



Active  irth Centre

RJMS
Alongside
Midwife-led
Unit

The Active Birth Centre (ABC)

The Active Birth Centre (ABC) is an alongside midwife-led unit (AMU) adjacent to the Consultant-led Delivery Suite, providing midwife-led care during labour and birth to women at low risk of complications. Some women feel reassured in a hospital environment and in the ABC we specialise in providing care which supports women to birth without medical interventions.

The ABC has four birthing rooms; Sanctuary, Serenity, Harmony, Haven, each with the privacy of an en-suite shower room and one has a fixed birthing pool.

The Philosophy of Care

The emphasis of the ABC is to facilitate normal birth, which improves outcomes and experiences for mothers and babies.

<http://bit.ly/PlaceofBirth>



Midwives provide one-to-one support during labour, offering a number of birthing aids and simple strategies to assist women in managing their labour.

What we offer for labour/birth

- Safe and caring environment to facilitate normal birth
- Comfortable surroundings to help you feel relaxed and in control
- Individual midwife-led care with experienced midwives
- Birthing aids available; birthing mats, birthing balls, CUBs (comfortable upright birth)
- Birthing pool if you wish to labour/birth in water
- Less chance of intervention, but reassurance of nearby medical assistance.

Who can birth in the ABC?

Being at low risk of complications means:

- You and your baby are healthy and well
- You have no medical conditions affecting you or baby
- If you have given birth before, there were no complications
- You are pregnant with one baby (not twins or triplets)
- Your baby has grown healthily during pregnancy and is in a 'head down' position
- Birth should take place between 37-42 weeks.

Certain conditions may be supported in an AMU, please refer to; <http://bit.ly/MLUNI> and speak to your midwife.

How do I plan to birth in the ABC?

Throughout your pregnancy you will be able to discuss with your midwife where you would like to have your baby. Your midwife will refer to the GAIN criteria for admission to midwife-led units in Northern Ireland <http://bit.ly/MLUNI>

Towards the end of your pregnancy your midwife will make sure you remain suitable to birth in the ABC, should you choose this birthplace option. You may wish to record your birthplace option in the birth preference section of your Maternity Hand Held Record (MHHR).

Who do I call when labour begins?

When your labour begins, call the RJMS Admissions Department (Tel: 028 9615 0596) and speak with a midwife, who can advise you how to manage at home in the early stages of labour and when to come in.

What if I develop complications in labour?

A small percentage of women may experience difficulties during labour/birth, requiring a transfer to Consultant-Led Care. If the midwife is concerned about you or your baby's wellbeing or progress during labour, she will discuss this with you and will be transferred to the Delivery Suite. If your baby experiences any complications the Neonatal team will be available.

How long will I stay after my baby is born?



The ABC is designed for you to stay in throughout labour, birth and postnatal. Partners are welcome to stay and you and your baby will go home a few hours after the birth (6-12).

If there is a clinical need for you or your baby to stay in hospital, you will be transferred to the postnatal ward for ongoing care.

After you go home your community midwife will continue to support you with home visits.

Other birth place options

If you are healthy and well you may also wish to consider;

- Birthing in the Mater Freestanding Midwife-Led Unit (FMU)
- Home birth

Please speak to your midwife about your birthplace options.



Personal and Public
Involvement (PPI)



Involving you,
improving care