

National Maternity Experience Survey 2025

Wexford General 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 Wexford General Hospital.
- The report focuses on experiences of care provided by Wexford General 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?

- 215 people who gave birth at Wexford General Hospital were invited to participate in the survey.
- 91 took part. This is a response rate of 42% (equal to the national rate of 42%).

Age of participants	Number	%
Under 25 years	9	9.9
25 to 29 years	26	28.6
30 to 34 years	26	28.6
35 to 39 years	23	25.3
40 years or older	7	7.7
Previous births	Number	%
None	34	37.4
1 or 2	48	52.7
3 or more	9	9.9

Ethnicity of participants	Number	%
White Irish	70	76.9
Irish Traveller	1	1.1
Any Other White Background	12	13.2
Black or Black Irish- African	1	1.1
Asian or Asian Irish- Indian/ Pakistani/ Bangladeshi	4	4.4
Asian or Asian Irish- Any Other Asian Background	1	1.1
Arab	1	1.1
Other	1	1.1
Long-term condition or disability	Number	%
Any long-term condition	11	12.1
No long-term condition	80	87.9

Areas of good experience



Pain management after birth | Q29

80% of participants (70 out of 88 who responded to this question) thought that healthcare professionals definitely did everything they could to manage their pain while in hospital after the birth.

Clear answers to questions in hospital after birth | Q31

81% of survey participants at Wexford General Hospital (72 of 89) felt that their questions were always answered in a way they could understand, while in hospital after the birth of their baby.

Information about physical recovery prior to discharge | Q33

68% of survey participants (60 out of 88) said they were definitely given information about their physical recovery prior to discharge.

These questions scored significantly above national average.

Comments from participants

"The midwives couldn't have been any more helpful. They answered every question and helped me in every way they could during labour and after. They never made me feel like I was annoying them or I was an inconvenience."

"The midwives on the ward after birth were extremely attentive and caring toward myself, partner and baby."

"Everything was explained well to me at the time of leaving hospital by midwife!"

Areas for improvement

There were no questions that scored significantly below national average at Wexford General 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

"We were encouraged to write a birth plan in the antenatal classes so both mothers and doctors / midwives were on the same page with regards to giving birth, but it was clear it wasn't taken into consideration."

"At the antenatal appointments I was afraid to express my worries or report my symptoms, as the answer by one or two of the nurses or midwives were always too sharp and in bad mood."

"Rude obstetricians in particular, could do with a lesson in bedside manners. Medical team should spend more time listening to the concerns and wishes of the pregnant woman and provide non-biased information. They should follow an evidence-based approach. Better communication between staff. Better diabetes education."

Care in pregnancy



- 45% of participants from Wexford General Hospital said that they were offered a choice about the type of maternity care they could receive.
- 76% of participants said that they were offered antenatal classes in pregnancy. 33% of participants said they did antenatal classes, while 42% did not do them. 21% of participants said they were not offered any antenatal classes in pregnancy.
- 96% of participants had some of their regular check-ups in pregnancy with their GP.

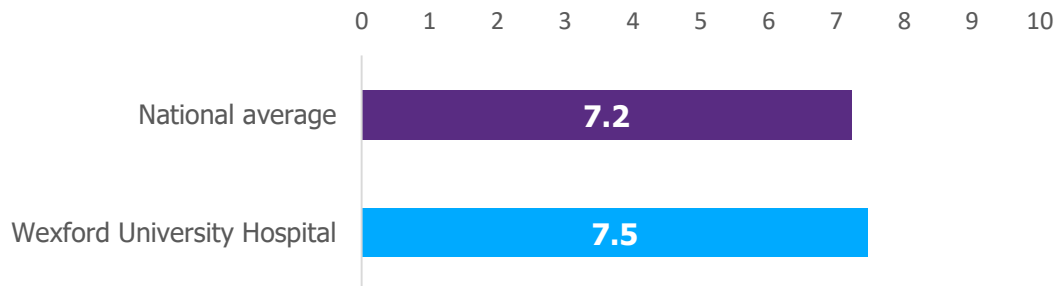
First healthcare professional seen when pregnant	Number	%
General Practitioner (GP) or family doctor	71	78.9
Midwife at maternity service	8	8.9
Obstetrician (doctor or consultant doctor) at maternity service	4	4.4
Healthcare professional at private scan clinic	5	5.6
Other	2	2.2

Type of maternity care in pregnancy	Number	%
Obstetrician public clinic at the hospital	31	34.4
Midwife clinic at the hospital	26	28.9
'Domino scheme': midwife-led care in community	24	26.7
Community midwife clinic	2	2.2
Midwifery-led unit	1	1.1
Home birth midwife	1	1.1
Obstetrician care at private clinic	4	4.4
Pregnancy check-ups in another country	1	1.1

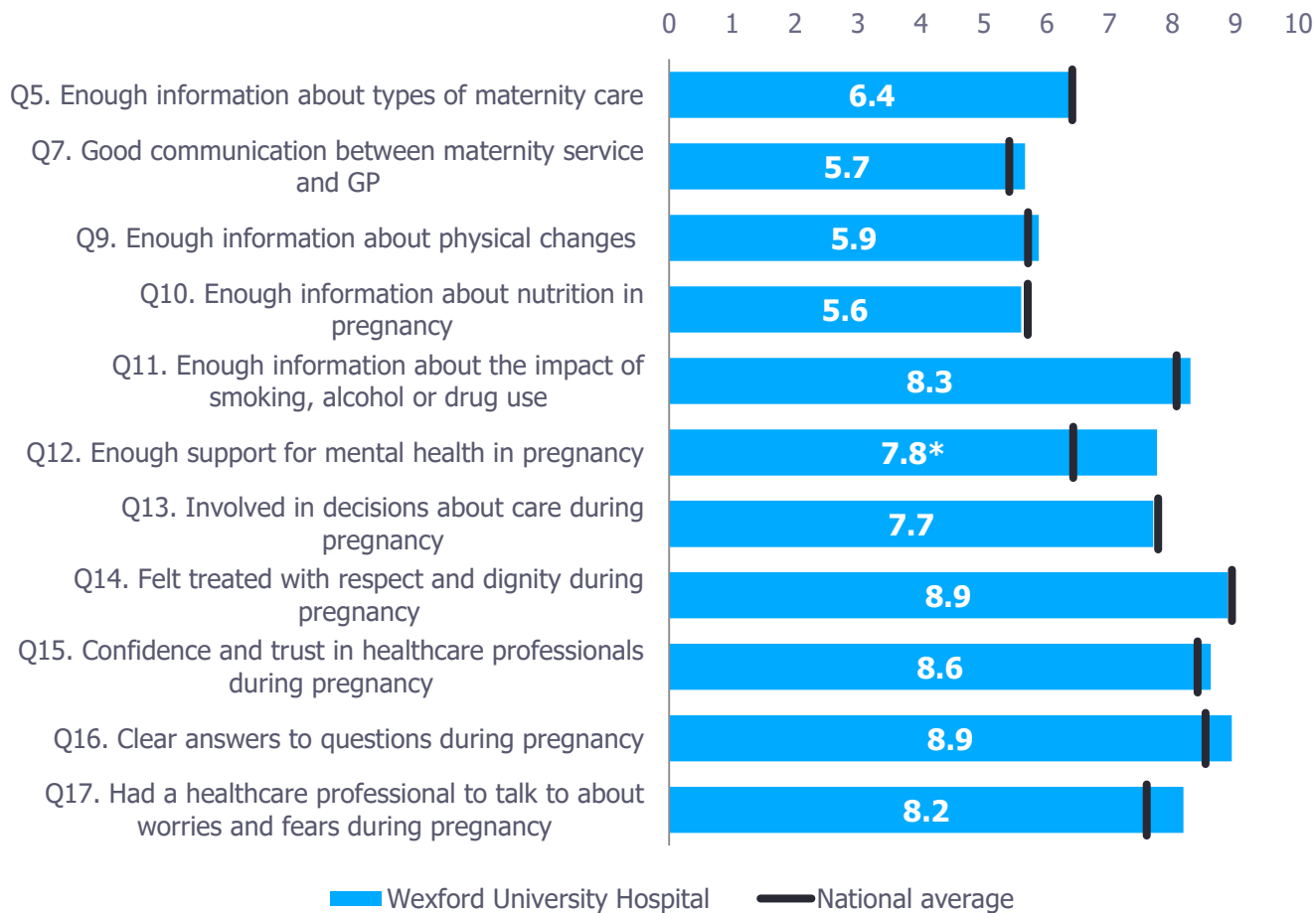
Scored questions for care in pregnancy

- **Highest-scoring questions:**
 - 78% of participants (69 of 89) said they always felt treated with respect and dignity in pregnancy.
 - 79% of participants (71 of 90) said their questions during pregnancy were always answered in a way they could understand.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 24% of participants (20 of 84) said they did not receive enough information about nutrition during pregnancy.

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

- 42% of survey participants at Wexford General Hospital said their labour was induced.

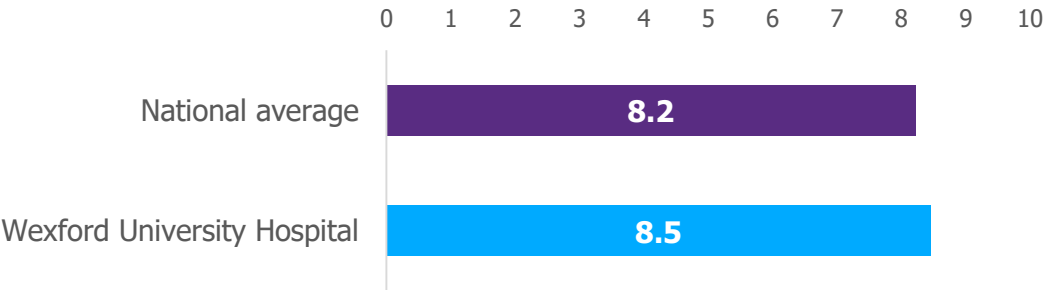
Type of birth for survey participants	Number	%
Vaginal birth (no forceps or ventouse suction cup)	44	48.4
Assisted vaginal birth (with forceps or ventouse suction cup)	14	15.4
Planned caesarean birth	15	16.5
Unplanned caesarean birth	18	19.8
Participant left alone by healthcare professionals at a time when it worried them	Number	%
Yes, during early labour	5	5.6
Yes, during the later stages of labour	6	6.7
Yes, during the birth	1	1.1
Yes, shortly after the birth	7	7.8
No	74	82.2



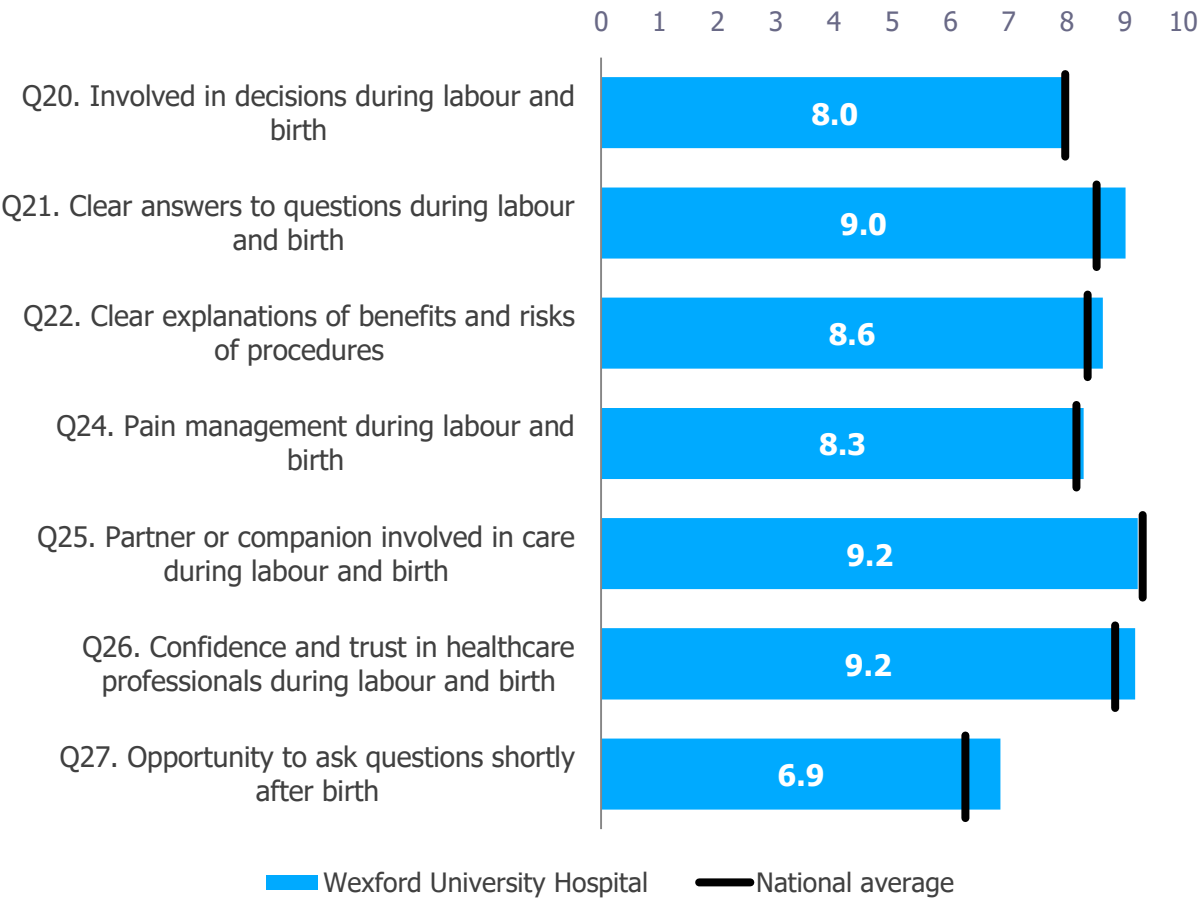
Scored questions for care during labour and birth

- **Highest-scoring questions:**
 - 92% of participants (83 of 90) said that their partner or companion was involved in their care during labour and birth as much as they wanted them to be.
 - 86% of participants (78 of 91) said they always had confidence and trust in the healthcare professionals caring for them during labour and birth.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 19% of participants (16 of 86) 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

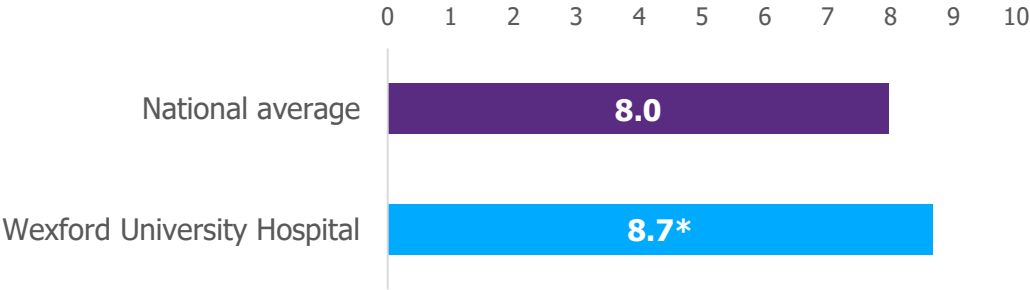




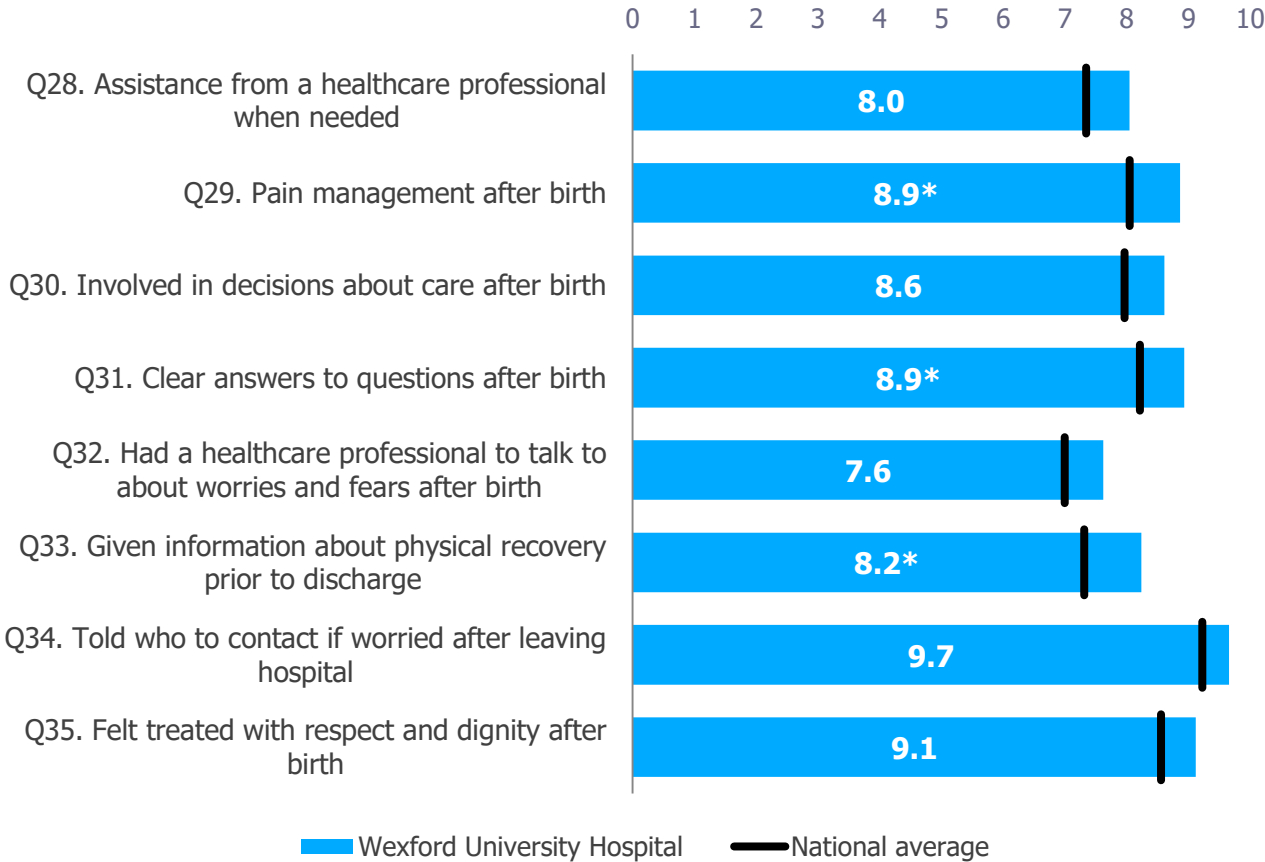
Scored questions for care in hospital after birth

- **Highest-scoring question:** 97% of participants (85 of 88) 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:** 12% of participants (10 of 82) 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



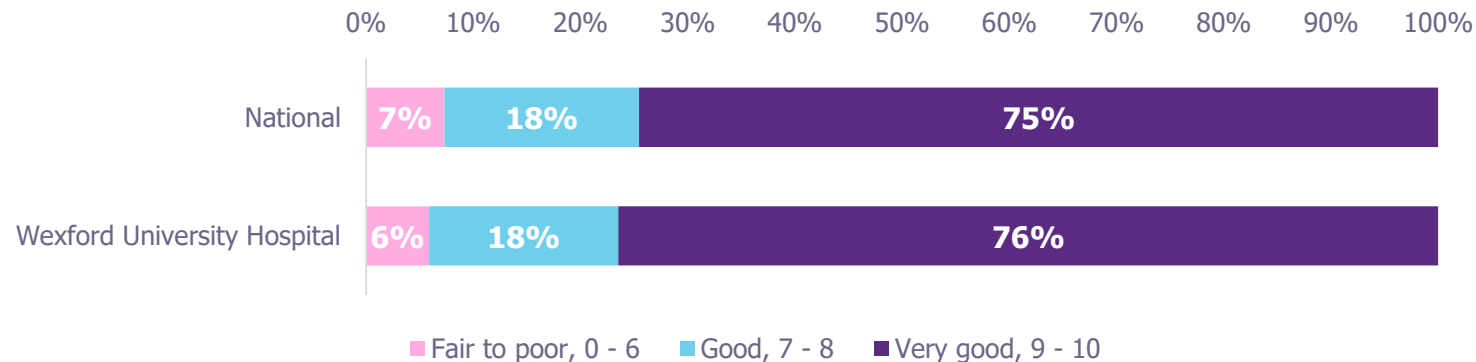
* Indicates statistically significant difference from the national average.

Specialist care in the neonatal unit



- 18 survey participants (20%) at Wexford General Hospital said that their baby spent time in the neonatal unit following the birth.
- Of these participants:
 - 61% said that they always received enough emotional support from healthcare professionals while their baby was in the neonatal unit.
 - 33% said that they sometimes received enough emotional support.
 - 6% said that they did not receive enough emotional support.

Overall rating of experience of care in the neonatal unit



Infant feeding

In the first few days after birth:

- 30% of participants fed their baby with breast milk only.
- 42% fed their baby with formula milk only.
- 29% fed their baby with both breast and formula milk.

Healthcare professional discussed feeding options		
	Number	%
Yes, during pregnancy	59	64.8
Yes, during labour or immediately after birth	17	18.7
Yes, after birth while in hospital	27	29.7
Yes, after birth while at home	9	9.9
No	6	6.6
Did not want or need discussion of different options	8	8.8
Don't know or can't remember	1	1.1

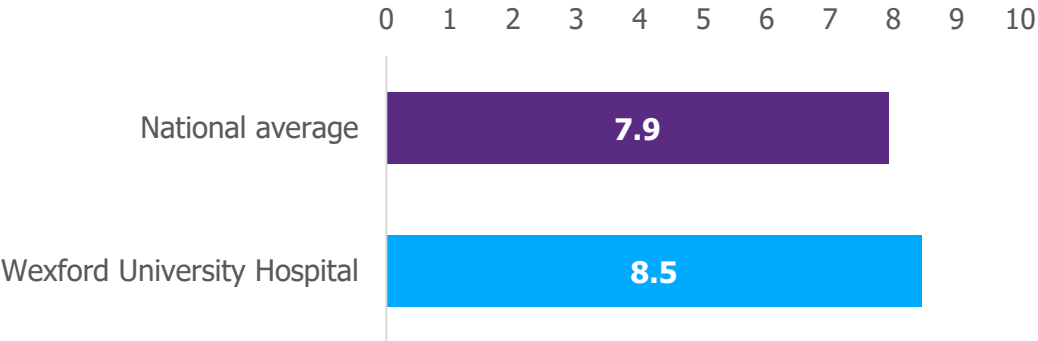
Sources of breastfeeding support		
	Number	%
Midwife(s) in hospital	38	43.7
Hospital lactation consultant	29	33.3
Home birth midwife	1	1.1
Postnatal community midwives	8	9.2
Public Health Nurse	18	20.7
GP	2	2.3
Practice nurse	1	1.1
Community breastfeeding support groups or volunteers	4	4.6
Private lactation consultant	4	4.6
Friends or family	13	14.9
Did not need support	8	9.2
Did not want to breastfeed	29	33.3

Scored questions for infant feeding

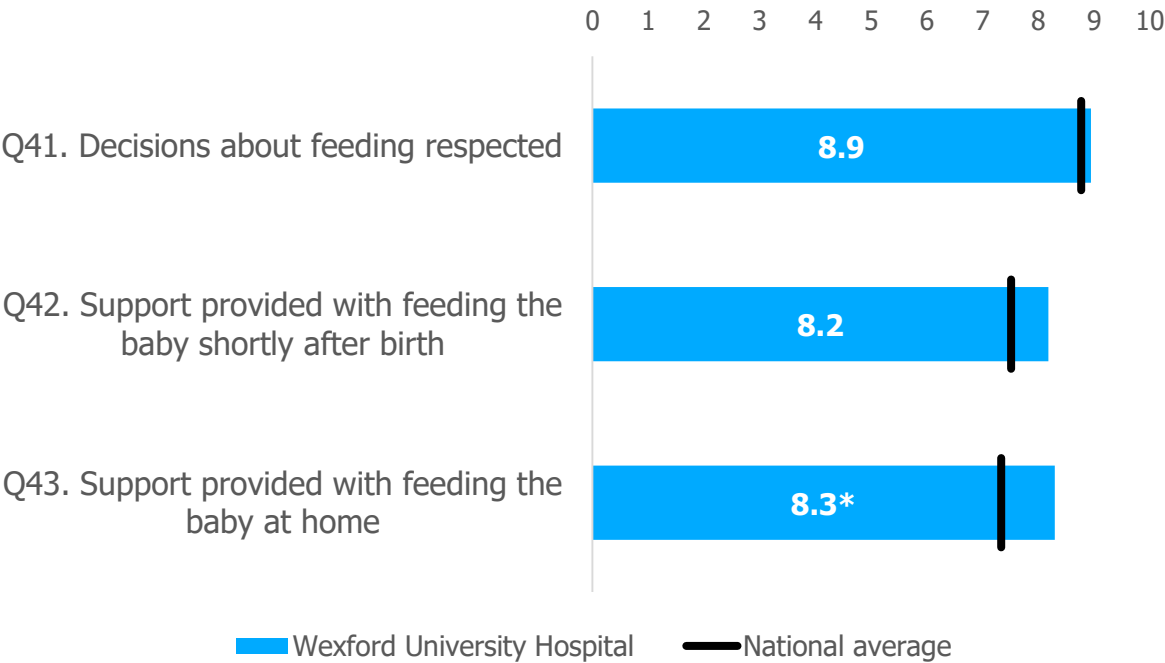


- **Highest-scoring question:** 81% of participants (73 of 90) said their decisions about how they wanted to feed their baby were always respected.
- **Lowest-scoring question:** 7% of participants (6 of 88) said that healthcare professionals did not give them adequate support with feeding their baby in hospital shortly after the birth.

Overall average score for infant feeding



Average scores out of 10 for individual questions



* Indicates statistically significant difference from the national average.

Care at home and in the community after birth



Healthcare professionals met after the birth of the baby

	Number	%
Postnatal community midwife at home	13	14.4
Postnatal community midwife at community clinic	1	1.1
Public Health Nurse at home	84	93.3
Public Health Nurse at community clinic	11	12.2
GP	57	63.3
Obstetrician at hospital clinic	4	4.4
Midwives and or paediatricians at hospital baby clinic	8	8.9
Other professionals	4	4.4
None of the above	1	1.1

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

	Number	%
GP	28	31.1
Public Health Nurse	30	33.3
Midwife	12	13.3
Obstetrician	3	3.3
Perinatal mental health midwife	8	8.9
Psychiatrist	2	2.2
Other professionals	1	1.1
None of the above	44	48.9

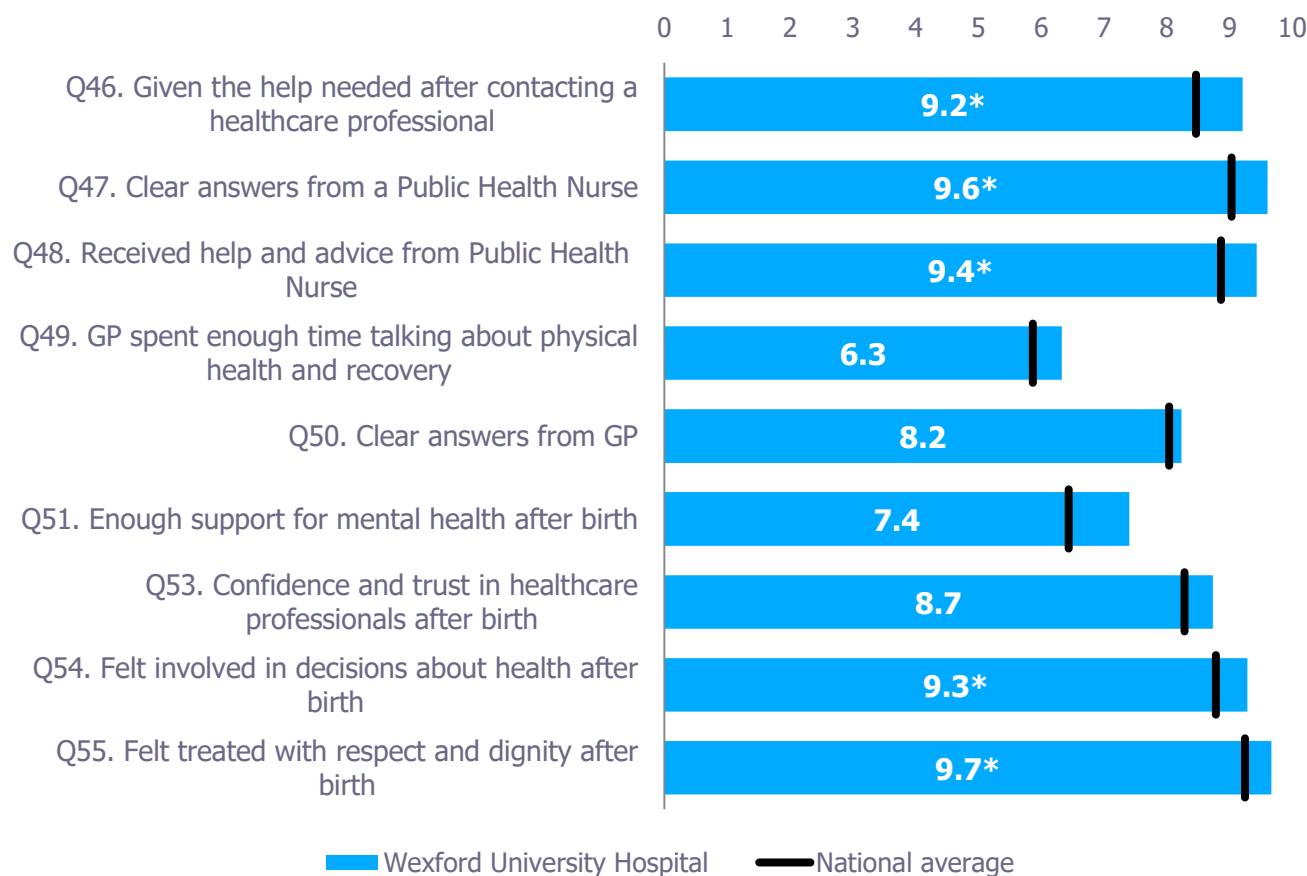
Scored questions for care at home after birth



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:** 93% of participants (85 of 91) 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.** 24% of participants (22 of 90) 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

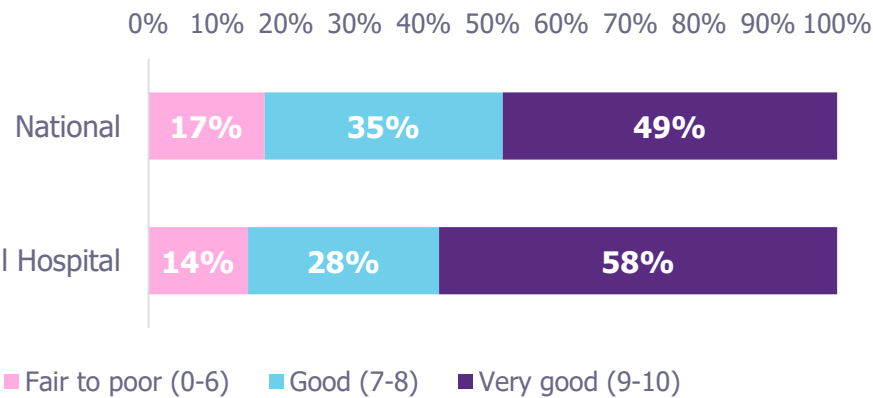


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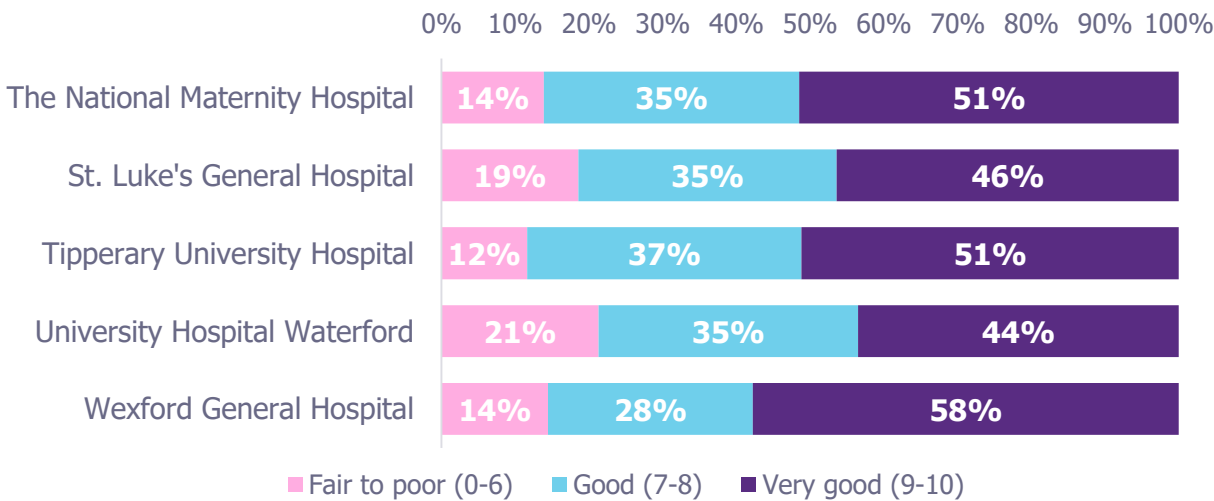
Overall experience of maternity care

- 80% of survey participants who gave birth at Wexford General Hospital said that their decisions about their maternity care were always respected by healthcare staff. 15% said their decisions were sometimes respected, while 4% said their decisions about their maternity care were not respected.
- 30% of participants said that they knew how and where to give feedback or make a complaint if they wanted to do so, while 42% said they did not know. 29% said they did not wish to give feedback or make a complaint.
- 86% of participants who gave birth at Wexford General Hospital said they had a good or very good overall experience (overall rating between 7 and 10), compared to 83% nationally. 14% of participants said they had a fair to poor experience of care.

Overall experience of care



Overall experience of care - HSE Dublin and South East 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 question scores at Wexford General Hospital.
- Between 2020 and 2025, there was a significant increase in information before discharge on who to contact if worried about health or baby's health after leaving hospital.
- There were no significant decreases in scores for any survey questions between 2020 and 2025 at Wexford General Hospital.

Comments from survey participants

- When survey participants at Wexford General 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 Wexford General Hospital, they most commonly referred to attention to needs and responsiveness.

"The midwives on the labour and delivery ward in my hospital were exceptional...I felt very safe in their hands. They communicated very clearly to me exactly what was happening and the steps that were likely to happen next. They answered all the questions that both myself and my partner had at the time of the birth and post delivery of baby."

"As this was my third baby, I felt a lack of attention to detail was given throughout to me, as 'you know from your last'. However, guidelines and information are always changing as well as 'baby brain' in the mix...often information was assumed [that] I knew."

"All the midwives I came across in Wexford general hospital were so amazing and friendly, they all explained everything very clearly, I found them all to be very approachable and caring."

"The midwives seemed to be short staffed. It felt extremely lonely with my newborn. When it came to having breakfast it was really difficult. I was breastfeeding my newborn and the breakfast was left at the end of the bed. I struggled with getting my newborn to settle, so by the time I could get my breakfast it was freezing cold."

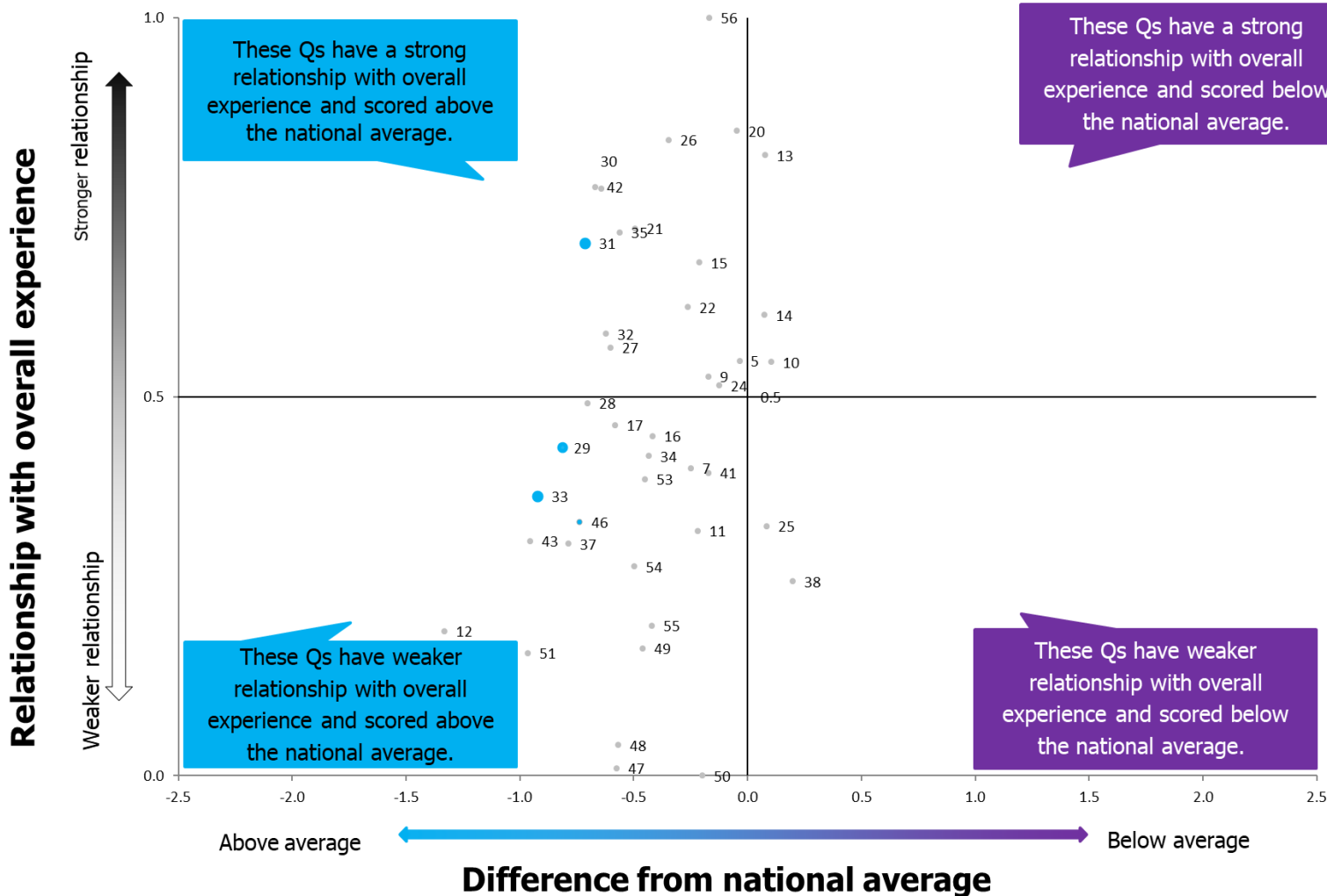
Conclusion

- Areas of good experience at Wexford General Hospital included clear answers to questions in hospital after birth, pain management after birth, and information about physical recovery on discharge.
- Ten questions for participants at Wexford General Hospital scored significantly above the national average and no questions scored significantly below national average.
- 86% of participants who gave birth at Wexford General Hospital said they had a good or very good overall experience; this is higher than the national figure (83%).
- Between 2020 and 2025, there was a significant increase in discharge information about who to contact if worried about health or baby's health after leaving hospital.

Appendix 1

Improvement map Wexford General 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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