

healthwatch
Bedford Borough

Enter & View Report

Bedford Hospital: Maternity Services

Visited 6th November 2015



Enter and View (E&V) report – Bedford Hospital: Maternity Services

Name and address	Bedford Hospital NHS Trust, South Wing, Kempston Rd, Bedford, MK42 9DJ
Description of care /service provided	Maternity Services
Names of Authorised Representatives	Sam Porter-Harris, Steve Clark and Kamila Naseova
Date of visit	6th November 2015

Background

Bedford Maternity service is situated within the Cygnet Wing of Bedford Hospital and is made up of several departments. On floor one there is the Antenatal Clinic and the Delivery Suite. On the second floor there is Orchard Maternity Ward which houses the Maternity Day Assessment Unit (DAU), Pre and Postnatal care beds. The Orchard Gynaecological Ward is situated down the far end. The Special Care Unit for babies (SCU) is also situated on the second floor.

The purpose of the visit was part of a wider project that Healthwatch Bedford Borough (HBB) is undertaking to investigate children’s (and their parents’ and carers’) experience of accessing health services across Bedford Borough. As part of this project HBB are seeking both parents’ and carers’ views as well as those of children.

Welcoming

We were met by Naomi Gallagher, Head of Midwifery/Matron SCU and Oonagh Purdy, Matron Maternity at the general reception at Bedford Hospital. Introductions were made and IDs presented. We were given a very detailed guided tour of all the Maternity Wards by Naomi, who was inviting and informative. Naomi answered all questions put to her with great knowledge and passion and noted where mistakes had been made and explained how things had been changed so as the same mistakes would not arise again. The atmosphere on all the wards we visited was calm and relaxed. The entrance was secure and we were encouraged to use hand gel at the entrances.

Visit details

Staff

Currently within the Cygnet Wing there is circa one hundred and forty maternity staff. One hundred and nine of these staff are whole time equivalent Midwives, this includes thirty five Community Midwives, twenty five staff are Maternity Care Assistants. Of the thirty five Community Midwives, there are two who specialise in the care of young/teenage mothers. These are expectant mothers who are aged 20 or under who would have been referred to the specialist midwives through FNP (Family Nurse Partnership) which is a national service. There are also four ‘on call’ Community Midwives each night that could be called to attend to

home births. They are periodically called in to the hospital to help on the wards if needed. However as these midwives work during the day time they would only be able to clinically support the wards for a two hour shift on any one night (4 Midwives x 2hours each =8 hours cover). Community Midwives attend on average about 70 – 100 home births a year if this is the chosen and safe option for the mother and the baby. Where there are language barriers, the Maternity Services mainly use Language Line for interpreting services. They sometimes use face to face translation services.

Orchard Ward

To gain access to Orchard Ward you must push a buzzer and wait for the doors to be unlocked. Visiting times on Orchard Ward are 8am till 10pm for partners, although there is a two hour period between 12pm and 2pm for protected meal times when partners are asked to leave. Times for other visitors are 2pm until 8pm every day. On Orchard Ward there is a Maternity DAU, this has four beds with a set of curtains around each for privacy. In the DAU expectant mothers will be seen for various reasons, such as blood pressure monitoring, foetal heart monitoring and any other concerns surrounding the pregnancy. This DAU is a day time facility and is open from 7am - 9pm Mon-Fri and 9am-5pm on a Saturday and a Sunday there is one midwife within the DAU and a Maternity Care Assistant. Expectant mothers are encouraged to go home whenever it is safe to do so. If for any reason the expectant mother needs to stay in hospital she will be admitted onto the pre-natal days.

The pre-natal unit comprises of a bay with four beds. Again these have individual curtains to be pulled round for privacy. These beds may at busy periods be used for post-natal mothers as well as pre-natal ones. There is a toilet and bathroom situated just outside these two rooms.

There is a dining room where expectant mothers are encouraged to eat their meals; however they can eat with their baby at their bed if desired. There is tea and coffee on offer all day to visitors within the dining room and for these a donation is suggested. Behind the Midwives' station is a nursery. This is used for breast feeding mothers and mothers who are expressing for comfort and space. The nursery is also used for some NIPE (Newborn and Infant Physical Examination) checks. NIPE training is offered to qualified Midwives and is provided by the University of Hertfordshire. Currently there are twenty six NIPE trained midwives within the Unit. There is a high dependency bay with four beds in a bay immediately behind the Midwives' station. These are used mainly for mothers who have had C-sections or who need continuous care for the first 24 hours after delivery. Mothers with other complications will be cared for in this bay as well.

Orchard Maternity Ward has four side rooms. These contain ensuite shower facilities and can be hired (if available) for around £60 per night. Parents that choose to hire a side room only pay for the room and do not receive any additional treatment or privileges to other mothers on the ward. The single rooms are also used for patients who need isolation or additional rest for medical reasons. The rooms may also be used for mothers who are having a miscarriage or young ladies (under 20) who may feel uncomfortable on the main ward. A medical reason for using a side room will take priority over mothers who wish to 'hire' the room. A locked room is where medications, both emergency and standard equipment and other instruments are kept (blood vials, dressings, cannulas etc.).

A record of equipment checks are logged and also kept in this room. Checks are carried out daily on all equipment and include the postpartum haemorrhage box for every type of postpartum haemorrhage, blood pressure machines and cuffs, preeclampsia box, blood sugar machines. All medications are kept in a locked cupboard also in this locked room. The emergency trolley is kept in the corridor between Maternity and Gynaecology; this was tidy

and easy to access. Opposite this were three fire evacuation slides that, if required, would aid evacuation of women who for whatever reason could not walk. To date, these evacuation slides have never been needed.

Gynaecological Ward

The Orchard Gynaecological Ward is situated at the far end of Orchard Ward. A new route onto the ward has been created for patients who may be experiencing a miscarriage or termination and do not wish to pass through Orchard Maternity Ward itself. Just as you arrive through the door onto the ward there is a board entitled 'you said we did'. On this board is where the responses from the Family and Friends Test would be displayed. All beds in this unit also have individual curtains for privacy and toilets and bathrooms are easily identified. This unit also use blue butterflies to discretely identify patients suffering from dementia.

Special Care Unit (SCU)

The SCU unit is accessible across the corridor from Orchard Maternity Ward, making it easier for mothers with babies within the SCU to visit as often as they like. The unit also allows the mothers, fathers and grandparents of the babies on the ward to have open access, meaning they can visit whenever they like. Siblings are also allowed to visit, however other children are not allowed onto the ward. There is a very pleasant day room on the SCU which contains tea and coffee making facilities and toys and books for children.

There are twelve cots within the SCU with intensive care cots located in the first bay. Babies in this bay will be treated for the first 48 hours, however if they carry on needing this intensive high dependency care, they will be referred to a Tertiary Referral Unit. Bedford Hospital Maternity and Neonatal Services are part of the East of England Neonatal Network and can keep up to date with cot availability and babies who were transferred out to other hospitals within the East of England via an internet connection called Badger Net.

The next bay is where the babies are moved to when they need slightly less care. There are curtains which can be pulled round the baby's cot for privacy when their mothers are breast feeding them or expressing breast milk. There are also rooms within the SCU for parents to stay overnight on the unit. These are usually used when the baby is ready to go home if parents are in need of reassurance about how to care for their baby without the help of the SCU staff. There are side rooms for use when isolation is required, there are chairs which turn into beds for parents. There is a nursery/milk room within which breast milk can be stored in a regulated fridge. Bottles and other parts to the breast pumps can be found there and disposed of within this room. When talking with Naomi on the SCU she expressed her thoughts surrounding passing on information to a mother who is still on the Delivery Suite and her baby is on SCU, especially when mum is too ill to be present straight away. Naomi shared a story from previous years surrounding a mother who felt denied time with her newborn before he/she died as mum was too poorly to be brought to the SCU straight away. Naomi stressed that she aims with the staff to continue to learn and make changes regarding keeping mothers updated or to transfer a mother on her bed to be with her newborn. Naomi said that occasionally staff can assume that partner will update the mother however they may be too emotionally traumatised/drained to pass on all information to their partner. It is important that a mother is united with her sick newborn as soon as possible after the birth.

Delivery Suite

On arrival at the Delivery Suite again there is a buzzer system to get in. Once on the ward there is a Midwives' station where a board is kept indicating which rooms are in use and any complications can be noted. Opposite the Midwives' station there are other boards on the wall one of which has photographs of all the midwives, care assistants, nurses, doctors, domestic staff and clerical staff on the ward. These photographs are used to indicate which members of staff are on shift on any given day. On the other boards on the wall there are very uplifting and motivational posters, these include 'Miss Maternity or Mr Maternity of the Month' and all those nominated. On the notice board there are also displayed comments given from parents who have recently delivered on the Suite.

Room one on Delivery Suite doubles up as an extra operating theatre when needed but is mainly used for multiple births (e.g. twins) or complicated deliveries for example a forceps delivery. This delivery room could also be used in high infection cases, for example if an expectant mother was to have Ebola. If this was the case, the ward would only be used for this purpose and other labouring women or pending admissions moved elsewhere to avoid contamination.

Of the other rooms there are three that contain birthing pools. These rooms are very spacious and have a relaxing background pictures placed behind the pool. One of the birthing pool rooms is equipped for high risk women to use. Towards the rear end of the Delivery Suite rooms is where the Acorn Suite starts. The Acorn Suite is a Midwifery Led Unit, meaning that women can deliver in a safe and relaxing environment that has a less medicalised feeling. Across the corridor from the delivery rooms is the Butterfly Suite. This is a purpose built room used to support families who need privacy and individual additional support for a number of reasons. It is commonly used for mothers who are suffering a bereavement (delivering a still born or a baby that is known will not survive). The room known as a 'Family in Need' room rather than a bereavement room. The name Butterfly was chosen as they are delicate creatures such as the situations that may be dealt with in this room.

In the main corridor there are a further two fire evacuation slides.

Safety

The Maternity Unit has a baby tagging security system and the buzzer entry system in place to ensure the safety of the mothers and their babies. This was designed so that mothers would feel more comfortable in leaving their new born babies to go for a shower or to the dining room for dinner. When the baby is born, a security tag is fitted around the baby's ankle once it is transferred to Orchard Maternity Ward. If the baby was to be taken past the exit doors of the ward, while the tag was still attached, an alarm would sound loudly and continuously.

It was noted that case notes that were out to be worked on, there was a blank piece of paper placed over the top so no details could be seen to keep all patient information confidential.

Patient feedback

The team spoke with 5 mothers or their relatives during their E&V visit. They all expressed satisfaction with the care they and their babies received. Everyone felt that they had been kept well informed throughout the process and were given relevant advice on how to care for twins or breastfeeding, for example.

Summary

Overall, the team felt from start to finish of our visit on the day that the staff were helpful, polite and keen to help when asked. The atmosphere on all wards was extremely calm and organised. All wards were clean and tidy and cupboards were very organised.

The following recommendations were made:

To carry on improving the experience for mothers and their babies on the wards from feedback received from mothers and their partners and families in an open and positive manner.

To consider how to educate staff about the two different uses for the butterfly motif within the hospital, one used as a name for the 'Family in Need' room to support familiar who are experiencing bereavement and the scheme used to identify dementia. Whilst recognising that it is highly unlikely the two would be confused, it is important that all staff are aware of the two uses of the butterfly motif in the Women & Children's Departments.

About Healthwatch Bedford Borough (HBB)

HBB is the independent consumer champion for the local community, influencing all local health and social care services.

HBB seeks to ensure that the views of the public and people who use health and social care services are taken into account.

Our vision is that

Healthwatch Bedford Borough will be:

- *a critical friend in challenging service providers to ensure that their services are person-centred and responsive to local community needs.*
- *seeking to empower all patients with confidence to make an informed choice about their health and social care needs.*

Our Mission is that

Healthwatch Bedford Borough will consult, engage and empower the wider community in a fair, transparent and realistic way. It will:

- *provide positive influence and encourage improvements in local health and social care services, acting as a critical friend to service providers and establishing valid outcomes against which changes can be measured.*
- *act as the voice of the public, providing a bridge between the commissioners and providers of Statutory Health and Social Care.*

HBB is for everyone in the community – adults, young people and children. It is vital that HBB actively seeks the views from all sections of the community, particularly those who seldom have their voices heard to ensure that information gathered is representative of the local community that it serves.

HBB Board

This is the body responsible for overseeing the work of the organisation.

Board members are:

- Anne Bustin (Chair).
- John Weetman (Finance Director).
- Linda Hiscott (Strategic Director).

There is also one non-executive Director – Lyz Hawkes.
The Board meets on a regular monthly basis.

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HBB Staff

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Laurie Hurn – Administrator and Company Secretary.
Shanice Dadhira – Modern Apprentice (Administration).

Important Note

HBB is a Community Interest Company (CIC). It is registered with Companies House as Company No 8385413.

The three Directors (Board) have an important position of trust and general company law imposes on them a range of duties and in ensuring that the CIC meets its statutory and other obligations.

The HBB strapline is as follows:

“A strong voice for local people”