

Your time in the Neonatal Unit



What to expect

For most people having their baby in the Neonatal Unit comes as a huge shock but rest assured that the Neonatal Unit is the best place to support new-born babies who are ill or born prematurely.

The Neonatal Unit is a busy ward with 38 cots. 10 cots are for Intensive Care where we look after the most seriously ill babies. Five cots are for High Dependency which sees babies who are not critically ill but still need complex care and 23 cots are for Specialist Care, which is for babies who are well but are catching up on growth and development after a premature birth, or for term babies who need a little help after a stressful birth.



Who will care for my baby in the unit?

In the Neonatal Unit, a skilled team from different professions will care for your baby 24 hours a day. Some of the people you might meet include:

Nursing staff and specialist Neonatal Nurses, Senior Nurses in charge (Sisters or the Unit Manager), Consultant Paediatricians or Neonatologists (who lead your baby's care), Junior Doctors, Physiotherapists (who help with your baby's development), Radiographers (who take x-rays and scans), Dieticians (who advise on nutrition), Pharmacists, nursery nurses and social workers.

Nursing staff usually change over at 7am and 7pm. There is a formal ward round every morning, and a shorter ward round in the afternoon. During these times staff may ask you to wait outside your baby's room so that every baby's care remains confidential.

The nursing staff caring for your baby will be happy to give you an update on your baby's care whenever you visit or telephone the unit. You can also ask to see the medical staff for an update on your baby's condition and an appointment can be arranged to see your baby's consultant.

How can I help to look after my baby?

Parents are encouraged to spend as much time with their baby on the unit as they feel able to, with 24-hour access every day. Nursing staff will show you how you can be hands-on with the care of your baby, for example helping with nappy changes and feeding. There may be times when your baby needs complete rest and needs to be undisturbed, which will always be discussed with you.

Parents also play a very important part in reducing infection risk for all the babies on the unit by washing their hands properly when entering the unit, and by using disinfectant hand gel before and after touching and handling their baby.

Additional information

Parents new to the Neonatal Unit will usually be given a Parent Information Guide published by Bliss Scotland. This excellent guide contains detailed information and support for the families of premature and ill babies in Scotland. The Parent Information Guide can also be viewed online at www.bliss.org.uk



The Archie Foundation

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