



**Royal Berkshire**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Newborn hearing screen

Important information for parents

Compassionate

Aspirational

Resourceful

Excellent

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**We are able to offer your baby an appointment for their newborn hearing screen and would like to provide you with the following information.**

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### **Why is it important to attend?**

The hearing screen and any further audiology assessments are **time critical** because the tests are difficult to perform on older babies. Ideally the screen should be **completed by 3 months** (12 weeks) of age with audiology assessment, if required, being undertaken within 4 weeks of the screen completion. It is not possible for us, unless for exceptional reasons, to screen your baby after 3 months of age.

### **We know that:**

- 1-2 babies in every 1000 are born with permanent hearing loss in one or both ears
- this increases to 1 in 100 babies who have spent more than 48 hours in a neonatal intensive care unit
- about 1 in 15 babies tested at the audiology clinic have a permanent hearing loss in one or both ears
- 90% of babies with a hearing loss are born to families with no history of deafness

Finding a hearing loss early gives babies a better chance of developing language, speech and communication skills, as well as making sure their families receive the support they need.

We want to emphasise the importance of attending any appointments you are offered. Please remember, that if you consent to the screen and your baby needs to be referred to Audiology, you should be prepared to attend this appointment as soon as it is offered.

We can assure you that our newborn hearing screening service and Audiology Department will be providing a safe environment to complete the test, so you should not be put off attending.

## Appointment attendance information

1. We will phone or text you a day or two before the appointment to:
  - a. make sure that you can attend
  - b. ask you about risk factors associated with hearing loss
  - c. check that you and your household remain well and are not self-isolating
2. On the day of your baby's appointment, if you or a member of your household are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms, please ring **0118 322 7556** to let us know
3. To allow for social distancing only one adult will be able bring the baby into the clinic room during the screening
4. When you come to the hospital entrance, your temperature maybe taken and you should bring a mask to wear
5. Hand sanitiser will be available and you will be asked to cleanse your hands when you arrive
6. We will be observing social-distancing and marking furniture and floors where possible to make this easier
7. Where we cannot be 2 meters distant (for example, when we need to be close to the baby's ear), we will be keeping close contact to a minimum as well as wearing PPE
8. We will wipe down surfaces, furniture, door handles and equipment at the start and end of each clinic and between babies
9. Please bring your baby in their car seat or pram and bring any changing and feeding items with you
10. Your baby needs to be settled, preferably asleep for the screen to be completed

11. Further appointments may be necessary to get a complete set of results
12. Please remember to bring your baby's personal child health record (red book)
13. Please allow plenty of time for travel and parking but do not come into the hospital/clinic until 5 minutes before your appointment time, to help reduce the number of people in waiting areas

## Further information

The information 'Screening tests for you and your baby' that was discussed with you by your midwife during your pregnancy, explains why newborn hearing screening is important. Further information is available below or on the NHS website. Go to [www.NHS.UK](http://www.NHS.UK) and search for newborn hearing screening.

Please see the online information **Screening tests for you and your baby** by typing this web address [www.gov.uk/phe/pregnancy-newborn-screening](http://www.gov.uk/phe/pregnancy-newborn-screening) or by scanning this QR code with your mobile phone



If you have any questions or concerns about attending with you baby, please call us on 0118 322 7556 to discuss.

To find out more about our Trust visit [www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

Please ask if you need this information in another language or format.

A McMasters, Local NBHSP manager February 2021

Next review due: February 2023