We can provide interpreters for a variety of languages, information in larger print or other formats (e.g. audio) - please call us on 01932 723553.

To use the Text Relay service, prefix all numbers with 18802.
Postnatal Care
For mothers and fathers immediately after the birth of your baby, on the postnatal wards and after transfer home

This leaflet is intended to give you additional information to that received from a healthcare professional.

It will explain the services we provide for you and your family in preparation for the days after the birth of your baby.

AFTER THE BIRTH

You and your baby will stay on the labour ward for a while after the birth to:

- make sure you and the baby are well
- give you and your partner time together with your baby
- support you with feeding your baby

If you have had an uncomplicated birth, and both you and your baby are well, you may go home straight from the labour ward. If you choose to go home, a midwife will usually see you and your baby at your home the next day.

If you stay in hospital, you and your baby will be transferred from the labour ward to the postnatal ward.

On the fifth day after the birth, the midwife will take the baby’s heel prick test and agree arrangements to discharge you and your baby from midwifery care at around ten days after birth. If you or your baby have any ongoing problems, the midwife may wish to visit you for a while longer.

A health visitor will make contact with you after your baby is ten days old to carry on the care of your baby, and will continue to support you until your baby is five years old.

FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information, advice, or to speak to one of our midwives, please telephone:

Community Midwives Clerk
01932 722413 – to pass on a message to a community midwife or to rearrange a visit.

Joan Booker Ward (Postnatal Ward)
01932 722378

Further Information
We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Matron, Senior Nurse or Manager on duty. If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01932 723553 or email pals@asph.nhs.uk. If you still remain concerned please contact our Complaints Manager on 01932 722612 or email complaints@asph.nhs.uk.
• you may need medicines to take home with you
• your discharge ‘papers’ and ‘red book’ will need to be completed ready for transfer home
• you will be given a copy of the leaflet Screening Tests for your Baby

The discharging midwife will inform the community midwives in your area that you have transferred home to ensure you and your baby have continued care. If you do not feel or require a visit the day after your discharge please discuss this with the midwife at time of discharge. Please remember to inform the midwife of the address you are going to and give her landline and mobile telephone numbers that you will be contactable on. You will then need to make arrangements for someone to take you home. For the safety of your baby, when travelling by car, please remember to use a baby car seat. At 10.00 a.m. you may be asked to wait in our discharge area with your baby until you are collected. Tea and coffee is available and please feel free to use the nursery and feeding room areas whilst waiting.

ON THE POSTNATAL WARD

The level of care on the postnatal ward will vary, depending on the type of birth you have had and your needs. If you have had an uncomplicated vaginal birth, nursery nurses, maternity health care assistants and midwives will support you with the care of your baby, as well as make sure you are well and help you with feeding your baby. If there are no complications you will be able to go home within 24 hours. If you have had a more complicated birth, such as a caesarean section - or if your baby is in the neonatal unit – your care will be based on how well you and your baby are progressing. Please remember to bring in all the things you may need for you and your baby whilst in hospital. This includes baby clothes, and a good supply of nappies. You will also need night dresses or other clothing, towels, sanitary pads and toiletries for yourself. Please note storage space is limited therefore only bring enough for your stay.

AT HOME

Depending on the arrangements you agreed with the hospital prior to discharge, the community midwife will contact you by telephone, or visit you at home on the first day. The time of the midwife’s first visit varies from 8.30 a.m. - 5.30 p.m. The community midwife will discuss a plan for visiting you and your baby thereafter. You may be asked to come to a postnatal clinic for some of your postnatal care; these clinics take place in a variety of locations and your midwife will advise you.

FEEDING YOUR BABY

We encourage mothers to breast feed their babies because we know that, in most circumstances, the mother's milk is the best possible milk. We will give you support to breast feed your baby, both in hospital and at home. We do have ‘drop-in’ groups based in the community that can continue to support you. If you decide to bottle feed your baby we will also support you in getting started. There are many different brands of milk on the market and you need to decide for yourself which is the best for you and your baby.
At present we stock 2 brands of prepared baby formulae. If you wish to provide your own, please discuss this with your midwife.

BABY CARE

National guidance recommends that well babies are not separated from their mothers. We do not have any facilities for offering care for well babies away from their mothers. Babies who need some minor medical care are cared for alongside their mothers in the Transitional Care Room. Sick babies are cared for in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, and parents are able to visit frequently. Regular bathing demonstrations are available and usually done in small groups. Other baby care information is given by nursery nurses, midwives and maternity assistants whilst caring for you and your baby. This information continues at home during the community midwife and health visitor contacts.

OTHER FACILITIES ON THE WARD

There is a personal TV and telephone system by each bed. This is a card-operated system; cards can be purchased from a machine on the ground floor. When using the system, please make sure that you use the headphones supplied and the volume is set at a level that will not disturb the other women around you. We would be grateful if you could ask relatives to telephone you at times that will not disturb other women on the postnatal ward with you.

VISITING GUIDANCE

We understand how people will be keen to visit you and your new baby, but you have just given birth and will need time to recover. Some women are not very well after birth and really need to rest. We ask your visitors to be considerate of other women on the ward.

Our visiting hours are:

- 8.00 a.m. - 8.00 p.m. for partners
- 2.00 p.m. - 4.00 p.m. and
- 6.00 p.m. - 8.00 p.m. for close relatives

No children under 16 are allowed to visit apart from your own.

GOING HOME

If you have had an uncomplicated birth you may go home within 6 - 24 hours, providing all is well. If you have had a caesarean section to deliver your baby, you may expect to be in hospital for at least two days. We will always discuss your plan for care with you.

To prepare you for going home:

- you will have an examination by a doctor or midwife
- your baby will be examined by a midwife, or baby doctor
- you will be offered the opportunity to have your baby vaccinated against Tuberculosis.(B.C.G)