



# **Children's Hospital**

## **London Health Sciences Centre**

### **Family Information**

## **TRANSFERRING TO ANOTHER HOSPITAL**

Discharge and transfer planning begins on admission to the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU). The NICU at Children's Hospital is the critical care centre in Southwestern Ontario for sick and premature babies. The NICU strives to admit every sick infant in the Southwestern Ontario area who needs specialized medical care in our Level III Intensive Care Unit. We know that it was important to you to have your baby admitted to our NICU when your baby was ill. As your baby gets older and stronger, your baby may not need the same level of care that the NICU offers. We work with hospitals within our region to provide the right level of care for you and your baby. When your baby is ready, the Health Care Team will begin the process of locating a hospital that gives the kind of care your baby will need to continue improving growth and health until discharge. Every effort is made to transfer to a hospital close to your home but occasionally, you may be sent to a hospital outside your community.

A transfer to another hospital may be arranged at some point as your baby gets better. Transfers to a Level II or Special Care Nursery will have many benefits for you and your baby. It allows you to get to know the health care team in your community hospital who will provide your baby's care in the future. Some babies who come to us from another region may require a transfer to a Level III intensive care unit within their own region when a bed becomes available there. We believe that families are partners in the care of their children. As the health care team identifies the plan for transfer, they will speak with you to discuss the plan.

### **Frequently Asked Questions:**

#### **How do I know which hospitals in my area have a Special Care Nursery?**

The Health Care Team has a list of hospitals in the province that includes the level of care each provides. Each hospital has their own guidelines for care they can provide. If your home is outside of the London area, you may be asked by the team which hospital is near your home. The Health Care Team will discuss with you the transfer to a Level II Nursery that can provide the appropriate level of care needed for your baby.

#### **When will a transfer take place?**

Your baby's health is the most important thing when we consider a transfer. All transfer plans will be made based on your baby's condition. The Neonatologist and the rest of your Health Care Team will decide when your baby is well enough for the care to be transferred to a Level II Nursery close to your home community. The Neonatologist will consult with a doctor at the receiving hospital in your area to begin the transfer plan. The doctor at the receiving regional hospital must accept responsibility for the future care of your baby before arrangements can be made with the nursing unit.

### **How much notice will we receive prior to transfer?**

You should be made aware when your baby is getting close to no longer needing intensive care and we are beginning to discuss a transfer of care to a Level II hospital. Each baby is different. We usually plan for a transfer a day or two in advance but often beds will become available with short notice. Same day transfers happen if a bed in the receiving hospital becomes available. You will always be notified when a transfer is happening.

### **How will my baby get to the other hospital and who will escort the baby?**

Your baby will be transferred in a transport incubator and an appropriate vehicle based on your baby's needs. (medical transport vehicle, ground or air ambulance) Staff from the NICU will travel with your baby to the receiving hospital. On occasion, some regional hospitals will provide their own transportation.

If a baby's condition warrants, the transfer will be done by the Neonatal-Paediatric Transport Team. They are a team of specially trained Registered Nurses and Respiratory Therapists who work in the NICU or PCCU (Paediatric Critical Care Unit) to provide critical care transport.

### **Who pays for the transportation?**

Transportation is paid for by the Provincial Government for hospital to hospital transfers in the Province of Ontario. Outside of province transfers need more planning and negotiation.

### **How will I get home?**

Most often, parents/family members need to find their own transportation home. This can be discussed with the Health Care Team if you are an inpatient within our hospital or have been staying in London while your baby is being cared for at Children's Hospital. Every situation will be assessed on an individual basis at the time of transfer.