

SURROGACY INFORMATION

Quinte Health Care (QHC) welcomes the opportunity to participate in progressive, medically responsible forms of alternative family planning. We aim to provide you, whether you are the birth or intended parents, with a positive delivery and postpartum experience. At QHC, we recognize the birth mother and newborn infant as patients of the hospital and must promote their health and well-being above all other considerations. In Ontario, common law recognizes the woman who gives birth as the baby's mother. As such, all decision-making authority rests with her until such time that a court declares otherwise. That being said, we make every effort to support the intended parents, and the baby to develop a bond.



Pre-Admission:

We encourage Surrogate Mothers & Intended Parents to meet with us prior to admission. This is called a pre-admission conference and gives all parties an opportunity to tour our facility and discuss expectations. We also encourage the parties to complete our Surrogacy Pre-Admission Questionnaire, (can be printed beforehand from our website at www.qhc.on.ca/having-a-baby-at-qhc). Families are also welcome to provide their legal documentation, although it is not necessary, as we do not place this information on the health record. It is important to note that the hospital is not a party to the legal contract between the birth mother and intended parents, but we do strive to honour any special requests that are consistent with the birth mother's wishes, our policies and available resources.

In The Delivery Room:

In the delivery room, the Birth Mother is encouraged to have a support person present. The Intended Parents are permitted to be present if agreeable to the Birth Mother. In the event of complications, the medical staff determines who may be present during the delivery.

Registration:

The hospital registers and bands the baby with the Birth Mother's information; this is the legal requirement and this band is not to be removed until discharge. Staff can put on a second set of white bands written with the name designated by the Intended Parents.

Postpartum Care & Accommodations:

In the postpartum period, the Birth Mother may choose to have the infant in her room or designate the intended parents to fulfill the care-giving role in another area of the unit. We offer this option because we recognize the importance of giving the Intended Parents the opportunity to look after the baby, prior to discharge.

Signing Authority:

There are a few documents that need to be signed. During the pre-delivery meeting, the Birth Mother will be asked to sign the **Gestational Carrier Agreement Confirmation, Consent to Access and/or Breast Feeding, Consent to Treatment** and **Release of Patient Information**. If an Intended Parent wished to breast feed a serology report will be required at the Intended Parents expense and must have been obtained within the 12 months prior to the start of the breast feeding.

The Intended Parents will also sign the **Consent to Treatment** agreeing to act as the substitute decision maker for the baby. Out of country Intended Parents will have be required to sign a **Governing Law and Jurisdiction Agreement**.

OHIP Registration

All Intended Parents will be issued a **Proof of Birth Letter**, if the Intended Parents are from Ontario they must take this letter with them to Service Ontario to apply for the baby's OHIP.

Hearing Screening

The Birth Mother must sign this so the baby's hearing test can be done prior to discharge; however, the contact information should be that of the Intended Parents.

Public Health

The Birth Mother signs this to permit the baby's information to be shared with the Public Health Unit. This program is universal for every Birth Mother and baby born in this province. If the Intended Parents live in Ontario, the information is then forwarded to the corresponding Health Unit.

Discharge Form

Both the Birth Mother and Intended Parents must sign the "**Authorization to Release Child from Hospital**" and "**Acknowledgement of Receipt of Child from Quinte Health Care**" form. The top half is signed by the Birth Mother, which gives consent for the hospital to discharge the baby to the Intended Parents. The bottom half is signed by the Intended Parents to acknowledge that they received the child from us. They must also provide photo id which is copied and placed on baby's chart.

Additional Costs:

Birth Mothers with a valid OHIP number do not pay for their healthcare (outside of upgrades to private or semi-private accommodations). If the Intended Parents are from a province/territory outside of Ontario, they may be required to pay for medical costs associated with the infant's care and should discuss this with both their provincial carrier, and the hospital's finance department. If the Intended Parents are from out of country, they will be responsible for healthcare costs associated with newborn care, and should make payment arrangements with the finance department prior to discharge. Out of country Intended Parents will be expected to prepay some of the cost associated with baby and will be expected to reimburse the hospital for the total cost at baby's discharge.

Discharge:

If the Birth Mother wishes to leave hospital prior to the newborn, she has to sign a consent designating **Substitute Decision Making Authority and Discharge to the Intended Parents**; however, the Birth Mother needs to be aware that she still retains formal legal authority until a court ordered transfer of guardianship and as such she can revoke her consent at any time prior to the transfer of legal guardianship. The parties are responsible for providing the hospital with the name and contact information of the health care provider that will be following the baby as the baby will need to be seen within 3 to 5 days after discharge.

PLEASE NOTE:

While we strive to honor your planning, the hospital must act in accordance with applicable laws and legislation; therefore, if the planning is not harmonious, lacks clarity or initiates conflict between the parties, the hospital has the authority to insist that the birth mother resume direct caregiving responsibilities. Please contact our program's Team Leader, Social Worker or Manager if you have additional questions (613-969-7400 x. 2775).