

# National Maternity Experience Survey 2025

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## Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital

Improving care experiences together

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## 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 Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital.
- The report focuses on experiences of care provided by Our Lady of Lourdes 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

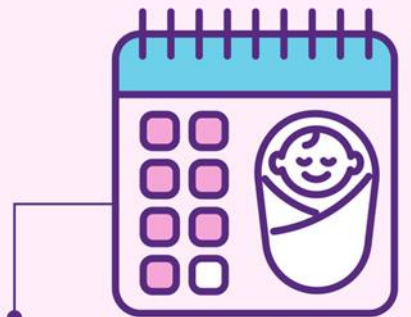
Experiences of support and advice from GPs, public health nurses and other healthcare professionals, while at home or in the community after birth.



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?

- 410 people who gave birth at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital were invited to participate in the survey.
- 188 took part. This is a response rate of 46% (compared to the national rate of 42%).

Age of participants	Number	%
Under 25 years	15	8.0
25 to 29 years	27	14.4
30 to 34 years	80	42.6
35 to 39 years	53	28.2
40 years or older	13	6.9
Previous births	Number	%
None	86	46
1 or 2	87	46.5
3 or more	14	7.5

Ethnicity of participants	Number	%
White Irish	135	71.8
Irish Traveller	1	0.5
Any other White background	20	10.6
Black or Black Irish- African	7	3.7
Black or Black Irish- Other Black background	1	0.5
Asian or Asian Irish- Chinese	1	0.5
Asian or Asian Irish- Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	12	6.4
Asian or Asian Irish- Other Asian background	5	2.7
Mixed	1	0.5
Other	5	2.7
Long-term condition or disability	Number	%
Any long-term condition	12	6.4
No long-term condition	176	93.6



## Areas of good experience

*There were no questions that scored significantly above national average for participants at Our Lady of Lourdes 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

"The staff during my labour and birth were incredible, they read my birth plan and kept to it. They did everything I asked for and made me feel listened to and very comfortable. I felt in control of my birth the entire time and felt really encouraged in the right way."

"MLU midwives in Drogheda during labour, delivery and aftercare were amazing. They couldn't do enough for you and the phone calls and visits in the week after birth really helped if I had concerns or questions."

"There was a student midwife in particular who spent the whole day with me. Every single thing she was about to do she explained it very thoroughly before doing so, made me feel so at ease and comfortable throughout the whole experience. She made what was a scary, long experience feel so comfortable and at ease."

## Areas for improvement

### Discharge information on who to contact | Q34

15% of survey participants at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital (27 out of 181) said that before they left hospital they were not told who to contact if they were worried about their health or their baby's health after leaving hospital.

### Clear answers from GP after birth | Q50

12% of survey participants at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital (22 out of 182) said that their questions were not answered by their GP in a way that they could understand after the birth of their baby.

*These questions scored significantly below national average.*

## Comments from participants

"GP care is ridiculous, they are not informed enough on baby care. Every question I had was met with a "maybe" or another question."

"Hard to get information in relation to peads clinic once the babies were discharged."

"Information around post-labour injuries and recuperation could be provided during maternity care."



# Care in pregnancy



- 64% of participants at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital said that they were offered a choice about the type of maternity care they could receive.
- 84% of participants said they were offered antenatal classes in pregnancy. 45% of participants said they did the antenatal classes, while 39% did not do them. 14% said they were not offered any antenatal classes in pregnancy.
- 91% of participants had some of their regular check-ups in pregnancy with their GP.

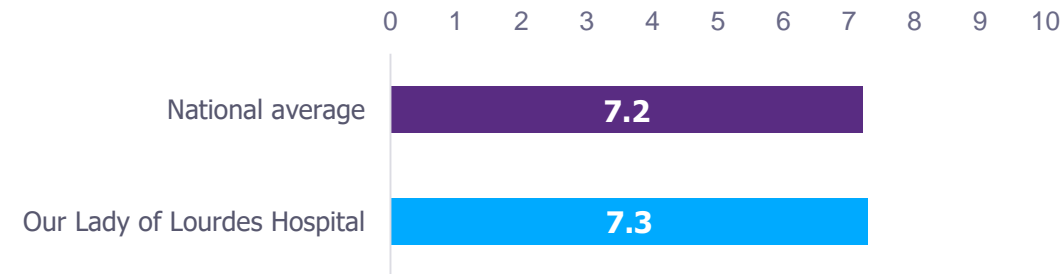
Type of maternity care in pregnancy	Number	%
Obstetrician public clinic at the hospital	74	39.4
Midwife clinic at the hospital	35	18.6
'Domino Scheme': midwife-led care in community	2	1.1
Community midwife clinic	3	1.6
Midwifery-led unit	61	32.4
Obstetrician private clinic	9	4.8
Pregnancy check-ups in another country	2	1.1
Did not have check-ups in pregnancy	2	1.1

First healthcare professional seen when pregnant	Number	%
General Practitioner (GP) or family doctor	153	81.4
Midwife at maternity service	12	6.4
Obstetrician (doctor or consultant) at maternity service	9	4.8
Healthcare professional at private scan clinic	8	4.3
Other	6	3.2

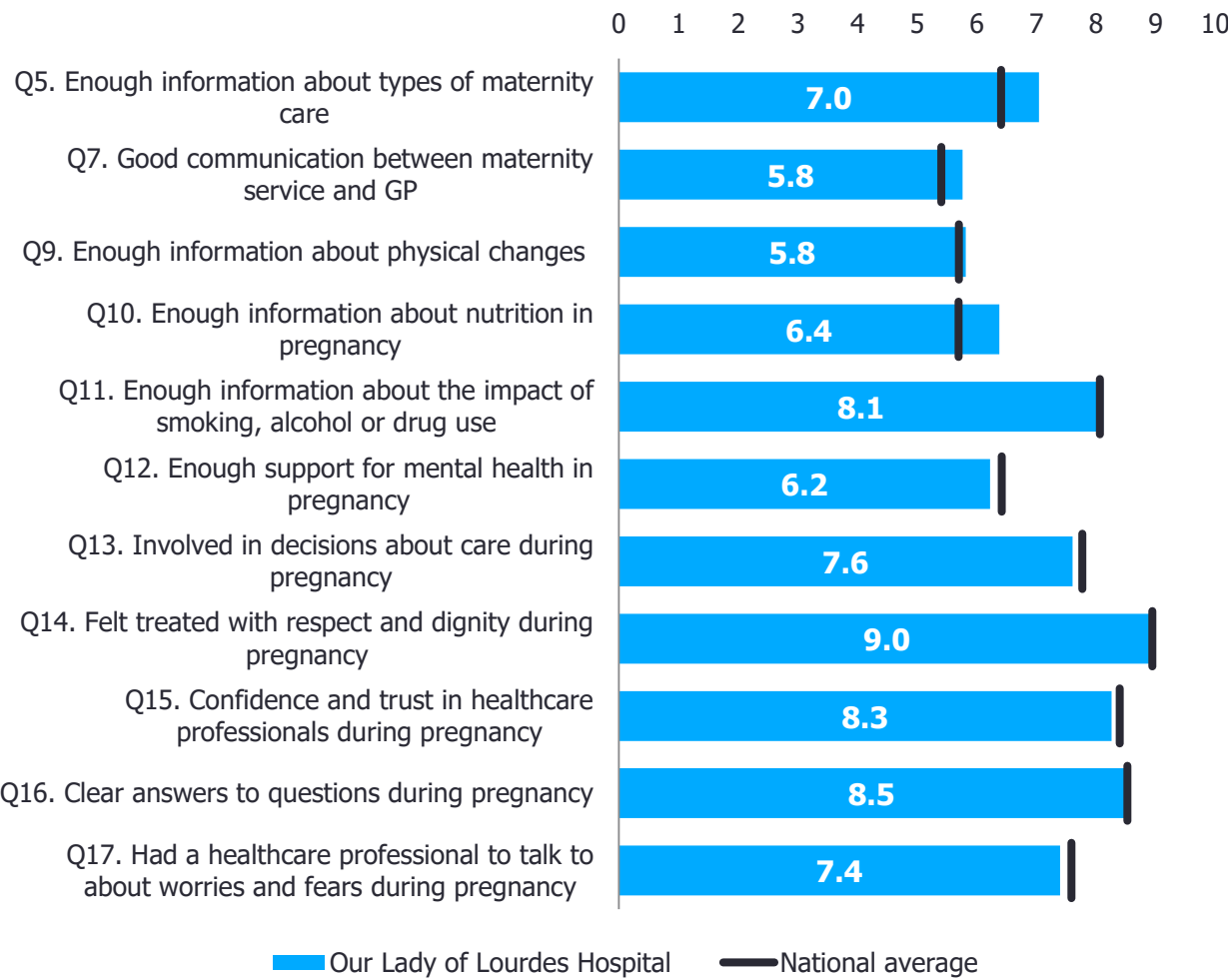
# Scored questions for care in pregnancy

- **Highest-scoring question:** 83% of participants (152 out of 184) said that they always felt treated with respect and dignity in pregnancy.
- **Lowest-scoring questions:**
  - 25% of participants (40 out of 163) felt that there was not good communication about their care in pregnancy between the maternity service and their GP.
  - 25% of participants (44 out of 177) said that they did not receive enough information about physical changes during pregnancy.

## Overall average score for care in pregnancy



## Average scores out of 10 for individual questions





# Care during labour and birth

- 43% of survey participants at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital said their labour was induced.

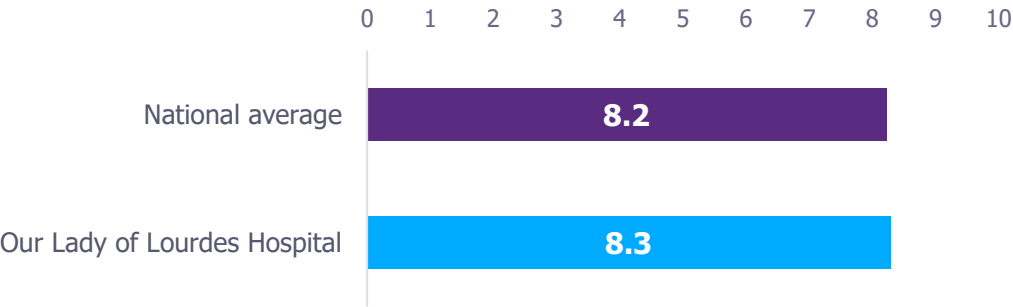
Type of birth for survey participants	Number	%
Vaginal birth (no forceps or ventouse suction cup)	89	47.3
Assisted vaginal birth (with forceps or ventouse suction cup)	30	16.0
Planned caesarean birth	38	20.2
Unplanned caesarean birth	31	16.5
Participant left alone by healthcare professionals at a time when it worried them	Number	%
Yes, during early labour	19	10.2
Yes, during the later stages of labour	9	4.8
Yes, during the birth	5	2.7
Yes, shortly after the birth	18	9.6
No	147	78.6



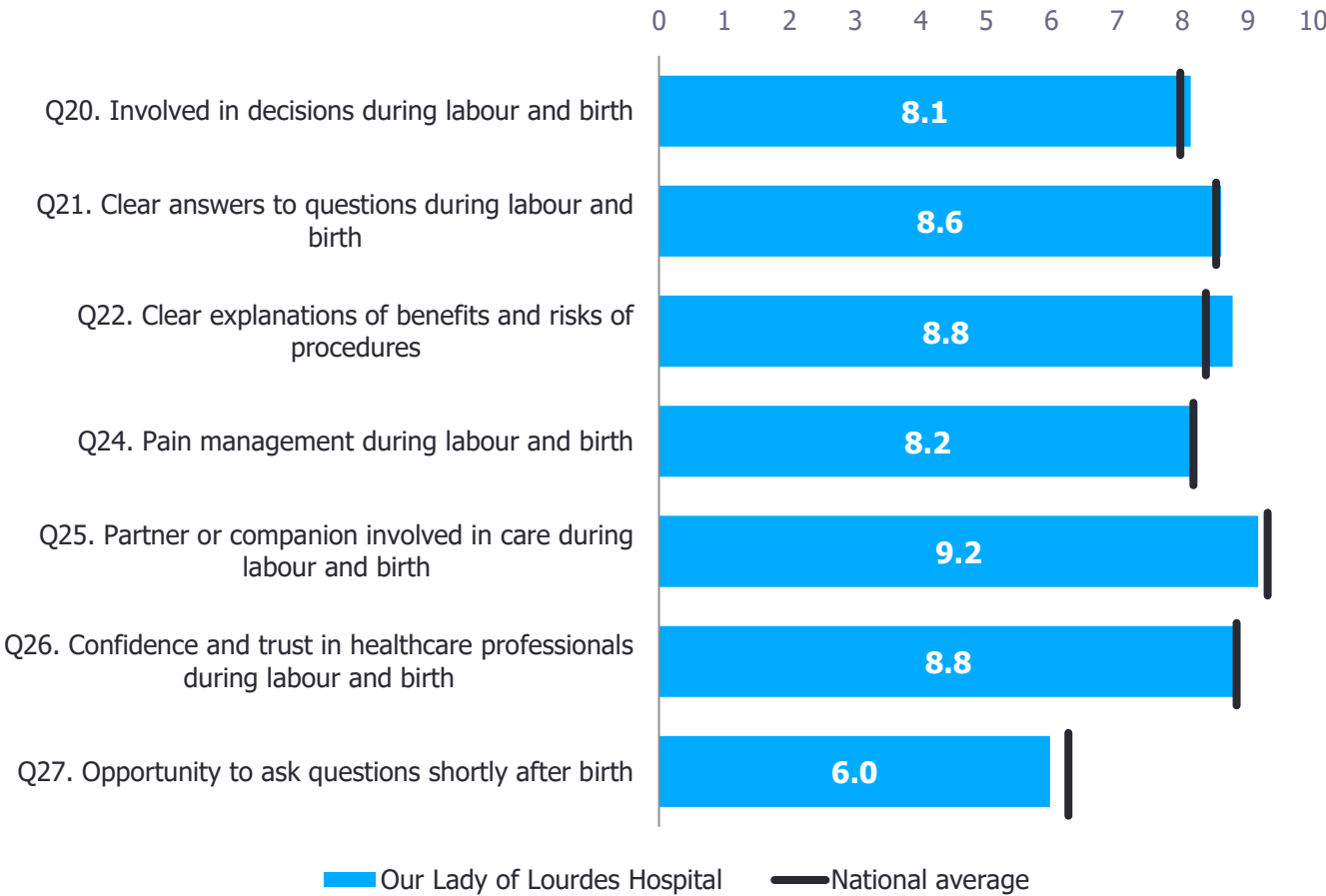
# Scored questions for care during labour and birth

- **Highest-scoring question:** 92% of participants (164 of 179) said that their partner was involved in their care during labour and birth as much as they wanted them to be.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 30% of participants (50 of 169) said they did not have the opportunity to ask questions about their labour and birth shortly after their baby was born.

## Overall average score for care during labour and birth



## Average scores out of 10 for individual questions

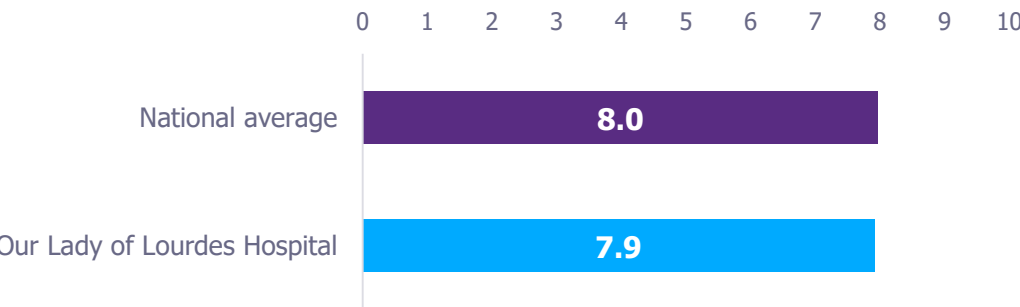




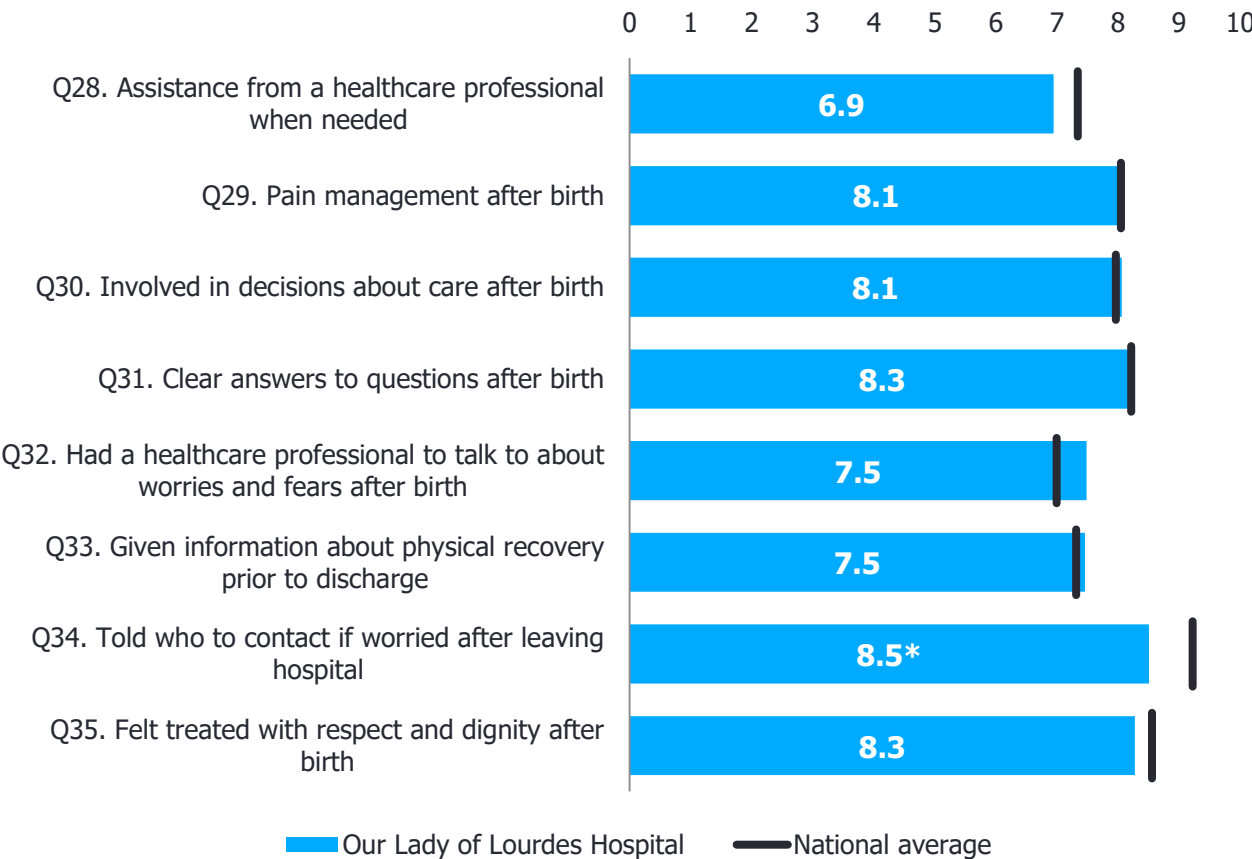
# Scored questions for care in hospital after birth

- **Highest-scoring question:** 85% of participants (154 of 181) 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; though this question scored below national average.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 13% of participants (23 of 172) said that they were not able to get a healthcare professional to assist them when needed in hospital after birth.

Overall average score for care in hospital after birth



Average scores out of 10 for individual questions



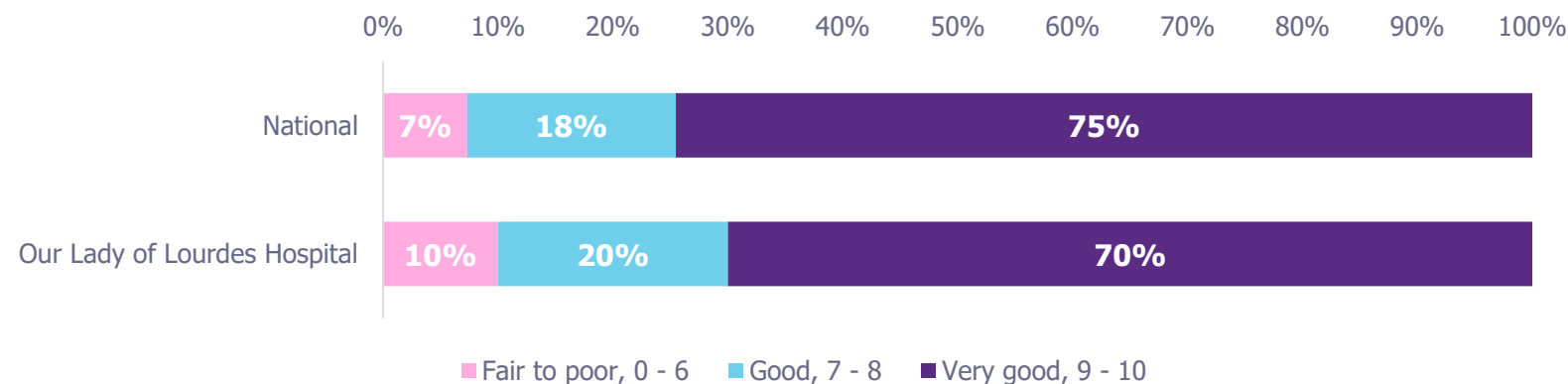
\* Indicates statistically significant difference from the national average.



## Specialist care in the neonatal unit

- 30 survey participants (16%) at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital said that their baby spent time in the neonatal unit following the birth.
- Of these participants:
  - 63% said that they always received enough emotional support from healthcare professionals while their baby was in the neonatal unit.
  - 10% said that they sometimes received enough emotional support.
  - 27% said they did not receive enough emotional support.

### Overall rating of experience of care for baby in neonatal unit



# Infant feeding

In the first few days after birth:

- 21% of participants fed their baby with breast milk only.
- 40% fed their baby with formula milk only.
- 40% fed their baby with both breast and formula milk.

Healthcare professional discussed feeding options		
	Number	%
Yes, during pregnancy	123	65.4
Yes, during labour or immediately after birth	57	30.3
Yes, after birth while in hospital	72	38.3
Yes, after birth while at home	29	15.4
No	13	6.9
Did not want or need discussion of different options	10	5.3

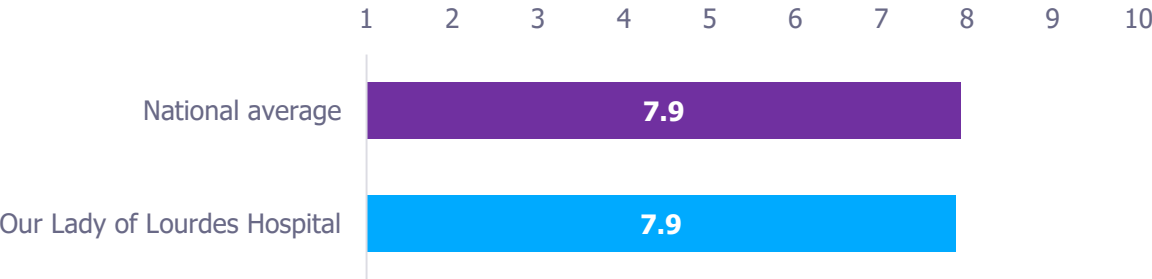
Sources of breastfeeding support		
	Number	%
Midwife(s) in hospital	80	44.4
Hospital lactation consultant	85	47.2
Home birth midwife	1	0.6
Postnatal community midwives	20	11.1
Public health nurse	64	35.6
GP	10	5.6
Practice nurse	2	1.1
Community breastfeeding support groups or volunteers	12	6.7
Private lactation consultant	5	2.8
Friends or family	27	15.0
Did not need support	8	4.4
Did not want to breastfeed	50	27.8

# Scored questions for infant feeding

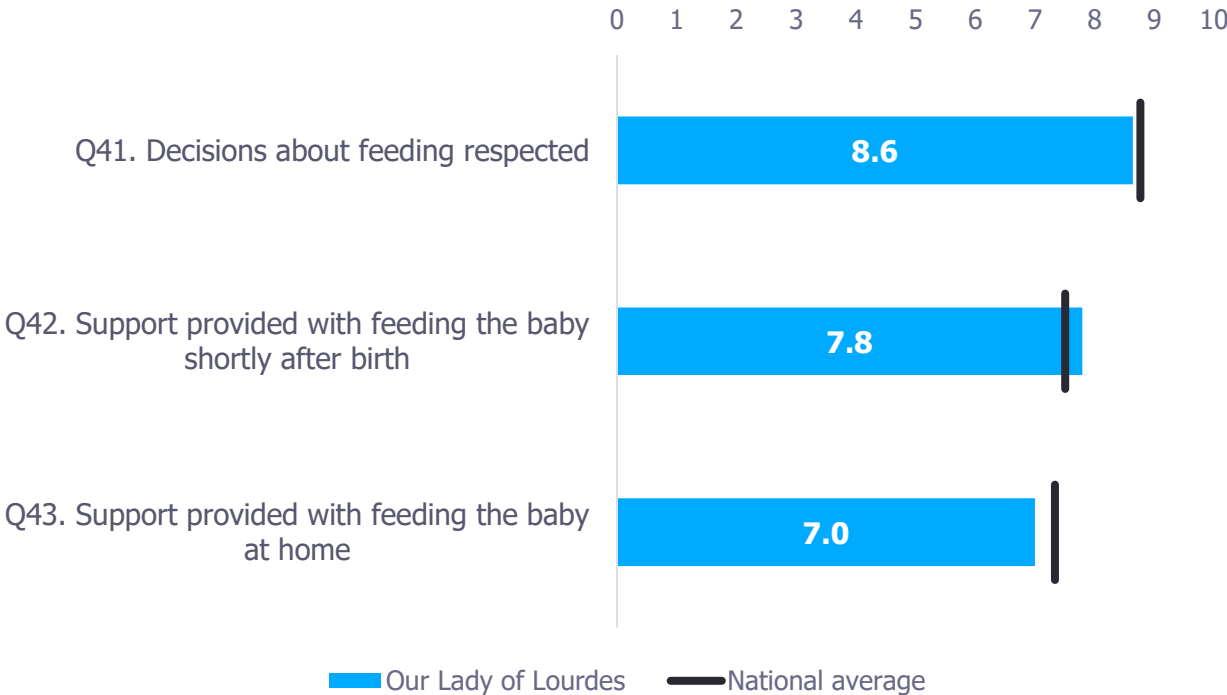


- **Highest-scoring question:** 78% of participants (146 of 188) said that their decisions about how they wanted to feed their baby were always respected by healthcare professionals.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 22% of participants (38 of 172) said that they did not get adequate support and encouragement from healthcare professionals with feeding their baby at home in the days and weeks after 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	43	22.9
Postnatal community midwife at community clinic	4	2.1
Public Health Nurse at home	157	83.5
Public Health Nurse at a community clinic	38	20.2
GP	118	62.8
Obstetrician at hospital clinic	11	5.9
Midwives or paediatricians at hospital baby clinic	13	6.9
Other professionals	11	5.9
None of the above	1	0.5

## Healthcare professionals who provided mental health support during pregnancy or after birth

	Number	%
GP	52	28.9
Public health nurse	68	37.8
Midwife	36	20.0
Obstetrician	4	2.2
Perinatal mental health midwife	6	3.3
Perinatal mental health nurse	4	2.2
Psychiatrist	4	2.2
Psychologist	1	0.6
Mental health social worker	1	0.6
Other professionals	4	2.2
None of the above	74	41.1

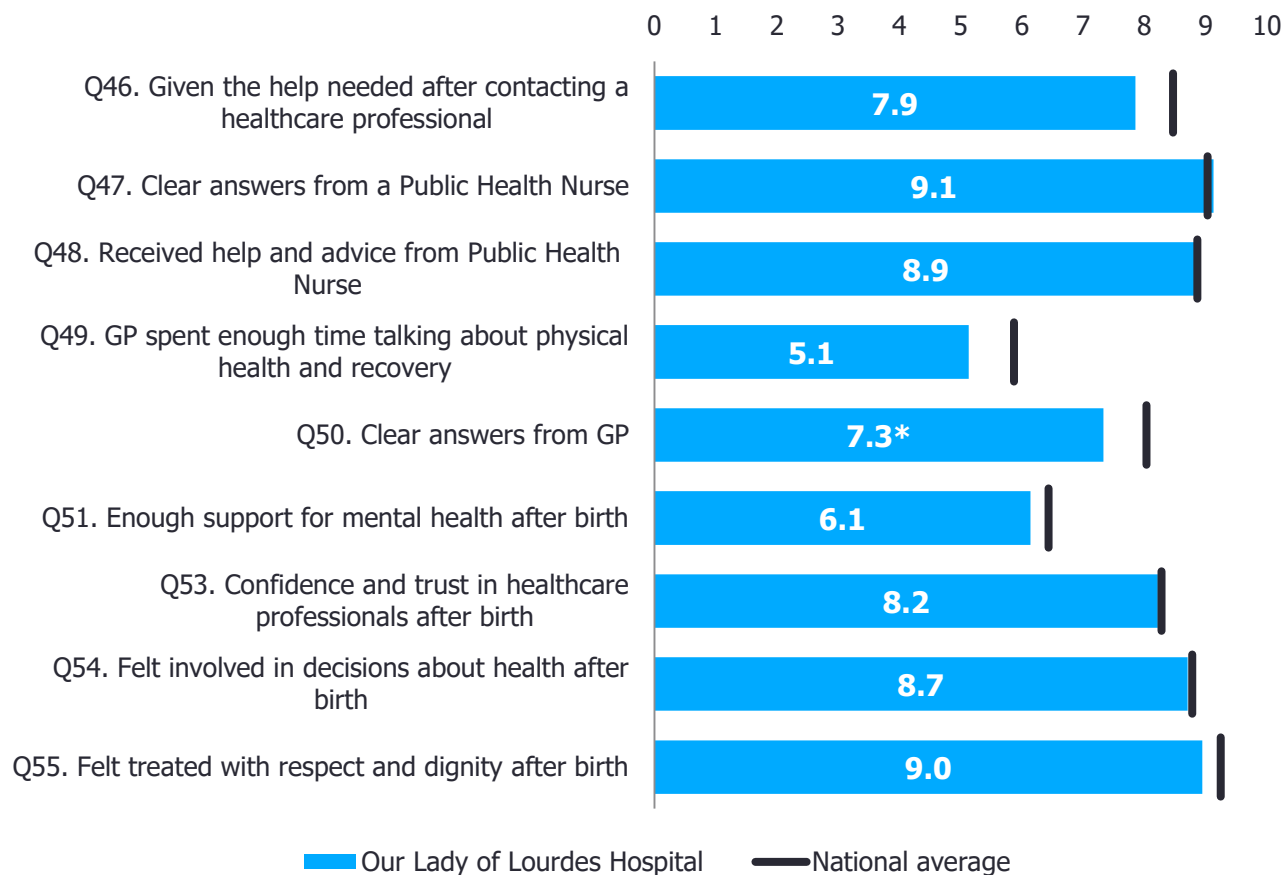
# Scored questions for care at home after birth



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 question:** 85% of participants (152 of 179) said that their questions were always answered by the Public Health Nurse in a way that they could understand.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 35% of participants (65 of 186) said that their GP did not spend enough time talking about physical health and recovery at the postnatal check-up, six weeks after birth.

## Average scores out of 10 for individual questions

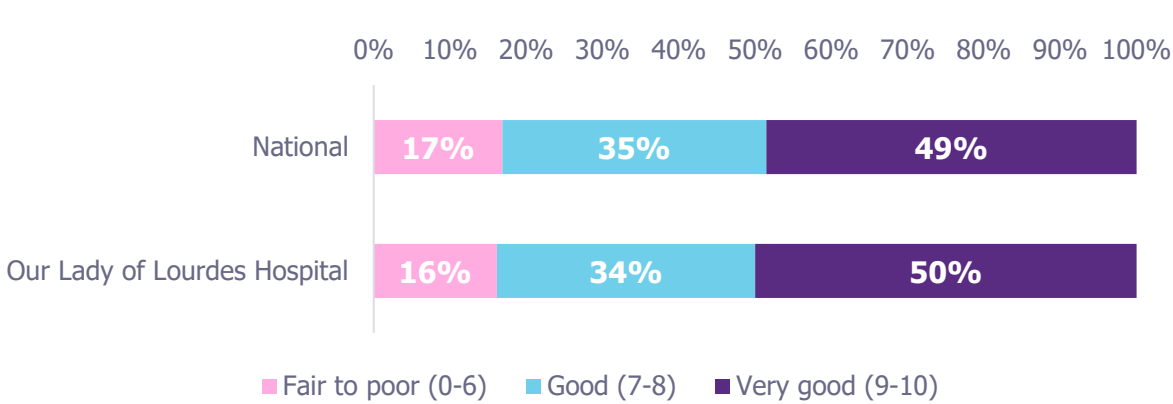


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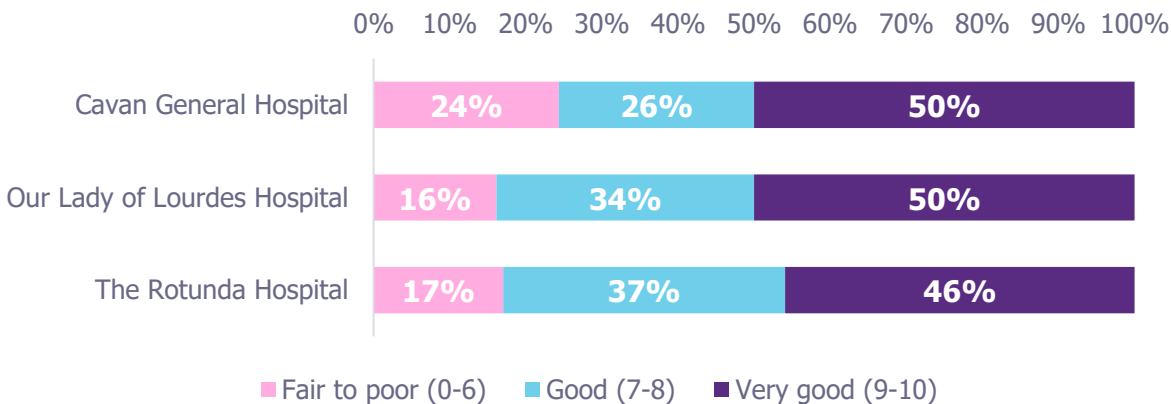
# Overall experience of maternity care

- 73% of survey participants who gave birth at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital said that their decisions about their maternity care were always respected by healthcare staff. 24% said their decisions were sometimes respected, while 3% said their decisions about their maternity care were not respected.
- 33% of participants said that they knew how and where to give feedback or make a complaint if they wanted to do so, while 44% said they did not know. 24% said they did not wish to give feedback or make a complaint.
- 84% of participants who gave birth at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital said they had a good or very good overall experience of maternity care (overall rating between 7 and 10), compared to 83% nationally. 16% of participants said they had a fair to poor experience of care.

Overall experience of care rating



Overall experience of care - HSE Dublin and North-East



## 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 question scores for participants at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital.
- Between 2020 and 2025, there were significant decreases in scores for the two questions about GP care at the postnatal check-up:
  - Participants in 2025 were less likely to say that their GP spent enough time talking about physical health and recovery, compared to participants in 2020.
  - Participants in 2025 were also less likely to say that their questions were answered by the GP in a way they could understand, compared to participants in 2020.

## Comments from survey participants

- When survey participants at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital were asked what was good about their care, they most commonly referred to the interpersonal aspects of the care they received.
- 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 Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital, they most commonly referred to staff responsiveness and attention to needs (in particular on the postnatal ward).

"My consultant was very attentive throughout pregnancy and during delivery. Any decisions were made after fully informing me of what was happening and why it needed to happen."

"The midwives were incredible. So attentive, understanding, they listened and were compassionate."

"During the induction I felt a little bit out of the loop on what was happening and that my midwife wasn't really listening to me."

"More assistance through the night on the postnatal ward. I had a very stressful night and called for a midwife just for some reassurance, but I felt very dismissed. I know the midwives are extremely busy but all I needed was someone to say not to worry and that everything was ok."

## Conclusion

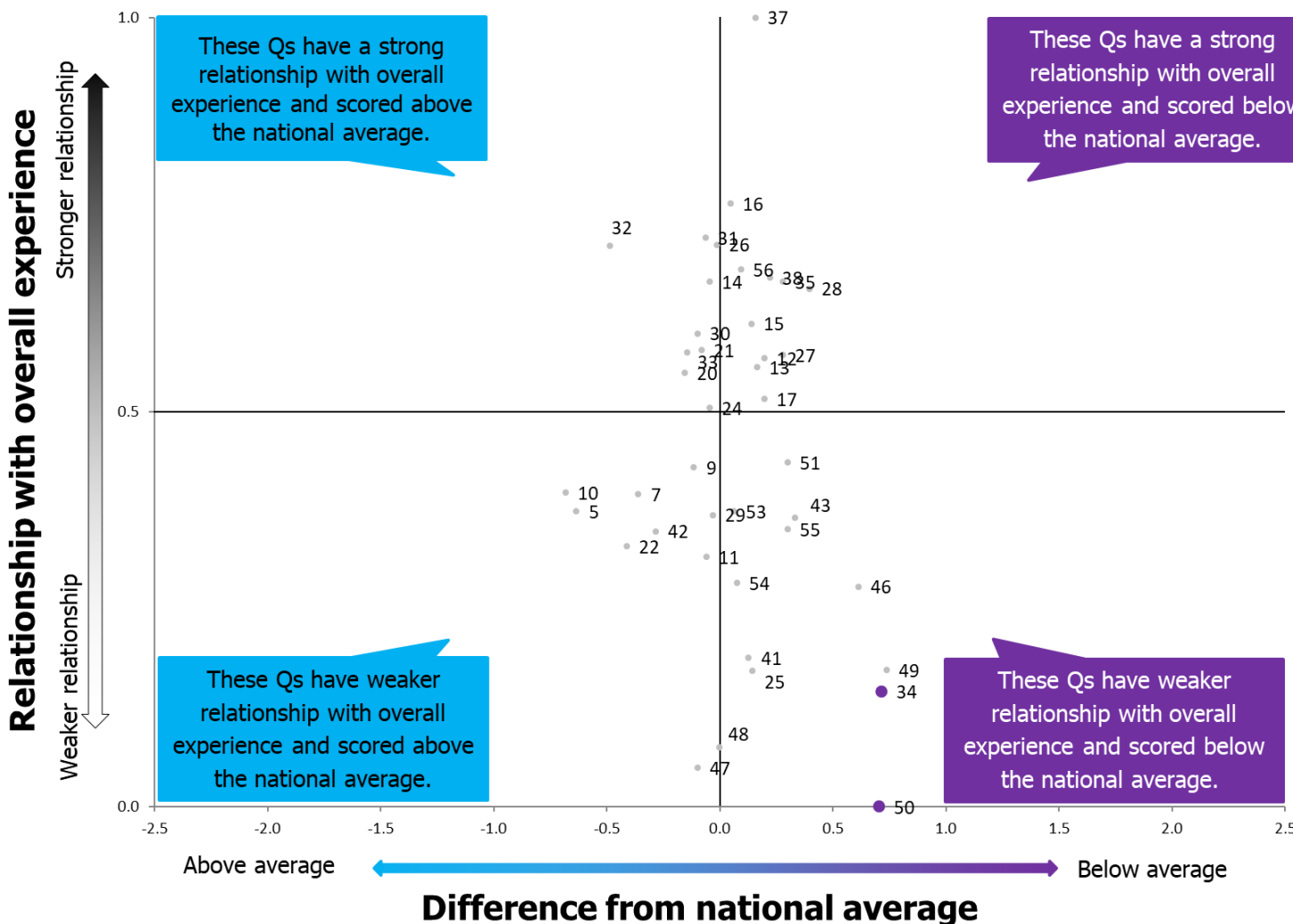
- There were no questions that scored significantly above national average for participants at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital.
- Two questions scored significantly below national average for participants at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital. These areas for improvement included discharge information about who to contact if worried after leaving hospital and clear answers to questions from the GP at the postnatal check-up.
- 84% of survey participants who gave birth at Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital said they had a good or very good overall experience; this is higher than the national figure of 83%.
- Between 2020 and 2025, there were significant decreases in scores for the questions about GP care at the postnatal check-up.



# Appendix 1

Improvement map for Our Lady of Lourdes Hospital

- 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](http://www.yourexperience.ie).





More information on the National Maternity Experience Survey 2025 is available from [www.yourexperience.ie](http://www.yourexperience.ie):

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

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