The staff on the Neonatal Unit at Liverpool Women’s NHS Foundation Trust would like to extend a warm welcome to you and your baby.

We recognise that this is a difficult time for you and we know that however small or sick your baby is, you, the parent(s) are the most important people in your baby’s life.

We will do everything we can to support, inform and guide you throughout your time here.

**Location of unit**

The Neonatal Unit is situated on the first floor of the hospital opposite to Delivery Suite and next to the Maternity Base.

It is one of the biggest neonatal intensive care units in the UK, caring for 48 babies on the unit and 6 babies in the Transitional Care area, from the North West region including the Isle of Man.

Your baby will be cared for by a team of medical, nursing and allied health professionals, if you have any questions or wish to speak to a Consultant, please ask the nurse caring for your baby to arrange this.
Phoning

We will only give information to parents who can telephone any time day or night.

The hospital phone number is: 0151 708 9988 – Option 0, then ask the switch board operator for the actual extension of the room where your baby is being cared for.

| Room 1 – 1201 | Room 5 – 4507 |
| Room 2 – 4652 | Room 6 – 4500 |
| Room 3 – 4505 | Room 7 – 4501 |
| Room 4 – 4506 | Transitional Care –1409 |

Parking facilities

Contained in the admission pack is a leaflet concerning car parking. Authorisation can be given to parents to park in designated areas without charge.

Please make sure you get this form signed by the Shift Leader as this will instruct staff on the main hospital reception to issue you with a card after each visit to allow you to leave the car park without charge.

Access to unit and security

To gain access to the unit you have to press the corresponding button for the room where your baby is being cared for, on the intercom system outside the main door to the Neonatal Unit. Staff will check your details and who you have come to see, before letting you in. If you are unsure press ‘staff base’ and when on duty the Ward Clerk will check your details and allow you access. Please be aware that they are not on duty outside normal office hours.

For the safety and security of your baby, please do not let any other person come in the door behind you.

There is also a lower button for visitors with restricted mobility. Staff will come and manually release the doors if required so please allow a few extra minutes.

Please ensure we have your phone number in case we need to contact you. (NB: We may have difficulty contacting you on a mobile phone, so an alternative land line number must be given where possible)
Infection control

We aim to provide a safe and clean environment. The following applies to parents and visitors:

1. Remove all outdoor clothes and handbags / bags and leave in the lockers provided before entering the nursery.

2. Remove all watches, bracelets and rings (except plain wedding rings) and roll up your sleeves.

3. Before entering the nursery apply the alcohol hand gel located by doors.

4. After entering the nursery wash and dry your hands and reapply the alcohol gel.

5. Before and after touching the baby apply alcohol gel again

6. When leaving the nursery reapply the alcohol gel again using the gel outside the doors.

Staff and parents are regularly monitored for effective hand hygiene.

Please contact a member of staff if you have any concerns.

The Parents’ sitting room is near to Rooms 1 and 2, this is only for mothers and fathers, (or mothers and their support person) and the baby’s siblings. Visitors are not permitted to wait there.

There is a play area within the sitting room with toys for brothers and sisters of babies on the unit. Because of the small space and the hot drinks machine, children must be supervised at all times.

Please do not leave any valuables unattended in these areas, as the Trust cannot be held responsible for any loss. Lockers are provided for parents at the main entrance, these require a pound coin or token to lock. Please empty the lockers and return the key after every visit so other parents can have access to the facilities.

We also have a room for consultations and meetings with parents.

It is the neonatal unit’s practice that only parents and grandparents should touch the baby to reduce the risk of transferring any infection.
Visiting

We operate an open visiting policy for parents and baby’s own brothers and sisters. No other children are allowed. There should be no more than two visitors at the cot / incubator at one time, and one of them must be a parent. Visiting hours are displayed in the unit. You are welcome to have someone with you – a maximum of two visitors per session may come to the unit and see your baby (one at a time with a parent present) in order to minimise the risk of infection to your baby. Please respect these precautions. If this causes extreme difficulties please speak to the Shift Leader.

Visitors should not visit if they are unwell e.g. have a cold, flu, stomach upset.
If you are unsure if you should visit, please phone and check with the nurse looking after your baby.

Visitors who do not have access to the unit can wait on the main hospital corridor and should not try to enter the unit for safety and security reasons.

Visitor waiting areas

To the left as you enter the unit, there is an area for visitors to wait if they are asked to leave the clinical area for any reason, they should not wait in the main corridor as this is constantly in use by staff and needs to be clear in case of an emergency.

Toilets

Toilets including a disabled toilet are situated the main corridor of the unit.

Baby changing facilities can be found in the disabled toilet.
Ward rounds in the Intensive and High Dependency areas

Each day there is a ward round led by the Consultant. You are welcome to attend but we ask that you wait outside the room until your baby’s condition is being discussed to avoid breaches of confidentiality.

There is a weekly meeting for the Low Dependency area led by a Consultant to discuss plans for the discharge home.

The nurse looking after your baby will let you know what time these rounds take place.

Nursing hand-over times

Nurses’ hand-over times are 07.15 hours, 13.15 hours and 19.15 hours. At these times parents are asked not to be present or to wait outside the room to avoid breaches of confidentiality. The handover takes approximately 15 minutes.

We ask that the parents discuss the times of their morning visits with the nursing staff so that the cleaning does not interfere with their plans to care for their baby.

Unit cleaning

Each day the domestic staff need to have access to the clinical area to maintain the high standards of cleanliness required for this Neonatal Intensive Care Unit.

We ask that the parents discuss the times of their morning visits with the nursing staff so that the cleaning does not interfere with their plans to care for their baby.

Caring for your baby

Staff will involve you in the care of your baby as soon as possible. You may feel a little apprehensive about touching your baby at first, but staff will help you to gain your confidence.

This is especially beneficial for Mum and / or Dad as well as baby.

The staff will guide you on what is appropriate for your baby at different stages of their development.

It is very important that you have contact with your baby. At first it may only be a touch, but as soon as baby’s condition allows you will be able to have a cuddle and perhaps have skin to skin contact which is sometimes called Kangaroo care.
**Feeding**

Breast milk is the best milk you can give your baby and even if you don’t intend to breastfeed, expressing your milk is one way you can really help your baby in the early days.

If you are unable to express your milk and the Consultant feels it would be beneficial for your baby to have donor breast milk he will discuss this with you and ask for your written permission to give it.

Please let us know as soon as possible which method of feeding you have chosen so we can support you in your choice.

**Red trolleys**

Please do not disturb the staff, except in an emergency, when you see them working at a red trolley as they are calculating, preparing or administering complex medication therapies for babies and need to concentrate so they do not make a mistake.

**Nappies and cotton wool**

Parents must provide their own disposable nappies and cotton wool for their baby during their stay on the neonatal unit.

Most large supermarkets and chemists stock premature nappies. You can also buy premature nappies on the internet.

**Quiet time**

Although the nurseries can be very busy we aim to keep the neonatal unit environment as quiet as possible and we would ask that you and your visitors help us achieve this.

Extra support is available should you need it through the key workers and the Infant Feeding Team, please ask the nurse caring for your baby to contact them.

The Infant Feeding Team also has a helpline and a drop in clinic when you go home. The Drop in clinic is held on Thursday morning 09.30 - 12.30 in the antenatal clinic – no appointment is necessary.

**Feeding Help line:**

0151 702 4293
Drinks in the nurseries
Hot drinks are not permitted in the nurseries. Water in a sealable bottle / container is allowed.

Baby clothing
We have a stock of baby clothes, which we wash on the premises. You can bring your own clothes for your baby, but they must be labelled with your baby’s name and the family must take them home to wash. It is recommended that the clothes are washed at no lower temperature than 60º Centigrade and that they are tumble-dried.

Toys
Toys are not allowed in incubators / cots whilst the baby is in the Intensive Care area however a comfort cloth can be used. In the High Dependency / Low Dependency areas, two small washable toys can be left in the incubator / cot if the baby does not have any Intravenous lines in place, which should be taken home and washed weekly.

Comfort cloths
If you hold a cloth close to your body, you can transfer your unique smell to your baby who will be comforted when the cloth is placed next to him / her. You also will be comforted if you take a cloth home with your baby’s smell on it and if you are breastfeeding it will help your milk to flow when you are expressing.

These cloths must also be washed frequently at 60º Centigrade.

Strong smells including strong perfumes will be too stimulating for your baby, so please try to avoid them.
Use of dummies

The staff will ask for permission to use a dummy while the baby is not receiving any milk feeds as this helps develop the sucking process and will help the baby reach full milk feeds more quickly.

Dummies can also be used as a method of pain relief during short procedures such as taking blood from a heel prick.

Dummies must be washed with hot soapy water, rinsed, dried and stored in a small container between uses. Dummies provided in hospital MUST NOT be taken home and used after discharge.

Parents message sheet

This message sheet is for you to write on. You can tell us what you would like us to know about who’s who in your baby’s family, how you are intending to feed, when you will be coming to visit and to leave any messages.

The sheet should be handed to the nurse caring for your baby to be displayed at your baby’s bedside. This is your property and you can keep it if you wish.

The Little Lamb Diary

Parents and staff have helped to develop this diary. It is intended as a place for you to write about treasured moments or reflections and keep a photograph of your baby. Please ask if you would like one.

Baby link

This is an online diary that contains photos and short messages. Should parents wish to use this facility, they will be able to access the diary using a user name and password of their choice, the nurse caring for your baby will be able to organise this for you.

Parents will then be able to review photographs and diary entries about their baby wherever they wish. This will be subject to availability of staff time to make entries.
Routine tests
There are a variety of routine tests that premature babies will have on the unit; further information is available, just ask a member of staff.

Blood spot screening
On admission to the unit your baby will have a sample of blood taken for blood spot screening. A further sample will be taken along with any routine blood due between day 5 and day 8 of life. This is a national test to check for blood disorders such as phenylketonuria (PKU), hypothyroidism, Sickle cell anaemia and cystic fibrosis as early recognition and treatment is essential for babies with these disorders.

If your baby is born less than 32 weeks gestation they will need a repeat sample taken on day 28 of life or at discharge. If you do not wish your baby to have these tests please tell the nurse or doctor looking after your baby.

You should have received a leaflet about the blood spot test in your antenatal information pack. If you have any further questions ask the nurse or doctor to explain it to you.

Head scans
Premature babies less than 30 weeks gestation will also have a routine ultrasound head scan; a Doctor or an Advanced Neonatal Nurse Practitioner will discuss this with you.

Eyes
Babies born less than 32 weeks gestation or weighing less than 1.5kg will have a routine eye check at around 6 weeks of age to exclude Retinopathy of Prematurity (R.O.P). A separate leaflet is available on R.O.P.

Hearing screening
All infants will have their hearing checked prior to discharge as part of a national screening programme.
Follow up appointment

Babies discharged from the unit who require a follow up will receive an appointment to attend our Outpatient Clinic. The purpose of this clinic is to follow up your baby’s progress whilst at home.

Accommodation

Within the unit are two parents’ bedrooms, these are for short-term use only and are in great demand. Siblings cannot stay in these facilities. If you are staying, we ask that you vacate the room for a short time at 11.00 hours each day, to have your bed put up and the room cleaned. For safety reasons please do not try to put the bed into the upright position yourself.

The rooms are used to assist parents in preparation for home. If you wish to stay, ask your nurse who will book the room for you if it is available.

In the event of a baby being very sick you may have to move at short notice so that other parents can be close to their baby.

There is also some offsite accommodation available for parents who do not live in the Liverpool area. This can be arranged via the Shift Leader but please note that there is only one flat with facilities for siblings to stay. Parents must cater for themselves and keep the accommodation clean and tidy as they are only cleaned by the unit staff on departure in preparation for other parents to use. Parents who fail to keep the accommodation to an acceptable standard or whose behaviour is inappropriate whilst staying here will be asked to leave immediately. No alternative accommodation will be arranged by the Neonatal Unit. As the accommodation is shared with other parents, visitors are not permitted on these premises.

Smoking is only permitted within designated smoking shelters on the hospital site and is not permitted at all in the offsite accommodation.

It is extremely important that you attend this appointment. If you do not attend and do not inform us of the reason for non-attendance, no further appointments will be sent.
Food for parents

If you are staying in one of the two onsite parent’s bedrooms, breakfast items are provided and you can order from the hospital menu for other meals. Alternatively you can bring your own food and use the parent’s kitchen which has a toaster, microwave and refrigerator. Please clean the area after use. If you are visiting during the day you can bring your lunch and store it in the fridge. Please put the date on as all food not labelled and / or more than 24 hours old will be discarded for health and safety reasons.

There is also a hot drink machine in the parent’s sitting room. This is provided without charge for parents and maintained by the supplier however if there are any problems with the machine please inform the Ward Clerk or Shift Leader.

If you arrive out of hours and are resident in the parent rooms and have missed a meal, snacks can be obtained for you, please ask the Shift Leader if required.

Food is also available in the restaurant, cafe and from the shop in the foyer – please check the opening times displayed outside these venues.

Support for parents

You will find that all the staff are very supportive but if you would like to talk to someone else, the following people may be able to help:

There is a Shift Leader available 24 hours a day on the unit.

Matron: 0151 702 4091
If you wish to speak to a Consultant or Doctor please tell the nurse caring for your baby.

FaB Families & Babies

A Family Support Worker from the local Children’s Centre will be present on the neonatal unit during Tuesday and Thursday afternoons to offer help and support for parents. The times of the session will be displayed on the unit.

An appointment is not required – just drop in. They are able to signpost you to other relevant agencies if required and to advise on your own local Children’s Centre so that support can be carried on after you leave the unit.
Neonatal parent’s meeting
This is a monthly meeting for parents held on the neonatal unit. It is an opportunity for you to help us to identify issues, make suggestions to improve the service we offer and is a chance to meet other parents on the unit.

Parent volunteers
Parents who have had babies on the unit volunteer their time to support current families and can be available for you to talk to. Please ask the nurse who is caring for your baby for details of when they are next in.

Bliss volunteer
A volunteer from the baby charity Bliss is available on the unit (usually Wednesday mornings) to give you information on how Bliss can support you. If you need any information and cannot meet her then please tell the nurse looking after your baby we can leave a message for her.

Family information
Information can be found on notice boards in the waiting area and on a table in the main corridor. If you cannot find anything you feel you need, please ask the nurse caring for your baby.

Picture board
Parents love to look at the photos in the gallery and see how premature babies have grown. If you wish your baby to be in the gallery don’t forget to send your story / photo in to the Matron on the neonatal unit.
Further support

There are hospital Chaplains and representation for all faiths, please ask the nurse caring for your baby if you would like one to visit you on the unit. There is also a multi-faith prayer room situated on the ground floor in the main reception.

An interpreter service is also available.

Patient Advice and Liaison (PALS) Manager, extension 4353

If you have any special requirements please let us know.

Transitional care

This area can be found in Room 6 in the Maternity Base. This is a five bedded ward plus one side room where babies not requiring intensive or high dependency care are able to stay with their mothers while they are inpatients. During the time spent in this area there is great emphasis on parent education and support in preparation for home. Mothers and babies will be cared for by registered Neonatal Nurses and Clinical Support Workers from the Neonatal Team.

In the Transitional Care area visiting is restricted to two visitors per bed.

**Partner support: 11.00 - 20.00 hrs**

**Afternoon visiting: 14.30 - 15.30 hrs**

**Evening visiting: 18.30 - 20.00 hrs**

Registering your baby’s birth

You can register your baby in the hospital by appointment in the Register Office on the 1st floor or at the Liverpool Register Office in the Cotton Exchange, Old Hall Street, Liverpool 3. Tel 0151 233 3004. A baby’s birth must be registered by law within 42days (6 weeks).

Information about registration will be given on admission to the unit.

If you are still an inpatient you can request an appointment in the hospital ex 4479.
Fire alarm and generator testing

Fire alarm and generator testing
The fire alarm is tested once a week. If the alarm goes off please stay by your baby however if you are in the sitting room or the bedrooms please return to the room where your baby is being cared for and await further instructions from nurse in charge of the room.

Generator testing also takes place monthly; this sometimes causes the baby’s alarms to go off but there is no danger to baby and the staff will be aware of this happening.

Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking shelters and not within the hospital buildings or the offsite parent accommodation.

Taxis are available outside main hospital entrance

If visitors require access to baby feeding facilities these are available in the main foyer – please ask at Reception for the key.

Travel

Traveline:
www.traveline-northwest.co.uk

Telephone:
0871 200 2233

National Rail:
http://ojp.nationalrail.co.uk/service/planjourney/search

More Travel information can be found at the main hospital reception.
Liverpool Women’s is a smoke free site. Smoking is not allowed inside the hospital building, grounds, car parks or gardens. If you would like advice about stopping smoking please ask your midwife about this.

This leaflet may be available in different formats on request.

If you would like to make any suggestions or comments about the content of this leaflet, please contact the Patient Experience Team on 0151 702 4160 or by email at feedback@lwh.nhs.uk