



Spotlight Series

Maternity Services in Medway



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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.



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. 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.

What did people tell us?

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.”

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 comments

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 delays they are kept in the loop



Some of the positive stories shared by people

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

"So far it's been a great experience."

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

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

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

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

"My partner feels involved when he comes to the appointments with me."

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

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



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.”



What next?

- **We have shared our findings with the Medway Maritime Antenatal Unit**



Healthwatch Medway

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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



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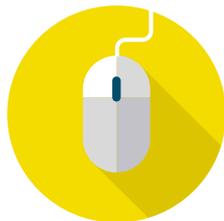
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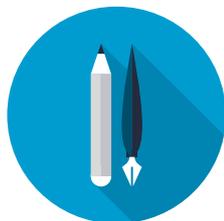
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