NHS
Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

My baby _____

is getting ready to leave Buscot Ward

0118 322 7430

Our aim is to support and prepare you for taking your baby home. If you have any questions please ask the nurses or nursery nurses, who will be happy to help.

Dear _____

Congratulations, _____ is progressing nicely and soon will be ready to come home with you. We would like to help with the transition of taking care of your baby, by teaching you some new skills and answering some common questions that parents have. On page 4 is a checklist, which you can keep up to date and tick off when you are happy each point has been answered or shown.

- We will be progressing your baby's sucking feeds by teaching you how to respond to their feeding cues until they are taking all their feeds by bottle or breast. We will work with you so that you can confidently feed your baby while you are here and continue to monitor their weight to ensure they are getting enough milk to grow and develop.
- We will be moving your baby out of his/her incubator or hot cot into a normal cot and we will teach you how to bath your baby once their temperature remains stable in a cot.
- We will talk to you about Infant safety precautions, including safe sleep position and proper use of car seats. If your baby is going home on any medication, we will talk to you about administering it and storage.
- If your baby is going to go home on oxygen we will complete competencies with you and order all necessary equipment.
- We will also talk to you about the signs and symptoms of illness, what to do in an emergency, and will offer you teaching on Infant Resuscitation. You will be offered a stay in our parents flat before going home.

Please also bear in mind these are a guide and on occasions the process can be daunting for the babies and they may take a step backwards. This doesn't necessarily mean anything negative but just that we need to move a little bit slower to match their ability (a bit like teaching them to run before they can walk)!

	Temperature	Feeding	Medications	Safety	Education
Getting ready for home	Baby has been transferred into a cot.	Baby is moving from tube feeds to more sucking feeds.	Baby may be due some immunisations.		
Around 34 weeks	Discuss room temperature and how to assess baby's temperature.	Bring in baby's own bottles & teats if applicable Would you like breastfeeding advice?	Baby may need to go home on medication. The nurses will explain these and any side effects	Has safe sleeping and 'Reduce the Risk of Cot Death' guidelines been discussed?	Have you been shown how to bath baby?
1 week to go	Baby can maintain their temperature in a cot without a hat.	Baby to try responsive feeding, but no longer than 5 hours between feeds.	You will be shown how to draw up medicines and practice giving them.	Make sure you have talked about signs and recognition of ill health.	Attend a resuscitation class.
3 days to go	Have you talked about clothes/ hats/ blankets for going home?	Baby should be having all breastfeeds during the day. Make sure you know about sterilising, making up feeds, if appropriate, and winding.	Are you confident drawing up and giving the medicines baby needs?	Do the nurses have your home address and GP details?	Has baby had its hearing test?
Home tomorrow	Bring in 'going home' clothes.	Have you stayed overnight in the flat to establish breastfeeding and/or confidence in bottle feeding?	Do the nurses have your home address and GP details?	Bring in car seat and check baby fits.	Do you know when baby's outpatient appointment is?
Home today	Baby is suitably dressed for going home.	If baby has gained sufficient weight you can go home.	Has baby had his/her hearing test?	Position baby safely in car seat.	Do you have the red book and a copy of baby's discharge letter?

Checklist

Medication

- My baby is approaching 60/90 days and due immunisations. ❑
- My baby needs to go home on medication. ❑
- The nurses have explained the medicines and their side effects. ❑
- I have been shown and confident at drawing up and giving the medication. ❑
- I am happy with safe storage of medicines. ❑
- I know how to get repeat prescriptions from my GP. ❑

Safety

- I have received all relevant leaflets and the ‘safer sleep for babies’ guidelines have been discussed. ❑
- Dispose of sleeping aids now baby is off monitoring and in a cot. ❑
- My baby has completed and passed a saturation study in oxygen. ❑
- I have talked to the nurses about signs and recognition of illness. ❑
- The nurses have my home address and GP details. ❑
- The oxygen is installed and working at my house. ❑

Education

- I have been shown how to bath my baby. ❑
- I am confident in giving my baby a bath. ❑
- I have attended a resuscitation class. ❑
- I have completed my oxygen competencies (if applicable). ❑
- My baby has had his/her hearing test. ❑
- My baby has had his/her eye test. ❑
- I have received my baby’s outpatient appointment. ❑
- I have received my baby’s red book and discharge letter. ❑

Important dates to remember

Your baby may need to come back to the hospital for follow up appointments, this information can be found in your baby's discharge summary. You may also get a reminder in the post.

- Immunisations.
- Hearing screen.
- Outpatient appointments.
- Health visitor.

Tips for when you're at home

- Give yourselves time to adjust to being a family at home, by limiting the amount of people visiting for the first couple of weeks.
- Ask for help from your family and friends, eg school runs, helping out with cooking/cleaning.
- Ask friends/family not to visit if they are feeling unwell or have respiratory viruses as your baby's immune system is still low.
- As your baby may have fragile lungs we would advise that nobody smokes in your house or around your baby. Smoking also increases the risk of cot death.
- Have an emergency overnight bag ready in the event that you need to attend the Emergency Department (A&E) or your baby needs to be admitted to the paediatric ward.
- Put important numbers on the fridge for easy access in an emergency.

Common questions asked by parents prior to discharge

- ***"How will I know if my baby is feeling unwell at home without the monitors?"*** Prior to going home, your baby will be off major monitoring and a small apnoea monitor will be attached to alert staff in the unlikely event that your baby stops breathing. Knowing your baby's sleeping/feeding/activity pattern will enable you to know when your baby is not feeling well. A separate leaflet about spotting sepsis will be given to you prior to discharge. If in doubt ring 999. **Above all, it's important to trust your instincts**.
- ***"Do I bring my baby back to the ward if they become ill at home?"*** No, if you are worried about your baby post discharge you can attend your GP or out of hours, your nearest A&E department.
- ***"How do I get a repeat prescription for my baby's medication?"*** You will be sent home with two weeks supply of your baby's medication. After that you will need to have a repeat prescription from your doctor (GP).
- ***"What support will we have when my baby goes home?"*** Your health visitor will be your main support once you are home. They will have been regularly updated on your baby's progress during your baby's stay on Buscot Ward.
- ***"Can I put my baby on their tummy?"*** Yes. It is important that your baby has time to play on their tummy to encourage normal development patterns and head control. However, this should only be done when your baby is awake and you are in the room with them. Your baby must remain on his/her back to go to sleep.

Please make a note of any questions or concerns you may have about your baby's discharge so that you can ask your nurse or health visitor.

Useful websites

- www.nhs.uk
- www.sepsistrust.org
- www.lullabytrust.org.uk
- www.unicef.org.uk
- www.bliss.org.uk
- www.bibs.org.uk
- www.tamba.org.uk (twins and multiple births)
- www.nct.org.uk
- www.breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk

Useful Apps (recommended by other parents)

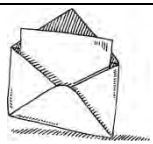
- Integrated family delivered neonatal care (IFDC) app.
- My Baby Today
- Baby Bundle
- Baby Bump

BIBS run a support group for families who have had experience of neonatal care, hosted by a professional Family Support Practitioner twice a month in a children's centre in Shinfield. For further information search on Facebook for "BIBS Family Support Group (formerly Bliss) – Reading and Wokingham area".

Important numbers:

- Emergency numbers: 999
- My GP: _____
- My health visitor: _____
- My community nurse: _____
- Out of hours advice: NHS 111
- Bliss helpline: 0808 801 0322
- Breastfeeding helpline 0300 100 0212

Before going out of the door:

		✓
Medication		
Car seat		
Discharge paperwork		
Travel O_2 cylinder		
Transport organised		

To find out more about our Trust visit www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

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

Written by: M Murphy/A Cook, Buscot Ward (Neonatal Intensive Care),
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