

Baby needing transfer

This information sheet aims to answer some commonly asked questions about transferring babies between facilities.

IMPORTANT: This is general information only. Ask your doctor or midwife about what care is right for you.

Why does your baby need to go to another hospital?

Your baby is being moved to a different hospital because he/she needs extra care that can't be given at your current hospital.

This may be because your baby:

- Was born early (premature)
- Is having breathing problems
- Is sick
- Had difficulties during birth
- Needs surgery
- Needs medicine and care from a neonatal specialist (doctor that looks after babies) for some conditions

Which hospital will your baby be transferred to?

Your local hospital staff will let you know where your baby is going.

How will your baby be transferred?

Your baby will travel in a special baby transport cot. Staff (doctor and/or nurses) with special training in caring for sick and premature babies will be with your baby at all times.

Your baby will go by ambulance, helicopter or plane. Your local hospital staff will let you know about this.

Can you travel with your baby?

Sometimes one parent may be able to travel with their baby. However, this is not always possible. If you are unwell or needing medical care you won't be able to travel with your baby, but may be moved to the same hospital at a different time.

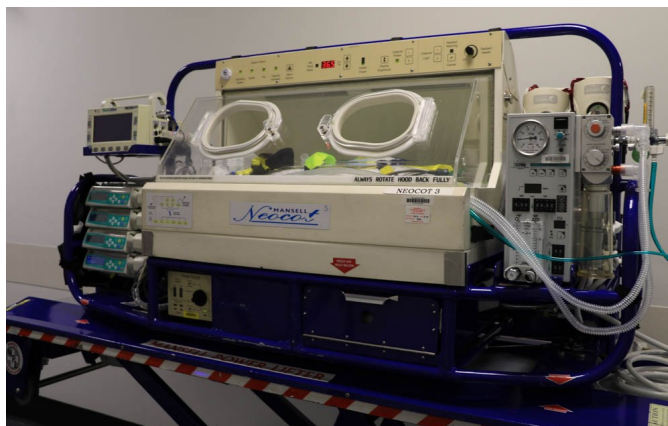
If you are well and unable to go with your baby, you will need to make plans to go to your baby's hospital. The local hospital staff will help you with this if possible.

Can you get help with the costs of travelling to another hospital?

Queensland Health's Patient Travel Subsidy Scheme helps with travel and accommodation costs when specialist care is needed at a different hospital. Ask to speak to a social worker or patient travel coordinator to get help with this.

How can you find out how your baby is going?

You will be given the contact phone number of your baby's hospital so that you can ring to find out how your baby is going. The hospital staff will also ring you to talk about your baby and the plan for care.



Special baby transport cot

Can you stay with your baby?

Spending time with your baby is important for both of you.

If you don't need to be admitted to hospital, staying near the hospital may be an option.

Some larger hospitals have accommodation close by (such as Ronald McDonald House). Your local hospital staff will help you find out about this or you can ask when you arrive at your baby's hospital.

What should you take with you?

Take clothes, shoes and personal items with you. You might also like to take (but not essential) a:

- Breast pump
- Small esky and cold brick for storing your expressed breast milk
- Book/journal and pens to record daily events in your baby's life
- Camera and/or video camera
- Mobile phone and charger

If you are not admitted to the hospital you will need money for living expenses.

If you are able to travel with your baby in a plane or helicopter there are weight and size limits. You are able to take 5kg (about the size of a supermarket shopping bag).

What can you expect when you arrive at the hospital?

The doctors and nurses will help you to visit, see and care for your baby. You will need to wash your hands each time you visit your baby.

You will be able to sit with, talk or read to your baby. You may also be able to help with nappy changes or feeding. It depends on how sick your baby is. Very sick babies often need a lot of rest.

You can discuss your baby's progress and treatment with the doctors and nurses.

Are siblings, family and friends able to visit your baby?

Each hospital has its own visiting policy. The staff at your baby's hospital will discuss this with you.

To protect your baby from infections, anyone with coughs, colds or other infections are not allowed to visit.

Can you feed your baby?

Sometimes it may not be possible to feed your baby straight after birth. You may like to start expressing your breast milk so there is milk ready when your baby starts feeding. The nurses/midwives will help you with this. If you have already expressed some breast milk, this will be labelled with your name, stored in a cool pack and go with your baby.

Who should you ask if you have questions?

This is a difficult and stressful time for you. You may feel overwhelmed, anxious, angry or uncomfortable when your baby needs to go to another hospital. The hospital staff caring for your baby will be able to help you with your questions and concerns. Most hospitals have social workers available for emotional and practical support.

Comfort, support & information

13HEALTH (13 432584) is a phone line that provides health information, referral and services to the public.

Pregnancy, Birth & Baby Helpline 1800 882 436 (free call) offers free, confidential, professional information and counselling for women, their partners and families relating to issues of conception, pregnancy, birthing and postnatal care. www.health.gov.au/pregnancyhelpline

Lifeline 13 11 14 Lifeline offers a telephone crisis support service to anyone. www.lifeline.org.au

Miracle Babies 1300 622 243 provide a resource and support for parents and families of premature babies www.miraclebabies.org.au

Preterm Infants' Parents' Association (PIPA) 1300 773 672 www.pipa.org.au

Queensland Clinical Guidelines Access the clinical guideline Neonatal stabilisation for retrieval aligned with this information www.health.qld.gov.au/qcg

Australian Breastfeeding Association Helpline 1800 mum 2 mum 1800 686 268. Community based self-help group offers