

Patient Story

Subject:	Fetal Care Unit, City Hospital Campus, Nottingham University Hospitals.
Presented by:	Nichola Bramhall
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Summary:	Compliment in relation to excellent staff care.

1. Introduction

Bringing patients or their carers into the Board to tell their stories is welcomed by the Governing Bodies as a mechanism for understanding the impact of the service we commission, positive and negative, on service users. Patient Stories are advocated as a powerful catalyst for change by the Institute for Healthcare Improvement (www.ihl.org).

Patient stories are a key feature of our ambition to revolutionise patient experience. They provide a focus on how, through listening and learning from the patient voice, we can continually improve the quality of services and transform patient and carer experience.

2. Background

This complimentary patient story has been provided by a patient who wished to express her gratitude and highlight the fantastic care that the staff within the Fetal Care Unit at Nottingham University Hospital City Campus provided, in particular Alec McEwan and Anne Rooke. Both staff members have provided consent for their names to be used in this report.

3. The Patient's Story

I have always wanted Consultant Alec McEwan and Midwife Anne Rooke to be recognised for their outstanding work and to thank them personally for all the support, understanding, empathy and advice they gave my family and I, on three separate occasions at the Fetal Care Unit, City Hospital, Nottingham.

I first accessed support in 2010 after being referred to the Fetal Care Unit from Kings Mill Hospital due to the 20 weeks development scan highlighting a concern. It was a very stressful, traumatic and emotional time for us. We went to meet Alec and Anne and our baby was diagnosed with a terminal condition. I received excellent support for the next 13 weeks, when I then gave birth to my son who sadly passed away during the birth.

In 2011 I fell pregnant again. Unfortunately this pregnancy also ended in tragedy.

In 2012 I fell pregnant again. We were supported through various tests, anticipation and anxiety, before the results confirmed that our unborn child was developing normally. Our beautiful child was born in October 2012.

So what makes my husband and I so impressed with the support we received from the Fetal Care Unit? Firstly, Alec and Anne discussed our options fully with us and gave us time to think them through. As you can imagine, we had lots and lots of questions to ask. We were never rushed or ignored. They always found time to answer our questions or queries. We never felt pressured to make quick or uninformed decisions. In 2010, we chose to continue with our pregnancy and let nature take its course through a labour that started naturally. Alec and Anne continually supported our choices and monitored my health frequently. I was fully aware of the risks to my health, however for my psychological wellbeing and recovery, it was vital for us to take time, explore the options and make informed decisions about what was right for us during a very difficult time. Despite the bereavement and upset and the physical impact of the pregnancy, I felt totally prepared, ensuring when the time came, we were able to capture as many memories as possible. I know that this support enabled us to prepare, cope and manage with our loss and sadness.

Throughout, Alec and Anne always included my husband. Talking to him about how he might feel and highlighting to him that he too would feel the trauma, worry and grief. Some health professionals only focus on the physical health of the patient, ignoring the psychological impact and the lifelong scars that come from a situation like ours. Their care was second to none, akin to that which people might associate with private health care. Care which we will always be grateful for.

Both Alec and Anne gave my husband and me the confidence to try and conceive again, despite the risks of further trauma, knowing that they were there to turn to for support throughout the whole pregnancy.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to tell my story. There is lots of criticism about our NHS and the standard of care and I wanted to share my positive experience of the care provided. Nottingham University Hospitals should be proud of the Fetal Care Unit and acknowledge the fantastic care it provides. Alec and Anne represent the hospital admirably and deliver an excellent, caring and compassionate service, one that goes above and beyond any other medical service that I know of.

4. Key Issues Raised from the Story

- Excellent, compassionate care provided by the team, in particular Alec McEwan and Anne Rooke.
- Shared decision making, both the patient and her husband were provided with all the information they needed to allow them to make fully informed decisions.
- Supportive care, the couple felt that they could rely on the team for any advice and emotional support they may need.

5. Contextual Information and Triangulation with Other Data Sources

The majority of pregnancies are uncomplicated and result in the birth of a healthy baby. But for some women developments may occur that need more specialist care in pregnancy. The Nottingham Fetal Care Unit perform scans and other tests (chorionic villus sampling, amniocentesis, fetal blood sampling, fetal blood transfusions, maternal blood tests, and Magnetic Resonance Imaging) to provide more information, in order together to plan appropriate care for mother and baby.

The Unit is run by a multi-disciplinary team including doctors, experienced midwives and receptionists. The team within Fetal Care works closely with other specialists such as neonatologists, paediatricians, cardiologists, paediatric surgeons a geneticist and a counsellor to provide holistic care for all clients. The team cares for women and their families whose babies:

- Are suspected/found to have a problem, seen with an ultrasound scan.
- Have a higher than usual chance of having a baby with a problem either highlighted after screening (e.g. combined or quadruple screening for Down's Syndrome) or after previous birth of a baby with a chromosomal/genetic problem.
- Are at risk of developing fetal anaemia in pregnancy (e.g. maternal antibodies, viral infections).
- Are at increased risk of developing growth discrepancy (e.g. identical twins).
- Women are also referred to the unit by their GP for pre-conception advice.

The Care Quality Commission

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) carried out an inspection visit of Nottingham University Hospital NHS Trust 26-28 November 2013 and 8 December 2013. During their inspection they visited the labour suites, antenatal clinic, antenatal and postnatal wards, the fetal maternal care unit and the neonatal units. The report was published on 2 July 2014.

Summary of findings

Maternity care was generally safe and effective. Feedback from patients and relatives was mostly positive, but a recent national maternity survey suggested that in some areas care was worse than expected. The service delivered care to patients in line with their needs and had responded to identified areas of improvement related to the delivery of care and treatment. The service provided a multidisciplinary approach to the provision of professional, supportive and sensitive care to patients. However, staff had not always appropriately followed and managed procedures for management of medicines and the prevention and control of infection.

Queens Medical Centre, City Hospital and Ropewalk House were more recently inspected by the Care Quality Commission in September 2015. The Report and rating is expected to be published early March 2016. No immediate concerns in relation to maternity services or the provider generally have been raised ahead of publication.

CQC Reporting 2015 - Maternity

Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust is one of 18 trusts that the CQC have selected to inspect under their new inspection model.

Report dated 15 December 2015 – The CQC use national surveys to find out about the experiences of people who receive care and treatment.

During the summer of 2015, a questionnaire was sent to all women who gave birth in February 2015 (and January 2015 at smaller trusts).

Responses were received from 324 patients at Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust.

Patient Survey	Patient Response	Compared with other trusts
Labour and birth	8.7/10	About the same
Staff during labour and birth	8.5/10	About the same
Care in hospital after the birth	7.1/10	About the same

‘Friends and Family’ Test

Since April 2012, on the day of discharge or within 24 hours, inpatients have been invited to give feedback on their care and experience by answering one simple question: “how likely is it that you would recommend this service to a friend or your family?” Nottingham University Hospital extended this question to their Emergency Department and Maternity patients in 2013. The results are published monthly on their website at www.nuh.nhs.uk, along with examples of improvements they have made in response to patient feedback.

Latest monthly scores (December 2015)

- Antenatal: 98.8% would recommend, 1.2% would not recommend (19.3% response rate)
- Birth: 100% would recommend, 0% would not recommend (4.3% response rate)
- Postnatal: 94.6% would recommend, 1.0% would not recommend (33.4% response rate)
- Postnatal community provision: 98.1% would recommend, 0.6% would not recommend (29% response rate)

The Trust is currently exploring ways of improving response rates particularly in antenatal services and immediately following birth including use of mobile technology and potential use of volunteers to capture feedback.

Complaints, Concerns, Comments and Compliments (4C’s)

Nottingham University Hospital has advised that there are currently no complaints, concerns, comments or compliments in relation to this service. In addition none have been received by the Commissioners in relation to this service.

6. Provider’s Response

This compliment was forwarded to Nottingham University Hospital. The Director of Nursing acknowledged receipt and thanked us for the information and advised that she would pass on the compliment to those involved and respond to the patient directly.

7. Commissioner's Response

As Commissioners we are committed to securing services that are both clinically effective and compassionate. We use stories such as this one in conjunction with other sources of data and feedback as part of the quality assurance process of the services that we commission.

This story highlights the positive experience for patients and their families when they are involved in decisions about their care, and when they are empowered to make informed choices and provide feedback. The story also demonstrates the importance of communication between patients and staff when making very difficult decisions often in distressing circumstances.

The outcome that was achieved for this patient was a positive and successful experience of Nottingham University Hospital Fetal Care Unit's services, despite some devastating early outcomes.

8. Recommendations

The following recommendations are made:

The Governing Body is asked to note the contents of the story and take assurance regarding the patient's positive experience of the service provided by the Fetal Care Unit.

The Patient Experience Team will promote positive experiences within all forums to demonstrate excellent care and compassion provided by staff when delivering all services often in very difficult and distressing circumstances.

The Patient Experience Team will work with our colleagues at the Trust to promote this story and the learning in relation to excellent care provided by the staff members identified.

9. Update on Actions Taken Following Previous Patient Stories

Carer's Story

Following presentation at the Governing Bodies in November 2015 this patient story has been widely disseminated to various groups, including Rushcliffe Carer's Forum and the Nottinghamshire Carer's Implementation Group. Updates include:

- The Radford Care Group is now commissioned by all the South Nottinghamshire CCGs, not just Nottingham West.
- The Nottinghamshire Help Yourself website is being made accessible from CCG websites and vice versa
- The CCG Patient Experience Team will now meet regularly with representatives from the Carers Hub and Radford Care Group to collate information for carers which will be shared via the 'You Said, We Did' report and added to the CCG carers section on the websites
- The CCG Patient Experience Team will now receive the minutes from Rushcliffe Carers Forum to enable useful information to be shared via the 'You Said, We Did' report on an on-going basis

Maternity - Same Sex Couple

Following presentation at the Governing Bodies in January 2016 this story has now been added to Nottingham University Hospitals' Equality Facebook page.

The Patient Experience Team is currently liaising with Stonewall to establish whether poster information outlining the diversity of modern families can be disseminated to all South Nottinghamshire CCG member practices.

The Chair of Nottingham West CCG has met with the Chair of Nottingham University Hospital to discuss concerns regarding the defensive, non-apologetic complaint response. Assurance has been given that the tone and content of complaint responses will be reviewed.

We would like to take the opportunity to thank this family for taking the time to share their experiences of the Fetal Care unit.