



MAIDSTONE & TUNBRIDGE WELLS

Maternity Voices

Working in partnership to improve maternity services

Committee Meeting Wednesday 11 October 10.00am

Seminar Room 1 & 2 Level 0 Tunbridge Wells Hospital

Agenda

- Welcome, Introductions and Apologies
- Minutes to be approved from last meeting held on 24 April 2019
- Matters Arising/Action points arising from last minutes
 - Tongue Tie Clinic Update (Sarah Blanchard-Stow)
 - Bounty Rep Feedback (Katie Kirk)
- Walk the Patch 13 September 2019 Feedback (Nina Rickman)

This was carried in Delivery Suite by Nina Rickman, Catherine Dickens and Miranda Hungerford. We had access to three low risk rooms, one regular room and one MECU room. Both Catherine and Miranda had attended the last “Walk the Patch” in 2014 and felt the rooms scored lower in 2019 than in 2014. Whilst this was my first time carrying this out, I also felt that the rooms needed improvement. The main concerns are as follows;

- Lack of self-service drink making facilities although an area for making drinks is going to be created in the “ward pantry”.
- General upkeep/maintenance – blinds in the rooms that could not be closed or opened as the mechanism had broken, lamps that were “blinking” or lacking a bulb, floors were grubby around the edges of the room.
- Signage over two sets of doors was confusing; eg the triage door has a sign with an arrow pointing in a different direction away from the door to triage.
- The booklet designed to help women explore different ways to labour was generally tucked away and therefore probably not used much. It displays great visual prompts for women to consider, however, the materials were not

available for them to be able to try e.g. no mats in any of the rooms, no pillows etc.

- The environment of the low risk rooms was very medicalised; we left feeling that these really needed enriching with softer, warmer lighting, comfier chairs, mats, music, a fan etc. We understand, however, that this is being addressed by Deniece Hardy and her team and the MVP are keen to find a way to transfer over the remaining funds from the old community bank account in order to contribute towards the enrichment of these rooms.

We were also given access to Triage, however all the rooms were busy, so we were not able to gain any feedback to provide in this area.

More positively, we found all the rooms were nice and private, clean and tidy with plenty of space to move around. Catherine and I spoke to a lady who had just given birth in one of the lower risk rooms. This was her third baby that she had had at Tunbridge Wells and she was happy with the support she had been given. The only negative was from her husband who commented on the lack of a comfortable chair to rest in and she commented that the room was looking “more tired” and pointed out the flooring was grubby around the edge of the room.

We would like to thank Deniece and Tracy for their assistance that day.

- Report on General Feedback Received (Nina Rickman)

On Friday 4 October I spent some time at a breastfeeding drop in clinic in Sevenoaks, speaking to Mums about their recent experiences of both antenatal and postnatal care.

I spoke to 10 mums/dads with babies born within the last 6 months and all but one reported a positive experience, being well informed and listened to and to quote one lady *“I had hoped for a VBAC but ended up with a planned c-section and the staff were great, ensuring that I still got the screen lowered so I could see baby arriving, delayed chord clamping and immediate skin to skin”*. All births were hospital births and interestingly, 8/10 did not get the birth that they had wished for i.e. Birth Centre or natural birth in hospital and reported various medical reasons for this.

One story that stood out from the rest was that of a lady that had suffered with quite serious depression. She was having a third baby and wanted to give birth at Maidstone Birth Centre but was told that she could not birth there due to her use of antidepressants. She reported that she then requested use of a birthing pool at the hospital but was denied due to carrying group b strep. She reports her labour as being a lot more painful in comparison to her two previous births and feels that she would have coped better in water. Baby was given a canula for antibiotics to be given and then two days later someone arrived in her room stating the baby needed to be taken for a lumbar puncture. This was the first she had heard of this and when she asked for an explanation, she was told that a more senior midwife would come

to her to explain why but this did not happen for 12 hours. She feels that she was not well supported and was on her own.

This story raises three questions;

1. Why would she be denied a birth at a birthing centre due to her use of antidepressants?
 2. Is your policy not to allow a water birth for women that carry group b strep?
 3. A lady with a history of depression needs extra care and consideration – how can you ensure this is facilitated going forward?
- Better Births Update (Sarah Blanchard-Stow)
 - Any Other Business
 - Proposed dates for 2020;

Friday 17 April, Friday 17 July & Friday 16 October all at 10.30am.