

Co-location is the key to care at Glasgow's Yorkhill

At Yorkhill, Glasgow, the location of maternity, neonatal and paediatric services on the same site affords a major opportunity to influence the health and wellbeing of the mothers and babies of Scotland. This co-location of clinical services is unique in Scotland and allows ease of access to essential diagnostic treatments.

Maternity and neonatal care is delivered at The Queen Mother's Hospital while children's health services are provided by The Royal Hospital for Sick Children. The Duncan Guthrie Institute of Medical Genetics provides diagnostic, investigative and counselling services for those with birth defects and inherited disorders.

The Queen Mother's Hospital is a 70-bedded specialist tertiary teaching maternity and neonatal centre providing general maternity services to mothers in the west of Glasgow and specialist services for the west of Scotland and beyond.

The neonatal unit has 10 intensive care and 18 special care cots and offers tertiary services for all aspects of neonatal care, including the latest investigative and therapeutic techniques.

Yorkhill's arrangement of maternity and neonatal services close to a major children's hospital has resulted in the development of an additional tier of service provision (quaternary care) designed to meet the needs of high risk newborn babies with rare conditions. These conditions can include persistent pulmonary hypertension and congenital diaphragmatic hernia, major airway problems and severe congenital heart disease.

The neonatal unit is the main provider in the west of Scotland for neonatal intensive renal support, including peritoneal dialysis and ultrafiltration. Babies with metabolic disorders are also managed in the Queen Mother's Hospital due to the possible need for supportive renal management. Finally, the unit manages a small group of severely ill infants with cerebro-vascular abnormalities with the support of interventional neurologists and cardiology colleagues.

The interaction of the services provided on the Yorkhill site has enhanced the development of a major programme of

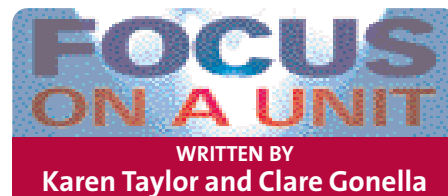


Neonatal nurses on the neonatal medical ward (from left) Clare Gonella, Wanda O'Dwyer, Sheena Thorn and Gillian Hourston.



prenatal diagnosis and fetal medicine management. This is used by families in the west of Scotland and further afield, with over 200 pregnancies being assisted annually. Around 60 babies a year are delivered at the Queen Mother's Hospital with problems detected antenatally. Planned delivery and early intervention for such babies ensures that mothers and babies are not separated following birth.

Staff in the neonatal unit work closely with colleagues in paediatric cardiac surgery, cardiology, and the neonatal surgical services in both the antenatal and postnatal period. The Queen Mother's Hospital is connected to the Royal Hospital for Sick Children by means of a connecting corridor, affectionately termed "the umbilical cord", which allows easy access to neonates who require intervention from specialists at The Royal Hospital for Sick Children, but are too sick to be transferred from the neonatal unit.



The neonatal surgical unit in The Royal Hospital for Sick Children, known as "The Dan Young Neonatal Surgical Intensive Care Unit," is a 23-bedded unit with six intensive care cots, 12 high dependency cots and six special care cots. It is also the Scottish centre for neonatal ECMO.

Babies from all over Scotland are referred to the surgical unit and ECMO candidates are also referred from England and Ireland. The unit specialises in the treatment of neonates with any surgical condition except those requiring cardiac surgery.

One of the advantages of the integrated services of the two hospitals is the opportunity for parents of a fetus diagnosed antenatally as requiring surgery to familiarise themselves with the environment prior to delivery in the hope that this will lessen their anxiety. Such families often have numerous antenatal visits to the Fetal Medicine Suite at Yorkhill to observe the fetal development and allow the obstetric and neonatal staff to decide the most appropriate time to deliver the infant in optimal condition.

Mothers of babies transferred into Yorkhill from other Scottish hospitals are often admitted to the Queen Mother's Hospital to continue their postnatal care, which allows them to visit, feed and care for their infants and encourages the bonding process.

All mothers room in with their baby prior to discharge from the units, ensuring that they are confident with their baby's basic care as well as more complex needs.

Yorkhill has developed a multi-professional team approach to the promotion of developmental supportive care which is now an integral aspect of care for all babies nursed at Yorkhill, whether they are in the medical or surgical units.

The integrated team approach operating at Yorkhill delivers, on a single site, optimal care for mothers, unborn and newborn babies in a family-friendly environment. This ensures these vulnerable babies have the best possible start in life.

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