

Maternity Ward D

Enter & View

27th March 2025
10am – 12:00pm



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

Alex Lever

Charlotte Knight

Acknowledgements

Healthwatch Blackpool would like to thank patients and staff for making us feel welcome during our visit to Maternity Ward D.

Announced Visit

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



What is Enter and View

We have the statutory right to carry out 'Enter and View' visits which allows trained authorised representatives of Healthwatch Blackpool to enter those premises where health and care is provided, to observe the nature and quality of the services. These visits are an opportunity to collect views directly from patients and to observe the environment and the quality of the service provided.

The visit was part of our programme of Enter and View visits to healthcare facilities in Blackpool. The aim of the visit was:

1. To find out about patients' experience of the hospital in relation to:

- Daily Life
- Quality of Care
- Activities
- Involvement of Patients

2. To identify examples of good practice
3. To highlight any issues or concerns from patients and any ideas for improvements



An
**& Enter
& View**
Project

Introduction

When working across Lancashire and South Cumbria, Healthwatch Blackpool work in partnership with Healthwatch Westmorland and Furness, Healthwatch Blackburn with Darwen, Healthwatch Cumberland 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.

As part of this work, Healthwatch Together is collaborating closely with the Local Maternity and Neonatal System (LMNS), aligning with the key workstreams of Equity and Equality and Care and Personalisation. This ensures 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.

Following recommendations made in The National Maternity Reviews, Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnerships (MNVPs) were created. An MNVP listens to the experiences of women and families, and brings together peoples who use those service, staff and other stakeholders to plan, review and improve maternity and neonatal care. In April 2023, Healthwatch Lancashire began hosting the Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership leads across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

To ensure effective delivery from each Trust and the wider work of the LMNS, each MNVP has a workplan that aligns to priorities set and reflect families and communities.

To support this work, in March 2024, Healthwatch Together conducted a series of Enter and View visits at maternity units, focusing on antenatal clinics and birth centres across Lancashire and South Cumbria.

Background to our Enter and View

Healthwatch Blackpool carried out an announced enter and view for 23/24 at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust on Maternity Ward D, as part of a Healthwatch Together project. The aim of this was 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.

The observations and patient engagements are written in a report, which is then 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

One year review



This is an opportunity to review work that has been completed across the maternity and neonatal footprint 24/25. Utilising intelligence gathered through our enter and views for 23/24, we will conduct a review through enter and view re-visits to raise awareness of the MNVP's across Lancashire and South Cumbria. The purpose of the re-visits were to explore any service changes/developments, and review any actions taken on the back of recommendations made in last years enter and view reports to demonstrate impact.

Re-visits

On 27th March 2025, the Healthwatch Blackpool team visited Maternity Ward D and engaged with 10 individuals to gather their insight and experiences. This report includes both patient feedback and Healthwatch Blackpool observations collected during the audit.

Pre-visit

The visit to Maternity D ward was prearranged with the Patient Experience Team Manager and Maternity Matron. The staff were notified via email prior to the site visit. 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.

Welcome to Ward D
Knowing How We Are Doing

Visiting Times
Visiting times for partners:
24 HRS. *Quiet Time*
We invite other visitors at these times:
OPEN VISITING.
* 2 VISITORS PER VISIT. *
Please speak to a member of staff if you wish to make alternative arrangements or telephone:
01253 953634

Performance
Environmental Audit score for: 92%
Hand Hygiene Audit score for: 100%
QUARTER 2

Maternity Dashboard
Call for concern
I feel like no one is listening
1123 000000
1123 000000

Don't Take Your Troubles Home
Our aim is to make your stay as comfortable as possible. If something is concerning you, please ask to speak to the person in charge or Ward Manager.
Ward Manager(s)
Denise McAllister
If after speaking with a member of staff you feel we have not been able to resolve your concerns you can also:
Contact our Patient Relations department on: 01253 955588 / 955589
E-mail us at: bwh.patientrelations@nhs.net

Accreditation
Collaborative Organisational Accreditation System for Teams (COAST).
This is an unannounced assessment, reviewing the care, environment and leadership of this area. All members of staff have played a part in ensuring that this area consistently achieves high standards of care.
All areas achieve a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum rating.
This Area is currently
Silver
Date last Assessed
12 2024
For further information please speak to the Ward Manager.

Staffing Levels
Today's Date: 21 05 2025
Midwife in Charge Today: Gosia Miotk
Today we should have: Today we actually have:
DAY SHIFT: 3 Trained Midwives, 2 Maternity Support Worker
NIGHT SHIFT: 3 Trained Midwives, 2 Maternity Support Worker

Patient and Relative Feedback
We value feedback from our patients and their families. This gives us the opportunity to improve the service we offer by hearing what we could do better.
Your Feedback Matters
Maternity Patient Feedback - 01 Feb - 28 Feb 2025
Friends and Family Test
Number of Responses
117



First Impressions

The Maternity D ward is situated within Blackpool Victoria Hospital, accessible via the main entrance and can be accessed via stairs or a lift. The signage is clear when entering the building. 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. The ward is secure and locked for the security of the parents and babies.

Ward D Overview:

Inside the wards, there are wide corridors and spacious lifts to support individuals with mobility, with clear overhead signage throughout to guide visitors. Notice boards also provide governance information, staffing levels, visiting times, and highlight maternity and neonatal safety champions. Healthwatch Blackpool observed 8–10 staff on the ward, all in uniform with visible name badges and roles, and were extremely welcoming to visitors. The environment is clean, tidy, peaceful, and relaxed, with equipment safely and appropriately stored. The ward is a 22-bedded mixed antenatal and postnatal ward, and there is a mixture of private side rooms and ward bays. Ward bays are separated by a curtain and are an adequate size for a bed and space for patients to move around. There are large reclining chairs for loved ones to sit and use overnight. It was observed that there are no facilities such as large cupboards or lockers for patients to be able to put their belongings however, each bay contains a bedside set of drawers. On admission, patients are allocated a bed and each bed space includes an overhead night light, a call buzzer and bedside drawers. Ward facilities include a wet room with a chair, a separate bathroom with a bath, separate toilets, disabled toilets and multiple handwashing and sanitising stations. For those requiring a hearing aid, hearing loops are available at reception. For visitors, there is a kitchen area equipped with a kettle, toaster, water, and seating. A patient feedback box is available at the reception desk, along with contact information for patient relations. Along the corridor are a variety of offices for midwives and nurses, a paediatric room and the option for private conversations, as well as storage cupboards for equipment.





Patient and Relative Feedback

Comfort

9 patients stated that they felt comfortable speaking with staff on the ward when asking questions about their care and one respondent expressed feeling somewhat comfortable.

Medication

Most patients received medication when needed (always or usually). One patient expressed that they had experienced delays, especially around post-surgery pain relief and laxatives. Another patient highlighted that there was a miscommunication with medication from staff. Others expressed that they haven't needed medication.

"They gave it me straight away."

"They've been as quick as they can be, within 20 mins."

"Always get it , sometimes delayed but bring when available."

"I've not needed it."

"Not needed any."

"They've been as quick as they can be, within 20 mins."

"Sometimes slow in being given medication. Not great , medication was given when shouldn't have , this wasn't recognised on the notes. Given anti sickness but was never given it since being here - miscommunication by staff . I have anxiety with tablets . . Midwife then got sent home."

"Delays with medication - constipation cannot past wind , abdomen hurt severely. Asked to give something strong a I was in so much pain. They said no can't give due to surgery- no alternative . Was walking in corridor , kept giving laxatives and asked for suppository. Suffered whole night and half the day. Had suppository in the end but took ages."

Quality of Care

Most patients rated the quality of care positively, often describing staff as friendly, caring, and supportive. Patients stated that staffing levels were fine, however one patient did highlight that there had been a few incidents with medication.

"Brilliant can't fault it - not really noticed with staffing levels , staff do the best."

"Yes fine with care - adequate staffing anything I've asked for someone's come to 20 mins and half an hour- can appreciate it busy but very good response."

"Good."

"Yeah good. I feel considerably better than 6 years ago. They were so stretched and overworked last time but it doesn't feel like that this time. Feels like there's enough staff and I've been well looked after. The staff feel really kind."

"Really good, really friendly. They make you feel at ease."

"Yes – adequate staffing , I haven't noticed really as I haven't needed anything. I haven't felt abandoned."

"Brilliant can't fault it – not really noticed with staffing levels , staff do the best"

"Overall positive – few incidents as discussed with medication."

Breastfeeding Support

There were mixed feedback in relation to breastfeeding support. While most patients declined breastfeeding support, they highlighted that staff had offered. One individual who received support found it different between staff members, finding it difficult when finding the most comfortable way to breastfeed and suggested a more personalised approach and improved staff continuity.

"No – it wasn't in my plan. I've heard other people have positive experiences. One women had the support most the night for breastfeeding."

"Yeah had all this before hand , I chose not to."

"I've declined breast feeding support but they've offered."

"Yes support received ."

"Yeah – fine attitude , mostly positive , day staff are better. First night staff , older lady was really good – mother hen – this is the lady I wanted for breast feeding support."

"Yes , breast feeding lady came the other day , didn't come yesterday. Baby wasn't ready the other day. I feel like the problem is with different midwife's, they do differ with their approach , hard to know what the best thing to do . Some very knowledgeable . Midwife's in the hospital try to help , I've got marks on my boobs , it's not right so I don't know what's right to do . I don't know what training midwives have had with specific breast feeding. They seem to fiddle with my bed , staff delaying things, asked for help , the one we didn't want was trying to intervene. I've had damage to my nipples. It makes it easier to make it more comfortable having the same people. Constant expertise on the ward would be beneficial – someone that focuses on breastfeeding , not a mixed method, and for it to be more personalised."

Respect, Dignity, and Staff Demeanor

Generally very positive feedback on staff attitudes and respectful care. Patients highlighted that staff were warm, friendly, person centred, and had positive attitudes.

"Yes treated with respect . Positive staff attitudes. Previous birth staff were amazing too."

"Very warm and friendly."

"So far– staff been happy and caring."

"Yes– their attitude is so caring and comforting , more than happy to help!"

"Yes – positive attitudes, person centred."

"Very warm and friendliness."



Cleanliness

Most patients found the ward clean, however a loved one mentioned that the visitor reclining chairs within one of the bays had a bad smell coming from it. They noted that he hadn't seen any chairs cleaned during their stay and that they said that these should be cleaned more often.

"This is fine but the toilets aren't great."

"The only thing is the chair , it gathers sweat and it stinks , chair doesn't seem to get washed. Haven't cleaned the cubicle when being in here. Just the chair it stinks, when you sit down it wafts out."

"The cleaners been in here twice while I've been in the bed."

"Yes up to standards."

"Yeah OK, not too bad."

"Very clean."



Food and Drink

Food quality feedback was mixed, some patients found the food absolutely fine, others described it as bland and unappetising. Some mentioned that they prefer to bring food from outside. However, patients found the ward kitchen very beneficial for snacks and drinks.

"Good- hospital food free - it's fine - salt in the food - need more junk food when I have cravings."

"Food not great, chicken and ham pie , no pie crusts just filling. BBQ pork stew- bland food. Went to m&s to get some food. Ward kitchen for constant food and drinks , cereals, toast, drinks , microwave close by downstairs due to not being allowed on the ward."

"It's been edible."

"Getting my own food and drink."

"It's been fine, they came round with a brew and biscuits. The menu is a bit peculiar but it was a bit niche. I wondered if it catered for the masses. There was beef curry."



Visiting Arrangements

Patients expressed very positive feedback in relation to visiting hours. They explained that their partners are able to stay the night, finding this extremely benefiting and comforting. Others stated that they were very happy with visiting hours, mentioning that they are very flexible and found this surprising. One patient highlighted that they were confused and lacked clear information on visiting hours.

"Brilliant, birth partner 24hrs , 8-8 for others, really good."

"I was surprised from last time. Used to be set visits and partners weren't allowed to stay. This time partners have been able to stay, opening visiting hours - massive change."

"Not been told anything but im guessing people can come whenever they want."

"Partner been able to stay over night. Open door policy it seems- anyone can come."

"A lot better than first time with baby- more times 8-11am , 3 people can visit and 1 person can stay over."

"Partner can come whenever he wants!"

Satisfaction of Care

Overall, 9 patients were very satisfied with their care and 1 patient stated somewhat satisfied with their care.

Improvements

The majority of patients were happy with the ward and didn't have many improvements to suggest. Other patients suggested improved communication between the birthing suite and the maternity ward and the ward to include more specialised breast feeding support.

"Happy with everything."

"It's all fine."

"Nothing."

"All fine."

"More specialised breast feeding support"

"Notes to be looked at from birthing suite to maternity ward regarding my anxiety disorder and other concerns around taking medication."



Overall Visit Summary



Healthwatch Blackpool had an extremely positive experience visiting Maternity ward D. Staff were kind and welcoming, and were more than happy for us to speak with members of the team and patients.

The main areas for improvement:

- A relative reported an unpleasant, unhygienic smell from one of the reclining chairs. Implement a regular cleaning and deodorising schedule for all patient chairs to maintain hygiene and comfort.
- A patient expressed confusion due to a lack of consistency in staff, especially while breastfeeding, as each staff member had a different approach. Where possible, provide consistent staff support for breastfeeding patients, or ensure a standardised approach is communicated across all staff.
- Concerns were raised about poor communication among staff and issues with the notes system. Improve communication between note sharing and ensure all staff are updated with patient care plans.
- Patients experienced delays in receiving prescribed medication. Ensure that medication delays are addressed and reduced where possible.

Observation/Feedback	Management/Provide Response	Action to be undertaken by/when?
<p>Reclining chair reported to have an unpleasant smell. Implement regular cleaning and deodorising schedule.</p>	<p>All reclining chairs are thoroughly wiped down when women are transferred or discharged. A blanket can be provided for overnight supporters. If the reclining chair is noticed to be dirty or to have an odour, patients can inform the staff, and the chair can be cleaned.</p>	<p>Immediately and on going</p>
<p>Patient found differing breastfeeding support approaches confusing. Implement continuity between breastfeeding support among staff.</p>	<p>All staff with in maternity have full breastfeeding training by the breastfeeding specialists. All staff should be providing the same information, using the same advice/ techniques and tools to support breast feeding.</p>	<p>On going training for all staff before November 2025</p>
<p>Issues with communication and note sharing. Ensure staff are updated on handovers and note systems.</p>	<p>All staff are required to attend daily handover to ensure they are aware of the women and babies they are caring for. If patients are transferred between areas a digital handover is completed. Ward D also has implemented 'back to the board' rounds, this is for staff to meet at regular intervals to discuss any updates.</p>	<p>Actioned from April 2025</p>

Observation/Feedback

Some patients noted a delay in receiving medication. Where possible reduce these waiting times.

Management/Provide Response

Ward D now have two medication trolleys, and at regular intervals throughout the day the staff are required to offer regular analgesia to all women.

Action to be undertaken by/when?

Ongoing with oversight of Head of Midwifery and Matron

Managers Overall Feedback

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

Yes

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

The staff were friendly and approachable.

They came with a clear plan, and easily identifiable.

Do you have any comments on staff conduct?

Excellent

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

None

Is there any way in which Healthwatch Blackpool can improve?

Any feedback is greatly appreciated

Great visit, we always value your feedback.