



Maternity Services in Hampshire

August 2014



Healthwatch Hampshire composed this report of comments received from people who use healthcare services and live in Hampshire. This report dates from April 2013 to August 2014.



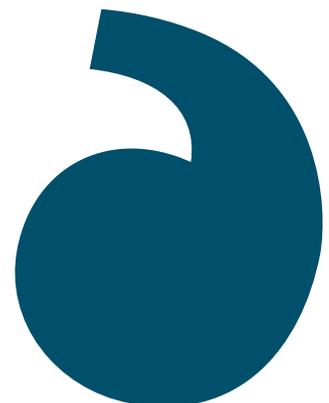
Data search

A search was conducted on the Healthwatch Hampshire CRM Database for comments we have received about maternity services, obstetrics and gynaecology.

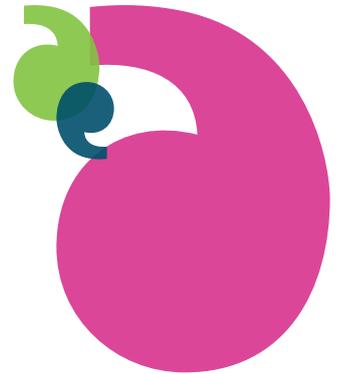
What we found

We found that the most positive experiences of maternity services were reported by patients for Ashurst Hospital, with most comments being made about excellent midwives and staff, and good building and facilities. More positive comments about Breastfeeding support were received from those that had used Ashurst Hospital maternity services, when compared to comments on breastfeeding support from other hospitals. The number of reports about Ashurst Hospital may reflect our engagement focus on Children's Centres in this locality, rather than a representation from which comparisons can be made with Hampshire as a whole. However, we received

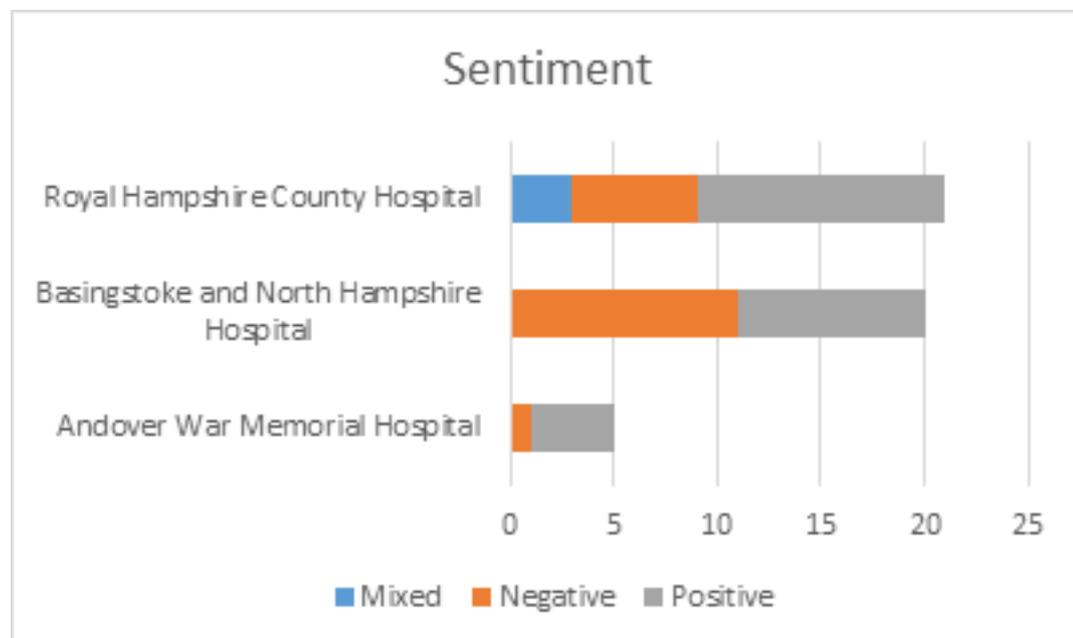
multiple comments from those who have used maternity services at this hospital reporting good breastfeeding advice and no negative comments, whereas there are only a few positive and negative experiences reported in other hospitals. Based on this, breastfeeding has not been an emerging negative issue during our engagement with mothers. Positive experience of good midwives were reported for Royal Hampshire County Hospital maternity services. Positive experiences in Quality of Care were reported for Basingstoke hospital, along with a few negative experiences relating to quality of treatment that were reported. Positive experience of good midwives were reported for Queen Alexandra Hospital maternity services. Two people were referred to Healthwatch NHS Advocacy Services for support with complaints about maternity services. These were for Frimley Park Hospital and Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital.



Hampshire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust



Comments given to us by people living in Hampshire were recorded as Positive, Negative, or Mixed sentiment for services in these hospitals. Graph 1 below shows the number of comments received by Hospital and sentiment.



Graph 1: sentiment of comments received by Hospital for HHFT, up to August 2014

A review of comments received for Royal Hampshire County Hospital (RHCH) maternity services show that we received more positive than negative comments, which we report here. The number in brackets refers to the number of issues from these comments from individual people.

Inpatient care, RHCH

A review of comments received for RHCH maternity services show that we received a number of positive issues about inpatient care. These were rated by the following subtopics: Cleanliness of environment [1], dignity [1], doctors [1], midwives [3], positive experience (overall experience rated positively by patient) [4], quality of care [1], and staff attitudes [1].

A review of comments received for RHCH maternity services show that we received a number of negative issues. One commentator reported that both fire exits were blocked, while another commented that during a scan from the EPAU*, the male sonographer was not experienced and being trained, and she was in a lot of discomfort from his handling of the probe". Comments were rated by the following subtopics: building and facilities [1], diagnostics [1], quality of care [3], quality of treatment [1], sonographer [1] (see comment 10), and staff attitudes [1].

Doctors [1], midwives [1], and patient choice [1].

Inpatient care, Basingstoke & North Hampshire Hospital (B&NHH)

A review of comments received for B&NHH maternity services show that we received a number of positive issues about inpatient care. These were rated by the following subtopics: Dignity & respect [1], midwives [2], quality of care [5], quality of treatment [1], and staff attitudes [3].

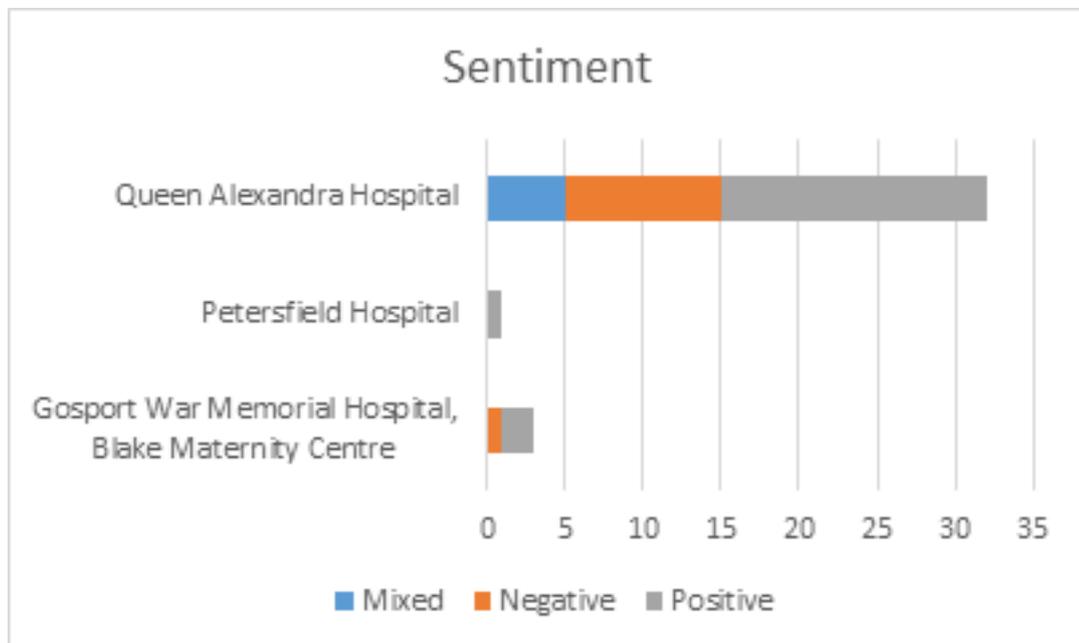
A review of comments received for B&NHH maternity services show that we received a number of negative issues. One commentator told us that: "when I had my Canular put in... they left the metal needle in my hand and would not believe me that I could bend my wrist from pain." Another commentator told us that blood was taken from her three times in case it was needed for transfusion, and that it was lost three times. Comments were rated by the following subtopics: quality of treatment [3], Doctors [1], midwives [1], and patient choice [1].

*Early Pregnancy Assessment Unit



Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust

From the comments we received for Portsmouth Hospitals NHS Trust, Graph 2 below shows the number of comments received by Hospital and the sentiment of services in these hospitals.



Graph 2: sentiment of comments received by Hospital for PHT, up to August 2014

We review comments received only for QAH maternity services, which show that there were more positive than negative comments.

Inpatient care

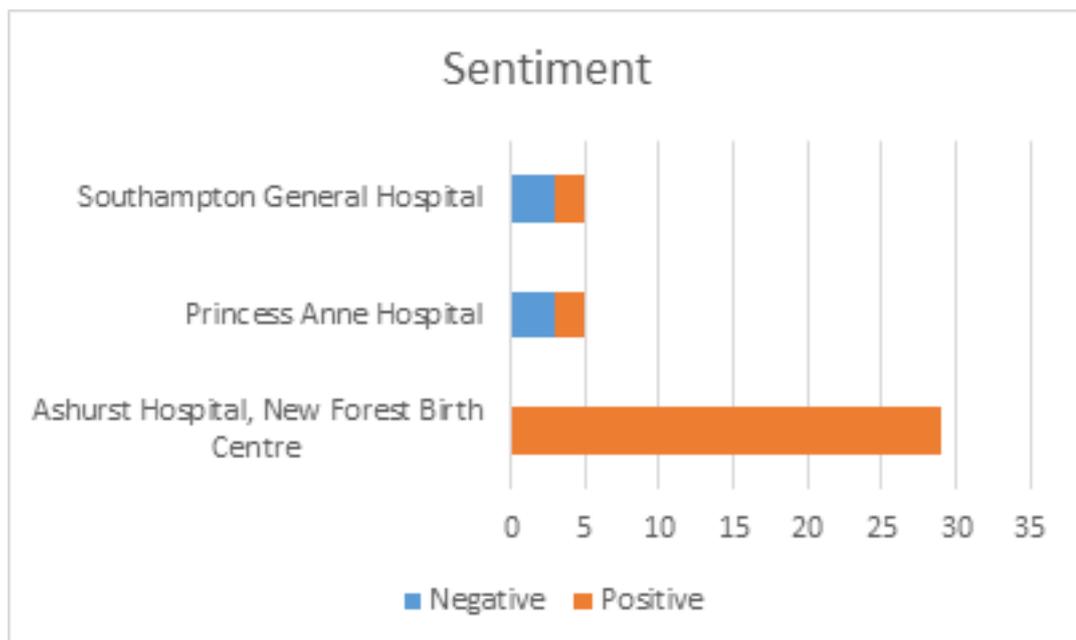
A review of comments received for QAH maternity services show that we received a number of positive issues about inpatient care. These were rated by the following subtopics: Midwives [4], cleanliness of environment [2], positive experience [5], quality of care [3], quality of treatment [1], and staff attitudes [1].

A review of comments received for QA maternity services show that we received a number of negative issues, especially regarding discharge. One commentator was discharged with the wrong notes, and without seeing an anaesthetist and

so without pain relief. She was asked to return the notes the following day. This patient found the thought of another person reading her own notes upsetting, and she did not receive an apology. Another patient was discharged shortly after her husband left, and was told to find alternative transport and was not provided with a wheelchair. Comments were rated by the following subtopics: discharge [3] (see comments 14 & 15), quality of care [3], midwives [1], quality of treatment [1], and staff attitudes [1].

University Hospital Southampton NHS Foundation Trust

Comments were recorded as Positive, Negative, or Mixed. Graph 3 shows the number of comments received by Hospital and sentiment.



Graph 3: sentiment of comments received by Hospital for UHSFT, up to August 2014.

Data for Ashurst Hospital may be skewed by our engagement focus on Children's Centres in this locality.

The graph above shows a large number of positive responses for Ashurst Hospital. These responses came partially from an engagement exercise undertaken in Children's Centres in the area, and may therefore reflect our engagement activities in this area. Due to the smaller number of comments provided about Southampton General Hospital and Princess Anne Hospital, we report here only on a few positive comments on Ashurst Hospital.

A review of comments received show that midwives were the most common issues throughout the positive comments that we received for Ashurst Hospital. One commentator told us "the midwives were very patient and took their time to support me." Another told us: "Friendly and helpful midwives on hand at the press of a button whenever you needed them," and another said: "the midwives and MSW's* were fabulous".

These comments were rated by the following subtopics: Midwives and staff [20], building & facilities [7], good quality of treatment [2], and staff attitudes [2].

*Maternity Support Worker

Other NHS Foundation Trusts and General Comments

Comments were also received for Frimley Park Hospital (Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust), Royal Surrey County Hospital (Royal Surrey County Hospital NHS Foundation Trust) and Salisbury District Hospital (Salisbury NHS Foundation Trust).

Comments were recorded as Positive, Negative, or Mixed. The data search provided for Salisbury District Hospital [1 negative comment], Royal Surrey County Hospital [2 negative comments], and Frimley Park Hospital [2 negative and 1 positive comment]. Further details on these comments can be supplied.





Breastfeeding

A search was conducted for all comments on breastfeeding throughout our stories on maternity services. We received positive comments for Ashurst Hospital [12] and for Queen Alexandra [1]; we received negative comments for Queen Alexandra [1], Royal Hampshire County Hospital [2], Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital [1] and Frimley Park Hospital [1].

Frimley Park Hospital

The midwife had propped the baby against the mother's breast to feed. The mother looked down at the baby and saw he was grey and called the midwife, he had been starved of oxygen, it was thought for about a minute... On leaving hospital the mother was encouraged by her own mother to make a complaint to Frimley Park Hospital. The response was that the mother was at fault as she had fallen asleep breastfeeding. The mother said that she had not fallen asleep but that she was full of drugs, in shock and not fully aware of what was going on. Mother advised to seek help to make a complaint through Healthwatch NHS complaints advocacy service.

Ashurst Hospital

"The staff were very helpful but did not hassle you and when breast feeding did not work for me and my baby they helped me with bottle feeding and didn't make me feel bad for not breast feeding."

"After birthing at the Princess Anne we stayed at the New Forest Birth Centre for two nights to get help and support getting breast feeding established and I would highly recommend it." "Now 3 months old, my daughter is exclusively breast fed, and I can confidently say that she would not have had any breast milk from me at all without the 'round the clock' support I received from the staff at Ashurst. Due to difficulties with her latch, we just couldn't get things established easily. I spent 5 days at the centre with the help of some very special ladies who were genuinely determined to get me to the point where I could leave the centre 100% happy that I could feed the way I wanted to. I cannot put into words how grateful I will always be for the start you enabled me to give my daughter."

Ashurst Hospital (cont.)

“After a night at Princess Anne I was able to go back to Ashurst and spent two nights there which was a godsend. I was able to call on the lovely midwives throughout the night to help with the breast feeding.”

“Their advice and support on breast-feeding was invaluable. Even if giving birth in hospital, a post-natal stay at NFBC is great way to recover and bond with your little one in a more homely and relaxed atmosphere, surrounded by people whose expertise, care and support is second to none.”

“I opted to transfer to the New Forest birthing centre as I was having problems breastfeeding my daughter, after she had developed breast aversion following the techniques used at Princess Anne. The staff at Ashurst were supportive and patient in trying to reverse this, sharing their personal and professional experiences to help me find what worked for us which gave me back the confidence I had lost trying to feed my baby.”

“I spent 48 hours at the NFBC after transferring from PAH following the birth of my first child. As breast feeding newbies we needed a lot of help and support which we received in abundance from the staff at Ashurst.”

A “The staff were all incredibly attentive and supportive, without being overbearing. They helped me to establish breast feeding and were a fantastic source of advice and support during the two days that we stayed here.”

“My daughter and I needed help with breastfeeding before going home, and I'd been recovering from blood loss during delivery. The Princess Anne was great, but quite a hectic environment, and it was nothing short of fantastic to move to the birthing centre.”

“I very much wanted to breast feed but was anxious about getting it right as so many people I know had given up within a short time. The midwives were very patient and took their time to support me. As a new mum I was surprised to feel confident when I walked out of there. My baby couldn't open her mouth very wide and has a slight tongue tie, they also realised she would chomp instead of the smooth sucking action she was supposed to be doing.”

“I was so happy with the personal care I received whilst at Ashurst Birthing Centre. It is a lovely place and the staff are wonderful and so helpful with breastfeeding amongst other things.”

“I would like to also add that I was very grateful for the individual breast feeding support that I received and it was a real pleasure to be surrounded by other new mums in the following days to chat about our experiences and even just to relax together at mealtimes. Overall Ashurst felt like a safe haven before returning to real life at home!”

Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital

New midwife bit blasé about breastfeed help... [Patient] ...then gave up breastfeeding but with extra support could have continued.

Royal Hampshire County Hospital

Poor communication and poor knowledge of infant feeding and care. Unsupportive of breastfeeding.

Pressure to breastfeed before birth then not after birth. Tried but gave up and then felt depressed and guilty. The visit 2 days after birth then son at 10% level should have made the midwives offer more support rather than working to 15%.

"I tried very hard to breast feed my son but had great difficulty in doing so and ended up stopping. I called a NHS breast feeding working in QA for advice and she made me feel like a terrible mother and this is where your service to me falls down. Care should always be next to known no matter your choices or preference. I was later diagnosed with post natal depression and I certainly feel the quality of the care given while giving up breast feeding didn't help this."

Queen Alexandra Hospital

"...trying to establish breast feeding and nearly gave up but for the support of the student midwife - she was caring and gave the time and information needed. Without her I would of probably given up."



NHS Advocacy

Healthwatch Hampshire are the providers of free and independent NHS Advocacy service in Hampshire. Patients who contact us can request advocacy, are offered advocacy where appropriate, and we also provide signposting, including signposting patients who seek compensation.

Frimley Park Hospital

As reported above under 'Breastfeeding', the midwife had propped the baby against the mother's breast to feed and the mother saw he was grey and it was thought that the baby had been starved of oxygen for about a minute. The response on making a complaint to Frimley Park Hospital was that the mother was at fault as she had fallen asleep breastfeeding, to which the mother responded that she had not fallen asleep but that she was full of drugs, in shock and not fully aware of what was going on [1].

The caller was internally referred to Healthwatch NHS Advocacy Services.

Basingstoke and North Hampshire Hospital

Patient had a bad experience with an Elective Caesarean where she had to wait 20 hours before she was given treatment and saw no doctor during that time. Patient was admitted one day earlier than planned time due to spontaneous labour on 3rd, and found the experience very upsetting as she felt they were trying to make her hold on until the next day. She sent a formal complaint to the head of maternity and had a visit from the Customer Care Co-ordinator who advised that she should get a response within 25 days. When she received a response she was unhappy, feels insulted and frustrated as it was not sent within the agreed timescale and she felt that the letter had been rushed, poorly written and didn't address the questions she wanted answered [2].

The caller was internally referred to Healthwatch NHS Advocacy Services.

[1] Our reference number: 00043356.

[2] Our reference number: 00045538.



Comments box



	Basingstoke & North Hampshire Hospital <i>Positive and Negative Comments</i>
1	<p>“A heartfelt thank you to all the maternity staff at the hospital, particularly to the doctor who in the end saved my son’s life as well as mine. I can highly recommend the maternity unit.”</p>
2	<p>“Attentive, caring, conscientious and professional in every way. An amazing team of midwives who collaborate well to ensure nothing is missed, and provide the highest standards of professional care.”</p>
3	<p>“Had my first baby here around two weeks ago, and just want to say what a fantastic team they all are. I felt I was treated with respect and dignity the whole time, everyone I met was lovely, welcoming and reassuring - couldn’t thank them enough!”</p>
4	<p>Baby was born by Caesarean. First 24 hours excellent. Then moved twice to different wards. They took blood in case needed for transfusion then lost it. they then took blood again and lost it, then took blood a third time and lost it. As borderline for blood transfusion then said she could go home with iron tablets or stay and have transfusion. She went home.</p>
5	<p>“...When they broke my waters, it was discoloured showing my baby was in distress. My midwife didn’t do anything. Other midwives were coming in and out looking at the readings and saying something was wrong, but she told them it was only the way I was laying. When a doctor came to review me, my midwife failed to disclose all the information and said the baby was not in distress and therefore the doctors left. [Later, another midwife] ...called a doctor as she could tell something was wrong and they said a x section was the safest option... It turned out that my son had a true knot on his cord which was starving him of oxygen. Explaining his dropping heart rate. Luckily, he was ok... My original midwife ... then tried to get me to stand way before I was ready after an epidural. At which point I fell...Don’t get me wrong I don’t blame the hospital. I blame the midwife.”</p>



Queen Alexandra Hospital <i>Positive and Negative Comments</i>	
11	<p>“Queen Alexandra maternity ward - got sent home, then 4 hours later returned. They were amazing couldn’t fault actual care. Living in Gosport its hard to get to QA takes 35-40 minutes or up to 1½ hours. QA sent out 2 midwives and told then to call ambulance - midwives waste of time. Can’t fault maternity unit, health visitors great always on the end of the phone.”</p>
12	<p>Maternity very good- student midwife and trained midwife. Accommodated water birth. Felt relaxed - all went well. Staff supportive.</p>
13	<p>“My overall experience of the labour ward at QA was fantastic. The care was next to none and the ward was extremely clean. My needs were met up until aftercare where I was left on my own trying to feed a new baby and couldn’t wait to leave. I had been desperate to go to Blake Maternity unit in Gosport but sadly at the time was closed. I tried very hard to breast feed my son but had great difficulty in doing so and ended up stopping. I called a NHS breast feeding working in QA for advice and she made me feel like a terrible mother and this is where your service to me falls down. Care should always be next to known no matter your choices or preference. I was later diagnosed with post natal depression and I certainly feel the quality of the care given while giving up breast feeding didn’t help this. Overall the care is good but it does need improving.”</p>
14	<p>Gave birth by emergency caesarean Labour midwives fantastic. After birth felt abandoned - After care poor. Husband had visited and daughter (3) had chicken pox. Just after husband had left told would be discharged in 1½ hours. Explained husband had just left but was told would have to find alternative transport then. Had to walk to car - no wheelchair provided.</p>
15	<p>After giving birth at QA was told needed to see anaesthetist for pain relief before being discharged. But was discharged with wrong notes without seeing an anaesthetist and so without pain relief. The hospital called at midnight and asked her to return the notes the next day. If she had another woman’s notes then someone was reading hers. The confidentiality breach was upsetting and how she was treated. No apology. Considered making a complaint but was too exhausted.</p>

Royal Hampshire County Hospital <i>Positive and Negative Comments</i>	
6	<p>“Just wanted to say a huge thank you to all the staff on the Antony Letchworth ward. I was treated with care and dignity on both occasions that I attended the ward. What was a very difficult, scary and emotional time was made a little easier by the genuine kindness and professionalism of everyone. I was never rushed and felt cared for throughout my stay... I couldn’t have asked for more, a true credit to the NHS. Thank you.”</p>
7	<p>“I gave birth to my second child at Winchester... it was a quick labour which unfortunately ended in emergency c-section. He was exactly 4 weeks premature, so right on the cut-off for transferring us straight to post-natal GH ward rather than neonates. The labour team were fab, brilliant midwives, the ward was very busy but the team coped well. Although in hindsight I think we were sent home far too early for a slightly prem baby, and unfortunately had to be rushed back to hospital the day after I was discharged, I then thankfully went straight to neonatal where I cannot praise the team enough. They were so kind, patient, caring & supportive; and worked hard to give you as much ownership over tasks and decisions for your little one as possible. What a truly remarkable team that work down there.”</p>
8	<p>“Winchester hospital was great, used birthing pool, labour midwives were fantastic and very supportive.”</p>
9	<p>Mother knew there was a problem with her child after she was born. Her breathing sounded too noisy. The doctors in Winchester said it was fine... [After 17 days] ... Doctor at Southampton diagnosed a serious problem with daughter. Operation took place 3 days later. Child now 2½ and has learning development issues. She doesn’t walk on her own and doesn’t speak. She is under 5 different Doctors at Southampton hospital. Mother concerned that though ignoring her for 17 days - lacking oxygen at birth - subsequently has caused these problems. She feels that she is only now being taken seriously.</p>
10	<p>“I was referred to the EPAU for a scan for possible ectopic pregnancy, the male sonographer was not experienced and was guided how to scan me with a colleague, I was in a lot of discomfort from his handling of the probe which I did not experience at subsequent scans. My partner and I also found both of their comments somewhat condescending and not reassuring at a worrying time. I waited an hour when returning for a blood test to check my hormone levels, which is fair enough but had to call several times to the results from the consultant who was sketchy about the levels, seemed almost flippant and just told me to come back for a further one. The further one I waited over an hour whilst several nurses stood around reception chatting and laughing until I begged one to take the test for me, who kindly did and apologised. After much insistence I brought my next scan forward as I knew I had lost my baby naturally and just wanted to get confirmation all was OK and get on with coping with the loss. The sonographer this time was very kind but didn’t know why I was there when I arrived for my appointment.”</p>



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