



**A Report of Patient Experience of the Maternity
Pathway in Suffolk**

**Your spotlight
on local services**



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Healthwatch Suffolk would like to acknowledge and extend thanks to every person who responded to our survey and to every person who participated in our telephone interviews.

Healthwatch Suffolk can only instigate change and improve patient experience if local people in Suffolk continue to take the time to share their views with us.

Healthwatch Suffolk would like to acknowledge and extend thanks to staff at Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital for partnership working throughout this project. Ipswich Hospital also invited members of the research team

These engagement opportunities enabled Healthwatch Suffolk to raise awareness of this project and to increase the response rate. Without Suffolk's hospitals' collaboration it is unlikely that so many people would have shared their experience of giving birth at or being present at a birth locally.

Finally, Healthwatch Suffolk would like to extend thanks to all other organisations who invited members of the research team at baby groups,

children centres or who helped us to raise awareness of this project.

If anybody has queries relating to the content in this report please contact a member of the research team at Healthwatch Suffolk via info@healthwatchsuffolk.co.uk.



Remember

Nappies &
Wipes
Baby grows
Mobile
To sleep! - :)

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BACKGROUND

At Healthwatch Suffolk we help local people get the best out of their health and social care services in Suffolk. We use local patient experience of using a health or social care service to influence and improve the delivery and design of the service. Healthwatch Suffolk's vision is to 'champion the views of local people to achieve excellent health and social care services in Suffolk'.

Healthwatch Suffolk aims to work in partnership with a wide range of stakeholders and to promote and support the involvement of local people. As defined by our vision and mission, this piece of engagement work met Healthwatch Suffolk's criteria to work in partnership with local hospitals to;

- a) Explore patient experience (birthing partners and new mums) of the maternity pathway at Ipswich Hospital and to
- b) Explore how patient experience could be improved for patients using the maternity services in the future

Emma Hardwick, the Head of Midwifery at Ipswich Hospital, approached Healthwatch

Suffolk about leading on an engagement project to gather birthing partner's views about the maternity pathway at Ipswich Hospital. As the representative for the patient voice in Suffolk, Healthwatch Suffolk expanded the project and collected new mum's views of the maternity pathway as well.

The Research Team were engaging with new mums when raising awareness of the project and attempting to gain access to birthing partners to collect their views. Therefore the decision was made to include new mums' experiences as they were considered to be valid and important voices when exploring use of the maternity pathway in Suffolk. The research was also expanded to include local people's experiences of using the maternity pathway at James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital, in Suffolk.

It should be noted that there is a lack of engagement research locally and nationally (in the whole of the UK) involving birthing partners sharing their experiences of the maternity pathway. To the research team's knowledge this is the first time that engagement work has been conducted with birthing partners within the Healthwatch network and in Suffolk.



Father/Partner involvement - Why is it important?

This section will provide some evidence from the literature about the benefits of father/partner (partner(s) hereafter) involvement during the antenatal, birth and postnatal experience. It should be noted that it is not within the scope of this project to provide an extensive review and therefore Healthwatch Suffolk does not claim that this review to be all-inclusive or systematic.

The positive effects of father involvement during pregnancy, birth and after the birth have been well documented. It is not a new finding that fathers who are actively involved during pregnancy and birth may experience greater closeness with their baby and partner (May, 1981). More recently authors have found that father involvement during pregnancy can positively impact a

pregnant woman's health behaviours (Teitler, 2001) such as increased smoking cessation (Martin et al., 2007) and increased rates and duration of breastfeeding (Wolffberg et al., 2004; Bailey, 2007; Fatherhood Institute, 2015).

Involvement of partners in the birth has the potential to have psychological health benefits for mums. Bailey (2007) found that when fathers are involved in the birth maternal mental health rates are likely to be higher. Involvement of partners during pregnancy and birth has been found to have psychological benefits for fathers themselves too.

Diemer (1997) reviewed the literature and found that fathers/partners who have been well-prepared to actively and appropriately assist with the birth of their child tended to be more active participants during the birth, which improved their own experience of the birth and their partners' birth-experiences. Positive involvement of fathers can reduce levels of fear and anxiety that partners may feel about the impending labour and increase trust and respect between themselves and their partner (Bailey, 2007).

Partner involvement can positively impact the relationship between mum and their partner. More specifically it has been found that involvement of fathers/partners during pregnancy and birth can lead to higher levels of satisfaction in the relationship/marriage (Chih-Yuan, Doherty & Williams, 2007). By involving fathers/partners at the birth it can begin the important process of developing a fathers/partners parental confidence and make them feel valued as a co-parent (Bailey, 2007).

It is also important to ensure that health messages are tailored so that partners understand them too. Birthing partners who understand that a pregnant woman has the potential to develop a complication at any point during her pregnancy, may be better able to support their partner's use of appropriate health services in order to reduce these risks (Fatherhood Institute, 2015).

In addition to positive effects of partner involvement it is essential to highlight that there can be negative consequences when the father/partner is not involved. If partners are not engaged with and are not appropriately educated on the benefits of certain health behaviours during pregnancy then they can often undermine

these health messages, albeit without intent (Fatherhood Institute, 2015).

The Fatherhood Institute (2015) state that the way maternity care is commonly organised in the UK tends to generate feelings of exclusion for partners. More specifically the authors state that despite the fact that the number of fathers/partners who attend antenatal appointments during their partner's pregnancy and who attend the birth of their baby have increased over the past few years, partners still often feel ignored by health professionals (Fatherhood Institute, 2015).

Recent research suggested that there are often better health outcomes for both mum and baby if health professionals engage with both mums and partners/father before the birth (Fatherhood Institute, 2015). In conclusion it is clear that there are a wide range of psychological and physical benefits for mum, partner and baby when the father is actively involved in the maternity process. More so it is apparent that there can be negative consequences for mum, partner and baby if the partner/father is not appropriately and effectively involved in the maternity process. There are a number of national guidelines and policy's that encourage the involvement of partners in the maternity process. These can be found here:

- Reaching out: Involving Fathers in Maternity Care - The Royal College of Midwives - can be accessed at: https://www.rcm.org.uk/sites/default/files/Father's%20Guides%20A4_3_O.pdf
- Including New Fathers: A guide for Maternity professionals (2007) <http://www.fatherhoodinstitute.org/uploads/publications/246.pdf>Demographics of respondents

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METHOD

This project adopted a mixed methodology approach. A quantitative survey with one open ended (qualitative) question was administered and distributed in the public domain.

Anybody who had given birth at Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital or West Suffolk Hospital or been present at a birth at one of these hospitals as a birthing partner since 2013 was invited to complete the survey. The survey was advertised on Healthwatch Suffolk's website and social media accounts (Twitter and Facebook).

Respondents were invited to share their contact details if they were happy to participate in a follow-up telephone interview.

A member of the research team and members of Healthwatch Suffolk's Community Development Team attended various events and locations (children centres, baby groups and hospital wards) across Suffolk in order to raise awareness of this project and increase the response rate. Data collection opened in October 2015 and closed on 31st January 2016.

All responses were analysed in an anonymous and confidential format. According to the Roasoft calculator Healthwatch Suffolk can claim that responses are representative of the population of Suffolk. However due to the split between respondent status (mums vs. birthing partners) Healthwatch Suffolk would encourage this statement to be interpreted with caution.

Maternity Services in Suffolk
West Suffolk Hospital, Ipswich Hospital and James Paget Hospital all provide maternity services to people living in and around Suffolk. All three hospitals have birthing wards, with a focus on natural delivery, and delivery suites where consultants are based and a higher level of pain relief and medical assistance is available. Ipswich Hospital

Ipswich Hospital has 3 maternity wards over 3 floors;

1. The Brook Birthing Centre

2. The Orwell Antenatal and Postnatal Ward
3. The Deben delivery suite

The Brook Birth Centre

The Brook birthing centre is a midwifery led ward. There are 10 beds for the care of mums after they have given birth, two assessment beds and three birthing rooms for natural childbirth in a quiet environment. There are no consultant rounds on this ward. Partner or named visitor times are allowed to visit between 9am-1pm and 3pm-7pm daily, with a maximum of three visitors at a time.

The Orwell Antenatal and Postnatal Ward

The Orwell consultant led antenatal and postnatal ward has 22 beds and is on the third floor of the maternity block. The on-call consultant makes a ward round every morning at around 10am. Partners or named visitor times are between 9am-1pm and 3pm-7pm daily, with a maximum of three visitors at a time.

The Deben delivery suite

The Deben consultant-led delivery suite is based on the fourth floor with six delivery rooms, three assessment rooms and a four bedded antenatal room with one en-suite quiet room. Generally, there are no visiting times and visiting is granted dependent on the woman's condition. The hospital's guidelines for active labour are that a maximum of two birthing partners are allowed. The hospital website states that a named consultant obstetrician will be available 24 hours a day.

James Paget Hospital

Antenatal and postnatal maternity services at James Paget Hospital are located on the first floor. The opening times for the Antenatal Clinic 9am-5pm Monday to Friday and 24 hours a day seven hours a week for the Delivery Suite, Dolphin Suite and Ward 11.

Depending on each individual patients' situation the patient may be offered a home birth or a

birth on the Delivery Suite or the midwife led Dolphin Suite. James Paget Hospital offer a birth workshop during later stages of pregnancy.

- Radios and CD players
- Tea and coffee facilities

West Suffolk Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

The maternity service at West Suffolk Hospital provides maternity care to women in Bury St Edmunds and the surrounding area of West Suffolk. If a woman living in West Suffolk tells their GP that they are pregnant they are put in touch with the midwife allocated to their GP Practice. This team will be one of six midwifery teams that cover every GP Practice in the area. West Suffolk Hospital state the following on its website; "We aim to provide high quality care, responding to the needs of mothers and their babies, in a friendly and professional environment. We aim to provide continuity of care throughout pregnancy, delivery and in the first days following your baby's birth, at each stage discussing options involving you fully and giving you choice in decisions regarding your care.

West Suffolk maternity services consists of three wards; The Midwife Led Birthing Unit, the Labour Suite and F11.

The Midwife Led Birthing Unit

The Midwife Led Care Birthing Unit (MLBU) has been open for patient use since 2011. Women who give birth on the MLBU are told that they can expect to give birth in a relaxed and comfortable environment which is designed to be similar to their home environment. Women who have a low risk, uncomplicated pregnancy should be offered the option of birthing your baby in the Birthing Unit where care is provided by midwives who are passionate about active births. Obstetricians, Anaesthetists and Paediatricians do not work on the birthing unit.

The Labour Suite

The midwifery staff on West Suffolk Hospital's Labour Suite aim to normalise birth and work alongside Obstetricians, Anaesthetists and Paediatricians, who are on-call 24 hours a day, should they be needed.

The Labour Suite has seven well-equipped and comfortable rooms for labour and birth. Additional facilities include:

- Bean bags and birthing pools
- Aromatherapy oils
- Birthing pool

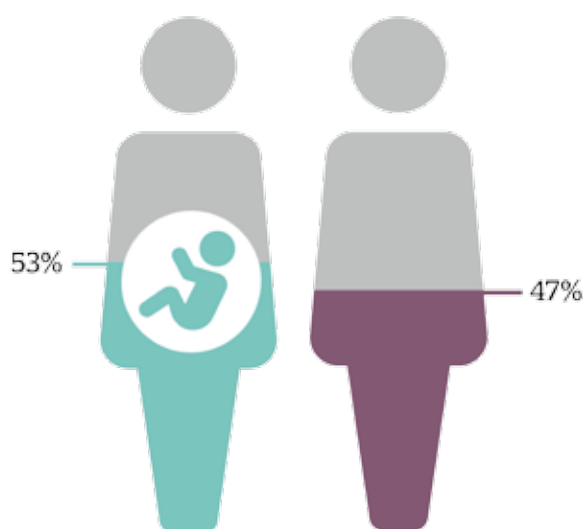
FINDINGS

Respondent Demographics

In total Healthwatch Suffolk received 373 responses to our survey. Respondents who stated that they had given birth at or been present at a birth at a hospital that was not in Suffolk (n=6) had their responses removed before the commencement of the analysis. Additionally, incomplete responses (n=14) were not included in the analysis. In total 353 responses were included for analysis.

Status (birthing partner or mum)

353 respondents stated whether they were a birthing partner or whether they had given birth themselves. 53% of respondents (n=188) stated that they had given birth in Suffolk within the past 2 years. 47% of respondents (n=165) stated that they had been a birthing partner within the past 2 years.



Location of birth

351 respondents provided the name of the hospital where they gave birth, or where their partner gave birth. 164 birthing partners shared the name of the hospital and 187 mums shared the name of the hospital where they gave birth at. 164 birthing partners provided the location of where their partner gave birth, 1 skipped it. The

majority of birthing partners (48%, n=78) stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital, a third of birthing partners (34%, n=55) stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital and a further 17% of birthing partners (n=28) stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital. The remaining four respondents selected 'other' and three of the respondents provided the location of the birth that they had been present at (one at Eye birthing unit and two at their own home).

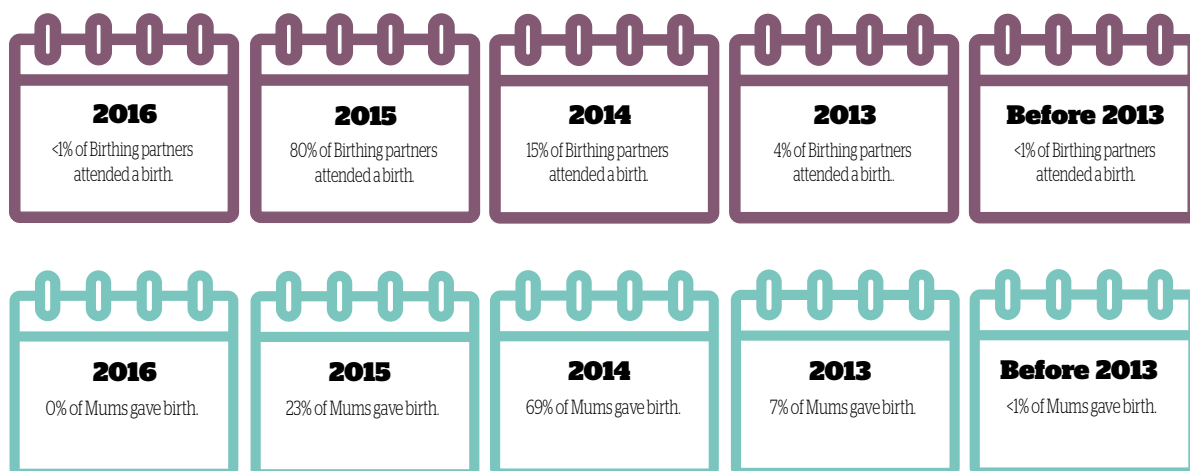
37% of mums (n=70) stated that they had given birth at Ipswich Hospital. Over one third of mums (42%, n=78) stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital, 17% of mums (n=32) stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital. The remaining seven respondents selected 'other'. Five respondents who stated 'other' stated that they gave birth at home, the remaining two respondents stated that they had given birth at the Gilchrist birthing centre in Eye.

Year of birth attended

162 birthing partners provided a date for when they attended their child's birth, 3 skipped it. <1% of birthing partners (n=1) stated that they had been present at a birth in 2016, 80% of birthing partners (n=97) stated that they had been present at a birth in 2015, 15% of birthing partners (n=18) stated that they had been present at a birth in 2014, 4% of respondents (n=5) stated that they had been present at a birth in 2013 and <1% of respondents (n=1) stated that they had been present at a birth before 2013.

186 mums provided a date for when they gave birth. 0% of mums (n=0) stated that they had been present at a birth in 2016, 23% of mums (n=39) stated that they had been present at a birth in 2015, 69% of birthing partners (n=118) stated that they had been present at a birth in 2014, 7% of respondents (n=12) stated that they had been present at a birth in 2013 and <1% of respondents (n=1) stated that they had been present at a birth before 2013.

The year that mums and birthing partners stated their baby was born.



Gender

327 provided their gender. 43% of respondents (n=140) stated that they were male, 57% of respondents (n=186) stated that they were female. <1% of respondents (n=1) stated that they would prefer not to share their gender.

Age



324 respondents provided their age group, 29 skipped it. All respondents stated that they were aged over 18 years and under 65 years of age. 9% of respondents (n=29) stated that they were aged 19-25, 67% of respondents (n=216) stated that they were aged between 26-35 years, 24% of respondents (n=77) stated that they were aged between 36-50 years and <1% (n=2) stated that they were aged between 51-64 years.

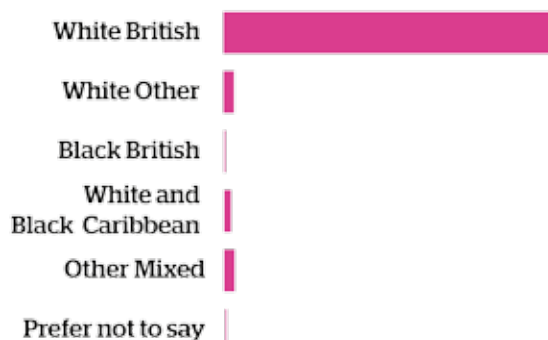
Sexual orientation

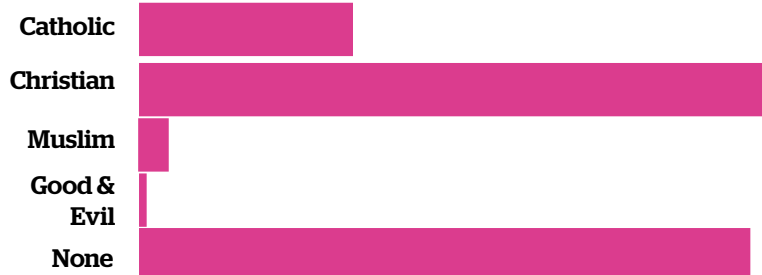
319 respondents provided their age group, 34 skipped it. 98% of respondents (n=313) described their sexual orientation as heterosexual, <1% (n=3) described their sexual orientation as Lesbian woman, no respondents described their sexual orientation as Gay man, <1% (n=2) described

their sexual orientation as Bisexual and <1% (n=1) described their sexual orientation as "Prefer not to say".

Ethnicity

322 respondents provided their age group, 30 skipped it. 12 different ethnicities were selected. The majority of respondents (91%, n=292) described+ their ethnicity as White British. <1% (n=2) described their ethnicity as Black British, <1% (n=1) described their ethnicity as White Irish, 3% (n=9) described their ethnicity as White Other, <1% (n=2) described their ethnicity as Caribbean, <1% (n=1) described their ethnicity as described their ethnicity as African, 2% (n=6) described their ethnicity as White & Black Caribbean, <1% (n=1) described their ethnicity as White and Asian, <1 (n=2) described their ethnicity as other white mixed other background, <1 (n=1) described their ethnicity as Indian, <1% (n=2) described their ethnicity as other Asian and <1% (n=3) stated that they would prefer not to share their ethnicity.





Religion

105 respondents provided an answer to this question, 248 skipped it. 40% of respondents (n=42) stated that they had no religion, 41% of respondents (n=43) described their religion as "Christian", 14% of respondents (n=15) described their religion as "Catholic", 2% (n=2) described their religion as "Muslim", 2% of respondents (n=2) stated 'yes' to religion but did not specify, and the final respondent (<1%, n=1) stated that they believed in good and evil.

Disability

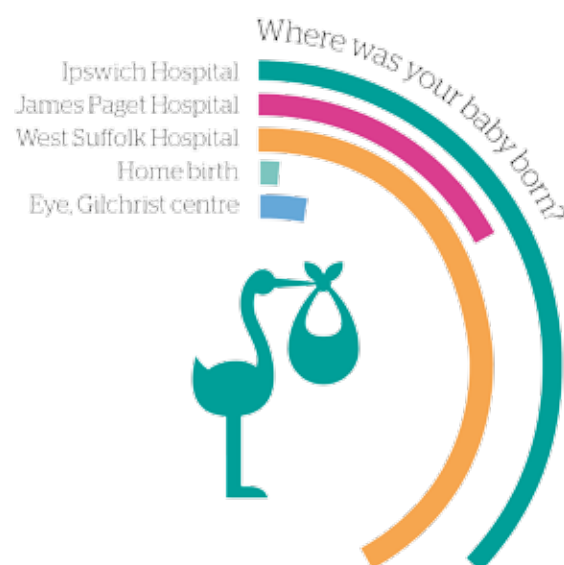
317 respondents provided their age group, 36 skipped it. 95% (n=302) respondents stated that they did not have a disability. 5% of respondents (n=15) stated that they did have a disability. Of these respondents the most common disability listed was "mental ill health" (2%, n=6). The next most common disability stated was "learning difficulty such as dyslexia", (<1%, n=2). <1% of respondents (n=1) stated that they had a physical disability, <1% of respondents (n=1) stated that they had a learning disability, <1% of respondents (n=1) stated that they would rather not say and 1% of respondents (n=4) stated that they had a disability that was not listed. Examples included the following; Post-partum PTSD, Chrohn's Disease, Fibromyalgia and Cancer.

Location of birth experience

All 187 mums provided the name of the hospital or maternity environment that they gave birth. 37% of mums (n=70) stated that they had given birth at Ipswich Hospital, 17% (n=32) of mums stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital and 42% (n=78) of mums stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital. Other births (4%)

referred to giving birth at home and at the Gilchrist birthing centre in Eye.

164 birthing partners provided the name of the hospital where their partner gave birth. 48% of birthing partners (n=78) stated that they had given birth at Ipswich Hospital, 34% (n=55) of mums stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital and 17% (n=28) of mums stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital. 1% (n=5) of respondents referred to other births referred to giving birth at home (n=3) and at the Gilchrist birthing centre in Eye (n=2).



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Section 1

Initial Contact: Choice or birth plans

Birthing partners - "Was your partner offered a choice of birth plans?"

Birthing partners were asked to state whether they were offered a choice of birth plans. 163 birthing partners responded to this question. 77% said 'yes' (n=126), 21% said 'no' (n=34), 2% (n=3) said 'other'. One respondent stated 'I don't know', another respondent stated 'initially yes, but no due to health complications' and the final respondent stated 'I requested no students, not given choice'.

- 77 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 70% of them (n=54) stated 'yes', 27% of respondents (n=21) stated 'no'. Two respondents stated 'other' ('I don't know, and 'requested no students - not given choice').
- 54 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 85% of them (n=46) stated yes and 15% of respondents (n=8) stated no.
- 28 birthing partners who had been present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 82% of them (n=23) stated yes, 14% of respondents (n=4) stated no and 4% of respondents (n=1) stated other ('initially yes but then no due to complications').

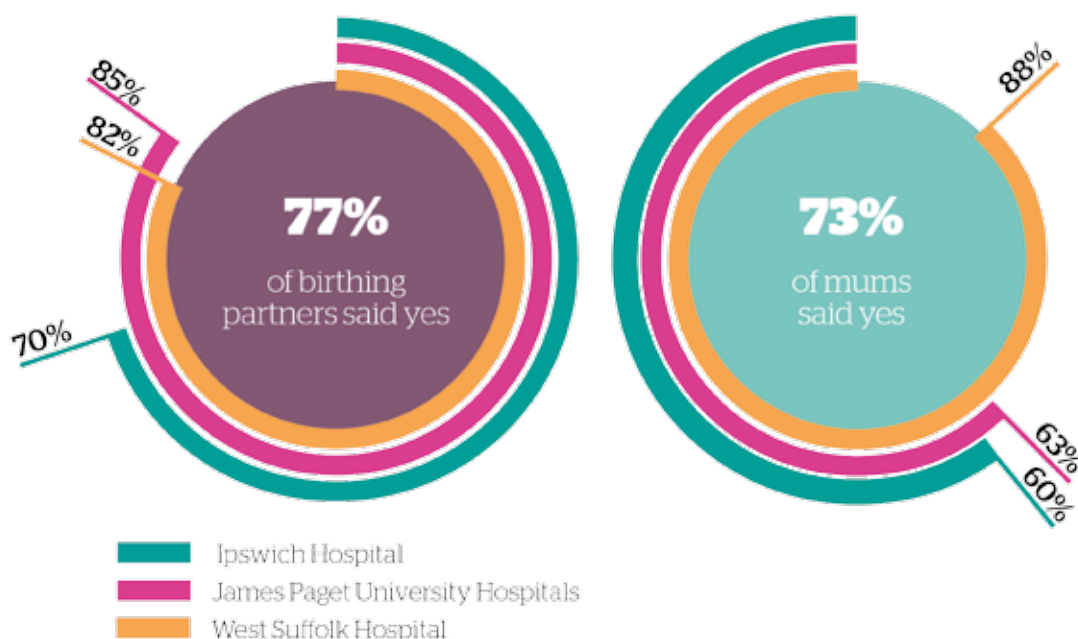
Mums - "Were you offered a choice of birth plans?"

Mums were asked to state whether they were offered a choice of birth plans. 181 mums responded to this, 172 skipped it. 73% said 'yes' (n=133), 22% said 'no' (n=39), 5% (n=9) said 'other'.

6 respondents stated that they were consultant led, 1 respondent stated that they had an elective caesarean section, 1 respondent stated that they had a premature birth and the final respondent stated that they were told that they were eligible for birthing unit and no more plans around birth plans.

- 68 mums stated they had given birth at Ipswich Hospital and answered this question. 60% of them (n=51) stated 'yes', 31% of respondents (n=21) stated 'no' and 9% of respondents (n=6) stated 'other' (4 stated consultant led, 1 stated premature birth, 1 stated elective caesarean).
- 29 mums stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital and answered this question. 63% of them (n=18) stated 'yes', 35% of respondents (n=10) stated 'no' and 3% of respondents (n=1) stated 'other' (1 consultant led).
- 77 mums stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital and answered this question. 88% of them (n=68) stated 'yes', 10% of respondents (n=7) stated 'no' and 3% of respondents (n=2) stated 'other' (1 consultant led).

Overall the majority of birthing partners (77%, n=126) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that their partner was offered a choice of birth plans (70%, 85%, 82%) respectively. Overall the majority of birthing partners (77%, n=126) and mums (73%, n=133) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were offered and their partner was offered a choice of birth plans (70%, 85%, 82%) and (60%, 63%, 88%) respectively.



Birthing Partners - “Did you get enough information from a midwife or doctor to help you decide where to have your baby?”

161 birthing partners answered this question. 70% of birthing partners (n=113) said ‘yes’, 30% of birthing partners (n=48) said ‘no’.

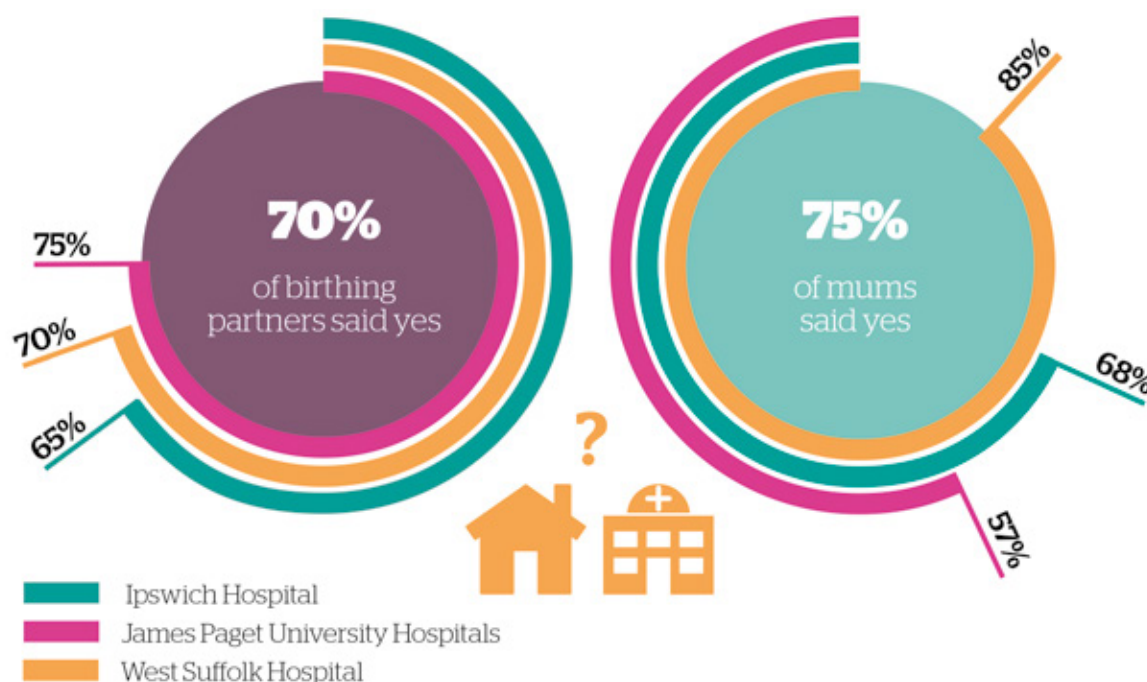
- 75 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 65% said ‘yes’ (n=49) and 35% said ‘no’ (n=26).
- 55 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 75% said ‘yes’ (n=41) and 25% said ‘no’ (n=14).
- 27 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 70% said ‘yes’ (n=19) and 30% said ‘no’ (n=8).

Mums - “Did you get enough information from a midwife or doctor to help you decide where to have your baby?”

183 mums answered this question. 75% of birthing partners (n=137) said ‘yes’, 25% of mums (n=25) said ‘no’.

- 69 mums who stated that they had given birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 68% of respondents (n=47) said ‘yes’, 32% of respondents (n=22) said ‘no’.
- 30 mums who stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 57% of respondents (n=17) said ‘yes’, 43% of respondents (n=13) said ‘no’.
- 76 mums who stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 85% of respondents (n=65) said ‘yes’, 15% of respondents (n=11) said ‘no’.

Overall the majority of birthing partners (70%, n=113) and mums (75%, n=133) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they got enough information from a midwife or doctor to help them to decide where to have their baby (65%, 75%, 70%) and (68%, 57%, 85%) respectively.



Birthing partners - “Did you feel involved in the maternity process?”

160 birthing partners responded to this question. 84% of all birthing partners (n=134) said ‘yes’, 16% of all birthing partners (n=26) said ‘no’.

- 75 birthing partners who stated that they had been at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 81% of these (n=61)

said ‘yes’, 19% of these (n=14) said ‘no’.

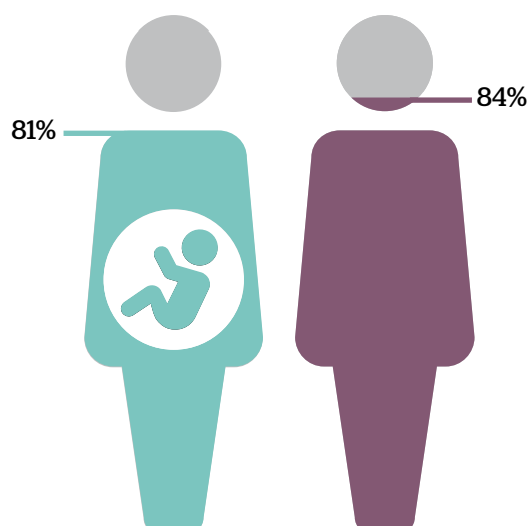
- 54 birthing partners stated that they had been at a birth at James Paget Hospital. 85% of them (n=46) said ‘yes’, 15% of them (n=8) said ‘no’.
- 27 birthing partners stated that they had been at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital 89% of them (n=24) said ‘yes’, 11% (n=3) of them said ‘no’.

Mums - "Did you feel involved in the maternity process?"

182 mums answered this question. 81% of mums (n=148) said 'yes', 19% of mums (n=34) said 'no'.

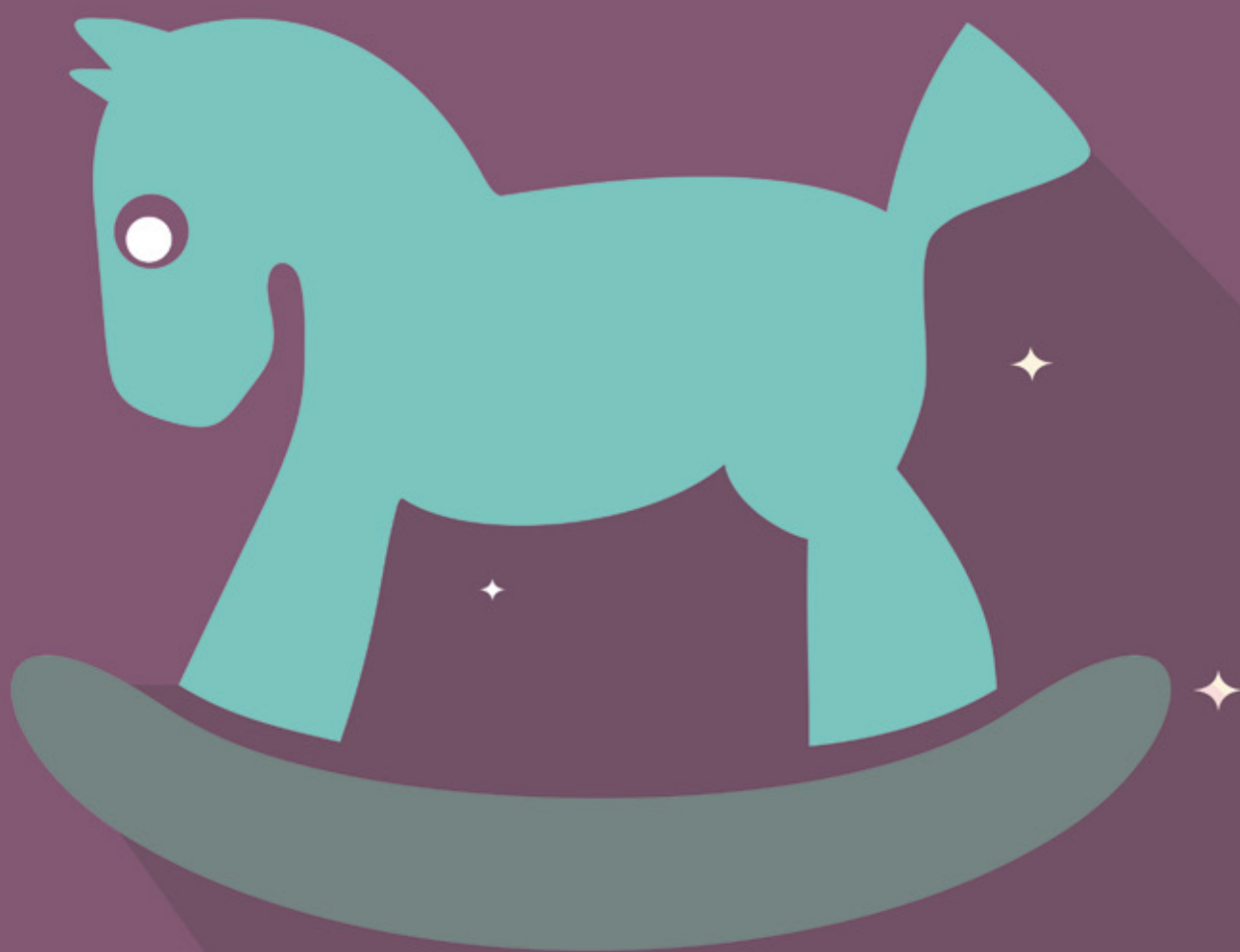
- 69 mums who stated that they had given birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 74% of respondents (n=51) said 'yes', 27% of respondents (n=18) said 'no'.
- 30 mums who stated that they had given birth at James Paget answered this question. 67% of respondents (n=20) said 'yes', 33% of respondents (n=10) said 'no'.
- 75 mums who stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 92% of respondents (n=69) said 'yes', 8% of respondents (n=6) said 'no'.

Overall the majority of birthing partners (84%, n=134) and mums (81%, n=148) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they felt involved in the maternity process (81%, 85%, 89%) and (74%, 67%, 92%) respectively.



More information to partners and partners to be involved in decisions regarding birth preferences. We sourced this independently through NCT Classes. - Birthing partner (West Suffolk Hospital)





Section 2

ANTENATAL CARE

Birthing partners - “During your partner’s antenatal care, were you given enough time to ask questions or discuss your pregnancy?”

Out of 156 birthing partners who answered this question, 87% (n=135) said ‘yes’, 13% said ‘no’ (n=21).

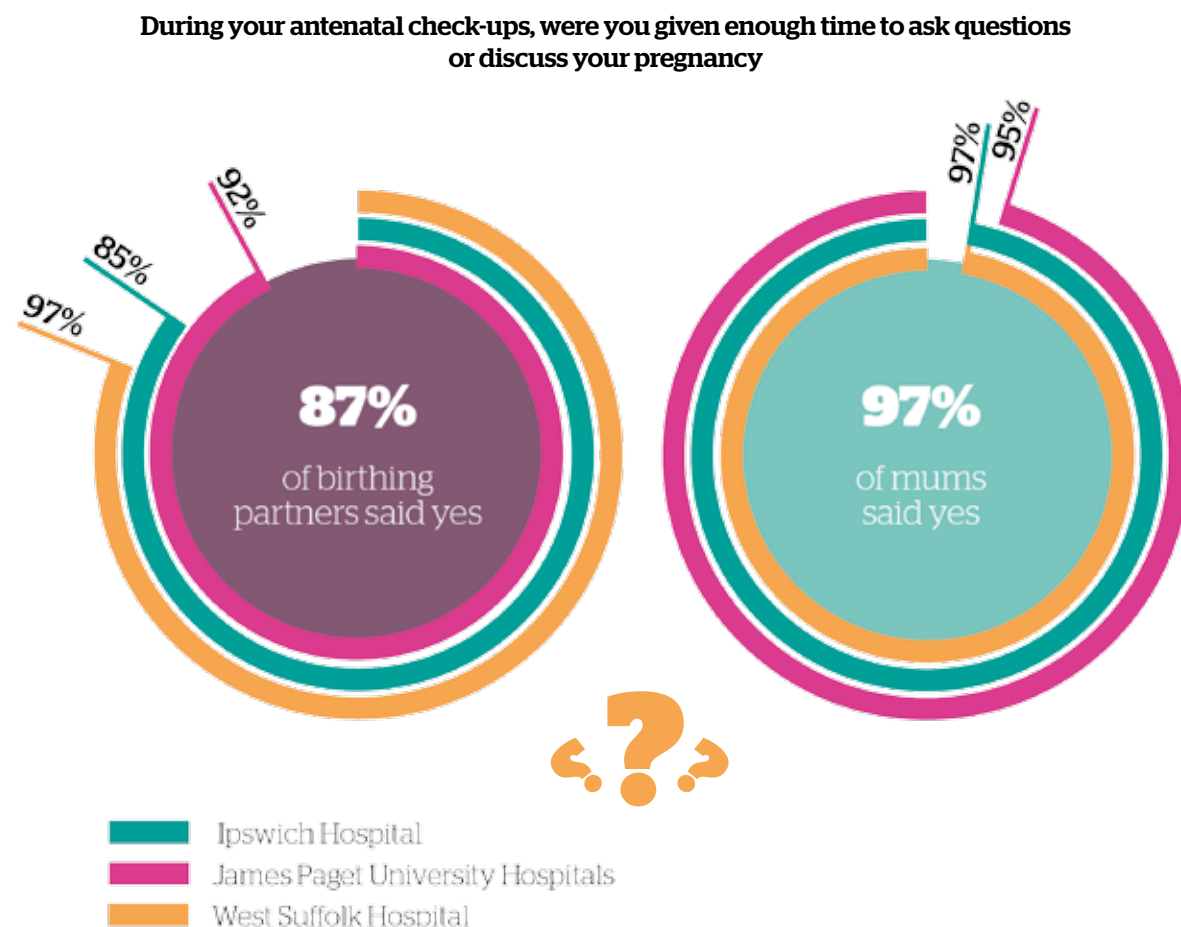
- 73 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 85% (n=62) ‘yes’, 15% (n=11) said ‘no’.
- 53 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this. 92% (n=49) said ‘yes’, 8% (n=4) said ‘no’.
- 26 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 81% (n=21) said ‘yes’, 19% (n=5) said ‘no’.

- 69 mums who stated that they had given birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question, 1 skipped it. 97% (n=67) said ‘yes’, 3% (n=2) said ‘no’.
- 29 mums who stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 3 skipped it. 93% (n=27) of mums who stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital said ‘yes’, 7% (n=2) said ‘no’.
- 73 mums who stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 5 skipped it. 97% (n=71) said ‘yes’, 3% (n=2) said ‘no’.

Overall the majority of birthing partners (87%, n=135) and mums (97%, n=173) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given enough time to ask questions or discuss the pregnancy (85%, 92%, 81%) and (97%, 93%, 97%) respectively.

Mums - “During your antenatal check-ups, were you given enough time to ask questions or discuss your pregnancy?”

179 mums responded to this question 97% (n=173) said ‘yes’, 3% (n=6) said ‘no’.



Birth partners - “If you contacted a midwife, were you given the help that you needed?”

160 birth partners answered this question. 61% (n=98) said ‘yes’, 4% (n=7) said ‘no’, 34% (n=55) said ‘n/a’.

- 75 birth partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital. 60% (n=45) said ‘yes’, 5% (n=4) said ‘no’, 35% (n=26) said ‘n/a’.
- 54 birth partners who stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this. 54% (n=29) said ‘yes’, 6% (n=3) said ‘no’, 41% (n=22) said ‘n/a’.
- 27 birth partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 81% (n=22) said ‘yes’, no respondents said ‘no’, 19% (n=5) said ‘n/a’.

Mums - “If you contacted a midwife, were you given the help that you needed?”

180 mums answered, 173 skipped. 83% (n=149) said ‘yes’, 3% (n=5) said ‘no’, 14% (n=26) said ‘n/a’.

- Out of 74 mums who stated that they had given birth at Ipswich Hospital, 69 answered this question. 81% (n=56) said ‘yes’, 3% (n=2) said ‘no’, 16% (n=11) said ‘n/a’.
- 29 mums who stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 3 skipped. 66% (n=19) said ‘yes’, 10% (n=3) said ‘no’, 24% (n=7) said ‘n/a’.
- 74 mums who stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 4 skipped it. 89% (n=66) said ‘yes’, no respondents said ‘no’, 11% (n=8) said ‘n/a’.

Overall the majority of birth partners (61%, n=98) and mums (83%, n=149) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given the help that they needed when they contacted a midwife (60%, 54%, 81%) and (81%, 66%, 89%) respectively.

Birth partners - “When you contacted a midwife, did you get a response as soon as you needed it?”

139 birth partners responded to this question. 60% (n=83) said ‘yes’, 14% (n=20) said ‘no’, 26% (n=36) said ‘n/a’.

- 67 birth partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question 61% (n=41) said ‘yes’, 12% (n=8) said ‘no’, 27% (n=18) said ‘n/a’.
- 43 birth partners who stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this. 53% (n=23) said ‘yes’, 16% (n=7) said ‘no’, 30% (n=13) said ‘n/a’.
- 25 birth partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital 68% (n=17) said ‘yes’, 20% (n=5) said ‘no’, 12% (n=3) said ‘n/a’.

Mums - “When you contacted a midwife, did you get a response as soon as you needed it?”

178 mums answered this question, 175 skipped. 77% (n=137) said ‘yes’, 11% (n=19) said ‘no’, 12% (n=22) said ‘n/a’.

- 68 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question, 2 skipped it. 68% (n=46) said ‘yes’, 18% (n=12) said ‘no’, 15% (n=10) said ‘n/a’.
- 28 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 4 skipped. 61% (n=17) said ‘yes’, 21% (n=6) said ‘no’, 18% (n=5) said ‘n/a’.
- 74 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 4 skipped. 89% (n=66) said ‘yes’, 1% (n=1) said ‘no’, 9% (n=7) said ‘n/a’.

Overall the majority of birth partners (60%, n=83) and mums (77%, n=137) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they got a response as soon as they needed it when they contacted a midwife (61%, 53%, 68%) and (68%, 61%, 89%) respectively.

Birthing partners - “Thinking about your partner’s antenatal care, were you spoken to in a way you could understand”?

155 birthing partners responded to this question. 81% (n=125) said ‘yes, always’, 17% (n=26) said ‘yes, but not always’, 3% (n=4) said ‘no’.

- 70 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital. 80% (n=56) said ‘yes, always’, 14% (n=10) said ‘yes, but not always’, 6% (n=4) said ‘no’.
- 54 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this. 83% (n=45) said ‘yes, always’ and 17% (n=9) said ‘no’.
- 27 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 78% (n=21) said ‘yes’, 22% (n=6) said ‘yes, but not always’, no respondents said ‘no’.

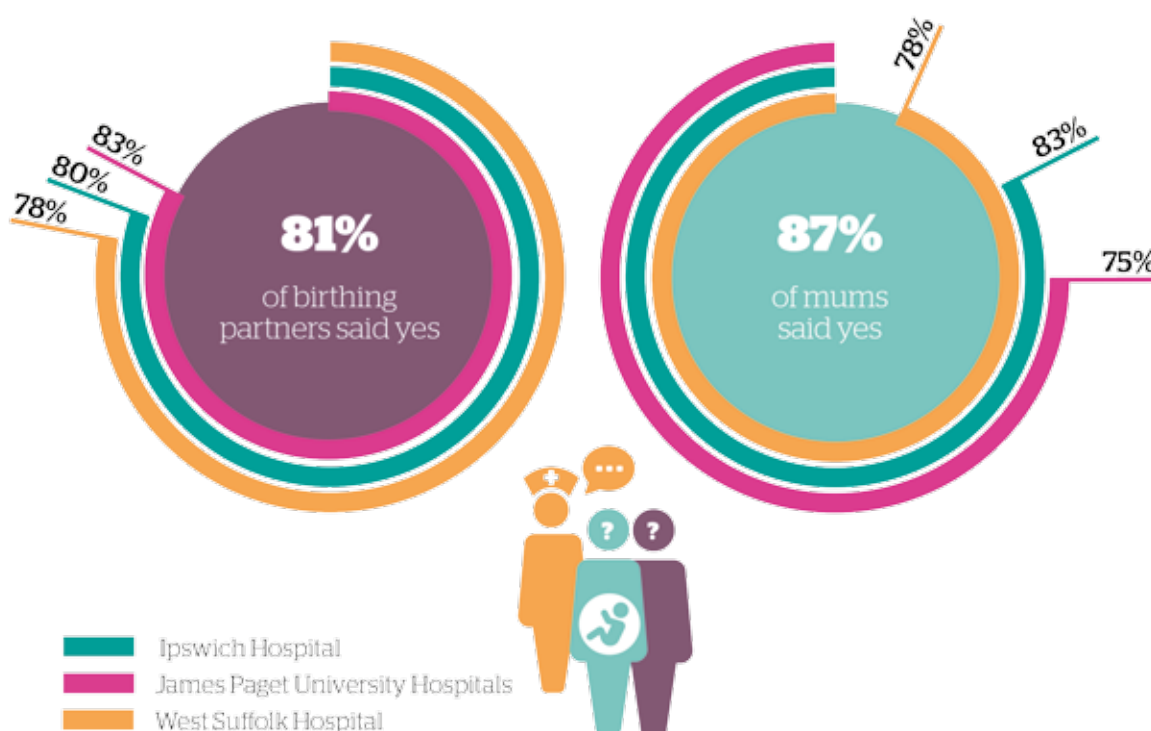
- 63 mums who stated that they had given birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question, 7 skipped it. 83% (n=52) says ‘yes, always’, 17% (n=11), no respondents said ‘no’.
- 28 mums who stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 4 skipped it. 75% (n=21) said ‘yes, always’, 21% (n=6) said, ‘yes, but not always’, 4% (n=1) said ‘no’.
- 70 mums who stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 8 skipped it. 94% (n=66) said ‘yes, always’, 6% (n=4) said ‘yes, but not always’, no respondents said ‘no’.

Overall the majority of birthing partners (81%, n=125) and mums (87%, n=146) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were spoken to in a way that they could understand (80%, 83%, 78%) and (75%, 83%, 94%) respectively.

Mums - “Thinking about your antenatal care, were you spoken to in a way you could understand?”

168 mums answered this question, 185 skipped. 87% (n=146) said ‘yes, always’, 12% (n=21) said ‘yes, but not always’, 1% (n=1) said ‘no’.

Thinking about your antenatal care, were you spoken to in a way you could understand”?



Birthing partners - "Thinking about your partner's antenatal care, were you treated with kindness and understanding?"

159 birthing partners responded to this question. 88% (n=140) said 'yes, always', 9% (n=14) said 'yes, but not always', 3% (n=5) said 'no'.

- 74 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital 87% (n=64) said 'yes', 9% (n=7) said 'yes, but not always', 4% (n=3) said 'no'.
- 54 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 89% (n=48) said 'yes, always', 9% (n=5) said 'yes, but not always', and 2% (n=1) said 'no'.
- 27 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 93% (n=25) said 'yes, always', 7% (n=2) said 'yes, but not always', no respondents said 'no'.

Mums - "Thinking about your antenatal care, were you treated with kindness and understanding?"

180 mums answered this question, 173 skipped it. 82% (n=148) said 'yes, always', 17% (n=30) said 'yes, but not always', 1% (n=2) said 'no'.

- 69 mums who stated that they gave birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question, 1 skipped it. 86% (n=59) said 'yes, always' 14% (n=10) said 'yes, but not always', no respondents said 'no'.
- 29 mums who stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 3 skipped it. 76% (n=22) said 'yes, always', 21% (n=6) said 'yes, but not always', 3% (n=1) said 'no'.
- 74 mums who stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question 81% (n=60) said 'yes, always', 18% (n=13) said 'yes, but not always', 1% (n=1) said 'no'.

Overall the majority of birthing partners (88%, n=140) and mums (82%, n=148) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were treated with kindness and understanding (87%, 89%, 93%) and (86%, 76%, 81%) respectively.

Birthing partners - "Did a midwife encourage you and your partner to make a birth plan (describing the kind of birth you wanted)?"

155 birthing partners responded to this question. 65% (n=101) said 'yes', 35% (n=54) said 'no'.

- 73 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital. 60% (n=44) said 'yes', 40% (n=29) said 'no'.
- 53 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 70% said 'yes' (n=37), 30% said 'no' (n=16).
- 25 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 72% (n=18) 'yes', 28% (n=7) said 'no'.

Mums - "Did a midwife encourage you and your partner to make a birth plan (describing the kind of birth you wanted)?"

In total 178 mums answered this question, 175 skipped. 61% (n=109) said yes, 39% (n=69) said no.

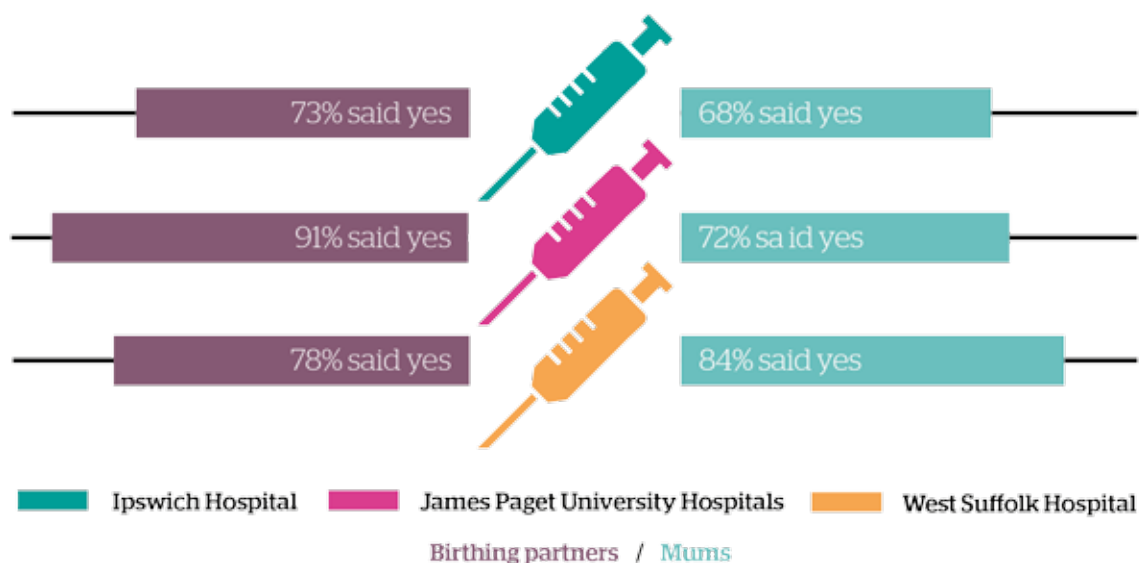
- 68 mums who stated that they had given birth at Ipswich Hospital answered, 2 skipped it. 56% (n=38) said 'yes', 44% (n=30) said 'no'.
- 29 mums who stated that they had given birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 3 skipped it. 55% (n=16) said 'yes', 45% (n=13) said 'no'.
- 73 mums who stated that they had given birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 5 skipped it. 69% (n=50) said 'yes', 31% (n=23) said 'no'.

Overall the majority of birthing partners (65%, n=101) and mums (61%, n=109) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that their midwife encouraged them to make a birth plan (60%, 70%, 72%) and (56%, 55%, 69%) respectively.



65% of birthing partners and **61% of mums** said they were encouraged to make a birth plan.

Did a midwife give you enough information about different kinds of pain control your partner could have during labour?



Birthing partners - “Were you given enough information about the sorts of emergency back-up that would be available (e.g., ambulance facilities if you needed them) if your partner’s chosen birth plan could not be followed?”

151 birthing partners answered this question. 56% (n=85) said ‘yes’, 44% (n=66) said ‘no’.

- 69 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 45% said ‘yes’ (n=31), 56% said ‘no’ (n=38).
- 52 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 62% (n=32) said ‘yes’, 38% (n=20) said ‘no’.
- 26 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 69% (n=18) said ‘yes’, 31% (n=8) said ‘no’.

Mums - “Were you given enough information about the sorts of emergency back-up that would be available (e.g., ambulance facilities if you needed them) if your chosen birth plan could not be followed?”

174 mums answered this question. 53% (n=93) said ‘yes’, 47% (n=81) said ‘no’. Figures were very similar for mums and birthing partners, however slightly more birthing partners felt that they were told about emergency back-up information than mums.

- 67 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital answered, skipped 3. 48% (n=32) said ‘yes’, 52% (n=35) said ‘no’.
- 29 mums who gave birth at James Paget answered this question, 3 skipped it. 31% (n=9) said ‘yes’, 69% (n=20) said ‘no’.
- 70 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 8 skipped it. 64% (n=45) said ‘yes’, 36% (n=25) said ‘no’.

Just over half of all birthing partners (56%, n=85) and mums (53%, n=93) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given enough information about the sorts of emergency back-up that would be available (62%, 45%, 69%) and (48%, 31%, 64%) respectively. However, more than half of birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital (56%, n=38) and over 2/3 of mums (69%, n=20) who gave birth at James Paget Hospital stated that they were not given enough information.

Birthing partners - “Did a midwife give you enough information about different kinds of pain control your partner could have during labour, listing the effects they may have on your partner and baby?”

158 birthing partners provided a response to this question, 80% (n=127) said ‘yes’, 20% (n=31) said ‘no’.

- 74 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital, 73%

- (n=54) said 'yes', 27% (n=20) said 'no'.
- 53 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 91% (n=48) said 'yes', 9% (n=5) said 'no'.
- 27 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 78% (n=21) said 'yes', 22% (n=6) said 'no'.

Mums - "Did a midwife give you enough information about different kinds of pain control you could have during labour, listing the effects they may have on you and your baby?"

181 mums answered this question, 172 skipped. 76% (n=137) said 'yes', 24% (n=44) said 'no'.

- 69 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question, 1 skipped it. 68% (n=47) said 'yes', 32% (n=22) said 'no'.
- 29 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 3 skipped it. 72% (n=21) said 'yes', 28% (n=8) said 'no'.
- 75 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 3 skipped it. 84% (n=63) said 'yes', 16% (n=12) said 'no'.

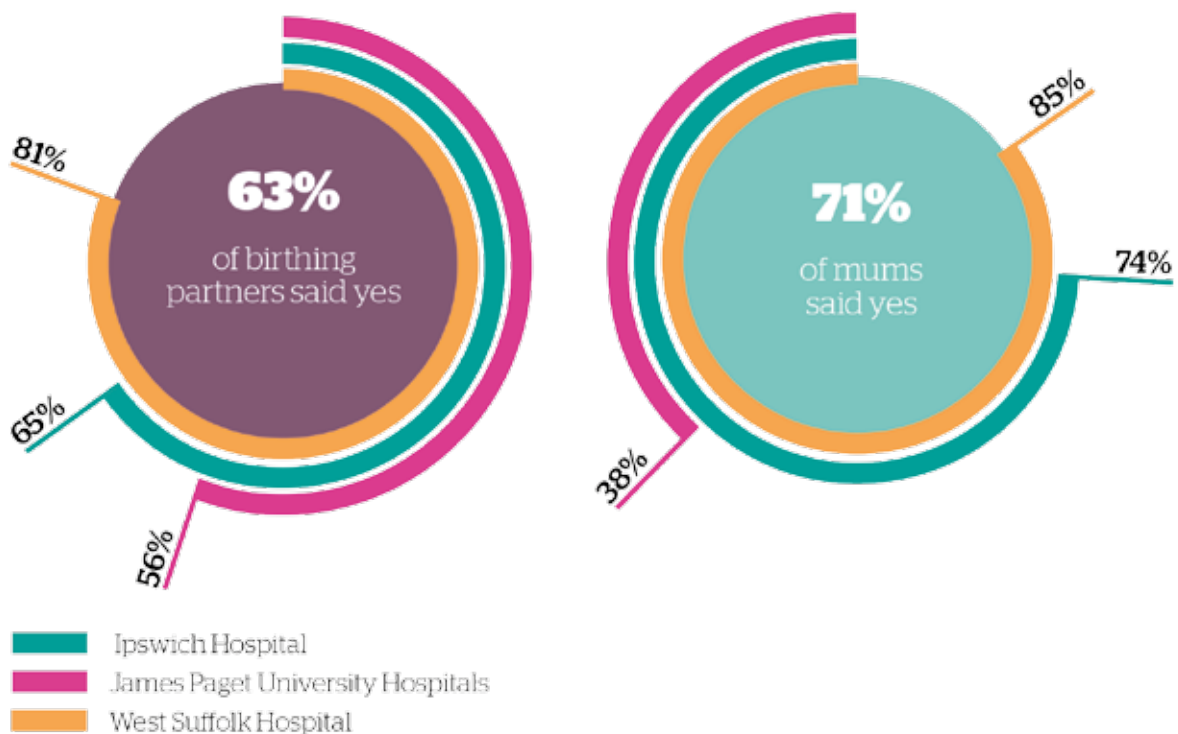
Overall the majority of birthing partners (80%, n=127) and mums (76%, n=137) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given enough information about different kinds of pain control that they or their partner could have during labour (73%, 91%, 78%) and (68%, 72%, 84%) respectively.

Birthing partners - "Did the midwife give you enough information on (or refer you and your partner to) additional antenatal classes? For example, 'Parent Craft'."

157 birthing partners responded to this question, 63% (n=99) said 'yes', 37% (n=58) said 'no'.

- 72 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this. 65% 'yes' (n=47), 35% 'no' (n=25).
- 54 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 56% (n=30) said 'yes', 44% (n=24) said 'no'.
- 27 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this. 81% (n=22) said 'yes', 19% (n=5) said 'no'.

Did the midwife give you enough information on (or refer you and your partner to) additional antenatal classes?



Mums - “Did the midwife give you enough information on (or refer you and your partner to) additional antenatal classes? For example, ‘Parent Craft’.”

In total, 181 mums answered this question. 71% (n=128) said ‘yes’, 29% (n=53) said ‘no’. Less birthing partners than mums felt that they were given enough information on additional antenatal classes.

- 69 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question, 1 skipped it. 74% (n=51) said ‘yes’, 27% (n=18) said ‘no’.
- 29 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 3 skipped it. 38% (n=11) said ‘yes’, 62% (n=18) said ‘no’.
- 75 mums who have birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 3 skipped it. 85% (n=64) said ‘yes’, 15% (n=11) said ‘no’.

Overall the majority of birthing partners (63%, n=99) and mums (71%, n=128) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that their midwife referred them on to parent craft classes (65%, 56%, 81%) and (74%, 38%, 85%) respectively. James Paget Hospital had a higher proportion of birthing partners (44%, n=24) and mums (62%, n=18) who stated that they were not referred for antenatal classes.

Birthing partners - “Did you feel antenatal classes equipped you with techniques to help your partner during labour?”

In total, 126 birthing partners responded to this question, 70% (n=88) said ‘yes’, 30% (n=38) said ‘no’.

- 59 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question 63% (n=37) said ‘yes’, 37% (n=22) said ‘no’.
- 41 birthing partners who gave birth at James Paget hospital answered this question 78% (n=32) said ‘yes’, 22% (n=9) said ‘no’.
- 23 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 78% said ‘yes’ (n=18), 22% (n=5) said ‘no’.

Mums - “Did you feel antenatal classes equipped you with techniques to help your partner during labour?”

In total, 136 mums answered this question, 217 skipped. 61% (n=83) said yes, 39% (n=53) said

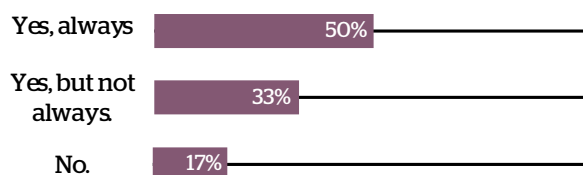
no. More birthing partners than mums felt that antenatal classes equipped them with techniques to help their partner during labour.

- 56 mums who gave birth at Ipswich hospital answered this question. 14 skipped it. 54% (n=30) said ‘yes’, 47% (n=26) said ‘no’.
- 23 mums who gave birth at James Paget hospital, 9 skipped it. 57% (n=13) said ‘yes’, 43% (n=10) said ‘no’.
- 53 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 25 skipped it. 74% (n=39) said ‘yes’, 26% (n=14) said ‘no’.

The majority of birthing partners (70%, n=88) and mums (61%, n=83) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that the antenatal classes equipped them with techniques for labour (63%, 78%, 78%) and (54%, 57%, 74%) respectively. However, 37% (n=22) of birthing partners and 47% (n=26) of mums from Ipswich Hospital and 43% of mums from James Paget stated that antenatal classes didn’t prepare them with techniques for labour.

Birthing partners - “Did the classes cover the topics you wanted?”

Birthing Partners answered ...

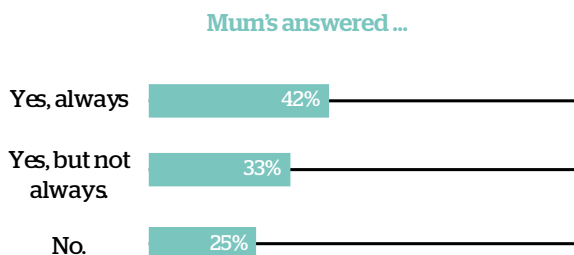


In total, 121 birthing partners completed this question. 50% (n=61) said ‘yes, always’, 33% (n=40) said ‘yes, but not always’, 17% (n=20) said ‘no’. Birthing partners were more likely than mums to state that the classes had covered the topics that they had wanted.

- 58 birthing partners who stated that they had been present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question 52% (n=30) said ‘yes, always’, 31% (n=18) said ‘yes, but not always’, 17% (n=10) said ‘no’.
- 38 birthing partners who stated that they had been present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 50% (n=19) said ‘yes, always’, 29% (n=11) said ‘yes, but not always’, 21% (n=8) said ‘no’.
- 24 birthing partners who stated that they

had been present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 50% (n=12) said 'yes, always', 42% (n=10) said 'yes, but not always', 8% (n=2) said 'no'.

Mums - "Did the classes cover the topics you wanted?"



In total, 135 mums answered this question. 42% (n=56) said 'yes, always', 33% (n=45) said 'yes, but not always', 25% (n=34) said 'no'.

- 56 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital answered, 14 skipped it. 39% (n=22) said 'yes, always', 36% (n=20) said 'yes, but not always', 25% (n=14) said 'no'.
- 22 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 10 skipped it. 27% (n=6) said 'yes, always', 32% (n=7) said 'yes, but not always', 41% (n=9) said 'no'.
- 53 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 25 skipped. 51% (n=27) said 'yes, always', 34% (n=18) said 'yes, but not always', 16% (n=8) said 'no'.

The majority of birthing partners (50%, n=61) and mums (42%, n=56) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that the antenatal classes covered the topics that they wanted (52%, 50%, 50%) and (39%, 27%, 51%) respectively. A similar amount of birthing partners (22%, n=40) and mums (33%, n=45) stated that antenatal classes only sometimes covered the topics that they wanted.

Birthing partners - "Did you have an opportunity to meet other father's/birthing partners?"

132 birthing partners completed this question. 66% (n=87) said 'yes', 34% (n=45) said 'no'. Overall, fewer birthing partners than mums stated that they had the opportunity to meet other father's/birthing partners.

- 62 birthing partners who were present at

a birth at Ipswich hospital answered this question. 69% (n=43) said 'yes', 31% (n=19) said 'no'.

- 44 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 64% (n=28) said 'yes', 37% (n=16) said 'no'.
- 24 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 67% (n=16) said 'yes', 33% (n=8) said 'no'.

Mums - "Did you have an opportunity to meet other pregnant women?"

154 mums answered this question. 70% (n=108) said 'yes', 30% (n=46) said 'no'.

- 60 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question, 10 skipped it. 68% (n=41) said 'yes', 32% (n=19) said 'no'.
- 24 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital, 8 skipped it. 58% (n=14) said 'yes', 42% (n=10) said 'no'.
- 64 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered, 14 skipped it. 81% (n=52) said 'yes', 19% (n=12) said 'no'.

The majority of birthing partners (66%, n=87) and mums (70%, n=108) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they had an opportunity to meet other pregnant women and other father's/birthing partners (69%, 64%, 67%) and (68%, 58%, 81%) respectively. At least 1/3 of birthing partners (31%, 37%, 33%) and mums (32%, 42%, 19%) respectively said no, they didn't have the opportunity to meet other mums or father's/birthing partners.

Birthing partners - "Were you given information on who to contact if you were concerned about yourself/your partner or your baby?"

In total, 156 birthing partners responded to this question. 80% (n=124) said 'yes', 20% (n=32) said 'no'. A higher percentage of birthing partners stated that they were not given information on who to contact.

- 73 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 82% (n=60) said 'yes', 18% (n=13) said 'no'.
- 53 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital

answered this question. 72% (n=38) said 'yes', 28% (n=15) said 'no'.

- 27 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 89% (n=24) said 'yes', 11% (n=3) said 'no'.

Mums - "Were you given information on who to contact if you were concerned about yourself/your partner or your baby?"

In total, 172 mums answered this question. 88% (n=151) said 'yes', 10% (n=17) said 'no', 2% (n=4) said 'other'.

- 67 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 88% (n=59) said 'yes', 12% (n=8) said 'no', no respondents said 'other'.
- 27 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 85% (n=23) said yes, 7% (n=2) said no, 7% (n=2) said 'other'.
- 72 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 87% (n=63) said 'yes', 10% (n=7) said 'no', 3% (n=2) said 'other'.

The majority of birthing partners (80%, n=124) and mums (88%, n=151) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given information on who to contact if they were concerned about themselves or their partner or baby (82%, 72%, 89%) and (88%, 85%, 97%) respectively.

Birthing partners - "Overall, how would you rate the care received during your partner's pregnancy? (1, extremely dissatisfied - 10, extremely satisfied)"

In total, 159 birthing partners provided a response to this question. The average rating of care was 8.13 (1.70), ranging from 2 (<1%, n=1) to 10 (25%, n=39) and the average rating of care was 8.13 (1.70).

- 76 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care was 8.11 (1.71), ranging from 2 (1%, n=1) to 10 (24%, n=18).
- 54 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care was 8.11 (1.71), ranging from 3 (2%, n=1) to 10 (25%, n=13).
- 26 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital responded to this question. The average rating of care was 8.23 (1.55), ranging from 4 (4%, n=1) to 10 (24%, n=6).

Mums - "Overall, how would you rate the care received during your pregnancy? (1, extremely dissatisfied - 10, extremely satisfied)"

In total, 178 mums answered this question, 175 skipped it. The average rating of care was 8.35 (1.87) ranging from 1 (1%, n=2) to 10 (35%, n=62).

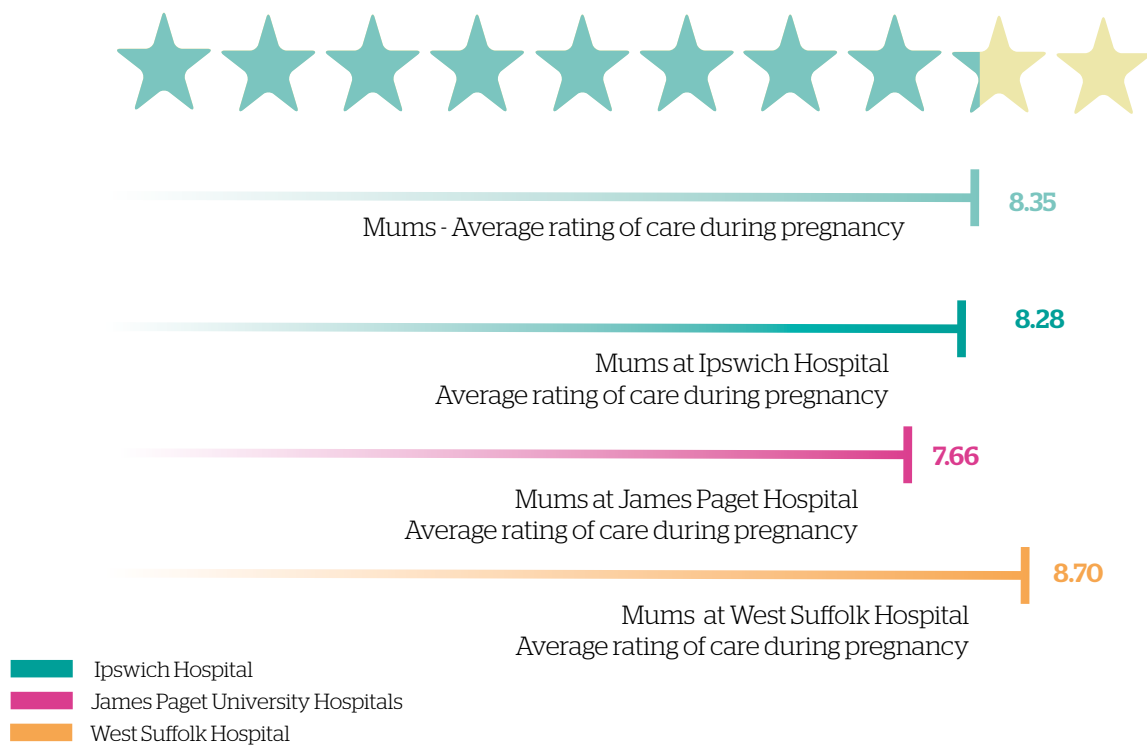
Birthing partners: Overall, how would you rate the care received during your partner's pregnancy? (1, extremely dissatisfied - 10, extremely satisfied)



- 69 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question, 1 skipped it. The average rating of care was 8.28 (1.72), ranging from 3 (3%, n=2), to 10 (30%, n=21).
- 29 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question, 3 skipped it. The average rating of care was 7.66 (2.32), ranging from 1 (4%, n=1) to 10 (28%, n=8).
- 74 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question, 4 skipped it. The average care rating was 8.70 (1.67), ranging from 1 (1%, n=1) to 10 (42%, n=31).

Overall, the average rating of care from all hospitals received during pregnancy from birthing partners was (8.13 (1.70)) and from mums (8.35, 1.87). Birthing partners and mums from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital scored the following ratings of care (8.13(1.70), 8.11(1.71), 8.23(1.55) and (8.28 (1.72), 7.66(2.32), 8.70(1.67)) respectively. The average rating for the level of care received was lower for birthing partners than for mums. The lowest rating of care was provided by Mums for James Paget Hospital (7.66, 2.32).

**Mums: Overall, how would you rate the care received during your partner's pregnancy?
(1, extremely dissatisfied - 10, extremely satisfied)**



We attended one day antenatal class, which included breathing techniques. Practised these up until my birth. When i was using them, the midwife told me to do the opposite which confused me. - Mum (Ipswich Hospital)

**Your spotlight
on local services**





Section 3

BIRTH

Birth partner - “When you arrived at the hospital with your partner, how long was it before she was assessed by a midwife or consultant?”

155 birthing partners completed this question. 63% (n=98) stated 0-15 minutes, 22% of respondents (n=34) stated '15-30 minutes', 10% of respondents (n=16) stated '30-45 minutes', 3% of respondents (n=4) stated '45-60 minutes', 2% of respondents (n=3) stated 'over 60 minutes'.

- 75 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 3 skipped it. '0-15' - 59% (n=44), '15-30' - 25% (n=19), '30-45' - 11% (n=8), '45-60' - 3% (n=2), '60+ minutes' 3% (n=2). The majority of birthing partners (59%) stated that their partner was assessed by a midwife or consultant within 15 minutes of arriving at the hospital.
- 53 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 64% (n=34) stated '0-15 minutes', 17% (n=9) stated '15-30 minutes', 13% (n=7) stated '30-45 minutes', 4% (n=2) stated '45-60 minutes' and 2% (n=1) stated 'over 60 minutes'.
- 25 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 72% (n=18) stated '0-15 minutes', 24% (n=6) stated '15-30 minutes', 4% (n=1) stated '30-45 minutes'.

Mums - “When you arrived at the hospital, how long was it before you were assessed by a midwife or consultant?”

173 mums answered this question

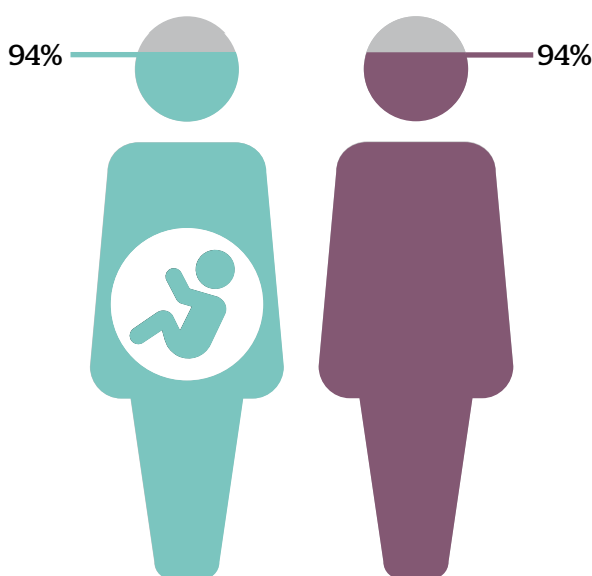
- 68 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 2 skipped it. '0-15' - 62% (n=42), '15-30' - 19% (n=13), '30-45' - 12% (n=12), '45-60' - 6% (n=4), '60+ minutes' 1% (n=1). The majority of mums (62%) were assessed by a midwife or consultant within 15 minutes of arriving at the hospital.
- 28 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 46% (n=13) said '0-15 minutes', 25% (n=7) said '15-30 minutes', 4% (n=1) said '30-45 minutes', 11% (n=3) said '45-60 minutes', 14% (n=4) said 'over 60 minutes'.
- 74 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital completed this question. 74% (n=55) said '0-15 minutes', 19% (n=14) said '15-30 minutes', 3% (n=2) said '30-45 minutes', 3% (n=2) said '45-60 minutes' and 1% (n=1) said over 60 minutes.



Most mums and birthing partners said they were assessed within 30 minutes of arriving at one of the hospitals.

The majority of birthing partners (85%, n=134) and mums (14%, n=25) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that they were or their partner was assessed within 30 minutes of arriving at the hospital (84%, 81%, 96%) and (81%, 71%, 93%) respectively.

Birthing partners - “During your partner’s labour and delivery, were you made welcome by the staff?”



156 birthing partners completed this question, 7 skipped it. 94% (n=147) said 'yes', 6% (n=9) said 'no'.

- 75 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 3 skipped it. 93% (n=70) of birthing partners stated 'yes', 7% (n=5) said 'no' they were not made welcome by the staff during their labour and delivery.
- 54 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 98% (n=53) said 'yes', 2% (n=1) said 'no'.
- 25 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this

question. 88% (n=22) said 'yes', 12% (n=3) said 'no'.

Mums - "During your partner's labour and delivery, were you made welcome by the staff?"

173 mums answered this question. 94% (n=161) said 'yes', 7% (n=12) said 'no'.

- 67 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 3 skipped it. 98% (n=66) of mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital stated 'yes', 2% (n=1) said 'no', they were not made welcome by the staff during their labour and delivery.
- 29 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 90% (n=26) said 'yes', 10% (n=3) said 'no'.
- 74 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 89% (n=66) said 'yes', 11% (n=8) said 'no'.

The majority of birthing partners (94%, n=147) and mums (94%, n=161) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were made to feel welcome by the staff (93%, 98%, 88%) and (94%, 98%, 89%) respectively.

Birthing partners - "Was there a member of staff available to help you at all times during your stay?"

156 partners completed this question, 7 skipped it. 87% (n=135) said 'yes', 12% (n=19) said 'no'.

- 75 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 3 skipped it. 84% (n=63) of birthing stated 'yes', 16% (n=12) said 'no', there was not a member of staff to help them at all times during their stay.
- 54 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 91% (n=49) stated 'yes', 9% (n=5) stated 'no'.
- 25 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 84% (n=21) said 'yes', 16% (n=4) said 'no'.

Mums - "Was there a member of staff available to help you at all times during your stay?"

174 mums in total answered this question. 85%

(n=148) said 'yes', 15% (n=26) said 'no'.

- 68 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 2 skipped it. 87% (n=59) of mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital stated 'yes', 13% (n=9) said 'no', there was not a member of staff available to help them at all times during their stay.
- 29 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 76% (n=22) said 'yes', 24% (n=7) said 'no'.
- 73 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 86% (n=63) said 'yes', 14% (n=10) said 'no'.

The majority of birthing partners (87%, n=135) and mums (85%, n=148) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that there was a member of staff to help them at all times (84%, 91%, 84%) and (87%, 76%, 86%) respectively.

Birthing partners - "If there were any complications during the birth, was everything explained in a timely manner?"

157 birthing partners completed this question. 61% (n=96) said 'yes', 12% (n=19) said 'no', 27% (n=42) said 'n/a'.

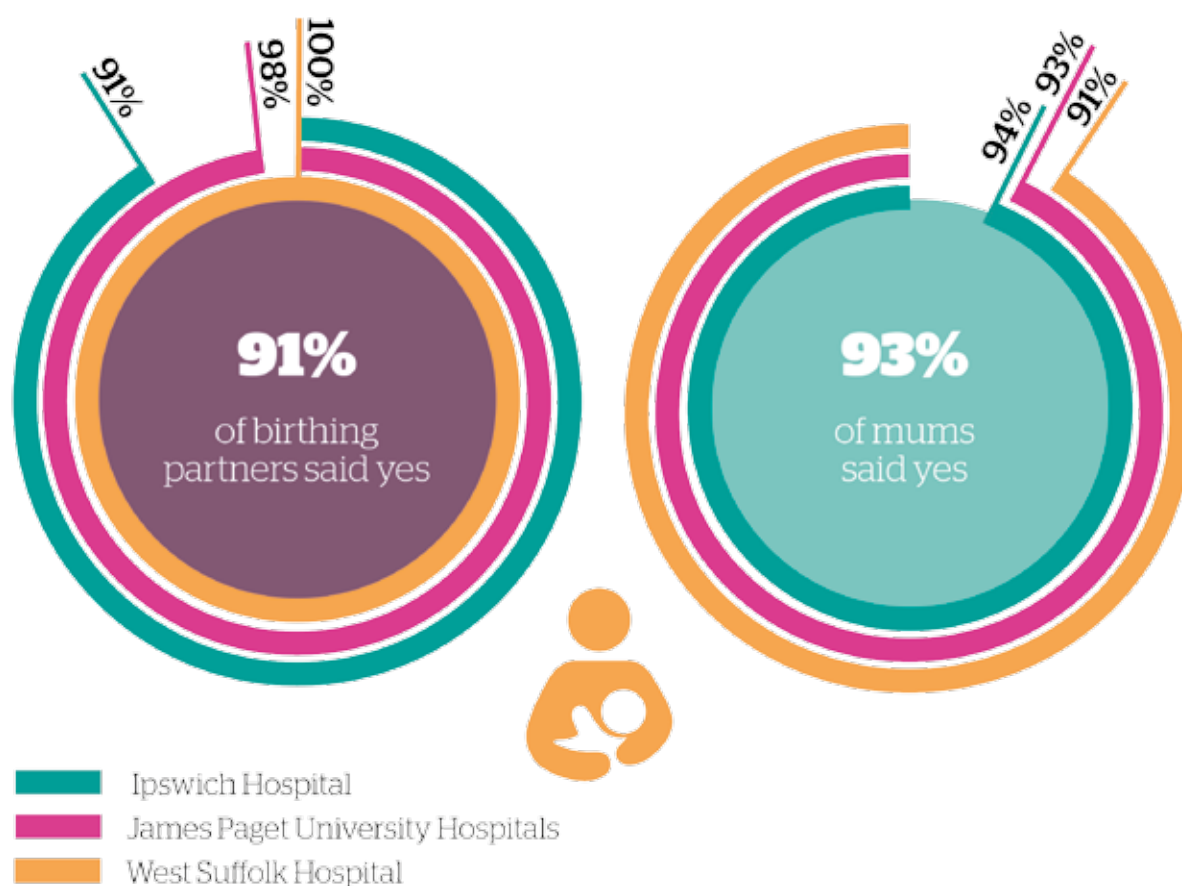
- 75 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 3 skipped it. 60% (n=45) of birthing stated 'yes', 15% (n=11) said 'no' complications were not explained in a timely manner and 25% (n=19) said 'n/a'.
- 54 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 59% (n=32) said 'yes', 13% (n=7) said 'no', 28% (n=15) said 'n/a'.
- 25 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 72% (n=18) said 'yes', 4% (n=1) said 'no', 24% (n=6) said 'n/a'.

Mums - "If there were any complications during the birth, was everything explained in a timely manner?"

174 mums answered this question in total. 55% (n=96) said 'yes', 13% (n=23) said 'no', 32% (n=55) said 'n/a'.

- 67 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 3 skipped it. 54% (n=36) of mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital stated 'yes', 18% (n=12) said 'no'.

Did you have contact with your baby shortly after the birth?



- complications were not explained in a timely manner, and 28% (n=19) said 'n/a'
- 29 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 66% (n=19) said 'yes', 17% (n=5) said 'no', 17% (n=5) said 'n/a'.
- 74 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 55% (n=41) said 'yes', 8% (n=6) said 'no', 37% (n=27) said 'n/a'.

The majority of birthing partners (61%, n=96) and mums 55% (n=96) said yes complications during the birth were explained in a timely manner. The majority of birthing partners from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital (60%, 59%, 72%) and (54%, 66%, 55%) respectively stated 'yes' in response to this question.

Birthing partners - "Did you have contact with your baby shortly after the birth?"

149 birthing partners completed this question. 95% (n=142) said 'yes', 5% (n=7) said 'no'.

- 68 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 10 skipped it. 91% (n=62) of birthing stated 'yes', 9% (n=6) said 'no' there was not a member of staff to help them at all times during their stay.
- 53 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 98% (n=52) said 'yes', 2% (n=1) said 'no'.
- 25 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 100% (n=25) of birthing partners said 'yes'.

Mums - "Did you have contact with your baby shortly after the birth?"

175 mums in total answered this question. 93% (n=162) said 'yes', 7% (n=13) said 'no'.

- 67 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 3 skipped it. 94% (n=63) of mums who gave birth at Ipswich

Hospital stated 'yes', 6% (n=4) said 'no' they did not have contact with their baby shortly after birth.

- 28 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 93% (n=26) said 'yes', 7% (n=2) said 'no'.
- 74 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 91% (n=67) said 'yes', 9% (n=7) said 'no'.

The majority of birthing partners (95%, n=142) and mums 93% (n=162) overall said yes they had contact with their baby shortly after their birth. Specifically, the majority of birthing partners and mums at Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital said yes to this question too; (91%, 98%, 100%) and (94%, 93% 91%) respectively.

Birthing partners - "During the birth, were you treated with dignity and respect?"

157 birthing partners completed this question. 97% (n=152) said 'yes', 3% (n=5) said 'no'.

- 75 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 3 skipped it. 96% (n=72) of birthing partners stated 'yes', 4% (n=3) said 'no' they were not treated with dignity and respect during the birth.
- 54 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 96% (n=52) said 'yes', 4% (n=2) said 'no'.
- 25 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 100% (n=25) of birthing partners said 'yes'.

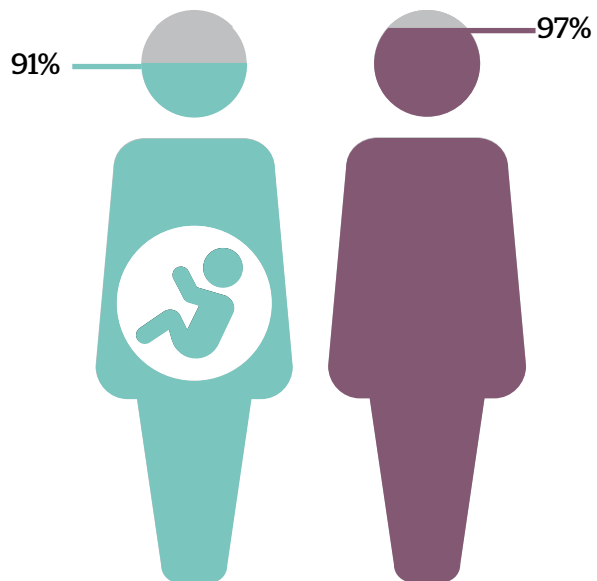
Mums - "During the birth, were you treated with dignity and respect?"

176 mums in total answered this question. 91% (n=160) said 'yes', 9% (n=16) said 'no'.

- 68 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 93% (n=63) of mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital stated 'yes', 7% (n=5) said 'no' they were not treated with dignity and respect during the birth.
- 29 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 90% (n=26) said 'yes', 10% (n=3) said 'no'.
- 73 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk

Hospital answered this question. 89% (n=65) said 'yes', 11% (n=8) said 'no'.

The majority of birthing partners (97%, n=152) and mums 91% (n=160) overall said yes they were treated with dignity and respect during the birth. Specifically, the majority of birthing partners and mums at Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital said yes to this question too; (96%, 96%, 100%) and (93%, 90% 89%) respectively.



Birthing partners - "If your partner had to stay in hospital overnight, were you given the option to stay with her?"

142 birthing partners completed this question. 21% (n=30) said 'yes', 54% (n=77) said 'no, but I wanted to', 25% (n=35) said 'no but I didn't want to'.

- 70 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 8 skipped it. 23% (n=16) of birthing partners stated 'yes', 44% (n=31) said 'no, but I wanted to', 33% (n=23) said 'no, but I didn't want to'.
- 51 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 22% (n=11) said 'yes', 63% (n=32) said 'no, but I wanted to', and 16% (n=8) said 'no, but I didn't want to'.
- 20 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 15% (n=3) of birthing partners said 'yes', 70% (n=14) said 'no but I wanted to', and 15% (n=3) said 'no but I didn't want to'.

Mums - "If you had to stay in hospital overnight, was your partner given the option to stay with you?"

162 mums answered this question in total. 14% (n=22) said 'yes', 51% (n=82) said 'no, but I wanted them to', 23% (n=37) said 'no, but I did not want them to'. 13% (n=21) said 'other'.

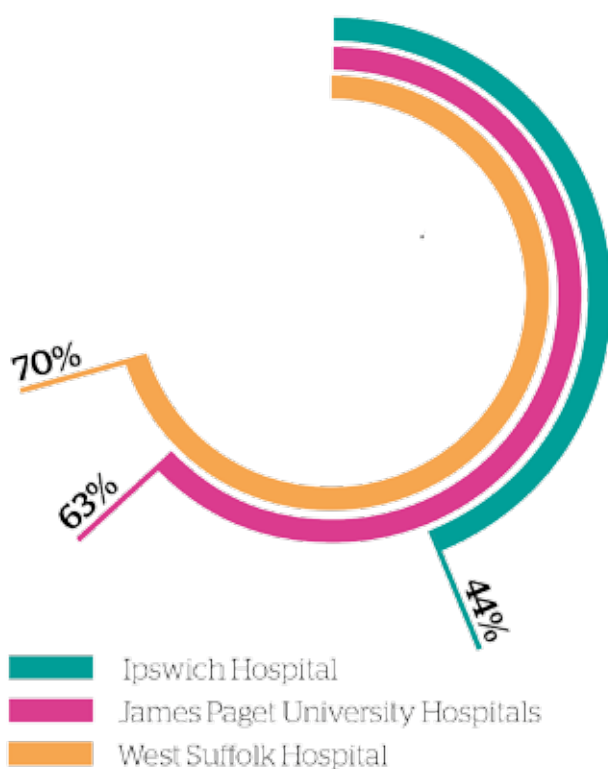
- 65 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 5 skipped it. 12% (n=8) of mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital stated 'yes' their partner was given the option to stay overnight with them, 52% (n=34) said 'no, but I wanted them to', 25% said 'no but I did not want them to' and 11% (n=7) said 'other'.
- 29 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 17% (n=5) said 'yes', 59% (n=17) said 'no, but I wanted them to', 21% (n=6) said 'no, but I did not want them to' and 3% (n=1) said 'other'; yes but I was poorly provided for.

64 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 14% (n=9) said 'yes', 48% (n=31) said 'no, but I wanted them to', 21% (n=14) said 'no, but I did not want them to' and 16% (n=10) said 'other'.

- 64 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 14% (n=9) said 'yes', 48% (n=31) said 'no, but I wanted them to', 21% (n=14) said 'no, but I did not want them to' and 16% (n=10) said 'other'.

The majority of birthing partners (54%, n=77) and mums 51% (n=82) said that they or their partner were not able to stay overnight with mum and baby in the hospital. Specifically, the majority of birthing partners and mums at Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital said 'yes' to this question too; (44%, 63%, 70%) and (52%, 59% 48%) respectively.

If you had to stay in hospital overnight, was your partner given the option to stay with you?



54% of birthing partners wanted to stay with mum overnight but were not given the option.



Fantastic stay in the labour ward. Couldn't ask for better service.
Mum (West Suffolk Hospital)



Birthing partners - “Overall, how would you rate the care received during your partner’s labour and birth? Please remember that this relates to your personal care, not that of your partner’s. 1 = Extremely Dissatisfied 10 = Extremely Satisfied”

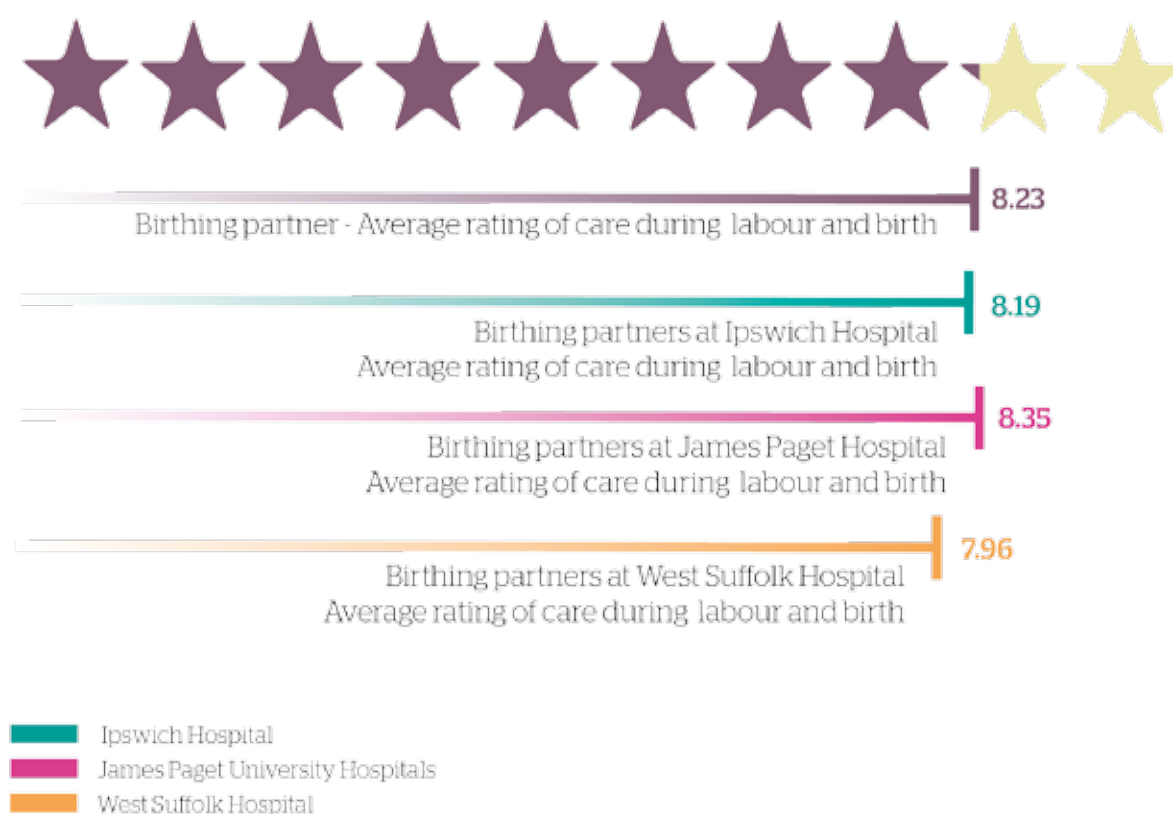
160 birthing partners completed this question. The average rating of care was 8.23 (1.88) ranging from 1 (<1%, n=1) to 10 (33%, n=53).

- 77 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 1 respondent skipped it. The average rating of care was 8.19 (1.86), ranging from 2 (1%, n=1) to 10 (29%, n=22).
- 55 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care was 8.35 (1.77), ranging from 5 (13%, n=7) to 10 (38%, n=21).
- 25 birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 100% (n=25) of birthing partners said yes. The average rating of care was 7.96 (2.18),

ranging from 1 (4%, n=1) to 10 (32%, n=8).

The average rating of care for care received during birthing partners’ labour was 8.23 (1.88) ranging from (<1%, n=1) to 10 (33%, n=53). Similarly, the average rating of care for care received during mums labour was 8.29 (2.12), ranging from 1 (1%, n=3) to 10 (36%, n=63). Mums rated Ipswich Hospital the lowest (8.21, S.D = 1.98), then West Suffolk Hospital (8.34, S.D = 2.18) and rated care at James Paget Hospital most highly (8.38, S.D=2.31). Birthing partners rated the level of care during birth at West Suffolk Hospital lowest (7.96, S.D =2.18), then Ipswich Hospital (8.19, S.D=1.86) and rated care at James Paget Hospital the highest (8.35, S.D = 1.77).

Birthing partners: Overall, how would you rate the care received during your labour and birth?



Mums - “Overall, how would you rate the care received during your labour and birth? Please remember that this relates to your personal care, not that of your partner’s. 1 = Extremely Dissatisfied 10 = Extremely Satisfied”

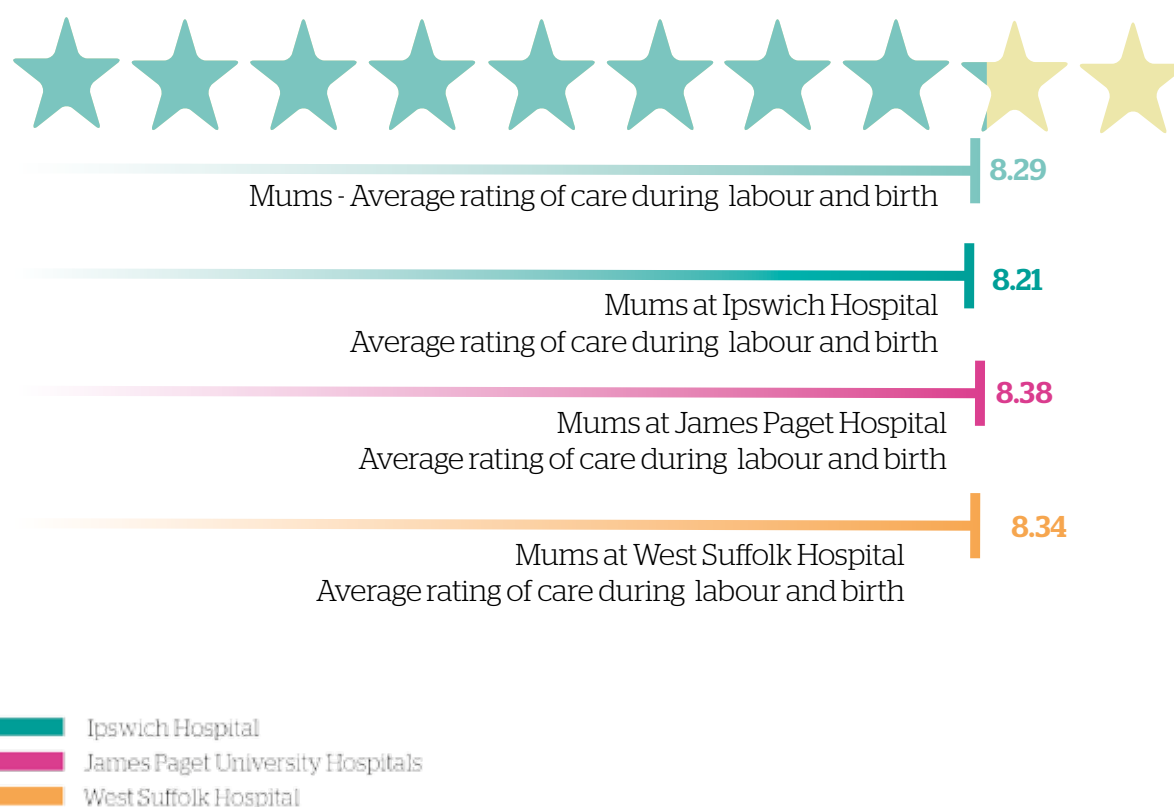
175 mums answered this question in total. The average rating of care was 8.29 (2.12), ranging from 1 (1%, n=3) to 10 (36%, n=63).

- 68 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital responded to this question. The average rating of care was 8.21 (1.98), ranging from 2 (1%, n=1) to 10 (28%, n=19).
- 29 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital responded to this question. The average rating of care was 8.38 (2.31), ranging from 1 (3%, n=1) to 10 (34%, n=10).
- 74 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care was 8.34 (2.18), ranging from 1 (3%, n=2) to 10 (43%, n=32).

The average rating of care for care received during birthing partners’ labour was 8.23 (1.88) ranging from (<1%, n=1) to 10 (33%, n=53). Similarly, the average rating of care for care received during mums labour was 8.29 (2.12), ranging from 1 (1%, n=3) to 10 (36%, n=63). Mums rated Ipswich Hospital the lowest (8.21, S.D = 1.98), then West Suffolk Hospital (8.34, S.D = 2.18) and rated care at James Paget Hospital most highly (8.38, S.D=2.31).

Birthing partners rated the level of care during birth at West Suffolk Hospital lowest (7.96, S.D =2.18), then Ipswich Hospital (8.19, S.D=1.86) and rated care at James Paget Hospital the highest (8.35, S.D = 1.77). James Paget Hospital had the highest level of care from birthing partners whereas West Suffolk Hospital were rated the lowest compared to Ipswich Hospital and James Paget Hospital.

Mums - Overall, how would you rate the care received during your labour and birth?





Section 4

THE NEONATAL UNIT



Birthing partners - “Did your child go to the neonatal unit?”

159 birthing partners completed this question. 17% (n=27) stated ‘yes’, 83% (n=132) stated ‘no’.

- 76 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 2 skipped it. 21% (n=16) said ‘yes’, 79% (n=60) said ‘no’ their child did not go the neonatal unit.
- 54 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 13% (n=7) said ‘yes’, 87% (n=47) said ‘no’.
- 25 birthing partners who stated that they had been present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 16% (n=4) said ‘yes’, 84% (n=21) said ‘no’.

Mums - “Did your child go to the neonatal unit?”

In total 177 mums answered this question. 14% (n=25) said ‘yes’, 86% (n=152) said ‘no’.

- 68 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 2 skipped it. 16% (n=11) of mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital stated ‘yes’, their child went to the neonatal unit, 84% (n=57) said ‘no’ their child did not go the neonatal unit.
- 28 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 21% (n=6) said ‘yes’, 79% (n=22) said ‘no’.
- 74 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 11% (n=8) said ‘yes’, 89% (n=66) said ‘no’.

Less than one quarter of birthing partners (17%, n=27) and mums (14%, n=25) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that their baby went to the

neonatal unit (21%, 13%, 16%) and (16%, 21%, 11%) respectively. Ipswich birthing partners rated a higher percentage of yes.

Birthing partners - “Did the midwife or consultant explain to you in an understandable and timely manner why your baby was being moved to the neonatal unit?”

17 birthing partners completed this question, 140 skipped it. 76% (n=13) stated ‘yes’, twelve percent (n=2) said ‘no’, twelve percent (n=2) said there wasn’t time to explain.

- 11 birthing partners who stated that their baby went to the neonatal unit at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 72% (n=8) said ‘yes’, the midwife or consultant explained to them in an understandable and timely manner, why their baby was being moved to the neonatal unit. 9% (n=1) said ‘no’, 18% (n=2) said there wasn’t time to explain.
- 6 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 83% (n=5) said ‘yes’, 17% (n=1) said ‘no’.
- There were no responses to this question from birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital.

Mums - “Did the midwife or consultant explain to you in an understandable and timely manner why your baby was being moved to the neonatal unit?”

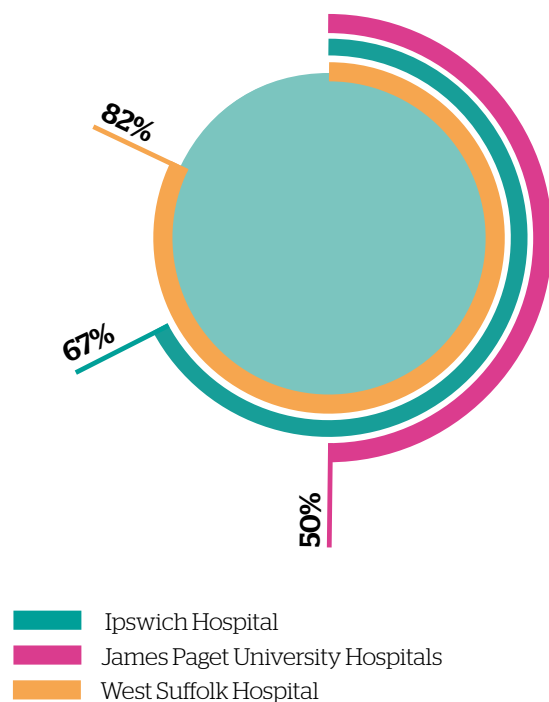
- All 11 mums who stated that their baby went to the neonatal unit at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 82% (n=9) said ‘yes’, the midwife or consultant explained to them in an understandable and timely manner, why their baby was being moved to the

neonatal unit. 0% (n=0) said 'no', 18% (n=2) said there wasn't time to explain.

- 6 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 50% (n=3) said 'yes', 33% (n=2) said 'no', 17% (n=1) said there wasn't time to explain.
- 9 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 67% (n=6) said 'yes' and 22% (n=2) said 'no', 11% (n=1) said there wasn't time to explain.

The majority of birthing partners (77%, n=13) and mums (52%, n=13) from Ipswich Hospital and James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that a health professional explained to them in an understandable and timely manner about why their baby was being moved to the neonatal unit (67%, 100%) and (63%, 17%, 68%) respectively. However, 83% (n=5) of mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital stated that they waited over 60 minutes to be updated on the health of their baby.

Mums - "Did the midwife or consultant explain to you in an understandable and timely manner why your baby was being moved?"



Birthing partners - "Once your baby was in the neonatal unit, how long did it take for a midwife or consultant to update you on the condition of your baby?"

17 birthing partners completed this question, 140 skipped it. 53% (n=9) selected '0-15 minutes', 24% (n=4) selected '15-30 minutes', 6% (n=1) selected '30-45 minutes', 18% (n=3) selected 'over 60 minutes'.

- 12 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 42% (n=5) stated '0-15 minutes', 25% (n=3) said '15-30 minutes', 8% (n=1) said '30-45 minutes', 0% (n=0) said '45-60 minutes', 25% (n=3) said 'over 60 minutes'.
- 5 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 80% (n=4) said '0-15 minutes', 20% (n=1) said '15-30 minutes'.
- There were no responses to this question from birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital.

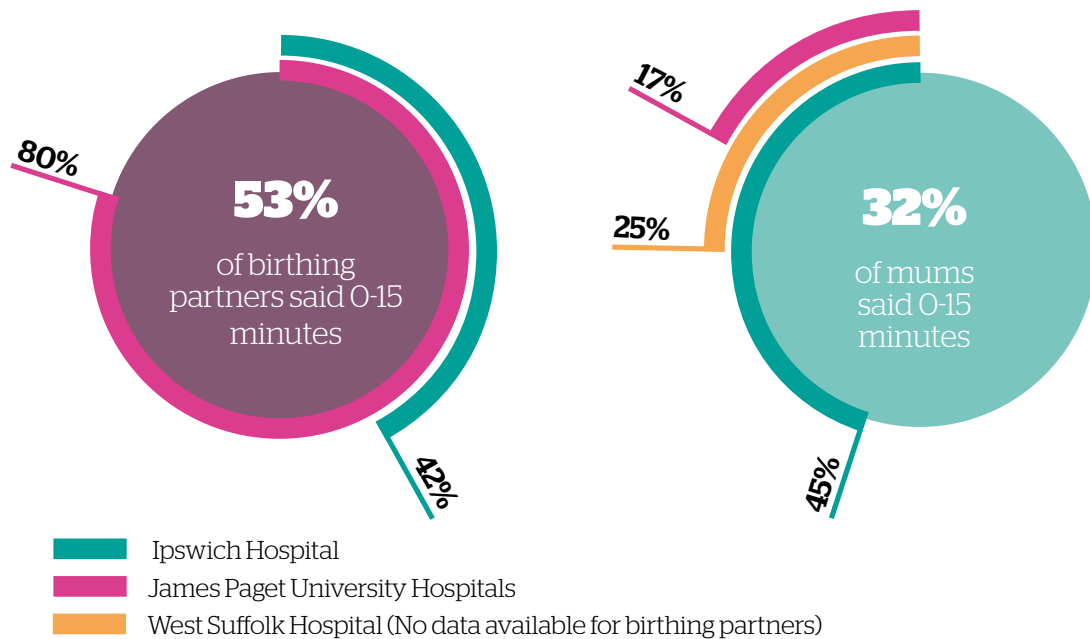
Mums - "Once your baby was in the neonatal unit, how long did it take for a midwife or consultant to update you on the condition of your baby?"

In total, 25 mums answered this question. '0-15 minutes' - 32% (n=8), '15-30 minutes' - 20% (n=5), '30-45 minutes' - 12% (n=3), '45-60 minutes' - 4% (n=1) and 'over 60 minutes' (32%, n=8)

- All 11 mums who stated that their baby went to the neonatal unit at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. '0-15 minutes' - 45% (n=5), '15-30 minutes' - 18% (n=2), '30-45 minutes' - 9% (n=1), '45-60 minutes' - 9% (n=1) and 'over 60 minutes' (18%, n=2).
- 6 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 17% (n=1) said '0-15 minutes', 83% (n=5) said 'over 60 minutes'.
- 8 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital responded to this question. 25% (n=2) said '0-15 minutes', 38% (n=3) said '15-30 minutes', 25% (n=2) said '30-45 minutes', no mums said '45-60 minutes', 13% (n=1) said 'over 60 minutes'.

The majority of birthing partners (77%, n=13) and mums (52%, n=13) from Ipswich Hospital and James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they received an update on the health of their baby within 30 minutes (67%, 100%) and (63%, 17%, 68%) respectively. 83% (n=5) of mums

Once your baby was in the neonatal unit, how long did it take for a midwife or consultant to update you on the condition of your baby?



who gave birth at James Paget Hospital stated that they waited over 60 minutes to be updated on the health of their baby.

Birthing partners - “When your baby was in the neonatal unit, did you receive regular updates on the health of your baby?”

18 birthing partners answered this question. 83% (n=15) said ‘yes, often’, 11% (n=2) said ‘yes, but would have liked more’ and 6% (n=1) said ‘no’.

- 12 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 75% (n=9) said ‘yes, often’ and 17% (n=2) said ‘yes, but would have liked more’.
- 6 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 100% (n=6) said ‘yes, often’.
- There were no responses to this question from birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital.

Mums - “When your baby was in the neonatal unit, did you receive regular updates on the health of your baby?”

In total 25 mums answered this question. 56% (n=14) said ‘yes, often’, 24% (n=6) said ‘yes, but would have liked more’ and 20% (n=5) said ‘no’.

11 mums who gave birth at Ipswich hospital answered this question. 55% (n=6) said ‘yes, often’, 18% (n=2) said ‘yes, but would have liked more’ and 27% (n=3) said ‘no’.

6 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 33% (n=2) said ‘yes, often’, 33% (n=2) said ‘yes, but would have liked more’ and 33% (n=2) of mums said ‘no’.

8 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital responded to this question. 75% (n=6) said ‘yes, often’, 25% (n=2) said ‘yes, but would have liked more’.

The majority of birthing partners (83%, n=15) and mums (56%, n=14) from Ipswich Hospital and James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they received regular updates on the health of their baby (75%, 100%) and (55%, 33%, 75%) respectively.

Birthing partners - “Overall, how would you rate the care received while your baby was in the neonatal unit?” 1 = Extremely Dissatisfied - 10 = Extremely Satisfied.

18 birthing partners completed this question. The average rating of care was 9.22 (1.13), ranging from 6 (n=1) to 10 (n=10).

- 12 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question. The average rating of care was 8.92 (1.26), ranging from 6 (8%, n=1) to 10 (42%, n=5).
- 6 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital completed this question. The average rating of care was 9.83 (0.37), ranging from 9 (17%, n=1) to 10 (83%, n=10).
- There were no responses to this question from birthing partners who were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital.

Mums - “Overall, how would you rate the care received while your baby was in the neonatal unit?”

Overall 25 mums responded to this question. The average rating of care in the neonatal unit from mums was 6.96 (3.32), ranging from 1 (12%, n=3) to 10 (36%, n=9).

- All 11 mums who stated that their baby went to the neonatal unit at Ipswich Hospital answered this question, 59 skipped it. The average rating of care was 7.82 (2.48) ranging from 3 (10%, n=1) to 10 (36%, n=4).
- 6 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care was 4.50 (2.63), ranging from 1 (17%, n=1) to 9 (17%, n=1).
- 8 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care was 7.63 (3.84), the minimum rating was 1 (25%, n=2) to 10 (63%, n=5).

The average rating of care received in the neonatal unit from birthing partners was 9.22 (1.13) and mums 6.96 (3.32) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that they were 8.92 (1.26) and 9.83 (0.37) and 7.82 (2.48), 4.5 (2.63) and 7.63 (3.84) respectively. Birthing partners in total rated care received while their baby was in the neonatal unit, at a higher standard than mums did. Birthing partners from Ipswich Hospital rated the level of care (8.92) lower than the level of care (9.83) by birthing partners from

James Paget Hospital. Birthing partners from James Paget hospital reported less variance in the rating of care, however it should be noted that the sample size was the smallest therefore results are not representative.

Mums (n=6) rated care on the neonatal unit at James Paget Hospital at 4.50 (2.63). However, this finding should be interpreted with caution considering that the sample size was only 6 mums.



Fathers need to be made to feel more important and welcome, especially at the hospital soon after labour - Birthing Partner (Ipswich Hospital)



Overall, how would you rate the care received while your baby was in the neonatal unit?"
1 = Extremely Dissatisfied - 10 = Extremely Satisfied.





Section 5

Care at home

Birthing Partners “Were you given enough information about any emotional changes that your partner might experience after the birth?”

151 birthing partners completed this question. 52% (n=79) of respondents said ‘yes’, 48% (n=72) said ‘no’, they were not given enough information about any emotional changes that their partner might experience after the birth.

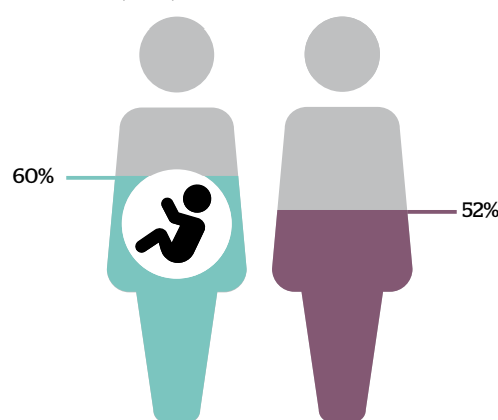
- 75 birthing partners who stated that they had been at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 47% (n=35) said ‘yes’, 53% (n=40) said ‘no’, they were not given enough information about any emotional changes that their partner might experience after the birth.
- 49 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 65% (n=32) said ‘yes’, 35% (n=17) said ‘no’, they were not given enough information about any emotional changes that their partner might experience after the birth.
- 24 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 50% (n=12) said ‘yes’, 50% (n=12) said ‘no’, they were not given enough information about any emotional changes that their partner might experience after the birth.

Mums - “Were you given enough information about any emotional changes that your partner might experience after the birth?”

In total 172 mums answered this question, 16 skipped it. 60% (n=98) said ‘yes’, 43% (n=74) said ‘no’.

- 65 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 5 skipped it. 51% (n=33) said ‘yes’ they were given enough information about any emotional changes that their partner might experience after the birth, 49% (n=32) said ‘no’, they were not given enough information about any emotional changes that their partner might experience after the birth.
- 28 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 54% (n=15) said ‘yes’, 46% (n=13) said ‘no’.
- 72 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 63% (n=45) said ‘yes’, 37% (n=27) said ‘no’.

The majority of birthing partners (52%, n=79) and mums (60%, n=98) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given enough information about any emotional changes that your partner might experience after the birth (47%, 65%, 50%) and (51%, 54%, 63%) respectively. However, nearly half of birthing partners overall (48%, n=72) and nearly half of all mums (43% (n=74) stated that they didn’t receive enough information. A slightly higher percentage of birthing partners stated that they were not given enough information about any emotional changes that their partner might experience. Birthing partners at Ipswich Hospital had the highest percentage of respondents who stated that they were not given enough information (53%).



Birthing partners - “Were you given enough information about your own emotional needs after the birth? For example, postnatal depression among partners/fathers”

153 birthing partners completed this question. 31% (n=47) said ‘yes’, 69% (n=106) said ‘no’.

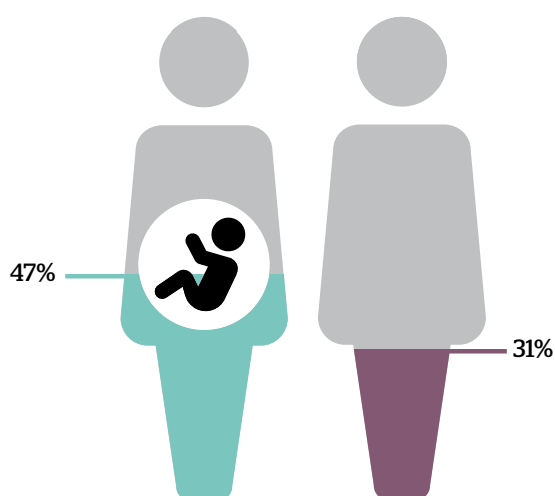
- 75 birthing partners present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. 32% (n=24) said ‘yes’, often, 68% (n=51) said ‘no’ they were not given enough information about their own emotional needs after the birth e.g. postnatal depression amongst partners/fathers.
- 51 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 35% (n=18) said ‘yes’, 65% (n=33) said ‘no’.
- 24 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 21% (n=5) said ‘yes’, 80% (n=19) said ‘no’.

Mums - “Were you given enough information about your own emotional needs after the birth? For example, postnatal depression”

In total 170 mums answered this question. 47% (n=80) said ‘yes’, 53% (n=90) said ‘no’.

- 64 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 6 skipped it. 36% (n=23) said ‘yes’ they were given enough information about their own emotional needs after the birth such as postnatal depression, 64% (n=41) said ‘no’ they were not given enough information about their own emotional needs after the birth such as postnatal depression.
- 28 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 68% (n=19) said ‘yes’, 32% (n=9) said ‘no’.
- 71 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 48% (n=34) said ‘yes’, 52% (n=37) said ‘no’.

One third of birthing partners (31%, n=47) and nearly one half of mums (47%, n=80) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given information about their own emotional needs after the birth (32%, 35%, 21%) and (47%, 36%, 48%) respectively. At least 2/3’s of birthing partners from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital (68%, 65, 80% respectively) stated that they did not get enough information about their own emotional needs after the birth. A slightly higher percentage of birthing partners stated that they were not given enough information about their own emotional needs after the birth.



Birthing partners - “Were you given advice on what to expect in the first few weeks after the birth, including parental advice and contact information if you had any concerns?”

150 birthing partners completed this question. 62% (n=93) said ‘yes’, 38% (n=57) said ‘no’.

- 73 birthing partners at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 5 skipped it. 64% (n=47) said ‘yes’ advice on what to expect in the first few weeks after the birth, including parental advice and contact information if they had any concerns, 36% (n=26) said ‘no’. they were not given enough advice on what to expect in the first few weeks after the birth.
- 51 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 63% (n=32) said ‘yes’, 37% (n=19) said ‘no’.
- 23 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 57% (n=13) said ‘yes’, 43% (n=10) said ‘no’.

Mums - “Were you given advice on what to expect in the first few weeks after the birth, including parental advice and contact information if you had any concerns?”

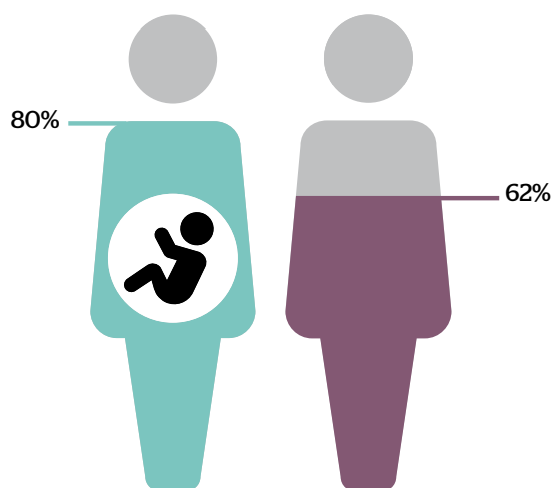
171 mums answered this question 80% (n=137) said ‘yes’, 20% (n=34) said ‘no’.

- 64 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 6 skipped it. 77% (n=49) said ‘yes’ they were given advice on what to expect in the first few weeks after the birth, including parental advice and contact information if they had any concerns, 23% (n=15) said ‘no’, they were not.
- 28 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 75% (n=21) said ‘yes’, 25% (n=7) said ‘no’.
- 72 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 88% (n=63) said ‘yes’, 12% (n=9) said ‘no’.

The majority of birthing partners (62%, n=93) and mums (80%, n=137) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given advice on what to expect in the first few weeks after the birth (64%, 63%, 57%) and (77%, 75%, 88%) respectively.

At least 1/3 of birthing partners from Ipswich

Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital (36%, 37%, 43% respectively) stated that they had not received advice about the first 6 weeks after birth. A higher percentage of birthing partners stated that they were not given enough advice on what to expect in the first few weeks after the birth.



Birthing partners - “In the six weeks after the birth of your baby did you receive help and advice from health professionals about your baby’s health and progress?”

142 birthing partners completed this question. 92% (n=131) said ‘yes’, 8% (n=11) said ‘no’.

- 72 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 6 skipped it. 92% (n=66) said ‘yes’ advice on what to expect in the first few weeks after the birth, including parental advice and contact information if they had any concerns, 8% (n=6) said ‘no’, they did not receive help and advice from health professionals about their baby’s health and progress.
- 45 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 93% (n=42) said ‘yes’, 7% (n=3) said ‘no’.
- 23 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 91% (n=21) said ‘yes’, 9% (n=2) said ‘no’.

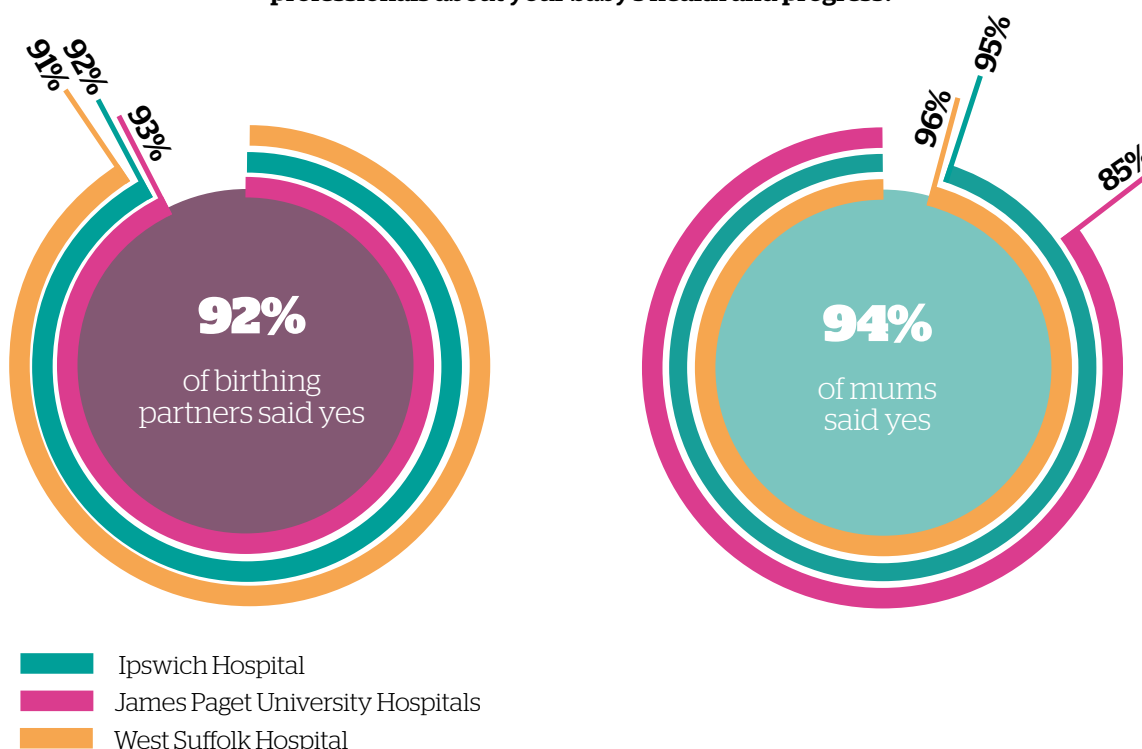
Mums - “In the six weeks after the birth of your baby did you receive help and advice from health professionals about your baby’s health and progress?”

Overall 166 mums answered this question. 94% (n=156) said ‘yes’, 6% (n=10) said ‘no’.

- 63 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 7 skipped it. 95% (n=60) said ‘yes’ they received help and advice from health professionals about their baby’s health and progress in the six weeks after their birth. 5% (n=3) said ‘no’, they did not receive help and advice from health professionals about their baby’s health and progress.
- 26 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. 85% (n=22) said ‘yes’, 15% (n=4) said ‘no’.
- 70 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. 96% (n=67) said ‘yes’, 4% (n=3) said ‘no’.

The majority of birthing partners (92%, n=131) and mums (94% n=156) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given help and advice about their baby in the six weeks after their birth (92%, 93%, 91%) and (95%, 85%, 96%) respectively. A higher percentage of birthing partners stated they did not receive help and advice from health professionals about their baby’s health and progress. This difference was/ was not found to be significant.

In the six weeks after the birth of your baby did you receive help and advice from health professionals about your baby's health and progress?



Birthing partners - “Overall, how would you rate the care received once you returned home? Please remember that this relates to your personal care”

142 birthing partners completed this question. The average rating was 7.39 (2.20), ranging from 1 (<1, n=1) to 10 (22%, n=31).

- 71 birthing partners who were present at a birth at Ipswich Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care at home was 7.48 (2.17), ranging from 2 (3%, n=2) to 10 (25%, n = 18).
- 45 birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care was 7.29 (2.20), ranging from 1 (2%, n=1) to 10 (16%, n=7).
- 23 birthing partners who stated that they were present at a birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care is 7.52 (2.24) ranging from 2 (4%, n=1) to 10 (27%, n=6).

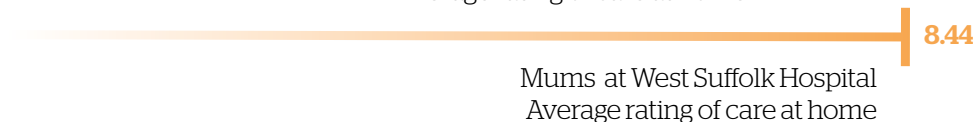
Mums - “Overall, how would you rate the care received once you returned home? Please remember that this relates to your personal care”

Overall 166 mums answered this question and 22 skipped it. The average rating of care was 7.84 (2.06) ranging from 1-10.

- 62 mums who gave birth at Ipswich Hospital completed this question, 8 skipped it. The average rating of care was 7.35 (1.95)
- 26 mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care was 7.35 (2.56), ranging from 1(4%, n=1) to 10 (27%, n=7)s
- 71 mums who gave birth at West Suffolk Hospital answered this question. The average rating of care was 8.44 (1.80), ranging from 1 (1%, n=1) to 10 (39%, n=28).

Rating of care received once returned home ranged from 7.29 (James Paget Hospital) to 7.52 (West Suffolk Hospital). The lowest rating of care received at home was 1 (James Paget Hospital). Positively roughly a quarter of birthing partners from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital rated the care received at home as a 10 (25%, 16%, 27%, respectively).

Overall, how would you rate the care received once you returned home?
Please remember that this relates to your personal care





Had a lot of trouble getting in touch with my own midwife. When I left messages it took days to get a response. This happened on more than one occasion. - Birthing Partner (Ipswich Hospital)



Telephone Interviews

Due to resources the Research Team could not contact all respondents who provided their contact details.

Respondents were invited to attend a follow-up interview via a process of random selection. Unfortunately, only three birthing partners from Ipswich Hospital, two birthing partners from West Suffolk Hospital and none from James Paget Hospital responded to our invitation and took part in an interview.

A member of the Research Team at Healthwatch Suffolk talked to three birthing partners who had been present at births at Ipswich Hospital.

One respondent stated that they would have liked more information about breastfeeding. Two respondents stated that they would have liked more support and information whilst they were at home after the birth. All three respondents stated that they would have liked more information about their own emotional health after the birth of their child. Only one respondent stated that they were given the chance to meet other prospective fathers, through antenatal classes run by Ipswich Hospital.

All three respondents stated that they felt they would have benefited from receiving written information during their partner's antenatal appointments about emotional changes after the birth of their baby.

The researcher also spoke to two birthing partners who were present at births at West Suffolk Hospital.

Both birthing partners commented that the antenatal class was aimed more towards mums and that they would have benefited from more information about how to support mum during the labour. One respondent commented that they would have liked to have been able to stay overnight with their partner and baby. Both respondents stated that they were satisfied with their overall experience of the maternity pathway at West Suffolk Hospital.

A close-up photograph of two women smiling and holding a baby. The woman on the left is older, with short brown hair, wearing a dark jacket over a pink shirt. The woman on the right is younger, with long dark curly hair, wearing a denim jacket over a teal shirt. They are both looking down at a baby who is wearing a white knit hat and a white sweater. The baby is being held in the woman's arms. The background is a bright, out-of-focus outdoor setting, possibly a beach or a field, with a blue sky and water visible. The text "Your spotlight on local services" is overlaid on the image in a pink and blue font.

**Your spotlight
on local services**



Your spotlight
on local services

CONCLUSIONS

and recommendations...

Overall, the average rating of care from all hospitals received during pregnancy from birthing partners was (8.13 (1.70) and from mums (8.35, 1.87). Birthing partners and mums from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital scored the following ratings of care (8.13(1.70), 8.11(1.71), 8.23(1.55) and (8.28 (1.72), 7.66(2.32), 8.70(1.67)) respectively. James Paget Hospital was rated lowest by mums and birthing partners in comparison to West Suffolk Hospital and Ipswich Hospital, however this may be due to smaller sample size of respondents from James Paget Hospital, therefore it must be interpreted with caution.

It is reassuring to read that an overwhelmingly high proportion of birthing partners (92%, n=131) and mums (94% n=156) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that they were given help and advice about their baby in the six weeks after their birth (92%, 93%, 91%) and (95%, 85%, 96%) respectively. A higher percentage of birthing partners stated they did not receive help and advice from health professionals about their baby's health and progress.

Recommendation 1. Antenatal appointments: More patient involvement with birth plan development

Based on the findings in this report Healthwatch Suffolk highlights a potential need for all three hospitals to review the structure of antenatal appointments. Findings from this report suggest that pregnant women and birthing partners would value more opportunities for discussions about the development of a birth plan and more opportunities for pregnant women and birthing partners to ask questions about the pregnancy and birth of their baby.

During antenatal appointments community midwives should be informing each patient that they do have a choice about where they could give birth. The midwife should provide information about the benefit and potential risk of each option to enable their patient to make an informed choice about where to give birth to

their baby. More specifically, Healthwatch Suffolk highlights the need for midwives at Ipswich Hospital to ensure that every pregnant woman and their chosen birthing partner feels involved in the process of preparing a birth plan.

Overall the majority of birthing partners (70%, n=113) and mums (75%, n=133) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that they got enough information from a midwife or doctor to help them to decide where to have their baby (65%, 75%, 70%) and (68%, 57%, 85%) respectively. However, between 25%-35% of birthing partners and 15%-43% of mums felt that they did not get enough information. Additionally, although the majority of birthing partners (84%, n=134) and mums (81%, n=148) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that they felt involved in the maternity process (81%, 85%, 89%) and (74%, 67%, 92%) respectively up to 19% of birthing partners and 33% of mums did not feel involved.

Further evidence for the need to review the patient's involvement in their birth plan was provided by the finding that between 35% of birthing partners and 29% of mums were not encouraged by their midwife to make a birth plan.

Unfortunately, the majority of respondents did not provide contact details therefore the Research Team were unable to explore the perceived reasons for the lack of encouragement to make a birth plan. Those who did share contact details did not follow up the invitation to take part in an interview. All midwives should openly discuss the pregnant women's options for where to give birth. Indeed, the pregnant woman and their birthing partner should both be involved in the development of the birth plan.

Recommendation 2. Antenatal appointments: Effective communication and methods of contact between patient, partner and midwife

Given the importance of birthing partner/father involvement during the birth it is vital that

pregnant women and birthing partners are given adequate time during antenatal appointments and effective methods outside antenatal appointments to ask questions about the impending birth of their baby.

In addition to issues around lack of provision of contact details, some mums and birthing partners stated that they were not given the help that they needed when they did contact a midwife and stated that they did not get a response from a midwife as soon as they needed it. Considering some respondents stated that they attempted to contact midwives with concerns about the health of their baby, it is worrying that such a high number of respondents stated that they did not feel that they received help from a midwife in a timely manner.

Due to potential health implications that delayed midwife response can cause, Healthwatch Suffolk recommends that the method of communication used between patient, partner and midwives may require clarification. For example, it may be of benefit to future patients for the midwife to explain how to get in contact with the appropriate teams in certain circumstances and what steps to take should they struggle to get a response.

Midwives should clarify the expected response time for contacting midwives during pregnancy so that patients and partners are clear of the alternatives to contact. If midwives already do this for every patient the findings may highlight the need for these messages to be tailored so that each patient understands the information that they are being given.

Recommendation 3: Appropriate use of language during midwife patient and partner interactions

Overall the majority of birthing partners (81%, n=125) and mums (87%, n=146) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that they were spoken to in a way that they could understand (80%, 83%, 78%) and (75%, 83%, 94%) respectively. However, between 22% of birthing partners and 25% of mums said that they weren't.

Efforts should be made to ensure that verbal communication between health professionals (midwives and consultants) and patients is patient-friendly and the health professional should ask every patient to confirm that they have understood what they have said.

Recommendation 4: Consistent high level of care provision between patient, birthing partner and midwife

Overall the majority of birthing partners (88%, n=140) and mums (82%, n=148) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that they were treated with kindness and understanding (87%, 89%, 93%) and (86%, 76%, 81%) respectively. However, up to 13% of birthing partners and 24% of mums said that they were not always treated with kindness and respect.

This finding raises the question of what factors caused the inconsistencies in experience captured by the 'yes, but not always'. It is a possibility that this response may have been explained by staff change over or a change in the message that was being delivered/situation that the message was being communicated in.

The majority of birthing partners (97%, n=152) and mums 91% (n=160) overall said 'yes' they were treated with dignity and respect during the birth. Specifically, the majority of birthing partners and mums at Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital said 'yes' to this question too; (96%, 96%, 100%) and (93%, 90%, 89%) respectively. 3% of birthing partners and 9% of mums said that they were not always treated with dignity and respect.

Although these percentages are considered to be of statistically low value, it is important to remember that each statistic represents an individual and an individual's negative experience of birth can have long-lasting profound effects on the mother, baby and partner.

Healthwatch Suffolk recommends that midwives at Ipswich Hospital, West Suffolk Hospital and James Paget Hospital continue to treat all patients with kindness and understanding at all times during the maternity pathway, with an additional awareness on delivering the same level of kindness and understanding when interacting with birthing partners.

Recommendation 5: Appropriate and adequate provision of information

Just over half of all birthing partners (56%, n=85) and mums (53%, n=93) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that they were given enough information about the sorts of emergency back-up that would be

available (62%, 45%, 69%) and (48%, 31%, 64%) respectively. However, more than half of birthing partners who were present at a birth at James Paget Hospital (56%, n=38) and over 2/3 of mums (69%, n=20) who gave birth at James Paget Hospital stated that they were not given enough information.

Overall the majority of birthing partners (80%, n=127) and mums (76%, n=137) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that they were given enough information about different kinds of pain control that they or their partner could have during labour (73%, 91%, 78%) and (68%, 72%, 84%) respectively.

It is a surprise that almost a third of mums and birthing partners were not given information about the different kinds of pain control options were available to them.

Overall the majority of birthing partners (63%, n=99) and mums (71%, n=128) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that their midwife referred them on to parent craft classes (65%, 56%, 81%) and (74%, 38%, 85%) respectively. James Paget Hospital had a higher proportion of birthing partners (44%, n=24) and mums (62%, n=18) who stated that they were not referred for antenatal classes.

Some respondents were not first time parents and a number of respondents stated that they chose not to go to antenatal classes because they had already been when they were pregnant with their first child. It is assumed that this may have affected the number of respondents who were offered antenatal classes by the midwife, but the exact reasons for the entire sample that stated 'no' is unknown.

There should be a fine balance between midwives providing enough information and allowing enough time for prospective mums and partners to be able to ask questions during antenatal appointments.

Recommendation 6: Antenatal classes; Appropriateness of content

The majority of birthing partners (70%, n=88) and mums (61%, n=83) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that the antenatal classes equipped them with techniques for labour (63%, 78%, 78%) and (54%,

57%, 74%) respectively. However, 37% (n=22) of birthing partners and 47% (n=26) of mums from Ipswich Hospital and 43% of mums from James Paget stated that antenatal classes didn't prepare them with techniques for labour.

Further exploration is needed to identify which topics patients would like to be included within the antenatal class structure and content. Given that most patients are only provided with one free session of antenatal classes it is an important opportunity to answer questions and provide relevant information about the birth of their baby, particularly for birthing partners who may not be present at every routine antenatal appointment during the pregnancy. It has been repeatedly found that even where fathers were minimally prepared for the birth of their baby, fathers and mums show high levels of satisfaction with their experience (Chan & Paterson-Brown, 2002).

As a result, antenatal classes run by the hospital should reflect the needs of the patients and partners attending. Importantly, antenatal classes should include education and support about breastfeeding tailored for expectant fathers/parents as tailored education has been shown to improve breastfeeding rates (Maycock et al, 2013).

Recommendation 7: Social interaction for birthing partners/new parents

The majority of birthing partners (66%, n=87) and mums (70%, n=108) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they had an opportunity to meet other pregnant women and other father's/birthing partners (69%, 64%, 67%) and (68%, 58%, 81%) respectively. At least 1/3 of birthing partners (31%, 37%, 33%) and mums (32%, 42%, 19%) respectively said no, they didn't have the opportunity to meet other mums or father's/birthing partners.

Adequate social support is an important factor for maintaining good psychological health after the birth of a baby therefore Healthwatch Suffolk would encourage Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital to scope the development of a social club or an interactive platform, where expectant fathers/parents can network and connect.

Recommendation 8: Overnight stays; More flexibility and clarity needed

Responses to this survey provide substantial

evidence for the need for more flexibility regarding overnight stays at hospital for birthing partners. The majority of birthing partners (54%, n=77) and mums 51% (n=82) said that they or their partner were not able to stay overnight with mum and baby in the hospital. Specifically, the majority of birthing partners and mums at Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital said 'yes' to this question too; (44%, 63%, 70%) and (52%, 59% 48%) respectively.

A study in 2012 found that allowing a partner to stay overnight had the potential to reduce the workload of midwives, as the father helped his partner with the baby care (RCOM, 2012). It is also stated within the literature this flexibility around birthing partners staying overnight would encourage and allow new fathers/parents to bond with their infant and to be a "visible parent" (RCOM, 2012).

A scheme called 'Partners Staying Overnight' was introduced at The Royal United Hospital in Bath, which provides a very good example of how a maternity unit can involve fathers and birthing partners in the period just after the birth of their baby. The published paper states that initially there were valid concerns from staff, such as that having the fathers and birthing partners on the ward for 12 hours a day might put additional stress on maternity ward staff. However, it was found that having fathers/birthing partners around eased the workload on midwives because mums had their partners to help them (RCOM, 2012).

Considering the evidence from the literature and the high percentage of mums and birthing partners who felt they were not given the option to stay overnight at the hospitals, Healthwatch Suffolk highlights the following need:- Heads of maternity wards at James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital and the relevant authoritative figures at the hospital are advised to introduce more flexibility around overnight stays for birthing partners, once a new mum has just given birth.

Since the data was collected and before this report was published Ipswich Hospital recognised the need for flexibility around overnight stays for birthing partners, and introduced a new policy that allowed birthing partners to stay on a reclining chair overnight.

Responses to this survey suggest flexibility is required when mums give birth during the night, or outside of visiting hours. An extension of this policy may also be beneficial for mums

and birthing partners who are being induced in the early hours of the evening, which may prevent their partner from being made to leave and potentially missing the birth of their baby, or being unable to provide valuable support to their partner during the lead up to and during the actual birth.

Recommendation 9: Neonatal unit; Review of process followed to update parents on the health of their baby

Overall the respondents painted a positive picture of using the neonatal unit at Ipswich Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital.

Less than one quarter of birthing partners (17%, n=27) and mums (14%, n=25) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that their baby went to the neonatal unit (21%, 13%, 16%) and (16%, 21%, 11%) respectively.

The majority of birthing partners (77%, n=13) and mums (52%, n=13) from Ipswich Hospital and James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that a health professional explained to them in an understandable and timely manner about why their baby was being moved to the neonatal unit (67%, 100%) and (63%, 17%, 68%) respectively. However, 83% (n=5) of mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital stated that they waited over 60 minutes to be updated on the health of their baby.

In regards to the length of time that mums and birthing partners had to wait for an update on the health of their baby in the neonatal unit, the majority of respondents stated that they did not have to wait longer than 15 minutes. The majority of birthing partners (77%, n=13) and mums (52%, n=13) from Ipswich Hospital and James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that a health professional explained to them in an understandable and timely manner about why their baby was being moved to the neonatal unit (67%, 100%) and (63%, 17%, 68%) respectively. However, 83% (n=5) of mums who gave birth at James Paget Hospital stated that they waited over 60 minutes to be updated on the health of their baby.

The majority of birthing partners (83%, n=15) and mums (56%, n=14) from Ipswich Hospital and James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they received regular updates on the health of their baby (75%, 100%) and (55%, 33%, 75%) respectively.

However, some birthing partners and mums did not receive regular updates on the health of their baby when their baby was in the neonatal unit. Despite this being a very low number, the psychological impact of not receiving updates on your baby's health in the neonatal unit for a new parent following a potentially traumatic birth must not be underestimated.

In light of these findings Healthwatch Suffolk recommends that Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital review the process of informing new mums and birthing partners about the health status of their baby whilst they are on the neonatal unit. Some respondents stated that they had to approach a member of staff and proactively asked for health status of their baby. All respondents stated the midwife told them that their baby was well. New parents who have just been through the birth of their baby and who are dealing with worry of the removal of their baby into the neonatal unit may not be in a physically or psychologically fit state to 'chase' updates about their baby. Healthwatch Suffolk would encourage staff at the hospitals Hospital to endeavour to inform parents of the status of their baby as soon as possible and as often as possible. This is likely to positively impact the whole birth experience and the recovery period for both parents through reduced anxiety levels.

Recommendation 10: Information about potential emotional changes post birth

The responses paint a clear picture about the need for more information about potential emotional changes in both new mums and birthing partner, post birth. The majority of birthing partners (52%, n=79) and mums (60%, n=98) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given enough information about any emotional changes that their partner might experience after the birth (47%, 65%, 50%) and (51%, 54%, 63%) respectively. However, nearly half of birthing partners overall (48%, n=72) and nearly half of all mums (43% (n=74) stated that they didn't receive enough information. A slightly higher percentage of birthing partners stated that they were not given enough information about any emotional changes that their partner might experience. Birthing partners at Ipswich Hospital had the highest percentage of respondents who stated that they were not given enough information (53%).

One third of birthing partners (31%, n=47) and nearly one half of mums (47%, n=80) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and Ipswich Hospital stated that they were given information about their own emotional needs after the birth (32%, 35%, 21%) and (47%, 36%, 48%) respectively. At least 2/3's of birthing partners from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital (68%, 65, 80% respectively) stated that they did not get enough information about their own emotional needs after the birth. A slightly higher percentage of birthing partners stated that they were not given enough information about their own emotional needs after the birth. National guidance published by the Royal College of Midwives (2012) highlights the importance of raising awareness of, and being alert to, the risks that are recognised to pre-dispose fathers to postnatal depression and post-traumatic stress. Guidance suggests that there is a national need to develop clear postnatal referral pathways for both parents if post-traumatic stress or postnatal depression is suspected or identified (RCOM, 2012).

Additionally, there may be a need to provide more information about potential expected emotional changes, particularly in the first few weeks after the birth of the baby. The majority of birthing partners (62%, n=93) and mums (80%, n=137) from Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital stated that they were given advice on what to expect in the first few weeks after the birth (64%, 63%, 57%) and (77%, 75%, 88%) respectively. Healthwatch Suffolk recommends that Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital scopes the feasibility of providing new parent(s) with an information booklet, with information about potential emotional changes in themselves and their partner. This should be re-touched upon after the birth with a follow-up once baby, mum and partner are back home.

Conclusion

This piece of work listened to mums and birthing partners who had used the maternity pathway at three hospitals in Suffolk; Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital. Healthwatch Suffolk and the local hospitals have acknowledged the importance of engaging with and listening to birthing partners, as they are often a voice that is seldom heard. The evidence suggests that expectant fathers and birthing partners can be influential advocates

for breastfeeding, by playing a critical role in encouraging a mother to breastfeed the newborn infant (Wolfberg et al. 2004). Considering the health benefits that breastfeeding provides for both baby and mum, it is vital that fathers and birthing partners are supported and involved throughout the maternity process; Particularly due to the fact that breast fed babies are less likely to develop obesity later in their lives vs. babies who have been formula fed (Armstrong et al, 2002). Expectant fathers and birthing partners need to be included in all aspects of maternity care and be offered opportunities to discuss their feelings and any fears they may have (RCOM, 2012).

Healthwatch Suffolk highlights some relevant evidence from the literature in light of taking recommendations forward with the local hospitals in Suffolk, with the aim of improving birthing partners' experiences of using the maternity pathway. "Maternity services should want to take every opportunity to provide relevant up-to-date information, guidance and support to enable fathers to be actively involved in the maternity care of their partner and infant.

This will promote a positive pregnancy, birth and parenting experience for both the mother and father (RCOM, 2012)." It is known that when maternity professionals make fathers/partners feel welcome and involved during the pregnancy birth and after the birth, there are family wide benefits for mum, partner and baby (RCOM, 2012).

In conclusion Healthwatch Suffolk would like to recognise the overwhelmingly positive experience stated by respondents. Provision of care and treatment at all stages on the maternity pathway was rated positively and the majority of respondents stated high levels of satisfaction with their experiences at Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital.

Healthwatch Suffolk acknowledges the complex nature of providing a health and social care service to a vast number of patients. We acknowledge the important work and the level of care that all hospital maternity ward staff provide on a regular basis. However, at times the variety of experience of giving birth and being at a birth at the hospitals in Suffolk does highlight some areas where improvements have the potential to greatly improve patient experience.

Healthwatch Suffolk looks forward to working with Ipswich Hospital, James Paget Hospital and West Suffolk Hospital in the future to take these recommendations forward.



Antenatal classes - not enough and too much in one day. Better education on care of baby and what to expect after birth. - Birthing Partner (James Paget Hospital)



A photograph of a diverse couple smiling and holding a baby together. The person on the left has short, styled brown hair and is wearing a grey blazer over a white shirt. The person on the right has long blonde hair and is wearing a blue top. They are both smiling warmly at each other and the baby. The baby is wearing a blue denim shirt and white socks. The background is a plain wall with some abstract art.

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If you require this report in an alternative format please contact us at the address above.

This report is publicly available on our website and has been distributed to the Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust for its response to the recommendations as well as other key health bodies and regulators.

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