

MEDIA RELEASE: Immediate release

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Mothers encouraged to have their say on maternity services

Pregnant women and mothers are invited to have their say about NHS-funded maternity services. NHS England has this week begun asking the Friends and Family Test (FFT) question in every NHS maternity unit across the country including both Basildon and Southend Hospital.

Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) across south Essex are encouraging all local residents to take part in the survey to help them to monitor the quality of local maternity services.

The first results of FFT for maternity services will be announced towards the end of January 2014 when three months' worth of feedback would have been gathered and analysed. NHS England started gathering the views of women from October 1, asking them to express their views on how likely they are to recommend maternity services to friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment at three different stages of pregnancy/birth:

- Antenatal care – to be surveyed at the 36 week antenatal appointment.
- Birth and care on the postnatal ward – to be surveyed at discharge from the ward or birth unit or following a home birth.
- Postnatal community care – to be surveyed at discharge from the care of the community midwifery team to the care of the health visitor or GP, usually at 10 days postnatal.

Jane Foster-Taylor, Executive Nurse for NHS Thurrock CCG, said: “The CCG welcomes the extension of the Friends and Family Test to maternity services. Who better to ask about the quality of maternity services than the women who use them? We are encouraging pregnant women and mothers in Thurrock to have their say about maternity services as this will give us valuable feedback on how they, their babies and their families are being treated and cared for. We will be keeping a close eye on the results to help us to bring about improvements in care.”

Kim James, Chief Operating Officer for Healthwatch Thurrock, said: “We are pleased to hear that this work is being undertaken within the maternity services. We ran a campaign looking at the feedback from those who had used these services two years ago as part of the Thurrock LINK work. It is also on our work plan for Healthwatch. We encourage all Thurrock residents to take part in the Friends and Family Test as the only way changes can be made is if people use their voices to influence the changes. Healthwatch Thurrock is always interested in hearing people’s experiences of using any health or social care service and would always welcome any feedback good or bad.”

ENDS

Notes to editors

[Learn more about the Friends and Family Test \(FFT\) here](#)

For more information, please contact communications@swessex.nhs.uk

For further information about NHS Thurrock CCG visit:
www.thurrockccg.nhs.uk

For further information about Healthwatch Thurrock visit:
www.healthwatchthurrock.org