



Royal Berkshire
NHS Foundation Trust

Information for women about Rainbow Care

Introduction to the Rainbow
Care Clinic held at Royal
Berkshire Hospital

Compassionate

Aspirational

Resourceful

Excellent

This leaflet aims to answer your queries and reduce any worries you may have. It also explains the concept of Rainbow Care and how the team looking after you will support you through your pregnancy and delivery. We have asked women who have had late miscarriages or stillbirths for their advice when writing this leaflet.

A 'Rainbow pregnancy' is a term used to describe pregnancy after the loss of a baby through late miscarriage, stillbirth, or an early neonatal death. A rainbow is considered a symbol of beauty and tranquillity after a stormy and turbulent time. However, for every woman and their families, it is a time of hope mixed with anxiety. At the Royal Berkshire Hospital, we have set up one of the first NHS funded multi-disciplinary team of experts to look after women in Rainbow pregnancies. The team has two specialist midwives, a consultant obstetrician and a fetal medicine ultrasound specialist. We can link in to many other specialised services on a bespoke basis. There is no need for your midwife or GP to ask for you to have appointments with consultant midwives, birth after Caesarean midwives, consultant anaesthetists or the Peri-Natal Mental Health Team, as these will be arranged by us if needed.

We offer the initial booking appointment with our specialist midwives for a woman, before 12 weeks. They will arrange any additional scans that may have been recommended at the Bereaved Parents' Clinic for the 12-20 week period. Liaising with our consultant, they will also ensure that any recommended prescriptions are available. They will provide a dedicated mobile phone number and advise how to get in touch.

The midwives will offer an appointment with the consultant in the team at 16-17 weeks in the Rainbow Clinic.

All women will be offered an appointment around 20 weeks, when the detailed scan is performed; earlier scans will be arranged if the circumstances around the loss of your baby mean this is needed.

Appointments will usually be made for 23-24 weeks, to review the blood flow studies to the uterus (womb) and along your baby's umbilical cord. Normally, you will then see the midwife in Rainbow at 25 and 28 weeks, and most will have a scan at one or both visits. If there are no medical concerns for your physical health, or the wellbeing of your baby during your pregnancy, you will not see the consultant until about 31 weeks. The midwives are able to arrange additional emotional support and reassurance appointments for those who are especially worried.

After 28 weeks, most women will be offered an appointment every two weeks with the team. Scans will be booked on a personalised care plan basis.

We would aim to support most families to reach about 37-38 weeks before planning to welcome your baby: at this stage the vast majority will be born able to breathe and feed confidently, and should not have jaundice needing treatment in the special care baby unit. We are very conscious of the balance needed between a safe birth and your baby staying at your bedside, rather than them being in need of care in the baby unit, as this can be a potent trigger for grief and guilt on your part.

The 'how' and 'when' of planning your baby's birth will usually be agreed around 30-34 weeks in pregnancy, depending on the circumstances of your loss, previous deliveries and how the Rainbow pregnancy has progressed.

We have Rainbow Baby outfit bags, containing a new hat, nappy, vest and sleep-suit, which you are welcome to dress your Rainbow Baby in if you would prefer not to bring baby clothes in when you

come to give birth: we ask that you kindly donate similar pieces of new clothing so that we can give these to another family making the journey after you.

Our model of care is based on the Rainbow Clinic at St Mary's Hospital in Manchester, which is funded by the Tommy's Charity. They have found, from their research that being cared for by a small team of experts reduces anxiety and the numbers of 'urgent checks' many women seek between appointments from staff who don't know their story.

Contacting us

- You, your community midwife or GP can email rbft.rainbowcare@nhs.net for any **non-urgent enquiries**; we aim to respond within 48-hours Monday to Friday, or sooner.
- All **urgent queries** should be made on the day to your GP or community midwife by phone, or calling the Royal Berkshire Maternity Triage Line on **0118 322 7304**.
- Rainbow Clinic Team Tel: 07500 835 264
Email: rbft.rainbowcare@nhs.net
- Bereavement Midwife Team Tel: 07500 123 912
Email: rbft.bereavementmidwives@nhs.net

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

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

J Siddall (Consultant Obstetrician) & J Ward (Rainbow MW), Sept 2018
Reviewed: March 2021
Next review due: March 2023