

# Midwife-led birthing suite in the Nightingale Birth Centre

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## Information for women



This leaflet is about an extra option you have if you are planning to give birth in hospital – our midwife-led birthing suite. It explains who can use it and what it offers. If you have any questions, please speak to one of the midwives caring for you.

### Confirming your identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your **name** and **date of birth** and check your **ID band**. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

**If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check.**

Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

## What is the midwife-led birthing suite?

It is an area on Nightingale Birth Centre that is designed and equipped to be relaxing and non-clinical for women who are having a straightforward labour and birth. It has two rooms – Beach and Woodland – which are run by midwives who are experts in supporting women who want to have a normal birth with as little intervention as possible.

## What do the rooms offer?

The rooms are decorated with large photos of natural scenery and in colours that help you feel calm and peaceful. You can also have the lights dimmed to help you relax.

They each have a:

- birthing pool
- floor mats
- birthing ball
- ceiling-mounted sling to help you have an active birth
- piped gas and air (entonox) for you to use in labour, if you wish
- radio, CD player and iPod docking station (adapter required for version 4 and 5)
- drop-down double bed that you can rest on after your baby is born
- en-suite bathroom
- tea and coffee making facilities.

## What are the benefits of having my baby in the birthing suite?

It is very important to feel as relaxed as possible when you are in labour. If you are tense and anxious it might progress more slowly and you might feel more pain.

Lots of things can help you feel more relaxed: good support; a calm and quiet environment; music; massage; getting into positions that are comfortable; and privacy.





Woodland



Beach

Our midwife-led rooms are designed to look less like hospital rooms, which may help you feel more relaxed. Feeling relaxed, well supported and safe can help you feel more in control and positive about yourself and giving birth. Reducing stress in labour may help it progress more smoothly.

Our rooms have facilities and equipment that will make it as easy as possible for you to move around in labour and get into upright positions or use the birthing pool. You can listen to your own music and have the lights dimmed.

### **Who can use the birthing suite?**

You can use it if you have had a straightforward pregnancy, you are not expected to have any problems during labour and you go into labour spontaneously.

If you do have any complications on the birthing suite, we will move you to the main labour ward, where doctors can assist you.

We do not have equipment in these rooms to monitor your baby's heart rate continuously. We usually recommend this if there are complications that

may affect how your baby copes with labour. If they need continuous monitoring, we will move you to the main labour ward.

## **What happens if I need to transfer?**

Our midwives are trained and equipped to manage unexpected complications. They will be in regular contact with the midwife in charge of the main labour ward and arrange for you to transfer as quickly as possible, if necessary.

We will involve you in these decisions and make sure you know what it is happening. Once you are on the main labour ward, doctors will examine you and plan your care.

## **Can I have an active birth on the main labour ward?**

Yes, you can have an active birth without interventions on the main labour ward. It has inflatable pools if you want a waterbirth, the lights can be dimmed and you can listen to music and use aromatherapy.

So, if you want to use our midwife-led birthing suite but a room is not available on the day, you can still have an intervention-free birth. Midwives on the main labour ward will also support your wishes for labour and birth.

## **What happens after the birth?**

If you give birth in the midwife-led birthing suite, you usually go home within a few hours. Your baby will have a full newborn examination at the clinic at King's, at home or your GP surgery.

Your local community midwives will continue to provide care. One of them usually visits you the day after you go home, to help you with breastfeeding and to check that you and your baby are well.



If you cannot go home this soon, we will move you to the postnatal ward. This is so other mums can use the birthing suite. If you need to stay overnight on the postnatal ward, your partner can stay with you if you wish.

**“Being able to give birth in the midwifery-led suite made the whole experience of bringing my daughter into the world even more special. The calming environment put me at ease immediately, the midwives were amazing and being in this spacious room meant that I could have three people in with me to support me. A truly magical experience, I would highly recommend using this room or at least going to view it!”**

*Rebecca, who gave birth to Izabelle on our midwife-led birthing suite on 25 January 2014*

### **It’s your choice**

**Choosing where to give birth is an important decision, but you have plenty of time to decide. You can change your mind at any stage during your pregnancy. Talking to midwives and other mothers may help you to decide.**

**Please ask for our leaflet, ‘Where will you have your baby?’, for more information about hospital and home births.**

### **Who can I contact if I want to find out more?**

For more information about our midwife-led birthing suite, please contact one of our midwives.

### **Modern Matron for Community and Antenatal Care**

Tel: 020 3299 3547

### **Consultant Midwife**

Tel: 020 3299 3971 or 1491



## More information

### Birthplace in England Research Programme

This research looks at the risks of home births compared with planned deliveries in hospital. You may find it useful when choosing where you prefer to give birth.

- NHS Choices – [www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)
- NCT – [www.nct.org.uk](http://www.nct.org.uk)
- NPEU – [www.npeu.ox.ac.uk](http://www.npeu.ox.ac.uk)

## PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. The PALS office is located on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road - staff will be happy to direct you.

Tel: **020 3299 3601**

Email: **[kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:kch-tr.PALS@nhs.net)**

**If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact PALS on 020 3299 1844.**

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