



## **Spotlight Series**

Maternity Services in Medway



## **Spotlight Series**

### **Feedback we have heard about Maternity services in Medway**

**In May 2019, we proactively sought feedback from women who are currently using maternity services at Medway Maritime Hospital.**

**We spoke to 38 people in the antenatal unit about their experience.**

**Everything we heard is detailed in this report.**



# Executive Summary

## Our Aim: We wanted to do two things:

- We wanted to hear directly from women who are expecting a baby and currently using Medway's maternity services.
- We wanted to hear about their experience so far and explore what could be improved.



## What did people tell us?

**We heard lots of positive stories. We asked people what was important to them about the service. They said:**

- Being able to book appointments easily.
- Flexibility with appointment times to enable the Dads to join too.
- My partner needs to feel involved.
- Point of contact in case people have concerns and can't reach their community midwife.
- Good, clear communication between staff and patients so that everyone knows what is happening.

## **Waiting times**

“Last time I visited, I had to wait 2 hours which felt like forever, but the staff did keep me in the loop.”

“The only thing about the Unit is the waiting time, if there is a long wait they do let you know.”

“The long waiting times means that parking can be really expensive. Last appointment cost £8 last time.”

## **People shared some individual experiences around appointments**

“This is my first appointment with the consultant. I am 34 weeks pregnant and I am high risk due to my medication. I hoped I would have seen the consultant before now. If further tests are needed it's probably too late now.”

“I didn't receive an appointment letter, so I rang to check. Lucky, I did as my appointment was the next day.”

“My 20 week scan was delayed by 3 weeks, I was told there just weren't enough appointments for the amount of patients. This was really disappointing as we wanted to know the sex of our baby.”

“When I went into the scan there were two technicians who clearly did not get on. I had to have an internal and external scan which felt awful and rushed. I paid to go private for my next scan. I am hoping for a more positive experience this time.”



## **The majority of people we spoke to shared positive stories including;**

**12 people said they found the staff to be kind and friendly**

**12 people said their partners felt involved with the staff talking to both of them during appointments**

**10 people said they feel informed and when there are delay's they are kept in the loop**



## **People had some great ideas to improve patient experience within the unit**

**“When staff call patients for their appointment they only call your first name. There could be three Sarah’s waiting here today.” It would be good if staff called your first and surname.**

**“It would be good to have a note on the appointment letter saying there might be a wait so clients know.”**

**“It would be great if instead of three appointments, you could have one which covers everything including the blood tests and scans.”**



## **Some of the positive comments shared by people**

**“I felt informed about what is happening, whether it is a blood test or a scan.”**

**“I have had lots of complications, but I have felt well looked after and couldn't fault the staff.”**

**“The staff are very friendly. Like an old Auntie, you feel like you are being cared for.”**

**“The Antenatal Unit is great; my partner feels involved and the staff are kind and friendly.”**

**“So far it's been a great experience.”**

**“My first scan was a long wait but each scan since has only been 10-15 minutes wait.”**

**“My partner feels involved when he comes to the appointments with me.”**

**“The staff were really good when there was a scary situation, they made me feel at ease and looked after.”**

**“I was offered six different dates and times for my appointment. It's been great patient choice.”**



## How did we go about it?

**We visited the antenatal clinic at Medway Maritime Hospital on two dates in May. We spoke directly to 38 members of the public about their experience.**

- Being able to book appointments easily.
- Flexibility with appointment times to enable the Dads to join too.
- My partner needs to feel involved.
- Point of contact in case people have concerns and can't reach their community midwife.
- Good, clear communication between staff and patients so that everyone knows what is happening.



## What next?

- **We have shared our findings with the Medway Maritime Antenatal Unit**
- **We have offered a follow up discussion to hear their view on how to move forward with the issues raised by patients visiting the unit**



# Healthwatch Medway

**Healthwatch Medway is the independent voice for local people in Medway.**

We gather and represent people's views about any health and social care service in Medway.

Our role is to understand what matters most to people and to use that information to influence providers and commissioners to change the way services are designed and developed.

Our **FREE** Information and Signposting service can help you navigate Medway's complicated health and social care system to ensure you can find and access the services that are available for you. Call us on 0800 136 656 or email [enquiries@healthwatchmedway.com](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchmedway.com)



## **By Telephone:**

Healthwatch Medway

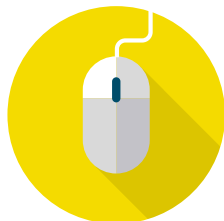
**Freephone 0800 136 656**

between the hours of 10:00 - 16:00  
Monday to Friday



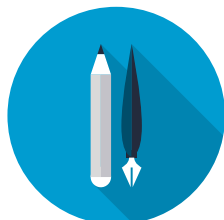
## **By Email:**

[enquiries@healthwatchmedway.com](mailto:enquiries@healthwatchmedway.com)



## **Online:**

[www.healthwatchmedway.com](http://www.healthwatchmedway.com)

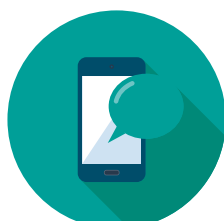


**By Post:** Write to us or fill in and send a Your Comment Counts form. **Freepost RTLG-UBZB-JUZA 5A New Road Avenue, Chatham, ME4 6BB**



## **Face to Face:**

Call **0800 136 656** to arrange a visit



## **By Text:** Text us on **07525 861 639**.

By texting 'NEED BSL', Healthwatch's British Sign Language interpreter will make contact and arrange a time to meet face to face.