

GP Shared Care at Eastern Health

Information for Pregnant Women

Women's and Children's Program

What is GP Shared Care?

Eastern Health Maternity Service offers a model of care in which you may choose an Eastern Health accredited General Practitioner (GP) who will provide your antenatal care during pregnancy. As an adjunct to the care your GP provides, you will also have a minimum of 3 antenatal appointments at the hospital with a midwife. You may also see a doctor when you attend the hospital visits.

Research shows that having a known carer during pregnancy results in less hospital admissions, less interventions in labour and birth, higher breastfeeding rates and women being more satisfied with their childbearing experience

Who is eligible for GP Shared Care?

The program is suitable for healthy low risk, women who feel it is important for them to know their carer through their pregnancy. Many women have a long term relationship with their GP & feel more comfortable under their care. The Eastern Health GP Shared Care program also offers women the opportunity to see a midwife during pregnancy to discuss their hospital stay, breastfeeding, early parenting and to plan for discharge home.

Is my Doctor an Accredited Shared Care Doctor at Eastern Health?

Your Doctor may not be accredited with Eastern Health. If you wish to have your own Doctor and he/she is not accredited, we can arrange for your Doctor to be accredited with Eastern Health . Please discuss this with your GP at your next appointment. Your Doctor will automatically be sent our accreditation documents when you nominate his/her name on the Maternity booking form.

Will I have to pay to be in the GP Shared Care program?

You will only pay the fee charged by your GP. Your visits to the hospital do not incur a fee.

How do I become part of the GP Shared Care program?

When you are completing the Eastern Health maternity booking form, simply tick the **GP Shared Care** option. Following the completion of your booking interview with an Eastern Health clinician, you will see your GP for most of your antenatal visits. You will only attend the antenatal clinic at 3 specific appointments during your pregnancy.

Your GP may refer you to higher level care at Eastern Health at any time during your pregnancy should you require it.

You can nominate to exit the **GP Shared Care** option at any time and remain booked at Eastern Health.

What will occur during pregnancy?

You will see your GP for the majority of your antenatal visits. You will meet with a midwife at an Eastern Health Antenatal Clinic for your scheduled midwife appointments in accordance with the **GP Shared Care** schedule of visits. The number of checks and the monitoring of your baby and your own wellbeing will be in accordance with Eastern Health Maternity Services procedures and protocols. Your GP will order tests when necessary and consult with the medical staff at Eastern Health if required.

How and When Do I Contact the hospital?

At your first antenatal visit the midwife will discuss with you how and when to contact your birth hospital.

What will occur during labour?

You will contact the hospital by phone when you are in labour or have any serious concerns. The hospital midwife and doctors will care for you in hospital. Your GP will not normally attend to you when you are in hospital.

What if Complications Occur?

If necessary, you will be referred to an obstetrician within the Eastern Health maternity service. Your ongoing pregnancy, birthing and post birth care will be determined in collaboration with yourself, and the multidisciplinary team. It may be necessary at times to be transferred to a higher level hospital for ongoing care.

What about my care after the birth?

The midwife will remain with you after the birth until she is sure that all is well with you and your baby, usually about 3-4 hours.

The remainder of your care while still at Birralee or Angliss will be by the midwives and doctors on duty.

The domiciliary midwife will visit you at your home in the early parenting period. The number of visits will depend on you and your baby's needs. Most women find 2-3 visits invaluable as they make the transition to this early parenting time. If you have any concerns between visits the midwife will be available on the phone.

At the conclusion of your post natal home visits the midwife will hand over your ongoing care to the maternal and child health nurse and your GP.