

What is Continuity of Midwifery Carer?



Continuity of Midwifery Carer

Continuity of Midwifery Carer is a new way of working that will provide integrated, appropriate and seamless care for all women through their journey from pregnancy and birth to the early parenting period. This innovative model will start to be phased in during 2023 and will become the standard model of maternity care across Northern Ireland. This means that the majority of pregnant women will be able to benefit from Continuity of Midwifery Carer.

Each pregnant woman will have a named midwife who works in a small team of 7 to 8 midwives. The named midwife will be the key professional responsible for coordinating the woman's care. While all pregnant women need a midwife, many women will also need an obstetrician. Women may also need to see a range of other specialists including doctors, mental health professionals, allied health professionals or specialist midwives and nurses, depending on their particular needs. All of this will be delivered within the new model.

What will Continuity of Midwifery Carer mean for you?

Evidence shows positive outcomes of this model of care. If you are cared for under the Continuity of Midwifery Carer model it means you are:

- more likely to have a positive birth experience
- less likely to have an assisted birth
- less likely to have your baby early
- less likely to lose your baby at any stage of pregnancy
- less likely to need an epidural for pain relief during labour
- more likely to know the midwife who will be supporting you in labour

How will you be cared for?

- You will meet your named midwife at your booking appointment. This midwife will be responsible for planning and providing your care throughout your pregnancy.
- You will have a regular schedule of appointments with your midwife, or a member of your CoMC team. These can be flexible and arranged to suit both you and your midwife.
- If at any stage of your pregnancy you need to see a consultant or other medical specialist, your midwife can attend these appointments with you.
- You will have the chance to meet all the midwives in your CoMC team at 'drop-in' sessions, coffee mornings and antenatal education classes.
- You will be offered antenatal classes and active birth sessions, run by your team of midwives.
- Your CoMC Team will provide 24/7 on-call support for labour and birth. Your midwife will support you in all birth settings, (home, midwifery-led unit or delivery suite.)
- Your midwife will support your discharge from hospital, if that is where you had your baby, and will visit you at home after the birth.
- When discharged your CoMC team will co-ordinate the handover of care to your Health Visitor, to make sure you and your baby get the care you need.

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