

A decorative graphic in the top left corner consisting of several overlapping, curved shapes in various colors: green, purple, blue, red, and yellow.

# Birth partner's role and responsibilities during a planned (elective) Caesarean birth

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**This leaflet will give you some more information about what to expect during the Caesarean birth as we know many people will have not been in an operating theatre before. It will also offer advice and explain what your role is.**

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## Introduction

This information is for those who will be acting as birth partner during planned (elective) Caesarean birth. We will refer to the person giving birth as 'your partner' but we appreciate you may be a relative, sibling or even parent to them but for the birth you are partners experiencing it together. Your primary role is to support your partner during the birth and be present to welcome baby/babies into the world.

If you are likely to feel unwell, faint or highly anxious (which is very common) it may be worth considering if you are the right person to support your partner during the actual birth. This leaflet will tell you more about what to expect so you can be prepared, and hopefully help with any anxieties.

## Please read the following carefully before coming into hospital

- On the morning of the planned Caesarean birth, please ensure you have a good breakfast (your partner will be fasting). You are much more likely to feel faint in theatre if you are hungry and dehydrated.
- You will be given hospital scrubs and shoes to wear for the birth. These must be worn with underwear and socks but no other clothes underneath. Once changed, you are not able to leave the ward due to infection control.
- You will also be given a hat to wear (even if you have very little or no hair!), please ensure all hair is tucked inside the hat.
- You may bring a camera / phone / tablet into theatre to take pictures. The device must be switched to aeroplane mode, phone / video calls are not permitted while in theatre.
- Once in the theatre, you will be sat next to your partners head. We ask that you stay seated during the birth. There will be lots of staff and sterile equipment (blue drapes / gowns indicate something / someone is sterile) which is why it is not possible for you to move around unless asked to by staff.
- If you feel unwell at any time please inform a member of staff so we can ensure you are in a safe position if you feel faint.
- There will be a screen between you and the operating area to protect the sterile environment, please do not touch or attempt to look around/ above the screen. The screen can be lowered during the birth if this is something your partner has requested.
- The obstetrician will cut the baby's cord. This will then need a second shorter cut (trim) once baby is away from the sterile area. If it is appropriate to do so, you will be able to trim the baby's cord if you wish to do so.

- If your partner would like for you to announce the baby's sex, the screen can be lowered to enable you to do this.
- Once the Caesarean is finished, you will stay with your partner and the baby. You will move to the recovery area where you will stay for approximately two hours.
- Once your partner is ready to go to the ward, you will accompany them to level 4. Depending on the time of warding, you may be able to stay with your partner until the visiting hours end. The staff on the day will be able to advise you on visiting hours for birth partners.

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.**

Antenatal Services Manager, April 2020

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## Our Maternity Strategy and Vision

*'Working together with women, birthing people and families to offer compassionate, supportive care and informed choice; striving for equity and excellence in our maternity service.'*

You can read our maternity strategy here

