

Visiting Guidelines for Maternity Wards

Introduction

The policy for Patient Visiting at Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust aims to balance the therapeutic effect of mothers spending time with relatives, carers and friends with the mother's and her baby's need for rest as well as for clinical staff to attend to their treatment and care needs, safely and efficiently. The Trust operates an open visiting policy from 9am – 10pm for all (no children under 16 except women's own children).

Parents/Carers and Visitors' Code

- All visitors are asked to support the ward staff to help those in our care by following the following guidelines:
- All visitors to maternity areas will be expected to report to the midwives' station prior to entering a mother or baby's bed area. Visitors will not be permitted access to a baby's bed area or cubicle if a parent/midwife is not present, unless there have been prior arrangements made with the mother and allocated staff. This is to enhance security in the wards and to improve communication with visitors.
- For the benefit of the mother, baby and nearby mothers, visitors will be restricted to a maximum of three per bed.
- Any visiting after 22.00hours will be arranged with the mother and midwife in charge.
- Remember that some mothers are ill and whilst the person you are visiting may well enjoy a lively noisy chat, the person in the next bed may need peace and quiet.
- Please do not bring flowers or plants as gifts for patients.
- Children must be accompanied by an adult and be supervised at all times.
- Please note that staff may ask visitors to wait outside during ward rounds while the doctors are in their relative's/friend's bay, giving treatments or examinations. There are refreshment facilities (cafes, restaurant and newsagent) on site which are available to visitors (see site map) while waiting.
- Please do not visit if you are unwell: you should be free of symptoms for 72 hours before coming to the ward. This includes coughs, colds, vomiting and diarrhoea.
- All visitors are asked to cleanse their hands before and after visiting, You can do this by using soap and water at the hand washing basins or using the hand hygiene gel located in ward. Where mothers and babies are being nursed using isolation measures (that is, to prevent the spread of infection to or from the mother) any additional requirements will be explained by the midwifery staff.

Continued overleaf

- Please do not sit on the bed, chairs are provided for the use of visitors.
- Please do not use the mothers' toilet. There are visitors' toilets in the main corridors.
- A parent can stay overnight next to their newborn and we can usually accommodate this when the baby or mother is critically ill Please discuss this with the Midwife in charge.
- Please refrain from touching any medical devices or equipment.
- Please respect other people's privacy.
- You are only permitted to film and photograph the mother and baby who you are visiting. Cameras (including mobile phone cameras) and camcorders may not be used by visitors to video in the general ward areas.
- Please ensure mobile phones are on silent/low ringtone. Show consideration to others mothers in your bay by speaking quietly.
- Visitors are reminded that all Trust premises, including the grounds, are non smoking areas.
- Drinking alcohol is not allowed on Trust premises.

The Trust operates a zero tolerance policy relating to any kind of verbal or physical abuse and visitors may be asked to leave if their behaviour causes disturbance to other patients or staff.