




# Your Postnatal Ward Stay

Congratulations on the birth of your baby!

Our team is here to support you during your stay and ensure both you and your baby receive the best possible care before you go home. This leaflet outlines what to expect during your stay on the postnatal ward, including plans of care, visiting arrangements and available support.





## The Ward Environment

For the safety of service users, our postnatal ward is a secure ward with locked access which requires you and your birth partner/visitors to speak to a member of staff before entering and exiting.

When attending the ward, you will need to press the buzzer outside so that a member of staff can check you in. There can occasionally be a delay if staff are providing patient care, so we request that you remain patient while you wait to be let in. Please share this information with anyone who may be visiting you during your stay.

Service users are required to use the sign out sheet and inform a member of staff at the midwives' station when exiting the ward.

The ward is made up of 4 bays and one side room. Each bay has 6 beds in with curtains around the bed spaces for privacy, however, we ask that the curtains around your bed stay open unless you are being examined, feeding or changing. Open curtains are essential to ensuring that our team providing care can keep you and your baby are safe. At nighttime your curtains can be pulled between beds but please leave them open at the front for the maternity staff to be able to support you and your baby during this time.

There is very limited space at each bedside, so we request that you only bring the essentials with you and aim to limit this to **one small suitcase and a handheld bag**. Belongings are to be stored out of the way, under the chair or in the bedside cabinet to allow access for cleaning team and health care professionals to provide care to you and your baby. We recommend taking home any items that you do not need during your stay to ensure you have as much space around your bed as possible. We ask that car seats are only brought in when you are ready to be discharged.

In the centre of the ward is the 'Midwives' Station' where staff may be located if they are not in your bay. Any member of staff can support



you or find someone that can so please do not hesitate to ask for help from any of our team.

During your stay you may encounter several other staff please use the QR code or the link below for our guide to who you may meet.

<https://www.mkuh.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflet/meet-the-maternity-team>

#### **Meet the Maternity Team**



There is a self-care station available on the ward with frequently asked for items which includes sanitary pads, bedsheets, towels and blankets. Please help yourselves to these during your stay but please ensure that used towels and blankets are left in hospital when you are discharged.

There is a parent's room with comfortable seating and a television that can be used if you would prefer time away from your bedside. There is a breakfast room where you are able to access the water cooler and hydration station for hot water, tea, coffee or hot chocolate which is free to use at any time of day.

Please ensure you and anyone present with you is appropriately dressed including wearing shoes/slippers when moving around the ward, for your safety, infection prevention and for the experience of those around you.



## Getting to know you

On arrival to the ward, the midwife transferring you from another area will complete a bedside handover with the midwife who is taking over your care.

You will be involved in this discussion, where information is given about your history and a plan of care is made. You will be provided with a jug of water and have your call bell placed within reach should you need assistance from a member of the team.

Your midwife will introduce themselves but if you forget who is caring for you, the name of the team providing your care is on the window of your bay and their pictures can be found on the “Our Team Today” Board.

Handover of staff between shifts takes place at 7am and 8pm, at these times another bedside handover will be completed.

WeCARE

A SAFE AND CARING DIVISION  
**WARD 9**  
Hello & Welcome

Milton Keynes University Hospital  
NHS Foundation Trust

OUR TEAM TODAY IS:

Matron		Ward Sister		Shift Leader	
Midwife					
Student Midwife					
Consultant Obstetrician		Obstetric Registrar		Senior House Officer	
Paediatric SNO		Paediatric ANNP		Infant feeding Team	
Maternity Care Assistant		Ward Clerk		Housekeeper	
Domestic		Hostess			

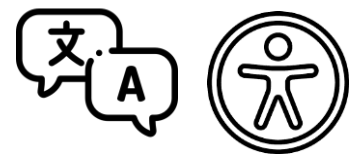
## Visiting

We have listened to feedback and understand how important it is for families to stay together after their baby is born.



At Milton Keynes Hospital we are proud to support a named birth partner being able to stay with you throughout your whole stay, including overnight.

- Birth partners can stay to help you recover and care for baby but please note they **cannot sleep in the bed**. A chair is provided at the bedside. Your birth partner's rest is also important, and they



are usually tired too, it is important to consider if sleeping at home may be more beneficial to ensuring they are adequately rested to help in your recovery when you return home. Staff will be there to provide you with support in their absence.

- There are toilet facilities available for visitors, but birth partners will need to leave the ward to wash, and it is important that hygiene standards are maintained.
- Food provided on the ward is for birthing people only so birth partners will need to leave to collect food that can be brought back into the ward. Please be aware that we do not have facilities to store or heat food.
- You may have 2 visitors at your bedside between 08:00 - 22:00 but they must be over the age of 16.
- Your own children can visit between 16:00 -18:00
- Visitors or siblings who are unwell should not visit the ward.
- Please be respectful of other families and their recovery.
- For anyone wishing to bring in gifts, please note that due to allergies and infection control we are unable to permit flowers or latex balloons onto the ward.

Visiting times may change due to local or national guidance, the team will let you know if there are any changes.

*Please note, there is a zero-tolerance policy for abuse of NHS staff and birth partners and visitors may be asked to leave the ward if this is not adhered to.*

## **Your care**

On arrival to the ward an individualised care plan will be made for you which will be based on your medical history, the type of birth you have had and any support needs that are identified. This care plan will be regularly reviewed and updated. We encourage you to be involved in this, with handover of care between midwives taking place at your



bedside to ensure that you are able to take part in any review and to keep you updated on your individual plan.

During your stay, you will be monitored to ensure you are recovering well after birth. This will include:

### Observations

- We will observe your vital signs (blood pressure, temperature, pulse, respiratory rate)
- The frequency of these observations varies from once a day to 6 times a day depending on your needs, this will be discussed with you as part of your care plan.



### A Daily Check

- A top to toe examination including checking of any wounds (c/section or any perineal stitches)

### Investigations

- Blood tests may be required if medically indicated

### Pain Relief

- Pain Relief is always available but there are regular medication rounds completed by midwives and nurses which take place at:
  - 06:00, 12:00, 18:00 and 22:00
- If you need medications outside of these times, please speak to a member of staff who can arrange this for you.
- For patient safety and to ensure that all medication is tracked, all medications need to be prescribed and administered by a member of staff. Please do not take your own medications unless this is discussed in advance with a member of the team.





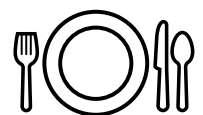
## Hydration and Bladder care



- A jug of water will be provided on arrival to the ward and can be refreshed at any time from the breakfast room, if you need support to refill your jug please ask a member of staff to do this for you.
- Some people will be required to have a catheter during or after their birth. Once you can mobilise, this may be removed and you will be encouraged to hydrate in order to pass urine within 6 hours of removal.

## Nutrition

- During your stay you will be provided with breakfast, lunch and dinner. You will receive a menu from our catering team to choose your lunch and dinner in advance
- Bespoke menus are provided if you have any dietary requirements.
- Breakfast is at 8am and is self-service in the breakfast room, a staff member will assist you if you do not have someone staying with you and are unable to get this yourself
- Lunch is at 12pm and is delivered to your bedside
- Dinner is at 5pm and is delivered to your bedside
- To note, this food is for pregnant or birthing service users only, we are unable to provide food for birth partners/visitors and therefore if they wish to eat whilst on the ward, they must bring in their own food.



Please be aware there are no facilities to refrigerate or heat food up on the ward.



If you arrive on the ward, feel hungry outside of mealtimes, or miss the ordering deadline, we can provide food from our ward supplies or the main kitchen. Please speak to a member of staff to arrange this.

**TheMKWay** **NHS**  
Milton Keynes University Hospital  
NHS Foundation Trust

## Night mode in Maternity

**Our staff will aim to reduce your disturbance overnight by:**

- Reviewing the need for any observations before you sleep
- Maintaining a quiet approach with transfers to and from the ward
- Keeping noise to a minimum with quieter conversations

**From 10pm we will ask you to say goodbye to your visitors.**

**We will ask you to:**

- Put your phone on silent
- Use headphones for any electronics
- Refrain from using loudspeaker for phone calls

**Lights will be turned down by 11pm**  
Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

### Rest

- We recognise that staying in a hospital setting does not always promote adequate rest, so we use 'night mode' to promote quiet time.
- We can also provide ear plugs if required – please speak to a member of staff to arrange this for you.

## Caring for your baby

Each baby will require an individualised plan of care which will be regularly reviewed and updated. If your baby requires any additional monitoring or treatment, staff will explain this to you and involve you in all decisions. Your baby will be monitored to ensure they are adapting to life outside of the womb this will include:



### Observations

- We will observe their vital signs (Temperature, heart rate, respiratory rate and oxygen saturations)
- The frequency of these observations varies between individuals and the clinical history and will be discussed as part of the care plan.





## A Daily Check

- A daily top to toe check will be completed including a review of the baby's sleeping, feeding, skin colour (to check for jaundice) and the number of wet and dirty nappies.

## Investigations and Examinations

- Blood tests may be required if medically indicated
- Our team will offer and perform screening tests such as:
  - NIPE (Newborn and Infant Physical Examination)
  - NBHS (Newborn Hearing Screening)
  - NBBS (Newborn Blood Spot)

Please use the website below for more information:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/screening-tests-for-you-and-your-baby>

Screening tests for you and  
your baby (STFYAYB)



## **Feeding your baby**

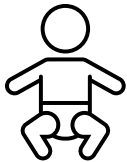
Please ask for help from any member of staff if you require support with feeding, all staff will be able to support you on your feeding journey or find someone that can.

If you have chosen to breastfeed/express breastmilk, staff can support with ensuring the baby has the correct positioning and attachment during feeds or support with hand expressing / using a breast pump. We have breast pumps available for you to use during your stay if this is required.



We have breastfeeding volunteers and an Infant Feeding Lead midwife who is based on the wards. They complete a daily walk round of all those staying on the ward, to discuss how feeding is going and identify with you any additional support that you require which can then be incorporated into your care plans.

If you have chosen to bottle feed, we are unable to provide formula milk and do not have the facilities to sterilise bottles or make up feeds with powdered milk. During your stay you will need to bring in pre-made milk.



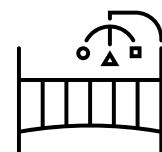
### **Keeping your baby safe during your stay**

To reduce the risk of dropping your baby during your hospital stay, please take the following steps to keep your baby safe.

- If you need to move around the ward with your baby, please place them baby in their cot to reduce the risk of accidental injury e.g. from being dropped or bumped into.
- Please ensure your baby is placed in the cot to sleep. The ward beds are very narrow, and the floor is very hard, so co-sleeping and bed sharing is not advised.
- We recognise that following birth both parents may be exhausted, and sleep deprived which this can lead to them falling asleep with their babies in their arms or on their chests. If staff see this, they will wake you or your birth partner to assist you in placing baby in the cot to keep them safe.

### **Safe Sleep Guidance**

- To reduce the chance of SIDS (sudden infant death syndrome) Families should follow the key advice for baby sleep.





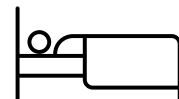
- The safest place for a baby to sleep is in their own clear separate space, such as a moses basket or cot.
  - This means that whilst on the ward babies must be put to sleep in their cot
  - They should be placed on their backs at the bottom of the cot in 'feet to foot position'
  - No use of sleep pods, nests, pillows or sleep positioners

Lullaby Trust Safe Sleeping Advice



## Expected length of stay

This will be dependent on your recovery and your baby's health, but your expected date of discharge will be discussed with you during your daily care plans.



Our aim is to discharge you home, when you are well and confident in feeding and caring for your baby.

Once you are identified as fit for discharge there are several checks and tasks that need to be completed before you depart. Please be patient with the discharge process, the team will work as quickly as possible to ensure all the relevant checks and paperwork is completed prior to you leaving.



Tasks and checks to be completed prior to discharge:

- ☐ Obstetric Review
- ☐ Newborn and Infant Physical Examination (NIPE)
- ☐ Newborn Hearing Screening
- ☐ Breastfeeding Observation
- ☐ Providing take home medications
- ☐ Discharge information and handover to community care

You will receive information about postnatal care, community team follow ups, home/clinic visit schedule and who to contact if you have concerns

A car seat is required for taking your baby home safely and we advise that babies are transported from the ward to the car in them. In cases where car seats cannot be removed from the car, please discuss this with your midwife. Please be advised that as each car seat is different, midwives cannot be responsible for checking that your baby is correctly fitted in their car seat. It is therefore essential that you ensure you are familiar with how your individual car seat functions.



## Follow up

A community midwife will visit you within 36 hours after you leave the hospital and will arrange the follow up appointments with you.

Please use the QR code below for more information regarding your discharge to the community midwifery team.





## Postnatal Community Care



### Need Help during your stay?

If you have any questions or concerns during your stay please raise this with the Midwife in Charge or a member of senior staff.



Ward Managers and the Ward Matron are available to speak to Monday-Friday

We are all willing to listen and support you to ensure that the care for you and your baby meets the high standards that we aim to achieve.

Thank you for choosing our maternity services!



Feedback can be provided via the hospital website, using this link:

**<https://uk.surveymonkey.com/r/maternity-FFT>**

**or by using this QR code**



**We encourage patients to be involved in their care by:**

1. Being part of the conversation and shared decision making
2. Asking questions if something is not clear
3. Speaking up if you have concerns

Checks are there to protect you and you can be part of them. Behave with respect and kindness towards healthcare professionals.

**We ask for information about you so that you can receive proper care and treatment. This information remains confidential and is stored securely by the Trust in accordance with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018/GDPR. Further guidance can be found within our privacy notice found on our Trust website: [www.mkuh.nhs.uk](http://www.mkuh.nhs.uk)**

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