

What should I do when I enter the unit?

We have small and vulnerable babies on the unit who are susceptible to germs and infection. Therefore we ask everyone who visits the baby to remove their outer coats/jackets and hang them up on the hooks provided outside of the special care nursery. On arrival and before going to your baby, please wash your hands thoroughly with warm water and soap at the sinks.

Is the unit secure and safe for my baby?

The unit is locked at all times. When visiting please ring the bell at the entrance and confirm your identity. When the door is released for you, please enter but do not let anyone in behind you or try to go in behind anyone else.

This is for your baby's security. Every person must be identity checked before they come into the ward. Please help us to keep the unit safe.

SCU is along the corridor on the first right after entrance to Caroline Thorpe Ward by the first orange square on the floor. Please ring the entrance bell and wait again for a second identity check.

If we cannot let you in immediately, please be patient as it will mean we are busy with a baby.

Your baby will wear two name bands on their ankles to identify them. If the name bands fall off, please alert a member of staff. Do not take them off.

Purple aprons are worn when we are calculating drugs. Please be mindful not to disturb us whilst we are wearing purple aprons. This is for your baby's safety.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your EBM is labelled correctly so that your baby receives your milk. You may be asked to check your EBM with a member of staff; please ensure you are checking that it is your EBM and that it is in date before your baby receives it.

If your baby cannot have the milk immediately, it will be frozen – nothing is wasted! As soon as your baby's condition permits you will be able to start to use it.

Can I be discharged if I am breast feeding?

Yes this is possible. Whilst we would encourage you to stay with your baby, we understand that this is not always possible. Staying with your baby can help increase your milk supply, supports bonding and also encourages your baby to feed. It has also been found to support your baby's brain development and improve emotional development. However, the ward can loan you a breast pump so that you can express your milk at home whilst your baby is on the ward. Please ask a member of staff about this.

Is it normal for me to feel so tired?

It is completely normal to feel tired, afraid, unconfident, irritable and stressed. Don't expect too much of yourself at first – your baby will need you to conserve your energy for later!

If everything gets on top of you and you need time out, don't feel guilty – tell us, we understand, and will try to help.

Why are you asking for my consent?

The mother automatically has parental responsibility for her baby. We will try to gain informed consent wherever possible for all procedures. Sometimes if you are not available, we will apply for a court order to allow us to proceed. We will always try to get your consent first.

What can I bring in for my baby?

You can bring in your own clothes/bedding and nappies etc if you wish. You may put pictures of yourselves and any brothers and sisters in the incubator or cot for your baby to look at. You are welcome to bring in up to two small washable toys to put by the incubator or cot.

Is there somewhere I can keep my personal belongings?

You can lock your personal belongings away in a locker. Please ask a nurse if you would

Who else may be involved with the care of my baby?

Audiologist

If your baby spends more than 48 hours in the SCU, we will ask for your consent for the audiologist to check his/her hearing

Physiotherapist

Some babies' conditions may require help from a paediatric physiotherapist

Midwives

If your baby is less than 10 days old the midwife will still be involved in your care. She will then discharge you into the care of the health visitor:

Health visitors

<p>Lumbar puncture in newborn babies #792</p>	<p>Neonatal outreach service #635</p>	<p>Pain relief and your baby #353</p>
<p>Parent/carer administration of medication whilst in hospital #829</p>	<p>Protecting your baby from low blood glucose #782</p>	<p>Retinopathy of Prematurity (ROP)</p>
<p>South West Neonatal Network leaflets</p>	<p>Welcome to Special Care Unit (SCU) #080</p>	<p>Taking an axilla temperature #828</p>

Further support and information is also available from

BLISS the Premature Baby Charity

Freephone: 0500618140

Email: information@bliss.org.uk

Website: www.bliss.org.uk/

The SCU has a BLISS champion who visits the ward to support parents.

