

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

MASKS & VISITORS

Why, when restrictions are being lifted to lockdown, are we being asked to wear masks when going to the hospital or GP surgery for antenatal appointments?

As lockdown is easing and people are out and about more, the risk of infection being brought into the hospital may increase, which is why the new guidance has been brought in. This is guidance from the government not individual healthcare settings.

Will I have to wear a mask while in labour?

No, you will not have to wear a mask during labour but your birth partner will have to wear one while in the hospital, including in the delivery room or if they step out of the room for any reason. This is to protect the staff.

Will I be provided with a mask?

If possible, please do bring your own mask or face covering. This can be a scarf or bandana covering your mouth and nose. There are some simple mask patterns available to look at which need no sewing. If you do not have a mask or face covering then one will be provided but you are encouraged to bring your own.

Will my baby have to wear a mask after it is born?

No, babies and children age 2 years old and under do not have to wear a mask.

The Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust website post about masks says “patients and visitors”, does this mean my partner can come onto the postnatal ward now to visit?

No, partners and visitors cannot visit the ante or postnatal wards at present. There are exceptional circumstances where one visitor – an immediate family member or carer – will be permitted to visit, these are listed below:

- The patient or child you wish to visit is receiving end-of-life care
- You are the birthing partner accompanying a woman in labour (Birth centre/Labour ward only)
- You are a parent or appropriate adult visiting your child
- You are supporting someone with a mental health issue such as dementia or with learning disability or autism, where not being present would cause the patient to be distressed.

Now everyone has to wear a mask, can my partner come with me to scans?

No, partners are currently still not permitted to attend appointments and scans. The hospital layout means that it is not possible to maintain 2m social distancing in waiting rooms and scan rooms if partners attend also.

I have read (or a friend has told me) that in another area visitors are being allowed again, why isn't Bucks? Why do hospitals have different rules?

Every NHS Trust is autonomous and will implement its own guidelines following guidance from the Government and various other bodies. Every hospital is set out differently, are bigger or smaller in size so social distancing may be easier to maintain in other environments.

Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust is working to keep staff and patients safe and are constantly reviewing the situation. As soon as there is any change they will post on their website - <https://www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk> and the Bucks MVP Facebook page.

PLEASE SPEAK WITH YOUR MIDWIFE OR DOCTOR IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS.