

# PRISM

Course  
workbook





# Welcome

Welcome to our online course designed to prepare mothers and their birth partners, for the birth of their baby with a focus on support, recovery and growth as a new parent. The course was developed by Ms Karen Joash, consultant obstetrician, and co-designed with service users and consumer representatives. The course reflects the different perspectives that parents, their families and caregivers may have, and brings these perspectives together to support each new parent's journey.

PRISM stands for Preparation, Recovery, Inspiration and Support during Motherhood. Our expert maternity team at St Mary's Hospital and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital, part of Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust, delivers the course, which includes input from midwives, physiotherapists and doctors. PRISM is delivered by the Imperial maternity team, with Karen Joash and consultant midwife, Susan Barry, co-delivering a number of the core modules.

An inspection by the Care Quality Commission ([link](#)), published in July 2019,

rated our maternity service at St Mary's and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals as 'outstanding', the first such rating for a maternity service in London. All members of the maternity team who deliver this course are experts in their field and we are renowned for providing excellent care to all women – including those with complex medical and obstetric problems.

## How to use the PRISM workbook

PRISM is exclusive to women having their babies at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust's maternity units. Each online session is live and generally lasts for around two hours. Prepare yourself for these live sessions by reading this workbook beforehand and make a note of any questions you have. During each online session there is an opportunity to raise questions. You can register now for upcoming PRISM live sessions.

We look forward to meeting you and hope you enjoy your experience of PRISM.

## Karen Joash

Head of quality and safety for maternity

---

# What to expect when visiting during the Covid-19 pandemic

To protect our patients, staff and visitors, we have made some changes to our services in response to coronavirus.

We are following Public Health England's guidelines on caring for pregnant women. As this is a constantly changing situation, please visit [imperial.nhs.uk/our-services/maternity-and-obstetrics](https://imperial.nhs.uk/our-services/maternity-and-obstetrics) for the most up-to-date information and advice, or speak to your midwife or care team.

**Please note the same Covid-19 precautions apply to the maternity services at St Mary's Hospital.**



# Contents

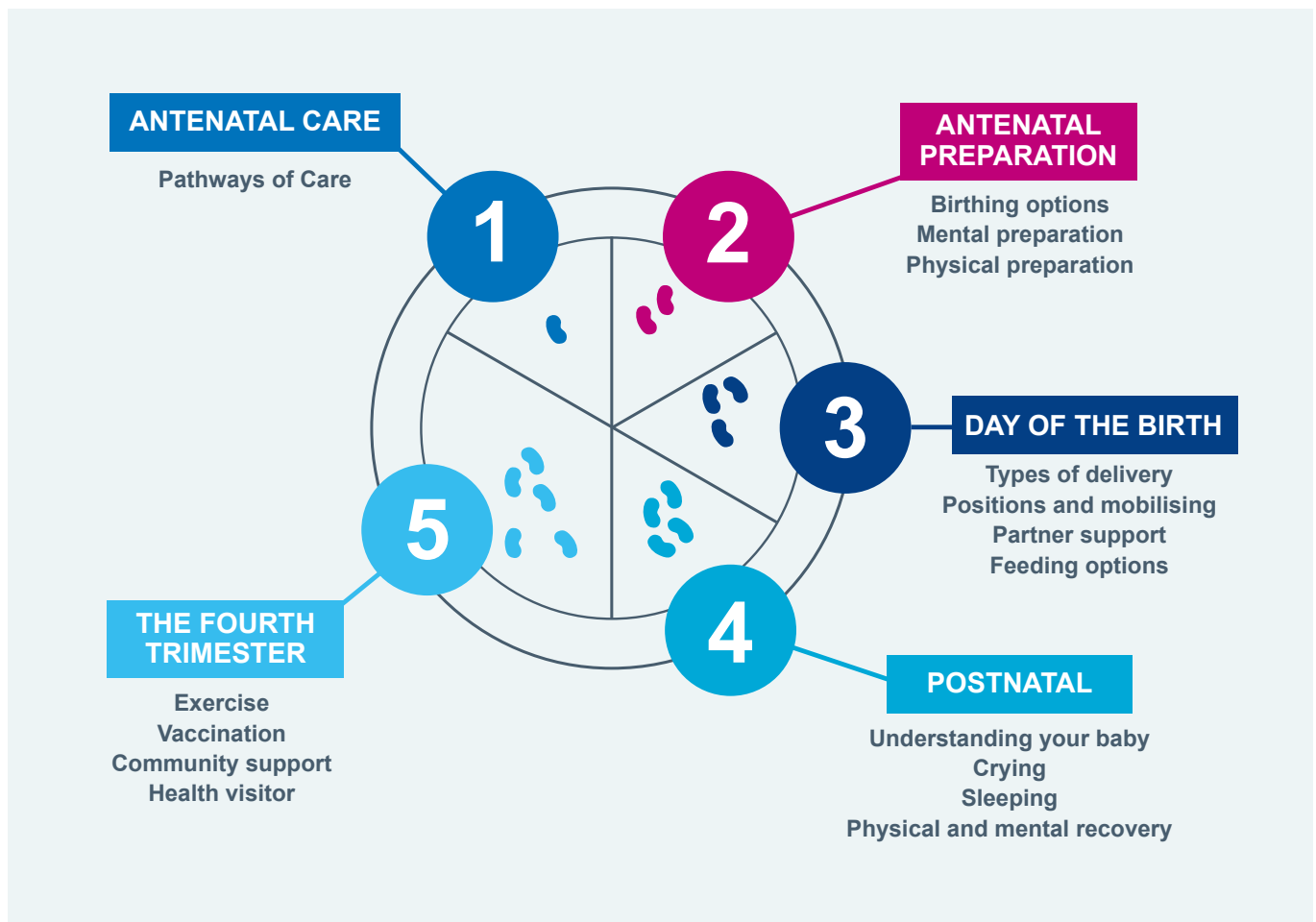
|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b>Welcome to PRISM</b>                                | <b>2</b> |
| What to expect when visiting our maternity departments | 3        |
| The stages of antenatal education                      | 5        |
| Standard points of care                                | 6        |
| <b>Antenatal care</b>                                  |          |
| Introducing antenatal care                             | 7        |
| Gratitude exercise                                     | 10       |
| Common pregnancy complaints                            | 11       |
| <b>Antenatal preparation</b>                           |          |
| Preparation for birth                                  | 12       |
| Exercises for pregnancy                                | 15       |
| Pelvic health  | 16       |
| <b>Day of birth</b>                                    |          |
| Birth on the labour ward                               | 17       |
| Hospital bag checklist                                 | 19       |
| <b>Postnatal</b>                                       |          |
| Postnatal care   | 22       |
| Postpartum recovery checklist                          | 23       |
| Feeding your baby                                      | 24       |
| <b>The fourth trimester</b>                            |          |
| Neonatal care  | 27       |
| What to expect   | 28       |
| The power of massage                                   | 29       |
| Specialised classes                                    | 32       |
| Useful resources                                       | 34       |
| Patient stories  | 36       |

# The stages of antenatal education

## PRISM antenatal education

Preparation, recovery, inspiration and support for motherhood (PRISM) is an individualised course to support you in your journey throughout pregnancy and birth. Our team of lead midwives have based the live sessions on the stages of antenatal education to provide you with the fundamental foundations for your new journey as a parent.

We also offer additional support with a range of specialised classes beyond the core sessions. The specialised classes focus on subjects such as breastfeeding and pregnancy loss. For more information visit the specialised classes section of this booklet.



# Standard points of care

WEEK 12



Booking a blood test

WEEK 20



Anomaly scan

WEEK 28



Glucose screen and blood tests

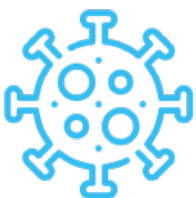


## VACCINATIONS

Whooping cough.

## FLU VACCINATION

You can book these at any time.



## COVID-19 SCREENING

Expect a Covid-19 screening before before you are admitted for planned care, like an induction or planned caesarean section.

### Not sure which additional appointments you may need?

That's ok! Ask your midwife.

# Introducing antenatal care

## Topics covered and questions to consider:

- Options for birth settings
- Tips for pregnancy and keeping healthy
- Myths in pregnancy
- Common complaints in pregnancy
- Positive affirmations and relaxation
- Sleep strategies
- Resources for birth partners



## Questions to consider during sessions:

- Do you have any questions around long-term health conditions or medication?
- Do you have any questions around developing a relationship with your baby, breastfeeding or how to prepare at home?
- Do you have any questions around your preferred method of birth, your birth partner or additional requirements you may need?



# Notes

Prepare yourself for the live session by reading this workbook beforehand and use this space to make a note of any questions you have.



# Notes

# Gratitude exercise

## Gratitude journaling

This is a powerful exercise that helps to train the brain to think in a positive way. Scientific research shows this simple daily action can rewire the brain to find solutions faster by focusing on the positive aspects of a situation – by elevating serotonin it enhances our mood.

**What three simple things can you be grateful for today?**

I am pregnant  
I am supported by my maternity team  
I will be a mother



# Common pregnancy complaints

- Bleeding gums
- Nosebleeds
- Back ache
- Pelvic pain
- Heartburn
- Headaches
- Swollen ankles/feet/hands
- Leg cramps
- Constipation
- Feeling faint
- Sleep deprivation



## Preparation for birth

### Topics to consider:

- The pelvic anatomy
- Types of delivery
- Length of labour
- Tips (mobilisation, nutrition)
- Tears and perineal preparation
- Signs of labour
- Different stages of labour
- Positions in labour
- How to give birth, positions and tips
- When to call for help
- The placenta
- Pain relief options
- Tips for mental health

### Questions to consider during sessions:

- Do you know what the stages of labour are?
- Are you aware of all of the pain relief options?
- Do you have any questions about the positions of the baby when you're giving birth?



# Notes

Prepare yourself for the live session by reading this workbook beforehand and use this space to make a note of any questions you have.

# Notes

# Exercises for pregnancy

A common myth about pregnancy is that you cannot continue to exercise. Exercising is a great way of maintaining the health of you and your baby's body throughout pregnancy. Strengthening your core and pelvic muscles can also contribute to having fewer complications in labour.

Our physiotherapy team have shared a series of exercises that you can do from home to support your pelvic health throughout pregnancy.

Connect with our physiotherapy team by joining our virtual healthy pregnancy classes.



# Pelvic health

In addition to the PRISM antenatal course, we offer a range of specialised workshops. During the 'Healthy pregnancy classes', which are hosted by the physiotherapy team, you will gain specialist insights into how to manage common health challenges that can occur during pregnancy. The topics covered include constipation, food and drinks for pregnancy, and exercises for pregnancy.

Connect with our physiotherapy team by joining our virtual healthy pregnancy classes, and watch the video below to gain insights that will help you to prepare questions for the workshop.





# Birth on the labour ward

### Topics to consider:

- Introduction to induction of labour (IOL)
- Reasons for IOL
- Process of induction
- Process involved in booking IOLs and attending
- Caesarean births and instrumental delivery
- Alternative pathways: intervention on the labour ward to support your labour; delay in labour and syntocinon use
- Emergencies in labour explained: Group B strep; meconium and infection

### Questions to consider during sessions:

- Do you know the reasons why you may be induced?
- Do you know what's involved in a caesarean vs an instrumental delivery?
- Do you have any questions about the labour ward?



## Relaxation tips in labour

- Books and magazines
- TV/films (comedy)
- Crosswords/board games/cards
- Homely items, e.g. pillow, photos
- Relaxation music
- Visualisations
- Hypnobirthing
- Relaxation scripts
- Positive affirmations
- Aromatherapy oils
- Electric candles



## Signs of labour

### Three key signs:

- A show (when the plug of mucus from your cervix comes away)
- Stronger, more frequent contractions
- Waters break

### Other signs of labour include:

- Loose feeling in your joints
- Baby “drops” – pressure
- Cramps and increased back pain
- Diarrhoea
- Fatigue and “nesting instinct”
- Change in colour and consistency of vaginal discharge

# Hospital bag checklist

The following checklist is a guide provided by NHS England on what to pack for labour and birth. It's recommended that you prepare your hospital bag at least two weeks before your due date. If you would like further recommendations on what to pack please make a note to ask in your next PRISM session. Alternatively you could ask your midwife or visit:

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pack-your-bag-for-birth/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pack-your-bag-for-birth/) for more information.

- Birth plan
- Hospital notes
- Loose and comfortable clothes to wear during labour: Including front-opening or loose-fitting clothes if you're going to breastfeed, and a comfortable outfit to wear home.
- Three changes of clothes
- Three comfortable and supportive bras: consider nursing bras if you're planning to breastfeed
- Breast pads
- A couple of packets of super-absorbent sanitary or maternity pads
- Six pairs of knickers – you may want to bring some disposable ones
- Your wash-bag, including:
  - A toothbrush
  - Hairbrush
  - Flannel
  - Soap
  - Lip balm
  - Deodorant
  - Hair ties
  - Other toiletries
  - Towels
- Things to help you pass the time and relax – for example, books, magazines, music or podcasts
- A fan or water spray to cool you down
- Dressing gown and slippers
- Healthy snacks and drinks
- Phone charger

Use the following checklist to pack a hospital bag for the resources that your baby may need during your stay with us:

- bodysuits, vests and sleepsuits
- an outfit for going home in
- a hat, scratch mittens and socks or booties
- plenty of nappies
- a shawl or blanket
- muslin squares
- a pram suit if it's cold
- a car seat for the trip home

# Notes

Prepare yourself for the live session by reading this workbook beforehand and use this space to make a note of any questions you have.

# Notes

## Postnatal care

### Topics to consider:

#### Neonatal team

- My new baby
- What to expect in the first few hours and days
- Skin-to-skin
- Jaundice
- Blood sugars and feeding

#### What to expect on the postnatal ward

- The rooms
- Staff who attend
- Partners
- Support available
- Pain relief
- Bottle feeding
- Breastfeeding
- Baby checks
- Pain relief
- Sleeping advice

#### Physical recovery

- Perineum recovery and wound care
- Haemorrhoids
- Bleeding
- Pelvic floor exercises
- Movement
- Abdominal care
- Nutrition and exercise
- Contraception

**The session will also cover mental challenges and recovery**

### Questions to consider during sessions:

- Have you considered contraception after giving birth?
- How do mood changes play a role in your postnatal care?
- Are you aware of what to expect in the first week after your baby's been born?



# Postpartum recovery checklist

The following checklist is a guide provided by the senior consultant midwives for your postpartum recovery. If you would like further recommendations, or any questions, please make a note to ask in your next PRISM session. Alternatively you could ask your midwife.

- Paracetamol or Ibuprofen. It can help with perineal pain and overall aches.
- Maxi pads. You'll probably need these for at least a couple of weeks, until postpartum bleeding lets up. Padding is good!
- Ice packs. There are lots of ways to ice your perineal area — from frozen padsicles to your standard lunchbox ice blocks (wrapped in paper towels, of course, to avoid frostbite).
- Witch hazel pads. This is often used in combination with ice packs to ease vaginal pain and help with postpartum hemorrhoids.
- Sitz bath. This little tub is designed for you to just sit and soak away postpartum pain. Don't add Salt
- Peri or squirt bottle. You'll use this to rinse off your perineal area before/after peeing as the area heals.
- Arnica, Lavender and tea tree oil – great for healing
- Cotton underpants. Go for the “granny” or hospital gauze underwear — comfort is much more important for now than looking sexy.
- Nursing bras. Invest in a few comfy ones that fit you well.
- Lanolin. The cream works wonders to prevent and treat cracked nipples.
- Nursing pads. If you're planning to breastfeed, these will help keep leaky nipples under wraps.
- Haemorrhoid cream. It helps ease the pain of postpartum haemorrhoids.
- Stool softener. You can buy lactulose over the counter. In case you get stopped up, this can gently help get things going.
- Postpartum recovery belt. If you think you might want one, the Belly Bandit or other similar belt can help keep things in place as your belly shrinks back to size.
- Heating/ cooling pad. This can help ease aches and pains in your breasts or perineal area.
- Doughnut cushion to sit on.

# Feeding Your Baby

In addition to the PRISM antenatal course, we offer a range of specialised workshops. During the, 'Feeding your baby' session, which is hosted by our infant feeding co-ordinator, mothers-to-be are guided through key topics such as, but not exclusive to: how to breastfeed, how to choose appropriate formula milk, and how to sterilise feeding equipment.

Watch the video below to gain insights that will help you to prepare questions for the workshop:





# Notes

Prepare yourself for the live session by reading this workbook beforehand and use this space to make a note of any questions you have.

# Notes

## Neonatal Care

### Topics to consider:

#### Understanding your baby

- Bonding with your baby
- Myths and facts; phases of crying
- The first few weeks
- Sleeping and recognising when your baby is unwell

#### Strategies for mental wellbeing

- Sleep deprivation
- Thought patterns
- Anxiety and depression
- Relaxation techniques
- Music therapy
- Exercise
- The outdoors and support networks

#### Managing your relationship

- Communication styles
- Support
- Thinking traps
- Making time for each other
- Dealing with emotions
- Feeling safe and parenting skills

#### Baby development

- Support from health visitors
- Vaccinations
- Where to seek help and interacting with your baby

### Questions to consider during sessions:

- Is there anything specific you would like to know about your physical recovery after birth?
- Do you know which vaccinations your baby will need after birth?
- Are there any particular strategies you would like to explore around mental wellbeing after birth?



# What to expect

Watch the video below to gain insights that will help you to prepare questions for the live Q&A.



# The power of massage

Massage has been proven to have many health benefits. We have special nerves which lie under the skin, and these are stimulated when we are massaged or give a massage, and they slow the heart rate. There are also local effects to the circulation and muscles.

## Benefits include:

- Increased blood circulation
- Reduced inflammation and tension
- Reduced stress hormones
- Increased flexibility and mobility
- Improved skin
- Recovery of soft tissue strain
- Relaxation
- Improved sleep



# Notes

Prepare yourself for the live session by reading this workbook beforehand and use this space to make a note of any questions you have.

# Notes

# Specialised classes

We also offer additional support with a range of specialised classes beyond the core sessions. Use the notes section to add any questions you may have about the specialised classes for your next antenatal appointment or PRISM session.

### Maternity Voices Partnership

The Maternity Voices Partnership is a community of women who are either going to give birth or have given birth through our services. We occasionally hold workshops to provide a space where women can share their experiences with the service, meet other women and let our team know how we can improve the quality of services you receive.

 **Join the Maternity Voices Partnership WhatsApp group [here](#).**

### Information session on screening tests during pregnancy

If you or your partner would like more information about screening in pregnancy, or you have any concerns or questions about screening procedures, please attend one of our information sessions. We will cover the screening for chromosome conditions such as Down Syndrome, combined screening test, and ultrasound scans among other key information to know with regards to screening in pregnancy.

 **Contact [dagmar.tapon@nhs.net](mailto:dagmar.tapon@nhs.net) for details on how to join**

### Positive psychology for pregnancy, birth and beyond

Gain tips for growing a positive mindset during pregnancy. Discover sleep strategies and find out about mood changes that can happen during pregnancy, among other topics to support you in building self-care habits.

 **Find out more and book [here](#).**

### Antenatal screening, fetal scans and fetal monitoring


This course is delivered by experts in fetal medicine who include our genetic experts, midwives and fetal medicine consultants. They will help you to understand the role of monitoring in pregnancy and what it means.

 **Find out more and book [here](#).**




### Preparing for natural childbirth

Join us online to learn about subjects such as benefits of natural birth, building positive expectancy, and the empowering nature of physiological labour pain.

 **For more information about the workshop, ask the midwives in your next PRISM session**

### Feeding your baby

Join us online to learn techniques such as responsive feeding, discover the benefits of breastfeeding and gain insights on how to choose formula milk should that be something you're considering. The session is led by Rachel Gallimore RM MSc IBCLC, Infant Feeding Coordinator.

 **For more information about the workshop, ask the midwives in your next PRISM session**

### The North-West London post-delivery contraception service

The post-delivery contraception service offers education and a full range of contraceptive choices to all women prior to discharge from maternity services, so that all women can plan their lives and choose if and when they become pregnant. As well as helping women avoid unplanned pregnancy, the service improves maternity safety.

 **Please speak with your midwife to be referred to the service.**

### Pregnancy loss support

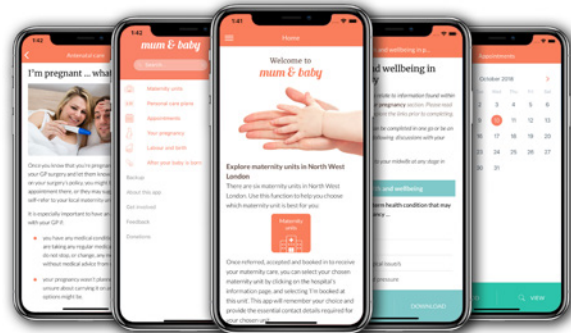
The Early Pregnancy Unit at Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea Hospital has a support group for women and their partners who may wish to talk and connect with others who have had similar experiences.

 **For more information and to register your place contact [juanita@miscarriageassociation.org.uk](mailto:juanita@miscarriageassociation.org.uk)**

## Useful resources

Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust is proud to maintain a connection with the women who use our services after giving birth. Our best way of keeping in touch with you is through the Maternity Voices Partnership group.

### Mum and Baby App



### Coronavirus (COVID19): Advice for parents



### Building a Happy Baby a Guide for Parents



**Off to the best start:**  
**Important information**  
**about feeding your baby**



**Breastfeeding in the First Hours**



**Baby Buddy app**



You can discover more useful resources [here](#)

## Patient stories



“ I had both of my daughters, who are now five and three years old, at Queen Charlotte’s & Chelsea Hospital. Both of my labours had complications and were Protracted, and both ended in emergency c-sections both times. I felt completely secure in the care of the staff. They delivered my daughters safely, and I had a really positive postnatal experience at the hospital.

“In both cases we needed

to stay in for a few days after the birth, and the midwives, nurses and healthcare workers couldn’t have been more caring and supportive. They went above and beyond to help with establishing feeding.

“I have very fond memories of Queen Charlotte’s Hospital, and despite not living in the area now, if we were to have a third baby, I would definitely want to go there again!”

**Leila**, mother of two.

“ My husband studied at Imperial College London, so when looking for Trusts that are local to us Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust felt like the right choice. We also know of an obstetrician who had a great experience working at the Trust, which influenced our decision to have our baby here.”

“Registering online, through the self-referral form was easy. I usually have doubts filling out online forms, because sometimes the response can take a while. However, the team got back to me surprisingly quickly.

“My pregnancy began in December, not too long before the lockdown. I wasn’t nervous because the changes to the service seemed to go smoothly and if there were ever any concerns around how my pregnancy

was developing then the team took action very quickly. It was also reassuring to be reminded by the midwives that even if things didn’t go exactly as I had planned, my body would know what it needs to do.

“It’s hard to foresee what the birth will be like, but I ended up having an uncomplicated delivery. The midwife was very supportive and gave us space to enjoy our first moments with our baby. I also had help with feeding, the hearing test, my checks and the vaccines were carried out really quickly.

The facilities at the Trust are great and I was given some really thorough and helpful resources to take home with me when I left hospital.

**Amy**, mother of one’

“ I have always had challenges with my mental health, and it intensified after the birth of my first son.

"I decided to have my second baby at Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust in 2015 and shared my anxieties about being pregnant again. The team referred me to the caseload midwifery team and perinatal mental health service at sixteen weeks. From that point onwards my care was a world away from what I had experienced before. My mental health was as bad as in my first pregnancy, but this time I felt supported.

"My caseload midwife was the most sensitive healthcare professional I had ever met, I always knew she was there for me. The medical team took my mental health and recurrence of intrauterine growth restriction (IUGR), which was missed in my first pregnancy, seriously.

"The team made me feel safe, even with my mental health struggles. The professionals listened to me and, perhaps most importantly, understood what I wasn't able to articulate.



"I was induced early and my amazing caseload midwife was with me. It was similar in some ways to my first birth with a high level of intervention, but it was not traumatic. Instead, it was incredibly healing.

"I have since had two more children. I will never be able to adequately thank my caseload midwife for empowering me and facilitating the safe pregnancy and birth experience I was able to have."

**Charlotte**, mother of four.

We always hugely appreciate when a mother who had her baby with us can open up to us about her experiences. If you have a birth story you would like us to share please email: [imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

