

PATIENT INFORMATION

Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU)

A guide of support options available to parents and carers at the SCBU



Emotional support for new parents in SCBU

Having a baby needing special care can be an emotionally difficult time. We hope this information helps you feel more informed about different options of support and things which can help.

What support is available?

There is a range of support available from self-help strategies to more one-to-one support.

Self help

There are some resources and groups online, which may be helpful to access to support yourself in the first instance. These depend on your need and range from support with a difficult birth to specific support for families who are experiencing a child with specific needs.

Levels of support

- I am interested in self-help and low-level support
- I am struggling and would like 1-2-1 support
- I need urgent help

We have collated a list of some of the resources and support available in line with the level you need.

I am interested in self-help and low-level support

Bliss

A charity offering online support and resources to parents and carers of premature babies or babies requiring additional care.

Website: <http://www.bliss.org.uk>

Maternal Mental Health Alliance

Website: <http://www.maternalmentalhealthalliance.org>

Family Lives

Website: familylives.org.uk

Mothers in Mind

Website: homestarteemd.org.uk/family-groups

National Childcare Trust (NCT)

They run a range of online antenatal and postnatal courses for new parents and families. They also offer local meet ups for parents.

Support Telephone Line: 0300 330 070

Website: nct.org.uk

I'm struggling and would like 1-2-1 support

Birth Afterthoughts Service

You can self-refer or have a medical professional refer you to talk through your birth experience, reflect on what happened and have questions answered.

Website: <https://www.torbayandsouthdevon.nhs.uk/services/maternity-services/birth-afterthoughts/>

Perinatal Mental Health Teams in Torbay and Exeter (including Maternal Mental Health Service)

(Medical Professional referral required).

Association for Postnatal Illness

Website: apni.org

Call 0207 386 0868 (from 10am to 2pm, Monday to Friday)

Email: info@apni.org

Centre For Women's Health Counselling service - if you have received care within Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust.

Tel: 01392 406678

Email: rduh.cwhcounsellors@nhs.net

Counsellors Southwest

Website: counsellorssouthwest.org

Referrals by health professional or GP.

Talkworks (they have a perinatal pathway)

Website: talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk

Self-refer by an online form/telephone or a GP/Health professional can refer

I need urgent help

If you feel overwhelmed and are concerned about the safety of yourself or others as a result. Please do speak to a professional and don't sit alone with difficult thoughts.

You can also call **111 (option 2)**

Samaritans - 24/7 support

Tel: 1116123

Email: jo@samaritans.org

Jasmine Lodge Mother and Baby Unit

(Medical Professional referral required)

What support would you like to see?

It would be helpful for us to understand what is helpful for you on SCBU and what further support you would like to see in the future. There are questionnaires printed on the ward which you can request to complete to give us your views, we would really appreciate hearing from you!

Five tips for wellbeing

1. Consider setting an alarm for your physical needs - prompting you attend to your physical needs such as to drink, stretch or walk outside, if able to, every few hours. Asking yourself, "What can I do in this moment to feel more comfortable in my body?" is a good way to check in and reduce build-up of tension. Don't forget to give yourself permission to ask for help if needed.

2. Try some breathing exercises

Find a rectangle object (i.e., a window, door, screen or a page) and follow your gaze around the outside; breathe in for the short sides (approx. 4 seconds), hold at the corner (approx. 2 seconds) and out for the long sides (approx. 8 seconds).

3. Try grounding techniques when feeling overwhelmed

Apps such as Headspace or Calm have guided grounding practices. The Compassionate Mind Foundation website have free audios online:

<http://www.compassionatemind.co.uk>

Attempt this 5 4 3 2 1 exercise, to bring your attention to the present and help reduce overthinking.

Take notice of your sense by thinking of:

- 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can hear
- 3 things you can feel or touch
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

4. Turn any worries you may have into questions for staff to then express and discuss with loved ones. Don't be alone with these thoughts.

5. Make a diary or memory book

Consider writing, recording, or making videos to capture some of the thoughts or feelings you are having.

For further assistance or to receive this information in a different format, please contact the paediatric health psychology team.