Our philosophy of care is to provide a comprehensive maternity service, which offers holistic, research-based care to the individual woman and her family.

If you want to complain about an aspect of your care, you can speak to your midwife, GP or health visitor, or contact the Citizens Advice Bureau (0131 557 1500) for independent advice.

This Leaflet is available in other languages and formats.
If English is not your first language, your midwife or GP can arrange for an interpreter to attend your appointments by contacting the INTERPRETATION & TRANSLATION SERVICE.
You can also contact the Minority Ethnic Health Inclusion Project (MEHIP) directly.
MEHIP’s minority ethnic linkworkers can provide free and confidential advice, information and support. If necessary they can accompany you to your health appointment.
MEHIP Secretary - 0131 537 7565
Bangladeshi Linkworker - 0131 537 7564
Chinese Linkworker - 0131 537 7562
Indian/Pakistani Linkworker - 0131 537 7563

Remember, it is your right to alter your choices at any time. If you have difficulty in getting your choice of care please contact a supervisor of midwives through the switchboard at either:
St John’s Hospital, Livingston - Tel: 01506 523 000
Simpson Centre for Reproductive Health, Edinburgh - Tel: 0131 536 1000

This leaflet outlines the various choices available to you for your maternity care in Lothian.
You may find it useful to talk about this leaflet and your personal choices with your midwife, GP or consultant obstetrician.
care in pregnancy

Women should be given the opportunity to choose who cares for them during their pregnancy. It would most often be the midwife, but may be the GP or the consultant obstetrician.

(A Framework for Maternity Services in Scotland. Scottish Executive 2001)

Once your pregnancy has been confirmed, you will normally see a midwife. This first appointment can be arranged through your GP (family doctor) or you can contact your local team of midwives directly (see contact numbers at the back of this leaflet).

At that first appointment, also called a booking appointment, you will be able to discuss the various options of care available to you.

Most pregnant women in Lothian are looked after by a midwife who is based in their local community. Midwives provide expert clinical care during pregnancy, in childbirth and after the birth. Your midwife will be part of a team of midwives and you may occasionally be seen by other midwives from that team during your pregnancy and after the birth of your baby.

You may want your GP (family doctor) to be involved in your pregnancy care and all GP practices in Lothian will give you this option. Your care will then be shared between your midwife and your GP. You should ask your local GP practice for more information.

You may see other health professionals such as a physiotherapist, during your pregnancy. Your midwife may also refer you to a consultant obstetrician or other hospital consultants or a dietician for specialist advice and care.

Whatever your choice, all professionals involved in your care will work in partnership with you and with each other.

birth of your baby

Women have the right to choose how and where they give birth. This choice should be supported by high quality information and evidence-based clinical advice that allows them to take part in the decision making process.

(A Framework for Maternity Services in Scotland. Scottish Executive 2001)

In Lothian, you have a number of options as to where to have your baby. Your midwife, GP or consultant obstetrician will be happy to discuss these with you. They will help you to make the decision that is best for you and your baby.

Here are the options in Lothian:

To have your baby in hospital where hospital midwives will care for you in labour and at the birth. Other healthcare professionals will also be there to assist if necessary.

In Lothian, you have the choice of 2 hospitals: St John’s Hospital in Livingston or the Simpson Centre for Reproductive Health, (Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh).

Both hospitals offer a choice of pain relief and have facilities for water birth. They both provide midwifery and obstetric care and have a special care baby unit. The Simpson is the regional centre for complex pregnancy and childbirth and has a neonatal intensive care unit on site.

Depending on where you live, you may also want to ask your midwife about the possibility of having your baby in a hospital outwith Lothian.

To have your baby at home where midwives from your local midwifery team will care for you in labour and at the birth. In certain circumstances, which your midwife will discuss with you, you may need to be transferred to hospital.

care at home after the birth of your baby

Wherever you decide to have your baby, the same team of midwives who cared for you during your pregnancy will care for you and your baby once you are home.