

Midwifery Group Practice (MGP) at Barwon Health is a model of maternity care that provides continuity of midwifery care to women and their families throughout pregnancy, birth and for the first 2 weeks at home with a new baby. Women and their families form a relationship with one midwife supported by a small team of back-up midwives, who you will meet during the pregnancy.

Who can use MGP?

MGP is available to all women living on the Bellarine Peninsula or living in particular postcodes to the north and west of Geelong city.

MGP has limited places available so an allocation process will occur.

Having a complicated pregnancy or pregnancy history does not exclude women from the program.

What happens during pregnancy?

Pregnancy care is an important part of promoting a healthy pregnancy and for preparing for childbirth and parenthood.

Your midwife will provide education around pregnancy and birth on a one-to-one basis.

You may like to take part in the childbirth preparation classes conducted by Barwon Health, which can be booked through Baxter Reception, ph: 4215 2060. There are also community classes available and you are encouraged to join The Australian Breastfeeding Association <https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au>.

Your midwife is able to order tests and ultrasounds when necessary and organise consultation with hospital doctors if needed.

During pregnancy, your midwife will provide 8 planned visits, timed to suit your needs.

Visits are 4-6 weeks until 30 weeks and then more frequently until you give birth (refer to orange Tests and Investigations book). If your pregnancy is low risk most of these visits will occur in the community, with one planned home visit.

Most appointments are 30 minutes long. You are welcome to bring anyone you wish to your appointments. Occasionally your appointments may need to be rescheduled when your midwife is attending a labour and birth.

If you need to come to, or are admitted to, hospital your midwife will be involved in your care management, in collaboration with the hospital staff and the medical team.

Midwives are on-call and available 24 hours a day by mobile phone to help you with urgent concerns.

Who will care for me during labour and birth?

You will be able to contact your midwife (or her backup) by mobile phone when you are in labour. She may come to your home to assess you before you come in to hospital. When labour is established, your midwife or her backup will care for you in hospital.

Midwives provide skilled clinical, physical and emotional support during labour and birth.

In the first few hours following birth you and your baby will be together in a quiet respectful environment with the people of your choice supporting you. We will assist you to breastfeed within the first hour after birth.



What about care after the birth?

Your midwife will remain with you until she is sure that all is well for you and your baby.

If both you and your baby are well, we encourage you to go home between 4 and 24 hours after the birth. Your midwife will provide further care at home.

If you need to stay longer than 6 hours or complications have occurred you will be admitted to the postnatal ward.

Care in the postnatal ward will be provided by the hospital staff who will liaise with your midwife as needed.

The number and frequency of visits in your home will depend on whether you spend time in the postnatal ward and on your needs within the first 2 weeks after birth.

Between visits your midwife will be available on their mobile phone.

Your midwife will hand over care of you and your baby to the maternal and child health nurse.

You are encouraged to make a 6 week appointment with your GP to check that all is well with you, and to meet and examine your baby.

What is expected of me?

Midwifery care promotes health and taking steps to avoid or minimise problems. Women cared for by midwives are active participants in their own health care. We expect you to take a high degree of responsibility for your health and your baby's health.

Midwives are committed to providing a supportive approach to helping women address risk factors such as obesity, smoking and alcohol use.

During your pregnancy, we encourage you to eat a well-balanced diet, become informed, participate actively in your pregnancy care, and get adequate, regular sleep and exercise.

Midwifery care is individualised according to women's needs. In order for us to be most effective as caregivers we need you to keep us well informed of any problems, concerns or situations, which may affect your care. We ask that you take the lead in talking about your experiences, needs and concerns.

We promote the health benefits of breastfeeding and respect women's choices to breast or bottle feed their babies. As part of health promotion for both women and babies we encourage you to breastfeed soon after birth, to give your baby valuable colostrum and to help minimise your blood loss. We also encourage you to become informed about issues by using books, videos and consumer websites such as the Better Health Channel

Contact information

**If you find you are unable to connect with your midwife or have other concerns about MGP, please call Baxter Reception who will assist you.
Ph: 4215 2060**



This document was developed by Women's and Children's Services, Barwon Health

