

Ref: FOI/GS/ID 7128

Please reply to:
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www.mtw.nhs.uk

10 January 2022

Freedom of Information Act 2000

I am writing in response to your request for information made under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in relation to Maternity partners policies.

You asked:

**Note: In relation to all questions, please disclose any relevant hospital policies or details relevant to normal times, as well as any temporary hospital policies or details related to births during the coronavirus pandemic.*

- 1. What is your policy related to partners attending routine outpatient appointments and planned scans with pregnant women before birth?*
- 2. What is your policy related to partners attending unplanned outpatient appointments and scans with pregnant women before birth?*
- 3. What is your policy related to partners being with pregnant women during any induction of labour?*
- 4. What is your policy related to partners being with pregnant women while giving birth in a delivery suite, antenatal ward or birth centre?*
- 5. What is your policy related to the amount of time partners are able to stay on the antenatal ward/delivery suite and/or birth centre after birth?*
- 6. What is your policy related to partners being with new mothers and their babies on postnatal wards?*
- 7. If partners are allowed on postnatal wards only during certain visiting hours please can you state what these hours are?*
- 8. What is your policy related to partners being with new mothers and their babies in the newborn intensive care unit? If there are also policies regarding the mother's hours allowed in these units please can you also state these?*

Trust response:

1. Partners are welcome to all maternity scans and outpatient appointments at Tunbridge Wells Hospital as well as our birth centres in Maidstone and Crowborough.

2. Please see response to Q1.

3. One birth partner can support on the antenatal ward with the second birth partner being invited in once you transferred to the delivery suite

4. The following information has been taken from the Trust website and can be found using this link. <https://www.mtw.nhs.uk/covid-19-maternity-information/>

You can have up to two nominated birth partners, which can include a doula, with you throughout all stages of labour. Your birth partner/s will be asked to wait outside triage while our midwives make you comfortable in an allocated room, but as soon as you are settled they will be invited in to support you.

Your nominated birth partner/s can leave Tunbridge Wells Hospital, or Maidstone Birth Centre, and return at a later time, or the following day, throughout all stages of labour but only one of your nominated birth partners will be able to stay with you and the baby on the postnatal ward at the hospital. Please note, to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our staff, patients and visitors during the pandemic, once a birth partner, or partners, has been chosen you cannot change who they are.

A wristband will be given to your birth partner/s when they arrive at the hospital, or birth centre, to support you. The wristband proves they have been with you previously. They must not remove it or give it to another person as they must show it to staff at the main entrance when they return. The wristbands will be different colours as one will indicate which nominated birth partner will be staying with you on the postnatal ward once the baby has been delivered. Entry is also subject to a temperature check being carried out by staff on the door. Your birth partner/s are expected to observe social distancing measures and wear a hospital supplied disposable surgical face mask at all times while in the hospital or birth centre – unless they are exempt or there is a clinical reason for them not to wear a mask.

If you are an inpatient on the antenatal ward and you are not in early labour or being induced, your birth partner/s can visit you between 4pm and 5pm daily.

5. Please see the response to Q4.

6. As above. With the addition that only one of the nominated birth partners will be able to remain with you and baby on the postnatal ward, however this decision will be kept under constant review. Please note, once a birth partner has been chosen you cannot change who they are

7. Not applicable

8. Further information can be found on our Neonatal Unit page on the Trust website or by using the following link:

<https://www.mtw.nhs.uk/service/neonatal-unit/?referrer=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.mtw.nhs.uk%2Fa-to-z-of-services%2F>

Visiting

Parents and grandparents are welcome to visit at any time of the day or night. We ask you to respect the babies' quiet time between 12.30–2pm (parents only). Other visitors over 16 and brothers and sisters of your baby are welcome to visit with a parent between 3-5pm. Only 2 visitors at each cot side, with parents.

Please do not visit if you have a cough, cold or diarrhoea. If you are not sure please talk to a member of staff.

During the winter months from 1st October-31st March, there may be occasions when siblings under the age of 6 are not allowed to visit. This is to reduce the risk of infection to your babies during the bronchiolitis season. Under 6's are the most at risk group for transmitting infections. Staff will let you know if this occurs.

Restrictions to access

There may be times when it is not possible to see your baby immediately. This might be due to your baby having X-rays or vital procedures. There is a family room on the unit where you can wait, and the nursing staff will keep you fully informed.