

Call for Concern[©]

**Are you worried that your
medical condition or that
of your baby is getting
worse?**

**Implementing Martha's rule in
Maternity at Gloucestershire
Hospitals**

What is Call for Concern[©]?

Call for Concern[©] is a patient safety service enabling patients and their families or carers to make a Martha's Rule call for help and advice from the medical teams when they feel concerned about a worsening clinical condition.

If you are worried that your medical condition or the medical condition of your baby is getting worse, you should discuss these concerns with your midwife, nurse or maternity healthcare support worker in the first instance. Staff will always act professionally and respond to your concerns. However, if you feel that your concerns have not been answered or resolved, you can ask to speak to the Midwife in Charge.

We want you to feel a partner in your care and the care of your baby. If you have concerns, we want you to tell us. You can notice the soft signs of illness in yourself and your baby before the medical teams, such as being off your food or unexplained pain or dizziness.

We have doctor ward-rounds every day where we will ask you how you are and we want you to tell us of any concerns. During labour you have your own midwife and a second midwife will check in on you every hour, if you are worried, please tell us. We will undertake a rapid review to check for any new clinical deterioration in you or your baby.

If we are concerned, we will hold discussions with the consultant team about your concerns and the next steps that have been determined. If needed, treatment changes and investigations will be started.

The aim of making a call for Martha's Rule in maternity is to request a rapid review for women and babies whose condition is deteriorating while in the hospital.

When not to use a Martha's Rule call

The on-call team do not routinely respond to the following general concerns:

- Maternity care issues
- Facilities on the ward
- Bed or rooms/bays
- Food
- Parking

These issues or concerns are best dealt with by the midwife, nurse or HCSW looking after you. Alternatively, you or a family member, can ask to speak to the Midwife in Charge of the ward, the Matron or the PALS team.

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offer an impartial and confidential service in our hospitals. They will listen to you and help to resolve any issues in an informal way, as well as providing information about organisations that offer further help and support. The PALS advisors will also explain the procedure for making a formal complaint, if needed.

You can contact PALS on freephone 0800 019 3282.

Making a Martha's Rule call

If you are a relative or carer and you are worried that the clinical condition of your family member or their baby is getting worse, in the first instance talk to the ward healthcare team.

If you are still worried or do not feel satisfied with the response you can either ask the ward healthcare team to contact the medical Team or you can contact them directly.

1

Speak to the midwife, nurse or maternity healthcare support worker if you feel that your health condition is worsening or not improving as expected.

2

If you are still unsure ask to speak to the Midwife in Charge.

3

If you are still not satisfied that your concerns have been addressed after steps one and two, you can escalate your concerns by contacting the Switchboard stating that **you are making a referral under Martha's Rule from the Maternity Department**, who are available to provide assistance and advice 24 hours a day.

0300 422 2222

The healthcare team will work with you and your family to ensure the best outcomes for you concerns. All calls will be triaged and responded to.

You might find it useful to make notes of the things you wish to say or ask the Midwife, Matron or Doctor.

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Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.

Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?



These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation.

***Ask 3 Questions** is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85



<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>



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If you would like to find out more, please contact:
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