



healthwatch
York

Antenatal & Postnatal Services in York

November 2016

Contents

Antenatal Services in York.....	3
Introduction.....	3
Why is Healthwatch York looking at Antenatal Services?	4
What we did to find out more.....	4
What we found out	5
Conclusion	
Recommendations	15
Appendices	
Appendix 1 – Sources of support for pregnant women & young mothers in York	16

Antenatal Services in York

Introduction

In September 2013, York Hospital stopped providing antenatal classes for the majority of pregnant women. Physiotherapy face-to-face groups continued for all women and antenatal education continued to be delivered face-to-face for teenage mums, multiple pregnancy and vulnerable women.

Christine Foster, Matron for Maternity, Gynaecology and Sexual Health, said: “We made the decision to move to online-antenatal education in 2013 because less than 30 per cent of pregnant women were attending antenatal classes.”

York Hospital Teaching Trust were the first NHS trust to replace face-to-face antenatal classes with ‘virtual classes’. However, a number of areas have since introduced online antenatal classes, and there are at least nine areas in England, and one in Walesⁱ, where NHS antenatal classes have been cut or ‘temporarily suspended’.

Why is Healthwatch York looking at Antenatal Services?

We were contacted by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation in October 2015 about the impact York Hospital stopping face-to-face antenatal classes. We also became aware of a number of women contacting the Kyra Women's Project York about access to face-to-face antenatal classes in York.

Kyra Women's Project is an independent service open to all women, offering non-judgmental support and information to all women, empowering them to make informed choices, become stronger and more independent, develop a network of support and achieve their goalsⁱⁱ.

Healthwatch York decided to find out more about how the stopping of these classes has impacted women's experiences of antenatal and postnatal services in York.

What we did to find out more

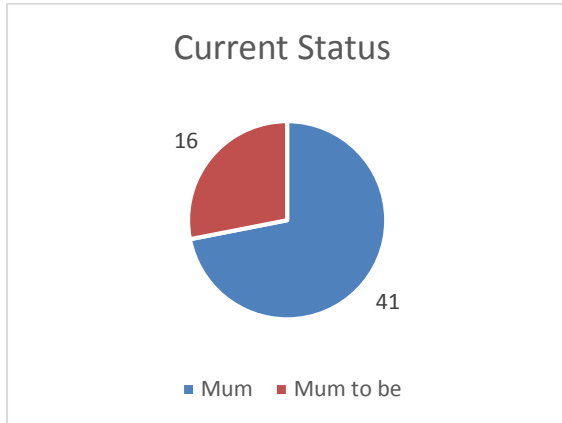
In order to gather women's experiences of antenatal and postnatal services, we worked with Kyra Women's Project and lay representatives on the Maternity Services and Liaison Committee to create a survey.

The survey was launched in December 2015 and closed at the end of February 2016, and we used social media to encourage as many women as possible to tell us about their experiences. Kyra Women's Project shared the survey with all young mother's they were in contact with.

We received 59 responses in total, and this report presents the results of the survey, and what we found out about women's experiences of antenatal and postnatal services in York.

What we found out

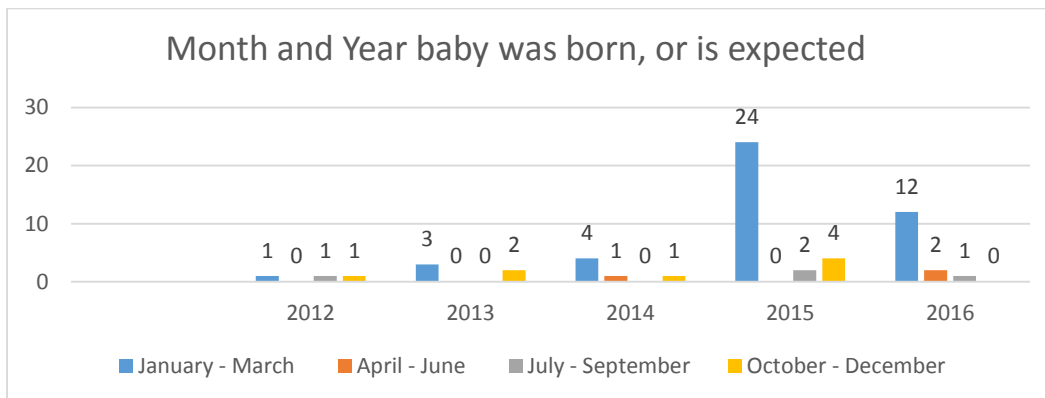
Question 1. Are you a?;



59 people answer the survey in total.

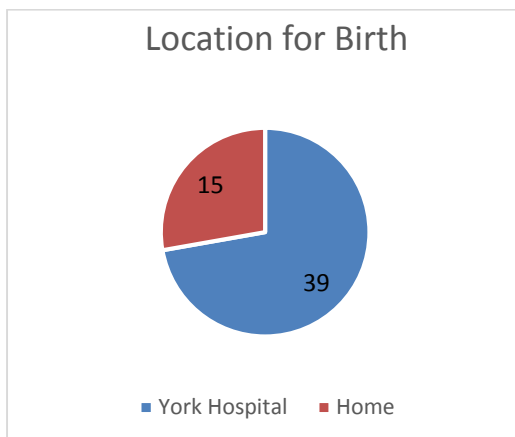
41 of those were mothers already; 16 were Mum's to be.

Question 2. When is baby due or when was baby born? Please give month and year.



Two babies were born prior to 2012

Question 3. Where were you or are you booked to have your baby?



68% said they plan to/have had their baby at York Hospital.

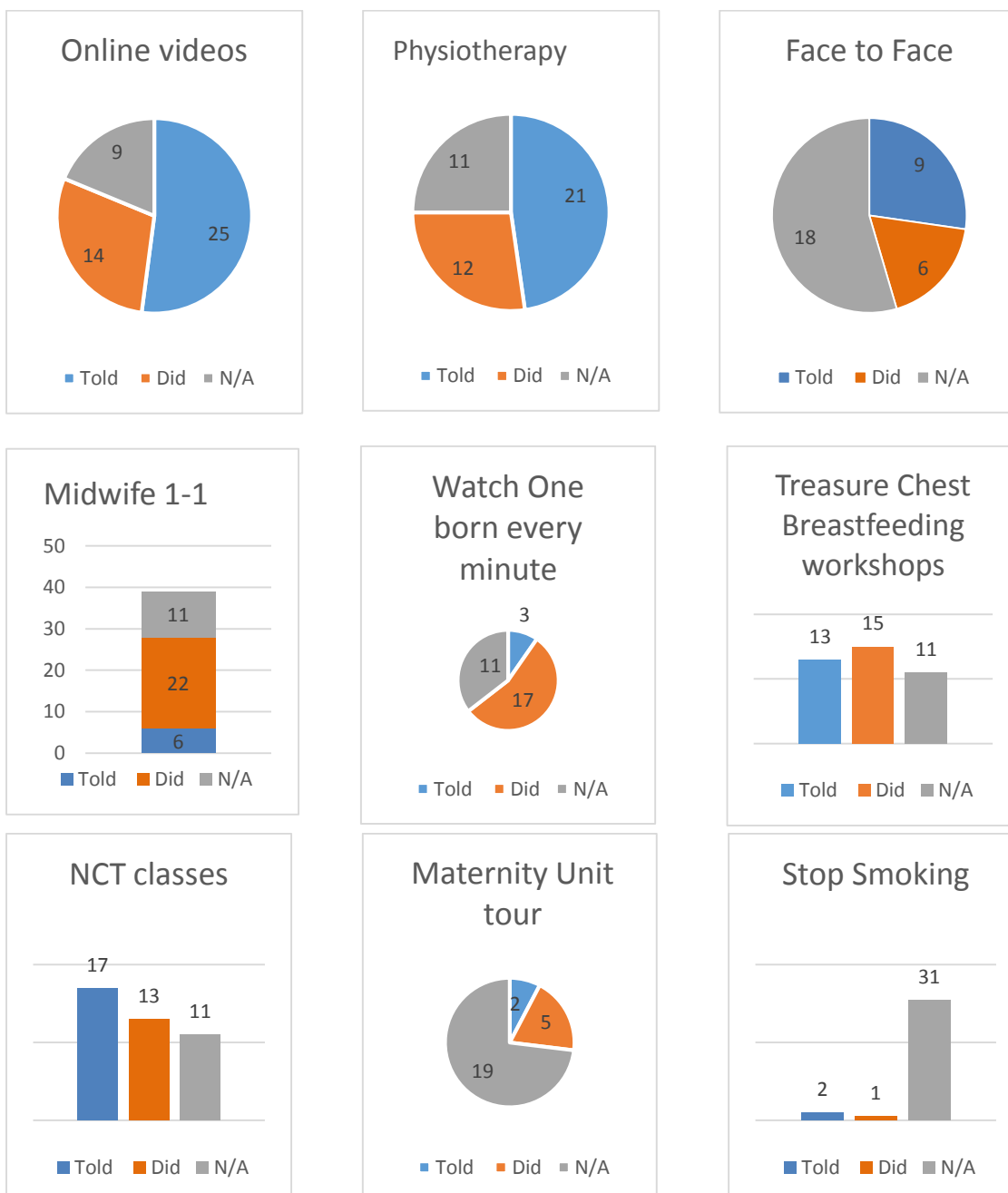
26% plan to/have had their baby at home.

Question 4. Were you offered antenatal education?

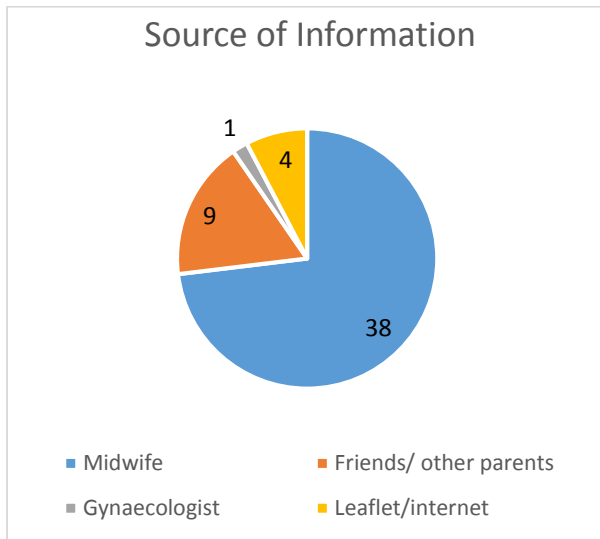
The following diagrams show what antenatal education respondents were offered.

The most **common** antenatal education service offered was online videos, with 25 people being told about it, and 14 people carrying this out.

Physiotherapy was the next **common** antenatal education service recommended to or accessed by respondents, with support to stop smoking and a tour of the maternity unit being the least **common**.



Question 5. Who told you about these?



44 people responded to this question.

The most popular response was that a midwife told women about the different antenatal education options.

Question 6. If you watched the online videos, what is your opinion of them?

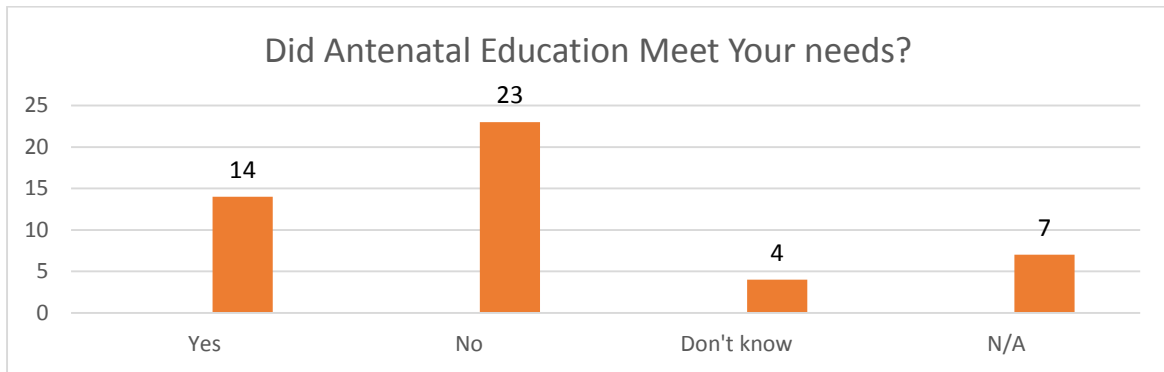
The common themes in the responses to this question included:

- Informative in some areas
- Not information or detailed enough in some areas
- Basic, simplistic
- Impersonal
- Not as good as face-to-face classes

Some of the responses are noted below:

- “They were OK. Not the same as being able to ask questions though.”
- “Not helpful. Too simplistic, not enough information and no use in learning where to find out more. A poor substitute for the classes that were available in 2012.”
- “Informative, easy to understand.”
- “Good general overview but lacking in detail”
- “Did not watch”
- “Didn’t know they existed”
- “They were ok. Would have preferred classes to meet other expectant parents”

Question 7. Did the antenatal education you received meet your needs?

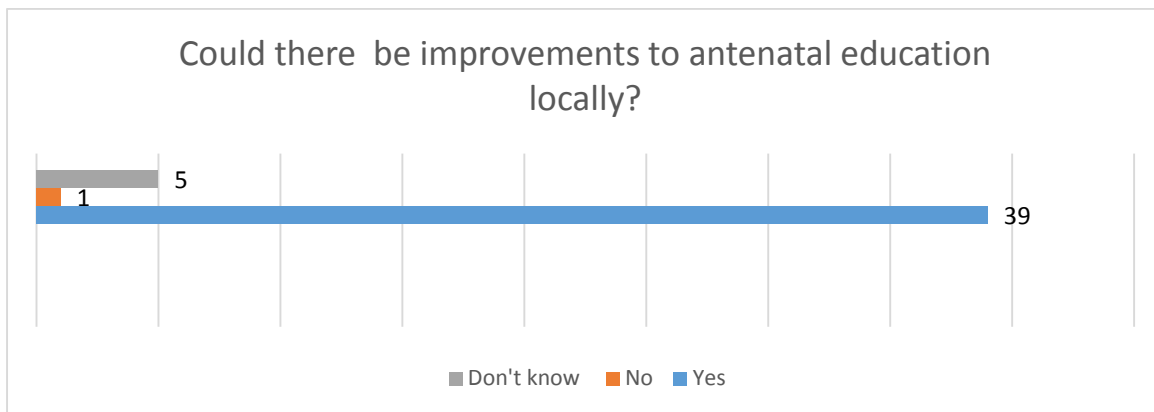


48% of those who responded to this question answered that the antenatal education they received did not meet their needs.

Some of the comments:

- “Most of the education came from my own research”
- “Apart from the classes I paid for there was no/limited opportunity to ask questions and find out information”
- “The private classes did [meet my needs]”
- “Not enough information, and [the] information given did not cover other options. Treasure chest were great though!”
- “The stuff online didn’t interest me – I wanted face to face classes”
- “NHS classes at hospital v[ery] basic and focused on physiological processes”

Question 8. Is there anything that could improve antenatal education locally?



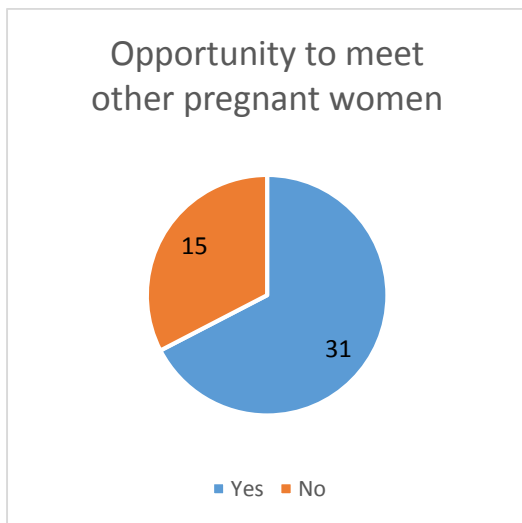
87% of people who responded to this question, answered that antenatal education could be improved locally. 36 people left comments, with the main themes being:

- The need for increased availability of classes
- More free classes
- More face to face antenatal education on offer

Comments:

- “more availability of in-person classes”
- “Availability of antenatal education through the NHS to make this accessible to all and support people through pregnancy and into parenthood”
- “Face to face antenatal classes”
- “antenatal classes should be free”

Question 9. Have you had the opportunity to meet other pregnant women?

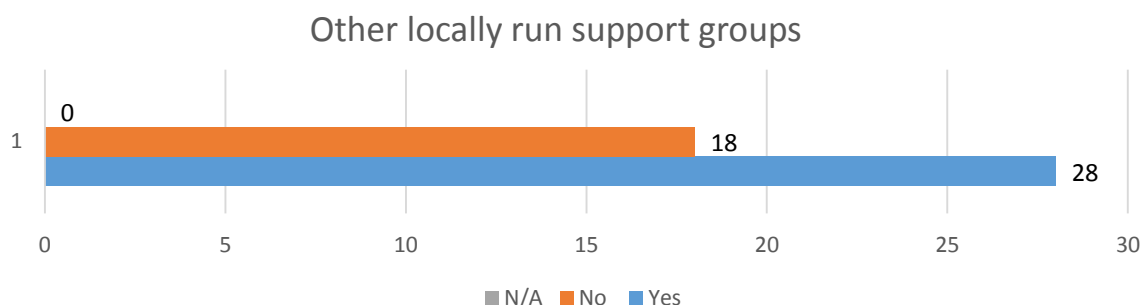


The majority of comments included reference to meeting other pregnant women through their own efforts, and not through services provided by the NHS – for example through pregnancy yoga and paid for antenatal classes such as through the NCT.

Examples of comments:

- “Not because of the NHS but through my yoga class and the online community.”
- “Made the opportunities myself, through NCT and pregnancy yoga”
- “I have paid for and attended aquanatal classes in York and met other pregnant women there. Also I have paid for antenatal classes and so met some more mum’s to be.”

Question 10. Were you told about any other support groups for pregnant women and new mothers that are run locally?

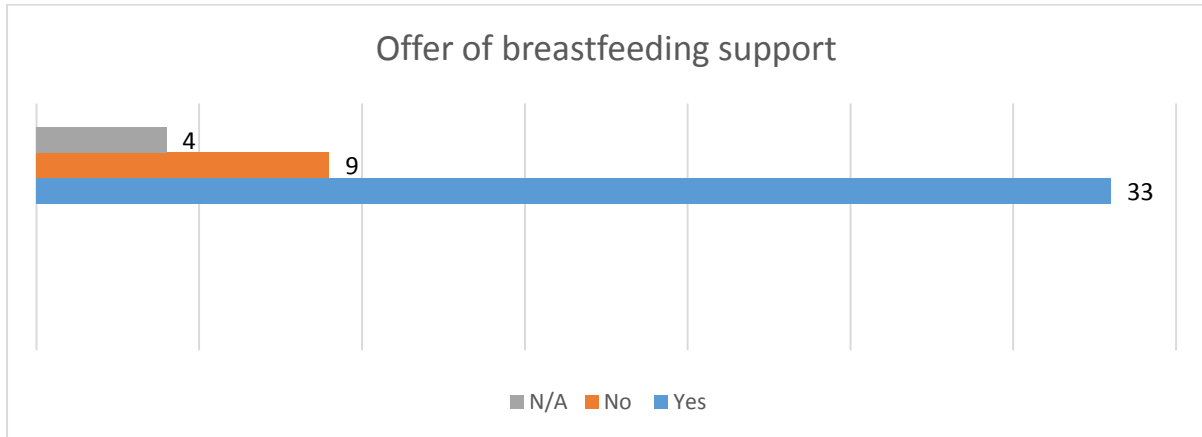


61% of respondents answered yes

39% of respondents answered no

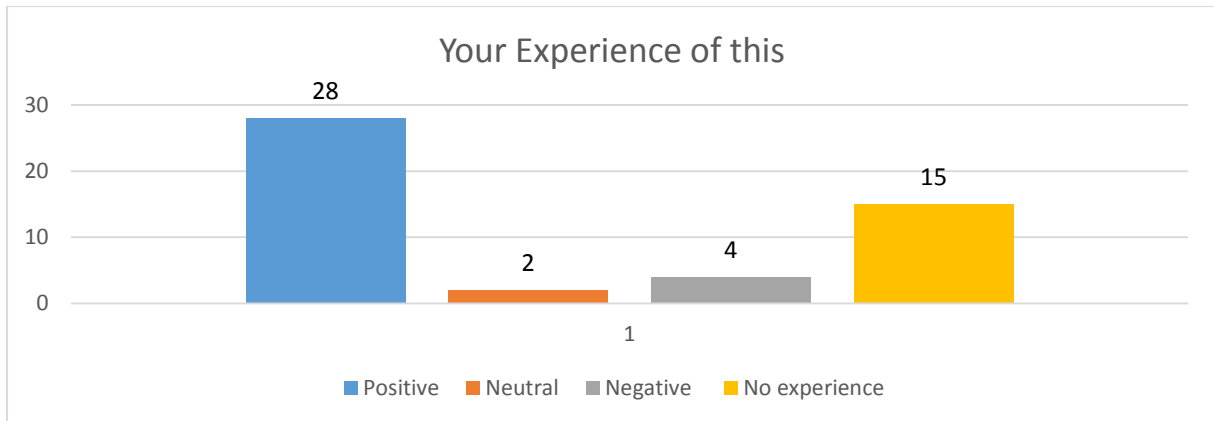
Treasure Chest was the most popular support group mentioned.

Question 11. Have you been offered breastfeeding support?



72% said yes; 20% said no

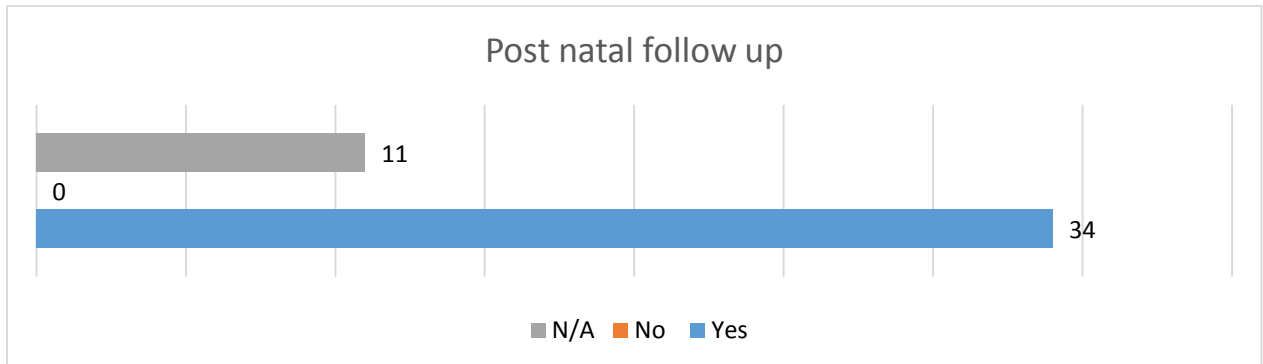
Question 12. If yes, what was your experience of this?



53% of respondents said they had a positive experience

9% of people said they had a negative experience

Question 13. Did you receive any postnatal follow up? For example, from a midwife, health visitor or district nurse.

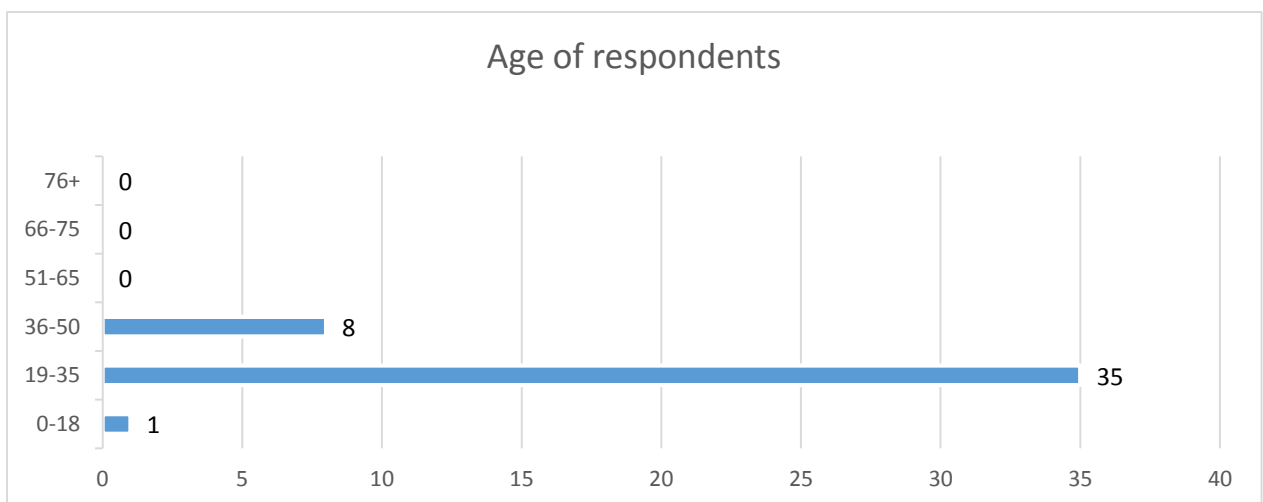


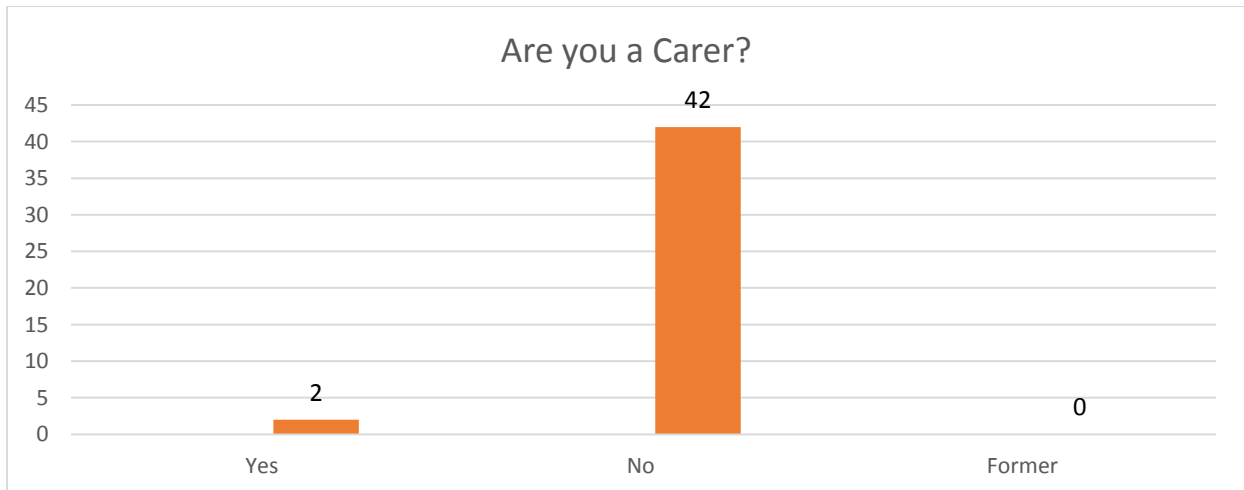
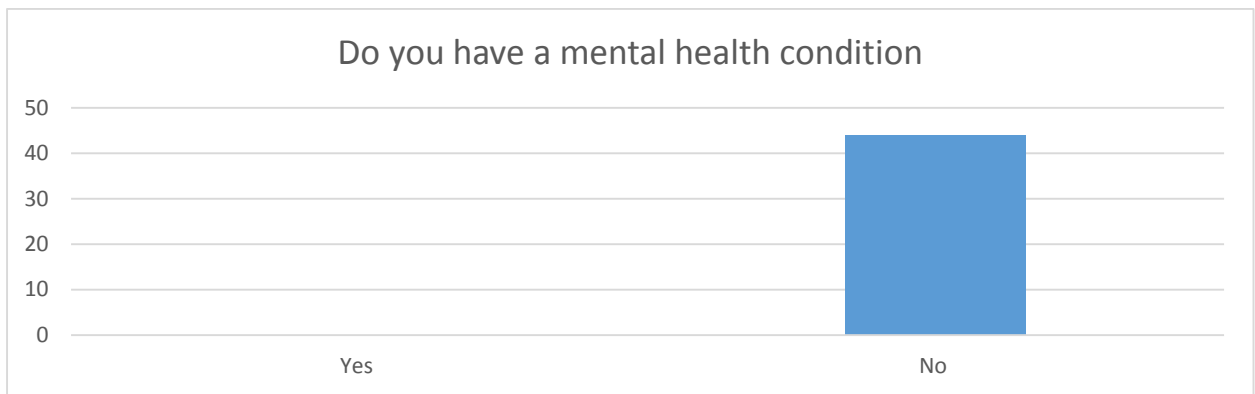
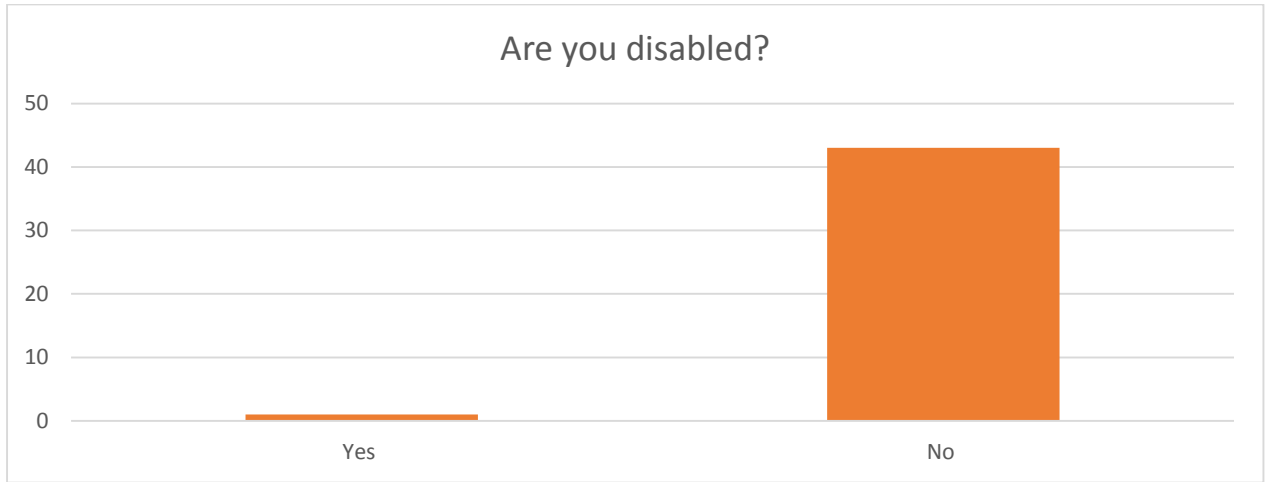
76% of people who answered this question said they did receive postnatal follow up, with no one answering that they had not received any postnatal follow up. 24% answered ‘not applicable’.

Some of the comments following this question included:

- “Very limited with second child”
- “Tick box exercise”
- “The York midwives have been amazing and have really gone out of their way to help me establish breastfeeding”

Monitoring information





Conclusion

There is a growing acceptance that technology has a role in health and care services, to enable people to take care of their health and care needs. However, the results of our survey suggest that the majority of respondents felt antenatal education could be improved. Further, 48% felt it did not meet their needs. The overall sense we got was that women want more face-to-face antenatal education on offer, particularly in the form of free classes.

It appears that pregnant women seek support and advice from services outside of the NHS, for example by attending antenatal yoga classes, Treasure Chest, and accessing services through the NCT. There was good feedback regarding the breastfeeding support that new mothers got from the NHS and voluntary organisations. All new mums received a postnatal follow up, though one commented that it was more limited compared to previous experiences of postnatal follow up with other children.

Overall, the responses to our survey indicate that antenatal services in York could be improved. The recommendations we set out in order to make improvements are noted below.

Recommendations

Recommendation	Recommended to
Consider the feedback within this report alongside work to address issues raised through the Discover Maternity work, and the National Maternity Review	York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Consider reintroducing face-to-face antenatal classes, this could include working with the voluntary and community sector to provide alternative face-to-face antenatal classes	York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Improve the information available about antenatal services on offer in York, both through the NHS and the 3 rd sector	York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust / NHS Vale of York Clinical Commissioning Group / Family Information Service at CYC
Improve the online antenatal education videos by making them more personal and informative, when updating online content. Consider following a co-production approach to make sure videos address the hopes, concerns, and fears that young mums may have.	York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Sources of support for pregnant women & young mothers in York

Antenatal classes at York Hospital

Antenatal classes produced by our own staff are now available on our website for you, your family and friends to share at any time during your pregnancy. We hope they will answer many of your questions about your pregnancy and birth at York Hospital. Please remember your community midwife or staff in the maternity unit are always available if you have any concerns and need to speak to someone.

Online ante natal classes from York Hospital

http://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/our_services/az_of_services/maternity_services/online_ante_natal_classes_and_information/

BUMP physiotherapy groups at York and Selby

What is the group about?

If you are pregnant and over 20 weeks you are invited to come to a one off group session. Here an obstetric physiotherapist will give advice, information and exercises to help you to be as comfortable and active as possible in pregnancy and also to help you to prepare for labour.

Who are the groups for?

Pregnant ladies only, from 20 weeks.

However, if you are suffering from any hip, back or pelvic pain in your pregnancy, then initially we would recommend that you attend one of our pelvic pain group sessions.

In order to attend one of these sessions you need to be referred to physiotherapy by your midwife or GP. We will give you an appointment once we have received the referral.

Useful leaflets

York Teaching Hospital NHS Foundation Trust produce a number of useful maternity services leaflets

These can be found online at:

https://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your_visit/patient_information_leaflets/maternity_patient_leaflets/

Or they can be requested from your midwife.

NCT – National Childbirth Trust

Face to face courses are provided by the NCT in all areas. There is a charge for these courses.

<https://www.nct.org.uk/courses/antenatal>

Tel: 0300 330 0700

Kyra Bump to Birth Classes

Join our new Bump to Birth ante and postnatal education course. This 3 week workshop will prepare you for the emotional and practical aspects of birth and life with a baby. Our workshop tutor, Lisa, will provide information and support in a safe environment, allowing any woman the opportunity to educate herself for the journey into motherhood. **The course will be held Thursday evenings. These are free of charge.** Please email contact@kyra.org.uk or call 01904 632332.

<http://www.kyra.org.uk/our-activities/#Counselling>

NHS Choices Antenatal Information

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/antenatal-classes-pregnant.aspx>

ⁱ <http://www.walesonline.co.uk/news/wales-news/antenatal-classes-cut-nhs-trust-2269796>

ⁱⁱ <http://www.kyra.org.uk/>

Contact us:

- Post: Freepost RTEG-BLES-RRYJ
Healthwatch York
15 Priory Street
York YO1 6ET
- Phone: 01904 621133
- Mobile: 07779 597361 – use this if you would like to leave us a text or voicemail message
- E mail: healthwatch@yorkcvs.org.uk
- Twitter: @healthwatchyork
- Facebook: Like us on Facebook
- Web: www.healthwatchyork.co.uk
-

York CVS

Healthwatch York is a project at York CVS. York CVS works with voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations in York. York CVS aims to help these groups do their best for their communities, and people who take part in their activities or use their services.

This report

This report is available to download from the Healthwatch York website:
www.healthwatchyork.co.uk

Paper copies are available from the Healthwatch York office
If you would like this report in any other format, please contact the Healthwatch York office