



The Dudley Group

NHS Foundation Trust

Russells Hall Hospital
Dudley
West Midlands
DY1 2HQ

Re: changes to maternity service provision at The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust as a result of COVID-19

To all our maternity service users,

Over the past weeks, there have been a number of changes to our service provision for maternity. These were made in order to protect pregnant women, their babies and the staff in the maternity unit.

We are writing to inform you of these changes and also to offer assurance that we will continue to put you and your baby at the centre of care.

Antenatal Care

Following guidance from the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG) and Royal College of Midwives (RCM), some of your antenatal appointments may change from face-to-face appointments to virtual appointments carried out by telephone call or online via video conferencing.

The number of appointments that you have will be based on your individual plan of care, but a minimum of six appointments will be face to face.

Some of your community midwife antenatal appointments will be taking place in alternative venues rather than your GP surgery. Again, we have chosen venues that will help us to reduce your contact with other members of the public and maintain social distancing.

Personalised care plans will continue to be developed with you by the community midwifery team, or your consultant obstetrician.

Antenatal Classes

In order to maintain social distancing in line with government recommendations, we have suspended all of our antenatal classes.

Breastfeeding sessions can be viewed via the Trust website: <http://www.dgft.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Breastfeeding-and-Mom2Mom-Workshop.pdf>

Free access to some useful antenatal sessions can be found via the following website: <https://inourplace.heiapply.com/online-learning/>

We are working to provide some additional virtual antenatal education with content specific to care at Russells Hall Hospital.

Visitors

In line with national guidance, we have visiting restrictions in place.



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We ask that for any face to face antenatal appointments, including ultrasound scans, that you attend alone in order to stop overcrowding in both the waiting room and consultation rooms. This will reduce the number of people coming into contact with both you and staff members.

When you are in labour, you can be accompanied by one birthing partner and there cannot be any swapping of this person. If you have a planned caesarean section, you will still be able to be accompanied by your birth partner.

After your baby is born, we will endeavour to facilitate an early transfer home if both you and your baby are well. However, if you do have to remain in hospital, visiting times have reduced to one hour each day between 3pm and 4pm for birth partners only. Again, this has been done to reduce the number of people that you, your baby and staff come into contact with whilst in hospital.

Home birth

Following a temporary suspension, the home birth service is being reinstated from Tuesday 19th May 2020. If you are considering home birth, please discuss this with your community midwife.

Clinical Care

You will notice that all staff offering you clinical care in the hospital, at community antenatal appointments or at home visits will be wearing additional personal protective equipment (PPE). All staff are following Public Health England (PHE) advice to reduce risk of infection. In addition to this, if you attend hospital for an ultrasound scan or a hospital antenatal appointment, we will ask you to wear a mask provided by us for the duration of your visit.

Information Telephone Line

If you have any questions or concerns related to your care, we have established an information hotline staffed daily by the community midwives Monday to Friday, 10am – 3pm on **01384 244574**.

Triage and Day Assessment Unit (DAU)

Triage and DAU are open for you to call and attend as usual. Please ensure that if you have any concerns regarding your pregnancy, that you call for advice immediately.

Yours sincerely,

Dawn Lewis
Head of Midwifery