

Enter & View

Fylde Coast Birth Centre

**6th March 2024 &
3rd April 2024**



Contact Details

Maternity Services, Women's Unit,
Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Whinney Heys Road,
Blackpool, FY3 8NR

Staff Liaised With

Holly Martinez – Maternity Matron
Andrea Graham – Patient and Family Experience Manager

Healthwatch Blackpool Authorised Representatives

Amy Butler
Julie Huttley
Abigail Lee
Mike Verity

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Blackpool would like to thank patients and staff for making us feel welcome during our visit to Fylde Coast Birth Centre.

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

Introduction

When working across Lancashire and South Cumbria, Healthwatch Blackpool work in partnership with Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen, Healthwatch Cumbria and Healthwatch Lancashire under Healthwatch Together. Each Healthwatch organisation works within their own geographical area and is their own unique entity, providing a local approach to community engagement.

Healthwatch Together have been commissioned to deliver an engagement project which will investigate the experiences of women and families who access maternity and neonatal services within Lancashire and South Cumbria, and whether people feel they have choice and personalisation in their care.

Healthwatch Together will connect with the Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS) and their workstreams 'Equity and Equality' and 'Care and Personalisation' to ensure that all women's voices are heard within maternity and neonatal services. Findings from this engagement will inform future workplans for the LMNS and formulate targeted interventions to improve service delivery.

Background to our Enter and View

Healthwatch Blackpool are responsible for the engagement within the Blackpool footprint, as well as two Enter and View's at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

This was an announced Enter and View visit as part of a Healthwatch Together project, undertaken by authorised representatives from Healthwatch Blackpool. Healthwatch have the authority to enter health and social care premises, announced or unannounced. The aim of this is to observe and assess the nature and quality of services and obtain the view of those patients using the services. The team of trained Enter and View representatives record their observations, along with feedback from patients and staff.

A report is sent to the manager of the facility for comments. Any response from the manager is included with the final version of the report, which is published on the Healthwatch Blackpool website: www.healthwatchblackpool.co.uk

The Healthwatch Blackpool team visited the Fylde Coast Birth Centre on 06th March 2024 to engage with patients. Many of the patients using maternity services at Blackpool Victoria Hospital were situated on the Maternity Ward, therefore patient interaction within the birth centre was limited. As well as this, due to staff capacity, Healthwatch representatives carried out a follow up accessibility audit on 3rd April 2024.

We spoke to 2 patients 1 relative, and the team recorded their own observations of the environment and facilities. We also engaged with staff members whilst on the visit, however these were not formal interviews. The information contained within this report includes both patient feedback and staff observations when completing the audit.

Healthwatch Blackpool would like to thank Holly and Andrea, together with patients and staff, for making the team feel welcome.

Pre visit:

The visit to Fylde Coast Birth Centre was prearranged with the Patient Experience Team Manager and Maternity Matron. The staff were notified via email prior to the site visit and the information regarding the Enter and View was discussed via telephone. As this has been conducted as part of a wider Maternity and Neonatal Voices project, the aims and methodology contained within the mandate were shared with the team.

First impressions:

The Fylde Coast Birth Centre is situated within Blackpool Victoria Hospital, accessible via the main entrance and an out of hours entrance. The signage is clear when entering the building, from both the main entrance and the out of hours. There are no steps leading up to the entrance and there is a drop off point clearly signposted outside the front of the building. There is a multi-storey carpark with disabled bays situated outside the hospital's main entrance. There are public transport links, with a bus stop directly outside the hospital.

There is a locked-door policy on the ward and a reception area at the entrance, with a phone number and bell to alert the ward upon arrival. At the time of completing the accessibility audit, there were no staff present on the reception desk inside the birth centre, but staff stated that patients are met on arrival and taken into their designated room. The phone number and bell at the out of hours entrance were clear, however, signage could be clearer to direct patients where to go. There is a sign above the door, but this is hidden by a structural beam and could easily be missed. None of the signage for the Fylde Coast Birth Centre is available in a different language or accessible format.

Fylde Coast Birth Centre Overview:

The building was extremely clean and representatives observed a calm and welcoming atmosphere. The environment was tidy and bright, with all facilities and equipment organised well. The only negative noted was a small amount of paint flaking off above a window in the corridor.

Staff within the birth centre were inviting, friendly and approachable. All staff present were observed to have yellow name badges on and were wearing the appropriate uniform. On the day of the accessibility audit, the birth centre was quiet, but several staff members were present and available for patients. Upon arrival, patients are accompanied by staff to their designated room, therefore the option to talk privately can be done so within this space. There is not a separate room in the Fylde Coast Birth Centre for private conversations between patients/visitors and staff. Within the offices, staff have access to book interpreters, with the staff stating they try to ensure that the same interpreter is booked for every appointment for consistency. When a BSL interpreter is used, staff informed Healthwatch Blackpool that they often are already aware of this and it is pre-booked prior to the appointment. Hearing loops are also present within the birth centre.

On the corridor of the birth centre, there is a small sofa for visitors and family members to take a seat whilst waiting. The rooms are large with a standard and recliner chair for seating. Every room has an en-suite, which is well signposted and clean with disability adaptations. As well as this, a sink is present within each room and there are hand sanitisers outside every door. The birth centre has a kitchen with drinking water, tea/coffee and toast making facilities. Within the outpatients area, there is a soft play for children to utilise, as they are not able to go into the birth centre until the baby has arrived.

Information and feedback:

Healthwatch Blackpool did not observe a visible noticeboard within the Fylde Coast Birth Centre. There is the opportunity for patients to give feedback on their experience via a poster on the wall in their rooms.

Patient and Relative Feedback:

Experience in the Fylde Coast Birth Centre

"I've been made to feel comfortable and the staff are very nice. They're taking me to theatre soon but it's my second baby so I feel alright."

"Absolutely great, I didn't think they would inform you as much as they do, the midwife during labour was there all the time and built a connection with me, explained every little bit of what was happening. Both me and my child have been really well cared for."

Accessible information

"I feel positive about everything that's going on and we both fully understand." – Mother and Husband

"They've broken it all down for me and I've understood all the information."

Decision-making

"We've both been kept well informed about everything that's going on."

"I've been involved in everything and really well informed. I can't think of any improvements."

Birthing plan

"My plan was to have a C-section which I'm waiting for now, so that has been positive."

"I did, didn't stick to it though but you never stick to it do you. I don't feel bothered at all that it didn't happen. Forceps for me was something I really didn't want, so it helped me to rule things out."

Support from staff

"The care has been really good throughout my pregnancy, I've had the same midwife apart from when she was sick. They've been very accommodating."

"Absolutely, I've received really good support and can't fault them."

Point of contact

"They're very responsive and it's easy to get in contact with people."

"I press the buzzer and they come straight away. I had the same midwife throughout my pregnancy so built up a relationship and knew how to get hold of her when I was pregnant."

Additional feedback

"I've been well looked after too and feel comfortable here." – Husband

"We have had our first child in a different country and this has been a much better experience in this country." – Mother and Husband

"I had jacket potato with cheese and beans but it was just a block of cheese, so I've got my partner to bring me food in. The toast was amazing though. The only thing I can think of is the food is sometimes not the best, but on the whole the experience has been really good."

Overall Visit Summary

Healthwatch Blackpool had an extremely positive experience at the Fylde Coast Birth Centre, despite only speaking to a small number of patients. Staff were kind and welcoming, taking time to speak with the team despite demands on time and capacity.

Feedback from patients demonstrated staff are delivering a high quality of personalised care. Patients had a comprehensive understanding of points of contact, were included in decision making and felt informed throughout their experience. Additionally, the relative feedback also suggested that they felt comfortable within the Fylde Coast Birth Centre.

The main areas for improvement related to the quality of the food, the display of information on a notice board and signage when entering the building.

Overall, the team at the Fylde Coast Birth Centre can celebrate the many positives taken from Healthwatch Blackpool's visit. We would like to thank all the staff, patients and relatives for taking the time to talk with the team and accommodate our visit.

Observation/Feedback	Management/Provider Response	Action to be undertaken by/when?
When entering through the out of hour's entrance, signage could be clearer to direct patients where to go. There is a sign above the door, however this is hidden on the other side of a structural beam and could be easily missed.	Thank you for supporting the visibility of the signage and the possibility of this being obscured for our visitors.	Review of current signage of removal or movement of sign to increase visibility/ 8 weeks.
It was noted that there was a small amount of paint flaking off above one window in the corridor. Where possible, ensure all maintenance is reported and carried out to make sure the environment within the birth centre remains of a high standard.	We are very proud of our birth centre and aim to maintain the high standards. All maintenance jobs are logged and reported.	Ensure maintenance job is logged with the relevant team and chase up timescale to completion./ 8 weeks.
There is no visible notice board within the birth centre. It is recommended for this to be instated, containing information such as local advocacy support, the Patient and Family Relations Team and available support via local classes and activities.	Thank you for this recommendation, we will ensure this is rectified and in line with other areas within maternity	Procure new notice board and work with MNVP team to create information pertinent to our service users/ 12 weeks.

Staff feedback

Organisation Address

Maternity Department, Blackpool Victoria Hospital

Contact Name

Holly Martinez

**Names of Healthwatch
Representatives**

Amy Butler, Julie Huttley, Abigail Lee, Mike Verity,
Alex Lever

Date of Enter and View Visit

Multiple

Time of Enter and View visit

Multiple

Were you happy with the Enter and View arrangements prior to the visit?

The visit was arranged well with enough prior notice to ensure we were prepared for the visit.

Please use this space to outline any positives aspects of the visit?

It was valuable to gain perspectives otherwise unseen and also showcase improvements that had been made in the recent years.

Do you have any comments on staff conduct?

The staff that arrived received lovely feedback and were very professional and approachable.

Please use this space to outline any negative aspects of the visit?

Nil of note.

Is there any way in which Healthwatch Blackpool can improve? Any feedback is greatly appreciated

Not at present.