

# Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh - Labour Ward

- Maternity Voices Partnership visit on 30 October 2023



# The Labour ward (LW)

- There are 13 birthing rooms
- 3 of the rooms have a birthing pool
- The beds are fully adaptable with a choice of multiple positions
- Telemetry monitoring is available (4 wireless machines)
- The midwives offer one-to-one care in labour
- All the midwives have experience of working in all the maternity unit settings (6-monthly or yearly rotations)
- There is a High Dependency area
- There is a dedicated bereavement room decorated by SIMBA

We were welcomed to the labour ward by Nichola and shown around one of the birthing rooms.

Nichola gave a brief presentation about the LW and patiently answered all our questions in great detail. Thank you!



The BRAIN poster is displayed in the corridor



# Birthing Room





# Adaptable Bed



Mood candles and  
Aromatherapy are available



# Birthing Pool in the Bathroom






# Encouraging Active Birth

- The MVP recommended placing a poster (like this one) showing various active birth positions in the room.
- There are birthing aids such as birth balls and peanut balls in the room.
- The bed can be used in a choice of positions.



# Mobile Epidural

The first dose of anaesthetic is lower than before to allow some feelings and sensations. There is a safe system to self-administer top-ups as and when required. Mobilising is encouraged and supported as illustrated below.

**Safe Mobilising with an Epidural** 

**Ensuring a Safe Environment**


- Stable observations and CTG before and during
- Constant presence of assistant
- Wearing appropriate footwear

**Who Might Be Suitable?**


- Stable blood pressure and CTG
- No concerns about high BMI
- Engaged presenting part
- No morphine past 4 hours
- No alcohol or illicit drugs

**Carry out mobility assessment every hour**


**1** Able to straight leg raise




**2** Aware of normal sensation in soles of feet



**3** Able to stand beside bed with 2 assistants for balance



**4** Able to do 3 knee bends with balance



**Benefits of Safe Mobilisation with an Epidural**

- Improved patient satisfaction
- Reduced risk of pressure sores
- Possible reduced need for instruments delivery

**How Much Mobilising?**

- Changing position in the bed
- Transfer to chair or bouncy ball
- Walking around birthing room
- Using toilet within birthing room

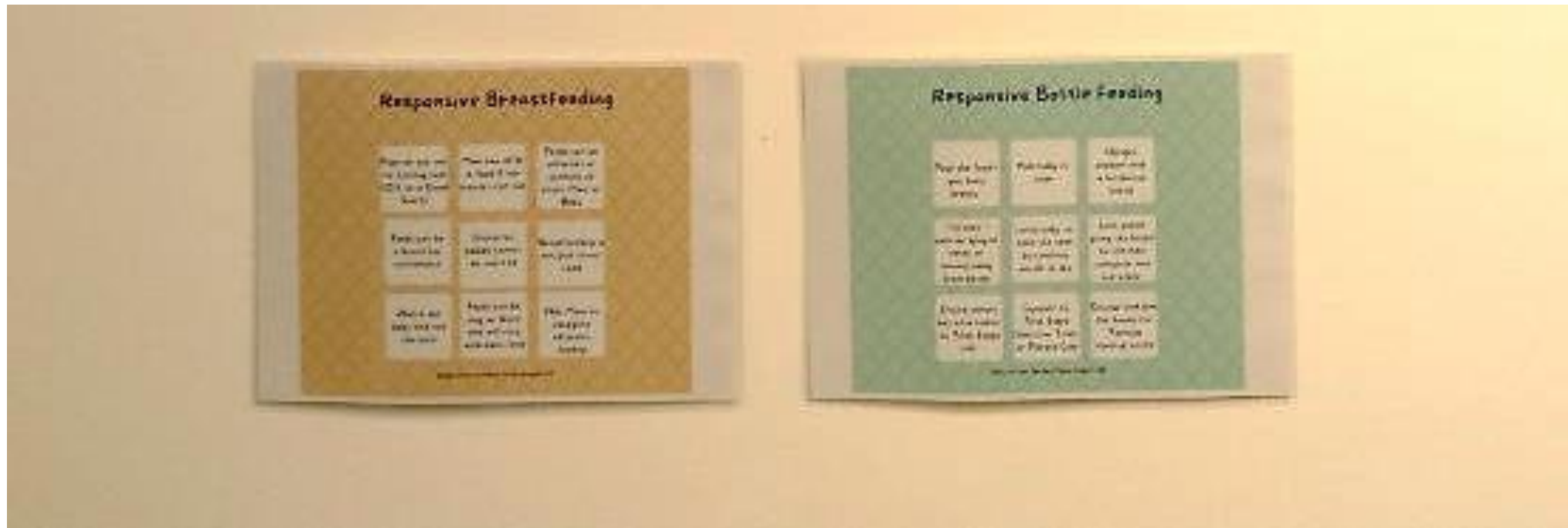
(If CTG monitoring)

# After the Birth

- Mum and baby typically stay between 2 to 3 hours in the birthing room before being transferred to the postnatal ward.
- If the birth takes place in theatre, mum and baby are transferred from there.
- Theatre is used for perineal repair in case of 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> degree tears.
- Dads and partners can stay on the postnatal ward to support the mother at all times, including overnight. However, it is important to know that meals are not provided for them and there are no beds or showering facilities for partners on the postnatal ward.

# Responsive Feeding

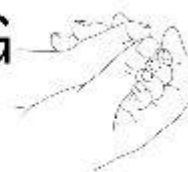
The MVP recommends displaying the new posters which were developed with the Infant Feeding Advisor (see next slide)







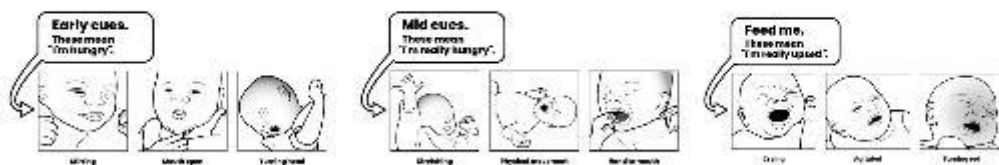
# RESPONSIVE FEEDING



Building a close and loving bond

Babies have all kinds of ways to tell us when they are hungry. Learning to recognise the signs that your baby is hungry and responding by offering a feed is called responsive feeding. Feeds can also be offered for parents needs such as breasts feeling full, wanting to increase supply or just for a close and loving cuddle! It helps you develop a close and loving bond with your baby and makes your baby feel safe and secure.

How does your baby tell you they are hungry?



## RESPONSIVE FEEDING

Make Feeding Time a Special Time



### TOGETHER TIME

- Hold your baby close
- Look into their eyes
- Speak to your baby
- Build up a close and loving bond

### FEEDING TIME

- Recognise the signs your baby is hungry
- Respond to your baby's cues by offering a feed
- Talk to and encourage your baby when they are feeding

### SOOTHING TIME

- Cuddle your baby next to your skin so they can smell you and hear your heartbeat
- Make soothing noises
- Rest and relax when your baby is feeding



## RESPONSIVE FEEDING

When breastfeeding

- Offer the breast when your baby shows signs that they are hungry
- Offer a feed when your breasts feel full
- Offer the breast to be close to your baby, reassure and comfort them.



When bottle feeding



- Offer a bottle when your baby shows signs that they are hungry
- Gently let baby take the teat into their mouth and allow them to feed at their own pace
- Recognise the signs that your baby has had enough and do not force baby to finish the feed
- Hold baby close during feeds with lots of eye contact
- Try to have most of the feeds given by yourself and one other person



# The Labour Ward is fully accredited by UNICEF Baby Friendly

**The Unicef Baby Friendly Initiative is a global partnership between the World Health Organisation (WHO) and Unicef.** It works with the National Health Service (NHS) in the UK to ensure a high standard of care for pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers and babies in hospitals and community health settings. The initiative aims to enable public services to better support families with feeding and developing close, loving relationships, ensuring that all babies get the best possible start in life.



# Feedback Board

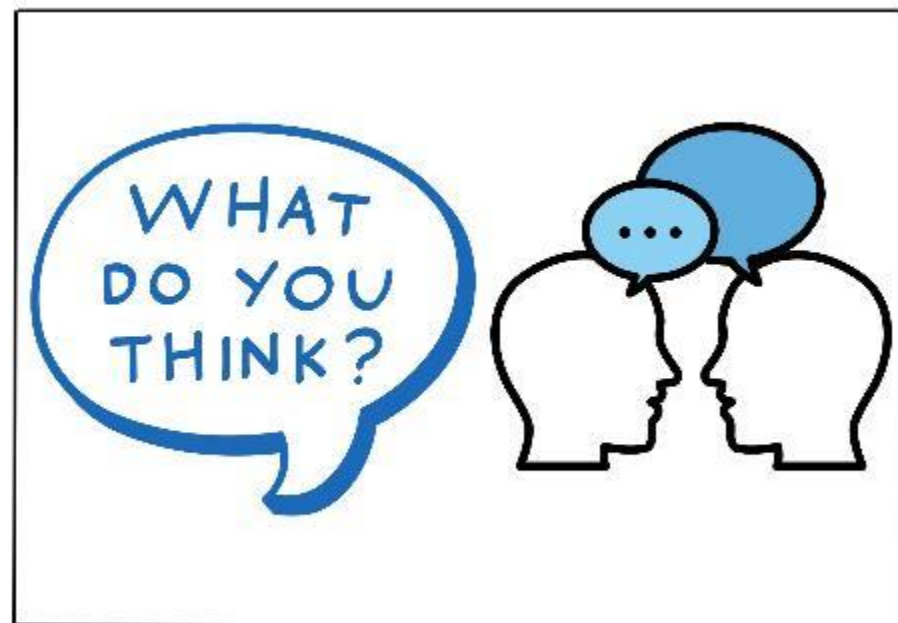
Infection prevention rules do not allow for post-its to be used. All posters must be laminated. The MVP designed posters that could be used here to direct feedback to NHS Lothian Patient Experience Team (see next slide).





If you have immediate concerns or questions about your stay on this ward,

ask to speak to the **Senior Charge Midwife** who will be pleased to assist you.



If you want to give a compliment, raise a concern or make a complaint, please contact NHS Lothian Patient Experience Team  
Telephone: 0131 536 3370 (9am – 2pm)  
Email: [feedback@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:feedback@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)

---

<https://www.nhslothian.scot/yourrights/compliments-concerns-complaints/>

---



# Operating Theatres

The LW has direct access to three dedicated theatres. One for gynaecology and two for obstetrics. One of those is for planned caesarean births with a resuscitaire in the room and one for unplanned caesarean births without a resuscitaire. Baby is taken to another room if a resuscitaire is needed. If this happens, the father or partner are, however, welcome to stay with baby. Feedback to the MVP shows that the baby being taken to another room can be an added cause of stress and the service is reviewing how the theatres can be used optimally.



# Skin-to-Skin after Birth in Theatre

- Skin-to-skin is offered and supported in theatre
- Skin to skin in theatre is available for birthing people at assisted vaginal birth, planned and unplanned caesarean births. It is encouraged and supported assuming the mother is stable from a clinical point of view and the baby does not need resuscitation.
- Fathers or partners are encouraged to hold baby in skin-to-skin if the mother cannot. The MVP mentioned that the team at St John's Labour ward were in the process of developing special theatre gowns to make it easier for partners to do skin-to-skin in theatre.



# Discussion

- **Regarding Birth Affirmations posters:** the MVP asked if posters similar to those in the Birth Centre could be displayed. After discussion with the LW team of midwives, Nichola explained that this might not be appropriate for some families who are looked after on the LW. However, if parents are wishing to use positive affirmations and feel it can benefit their experience, they are encouraged to bring in their own flash cards/ posters/ phrases to make the birthing space their own. All midwives are mindful to use language that birthing parents feel is most appropriate to their unique labour.
- **Regarding kangaroo care gowns for partners to wear in theatre-** This suggestion was welcomed and Nichola made enquiries with SJH. Currently this is still a QI project being run on a small scale by the elective caesarean section midwife and is still in the trial/testing phase therefore is not something that has been formally rolled out yet and is not finalised. Nichola requested that once SJH are in their evaluation phase or in a position to up-scale the project, they could copy her into their findings. Any plans to roll this out across Lothian will be made available to her. It certainly is an exciting development that holds potential to improve theatre conditions for parents.

# Recommendations

- Replace Responsive Feeding posters with the new ones.
- Replace feedback posters with the ones suggested.
- Active Birth positions: add a poster showing positions (or a hand-held laminated A4 sheet) in the birthing rooms.
- Reconvene the labour ward Better Birth multidisciplinary group to enable direct and regular service users input.
- Create a website page for the RIE labour ward.