

Newborn Care Centre: Support for Parents

March 2023

Social Workers

Social Work is an integral part of the NCC team and, along with the clinicians who are looking after your baby, they are here to assist you with practical and emotional support throughout your baby's admission. The role of social workers is to focus on your wellbeing, helping you to look after yourself as you navigate the journey that your baby has gone through in the NCC.

The Social Work team is available to attend medical meetings, provide counselling support, assist with practicalities such as accommodation, parking concession forms, and link you to support services when it is time to be discharged home.

The Social Work team run a weekly **Beading Group** in the NCC and welcome all parents who wish to attend. This group is a great opportunity to both connect with other parents in the NCC and collect beads to document your baby's unique journey throughout their hospital stay. Please ask your nurse when this session is scheduled and they will be able to connect you.

The Social Work team is available business hours Monday – Friday and provide an on-call service on weekends and public holidays. Not all patients are automatically linked to social work, so if you have not seen a social worker and would like to, please ask a member of the nursing staff to refer you.

Parents' Mental Health

Rates of post-natal depression (PND) are as high as 40% among women with premature infants, compared to 5–10% of mothers who give birth to full term healthy babies. More than half also report symptoms of anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Studies have also found that mothers who do not receive psychological help after giving birth prematurely are five times more likely to suffer depression than those who do, even up to eight

years after their children are born. Fathers can also suffer the effects of PND and PTSD, and we encourage both parents to make their mental health a priority, both during their baby's hospitalisation and after their discharge.

In addition to the Social Work team, your GP can be a source of support. You are able to request a mental health check up with your GP, and based on the results they can refer you to a psychologist for additional help during this difficult time, and potentially on an ongoing basis.

Support Groups

During your baby's time in the NCC, and after discharge, you may struggle to find a parents group where you feel like you fit in. The experience you and your baby have been through is one that parents of healthy term babies may not understand. The following groups may be communities where you find like-minded people:

- Miracle Babies Nurture Group (www.miraclebabies.org.au)

The parents of other NCC babies may also be a great source of knowledge, compassion and community. As much as you feel comfortable, strike up conversations and do not be afraid to swap contact details – when the dust has settled you may be glad to reinitiate a connection.

The Royal Hospital for Women Foundation

The Foundation office is down the corridor from the NCC and open 9am – 3pm. If your baby was born at The Royal, you are welcome to drop in to collect a Royal Koala pack. This is a lovely keepsake and/or gift for your baby.

You may have also noticed the beautiful star wall? Please ask at the Foundation office or search on the Foundation's website for how to make a donation and commission your

baby's star. Putting up your baby's star can be an especially meaningful milestone for a NCC parent.



A new baby star being added to the wall



The Royal Hospital for Women's NCC Koala Pack

Car Parking

The car park at RHW is run by a private company, however some concessions are available for parents and support people. Please ask for a Parking Authority Form from NCC reception or your nurse. You will be required to have this form signed by nursing staff in NCC. Once signed please take it to the main information counter set up in the POWH Barker Street foyer.

Accommodation

There is currently no parent or family accommodation available on campus. Hotels nearby often do special deals

for people with a family member in hospital. The following are some accommodation options nearby. Please call to get current rates:

- Perouse Lodge, 6 Perouse Rd Randwick, ph. (02) 9314 6686
- Randwick Lodge, 211 Avoca Street Randwick, ph. (02) 9310 0700
- Avoca Lodge, 235 Avoca St, Randwick NSW, ph. (02) 9399 7779
- Royal Hotel, Perouse Road & Cuthill Street, Randwick, ph. (02) 9399 3006
- High Cross Park Lodge, 7-9 Cuthill Street, Randwick, ph. (02) 9314 5554
- Elizabeth Hunter Lodge (5-10 mins away by car), 125 Birrell Street, Waverley, ph. (02) 9369 0307 [Elizabeth Hunter Lodge is located in the grounds of War Memorial Hospital at Waverley and is affordably priced. Bulk billing is available for 3 or more nights for IPTAAS eligible patients & carers]

Do you live more than 100 kilometres away?

Isolated Patients' Travel and Accommodation Scheme (IPTAAS) provides financial assistance towards travel and accommodation costs for parents who need to travel more than 100 kilometres to access specialist treatment not available in your area. For further information or to obtain an IPTAAS Application form, please let your social worker know or contact the Social Work Department (02) 9382 6670.

Food

There are numerous on-site food options, as well as cafes and restaurants close by for when you feel like some fresh air or an evening meal after a day with your baby in the NCC:

- LifeGrain – Located in the Campus Retail Centre at the Barker Street entrance near Prince of Wales Hospital
- Sunny's Café – Located on Level 0 of the Sydney Children's Hospital
- The main street of Randwick and 'The Spot' (St Paul's St, Randwick) have lots of cafes, restaurants and fast food outlets
- The Newmarket complex, located on Barker Street across the road from RHW, has many sit down and take away food outlets.

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Should you wish to discuss any aspect of this information please send an email to portal@royalwomen.org.au