

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT

After the midwife from the hospital has discharged you from hospital care [and completed the final home visit], the Maternal and Child Health Nurse [MCHN] will take over the care of you and your baby. She will monitor your baby's growth and development until your child goes to school.

This includes immunisations, seeing that the baby reaches their growth and developmental milestones, hearing and vision screening, advice on feeding, sleep and settling.

She may visit you at home the first time, then you will visit her in the MCH Centre which will be in your local area.

She may organise first time parent's groups so that new parents can meet other new parents in their area.

Sometimes they are offered in language groups for example, Vietnamese or Arabic.

You can download the MCH app for your phone, which is available in other languages, including Arabic, Burmese, Chinese (Simplified), Dari, Khmer, Persian, Punjabi, Spanish and Vietnamese.

This will help you access child health and development information matched to the age of your child. You will also be able to chart your baby's growth with the interactive growth tracker; it will also remind you about upcoming MCH appointments.

## OTHER SUPPORT

If more help is needed due to health or social issues, more support services will be involved, or the home visits will be provided over a longer time. Talk to your Maternal and Child Health Nurse about who may be able to provide the support you need.

These may be:

- Enhanced Maternal and Child Health - this program is focused on achieving improved outcomes for infants, children, mothers and their families who are experiencing a period of increased need, and who could benefit from additional support
- housing support
- ongoing social support
- refugee support networks
- Cradle to Kinder [support for young families including specific programs for Aboriginal families]
- Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies [must be referred during pregnancy]
- Parenting support services [see link below]

## YOUR GP

You will be advised to visit your GP when your baby is 6 weeks old for a check-up.

You will need to make a long appointment so the GP can check you and your baby.

They will ask you things like how you feel you have recovered after the birth. They may ask about your physical health – if you had stitches, they will check them; they may ask if you have had sexual intercourse since the birth; how your breasts are [if you are breastfeeding or formula feeding]; they may ask about your bowel movements and if you have had any problems; they may check your blood pressure; and if you had diabetes during pregnancy they may ask you to complete a blood test to check if your sugar levels are back to normal.

They will also check on your emotional health by asking you some questions about sleeping, how you feel day to day and if there are things worrying you.

They may also ask about contraception and planning for the next baby.

The baby will be checked to make sure they are healthy, gaining weight, having wet and dirty nappies and sleeping as a newborn should. They will ask if you have any concerns about your baby.

Having a good GP that you trust is important, especially after the birth of your baby.

## RESOURCES

<https://www.cope.org.au/new-parents/first-weeks/community-resources-providing-support/>

<https://www.panda.org.au/info-support/after-birth>

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/servicesandsupport/first-days-after-birth>

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/servicesandsupport/first-weeks-after-birth>

<https://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/healthyliving/maternal-and-child-health-services>

[Parenting support services](#)

## DISCLAIMER

This information is not intended to be medical advice, it is a guide only. Please ask your midwife or doctor for information and advice directly related to your care and your baby's care.