

A close-up photograph of a newborn baby's feet, which are pink and wrinkled, being gently held by two adult hands. The background is a soft, light blue fabric.

# Your Choices

before, during and after pregnancy

## A Guide to your Maternity Choices

Norfolk & Waveney Local Maternity & Neonatal System is committed to ensuring you have access to high quality maternity care, wherever you choose to have your baby



Local Maternity  
& Neonatal System

As soon as you find out you are pregnant it is important that you book in with maternity services

Pregnancy can be a joyful time, but we also recognise that you can experience mixed emotions

Each appointment is an opportunity for you to talk about how you are feeling and ask any questions you might have with your midwife

During the COVID restrictions, antenatal appointments will either be face to face or digital online. Please ask your midwife for current guidelines and schedule of your appointments.



Booking

at this appointment you will be able to discuss antenatal screening tests

12

dating scan

16

16 wks review and discuss any tests you've had

18-22

anomaly scan of baby

25

25 wks pregnancy health and wellbeing check - if this is your first pregnancy



34

34 wks pregnancy health and wellbeing check review blood tests



Blood pressure and urine testing during pregnancy is important. These will be checked at every appointment.

28

You will be invited to meet your Health Visitor between wks 28-32 of pregnancy to introduce the Healthy Child Programme

Start thinking about your birth preferences and discuss with your midwife.

SLOW

28 wks pregnancy health and wellbeing blood tests - If you have been recommended to have Anti-D this is when you would have it

31

Pregnancy health and wellbeing if this is your first baby



36

Antenatal classes available face-to-face or online. If you want to find out more click [here](#)

pregnancy health and wellbeing check

CHECKPOINT!  
Talk to your midwife about how you're feeling



40

pregnancy health and wellbeing if this is your first baby



38

pregnancy health and wellbeing check

41

Offer membrane sweep and Induction of labour

Where will your journey take you?



Home Birth



Consultant/Obstetric Led Unit



Midwifery Led Birthing Unit

For more healthcare advice visit [Just One Norfolk](#)

**Please note:** During COVID antenatal schedules may have been revised. Please refer to the maternity section on the hospital website or speak to your midwife.

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**Your local Maternity & Neonatal System would like to support you to achieve the birth you plan, in the place you would like and feel safe, wherever possible**



**This booklet summarises the main options available and will help you choose what is right for you and your family.**

You may find the information in this booklet useful when talking with your midwife or obstetrician at your antenatal appointments. It can help to support you with any decisions made in partnership with your healthcare professional caring for you during your pregnancy.

Your midwife will discuss your health and wellbeing, and any previous pregnancies with you, as this may influence your options.

## **Top tips of things to do once you find out you are pregnant:**



- Plan to see a midwife as soon as possible, for your booking appointment, especially if you have any medical conditions
- At your booking appointment you will be asked about antenatal screening tests. Information about these can be found at [NHS Website](#)
- Start taking 400mcg folic acid per day to help prevent birth defects of your baby's brain and spinal cord. If you have diabetes, epilepsy or a raised body mass index (BMI) you will need a prescription for a higher dose per day
- Start taking 10mcg vitamin D per day to support bone and muscle development
- Eat a healthy, balanced [diet www.healthystart.nhs.uk](http://www.healthystart.nhs.uk)
- Take time out for yourself - doing something you enjoy
- Talk to someone about how you are feeling
- You can take gentle, daily [exercise](#)
- Ask for practical help such as with childcare or shopping
- Try to get plenty of rest
- For more healthy living and pregnancy advice visit [Just One Norfolk](#)

- Meeting other expectant parents at local groups/activities; ask your midwife or Community Hub what's on locally
- It is advised not to smoke during pregnancy. Smoking affects the development of the baby and is associated with complications in pregnancy and poor outcomes. Smoking can also impact on fertility. For support, please refer to [Just One Norfolk](#)
- It is advised not to drink alcohol whilst pregnant. For more information visit [Just One Norfolk](#)
- Do NOT feel guilty if you feel low; be kind to yourself - many women experience these feelings. Speak to your midwife as they can signpost you to local services [Just One Norfolk](#)

## Reasons to get in touch with your maternity services promptly include below:

**If you have any concerns, please contact your maternity services but information around fetal movements can be found on the [Just One Norfolk website](#). Follow the above link.**

- Baby's movements have reduced, slowed down or [changed](#). If you have any concerns, please contact your maternity services but information around fetal movements can be found on the Just One Norfolk website
- Bleeding from the vagina
- Watery, clear or coloured discharge from the vagina which seems abnormal
- Signs of pre-eclampsia, such as obvious swelling, especially affecting the hands and face or upper body; severe headache that won't go away, sometimes with vomiting; problems with vision (blurring, flashing lights or spots, difficulty in focusing); and severe pain just below the ribs in the middle of the abdomen.



# Your care and your shared decision making

**It is your right to be involved in making choices about your care. The following information tells you what your options are and how they might affect your pregnancy, health and wellbeing.**

- Antenatal screening for [you and your baby](#)
- Your first midwife appointment (also called the booking appointment) should happen before you are 10 weeks [pregnant](#)
- You'll have a number of [antenatal](#) appointments during your pregnancy, and you'll see a midwife or sometimes an obstetrician (doctor specialising in pregnancy)
- You'll be invited to meet your health visitor between 28-32 weeks of pregnancy
- Pathway to Parenting (P2P) sessions are available in a variety of formats to suit your needs. Your midwife will discuss the options available to you. Follow the link [here](#) to Just One Norfolk
- While you're pregnant, you will normally see a small number of [healthcare professionals](#), led by your midwife or doctor
- Consent to treatment means a person must give [permission](#) before they receive any type of medical treatment, test or examination

## For general pregnancy advice, please see:

[NHS Pregnancy and baby](#)

[Just One Norfolk](#)





**Shared decision making is when health professionals and families work together. It puts you at the centre of decisions about your own treatment and care.**

## **This means that:**

- different choices available to you are discussed
- care or treatment options are explored in full, along with the risks and benefits
- you reach a decision with your health and social care professional

Making decisions about [your care](#) and help contribute to your personal care plan.

## **There are Maternity Voices Partnerships (MVPs) across England and beyond**

<http://nationalmaternityvoices.org.uk/>



Their purpose is to champion the voices of women, birthing people and their families in the development of maternity & neonatal services in England. They do this by representing, supporting and networking with the Maternity Voice Partnerships.

A Maternity & Neonatal Voices Partnership (MVP) is an NHS working group of women, birthing people and their families, commissioners and maternity and service staff collaborating to review and develop local maternity & neonatal care. It is led by an independent lay chair that ensures service users are represented.

MVPs operate on the following founding five principles, which National Maternity Voices endorses and upholds in its work supporting the MVPs:

- Work creatively, respectfully and collaboratively to co-produce solutions together as equals, promoting and valuing participation
- Seek out and listen to the voices of women and birthing people, families and carers using maternity services, [even when that voice is a whisper](#)

- Champion the use of service users' experiences and insight as evidence when reviewing services
- Understand and work with the relationship that exists between the experience of staff and positive outcomes for women, birthing people, families and carers
- Pursue continuous quality improvement in local maternity services with a particular focus on closing inequality gaps

The workforce and members of National Maternity Voices are acting in a public service capacity and are expected to adhere to the [Nolan Principles](#).

The Norfolk & Waveney Local Maternity and Neonatal System are committed to considering the values and opinions of our MVPs and service users.

The Norfolk & Waveney LMNS have three areas of representation in Norwich, East Norfolk and West Norfolk. To find out more information, please contact your local representative:

### **Norwich Maternity Voices Partnership**

email: [norwichmvp@gmail.com](mailto:norwichmvp@gmail.com) or follow them on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#)

### **Birth Voices East Maternity Voices Partnership**

email: [birthvoiceseast@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:birthvoiceseast@yahoo.co.uk) or follow them on [Facebook](#)

### **QEH (King's Lynn) Maternity Voices Partnership**

email: [mvpqeh@communityactionnorfolk.org.uk](mailto:mvpqeh@communityactionnorfolk.org.uk) or go to their website: <https://www.maternityvoicesklw.com/> or follow them on [Facebook](#)





## Personalised Care Plan (PCP)

Your Maternity Personalised Care Plan (PCP) is discussed at your first appointment with your midwife and she/he will help you plan your pregnancy journey. This is completed during the health & wellbeing section on your Maternity Health Record.

Personalised Care Plans help you to explore, understand and record your individual choices for pregnancy, birth and early parenthood. Everyone is different, with individual needs, which have an influence on care and preferences.

- The PCP gives you the opportunity to record what is important to you and your family
- Your midwife can update your Personalised Care Plan within your digital record *throughout* your pregnancy at each appointment
- You can discuss options for your birth with your midwife to make sure your care is personal to you
- You can also use your PCP to consider and plan things that are important to you after you have given birth

If you do not receive a Personalised Care Plan at your first appointment, please call your midwife and request a copy.



# Introduction - Improving your choices

## The LMNS in Norfolk & Waveney is looking at ways of improving your choices and aims to:

- help you have a maternity journey that is personal to you
- give you information on the range of options available and,
- help you make choices that are right for you

All of the local maternity units within Norfolk and Waveney offer care from midwives and consultants, or specialists, depending on the level of support you need.

### **Pregnancy care before (antenatal) and after birth (postnatal)**

is available in the maternity units, community hubs, GP surgeries and sometimes at home. Some or all of these choices are available depending on where you choose to receive your care. If you find any locations are difficult to access due to individual needs, please discuss possible alternatives with your midwife. See each maternity unit's information on page 16. Across all areas, we are developing a Continuity of Carer service. These small teams of midwives enable you to be cared for by a midwife who you know throughout pregnancy, labour and the postnatal period.

We work closely with the Healthy Child Programme to help you have a seamless journey from pregnancy to parenthood. Please click [here](#) to see what services are offered to you and your baby.

**You can birth** at home, in a midwife-led birthing unit at the hospital, or in a birthing room within the consultant-led unit (also known as Delivery Suite). See page 16 for what each facility offers.

**If you have particular medical needs** you may be advised to attend hospital for some of your appointments or to give birth.

**Your care after your baby is born and discharged from hospital** takes place either at home or in specific postnatal clinics.



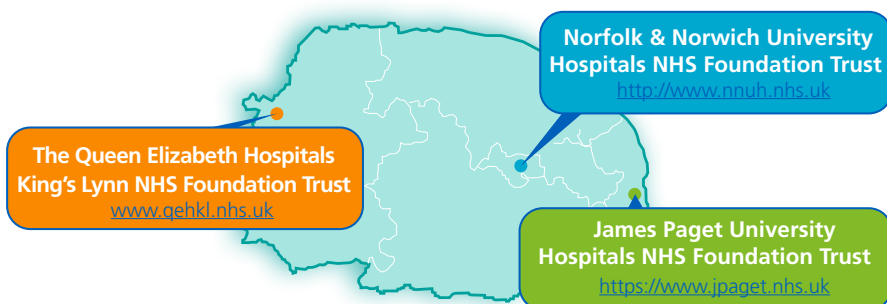
# Places to give birth

The three hospitals in the Norfolk & Waveney Local Maternity & Neonatal System are:

- ▶ **Norfolk & Norwich University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**  
<http://www.nnuh.nhs.uk/>
- ▶ **The Queen Elizabeth Hospitals King's Lynn NHS Foundation Trust**  
[www.gehkl.nhs.uk](http://www.gehkl.nhs.uk)
- ▶ **James Paget University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust**  
<https://www.jpaget.nhs.uk/>

Birth at home or in a midwife-led unit is recommended for women who have a straightforward pregnancy and no complications.

Birth in a consultant-led birthing unit or delivery suite is recommended for women with certain health conditions or health concerns with their babies, but this may not be the ideal environment for all women.



Expectant parents who live within the Norfolk & Waveney area have the choice to give birth at any of these three hospitals, or at home.

The LMNS services will do their best to ensure that you have access to your **preferred choice** throughout your pregnancy, although this could change unexpectedly if there's a change in you or your baby's medical need or a change in maternity services available.

## Each hospital offers translation/interpretation services:

The Queen Elizabeth King's Lynn offers Language Line and the Norfolk & Norwich and James Paget Hospitals offer Intran. All information on the [Just One Norfolk](#) website is able to be translated into many different languages and read aloud if needed - including this booklet.



# Home Birth

**Home births are a popular choice for some expectant parents who want to give birth in familiar surroundings with support from midwives.**

**In England and Wales 1 in 50 pregnant women give birth at home.**



Giving birth is generally safe wherever you choose to have your baby.

## **The advantages to giving birth at home include:**

- Being in familiar surroundings, where you may feel more relaxed and better able to cope
- Not having to interrupt your labour to go into hospital
- Having the option for any other children you may have to be involved
- Not having to be separated from your partner after the birth
- Increased likelihood of being looked after by a midwife you have got to know during your pregnancy
- Lower likelihood of having an intervention, such as forceps or ventouse, than women giving birth in a hospital

The 2011 '[Birth Place](#) in England Study' focused in particular on birth outcomes in healthy women with straightforward pregnancies who are at 'low risk' of complications. Research showed:-

- For second and subsequent babies, home births are just as safe as hospital births for the baby. However, they are shown to be safer for the mother
- For parents expecting their first baby, home birth slightly increases the risk of a poor outcome for the baby from 5 per 1000 to 9 per 1000. Poor outcomes include death of a baby and problems which may affect baby's quality of life. Overall the risks associated with birthing at home are still very low

## Possible Transfer:

- The midwife caring for you will closely monitor you and your baby. If you choose to transfer to hospital for further pain relief, you need medical assistance or your labour is not progressing as well as it should, your midwife will discuss this with you and where necessary make arrangements for you to be transferred to hospital. Just under half of all first-time mothers transfer from home birth to hospital during or after labour. However, only around one in ten women require a transfer who have given birth before
- If you are considering a home birth, your midwife will give you information about what would happen if you had to be transferred to hospital during labour and how long this might take

## Support in Labour:

- Birth Pool (private hire)
- Gas and Air
- TENS machine (pain relief involving mild electrical current)
- Relaxation techniques you may have learned

You can find out more about pain relief in labour on the [NHS website](#)



# Midwife Led Birthing Units (MLBU)

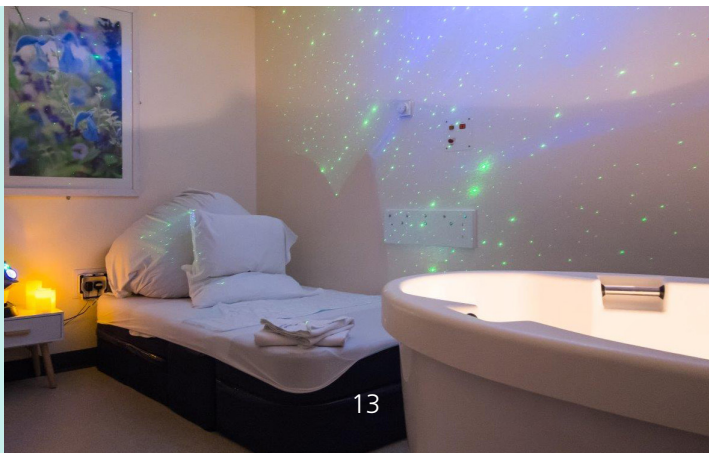
Midwife Led Birthing Units are staffed by midwives and midwifery support workers where the emphasis is on creating a calm 'home-from-home' environment, which can enable you to be more comfortable with your surroundings during labour. Birth pools are available and encouraged. Epidurals are not administered in a birthing centre. They are also known as Birth Centres.

## Birthing Centres are available at:

- ▶ [Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital](#)
- ▶ [Queen Elizabeth King's Lynn University Hospital](#)
- ▶ [James Paget University Hospital](#)

If you are having a straightforward pregnancy, birth centres are just as safe for babies as hospital delivery suites and significantly safer for the mother because her chance of needing a caesarean section or other medical interventions is much lower. For example, women who start their labour in the birth centre are 50 percent less likely to have a caesarean birth. This applies even if the mother transfers from the birth centre to a hospital during labour. If a problem occurs during labour, the mother will be transferred to a hospital delivery suite, accompanied by her midwife. See chart on page 16, for more detailed information on each hospital.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> [Birth Place in England Study](#)





# Delivery Suites

**A hospital delivery suite might also be known as an obstetric unit or consultant led unit. You may have some additional health needs or risk (or complicating) factors that would be recommended to have further support and care with labour and birth. You will be advised of the safest place to give birth.**



This will be discussed with you throughout your pregnancy, so that you can make decisions about your care with the support of the consultant led team.

In a hospital delivery suite, you will have one-to-one care from a midwife (as you would in a birthing unit or at home) but you also will have an obstetric team of doctors who will oversee your care. See chart on page 16 for more detailed information on each hospital.

## Reasons to consider:

- You have other health or pregnancy needs which require further support
- You have complicating factors which mean that you may need additional care during the labour
- You are planning a caesarean birth, or think one is likely to be needed
- You know that your baby is likely to need special care immediately after birth
- If you would like an epidural



# Your preferences

Having discussed your options with your midwifery team, have you decided where you would like to give birth?

Further details of each option can be found [here](#).

- ▶ Home Birth
- ▶ Midwifery Led Birthing Unit
- ▶ Delivery Suite



Service Options	NNUH	JPH	QEH
<b>Analgesia:</b>			
- Epidural	✓	✓	✓
- Morphine	✓	✓	✓
- Gas and Air (Entonox)	✓	✓	✓
- TENS Machine	✓	✓	✓
Antenatal Classes	✓	✓	✓
Antenatal Colostrum Expressing Support	✓	✓	✓
Aromatherapy	✓	✓	✓
Birth Reflections Service	✓	✓	✓
Continuity of Carer	✗	✓	✓
Hypnobirthing Classes	✗	✓	✓
Maternity Phone App	✗	✗	✓
Maternity Notes Online Portal	✗	✗	✓
Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)	✓	From 30 weeks	From 27 weeks
Outpatient Induction of Labour Service	✓	✓	✓
Partners can stay overnight	✓	✓	✓
Pressure Point Treatment	✗	✗	✓
<b>Specialist Midwives:</b>			
- Professional Midwifery Advocates	✓	✓	✓
- Specialist Midwife for Bereavement	✓	✓	✓
- Specialist Midwife for Mental Health	✓	✓	✓
- Women's Experience Midwife	✓	✓	✓
- Specialist Midwife for Diabetes	✓	✓	✓
- Infant Feeding Midwife	✓	✓	✓
- Tongue Tie Services	✓	✓	✓
- Infant Feeding Clinic	✓	✓	✓
Tours of Maternity Unit (available online)	✓	✓	✗
Vaginal Birth After Caesarean Clinic/ Birth Choices Clinic	✓	✓	✓
Vulnerable Women's Team	✓	✓	✗
Women's Health Physiotherapist	✓	✓	✓

# After your Baby is Born (postnatal)

- Newborn Examination within the first 72 hours after birth by your community midwife or maternity support worker
- Postnatal care is carried out by your community midwife. This may be in your home or in a clinic setting according to your needs
- Newborn hearing screening
- Baby's blood spot screening - a small sample of blood usually taken by the community midwife or maternity support work to check for some possible genetic problems (around day 5)
- Feeding support is provided by midwives, maternity support workers, Neonatal Intensive Care Team and health visitors
- Vitamin K by injection or oral supplement for your baby
- Your baby will be offered some screening tests and maybe some additional recommendations after they are born. Your midwife will discuss these with you
- Spending as much time skin-to-skin with your baby after birth will help you and your baby to develop a close, loving relationship. It also stimulates your baby's breastfeeding instincts, helps your baby to maintain his/her temperature, blood sugar levels and also supports brain development
- Maintaining good [pelvic floor](#) health is important after birth. Please follow the link to find out about exercises and support for the Norfolk and Waveney area.

## Breastfeeding

Your breast milk is perfectly designed for your baby and provides protection from infections and diseases. Breastfeeding provides health benefits for you and also allows for a strong, emotional bond to build between you and your baby. There is also evidence of long-term health benefits to babies from breastfeeding. Ask your midwife for any support services available, such as antenatal hand expressing, and syringes for antenatal hand expressing.

Each maternity unit will provide information on feeding support groups in your area. Further breastfeeding advice can be found on the NHS website under [breastfeeding](#) or the [UNICEF babyfriendly](#) websites, or The [National Breastfeeding](#) Helpline.

Just One Norfolk has a comprehensive [Infant Feeding section](#) which you may find very helpful to access before your baby is born. You can access infant feeding support up to 28 days after your baby is born, and at any point after birth from the Healthy Child Programme. Call Just One Number on 0300 300 0123 to speak to Unicef trained staff. The Healthy Child programme have a team of Infant Feeding Champions dedicated to supporting your feeding experience if you are having [challenges](#) along the way.

Please access the link [here](#) for more information.

There are also private services available which may have a cost attached. Further information can be found at [Lactation Consultants of Great Britain](#).

## Safer Sleep for your baby

After your baby is born it is very important to make sure they are sleeping in a safe way to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS), also known as Cot Death.

Please take the time to look at the advice and guidance and watch our videos on how to keep your baby [safe](#) while they are sleeping - and speak to your midwife or health visitor if you have any questions.



## Crying

Crying is part of a baby's language. Crying is normal, but can be hard to deal with. Babies cry most when they are around 6-8 weeks old.

Be careful to always handle your baby gently, never shake them.

Some parents and carers have shaken their babies whilst feeling very stressed and babies have sadly been badly injured or died. It is very important to take a break when you need to.

Please follow this [link](#) to the Just One Norfolk All Babies Cry page. This will help you to understand more about normal crying in babies, when it may not be normal, helpful tips for looking after yourself and where to get support if you are finding your baby's crying very stressful.

Remember - Babies cry and you can cope: <https://iconcope.org/>

- I** Infant Crying is normal
- C** Comforting methods can help
- O** It's OK to walk away
- N** Never, ever shake a baby





## Mental Health Support

Pregnancy and childbirth are big life-changing events and can bring about many emotional and psychological changes. Most women will experience positive mental health in pregnancy and following delivery. However, some new parents will develop commonly experienced mental health problems, such as anxiety and depression. When you see your midwife, she will ask you questions about your mental as well as physical health in order to ensure you receive appropriate care and support.

- For mental wellbeing support and advice, visit [Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Wellbeing Services](#)
- [Tommy's](#) provides pregnancy health information to parents
- [Norfolk & Waveney MIND](#)
- [Every Mind Matters](#)
- Patient information about [Mental Health](#) in pregnancy
- Mental Health issues for [Dads and Partners](#)
- [MIND](#)

## For more information and useful websites for your pregnancy:

- [Just One Norfolk](#)
- Get help to buy food and milk [Healthy Start](#)
- [Which? Guide](#)
- [The Birthplace in England Research Programme](#)
- [NHS Pregnancy Pages](#)
- [Norfolk County Council Children's Health & Wellbeing](#)
- [Baby Buddy](#)
- [Positive Birth Movement](#)
- [Maternity Voice](#)
- Norfolk County Council [Early Childhood](#)
- [Suffolk County Council](#) Children, Families and Learning
- [Screening information in various languages](#)
- <https://www.birtherights.org.uk/>

**Antenatal screening** – tests that will be done whilst you are pregnant and before birth.

**Midwifery-led Birthing Units (MLBU)**, which include rooms with birthing pools, holistic care and is staffed by midwives 24 hours a day.

**Consultant-led care** for expectant parents who need more complex care and support.

**Delivery suites** (these are sometimes referred to as labour wards) with specialist maternity services for giving birth and specialist theatres for women needing caesarean sections.

**Epidural** Epidural anaesthesia blocks pain in a particular region of the body. The goal of an epidural is to provide pain relief, rather than anaesthesia, which leads to total lack of feeling. Epidurals block the nerve impulses from the lower spinal segments.

**Friends and Family Test (FFT)** – The Friends and Family Test (FFT) is a feedback tool that supports the principle that people who use NHS services should have the opportunity to provide feedback on their experience. It asks people if they would recommend the services they have used and offers a range of responses. The FFT provides a method to highlight both good and poor patient experience. This kind of feedback is vital in transforming NHS services and supporting patient choice. Click on the link below for [QEH](#) [JPH](#) [NNUH](#)

**Midwife-led care** for expectant parents by a highly experienced team of midwives 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

**Newborn screening** – these are various tests to check health aspects of your baby.

**NHS Choices** – NHS Choices is an NHS website that provides information on services and for maternity, it provides patient information, advice and support for expectant parents and their families. It also includes reviews and ratings from members of the public and this is the data that we have used for the birth centres within this leaflet [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**Obstetrician** – Specialist doctor for maternity.

**Personal Care Plan (PCP)** During pregnancy we encourage every woman to complete their own personal care plans, in partnership with their midwives and/or doctors. Personal care plans help you to explore, understand and record your individual choices for pregnancy, birth and early parenthood.

**Recovery areas or Maternity High Dependency Unit (HDU)** for women who have given birth in theatre or have very complex care needs.

**Special Care Baby Units** and intensive care units/neonatal units for babies requiring continuous medical and nursing care due to prematurity or complex needs.

**Specialist midwife** – A Clinical Midwife Specialist is a highly skilled and experienced registered midwife who has an extended level of independence and works closely with managers and senior clinicians.

**Vitamin K injection for babies** – In the UK, parents of new babies are routinely asked if their baby is to have supplementary vitamin K by injection or oral supplement, which is needed to make blood clot and prevent excessive internal bleeding, if required.





## Local Maternity & Neonatal System



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### Better Births

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