

Pregnancy and Parenting Education – Report on Customer Survey and Service Provider Survey

Nelson Marlborough District Health Board, 2011

1. Report on the Customer Survey

A random sample of 95 women who had babies at Nelson Hospital over the period January-June 2011 was selected and a survey form was posted out to them. In addition, 15 survey forms were distributed by Maternity Services Ltd to mothers who had had their babies in the Motueka facility.

Classes Attended

A total of 44 completed survey forms were returned by the end of September (40% response rate). Twenty-seven (27) of the 44 respondents (61% of respondents) had attended classes. All but one of the known providers of classes were represented by the responses: Annesbrook Community Church (now no longer providing these services), Nelson Hospital Maternity Services, Parents' Centre Motueka, Parents' Centre Nelson and the Golden Bay midwives. No responses were received from women attending the 'young parents' classes run through Nelson Bays Primary Health (Ruth Brodbeck).

Reasons for not attending classes

The reasons given by the 17 respondents who did not attend classes were:

- Not first pregnancy – 12
- Transport – 1
- Location – 1
- Time of day – 1
- Day of week – 1
- Didn't want to – 2 (in one case the woman's mother was a midwife)
- Other – 2 (re-located from Canterbury; elective C-section)

Some of the women not attending had attended antenatal classes in the past with earlier pregnancies and gave comments in question 20, i.e. 'Any other comments'.

Ethnicity of Respondents

- Asian – 2 (did attend classes)
- Maori – 6 (4 did not attend)
- NZ European – 31 (12 did not attend)
- Other – 3 (2x New Zealander; 1x South American; all attended)
- Pacific – 1 (did not attend, not first pregnancy)
- Did not respond – 1

Home location of Respondents

- Atawhai – 2
- Golden Bay – 3
- Motueka – 9
- Nelson City – 13
- Richmond – 5
- Rural – 6
- Stoke – 5
- Did not respond – 1

Age of Respondents

- <20 years – 2 (Maori, did not attend)
- 20-24 years – 7 (5 attended, 2 didn't)
- 25-34 years – 21 (16 attended)
- 35+ years – 13 (5 attended)
- Did not respond - 1

Numbers in the Classes

Of the 27 who attended classes, 22 felt the numbers attending were 'about right', while the other 5 said there was 'too many' (this covered 3 of the providers).

Things that make it easy or not easy to attend classes

For most people it was easy to attend classes – those factors that contributed to making it not easy were noted as:

- Location – 3
- Time of day – 7
- Day of the week – 2
- Number of sessions – 3
- Number in class – 5
- Quality of speakers – 6
- Class cost – 4

Suggestions offered as to how to make it easier to attend were:

- Have classes on a weekend – during the day
- Shorter sessions or starting earlier, a bit late for pregnant women who are really tired and for working people
- Evening session would be better, e.g. enable working dads to attend
- Better advertising before they start
- Perhaps try offering over a day in the weekend instead of separate classes over several weeks
- More small group work or smaller size class
- Having classes in Richmond as well as Nelson
- More time on labour & birth; less time on sales
- Better organisation so topics don't get missed
- Have the same tutor each time or not too many changes
- Info sheet about when topics will be covered in class & encouragement to at least come to some if not all.

What people found most useful about the classes

All the respondents who attended classes answered this question. Responses were:

- Labour and birth: 16
- Meeting other parents: 8
- Practical information, e.g. Car seats, nappies: 4
- Hospital visit: 3
- What to expect with a newborn: 3
- Able to discuss queries and concerns: 2
- Information on tax/work and income/paid parental leave: 2
- Breastfeeding: 2
- CPR: 1
- Everything: 1
- Nothing: 1

What was not covered that would have been useful

All but 6 of the respondents who attended classes provided suggestions in response to this question:

- More on life with a newborn (feeding, sleeping): 7
- Other birth options/approaches, e.g. Water birth, Pink Kit, breathing, actively managing pain rather than 'pain relief': 3
- New mums sharing their experiences: 3
- Breastfeeding – what helps and what might go wrong: 3
- More time on labour and birth: 2
- Mixed feeding/expressing, formula feeding: 2
- Practical information e.g. car seat standards, baby clothing sizes: 2
- Info on labour and birth not going to plan: 1
- CPR in more depth: 1
- Everything I wanted was covered: 1
- Topics were frequently missed: 1

Any other comments:

Negative

- Bad organisation of time; important info compromised for retail/sales; left after 3rd class and didn't return; wouldn't recommend to others
- Room used not enough space for classes
- Have 3 children – went to 2 classes for first child. Never attended since as didn't feel comfortable. Too structured and I was only Maori there - didn't feel I could input
- Husband did not enjoy the 'male bonding' session
- Didn't receive a list of people in class or 'pack' we were meant to receive at the end
- A bit disorganised with speakers not turning up, topics not covered being rushed most weeks
- No information on formula feeding for people unable to breastfeed or babies that couldn't feed.

Positive

- Being a mother is the best privilege in the world; would highly recommend the classes for first time mothers
- Would recommend classes wholeheartedly
- It was good; Well-informed
- Great hosts, great relaxed atmosphere; great way to meet other mums
- Teacher was fantastic, she made you comfortable and confident about birth
- Nice to have opportunity to attend & be offered mix of planned and spontaneous discussion. Found the classes valuable for myself and partner
- Classes were really useful, thank you
- Presenter did a fantastic job and was well worth attending
- Really appreciate the classes and that they were free.

Neutral / Suggestions

- For first baby, classes would be good
- If you don't have someone in to talk about modern cloth nappies, this would be a good idea to add
- Attended classes for first child - programme needs more attention to post-natal time
- When first time parent, main reason for attending was to meet others, so smaller groups were an advantage
- Would be better to give more time for the pregnant mums to talk to each other and get to know them as I found it was great meeting up after the birth
- Third pregnancy so did not require it
- Car seat person should have covered safety standards including Australian - didn't go through this as didn't sell these.

- Was a chance to meet others due around the same time
- Class focussed on practical things we needed to know once baby came home, rather than 'what ifs' which were covered by midwife when I needed to know
- Exciting props/resources.

2. Report on the Provider survey

Questionnaires were sent to five known providers in Nelson and Motueka. Three (3) responded with information on their service and one responded to say they no longer provide classes (Annesbrook Church and Community Centre no longer run classes due to reassessment of the most effective use of time and resources).

Current Services

A summary of responses from three providers are presented below.

Nelson Bays Primary Health (Ruth Brodbeck) are contracted by NMDHB – they run 4 classes per year:

- Once a week for 6 weeks each (although noted that this sometimes changes according to needs of the group)
- At the Victory Community Centre
- During the daytime, on a day/time that suits participants
- Target audience is young parents. Classes are advertised as 'young parents classes' and age range is 15 to early 20s
- Advertising is through word of mouth and email to all midwives, LMCs, Te Korowai Trust , Family Start
- The classes cater for up to 8 mothers (with partners/support people sometimes attending) although they are not usually full
- No payment is required
- It is first time parents that attend
- Wide range of topics covered: smoking, alcohol, pregnancy changes, LMCs, birth (normal, interventions, pain relief), support persons role, breastfeeding, safety, SUDI, parenting in general, immunisation, fathers, Work & Income/IRD, teen education programme. Also noted 'Much more covering class as it comes up in discussion with the group'
- Some young mums exchange phone numbers with the intention of keeping in touch after the classes finish. Provider will occasionally follow up participants with a phone call
- Participants are invited to complete an evaluation – this is for the providers use only.

Nelson Bays PHO (NBPH) are also contracted by NMDHB to provide classes in Motueka. These are provided through a subcontract to Parents' Centre NZ:

- Four classes per year
- One class per week for 8 weeks
- Held at Motueka Family Service Centre on Tuesday evenings
- Target audience: not targeted, open to anyone
- Classes cater for up to 12 couples, with classes usually full and sometimes over capacity. A broad cross section of people attend. Sometimes get second time mums if there has been a gap since last pregnancy or there is a new partner
- No payment required from those attending
- Participants are invited to complete an evaluation – this is provided to PCNZ national office and to NBPH
- Classes are not advertised but information is spread by word of mouth, midwives recommending and they are on the PCNZ website
- Wide range of topics covered e.g.: pregnancy and preparation, anatomy, exercise, nutrition, labour, birth, 3rd stage, breastfeeding, post-natal care and expectations, baby care, parenting, immunisation, post-natal depressions, car safety, CPR, support groups, unexpected events/medical interventions,

informed choice, Plunket, nappies, shopping. Commented that there is greater focus around birth choices now (e.g. water birth) and more time spent on post-natal and parenting than there used to be.

- Sometime parents link up post-natally after the class – contact list provided and it is up to parents if they follow-up.

Nelson Hospital Maternity services classes funded and provided by NMDHB:

- Two classes run concurrently, once a week for 6 weeks from January to December each year
- Tuesdays and Wednesday evenings 6:30-8:30pm
- Held at the DHB Seminar Centre of Braemar Campus
- Target audiences are first time parents, lower socio-economic groups and the general population
- Advertising is via LMCs, word of mouth, leaflet
- 10-12 parents/couples and each class is usually full or 'more than full' with 12-14 couples. Partners usually attend
- No payment is required
- Occasionally parents who have previously had children come, with a new partner usually
- Wide range of topics covered e.g: pregnancy discomforts, & various helpful remedies, signs of problems to be aware of in pregnancy, diet, smokefree, effect of drugs/alcohol, role of different health practitioners in childbirth process, pelvic floor exercises, back problems & corrective posture/exercises/physio, labour signs, physiological process, coping skills/support for labouring women/self help, pain relief, interventions in labour/birth, maternity unit tour & explanations of equipment/setting, car seats & equipment & safety for baby, assessments & tests of baby after birth, cot making, baby clothing, first feed & breastfeeding process using WHO guidelines, support available, prevention of postnatal depression, community resources info, Well Child services, coping with newborn baby, early parenting, WINZ/IRD info and answer questions.
- Participants are invited to complete an evaluation – this is provided to DHB educators
- Some parents link up after the classes finish if they want to. A contact list is given out, otherwise the Provider takes no role in this.

Groups that miss out on classes

Providers reported that they are aware that:

- Many Maori mothers don't come to classes (possibly due to transport problems)
- Refugee mothers don't attend classes
- Few Maori, Burmese, teenage, low income, Pacific Island, non-English speaking attend classes
- Teenagers often choose not to come – perception it is too like school or don't think they need it.

Comments on the provision of pregnancy and parenting education

- PPE should be provided to the group's needs, e.g. young parents might prefer to have 2 x 1 day courses.
- Certain topics could be available regularly through the year, e.g. breastfeeding, immunisation, attachment parenting, as one evening session for parents to attend at any time during their pregnancy or as a 'refresher'.
- NMDHB previously trialled morning classes; want to do smaller groups but large demand and limited number of educators
- Have done occasional weekend class when there is demand
- Also the role of the LMC
- Crucial education for expectant parents
- Use varied format
- Use principles of adult education
- Use Ministry of Health (MoH) & World Health Organisation (WHO) guidelines
- Regularly update resources
- Aim at a wide range of people
- There is an identified need for classes for Maori, Asian, Pacific and young mothers.

3. Other Feedback on provision of Pregnancy and Parenting Education

An email was sent out inviting others with an interest in the topic of PPE to provide feedback. One formal submission was received, although it is known that others are also exploring the issues so a few comments from the notes from a hui at Whakatu Marae exploring this issue with expectant mothers are also included below.

Comments provided:

- Reasons for not attending classes – money, transport, baby-sitting
- Why Maori women are not going to classes: Didn't feel comfortable being the only Māori woman/women; Too Structured /structure doesn't work; Felt like we couldn't input, into what fitted for me; What was being taught wasn't relevant to me; To have a wharenui setting; Enable all women to interact freely
- Large group and style of classes not suitable for Maori, teens, families with literacy issues, families who lack confidence of health status to cope with large group education format
- Content and presentation of the classes needs to be up-to-date and appropriate to adequately prepare women for the realities of labour, birthing, breastfeeding, early parenting and modern maternity care, e.g.:
 - LMC role in terms of Section 88 and in partnership with women
 - Practical advice on breastfeeding, normal expectations of feeding infants and compliance with breastfeeding education standards
 - Discuss range of options and personal preference and choice in maternity care and parenting
 - opportunity to empower women and their birthing support persons with a variety of coping strategies for labour
 - up-to-date resources (videos etc)
- more than one type of class needs to be funded to allow for women to chose alternative options such as teen classes, marae or Maori forum and /or hosted classes, other types of birth preparation such as hypno-birthing, 'pink-kit' and home birth focussed classes, all of which empower women in their birthing process
- Although all midwives do some education as a matter of course, the option of funding the midwife to deliver individual education to women, who are unable to attend, or for whom group education is not appropriate, should be an option women can choose
- Reconsider length of classes – eight weeks is too long; reallocate to meet the needs of families who are non-attenders at these classes. Other options such as four week course or day hui, with whanau welcomed to attend, should be available for those whom that would suit
- Consider appropriateness of sale of good to participants and endorsement of particular brand items
- Option: Flexible funding to be attached to the client to allow the client to attend a range of options or to be educated individually by the midwife if appropriate.
- Wider number of options such as marae/community centre hosted classes, with midwives contracted to teach.
- Inclusion of midwife led sessions for labour and birth, and breastfeeding if the childbirth educator is not a midwife.

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