

# About the neonatal transport service

an information leaflet for parents



**Bliss**  
Scotland

for babies born too soon,  
too small, too sick

[www.bliss.org.uk](http://www.bliss.org.uk)

**NHS**  
SCOTLAND

## Dear family

The birth of your baby should be a time of celebration. However not all pregnancies go as planned – some babies are born prematurely, while others develop complications even when delivered at full term.

Many of these babies need specialised care, until they are big enough to breathe on their own, or recover from surgery or an illness. The doctors caring for your baby may ask the neonatal transport team to transfer your baby to a hospital with specialised facilities, or to a hospital near your home.

We know this is an extremely difficult and stressful time for you. This is why we hope this booklet will help to answer some of the questions about your baby's transfer – why it is necessary and how it takes place.

Please do not hesitate to ask the team any questions you may have regarding your baby's care and their journey between hospitals.

Thank you

Your neonatal transport service team

As part of Bliss, the UK charity, our mission is to make sure that more babies born prematurely or sick in the UK survive and that each one has the best quality of life.

Bliss Scotland  
PO Box 29198  
Dunfermline KY12 2BB  
† 0845 157 0077  
e [scotland@bliss.org.uk](mailto:scotland@bliss.org.uk)  
[www.bliss.org.uk](http://www.bliss.org.uk)

**Family Support Freephone Helpline** 0500 618140

**RNID typetalk** 018001 0500 618140

**Online parent messageboard** [www.blissmessageboard.org.uk](http://www.blissmessageboard.org.uk)

Bliss is a member of **Language Line** the telephone interpreting service, which has access to over 170 languages.

Bliss Publications 01933 318503 or order online at [www.bliss.org.uk](http://www.bliss.org.uk)  
Scottish registered charity SCO40878  
Registered charity no. 1002973 Registered no. 2609219

**We rely on donations to fund our work and your support could make a real difference. To find out about the different ways in which you could help, please contact us on 020 7378 5740 or go to [www.bliss.org.uk/donate](http://www.bliss.org.uk/donate)**

# What is the neonatal transport service?

It is a dedicated service designed to move babies safely from one hospital to another for specialised or ongoing care. The transport team has staff that have been specifically trained to transport critically ill babies.

Neonatal care is only provided in a small number of specialist units, and your closest hospital may not have the facilities that your baby needs. Although your hospital may have carried out some procedures and investigations, they may need to transfer your baby elsewhere for more specialist care.

The neonatal transport service exists to make sure the transfer is as safe and efficient as possible. We offer advice to your local hospital regarding your baby's care, and we communicate with different specialist centres as your baby's condition requires.



## What we do

The transport team will assess your baby and carry out any treatment to stabilise them for transport. Sometimes this takes time, but the team will update you regularly on your baby's condition.

The team is highly equipped with everything that might be necessary for the journey. We have our own specifically designed ambulance, but on occasion use other vehicles. If distance or time are a problem, we can also travel by plane or helicopter.

Due to the limited space in the vehicles we use, it may not be possible for you to travel with your baby and the team. However, you will be given a map and directions to the hospital. The team will also take a contact telephone number from you to give to the staff at the new hospital, and will phone you to update you on how the journey went and your baby's condition. The phone numbers of the new hospital are in this leaflet, to allow you to phone once your baby arrives.

**It is important that you do not try to follow the ambulance – this can be very dangerous.**

# What will happen to your baby

Your baby will travel in an incubator similar to those used in neonatal units. This is to make sure that your baby is warm and comfortable throughout the journey, and it also allows the team to observe your baby continuously. The baby will also be attached to a monitor, which gives us information on their condition.

If your baby needs help with breathing, we can help using various methods. Firstly, we can deliver oxygen through little prongs into your baby's nose, or we can use slightly larger prongs to deliver a little pressure through their nose, which keeps the airways open and makes breathing a little easier (Continuous Positive Airway Pressure, or CPAP). Sometimes we may have to pass a breathing tube through the mouth or nose into the windpipe, which gives your baby extra help with breathing. This tube is connected to a breathing machine (ventilator), and stays in place until your baby can breathe properly without it.

While this breathing tube is in place, any secretions are cleared by putting a thinner tube (suction catheter) inside the breathing tube, which sucks them out. Your baby may be given some sedation and pain relief, so that they are comfortable and relaxed throughout the journey.

A feeding tube is also placed through the mouth or nose down the foodpipe and into the stomach. There will also be little tubes (cannulae/drips) going into your baby's veins to give them fluids and other types of medication.



At times during the journey, the team may have to check your baby's blood pressure. We will place a small tube into another type of blood vessel and attach it to the monitor. This tube (arterial line) also lets the team take small blood samples to measure oxygen levels and carry out other investigations.

# Neonatal intensive care units

During their time in intensive care, your baby will remain in an incubator and may be attached to monitors. The equipment may make a lot of noise, which you may find disconcerting or frightening. However, everyone caring for your baby will be happy to explain and support you.



Generally, accommodation is available for you near your baby. If you wish to stay beside them, the nursing and transport team will try to make arrangements.

You will be encouraged to touch and talk to your baby as much as possible. However, you should always remember to wash your hands and dry them thoroughly before you do so. You can open the incubator's portholes and do your baby's cares – staff will guide and support you, especially at the beginning, as it can be tricky if your baby is attached to lots of different equipment.

Visiting rules vary depending on which unit you are transferred to. Generally, parents and siblings are allowed to visit at any time. Extended family and friends will have set visiting times. Only two visitors are allowed in at one time, to reduce the level of noise and congestion inside the unit. Also, staff won't allow visitors in without parents present, unless you have given your permission.

In most units nursing staff change shift at 7am–8am and 7pm–8pm. Ward round times are daily, usually first thing in the morning. During these times you may be unable to visit your baby, as other babies' care will be discussed and privacy is necessary. If you wish to speak with a member of the medical team, let the nursing staff know and they will arrange this.

As your baby gets better, they may be moved to a different part of the unit. Over time you will be more and more involved in your baby's care. If your baby has any specific needs the nursing staff will show what you need to do.

Preparing you for going home with your new baby will begin as soon as you are admitted. Some units offer a 'transitional care', which allows you to be with your baby and carry out all their cares with a nurse nearby. It is more relaxed and homely, and allows you to get used to your new life with your baby.

# Information about neonatal units in Scotland

- 1 Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh (Simpson Special Care Baby Unit)**  
51 Little France Crescent Edinburgh EH16 4SA (Unit in maternity building on 1st floor)  
Switchboard 0131 536 1000  
Direct line 0131 242 2601/2  
[www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)  
Travel: A7 from City Bypass; Parking available, discounts offered
- 2 Paisley Royal Infirmary**  
Corsebar Road  
Paisley PA2 9PN  
(Unit on 1st floor)  
Switchboard 0141 887 9111  
Direct line to Unit 0141 314 7035  
[www.nhsgg.org.uk](http://www.nhsgg.org.uk)  
Travel: M8 towards Glasgow Airport; Parking available, no cost
- 3 Southern General Hospital**  
1345 Govan Road  
Glasgow G51 4F  
(Unit in Maternity Building)  
Switchboard 0141 201 1100  
Direct line to Unit 0141 201 2261  
[www.nhsggc.org.uk](http://www.nhsggc.org.uk)  
Travel: Glasgow Govan area, M8 towards Paisley; Free parking, no restrictions
- 4 Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary**  
86 Bankhead Road  
Dumfries DG1 4AP  
(Unit in maternity wing on 1st floor)  
Switchboard 01387 246246  
[www.nhsdg.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsdg.scot.nhs.uk)  
Travel: Signposted from Dumfries ringroad; Free parking, no restrictions
- 5 Ninewells Hospital**  
Ninewells Avenue  
Dundee DD1 9SY  
(Unit in main building on level 6, ward 40)  
Switchboard 01382 660111  
Direct line to Unit 01382 633840  
[www.nhstayside.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhstayside.scot.nhs.uk)  
Travel: West of Dundee, main gate at Ninewells Ave; Parking available
- 6 St. John's Hospital**  
128 Howden Road  
Livingston EH54 6PP  
(Unit in main building on 1st floor)  
Switchboard 01506 523000  
Direct line to Unit 01506 524394  
[www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)  
Travel: In Howden area; Free parking, no restrictions
- 7 Forth Park Maternity Hospital**  
30 Bennoch Road  
Kirkcaldy KY2 5RA  
(Unit situated on 1st floor)  
Switchboard 01592 643355  
Direct line to Unit 01592 648128  
[www.nhsfife.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhsfife.scot.nhs.uk)  
Travel: In west Kirkcaldy; Free parking, limited spaces
- 8 Wishaw General Hospital**  
50 Netherton Street  
Lanarkshire ML2 0DP  
(Unit in maternity wing of main building on 2nd floor)  
Switchboard 01698 361100  
Direct line to Unit 01698 366820  
[www.nhslanarkshire.co.uk](http://www.nhslanarkshire.co.uk)  
Travel: Centre of Wishaw; Free parking, no restrictions

- 9 Stirling Royal Infirmary**  
 Livilands Gate  
 Stirling FK8 2AU  
 (Unit in maternity wing of main building on 1st floor)  
 Switchboard 01786 434000  
 Direct line to Unit 01786 434044  
[www.nhsforthvalley.com](http://www.nhsforthvalley.com)  
 Travel: South of City Centre J9 from M9 or M80; Free parking with 4 hour restriction, unit pass can be provided for longer stay
- 10 Ayrshire Crosshouse Hospital**  
 Kilmarnock Road  
 Kilmarnock KA2 OBE  
 (Unit in main building on ground floor)  
 Switchboard 01563 521133  
 Direct line to Unit 01563 825352  
[www.nhsayrshireandarran.com](http://www.nhsayrshireandarran.com)  
 Travel: West of Kilmarnock (Borders Crosshouse village) M8/M77/A71;  
 Free parking, no restrictions
- 11 Borders General Hospital**  
 74 Melrose  
 Melrose, Roxburghshire TD6 9BS  
 (Unit on 2nd floor of main building)  
 Switchboard 01896 826000  
 Direct line to Unit 01896 826123  
[www.nhsborders.org.uk](http://www.nhsborders.org.uk)  
 Travel: East of Melrose off A68; Free parking, no restrictions
- 12 Princess Royal Maternity Glasgow**  
 Alexandra Parade  
 Glasgow G31 2ER  
 (Unit on 4th floor)  
 Switchboard 0141 211 5349  
 Direct line to Unit 0141 211 5247  
[www.nhsggc.org.uk](http://www.nhsggc.org.uk)  
 Travel: M8; Parking at hospital with charge
- 13 Royal Sick Children Hospital, Yorkhill (known as Yorkhill)**  
 Dalnair Street  
 Glasgow G3 8SJ  
 (Unit on 4th floor)  
 Switchboard 0141 201 0550  
 Direct line to Unit 0141 201 0528  
[www.nhsggc.org.uk](http://www.nhsggc.org.uk)  
 Travel: Situated in West End of Glasgow (close to Kelvingrove Museum); M8 (Charing X exit); Parking – first 4 hours free: if baby admitted then permit given for free parking
- 14 Raigmore Hospital**  
 122 Old Perth Road  
 Inverness IV2 3UJ  
 (Unit on 1st floor of main building)  
 Switchboard 01463 704000  
 Direct line to Unit 01463 704375  
[www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.nhshighland.scot.nhs.uk)  
 Travel: Situated in outskirts on south side of city; Free parking, no restrictions
- 15 Aberdeen Maternity Hospital**  
 398 Cornhill Road  
 Aberdeen AB25 2ZL  
 (Unit on ground floor of main building)  
 Switchboard 0845 456 6000  
 Direct line to Unit 01224 552602  
[www.nhsgrampian.org](http://www.nhsgrampian.org)  
 Travel: Situated on west side in Foresterhill area; Free parking, no restrictions
- 16 Dr Grays Hospital**  
 Elgin IV30 1SN  
 (Unit in main building on 1st floor)  
 Switchboard 0845 456 6000  
 Direct line to Unit 01343 567443  
[www.nhsgrampian.org](http://www.nhsgrampian.org)  
 Travel: Situated to west of Elgin off A96; Free main car park, no restrictions
- 17 Royal Hospital for Sick Children**  
 9 Sciennes Road, Edinburgh EH9 1LF  
 Telephone 0131 536 0000  
[www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/hospitals/rhsc](http://www.nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk/hospitals/rhsc)  
 Travel: Situated in city centre; pay and display around the hospital



# Neonatal units in Scotland



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh        | 10. Ayrshire Crosshouse Hospital           |
| 2. Paisley Royal Infirmary             | 11. Borders General Hospital               |
| 3. Southern General Hospital           | 12. Princess Royal Maternity Glasgow       |
| 4. Dumfries & Galloway Royal Infirmary | 13. Royal Sick Children Hospital, Yorkhill |
| 5. Ninewells Hospital                  | 14. Raigmore Hospital                      |
| 6. St. John's Hospital                 | 15. Aberdeen Maternity Hospital            |
| 7. Forth Park Maternity Hospital       | 16. Dr Grays Hospital                      |
| 8. Wishaw General Hospital             | 17. Royal Hospital for Sick Children       |
| 9. Stirling Royal Infirmary            |  |