

# National Maternity Experience Survey 2025

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## The Rotunda 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 The Rotunda Hospital.
- The report focuses on experiences of care provided by The Rotunda 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?

- 1,258 people who gave birth at The Rotunda Hospital were invited to participate in the survey.
- 512 took part. This is a response rate of 41% (compared to national rate of 42%).

Age of participants	Number	%
Under 25 years	29	5.7
25 to 29 years	67	13.1
30 to 34 years	192	37.5
35 to 39 years	171	33.4
40 years or older	53	10.4
Previous births	Number	%
None	257	50.3
1 or 2	227	44.4
3 or more	27	5.3

Ethnicity of participants	Number	%
White Irish	324	63.5
Irish Traveller	4	0.8
Roma	4	0.8
Any other White background	79	15.5
Black or Black Irish- African	32	6.3
Black or Black Irish- Other Black background	2	0.4
Asian or Asian Irish- Chinese	2	0.4
Asian or Asian Irish- Indian/Pakistani/Bangladeshi	38	7.5
Asian or Asian Irish- Other Asian background	7	1.4
Arab	5	1.0
Mixed	4	0.8
Other	9	1.8
Long-term condition or disability	Number	%
Any long-term condition	44	8.6
No long-term condition	468	91.4



## Areas of good experience

### **Pain management during labour and birth | Q24**

77% of survey participants at The Rotunda Hospital (378 out of 489) felt that their healthcare professionals definitely did everything they could to help manage pain during labour and birth.

*This question scored significantly above the national average.*

## Comments from participants

"The way they treated me, my husband and my baby. So much respect and kindness. I felt they really wanted us to feel well, without pain and helping us in hospital the day of the birth and also after the birth with the visits at home. Thanks a lot!"

"They listened to me and trusted I knew my body and supported with pain relief straight away."

"Being treated like a human. Staff realising that despite this being their day-to-day job, this pregnancy and baby means the world to us and staff appeared to really understand that."

## Areas for improvement

*There were no questions that scored significantly below national average for participants at The Rotunda Hospital. The highest and lowest-scoring questions for each stage of care are highlighted throughout this report. A selection of comments highlighting areas of care that participants suggested could be improved is provided below.*

### Comments from participants

"On the day of my induction, I was left on the ward for hours before anyone came to me to go through what the plan was or when the induction was going to start. It would have been better if a doctor or midwife had explained that it would not be starting straight away."

"I had a previous very traumatic birth, but it was not considered during or after birth how this birth might be triggering. I received no follow-up care or mental health assistance."

"The NICU could be massively improved on. Some of the staff made me feel completely stupid if I asked something. They disrespected and disregarded what I said as they 'knew better'."

# Care in pregnancy



- 63% of participants at The Rotunda Hospital said that they were offered a choice about the type of maternity care they could receive.
- 88% of participants said they were offered antenatal classes in pregnancy. 48% of participants said they did the antenatal classes, while 41% did not do them. 10% said they were not offered any antenatal classes in pregnancy.
- 80% of participants had some of their regular check-ups in pregnancy with their GP.

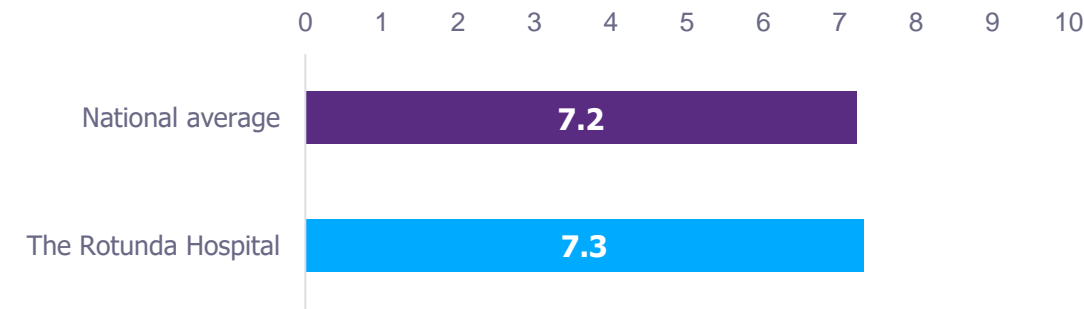
First healthcare professional seen when pregnant	Number	%
General Practitioner (GP) or family doctor	337	65.9
Midwife at maternity service	45	8.8
Obstetrician (doctor or consultant) at maternity service	65	12.7
Healthcare professional at private scan clinic	48	9.4
Other	16	3.1

Type of maternity care in pregnancy	Number	%
Obstetrician public clinic at hospital	113	22.1
Midwife clinic at the hospital	103	20.2
'Domino Scheme': midwife-led care in community	34	6.7
Community midwife clinic	35	6.8
Midwifery-led unit	1	0.2
Home birth midwife	1	0.2
Obstetrician semi-private clinic	85	16.6
Obstetrician private clinic	132	25.8
Pregnancy check-ups in another country	3	0.6
Did not have check-ups in pregnancy	2	0.4
Attended pregnancy check-ups at another service	2	0.4

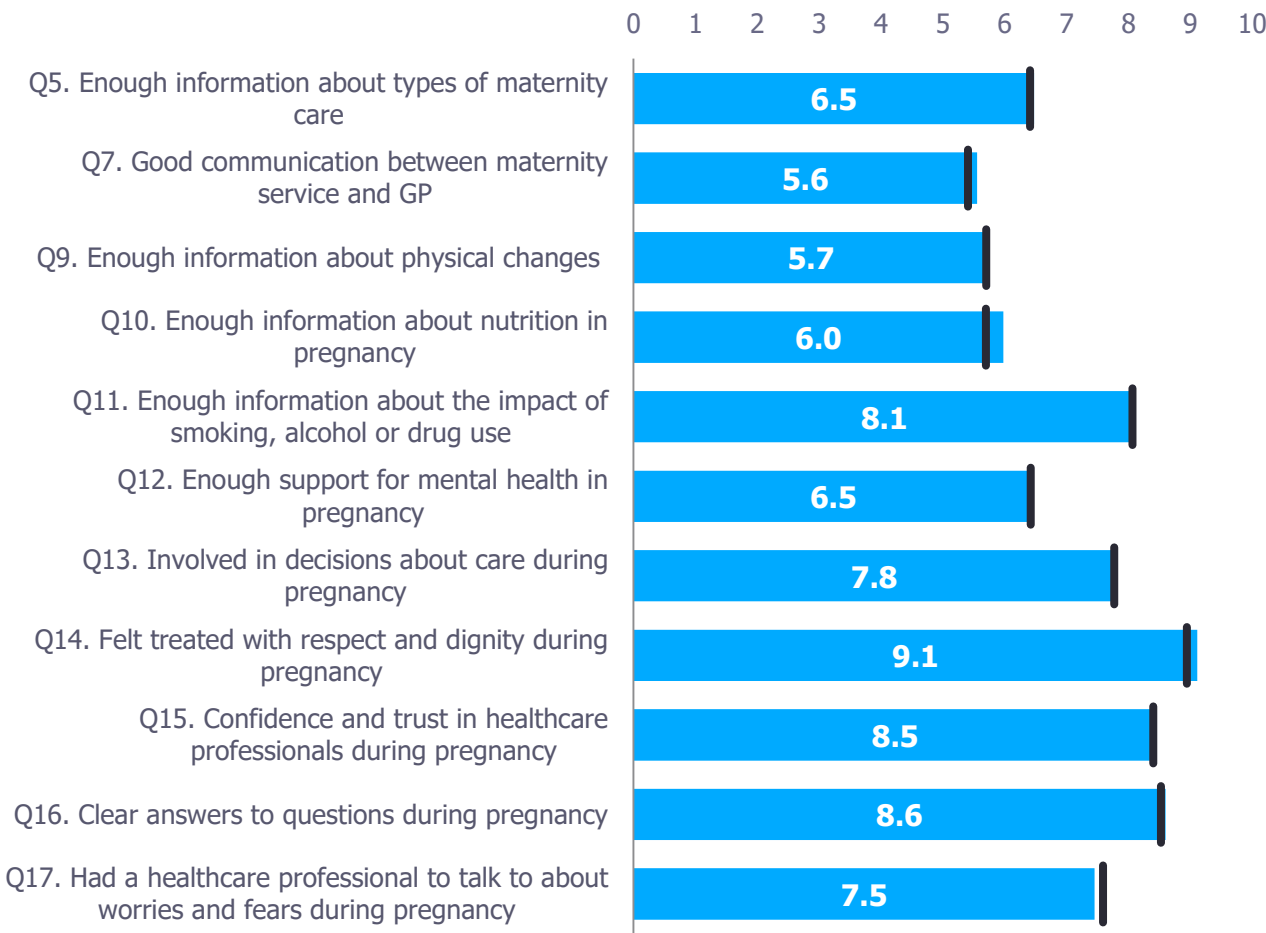
# Scored questions for care in pregnancy

- **Highest-scoring question:** 84% of participants (423 out of 504) said that they always felt treated with respect and dignity in pregnancy.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 30% of participants (115 out of 387) did not feel that 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



The Rotunda Hospital      National average

# Care during labour and birth

- 47% of survey participants at The Rotunda Hospital said their labour was induced.

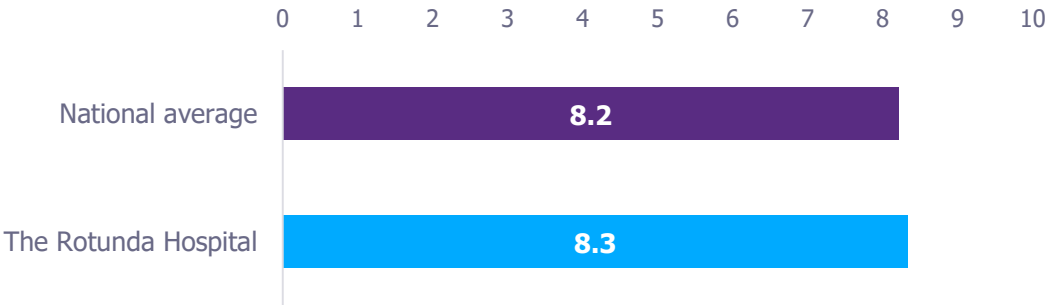
Type of birth for survey participants	Number	%
Vaginal birth (no forceps or ventouse suction cup)	175	34.2
Assisted vaginal birth (with forceps or ventouse suction cup)	83	16.2
Planned caesarean birth	151	29.5
Unplanned caesarean birth	102	20.0
Participant left alone by healthcare professionals at a time when it worried them	Number	%
Yes, during early labour	72	14.1
Yes, during the later stages of labour	27	5.3
Yes, during the birth	11	2.1
Yes, shortly after the birth	44	8.6
No	389	76.0



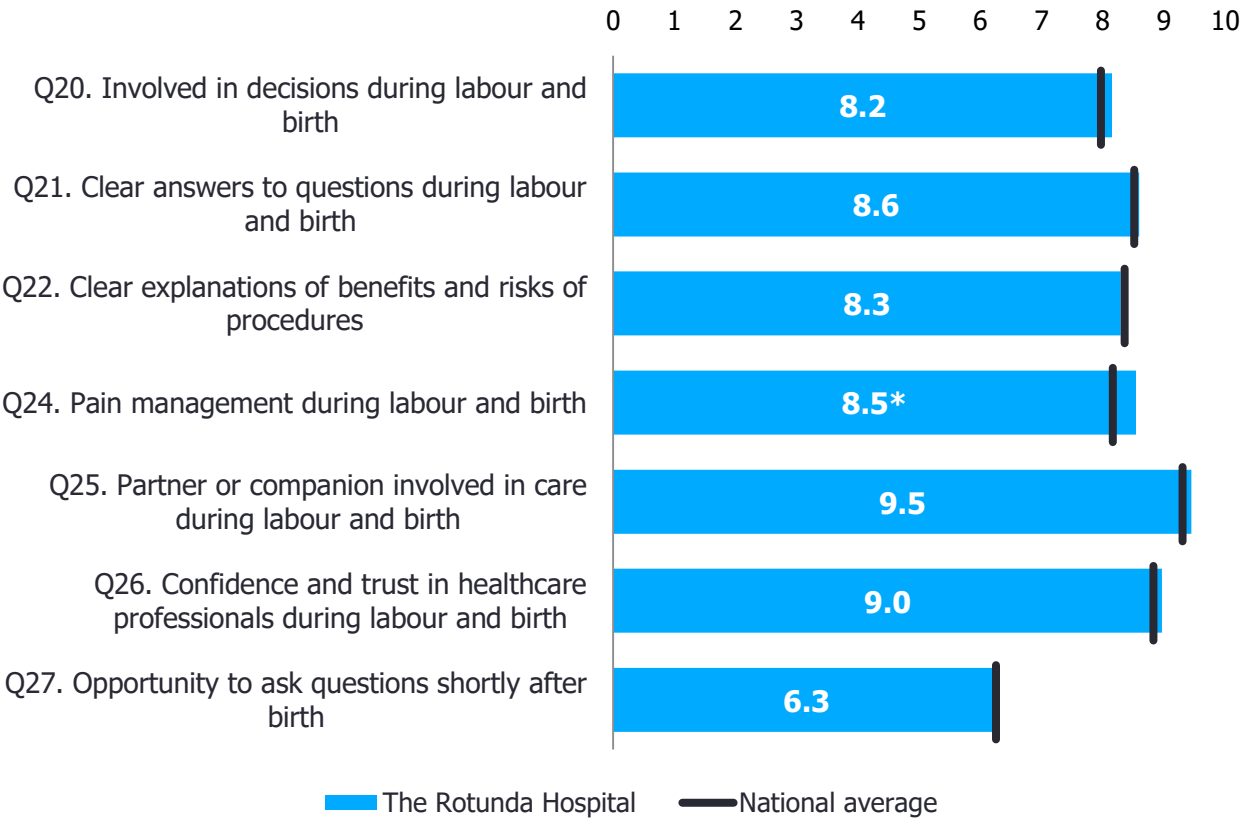
# Scored questions for care during labour and birth

- **Highest-scoring question:** 95% of participants (464 of 491) said that their partner was involved in their care during labour and birth as much as they wanted them to be.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 24% of participants (113 of 474) 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



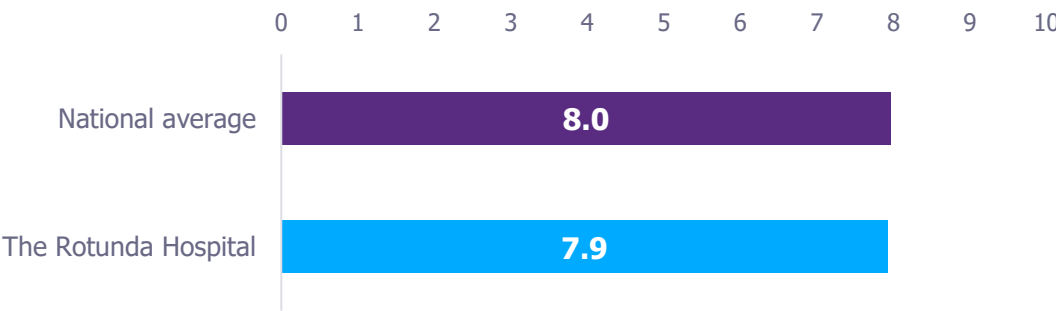
*\* Indicates statistically significant difference from the national average.*



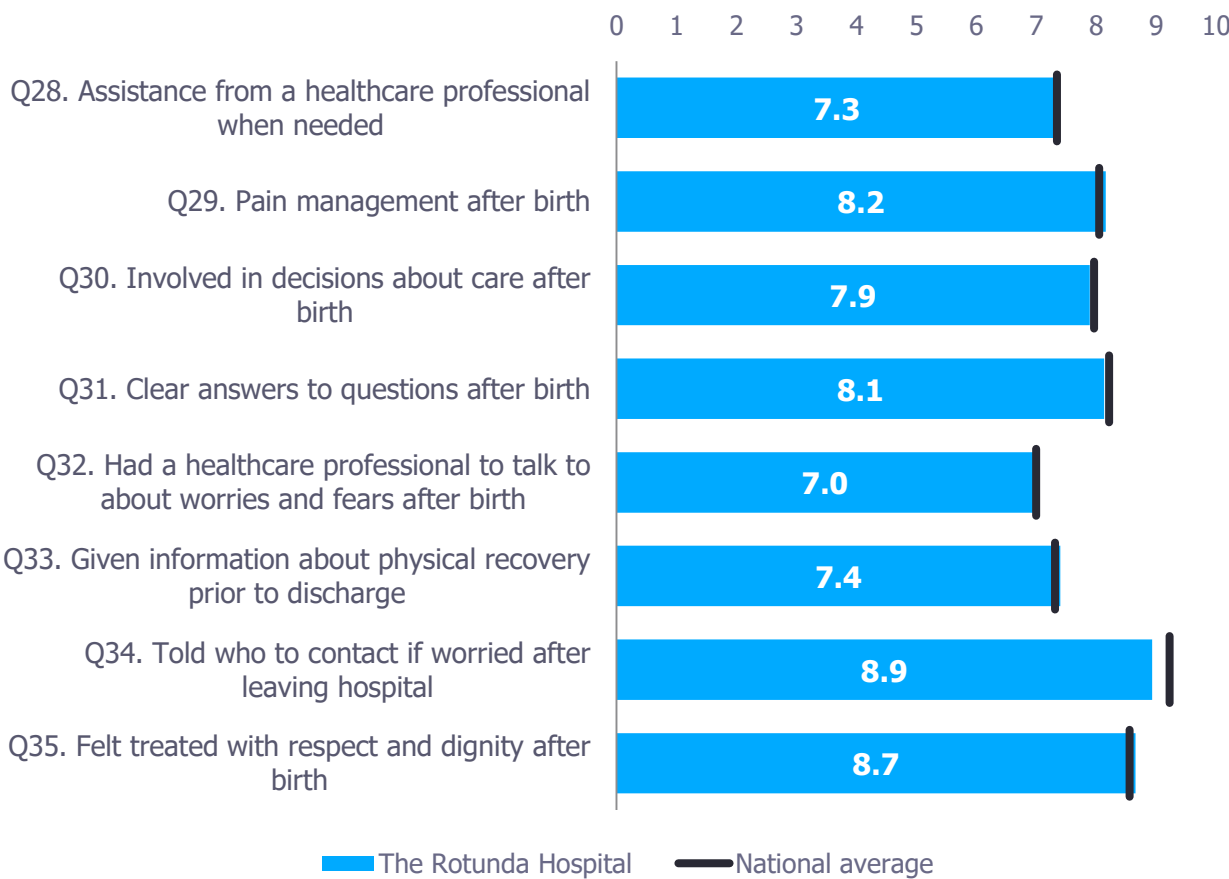
# Scored questions for care in hospital after birth

- **Highest-scoring question:** 89% of participants (427 of 478) 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:** 15% of participants (72 of 471) 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

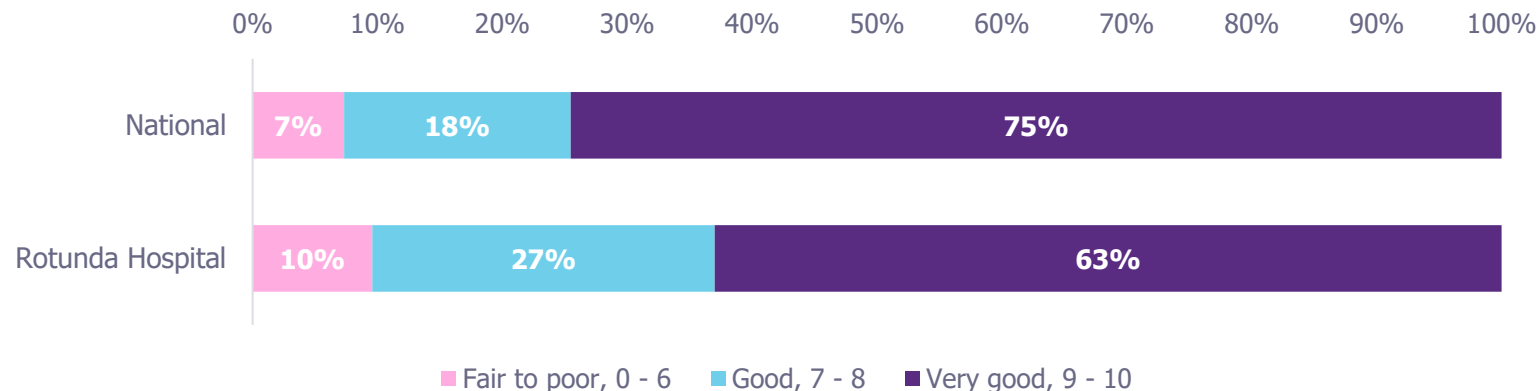




# Specialist care in the neonatal unit

- 75 survey participants (15%) at The Rotunda Hospital said that their baby spent time in the neonatal unit following the birth.
- Of these participants:
  - 46% said that they always received enough emotional support from healthcare professionals while their baby was in the neonatal unit.
  - 27% said that they sometimes received enough emotional support.
  - 26% said they did not receive enough emotional support.
  - 1% said they did not want or need any emotional support.

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



# Infant feeding

In the first few days after birth:

- 35% of participants fed their baby with breast milk only.
- 26% 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	250	48.9
Yes, during labour or immediately after birth	131	25.6
Yes, after birth while in hospital	212	41.5
Yes, after birth while at home	94	18.4
No	52	10.2
Did not want or need discussion of different options	51	10.0
Don't know or can't remember	8	1.6

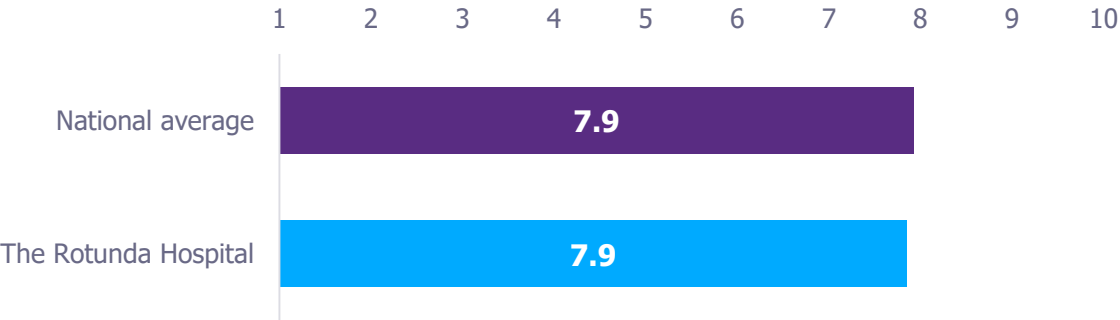
Sources of breastfeeding support		
	Number	%
Midwife(s) in hospital	287	56.8
Hospital lactation consultant	123	24.4
Home birth midwife	6	1.2
Postnatal community midwives	75	14.9
Postnatal hub midwife	3	0.6
Public health nurse	175	34.7
GP	29	5.7
Practice nurse	14	2.8
Community breastfeeding support groups or volunteers	34	6.7
Private lactation consultant	71	14.1
Friends or family	132	26.1
Did not need support	28	5.5
Did not want to breastfeed	95	18.8

# Scored questions for infant feeding

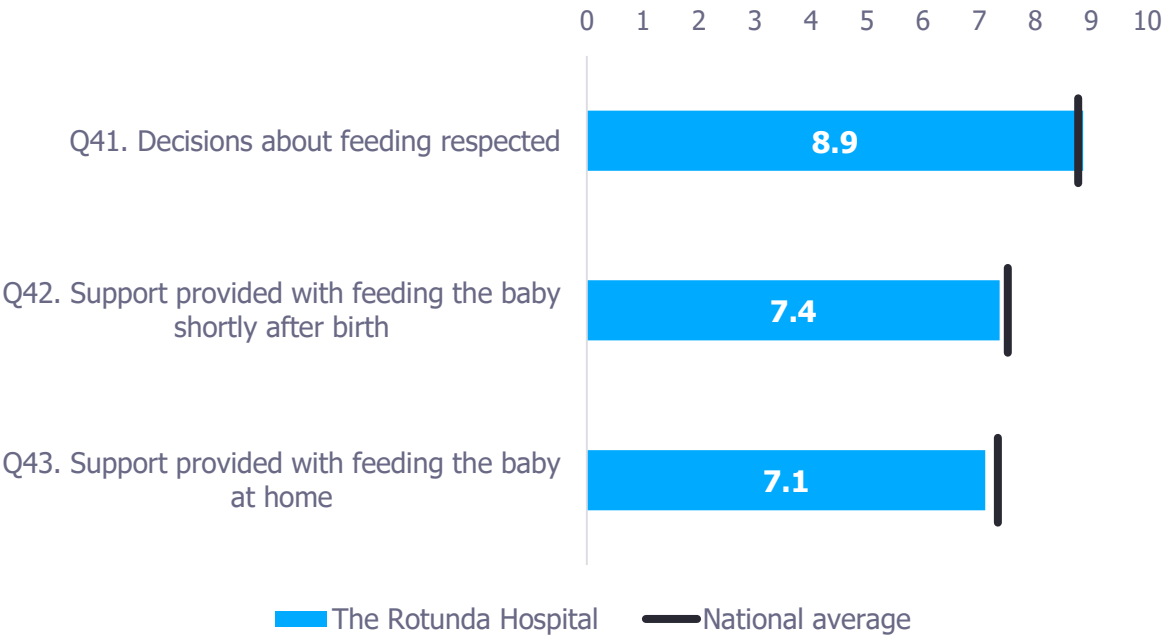


- **Highest-scoring question:** 82% of participants (415 of 509) said that their decisions about how they wanted to feed their baby were always respected by healthcare professionals.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 17% of participants (77 of 459) said that they did not get adequate support and encouragement 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	143	27.9
Postnatal community midwife at community clinic	16	3.1
Public Health Nurse at home	443	86.5
Public Health Nurse at community clinic	78	15.2
GP	362	70.7
Obstetrician at hospital clinic	133	26.0
Midwives or paediatricians at hospital baby clinic	84	16.4
Other professionals	33	6.4
None of the above	5	1.0

Healthcare professionals who provided mental health support during pregnancy or after birth		
	Number	%
GP	168	34.1
Public health nurse	133	27.0
Midwife	78	15.8
Obstetrician	44	8.9
Perinatal mental health midwife	15	3.0
Perinatal mental health nurse	11	2.2
Psychiatrist	12	2.4
Psychologist	12	2.4
Mental health social worker	15	3.0
Other professionals	10	2.0
None of the above	232	47.1

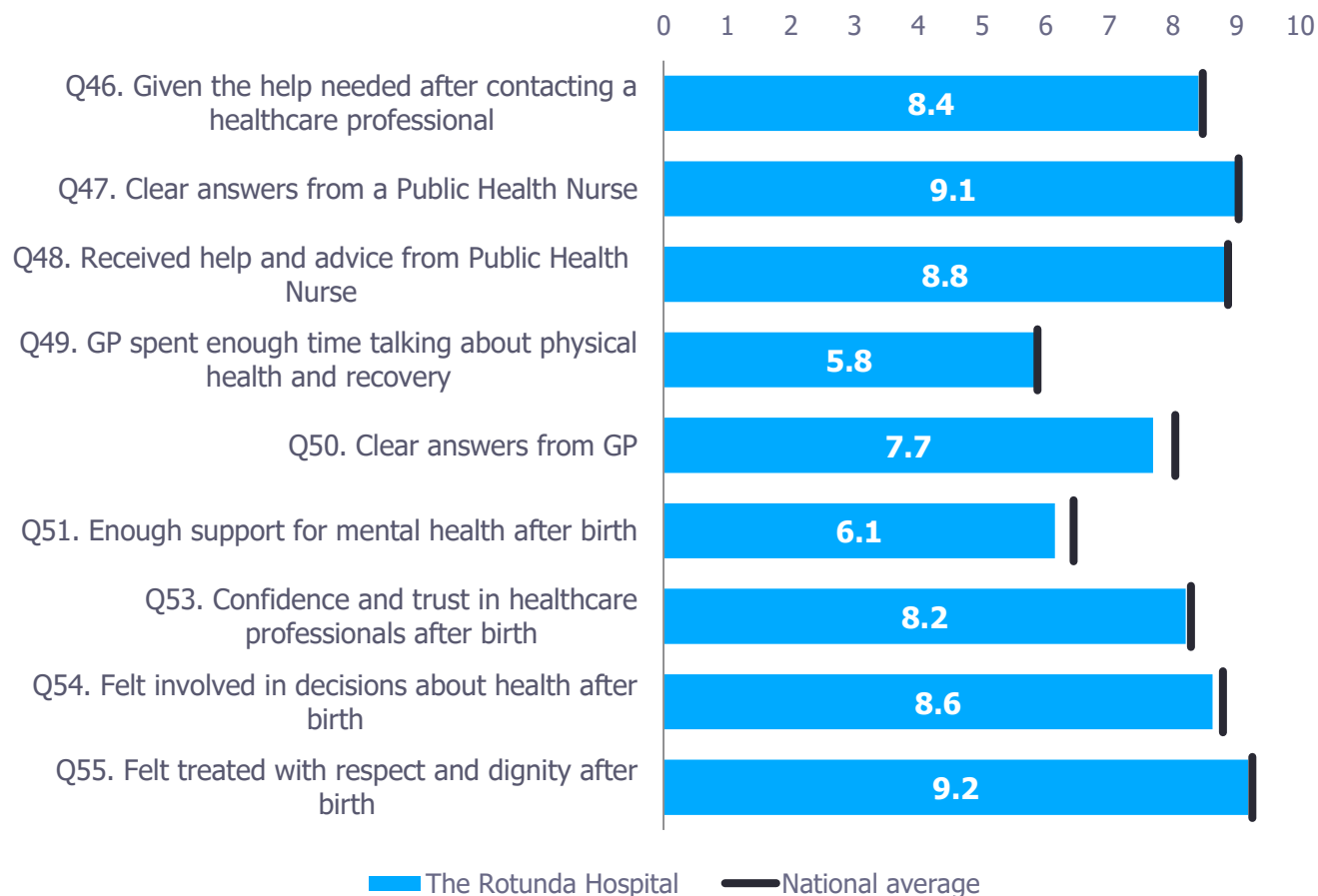
# Scored questions for care at home after birth



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.

## Average scores out of 10 for individual questions

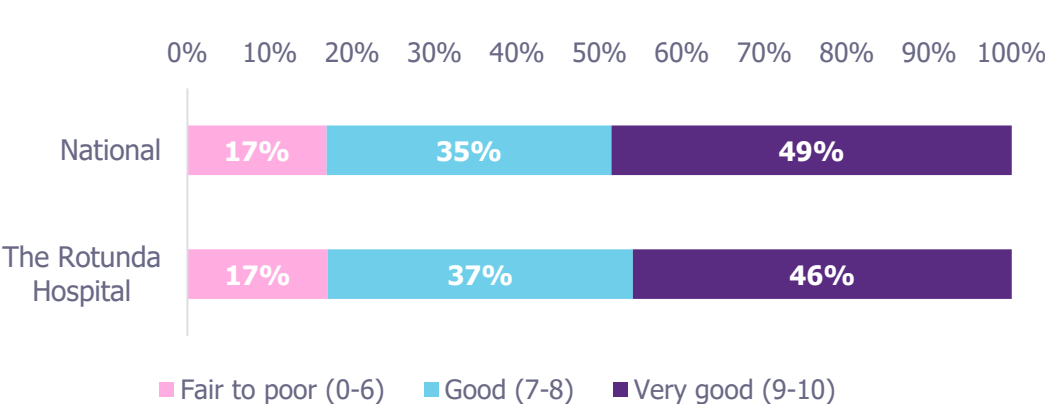
- **Highest-scoring question:** 86% of participants (434 of 506) said they always felt treated with respect and dignity during the care they received at home or in their community after birth.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 28% of participants (134 of 482) said that the GP did not spend enough time talking about physical health and recovery at the postnatal check-up, six weeks after the birth.



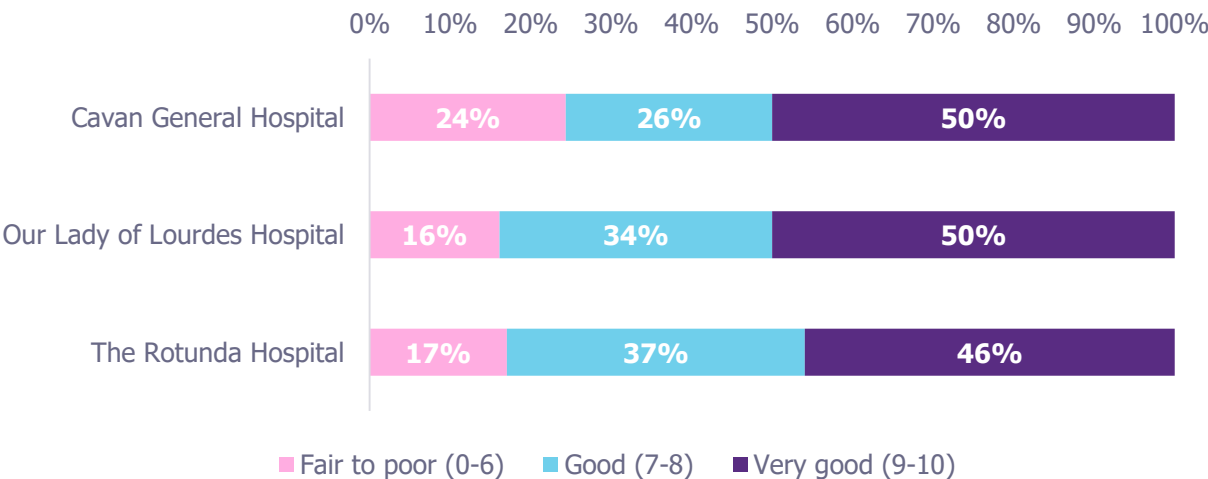
# Overall experience of maternity care

- 77% of survey participants who gave birth at The Rotunda Hospital said that their decisions about their maternity care were always respected by healthcare staff. 21% said their decisions were sometimes respected, while 2% said their decisions about their maternity care were not respected.
- 30% of participants said they knew how and where to give feedback or make a complaint if they wanted to do so, while 43% said they did not know. 27% said they did not wish to give feedback or make a complaint.
- 83% of participants who gave birth at The Rotunda Hospital said they had a good or very good overall experience of maternity care (overall rating between 7 and 10). This is the same as the national figure. 17% 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 at The Rotunda Hospital.
- Between 2020 and 2025, there was a significant increase in score for pain management during labour and birth at The Rotunda Hospital.
- There were no questions that significantly decreased in score at The Rotunda Hospital between 2020 and 2025.

## Comments from survey participants

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

"The best part of my maternity care service was being referred to and seen by the Advanced Midwife. I was listened to, respected and advocated for. I built up a relationship with her and was able to trust in her advocacy."

"I came across some really genuinely nice midwives. I loved the community midwife idea and not having to go into the hospital for all my check ups."

- When survey participants were asked what could be improved with care at The Rotunda Hospital, they most commonly referred to information sharing and explanations from staff, and support with feeding their baby.

"One doctor was insisting I have a scheduled induction but couldn't give me a proper explanation as to why. I felt pressured into agreeing and left the hospital stressed and in tears at 38 weeks pregnant."

"Although the midwives in the hospital did offer support in latching when asked, they were too busy to assist and provide one-on-one support. When I requested support each time, they would latch the baby but not teach me how to do it correctly for the next time. This led to a great deal of stress and anxiety on my behalf."

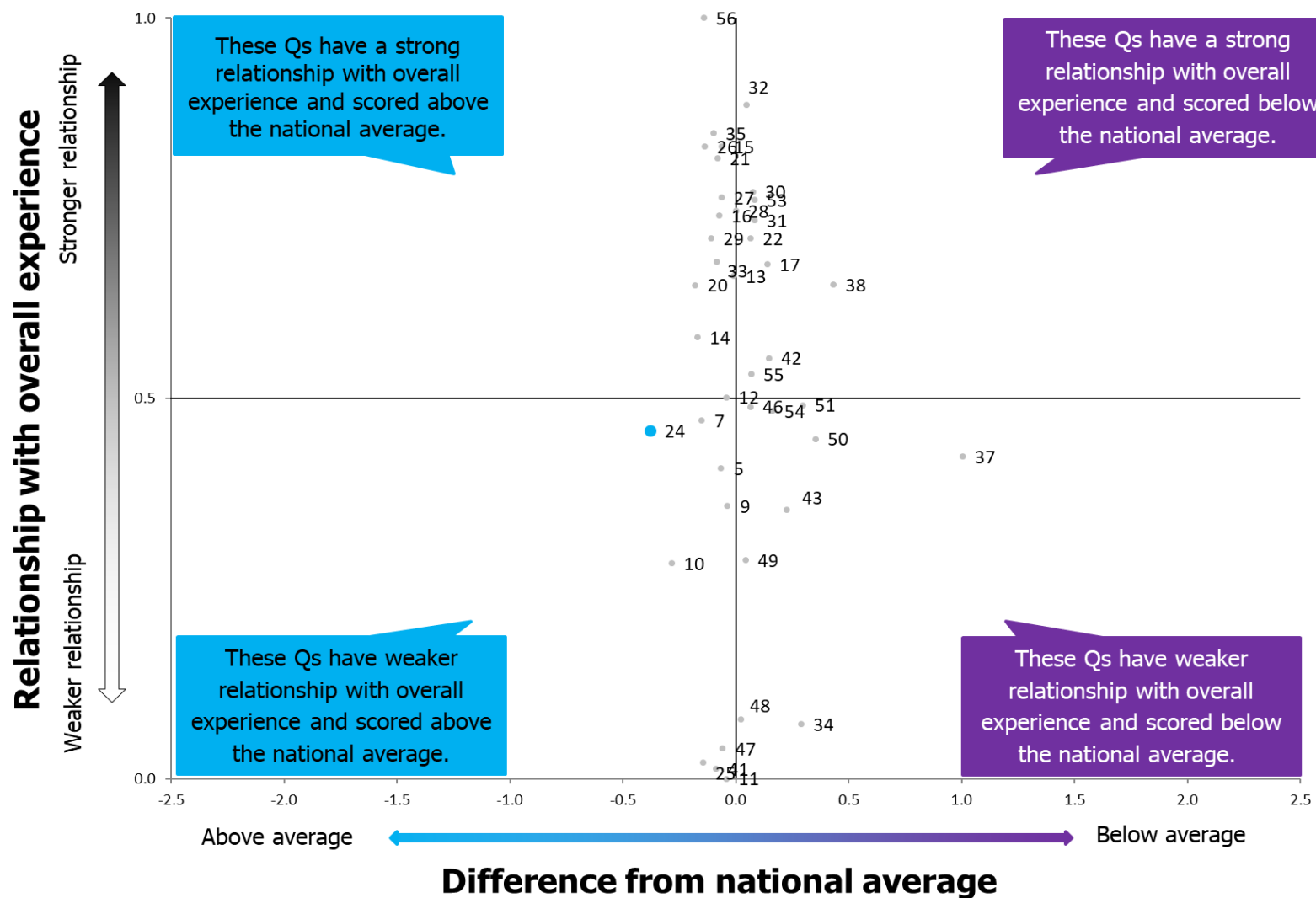
## Conclusion

- Pain management during labour and birth scored significantly above national average for participants at The Rotunda Hospital. The score for this question also significantly increased between 2020 and 2025 at The Rotunda Hospital.
- No questions scored significantly below national average for participants at The Rotunda Hospital.
- 83% of survey participants who gave birth at The Rotunda Hospital said they had a good or very good overall experience; this is the same as the national figure.

# Appendix 1

Improvement map for The Rotunda 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.yourexpperience.ie](http://www.yourexpperience.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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