

A close-up photograph of a woman with brown hair, eyes closed, smiling gently while holding a sleeping baby. The baby is wearing a white t-shirt and a grey blanket. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue sky.

MATERNITY CARE

The Portland Hospital
part of **HCA** Healthcare UK





WELCOME

The Portland Hospital for Women and Children is one of the largest centres for private maternal and paediatric medicine in Europe. Our multidisciplinary team of experts deliver clinical care of the highest quality, providing a vital role in ensuring you and your baby are always in safe hands.

We are here to support you and your family throughout your pregnancy, offering you full choice and control of your antenatal care and delivery. Our maternity services include pregnancy scans and physiotherapy, and our tailored packages offer a choice between consultant-led or midwife-led maternity care.

Alongside our Enhanced Maternal Critical Care Unit for women who experience complications, The Portland Hospital is unique in that it is the only private hospital in the UK to also have on-site neonatal intensive care and paediatric intensive care units. This allows us to offer treatment to babies born from just 28 weeks' gestation.

Ultimately, at one of the most fulfilling and exciting times in a parent's life, we are with you every step of the way. We take great pride in delivering an amazing experience for parents-to-be, and you can be reassured that both you and your baby will be cared for by the country's finest consultants, midwives and wider clinical teams.

At The Portland Hospital, every day our purpose is to deliver extraordinary care - from your personal maternity experience to the safe arrival of your baby.

Jane Whitney-Smith

Chief Executive Officer, The Portland Hospital

DID YOU KNOW?

The Portland Hospital is home to more than 50 top consultant obstetricians, many of whom are considered to be amongst the world's leading birthing experts. Many hold senior obstetrics appointments at London NHS teaching and research hospitals.



The road to **parenthood**

At The Portland Hospital we're here to ensure you have the best possible pregnancy and birthing experience.

Our aim is to support you from the moment you discover you're pregnant. We give you all the information and advice you need to choose your preferred delivery method, choice and control over your birth plan and postnatal support to equip you with the skills and confidence to step back into day-to-day life.

We want parents to feel respected, supported and empowered at all times. This is why we care for you and your baby in an environment that is designed to feel as close to home as possible – a comfortable and relaxed setting where visitors and family are made to feel welcome. The Portland Hospital has the added reassurance of safety, with a dedicated neonatal unit on-site, as well as 24/7 resident obstetric anaesthetist care.

Alongside our consultant obstetricians, we have a wider team of over 300 healthcare professionals that include:



Our team of consultant neonatologists and paediatricians provide 24/7 support, giving you the reassurance that your baby is being looked after in a safe environment with parent-centred care. In addition, our obstetric resident medical officer is available at all times, providing additional support to mums.

ABOUT US

More than 1,300 babies

are born at The Portland Hospital
each year*

Emergency theatre

located on the labour ward

Five private

en-suite delivery rooms

24-hour nursery

on the same floor as the postnatal
rooms and run by highly experienced nursery nurses
and on the same floor as our postnatal rooms
(subject to safety guidelines and availability)

16 en-suite bedrooms

10 standard and two deluxe rooms, plus
three suites and one premiere suite

Physiotherapy

support for both
women and babies

*Based on maternity statistics from 2018

A holistic approach
to pregnancy and childbirth

One-to-one
midwife care in labour

Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU)

A unit for babies who require less invasive support than those in the NICU

Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)

Monitor and care for babies born from 28 weeks onward who need a high level of care

Consultant
obstetric care

Birth pool
on labour ward

24/7 access to:

- Resident medical officers for obstetrics and neonatal care
- Resident consultant obstetric anaesthetists
- Consultant neonatologists

Enhanced Maternity Critical Care Unit

on-site to manage post delivery emergency care if required



YOUR STAY





Your choice of care

We believe it is important to offer expectant mothers choice and control over the type of antenatal care and delivery they receive. At The Portland Hospital we offer both consultant-led and midwife-led care, as well as the full range of birthing options to enable you to develop your own birth plan. Depending on your individual pregnancy requirements, you can be assured we offer a range of packages to suit your needs.

Consultant-led care

This package is for mothers-to-be who prefer to be looked after by a consultant obstetrician throughout their pregnancy, whether it is low-risk or high-risk.

Our team of over 50 consultant obstetricians are all independent practitioners, who have undergone a rigorous process of assessment prior to gaining admitting privileges at our hospital.

Your chosen consultant obstetrician will advise on all aspects of your antenatal and obstetric care. They will arrange your hospital delivery and offer you a choice of all types of birth, from natural deliveries through to elective or medical caesarean sections.

Some mothers-to-be discover late in their pregnancy that they require a medical caesarean section which, depending on your policy, may be covered by your healthcare insurance. We have consultant obstetricians who will accept late bookings.

Pregnant women who are booked under the care of a consultant obstetrician are asked to attend the midwifery-booking clinic. This is a maternity booking appointment which offers you the chance to meet a member of the hospital midwifery team before the birth to discuss your personal needs.

Our midwifery team can give you a wealth of advice on nutrition, health and wellbeing throughout your pregnancy, as well as discuss your plans for delivery at the hospital. The midwife will also assess any risk factors associated with your pregnancy, health and wellbeing and make necessary referrals if indicated.

A midwife will be present throughout your delivery to assist the consultant obstetrician. They will also care for you whilst you remain in hospital post-delivery, and provide invaluable support with feeding and caring for your new baby.

If you would like to book a consultant-led delivery, search for a consultant obstetrician online at: **hcahealthcare.co.uk** (Search: *Obstetrician*), or call: **020 7390 6068*** and a member of our team can assist with selection.



Midwife-led care

Midwife-led care is available to mothers-to-be who are expecting an uncomplicated pregnancy and aiming for a natural birth. An experienced, named consultant obstetrician is also available to offer support if necessary.

We have a small team of highly experienced, friendly and committed midwives who have the time and resources to empower women to create and follow their birth plan, whether it is a natural birth (with or without pain relief) or a water birth.

Our complete midwife-led package can be accessed at 10, 20 or 30 weeks' pregnancy and includes all antenatal appointments with the midwives, all ultrasound scans, routinely-required blood tests, midwife-led birth and a 24-hour stay from admission in one of our private postnatal rooms. Our midwives are available 24 hours a day for advice throughout your pregnancy.

Uniquely, within this package we also include one consultation with a dedicated consultant obstetrician, who will meet with you to ensure your pregnancy is proceeding as expected. If it becomes clear during labour or birth that a consultant obstetrician is required, the same consultant will ensure the safe delivery of your baby and your wellbeing.

A full range of pain relief options is available including 24-hour consultant anaesthetist epidural services. Following birth, you will be looked after in a private room under the care of a midwife, who will be on hand to provide you with invaluable support and advice.

Mums-to-be are accepted up to 32 weeks onto both consultant-led and midwife-led care packages. For those over 32 weeks, please discuss directly with your consultant obstetrician or midwife to check the booking criteria.

To arrange a 'Meet and Greet' with one of our midwives and discuss our midwife-led plan of care, please call
020 7390 6344



Putting **safety first**

Complex pregnancies

If your pregnancy is complex, a **multidisciplinary team** (MDT) of healthcare professionals, led by your **consultant obstetrician**, will meet prior to the birth to plan a clinical care pathway that ensures safe delivery for mother and baby. The team will be **unique to your personal circumstance**, but may include another consultant obstetrician, consultant anaesthetist, foetal medicine consultant, consultant neonatologist, interventional radiologist and lead midwife.

Complex pregnancies may include **placenta previa**, deliveries with known abnormalities of baby including **cardiac anomalies**, and other medical conditions affecting mother or baby. The Portland Hospital is a pre-booked service, and so the medical history of all mothers and their newborns is known to the team prior to delivery, allowing the best medical care to be put into place. In the unlikely event that a complication arises during birth, The Portland Hospital has **immediate access to a dedicated emergency delivery theatre**, resident consultant obstetric anaesthetists and theatre team, along with **critical care facilities** which are second to none.



Pain relief

All forms of pain relief are available at The Portland Hospital, including the use of a **birthing pool, hypnobirthing or epidural**. The options available will be explained by your midwife or consultant obstetrician prior to delivery. Should you wish, you can be referred to a member of the resident anaesthetic team to discuss further options.

Uniquely for the private sector, we have a **dedicated resident obstetric consultant anaesthetist** on the labour ward **24 hours a day** to offer epidural and other pain relief services whenever you need them. More importantly, the consultant resident anaesthetist is instantly available should you suddenly require an emergency caesarean section.

Neonatal unit

Our neonatal unit, which is based in the main hospital, provides care in either the **Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)** or **Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU)** dependent on your baby's health needs. The unit offers **advanced technology** and **trained healthcare professionals** to monitor and care for babies who have complications. It is managed by **consultant neonatologists** and a highly skilled specialist nurse team. It is supported by our wider group of consultant paediatric sub-specialists, available in nearly all paediatric specialties.

Enhanced Maternal Critical Care Unit

At The Portland Hospital, keeping you and your baby safe is our number one priority. We offer enhanced maternal care* to support the care of women who become critically ill around the time of childbirth, and this high level of care we provide is closely aligned to the Royal College of Anaesthetists guidelines.

Our Enhanced Maternal Critical Care Unit is located on our labour ward, next to our emergency obstetric theatre. The concept of 'enhanced maternal care' was developed by obstetricians, anaesthetists and midwives to ensure that pregnant women receive the highest standards of care if they become unwell while pregnant, or after they have had their baby.

Enhanced maternal care is underpinned by a set of essential skills. Midwives at The Portland Hospital undergo annual training in enhanced maternal care and work alongside a team of dedicated consultant obstetric anaesthetists to ensure high-quality, safe care is continued at all times.

*<https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/sites/default/files/documents/2019-09/EMC-Guidelines2018.pdf>



The greatest joy

How our maternity team saved mum Gemma's life after delivering baby Louis

Up until the very moment Gemma gave birth to her son Louis, she and her husband Oliver had experienced what most would consider a 'normal' pregnancy.

After deciding upon our midwife-led care option, Gemma and Oliver first visited The Portland Hospital at 30 weeks' gestation. They immediately felt the benefits of a maternity offering more suited to their needs, with Gemma enjoying the attention and time from the midwives and "The great flexibility with appointments - evening and weekend availability made it far easier for Oliver and myself."

This flexibility was matched by the personal care both felt from The Portland's midwife-led team. As Gemma fondly remembers, **"Every single midwife was so friendly, kind and welcoming. I never met one person at The Portland who didn't love their job. They care passionately about doing the very best for you."**

Calm upon arrival

Indeed, when Gemma's waters eventually broke at home that March Wednesday evening, the relative calm of her pregnancy led both her and Oliver to feel perfectly relaxed as they arrived at The Portland. At this stage, she remembers there was no reason to fear anything untoward. "Everybody was very relaxed. The overwhelming feeling for us at that point was one of calmness. We were happy and excited about meeting our baby soon."

Gemma had already been diagnosed as Group B Streptococcus (GBS) positive; a common type of bacterial infection in women, and one that can be harmful to babies in the womb if their mother's waters are broken for a long period before delivery. However, despite needing to take pre-planned antibiotics once she was in hospital, as she and Oliver lay in their private room, Gemma says it was more a case of sitting tight until Louis decided he was ready to join them. "It's a bit of a waiting game before you give birth - at one point we were having tea and biscuits."

A turn of events

After a period of waiting it was necessary to help speed up Gemma's contractions, and so her consultant induced her during the night. Whilst having the desired effect initially, the contractions soon became too painful for her to manage, to the point where she decided she wanted an epidural.

As Gemma points out, this was perhaps the first moment she and Oliver experienced slight nerves about their birthing experience. "I wasn't coping well with the pain, and at this point the excitement turned into tiredness and nerves. I was thinking - 'I'm actually scared now.' However, the resident obstetric anaesthetist and midwife were amazing and made me feel as calm as possible - particularly helpful considering I had to have an epidural needle inserted into my spine."

Gemma fights for her life after Louis is born

Unfortunately, the greatest drama was still to come. When the time finally arrived for Gemma to give birth to Louis the following morning, the risks were immediate. Whilst Louis was completely healthy on arrival, Gemma incurred a major obstetric haemorrhage, losing a life-threatening three and a half litres of blood as a result of internal bleeding.

SPOTLIGHT ON

E . M . C . U



As the renowned team of Portland consultants and maternity midwives went into action, Gemma was fully aware of how drastic the events were becoming. "I genuinely did think I might die. I looked over at my husband holding my son, and thought I might never get to see them again. It really was quite traumatic."

Exceptional care in dramatic circumstances

Gemma was right. After losing so much blood, the split-second decisions of the medical team proved vital in stabilising her before she worsened any further. Karen Russell, Maternity Patient Safety Matron at The Portland Hospital, reflects on the urgency of Gemma's situation. "Her care was immediately transferred over to her dedicated consultant

obstetrician, where she was given medication to contract her uterus, before going on to have an emergency blood transfusion to replace the blood she had lost after giving birth to Louis."

Gemma was transferred to the Enhanced Maternity Critical Care Unit on the labour ward, where she received one-to-one midwifery care and was kept under close observation by the consultant obstetric and anaesthetic team throughout the entire 16 hours she remained there. During this time when Gemma needed to rest Louis was cared for in the maternity nursery, whilst Oliver was also able to sleep in a room specially made up for him by The Portland staff.

As things began to settle down, the next stage of Gemma's rapid recovery was nothing short of incredible. After giving birth to Louis and the alarming experience that ensued, Gemma, Oliver and their newborn baby were able to leave hospital several days later, with The Portland's consultant team satisfied Gemma had recovered suitably enough to return home with a care plan and the medication she required.

Looking ahead as a happy family

Six months on from Louis' birth, both Gemma and Oliver have had plenty of time to enjoy the life-changing period of starting a family, as well as taking advantage of The Portland's postnatal Women's Health physiotherapy and support.

With mother and baby both happy and healthy, Gemma looks back on her experience with fond memories – something to be admired all things considered. "They saved my life and my son's life, and gave me the happy family that I wanted. I would definitely give birth again at The Portland Hospital, the care was flawless."



“

Here at The Portland Hospital's ultrasound department, we offer a high level of flexibility and availability to our parents-to-be. Appointments can be made at the weekend or at short notice, allowing the whole family to experience the magic of seeing their unborn child on screen for the first time. ”

Dean Meredith

Ultrasound Manager
The Portland Hospital

Watching your **baby** grow

We have the facilities to provide all the obstetric ultrasound scans you will need. Led by a team of foetal medicine consultants, expert gynaecologists and specialist sonographers, our ultrasound department allows you and your family to share in the experience of watching your baby grow, and mark the milestones in their development as your pregnancy progresses.

Our clinics feature the latest technology and are open throughout the week, from 9.00am-7.00pm and on Saturday mornings. This enables our team to offer a no-waiting-list service that is flexible enough to meet your needs.

Our multidisciplinary team will tailor all care to your individual needs, ensuring that you walk away from your appointment feeling comfortable and with all the information you need. Be assured, our maternity team are always available to give clear advice and any counselling you might need, at what can on occasion be a sensitive and worrying time.

Type of scan	Timing	Pregnancy detail
Early pregnancy and dating scan	6-10 weeks	<p>Your first ultrasound scan provides important information about the number of babies and the expected date of delivery.</p> <p>The presence of a pregnancy and detection of the foetal heart can be seen from six weeks by vaginal scan, and from eight to nine weeks by abdominal scan. Accurate measurements and images are taken of the gestational sac and the crown to rump length of the embryo, to precisely date the pregnancy and to check the health of the pelvic organs.</p>
Down's syndrome	11-14 weeks	<p>Serum blood screening in early pregnancy in combination with nuchal scanning and maternal age identifies pregnancies at high risk of complications or abnormalities. The combination of these factors allows the detection of about 85% of Down's syndrome cases and also those at high risk of Edwards' syndrome (Trisomy 18). We also offer non-invasive prenatal testing, which can be undertaken from 10 weeks gestation and will detect 99% of Down's syndrome cases, 98% of Edwards' syndrome and over 80% of Patau's syndrome.</p>
Foetal anatomy scan	19-21 weeks	<p>This is the stage at which the anatomy of your baby can be seen in more detail. Information about your baby's major organs such as the heart and major blood vessels, digestive tract, head and brain, and the urinary tract are imaged and interpreted.</p>
Growth scan	28 weeks onwards	<p>At this stage we take measurements and scan images to plot and monitor the growth pattern of your baby. We measure your baby's head, abdomen and limbs, and estimate the weight of your baby too.</p>

Special **tests** and **scans**

The Portland Hospital's ultrasound department also offers the full range of special tests, scans and blood sampling that your maternity care team might recommend for you.

Our centre was one of the first units in the country to offer serum blood screening in early pregnancy. In combination with nuchal scanning and maternal age, this allows us to detect around 85% of Down's syndrome cases – as well as unborn babies at risk of Edwards' syndrome (Trisomy 18) and neural tube defects. We were also one of the first to adopt the non-invasive prenatal testing which detects 99% of Down's syndrome.

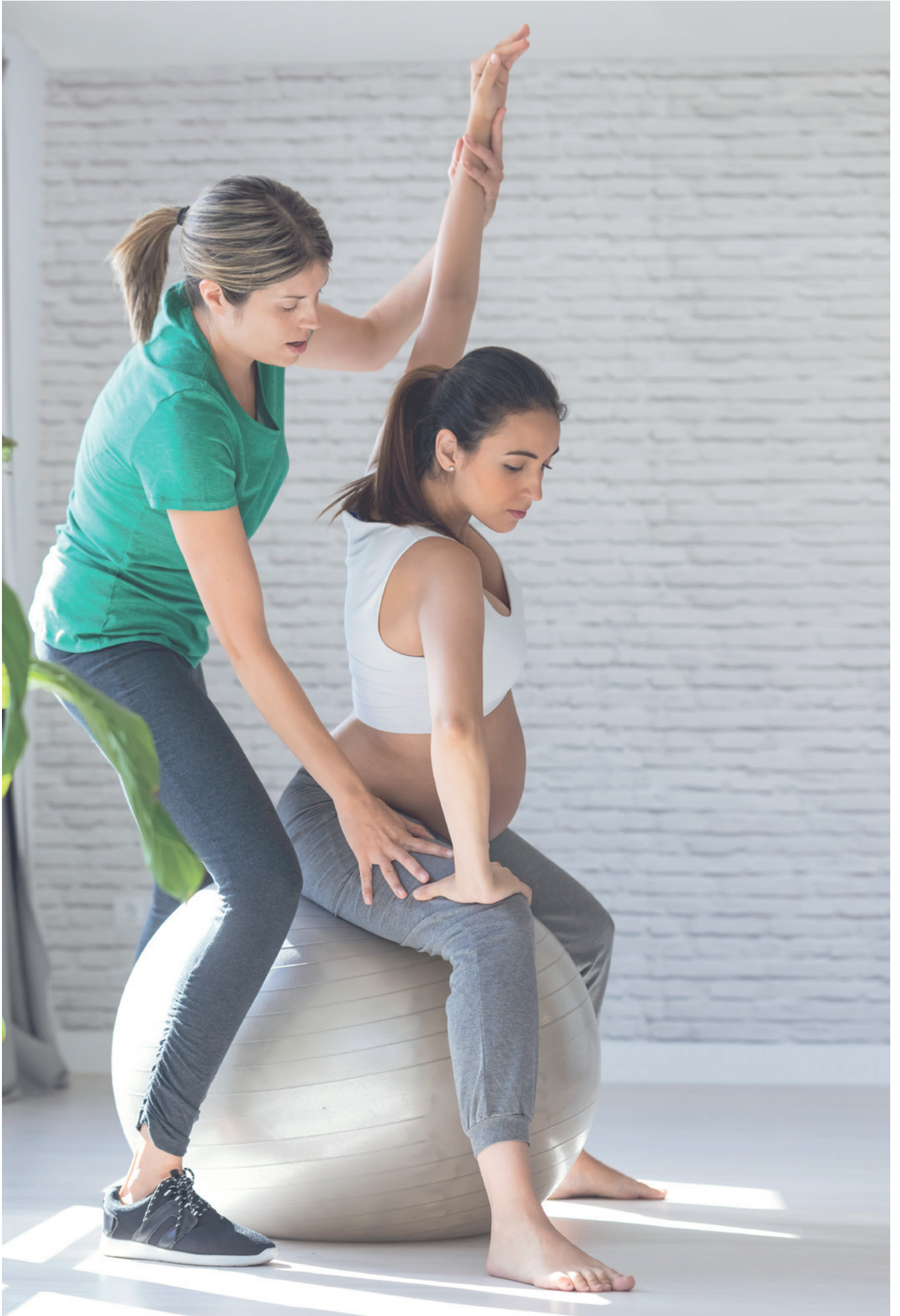
Scan/test type	Non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT)	Combined screening test
Timing	10 weeks onwards	11 1/2 - 14 weeks
To detect	High risk of Down's syndrome, Patau's syndrome (Trisomy 13) and Edwards' syndrome (Trisomy 18).	
Detail	<p>We work with several companies to provide non-invasive prenatal testing (NIPT). The test involves a scan to make sure the dates are correct and that the baby's heart is beating. It will also include a blood test.</p> <p>The baby's DNA is present in the mother's blood sample and this is extracted for the test. There needs to be enough fetal DNA in the maternal blood to be able to provide a result. If there is insufficient foetal DNA in the sample, another blood sample from the mother may be required. This occurs in 3-5% of cases, and will be processed in the laboratory at no extra charge.</p>	<p>This test is performed in collaboration with the Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine and the Foetal Medicine Foundation.</p> <p>The consultant or sonographer will perform an ultrasound scan to measure your baby and confirm gestation (baby's age).</p> <p>The nuchal translucency will be measured (increased measurement equates to increased risk).</p> <p>The baby's anatomy will be assessed as much as possible at this early stage. A blood sample will also be taken from you.</p>
Results	<p>Your test result will be available within 5-8 working days.</p> <p>The test result will be reported as low-risk or high-risk of a foetal trisomy. If the non-invasive prenatal test shows there is a high risk of the baby having trisomy 21, 18 or 13, it does not mean that the baby definitely has one of these conditions. We can discuss an invasive test (CVS or amniocentesis), which is the only way to be certain as to whether or not an unborn baby has a chromosomal abnormality.</p> <p>If the test shows that there is a low risk of the baby having trisomy 21, 18 or 13, it is highly unlikely that the baby has one of these conditions. The test identifies more than 99% of babies with trisomy 21, 98% of babies with trisomy 18 and over 80% of babies with trisomy 13.</p>	<p>The result will be available within 24 hours.</p> <p>Women with a risk of 1 in 150 or greater are interpreted as being screen negative. If the risk is 1 in 150 or lower, this is interpreted as screen positive.</p> <p>If screen positive, we can discuss non-invasive prenatal testing or invasive testing. This carries a small, inherent risk of miscarriage (1%).</p>
Test	Chorionic villus sampling	Amniocentesis
Timing	11 weeks onwards	15 weeks
To detect	Major chromosomal abnormalities.	
Detail	The removal of a small sample of placenta tissue (chorionic villi) from the placenta during early pregnancy to screen the baby for genetic defects.	The extraction of a small amount of amniotic fluid from the amniotic sac surrounding the developing baby during the pregnancy.
Results	Your test results will be in two parts. The first part will be ready in 48-72 hours and will report whether baby has Down's, Edwards' or Patau's syndrome as well as sex-linked abnormalities. The full result will be ready in two weeks. The laboratory uses cells from the sample to look at the baby's chromosomes under a microscope and check for any major changes.	

Pictures to treasure

Our centre is equipped with the latest technology, and offers 3D scans which provide a wonderful chance to see your baby's face and facial features before they're born. They are typically performed at 28-30 weeks' pregnancy.

Your sonographer can provide you with copies of your scans in various formats – a JPEG image on a CD, thermal paper images or a short DVD.





Integrated **therapies**

Women's health physiotherapy

We have a dedicated team of women's health physiotherapists who are able to support you through your antenatal period, ward stay and ongoing postnatal care. They are trained in all aspects of injury prevention in pregnancy, and can assess and treat any pregnancy-related musculoskeletal and pelvic floor issues.

During your hospital stay we offer inpatient physiotherapy sessions to advise on mobility, postural care, exercise and can assist if you're experiencing pelvic floor problems. Six weeks after the birth, we also offer an outpatient appointment to assess any physical problems, check your abdominal muscles and offer specific exercises to assist your return to sports or hobbies in a safe and timely manner.

Dietetics

Experienced dietitians are available to consult on the management of a range of nutritional concerns pre-conception, during pregnancy and after delivery. Dietetic advice may help to achieve a healthy body weight, balanced nutritious eating and improved blood pressure control. Consultation to discuss polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS), irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), constipation, diabetes mellitus, diet and lactation and recovery from surgery is also available.

To find out more or to book an appointment, please contact the Therapy Department on **+44 (0)20 7390 6553** or email **therapies@hcahealthcare.co.uk**.





Family-centred **care**

We understand that the thought of giving birth can be both exciting and daunting — particularly if it is your first child. Our hospital offers a range of services and facilities that are designed to help minimise the inevitable stress of childbirth and make the birthing experience as positive as possible. Our warm, friendly and highly experienced maternity and foetal wellbeing team is on hand to offer advice, support and care.

The little things count

At The Portland Hospital, we offer:

- Beautifully furnished and fully equipped delivery rooms which provide a comfortable environment for normal labour and birth.
- A family-friendly environment. Family or friends can visit you at any time of the day. (Visitors restricted during Covid-19)
- A bedside cot, en-suite bathroom, television, telephone, air conditioning and Wi-Fi are available in all postnatal rooms.
- A bed for your partner to stay overnight with their new family should they wish to, with breakfast included.
- A newborn nursery on our maternity floor to support caring for your baby and to allow you to rest. (Subject to Covid-19 safety measures)
- 24-hour room service is available with an accompanying fine dining menu. We also have a dedicated children's menu to ensure big brother or sister also feels special when visiting.
- With a little bit of notice, our catering team is happy to cater for almost any dietary need.
- Afternoon tea to celebrate your new arrival.
- A bespoke gift box on discharge.



A word about cleanliness

- We pride ourselves on unparalleled levels of cleanliness.
- Strict infection control measures are followed by staff at all times.
- We also require partners and visitors to use hand cleansing gels before entering and when leaving your room.

Valet parking

If you're arriving in a hurry, you can pull into our hospital driveway for a quick access. Your partner can then be promptly escorted to the labour ward and we can park your car for you in a nearby car park.

Safe and sound

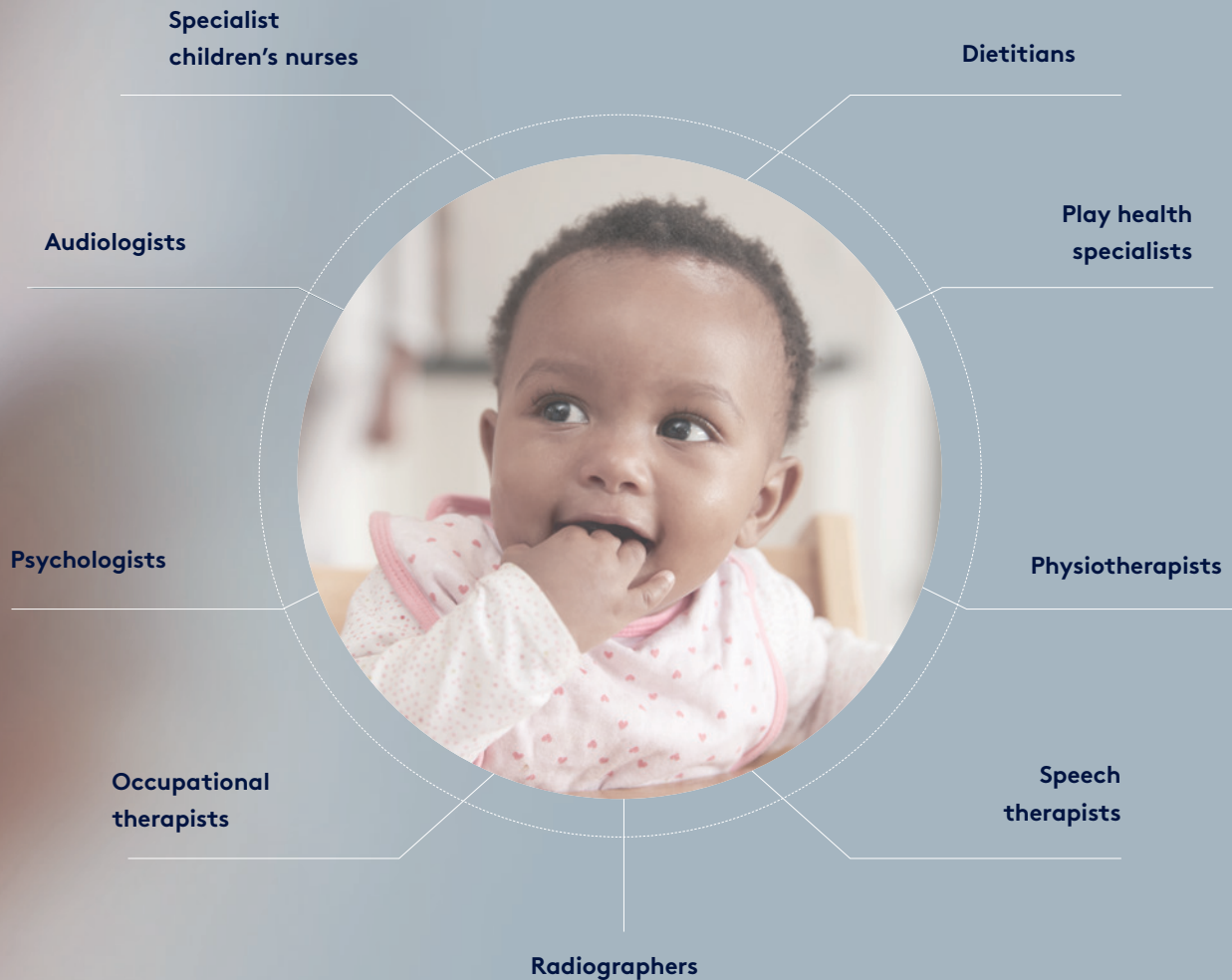
- The Portland Hospital pays vigorous attention to the safety and security of all our patients and staff. CCTV cameras, personal electronic security tags for doctors and staff, and staff identification badges are mandatory.
- Strict visitor identification and ward entry procedures are in place.
- All babies have an electronic tagged bracelet applied from the time they are born, which is electronically linked to their mother's bracelet and only removed at the time of discharge.
- Should complications arise during labour, you can be assured that we have the best urgent medical care available. Our high dependency rooms are designed to provide specialist medical care in a luxurious setting, with ensuite bathrooms for added privacy.

Born at The Portland

The Portland Hospital is the UK's largest independent children's hospital, devoted to caring for babies and children up to the age of 18 years. Our priority is to deliver high quality healthcare to children in a supportive and family friendly environment.

The Portland Hospital is 'home' to more than 120 top paediatric consultant specialists – the largest group of private paediatric specialists in the UK – many of whom are considered to be amongst the world's leading clinicians.

Our wider team of over 300 healthcare professionals includes:



We provide a comprehensive children's service, offering treatment for everything from general paediatric conditions to complex craniofacial reconstruction. Same-day appointments are available with immediate hospital admission if required.

All of our paediatric specialties have the back-up of our on-site Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU). Such is the reputation of our PICU that patients are flown in from all over the world for complex medical care or surgery, including neurosurgery and reconstructive surgery.

All babies born at The Portland Hospital receive a full paediatric review prior to discharge by a consultant paediatrician or paediatric resident medical officer. Many parents then choose to follow on with paediatric care for their child at the hospital.

Shortly after the birth, a skin review is undertaken on all babies. This service is overseen by a paediatric dermatologist who can advise on all skin conditions, including birthmarks and eczema.

Getting through the **impossible**

How we helped parents Fleur and Valentijn care for their
premature baby in our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit



SPOTLIGHT ON N.I.C.U

Feeling something wasn't quite right over the weekend, expectant mum Fleur headed to The Portland Hospital with her husband Valentijn to see her consultant obstetrician.

At only 25 weeks pregnant, they hoped she'd be able to return home that afternoon after a quick check-up. However, examinations immediately revealed that labour had started and the baby was already on its way, almost 15 weeks early.

Fleur says, "We didn't know that it was even possible to have a baby at 25 weeks gestation – it's not something that you think about when you're pregnant. Everyone knows someone who's had a baby two or three weeks early, but not three months."

The team at The Portland Hospital swung into action, administering medication to increase the probability of the baby's survival, and arranging a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) incubator suitable for an 'extreme preterm' baby (meaning a premature baby born before 28 weeks gestation).

Dawn Dowdall, our Neonatal Matron explains, "We are equivalent to a Level 2 provider of neonatal care in the NHS. Best practice for very preterm deliveries is that all such women should deliver in a Tertiary Centre (Level 3 NICU) for babies born before 28 weeks gestation, as they will have very complex needs. At The Portland Hospital we care for babies from 30 weeks gestation, whether born at The Portland or transferred from a Tertiary Centre once clinically appropriate.

As a result of Fleur's early stage of pregnancy, The Portland team quickly arranged for her to be transferred to a Level 3 NICU in another London hospital for the specialist preterm care this gestation of baby requires, where she gave birth to their baby girl Olivia the following morning. Their daughter weighed just 773 grams and required round-the-clock care in the Level 3 NICU.

After five weeks, when Olivia was almost 31 weeks gestational age, her doctors and parents agreed she was stable and progressing enough to be transferred to The Portland Hospital NICU for her ongoing high dependency neonatal care.

Valentijn says, "It was a rollercoaster, especially the first few weeks as we were overwhelmed by the sudden birth of Olivia and all the medical procedures and complications that were thrown at us, as well as the extensive travel across London to be with Olivia as much as we could. Being able to move Olivia back to the Portland, which was much closer to where we live, was amazing, not only for Olivia's care and development, but also in terms of the support we received as new parents to a premature baby."

"She really benefitted from the individual attention and we felt completely reassured that Olivia was getting the care that she needed," adds Fleur. "Having a premature baby is really stressful for parents, but knowing the nurses will look out for you really helps in that situation."

During her six-week stay in The Portland Hospital's NICU, Olivia was cared for by the highly skilled paediatric consultants, including Consultant Paediatrician and Neonatologist Dr Elia Maalouf, and the team of 12 qualified in specialty neonatal nursing who supported her care day and night until she was ready for discharge. She also benefitted from the multidisciplinary team available, including a lactation midwife, speech and language therapy, physiotherapy, and music therapy.

"At first I was a little dubious about music therapy for such a small baby," admits Fleur. "But even after a couple of sessions, I could tell she was really enjoying it as she became so calm during the sessions."

After six weeks of neonatal care at The Portland Hospital, Olivia was discharged at 37 weeks gestational age and a weight of 2.3kg. Since, Olivia is thriving. A happy and active baby, she continues to visit Dr Elia Maalouf at The Portland Hospital for regular check-ups and is so far reaching all her adjusted milestones.

Working with **charities**

Wellbeing of Women

Wellbeing of Women is the UK's leading women's reproductive and gynaecological health charity, which for over 55 years has been dedicated to saving and changing lives through research. Its pioneering work into the prevention, diagnosis and treatment across the breadth of female reproductive and gynaecological health, including pregnancy and childbirth, gynaecological cancers, and overlooked areas such as endometriosis and the menopause has helped to save thousands of lives and ensure a better start for many babies.

Many of the routine tests and treatments that form everyday clinical practice can be traced back to their work, such as the use of ultrasound in pregnancy and the importance of taking folic acid for the health of the unborn baby. They also funded Professor Henry Kitchener, who linked HPV to cervical cancer, which led to the HPV vaccination programme in schools and making cervical cancer preventable for the first time. Only 2.48% of publicly funded research is dedicated to reproductive health and childbirth, which makes our work so vital.

The Portland Hospital shares Wellbeing of Women's drive and commitment to support women and their families everywhere by finding better treatments, preventions and cures. It's important for women everywhere to be supported.

You too can get involved by visiting:
www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk

Dedicated to saving and changing the lives of women through reproductive and gynaecological research.

The charity funded Prof Henry Kitchener, who helped make cervical cancer preventable for the first time.



**WELLBEING
OF WOMEN**



SPOTLIGHT ON OUR PARTNERS

"The first time I delivered a baby was as a medical student at Bart's Hospital in 1965. The last, at The Portland Hospital almost 50 years later, was in 2013. The excitement then was just as great as it had been at the first.

There have been many breakthroughs and enormous improvements in all aspects of healthcare in that time, and thankfully, giving birth in 2019 is much safer for both mother and baby than it was 50 years ago. Many of these developments have come about as a result of research-funded by Wellbeing of Women, of which I am proud to be Honorary President. These include the use of ultrasound, and prenatal diagnostic tests, foetal monitoring, safer anaesthesia and pain relief, as well as advances in prevention of premature labour, and the care of newborns needing intensive care.

Wellbeing's research has also led to many of the improvements in gynaecological care today. It is true to say that every woman alive today will have benefited from the work of Wellbeing of Women in some way."



Sir Marcus Setchell

Consultant Obstetrician and Gynaecologist
The Portland Hospital
Honorary President at Wellbeing of Women

Located in Central London

The Portland Hospital lies at the heart of the private healthcare district in London – at the top of the famous Great Portland Street.

Our addresses

The Portland Hospital for Women and Children
205-209 Great Portland Street
London W1W 5AH

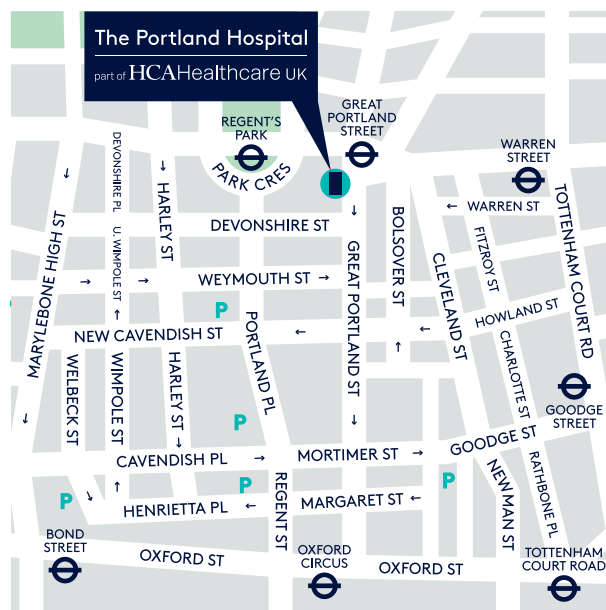
The Portland Hospital Maternal
and Foetal Wellbeing Centre
212 Great Portland Street
London W1N 5HG

Contact us

The Portland Hospital Maternity Enquiry Line:
+44 (0)20 7390 6068

Hospital Switchboard:
+44 (0)20 7580 4400

www.theportlandhospital.com



Getting here by car

Visitors have the option of two car parks close to the hospital:

- NCP in Carburton Street
- Union Car Parks in Devonshire Row Mews

There are also meter parking bays in the surrounding streets.

Getting here by tube

- Great Portland Street Station (2 mins walk)
Circle, Hammersmith & City and Metropolitan Lines
- Regent's Park Station (5 mins walk)
Bakerloo Line







Our group

Connect with us



The Harley Street Clinic
The Lister Hospital
London Bridge Hospital
The Portland Hospital
The Princess Grace Hospital
The Wellington Hospital
The Christie Private Care
GP Services
HCA UK at University College Hospital
HCA UK at The Wilmslow Hospital
Leaders in Oncology Care

020 7580 4400

theportlandhospital.com

The Portland Hospital

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