



News about “Better Births”

August 2019

WORKING TOGETHER FOR BETTER CARE

LAUNCH Update

by Anne Richley, Northamptonshire Maternity System Implementation Lead

This August will see the launch of the Northamptonshire Personalised Care Plan (PCP). It will become a communication tool during pregnancy, birth and beyond.

The care plan is completed by, and owned by the woman. It includes what is important to the woman and her family. This includes her values and expectations about being pregnant, giving birth and becoming a mother. Her home/family/professional life and support networks. Her previous experiences of pregnancy and childbirth, any fears or concerns she might have.

There is space for free text as too many tick boxes become meaningless and can end up directing someone to the answer that ‘fits’. The booklet will also be available in Bengali, Romanian, Lithuanian and Polish. The next step will be the option for women to access this electronically if they prefer.

The booklet is divided into four separate plans:

- **Health and Wellbeing in Pregnancy**
(Complete at the beginning, or any time during pregnancy)
- **Personalised Birth Preferences**
Complete 32-34 weeks of pregnancy
- **After Your Baby is Born**
Complete from 34 weeks of pregnancy
- **Birth Reflections**
Complete after your baby’s birth

The pregnancy passport is already in place for women with a learning disability but a local student nurse, Daniel White, created an ‘easy read’ version of a birth plan which is already in use and has been well received.

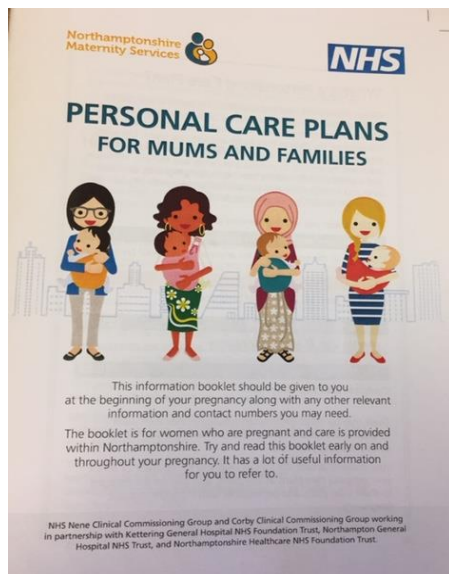


Our PCP is based on the one that North-West London successfully use, who were one of the early adopters for Better Births. However, after sending it out locally for comments it was then updated. Local families as well as the Heads of Midwifery, midwives, obstetricians, health visitors and the perinatal mental health leads reviewed and agreed the contents.

“All pregnant women will have a personalised birth plan and make choices about their maternity care, during pregnancy, birth and postnatally.”

FAST FACTS

By implementing the recommendations in Better Births (NHSE 2016) The ambition detailed in the NHS long term plan 2019 is to reduce stillbirths, brain injuries, neonatal deaths and maternal deaths by 2025



Every woman is free to make choices about her own pregnancy and childbirth, even if her caregivers do not agree with her. What is important is that she has evidence based information, rather than opinion, on which to make her choices. The majority of complaints come down to poor communication and women feeling that they aren't listened to. The PCP's will provide a tool for women to document and share what is important to them about the care they receive and the decisions they make.

The PCP also gives women opportunities to identify, at different stages of their pregnancy, if they need more information in order to make choices.

This year has also seen the launch of a new Northamptonshire Maternity Website:-

www.northamptonshirematernityservices.co.uk

This will provide further information for women and their partners, to help them make decisions about their care. The website can signpost to other agencies and websites, both locally and nationally and will also have a page for women to share their stories with each other.

By 2023/24, all women will be able to access their maternity notes and information through their smart phones or other devices.



The PCPs will also be available to view on the website. Eventually we hope that the women will be able to register their pregnancy online via the website and can then be allocated a midwife. Watch this space!



Questions and Answers

Does this care plan become part of my records?

This care plan is owned by you, it doesn't become part of your base folder. Pertinent points from it can be recorded electronically if you want them to be shared further.

Who completes the booklet?

This plan is for you to complete. It should be given to you at the beginning of pregnancy and then updated at different stages throughout and also following your birth. The midwives and doctors can talk through any concerns that have been highlighted, areas where you feel you need more information or any risks that the midwives and doctors feel that you need to be aware of.

What if I don't want to complete this?

No one should feel compelled to complete the PCP, however there are benefits to making healthcare professionals aware of your individual wishes or concerns, as it is important that you are at the centre of your care and that your voice is heard. The PCP contains important information and links to other services.

Some women already do a birth plan- aren't you reinventing the wheel?

The PCP is more than a birth plan. It includes information on women's values, thoughts, feelings, emotions and encourages her to consider the various options she has throughout her pregnancy. The plan also provides evidence based information to help her to make choices.

When do I receive my PCP?

From August 19th this should be given to women at the beginning of their pregnancy but then added to at different stages, as the pregnancy progresses. There is also an area to complete following the birth, reflecting on how you feel and if you need any further support.

Wouldn't this be better as an App so I could access this on my mobile phones?

Interestingly one of the early adopter sites found that women preferred paper when it came to sharing information with their midwife. However, ideally it would be great if women had the choice of how they access the PCP. We hope to add this to the website very soon and we are working on the option of an App too.

Is the PCP available in different languages?

Copies are also available in Bengali, Romanian, Polish and Lithuanian, which are the top four non English speaking languages used in maternity across our County. At this stage we are unable to translate the PCP into every conceivable language and there will inevitably still be a need for an interpreter to assist women in completing this. We are also looking at programs that can interpret this, once it is also available electronically.



For more information or your suggestions

If you have any ideas which you would love to see put into practice, don't keep them to yourself but please email me at anne.richley1@nhs.net