
Healthwatch West Berkshire Maternity Report

Report being considered by: Health and Wellbeing Board
On: 24 September 2020
Report Author: Andrew Sharp (Healthwatch West Berkshire)
Item for: Discussion

1. Purpose of the Report

For the Health and Wellbeing Board to discuss Healthwatch West Berkshire's Maternity Report.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To ensure that all future reports and data on maternity services presented to the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board include data on West Berkshire births at the Great Western Hospital and Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital in addition to Royal Berkshire Hospital.
- 2.2 To ensure that any tracking data sets and data dashboards developed and used to evaluate quality of maternity services by West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board should include data on West Berkshire births at the Great Western Hospital and Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital, in addition to Royal Berkshire Hospital
- 2.3 To ensure that data on all maternity services including during pregnancy, during birth and 10 days following birth are presented to the West Berkshire Health and Wellbeing Board on an annual basis including national and comparative area benchmarking.
- 2.4 To ensure postnatal care in particular is scrutinised and improved in whatever way possible, including setting up of postnatal classes to help women learn from each other and the involvement of voluntary and community groups, supported by health professionals. All discussions to include Health Visitors, Midwives and Family Hubs.

3. How the Health and Wellbeing Board can help

- 3.1 The Board can help in improving maternity services as part of its priority around the first 1001 days to give children the best start in life.
- 3.2 The Board can ensure that the issues identified in the maternity report are considered and addressed by the emerging Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Will the recommendation require the matter to be referred to the Executive for final determination?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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4. Introduction/Background

- 4.1 Healthwatch West Berkshire produced a report on local maternity services, which was published in September 2020. The report found that in West Berkshire the levels of maternity care are generally very good. However, it also highlights some issues of concern that may warrant further investigation and potential changes or additions to service provision in order to improve standards for all women in West Berkshire using maternity services
- 4.2 Following on from a BOB ICS (Bucks, Oxon, Berks West Integrated Care System) wide survey undertaken by five local Healthwatch in 2018, this report sought to fill in some gaps in knowledge and get a 'temperature ' check of how women felt they were being treated during their maternity experience.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 The report indicated that, unlike women in the rest of the Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group area, many women in West Berkshire do not solely use Royal Berkshire Hospital for maternity services. The other hospitals utilised are: Hampshire Hospitals (HHFT) Basingstoke Hospital, Great Western Hospital (GWH) in Swindon and John Radcliffe (JR) in Oxford.
- 5.2 The report suggested that there is too much focus on Royal Berkshire Hospital services by the current Berkshire West health 'system', at the expense of ensuring consistent, truly 'connected care' from all four maternity providers to the women of West Berkshire.
- 5.3 The report also found that 25% of women surveyed were dissatisfied with their maternity care, and 9% described the overall experience in their eyes as 'traumatic'. This is a high proportion and warrants further investigation.
- 5.4 The report made 14 recommendations based on the survey and Healthwatch has indicated that it would also like to see more emphasis on providing parity of care for all the women of West Berkshire, wherever they are accessing maternity services.
- 5.5 The report advocated urgent work to ensure those using services outside the direct control of the Berkshire West CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group) are supported closer to home and in an integrated 'joined-up' way. It went on to suggest that women of West Berkshire using services other than RBH should not have to accept different standards of care because the trust they choose is not in the Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership or the BOB ICS model.
- 5.6 Since the first iteration of this report, Healthwatch has received further maternity related feedback around Covid experiences, which has been included as an addendum. This feedback was taken during the Covid outbreak, following the formation of the 'West Berkshire Maternity Forum' to look at additional key factors of concern for new mums; Mental Health and the importance of Health Visitors were highlighted. Service providers have not had the chance to respond to this information, which is why it is provided in an addendum and not the main body of the document or referenced in any recommendations.

6. Options for Consideration

The Health and Wellbeing Board is invited to discuss the Healthwatch West Berkshire Maternity Report attached as Appendix A.

7. Proposal(s)

Members of the Health and Wellbeing Steering Group were sent copies of the report on 8 September and it was agreed that this should be discussed at Health and Wellbeing Board.

8. Conclusion(s)

The report has highlighted some significant issues around maternity services for women across West Berkshire. Initial feedback from the Steering Group suggests that more work is needed to: understand if the report is based on a sufficiently large and demographically representative sample; understand how the numbers with adverse maternity experiences relate to the total number of births in West Berkshire; and get feedback from maternity service providers on the report findings in relation to Covid. The Board may wish to consider requesting annual reports on maternity care.

9. Consultation and Engagement

Councillor Howard Woollaston – Executive Portfolio Holder for Public Health & Community Wellbeing, Leisure and Culture; Dr Bal Bahia - GP Clinical Lead, Berkshire West CCG; Matt Pearce – Head of Public Health and Wellbeing; Pete Campbell – Head of Children and Family Services.

10. Appendices

Appendix A – Healthwatch West Berkshire Maternity Report (with initial Covid-19 feedback Addendum), September 2020

Background Papers:

[Delivering Better Births, Views on Personalised Care Plans from Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West \(June 2019\)](#)

Health and Wellbeing Priorities 2019/20 Supported:

- ☒ First 1001 days – give every child the best start in life
- ☐ Primary Care Networks

Health and Wellbeing Strategic Aims Supported:

The proposals will help achieve the following Health and Wellbeing Strategy aim(s):

- ☒ Give every child the best start in life
- ☒ Support mental health and wellbeing throughout life
- ☒ Reduce premature mortality by helping people lead healthier lives
- ☐ Build a thriving and sustainable environment in which communities can flourish
- ☐ Help older people maintain a healthy, independent life for as long as possible

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Health and Wellbeing Strategy aim by improving maternity services for women across West Berkshire.

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