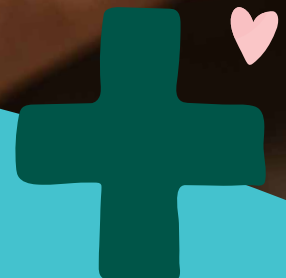




STEPS
TOGETHER

MATERNAL + PARENTAL MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES



What to expect from a perinatal inpatient admission





What to expect from going to stay at:

Chamomile Mother and Baby Unit (MBU) Birmingham or Brockington Parent and Baby Unit (PBU) Stafford

Pre-admission Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for mothers, their families and other carers

This leaflet has been written by people who have stayed in our units and people who work in them.

We understand that coming into hospital can be a difficult or worrying time and we want to help you to feel informed. In this leaflet we will be answering some commonly asked questions about what happens in our units, the care you and your baby will receive, how your loved

ones can be involved in your stay, and what the process is when the time comes for you to be discharged.

At the end of this leaflet you will find the contact details for our units. Please do not hesitate to reach out directly with any further questions or to discuss more about what an admission to one of our units could be like for you.

“I came to see the unit as a place of safety. It offered therapies, activities and the opportunity to meet other mothers going through a similar thing. It helped me to re-grow the confidence that my disease had decimated, making me feel positive about our ability to thrive at home.”



What is a MBU / PBU?

Mother, or Parent, and Baby Units are specialist hospital wards for some women / birthing people with mental health problems during pregnancy or after the birth of their baby. You will be cared for by a team dedicated to helping you recover, staying with your baby in a safe and homely environment.

“Talking to other patients helped as we can relate to each other.”



What is better for me – staying at home or staying on a unit?

Staying in a unit means you can focus on your health, your baby, and the care you both need.

Specialist staff are available at all times and they can help you and your baby develop and maintain healthy routines. Care and treatments are provided to enhance your experience of motherhood and support you towards recovery.

It is helpful to talk with your current care team to understand why a stay on the unit might benefit you and what alternatives are available for you in the community.

What does the unit look like?

Our units are purpose built for parents and babies. Everyone has their own bedroom (shared with baby) and there is a range of communal areas such as lounges, play spaces and garden areas.

Can I see the unit before I might be admitted?

Chamomile:

You can have a virtual tour

➔ [click here:](#)

Brockington:

You can have a virtual tour

➔ [click here:](#)

In some circumstances you may be able to arrange a visit. Please discuss this with your current care team.

How can I prepare for an admission?



Your current care team can support you to make necessary arrangements such as how any older children, or other people you normally care for, will be looked after while you are in hospital. They will also help arrange transport to the unit.

You will be given a list of items to bring with you. This will include clothes and toiletries for yourself and your baby, nappies and feeding equipment, formula milk if you are using this and any medication you or your baby usually take at home. There may be slight differences from unit to unit so you will be given a full list when you know which unit you are coming to.

If you come in at short notice the unit staff will be able to help you with essential items you may need.

What happens after I arrive to the unit?

The unit staff will welcome you and show you around the unit and your bedroom. If you have a family member or loved one with you they are welcome to join you.

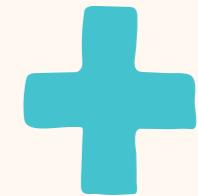
Staff will check the property you have brought in and help you unpack.

You will be given a welcome pack which explains more about the unit and the treatments, activities and support available.

A doctor will come and see you soon after you arrive. They will talk with you about your physical and mental health needs and the needs of your baby. They will work with you and the staff team to plan the care you need as you settle in.

How safe is it on the units?

Both of our units have security measures in place to ensure a safe environment including locked entrances. Belongings are checked to prevent any potential risks. All staff have DBS checks and have training to deal with emergencies. If you have concerns about feeling safe whilst on the unit please tell your care team or the unit staff.



“I’d never been to any kind of inpatient mental health facility before, and I expected that the MBU would be something along the lines of the high-security institutions you see in movies or TV. However, the atmosphere on the ward was actually very relaxed. I couldn’t believe how peaceful it was!”



“My faith is important to me, so it was really good to know about the spiritual centre in the same building. Even more amazing was the chaplain who came to be with me twice a week before 7am when I had some treatment that made me anxious. That was above and beyond!”

Who will look after me?

The teams on our units are made up of staff with a range of different skills to provide care to you and your baby — including specialist doctors, mental health nurses, nursery nurses, health care assistants, psychologists, occupational therapists and peer support workers. This team is called a ‘multidisciplinary team’, or ‘MDT’ for short. You may meet other staff like health visitors, dieticians and physiotherapists depending on the needs of you and your baby.

What treatment will I be given for my mental health?

Treatments available on the units include medication, talking therapies, occupational therapy and specific therapies to help your bond with your baby. We will assess your individual needs and work with you to create your care and treatment plan.

What assessments are done on the unit?

Staff will continually assess how you are doing and how well your treatment is working by spending time with you and talking to you during your stay. More formal assessments such as questionnaires may be used with you to help ‘measure’ areas which you may be struggling with and make sure that treatments are helping you.

present if you wish. They will work with you to put a plan in place making sure your physical health needs are met whilst in hospital. You will be offered regular physical health checks throughout your stay. Our doctors can refer you onto specialists or help you access a GP if needed.

Will my dietary needs be met?

Most dietary needs can be catered for. Do inform us what your needs are as soon as possible.

How will decisions about my care and treatment be made?

Your care plan will be reviewed with you at least once each week, in a meeting together with your consultant psychiatrist and the staff team. A family member or loved one can join you in this meeting if you wish. Changes to your care plan will be made with you throughout your stay as your needs change.

Can I smoke in the unit or in the outside areas?

Smoking is not permitted on site, however the team can support with nicotine replacement if required.

What about my physical health needs?

Soon after you arrive, a doctor and nurse will assess your physical health needs, including offering routine physical examination and blood tests. You can have a chaperone

What about my religious or spiritual needs?

Both of our units have a range of resources including multi-faith chaplaincy staff who can support you with your religious and spiritual needs during your hospital stay.

You can find out more about what the staff do

 [click here](#)

“Each and every member of staff was so kind and reassuring and I felt safe to open up to them as I didn’t feel judged”

Who will look after my baby?

We encourage you to look after your baby as much as you feel able to and our staff are available 24/7 to support you. This might be with practical tasks, such as dressing, bathing or feeding or with caring for your baby when you need to have a break or rest.

Nursery Nurses provide activities for your baby or for you both to do together. They can also support you to bond with each other.

It is usual for staff to be quite close with you and your baby when you first come into hospital. This is so they can help you settle in, get to know you better and understand more about what support you need.

Can the unit accommodate my parenting style?

People choose to parent in lots of different ways and we will try our best to accommodate your choices. There are some things we ask everybody to agree to so we can ensure babies are safe on the unit – such as to refrain from co-sleeping with baby. If you have specific questions or concerns about anything that may affect how you look after your baby during your stay, please discuss this with your care team or the unit staff.



“All members of staff have supported me to look after my son throughout and offered fabulous advice and care when I have been unwell.”

What happens on the units?

While you are recovering we want to enable you to carry on your life as normally as possible, caring for your baby and keeping up personal interests.

You will have regular meetings with members of the team throughout the week, such as your doctor, psychology appointments or occupational therapy assessments. These will be discussed and planned with you each week depending on your individual needs.

You will be encouraged to join in with activities on the unit – such as baby massage, play sessions, cooking groups, craft activities, pamper sessions and outings. There will be regular opportunities to meet with staff and the other mums on the unit to plan activities together.



Can I go outside the unit?

We ask that you spend as much time as possible on the unit when you are first admitted so that staff can assess your mental health and your needs. If you are detained under the mental health act it can mean that you have to follow advice from your doctor about when you can leave the hospital. Staff will explain your rights to you when you come in, or when your admission is being planned, including any restrictions that may be in place for you around taking leave from the hospital.



Can I drive to and from the unit?

We strongly advise that you do not drive whilst you are under inpatient care, as it is likely that your insurance will be invalidated if you do. The team will support you with transport for home visits or appointments outside of the hospital if you need it.



“I took part in group craft sessions, walks, movie nights, and other activities with the other moms. If nothing was happening, I could curl up with a book in the lounge, go to the gym on-site, or take some time to reflect in the building’s prayer space. I had some dietary limitations, but didn’t have any issue getting food I liked (I really liked the food!).”



My family (partner, older siblings) or carers and friends

When can I see my family or other visitors?

We recognise how important it is that you and your baby spend time with family and loved ones during your admission. Our units have different visiting hours throughout the day but we are relatively flexible for your immediate family / main support people. Your older children are welcome to visit you if they are accompanied by another adult. There may be slight differences from unit to unit so you will be given more information about arranging visits when you know which unit you are coming to. It is not possible for visitors to stay overnight.



We try to be flexible to accommodate a loved ones availability for planned meetings and other appointments you may want them to join, and can offer appointments via video link if needed.

If your loved ones would struggle to visit you for any reason please discuss this with your current care team or the unit to see if they can offer any help.

Will my family receive any support?

The units aim to support your whole family. Partners or your chosen main support person will be offered one to one time with a member of staff early in your admission, to help identify if there is any additional support that could be provided to them by the unit or other services. They will be included in decisions around your care with your consent.

We have a range of information available for you and your loved ones, around what happens in hospital, different conditions and support services, including some resources specifically for children.

“To be involved in my partner’s care and to be made to feel welcome on the unit and interaction actively encouraged resulted in us feeling that we were being cared for as a family. It made a scary situation more manageable and ultimately helped my partner recover with me knowing what I could do to help”





“For me recovery was about starting to feel that I was not different or abnormal, it was about doing everyday things in an everyday way and being treated like a human being.”



Being discharged from hospital

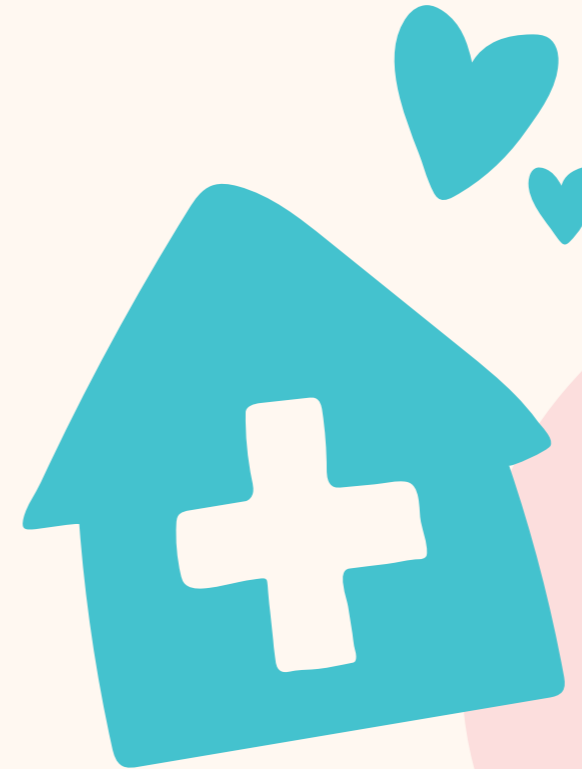
How long might I be staying?

Everyone’s needs are different so people stay with us for varying lengths of time. Some patients may need to stay for a few weeks; others may need longer to be well enough to return home.

Your doctor will work with you to plan home visits, aiming to increase time at home gradually as your stay progresses.

How will I continue to receive care after I am discharged?

Before you are discharged you will have a discharge planning meeting which will involve the professionals and loved ones who will be supporting you at home. You will be provided with a care plan to outline this follow up care. You are always welcome to contact the unit if you have concerns following your discharge or don’t know who to contact for help.



“I felt like I would never be well enough to go home but the support I had was amazing. I had a really smooth transition back home with no gaps in my support when I still needed it. Eventually, I was well enough to be fully discharged from all mental health services.”



What happens now?

Hopefully this has helped you towards deciding if coming into hospital is right for you. However, we understand that this can be a difficult decision and encourage you to discuss this further with your care team. Please do get in touch if you or your loved ones have any questions or would like to talk more about what an admission might be like for you. You can also access our websites for more information.



“I feel myself again. I’ve gained so many skills and tools to help myself when I feel like I need it.”

“Ask for as much help as you need – don’t be afraid to ask for help when you need it. You WILL get better and to a point when you are ready to go home.”



This preadmission pack was co-produced by staff, ex-patients and families from Chamomile MBU and Brockington PBU. All quotes used in this booklet were provided by people who have stayed in perinatal inpatient units.

Thank you to all who contributed to this document.



Contact Details


Birmingham (Chamomile)

The Mother and Baby Unit
The Barberry
25 Vincent Drive
Birmingham
B15 2FG

Tel: 0121 301 2002 (Reception)

Tel: 0121 301 2190 (Nursing office)

www.bsmhft.nhs.uk/our-services/specialist-services/perinatal-mental-health-service/

 [Click here to find out more](#)


Stafford (Brockington)

The Parent & Baby Unit
St. Chad’s House
St. George’s Hospital
Corporation Street
Stafford
ST16 3AG

Tel: 01785 221560 (Ward)

Tel: 01785 221554 (Secretary)

www.motherandbaby.mpft.nhs.uk/

 [Click here to find out more](#)

Notes/questions:



Please use this section to jot down notes, or any questions you'd may like to ask a member of our team about the unit and the care you'll receive.

A large white rounded rectangle containing 15 horizontal dashed lines for writing notes or questions.