The Birth Centre

East Surrey Hospital
Welcome to our Birth Centre
The Birth Centre is located next to the Delivery Suite on the first floor of East Surrey Hospital, nearest the East Entrance.

Philosophy of birth
Pregnancy and birth is a very unique, personal and emotional experience. We wish to make that experience the best for you.

If you have had a normal pregnancy with no previous complications the Birth Centre offers you a natural birth experience in a relaxed and comfortable environment.

The Birth Centre is managed by a team of experienced midwives with maternity support workers and healthcare assistants. Our vision is to provide safe, flexible and quality care in a home-from-home environment that encourages natural birth, with as little intervention as possible.

What does the Birth Centre offer?
Experienced midwives available 24 hours a day, to provide one-to-one care when you are in established labour. The Birth Centre also features:
• Three large birthing pool rooms, all with en suite
• All rooms equipped with a pull-down double bed
• Floor mats, birthing balls and birthing stools to facilitate active labour
• Pain relief options include birthing pool, gas and air and Pethidine

Who can give birth in the Birth Centre?
Women who...
• have had a normal pregnancy, without complications
• wish to have an active normal birth, without an epidural for pain relief
• have labour which starts spontaneously, between 37-42 completed weeks of pregnancy
• are expecting a single baby, who is presenting head first
• have had fewer than five babies
• have not had complications in previous pregnancies or labours

You can discuss your birth options with your midwife or GP at your booking/antenatal appointments. Please feel free to contact the Birth Centre team on eastsurrey.birthcentre@nhs.net for any queries you may have.
What happens when I go into labour?
When you think your labour has started, you can call the Maternity Unit at East Surrey Hospital on 01737 768 511 x6790 or x6791.

We run a 24-hour triage system, will access to a midwife to speak to day and night. They will advise you on your best plan of care.

If you are in early labour, the midwife may advise you to stay at home until your labour is established. Once your labour is established you will be asked to come in to the Birth Centre. Advice and coping strategies for early labour are available on our website - visit www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk/labour

Your care will be led by a midwife, who will support your choice in achieving a fulfilling birth experience. We offer a variety of birthing aids to facilitate an active labour and birth.

We acknowledge the importance of an optimum birth environment to assist the natural progression of labour. The Birth Centre provides a tranquil, relaxed atmosphere, with facilities for preparing your own drinks and snacks. You are welcome to bring in some home comforts - for example, your own music and pillows.

For more information, please discuss with your midwife or at your antenatal class.
What if I have problems in labour?
Most babies are born without complications, but sometimes unexpected problems occur during the labour. Your midwife will be assessing and monitoring you and your baby throughout labour. In the event of any concerns regarding the wellbeing of you or your baby, we will transfer you to the Delivery Suite for on-going care.

Possible reasons for transfer may be:
• Meconium stained liquor (when baby opens his/her bowels in the waters)
• For closer monitoring of your baby’s heart rate, via a continuous electronic monitor
• Delayed progress in labour

Should you require an epidural, your midwife will transfer you to the Delivery Suite.

Postnatal care
Your length of stay in hospital depends on the individual needs of mothers and babies. Following birth, if all is well, you may go straight home from the Birth Centre and a midwife will visit you at home the next day.

If you choose to stay in hospital, you will be transferred to Burstow Ward, where you will receive advice on feeding and other aspects of baby care.

Your baby will need an examination within 72 hours of birth, and an appointment can be made via Burstow Ward. For further postnatal appointments you can choose between being seen at home or any other locally agreed venues that your community midwife can tell you about.
The Birthplace in England Research Programme

The Birthplace study was designed to answer questions about the risks and benefits of giving birth in different settings, focusing in particular on birth outcomes in healthy women with straightforward pregnancies who are at ‘low risk’ of complications. The study found:

For planned births in a midwifery-led birth centre, there were no significant differences in adverse perinatal outcomes compared with planned birth in an obstetric unit or delivery suite.

Women who planned birth in a midwifery-led unit had significantly fewer interventions, including fewer emergency caesarean sections, and more normal births than women who planned birth in an obstetric unit.

60% of women having their first baby in birth centres gave birth without requiring transfer to obstetric unit.

90% of women having their second or subsequent baby in a birth centre gave birth without requiring transfer to obstetric unit.

For women having their second or subsequent babies:

- there were no significant differences in adverse perinatal outcomes between midwifery unit births and planned births in obstetric units
- a birth centre setting significantly and substantially reduced the odds of having an intrapartum caesarean section, instrumental delivery or episiotomy

NICE (2014) also states that women with uncomplicated pregnancies who are having their first baby are advised to give birth in a midwifery-led unit because the rate of intervention is lower and the outcome for baby is no different compared with an obstetric unit or delivery suite.
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Telephone: 01737 231 958
Email: pals@sash.nhs.uk
Write to: PALS, East Surrey Hospital, Redhill, Surrey RH1 5RH

You can also ask a member of staff to contact PALS on your behalf.

This information can be made available in other languages and formats, including larger text. Contact 01737 231 958 for help.

Niniejsze informacje można otrzymać w innych językach i formatach, np. dużym drukiem dzwoniąc pod numer 01737 231 958.

Podemos disponibilizar esta informação noutras línguas e noutros formatos, incluindo texto grande. Contacte o 01737 231 958 para receber ajuda.

Contact Us
Maternity Unit
East Surrey Hospital
Redhill, Surrey RH1 5RH
Tel: 01737 231 764
www.surreyandsussex.nhs.uk

Author: Birth Centre lead midwife
Last updated: June 2016
Birth Centre booklet A4 web June 2016