

National Maternity Experience Survey 2025

The Coombe 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 The Coombe Hospital.
- The report focuses on experiences of care provided by The Coombe 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




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



Gave birth in February or March 2025



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



Who took part in the survey?

- 989 people who gave birth at The Coombe Hospital were invited to participate in the survey.
- 388 took part. This is a response rate of 39% (compared to the national rate of 42%).

Age of participants	Number	%
Under 25 years	22	5.7
25 to 29 years	55	14.2
30 to 34 years	155	39.9
35 to 39 years	120	30.9
40 years or older	36	9.3
Previous births	Number	%
None	196	50.8
1 or 2	174	45.1
3 or more	16	4.1

Ethnicity of participants	Number	%
White Irish	266	68.7
Irish Traveller	2	0.5
Any other White background	38	9.8
Black or Black Irish- African	13	3.4
Asian or Asian Irish- Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	41	10.6
Any other Asian background	11	2.8
Arab	2	0.5
Mixed	2	0.5
Other	12	3.1
Long-term condition or disability	Number	%
Any long-term condition	32	8.2
No long-term condition	356	91.8



Areas of good experience

There were no questions that scored significantly above national average for participants at The Coombe 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 midwife present at our delivery was empowering and let me lead the process. She accompanied me to the ward around midnight and didn't leave my side until she did a thorough handover with the midwife on the ward."

"Community midwives were very holistic in their approach compared to the GP, which I liked. I felt I had more time to talk to them and they really listened."

"I have had all 3 of my babies in the Coombe through the public system and I cannot praise the care I received enough... ..I was induced on number 3 and was a little anxious but my midwives were wonderful and put my mind at ease."

Areas for improvement

Information about nutrition in pregnancy | Q10

34% of survey participants at The Coombe Hospital (124 out of 366 participants who responded to this question) said that they did not receive enough information about nutrition in pregnancy.

Support for mental health in pregnancy | Q12

27% of participants (91 out of 342) said that they did not receive enough support for their mental health in pregnancy.

These questions scored significantly below national average.

Comments from participants

"Following a number of miscarriages, this pregnancy was tough mentally with lots of anxiety. I was not offered any mental health care so I accessed this privately myself."

"More information about nutrition and mental health."

"Mental health support wasn't great, but it was offered. I sought assistance privately in the end due to the resources being offered not being what was needed."

Care in pregnancy



- 68% of participants from The Coombe Hospital said that they were offered a choice about the type of maternity care they would receive.
- 86% of participants said that they were offered antenatal classes in pregnancy. 51% of participants said they did antenatal classes, while 35% did not do them. 13% said they were not offered any antenatal classes in pregnancy.
- 79% of participants had some of their regular check-ups in pregnancy with their GP.

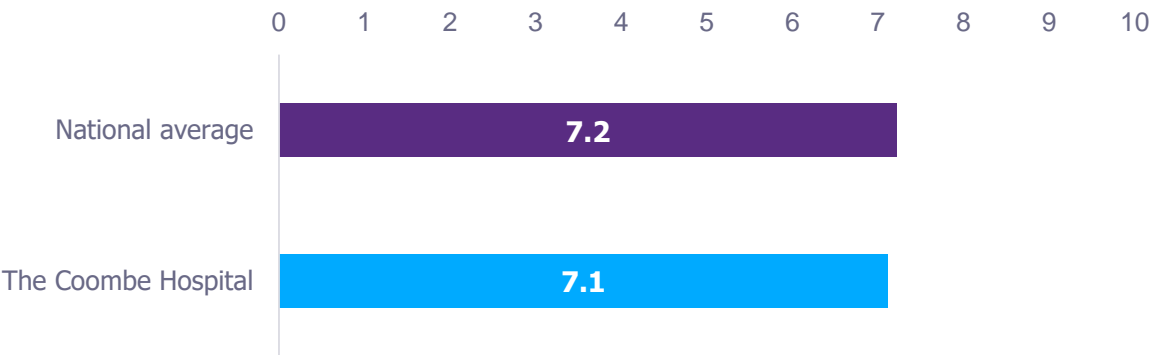
First healthcare professional seen when pregnant	Number	%
General Practitioner (GP) or family doctor	268	69.3
Midwife at maternity service	28	7.2
Obstetrician (doctor or consultant) at maternity service	45	11.6
Healthcare professional at private scan clinic	33	8.5
Other	13	3.4

Type of maternity care in pregnancy	Number	%
Obstetrician public clinic at hospital	139	35.8
Midwife clinic at the hospital	37	9.5
'Domino scheme': midwife-led care	46	11.9
Community midwife clinic	30	7.7
Home birth midwife	2	0.5
Obstetrician semi-private clinic	50	12.9
Obstetrician private clinic	79	20.4
Pregnancy check-ups in another country	2	0.5
Did not have any check-ups in pregnancy	1	0.3
Attended pregnancy check-ups at another service	2	0.5

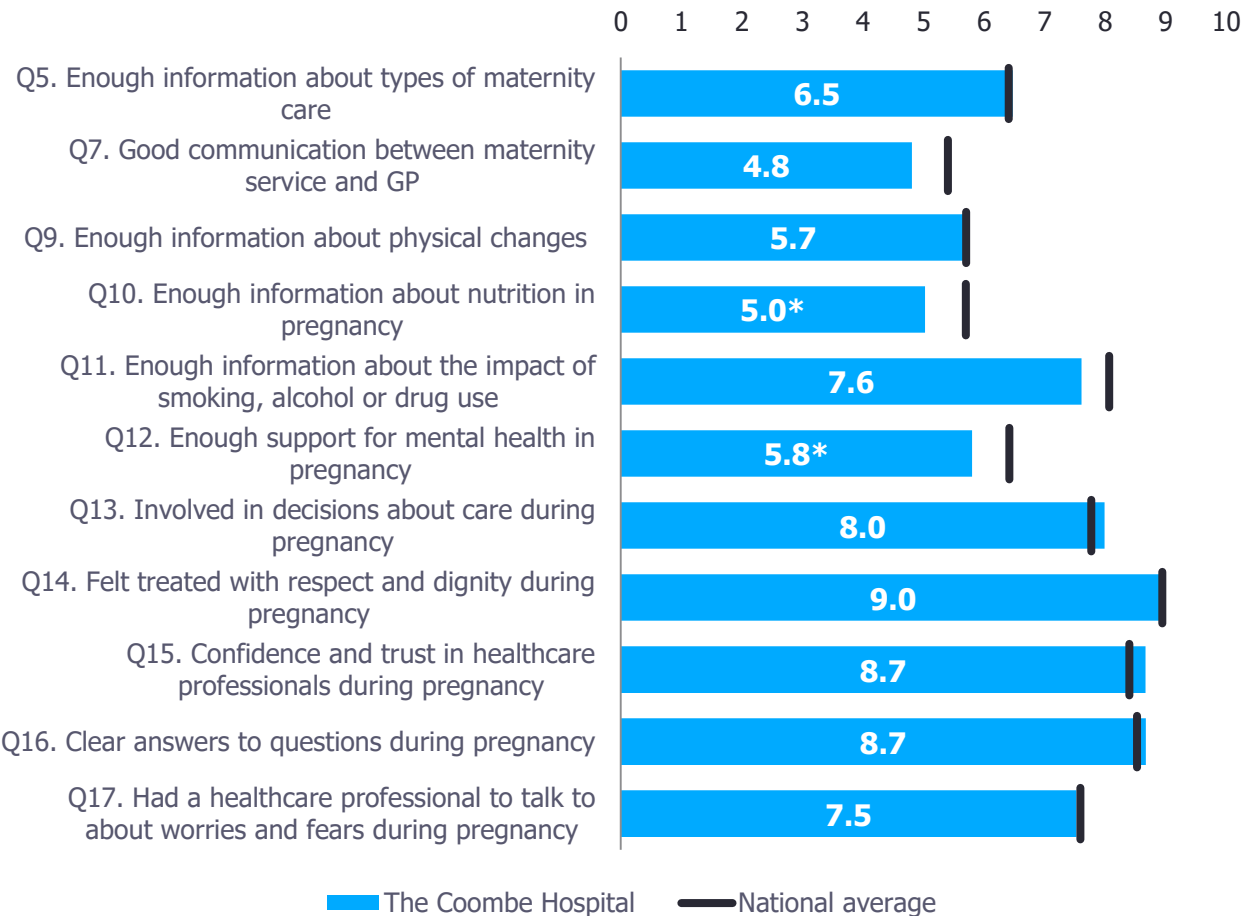
Scored questions for care in pregnancy

- **Highest-scoring question:** 82% of participants (316 of 385) said they always felt treated with respect and dignity in pregnancy.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 40% of participants (116 of 291) felt there was not 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

- 48% of survey participants at The Coombe Hospital said their labour was induced.

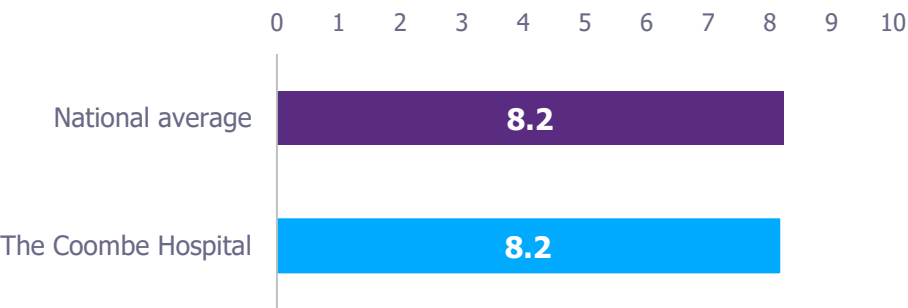
Type of birth for survey participants	Number	%
Vaginal birth (no forceps or ventouse suction cup)	167	43.2
Assisted vaginal birth (with forceps or ventouse suction cup)	58	15.0
Planned caesarean birth	88	22.7
Unplanned caesarean birth	74	19.1
Participant left alone by healthcare professionals at a time when it worried them	Number	%
Yes, during early labour	47	12.2
Yes, during the later stages of labour	25	6.5
Yes, during the birth	8	2.1
Yes, shortly after the birth	34	8.9
No	293	76.3



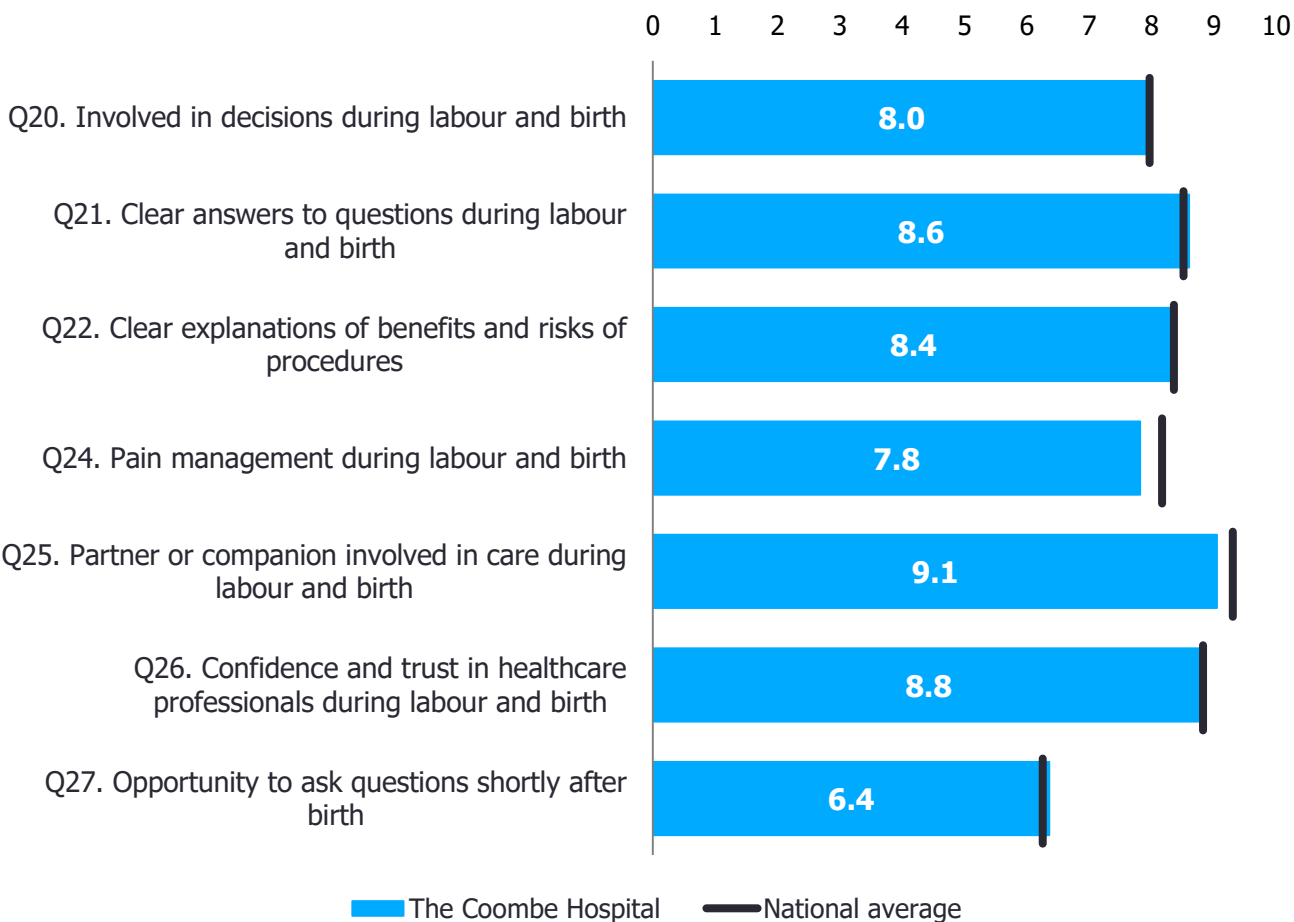
Scored questions for care during labour and birth

- **Highest-scoring question:** 91% of participants (343 of 379) said that their partner or companion was involved in their care during labour and birth as much as they wanted them to be.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 24% of participants (85 of 357) said they did not have the opportunity to ask questions about their labour and the birth shortly after the baby was born.

Overall average score for care during labour and birth



Average scores out of 10 for individual questions

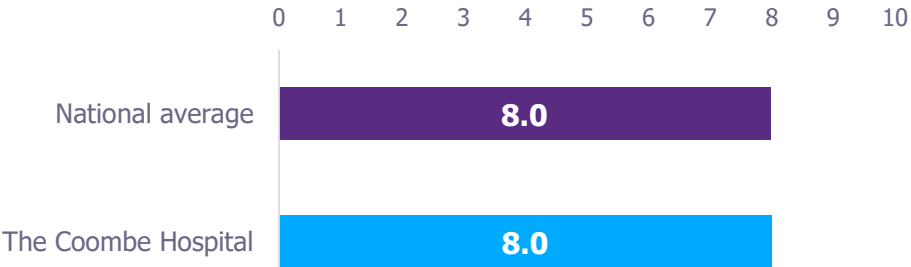




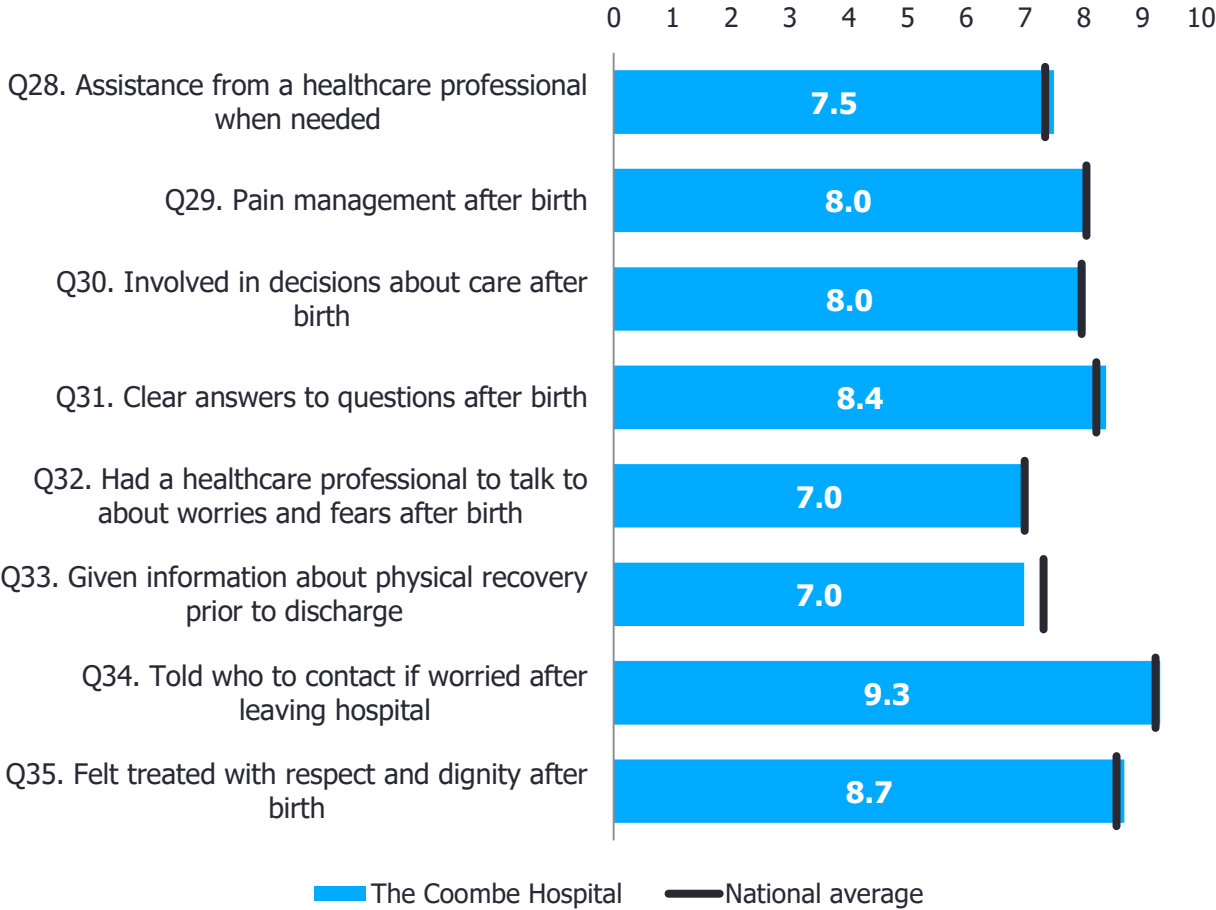
Scored questions for care in hospital after birth

- **Highest-scoring question:** 93% of participants (347 of 373) 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.
- **Lowest-scoring questions:**
 - 15% of participants (53 of 359) said that they did not have a healthcare professional that they could talk to about their worries and fears in hospital after the birth.
 - 13% of participants (50 of 380) said they were not given information about physical recovery prior to discharge.

Overall average score for care in hospital after birth



Average scores out of 10 for individual questions

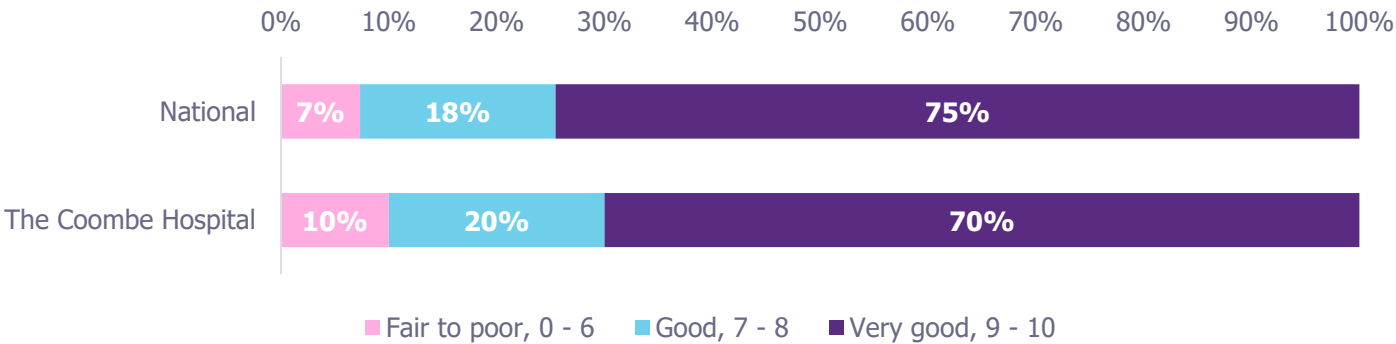




Specialist care in the neonatal unit

- 69 survey participants (18%) at The Coombe Hospital said that their baby spent time in the neonatal unit following the birth.
- Of these participants:
 - 58% said that they always received enough emotional support from healthcare professionals while their baby was in the neonatal unit.
 - 21% said that they sometimes received enough emotional support.
 - 18% said that they did not receive enough emotional support.
 - 3% said they did not want or need any emotional support.

Overall rating of experience of care in the neonatal unit



Infant feeding

In the first few days after birth:

- 28% of participants fed their baby with breast milk only.
- 30% fed their baby with formula milk only.
- 42% fed their baby with both breast and formula milk.

Healthcare professional discussed feeding options

	Number	%
Yes, during pregnancy	197	51.0
Yes, during labour or immediately after birth	103	26.7
Yes, after birth while in hospital	166	43.0
Yes, after birth while at home	85	22.0
No	49	12.7
Did not want or need discussion of different options	39	10.1
Don't know or can't remember	2	0.5

Sources of breastfeeding support

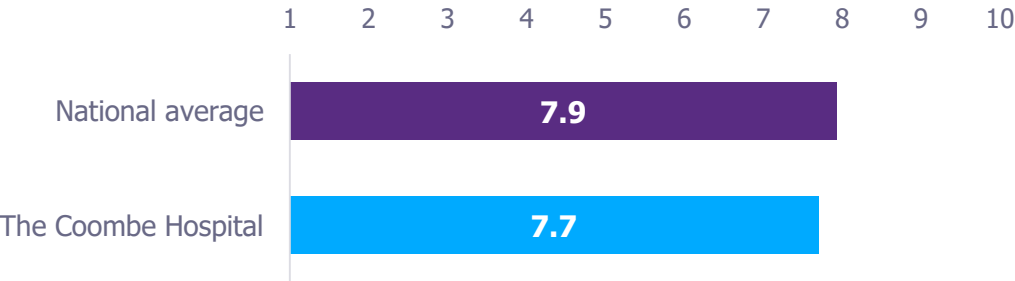
	Number	%
Midwife(s) in hospital	194	51.6
Hospital lactation consultant	87	23.1
Home birth midwife	6	1.6
Postnatal community midwives	66	17.6
Postnatal hub midwife	3	0.8
Public Health Nurse	130	34.6
GP	26	6.9
Practice nurse	8	2.1
Community breastfeeding support groups or volunteers	37	9.8
Private lactation consultant	42	11.2
Friends or family	85	22.6
Did not need support	21	5.6
Did not want to breastfeed	90	23.9

Scored questions for infant feeding

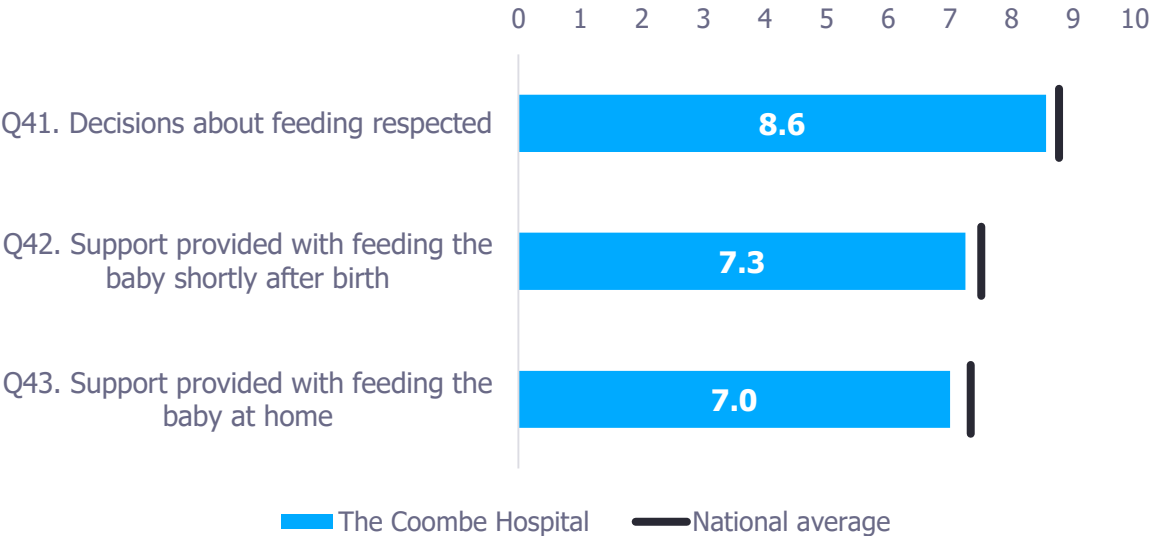


- **Highest-scoring question:** 77% of participants (294 of 380) said their decisions about how they wanted to feed their baby were always respected by healthcare professionals.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 19% of participants (67 of 349) said that they did not get adequate support from healthcare professionals with feeding at home or in the community.

Overall average score for 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	117	30.3
Postnatal community midwife at a community clinic (including a Postnatal Hub)	20	5.2
Public Health Nurse at home	342	88.6
Public Health Nurse at a community clinic	80	20.7
GP	266	68.9
Obstetrician at hospital clinic	106	27.5
Midwives and or paediatricians at hospital baby clinic	77	19.9
Other professionals	33	8.5

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

	Number	%
GP	106	28.1
Public Health Nurse	108	28.6
Midwife	56	14.9
Obstetrician	27	7.2
Perinatal mental health midwife	11	2.9
Perinatal mental health nurse	14	3.7
Psychiatrist	11	2.9
Psychologist	14	3.7
Mental health social worker	10	2.7
Other professionals	14	3.7
None of the above	188	49.9

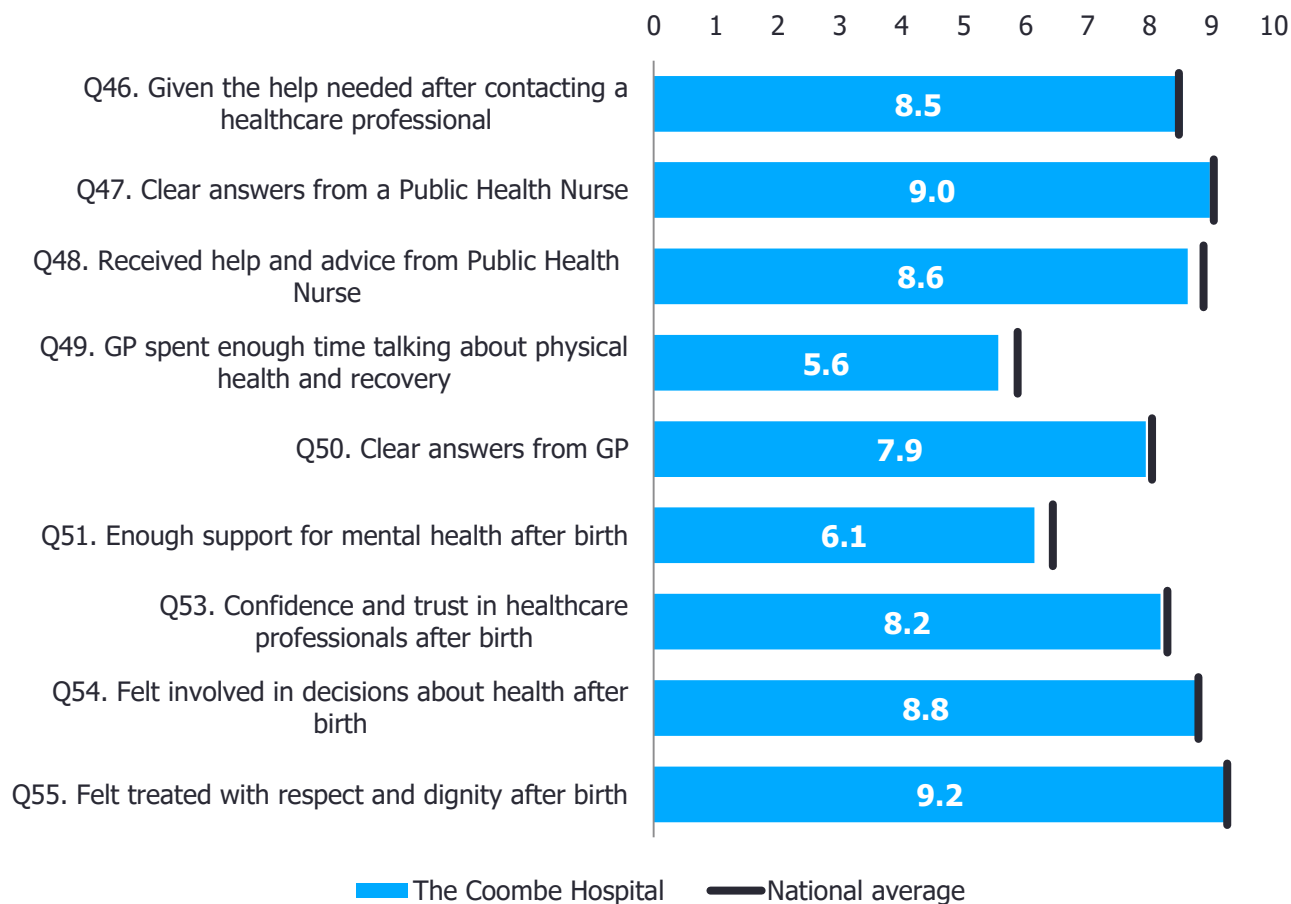
Scored questions for care at home after birth



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.

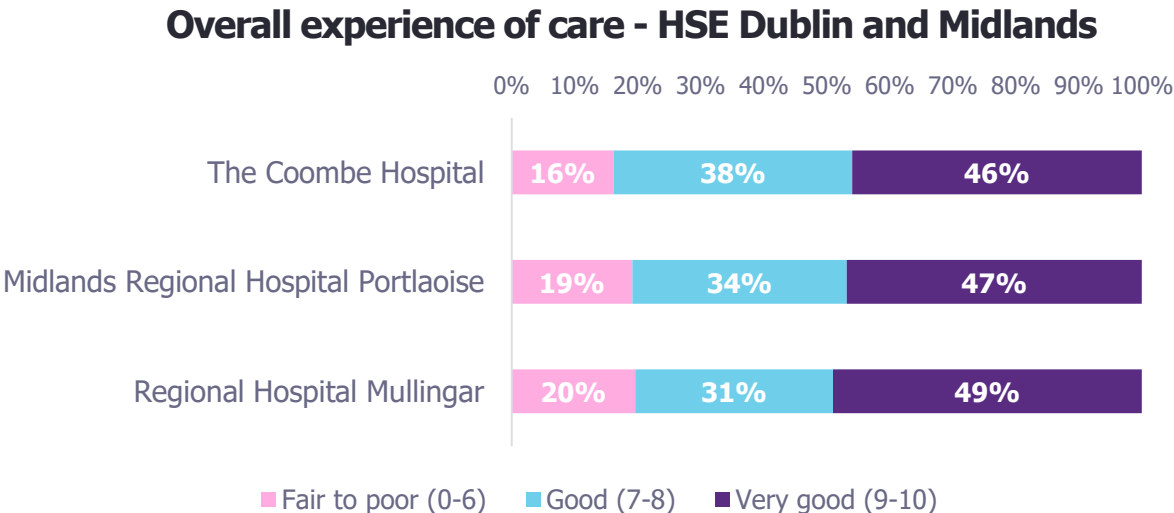
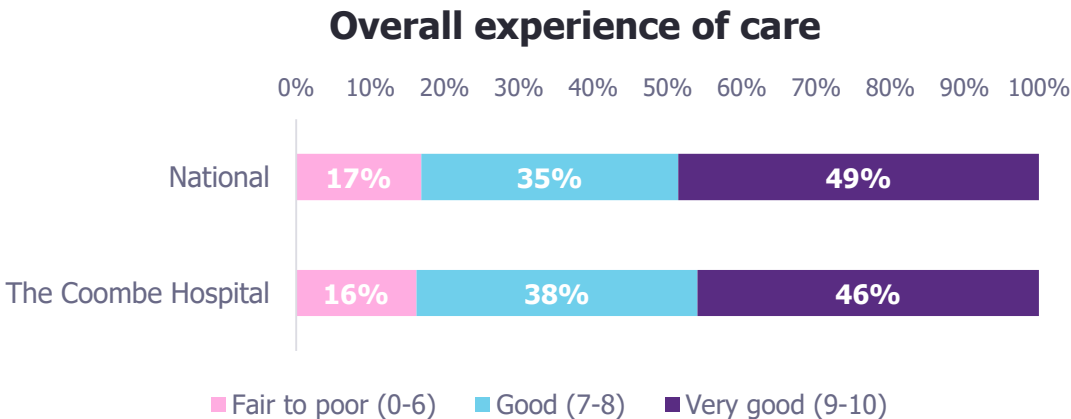
- **Highest-scoring question:** 87% of participants (335 of 386) said they were always treated with respect and dignity when they received care at home or in the community after the birth of their baby.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 31% of participants (112 of 367) said that their GP did not spend enough 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



Overall experience of maternity care

- 76% of survey participants who gave birth at The Coombe Hospital said that their decisions about their maternity care were always respected by healthcare staff. 22% said their decisions were sometimes respected, while 2% said their decisions about their maternity care were not respected.
- 30% of participants said that if they wanted to give feedback or make a complaint they knew how and where to do so, while 48% said they did not know. 22% said they did not wish to give feedback or make a complaint.
- 84% of participants who gave birth at The Coombe 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.



Changes since 2020 survey

- Survey findings from 2025 were compared with survey findings from 2020 to see whether there had been any increase or decrease in survey question scores at The Coombe Hospital.
- There were no significant increases or decreases in scores for any survey questions between 2020 and 2025 at The Coombe Hospital.

Comments from survey participants

- When survey participants at The Coombe Hospital were asked what was good about their care, they most commonly referred to the interactions they had with healthcare staff. Survey participants also frequently mentioned the specific type of maternity care they received and the positive aspects of that type of care.

"The midwives in the Coombe and with the Domino clinic were amazing. They were so kind through every step and always gave me information and answered all of my questions thoroughly."

"I paid a lot of money to go private, but was very happy with my consultant who really listened to me and genuinely cared."

- When survey participants were asked what could be improved with care at The Coombe Hospital, they most commonly referred to the conditions of the hospital, and support with feeding their baby.

"The hygiene was appalling. Vomit and blood in the toilets and showers. Not cleaned regularly or thoroughly. The mattress on the bed was also very hard and uncomfortable, which was not ideal after a ventouse delivery."

"No breastfeeding support in recovery post C-section whatsoever, was just advised to give formula despite wanting to breastfeed. No chairs with armrests for breastfeeding."

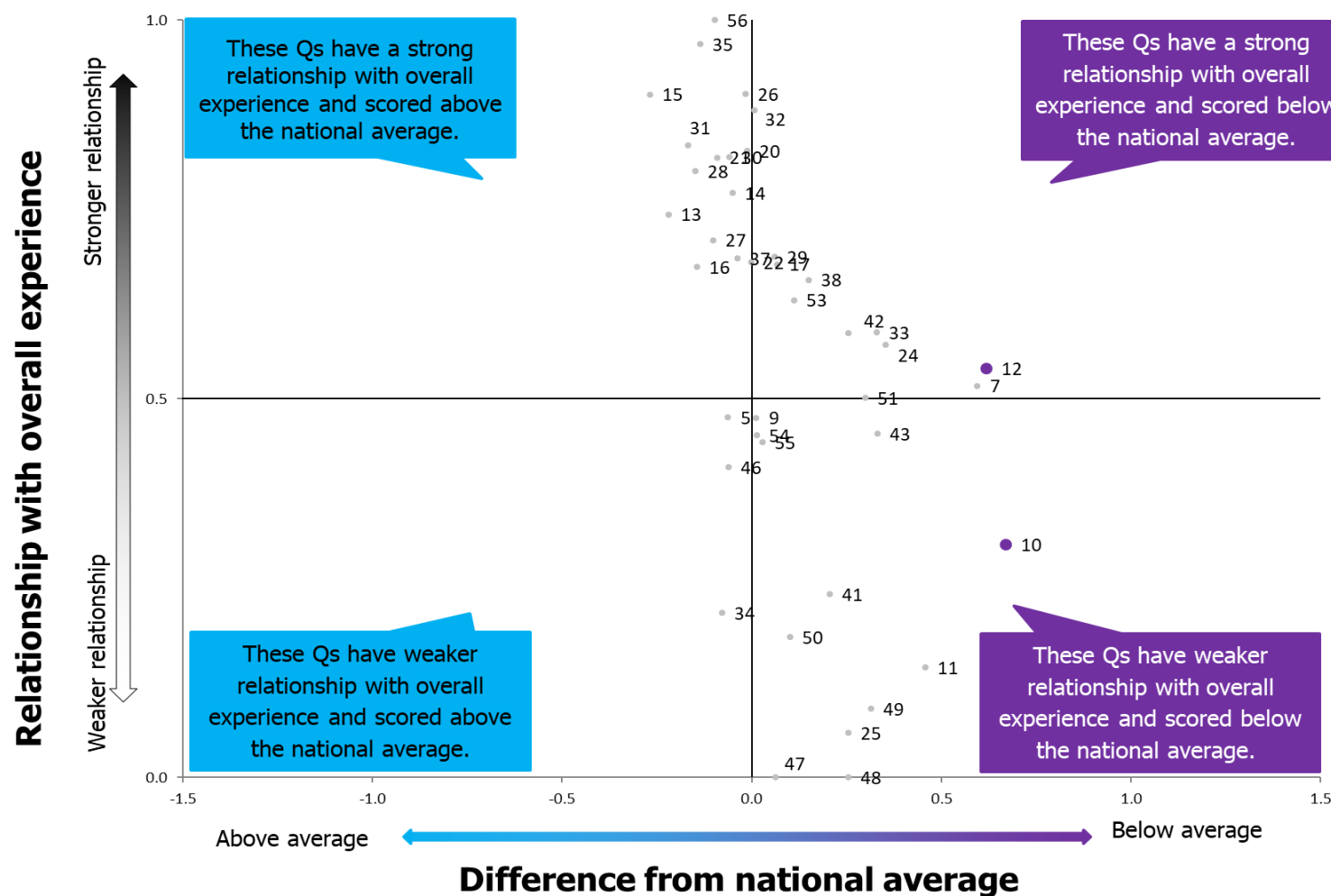
Conclusion

- There were no questions that scored significantly above national average at The Coombe Hospital.
- Two questions scored significantly below national average. These areas for improvement included information about nutrition in pregnancy and support for mental health in pregnancy.
- 84% of survey participants who gave birth at The Coombe Hospital said they had a good or very good overall experience; this is higher than the national figure (83%).
- Between 2020 and 2025, there were no significant increases or decreases in scores for survey questions at The Coombe Hospital.

Appendix 1

Improvement map for The Coombe 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.





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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