Maternity Services Update – Week 2

April 2020

Welcome to the second 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 daily 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 to keep informed. Any changes made we make are to keep you, your family and our staff as safe as possible.

These are some of the questions we’re frequently being asked:

Please refer to the March 2020 Update to view previous questions

- Will the people caring for me be wearing gowns and other protective equipment?
  Yes
  You will see staff in a variety of gowns, aprons, gloves, masks and goggles / visors. This is to protect you and staff.

  Below is what some of the staff caring for you might look like. Although this isn’t what we usually wear, we are still here to provide the same level of care, reassurance and support – we just look a bit different.

- Will my labour still be induced if required?
  Yes
  If you need to have your labour induced then we will arrange this with you. You will be cared for by a midwife during this process. We aim to make this time as comfortable and relaxed as possible. All women who are going through an induction of labour during this stressful time have commented positively about their experience.
You will be asked to attend for induction of labour unaccompanied. Your birth partner will be able to attend once you go into labour.

- **Will I still get my elective (planned) caesarean section?**
  *Yes but may occasionally be delayed*

  There are some changes that you need to be aware of:
  
  o You can still have your partner under most circumstances with you during your elective caesarean section.
  
  o You will have your elective caesarean section in a hospital theatre other than the maternity theatre. It will be the same maternity team.
  
  o The team looking after you will be wearing different masks and eye protection. This is to protect both you and the staff.
  
  o You will be asked to attend the day before your elective caesarean section for a nasal and throat swab to test if you have coronavirus/COVID-19.

    **If your swab is positive** for Coronavirus/COVID-19 – we may consider it better to delay your elective caesarean section as your recovery is likely to be better. We will discuss this with you.

    **If your swab is negative** for Coronavirus/COVID-19 – we will carry out you elective caesarean section where possible on the planned day.

- **Can I still use gas and air in labour?**
  *Maybe*

  **No symptoms/negative swab of Coronavirus/COVID-19** – you can use gas and air (entonox) as usual.

  **Symptoms/positive swab of Coronavirus/COVID-19** – you will not be allowed to use gas and air and will be offered alternative pain relief. This is due to having no ventilation for the gases in certain delivery rooms that may give an increased risk of spreading the Coronavirus/COVID-19.

- **Can I have a home birth?**
  *No*

  We have made the difficult decision to suspend homebirths. We are happy to offer delivery at the low dependency Friarage Midwifery Unit. If you would like to discuss this option please contact the Maternity Advice Line on 01609 763093.

- **Can I have a waterbirth?**
  *No*

  We have suspended waterbirths due to the risk of increased infection. Please speak to your midwife to discuss your options.

- **If my baby is admitted to the Neonatal Unit (NICU), can I still visit?**
  *Yes*

  We want to keep all babies and parents as safe as possible. Therefore visiting is:
- One parent can visit NICU once a day for a maximum of 2 hours.
- You can choose what time of day you would like to visit your baby around what works best for you – this can vary each day.
- If you leave the NICU at any point within your allocated 2 hours, you will not be allowed to re-enter.
- If your baby is really poorly this will be reviewed on an individual basis.