



WEST CUMBRIA Maternity Voices

Working in partnership to improve maternity services

2018 Discussion Topic

**If you were designing
maternity services from
scratch how should Dads/
partners be involved in
maternity care?**

Women's Voices in response:

- **From personal experience, when being induced, partners should be allowed to stay from the start right through. I was on my own on maternity ward in a lot of pain. Was scary**
- **Women often prepare for labour with partner so having them there can be part of security and support woman chooses**
- **Partners feel welcome at birth preparation classes and often involved in putting together birth preferences, so they can be advocates for mother in labour**
- **The space on antenatal ward needs to be carefully considered so that mothers can have birth partners present without other mums on the ward feeling vulnerable or like their privacy was compromised**
- **That is true some people think you can't hear through them 'magic' curtains. 🤔**

- **Having rooms where you arrive in labour or for induction until after birth and perhaps even go home from would be most comfortable, I feel**
- **I also think partners should be able to stay if you have had a c section to. When I had my twins, the ward was so busy. If I was able to have my husband stay with me if needed would have been a God send and I know some other NHS hospital do allow partners to stay with you.**
- **You shouldn't have to feel like you are pestering midwives for basic care and help, would be one less job for them to do if birth partners can stay.**
- **I felt so isolated! Luckily the staff kept me on the Labour ward the 5 days I was in! Due to high bp and magnesium sulphate drip. I was an emotional wreck really esp through the nights but if we had the chance my husband would have stayed**
- **Care for mother so she can care for baby!**
- **lots of agreement on that point. Staff very busy, so partners being there would help.**
- **Comment made about not having anywhere for partners to sleep, I'm not sure if this was on Honister or the delivery ward, but with my first birth on the delivery ward my partner had a recliner chair and the midwife brought him a blanket (this was 2yrs ago) with my second they brought a fold out bed for him on the delivery ward so I know they def have them, so it's awful you was never offered anything**
- **I deff think that they should let you know, maybe in the antenatal classes? as I don't think we would have asked whether, the first time the chair was already in the room, and second, I had a brilliant midwife that asked us if we wanted the bed brought in**
- **Just been chatting to my partner and some things he mentioned were:**
 - **practical tips and advice on HOW to support partners in the run up e.g. make sure you know what is where in birth bag/pack it with them,**
 - **a pamphlet or something with advice on how to physically/emotionally support them during the labour**
 - **more in antenatal courses about taking care of a newborn! Also, more advice on how to look out for signs of PND - what signs might be more than normal 'baby blues', how to help and who to contact etc**
 - **Would be great to get some Dads involved with this task above to share tips etc. [Lots of agreement with this point made].**

- **Partners really are in best position to see changes. They clock when your moods alter because of hormones because they know you better than anyone but knowing additional signs when it may be more to it is invaluable. Especially as women may find themselves painting things in a good light/making light of things when with medical professionals, so therefore deeper issues may be missed by those who know how to spot it. We really need to really make use of the partner in these cases, like you say, a check list of sorts.**
- **I agree. [partner's name] always says that had we not sought out our own birth preparation course then he would not have felt confident in the birth process at all and if anything, it filled him with fear, the aspect of not knowing**
- **We need to look for opportunities for partner involvement from early on and right the way through...getting Dads voices into Maternity Voices important. Would be great to have a few Dads popping up on the Facebook discussion group**

**Involvement of Dads and Partners is a Key Focus area for our Maternity Voices groups in 2018 and will continue to be in 2019, we would like more Dads actively involved in the group, and we would like to hear your ideas on how involvement could be improved. Send any ideas to us:
info@wnecumbriamvp.co.uk**