



# Having a baby in WA – your care options

## I think I'm pregnant, now what?

If you think you may be pregnant you need to make an appointment to see your local doctor as soon as possible. Your doctor will confirm your pregnancy and discuss care options with you. Once you have made a decision about the type of care you'd like to receive, your doctor will provide you with a referral letter and/or contact information. Some services do not require a doctor's referral but limited places are available; these include the KEMH Family Birth Centre, Community Midwifery Program WA and private practice midwifery care.

## Find a local doctor at 'healthdirect Australia'

W: [www.healthdirect.gov.au](http://www.healthdirect.gov.au) (search under 'General Practice')  
T: 1800 022 222.

## General Hospital Care

General Hospital Care is available for women experiencing an uncomplicated or 'low-risk' pregnancy and is offered at your local public hospital, based on your postcode. Care is usually provided by hospital midwives, doctors and/or your local doctor. Please visit [www.healthywa.wa.gov.au](http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au) → Health Living → Having a Baby → '[Having a baby in a public hospital](#)' page to see which public maternity hospital you will be referred to.

## GP Shared-Care

GP shared-care is an option provided at many hospitals in which your pregnancy care is shared between your doctor (GP) and your local hospital.

- Your doctor provides antenatal appointments.
- At about 20 weeks of pregnancy an appointment will be made at the shared-care hospital.
- If your pregnancy is uncomplicated, appointments will continue with your doctor.
- From about 36 weeks of pregnancy you will attend appointments at your hospital until you give birth.

Contact your local hospital for details of doctors who provide shared-care in your area.

## Community Midwifery Program

- Available to women experiencing a low-risk pregnancy who are interested in having a home birth.
- Offers continuous midwifery care throughout your pregnancy, labour, birth and early postnatal period.
- Antenatal appointments occur in your home and in community based clinics.
- No referral necessary, call (08) 9301 9227 for more information.

## Private care

- You choose the doctor (obstetrician) and hospital you would prefer to provide your care.
- Part or all hospital costs covered by your private health insurance fund or at your own expense.
- Antenatal appointments are usually held in your obstetrician's private rooms or at a hospital antenatal clinic (not covered by private insurance but may be part covered by Medicare).

For more information call the private hospital you wish to deliver at visit [www.healthywa.wa.gov.au](http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au) - having a baby in private care.

## Private practice midwifery care

- Practising midwives who are not linked to a hospital or the Community Midwifery Program.
- Antenatal care is provided to 'low-risk', healthy women in their own homes by the same midwife or group of midwives.
- Eligible private practise midwives have access to the Medicare benefit scheme which means you may be able to claim a rebate for their service if they are endorsed by the scheme.

For more information [www.midwives.org.au](http://www.midwives.org.au) , [www.australiansocietyofindependentmidwives.com](http://www.australiansocietyofindependentmidwives.com) or call the Independent Midwives Centre (08) 9319 8043.

## Tertiary Care

- Tertiary care in WA is provided at King Edward Memorial Hospital (KEMH).
- If you are assessed as being at 'high-risk' of experiencing pregnancy complications and requiring on-going specialised care you will be referred by your GP or obstetrician for tertiary care.
- You may have a history of complications with a previous pregnancy or birth, have an existing medical condition or may be experiencing a complex pregnancy.

Women who receive care initially through other WA maternity services, including private hospitals, who experience unexpected complications during pregnancy or in labour may be transferred to KEMH for specialist care.

For more information about having a baby in Western Australia please visit [www.healthywa.wa.gov.au](http://www.healthywa.wa.gov.au) → Healthy living → Having a baby.



This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with a disability.

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