



National Maternity Experience Survey 2020

Wexford General Hospital

2020 survey results

Respondents



149

Number of respondents

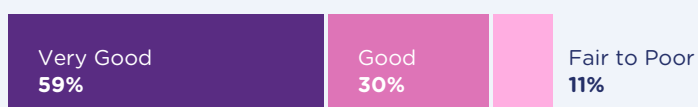


53%

Participation rate

Overall experience

2020



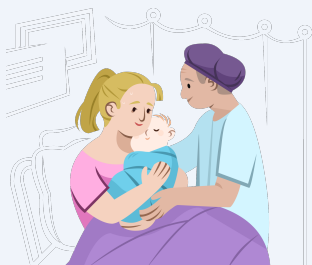
Stages of care



Care while pregnant (antenatal care)

Care provided in the hospital and the community

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



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

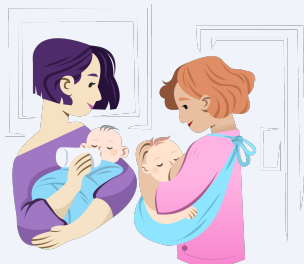
Ratings of 'care in hospital after the birth' were about the same as the national average. The highest-scoring question related to being treated with respect and dignity. The lowest-scoring question related to 'debriefing' and the opportunity for women to ask questions about their labour and birth after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



Specialised care*

Care provided in the hospital

73% of women said that they had a very good overall experience of the care their baby received in the neonatal unit in Wexford General 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 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 or practice nurse/midwife discussing mental health during the 6-week check-up.



*See page 18 of this report for more information.

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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 care services from the perspectives of the women who use them.⁽¹⁾

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.

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 Wexford General 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 Wexford General Hospital, and by general practitioners and public health nurses based in the community.

What were the findings for women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital?

The majority of women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital said they had a positive overall experience. 89% said their maternity care was good or very good, compared with 85% nationally. The hospital scored close to the national average for each stage of care.

55% of women who gave birth in Wexford General 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.

Women's ratings of the provision of information about any changes they might experience with their mental health or physical health after they were discharged from hospital, and the care their baby received in the neonatal unit were significantly above the national average. However, Q35 scored significantly below the national average. This question asked whether women were told who to contact if they were worried about their health or their baby's health after they left hospital.

The responses to the three free-text questions provided very detailed information on women's experiences while in Wexford General 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?

280 women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital in October and November 2019 were invited to participate in the survey. 149 women completed the survey, representing a response rate of 53%.¹ Table 1 provides information on the characteristics of the women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital who responded to the survey. Most of these women said that they lived in Wexford.

¹ 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.

Table 1. Characteristics of respondents who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital.

Age category		
	No.	%
Under 25	8	5.4%
25-29	34	22.8%
30-34	49	32.9%
35-39	50	33.6%
40 or older	8	5.4%
Previous births		
None	55	40.4%
One or two	65	47.8%
Three or more	16	11.8%
Ethnic group		
White Irish	129	87.2%
Irish Traveller	1	0.7%
Roma	1	0.7%
Any other White background	13	8.8%
Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	1	0.7%
Any other Asian background	1	0.7%
Arabic	1	0.7%
Mixed	1	0.7%
County of residence		
Carlow	3	2.0%
Wexford	136	91.3%
Wicklow	10	6.7%

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 Wexford General 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.

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 Wexford General 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 Wexford General 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 the scored above the national average

Care after birth

Information about physical recovery before leaving hospital | Q33.

98 (73.6%) out of the 148 women who answered this question, said that they received information about their physical recovery before they were discharged from hospital.

Care after birth

Information about mental health before leaving hospital | Q34.

89 (62.2%) out of the 143 women who answered this question, said that they received information about any changes they might experience with their mental health before they were discharged from hospital.

Specialised care

Overall experience of neonatal unit | Q39.

23 (95.8%) out of the 24 women who answered this question, rated their experience of the care their baby received in the neonatal unit as good or very good.

Areas that scored below the national average

Care after birth

Information on support services after discharge | Q35.

111 out of the 141 women (78.7%) who responded to this question said that they were told who to contact if they were worried about their health or their baby's health after they left hospital.

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 Wexford General Hospital.

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

Q1. In your most recent pregnancy, did you give birth to...		
	No.	%
A single baby	149	100.0%
Twins	0	0.0%
Triplets, quads or more	0	0.0%
Q2. Who was the first healthcare professional you saw when you thought you were pregnant?		
GP / family doctor	136	91.3%
Midwife	5	3.4%
Other	8	5.4%

82 women (55%) who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital said that they were offered a choice of maternity care, while 52 (34.9%) 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 Wexford General Hospital.

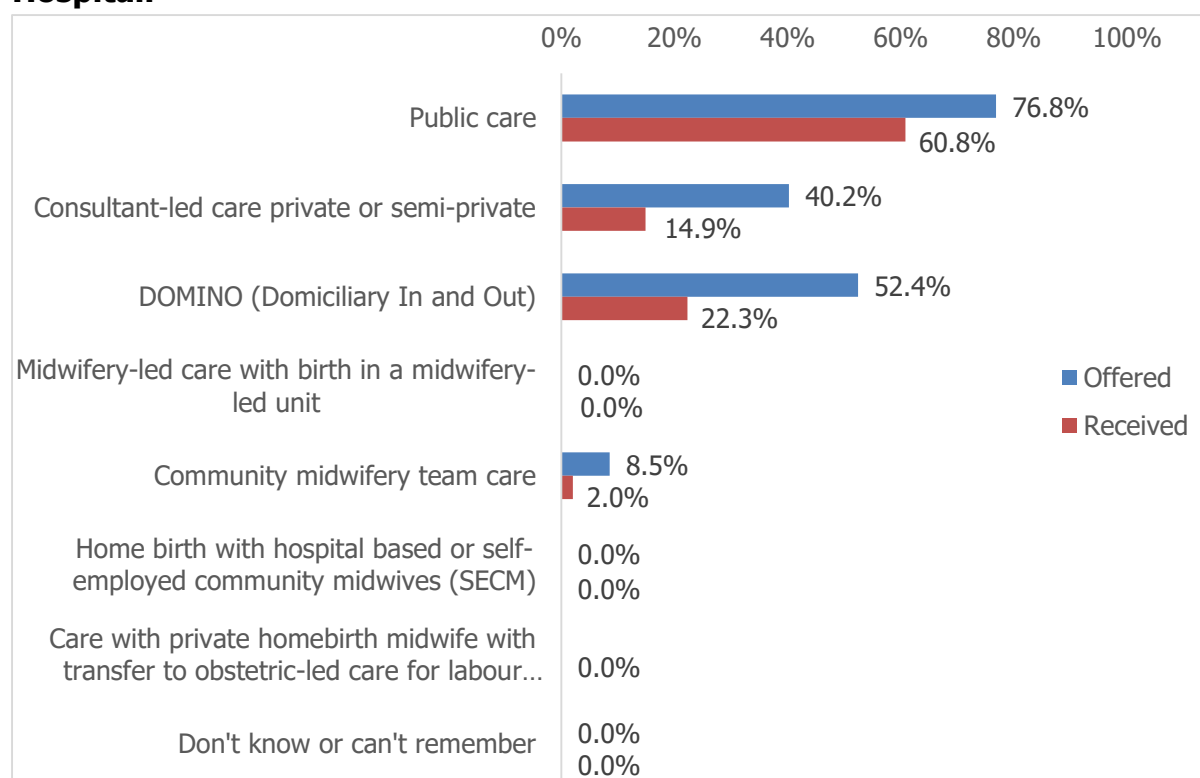


Table 3. Results for questions on antenatal classes or courses attended by women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital.

Q6. During your pregnancy were you offered any antenatal classes or courses?		
	No.	%
Yes, and I did them	55	36.9%
Yes, but I did not do them	55	36.9%
No	38	25.5%
Don't know or can't remember	1	0.7%
Q7. Are there any particular reasons you did not go to antenatal classes or courses?		
It was not my first baby	42	76.4%
It was my first baby but I didn't want to go to classes	4	7.3%
There were no available spaces/they were booked out	4	7.3%
I couldn't find classes that were right for me	1	1.8%
There were no classes near me	2	3.6%
I had other commitments	1	1.8%
Other	4	7.3%

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 Wexford General Hospital in Figure 3. Scores for the individual questions are compared against the national average in Figure 4.

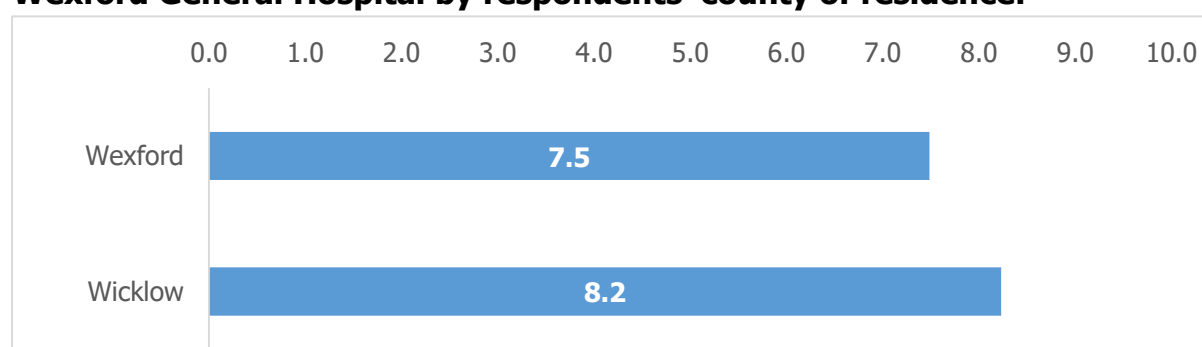
Women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital rated their antenatal care as about the same as the national average.

The highest-scoring question for this stage related to respect and dignity, with 82.4% saying they were always treated with respect and dignity during their pregnancy. The lowest-scoring question related to information about mental health. 26.1% said 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 Wexford General Hospital against the national average.

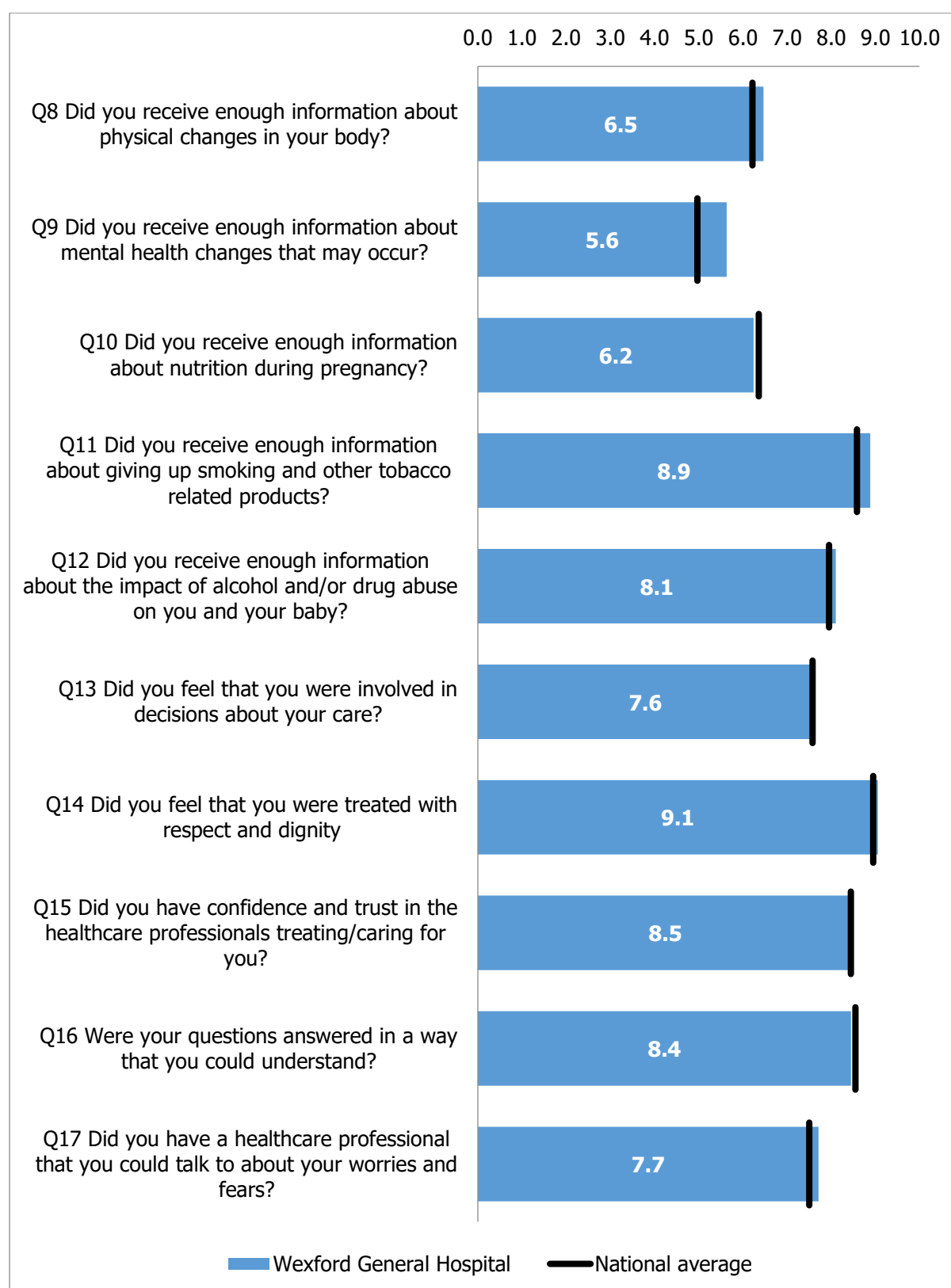


Figure 3. Comparison of 'Care while pregnant (antenatal care)' scores for Wexford General Hospital by respondents' county of residence.²



² 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.



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 Wexford General 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 Wexford General 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 96.6% 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 about care during labour and birth, with 13 women (8.8%) reporting that they were not involved in decisions about their care.

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

Q18. Thinking about the birth of your baby, was your labour induced?		
	No.	%
Yes	55	36.9%
No	90	60.4%
Don't know or can't remember	4	2.7%
Q19. What type of birth did you have?		
A vaginal birth (no forceps or ventouse suction cup)	79	53.0%
An assisted vaginal birth (e.g. with forceps or ventouse suction cup)	24	16.1%
A planned caesarean birth	24	16.1%
An unplanned caesarean birth	22	14.8%
Q23. Were you (and or your partner or companion) left alone by healthcare professionals at a time when it worried you?		
Yes, during early labour	21	14.1%
Yes, during the later stages of labour	10	6.7%
Yes, during the birth	0	0.0%
Yes, shortly after the birth	10	6.7%
No, not at all	115	77.2%

Figure 5. Comparison of 'Care during labour and birth' scores for Wexford General Hospital against the national average.

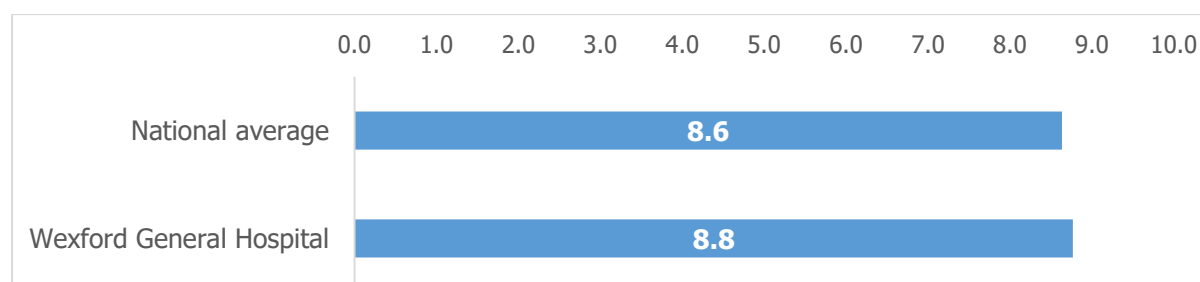
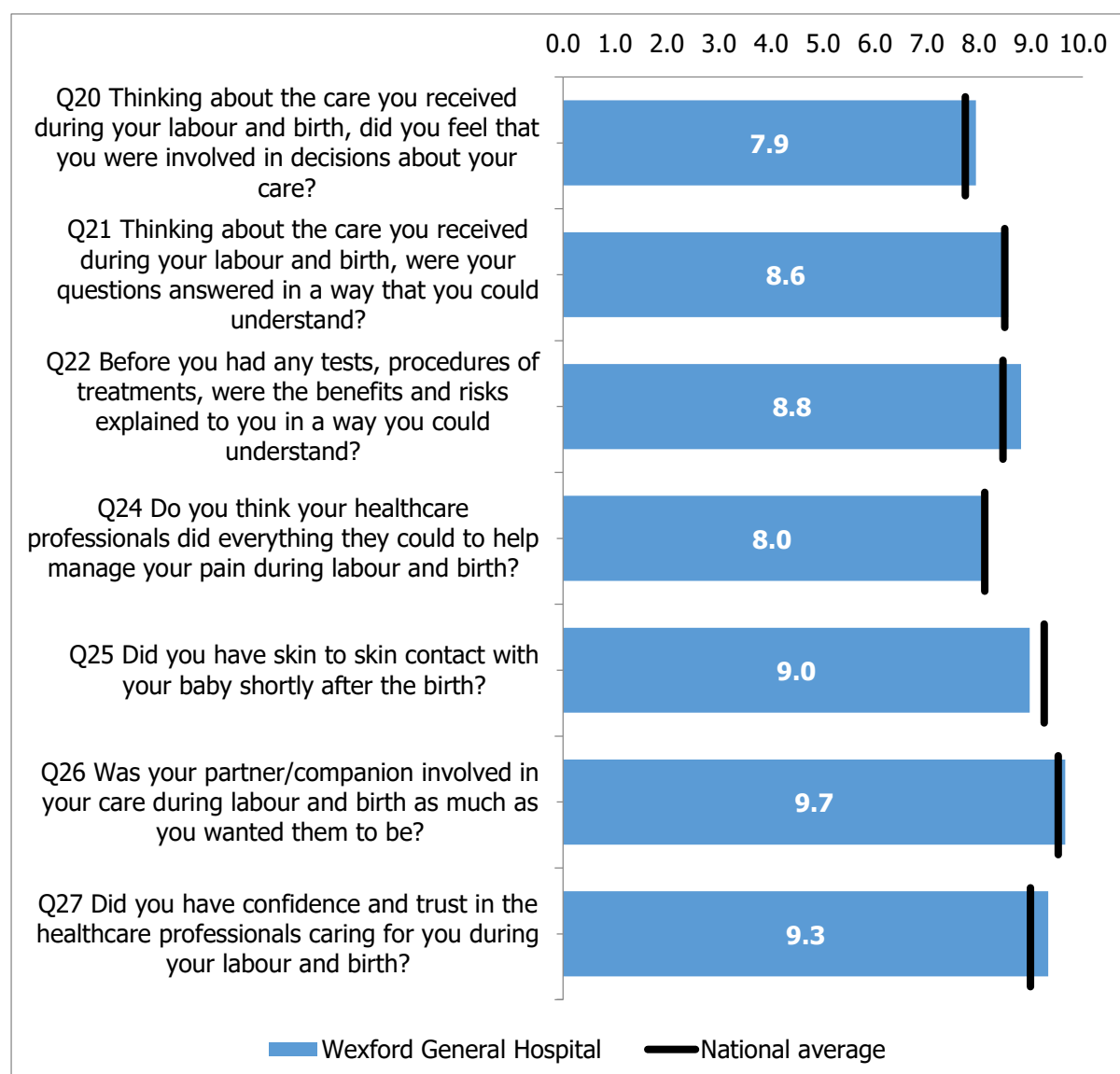


Figure 6. Comparison of individual question scores for 'Care during labour and birth' in Wexford General Hospital against the national average.



Care in hospital after the birth

The questions for this stage related to the care women who gave birth in Wexford General 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 against the individual questions in Figure 8.

Women who gave birth in Wexford General 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 treated with respect and dignity in hospital, with 77.9% saying they were always treated with respect and dignity. The lowest-scoring question related to 'debriefing' with 32 women (23.9%) reporting 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 Wexford General Hospital against the national average.

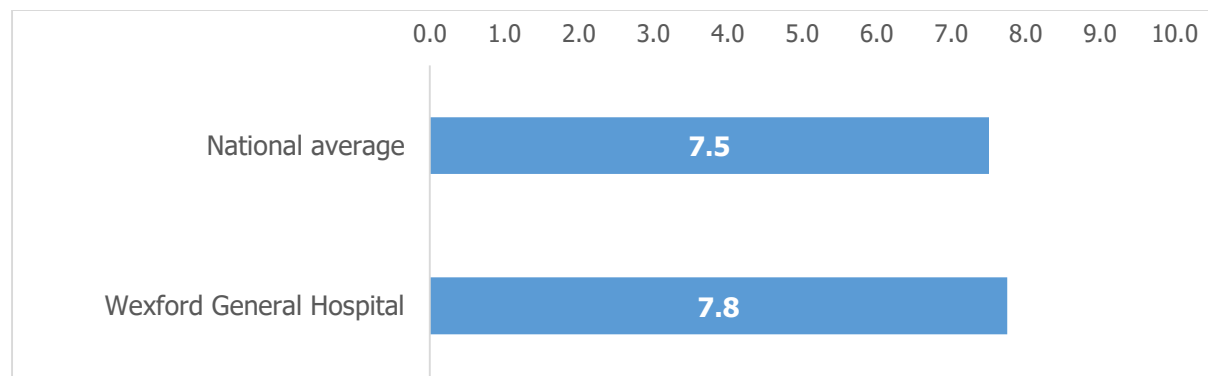
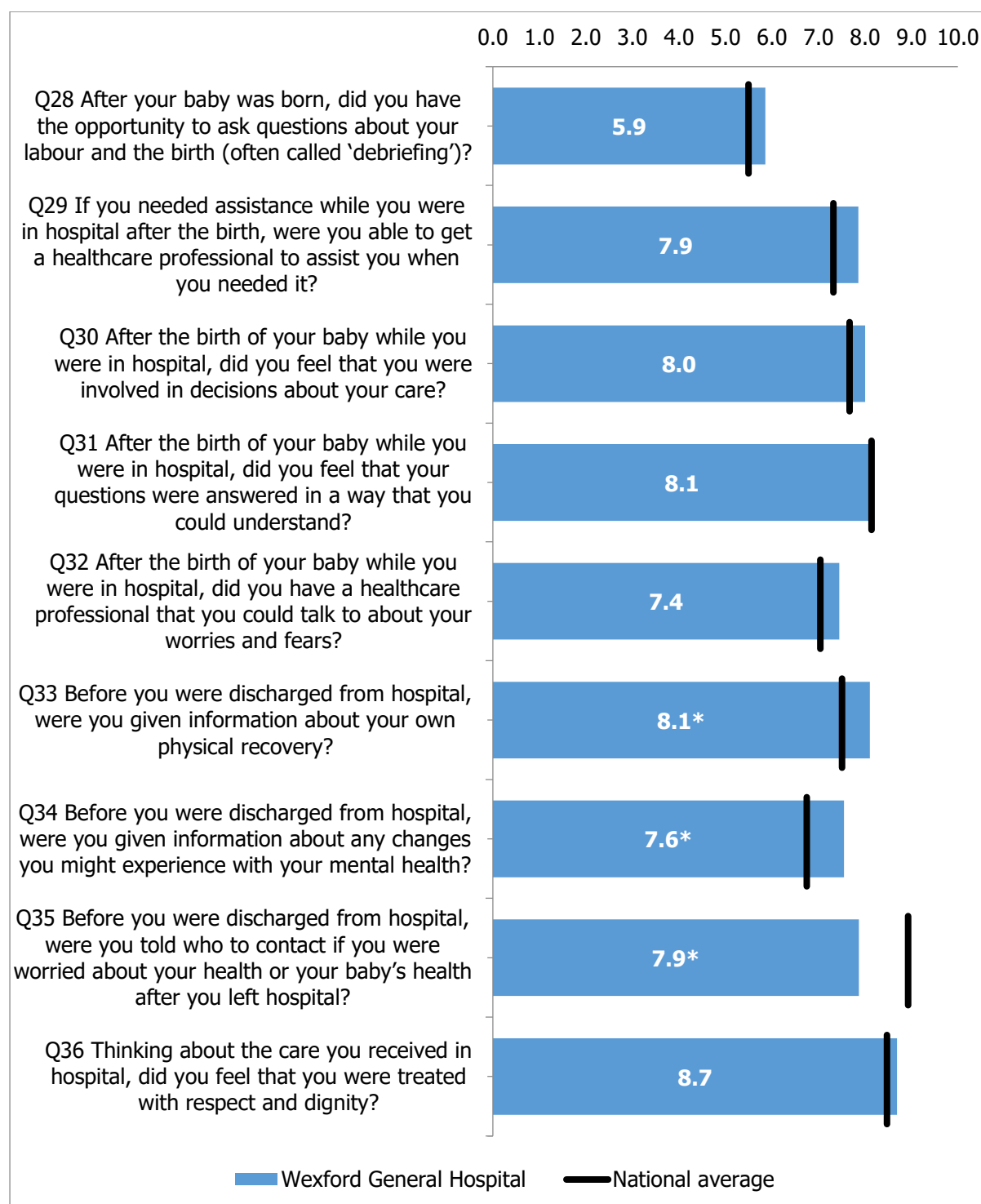


Figure 8. Comparison of individual question scores for 'Care in hospital after the birth' in Wexford General Hospital against the national average.



* indicates a statistically significant difference from the national average

Specialised care

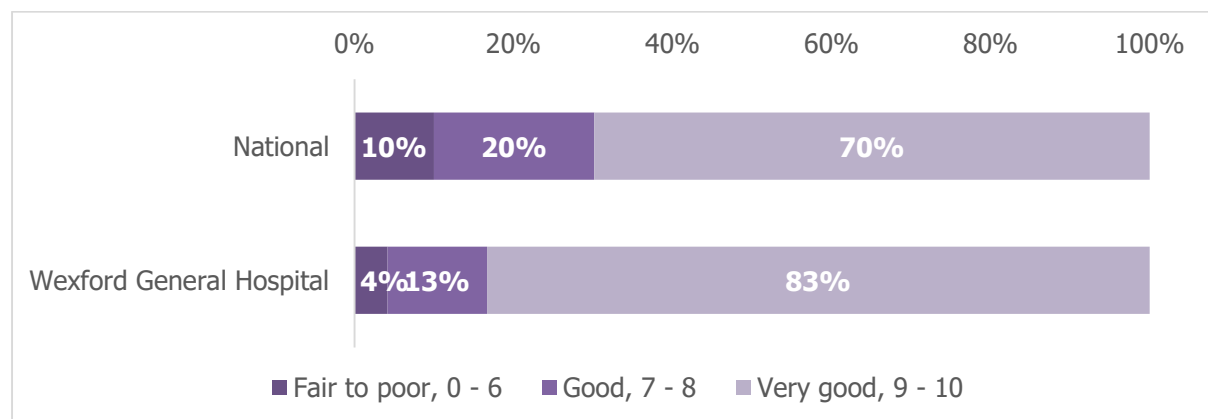
The questions for this stage explore the experiences of women whose babies required specialist care in a neonatal unit after birth. Women whose baby was not admitted to a neonatal unit did not answer Q38 or Q39. The results for Q37 and Q38 are shown in Table 5. Q39 asked women to rate their experience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

83% of women said that they had a very good overall experience of the care their baby received in the neonatal unit. This was significantly higher than the national average of 70%.

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

Q37. Following the birth, did your baby spend any time in the neonatal unit?		
	N	%
Yes	23	15.5%
No	124	83.8%
Don't know or can't remember	1	0.7%
Q38. While your baby was in the neonatal unit, did you receive enough emotional support from healthcare professionals?		
Yes, always	10	41.7%
Yes, sometimes	9	37.5%
No	4	16.7%
I did not want or need any emotional support	0	0.0%
Don't know or can't remember	1	4.2%

Figure 9. Comparison of overall ratings of experiences in the neonatal unit at Wexford General 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 Wexford General Hospital rated the 'Feeding' questions as about the same as the national average.

Most women (80.5%) said that their decision 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 15 women (11.2%) 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.

Q40. Did your healthcare professionals discuss with you the different options for Feeding?		
	No.	%
Yes, during pregnancy	98	65.8%
Yes, during labour or immediately after birth	31	20.8%
Yes, after birth while in hospital	41	27.5%
Yes, after birth while at home	21	14.1%
No	10	6.7%
I did not want or need discussion of different options	21	14.1%
Don't know or can't remember	0	0.0%
Q41. In the first few days after the birth, how was your baby fed?		
Breast milk (or expressed breast milk) only	69	46.3%
Both breast and formula (bottle) milk	34	22.8%
Formula (bottle) milk only	46	30.9%
Don't know or can't remember	0	0.0%

Figure 10. Comparison of scores for 'Feeding' in Wexford General Hospital against the national average.

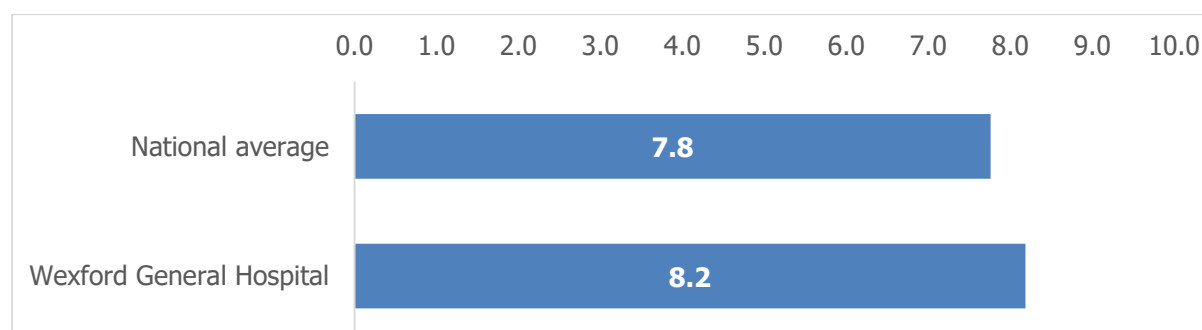
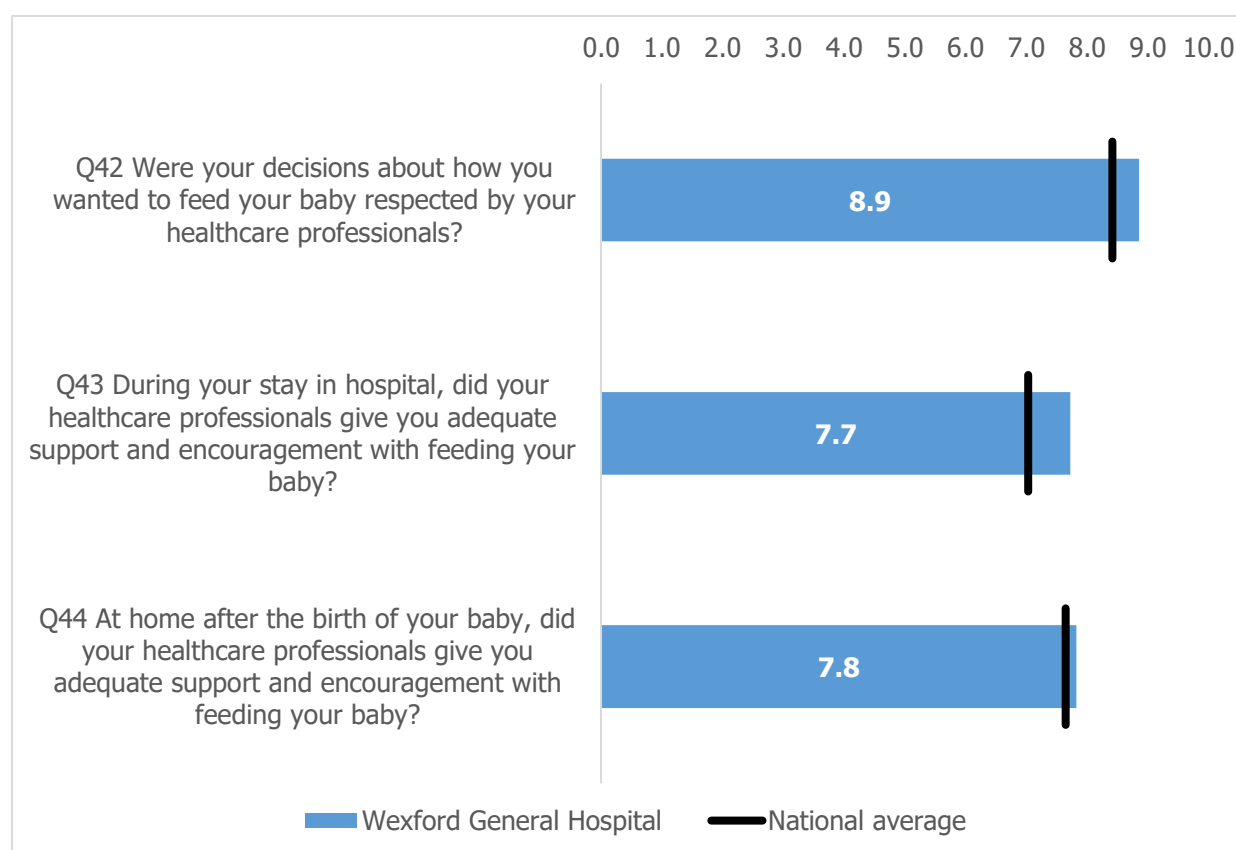


Figure 11. Comparison of individual question scores for 'Feeding' in Wexford General Hospital against the national average.



Care at home after the birth

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.³ 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 Wexford General 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 Wexford General 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 Wexford General Hospital rated their care at home after the birth as about the same as the national average.

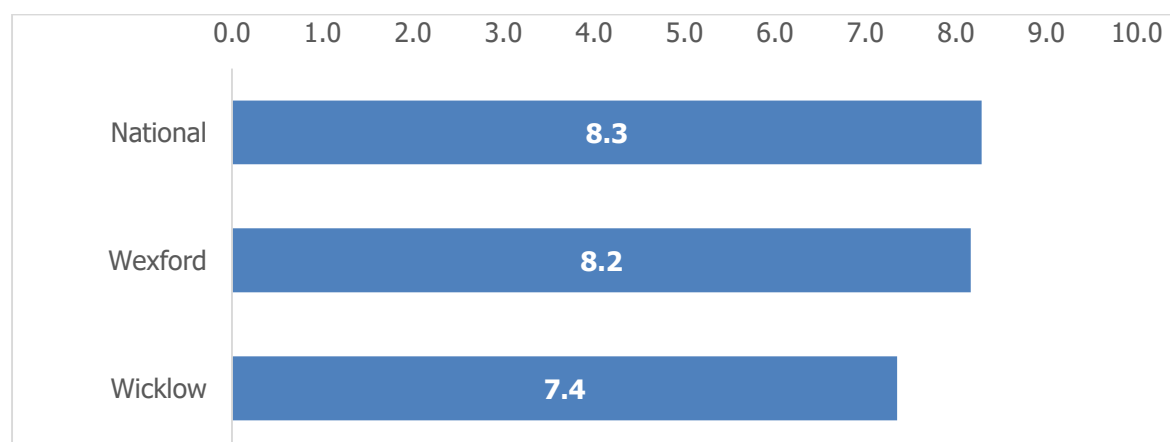
The highest-scoring question for this stage related to being treated with respect and dignity, with 89.1% saying that they were always treated with respect and dignity at home after the birth of their baby. The lowest-scoring questions related to the time spent by the GP or practice nurse/midwife discussing mental health at their six-week check-up. 31.7% said that there was not enough time spent discussing their mental health at this check-up.

³ While the questions for this stage of care do not directly relate to care provided by Wexford General 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.

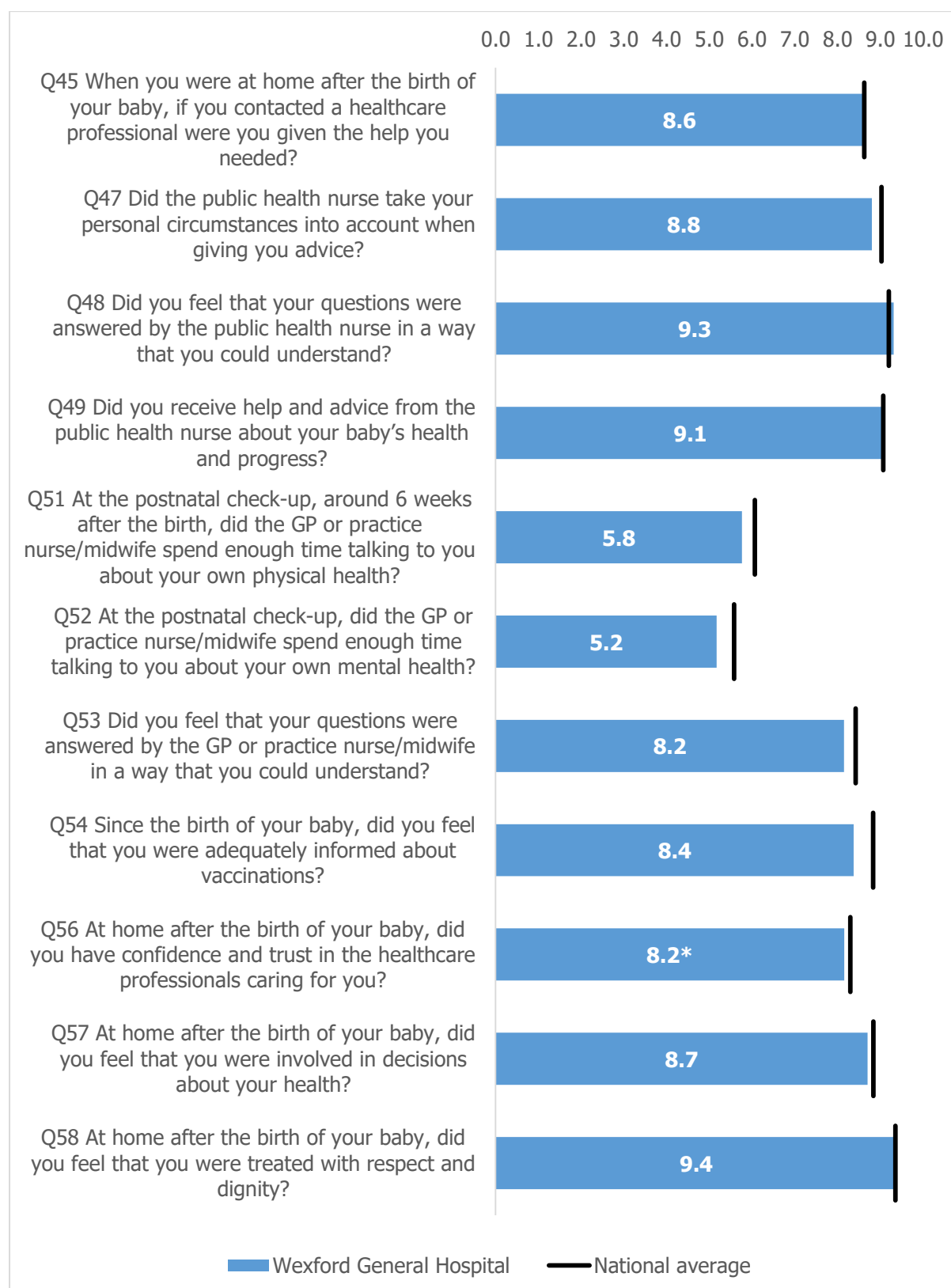
Q46. Since your baby's birth, have you been visited at home by a public health nurse?		
	No.	%
Yes	148	100.0%
No	0	0.0%
Not relevant to my situation	0	0.0%
Don't know or can't remember	0	0.0%
Q50. Did your baby receive a 2-week check-up with your general practitioner (GP)?		
Yes	122	81.9%
No, I did not know about the check-up	12	8.1%
No, I knew about the check-up but did not attend	10	6.7%
I attended another healthcare professional for the 2-week check-up	4	2.7%
Not relevant to my situation	0	0.0%
Don't know or can't remember	1	0.7%
Q55. Did you use local support groups e.g. mother and baby groups, feeding support groups, etc.		
Yes	30	20.1%
No	119	79.9%
Don't know or can't remember	0	0.0%

Figure 12. 'Care at home after the birth' scores for women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital compared by county of residence.⁴



⁴ 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' against the national average.



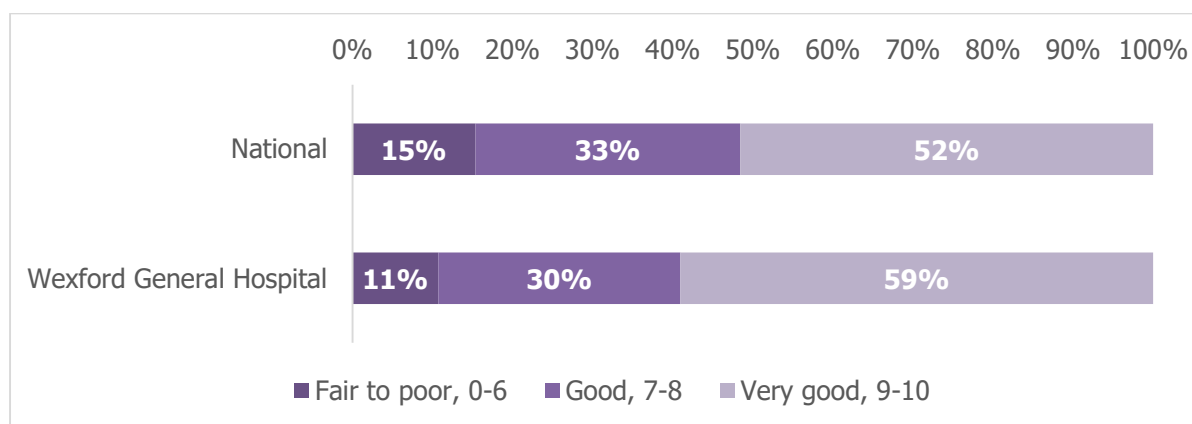
Overall experience

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. In total, 46 women (30.9%) answered 'yes', while 64 (43%) answered 'no'. 39 (26.2%) 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. 89% of women who gave birth at Wexford General Hospital rated their overall experience as good or very good, compared with 85% nationally.

Figure 14 shows the average overall experience ratings for Wexford General Hospital compared with the national average.

Figure 14. Comparison of overall maternity experiences scores for Wexford General 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.

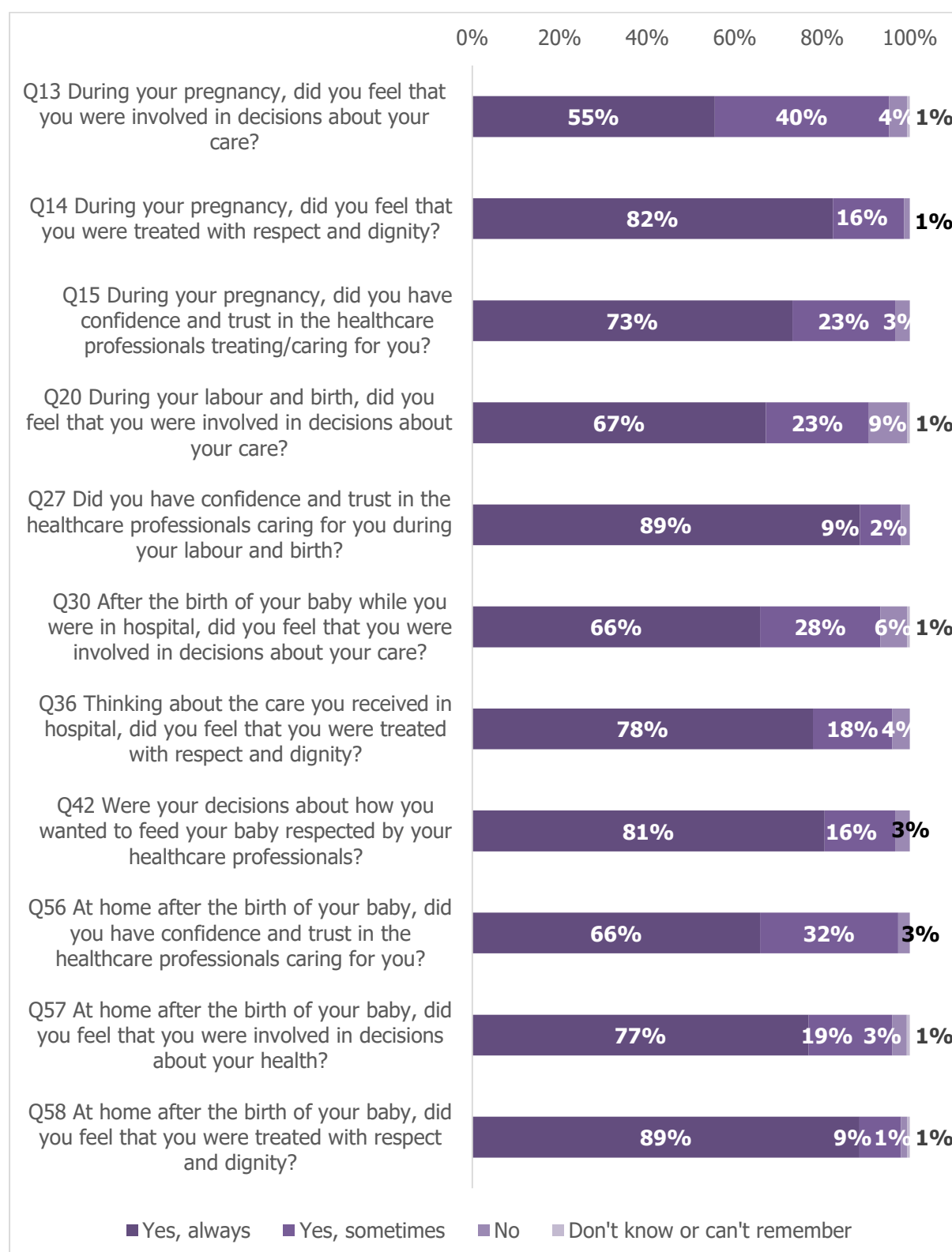
Eleven questions on the survey explore involvement in decisions, confidence and trust, and respect and dignity. The average scores for these questions as a whole for women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital are compared with the national average in Figure 15. The responses for the relevant questions are presented in Figure 16.

Women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital rated the questions for these questions about the same as the national average. The joint highest-scoring questions for this stage related to being treated with respect and dignity at home after the birth and having confidence and trust in the healthcare professionals. In total, 88.5% said that they were always treated with respect and dignity at home and 88.6% reported that they always had confidence and trust in the healthcare professionals during their labour and birth. The lowest-scoring question related to involvement in decisions, with 55.4% saying they were always involved in decisions about their care during pregnancy, and the remaining women only sometimes involved or not involved in decisions.

Figure 15. Comparison of relevant questions for women who gave birth in Wexford General 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 Wexford General Hospital.



In their own words: analysis of women's comments

Three survey questions (questions 61-63) asked women to provide additional information, in 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, 284 comments were received from women who gave birth in Wexford General 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 'communication/information sharing' themes. For Q62, most comments related to the 'midwives', 'feeding' and 'postnatal care' themes. Finally, most responses to Q63 related to the 'general comments' and 'communication/information sharing' themes.

It is notable the midwives feature strongly to the responses for each of the three questions. There are many times more positive comments than suggestions for improvement relating to midwives, which likely reflects the nature and importance of the interactions that women have with midwives during labour and birth.

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.

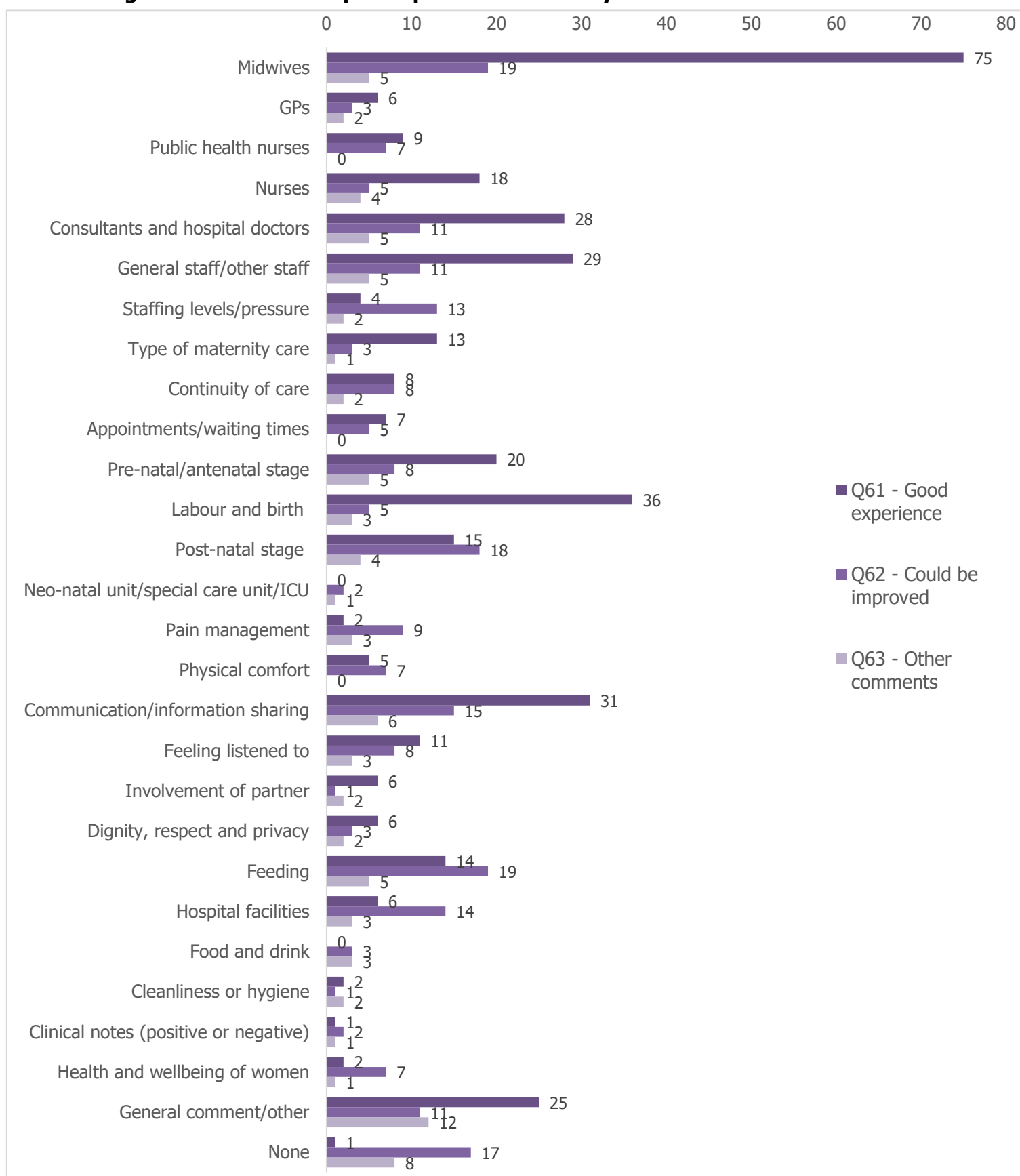


Figure 18. Sample comments.

Q61. Positive comments

"With the domino scheme, I found it very relaxed and stress free. Full of helpful information. Quick appointments with little or no delays. Kind and caring midwives, who were friendly."

"The midwives in the labour and delivery ward were very attentive, I appreciated that the same nurse came back to me when shifts changed as she was already familiar to me. Pain relief was offered very swiftly when requested. I also felt they looked after my husband well."

"Yes, the time the nurses gave to me to chat, to reassure me and support me in the birth. The genuine care and thoughtfulness from the nurses even when a shift finished they would return to check up or say hello."

Q62. Suggestions for improvement

"I was put into a pre-natal ward as all maternity wards were full. Couldn't avail of hospital antenatal classes were booked up for months in advance. Was my first baby so I had to pay for them privately which was disappointing."

"Lactation Consultant needed in hospital. Skin-to-skin with mother after having a C-section. Reduced ratio of patients to mid-wives. Insure every midwife gives the same advice. Reduce waiting time for pre-natal appointments."

"Care in the hospital was fantastic, however another GP check apart from the 2 week check would be great, as at one point the GP raised a concern that the Public health nurse did not check for. Although the nurses have been fantastic i would be reassured if there was a second GP visit at say 3 months."

Q63. Other comments

"I have to say that the work at every level in the hospital from the consultants to the lunch ladies was phenomenal and at all times I felt reassured and cared for, making my first birth a fantastic experience."

"Addition pregnancy related clinics or supports may be relevant as these areas seem to be very under resourced, in Wexford general at least."

"The information regarding labour & placenta complications were not evident in any literature I received. Also, further information required regarding bringing your baby home and the first 6 weeks that follow regarding adjusting to a new life."

Conclusion

What were women's experiences of maternity care in Wexford General Hospital in October 2019?

Most of the participants who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital has a positive experience of maternity care, with 89% saying they had a good or very good overall experience, compared with 85% nationally.

Across each stage of care from antenatal care through to postnatal care at home, women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital rated their care as similar to the national average. 55% of women who gave birth in Wexford General Hospital said that they were offered a choice of the type of maternity care they would receive.

The hospital scored above the national average for ratings of care in the neonatal unit, in addition to the provision of information to women on their physical and mental health prior to discharge.

Wexford General Hospital scored below the national average in relation to information on who women should contact if they were worried about their own health or their baby's health after they left hospital.

The responses to the three free-text questions provided very detailed information on women's experiences while in Wexford General 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 Wexford General 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 21, which asked whether women were given answers they could understand to the questions they asked during labour and birth, had a strong relationship with overall experience. This means that women who were given answers they could understand were very likely to give a positive rating of their overall experience. Women who felt they did not get answers they could understand tended to give more negative ratings of their overall experience.

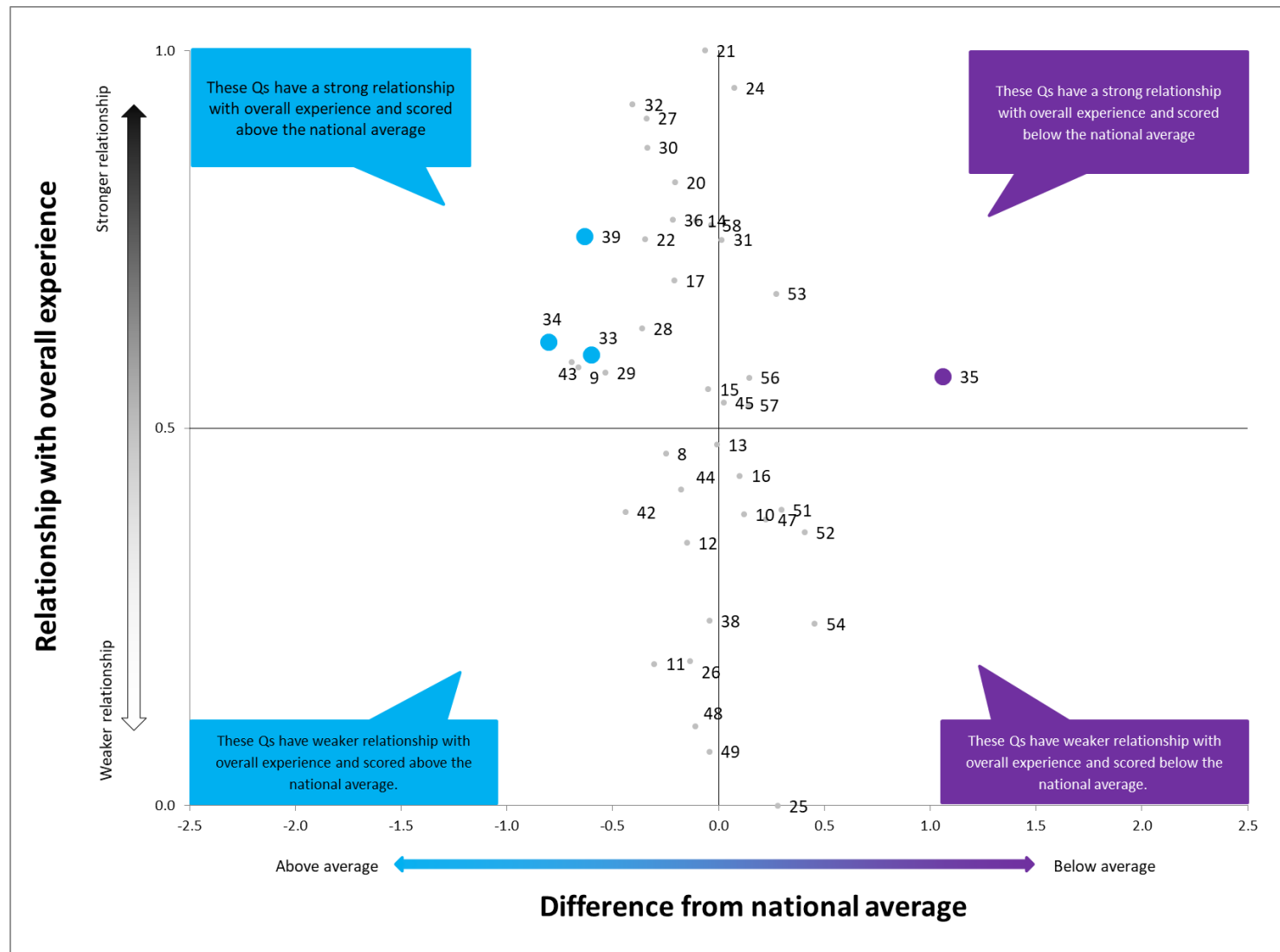
Other questions had a weaker relationship with overall experience – this means that patients' experiences in these areas had little bearing on how they rated their overall experience. An example is Question 25, which asked women if they had skin-to-skin contact with their baby shortly after the birth. The relationship between skin-to-skin contact and women's ratings of their overall experience was weak. This means that even if women had skin-to-skin contact with their baby after the birth may have given negative ratings of their overall experience, or if they did not have skin-to-skin contact, 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 women's 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 relating to Wexford General 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 <http://www.yourexperience.ie/>, along with instructions on how to interpret it.

Figure 19. Improvement map for responses of women who gave birth in Wexford General 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 your 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 your 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 your 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 your 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.

