

INFORMATION & SUPPORT FOLLOWING BIRTH

EXPECTATIONS OF WOMEN AND PARTNERS AND HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

We spoke with 23 recent mothers, 5 partners and 16 health professionals (midwives, obstetricians, allied health). We asked them about their expectations and experiences with information, education and support for women and partners in hospital following birth. The information will help plan future postnatal services and research.



Including mother and partner education and support alongside baby

- Importance of tailoring education and support for women and partner

Personalised, articulated pathway for education and support

- Need for autonomy and understanding about care pathway, education and support on offer around baby feeding, sleeping and settling, parent health, discharge services, hospital procedures, health professional support

I should have known better ..but it was a shock. You have birthed this human but it becomes about the tiny human and not what you have been through"

(Health professional 8)

You don't know what you don't know"

(Participant F2)

Confidence gap between discharge and establishing a support network

- Women and partners are concerned about establishing confidence for discharge and establishing a support network
- Opportunities for additional services eg mother and baby unit, lactation/settling/sleep clinic, allied health

Continuity of care and communication

- Education and support impacted by continuity of care
- Health professional communication was the most frequently and important mentioned aspect of care

I had the same midwife for the first 3 days which gave me confidence"

(Participant F3)

The women need to feel confident that they have the support going forward. We say "Well done. You have pushed out a baby. Your review is in 6 weeks with someone you have never met." It's an opportunity missed."

(Health professional 9)

Evaluation of experience is related to meeting expectations

- Women and partners judge the maternity hospital postnatal experience through meeting of expectations of health of baby and mother, communication, care and education, accommodation, discharge preparation

Researchers: Dr Jane Willcox, Stacey Goad, Jane Lynch, Scott Norman, Lisa Garner, Professor Ana Hutchinson, Elizabeth McIntyre

Funding: Thank you to the Epworth Medical Foundation

Ethics and governance: Monash Health, Deakin University, Epworth HealthCare



1/12/2022