Standard Operational Procedure:
Post-dates Complementary therapy clinic
(MAT-SOP-027)

Approval

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Approval Group</th>
<th>Job Title, Chair of Committee</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maternity &amp; Children’s Services Clinical Governance Committee</td>
<td>Chair, Maternity Clinical Governance Committee</td>
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Change History

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>1.0</td>
<td>Feb 2019</td>
<td>J Hunter, Midwife</td>
<td>Trust requirement</td>
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Author: J Hunter
Date: April 2019
Job Title: Midwife
Review Date: April 2021
Policy Lead: Group Director Urgent Care
Version: V1.0 ratified 5/4/19
Location: Policy hub/ Clinical/ Maternity / Professional Guidelines / MAT-SOP-027

This document is valid only on date last printed
QUALITY PROCEDURE

1. To initiate a pilot scheme to assess the feasibility of introducing a post-dates clinic including the complementary therapies, aromatherapy and acupressure, alongside traditional stretch and sweep to improve the favourability of cervix for labour, and increase likelihood of spontaneous onset of labour before formal induction of labour. This will be facilitated by Midwife/ midwives who hold qualification specifically for this purpose having attended recognised training programme.

Prepared by: Julie Hunter,
Date of first issue: 12th April 2019

This version checked by: Sarah Bailey, Matron for Hospital Services
Signature/date: 16/5/19

This version authorised by: Gill Valentine, Director of Midwifery
Signature/date: Gill Valentine 28-5-19

Location of copies:

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Document review:

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DOCUMENT AMENDMENT

- Amendments may only be made on the electronic copy to ensure all formally issued location copies are maintained to the updated requirements.
- Amendments (changes of up to a sentence in length) must be performed by senior members of staff only.
- Major changes (changes of greater than a sentence in length) must result in immediate review of procedure.

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Job Title: Midwife  Review Date: April 2021
Policy Lead: Group Director Urgent Care  Version: V1.0 ratified 5/4/19
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1. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

1.1 Quality Management Procedures (QMPs) are formal authorised documents detailing the procedures to be followed in the accomplishment of various tasks. Note procedures may also be referred to as Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs).

1.2 A general increase in the appetite for complementary therapies is recognised amongst women (Hall, 2011, Pallivalapila et al. 2015, RCM, 2014), who often will seek alternative means to encourage onset of labour prior to induction. Many women who undergo a formal induction face a lengthy process with extended periods of time in hospital to facilitate this. During the process of induction a mother may receive multiple applications of prostaglandin treatments, with associated costs of treatment, stay in hospital and impact on satisfaction of birth experience (Shetty et al, 2005). Evidence suggests that favorability of the cervix may be improved by use of acupressure (Smith et al, 2017, Tarkzaharani et al 2015) which involves application of pressure on meridian channels, for focussed stimulation of specific points. In addition specific essential oils, absorbed through application to skin, using carrier oil, and scent through respiratory means, are a helpful adjunct to birth experience, psychologically and physically, reportedly reducing stress, including cortisol levels (Tadakoro et al, 2017) anxiety and tension, and some oils thought to harness uterotonic effects that may help promote onset of labour.

1.3 This QMP describes the initiation of a pilot scheme to assess the feasibility of introducing a post-dates clinic including the complementary therapies, aromatherapy and acupressure, alongside traditional stretch and sweep to improve the favourability of cervix for labour, and increase likelihood of spontaneous onset of labour before formal induction of labour. This will be facilitated by Midwife / midwives who hold qualification specifically for this purpose having attended recognised training programme.

Document control

Document control is an essential part of a quality management system.

1 A robust system for the regular review and updating of all guidelines, protocols, policies and procedures has been agreed by the Maternity Clinical Governance Committee and is monitored through this forum.

2. AUTHORISED STAFF

2.1 Midwife / midwives who hold qualification specifically for this purpose having attended recognised training programme.
3. SPECIMEN REQUIREMENTS

N/A

4. EQUIPMENT & SPECIAL SUPPLIES

4.1 The pilot will take place at Whitley Health Centre, which has been risk assessed for ventilation and all women will undergo a risk assessment before any oils are used.

4.2 Oils to be purchased from NHS procurement with agreed supplier and they will be pre mixed on the RBH site and will be disposed of under the guideline, GL1085 Aromatherapy use in labour care

5. REAGENTS, STANDARDS OR CALIBRANTS, IQC MATERIALS AND PROCEDURES

N/A

6. PROCEDURE

6.1 Patient provided information sheet (App A) and booked for post-dates clinic by community midwife

6.2 Complete initial assessment form (App B)

6.3 Review antenatal hand held records, observe for any contraindications from within notes, and review latest scan report to ensure no known placenta praevia or malposition. If contraindications found explain to patient unable to proceed and document discussion.

6.4 Complete full antenatal check, including BP, urine, palpation and auscultate fetal heart. Refer any abnormal findings to day assessment unit/ delivery suite. Explain unable to proceed and document in patients hand held notes.

6.5 Offered an internal vaginal examination including a stretch and membrane sweep, in line with NICE guidance. Document consent and findings. If a woman declines stretch and sweep may still proceed with acupressure and aromatherapy providing previous steps provide no contraindications for doing so.

6.6 Apply acupressure: 20-30 intermittent presses applied to 3 points- spleen 6, Large Intestine 4, Gallbladder 21. (Image of points App C) Inform participant that points may feel tender and right to withdraw from treatment at any point.

6.7 Offer a choice of aromatherapy oil blends (App D) 3% blend for postdates; Preferred base oil grape seed *No nut based oils to be used

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6.8 Apply oil of woman's choice to feet or hands, if preferred the oil may be applied to her back, the main aim is to deliver the oils to the body and is not a specific therapeutic massage. (Clary Sage, Rose or Jasmine will not be used for women who have had any uterine surgery)

6.9 Document therapy used. Provide follow up audit form (App E) attached to patient notes.

Minor reactions, such as erythemic rash or headaches may occur in approximately 1% of women using aromatherapy (Burns, 2000). In the unlikely event that a severe or anaphylactic event occurs:
- Stop treatment
- Ventilate room/ vacate the room with patient to move away from trigger if appropriate or able
- Telephone 999 requesting ambulance, state emergency
- Initiate immediate anaphylaxis therapy (anaphylaxis kit must be available, in date and quality checked for every clinic) Link Life Saving guidelines ‘Anaphylaxis algorithm’ EMA-095 Resuscitation council
- Submit DATIX

7. FORMS/TEMPLATES TO BE USED

App A: Patient information leaflet
App B: Initial assessment form
App C: Acupressure points image
App D: Aromatherapy oil blend choice, information for midwives on blend
App E: Post treatment outcomes form

8. INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL REFERENCES

8.1 Internal References
- RBH Policy Hub / Clinical / Maternity / Intrapartum / GL1085 Aromatherapy use in labour care: Author Laura Wallbank
- RBH Policy Hub / Clinical / Maternity / LIFESAVING GUIDELINES / EMA-095 Anaphylaxis algorithm - Resuscitation council

8.2 External References
5. RCM (2014) Position Statement: complementary therapies and natural remedies Royal College of Midwives
Appendix A – Maternity information leaflet for Post-dates clinic

Use of aromatherapy and acupressure for post-dates pregnancy: Post-dates Clinic

You have been given this leaflet to provide information on aromatherapy and acupressure and its use for post-dates pregnancy. If you have any further questions or concerns please speak to your midwife or doctor.

Use of aromatherapy and acupressure for post-dates pregnancy: Post-dates Clinic

You have been given this leaflet to provide information on aromatherapy and acupressure and its use to encourage the onset of your labour. If you have any further questions or concerns please speak to your midwife or doctor.

About acupressure and aromatherapy for post-dates pregnancy

This leaflet discusses three different techniques to encourage the onset of your labour:

- **Membrane sweeping**: An internal examination to stimulate the natural production of prostaglandins. Once you have given consent the examiner’s fingers will locate your cervix, insert fingers into the cervix and sweep the membranes, separating them from the wall of the cervix.

- **Aromatherapy**: The use of oils with specific properties to stimulate uterine activity and promote a sense of relaxation. These are applied topically by massage using a grape seed oil base.

- **Acupressure**: A complementary therapy technique of applying pressure using fingers or thumbs along specific acupressure points that lie along meridian channels in the body. Acupuncture may promote a more favourable cervix within 24 hours.

- **Aromatherapy**: The use of oils with specific properties to stimulate uterine activity and promote a sense of relaxation. Applied topically by massage using a grape seed oil base.

It is important that you announce any allergies on arrival to the clinic.

Who is eligible to take part in Post-dates Clinic?

Your midwife will talk to you about whether you are able to take part in the pilot service offering acupressure and aromatherapy to women receiving antenatal care at the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust, however, suitability depends on the following criteria:

- First-time mothers over 40 weeks of pregnancy, or mothers who have had babies before 41 weeks.
- You are fit and well.
- There are no concerns for yourself or your baby.
- You have a normally situated placenta.
- Growth of your baby is within normal limits.
- No previous adverse reaction to aromatherapy oils.
- You have arranged an induction of labour with your usual community midwife.

What are the benefits of using complementary therapies?

Membrane sweeping encourages onset of labour; in addition to this evidence suggests that acupressure aids cervical ‘ripening’ (readiness of the cervix for labour) alongside the harnessing of the natural properties of selected oils to encourage and promote relaxation and stimulate contractions.

What are the potential risks?

The use of acupressure and aromatherapy is non-invasive, although most women express that acupressure points are tender. You may feel relaxed and sleepy after the appointment. For this reason it is suggested that you consider your transport after the appointment, and whether you feel alert enough to drive afterwards. Due to the nature of aromatherapy oils please do not bring small children with you to the appointment, or friends in the earlier stages of pregnancy.

Membrane sweeping makes spontaneous labour more likely. It may not be possible to perform if the baby’s head is too high, or the cervix is completely closed. It is often uncomfortable, and can lead to some short-term spotting. In rare circumstances your waters may accidentally break during the examination.

Are there any circumstances when complementary therapies should not be used?

The following is a list of contraindications for aromatherapy and acupressure treatment.

- Please consider if any of the following also apply to any persons you have bought with you for support, as passive exposure to the oils by others in the room with you cannot be avoided. It is preferred that you are alone with midwife for the acupressure and aromatherapy components of treatment.
  - Epilepsy (complete contraindication)
  - Severe asthma or respiratory disease.
  - Known or suspected thrombosis (blood clot).
  - Anticoagulation therapy.
  - Previous caesarean birth.
Maternity information

- Previous adverse reaction to aromatherapy.
- Broken skin or sores at the points used for acupressure (ankle, hand and neck).
- Underlying medical conditions.

What happens at my Post-dates Clinic appointment?

On the day of your appointment you will be greeted by your midwife who will review your notes and ask you some questions to make sure you fit the criteria for our Post-dates Clinic. The appointment is anticipated to last 45 minutes and will include an antenatal check. To allow for administration tasks please arrive early for your appointment, and allow at least 15 minutes after appointment.

The midwife will ask you a series of assessment questions.

An antenatal check, including blood pressure, urine, a physical examination (palpation) and listening to your baby's heartbeat will be performed which will help us to ensure it is safe to proceed with the treatment.

You will be offered an internal vaginal examination including a stretch and membrane sweep. Some women do experience discomfort during this procedure and light blood spotting afterwards is not uncommon.

You will then be offered acupressure where pressure is applied using fingers, 20 intermittent presses will be applied to three points — o the spleen, to the large intestine and to the gallbladder. Most women find that following the acupressure the pressure points are initially tender.

Following acupressure, you will be offered a choice of aromatherapy oil blends with specific characteristics. These will be explained to you allowing you to choose the most suitable blend. You are welcome to smell the blends prior to application. The oil of your choice will be applied to your feet or hands. If you prefer, the oil can be applied to your back although it may be difficult for you to achieve a position that will make this comfortable. The main aim is to deliver the oils to your body (clary sage, rose or jasmine will not be used for women who have had uterine surgery).

Following your appointment, you will be asked to be seated for a moment. Any feedback that you wish to provide during this time will be greatly appreciated.

Drink plenty of fluid as we recommend that you stay hydrated, relax for the rest of the day and avoid showering until the next morning.

Inform your midwife when:

- Your contractions have started.
- You experience continuous pain in your abdomen.
- You think your waters have broken.
- You have vaginal bleeding.
- If you have any concerns.
- You feel that baby’s movements have reduced.

Contact information

If you have any concerns, worries or questions, please call 0118 322 7304 and speak to the triage midwife and she will be able to help you.

More information is available on the Trust website: www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

Author: Julie Hunter, Midwife (February 2019)
Approved: Maternity Information Group & Patient Information Manager, April 2019
Review due: April 2021
Appendix B – Proforma for post-dates clinic

Initial assessment questions

Allergies/ sensitivities (incl food/ nut/ citrus allergies).............................................................................

Open wounds or sores/ eczema at acupressure points?................................................................................

Any previous sensitivity or reaction to essential oils (detail)?.................................................................

Asthma or any respiratory complaints?........................................................................................................

Confirm gestation 40+ primip / 41+ multip EDD:........................................................................................

Uncomplicated postmature pregnancy?........................................................................................................

Scan report seen to confirm placenta yes/ no……………………………………………………………………

Confirm no bleeding during pregnancy........................................................................................................

Patient statement

I confirm that I am enjoying an uncomplicated pregnancy and willingly take part in this pilot scheme using complementary methods of aromatherapy and acupressure for post-dates pregnancy. I understand that pressure points may be tender and recognise my right to withdraw from treatment at any point I wish. I have received an information leaflet regarding this treatment. I understand that data will be collected for audit and evaluation purposes. The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust takes data protection and compliance of confidentiality extremely seriously and we are compliant with the Data Protection Bill 2018 and the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) which was introduced in May 2018.

Signed……………………………………… date……………………………………………………

Stretch and sweep offered yes/ no

Stretch and sweep consent yes/ no

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<th>J Hunter</th>
<th>Date:</th>
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**Modified Bishop Score:**
(Calder score NICE 2008)

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**Treatment details:**

**Pressure points**
- Spleen 6 (ankle) San Yin Jiao
- Large Intestine 4 (hand) He Gu
- Gallbladder 21 (shoulder) Jian jing

**Oils used**

**Area of massage (feet/ hand or both)**
Appendix C - Images of Acupressure points: Drawings by Mike Gutteridge © 2019
Appendix D - Choice of Oils

I have created 4 different blends to meet differing needs. Please read the following to enable you to make a choice that fits you. Prior to application you will be given the chance to smell the blend, as personal scent preferences may inform the choice of blend that you choose. The essential oils are blended with grapeseed oil.

Blend for mothers with oedematous (swollen) ankles:
- Cypress; calming and diuretic aids with relief of oedema and carpal tunnel
- Bergamot; an uplifting oil, calms nerves *not suitable for women with citrus allergies
- Jasmine; encourages uterine activity

*Application to feet and legs suggested and/or hands

Blend for ladies with anxiety and stress:
- Chamomile; reduces anxiety and encourages uterine activity
- Frankincense; grounding oil
- Ylang Ylang; Aids relaxation

*Application to feet and legs suggested and/or hands

*due to the relaxing oils used in this blend it is recommended that you are mindful of your journey home and ensure adequate opportunity to rest when home.

Muscular aches and Pains
- Black Pepper; analgesic oil (can produce laxative effect)
- Lavender; aids relaxation
- Clary Sage; encourages uterine activity

*Application to back (will need to lay on side) or legs and feet

Birth fear or depression
- Neroli; eases anxiety
- Rose; encourages uterine activity
- Sweet Orange; mood enhancing *not suitable for women with citrus allergies

*Application to feet and legs suggested and/or hands

Whilst the oil application is intended to feel pleasant and relaxing the main purpose is to deliver the oils to the body, in most instances hand or feet is the ideal site of application.

Following your treatment please take a seat and drink some water.
Appendix E

Your patient has taken part in a pilot scheme offering acupressure and aromatherapy for post maturity. To allow audit of outcomes it would be appreciated if you could complete the following questions and leave form in Julie Hunter’s file on delivery suite.

Follow up Questions

Date of admission: ............................................

Bishop Score on Admission:

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Induction required? Yes / No  
Reason for Induction if Yes:

Method of Induction (tick all that apply)

- 1x Propess
- 2x Propess
- Prostin gel
- ARM
- Oxytocin
Analgesia in labour (tick all that apply)

☐ Aromatherapy
☐ TENS
☐ Paracetamol
☐ Water Injections
☐ Pool
☐ Entonox
☐ Diamorphine
☐ Epidural
☐ Other ....................

Length of labour (from CMIS summary of labour) .................................................

Mode of Delivery ..........................................................................................................
(please state reason for any assisted delivery)

Weight/ percentile ........................................................................................................