

**COVID-19 maternity communications for our pregnant māmā and whānau***Updated 6 April 2020*

**Pregnant women accessing the Maternity Unit**

We want to reassure you that we are still here to look after you and your support person during your labour and birth. During these challenging times care may be provided by different midwives in different areas of the hospital. Our aim is still to provide you with the best care available.

**Entrance**
For all women coming for assessment, induction of labour, day assessment unit visit or who are in labour, please come straight to the Ata Rangi labour and birthing suite entrance at Gate 4 off Canning Road (behind the rear of the Maternity unit). Please use the intercom. You and your partner will be screened by a staff member for COVID-19.

* For those who are contacted for a face-to-face consultation with a doctor antenatally, these will continue at Te Kākano Antenatal Clinic on Omahu Road.

If you **screen negative** for COVID-19 you will be admitted to the Ata Rangi labour and birthing suite (Waioha ward has been reserved for COVID patients). Birthing and postnatal care will be as usual with your LMC. Your LMC will be wearing a mask and eye protection during your labour and birth as recommended by the Ministry of Health and New Zealand College of Midwives.

* ***Your support person will be able to be with you during your labour and birth and may stay with you and your baby for birth and for 2 hours after.*** After this time there will be NO VISITORS. You may wish to go home early – as long as you and your baby are well, this is ok (in discussion with your LMC midwife).

***If your baby is admitted to the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU), the current visiting rules are for the MUM only.*** This is to protect all the vulnerable babies and our staff. As soon as your baby is well enough he/she will be back with you in your postnatal room.

**Elective or emergency C-section**Women who screen **NEGATIVE** for COVID who require an elective or emergency C-section can have their support person with them in theatre. Your support person will be screened and you will be asked about any other member of your ‘bubble’. Your support person will be in scrubs (as per usual practice), must wear a mask, and must have their temperature taken and be within normal range prior to going to theatre.

* If you at any stage become medically unwell with COVID symptoms post-birth, you will be cared for in the main respiratory isolation ward in the hospital. The midwife in charge will have a discussion with your support person in regards to caring for your baby; this could either be done in maternity isolation ward (Waioha) or at home.

**For women who screen positive for COVID-19:**

If you screen **POSITIVE** for COVID-19, you will be asked to return to your car. Please give your vehicle registration to the staff member on the intercom. A staff member will meet you at your car, give you a mask to wear and escort you to the maternity isolation ward (Waioha). The midwife will be in full personal protection gear: hat, mask, goggles, face shield, and yellow gown. Please do not be scared – she will look after you.

* If you arrive for an assessment, your support person will have to remain in the car.

If you are in established labour, a staff member will provide your support person with a mask and will escort them from the car and take them to the maternity isolation ward. You and your support person will need to wear your masks at all times. ***This is very important***, to protect everyone caring for you. If we feel that you are in early labour or not in labour, we will advise you to go home and return when your labour has established. Your support person can stay with you during established labour and for 2 hours after birth. You will be cared for by hospital midwives instead of your LMC; these have been Ministry of Health instructions to ensure your LMC midwife can carry on caring for you at home with your baby.

* Use of water for labour or birth is not permitted for women who screen positive for COVID-19, for safety reasons.
* For pain relief there will be Entenox (gas) and you will have access to an epidural if required.
* ***There is to be NO VISITORS.*** This is to protect you, your baby and the staff caring for you.
* During your labour and birth, the midwife will care for you as usual. You will be treated with high quality care at all times. We aim to give you a safe and positive childbirth experience.
* If you require medical assistance/review from the medical team, they will come and assess you in your room and make a detailed plan with you. Once again they will be dressed in full personal protection gear.
* If you require an emergency caesarean section (C-section) you will be taken to the operating theatre. ***Your support person must remain in the room until you arrive back and can stay for two hours after the birth.***
* ***If your baby is admitted to the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU), neither you or your partner will be able to visit.*** This is to protect all the vulnerable babies and our staff. We will ensure your baby is back with you as soon as he/she is well enough to be in your room with you.

**Please be aware this information will be continuously updated. If you have queries please ask your LMC/midwife, or visit our Hawke’s Bay Maternity Facebook page.**