NHS
Calderdale and Huddersfield
NHS Foundation Trust

Where would you like your baby to be born – home, birth centre or labour ward?

Making the right choice for you and your baby

During your pregnancy you will have to make many decisions about your care. The health care team is there to support you to make an informed choice about where you would like to have your baby but no one knows better than you what's right for you and your baby. The information below will help you to think about where you would like your baby to be born.

Your choice about where to have your baby will depend on the facilities and support you would like for your labour and the kinds of pain relief you may wish to be available.

We offer women the choice of giving birth at home, in a birth centre or labour ward.

For most women, pregnancy and childbirth are normal life events that are generally very safe and need very little medical care. In this case you may decide that you would like to give birth at **home** or on a **birth centre**. For women with some medical conditions or complications that may affect pregnancy, your midwife or doctor will advise you that the **Labour Ward** is the safest place to give birth so that specialists are available if you need extra help during labour. The labour ward is situated in Calderdale Royal Hospital.

The decision about where to give birth is yours and should take into account where you feel most comfortable, relaxed and in control.

compassionate care

Home birth

Evidence shows that a home birth is as safe as a hospital birth for healthy women having a straightforward pregnancy; it also shows that you will have less chance of an episiotomy (cut to the perineum) and a caesarean section. For most women and their partners the major concern about having their baby at home is that a medical emergency may occur. You can discuss with your midwives what arrangements are in place if a problem rises. The midwife is trained and equipped to deal with most problems; for instance, she will have drugs to stop heavy bleeding after the birth and can resuscitate a baby that is slow to breathe. The most common problem is a long labour where the mother or baby gets tired and progress slows. Transfer to hospital may be needed. But women who started to have their baby at home and needed to transfer say that they valued having spent even part of their labour at home. A first-time mother has a 70% chance of achieving a home birth (although this rate varies widely in different areas). For women who have already had a baby, the chance is much higher – between 88 and 99% of women. There is a small chance (about 1 in 30) of having to be transferred to hospital after the baby has been born, usually because of problems with the delivery of the placenta, or sometimes because of concern about the baby's breathing. When you choose to have a homebirth the midwife will visit you at home when you are 36 weeks pregnant to make sure you are well prepared and have all the information you need. She will give you numbers for contacting the midwife and explain what you can expect during labour. She will also explain about what pain relief you can use and how to access that.

When you suspect your labour is starting you will call the midwife and she will assess you to confirm your stage of labour. Your midwife will stay with you when she is sure that you are in the active stage of labour, monitoring you and your baby. She will call another person to assist at the birth and they will both remain with you until you and she are happy that everything is as it should be. After the birth you will have further visits from the midwife and she will advise you on how you and your baby are recovering. You may have other people to provide services such as hearing screening, breastfeeding advice and general follow up care.

If there is a problem with you or your baby during labour or after birth, your midwife will arrange for an ambulance to take you to Calderdale Royal Hospital and she will go with you.

Benefits

- Research has shown that a planned home birth for women who are 'low risk' is as safe as a hospital birth.
- You may feel more relaxed and safer in your familiar home environment surrounded by family members.
- You will feel more in control of your labour and less likely to need strong pain relief. This leads to a more positive birth experience. Women who have had a positive birth experience are more likely to breastfeed successfully.
- You are less likely to need help to deliver your baby, such as a cut to the area between your vagina and anus, or help with forceps.
- In some cases you will have met the midwives looking after you prior to going into labour.
- Less disruption to the family.
- More privacy.
- The option to hire a birthing pool ensuring water birth is available for you.

Risks

- You may require transfer to the Labour Ward if labour does not progress well or there are any concerns about you or your baby's wellbeing. This happens to 4 – 5 out of 10 women having their first baby, and 1 – 2 out of 10 women who have given birth before.
- If you are having your first baby at home there is a higher risk of your baby developing a serious problem during labour or birth. This happens to 9 – 10 out of 1000 of these babies, compared to 3 – 5 out of 1000 babies born in hospital. If you have given birth before, the risk of your baby developing a serious problem is the same if you give birth in a birth centre, hospital or at home (4 out of 1000).
- It may take longer to get emergency treatment for you and your baby. Ambulance transfer would be requested to hospital.

Home birth is not recommended for women with certain clinical conditions.

Giving birth in a birth centre

Our Birth Centres are small units which offer a comfortable environment where birth is treated as a normal process and in a less clinical way. Birth centres are a suitable place for women who are 'low risk' to give birth. Our birth centres are staffed by experienced midwives and midwifery care assistants, who are the best people to care for you when you have a low risk pregnancy and birth. There are no doctors in the birth centres for either mother or baby. The **Huddersfield Family Birth Centre** is situated within the hospital building at Huddersfield Royal Infirmary. It is "freestanding" in that it is separate from the rest of maternity services providing care for labour and birth. Access to medical support for both mother and baby in an emergency is by ambulance transfer to Calderdale. The **Calderdale Birth Centre** is "alongside" the rest of maternity services providing labour and birth care in Calderdale Royal Hospital. Access to medical support in an emergency is within the hospital, transferring from the ground floor to the 2nd floor of the hospital.

The facilities at Calderdale Birth Centre

Calderdale Birth Centre has 7 birthing rooms which are all decorated to have a modern, homely and relaxing feel and is run by midwives. Two of the rooms have a birth pool. Each room has:

- A wooden changing station for your baby
- An ensuite bathroom

The Birth Centre also has:

- Birthing stools, birth balls and birthing mats.
- A shared kitchen where you can prepare your own drinks and refreshments.
- An enclosed garden.
- Facilities are available if you have special needs such as interpreters, adjustable beds and wheelchair access and there are facilities for partners to stay overnight.

The Huddersfield Family Birth Centre is a "freestanding" birth centre.

This means that it is run by midwives and is not on the same site as any hospital-based maternity care. No doctors work at this centre or are on the same site for either mothers or their babies, despite being located within Huddersfield Royal Infirmary. If there is a problem with you or baby during labour you will be assessed and your midwife will arrange for an ambulance to take you to the Calderdale Royal Hospital. The midwife will go with you.

The facilities at Huddersfield Family Birth Centre

Huddersfield Family Birth Centre has 6 birthing rooms which are all decorated to have a modern, homely and relaxing feel. Two rooms have a birth pool. Each room has:

- A wooden changing station for your baby
- An ensuite bathroom

The Birth Centre also has:

- Birthing stools, birth balls and birthing mats.
- A shared kitchen where you can prepare your own drinks and refreshments.
- A waiting area for visitors.
- Facilities are available if you have special needs such as interpreters, adjustable beds and wheelchair access and for partners to stay overnight.

What pain relief is available in the birth centres?

Your midwife will be with you at all times during your labour in the birth centres, supporting and helping you. They can also offer you the following methods of pain relief:

- Gas and air (entonox)
- Birth pools
- Relaxation and breathing techniques
- Meptid injections

We are not able to provide epidural pain relief in the birth centres. If you plan to have an epidural you will be booked to have your baby on the Labour Ward at Calderdale Royal Hospital. If you find you need an epidural whilst you are in labour in one of the birth centres, you will be transferred to the Labour Ward at Calderdale Royal Hospital.

Transfer rates from the birth centres

Transfer from either birth centre may be for a variety of reasons, at any stage in labour or shortly after birth, relating to either mother or baby. Some transfers are emergency transfers. Below is the overall transfer rate for both birth centres. It is important to remember that for your safety, transfer will be carried out in a timely manner.

Calderdale Birth Centre. The transfer rate for women in their first pregnancy is 36% and the transfer rate for women in a subsequent pregnancy is 12%

Huddersfield Family Birth Centre. The transfer rate for women in their first pregnancy is 40% and for women in a subsequent pregnancy 5%.

Ambulance transfer times

Yorkshire Ambulance Service aims to provide an 8 minute response to an emergency call from the Huddersfield Family Birth Centre. The response may be within this time, if an available ambulance is already at the Huddersfield Royal Infirmary. This means that if there is need for a mother or baby to transfer in an emergency to Calderdale Royal Hospital, the ambulance will arrive at the Huddersfield site by 8 minutes. Depending on the time of day and availability of the lift to the birth centre in the hospital, attendance at Huddersfield Family Birth Centre may be between 8-14 minutes.

From the call made to the ambulance service informing them transfer is required, to a woman or baby arriving on the obstetric unit/neonatal unit in Calderdale transfer takes on average 35 minutes, where this transfer is time critical. The transfer time may be longer when the transfer is not time critical, depending on the clinical circumstances. If transfer is required, you will be fully informed of the reason and expected time for transfer.

Labour Ward birth (Obstetric Unit)

If you decide to give birth on the Labour Ward, your care can be managed by a midwife or a maternity team comprising of a midwife and obstetrician. A paediatrician, an anaesthetist and sometimes other specialists will be available if required.

Benefits

- Medical help and emergency facilities are close by if required.
- There is a wide choice of pain relief available including a 24 hour epidural anaesthesia service and a birthing pool.
- There is an active birth room, where there is the birth pool.
- There is the facility for continuous electronic fetal heart monitoring, which can be achieved wirelessly via telemetry, enabling women with more complex pregnancies the opportunity to have close monitoring and active birth.
- All rooms have en suite facilities
- There are birth balls and mats available
- Facilities are available if you have special needs such as interpreters, adjustable beds and wheelchair access.

Risks

- You are more likely to have interventions such as electronic monitoring and drips, which can themselves lead to further interventions.
- Separation from other family members.
- If you require postnatal care you may be transferred to one of the postnatal wards, where there is limited single room accommodation or opportunity for partners to stay overnight.

What does the evidence say?

The Birthplace study has evaluated the evidence relating to hospital maternity units and states that:

- Birthing on the Labour Ward is recommended for women with certain medical conditions.
- You are less likely to have a normal birth on the obstetric unit, than if you chose to give birth at home, or in a birth centre.

You decide

- Don’t feel you have to rush into a decision.
- Take your time and discuss it with your family and midwife, who will be able to give you more detailed information.
- Remember that you can change your mind at any stage during your pregnancy.
- Try to keep an open mind, so that you can alter your plans if your needs change.

Suggested further reading

Birthplace in England Research Programme (2011) The Birthplace Study Available at: www.npeu.ox.ac.uk/birthplace

Kitzinger,S.(2002)Birth your way. Dorling Kindersley Publishers Ltd, London. ISBN-13:978-0751307887

National Childbirth Trust NCT booklet-Home Birth: All you need to know www.nct.org.uk/birth/choosing-where-have-your-baby

National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (2014) Intrapartum care: care of healthy women and their babies during childbirth (quick reference guide) NICE, London available at: **www.nice.org.uk/guidance/cg190/chapter/Introduction**

- The Royal College of Midwives, 'Evidence Based Guidelines for Midwifery-Led Care in Labour: Birth environment', November 2012

- Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists & Royal College of Midwives, Joint statement No.2 'Home births', April 2007

If you have any comments about this leaflet or the service you have received you can contact :

Consultant Midwife
Calderdale Royal Hospital
Telephone: 01422 224664

www.cht.nhs.uk

If you would like this information in another format or language contact the above.

Potřebujete-li tyto informace v jiném formátu nebo jazyce, obrat'te se prosím na výše uvedené oddělení

Jeżeli są Państwo zainteresowani otrzymaniem tych informacji w innym fomacie lub wersji językowej, prosimy skontaktować się z nami, korzystając z ww. danych kontaktowych

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਪ੍ਰਾਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਲੈਣਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ,
ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਉਪਰੋਕਤ ਵਿਭਾਗ ਵਿੱਚ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰੋ।

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور فارمیٹ یا زبان میں درکار ہوں، تو
براۂے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا شعبے میں ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔

"إذا احتجت الحصول على هذه المعلومة بشكل مغاير أو مترجمة إلى لغة مختلفة فيرجى منك الاتصال بالقسم المذكور أعلاه"