

Maternity Services (NNUH) Feedback



October 2024

In October we visited the Maternity Services within the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital (NNUH) to speak with patients about their experience with health and social care services, this included the Antenatal Clinic and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). From this visit we received 18 reviews for the NNUH Maternity Services. The reviews have an average star rating of 4.7 out of 5.

The Maternity Services consist of a number of departments within the Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. The delivery suite contains 15 birthing rooms and the capacity for water births and there are two 24-hour, obstetric theatres which are dedicated to the unit. The Neonatal Intensive Care Unit cares for more than 1000 babies a year.

Healthwatch Norfolk Officers who visited the NICU at the NNUH noted:

Specialist areas create optimum conditions for babies by strictly controlling temperature, light and noise in the environment.

Staff were observed to be highly responsive and empathic towards service users.

There is a shortage of areas for single cots. One room not intended for this purpose was adapted during our visit to create privacy for parents dealing with difficult news. Staff would prefer more space for this, and more space in general between cots in communal areas.

Staff also told us there aren't enough chairs. We observed a nurse searching for one in different rooms so a parent could sit and feed their child.

Staff told us they would also like funding to provide food for dads on the unit – currently restricted to mums – and the ability to accommodate siblings overnight. This was said to be vital to parental welfare and for healthy whole-family bonds during a challenging time.

Healthwatch Norfolk Officers who visited the Ante-Natal Clinic, Ante-Natal Ward and Post-Natal Ward at the NNUH noted:

Staff across all areas were observed to demonstrate sensitivity towards service users and created a positive atmosphere.

We were made to feel welcome and given lots of information by all the staff we interacted with.

Overall, people were very satisfied with their experiences of care within the Maternity Services at the NNUH, with patients being particularly pleased with the communication and care provided by members of staff. However, it was noted by two people that there appeared to be staffing shortages.

The reviews are displayed in the table below and can be found on our website www.healthwatchnorfolk.co.uk.

ID	Service Provider	Department	Title	Review	Rating
247879	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Maternity	We have been well looked after	I am pleased my son is still alive, we have been well looked after. The midwives are brilliant as are all the nurses. They are all very helpful, they even brought me a cup of tea when I was feeling shattered. The food is not good, the quality is not great.	5
247871	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Maternity	The staff are brilliant	It's good, the staff are brilliant. The catering staff are very lovely and the food is far better than at a previous hospital I visited. As I've been here a long time being by the window is nice. I have had to be in for quite a while and it's nice to have been able to go on some home visits. Its just a bit noisy, but I appreciate it is a busy ward. I have found my own ways of blocking out the noise at night, so sometimes I am able to sleep quite well.	5
247864	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Maternity	They make you feel comfortable	The antenatal clinic is really good, we were late getting here and they have still fitted us in. The staff are polite and they make you feel comfortable. The appointments are usually good and everyone is kind. The only negative I can think of is, we knew we were going to be late today but we were unable to get in touch to let the clinic know as we couldn't get through on the phone. However when we arrived they didn't appear to mind.	5

247861	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Maternity	I'm able to ask questions which is good	I have visited the ante natal clinic several times and I think they are really thorough. I've not had to wait too long and the communication is good. I am having constant check ups which is reassuring and I have nothing to fault. I am aware of the situation and I am able to ask questions which is good. The communication is good and in a way we understand.	5
247860	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Maternity	You don't feel rushed	They seem to be taking care of my pregnancy. I have been to the ante natal clinic about 4 times and I'm having a scan today. Sometimes you do have to wait a bit but it is acceptable. The communication is good and I understand and I do not feel rushed.	5
247858	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Maternity	They make us feel at ease	I came to the ante natal clinic today for a scan and as usual there are no long waits. The interaction we have in the room makes you feel at ease. I was seen by a midwife yesterday and the scan was arranged for today so it was a quick turnaround. You do feel looked after. I can't fault them. The staff are all so good, so helpful. Also the communication is really clear and the whole thing seems like a good person cantered approach.	5

247633	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Neonatal	You feel supported	It's been good, I feel like my baby's been taken care of when I couldn't. If I ask questions I will get clear answers. If I need help with anything regards me or my baby I get it. Overall it's been good. I was here 5 years ago and it was the same experience. As a mother you feel supported. They're doing the best they could do.	5
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247632	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Neonatal	They're superheroes	<p>The whole experience has been amazing, it's surpassed our expectations of an NHS service. The nurses don't stop moving for their whole shift but still check on you all the time, asking whether we've eaten when I know they haven't taken a break. I've felt like we've been the only parents here as they make you feel like it's one-to-one care. We met the whole operating team for my baby which was reassuring. This has been the hardest thing I've gone through and it's thanks to the nurses that I'm semi-sane. They've been my support network, like family. Every single one of them is fighting for you and your baby. Even ones that aren't assigned to my baby know all about her and our story so it feels more like a community. They all take note of what's going on around them. You can see how the nurses talk to and about the babies when parents aren't around, they really do care, it isn't for show. They're so thorough how they check everything, they do everything in pairs which makes me think the safety aspect is high on here and there's little room for error. I don't leave my children with anybody, even people I know, but it's all those things that built my trust and I had no doubts whatsoever leaving my baby with them. Kate, Sam and Alex have gone above and beyond and it's thanks to them we're going home today. Nobody passes you without checking if there's anything you need, Lindsay and the domestic team also do this and even the surgeon who operated on my baby came to say goodbye. Every box is ticked so the only thing I need to think about is how my baby's doing because they've thought of everything else. They're superheroes, I don't even know how they do it all! My partner has felt included as a dad and the bedroom has been a safe haven for us. The family room is so thoughtful that they've provided that, it's always clean and is a welcoming space. My daughter didn't want to leave! You can see the toys are clean in there so it's another thing you don't have to worry about. We've got lots of appointments booked for follow-ups too. There's nothing negative to say. I can't say it's been nice, it's not something I'd ever want to do again but we've been fortunate. It's changed my idea of what an NHS experience is and I'd give it 5++++ stars if I could.</p>	5
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247631	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Neonatal	Staff are really good	It's been really, really good. The staff are really good. The c-section went well, there was no pain during it and I'm getting some stronger meds now. Everything has been explained. They're doing their best, everything has been wonderful.	5
247630	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Neonatal	Generally amazing	It's generally amazing what they do here, it's incredible, the whole lot. The set-up here is really good and the support from the staff is great, they update you all the time. There's not really anything to improve on as it's way beyond what you could think is possible anyway. It's a stressful time and you can fixate on little things when sometimes they can be a bit vague and perhaps don't notice all the things about your baby as you're always here. Like I was told she hadn't been sick but I could see sick on her clothes. I don't want to be nitpicky, I know I'm just looking for everything to be perfect because I want them home. There was a day when my partner and I took the temperatures all day as nobody came to do it, but then the book was filled in with temperatures which we didn't write in there. It was a one-off though and other than that it's been 99.99% brilliant. The support has been incredible. I've ran in here in tears at 2am and all sorts of times and they've welcomed me in and looked after me.	5
247629	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital	Neonatal	They've been good to my baby	It's been good here. It's the first time I've seen my baby and they've explained everything very well with what they've been doing. They've been good to her.	5

	NHS Foundati on Trust (NNUH)				
247628	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundati on Trust (NNUH)	Neonatal	Staffing levels 4 stars, care 5 stars	It's been brilliant, it's nice. The unit is a difficult place to be but the staff are really friendly and the doctors patiently explain everything. They're very supportive and I know what's going on. The nursing staffing levels could be better, sometimes they're struggling with 2 or 3 babies so more staff would be better. Also you sometimes have to wait a long time to sterilise things and it would be better if there was more than one room for this. The staffing levels would be a 4 but the level of care makes it a 5.	5
247627	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundati on Trust (NNUH)	Neonatal	Really good teamwork	It's been very good - good care. The nurses are friendly with the parent as well, you feel like they care about our babies. They have really good teamwork, they make sure everyone is looked after. They tell me everything that's going on with my baby like how they were at nighttime and the feeds.	5
247624	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital	Neonatal	They couldn't do more if they tried	I couldn't have got through any of this without these guys, they've been amazing. They couldn't do more if they tried. They've all been really, really lovely and they make the right decisions. They not only care for my baby, they care for me, my partner and my other child too. We've been here 9 or 10 days and they've taught us everything. I couldn't think of one thing they could	5

	NHS Foundati on Trust (NNUH)			improve on. I feel like I can go to them about anything, there's no silly questions.	
247880	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundati on Trust (NNUH)	Maternity	The staff are helpful, friendly and supportive	The staff are so good, helpful, friendly and supportive. sometimes they say just a moment and they take too long to come back but otherwise it's been really good.	4
247876	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundati on Trust (NNUH)	Maternity	The staff are empathetic	The staff are empathetic, you can approach them and have a conversation. The facilities are good and you have everything you need. I was moved one night for a period of time because they needed this room and I found that a bit unsettling as I found myself on a ward with people who were at a different stage of their journey. If you call the staff on the buzzer sometimes it is a wait before they come. I could be in this room for several hours without anyone even checking me unless I call, so I think it would be good if someone could just check you are okay from time to time. Because I am here for quite a while I find the visiting times a bit restrictive for family and friends. It's fine for my birthing partner as he can come anytime but he is at work and my sister and friend do not find the general visiting hours very convenient.	4

247859	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Maternity	The staff are lovely and polite	I don't mind coming to the ante natal clinic. The staff are lovely and polite. The communication is good and they explain things so I understand. The appointment system seems to work fine. I had a letter then a text and an email reminder which has worked well.	4
247626	Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (NNUH)	Neonatal	Would be 5 stars if it was just about the nursing	Overall it's been a positive experience. The care itself for our little baby has been incredible, faultless. All staff from the nurses to the cleaners greet you with smiley faces. However the communication from the doctors hasn't been clear. We've asked questions about the future for our baby and been told quite horrific things but then another specialist told us that's incorrect as it's actually unknown yet. It's obviously a traumatic time and that's not always acknowledged in how things are communicated by the doctors. There's a lack of empathy. The doctors seemed fixated on their original diagnosis when they see our baby for 5 minutes at a time. We're here all the time and see all the small changes but we haven't been listened to. It took 13 weeks for them to listen to us and when they did, our baby improved. It shouldn't have taken for me to have a breakdown and cry to be taken seriously. Now they've started to accept there might be something else going on. The nurses do advocate for us. We'd be lost without Kate and the whole family liaison team. They're integral to our baby's care, we can't thank them enough.	3