



Trust service change update

Issue 3: 2 December 2011

This is the third edition of the Trust's regular updates for GPs and their staff about service changes taking place at the Trust's hospitals, especially the Lister and QEII. Based on feedback received, it aims to summarise the key information that GPs and their teams need to know in order to support their patients. Questions, comments and feedback should be sent to gpliaison.enh-tr@nhs.net. This e-mail address is monitored daily, thus making sure that GPs get the right response to their questions and/or be put in touch directly with the appropriate team within the Trust.

This December 2011 edition focuses principally on the Trust's maternity services, specifically the referral process for newly pregnant women. Following the creation of the new single inpatient maternity service at the Lister site, the antenatal booking system used successfully in east Hertfordshire has been reviewed and is now being adopted across the Trust. Up until now, women from the Stevenage and north Hertfordshire areas would often first see a community midwife in a local GP's surgery and then have to make separate arrangements for blood tests and the booking of ultrasound scans.

What is changing

- A one-stop booking system is now made available to all newly pregnant women, which ensures they receive their antenatal counselling and screening within the timeframe set out by the National Screening Committee and NICE guidelines. Women should be referred in to the service following their initial consultation confirming their pregnancy in order to meet the national timeframe.
- Women will now attend Hertford County, QEII or Lister hospitals for their initial appointment.
- There are no other changes to antenatal care – subsequent appointments from 16 weeks gestation will remain as they always have, close to the woman's home.

How to refer women in to the Trust's maternity service

- Women can be referred by either completing the antenatal booking referral form or by referral letter. The letter or the form should be faxed through to the Trust's dedicated fax number – 01438 781198. On receipt of the referral, women will be offered an appointment at Hertford County, QEII or Lister hospital.
- A copy of the form is attached with this bulletin and is also available on the Trust's website: <http://www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk/gps-professionals/key-documents/>

Benefits to women

- This new system offers women a one-stop clinic which streamlines the booking process, ensuring that any counselling, investigations and screening are undertaken within the correct timeframe. Results are then available and can be actioned in a timely manner. It provides women with the knowledge and reassurance of when and how they will receive the results of any investigations, as well as involving women more in developing their care plans. This process will also strengthen our failsafe procedures.

Benefits to GPs

- We have a dedicated fax number that speeds up the referral process and reduces postage costs.
- Results initiated in hospital booking clinics will be followed up by the antenatal clinic staff, reducing the time spent by GP surgery staff chasing up results.

Getting answers to questions – GPs and their staff

- If you have any questions, please telephone Alison Duffy in the maternity team on 01438 284612 during normal office hours.