

Charlene Brown – 10 February 2021

I am writing to offer my views on the Maternity Services provided in Jersey. I am a mother of 2 children aged 5 and 2 and I work for the Government of Jersey. A few years ago I undertook the task of improving the maternity information available on gov.je and bringing it all together in one user friendly website, through my research for this and my own birthing experiences, I found our facilities and services to be lacking. I want to make this clear that this is through no fault of the staff I encountered, all of which were lovely, this is strictly to do with the outdated and archaic facilities they have to endure. You can see the new (ish) maternity website we created here:

<https://www.gov.je/health/pregnancyandbirth/Pages/home.aspx>

Before we published this site, the information available to new mums online was minimal and most of the information they needed was provided to them in paper handouts from midwife appointments (and still is!)

Firstly, I wanted to express how inadequate I feel our facilities are, whilst researching for the gov.je website I came across many maternity websites across the UK, and looking at the facilities offered to parents in the UK versus Jersey, Jersey always comes up as lacking in the basics. A few things that I feel we need to focus on: private rooms with en-suite facilities as standard for all, full facilities for partners to be present, alternative birthing facilities such as active birthing and birthing pools (eg more than one birth pool and not a blow up one), a complete overhaul and update of all delivery suite, maternity department, antenatal office and SCBU facilities and services, this includes rooms, beds, cots, linen, kitchen areas, food, gas and air facilities, communal spaces, outdoor spaces, computer systems and internal communications and collaboration, branding, and the mother's journey as a whole from conception through to delivery and aftercare and how we support that in a collaborative way, a better after-care programme for new parents to include more support and guidance and services for post-natal depression, better private facilities and support available for baby-loss.

Also don't even get me started on the awful buzzer system they have in place in the maternity ward. Just awful!!

The Liverpool Women's hospital is a great example of what we could achieve and there are also a wealth of inspirational maternity suites available on YouTube for inspiration / comparison:

https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=maternity+virtual+tour+uk