

Now you are pregnant

Choices for Maternity Care in Northern Ireland



Health and
Social Care

Our aim is to ensure you receive maternity care in the right place, with the right people looking after you and your baby.

How do I book for my Maternity Care?

- You can refer yourself to the local midwife
- You can contact a maternity unit directly
- Your GP can arrange your maternity care

This self-referral form can be obtained from Trust websites.

Antenatal Appointments

Your booking appointment will ideally be between 10 and 12 weeks. At this appointment, the midwife will discuss important information which will guide your care.

You will be given your green Maternity Notes and the Pregnancy book - please remember to bring them to all appointments. We will provide information to help you to stay as healthy as possible. You will also be informed about what to expect at future appointments and encouraged to attend parenting education sessions to prepare you and your family for pregnancy and parenting.

What you can do now

- If you have a medical condition or are taking prescribed medication, see your GP or medical specialist now
- Take folic acid and Vitamin D - ask your midwife or GP about the correct dose
- Stop smoking: go to want2stop.info for help
- Stop drinking alcohol
- Stop taking non-prescribed drugs
- Eat a healthy diet and take regular exercise



Choices for Antenatal Care

There are a number of options for your care. The healthcare professional leading your care will liaise with your GP and other specialists throughout your pregnancy and the postnatal period.

Midwifery Led Care (MLC)

If your pregnancy is straightforward, midwives will provide all your antenatal maternity care, during childbirth and the early postnatal period. Your antenatal appointments will be at your local health centre, maternity unit, at home or other suitable venue. These are mostly individual appointments or you may be offered the option of group-based antenatal care and education.

Obstetric Led Care

This option is suitable for women who will require obstetric and medical care during pregnancy and childbirth. Therefore if your pregnancy is not straightforward or you have had complications in the past, your maternity care will be led by a consultant obstetrician at the Maternity Unit. Some of your antenatal appointments may be with a midwife.




Birthplace choices

At your first appointment ask the midwife for information about the best options for you. If your pregnancy is straightforward, evidence shows that birthplace options are safe for you and your baby:

- Freestanding midwife-led units (community maternity units/ birth centres)
- Alongside midwife-led units (attached to consultant units)
- In your own home (discuss how to plan this with your midwife)
- DOMINO (one of your community midwives provides care in a maternity unit)

If your pregnancy is not straightforward the best place is likely to be in a Consultant Unit in hospital under the care of an obstetrician. . A multidisciplinary team including midwives will be available to provide care for all women who require specialist services.

Northern Ireland Maternity Units

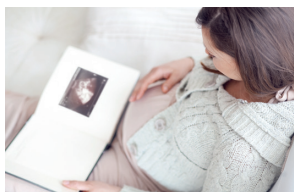
-  Freestanding midwife-led unit
-  Consultant unit with alongside midwife-led unit
-  Consultant unit



This map outlines the current Maternity Units in Northern Ireland and may be subject to change.

Maternity care in the right place, with the right people looking after you and your baby will help ensure the best outcomes.

- Birth in a relaxed environment with low intervention rates for women with a straightforward pregnancy
- Medical care from specialist teams if you need it, to ensure a safe birth for you and your baby
- Talk to your midwife and/or doctor about what you would like so that the care offered meets your individual needs and choices



What if a problem arises?

You will be continually assessed as your pregnancy, labour and postnatal period progresses.

- Contact your midwife or local maternity unit immediately if you have any concerns about your pregnancy
- Contact your own GP about any medical problems just as you would normally do
- If your midwife or GP has any concerns they will discuss this with you and arrange for an obstetrician to see you
- Emergency 24 hour medical cover is available by obstetricians, paediatricians and anaesthetists should this be necessary

Maternity Service Liaison Committees (MSLC)

Ask the midwife or visit your Trust's website to learn more about local MSLC groups and how you can join – just remember your views really matter and you can help us to improve services. Be sure to let the MSLC know when problems/concerns are resolved.



Further Information

Maternity Services' details and links to care pathways, leaflets, The Pregnancy Book, websites, local antenatal education sessions and other useful information is available on our Trust websites.

www.belfasttrust.hscni.net

www.northerntrust.hscni.net

www.southerntrust.hscni.net

www.setrust.hscni.net

www.westerntrust.hscni.net

If you require general information, about the services, please visit the regional websites.

www.publichealth.hscni.net

www.health-ni.gov.uk

www.nidirect.gov.uk



Supervisor of Midwives

If you wish to discuss any particular aspects of your maternity care, you can contact a local Supervisor of Midwives (SOM) who will be happy to help.

The 24 hour 'SOM On-Call' telephone number for your area is available in your Maternity Notes or visit www.nipec.hscni.net/supervisionofmidwives

Feedback

Your feedback is very important as it helps us to monitor and improve our services so please use the feedback link on the Trust website or ask staff for a feedback card.

