

Support for trans and non-binary people during pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period

What is the role of the midwife at Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals (BSUH)?

At BSUH we acknowledge the additional challenges that gender identity can have on pregnancy, birth and infant feeding. We recognise the importance of providing inclusive, respectful perinatal care to all pregnant people and their families. We are proud to care for trans and non-binary (including agender, bigender and genderqueer) people as birthing parents and co-parents, and to celebrate and affirm their journey to parenthood.

Midwives believe pregnancy and birth are normal, healthy parts of life. The midwife's role is to support a pregnant person's journey through each stage of pregnancy, birth, and the early days with their new baby.

As midwives we are keen to talk about how we can welcome you into supportive, safe care that is individualised to meet the specific needs of you and your family.

Midwives believe that you know what is best for you and your baby, and will work together with you to ensure your experience of pregnancy and birth is safe and positive.

What are our goals for inclusive care?

BSUH is on a journey towards gender inclusive care for everybody during pregnancy, birth and afterwards. This journey is led by members of the trans and non-binary community. We are at the beginning of this process, which will continue over the next few years.

As part of this journey, the Gender Inclusion Midwives are working on:

- Connecting with the local trans and non-binary community
- Training midwives and other health professionals about gender identity and the health-care needs of trans and non-binary people
- Developing our services and environment to be more inclusive
- Producing guidance on inclusive language and communication.

What additional support do the Gender Inclusion Midwives provide?

The Gender Inclusion Midwives can also provide extra support to you during and following your pregnancy, alongside your regular community midwife appointments. This can include:

- Talking about where you would feel most comfortable having your midwife appointments (e.g. at home instead of at a Children's Centre)
- Pronoun stickers for your notes (these are optional, they will only be used if you wish to communicate your pronouns to all healthcare professionals you may meet)
- Company and support at other appointments, such as scans
- Personalised birth, feeding and parenting preparation (antenatal classes) at home
- Talking about how you would like to birth your baby, and supporting your choice of home birth, hospital birth, or Caesarean birth
- Tour of the hospital facilities where you may choose to have your baby
- Writing a birth plan, including your language preferences for talking about your body.

Who are the Gender Inclusion Team?

Working alongside the Gender Inclusion Midwives, we have a supportive team of professionals available to you to help you on your journey through pregnancy, birth and parenting. Each professional in the team has a specific area of expertise to help provide the best possible care for you and your family. The team includes an obstetrician, neonatologist, endocrinologist, sexual and reproductive health doctor, and infant feeding midwife.

Contact our Gender Inclusion Midwives to discuss how we can individualise your care, and help you feel safe and supported during your pregnancy, birth and afterwards. You do not need to be currently pregnant to make contact. Enquiries are welcome from all, whether you are a prospective or currently pregnant trans man or non-binary person, a partner or healthcare professional.

Contact details

bsuh.genderinclusionmidwives@nhs.net

We look forward to sharing your journey to parenthood with you.

External Resources

Trans Pregnancy Research Study

<https://transpregnancy.leeds.ac.uk/resources>

Birth for Every Body

www.birthforeverybody.org

La Leche League breast/chestfeeding support

www.laleche.org.uk/support-transgender-non-binary-parents

“Where’s The Mother? Stories from a Transgender Dad”

by Trevor MacDonald

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