

Trust Headquarters
Russells Hall Hospital
Dudley
West Midlands
DY1 2HQ

Ref: FOI-082025-0001855

Date: 12th September 2025

Address / Email:

Dear

Request Under Freedom of Information Act 2000

Thank you for requesting information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding the implementation and evaluation of **Family Integrated Care (FiCare)** within your neonatal services.

Please could you provide the following:

1. Confirmation of whether Family Integrated Care (FiCare) is currently implemented in your neonatal unit(s), and if so, the date of initial implementation.

FiCare is implemented at Russells Hall Hospital and has been for many years and currently hold the Bronze Bliss award and are working towards silver accreditation.

2. Copies of any internal policies, protocols, or guidance documents relating to FiCare.

There was previously a FiCare SOP in place, but this has now been archived as it is felt to be embedded as standard practice on the unit. Archived SOP attached.

3. Details of any staff training programmes or materials used to support FiCare delivery.

The majority of NNU staff have completed the Foundation course and 50% RNs hold a QIS (qualified in speciality) qualification. During this course, the universities have guest FiCare speakers in to deliver a session. In addition to this FiCare has been taught to our staff via our in-service study days. There is a formal version of FiCare training/ Developmental Care which is a short course provided through [Family and Infant Neurodevelopmental Education | FINE Training](#) which a few staff have also completed

4. Details of any staff training programmes or materials used to support FiCare delivery relating to older siblings.

There isn't anything specifically related to older siblings other than incorporating the whole family in ensuring family integrated care.

5. Any audit reports, evaluations, or outcome data relating to the effectiveness or impact of FiCare on neonatal care or family experience.

No formal audits are being undertaken at present although a Parent Questionnaire was

recently completed regarding the ward round to try and facilitate attendance/engagement.

6. If FICare is not currently implemented, please indicate whether there are plans or discussions underway to introduce it.

N/A

In addition (and if relevant), please could the Trust provide information on its policies or regulations regarding parental and sibling access to babies receiving neonatal care:

1. Are both parents and siblings permitted to spend time with babies in neonatal care units?
2. Are there any time restrictions or limitations on how long parents or siblings may spend with babies in neonatal care?
3. Does the Trust have any policies to ensure that babies from multiple births (e.g. twins, triplets) receive equal parental contact time compared to singleton babies?

Please find attached family integrated care on the neonatal unit guideline

Additional Information:

-There are two rooms in the flat on the unit for parents to use for overnight accommodation. There is also a bathroom and kitchenette nearby. Parents who wish to stay by the cot side would be offered either a reclining chair or a side room with a camp bed. We have three side rooms available.

The rooms on the Neonatal unit are provided free of charge for rooming in or for parents to be close to their baby. They are allocated according to need with first priority for parents of critically ill patients, then those rooming in prior to discharge, then mothers who wish to breast feed and then parents who wish to be close to their baby.

-There is a designated area for parents which has a bedroom and a multi-purpose room/sitting/dining room. There is a bathroom with shower and toilet and a kitchenette with hot water, toaster, and microwave. Beverages provided free of charge include tea, coffee, drinking chocolate and squash. Bread, cereal, and butter are also provided. Parents are also able to order hot meals for lunch and dinner free of charge.

There is also a weekday hot drinks round for parents run by the volunteer service. Resident and non-resident parents have access to the parent facilities. Feedback can be obtained via the friends and family survey.

-There is a toy box in the multi-purpose room/sitting/dining room for siblings. Provision is limited by the lack of space and because the room is multi-function. There is also a library on the wall on the way to accessing the parents' facilities. We are currently liaising with Noahs Star who provide a support service for families and siblings during their neonatal stay.

-Parents are offered the opportunity to visit the unit before delivery of their baby. This may be arranged via ante natal clinic or whilst the mother is an in-patient on maternity. Network virtual tours of all the local units is now active.

-Staff provide information on admission about the baby's condition and care. The unit has an "Introduction to the unit checklist" which standardises the information parents receive on admission. The checklist includes information about the baby's condition, treatment, and likely length of stay as well as information about facilities on the unit, parent access, feeding choice and equipment/alarms. The plan is for the document to be completed during the first few days. There is a second signatory column as it is recognised that parents may not always assimilate all the information at one time.

Senior medical consultation provided within 24 hours, and compliance evidenced from Badger net data. Parent update recorded on the medical handover document.

Signpost to Bliss via the family information board.

Memory boxes will soon be provided for parents of babies born at < 34weeks' gestation.

-Parents are granted unrestricted access to the Neonatal Unit 24 hours a day, especially during ward rounds. This open-access approach ensures that parents remain closely involved in their baby's care and medical progress. However, in rare circumstances, access may be temporarily restricted to maintain the baby's safety and well-being. Examples include safeguarding concerns or situations where supervised parental access is required by external agencies.

In addition to parents, up to four visitors may be nominated to visit the baby. At any given time, only two visitors are allowed at the cot side, and one of these must be a parent. Siblings of the baby or babies are not included in the nominated visitor count. All visitors must be at least 16 years of age, except in the case of siblings.

Where a partner is unavailable, one individual may be designated as a nominated support person to ensure that the parent continues to receive emotional and practical support. Partners are strongly encouraged to accompany the baby during transfer from the delivery or maternity unit to the Neonatal Unit to support continuity of care and bonding.

To ensure the safety of all babies on the unit, a secure tagging system is used. To provide safety and reassurance to our families. Access to the unit is controlled via a buzzer system at the main doors, and only authorized individuals are permitted entry. For telephone updates, a password system is used to protect the confidentiality of each baby's care. Parents are also provided with cards displaying the Neonatal Unit's direct contact number, allowing them to call the unit at any time, day, or night.

A dedicated parents' area is available for all parents to use freely throughout the day. For those wishing to stay overnight, a parents' flat can be arranged upon request. In cases where parents are unable to attend, Badger Net baby diary is maintained to document care details, and milestones including picture updates.

Meals are provided daily for mothers upon request, helping support their well-being during their baby's stay. Additionally, transportation support is available in the form of bus passes - Non means tested. Additionally, we work closely with 'Family Fund' who can support our families financially. We can support our families with the application form.

We also have an 'NNU Welcome Padlet' QR code, as an information sharing platform.

If you are dissatisfied with our response, you have the right to appeal in line with guidance from the Information Commissioner. In the first instance you may contact the Information Governance Manager of the Trust.

Information Governance Manager
Trust Headquarters
Russell's Hall Hospital
Dudley
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DY1 2HQ
Email: dgft.dpo@nhs.net

Should you disagree with the contents of our response to your appeal, you have the right to appeal to the Information Commissioners Office at.

Information Commissioners Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF
Tel: 0303 123 1113
www.ico.org.uk

If you require further clarification, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Team
The Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust