

Chesterfield Royal Hospital NHS FT

Update on Maternity Services during the COVID-19 Pandemic

20/4/20

Our priority is to ensure that you and your baby are well during the coronavirus pandemic. We are committed to providing safe maternity care, and will always try to meet your personal needs and choices.

It is important that you have all the information you need to help you make informed decisions about your maternity care.

We have fewer maternity staff available and this means we have had to think about how we will care for you and your family during your labour and birth.

Women who have coronavirus or coronavirus symptoms will be cared for in a separate part of the maternity unit to women who do not have symptoms. This is to keep everyone who uses our services as safe as possible. We want to assure you that we have sufficient personal protective equipment for all our maternity staff.

We have already redeployed a number of midwives who have a non-clinical role to work on the in-patient ward and the birth centre. We have also re-employed midwives who have recently retired from here.

However, we have had to make some changes to ensure we keep you and your baby safe.

Some of your appointments during your pregnancy will be by telephone with your community midwife. However you will still have face to face appointments for your booking and anomaly scans, and at 28, 36 and 40 weeks. If this is your first baby you will also have a face to face appointment at 38 weeks.

When you come to the hospital for your appointments, if you are accompanied by another person they will not be able to enter the Antenatal Clinic with you. This is to reduce the number of people in the clinic area to ensure we can practice social distancing as per government guidelines. We ask that partners should wait outside of the hospital.

Some of your postnatal appointments will be by telephone, but as a minimum, you will be seen by a midwife on the day after you have been discharged from hospital and on day 5 after the baby's birth for the baby to be weighed, have the newborn blood spot test and to check you are doing well.

At present, we have had to make a very difficult decision to suspend the homebirth service, not only because of numbers of staff, but to reduce the risk of exposure to infection for our midwives and reduce pressure on the ambulance service. We will be reviewing this decision on a weekly basis, and working with the maternity team and ambulance service to make the homebirth service available again as soon as it is safe to do so.

These changes have been made with our Maternity Voices Partnership (MVP) user chairs.

You can contact the Derbyshire Maternity Voices by email derbyshirematvoices@gmail.com or by Facebook.

The choices of place of birth that are still available are:

- Midwife led unit on Chesterfield Birth Centre
- Co-located obstetric unit on Chesterfield Birth Centre

Despite the above changes, you will be fully supported by our midwives with the many choices available, positions for labour, mobilisation, aromatherapy, relaxation support using music during labour and pain relief options.

Water births are available to in our birthing pools however as per national guidance not suitable for women with symptoms of Coronavirus.

One birth partner may support you during your labour and birth, however cannot attend if they are showing any symptoms of Coronavirus.

You can still expect us to communicate clearly with you.

You will still be treated with dignity and respect, and we will try to make your birth experience with us as special as we can, for you.

We will support you to go home from hospital as soon as possible after the birth, if this is what you want.

Your midwife or obstetrician will support you at this time as you plan for your labour and birth. This might include changing your plan for birth.

In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact your community midwife or community base.

If your questions are about Coronavirus, please contact our COVID-19 advice line on 01246 512361 Monday to Friday 8.30am to 4.30pm.

You can also contact me via email linda.gustard@nhs.net

Thank you and take care.

Linda Gustard, Head of Midwifery.