

Women rate their experiences of maternity care in NSW public hospitals

The Bureau of Health Information (BHI) today published survey results reflecting the experiences of care of almost 5,000 women who gave birth in public hospitals across NSW in 2017.

The Maternity Care Survey was completed approximately three months after women gave birth and asked about their experiences of care during various stages of their maternity journey, including antenatal care, care during labour and birth, postnatal care in hospital and follow-up care at home.

BHI Chief Executive, Dr Diane Watson, said most women had positive experiences of maternity care in NSW public hospitals.

“Women were particularly positive about the care they received during labour and birth, with 95% saying it was either very good or good,” Dr Watson said.

“Almost nine in 10 women reported they had confidence and trust in the midwives or doctors taking care of them during labour and birth.”

The survey results also show areas where improvements can be made, including the consistency of some types of information provided by health professionals.

“Almost one in three women said they received conflicting information about feeding their baby, and women in some public hospitals were more likely to report receiving conflicting information than women in other public hospitals,” Dr Watson said.

Results for 59 individual hospitals are available on BHI’s website, showing differences in ratings of maternity care across NSW public hospitals.

More than one in three women said they experienced a problem or complication during birth, though almost two-thirds of those women rated its seriousness as either not at all serious or not very serious.

“Childbirth carries with it risks of problems and complications. Some of these may be expected and cannot be prevented. It is important to ensure that women are provided with information so they are aware of these risks and also that health professionals learn from the experiences of their patients to reduce those complications that are preventable,” Dr Watson said.

“Women provide a unique and valuable perspective about their maternity care experiences. What women have told us in this survey can be used in conjunction with clinical data to inform efforts to improve the experiences and outcomes of care for women giving birth in our public hospitals.”

BHI also released the results of two further patient surveys today:

The **BreastScreen NSW Client Experience Survey 2017** reflects the experiences of care of more than 10,000 women aged 50-74 years who had a screening mammogram within BreastScreen NSW. Overall, 98% of women rated their experience as either very good or good.

The **Adult Admitted Patient Survey 2017** results reflects the experiences of care of more than 21,000 adults admitted to one of 77 public hospitals across NSW. Overall, 94% of patients rated their care as either very good or good.

Full survey results and associated information products are available at bhi.nsw.gov.au