

Welcome to the Transitional Care Ward

Information for parents



This leaflet has been designed to help you understand transitional care and how you and your baby will be looked after during your stay.

What is Transitional Care (TC)?

Transitional Care (TC) is given to babies born between 34 and 36+6 weeks and those born after 37 weeks who need additional care. This includes low birth weight babies and those with other medical needs that do not require the Neonatal Unit.

All babies use blood sugar (glucose) for energy to keep warm, feed and cry. TC babies can use up their blood sugar stores more rapidly and therefore are more at risk of developing

hypoglycaemia or low blood sugars. Specialist feeding programmes will help your baby get the energy required for healthy growth and development.

The Transitional Care (TC) ward

The TC ward is an eight single room area within the Postnatal Ward of the Tunbridge Wells Hospital. You and your baby will stay together and we will help you meet the needs of your baby with support and guidance.

During your stay you will be supported by midwives who specialise in caring for TC babies. These midwives are part of a neonatal and midwifery team, which includes:

- Transitional Care Manager
- Infant Feeding Specialists
- Paediatric Doctors
- Advanced Neonatal Nurse Practitioner
- Nursery Nurses
- Support Workers

What will happen when you and your baby are admitted to the Transitional Care ward?

The TC midwife will discuss care with you and develop a personal plan specifically for your baby. These plans are reviewed daily by the midwife supporting you and will be adjusted to suit the ongoing needs of your baby. You will be involved in all discussions regarding your baby's care needs so that you are able to make an informed choice. Please feel free to ask any questions that you may have.

Kangaroo care and skin to skin contact

TC babies need a little extra support to adjust to their new environment and keeping warm is the most important factor.

We are proud to offer Kangaroo Care to all TC babies and we do encourage you to get involved. Kangaroo care involves keeping your baby in skin to skin contact with the help of a specially designed KangaWrap. Kangaroo care research at Tunbridge Wells Hospital has shown that this level of skin to skin contact reduces the length of hospital stay for babies requiring additional care.

Research shows that Kangaroo Care helps all babies regardless of feeding method:

- To keep warm and maintain blood sugar levels
- To create a bond between baby and parent
- Helps with brain development
- Helps babies' digestion
- If you are breastfeeding, it can help make this more successful

We have a leaflet we can give you about Kangaroo Care, which explains the benefits for you and your baby.

Daily routine

All TC babies are weighed daily in the morning **before a feed**. The amount of milk feeds for your baby will then be recalculated for that day and you will be fully informed of the plan and any changes. For breastfed babies, length of breastfeeds will be discussed so that we can ensure your baby is getting enough milk.

Feeding your baby

However you choose to feed your baby we are here to support you. Breastfeeding has many benefits for both you and your baby. Breastmilk is full of antibodies to help your baby fight infection, it helps 'line the gut' with good bacteria and helps

promote bonding. This is particularly important in premature babies and those that are small for gestational age (SGA).

Responsive breastfeeding

Responsive breastfeeding involves responding to your baby's cues and recognising that feeds are not just for nutrition but also for love, comfort and reassurance.

Responsive breastfeeding is also characterised by the need for physical comfort, i.e. relieving of heavy uncomfortable breasts. You can do this by encouraging your baby to feed even when they are not displaying feeding cues; there are no concerns that you will 'overfeed' the baby; it is impossible to overfeed a breastfed baby

Responsive bottle feeding

Responsive bottle feeding is characterised by:

- Feeding the baby when they show feeding 'cues' e.g. head bobbing, hand to mouth movements.
 - Holding baby close in a semi-upright position, looking into their eyes, changing the sides they are held, talking to baby when feeding.
 - Inviting baby to take the teat by stroking the top lip with the teat, gently inserting the teat and holding the bottle in an almost horizontal position to prevent a fast flow of milk, which the baby will not be able to control.
 - For the parent to be alert to the baby's cues and act accordingly i.e. if baby splays their fingers or toes it is a sign that they want to stop drinking.
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Nasogastric tubes

Sometimes TC babies do not manage to take enough breastmilk or formula milk per feed. This means that we may need to help your baby get their required amount through a nasogastric tube, with your consent. This is a small tube that is put down the nose and into the tummy so that milk, either expressed breastmilk or formula, can be given to your baby through the tube by a syringe. If we feel your baby needs a nasogastric tube we can discuss this with you further and answer any questions you may have.

Facilities

We have breast pumps available to use during your stay if required and we provide cold water sterilisers. If you wish to formula feed you will need to bring in your own formula, bottles and teats.

Length of stay

Your length of stay on the TC ward can be anywhere between 3-14 days and depends on your baby and the care they need. Our aim is to get you home as soon as possible once your baby has established feeding and is gaining weight as expected.

Family-centred care is encouraged on the TC ward. Partners are welcome to stay and we support them to be as involved as they would like in the care of your baby. We have some fold out single sofa chairs but your partner will need to bring their own bedding and pillow.

If your baby is being cared for by the Neonatal Unit, we are unable to accommodate parents on the postnatal ward as we need the rooms for other families. Therefore, unless it is thought your baby will be coming back to the ward within 24 hours we will need to ask you to go home. You will be able to visit your baby following the Neonatal Unit visiting plans.

Infection Control

All staff are vigilant to prevent and control cross infection.

We do ask you to please observe the hand hygiene signs and to regularly wash your hands. We also request no flowers please.


Visitors

- Visiting times are restricted to allow time for you to rest and for midwifery/nursing care
- Please do not let your visitors sit on the beds; chairs are available
- Visitors are asked not to visit if they have a cold, diarrhoea or sickness
- Visiting times for partners and your own children are **8.00am – 8.30pm**
- Visiting times for other visitors (adults only) are **3.30pm – 7.30pm. No children under 16 will be allowed on the ward, except your own children.**
- Please limit the number of additional visitors to two at a time
- Visitors' toilets are located in the hospital's main reception area. Please do not let your visitors use the toilets in your room
- No flowers please; this is to assist with keeping rooms clean and tidy and an infection control requirement

Please use this space to write any notes or questions you may have.

Further information and advice can be obtained from:


NHS 111

 111


NHS Choices online

www.nhs.uk


The Transitional Care Ward:

 01892 631216


Maternity Triage

 01892 633500


Crowborough Birthing Centre

 01892 654080


Maidstone Birthing Centre

 01892 220161

BLISS

 0500 618140
www.bliss.org.uk

TAMBA

 0800 138 0509
www.tamba.org.uk

UNICEF

www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly/baby-friendly-resources/relationship-building-resources/responsive-feeding-infosheet/

MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). We will do our best to arrange this.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust welcomes all forms of feedback from our service users. If the standard of service you have received from the Trust does not meet your expectations, we want to hear from you. Please speak with the ward manager or the nurse in charge in the first instance, or you can contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** on:

Telephone: ☎ 01622 224960 or ☎ 01892 632953

Email: mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net

or visit their office at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient's consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust's website: www.mtw.nhs.uk or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

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