



Welcome to our Special Care Nursery

Parent Handbook

Huron Perth Healthcare Alliance

Special Care Nursery

Stratford General Hospital, East Building – Level 2

46 General Hospital Dr., Stratford, Ontario N5A 2Y6

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This document is available in an alternative format upon request.

About the Special Care Nursery (SCN)

Babies are admitted to the Special Care Nursery (SCN) because they need specialized medical and nursing care. Our SCN is a Level II, which means that we can provide specialized care for sick infants, but do not have the ability to provide all the care of a Level III Nursery.

Our first priority is the care and health of your family. We want to work with you to meet your baby's needs and make sure your baby's stay is as positive as possible. Please ask questions or discuss concerns with your baby's nurse or doctor. If you are feeling overwhelmed, the Maternal Child staff are always available to support you and your family. You may also speak with other resources available to help you including our Social Worker, Public Health Nurse, your midwife or your spiritual advisor.

Admission from Home

If your baby is admitted from home they may be looked after in an isolette, which is used to keep your baby warm, in a quiet atmosphere. Isolettes allow for close monitoring. Other options may include an open cot or crib, depending on your baby's age and size.



Transferred From another Hospital

If your baby has come to us from a Level III Nursery, you may notice that some of our care is a little different. We may put your baby in an isolette with a cardiac monitor, even if they were in a cot with no monitors at the other hospital. This is not a step backward, but rather a way for our doctors to see what is normal for your baby.

Isolation

If your baby is admitted from home or another hospital, they will be isolated for approximately 24 – 48 hours, as we complete screening tests.

Transfer of Accountability & Family Involvement

Every time your baby's care changes to a new Nurse, a report is given called "Transfer of Accountability". The Nurse who has been caring for your baby will give information to the Nurse taking over. Generally this report happens at your baby's bedside or at the Communication Station.

Here are some things to keep in mind:

- We invite you to take part in this report but if you would rather not, please let us know. This is a good time to talk about any specific concerns or questions you may have.
- At the start of each shift your Nurse will need to confirm your baby's identity by checking your baby's identification band. We will do our best not to wake your baby when doing this important check.

Your Healthcare Team

There are many healthcare professionals who are involved in caring for your baby. Various members of the team may be involved in your baby's care depending on your needs and wishes. This team may include any of the following:

- Kerri Hannon, Manager, Maternal Child: Responsible for the day-to-day management of the maternal child program. Kerri is available to speak with you if any concerns or questions arise during your baby's stay in the SCN. Kerri can be reached at 519-272-8210 ext. 2323 or via email kerri.hannon@hpha.ca
- Dietitian: Reviews your baby's nutritional needs while in the hospital and at discharge, if needed.
- Laboratory Technician: Takes blood samples from your baby to help in diagnosis and treatment.
- Lactation Support / Consultant: A registered nurse who has specialized expertise in breastfeeding. They are able to help with breastfeeding as needed.
- Pediatrician: A doctor with special training and expertise in caring for children from newborn to 18 years of age. Your family doctor and/or midwife may visit and support you and your baby while in the SCN but are not involved in the care.
- Pharmacist: Oversees your baby's medications, available during the day to answer any questions as needed.
- Physiotherapist: Evaluates your baby if he/she needs to be assessed for growth, development and mobility.
- Registered Nurse: Nurses who care for your baby and have specialized training in the care of infants.
- Respiratory Therapist: Specialize in breathing.
- Social Worker: Available to help you with stress related to your baby's hospital stay. Can also help with plans for going home.
- Team Leader: A Resource Nurse to help answer any questions or concerns during your baby's stay. Responsible for the flow of babies and staff throughout the Maternal Child Unit.
- Unit Clerk: Main contact at the communication station. Answers phones and lets you into the Unit.

Family and Children's Services Workers, Infection Control Practitioners and Spiritual Care Services are available as needed or requested. If you require any of these services please ask your Nurse.



Contact Information

Please call the SCN anytime day or night if you have any questions or concerns about your baby.

Phone Number: **519-272-8210 ext. 2490**

Toll- Free: 1-888-275-1102 ext. 2490

If you leave the SCN we ask that you leave a contact number.

Please note: the material contained here is for INFORMATION ONLY and should not replace the advice of your doctor.

Visiting the SCN

HPHA encourages and supports patient and family-centred care. Visitors are welcome to the SCN 24 hours a day according to parent preference, condition and care needs. We encourage you to come to the hospital as much as you can.

Please note there may be times when we will ask you or your visitors to temporarily leave the nursery due to patient procedures that need to be done. This could be a procedure for your baby or another baby in the nursery.

To maintain confidentiality we ask that you please **knock on the SCN door before entering when the door is closed.**

All parents and visitors to the SCN need to respect the privacy of the other families and are asked to not wander to other bedsides or to ask questions about other babies or families.

Balloons

No latex balloons are allowed on the unit. Only FOIL balloons are allowed.

Courtesy Bed / Room

If you wish to stay in the hospital overnight to be near your baby, we have courtesy rooms available.

- There is no cost to the parents for these rooms
- The rooms are normally located across from the SCN, but at times they may be further away if we have an increased number of babies in the nursery.
- It may be a shared room with another parent.
- There is a small refrigerator in each room.
- There is a shared bathroom with a shower.
- You may sign up for meals at the main communication station. Please ask staff about current pricing.
- Access to an electric breast pump is available.
- There is a phone in each room that can be connected for local calls.

You should bring the following items if you are staying in a courtesy room:

- Towels, shampoo, soap, toothbrush and toothpaste, etc.
- Sanitary napkins
- Extra pillows and blankets
- Food (microwaves are available)
- Clothing

Electronic Devices

- If you wish to use your cell phone while in the SCN, we ask that you keep it on silent mode as a courtesy to other families and staff. If listening to music, playing video games or using a tablet to watch video, please use headphones.
- Please be sensitive while taking photos of your baby and do not include other patients and families in your photos.

Entrance “After-Hours”

The main entrance of the hospital is locked between 8:00 pm and 6:00 am. It is still possible to use this entrance, but in order to do so you must press the button on the wall. Switchboard staff will then unlock the door for you.

Parking

A number of parking discounts for frequent visitors and patients are available. Parking cards can be purchased as follows:

- Valid every day for one month from date of purchase
- Valid for 5 consecutive or non-consecutive days for a year
- Valid for 10 consecutive or non-consecutive days for a year
- Valid for 30 consecutive or non-consecutive days for a year

A deposit at time of purchase is required and is reimbursed once the card is returned. A fee is charged for lost or damaged cards. (Note: Cards may be damaged by excessive heat, cold and contact with magnets & chemicals).

To obtain a parking card, a "Frequent Visitor Parking Card Request Form" is to be signed by the visitor or patient at the Business Office in the West Building. In the event of a lost parking card, the Business Office is to be notified by the end of the next business day.

Tokens are also available in groups of 10 at a discount.

Scents & Flowers

In consideration of those who may be sensitive to scents, we request that you, your family and visitors use scent-free products and do not wear perfumes or colognes. We also ask that you do not have strongly scented flowers in your room.

Shift Change

During shift change (7:30 am and 7:30 pm) you may be asked to leave the SCN when other babies are being discussed.

Visitor Lists

You will be asked if visitors can see your baby when you are not at the hospital. If you agree, you can leave a list of four (4) people that will be allowed to care for your baby in the nursery when you are not there.

Preventing Infections

Babies in the SCN can get infections very easily. Below are some guidelines to protect your baby.

- You and your visitors should use the hand sanitizer (located at the entrance of the nursery) when entering and leaving the room.
- Visitors are required to wear a gown when holding your baby.
- Please encourage your visitors to visit your baby in the hospital first if they happen to be visiting other patients in the hospital.
- Do not visit, and make your visitors aware that they are not to visit either, if you or they have: cough, rash, weeping cold sores, diarrhea, fever, pink eye, sore throat, measles, chicken pox, running nose, vomiting, mumps or flu-like symptoms.

Caring for your Baby in our SCN

We encourage and support you to take an active part in your baby's care. Please keep us aware of what you feel comfortable doing for your baby. We will help you to care for your baby as much as the baby's condition allows. As you get more comfortable in the SCN, let the nurse know when you are ready to give more care, such as bathing your baby and checking your baby's temperature.

Skin to Skin, or Kangaroo Care

All babies benefit from skin-to-skin care. As soon as you are able to visit your baby in the nursery and they are stable we encourage you or your partner to hold your baby on your bare chest.

With skin-to-skin your baby:

- Breast feeds easier
- Cries less and is calmer
- Stays warmer
- Enjoys more comfort from you
- Has better blood sugar levels and heart rate

- Is protected by some of your good bacteria

With skin-to-skin, you:

- Breastfeed more easily
- Create more breast milk
- Learn when your baby is hungry
- Bond more with your baby
- Gain confidence and satisfaction caring for your baby
- Are more relaxed

Feeding & Weight

Breast milk is the best food for growth of babies. Breastfeeding and breast milk provides many benefits for both mothers and babies. It helps to create and establish a lasting bond between mother and her baby.

There are reasons that families may choose to not exclusively breastfeed. The staff at HPHA will strive to ensure families have evidence based information and support to make feeding decisions that are best for your family. This includes bottles and other ways to help your baby feed.

If you have to be separated from your baby we will assist you to breastfeed and maintain lactation.

- We will provide you with the equipment to collect and store your breastmilk if your baby is unable to breastfeed.
- We will provide you with information on hand expression as found in “Breastfeeding Matters” booklet by Best Start. (Given at Pre-Admit – please ask your Nurse if you require a copy).
- Your Nurse will help you to start hand expressing/pumping shortly after the delivery of your baby. Your nurse will help set you up with a hospital pump and kit (at a cost to you), if required.
- We provide storage containers and a refrigerator/freezer to store expressed milk. We ask that only staff put in or take expressed milk from the refrigerator/freezer.

We will weigh your baby every night.

Preparing for Discharge Home

When your baby is ready for discharge your Nurse will review the discharge plan with you. The preparation for discharge will start before the anticipated date, allowing you time to prepare for baby coming home.

