around information available in pregnancy, decision making and general experience of the visit to the ante natal clinic on that day. Designed to gather information concerning patients and staff experience of the ante natal clinic, 2 of the patient respondent questions related specifically to maternal mental health.

1 respondent contributed a "Birth Story"

Respondents who preferred to fill in questionnaires later were directed to an identifiable collection box and contact slips were used to give potential respondents the opportunity to share their stories with Healthwatch representatives at a later date.

The team also recorded their own observations of the environment and facilities. The visit was intended as a snapshot of the patient experience on that day.

Team Members

Michele Chapman HW staff (Lead)

Sarah Johns HW staff

Gervaise McCaughran HW staff

Liz Butterworth volunteer

Michele Livesey volunteer



SUMMARY

Patient responses about parking prior to the clinic visit were overwhelmingly negative, with this causing some respondents considerable anxiety. Respondents described walking from parking other than the maternity unit whilst physically compromised, being heavily pregnant or in one case a recent Caesarean.

Likewise, there were mixed responses in respect of clinic waiting times with representatives deliberating whether road closures and parking difficulties may impact on the appointments schedule

However, patient responses in respect of staff and services were very positive. Staff were described as “friendly” and “understanding”. One respondent reporting “*I feel happy to be here as they make me confident*”.

An app based central notes system Badger Notes was introduced in November 2021, with the majority of respondents telling us how much they appreciated its convenience.

However Healthwatch representatives considered how the use of a smartphone app may impact on the most vulnerable.

- Having access to a smartphone/internet
- Having credit for data to service the smartphone
- Problems with language, illiteracy or disability.

Environmentally the LWNBC unit was an exceptional facility being spacious, clean and easily navigable. However representatives felt there should be extra provision for baby changing.

- In the men’s WC in the main reception and /or
- In the ante natal clinic.

In terms of patient mental health and wellbeing, patient responses were very positive with all respondents reporting feeling well supported in this area. Most respondents told us they knew where to access mental health and wellbeing support citing the midwifery team, their GP, consultant or Badger Notes.

Staff responses were generally less positive. Staff were happy to talk to us demonstrating an open culture. They told us that they felt well supported by their manager and that she was approachable.

However, they also told us that they had difficulties with staffing levels and would have liked more time to deliver person centred care. There were also mixed responses in respect of the effectiveness of training and the use of Badger Notes with concerns about the technology and the need for administrative support. Despite many respondents telling us that they “loved” their job, staff seemed to reflect a national picture of pressures around the role describing it as “challenging.” Some staff reported being unhappy one stating “*I am not very satisfied I didn’t sign up for this !*”

Staff were confident in the referral process to mental health services however representatives were very concerned to hear that such referrals may be unsuccessful due to an over capacity mental health team.



WHAT WE SAW

Pre visit

Representatives first undertook an overview of the hospital website. As part of this overview the website was compared to 2 other websites at nearby hospital trusts Lancashire Teaching Hospitals Preston and Southport and Formby District general Hospital.

The Burnley General Teaching Hospital website compared favourably to the other websites and representatives found it clear, informative, easy to navigate and populated with engaging images.

A “Your Visit” tab gives information and direction of the site, parking areas and advice about public transport. A free shuttle bus from the Royal Blackburn Hospital. Pendle Community Hospital and Burnley operates and the timetable is published. Likewise, parking zones are detailed with a maximum cost of £3.50. However we could not find advice on payment methods although the “correct change” is advised.

The ante natal clinic is clearly shown as situated in the Lancashire Women and New-born Centre (LWNBC)

Representatives found it easy to navigate to the dedicated “Maternity and New Born services” drop down and immediately noted a QR code patient consultation invitation in respect of the use of “Badger Net” notes. (Badger Net being an online app which carries all the patient notes and updates)

We also found signposting to a Friends and Family online survey with accessible versions available.

The “Meet the Team” drop down gave full information on the maternity team with dedicated areas such as Diabetes, Bereavement, and Perinatal mental health noted clearly.

In terms of the ante natal team these are introduced by name and role. A link is also provided to encourage patients to access screening information prior to the visit.

There is also dedicated Maternal Mental Health drop down tab with a referral link to local psychological services (IAPT).

As part of our pre-visit assessment the Lead representative rang the number given on the website for the ante-natal clinic (at 10.38am on 18/01/2023). After approximately 3 minutes without response the phone was disconnected without any explanation.

However a further phone call during the afternoon was answered immediately and the staff were very helpful.

Representatives also referred to results of the recent CQC hospital inspection report Burnley General Hospital NOV 2022 which rated the hospital as “Good”.

The CQC reporting on the Maternity service.

“The service had 24-hour access to mental health liaison and specialist mental health support (if staff were concerned about a woman’s mental health). Staff could access support for women from a specialist perinatal mental health team. Staff completed, or arranged, psychosocial assessments and risk assessments for women thought to be at risk of self-harm or suicide. We saw mental health assessments using a recognised tool were completed in all records we reviewed.”



Location

Burnley General Hospital is provided by East Lancashire Teaching Hospitals and serves a local population of approximately 530 000. The hospital building occupies a large site on the outskirts of Burnley served by the M65 and various A roads.

Whilst it is difficult to address the location of the hospital in terms of the road network, it is worth noting there is a heavy reliance on one road (the M65) which impacts particularly on patients obliged to travel from Blackburn and other areas.

On the day of our visit there had been an incident on the M65 which had affected the journeys of visitors, staff and patients as both car journeys and the shuttle bus had been delayed.

Representatives considered that delays in patients reaching appointments may have an operational effect on the clinical delivery at the hospital and/or that transport difficulties may “put people off” attending the hospital.

Our team found the hospital to be poorly signposted from some routes. The approach from the roundabout at Casterton Ave gives little indication that the hospital can be accessed from there. Similarly the hospital entrance on Briercliffe Rd is only signposted from one aspect.

Parking and the Hospital grounds

At the time of our visit the parking provision could be described as inadequate. The majority of the team having to park in nearby residential side roads. Despite circling the various car parks there were no vacant space and cars were parked in undesignated areas. It was difficult to see if there were dedicated mother and child spaces or how many disabled bays were designated due to the congestion of cars. A drop off point directly in front of the Lancashire Women and New-born Centre was similarly congested with vehicles observed to be stationary beyond the 30 min waiting time. Representatives observed patients and visitors being dropped off in the roadway to accommodate this.

Later, a heavily pregnant patient attending the antenatal clinic described to us how the lack of parking had affected her experience. She described being highly anxious about being late for her appointment after struggling to find somewhere to park. She told us that she had attempted to pay for parking at 2 separate pay points both of which were inoperable and how she had felt obliged to capture this on her phone to prove she had tried to pay.

However, the hospital grounds were generally well presented with little evidence of litter, and the planting particularly outside the LWNBC was very attractive and welcoming.

A quadrangle at the centre of the LWNBC was beautifully landscaped with both hard and soft landscaping in a circular pattern and the seating reflecting that.

Representatives observed the gentle gradient to the centre entrance to accommodate wheelchairs and prams.



The Lancashire Women and New-born Centre

“The Lancashire Women & New-born Centre was purpose built to provide one of the most advanced units of its kind in the UK. Sitting on the existing Burnley General Hospital site, it provides centralised state-of-the-art maternity services with the best possible care. The Centre features LDRP suites (labour, delivery, recovery, postpartum), which promote the value of family togetherness and allow the entire birthing process to take place in one room.” (Hoare Lee Project Managers 2023)

The external presentation to the building certainly lives up to its promotion. Presenting a modern low profile construction with large window areas and a sliding automatic door entrance. Inside the main reception area serves all the functions of the unit, and we found this to be clean, calm, and extremely well presented.

Furnishings were in keeping with the modernity of the building and appeared to be newly acquired. There was plenty of seating being modular units grouped around coffee tables. Representatives observed 3 toilet areas Women’s and Baby changing, Men’s and a Disabled cubicle. Pictorial written and colour contrasting signage was clearly positioned and representatives observed each cubicle to be clean and well stocked with soap hand dryers and toilet paper. (Indeed the cleaner was in attendance during our visit.) The cubicles were contemporary and user friendly with anti-bacterial surfaces and a drop down baby changing unit. However, the siting of the baby changing unit in the female toilet cubicle precluded male partners from undertaking this task.

The reception area also hosted several large vending machines which dispensed hot and cold drinks and snacks. Elsewhere there were information screens and posters and ample supplies of face masks and hand gel. A clock on the wall displayed the time in digital and analogue and was correctly orientated to the time day and date.

Double doors led directly to the corridor leading to the ante-natal clinic which was clearly signposted. A feature of the corridor was an engaging display banner (with QR code) promoting the “Badger Net” app.

The corridors leading to and from the ante natal clinic were populated by additional seating.

The Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen poster was displayed throughout the unit as requested.



Ante Natal Clinic and Welcome

The ante-natal clinic is approached through double swing doors and is smaller and more intimate than the main reception. Representatives felt that the atmosphere was calm and relaxed with chairs and low level tables arranged to facilitate social interaction. Reception staff were smart, friendly and welcoming and at “check in” we observed patients being called to their appointment by the midwife at the door to the treatment rooms.

However, we observed a patient asking for the baby changing facilities and staff directed her back to the main reception area. Representatives considered whether absence from the dedicated ante natal area you may mean patients miss being called for the appointment.

The area was well served by a patient toilet which was clean and fully stocked elsewhere notices posters and leaflets offered more supporting information. A laminated poster explained uniforms of the staff and the role they represented. A “You said We did” information board described how the unit had responded positively to patient feedback. Unfortunately, the whiteboard close to it had not been updated with the names of the staff on duty or the waiting times (which patients had specifically requested in feedback.)

Nor did we see information or signposting in respect of support around mental health, communication issues or chaperone availability.

Later in the visit we spoke to the Perinatal mental health midwife about the lack of information and signposting in respect of this. She told us that additional support was established at the longer “booking in” appointment and that this would have already been accommodated in the patient notes. She also told us that iPads could be used to support patients with any language difficulties.

Representatives observed a volunteer approaching patients to introduce herself as breast feeding support, she told patients that she would be speaking to them again at 25 weeks gestation about feeding choices. When we spoke to the volunteer later she was full of praise for the unit and its promotion of breastfeeding pointing out that the Unit had received a **UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI) GOLD Reaccreditation 2021** gold award in recognition of this.

Representatives did not see any accommodation for accompanying children and attributed this to Infection control measures.



WHAT STAFF TOLD US

The staff responses were candid and mixed. However common themes were,

- A consistent struggle around staffing levels,
- A lack of time around appointments.
- Appreciation of a supportive manager

A number of staff reported “loving “their job but lacking confidence in specific areas.

One staff member has considered retirement due to her difficulties with computerised systems and her lack of faith in them .Yet another staff member felt that the midwives required more administrative support.

A staff member highlighted the difficulties when women could not speak English and had to rely on family members or partners to interpret for them.

However in respect of the focus of our report(maternal mental health) we were concerned to hear that signposting to overcapacity mental health services was not always successful. Indeed one staff member related her worry about a patient when mental health support could not be accessed as it was a late afternoon appointment. This patient was admitted as a precaution until support was available.

Similarly, many staff appeared demoralised for reasons that may be described as systemic and national.

Do you always have enough staff when on duty?

“Not always this may depend on sickness on the day.”

“This depends, on certain days we may have sickness etc.”

“Some days we have enough staff however it is all dependant on shortages in other areas .We can be moved to other areas where there are staff shortages”.

“Most of the time I feel we are well staffed although staff are frequently pulled to other areas (when we are fully staffed)”

“No”

“Not every day.”

“Some days.”

“Not every shift.”

“Today we have but that’s not always the case. Yesterday we didn’t. We are regularly short staffed. It is very frustrating when I feel that cannot give the women the time they need. I work in the Foetal medicine unit and often ladies need lots of support especially if they have had bad news.”



“I feel torn between the patient I am seeing and all those that I know are waiting”.

“Not always, no. today is ok but other days it can be very challenging. In our department we deal with very emotive situations and it needs time to talk with those who have had difficult news. I feel rushed. I am not able to give the amount of time needed. This impacts on my own wellbeing, and also my colleagues. I feel like I am not doing a good job. I sometimes remember things I could have done later. I find myself making follow up calls after the patient has left especially if I am concerned.”

Do you feel supported to carry out person centred care (Do you have enough time around appointments)?

“I don’t feel the appointments are long enough to carry out full assessments. There are huge time constraints”.

“No”

“When staffing is adequate yes.”

“Yes, but at times this can be challenging when activity levels are high.”

“No”

“I would like to do more but I am aware of time constraints.”

“Mostly.”

“Some days”

“As above. There is not enough time for each patient. Even though appointments in foetal medicine are 30 minutes. Some need much longer when the situation is distressing and it is awful if you have to rush. The managers are supportive and do understand but they cannot change the situation.”

“There is often not enough staff time for each patient especially when more time is given to a patient. This creates additional pressure on the team”.

“We have been able to introduce antenatal memory making and we have close links with Neonatology and Derian House.”



Do you feel you have enough training on maternal mental health. Do you feel confident to identify these issues and make a referral for support if appropriate ?

“No I don’t have enough training and we make referrals but these are not always accepted due to capacity”.

“No I don’t feel I have enough training, but I am confident in making referrals.”



"I am aware of the procedures to ask the appropriate questions but not confident to know which service/professional to direct towards. I am happy to ask for assistance though, and then refer to the right area."

"Yes, I feel confident to make the necessary referrals. However there have been times when I needed to do 1 to 1 care on the ward for 12 hour shifts and I do not feel entirely comfortable with these situations."

"We have the training, however there is a big issue during appointments and doing referrals at home in our own time."

"Yes I am very confident our manager is very approachable if I need assistance. I am aware of the referral pathway."

"Yes, it is on update day and I have supervision if needed. My managers are always happy to help if needed"

"Yes, I always attend update day and I can always contact my manager for extra advice."

"I personally do due to my previous experiences and exposure to maternal bereavements. Some colleagues lack confidence."

"We have an update once a year from the maternal mental health team. Staff can discuss any personal training needs at appraisal"

"We do have training but it is very standardised. More experienced staff are able to identify patients needing additional support"

"It isn't always easy to access support from mental health as that team is also overwhelmed. Referrals are made online and staff don't feel confident in this system. Our expertise is midwifery, clinical skills and dealing with patients not computer systems."

"Patients are signposted to perinatal mental health but it's not easy to get them through."

"The computerised record system causes additional stress for some staff. They find it overwhelming and complex. Making referrals is stressful for experienced midwives that are not computer experts. Making referrals is very time consuming and takes us away from patients. More admin support would be appreciated"

"I lack confidence in the systems and worry if it has gone to right place."

How satisfied are you in your role do you have any frustrations ?

"I am not very satisfied I didn't sign up for this !"

"It depends it varies on a day to day basis."

"Most days I am satisfied"

"About a 9 out of 10."

“Not very”

“ I love being a midwife.”

“I am satisfied with my job when we are well staffed.”

“I love it. We are all here because we care. It is good to make a difference.”

“Yes but you get used to the constraints. There isn't enough staff or enough time.”

“Management try to understand but what can they do ?”

“I love my work in a way that I cannot explain. Work is very intense in foetal medicine. It impacts on staff wellbeing”.

“I find it tough. I question if I did enough for some patients. I go home feeling that I didn't do enough.”

“All information including patient records are online, with everything on screen. Some staff find this difficult.”

“Some patients have difficulty when English isn't first language or not computer literate. Other languages are available but only if patients / partners can translate via systems.”



WHAT PATIENTS TOLD US

Patient feedback was generally positive with the exception of the parking situation.

The majority of patients were happy with the service they received from the unit particularly in their involvement in the decision making process around their pregnancy. Staff were generally described positively as “good and “kind” and patients told us they were asked about their mental health and wellbeing at each appointment.

There were mixed responses about waiting times at appointments.

Badger Notes seemed to be viewed positively with most patients consulting the App for further advice. However, one patient told us that she had received an hour long appointment via Badger notes. She was very anxious at the lack of further information on the system, as she hadn't been told what the appointment was about.



What is your general experience of your appointment today(e.g. were you offered a chaperone ? Did you have to wait long ?Was it easy to park? Were staff polite?)

“My journey here was fine but the parking is a nightmare and I have had to park around the back. I have had just had a C section and I am also worried about getting a ticket.”

“There is never any parking so my husband dropped me off.”

“I walked a long way looking for somewhere to park and I tried to use 2 parking meters and neither worked. I am worried I didn't get time to pay.”

“The staff are very polite and understanding, they are always busy.”

“The clinic is running on time and a lovely staff member was understanding of the baby's need to stop and feed. I wasn't rushed.”

“Appointments are on time. Today my appointment is a long one because of having a scan. I knew it would be so that's ok”.

“Parking is usually busy. Today I had to use the big main car park and walk over to the unit”.

“Staff are friendly.”

“Appointments are on time”.

“ There is always problems parking. My husband has to drop me off. This is inconvenient. There should be parking available.”

“Staff are good and always polite.”

“Alright.”

“Appointment very late. My appointment time was 9.30 am and it is now 10.50 and still no sign of being seen”.

“Appointments are on time.”

“It is sometimes difficult to park, especially at busy times.”

“Staff are kind.”

“I am offered a chaperone.”

“Appointments are always late. 30 minutes today already. I have waited up to 2 hours before.”

“I come on the bus from Nelson which is very stressful with my baby and pram.”

“The staff are ok this time. My previous pregnancy was a different poor experience.”

“Trying to park was carnage. There was nowhere to park. Someone had warned me that it would be like this so I set off early for my appointment but it was still

horrendous. We were just driving around looking for a parking space. So were lots of other people. In the end I got dropped off outside the unit and my partner drove off and parked on a random street away from the hospital. It was so stressful.”

“The staff are all very friendly here at the Unit. I have been before so I knew how to find my way to the Unit but it is well signposted.”

“My experience so far has been good. The staff are friendly. I feel happy to be here as they make me confident. This is my first time here and my first appointment. We had no trouble parking”.

“It was horrendous trying to park. It took us 10 minutes trying to find a carparking place. People were going round the wrong way on one-way roads outside the Unit. I got stuck behind someone who was coming the wrong way. There were cars backed up outside here (the Unit).I had to park over by A+E and I don’t even know if I’m supposed to park there. It was stressful as I thought I was going to be late so I just had to park somewhere. I use the ‘Badger App’ for my appointment. Badger Notes was difficult to understand when I tried to load and use it. It wasn’t very clear what to do but I managed in the end. I don’t know why it called Badger - for a maternity app it sounds strange. It took me a while to work it out but it is good and I like it.”

We came in the car and parking was easy. Weve had no problems parking. We found everything ok and the Unit is well signposted. The staff are friendly. My appointment was on the Badger app which I like.

Have you felt that you have been given the information you would expect during your pregnancy?

“I have definitely felt supported throughout the whole journey and I have had all the information I needed.”

“Yes, although I got my appointment over Badger Notes (which was for 1 hour). I don’t know why because it isn’t on the system.”

“I am happy with all the information”

“Yes, I have had lots of information and support.”

“Yes, my questions are always answered and my concerns listened to.”

“Yes”

“Yes”

“Yes”

“We can talk to staff and ask any questions. The midwives are there to give any advice needed.”

“Yes, although I haven’t really been given any.”



“Last time I got conflicting information from different staff.”

“I had problems prior to the baby and my partner and I were very concerned. Whenever we asked any questions we felt we were talked down to.”

“Its early days for me at the moment but I feel so far that I’ve got enough information. I’m happy so far.”

“I received a letter to attend here today but I have not received any other information.”

“Yes I have. This is my second baby The staff are lovely and I have no complaints.”

“This is my second pregnancy and with this one I have so much information. There is lots of information on the Badger app. I really like this app. Everything you need to know - telephone numbers, named midwife, test results, blood group, appointment times and reminders there’s so much more too. Its brilliant and no pieces of paper to keep or get lost. I find this much better than the first time.”

Have you been included in decisions about your pregnancy and made a birthing plan ?

“It’s too soon for this. It will be later in the pregnancy.”

“It’s been brilliant the birth suite was welcoming and the staff have all been amazing.”

“I have been shown choice and consideration and an alternative final birth pathway.”

“Yes, the staff have involved me and kept me up to date throughout. There has been communication with other hospitals.”

“I was clear on what I felt was best for me and staff were supportive.”

“Yes.”

“No birthing plan as such but I have been included in all discussions. I am being induced in 6 weeks.”

“Due to do that today.”

“This is my first appointment so I am not sure . I feel confident that staff will explain things.”

“I am hoping to do my birthing plan today”.

“Not yet as its early for me.”

“Not yet as this is my first appointment so I haven’t decided what I want yet.”

“Yes everyone has been very supportive and informative.”



“Absolutely, the midwives and Doctors have been brilliant. They explain everything to me so I understand. I have been so well looked after. My first birth was a caesarean and this time I have complications so I’m going to the Birth Suite for a normal delivery which I’m happy about because I wanted a normal birth this time and there will be Doctors available there if things go wrong. They are supporting me all the way with my choice of a normal delivery but making it safe for me and my baby.”

Have you felt that your physical and mental wellbeing have been supported? If not why not?

“100% yes ! I just wish the whole hospital was like this.”

“I am asked at every appointment about my mental health and I am well supported.”

“I have had excellent care from the midwife about how I am coping.”

“Yes, definitely. I have had 3 babies here and the care has been consistently good. Previous discharges haven’t been as consistent though. After having baby no 1 I was discharged a day earlier than I felt comfortable .With baby no 2 I was discharged after 3/4 days. Baby 3 was a C section and I was discharged the day after and whilst there were no complications, I was sore and I felt rushed.”

“Yes”

“Yes”

“Yes”

“I feel very well supported.”

“I am well supported by family.”

“Yes I have. The last time I was here the midwife talked to me about mental health and wellbeing and it was helpful.”

“I don’t know really as this is my first visit,”

“Yes every time I visit. I’m very satisfied with the support and information I’ve been given.”

“Yes very much. I have no worries. If I am concerned at all they explain things so I understand. I never go away worried I am very happy with my care.”



Would you know where to access support for your mental and emotional wellbeing if you needed to.? What resources would you access?

“I would use google or see my GP.”

“We are given links on the Badger Notes app.”

“I find the Badger Notes app tells me everything I need to know.”

Yes, I have been given leaflets and numbers and I have been asked how I feel and if I need support at regular appointments.”

“I would call my doctor. and I have been told on discharge I could access support back at the hospital if needed.”

“Yes”

“The app. I talk to the staff here”.

“Staff always ask how I am feeling, how things are at home and about my partner”.

“Yes.”

“Literature.”

“The app”.

“Yes, my consultant.”

“No I don’t know”.

“I have help from my partner. If I needed anything else and wasn’t sure I would ask my midwife or any of the staff here.”

“Yes I would. The staff here at the Unit would help me and my GP.”

“No I don’t know where or what is available.”

“Yes I would and I can ask the staff too. They are approachable and explain things to you so you understand everything.”

“When I see the Doctor or midwives they are excellent in explaining things. I ask them if I’m concerned.”





“Lesley” - a Birth Story

This was my third birth at Burnley General Hospital and despite having complications with all three births I always felt supported by the team there and had absolutely no concerns about my care. My first birth was a long induction and ended up in theatre but I was able to stay for a few days afterwards in a room by myself and just having that time really helped the healing process for me. The second birth was a planned C-section with different complications but again I was supported through the process with weekly monitoring and I was able to stay on afterwards in a room on my own to recover.

This third birth was a planned C-section again and I had complications with gestational diabetes. This time was slightly different for me because I was on the ward after the birth. I was given the choice to go home on the same day but I wanted to stay to make sure my womb was healing and to know that baby was fully ok.

The ward felt a bit impersonal and I understand that all the mums were in there recovering but it did feel with the grey curtains closed that I was very much in my own little cave! It would have been nice to have been able to speak with other mums a bit more.

I felt involved in decision making about each of the births and felt like I had all the information I needed to make informed decisions about them. On this last occasion I decided to have a planned C-section because I knew I wasn't going to reach full term and the consultant was really supportive and booked a date for me straightaway. My decision was never questioned or challenged. The team are always at the end of the phone if you need them and during appointments are very attentive to your care.

The only time when I felt rushed to make a decision was when leaving the hospital after this last birth two weeks ago. I was asked if I wanted to leave on the same day as giving birth and I chose not to because although the baby seemed healthy I just wanted that reassurance. Although I didn't feel pressured to leave by the staff, I got the impression that they would have preferred it if I had said yes. I then left on the following day which was a Friday afternoon and I got the impression they were trying to clear the beds, it felt like everyone was hobbling out at the same time!

I felt that both my physical and emotional wellbeing were supported throughout my pregnancies. At each appointment I was asked if I felt ok and if I needed any additional support - I could have spoken up at any point if I didn't feel I was managing too well. Plus there's lots of posters everywhere with contact details for the mental health team and others who can support you as a pregnant mother.

The only thing I'd say they could communicate better is timing of appointments. As this is my third baby at Burnley, I'm used to it! In the day unit and when going for scans, you

know that you will never be waiting for more than half an hour. However with the antenatal clinic, if my appointment was at 3.30pm I'd tell my partner that I'll probably be seen at 5pm and home for 6pm. It generally runs 1-2 hours late but it's completely understandable. If something comes up on a scan which needs an urgent appointment, it's only right for those women to be seen ahead of others. The team might just want to communicate this with people better to manage their expectations, I'm sure others would understand those circumstances too.

Further Reference

[Overview | Antenatal and postnatal mental health: clinical management and service guidance | Guidance | NICE](#)

INS2-13833532761 - RXR10 Burnley General Hospital - 2022-12-20 (CQC REPORT)

Response from provider

Enquiries to:	Patient Experience Team	Quality and Safety Department
Telephone No.	01254 734471	Park View Offices
Ext:	84471	Royal Blackburn Hospital
Email	patientexperience@elht.nhs.uk	Haslingden Road
Ref:	FC Enter&View	Blackburn
		BB2 3HH

10 March 2023

FAO

Ms Sarah Johns

Chief Officer

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen

Unit 19

Eanam Wharf Business Development Centre

Blackburn,

BB1 5BL

Dear Sarah

Re: Enter and View report in respect of the Antenatal Clinic, Burnley General Hospital.

It was a pleasure to welcome the Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen team for their visit to the Antenatal Clinic, Lancashire Women and Newborn Centre (LWNBC) on Tuesday 24th January 2023. We take all feedback very seriously and constantly strive to ensure all our patients and relatives have an enjoyable experience when using the Trust's services. We will be taking on board all the comments received and ensuring the issues raised are looked at in further detail and feedback provided to Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen.

We were delighted to receive such excellent feedback from our service users, carers, and family members. We are extremely proud that all the service users, carers and family members spoken to reported that the staff were, friendly, well informed, and supportive and that the service users felt involved in the decision making in relation to their physical and mental health. It was also reassuring to learn that through our staff the service users knew where to access support for mental health and emotional wellbeing concerns should they need it.

We are pleased that our new Badgernet electronic patient record system has been positively received and that information on pregnancy is readily available and easily accessible. We do recognise that this system may not be the preferred option for some service users and families and therefore paper notes are also available if required, and the Maternity team are always happy to help those that need further support with Maternity records.

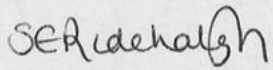
In response to the report, we would also like to make the following comments:

- We acknowledge that at on occasions waiting times in clinic have been excessive. Our staff continue to attempt to balance providing consistent safe, personal, and effective care for our women, in a timely manner. This can mean waiting times are longer than expected. We apologise for the occasions that we have not consistently communicated how long the wait may be, and we would like to assure our service users that we are looking into waiting times and how to improve them.
- We recognise that car parking and sign posting can be difficult and frustrating when you are visiting the hospital. We are working closely with our colleagues in the estate department and other colleagues across the Trust to improve this for all our service user, carers, and families.
- Baby changing facilities are currently not available within the antenatal clinic area and are positioned within the main reception area. Reception staff are available to support service users should they need to use the baby changing facilities to ensure that appoints are not missed.
- Maternity Staffing has been under review, and this is a local and national priority. Here at East Lancashire Maternity Services a full maternity staffing review has been undertaken by BirthRate plus which is a nationally recognise organisation who specialise in reviewing and making recommendation on the safe maternity staffing levels. Work is ongoing to ensure that Maternity staff is at a consistently safe level, and we are in the process of implementing all the recommendations made by the BirthRate plus review.
- We are happy that staff were confident in the referral process to mental health services, and we would give assurance that the BirthRate plus review process included the mental health team and that as such work is ongoing to ensure that there is sufficient staff to meet the needs of all mental health referrals.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank “Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen volunteers and staff for the work undertaken to support the Trust in highlighting positive findings from service user, carers, families, and staff, as well as highlighting areas for improvement.

With kind regards,

pp



Tracy Thompson

Head of Midwifery & Divisional Director of Nursing

Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen

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