

CQC's response to the 2015 survey of women's experiences of maternity care

January 2016

Contents

| | |
|--|----|
| Summary..... | 3 |
| Interpreting the results | 4 |
| Key findings..... | 5 |
| What the survey tells us about safety: are maternity services clean? | 5 |
| What the survey tells us about effectiveness: are women giving birth in the right position for them? | 8 |
| What the survey tells us about caring: are people treated with kindness and dignity? | 10 |
| Are women involved in their care? | 13 |
| Do women receive the support they need to cope emotionally? | 15 |
| What the survey tells us about responsiveness: are services delivered to meet women's needs?..... | 16 |
| Variation in results for NHS trusts..... | 18 |
| Trusts achieving 'better than expected' results | 18 |
| Trusts achieving 'worse than expected' results..... | 19 |
| Feedback..... | 20 |

Summary

There are almost 700,000 live births each year in England. Having a baby is the most common reason for a hospital admission.¹ While most births are happy events in the lives of women, this is not always the case. This is broadly reflected by our State of Care report 2014/15 in which we said that the majority of maternity services were good or outstanding but that there was variation in the quality of maternity services across trusts.²

The survey results show that more women are accessing booking appointments before they reach their 10th week of pregnancy, and have a greater choice in their care pathways. During labour and birth, services are increasingly clean particularly in the hospitals' rooms and wards. The majority of women are always treated with respect and kindness and many are always involved in decisions about their care during birth. Ninety-seven per cent of women said their midwives or health visitors asked how they felt emotionally after the birth, which is essential in identifying and managing postnatal depression.

However, more could be done by all trusts to ensure that services continue to improve. In particular, they need to do more

to ensure that women who have normal vaginal births are able to move around and choose a position that is comfortable for them.

We were able to compare trust level results for the labour and birth section of the survey's questionnaire. Some trusts, particularly University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust and Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust, were above expected on a number of questions across the survey.

However, the performance of Barts Health NHS Trust and North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust was below expected on 74% of the questions asked about labour and birth in this survey. Maternity services at Barts Health NHS Trust were rated as requires improvement in May 2015, after the women in this survey had given birth. The trust should, therefore, review any action plans developed as a result of the inspection, to ensure that they address the issues outlined in this survey.

North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust was inspected in August 2014 and rated good for maternity services. This survey reflects women's experiences of care after this rating was awarded. We would expect the trust to review its services to ensure that there are no risks to the quality of care received by pregnant women. Where risks are found, we would expect the trust to develop suitable action plans to address them.

1. Maternity services in England (2013) National Audit Office
www.nao.org.uk/2013-maternityservices

2. <http://www.cqc.org.uk/content/state-care-201415>

Interpreting the results

The charts and graphs in this report show the percentage of women giving responses to selected questions from the survey. The full survey results for England are published on our website: www.cqc.org.uk/maternitysurvey.

Trust results

The tables that highlight trust variation as 'better than expected' or 'worse than expected' are based on the expected range that is calculated for each question for each trust. This is the range within which we would expect a particular trust to score if it performed about the same as most other trusts in the survey. The range takes into account the number of respondents from each trust as well as the scores for all other trusts. It allows us to identify which scores we can confidently say are better or worse than the majority of other trusts.

It should be noted that movement of a trust from 'about the same' to either 'better than expected' or 'worse than expected' does not infer that there has been an improvement or deterioration in service provision. It is due to the expected range taking into consideration all scores from all trusts. For example, it is possible for a trust to move from 'about the same' to 'worse than expected' because patient experience has improved at other trusts, while patient experience at that individual trust has remained unchanged, improved to a lesser extent, or deteriorated.

This report only highlights those trusts that performed better or worse in 2015 if they showed the same performance in 2013; it does not list all trusts that were better or worse in 2013. Any trusts that are not listed in the tables have scored 'about the same' as other trusts in the 2015 survey

The tables relate to questions from the labour and birth section of the questionnaire **only**, as antenatal and postnatal care may not be provided by the same trust as the one where women gave birth.³ For further information about the scoring methodology, please go to the maternity services technical document on CQC's [website](#) listed above.

³ Results for antenatal and postnatal care are available for some trusts (see: <http://www.nhssurveys.org/surveys/876>), although the data is not as reliable as that for labour and birth.

Key findings

What the survey tells us about safety: are maternity services clean?

The NHS Constitution states that everyone has a right to be cared for in a clean and safe environment.⁴

To understand whether services are clean, our inspectors check to ensure that standards of cleanliness and hygiene are maintained and that there are reliable systems in place to protect people from a healthcare-associated infection.

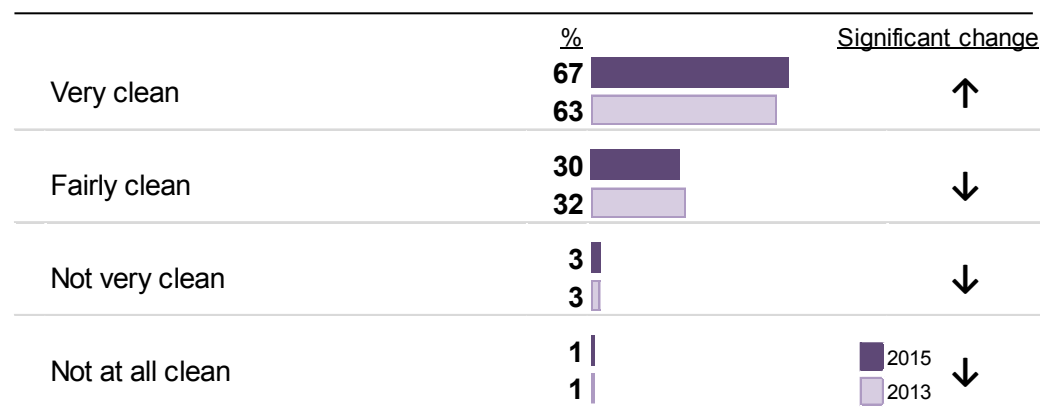
Nationally, significantly more women stated that both toilets and bathrooms, as well as rooms and wards, were very clean in 2015 compared with 2013 (figures 1 and 2). While this improvement is encouraging, women were overall less positive about the cleanliness of toilets and bathrooms compared with rooms and wards.

Trusts should review standards of cleanliness and hygiene to ensure that all hospital environments are clean.

⁴ NHS Constitution: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-nhs-constitution-for-england>

Figure 1: Cleanliness of hospital room or ward

D7. Thinking about your stay in hospital, how clean was the hospital room or ward you were in? (Care in hospital after the birth)



Answered by all who went to hospital

Number of respondents: 2013 (22,389), 2015 (20,047)

Note: those who responded that they could not remember or did not know have been excluded

Three trusts were above expected on the cleanliness questions for hospital rooms and wards and for toilets and bathrooms in both 2015 and 2013:

- Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust
- St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust

Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust was also above expected for the cleanliness of toilets and bathrooms in 2015 and 2013.

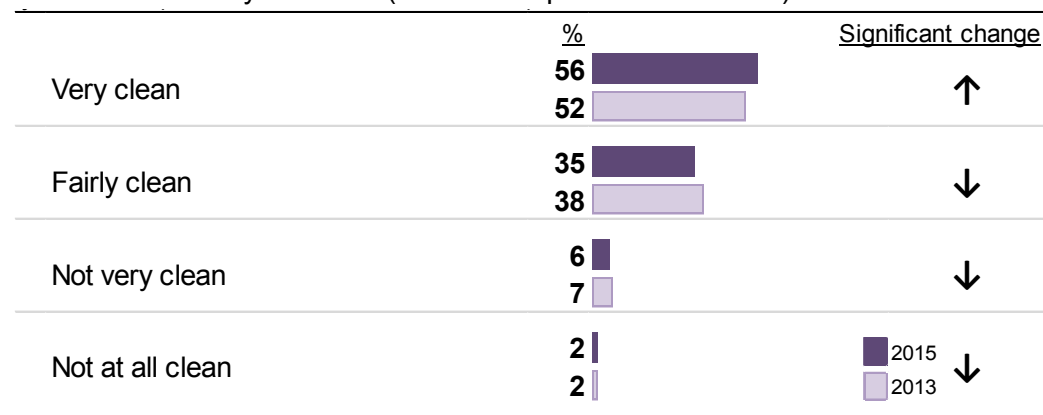
However, three trusts were below expected on one of the two cleanliness questions for both surveys (2015 and 2013):

- Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Trust
- Croydon Health Services NHS Trust
- Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

These trusts must review what action they will take to ensure that all women are cared for in a clean environment and are protected against healthcare-acquired infection.

Figure 2: Cleanliness of toilets and bathrooms

D8. Thinking about your stay in hospital, how clean were the toilets and bathrooms you used? (Care in hospital after the birth)



Answered by all who went to hospital

Number of respondents: 2013 (22,421), 2015 (20,063)

Note: those who responded that they did not use the toilet, or could not remember or did not know have been excluded

Table 1: Trusts performing better or worse than expected in 2015 for cleanliness

| Thinking about your stay in hospital, how clean... | ...were the toilets and bathrooms you used? (D8) | | ...was the hospital room or ward you were in? (D7) | |
|--|--|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| | Better than expected 2015 | Better than expected 2013 | Better than expected 2015 | Better than expected 2013 |
| Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Wirral University Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | | | ✓ | |
| Shrewsbury and Telford Hospital NHS Trust | | | ✓ | |
| | Worse than expected | | Worse than expected | |
| | 2015 | 2013 | 2015 | 2013 |
| Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | | | ✓ | |
| Chelsea and Westminster Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | ✓ | | |
| Croydon Health Services NHS Trust | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust | ✓ | | | |
| Kettering General Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust | ✓ | | | |
| Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | | |
| The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust | ✓ | | ✓ | |

What the survey tells us about effectiveness: are women giving birth in the right position for them?

Where possible, women should be active during labour and move around where this can be achieved. This is reflected in *Safer Childbirth* policy⁵ and relevant NICE guidance.⁶

Seventy per cent of women said that they were able to move around and choose the position that made them feel most comfortable during labour most of the time. Only 10% of women responded that this was not possible.

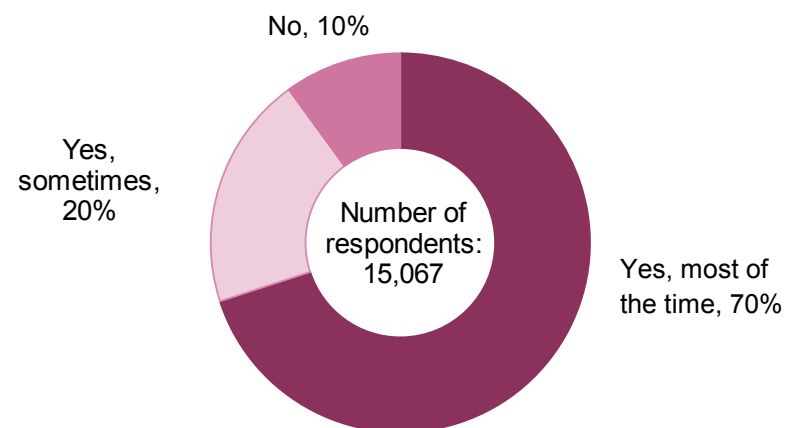
Despite this, the survey results show an increase in the percentage of women having a normal delivery in stirrups, 22% in 2015 compared with 17% in 2010. This may be because of women having a normal vaginal delivery in stirrups after preparations had been made to have an assisted birth that was then not required. However, unless there is a medical reason why the woman should not move, women should always be able to choose their position in labour. We encourage all trusts to review how and why stirrups are used for normal vaginal births and develop action plans, where appropriate, to ensure that services are in line with best practice.

⁵ <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/guidelines-research-services/guidelines/safer-childbirth-minimum-standards-for-the-organisation-and-delivery-of-care-in-labour/>

⁶ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg190>

Figure 3: Moving around and choosing position

C3. During your labour, were you able to move around and choose the position that made you most comfortable? (Labour & birth)



Answered by all who did not have a planned caesarean

Note: those who responded that it was not possible to move around have been excluded

Two trusts scored above expected on enabling women to move around and choose the position that made them most comfortable in both 2015 and 2013:

- Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Trust
- Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust.

However, seven trusts performed worse than expected and Barts Health NHS Trust was worse than expected in both 2013 and 2015. These trusts must review how they ensure that their services are effective and that women receive care in line with best practice.

Table 2: Trusts performing better or worse than expected in 2015 for enabling women to move and choose a comfortable position

C3. During your labour, were you able to move around and choose the position that made you most comfortable?

| | Better than expected | |
|--|-----------------------------|------|
| | 2015 | 2013 |
| Airedale NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| Calderdale and Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | ✓ |
| Medway NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| South Tyneside NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | ✓ |
| | | |
| | Worse than expected | |
| | 2015 | 2013 |
| Barking, Havering and Redbridge University Hospitals NHS Trust | ✓ | |
| Barts Health NHS Trust | ✓ | ✓ |
| North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust | ✓ | |
| The Royal Free London NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| Walsall Healthcare NHS Trust | ✓ | |
| Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust | ✓ | |

What the survey tells us about caring: are people treated with kindness and dignity?

To understand whether services are caring, our inspectors check that:

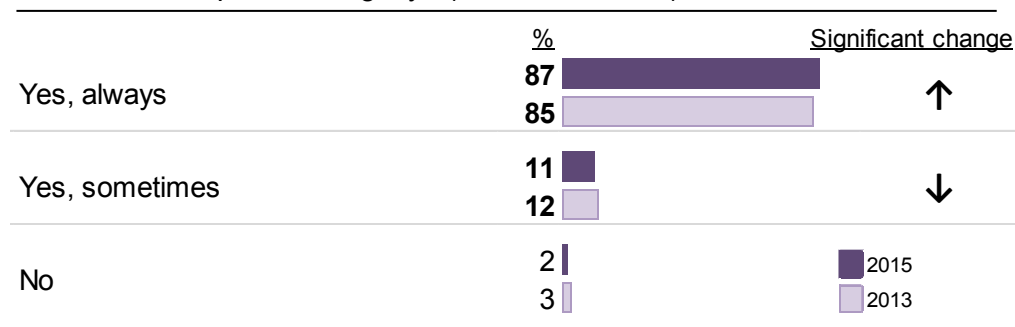
- People are treated with kindness, dignity, respect and compassion
- People are involved in their care
- People receive the support they need to cope emotionally.

Most women (87%) said that they were always treated with dignity and respect during labour and birth, and were always treated with kindness and understanding after the birth of their baby (71%). In both cases, these show a significant improvement from the last survey.

Sixteen trusts performed better than expected on these questions. University Hospitals Bristol NHS Trust performed better than expected on both questions in 2015, and better than expected on kindness and understanding in 2013. However, six trusts were below average in these areas. Barts Health NHS Trust and North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust were worse than expected on both questions in 2015. Barts Health NHS Trust also performed worse than expected for dignity and respect in 2013.

Figure 4: Respect and dignity

C18. Thinking about your care during labour and birth, were you treated with respect and dignity? (Labour and birth)



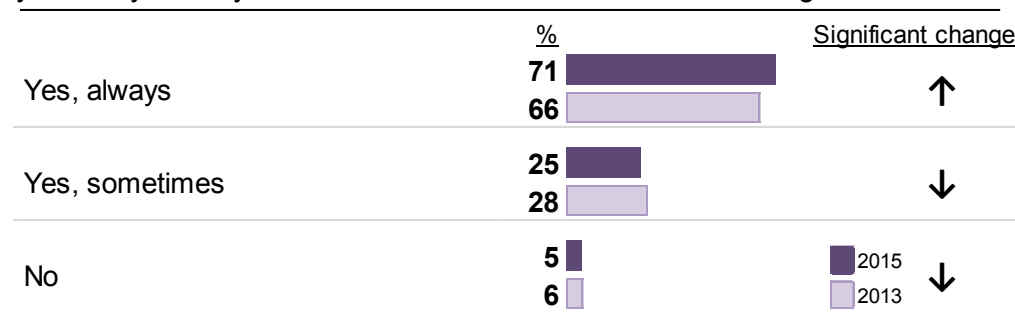
Answered by all

Number of respondents: 2013 (22,756), 2015 (20,373)

Note: those who responded that they could not remember or did not know have been excluded

Figure 5: Kindness and understanding

D5. Thinking about the care you received in hospital after the birth of your baby, were you treated with kindness and understanding?



Answered by all who went to hospital

Number of respondents: 2013 (22,444), 2015 (20,112)

Note: those who responded that they could not remember or did not know have been excluded

Table 3: Trusts performing better or worse than expected in 2015 for dignity, respect, kindness and understanding

| Were you treated with... | ...respect and dignity during labour and birth (C18) | | ...kindness and understanding in the hospital after the birth of your baby (D5) | |
|---|--|------|---|------|
| | Better than expected 2015 | 2013 | Better than expected 2015 | 2013 |
| Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust | | | ✓ | |
| Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | | | ✓ | ✓ |
| City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | | |
| County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| East Cheshire NHS Trust | ✓ | | | |
| Medway NHS Foundation Trust | | | ✓ | |
| North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust | | | ✓ | |
| Peterborough and Stamford Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | | | ✓ | |
| Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | | |
| Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | | |
| Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | | |
| The Queen Elizabeth Hospital, King's Lynn, NHS Foundation Trust | | ✓ | ✓ | |
| University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | | |
| University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust | | | ✓ | |
| Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust | | | ✓ | |

| Were you treated with... | ...respect and dignity during labour and birth (C18) | | ...kindness and understanding in the hospital after the birth of your baby (D5) | |
|--|--|------|---|------|
| | Worse than expected | | Worse than expected | |
| | 2015 | 2013 | 2015 | 2013 |
| Barts Health NHS Trust | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Croydon Health Services NHS Trust | ✓ | | | |
| Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| North Bristol NHS Trust | | | ✓ | |
| North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust | ✓ | | ✓ | |
| University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | | | ✓ | |

Are women involved in their care?

The majority of women (75%) who responded to the survey felt that they were always involved enough in decisions about their care during labour and birth. This shows a significant increase since 2007 and the continued improvement is encouraging.

However, five trusts were worse than expected on this question, with Barts Health NHS Trust and Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust performing worse than expected in both 2015 and 2013.

Table 4: Overall responses on involvement in decisions about care, 2007 to 2015

C17: Thinking about your care during labour and birth, were you involved enough in decisions about your care?

| | 2007 | 2010 | 2013 | 2015 | Significant change between 2007 and 2015? |
|-----------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---|
| Yes, always | 70% | 72% | 74% | 75% | ↑ |
| Yes, sometimes | 21% | 22% | 20% | 19% | ↓ |
| No | 9% | 6% | 5% | 6% | ↓ |
| Number of respondents | 25,074 | 24,517 | 22,186 | 19,651 | |

Table 5: Trusts performing better or worse than expected in 2015 for involving women in decisions about their care

C17. Thinking about your care during labour and birth, were you involved enough in decisions about your care?

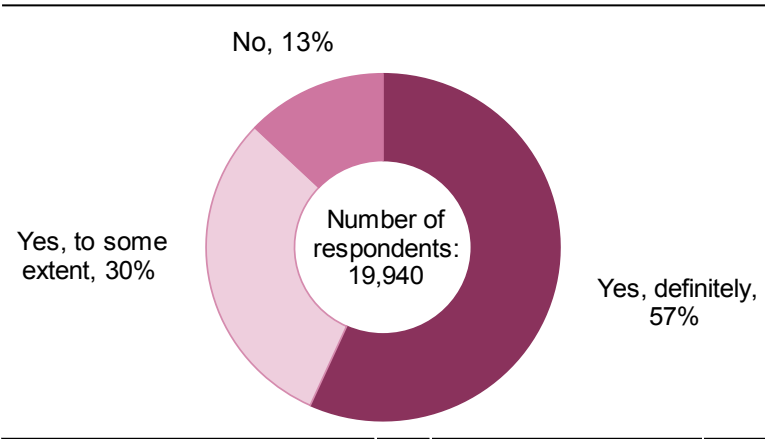
| | Better than expected | |
|--|-----------------------------|------|
| | 2015 | 2013 |
| City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| Doncaster and Bassetlaw Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust | ✓ | |
| Royal Cornwall Hospitals NHS Trust | ✓ | |
| Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | |
| | | |
| | Worse than expected | |
| | 2015 | 2013 |
| Barts Health NHS Trust | ✓ | ✓ |
| Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | ✓ | ✓ |
| North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust | ✓ | |
| Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust | ✓ | |
| West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust | ✓ | |

Do women receive the support they need to cope emotionally?

Fifty-seven per cent of women said their midwife definitely asked them how they were feeling emotionally during antenatal visits. Ninety-seven per cent (up from 96% in 2013) said that they were asked by a health visitor or midwife during postnatal visits. Checking on emotional well-being in the postnatal period is crucial in detecting postnatal depression and these results are therefore very welcome.

Figure 6: Emotional well-being during antenatal care

B13. During your antenatal check-ups, did a midwife ask you how you were feeling emotionally? (Antenatal)



Answered by all

Note: those who responded that they could not remember or did not know have been excluded

Figure 7: Emotional well-being during postnatal care

F12. Did a midwife or health visitor ask you how you were feeling emotionally? (Postnatal)

| | % | Significant change |
|-----|----------|--------------------|
| Yes | 97 96 | ↑ |
| No | 3 4 | ↓ |

Answered by all

Number of respondents: 2013 (22,506), 2015 (20,155)

Note: those who responded that they could not remember or did not know have been excluded

There is no table to show trusts for this section because these questions relate to antenatal and postnatal care only.

What the survey tells us about responsiveness: are services delivered to meet women's needs?

NICE guidelines state that pregnant women should be supported to access antenatal care ideally before they reach their 10th week of pregnancy. In 2015, 59% of women who responded had their booking appointment before 10 weeks. This has improved since 2007.

The Midwifery 2020 strategy⁷, states that midwives should have a greater public health role and be the lead professional for all healthy women with a straightforward pregnancy.⁸ This is particularly the case for low-risk multiparous women (women who have previously given birth one or more times), who should be advised that giving birth at home or in a midwifery-led unit is suitable for them.⁹

More women who responded to the 2015 survey said they were offered a choice of either a midwife-led unit or a birth centre (41%) compared with 2013 (35%), which is encouraging.

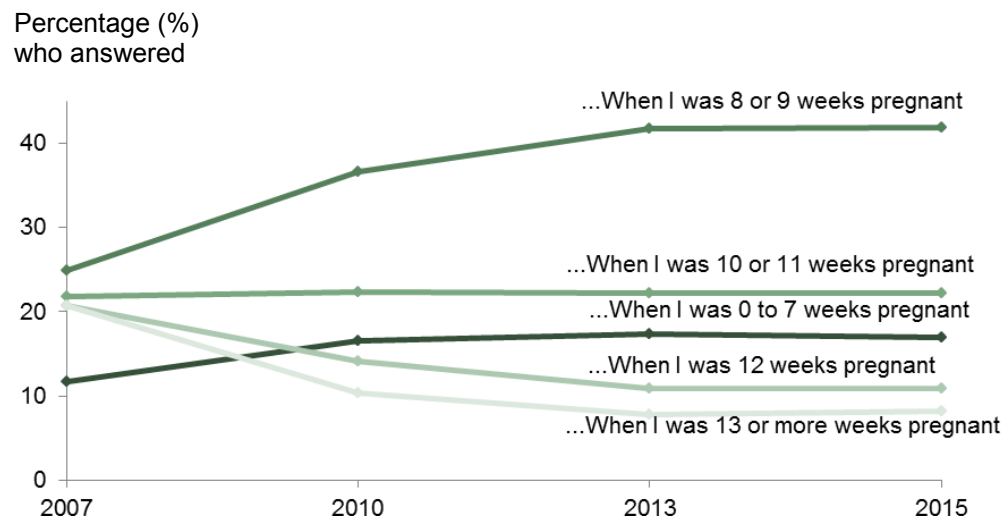
7. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/midwifery-2020-delivering-expectations>

8. See also NICE CG 62: Midwife- and GP-led models of care should be offered to women with an uncomplicated pregnancy.

9 <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg190>

Figure 8: Timely booking appointments

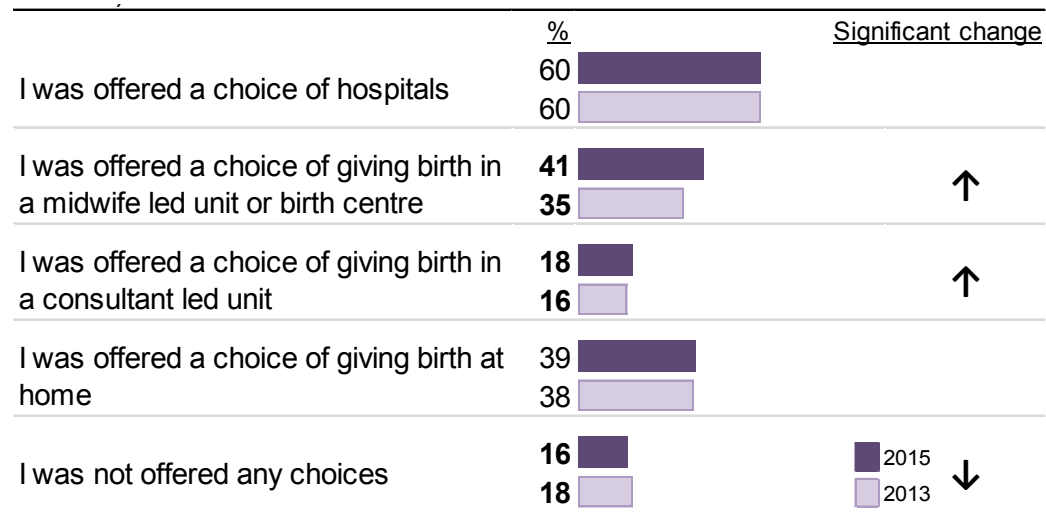
B3. Roughly how many weeks pregnant were you when you had your 'booking' appointment (the appointment where you were given your pregnancy notes)?



However, more primiparous women (first-time mothers) (40%) were offered the option of a home birth, compared with multiparous women (37%). Organisations should ensure that they offer choice to pregnant women to ensure that they receive services that meet their needs – particularly the needs of multiparous women.

Figure 9: Choice of where to have a baby

B4. Were you offered any of the following choices about where to have your baby? (Antenatal)



Answered by all.

Number of respondents: 2013 (19,961), 2015 (17,770).

Note: those who responded that they did not have a choice due to medical reasons, they could not remember or did not know have been excluded.

Note: women were able to mark more than one option, percentages do not add to 100% as a result.

Variation in results for NHS trusts

Trusts achieving 'better than expected' results

Nine trusts were classed as performing 'better than expected' for more than 20% of all scored questions in the survey. University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust and

Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust performed better than expected for 53% of the questions asked in the survey.

Table 6: Trusts with a high proportion of questions where performance is 'better than expected' compared with other trusts, alongside CQC inspection ratings overall and for the maternity core service

| NHS trust | % of questions where trusts were better than expected | No. of questions where trusts were better than expected | CQC overall trust rating | CQC inspection rating for maternity services |
|---|---|---|--------------------------|--|
| University Hospitals Bristol NHS Foundation Trust | 53 | 10 | Requires improvement | Good |
| Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | 53 | 10 | Requires improvement | Good |
| Tameside Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | 37 | 7 | Requires improvement | Good |
| City Hospitals Sunderland NHS Foundation Trust | 32 | 6 | Requires improvement | Good |
| Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust | 26 | 5 | Not yet inspected | Not yet inspected |
| Yeovil District Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | 21 | 4 | Not yet inspected | Not yet inspected |
| St Helens and Knowsley Hospitals NHS Trust | 21 | 4 | Good | Requires improvement |
| North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust | 21 | 4 | Not yet inspected | Not yet inspected |
| County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust | 21 | 4 | Requires improvement | Good |

Trusts achieving ‘worse than expected’ results

Seven trusts were classed as ‘worse than expected’ for 20% or more of all questions that evaluated a trust’s performance.

Barts Health NHS Trust and North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust performed ‘worse than expected’ on 74% of questions.

All trusts with worse than expected results must review their performance as a matter of urgency to ensure that they provide good quality experiences for women using maternity services. Inspectors have been advised of the results of the survey and will be considering this when they next carry out an inspection to identify risks. Where there is a risk to the quality of care, CQC will take further action.

Table 7: Trusts with a high proportion of questions where performance is ‘worse than expected’ compared with other trusts, alongside CQC inspection ratings overall and for the maternity core service

| NHS trust | % of questions where trusts were worse than expected | No. of questions where trusts were worse than expected | CQC overall trust rating | CQC inspection rating for maternity services |
|---|--|--|--------------------------|--|
| Barts Health NHS Trust | 74 | 14 | Inadequate | Requires improvement |
| North Middlesex University Hospital NHS Trust | 74 | 14 | Requires improvement | Good |
| Croydon Health Services NHS Trust | 32 | 6 | Requires improvement | Good |
| University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | 32 | 6 | Not yet inspected | Not yet inspected |
| Milton Keynes Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | 26 | 5 | Requires improvement | Good |
| Homerton University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust | 26 | 5 | Good | Requires improvement |
| The Hillingdon Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust | 21 | 4 | Requires improvement | Requires improvement |

Feedback

We welcome all feedback on the findings from this survey and the approach that we have used to report the results, particularly from people using services, their representatives, and those providing services. If you have any views, comments or suggestions on how we can improve this publication, please contact Paul Williamson, User Voice Development Manager at Patient.Survey@cqc.org.uk.

CQC will review the information you provide and use it, as appropriate, to improve the statistics that we publish across the National Patient Survey Programme.

If you would like to be involved in consultations or receive updates on the NHS Patient Survey Programme, please subscribe here: www.cqc.org.uk/surveyupdates.

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