

NHS Ayrshire & Arran



Meeting: Ayrshire and Arran NHS Board

Meeting date: Monday 2 June 2025

Title: Patient Experience: Nada's Story – Ayrshire Maternity Unit

Responsible Director: Vicki Campbell, Director of Acute Services

Report Author: Laura Harvey, QI Lead, Patient Experience

1. Purpose

This is presented to the Board for:

- Discussion

This paper relates to:

- Government policy/directive
- Local policy

This aligns to the following NHS Scotland quality ambition(s):

- Safe
- Effective
- Person Centred

2. Report summary

2.1 Situation

This story shares Nada's experience of maternity care received in Ayrshire Maternity Unit following an emergency transfer from Ninewells Hospital in Dundee in October 2024. The transfer was required due to the unavailability of a neo-natal bed within NHS Tayside.

Nada has shared her story in her own words and wishes to express her sincere thanks for the exceptional clinical care, birthing experience and emotional support provided by all staff in the Ayrshire Maternity Unit.

2.2 Background

Nada is a 41 year old lady who lives in Brechin and normally attends Ninewells Hospital in Dundee, about 40 miles away from her family home. Nada had gestational diabetes and Graves' disease which caused concern in the latter stages of her 4th pregnancy necessitating an emergency transfer to the Ayrshire Maternity Unit.

Following her daughter's birth, Nada shared her experience on the social media site "Kilmarnock Chat". Her story was read by the Patient Experience Facilitator, who

made contact with Nada to hear her full story and to request consent for the development of a patient story which could be shared to highlight the excellent care provided.

2.3 Assessment

Nada was 36 weeks pregnant when she attended Ninewells Hospital on Friday 25th October 2024 where she was assessed by a Diabetic Consultant. Following assessment, Nada was informed that the placenta was failing and her baby would need to be delivered prematurely due to her deteriorating health and placenta issues. Nada was given steroid injections to develop her baby's lungs.

The decision to transfer Nada was made at around midnight due to a requirement for a neonatal bed which was unavailable within NHS Tayside. Nada was obviously anxious and worried about the developments and having to be transferred to a hospital so far from home. The condition of the baby necessitated an immediate transfer not allowing Nada's partner time to get back to the hospital to see her prior to transfer.

Nada was transferred by 'blue light' ambulance and escorted by a midwife as well as paramedic to monitor her during the two hour transfer. Unfortunately, this meant that Nigel, her partner, was unable to travel with her, leaving him following behind the ambulance. During the journey Nada felt terrified. She was so far away from home and her three children.

On arrival at Ayrshire Maternity Unit, Nada felt instantly welcomed, reassured and at ease. The staff acknowledged that Nada and Nigel were exhausted and ensured that all tests and observations were done efficiently to let them rest. Nada described the midwife as fantastic, she explained everything. She was tactile but not intrusive, just what Nada needed at that time. The staff were considerate towards Nigel, ensuring that he was comfortable, apologising for not being able to provide him with a bed but assured him that this would be prioritised. The whole environment was modern and comfortable.

On Saturday 26th October, Nada started on a pessary with her waters broken on the Sunday. The staff provided excellent pain relief which was so important to Nada. Nada felt so motivated. Her midwife was so supportive and encouraging but never condescending or forceful. Nada described this as the most relaxing birthing experience. Her labour progressed but stopped at 3cm. She was unable to have an epidural, however, her midwife guided her through and was so supportive making her birthing experience so special.

Nada described every single person as being so sincere, they worked as a team, and were so natural. Nada's midwife from her initial arrival at Ayrshire Maternity Unit visited her at end of a shift to see her and her baby. The doctor checking for antibodies due to Graves' disease – explained everything and was so kind. The domestic, an elderly lady was so uplifting. Everyone was so kind and warm. During discharge, the staff provided Nada with some final reassurance that her new baby was healthy and ready to go home.

Nada wishes to share her story to offer her sincere thanks to the staff within Ayrshire Maternity Unit for their exceptional care and for the genuine compassion shown to her throughout her journey. Despite arriving as an out of area patient and in unfamiliar

territory her, and her partner felt welcomed, calm and reassured and this positive experience continued throughout her entire stay in Ayrshire Maternity Unit.

2.3.1 Quality/patient care

This story highlights the positive impact that true, person-centred clinical and emotional care can have on a patient's overall experience. This was particularly meaningful for this out of area patient who was receiving care in an unfamiliar health board and region.

2.3.2 Workforce

Using healthcare stories to share good and bad feedback with staff across the organisation demonstrates an open honest and transparent approach to improvement and this encourages other teams and individuals to adopt a similar approach in their improvement journeys.

This story expresses the positive impact that Ayrshire Maternity Unit staff made by delivering true, person-centred care.

2.3.3 Financial

No financial Impact

2.3.4 Risk assessment/management

No identified risk

2.3.5 Equality and diversity, including health inequalities

An impact assessment is not required as the individual sharing the story has given consent and any impact on others will be individual

2.3.6 Other impact

- **Best value**

Demonstrates the importance of collaborative working across health boards to support the best possible outcome for patients and their families

- **Safe, Caring & Respectful**

Nada's story fully complies with our corporate objectives and highlights the importance of applying them to every patient throughout their care journey

2.3.7 Communication, involvement, engagement and consultation

This patient story will be shared across all Services to highlight this patient's positive experiences.

2.3.8 Route to the meeting

This story has not been heard at any other meetings but has been shared with the service involved.

2.3.9 Recommendation

Members are asked to listen to Nada's story,