

Maternity Services

UPDATE



NHS

South Tees Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Maternity services update – 9

January 2021

Welcome to the South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Maternity Service leaflet that aims to provide you with updated information in relation to service changes due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Information continues to change on a frequent basis from the Government, Public Health England and other sources.

The Maternity Service aims to keep you updated on the trust website on a regular basis if things are changing. Any changes made are to keep you, your family and our staff as safe as possible.

Please refer to the previous updates on the website for any answers that may not be addressed below

These are some of the questions we're frequently being asked

- **Are Partners able to attend Scans**

Yes partially

Following ongoing risk assessment we are pleased to continue inviting partners to attend 12wk (dating), 20wk (anomaly), early pregnancy (before 12 weeks) and fetal medicine scans.

We have made the difficult decision to withdraw partners attending all other scans due to capacity within the department and the rising rates of COVID-19 admissions within the unit. Partners that are attending will be asked to wait in their vehicle or outside until the scanning room is available, this will ensure we can maintain social distancing regulations.

Partners will also be required to wear a surgical mask upon entering the maternity unit to protect patients and staff (provided on arrival). We will continue to review this on a regular basis in line with any further national changes.

- **Do pregnant women need to take extra precautions?**

Studies from the UK show that pregnant women are no more likely to get seriously unwell from coronavirus but pregnant women have been included in the list of people at moderate risk (clinically vulnerable) as a precaution.

The government guidance for the clinically vulnerable remains in place and you should ensure you continue to follow the latest government guidance.

Pregnant women should follow the latest government guidance on staying alert and safe (social distancing) and avoid anyone who has symptoms suggestive of coronavirus. If you are in your third trimester (more than 28 weeks' pregnant) you should be particularly attentive to social distancing (RCOG 2021). Isolating with your partner before attending for birth is something you may wish to consider to reduce the chances of contracting the virus.

- **Can my partner attend appointments?**

Yes Partially

Due to rising infection rates and to maintain the safety of our patients and staff we have withdrawn partners attending antenatal appointments. We are encouraging partners to dial in to appointments or video call if you have that facility on your mobile phone.

- **Will my partner be offered a COVID-19 Swab?**

Yes

To ensure we are keeping our inpatient areas as safe as possible for patients, babies and staff we are asking all birth partners to have a COVID-19 swab completed at the same time as their partner. Please see the swabbing process on our maternity services website page for further explanation of timing of the test and the results process.

- **Can my partner attend for an induction of labour?**

Yes

We continue to welcome your birthing partner to accompany you on admission to central delivery suite for induction of labour. They can remain with you for one -two hours until you are moved to the induction suite where social distancing can no longer be maintained.

Once your induction of labour progresses and you are moved into a single delivery room your partner will be able to attend to provide support.

- **Can my partner attend the antenatal ward?**

Yes

Your partner can continue to support you on the antenatal ward which will take place in staggered time slots to maintain social distancing in the shared bays. This will be for your birth partner only and must remain the same person for the duration of the stay; we provide COVID-19 screening for all partners to ensure safety of patients and staff.

Staff will keep a record of partners contact details for track and trace purposes and will ask COVID-19 screening questions before admission. Partners must be asymptomatic of COVID-19 and be in the same household or support bubble as the patient. Partners are unable to bring any items into the ward other than clothes and hygiene products.

- **Can my partner attend the postnatal ward?**

Yes

Your Birth partner can continue to support you following a negative COVID-19 swab, on the postnatal ward in staggered time slots to ensure social distancing is maintained. This must remain the same birth partner for the duration of your stay and they must not leave the ward during the time slot or they will be unable to be readmitted to the area. We provide COVID-19 screening for all partners to ensure safety of patients and staff.

Staff will keep a record of partner contact details for track and trace purposes and will ask COVID-19 screening questions before admission. Partners must be asymptomatic of COVID-19 and be in the same household or support bubble as the patient. Partners will be asked to remain in their vehicle until they are contacted by the patient to attend the unit, please do not attend before this phone call.

- **Is COVID-19 screening available for parents of babies on the neonatal unit?**

Yes

All parents will be offered regular COVID-19 testing for the duration of their babies stay on the unit. Regular testing reduces the risk to the vulnerable babies, parents and staff. Staff will discuss this with you further if your baby requires neonatal care.