COVID-19: Updated Maternity Advice for South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust

Thank you for using the maternity services of South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust. We would like to update you on a few changes that we have made to our services in response to the COVID-19 outbreak.

You can also receive regular updates for maternity services by following ‘Maternity Updates SWFT’ on Facebook.

South Warwickshire NHS Foundation Trust @nhsswft nhsswft

SWFT Maternity Partnership @swftmatpship

Key Information

COVID-19 Symptoms: If you, your partner or anyone living in your household have the following symptoms or have had these symptoms in the last 7 days, and/or has tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 14 days, please inform your named midwife and do not attend the hospital until you have spoken to a midwife or obstetrician via:

- Antenatal Assessment Unit, Warwick (AAU): 01926 495321 // Ext. 4090
- Labour Ward, Warwick: 01926 495321 // Ext. 4552

A high temperature: You feel hot to touch on your chest or back. If you have a thermometer, a high temperature is anything at 37.8°C or above.

A new continuous cough: Coughing for more than an hour, or 3+ coughing episodes in 24 hours.

Call 999 if you are having difficulty breathing or your symptoms are life threatening.
**Summary of Changes**

**Birth partners and visiting:** We are following social distancing recommendations from the government as well as national guidance for maternity care during the COVID-19 pandemic. We are able to support your chosen birth partner to stay with you throughout your birth.

This person must be well and not recently exposed to COVID-19. Your birth partner needs to remain in the maternity unit with you and they should bring with them a small bag containing anything they may need.

No visitors or children are able to attend the maternity unit at this time. Please attend all other appointments alone including Antenatal Assessment Unit, Antenatal Clinic, community midwifery appointments and ultrasound scans.

**Antenatal care:** We are committed to maintaining our midwifery teams out in the community, so that you have a known midwife, supported by a team. Our consultant-led clinics will continue to run from Antenatal Clinic in the hospital. Some antenatal appointments will be conducted virtually. Online Antenatal Education sessions and tours of the unit will be shared on the ‘Maternity Updates SWFT’ Facebook page while we are unable to provide the face-to-face sessions.

**Place of birth:** We are committed to supporting all three choices around place of birth - Obstetric Unit, Birth Centre and home birth. We are actively encouraging our well, Birth Centre suitable women to consider home birth. Please discuss this with your named midwife.

**Planned procedures such as induction of labour and caesarean section:** Planned procedures in maternity are going ahead as normal.

If you need to come to the maternity unit for an induction of labour, we will try our best to care for you in a side room (subject to availability) to enable your birth partner to remain with you throughout the induction process and birth. If your birth partner is unable to stay for the duration of induction of labour, we would advise that you attend without them. We will contact them once you are transferred to the Labour Ward and they can join you there.

If you need to come to the maternity unit for a planned caesarean section, we will ensure you stay with your birth partner throughout the process.

**Postnatal:** Whilst we understand and support the importance of post birth time together for couples with a new baby, we are only able to support your birth partner to stay for three hours post birth.

We will be aiming to discharge you home as soon as it is safe to do so following birth. If you have extenuating circumstances, this will be taken into account during your postnatal stay.

Following discharge, we are committed to maintaining our midwifery teams out in the community, so that you have a known midwife, supported by a team for your postnatal care. Some postnatal appointments will be conducted virtually.

**Frequently asked questions (FAQs):** There are several FAQs and answers at the end of this letter.
Antenatal - Pregnancy Care

Changes to visiting: We are following social distancing recommendations from the government as well as national guidance for maternity care during the COVID-19 pandemic. We understand how important support from partners, family and friends is during pregnancy and birth. In order to protect you and our staff no partners, visitors or children are able to attend the maternity unit at this time.

Please attend all other appointments alone including Antenatal Assessment Unit, Antenatal Clinic, community midwifery appointments and ultrasound scans. Please be reassured that the staff who will be looking after you while your partner is not present, will ensure you are well looked after.

Antenatal care: Your routine antenatal visits will now be a mixture of face-to-face and virtual consultations. We may be contacting you about changes to your care and this can be a withheld number. It is important that you answer these calls.

Our current schedule of visits for your midwifery led care pathway:

Booking appointment: Your first meeting with a midwife will be over the phone or by virtual appointment which usually takes an hour. The midwife will take your previous medical and obstetric history (please have any relevant documents with you) and ask you questions about your lifestyle. They will discuss the blood tests recommended for your next appointment and will also agree a plan for your care.

Booking blood tests clinic: You will attend a clinic to have the blood tests taken that were discussed with you at your booking appointment. Your blood pressure and urine samples will also be taken.

Dating scan: This ultrasound scan will take place between 11 weeks and 5 days and 12 weeks and 3 days. Following this scan, you may opt to have screening blood tests.

16 week appointment: This will be a telephone consultation. Your midwife will discuss your pregnancy care plan with you.

18—20 week ultrasound scan: At this visit a midwife or maternity support worker will check your blood pressure and urine.

28 week appointment: You will see a midwife and they will check your blood pressure and urine, listen to your baby’s heart rate, and check the position of your baby. This will take place in the community hub. You can also collect your MATB1 form (please inform your midwife if you need your MATB1 form before 28 weeks).
32 week appointment: You will be seen by your midwife who will check your blood pressure and urine, listen to your baby’s heart rate, and check the position of your baby. This will take place in the community hub.

36 week appointment: You will be seen by your midwife who will check your blood pressure and urine, listen to your baby’s heart rate, and check the position of your baby. Your midwife will also discuss your birth preferences with you. This will take place in the community hub. If you are booked for a home birth, your appointment will take place at home.

38 week appointment: For first time mums only. You will be seen by your midwife who will check your blood pressure and urine, listen to your baby’s heart rate, and check the position of your baby. This will take place in the community hub.

40 week appointment: You will be seen by your midwife who will check your blood pressure and urine, listen to your baby’s heart rate, and check the position of your baby. Your midwife will give you information about prolonged pregnancy, and induction of labour. This will take place in the community hub.

If you are following a consultant-led pathway, you will have a similar pattern of appointments but tailored to your personalised care plan.

If you experience any of the following, please call us:

- Vaginal bleeding
- Your baby is not moving, or the movements are not the usual pattern
- Starred vision or disturbed vision
- Swelling of your face, hands or feet
- Leg pain, swelling and / or redness
- If your waters break or you are concerned about vaginal discharge
- If you have pain when passing urine
- Constant tummy pain
- Persistent headache not improved / cleared with paracetamol
- Epigastric pain not resolved with antacids
- Itching of your hands or feet
- If you feel short of breath
- If you feel unwell and are unable to maintain fluid intake or become feverish

Labour & Birth

Place of birth: We are committed to supporting choice and intend to keep all birth settings available (Labour Ward, Birth Centre, home birth and water birth) throughout this pandemic. To do this, we are working hard to make sure we have enough staff in all areas, and we have acquired additional resources to support transfers of women in urgent situations. If you have planned or would like to plan to give birth at home in the next few months, talk to your midwife who will ensure you have the most up to date information.
Postnatal Care

Following the birth of your baby, wherever possible, we aim to allow some time for you to be together as a family. Birth partners will be able to stay for three hours post birth and we aim to discharge you home as soon as is as safe to do so.

If you have extenuating circumstances, this will be taken into consideration during your postnatal stay. Please be reassured that the team caring for you will listen to what is important to you, and ensure that your care is both safe and personalised. Please discuss any concerns with your midwife.

Discharge: We will encourage you to return home as soon as it is safe to do so.

Postnatal visits: Once you are discharged, we will ensure that you receive the very best postnatal care at home. We are always at the end of the phone if you have any questions. Please contact your named midwife if not urgent, or Labour Ward / Birth Centre with more urgent queries.

While this will vary with individual circumstances, the minimum consultation plan will include:

Day 1 — Your first day at home: You will receive a telephone consultation.

Day 5: A midwife will come to your home. At this appointment we will weigh your baby and perform the Newborn Blood Spot test.

Day 10: We will visit you again on Day 10. This could be a telephone consultation depending on your circumstances.
If you experience any of the following, please call us:

- **Antenatal Assessment Unit, Warwick (AAU):** 01926 495321 // Ext. 4090
- **Labour Ward, Warwick:** 01926 495321 // Ext. 4552
- **Birth Centre, Warwick:** 01926 495321 // Ext. 6977

- If your bleeding is becoming heavier or you are passing clots
- You are concerned that your wound site is becoming infected (red, inflamed, painful, swelling, oozing)
- Your vaginal discharge is offensive, or your stitches become more painful
- You are concerned about your baby feeding or your baby is sleepy and not waking for feeds
- You feel unwell and/or feverish
- You have pain or swelling in your legs or feel short of breath
- If you have any other concerns

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Thank You.

This is an anxious time for everybody, with requirements changing on a daily basis. I would like to reassure you that the health and well-being of you, your baby and family are at the heart of everything we do.

We are sadly having to make temporary changes to our service; particularly with regards to the social aspects of birth - no visiting and no birth partners on Swan Ward (the postnatal ward). This, however, is essential in order to protect you, your baby and our staff.

The birth of a child is an everyday miracle, and we are so excited for you and your future. I ask you to place your trust in us and most importantly yourself that your pregnancy, birth and early days with your new baby will be just as precious. What a story you will have to tell them as they grow up!

I am so proud of my team here at Warwick. They are in my opinion the best of the best. We are and will continue to be here for you. This document will continue to be updated and reposted. Please ensure you are looking the most recent version. We will also continue to regularly post updates on the ‘Maternity Updates SWFT’ Facebook group – please circulate this information to anybody in your network whom you know is pregnant, to help us keep everybody informed.

Yours sincerely,

**Sarah Noble**
Head of Midwifery
Frequently Asked Questions

What other resources are available for information concerning COVID-19? We will be updating the ‘Maternity Updates SWFT’ Facebook page as information and guidance changes. We have also compiled a list of useful resources which you can view by clicking the blue links below.

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists in conjunction with the Royal College of Midwives have created a webpage with useful information for you and your family. This page is frequently updated as new guidance and information is available.

COVID-19 Infection and pregnancy, information for women and their families

COVID-19 Parent information for newborn babies from NHS England

COVID-19 Information for parents worried their baby is unwell and how to seek help from the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

More general information regarding COVID-19 from the Government
This is also available in many different languages

What other resources are available for information relating to your baby? We have compiled a list of useful resources which you can view by clicking the blue links below.

NHS Information for low risk women having their first baby

Information for healthy, low-risk women who have had a baby before

International Confederation of Midwives Statement

Who should I contact? For non-urgent issues please contact your named midwife. If you have an urgent query, please contact:

 позвоните в отделение родовспоможения, Лаундж, Уэрвик: +44 (0) 1926 495321 // Ext. 4552

Should I be social distancing? We recommend that you follow government advice on social distancing. Click the following link for more information.

Guidance on social distancing for everyone in the UK

Is the hospital safe and clean? All our healthcare and support staff are working tirelessly to ensure the hospital is kept clean and the risk of transmitting COVID-19 is minimized. We all need to play our part in ensuring we report symptoms and perform hand hygiene regularly. The senior midwifery and medical team are constantly reviewing how many staff are available and how busy we are across the whole maternity service. We have contingency measures in place should staff sickness increase to ensure the safety and quality of our care is not affected.

Can I still attend the hospital if I have any concerns? If your concern is life threatening, then please call 999. Otherwise you should call the Antenatal Assessment Unit, Warwick (AAU): 01926 495321 // Ext. 4090 or Labour Ward, Warwick: 01926 495321 // Ext. 4552 and a midwife will assess your concern and advise you. Please be assured that you will be seen if it is clinically indicated.
My birth partner has been unwell and is suspected to have COVID-19 - can they still come to the hospital? If your birth partner no longer has symptoms, they can attend the hospital. It is really important that you inform us via Labour Ward, Warwick: 01926 495321 // Ext. 4552 prior to coming into hospital. This allows staff to prepare for your arrival and ensure we minimise the possible transmission of the virus. It is really important that you are honest about your own and your birth partner’s symptoms.

My planned birth partner is symptomatic and is unable to come to the hospital - can I bring someone else? Yes, if that person lives in the same household with you but is important that you inform us before to coming to hospital that someone in your household has symptoms of COVID-19. If your alternative birth partner lives in another household it is important they understand that they must self-isolate for 14 days after coming in to hospital with you.

Can my partner join me for my scans? All scans and appointments should be unaccompanied. Please speak to your midwife if you have any concerns.

Are home births being supported? We are committed to supporting all three current birth choices around place of birth and we are actively encouraging our well Birth Centre suitable women to consider home birth. Please discuss home birth as an option with your named midwife.

What changes have been made to the induction of labour process? Dependent on the reason you are being induced we may be able to offer you an outpatient induction. This is to minimise your time in hospital. Your consultant will be able to discuss this option with you.

Can my birth partner stay after the birth if I need a caesarean section? Following the birth of your baby, all birth partners can stay for three hours post birth.

Is there any evidence that taking ibuprofen or diclofenac will increase the risk of developing COVID-19 or of developing more severe COVID-19 symptoms? NHS England and NHS Improvement issued a review on 14 April 2020, and advised that there is no evidence that the acute use of NSAIDs such as ibuprofen and diclofenac increases the risk of developing COVID-19, or of developing more severe COVID-19 symptoms. We recommend that it is taken as normal postnatally, with the routine exclusions applying.

What will happen if I have been referred for an antenatal anaesthetic appointment during my pregnancy? If you have been referred by your midwife or obstetrician for an anaesthetic appointment during pregnancy, your referral will be triaged for either a written response, telephone assessment or a face-to-face appointment. In some cases we will advise you request to see the anaesthetist upon arrival to Labour Ward to discuss any issues you might have. We will write to you via the Badger portal of the outcome of your referral.