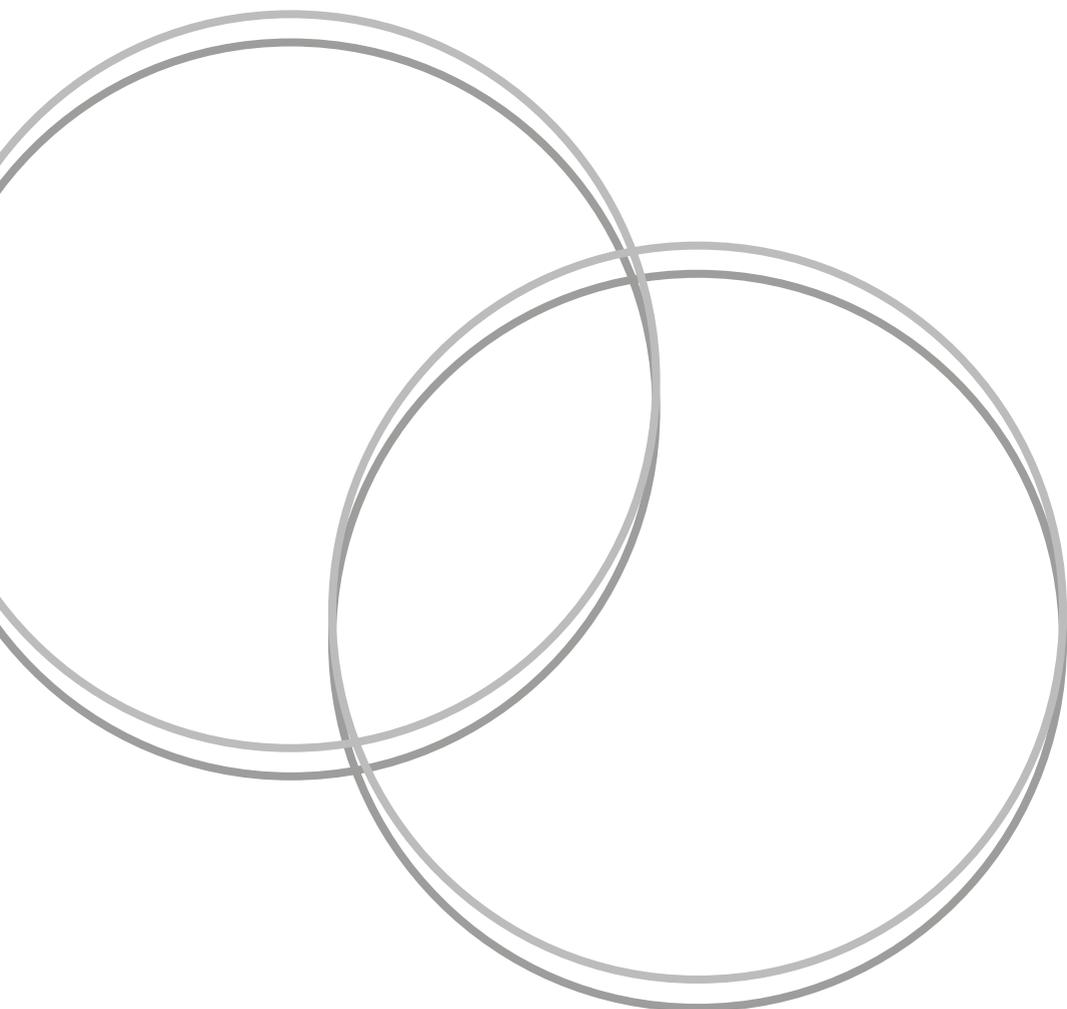




Oxford University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Horton Midwifery-Led Unit (MLU)

Information leaflet



## **Gender inclusive language in OUH Maternity and Perinatal Services:**

This leaflet uses the terms woman, women and mother throughout. These terms should be taken to include people who do not identify as women but who are pregnant. Similarly, if the term parent(s) is used, this should be taken to include anyone who has main responsibility for caring for a baby.

The term partner refers to the woman's chosen supporter. This could be the baby's father, the woman's partner, a family member or friend, or anyone who the woman feels supported by and wishes to involve in their care.

The Horton Midwifery-led Unit (MLU) is in the Maternity Department of the Horton General Hospital in Banbury.

An MLU is a maternity unit that is run by experienced midwives and maternity support workers. They are supported by colleagues from the community midwifery teams and provide care for low risk women choosing to birth their babies in an MLU setting 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

All care during labour, birth and immediately following birth is led by midwives. There are no obstetricians (hospital doctors), anaesthetists (anaesthetic doctors) or paediatricians (baby doctors) on site at the Horton MLU.

## Choosing to give birth at the Horton MLU

If you are healthy with an uncomplicated pregnancy, then planning to give birth in a setting such as the Horton MLU, is safe for you and your baby, and you are more likely to have a birth with fewer interventions.

### **An MLU is a safe birth setting for you if:**

- Your pregnancy is uncomplicated and you are anticipating an unassisted vaginal birth
- Previous babies have been born vaginally
- You are having your first to fourth baby (inclusive)
- You are over 16 years and less than 40 years old at booking
- You are between 37 and 42 weeks when labour starts
- You are having a single baby
- You have a Body Mass Index (BMI) equal to or above 18 and less than 35 and are having your first baby
- You have a Body Mass Index (BMI) equal to or above 18 and less than 40 and you are having your second or subsequent baby and your previous births have been vaginal
- If your haemoglobin (iron level) is equal to or above 100 g/l at the start of labour

If you are unsure or would like to discuss any of the above further, please speak to your community midwife or obstetrician (hospital doctor).

## Care at the Horton MLU

At the Horton MLU, you will be offered a personal and family-centred service. There will be a strong emphasis on skilled, sensitive and respectful midwifery care. Our aim is to provide a safe, relaxed and informal environment for childbirth. Recognising, respecting and safeguarding the birthing process is at the heart of our philosophy of care. During your labour, we monitor your baby's heart rate using a handheld device at regular intervals.

The birthing rooms at the Horton MLU are designed to help you relax and promote the release of your natural pain-relieving hormones. We can also provide additional support including a birthing pool, TENS (trans-electrical nerve stimulation), aromatherapy, massage, water, entonox (known as gas and air) and/or meptid (a pain relieving injection). Women are encouraged to labour in whatever positions they feel most comfortable, making use of the furniture and birthing equipment in the room.

We welcome and value the presence of partners and/or birth supporters, and will work with everyone present to ensure that you have a positive birthing experience.

## Coming into the Horton MLU

Ring us when you think your labour is starting, or if your waters break, so we can talk to you about what is happening and give you advice.

### **IMPORTANT**

#### **During pregnancy if:**

- You feel concerned about baby's movements (if the baby is not moving as often as before)
- You develop a headache which is not resolved by paracetamol
- You have fresh red vaginal blood loss
- You have any concerns about yourself and/or your baby

Please phone the **Maternity Assessment Unit** at the John Radcliffe Hospital on: **01865 220 221**

## **Transfer to the John Radcliffe Hospital**

We cannot offer epidurals, induction of labour, or care for women with medical complications. Midwives are trained to deal with any unexpected emergencies and will monitor you and your baby regularly throughout labour. If complications develop, if continuous monitoring of your baby's heart rate is recommended, or if you request an epidural, you will be transferred to the John Radcliffe Delivery Suite by car or ambulance, depending on the circumstances, where you will be reviewed by an obstetrician.

Nationally the transfer rate for women having their first baby is around 36 to 40%, and 10% for women having their second, third or fourth babies. The average transfer time from the Horton MLU to the John Radcliffe Hospital is approximately 38 minutes.

## **Postnatal care**

Staff at the Horton MLU are committed to helping mothers breastfeed their babies and will help you to learn this skill. They will also provide individual support to mothers who choose to feed their babies with formula milk.

## **Going home**

We expect most women to be ready to go home between two and 24 hours after the birth.

All babies must travel in an appropriate car seat – this is a legal requirement. Please make sure you bring the baby's car seat with you when you come into the unit.

After you go home your community midwife will continue to support you with visits and phone calls before handing over ongoing care to your health visitor.

## Contact details

### **Horton MLU:**

Tel: **01295 229 459**  
(24 hour service)

### **Banbury Community Midwives:**

Tel: **01295 229 190**  
(24-hour service – answerphone facility available for non-urgent queries)

### **JR Maternity Assessment Unit (MAU):**

(24 hour service)  
Tel: **01865 220 221**

### **Horton Maternity Assessment Unit:**

Tel: **01295 229 779**  
(Monday to Friday – 8.00am to 4.00pm)



## Further information

If you would like an interpreter, please speak to the department where you are being seen.

Please also tell them if you would like this information in another format, such as:

- Easy Read
- large print
- braille
- audio
- electronic
- another language.

We have tried to make the information in this leaflet meet your needs. If it does not meet your individual needs or situation, please speak to your healthcare team. They are happy to help.

*We would like to thank the Oxfordshire Maternity Voices Partnership for their contribution in the development of this leaflet*

Author: Midwife Manager at the Horton Midwifery Led Unit  
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