



TOWER HAMLETS · NEWHAM ·
WALTHAM FOREST
Maternity &
Neonatal Voices

Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership

Quarterly Report April - June 2024

Newham

Tower Hamlets

Waltham Forest

Introduction-

Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership is a team of women, midwives, doctors, health visitors and commissioners working together to review and contribute to the development of local maternity and neonatal care in Tower Hamlets, Waltham Forest, and Newham.

It recognises that listening and responding to all women and families is an essential part of safe and high-quality care. Listening to women and families with compassion improves the safety and experience of those using maternity and neonatal services and helps address health inequalities.

Maternity and neonatal voices partnerships (MNVPs) ensure that service user voices are at the heart of decision-making in maternity and neonatal services.

Working with BARTS Health across Northeast London, Healthwatch Newham along with Healthwatch Tower Hamlets and Healthwatch Waltham Forest have now been awarded the East London Maternity Voices Partnership (MNVP) contracts in Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest, starting in May 2023.

Feedback is collected by a team of local women who are the MNVP Chair dedicated to each borough.

MNVPs listen to and reflect the views of local communities. All groups are heard, including bereaved families. They have strategic influence and are embedded in decision-making.

In line with the service specifications, we are reaching out to local parents using a variety method that enable parents from diverse communities in Newham, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest to engage with maternity services in a meaningful way.

User engagement is driven through by visiting children and community centres, maternity ward visits through 'Walk the Patch', participation in new parent groups and/or events, and digital engagement through social media, and peanut app.

We have fostered engagement with essential organisations, NHS and Council representatives and key partners in each borough to facilitate service user engagement in line with our work plan shared in this report.

The summary of the report covers Patient experience is captured, triangulated and themes identified, Outreach into the community and hospital, Support of local Chair and Volunteers, Positive working relationship with Barts and Parent participation in service development.

Last Quarter Highlights-

Summary of Key Issues Raised at Quarterly Meeting with BARTS Health (Chair: Caroline Alexander, Chief Nurse)

The last quarter saw significant feedback regarding:

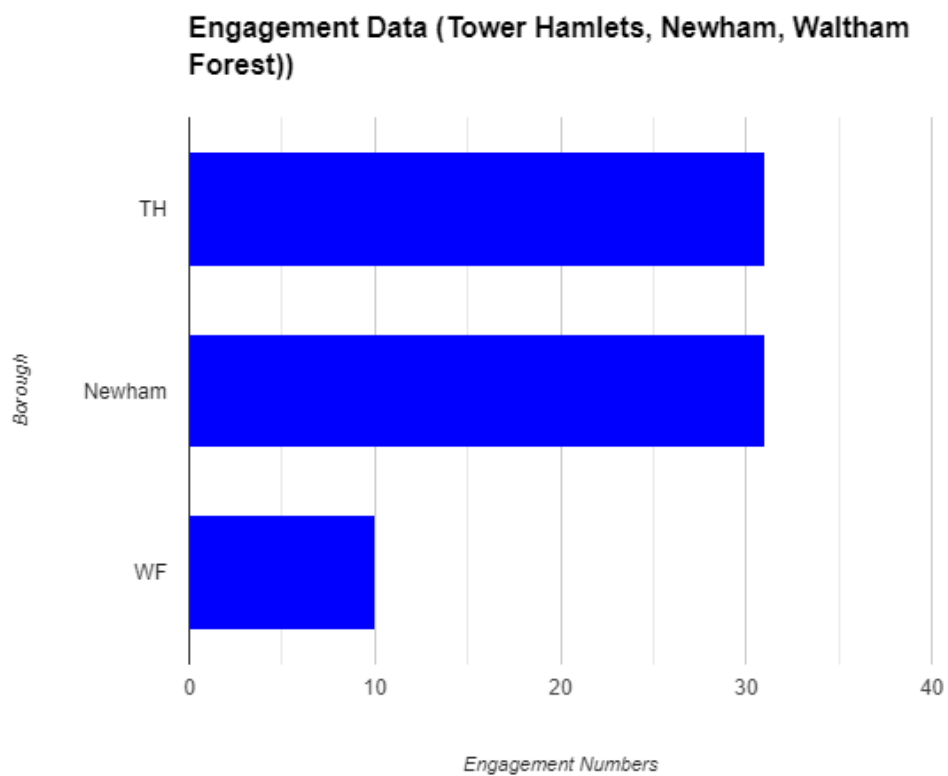
- **Triage:** Concerns were raised about the triage process.
- **Long Waiting Times:** Patients experienced extended wait times.
- **Staff Communication:** Communication between staff and patients was identified as an area for improvement.

Here's an update on our progress:

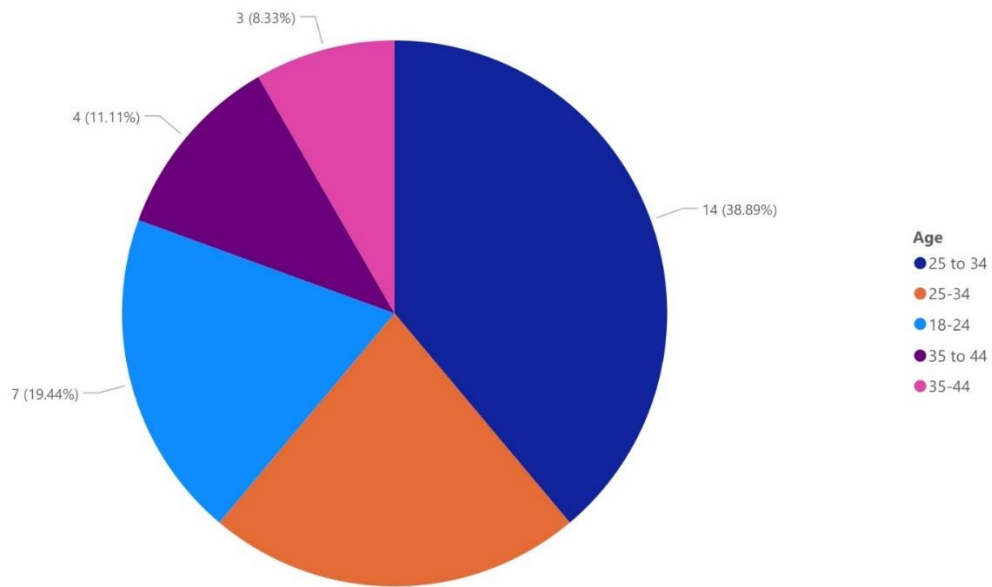
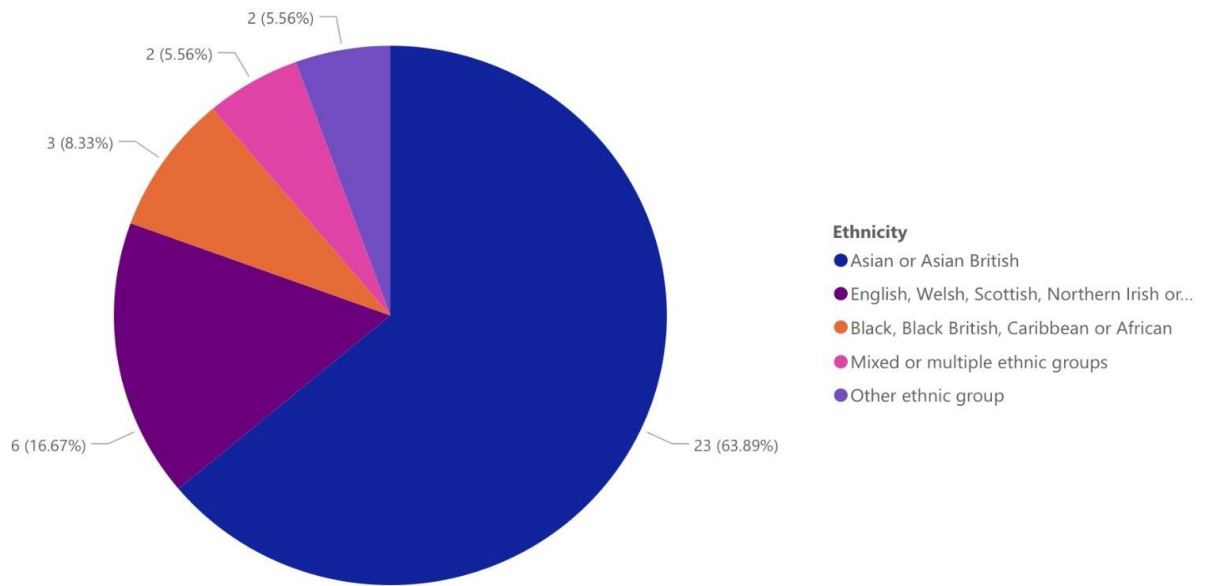
- **Triage and Waiting Times:** Whipss Cross Hospital is particularly focused on improving Triage and reducing waiting times. A dedicated work plan is in place to address these concerns.
- **Pain Management:** We recognize the importance of effective pain control. We've incorporated specific questions about pain management into our "walk the patch" and outreach programs to better understand and address patient concerns.
- **Staff Communication and Accessibility:** We strive to ensure all voices are heard. To improve communication with patients from diverse backgrounds, we're working to enhance interpreter access. This will allow us to gain valuable insights from different ethnic groups and ensure their concerns are addressed.

- **Postnatal Care:** Improvements in postnatal care are underway across all three hospitals, as reflected in recent operational outcomes. We remain committed to providing the best possible care to new mothers.

Current Trends



DEMOGRAPHICS



LONDON BOROUGH OF NEWHAM

WALK THE PATCH SUMMARY- 28 Feedback

Positive Experiences

- **Skilled and supportive staff:** 100% women praised the midwives, doctors, and nurses who cared for them during labor, delivery, and postpartum.
- **Good breastfeeding support:** 100% reported receiving good breastfeeding support from staff and were offered information on drop-in support sessions.
- **Close proximity to home:** Several women appreciated the convenience of having the hospital close to their homes.

Negative Experiences

- **Long waiting times:** A significant concern was long waiting times for beds, both in triage and for induction appointments. 60% women reported waiting for over 12 hours.
- **Staff shortages:** 33% women felt that the hospital was understaffed, leading to delays in receiving assistance and inconsistencies in information provided by different staff members.
- **Inconsistent communication:** 17% reported receiving contradictory information from different staff members, particularly regarding visiting policies.
- **Limited postnatal support:** A few women felt that they did not receive adequate support after birth, particularly at night.
- **Lack of compassion:** A few women reported feeling that some staff members were not compassionate or understanding of their needs.

CASE STUDIES- 3 (During Walk the Patch)

“The breastfeeding support is good, some staff have been good and some not so supportive, recommendation for improvement for staff to present themselves better towards mums and speaking

“In antenatal experience needed a nebuliser, the midwife said it is not available, but the doctor insisted to get one, she then said that they don’t use nebulisers, then the doctor had to go and get because the midwife was refusing to”

“Delivery staff have been very good but not so good in postnatal. Having medicine upon request but it takes too long for the medicine to come, there is a very long wait for assistance during the night times but not too bad during the day”

Positive Experiences:

- All three women reported positive experiences with specific staff members, particularly midwives and doctors.
- Two women reported positive experiences with breastfeeding support.
- One woman found the hospital to be conveniently located.
- One woman had a positive experience with the antenatal clinic.

Negative Experiences:

- **Long wait times:** All three women experienced long wait times, either for a bed in triage or during labor induction due to staff shortages.
- **Communication issues:** Two women reported communication issues, including inconsistent information from staff and difficulty getting questions answered.

- **Lack of compassion:** Two women felt disrespected or unsupported by some staff members.
- **Inconsistent postnatal care:** Two women reported inconsistent postnatal care, with good experiences in some areas and feeling unsupported in others.

OUTREACH

Coffee Morning - June 28, 2024

Number of Feedback: 3

Positive Feedback:

- All service users reported positive experiences with breastfeeding support.
- Two service users appreciated having staff who spoke their language (Arabic) for translation.
- One service user had a positive experience with the birth center staff and delivery.

Negative Feedback:

- One service user had a negative experience with postnatal care, including lack of privacy, dirty wards, and staff not introducing themselves.
- One service user felt pressured into making decisions during her first pregnancy due to anxiety from a previous negative experience.
- One service user waited a long time for a bed after being induced and felt the staff should have encouraged an induction sooner due to her medical history.
- All service users mentioned areas for improvement in communication.

Overall Recommendations:

- **Communication:** Inconsistent information and difficulty getting questions answered were recurring issues. There is a need for improved communication between staff members and with patients to ensure consistent information is provided.
- **Staffing:** service users mentioned staff shortages or feeling ignored by some staff members. Improved communication and training on cultural sensitivity could address this.

- **Wait Times:** Long wait times in triage and for medication were frustrating for service users. Strategies to reduce waiting times for beds and appointments should be explored.
- **Postnatal Support:** Inconsistent support in the postnatal ward was a concern for two service users.
- **Improve accessibility for non-English speakers:** Providing interpretation services readily and ensuring information is available in multiple languages would help bridge communication gaps.
- **Increase transparency about visiting policies:** Clear and consistent information about visiting policies should be readily available to all service users.

LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST-

WALK THE PATCH SUMMARY- 9 Feedback

As per our records, the "Walk the Patch" survey was conducted once in June during this period. Below is a summary of the data provided by the Chair:

Positive Feedback

The feedback received was overwhelmingly positive, with several key themes emerging:

- **Staff Excellence:** All respondents praised the staff for their kindness, support, and attentiveness.
- **Quality of Care:** The care provided was universally commended by service users.
- **Strong Recommendations:** All participants expressed a willingness to recommend the hospital to friends and family.
- **Breastfeeding Support:** Comprehensive breastfeeding support was provided to all respondents.
- **Communication:** A high proportion (80%) of respondents were satisfied with communication, although some instances of repeated information were noted.

Negative Feedback

- **Waiting Times:** A small percentage (10%) of respondents mentioned experiencing long waiting times.
- **Triage Access:** Difficulties in contacting triage were reported by 10% of participants.

Overall Recommendations

- **Enhanced Postnatal Support:** Providing more comprehensive postnatal support upon discharge would be beneficial for new mothers.
- **Improved Communication:** While communication was generally positive, refining information sharing processes could enhance the patient experience.
- **Food Facilities:** Introducing food reheating services would be a welcome addition for patients.

OUTREACH

The MNVP Chair attended the launch event for the Bump to Baby program at Walthamstow Family Hub. Several local organizations, including HENRY and Lloyd Park Children's Charity, were present. Only one service user, a first-time expectant mother planning to deliver at Whipps Cross Hospital, attended the event.

Feedback:

- **Positive:** The service user had a positive experience with antenatal services overall.
- **Negative:** The service user identified communication and appointment organization as areas for improvement within antenatal services.

While attendance was low, the event offered a chance to connect with a potential service user and explore future collaboration opportunities. The event provided an opportunity to connect with a potential service user. A potential collaboration with the HENRY team regarding breastfeeding support was discussed.

LONDON BOROUGH OF TOWER HAMLETS

WALK THE PATCH- 14 Feedback

Positive Feedback

- **Staff Attitude:** A high proportion (90%) of respondents praised the staff for their supportive and friendly.

- **Overall Care:** 80% of participants rated the overall care positively.
- **Pain Relief:** 20% Service users had a need for pain relief, and it was administered quickly and efficiently
- **Recommendation:** A similar percentage (80%) indicated they would recommend the hospital to friends and family.

Negative Feedback

- **Breastfeeding Support:** No respondents reported receiving breastfeeding support, highlighting a significant gap in care.
- **Additional Needs:** 30% of respondents with specific medical needs reported that these were not adequately addressed.
- **Waiting Times:** 50% of respondents experienced wait times exceeding two hours.
- **Staff Performance:** One respondent specifically mentioned slowness among doctors in the labor and delivery room.

Overall Recommendations:

- **Prioritize Breastfeeding Support:** Implement comprehensive breastfeeding support programs to address the complete absence of such services identified in the feedback.
- **Address Patient Needs:** Develop systems to effectively identify and address the specific needs of patients with additional medical histories.
- **Reduce Waiting Times:** Implement strategies to minimize patient wait times, particularly those exceeding two hours.

OUTREACH-

This report summarizes feedback collected through Peanut online outreach from 8 women and birthing people about their maternity experiences at Royal London Hospital.

Felt dismissed by midwives

Awful experience. Self-discharged due to feeling unsupported.

Disorganized antenatal care, felt safe during labour, but neglected and uninformed in postnatal care.

Horrible experience, made formal complaints

Dismissed and sent home, . Begged for pain relief and C-section

Rude and Dismissive Staff, Delayed pain medication, lack of breastfeeding support

Common Themes:

- **Communication:** Lack of clear communication, dismissive attitude from staff, not being kept informed about procedures and decisions.
- **Pain Management:** Inconsistent pain management, requests for pain relief ignored or delayed.
- **Staff Behavior:** Rude, dismissive, and unprofessional behavior from some midwives and doctors.
- **Informed Consent:** Not being properly informed about procedures and options, or feeling pressured into choices.
- **Postnatal Care:** Feeling neglected and unsupported after birth, lack of breastfeeding support, and inadequate discharge instructions.
- **Understaffing:** Perception of understaffing leading to long wait times and potentially compromised care.

BP CLINIC

Number of feedback- 9

Positive Feedback (75%)

- Friendly and informative staff
- Helpful resources and interpreters
- Comfortable communication
- Effective follow-up

Negative Feedback (25%)

- Unwelcoming staff
- High Cost of BP monitor

Overall Recommendations

- Improve communication with birthing people, ensuring they are kept informed and involved in decision-making.
- Train staff on compassion, communication skills, and cultural sensitivity.
- Implement stricter protocols for informed consent.
- Improve pain management practices and ensure timely responses to requests for pain relief.

- Enhance postnatal care to provide more support and address individual needs.
- Investigate potential understaffing issues and address them to ensure adequate care for all birthing people.

MNVP Chair Meetings and Events Attendance

MNVP Chairs actively participate in various meetings and events to stay informed, collaborate, and contribute to the project's success. Here's a breakdown of some key gatherings they attend:

NEWHAM	TOWER HAMLETS	WALTHAM FOREST
PEM and Adom at NUH 24/05/2024	Tower Hamlets Maternity Borough Meeting 06/06/24- Online Covered by HWN	London MNVP Leads and Chairs - May
Maternity and Neonatal Committee Meeting Online-10/05/2024	Bereavement Training Part 1 Online- 25/06/224	MNVP Cross Site Meeting – June
Bereavement Training Part 1 Online- 16/04/24		
World Café Event- 19/06/24		
Bereavement Training Part 2 Online- 11/06/24		

Collaboration with Patient Experience Midwives

We have established a strong collaborative relationship with patient experience midwives (PEMs) to enhance the Maternity and Neonatal Voices Partnership (MNVP) program. Here's how we've been working together

- The chairs reviewed the Maternity action plan in collaboration with Patient Experience Midwives (PEMs).
- Healthwatch Newham along with the MNVP Chairs and PEM, co-produced the MNVP Work Plan
- To enhance promotion of (MNVP) program, The PEM have shared the service user details with the chairs to facilitate direct connection and outreach.

- Reviewing the key requirements from Healthwatch Newham

Cross-Site Collaboration & Communication:

- We're fostering cross-site collaboration to ensure consistent communication and information sharing about key MNVP requirements across all maternity services. The Cross-site meetings are proposed to be monthly in the last week of the month.
- This collaborative approach will streamline implementation and improve accessibility for service users.

Social Media Insights and Strategy

The MNVP project now has social media presence since the end of March to Share information and increase the awareness and share about the resources and help available around maternity and neonatal services. Healthwatch Newham actively shares information on a shared Instagram account for three boroughs along with Facebook. The data is also shared on the HW Newham website along with HW Newham's monthly newsletter.

- **Post Format:** Most posts are text-based announcements with accompanying images.
- **Content Focus:** The content revolves around introducing MNVP Chairs for Waltham Forest and Tower Hamlets, promoting coffee morning events for parents to share maternity care experiences, and announcing a quarterly meeting.
- **Post Reach:** A total of 152 accounts have been reached, with 16 followers and 136 non-followers.
- **Engagement:** Engagement is low, with only a few posts receiving one reaction.

This social media strategy outlines the approach for utilizing Facebook and Instagram to increase community engagement, raise awareness about MNVP initiatives, and encourage participation among residents of Newham, Tower Hamlets, and Waltham Forest.

Objectives

- **Raise Awareness:** Enhance visibility of MNVP's work within the community.
- **Engage the Community:** Foster a sense of community and encourage discussions around maternity and neonatal services.
- **Drive Participation:** Motivate followers to attend events such as coffee mornings and quarterly meetings.

Target Audience

- Local residents
- Volunteers and donors
- Local businesses and organizations

Content Themes

- Community stories and testimonials
- Event announcements and promotions
- Behind-the-scenes insights into MNVP's work
- Educational content related to maternity and neonatal services
- User-generated content

Posting Schedule

- **Facebook:** 1-3 posts per week (Tuesdays: educational content, Fridays: coffee morning updates)
- **Instagram:** 1-3 posts per week (Tuesdays: educational graphics or tips, Fridays: coffee morning updates)

Engagement Tactics

- Responsive engagement with followers through comments and messages.
- Partnerships with local businesses and community groups.

Analytics and Monitoring

- Regular review of Facebook Insights and Instagram Analytics.
- Adjustment of strategy based on data-driven insights.

Moving Forward

Key Initiatives:

- **Raising Awareness:**
 - **Chair Posters:** Introduce informational posters displayed on chairs in maternity wards and community centres
 - **Social Media Boost:** Enhance social media engagement with Chairs and the Healthwatch Newham Communications Team. Develop a targeted strategy to reach new parents.

- **QR Code Distribution:** Share a QR code easily accessible in maternity wards and new parent gathering places. This code will link directly to MNVP information on the dedicated website.
- **Collaboration:**
 - **Co-Production with PEM:** Partner with the Patient Experience Team (PEM) to develop engaging sessions at the weekly clinics at hospitals.
 - **Social Media x Peanut App & VCS:** Collaborate with the Social Media Team to promote the MNVP program through targeted ads within the Peanut app and through Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) networks within the three boroughs. (**Target Audience:** New parents)
 - **Co-hosting events:** We'll collaborate with other services to offer joint events that cater to a broader range of interests. This could create a more vibrant and inclusive atmosphere.