

National Maternity Experience Survey 2025

Mayo University Hospital

Improving care experiences together



About this report

- The National Maternity Experience Survey offers people who have recently given birth the opportunity to share their experiences of Ireland's maternity services.
- The second National Maternity Experience Survey took place in 2025. This report contains findings from the 2025 survey for participants who gave birth at Mayo University Hospital.
- The report focuses on experiences of care provided by Mayo University Hospital during pregnancy, labour and birth, and after birth. The report also includes findings on experiences of care provided by GPs and public health nurses based in the community.
- This report presents scores out of 10 for survey questions, which were calculated based on participants' responses. Scores were also calculated for each of the stages of maternity care.
- More information on the National Maternity Experience Survey 2025 is available from <https://yourexperience.ie/maternity/about-the-survey/>

Survey overview

Survey questions

Care while you were pregnant (antenatal care)

Experiences of the type of maternity care received, information provided and communication with healthcare professionals during pregnancy.



17 questions

Care during your labour and birth

Experiences of interactions with healthcare professionals, pain management and involvement in decisions during labour and when giving birth.



10 questions

Care in hospital after the birth of your baby*

Experiences in hospital, such as the support and assistance provided by staff, and information provided on care and recovery.



8 questions

Specialised care**

Experiences of support in the neonatal unit, and overall ratings of the care received by the baby while in the unit.



3 questions

Feeding

Experiences of receiving information and support for feeding the baby.



6 questions

Care at home and in the community after the birth

Experiences of support and advice from GPs, public health nurses and other healthcare professionals, while at home or in the community after birth.



11 questions

Who was eligible to take part?

Aged 16 years or older



Gave birth in February or March 2025



Attended a maternity hospital or unit in Ireland, including for a home birth



Had a mobile telephone number registered with the maternity hospital or unit



Who took part in the survey?

- 203 people who gave birth in Mayo University Hospital were invited to participate in the survey.
- 87 took part. This is a response rate of 43% (compared to the national rate of 42%).

Age of participants	Number	%
Under 25 years	3	3.4
25 to 29 years	10	11.5
30 to 34 years	33	37.9
35 to 39 years	30	34.5
40 years or older	11	12.6
Previous births	Number	%
None	30	34.9
1 or 2	49	57.0
3 or more	7	8.1

Ethnicity of participants	Number	%
White Irish	70	80.5
Any Other White Background	8	9.2
Black or Black Irish- African	3	3.4
Asian or Asian Irish- Indian/ Pakistani/ Bangladeshi	2	2.3
Asian or Asian Irish- Any Other Asian Background	2	2.3
Arab	1	1.1
Other	1	1.1
Long-term condition or disability	Number	%
Any long-term condition	4	4.6
No long-term condition	83	95.4



Areas of good experience

There were no questions that scored significantly above national average for participants at Mayo University Hospital. The highest and lowest-scoring questions for each stage of care are highlighted throughout this report.

A selection of comments highlighting areas of good experience is provided below.

Comments from participants

"Midwife-led clinic was brilliant. It was great to go to an appointment, have a set time for it and not be left sitting there for hours. Was also great to have the same midwife for majority of appointments, you form a connection with them that you don't have the opportunity to do in hospital appointments."

"My PHN was such a joy and really made me feel comfortable with my choices and answered any queries I had. I felt I could contact her anytime and she came back to me as soon as she could."

Areas for improvement

Respect and dignity during pregnancy | Q14

3% of survey participants at Mayo University Hospital (3 out of 87 participants who responded to this question) said that they were not treated with respect and dignity during their pregnancy.

Clear answers to questions during labour and birth | Q21

10% of participants (8 out of 83) said that during their labour and birth, their questions were not answered in a way that they could understand.

Clear explanations of benefits and risks of procedures | Q22

12% of participants (10 out of 84) said that before they had any tests or procedures during labour and birth, the benefits and risks were not explained to them in a way they could understand.

These questions scored significantly below national average and have a strong relationship with overall care experience.

Comments from participants

"There is no privacy at the clinic. 4-5 women in the same room at the same time getting blood pressure and urine checked if you have questions it's hard to ask them with 4 to 5 other women in the same room!"

"I found the doctor at delivery did not listen when I said I was in labour. I feel patients need to be listened to more. We know our own bodies."

"Feeling coerced into having an induction I clearly didn't want. Not being listened to whilst in labour...Painful internal examinations and my waters being broken without much discussion. No follow-up debrief after an emergency C-section. Overall a very traumatic experience."

Care in pregnancy



- 49% of participants from Mayo University Hospital said that they were offered a choice about the type of maternity care they could receive.
- 85% of participants said they were offered antenatal classes in pregnancy. 40% of participants said they did antenatal classes, while 45% did not do them. 12% said they were not offered any antenatal classes in pregnancy.
- 92% of participants had some of their regular check-ups in pregnancy with their GP.

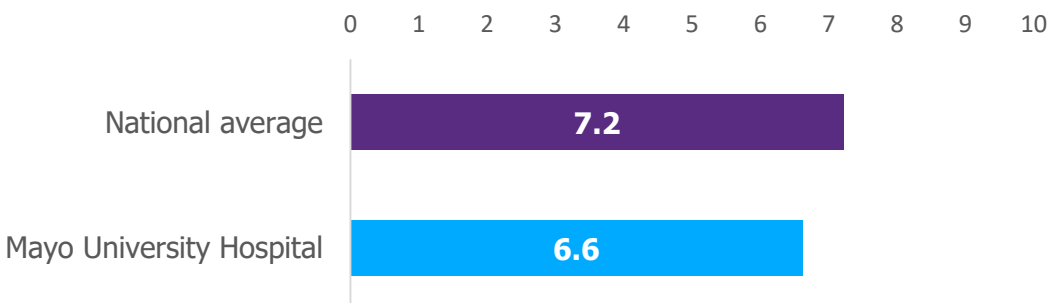
First healthcare professional seen when pregnant	Number	%
General Practitioner (GP) or family doctor	78	89.7
Midwife at maternity service	5	5.7
Obstetrician (doctor or consultant doctor) at maternity service	1	1.1
Healthcare professional at private scan clinic	2	2.3
Other	1	1.1

Type of maternity care in pregnancy	Number	%
Obstetrician public clinic at the hospital	44	50.6
Midwife clinic at the hospital	25	28.7
'Domino scheme': midwife-led care in community	4	4.6
Community midwife clinic	8	9.2
Obstetrician semi-private clinic	1	1.1
Obstetrician private clinic	5	5.7

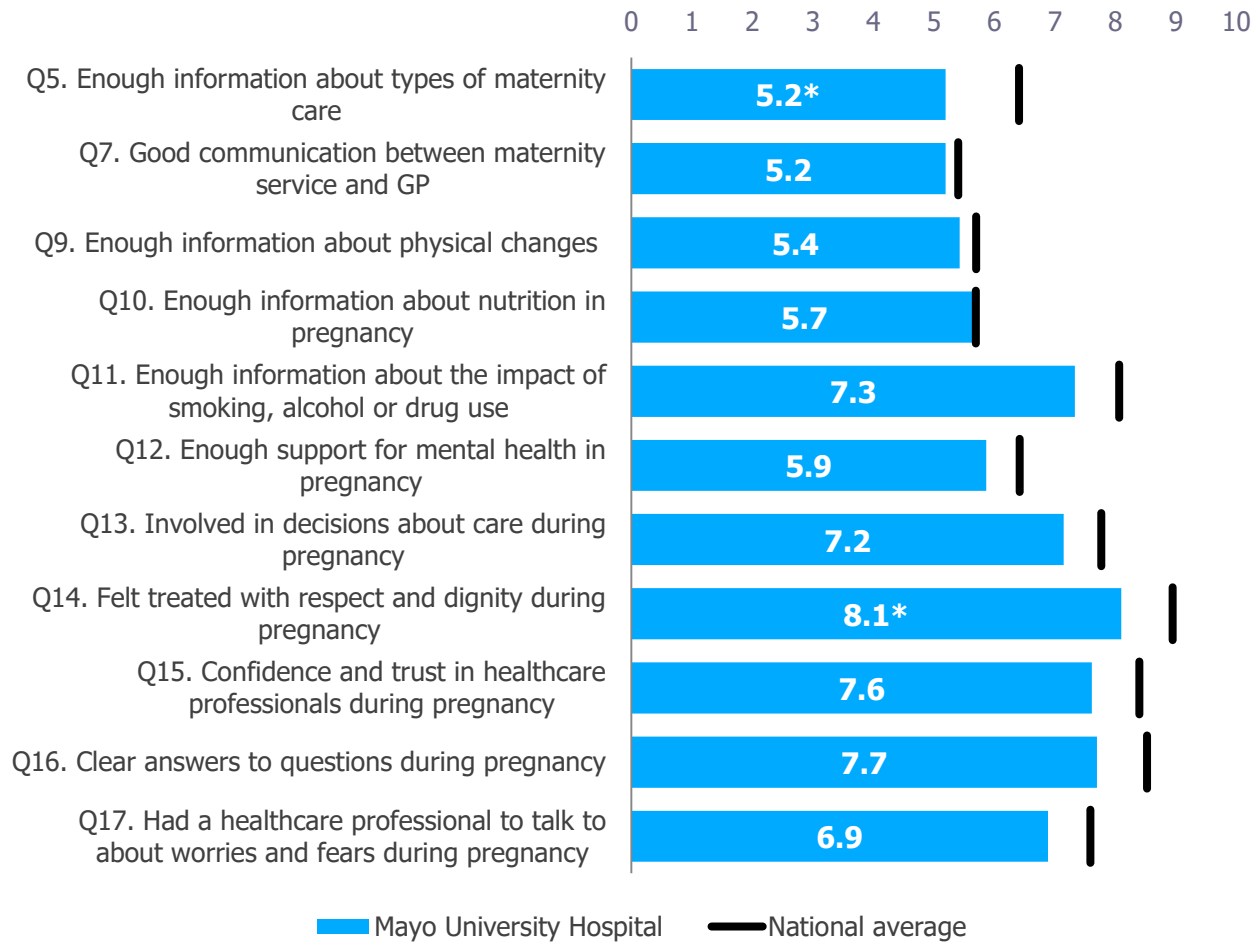
Scored questions for care in pregnancy

- **Highest-scoring question:** 66% of participants (57 of 87) said they always felt treated with respect and dignity in pregnancy; though this question scored significantly below national average.
- **Lowest-scoring questions:**
 - 27% of participants (21 of 77) said they did not receive enough information about the types of maternity care available.
 - 27% of participants (21 of 77) did not feel there was good communication about their care in pregnancy between the maternity service and their GP.

Overall average score for care in pregnancy



Average scores out of 10 for individual questions



* Indicates statistically significant difference from the national average.

Care during labour and birth

- 50% of survey participants at Mayo University Hospital said their labour was induced.

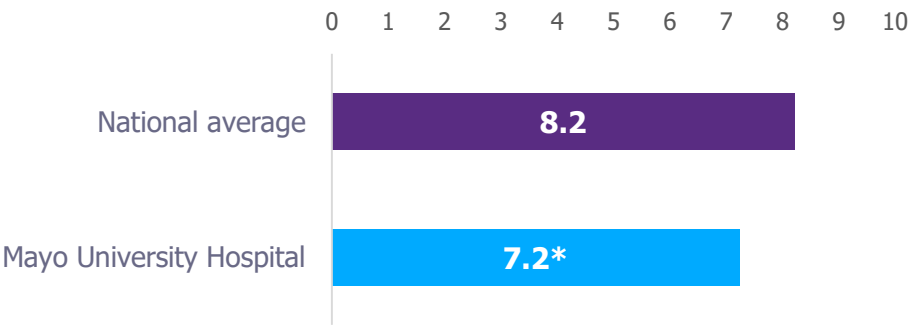
Type of birth for survey participants	Number	%
Vaginal birth (no forceps or ventouse suction cup)	47	54.0
Assisted vaginal birth (with forceps or ventouse suction cup)	6	6.9
Planned caesarean birth	14	16.1
Unplanned caesarean birth	20	23.0
Participant left alone by healthcare professionals at a time when it worried them	Number	%
Yes, during early labour	11	12.6
Yes, during the later stages of labour	8	9.2
Yes, during the birth	3	3.4
Yes, shortly after the birth	4	4.6
No	67	77.0



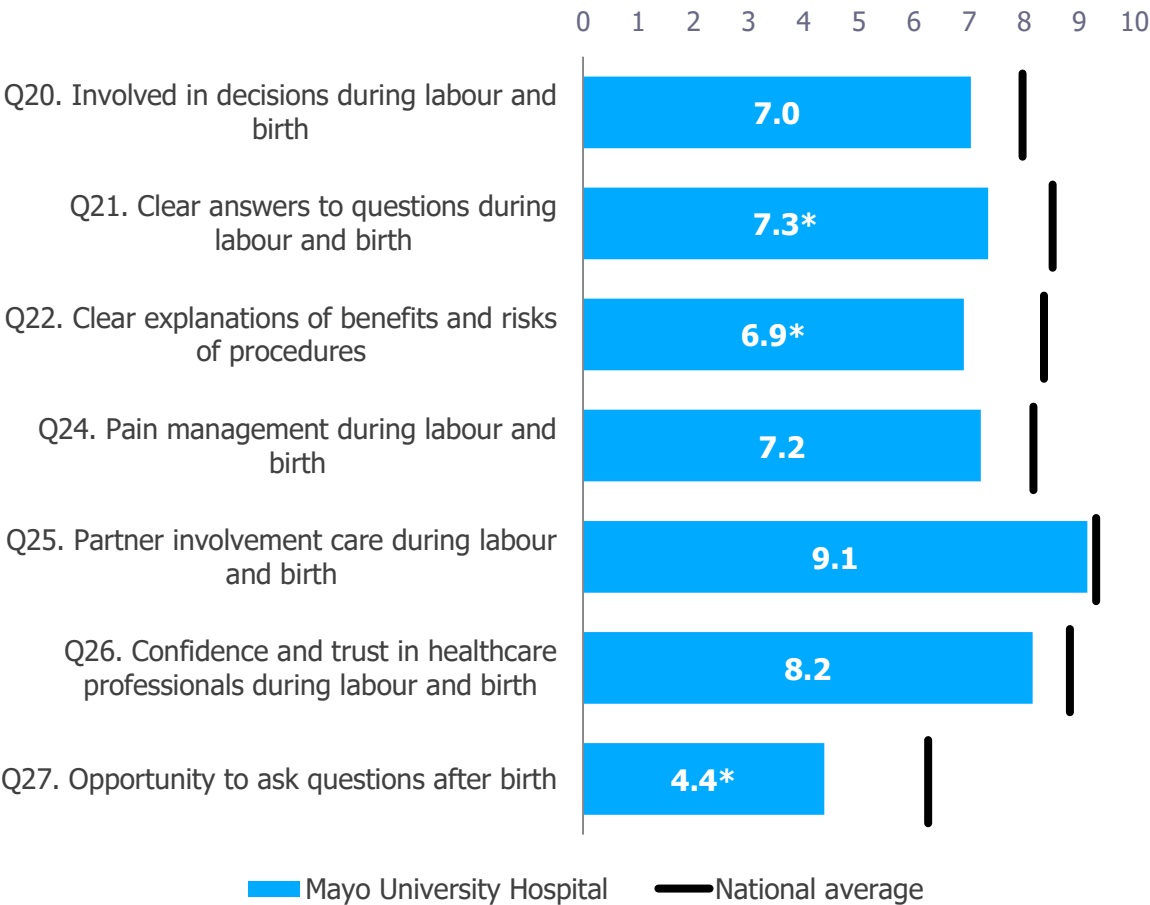
Scored questions for care during labour and birth

- **Highest-scoring question:** 92% of participants (75 of 82) said their partner or companion was involved in their care during labour and birth as much as they wanted them to be.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 42% of participants (30 of 72) said they did not have the opportunity to ask questions about their labour and birth shortly after the baby was born.

Overall average score for care during labour and birth



Average scores out of 10 for individual questions



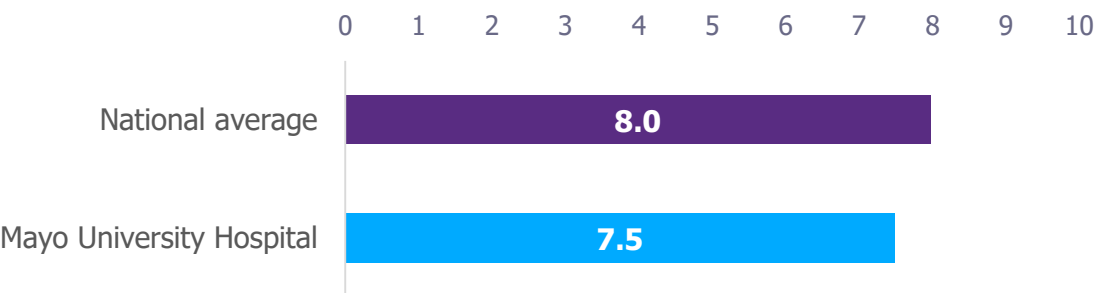
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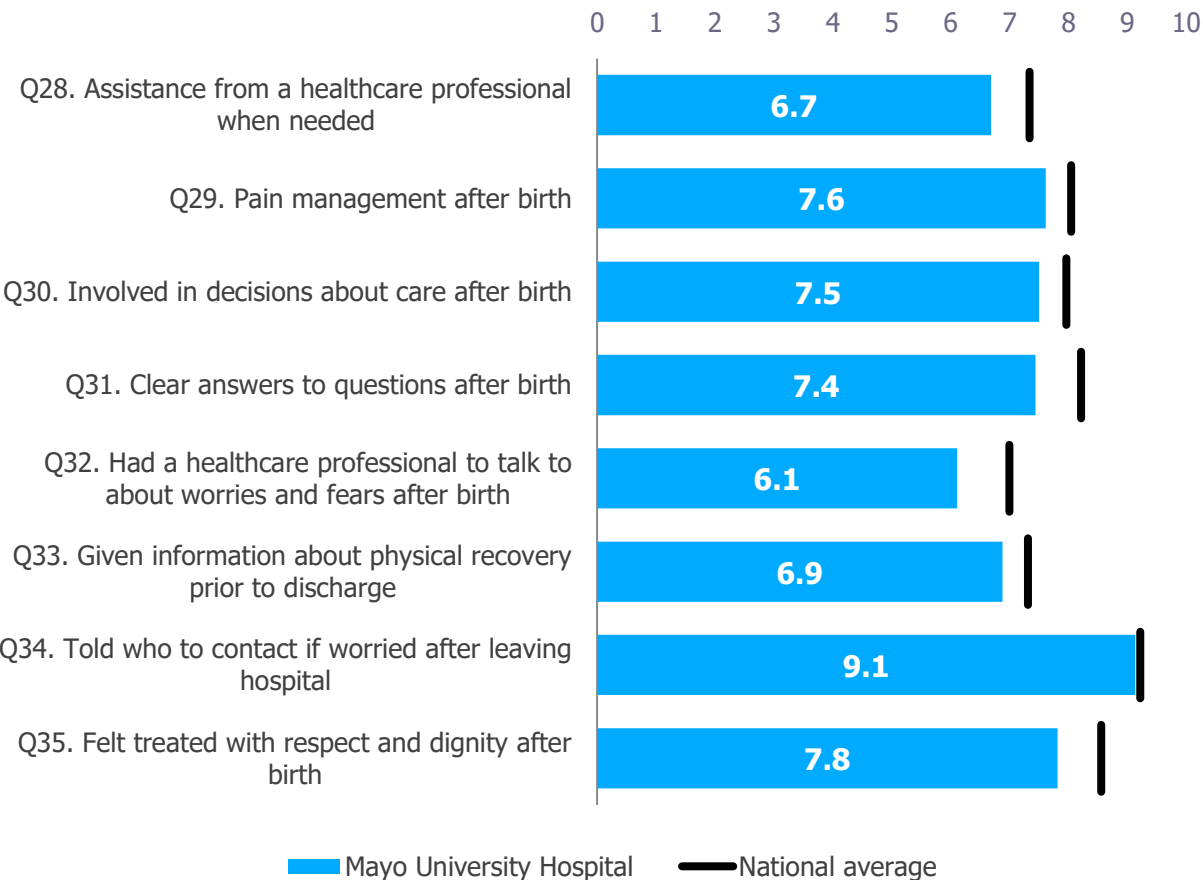
Scored questions for care in hospital after birth

- **Highest-scoring question:** 91% of participants (74 of 81) said that before they were discharged, they were told who to contact if they were worried about their own health or their baby’s health after leaving hospital.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 19% of participants (14 of 72) said that they did not have a healthcare professional that they could talk to about their worries and fears in hospital after the birth.

Overall average score for care in hospital after birth



Average scores out of 10 for individual questions

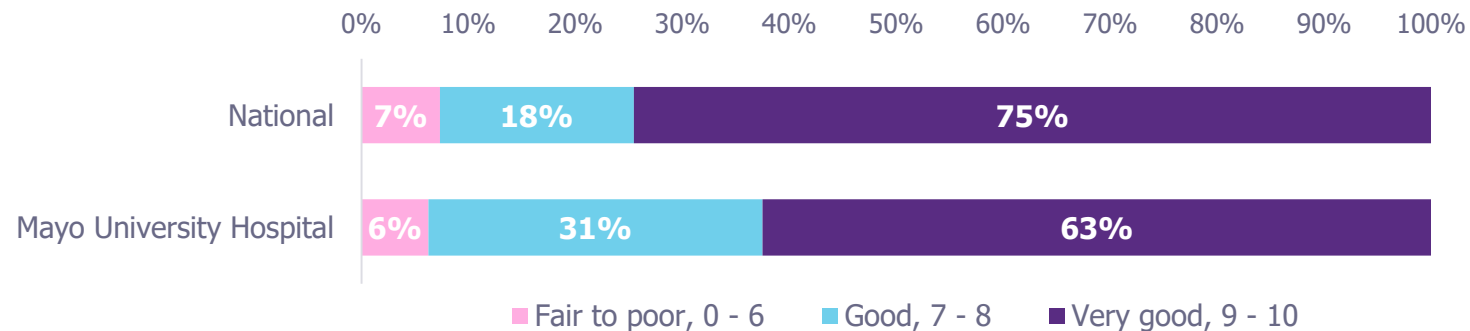




Specialist care in the neonatal unit

- 16 survey participants (19%) at Mayo University Hospital said that their baby spent time in the neonatal unit following the birth.
- Of these participants:
 - 50% said that they always received enough emotional support from healthcare professionals while their baby was in the neonatal unit.
 - 31% said that they sometimes received enough emotional support.
 - 13% said that they did not receive enough emotional support.
 - 6% could not remember if they received enough emotional support.

Overall rating of experience of care in the neonatal unit



Infant feeding

In the first few days after birth:

- 27% of participants fed their baby with breast milk only.
- 38% fed their baby with formula milk only.
- 35% fed their baby with both breast and formula milk.

Healthcare professional discussed feeding options		
	Number	%
Yes, during pregnancy	50	57.5
Yes, during labour or immediately after birth	19	21.8
Yes, after birth while in hospital	25	28.7
Yes, after birth while at home	15	17.2
No	5	5.7
Did not want or need discussion of different options	18	20.7
Don't know or can't remember	1	1.1

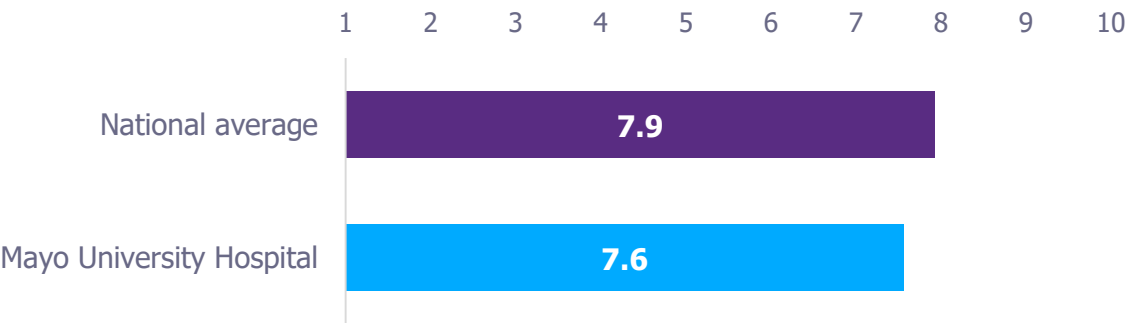
Sources of breastfeeding support		
	Number	%
Midwife(s) in hospital	38	44.7
Hospital lactation consultant	19	22.4
Home birth midwife	1	1.2
Postnatal community midwives	6	7.1
Postnatal hub midwife	1	1.2
Public Health Nurse	32	37.6
GP	5	5.9
Practice nurse	4	4.7
Community breastfeeding support groups or volunteers	10	11.8
Private lactation consultant	4	4.7
Friends or family	14	16.5
Did not need support	10	11.8
Did not want to breastfeed	20	23.5

Scored questions for infant feeding

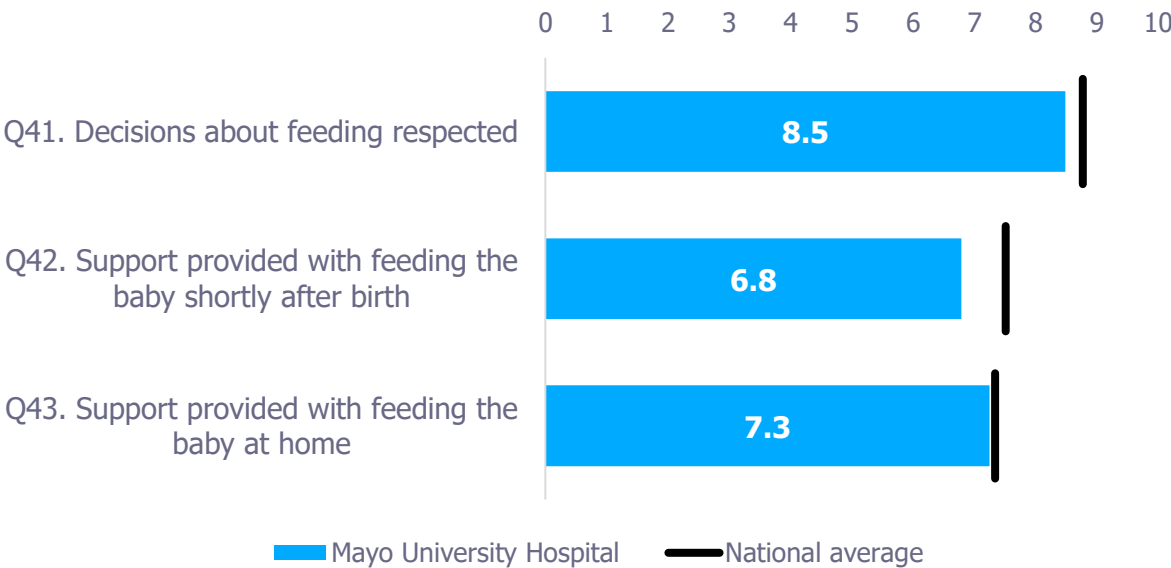


- **Highest-scoring question:** 74% of participants (64 of 86) said their decisions about how they wanted to feed their baby were always respected by healthcare professionals.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 13% of participants (11 of 84) said that healthcare professionals did not give them adequate support with feeding their baby in hospital shortly after the birth.

Overall average score for infant feeding



Average scores out of 10 for individual questions



Care at home and in the community after birth



Healthcare professionals met after the birth of the baby		
	Number	%
Postnatal community midwife at home	6	6.9
Postnatal community midwife at a community clinic (including Postnatal Hub)	2	2.3
Public Health Nurse at home	84	96.6
Public Health Nurse at a community clinic	17	19.5
GP	59	67.8
Obstetrician at hospital clinic	10	11.5
Midwives and or paediatricians at hospital baby clinic	6	6.9
Other professionals	5	5.7

Healthcare professionals who provided mental health support during pregnancy or after birth		
	Number	%
GP	17	20.0
Public Health Nurse	32	37.6
Midwife	13	15.3
Obstetrician	1	1.2
Perinatal mental health midwife	2	2.4
Psychiatrist	1	1.2
Psychologist	2	2.4
Other professionals	5	5.9
None of the above	44	51.8

Scored questions for care at home after birth



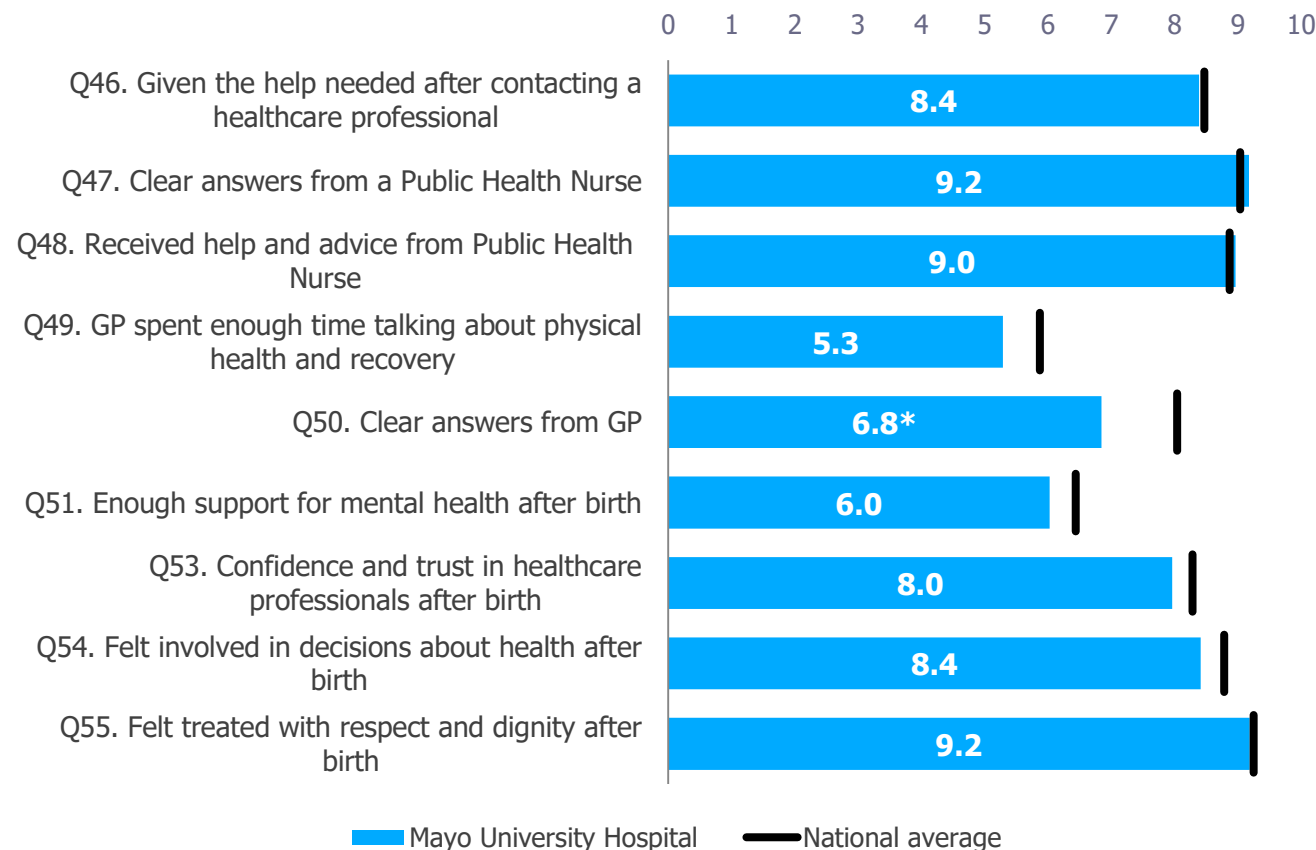
Note: The questions for this stage of maternity care explored participants' experiences of postnatal care in the community, which included care from Public Health Nurses and GPs.

■ Highest-scoring questions:

- 85% of participants (72 of 85) said their questions were always answered by the Public Health Nurse in a way they could understand.
- 86% of participants (74 of 86) said they were always treated with respect and dignity when they received care at home or in the community after the birth of their baby.

- Lowest-scoring question:** 34% of participants (29 of 86) said that their GP did not spend enough time talking to them about their physical health and recovery at the postnatal check-up, six weeks after the birth.

Average scores out of 10 for individual questions

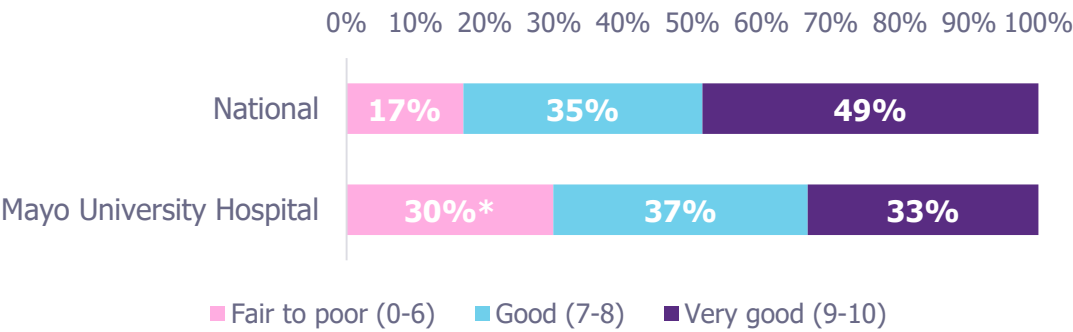


* Indicates statistically significant difference from the national average.

Overall experience of maternity care

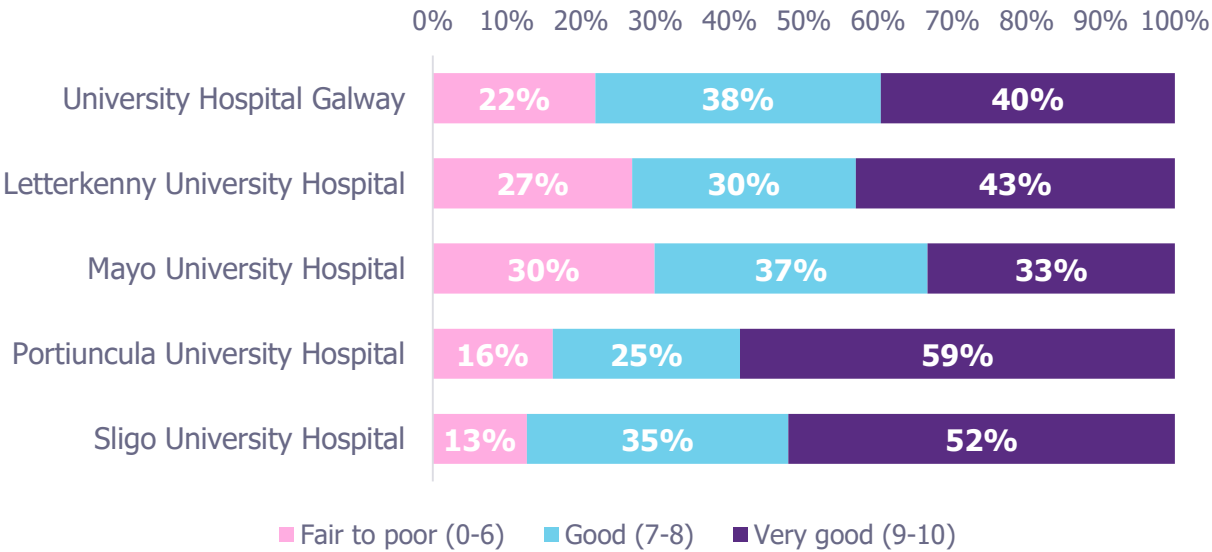
- 66% of survey participants who gave birth at Mayo University Hospital said that their decisions about their maternity care were always respected by healthcare staff. 31% said their decisions were sometimes respected, while 3% said their decisions about their maternity care were not respected.
- 24% of participants said that they knew how and where to give feedback or make a complaint if they wanted to do so, while 58% said they did not know. 18% said they did not wish to give feedback or make a complaint.
- 70% of participants who gave birth at Mayo University Hospital said they had a good or very good overall experience (overall rating between 7 and 10), which was significantly lower than the national figure of 83%. 30% of participants said they had a fair to poor experience of care.

Overall experience of care



* Indicates statistically significant difference from the national average.

Overall experience of care - HSE West and North West health region



Changes since 2020 survey

- Survey findings from 2025 were compared with survey findings from 2020 to see whether there were any significant increases or decreases in survey question scores at Mayo University Hospital.
- There were no significant increases in scores for any survey questions between 2020 and 2025 at Mayo University Hospital.
- Between 2020 and 2025, there was a significant decrease in the number of participants who said that their questions were answered by the GP in a way they could understand, after the birth of their baby.

Comments from survey participants

- When survey participants at Mayo University Hospital were asked what was good about their care, they most commonly referred to the interactions they had with healthcare staff.
- The theme of information sharing and explanations from healthcare staff was frequently raised in participants' comments on both positive and negative aspects of their care.
- When survey participants were asked what could be improved with care at Mayo University Hospital, they frequently referred to support with feeding their baby.

"Majority of the midwives and health care assistants on the ward while I was in labour and after having the baby were amazing. So kind and caring when I was in such a vulnerable state."

"I never felt thrown in the deep end, as there was always someone there to answer any questions I had. I was in the obstetrician-led clinic and I felt my obstetrician always explained everything thoroughly and was very open with me and allowed me to make my decisions."

"Consultant did not have a proper chat with me during rounds after birth to go through or explain certain things. He just popped his head around the curtain to congratulate. It would have been good to have a more in depth conversation."

"I was struggling with my baby not coming off the breast and I was exhausted and wanted to ask for advice. I was told by the midwife that this is what babies do on the second night and that if I wanted to breastfeed that I would be up for the night. The midwife then handed me a bottle and said if I wanted a break to give the bottle and the baby would sleep for two hours."

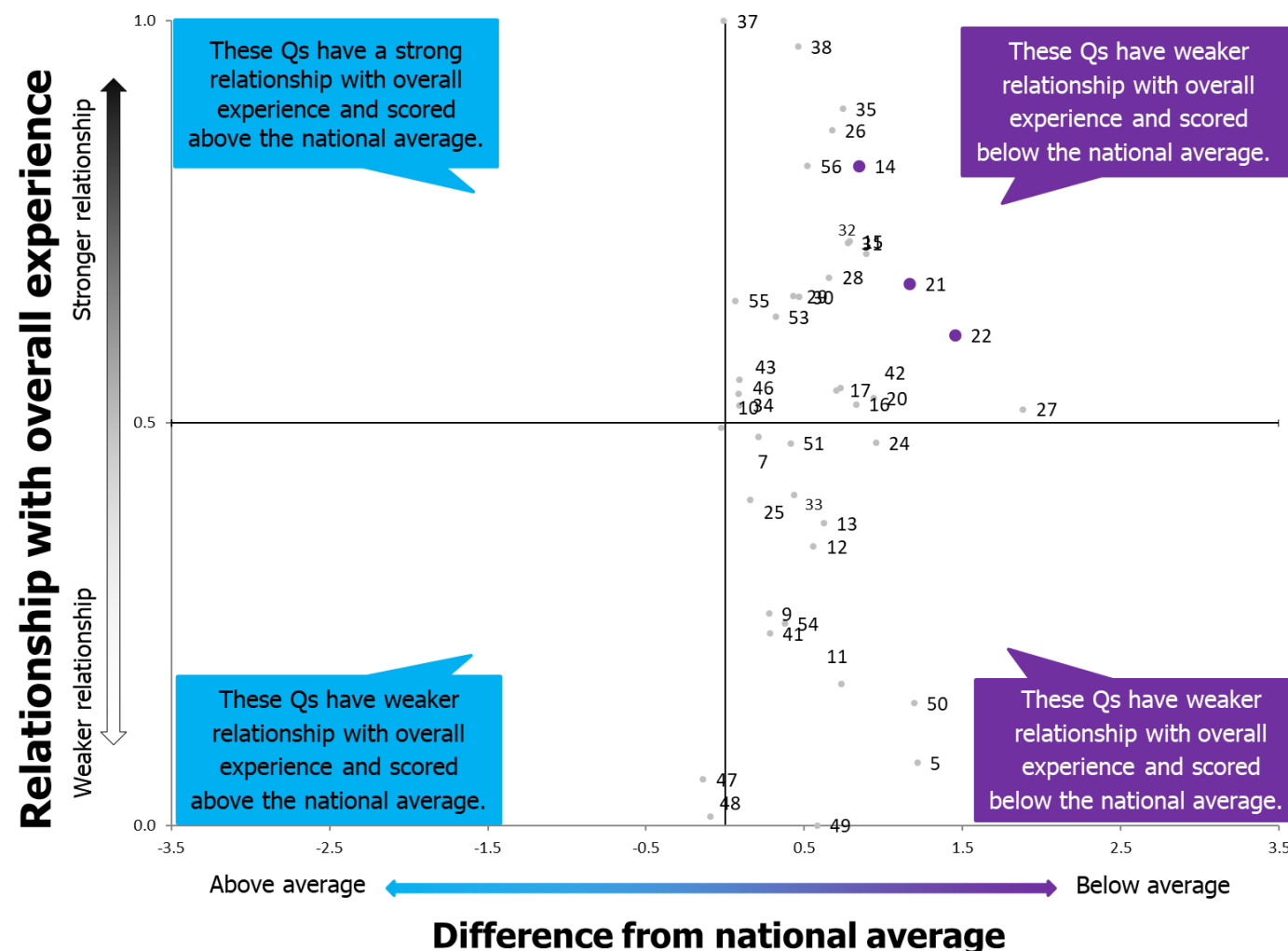
Conclusion

- There were no questions that scored significantly above national average for participants at Mayo University Hospital and seven questions scored significantly below national average.
- Areas for improvement included respect and dignity during pregnancy, clear answers to questions during labour and birth, and explanations about the benefits and risks of procedures in labour and birth.
- 70% of participants who gave birth at Mayo University Hospital said they had a good or very good overall experience; this is significantly lower than the national figure (83%).
- Between 2020 and 2025, there was a significant decrease in the number of participants at Mayo University Hospital who said that their questions were answered by the GP in a way they could understand, after the birth of their baby.

Appendix 1

- The improvement map shows which questions scored above or below the national average, and which questions are related to participants' overall maternity care experience.
- Questions that scored significantly above average and had a stronger relationship with overall experience are areas of good experience, highlighted in blue.
- Questions that scored significantly below average and had a stronger relationship with overall experience are areas that may need improvement, highlighted in purple.
- More information on the science behind the improvement map can be found in the national report on www.yourexperience.ie

Improvement map Mayo University Hospital





More information on the National Maternity Experience Survey 2025 is available from www.yourexperience.ie:

- National results ([click here](#))
- Interactive results ([click here](#))

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