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Request for Information Reference: 08.20.28

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Email only

22 September 2020

**Freedom of Information Act 2000 – Request for Information**

Thank you for submitting a request for information which we received on 24 August 2020 in relation to County Durham and Darlington NHS Foundation Trust (the Trust). Your request has been processed under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and I am now able to provide you with a response.

Your request was in relation to Maternity services restrictions on partner attendance during COVID-19 and I am providing the following information in response to your specific questions, please note however that these answers are correct as at the time of your request, however the restrictions have since changed, please do forward us another request if you wish to receive the revised restrictions which are now in place:

- 1. During the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic have you introduced new policies or practices to any of your services relating to maternity care (antenatal, intrapartum, postnatal) which either restrict or completely prohibit partners/parents/birth partners (referred to as ‘partners’ from now on) attending planned or unplanned care because of COVID-19? (Y/N)?**

If yes, please go to Q2. If no, please go to Q6.

Yes.

- 2. If restrictions have been introduced, please provide brief details of the policy (e.g. number of partners allowed to attend, length of time partners are allowed to attend for) in the relevant section(s) of the table below:**

Type of service	Brief details of any restriction(s) introduced (e.g. partners banned altogether; restricted number of hours partners can attend for; or other relevant policy details).
<b>Antenatal scans</b>	The Trust restricted completely until 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2020, now we allow one person to attend all scans (individual circumstances are always considered)

<b>Antenatal routine care (e.g. midwife appointments)</b>	Restricted to none at present due to inability to socially distance. Individual family's needs are considered.
<b>Antenatal, non-routine care (e.g. assessment for reduced foetal movements)</b>	Restricted to none at present due to inability to socially distance. Individual family's needs are considered.
<b>Admission for induction of labour or latent phase of labour</b>	Once in established labour birthing partners are welcome and again all individual family's needs are considered.
<b>Intrapartum care - homebirth</b>	One birthing partner throughout.
<b>Intrapartum care - freestanding midwifery led unit</b>	NA.
<b>Intrapartum care – alongside midwifery led unit</b>	One Birthing partner throughout and 6 hours post-delivery. Individual family's needs are considered.
<b>Intrapartum care – consultant led unit</b>	One Birthing partner throughout and 6 hours post-delivery. Individual family's needs are considered.
<b>Intrapartum care – delivery in theatre</b>	One Birthing partner throughout and 6 hours post-delivery. Individual family's needs are considered.
<b>Postnatal care – post birth and on the postnatal ward</b>	One hour per women per day for the birthing partner. Individual family's needs are considered.
<b>Community postnatal clinics</b>	Restricted to none at present due to inability to socially distance. Individual family's needs are considered.

**3. Do restrictions in place, or related policies/practice, include provision for extenuating circumstances (e.g. mental health conditions, disabilities, pre-term birth, or following deliveries with complications)? (Y/N)? If yes please provide brief details?**

Not specifically as the Trust implements all policies and procedures with due consideration of the emotional and physical needs of the individual. Any restrictions in place have been adapted regarding access as per the needs of the families involved.

**4. Please indicate (Y/N) whether the restrictions detailed above were informed by:**

Yes.

- **Guidance issued by a professional body (please detail which body)**
- **Engagement with service users**
- **Other (please provide brief details)**

Guidance has been issued by the following professional bodies: the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists (RCOG), Society of Radiographers (SCoR), the Royal College of Midwives (RCM) and the National Health Service (NHS).

**5. Are these restrictions still in place (Y/N)? If not, please provide the date/an estimate of the date when they were removed?**

Please note above changes listed made on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020 and note the Trust will reconsider as per the current situation accordingly.

**6. Please provide details of any firm plans in place to introduce new restrictions on partner attendance at maternity services (e.g. in the event of a local lockdown, in the event of a major 2<sup>nd</sup> wave)?**

The Trust may return to the previous step in the national guidance (step 1) if the rates increase and local lockdown is confirmed. This will be driven by national direction, regional R rates, and organisational decision (at executive level).

In line with the Information Commissioner's directive on the disclosure of information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 your request will form part of our disclosure log on the Trust's website. However please be assured that we anonymise all responses prior to adding them to the disclosure log.

I hope that this response has provided you with the information you had requested. If you have any queries or wish to discuss the information supplied, please do not hesitate to contact me by telephone or in writing. If however, you are dissatisfied with the way in which your request has been handled and would like an internal review, you will need to contact me in writing at the above address or via [cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs](mailto:cdda-tr.cddftfoi@nhs).

If you remain dissatisfied with our response following an internal review you have the right to appeal to The Information Commissioner at Wycliffe House, Water Lane, Wilmslow, Cheshire, SK9 5AF. More information is available on their website; [www.ico.gov.uk](http://www.ico.gov.uk).

Yours sincerely

**Joanna Tyrrell**  
Freedom of Information Officer