**How-to guide for the National Maternity Services Survey Tool**

**What is the National Maternity Services Survey Tool?**

The National Maternity Services Survey Tool has been developed for DHBs to enable robust and consistent measurement of women’s experience and satisfaction with the maternity services accessed in their DHB region. The Survey Tool was developed by the Ministry of Health and Research New Zealand (www.researchnz.com) to support DHBs to meet New Zealand Maternity Standard 17.1: All DHBs apply the national tool for feedback on maternity services at least once every five years.

The Survey Tool covers all publicly funded maternity services accessed by women and their families, including those not funded by DHBs, to provide an overall picture of service access and experience in each DHB region. By using a professionally developed Survey Tool consistently across all DHB regions, DHBs can be assured that the survey data they gather will be useful, relevant, and can be compared between DHB regions if the DHB chooses.

**Where did the survey questions come from?**

The questions in the Survey Tool were developed for the Ministry of Health’s Maternity Consumer Satisfaction Survey. These questions have been thoroughly tested, piloted and analysed for quality and validity. To keep the Survey Tool brief, it only includes questions proven in Maternity Consumer Satisfaction Survey to cover aspects of maternity care that are both important to women and had an impact on overall experience of care.

You can view the latest Maternity Consumer Satisfaction Survey report on the Ministry’s website. This contains the full survey questionnaire and regression analysis.

**Can I change the wording of the questions?**

No. Do not change the wording of the questions in the Survey Tool. It is important that these questions are asked by each DHB in exactly the same way, every time. This ensures the accuracy of your results and enables you to compare your results with the results from other DHBs who use this Survey Tool.

**Can I add my own DHB’s questions?**

Yes. There is a page towards the end of the questionnaire (Page 6, Section 7) that has been left blank for you to insert your own questions, if you wish to. If you do not have any additional questions you would like to include, make sure you delete the blank page before printing the questionnaire.

Here are some tips and advice from Research New Zealand to help you develop additional questions:

* Keep the number of additional questions to a minimum (limit of one page). The longer the survey is, the fewer women that will complete it.
* If you have additional statements that you want people to rate, use the same rating scale that has been used in the rest of the questionnaire. Changing rating scales midway through the questionnaire could confuse your respondents and limit the accuracy of your survey.
* If the question involves asking the respondent to select from a list of possible options, provide instructions so they know whether they should tick only one box, or if they can tick more than one.
* Ensure you keep the ‘look’ of the questionnaire consistent. Use the same font and layout throughout. When you add your new questions in, we suggest you first copy and paste a similar type of question from the questionnaire and edit the wording as necessary.

Question tips

* Keep the wording of the question(s) as short as possible.
* Keep the language simple. Do not use complicated words, jargon or acronyms.
* So that the respondent remembers what the question is asking, the most important part of the question should be last.
* Avoid leading questions.
* Test your questions with your consumer representatives or other consumers to make sure they make sense and are interpreted consistently.

**How do I implement the survey?**

This survey has been designed to be completed on paper.

Once you have added your additional questions (or deleted that page if you are not going to use it) you need to insert your DHB logo onto the front page. Resize the logo so it fits in the box and print the questionnaire. Remember to print a few more copies than you need, so you have spares on hand. You can print the questionnaire in colour or in black and white, whichever you prefer.

Because the survey covers the maternity care received during pregnancy right through to the end of the postnatal care at home (4-6 weeks after the birth), it is important that the questionnaire is completed at the right time.

We recommend you post a copy of the survey (and a reply paid envelope) to every woman who has had a live birth, at around 6 weeks after the birth. You may need to work with your community LMCs to ensure women who give birth at home receive a copy.

Do not hand the questionnaire to the mother when she leaves the hospital immediately following the birth. She will have more important things on her mind at that time and is much less likely to remember to complete it later on. If she does complete it straight after the birth, you will miss valuable information on her postnatal experience. Many women tell us that they are not ready to reflect on their pregnancy and birth experience until several weeks or even months later.

Do not ask the woman’s midwife, LMC or WCTO provider to collect the completed questionnaires because women may feel uncomfortable providing comments if there is a chance that this provider will see what they have written.

This has been designed as an anonymous survey. There are no patient identification numbers or registration codes on the survey questionnaire that would enable anyone to link the survey results to an individual respondent. However, if the respondent would like to be contacted in relation to her maternity care, you will note that she can provide her name and contact details at the end of the survey and a brief explanation as to what she would like to discuss.

**Can I run this as an online survey?**

If someone within your DHB has the ability to convert this questionnaire into an online survey (e.g. using Survey Monkey or a locally available online tool), then you are welcome to do so. Please make sure the wording of the questions remains exactly as the paper version and that the survey is made available to women around 6 weeks following the baby’s birth.

**What do I do with the completed questionnaires?**

When you receive completed questionnaires back in the post, first check to see if the respondent has requested a follow-up and then notify whoever it is that needs to action this.

We recommend you record the survey responses electronically, along with the date, so you can monitor how your results are tracking over time. This can be done in Excel or a more sophisticated data collection and analysis programme, if you have access to this.

You should wait until you have received at least 100 completed surveys before you do any formal analysis on the results. If you only have a very small number of responses, you cannot be sure that the results accurately reflect the views of all of maternity consumers. If you do not reach this sample size, you can still analyse the responses but you should interpret the results with caution. The same applies if you break down your analysis by demographics, such as age or ethnicity, and as such have small sub-samples.

**What if I need help?**

If you need assistance or help to design any questions you wish to add, input completed questionnaires into a database, or to complete your analysis Research New Zealand has offered their ongoing involvement. There may be a charge associated with additional work. Please contact Katrina Magill at Research New Zealand on 0800 500 168 or by email (katrina.magill@researchnz.com) to request a quote.