



National Maternity  
Experience Survey 2020

Mayo University Hospital

## 2020 survey results

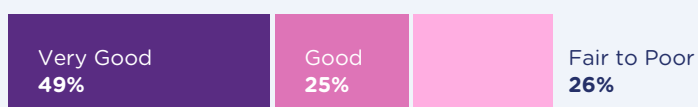
### Respondents

 **157**  
Number of respondents

 **56%**  
Participation rate

### Overall experience

2020

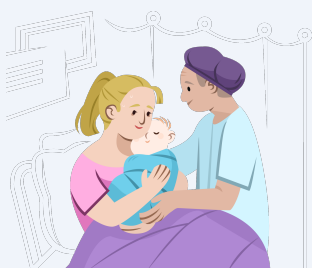


### Stages of care

**6.8**  
out of 10

#### Care while pregnant (antenatal care)

Care provided in the hospital and the community  
Ratings of 'care while pregnant (antenatal care)' were below the national average. The highest-scoring question related to being treated with respect and dignity while pregnant. The lowest-scoring question related to the receipt of information about changes in mental health while pregnant.



**8.2**  
out of 10

#### Care during labour and birth

Care provided in the hospital  
Ratings of 'care during labour and birth' were similar to the national average. The highest-scoring question related to the involvement of a partner or companion during the labour and birth. The lowest-scoring question related to the involvement of women in decisions about care during labour and birth.



## Care in hospital after the birth

Care provided in the hospital

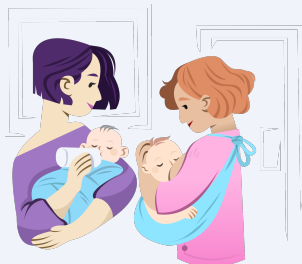
Ratings of 'care in hospital after the birth' were about the same as the national average. The highest-scoring question related to being told who to contact after discharge. The lowest-scoring question related to 'debriefing' and the opportunity for women to ask questions about their labour and birth after the baby was born.



## Specialised care\*

Care provided in the hospital

69% of women said that they had a very good overall experience of the care their baby received in the neonatal unit in Mayo University Hospital, compared with 70% nationally.



## Feeding

Care provided in the hospital and the community

Ratings of 'feeding' were about the same as the national average. The highest-scoring question related to respect for decisions about how women wanted to feed their baby. The lowest-scoring question related to support and encouragement provided to women with feeding their baby while in hospital.



## Care at home after the birth

Care provided in the community

Ratings of 'care at home after the birth' were about the same as the national average. The highest-scoring question related to being treated with respect and dignity at home after the birth. The lowest-scoring question related to the time spent by the GP practice nurse/midwife discussing mental health at the 6-week check-up.



\*See page 18 of this report for more information.

## Contents

<b>About the National Maternity Experience Survey .....</b>	<b>4</b>
About this report.....	4
What were the findings for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital? ...	5
Who took part in the survey?.....	5
Interpreting the results presented in this report.....	7
<b>Experiences of maternity care for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital .....</b>	<b>8</b>
Areas that scored above and below the national average .....	8
<b>Care while pregnant (antenatal care) .....</b>	<b>9</b>
Care during labour and birth.....	13
Care in hospital after the birth .....	15
Specialised care .....	17
Feeding .....	18
Care at home after the birth of your baby .....	20
Overall experience .....	23
Focus on: Involvement in decisions, confidence in staff, and respect and dignity	23
In their own words: analysis of women's comments.....	26
<b>Conclusion.....</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Appendix 1: Areas that scored above or below the national average .....</b>	<b>30</b>
Improvement map .....	30
<b>Appendix 2: Description of models of maternity care.....</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>34</b>

## About the National Maternity Experience Survey

The National Maternity Experience Survey offers women the opportunity to share their experiences of Ireland's maternity services. The survey is part of the National Care Experience Programme, a joint initiative by the Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA), the Health Service Executive (HSE) and the Department of Health. The National Care Experience Programme seeks to improve the quality of health and social care services in Ireland by asking people about their experiences of care and acting on their feedback. The survey reflects a commitment made in the National Maternity Strategy 2016-2026 to evaluate maternity services from the perspectives of the women who use them.<sup>(1)</sup>

The survey questionnaire contains 68 questions which capture the whole maternity pathway from antenatal care, through labour and birth, to postnatal care in the community. The National Maternity Experience Survey includes questions taken or adapted from a library of questions developed by the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) in collaboration with the National Care Experience Programme. More information on the survey design can be found at [www.yourexperience.ie/maternity/about-the-survey](http://www.yourexperience.ie/maternity/about-the-survey).

The aim of the survey is to learn from the experiences of women to improve the safety and quality of the care that they and their baby receive. HIQA, the HSE and the Department of Health have committed to acting on the findings of the National Maternity Experience Survey to improve the quality of maternity care services in Ireland. Quality improvement plans have been developed by the HSE at national and local levels to address the issues highlighted in the survey.

## About this report

This report focuses on the experiences of women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital. In Ireland, maternity care is provided by a mix of hospital-based and community-based services. This report includes women's experiences of the care provided both in Mayo University Hospital, and by general practitioners and public health nurses based in the community.

## What were the findings for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital?

The majority of women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital said they had a positive overall experience. 74% said their maternity care was good or very good, compared with the national figure of 85%. Women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital rated their antenatal care below the national average. Their ratings of all other stages of care were close to the national average.

49% of women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital said that they were offered a choice of the type of maternity care they would receive. Options included public care, consultant-led private or semi-private care, DOMINO and community midwifery care.

The highest-scoring question for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital related to partners' involvement in labour and birth, with the majority saying their partner or companion was as involved as they themselves wanted to be. Most women said that they were treated with respect and dignity by healthcare professionals while at home after the birth, and that public health nurses answered their questions in a way that they could understand. However, none of these questions scored significantly above the national average.

Women's ratings of the information they received during their pregnancy on changes to their mental health, the impact of smoking, and the impact of alcohol or drug abuse were all significantly below the national average. It was evident that some women did not receive sufficient information on these topics.

The responses to the three free-text questions provided very detailed information on women's experiences while in Mayo University Hospital and the maternity care they received in the community before and after giving birth. These comments identified the caring and helpful attitudes of healthcare professionals but also highlighted the difficulties that some women experienced in accessing help when they needed it.

## Who took part in the survey?

279 women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital in October and November 2019 were invited to participate in the survey. 157 women completed the survey, representing a response rate of 56%.<sup>1</sup> Table 1 provides information on the

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<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that the Covid-19 pandemic may have had an impact on the number of survey responses received. However, the women who were invited to take part gave birth prior to the pandemic and the maternity care they received was thus unlikely to have been affected.

characteristics of the women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital who responded to the survey. Most of these women said that they lived in Mayo.

**Table 1. Characteristics of respondents who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital.**

<b>Age category</b>		
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Under 25	7	4.5%
25-29	18	11.5%
30-34	69	43.9%
35-39	55	35.0%
40 or older	8	5.1%
<b>Previous births</b>		
None	52	35.9%
One or two	79	54.5%
Three or more	14	9.7%
<b>Ethnic group</b>		
White Irish	139	89.7%
Irish Traveller	1	0.6%
Any other White background	6	3.9%
African	1	0.6%
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	3	1.9%
Any other Asian background	1	0.6%
Mixed	1	0.6%
Other	3	1.9%
<b>County of residence</b>		
Mayo	145	92.9%
Roscommon	10	6.4%
Sligo	1	0.6%

## Interpreting the results presented in this report

In this report, scores out of 10 are given for relevant questions belonging to a stage of maternity care or to a stage as whole. A score of 0 indicates a very negative experience and a score of 10 indicates a very positive experience. Some questions simply provide descriptive information and these questions are not given a score out of 10.

Statistical tests were carried out to examine if there were significant differences between the scores for specific groups, for example, for people who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital, and the national average. Throughout this report, when the hospital scored significantly above the national average, this is described as 'higher'. When the hospital scored significantly below the national average, it is described as 'lower'. When there is no statistically significant difference between the hospital's score and the national average, it is described as 'about the same'. For more information on the analyses please consult Appendix 3 of the 2020 national report, available at [www.yourexperience.ie](http://www.yourexperience.ie).

There were three free-text questions in the survey which asked women about the positive aspects of their experiences and where improvements were required. Quotations from women are presented in a dedicated chapter. These quotations have been redacted to remove any information that could identify an individual.



# Experiences of maternity care for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital

## Areas that scored above and below the national average

Using a methodology set out in appendix 1 this section lists the questions where women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital rated their experiences significantly above or below the national average. It is important to note that even for questions that scored significantly above the national average, there is still room for improvement. The list includes the relevant stage of care and question number for each area.

## Areas that scored below the national average

In Mayo University Hospital, the scores for all questions were below or the same as the national average. While no specific areas of good experience were identified using the methodology outlined in Appendix 1, positive responses were made to a number of questions. Participants' comments also identified areas where participants had positive experiences.

## Areas that scored below the national average

### Care while pregnant (antenatal care)

#### Information about mental health changes while pregnant | Q9.

70 (46.7%) of the 150 women who responded to this question said that they did not receive enough information about mental health changes during their pregnancy.

### Care while pregnant (antenatal care)

#### Information about smoking while pregnant | Q11.

14 (15.7%) of the 89 women who responded to this question said that they did not receive enough information about giving up smoking and other tobacco related products during their pregnancy.

### Care while pregnant (antenatal care)

#### Information about alcohol and/or drug abuse while pregnant | Q12.

20 (17.1%) of the 117 women who responded to this question said that they did not receive enough information about the impact of alcohol or drug abuse during their pregnancy.

## Care while pregnant (antenatal care)

The first seven questions for this stage asked women to provide information about the first healthcare professional they contacted when they knew they were pregnant, the types of maternity care they were offered, and whether they attended antenatal classes or courses. The results for these questions are presented in Tables 2 and 3. A description of the types of maternity care is provided in Appendix 2.

The remaining 10 questions asked about the information and support women received during their antenatal care. These questions were scored out of 10, with the scores for the stage as a whole compared against the national average in Figure 2, and compared by participants' county of residence in Figure 3. The scores for the individual questions are compared against the national average in Figure 4.

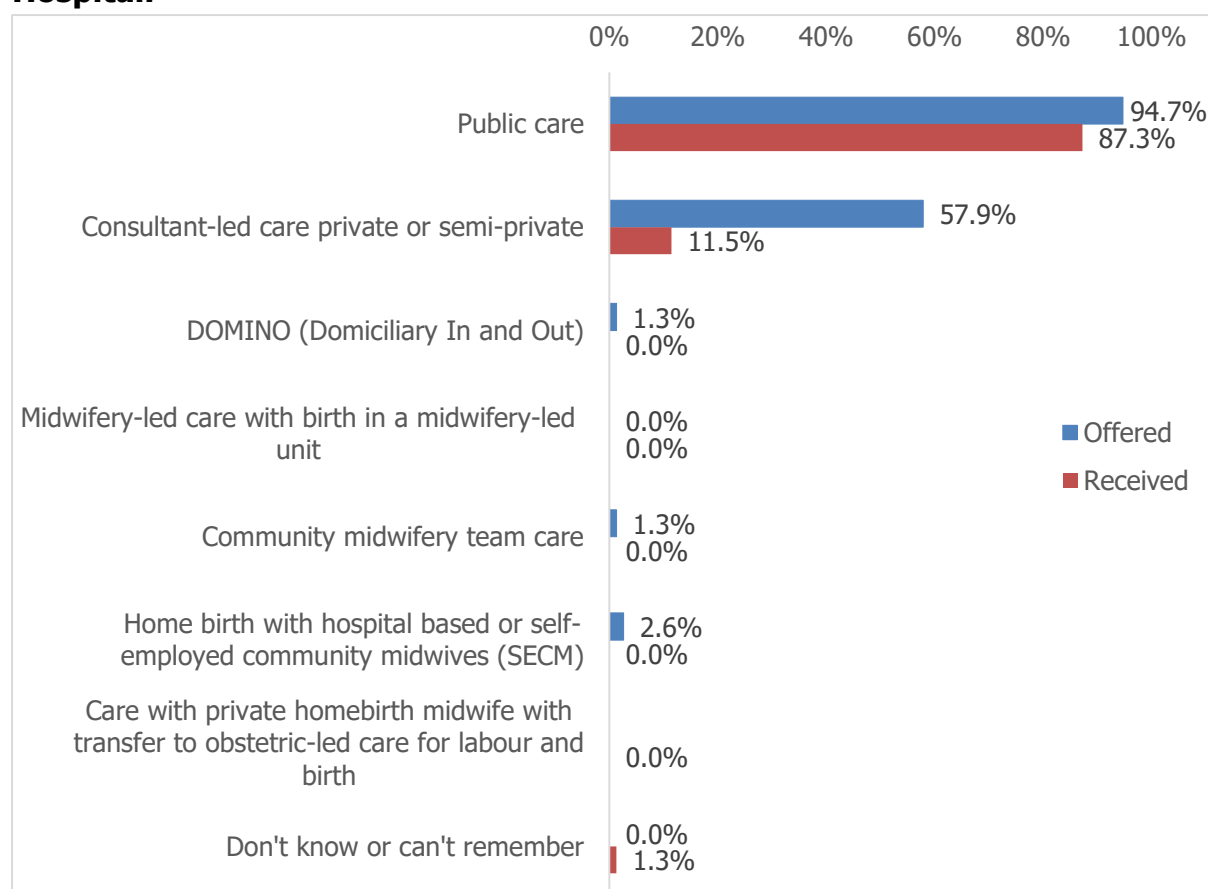
It is important to note that the questions for this stage of care relate both to care provided in the community and care provided in Mayo University Hospital.

**Table 2. Number of births and first healthcare professional contacted.**

<b>Q1. In your most recent pregnancy, did you give birth to...</b>		
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
A single baby	154	98.1%
Twins	3	1.9%
Triplets, quads or more	0	0.0%
<b>Q2. Who was the first healthcare professional you saw when you thought you were pregnant?</b>		
GP / family doctor	152	96.8%
Midwife	3	1.9%
Other	2	1.3%

77 women (49.4%) who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital said that they were offered a choice of maternity care, while 58 (37.2%) said they were not offered any choices. Figure 1 shows the choices of maternity care that were offered to women and the type of care that they actually received.

**Figure 1. Types of maternity care offered and received in Mayo University Hospital.**



**Table 3. Results for questions on antenatal classes or courses attended by women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital.**

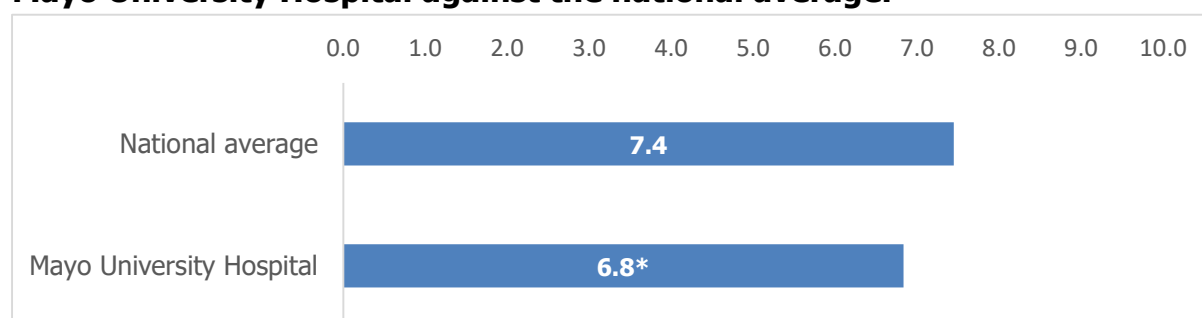
<b>Q6. During your pregnancy were you offered any antenatal classes or courses?</b>		
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes, and I did them	59	37.6%
Yes, but I did not do them	59	37.6%
No	38	24.2%
Don't know or can't remember	1	0.6%
<b>Q7. Are there any particular reasons you did not go to antenatal classes or courses?</b>		
It was not my first baby	48	81.4%
It was my first baby but I didn't want to go to classes	4	6.8%
There were no available spaces/they were booked out	0	0.0%
I couldn't find classes that were right for me	0	0.0%
There were no classes near me	2	3.4%
I had other commitments	4	6.8%
Other	3	5.1%

10 questions explored whether women received sufficient information on their health and care, were involved in decisions about their antenatal care and had confidence and trust in their healthcare professionals. These questions were scored out of 10, with the scores for the stage as a whole compared against the national average in Figure 2. Scores for this stage of care are compared by the county of residence of women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital in Figure 3. Scores for the individual questions are compared against the national average in Figure 4.

Women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital rated their antenatal care below the national average.

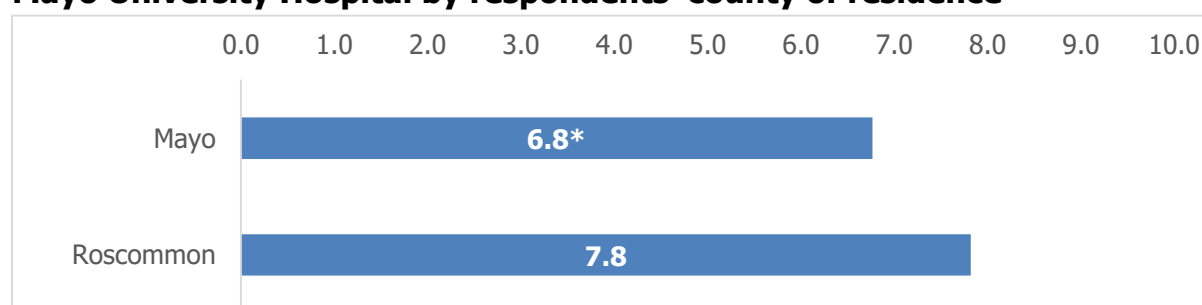
The highest-scoring question for this stage related to being treated with respect and dignity, with 78.3% saying they were always treated with respect and dignity while they were pregnant. The lowest-scoring question related to information about mental health with 46.7% saying that they did not receive enough information about changes in their mental health while they were pregnant.

**Figure 2. Comparison of 'Care while pregnant (antenatal care)' scores for Mayo University Hospital against the national average.**



\*indicates significant difference from the national average

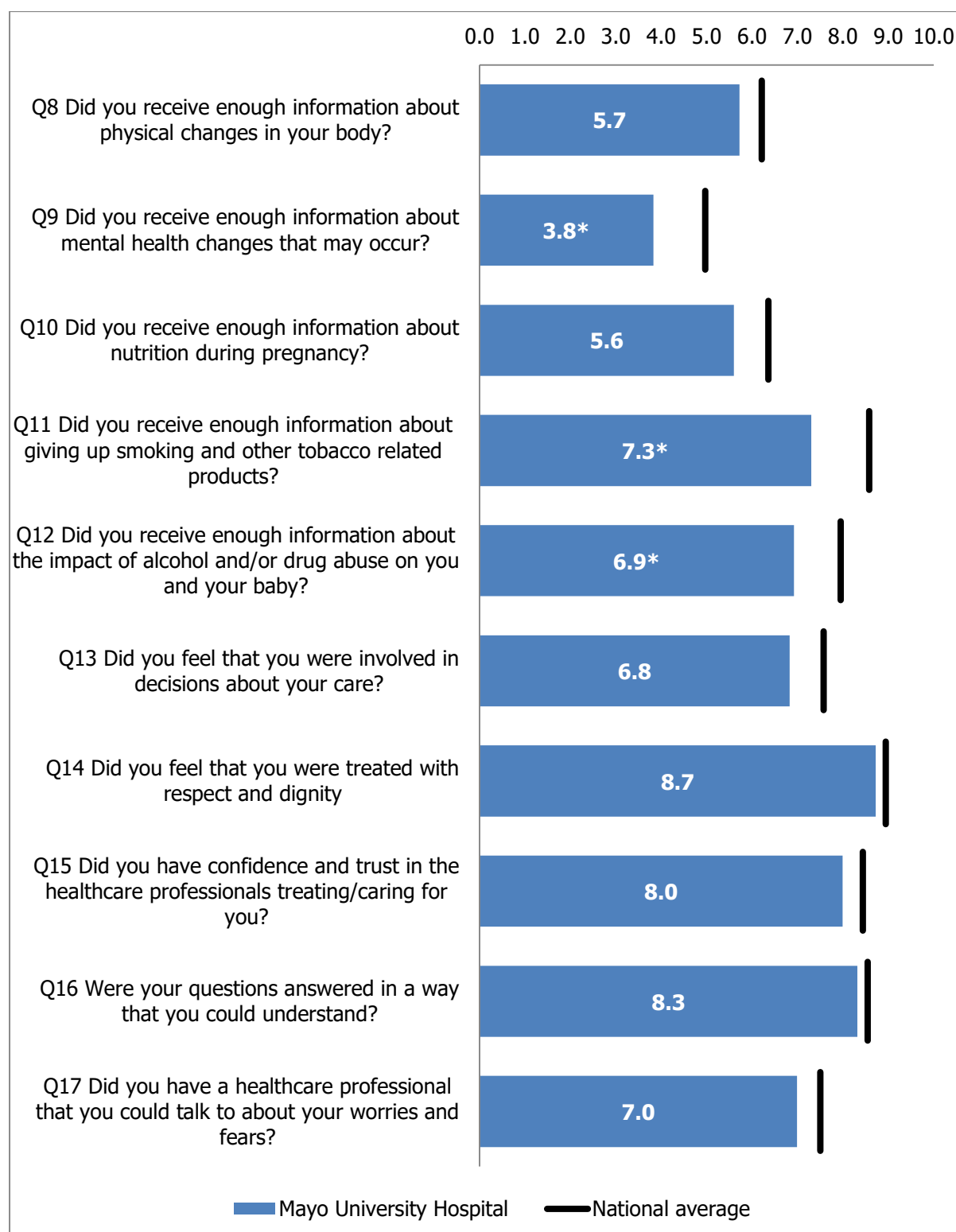
**Figure 3. Comparison of 'Care while pregnant (antenatal care)' scores for Mayo University Hospital by respondents' county of residence<sup>2</sup>**



\*indicates significant difference from the national average

<sup>2</sup> Results for counties are only shown if five or more women from that county responded.

**Figure 4. Comparison of individual question scores for 'Care while pregnant (antenatal care)' against the national average.**



\*indicates significant difference from the national average

## Care during labour and birth

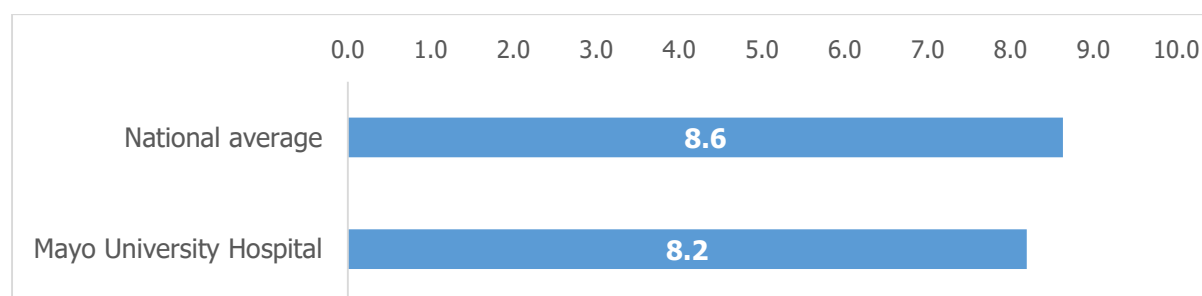
This stage of the survey included three questions where women were asked to describe the birth of their baby and whether they were left alone at any point, with the results for Mayo University Hospital shown in Table 4. There were also seven other questions about this stage of care that received scores out of 10. The scores for the stage as a whole are compared against the national average in Figure 5, and for the individual questions in Figure 6.

Women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital rated their care during labour and birth as about the same as the national average. The highest-scoring question for this stage related to involvement of a partner or companion, with 95.4% saying that their partner or companion was as involved as they wanted them to be in the labour and birth. The lowest-scoring question related to involvement in decisions during labour and birth. 21 women (13.4%) said that they were not involved in decisions about their care during labour and birth.

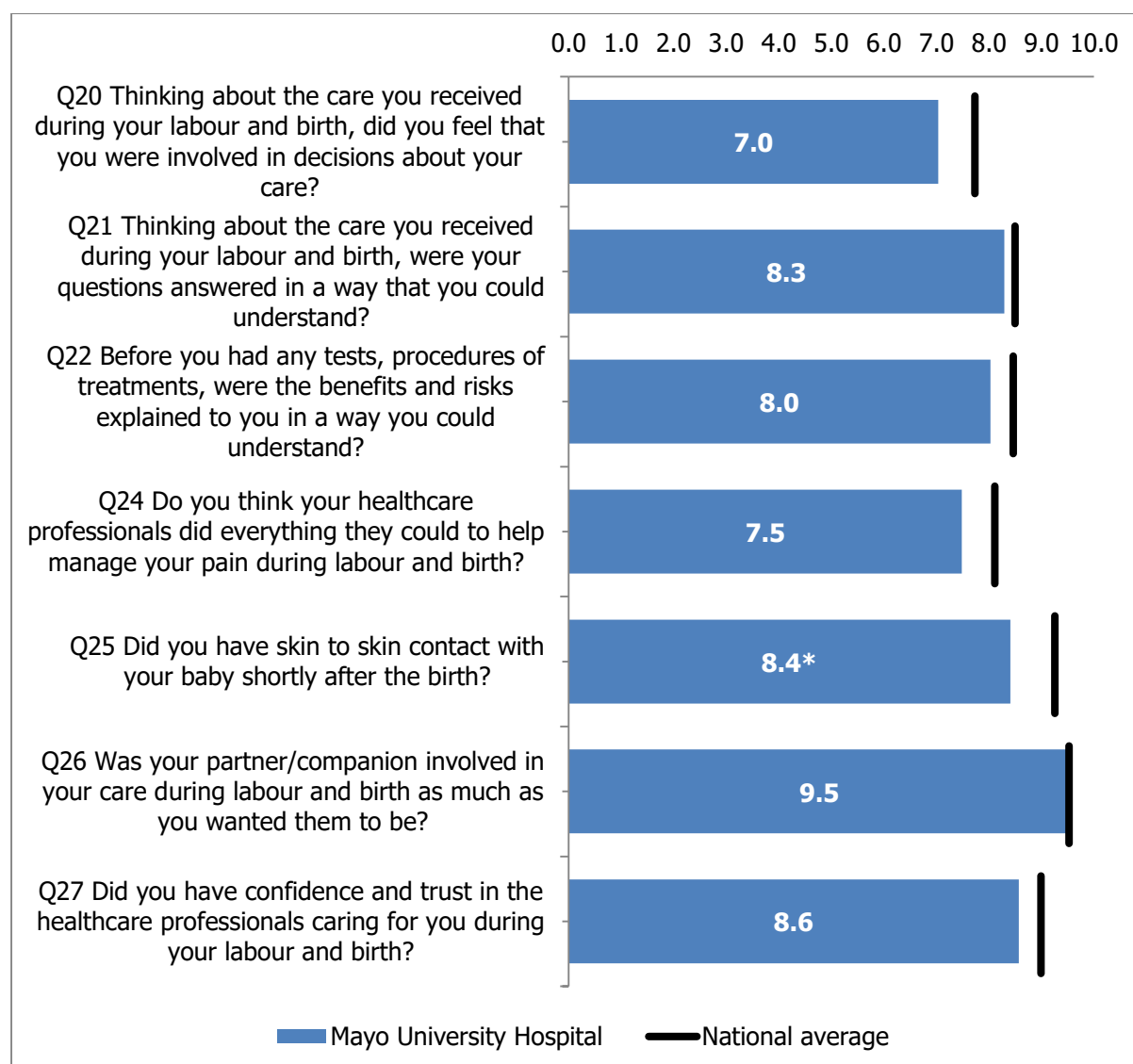
**Table 4. Results for questions on induction of labour, type of birth and being left alone.**

<b>Q18. Thinking about the birth of your baby, was your labour induced?</b>		
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	54	34.4%
No	103	65.6%
Don't know or can't remember	0	0.0%
<b>Q19. What type of birth did you have?</b>		
A vaginal birth (no forceps or ventouse suction cup)	78	49.7%
An assisted vaginal birth (e.g. with forceps or ventouse suction cup)	28	17.8%
A planned caesarean birth	26	16.6%
An unplanned caesarean birth	25	15.9%
<b>Q23. Were you (and/or your partner or companion) left alone by healthcare professionals at a time when it worried you?</b>		
Yes, during early labour	25	16.0%
Yes, during the later stages of labour	19	12.2%
Yes, during the birth	1	0.6%
Yes, shortly after the birth	12	7.7%
No, not at all	115	73.7%

**Figure 5. Comparison of 'Care during labour and birth' scores for Mayo University Hospital against the national average.**



**Figure 6. Comparison of individual question scores for 'Care during labour and birth' in Mayo University Hospital against the national average.**



\*indicates significant difference from the national average

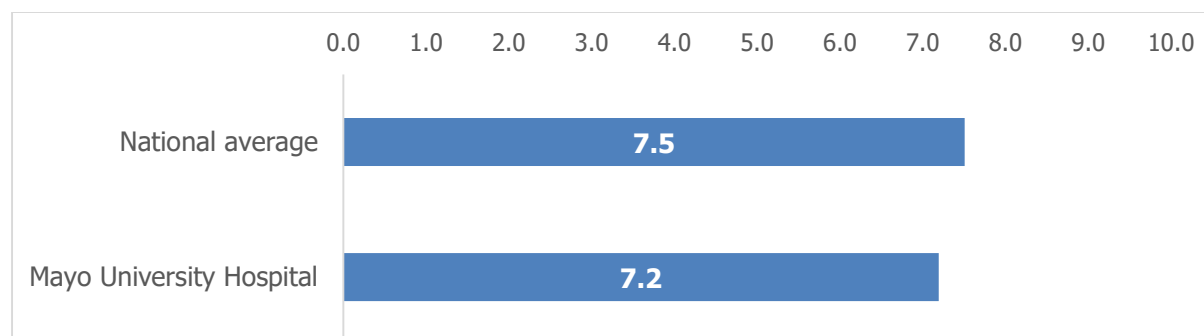
## Care in hospital after the birth

The questions for this stage related to the care women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital received after the birth of their baby. All of the questions for this stage were given a score out of 10. The scores for the stage as a whole are compared against the national average in Figure 7, and for the individual questions in Figure 8.

Women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital rated their care in hospital after the birth as about the same as the national average.

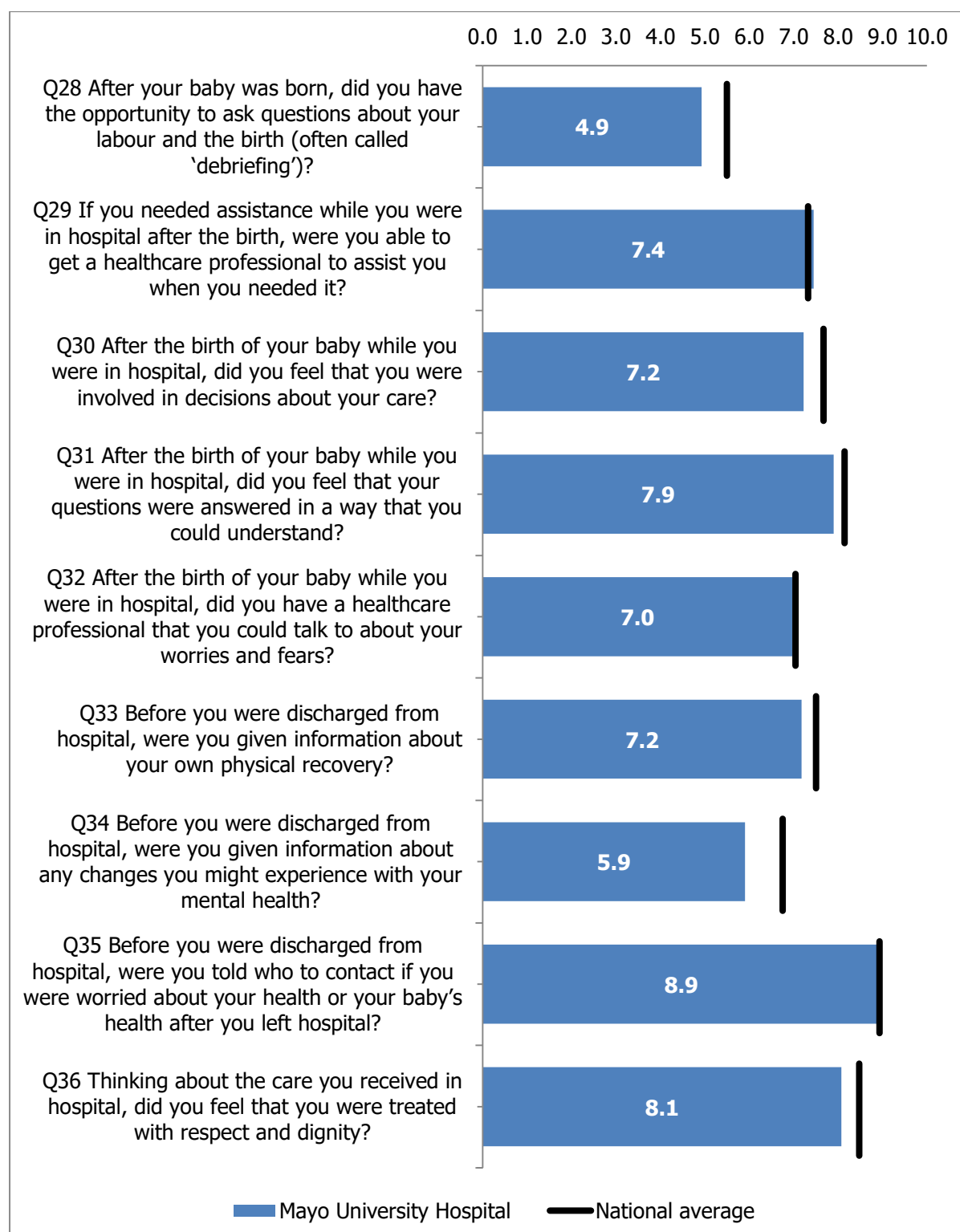
The highest-scoring question for this stage related to being told who to contact after discharge, with 89.5% saying they were told who to contact if they were worried about their own health or their baby's health. The lowest-scoring question related to 'debriefing' with 48 women (33.6%) saying that they did not have the opportunity to ask questions about their labour and birth after the baby was born.

**Figure 7. Comparison of 'Care in hospital after the birth' scores for Mayo University Hospital against the national average.**





**Figure 8. Comparison of individual question scores for 'Care in hospital after the birth' in Mayo University Hospital against the national average.**



## Specialised care

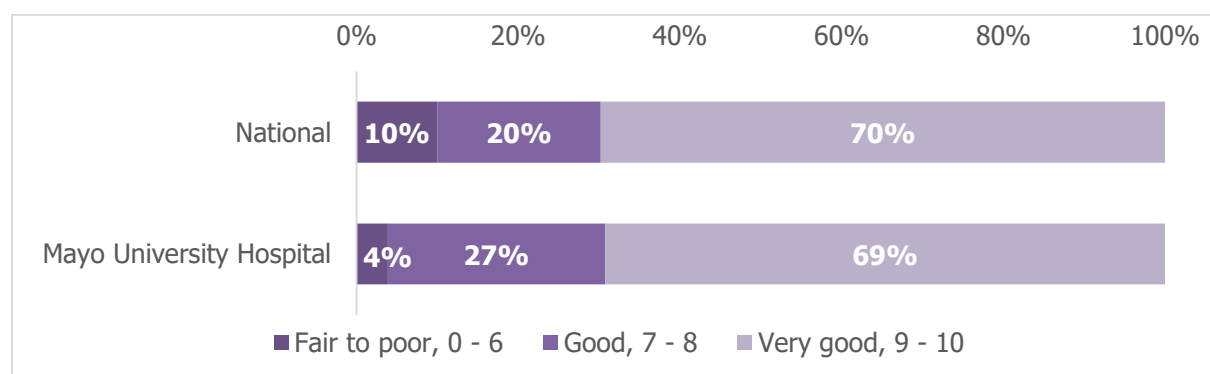
The questions for this stage explore the experiences of women whose babies required specialist care in a neonatal unit after birth. Women whose baby was not admitted to a neonatal unit did not answer Q38 or Q39. The results for Q37 and Q38 are shown in Table 5. Q39 asked women to rate their experience of the care their baby received in the neonatal unit from 0 to 10 and the results for Mayo University Hospital are compared against the national average in Figure 9.

69% of women said that they had a very good overall experience of the care their baby received in the neonatal unit. This was about the same as the national average of 70%.

**Table 5. Admission to the neonatal unit and emotional support.**

<b>Q37. Following the birth, did your baby spend any time in the neonatal unit?</b>		
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	26	16.9%
No	126	81.8%
Don't know or can't remember	2	1.3%
<b>Q38. While your baby was in the neonatal unit, did you receive enough emotional support from healthcare professionals?</b>		
Yes, always	17	65.4%
Yes, sometimes	5	19.2%
No	4	15.4%
I did not want or need any emotional support	0	0.0%
Don't know or can't remember	0	0.0%

**Figure 9. Comparison of overall ratings of experiences in the neonatal unit at Mayo University Hospital against the national average.**



## Feeding

This stage included two questions asking women when their healthcare professionals discussed the different options for feeding their baby, and how they fed their baby in the first few days after birth. The results for these questions are shown in Table 6.

The other questions for this stage explored whether women felt supported and respected by healthcare professionals in feeding their baby, both in the hospital and after they had returned home. These questions were scored out of 10, with the scores for the stage as a whole compared against the national average in Figure 10 and individual questions compared against the national average in Figure 11.

Women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital rated the 'Feeding' questions as about the same as the national average.

Most women (72%) said that their decisions about how they wanted to feed their baby were always respected by their healthcare professionals. The lowest-scoring question for this stage related to support and encouragement, with 19 women (13.2%) saying that they did not get adequate support and encouragement with feeding their baby, while they were in hospital.

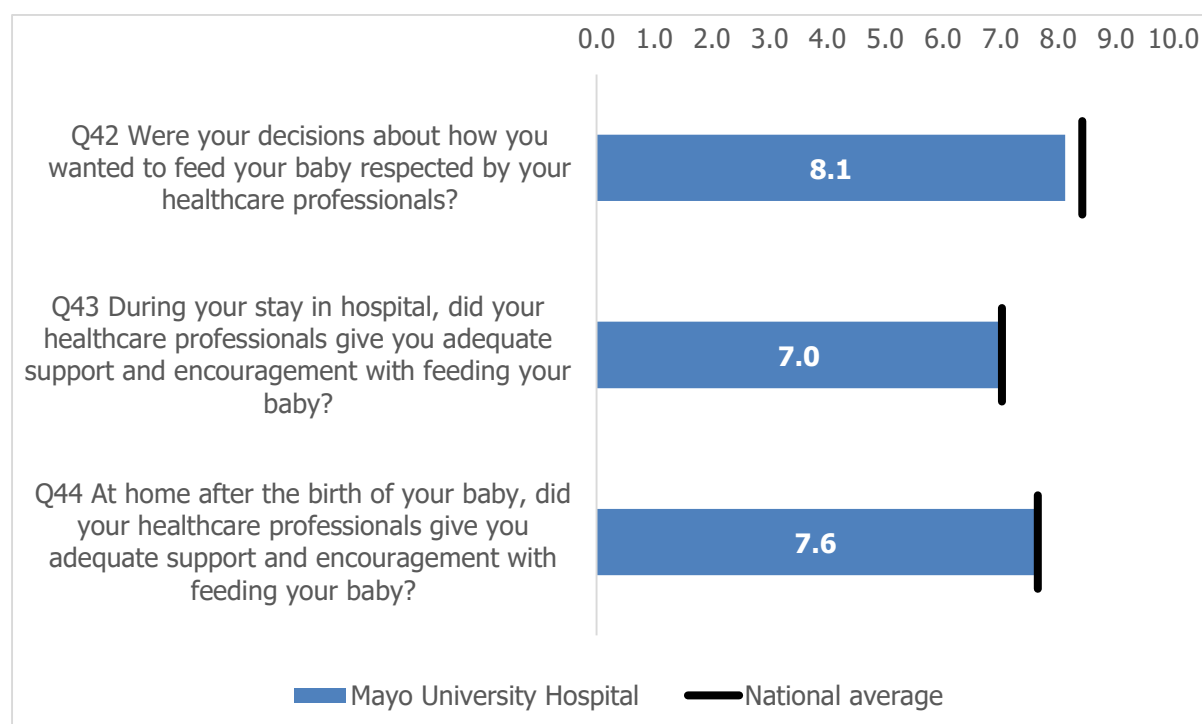
**Table 6. Results for questions on discussion of feeding options and the methods of feeding used.**

<b>Q40. Did your healthcare professionals discuss with you the different options for Feeding?</b>		
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes, during pregnancy	85	54.5%
Yes, during labour or immediately after birth	42	26.9%
Yes, after birth while in hospital	50	32.1%
Yes, after birth while at home	17	10.9%
No	19	12.2%
I did not want or need discussion of different options	21	13.5%
Don't know or can't remember	0	0.0%
<b>Q41. In the first few days after the birth, how was your baby fed?</b>		
Breast milk (or expressed breast milk) only	42	26.8%
Both breast and formula (bottle) milk	58	36.9%
Formula (bottle) milk only	57	36.3%
Don't know or can't remember	0	0.0%

**Figure 10. Comparison of scores for 'Feeding' in Mayo University Hospital against the national average.**



**Figure 11. Comparison of individual question scores for 'Feeding' in Mayo University Hospital against the national average.**



## Care at home after the birth of your baby

The questions for this stage of maternity care explored women's experiences of postnatal care in the community provided by public health nurses and general practitioners.<sup>3</sup> Two questions asked whether women and their babies had been visited at home by a public health nurse and received check-ups with their general practitioner. These appointments are a routine part of postnatal care in Ireland. Another question asked whether women had used local support groups such as mother and baby groups or feeding support groups. The results for these questions for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital are summarised in Table 7.

The remaining questions for this stage explored women's experiences of the information and support they received at home after the birth of their baby. These questions were scored out of 10, with the scores for the stage as a whole broken down by the county of residence of women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital, and compared against the national average in Figure 12. Scores for the individual questions are compared against the national average in Figure 13.

Women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital rated their care at home after the birth as about the same as the national average. The highest-scoring question for this stage related to being treated with respect and dignity, with 87.8% saying that they were always treated with respect and dignity at home after the birth of their baby. The lowest-scoring question related to the time spent by the GP or practice nurse/midwife discussing mental health at the six-week check-up. 27.6% said insufficient time was spending discussing their mental health at this check-up.

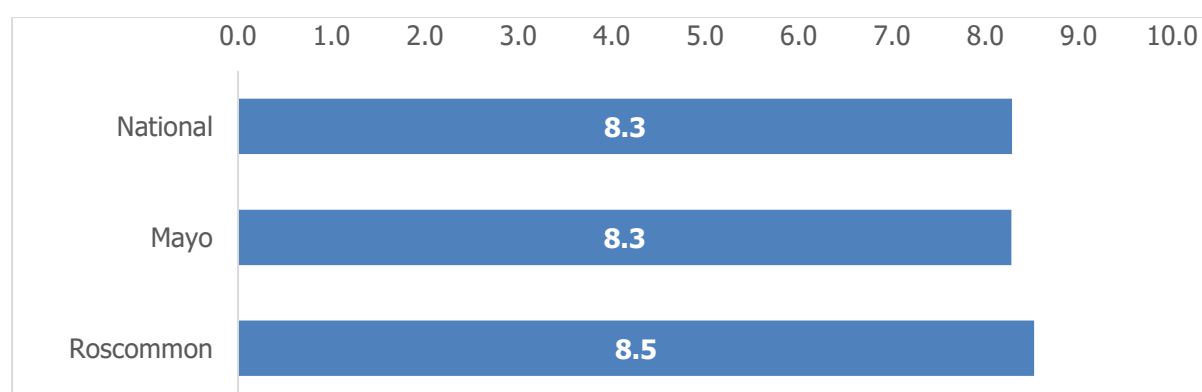
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<sup>3</sup> While the questions for this stage of care do not directly relate to care provided by Mayo University Hospital, it is important to represent all stages of a woman's maternity care journey in this report.

**Table 7. Results for questions on postnatal check-ups and engagement with support groups.**

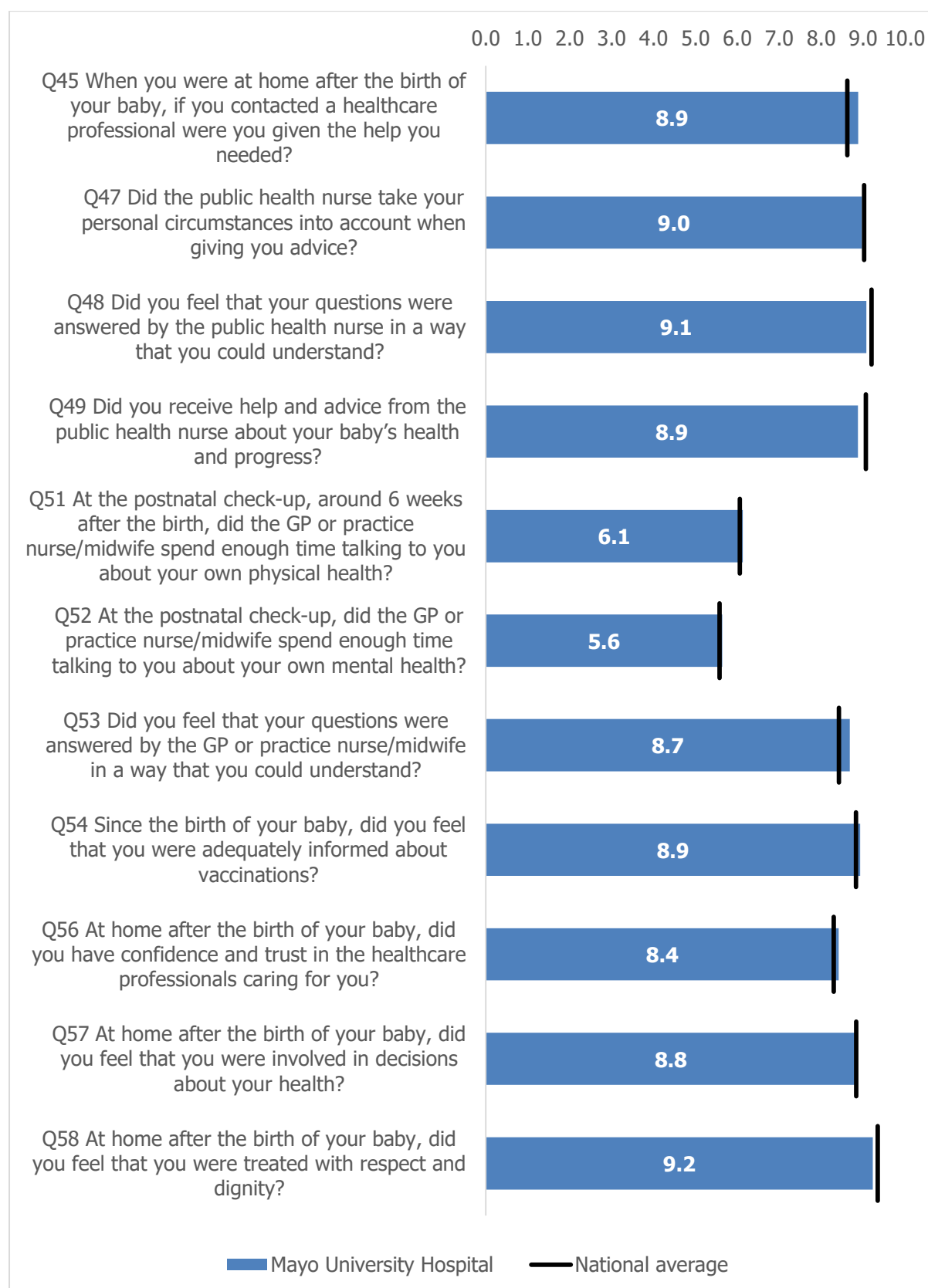
<b>Q46. Since your baby's birth, have you been visited at home by a public health nurse?</b>		
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	156	100.0%
No	0	0.0%
Not relevant to my situation	0	0.0%
Don't know or can't remember	0	0.0%
<b>Q50. Did your baby receive a 2-week check-up with your general practitioner (GP)?</b>		
Yes	143	91.7%
No, I did not know about the check-up	2	1.3%
No, I knew about the check-up but did not attend	4	2.6%
I attended another healthcare professional for the 2-week check-up	3	1.9%
Not relevant to my situation	2	1.3%
Don't know or can't remember	2	1.3%
<b>Q55. Did you use local support groups e.g. mother and baby groups, feeding support groups, etc.</b>		
Yes	48	30.8%
No	108	69.2%
Don't know or can't remember	0	0.0%

**Figure 12. 'Care at home after the birth of your baby' scores for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital compared by county of residence.<sup>4</sup>**



<sup>4</sup> Results for counties are only shown if five or more women from that county responded.

**Figure 13. Comparison of individual question scores for 'care at home after the birth of your baby' against the national average.**



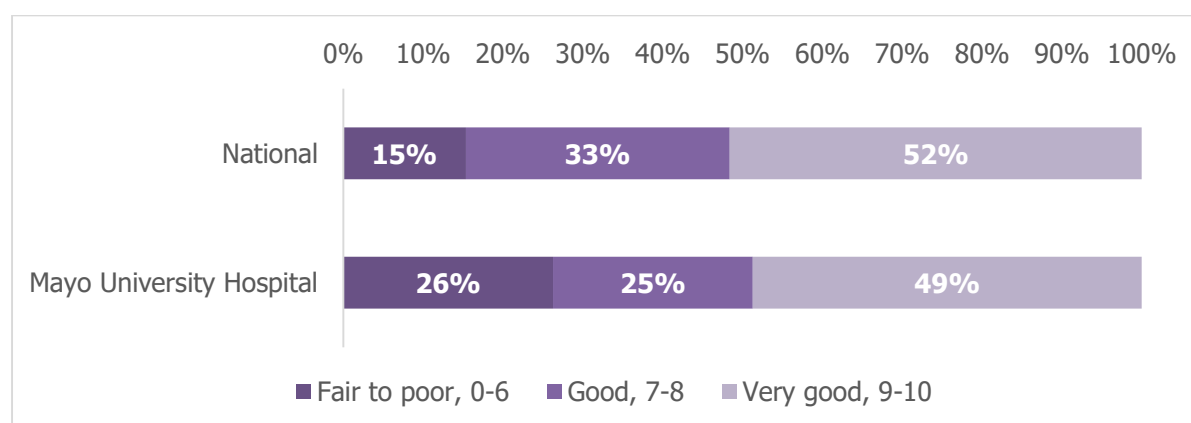
## Overall experience

Two questions examined women's overall experience of maternity care. The first question asked if they knew how to give feedback or make a complaint. 44 women (28.2%) answered 'yes', while 73 (46.8%) answered 'no'. 39 (25%) said they did not wish to give feedback or make a complaint.

Women were also asked to rate their overall maternity experience on a scale from 0 to 10, with 10 being the most positive experience, and 0 the most negative experience. 74% of women who gave birth at Mayo University Hospital rated their overall experience as good or very good, compared with 85% nationally

Figure 14 shows the average overall experience ratings for Mayo University Hospital compared with the national average.

**Figure 14. Comparison of overall maternity experiences scores for Mayo University Hospital against the national average.**



## Focus on: Involvement in decisions, confidence in staff, and respect and dignity

The National Maternity Strategy 2016-2026 emphasises the importance of women being empowered to make decisions about their maternity care, having confidence and trust in healthcare professionals, and being treated with respect and dignity. This section explores the relationship between these elements and women's overall ratings of the care they received.

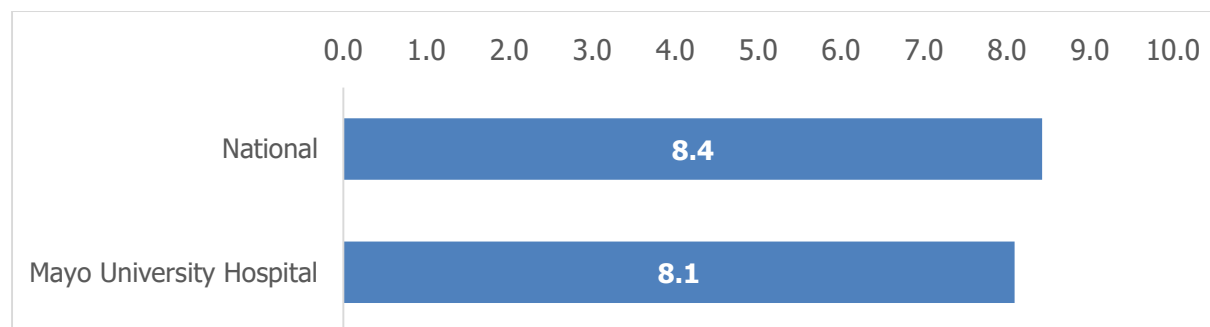
Eleven questions on the survey explore involvement in decisions, confidence and trust, and respect and dignity. The average scores for these questions as a whole for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital are compared with the national



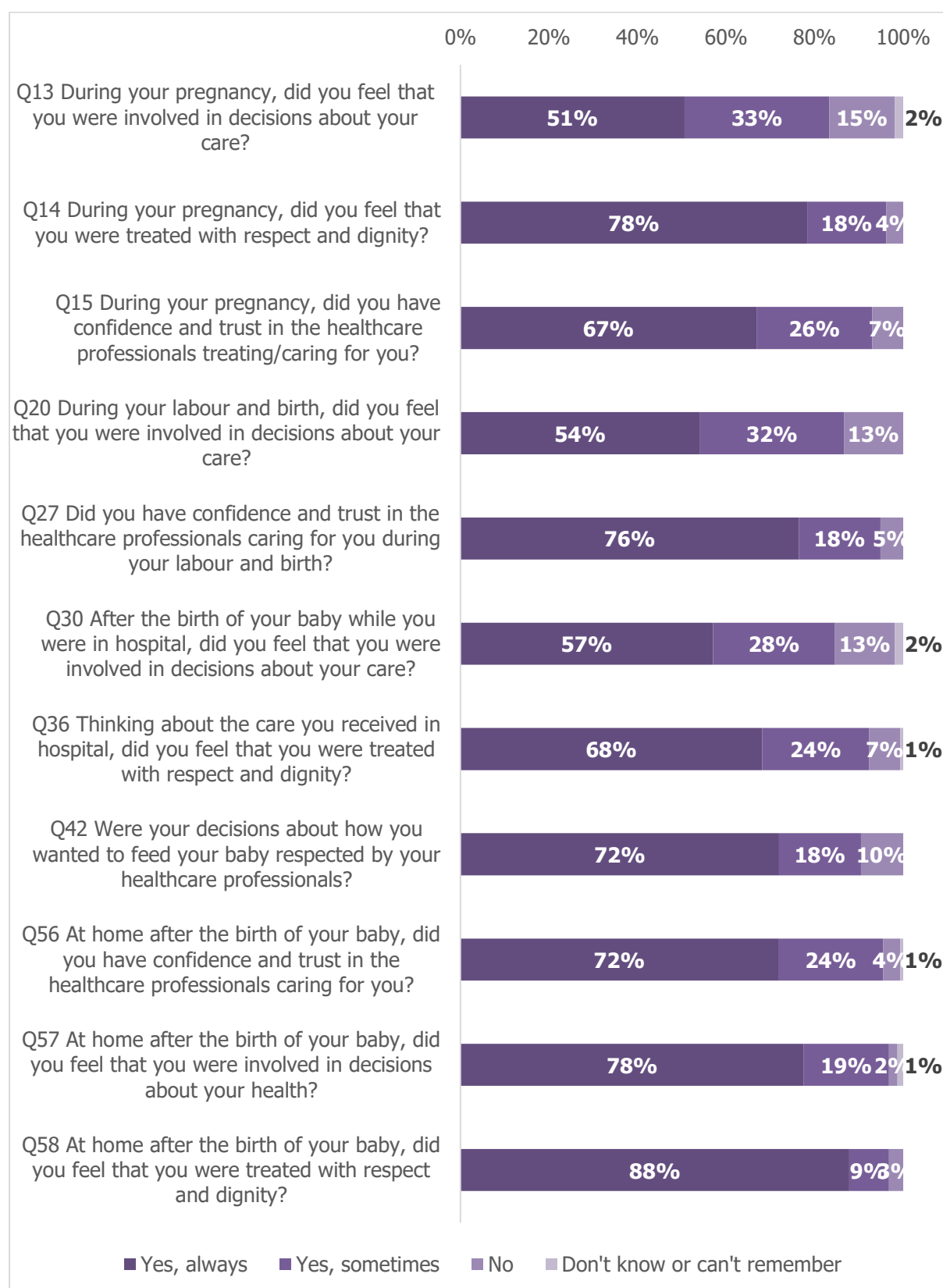
average in Figure 15. The responses for the relevant questions are presented in Figure 16.

Women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital rated the answers for these questions as about the same as the national average. The highest-scoring question for this stage related to being treated with respect and dignity at home after the birth, with 87.8% saying that they were always treated with respect and dignity at home. The lowest-scoring question related to involvement in decisions, with 51.6% saying they were always involved in decisions about their care during labour and birth, and the remaining women saying that they were only sometimes involved or not involved in decisions.

**Figure 15. Comparison of relevant questions for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital with the national average**



**Figure 16. Scores for questions about involvement in decisions, confidence and trust and respect and dignity for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital.**



## **In their own words: analysis of women's comments**

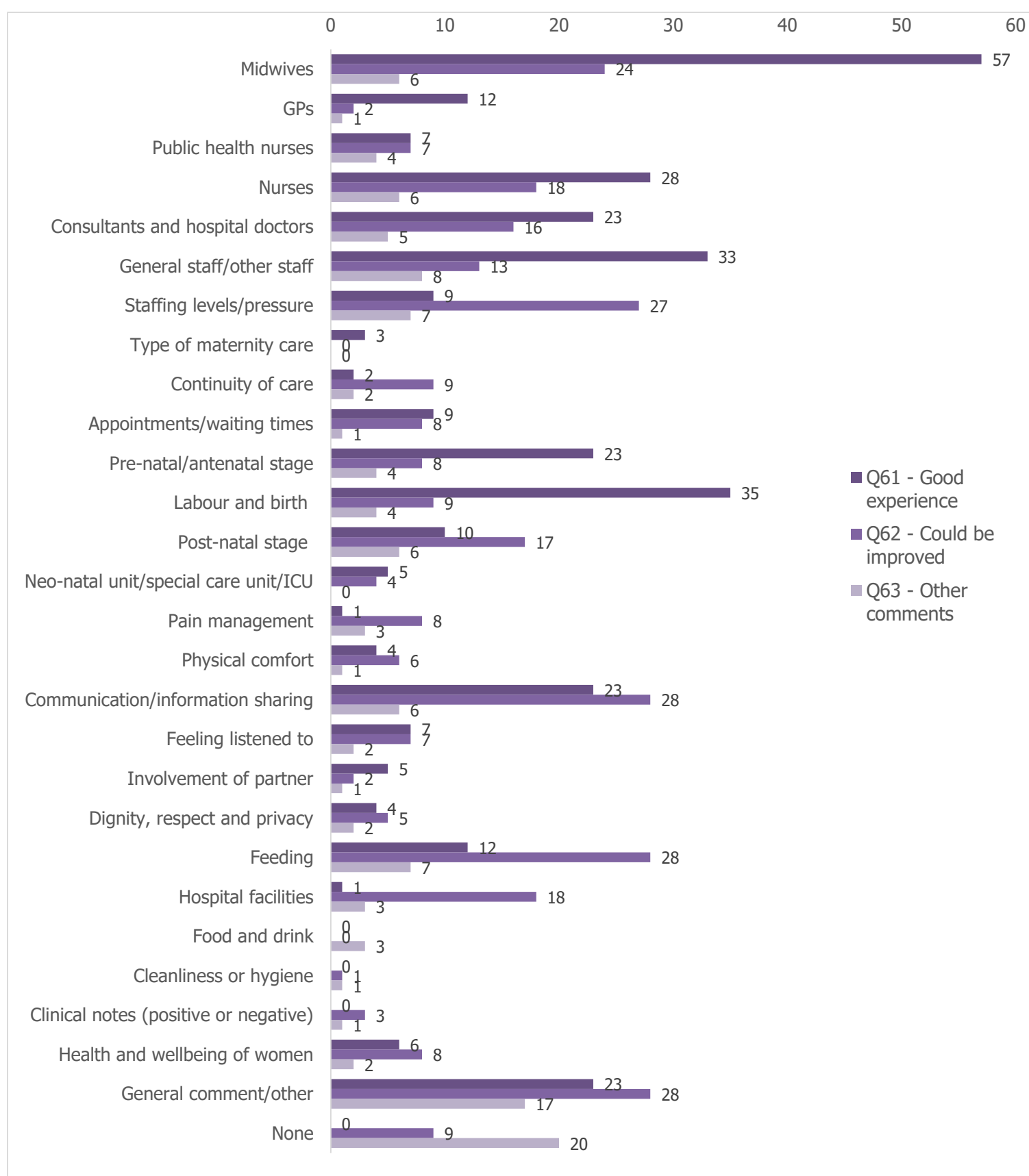
Three questions on the survey (questions 61-63) asked women to provide additional information, on their own words, on their maternity experiences. These free-text questions allowed women to give a more in-depth description of specific aspects of their maternity care. In total, 294 comments were received from women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital.

Figure 17 shows the breakdown of comments by theme for each of the three open-ended questions. Q61 asked women what was particularly good about their maternity care, Q62 asked women what could be improved, and Q63 asked women if there were any other aspects of their maternity care experience that they would like to describe.

For Q61, most of the comments related to the 'midwives', 'labour and birth' and 'general staff/other staff' themes. For Q62, most comments related to the 'staffing levels/pressure', 'feeding' and 'general and other comment' themes. Finally, most responses to Q63 related to the 'general and other comment', 'staffing levels/pressure', and 'general staff/other staff' themes.

Examples of the comments received in response to each free-text question are provided in Figure 18.

**Figure 17. Number of participant comments by theme.**



## Figure 18. Sample comments.

### Q61. Positive comments

"Midwives were excellent throughout labour and birth, so supportive, encouraging and positive. I had a beautiful birthing experience."

"All the staff at Mayo University were very attentive, helpful and friendly. I felt at ease through labour and after giving birth."

"I found the midwives involved in my care during labour to be particularly helpful, caring, understanding and they explained what was happening at various stages. They really were excellent."

### Q62. Suggestions for improvement

"Antenatal classes were outdated and lacked a sense of dignity women should be getting now. After care - still left to your devices in hours straight after labour - which are very important hours."

"I think that women after c section should receive more help after giving birth, especially when they are feeding the babies because it is every painful to get up"

"After having my 3rd c-section, where there are no complications, I feel the separation of mother and baby while the mother is in recovery should be looked at. It is stressful for all parties and delays bonding and feeding."

### Q63. Other comments

"I had a c-section. My baby was not afforded skin-to-skin with my husband or myself. I also felt that I was forced to give bottles to my baby when I was trying very hard to breastfeed."

"We are delighted to get opportunity to commend the great healthcare service we received in Ireland. Go raibh maith agaibh"

"It would have been helpful if we were given info about exact rules of visiting hours / who can visit before going into hospital."

## Conclusion

### What were women's experiences of maternity care in Mayo University Hospital in October 2019?

Most of the participants who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital has a positive experience of maternity care, with 74% saying they had a good or very good overall experience. This was below the national average of 85%.

Women who have birth in Mayo University Hospital gave lower ratings of their antenatal care than the national average. Ratings of all other stages were about the same as the national average. 49% of women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital said that they were offered a choice of the type of maternity care they would receive.

The highest-scoring questions for women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital related to partners' involvement in labour and birth, being treated with respect and dignity while at home after the birth, and public health nurses answering questions in a way that they could be understood. However, none of these questions scored significantly above the national average.

Women's ratings of the information they received during their pregnancy on changes to their mental health, the impact of smoking, and the impact of alcohol or drug abuse were all significantly below the national average. It was evident that some women did not receive sufficient information on these topics.

The responses to the three free-text questions provided very detailed information on women's experiences while in Mayo University Hospital and the maternity care they received in the community before and after giving birth. These comments identified the caring and helpful attitudes of healthcare professionals but also highlighted the difficulties that some women experienced in accessing help when they needed it.

The findings of the National Maternity Experience Survey will be used by Mayo University Hospital and community maternity care providers in the area to improve the maternity experiences of women who give birth in the hospital.

## Appendix 1: Areas that scored above or below the national average

### Improvement map

It is important for maternity care providers to know if they scored above or below the national average for each question, and this is shown in the improvement map in Figure 19. The improvement map also shows which questions are related to patients' overall experience in hospital. Some questions had a stronger relationship with overall experience than others.

For example, Question 38, which asked women if they received enough emotional support while their baby was in the neonatal unit had a strong relationship with overall experience. This means that women who said they were given enough emotional support were very likely to give a positive rating of their overall experience. Women who felt they were not given enough emotional support tended to give more negative ratings of their overall experience.

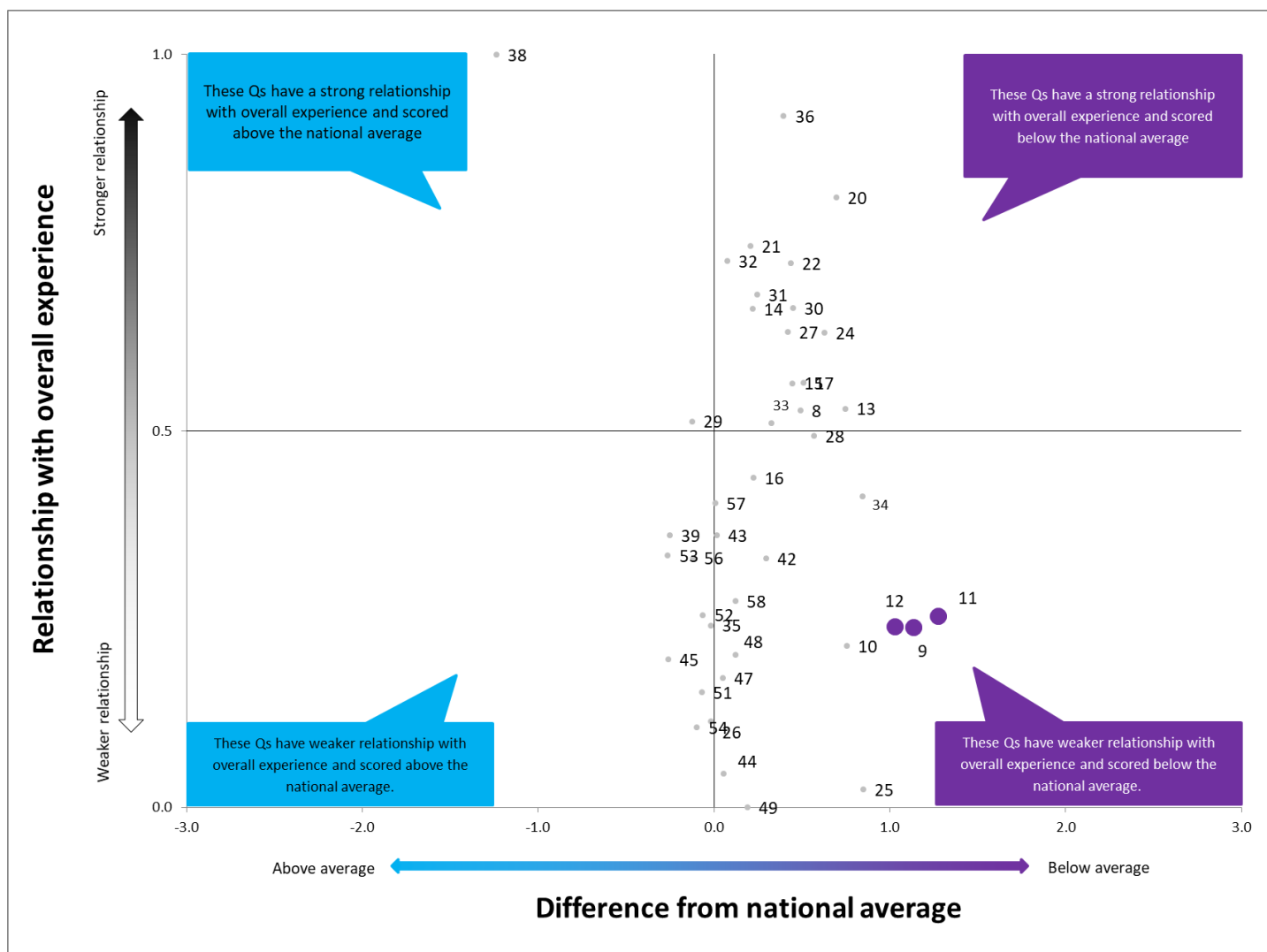
Other questions had a weaker relationship with overall experience – this means that patients' experiences in these areas had little bearing on how they rated their overall experience. An example is Question 49, which asked women if they received help and advice from the public health nurse about their baby's health and progress. The relationship between receiving this help and advice, and women's ratings of their overall experience was weak. This means that even if women received help and advice on their baby's health they may have given negative ratings of their overall experience, or if they did not receive help and advice, women may still have given positive ratings of their overall experience.

It is useful for maternity care providers to know which questions strongly relate to their patients' overall experience as these are the areas on which they should focus their improvement efforts.

In Figure 19, each dot shows a specific survey question Mayo University Hospital. Questions at the top of the graph are strongly related to overall experience, while those at the bottom have a weaker relationship. Questions to the right of the graph scored below the national average, while those on the left scored above it.

The improvement map for each hospital is unique and gives specific information on where a hospital is doing well, and areas where improvements are needed. An interactive version of the improvement map is also available at [www.yourexperience.ie/](http://www.yourexperience.ie/), along with instructions on how to interpret it.

**Figure 19. Improvement map for responses of women who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital**





## Appendix 2: Description of models of maternity care

There are multiple types of maternity care, often described as 'models' of maternity care, available across Ireland. Each model of maternity care involves a varied mix of maternity services and healthcare professionals. These models of care, and where they are provided, are described in detail below.

### **Public care**

Also known as combined care or shared care. Regular antenatal check-ups with midwives and/or obstetricians in the hospital and, in most cases, with a General Practitioner (GP). Labour and birth in the hospital. Postnatal care in a public ward in the hospital with subsequent postnatal check-ups in a community setting.

### **Consultant-led care private or semi-private**

Antenatal check-ups with a private obstetrician (chosen by the women) with the option of sharing these with a GP as part of combined/shared care. Labour and birth in the hospital with care provided by an obstetrician/the obstetrician's team and hospital midwives. Postnatal care in a private or semi-private ward in the hospital with subsequent postnatal check-ups in a community setting.

### **DOMINO (Domiciliary In and Out)**

Antenatal check-ups with one midwife or a small team of midwives in the hospital or in a community setting, with the option of sharing these antenatal checks-ups with a GP as part of combined/shared care. Labour and birth in the hospital. Transfer home within 12-24 hours after birth. Postnatal care in a public ward in the hospital with subsequent postnatal check-ups in a community setting.

### **Midwifery-led care with birth in a midwifery-led unit (Cavan General and Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital Drogheda only)**

Antenatal check-ups with a midwife or a small team of midwives in a midwifery-led unit or in a community setting. Labour and birth in a midwifery-led unit. Postnatal care in a midwifery-led unit with subsequent postnatal check-ups in a community setting.

**Community midwifery team care**

Antenatal check-ups with a midwife or a small team of midwives in the hospital or in a community setting, with the option of sharing these antenatal check-ups with a GP as part of combined/shared care. Labour and birth in the hospital. Postnatal care in a public ward in the hospital with subsequent postnatal check-ups in a community setting.

**Home birth with hospital based or self-employed community midwives (SECM)**

Antenatal check-ups at home or in a community setting with either a hospital-based or self-employed community midwife (chosen by the women). Labour and birth at home with care provided by a midwife. Postnatal care in a community setting.

## References

1. Department of Health. Creating a better future together: national maternity strategy 2016-2026. 2016.



# National Maternity Experience Survey

