Welcome to the Transitional Care Unit (TC)

Information for parents and families receiving Transitional Care.

Introduction

Transitional care is a service that enables babies who need additional care to remain with their parents rather than be admitted to the neonatal unit. During your stay with us we aim to provide a safe and caring environment in which you can care for your new baby with the help of a neonatal nurse or nursery nurse, and we encourage parents and carers to participate in their baby's care. Mothers/birthing parent will also have access to midwifery care as Transitional Care is situated on Level 4.

Transitional Care is an 8 -bed unit on Marsh ward that is run by a partnership of neonatal and midwifery staff. Midwifery staff care for our mothers/birthing parent, whilst neonatal nurses support the baby's additional needs alongside the medical team. All plans of care for your baby will be discussed with you and fully explained. If you have any questions about anything then please don't hesitate to ask the nurse, nursery nurse or midwife caring for you and your baby.

The aim of the unit

Our aim is to provide your baby with the little bit of extra support that they may need without separating you from them. On the Transitional Care Unit, you may see some equipment that you are not familiar with, such as:

- **Hot cot:** This is a cot with a special warming gel mattress for your baby to lie on. Some babies need a little extra warmth and this can provide that.
- **Phototherapy unit:** This is a blue light that we use to treat babies who have jaundice and need help for this to resolve. Your baby will wear goggles to protect their eyes. You can still breastfeed while your baby is having phototherapy.
- **Feeding tubes:** This is a small tube inserted through your baby's nose or mouth, which are used if they are having difficulty feeding or not completing feeds.

Staying with your baby

Mothers/birthing parent will be able to stay with their baby the whole time that they are in Transitional Care. If you would like to know more about any treatment your baby is receiving on the unit, please ask the team and they will be happy to explain.

How do we decide which babies are suitable for Transitional Care?

Transitional care is suitable for babies who are well enough to stay with their parents but need some additional support and/or observations.

- Babies who meet the following criteria are suitable:
  - Babies born between 34+0 and 35+6 weeks who do not need any other help other than phototherapy, extra warmth from a hot cot or help with feeding.

- Babies born weighing between 1600g and 2100g who may need a little extra help to keep warm or feed. Babies who need some extra help feeding via the feeding tube.
- Baby has been cold on the ward and has not warmed up despite skin to skin and / or being dressed warmly.
- Babies that are re-admitted from outside the hospital with jaundice and weight loss.
- A discussion has taken place between all involved in baby's care that Transitional Care is the best place for your baby to be.

What happens if my baby needs to move?

We try to keep your baby with you at all times; however, sometimes your baby may need extra care on the special care baby unit (neonatal unit). This will be fully discussed with you by those involved in the care of your baby. Ideally, we will try to give your baby any medications that they are prescribed on Transitional Care to take with them. However, sometimes they may have to go to the neonatal unit for these. You can either accompany your baby there or they will be returned to you as soon as those medications are given.

Unit information

- **Father/birth partner shared care** is heavily encouraged and supported to reside between the hours of 8:30am – 8:30pm to enable skin to skin, bonding and learning to care for your baby. Baby's own siblings are welcome to visit provided they are well but please be aware supervision cannot be provided by our team.
- **Visiting hours:** A nominated visitor may visit between 2pm and 6pm.
- **For your safety and privacy** we do not disclose any information about you or your baby over the telephone, irrespective of who may be asking. If you are moving your baby around the ward, please move them in the cot rather than carry them, to avoid the risk of trips or falls.
- **Mealtimes:** Breakfast is served at 8am, the lunch trolley arrives at 1pm and the dinner trolley arrives around 6pm. Meal cards are collected in the evening for the following day's meals. There is also a patient kitchen available. This has a fridge for your own food (labelled with your details) and a microwave and toaster.
- **We aim to support you** with caring for your baby as much as possible, so we are happy to show you how to clean your baby, change nappies, bathe your baby and help you with whichever method of feeding you choose. Please ask us for assistance with anything you would like to do / know how to do. We provide soap / alcohol gel on the ward for both staff and parents and visitors to use. We ask that you provide your own nappies, cotton wool / wipes and clothing / blankets / supplies. If you are choosing to formula feed, then we ask that you bring in your own formula.
- **Whichever feeding option** you choose, we are here to support you. Breastfeeding has many benefits for both you and your baby. Breast milk is full of antibodies that can help your baby to fight infection, it helps to 'line the gut' with good bacteria to build up natural flora to help your baby fight infections, and helps to promote bonding between mum and baby. Babies who breastfeed have a lower risk of:
  - Gastroenteritis
  - Respiratory infections
  - Sudden infant death syndrome

  - Obesity
  - Type 1 and 2 diabetes
  - Allergies such as asthma or lactose intolerance
- Please see www.unicef.org.uk/babyfriendly for further information on breastfeeding or ask our infant feeding team and they will be happy to help. Infant feeding team support sessions are available Monday – Friday on Iffley ward.
- We have a special fridge to store your breast milk if you choose to express while on the ward. All of our staff are trained to be able to help you establish breastfeeding and guide you on your feeding journey.
- We also have the option of donor breast milk in the first 48 hours following birth to support exclusive breast feeding, which has been screened and pasteurised for safe use in babies. Please ask a member of staff for further details regarding this option.
- If you chose to bottle feed, a staff member will spend some time with you to offer support and advice regarding safe preparation, storage and feeding techniques.

Help and information

If you need any help or guidance during your stay with us on Transitional Care, please do not hesitate to ask and we will be happy to help. At our hospital, yours and your baby's safety is our absolute priority and we are proud to endorse Martha's Rule, a national safety initiative that ensures your voice is always heard. If you have any concerns, please tell us, we want to hear from you and value you as an essential partner in care.

The unit can be contacted via Transitional Care Tel: **0118 322 7288**.

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

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

RBFT Neonatal Unit: Ward Sister for Neonates,
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