

Information for maternity visitors to Royal Bournemouth Hospital, Poole Hospital and community maternity clinics during Covid-19

Maternity patient information

General information

As the spread of the Coronavirus evolves, we are now able to relax some of our restrictions around partners / support people coming into the unit. These changes will take place from 12 April 2021.

Although the risk from Covid-19 is now lower than it was, we still need to reduce the number of people visiting our hospitals. This will help us maintain social distancing and ensure we are protecting you, your family and our staff as much as possible. We understand this can be difficult, but it is essential to slow the spread of the infection.

We may need to change these arrangements at short notice if there is a change in local Covid alert levels, and we will let you know if things change.

All visitors to the maternity unit are **required to wear a face covering and use the alcohol gel available to sanitise their hands** when they enter the hospital. A face covering must be worn at all times in the unit. If your chosen support partner is medically exempt from wearing a face covering, please contact the department prior to your appointment.

Please remember that face coverings are not a replacement for social distancing and regular hand washing, which remain the most important actions for the protection against Covid-19. Visitors must maintain social distancing (at least 2 metres) wherever possible.

Please do not bring in food parcels, flowers, helium balloons or similar items.

Women who have tested positive for Covid-19 will not be able to have visitors. However, they will still be able to have a birth partner present during their labour.

We know the restrictions can be upsetting, but all visitors must respect the visiting guidance and instructions from staff. For your safety, it is vital our staff enforce the restrictions – we have zero tolerance of abuse towards our staff. Anyone abusing staff for this or any other reason will be asked to leave immediately.

Important - lateral flow device (LFD) testing

We are asking all women and their partners / support people to take lateral flow tests prior to scheduled appointments, scans or when visiting the maternity unit. It is your responsibility to arrange an LFD test before attending. It's very important that your test result is logged via the NHS app or website as per the instructions in the test kit, and that you bring the result confirmation with you, not the actual test itself.

We recommend that you order LFD tests as soon as possible so that you have them ready for use when needed.

You can order LFD tests online or find locations local to you where you can collect LFD tests to do yourself at home. For more information, go to <https://maps.test-and-trace.nhs.uk> or scan the QR code below.



You will be asked to produce evidence of your LFD test date and result.

For outpatient appointments and scans, the partner / support person must have had an LFD test within the last 24 hours, due to the small space and limited ventilation in outpatient areas.

For visiting wards, the partner / support person must have had an LFD test within the last 72 hours of every visit.

If you need to attend as an emergency, please do not delay coming into the unit even if your partner / support person hasn't had a recent LFD test. We will assist you and make alternative arrangements to ensure that your partner / support person can accompany you.

Summary of new restrictions from 12 April 2021

Outpatient areas, community clinics and ultrasound scanning

		Requirements
Ultrasound scans	One partner / support person may attend all scans	Lateral flow test within 24 hours before appointment
Early Pregnancy Unit*	One partner / support person may accompany you to all appointments	
Antenatal Day Assessment (ANDA)*	One partner / support person may accompany you to all appointments	
Antenatal clinic/fetal medicine		
Community maternity clinics		

*If you need to attend as an emergency, please do not delay coming into the unit even if your partner / support person hasn't had a recent LFD test. We will assist you and make alternative arrangements to ensure that your partner / support person can accompany you.

Labour wards

		Requirements
Haven Birthing Suite	<p>Two named birth partners can accompany women throughout labour and birth / caesarean from admission.</p> <p>Both birth partners will need to leave if / when woman is transferred to the postnatal ward or Transitional Care Unit (see below for visiting information on wards)</p>	<p>Do not delay attending even if your partner / support person hasn't had a recent LFD test.</p> <p>You will be admitted into a single room and your birth partner can do an LFD test here.</p> <p>If at all possible, please bring an LFD test with you, which you can order using the links and QR codes above</p>
Central Delivery Suite		
Planned caesarean birth (ELCS)	<p>One named birth partner/ support person can accompany women for the ELCS/ECV from admission. For ELCS - Birth partner/support person will need to leave when transferred to PNW/TCU. For ECV - birth partner/support person can remain throughout but if admission to inpatient ward needed, birth partner/support person will need to leave when transferred to an inpatient ward</p>	Partner will need LFD test within 72 hours before planned admission
External Cephalic Version (ECV)		Partner will need LFD test within 72 hours before planned admission

Inpatient wards

		Requirements
Induction of labour	One partner / support person can accompany women on admission for a maximum of two hours.	Partner / support person will need LFD test within the previous 72 hours
Antenatal ward	One partner / support person for one hour per day, unless being discharged that day	
Postnatal ward		
Transitional Care Unit		

Booking process for visitors to our inpatient wards

- Staff will identify women who are able to have a visitor at the beginning of the day and ask for their visitor's name and contact number.
- Our staff will then contact the visitor to agree a time slot.
- When visiting, partners / visitors must remain within the patient's bed space area and should not use the ward kitchen and/or toilets.
- Visitors are required to arrive promptly for their booked slot:
 - On arrival to the maternity unit, visitors will be required to wear a face covering
 - Once on the ward, you will be required to sanitise your hands
 - Visitors must leave promptly once their visiting slot has come to an end

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)

- 24 hour visiting for both partners.
- Unfortunately at this time, we cannot accept other visitors or siblings.

Who cannot visit the maternity unit

You must not visit if:

- You have **tested positive to coronavirus within the previous 10 days**, and if you continue to have a high temperature/fever after 10 days of testing positive.
- Your **LFD test is positive**.
- You **have symptoms of coronavirus**:
 - a new, continuous cough
 - a high temperature
 - loss or change to sense of smell and/or taste
- **You are self-isolating** because a household member has symptoms of coronavirus or you have returned from a high risk area.
- You have been contacted by **NHS Test and Trace services** and have been advised to self-isolate.
- You are **shielding** because you are at an increased risk of severe illness from coronavirus, except for compassionate reasons.
- You are **unwell for any other reason**, including vomiting and diarrhoea.

Children are currently not able to visit.

References

PHE, 2020. COVID-19: Guidance for the remobilisation of services within health and care settings. [online] Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/910885/COVID-19_Infection_prevention_and_control_guidance_FINAL_PDF_20082020.pdf [Accessed 8 April 2021].

RCM, 2020. RCM Briefing On Re-Introduction Of Visitors To Maternity Units Across The UK During The COVID-19 Pandemic. [online] Available at: www.rcm.org.uk/media/4161/rcm-briefing-on-reintroduction-of-visitors-to-maternity-units-in-the-covid-pandemic-003.pdf [Accessed 12 August 2020].

Contact details

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