

FOI REF: 25/829

19th December 2025

Eastbourne District General Hospital

Kings Drive
Eastbourne
East Sussex
BN21 2UD

Tel: 0300 131 4500

Website: www.esht.nhs.uk

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT

I am responding to your request for information under the Freedom of Information Act. The answers to your specific questions are as follows:

I am writing to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 regarding the implementation and evaluation of Family Integrated Care (FICare) within your neonatal/special baby care services.

Please could you provide the following:

- 1. Confirmation of whether Family Integrated Care (FICare) is currently implemented in your neonatal unit(s), and if so, the date of initial implementation.**

Yes, FICare was implemented on the Special Care Baby Unit (SCBU) at East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust (ESHT) in 2020. It became the first Level 1 unit in the country to achieve Gold Accreditation in The Bliss Baby Charter.

- 2. Copies of any internal policies, protocols, or guidance documents relating to FICare.**

FICare has been implemented on the neonatal unit at ESHT as part of the Kent, Surrey and Sussex (KSS) Neonatal Operational Delivery Network.

- 3. Details of any staff training programmes or materials used to support FICare delivery.**

Staff teaching and training materials used to support FICare delivery are provided via KSS, which is part of NHS England. Please contact NHS England directly for copies of the aforementioned materials at this following email address:

england.contactus@nhs.net

Please ensure you write "Freedom of Information" in the subject line of any FOI request to NHS England.

- 4. Details of any staff training programmes or materials used to support FICare delivery relating to older siblings.**

At ESHT, staff teaching and training materials used to support FICare delivery relating to older siblings involves the use of 'Baby Steps: Our Neonatal Journey Cards'. For copies of these materials, please contact NHS England as set out in our response to Question 3.

- 5. Any audit reports, evaluations, or outcome data relating to the effectiveness or impact of FICare on neonatal care or family experience.**

Our review of the effectiveness or impact of FICare on neonatal care or family experience is currently in process, with staff being allocated protected time to complete this and any findings/recommendations that may arise from the review.

- 6. If FICare is not currently implemented, please indicate whether there are plans or discussions underway to introduce it.**

Not applicable; please refer to our responses to Questions 1 through to 5.

In addition (and if relevant), please could the Trust provide information on its policies or regulations regarding parental and sibling access to babies receiving neonatal care:

- 1. Are both parents and siblings permitted to spend time with babies in neonatal care units?**

Yes, both parents and siblings are permitted.

- 2. Are there any time restrictions or limitations on how long parents or siblings may spend with babies in neonatal care?**

There are no time restrictions or limitations on how long parents or siblings may spend with babies in neonatal care.

- 3. Does the Trust have any policies to ensure that babies from multiple births (e.g. twins, triplets) receive equal parental contact time compared to singleton babies?**

No, ESHT does not have a policy which prohibits equal parental contact time for multiple births. The parents and siblings of a baby are encouraged to spend equal time with each of their babies; this is parental choice.

If I can be of any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Should you be dissatisfied with the Trust's response to your request, you have the right to request an internal review. Please write to the Freedom of Information Department (esh-tr.foi@nhs.net), quoting the above reference, within 40 working days. The Trust is not obliged to accept an internal review after this date.

Should you still be dissatisfied with your FOI request, you have the right of complaint to the Information Commissioner at the following address:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF

Telephone: 0303 123 1113

Yours sincerely

Freedom of Information Department
esh-tr.foi@nhs.net