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## What is Shared Care?

Shared Care is sharing your pregnancy care between the hospital and your family doctor.

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## Who is it For?

Women who normally attend The Sutherland Hospital Clinic with healthy pregnancies.

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## What are the Advantages of having my GP look after me?

- ☆ Personalised service
  - ☆ Continuation of care with your GP
  - ☆ Generally, shorter waiting times and more flexible appointments
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## What Does it Cost?

Normal GP consultation is usually charged and, in general, all tests are bulk billed.

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## What Tests Do I Need?

The following are the most common **tests** performed:

On Confirmation of Pregnancy	Blood Tests Urine Tests Cervical Smear (if not done within last 1-2 years)
18 weeks	Ultrasound
28 weeks	Blood Tests
36 weeks	Repeat Blood Tests and Vaginal Swab in some patients

## How Do I Arrange Shared Care?

If you are planning your pregnancy, or as soon as you know you are pregnant, ask your GP for details

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## The Importance of Folic Acid

About 400 children born each year in Australia are affected by Neural Tube Defects (Spina bifida). Most infants are either stillborn or die early in life. The remainder usually have life-long physical and often intellectual disability.

Recent evidence has confirmed that the majority of Neural Tube Defects may be prevented by appropriate intake of Folic Acid (folate).

Spina bifida occurs in the early weeks of pregnancy when the brain and spinal cord are developing. In the baby with spina bifida, the development of the spinal cord is incomplete and it remains exposed. This results in problems with walking as well as bowel and bladder control.

Folic acid is a water soluble vitamin found in many fruits, leafy green vegetables, cereals and legumes. Because it is difficult to get enough folic acid in a normal diet to prevent spina bifida it is recommended to supplement the diet with folic acid in tablet form when a pregnancy is planned.

It is recommended that women with no family history of neural tube defects and not on anti-convulsants take folic acid (0.5mg daily). Women with close family history of neural tube defects are advised to take 5mg daily. Ideally this should be commenced several months before conception, and continue to 3 months gestation.

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## Schedule of Visits During Pregnancy

*Initial visit to GP*  
**(6-10 weeks)**      Pregnancy test  
Any other tests required

*Initial Visits to Clinic*  
**(10-14 weeks)**      Visit to Antenatal Clinic

**14-26 weeks**      Monthly visit to GP

**28 weeks**      Visit to GP

**30 weeks**      Check-up at Clinic

**32-34 weeks**      Fortnightly visit to GP

**36 weeks**      Check-up at Clinic

**37-40 weeks**      Weekly checks by GP

**41 weeks**      Weekly checks at Clinic

*Postnatal*  
**4-6 weeks**      Visit to GP

*This schedule is at the discretion  
of the Specialist and/or GP.*

### USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

#### Sutherland Hospital

Main Switchboard      9540 7111

Antenatal Clinic      9540 7240

Appointment Enquiries Mon—Fri      9.00am—4.30pm

Antenatal Assessment Unit      9540 8654

Clinical Enquiries Mon—Fri      8.30am—4.30pm

Birthing Suite      9540 7982/7981

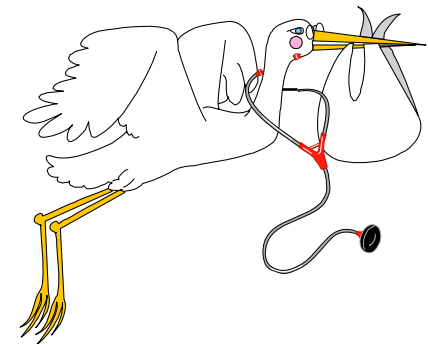


Shire GPs is an association of General Practitioners in the Sutherland Shire.

The focus is:

- ☆ To improve patient care in the community and in the hospital
- ☆ To improve communication between GPs and other local health providers
- ☆ To contribute to more efficient and cost-effective allocation of community health resources

## Did You Know You Can Have



## Shared Pregnancy Care with your GP?