

Neonatal family care team

Information for children, families and carers

Congratulations on the arrival of your baby or babies.

We understand that having a baby on the neonatal unit can feel frightening, stressful and worrying. There is no right way to feel right now, but we are here to support you.

We've written this factsheet to explain who our neonatal family care team are and how we can support you and your family on your neonatal journey. We hope it will help to answer some of the questions you may have. If you have any further questions or concerns, please speak to a member of our team.

Who are we?

Our neonatal family care team provides practical and psychological support to your family while your baby is being cared for on the neonatal unit.

Our team is made up of a family care lead nurse (a senior neonatal nurse) and a clinical psychologist. We also have trainee clinical psychologists on placement with us at different times.

We work alongside the neonatal team looking after your baby and attend regular neonatal meetings to discuss how best to support you. We also work together with other healthcare professionals involved in your baby's care, ensuring they are regularly updated (for example, midwives, GPs, neonatal therapists, social workers, health visitors and hospital consultants).

How can we help support you?

There are lots of different ways we can support families on the neonatal unit. We have included some examples of how we can help below.

Practical information and advice

We can offer advice and provide further information on a range of topics, including:

- sibling support (please ask us about our sibling activity books and sibling heart project)

- bonding with your baby and attachment
- self-care (for you to be there for your baby, it is important that you look after yourself too)

We can also discuss how you'd like to receive medical information and how we can best support you and your family.

Emotional and psychological support

We can discuss what is happening with your baby and how you are feeling to help you make sense of everything. We can also discuss coping strategies to help you manage any overwhelming emotions you might understandably experience while your baby is being cared for on the neonatal unit.

Financial advice

We can:

- offer advice about the financial benefits you may be entitled to
- write to your employer(s) to explain your family's current situation and request compassionate leave (if appropriate)

Peer support

We run wellbeing drop-in sessions called 'cake breaks' for parents and carers on the unit most Friday mornings between 11.30am and 12.30pm (please check the poster on the family room door for more information). These 'cake breaks' take place in the family lounge on the neonatal unit. Our 'cake breaks' provide you with the opportunity to meet with our clinical psychologist and other parents currently on the unit while getting something to eat. Occasionally, we focus on a particular theme during the session to help focus our conversation, such as bonding with your baby.

We also run weekly coffee mornings for neonatal families at Ronald McDonald House every Wednesday from 10am to 12 noon. All families with babies either currently on the neonatal unit or babies who have recently been discharged from the neonatal unit (within the last six months) are welcome to come along. Our coffee mornings provide you with the opportunity to meet with other neonatal families and members of the neonatal team (family care team, neonatal home team, neonatal therapies team and Ronald McDonald staff). Please check the 'holding little hands' Facebook group page for more information.

Advocacy

We can act as your advocate (someone to speak up for you) and support you in medical meetings.

Follow-up support

For the first three months after your baby leaves hospital, we can provide psychological support to your family. The support we offer you will focus on what you need at the time. For example, we can focus on adjusting to life outside of the hospital. We can also signpost you to other community services, depending on what would be most helpful for your family.

Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns, or you would like to meet with us to discuss how we can help you and your family, please contact us.

Neonatal family care team
E level
Princess Anne Hospital
Coxford Road
Southampton
Hampshire
SO16 5YA

Telephone: **07827 271166** (Monday to Friday)
Email: **Neonatafamilycare@uhs.nhs.uk**

Alternatively, please ask one of the neonatal team to contact us for you and we will arrange a suitable time to meet with you.

Useful links and resources

Birth reflections service

Birth reflections is a midwife-led listening and debriefing service which provides you with an opportunity to talk through your birth experience. For more information about this service, please download a copy of our birth reflections service factsheet: www.uhs.nhs.uk/Media/UHS-website-2019/Patientinformation/Pregnancyandbirth/Birth-reflections-service-3118-PIL.pdf or call the service on telephone: **023 8120 6834**.

Holding little hands

Holding little hands is a Facebook group for past and present families of babies cared for on the neonatal unit at Princess Anne Hospital. Our team often posts information about upcoming events and resources to this group and parents can also share their own stories here.

Bliss

Bliss is a charity that supports families with a baby in neonatal care. Through their network of dedicated volunteers, they provide face-to-face and email support. They also provide lots of information about caring for premature and full-term sick babies.

Website: www.bliss.org.uk

My Prem Baby

My Prem Baby is a free app from Tommy's. It is a premature baby tracker for parents, from pregnancy to after the birth.

Website: www.tommys.org/pregnancy-information/premature-birth/my-prem-baby-app

The Birth Trauma Association UK

The Birth Trauma Association UK is a charity that supports all women who have had a traumatic birth experience.

Website: www.birthtraumaassociation.co.uk

Rainbow Trust

Rainbow Trust is a children's charity that provides emotional and practical support to families who have a baby in neonatal care.

Website: www.rainbowtrust.org.uk/neonatal-support

The DadPad

Developed with the NHS, DadPad gives new dads and dads-to-be the knowledge and skills needed to gain confidence and give their baby the best start in life.

Website: www.thedadpad.co.uk

Steps 2 Wellbeing

Steps 2 Wellbeing offer psychological therapies for mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety and stress.

Website: www.steps2wellbeing.co.uk

PANDAS (postnatal depression awareness and support)

PANDAS is a charity that offers information, support and guidance to families suffering with perinatal mental illness, including prenatal (antenatal) and postnatal depression.

Website: www.pandasfoundation.org.uk

If you are a patient at one of our hospitals and need this document translated, or in another format such as easy read, large print, Braille or audio, please telephone **0800 484 0135** or email patientsupporthub@uhs.nhs.uk

For help preparing for your visit, arranging an interpreter or accessing the hospital, please visit www.uhs.nhs.uk/additionalsupport

www.uhs.nhs.uk/childrenshospital

Version 1. Published March 2023. Due for review March 2026. 3274