

Transferring your baby to another hospital

Congratulations on your baby's progress in the Newborn Intensive Care Unit (NICU). It's wonderful that your baby is doing well and is almost ready to leave. This is an important milestone.

The next stage of your baby's care will be in a Special Care nursery at another hospital.

Transferring your baby from the NICU to a Special Care nursery and then home can be both exciting and a bit overwhelming. But careful planning and support can make it go more smoothly.

We want to help you understand what's going on and what to expect. Here are some common questions parents ask us.

Why does your baby have to move?

The Women's is a Newborn Intensive Care Unit. When your baby no longer needs this intense level of care, they're best cared for in a Special Care nursery. In this setting, staff can help both you and your baby get ready to go home.

What will care be like at the new hospital?

The medical and nursing staff in the Special Care nursery are qualified and experienced in caring for sick and premature babies. Your baby will need less equipment and monitoring as they progress through Special Care. Staff will help you become confident hands-on parents with feeding, bathing and caring for your baby.

Every hospital has a slightly different way of doing things. As the parent you're an important part of your baby's care team.

Don't hesitate to share your knowledge with the staff at the new hospital. When you get to the Special Care nursery let staff know about your baby's likes and dislikes, soothing techniques that work, and any preferences they have. Every baby is different and giving this personal information will help staff get to know you and your baby better.

If any changes in your baby's care make you uncomfortable, talk to the doctor, nurse or unit manager. Share your concerns about how it might affect you or your baby.

How will your baby be moved?

A specialist baby transport service (PIPER) will move your baby safely from one hospital to another. Your care manager and healthcare team will explain how this works.

How will your baby's information be shared?

Your care manager and your baby's doctor will contact the nursery at the new hospital. The paediatrician and nurses will receive detailed information about your baby's past and current health and care. A discharge letter will go with your baby at the time of transfer. You'll get a copy of this.

If your baby was born before 28 weeks, weighed less than 1000 grams or had therapeutic hypothermia, they'll be offered a two-year follow-up appointment at the Women's Newborn Follow-up Clinic. You'll be contacted around your baby's 2nd birthday to schedule this appointment. If you move during this time, please let the Newborn Clinic Coordinator know by calling 03 8345 2240.

Can you visit the nursery before your baby is transferred?

Yes, your care manager can arrange a tour of the nursery. If you have any specific questions or requests, raise them during the tour. You can also contact the nursery directly. By doing this, you'll have a better understanding of where your baby will be cared for and feel more confident about the Special Care nursery.

When will your baby be transferred?

First, we'll make sure your baby is in good health and stable for the transfer.

Your baby will be moved when a bed becomes available in the Special Care nursery. Usually, we only find out on the day of the transfer. Your care manager will contact you with the expected transfer time. This can sometimes be at short notice.

People say this is good for your baby, but what if it makes you feel upset or anxious?

While this move is a positive step, some parents may feel sad saying goodbye to their baby's first crib, the hospital staff, and other parents. It's normal to feel anxious about changes involving your baby.

It's okay to have these feelings and to need extra support from family, friends, or professionals during this time.

If you need additional support, please talk to the social work team before or after the transfer.

Who can you talk to for more information or if you have any concerns?

Your care manager, doctors and social workers are available to discuss any concerns or questions you have. If you're worried about any decisions being made, you can also ask to speak to the Consumer Liaison.

Services and supports

If you or your baby are receiving care at the Women's that needs to be continued after transfer, the healthcare team responsible will refer you or your baby to a service either in hospital or in the community. These arrangements will be discussed with you prior to your baby's transfer.

Telephone numbers

Consumer Liaison at the Women's

Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm

Call: 03 8345 2290 or 03 8345 2291

Email: consumer.liaison@thewomens.org.au

Newborn Intensive Care Unit, The Royal Women's Hospital

Call: 03 8345 3400

Do you need an interpreter?



Interpreter

You can ask for an interpreter if you need one.

Family Violence Support

1800 Respect National Helpline

You can get help if you have experienced sexual assault, domestic or family violence and abuse.

You can call any time of day or night.

1800 737 732 1800respect.org.au