

Birth Reflections Service

Information for Women, Birthing
People and their families



Leeds
Maternity Care

This leaflet provides information about the Leeds Maternity Birth Reflections service and is suitable for any individual who has given birth within the Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust and/or their birth partners.

A safe space to talk, heal, and understand your birth experience

Giving birth is a deeply personal journey - one that can stir up many emotions. While it can be joyful and empowering, it can also leave behind feelings of confusion, sadness or anxiety, especially if things didn't go as planned.

At the **Birth Reflections Clinic**, we offer a calm, supportive space where you can talk through your birth story with a compassionate midwife. Whether your experience was recent or some time ago, we're here to help you make sense of it and support your emotional recovery.

Patient quote:

"Exceptionally helpful - they guided me to understand what happened and how to approach future pregnancies with confidence."

What to expect

- A gentle, one-hour session focused on you and your maternity and birthing experience.
- Appointments available over the phone, online or face-to-face. The wait time is normally 3-4 months from the point of referral.
- The opportunity to go through your birth notes, ask questions, and understand what happened.
- Emotional support to help you reflect and begin healing.
- We can refer or signpost to other services for ongoing support if required.

You're welcome to bring your birth partner or support person to the appointment - it can be a valuable and therapeutic experience for you both.



This space is for you if

Your birth was difficult or traumatic and

- You have been left with questions or emotional challenges related to your experience.
- You feel nervous about a future pregnancy or birth.
- Want to feel heard and supported.

It's not a part of a formal complaints process, or mental health service but a space to be listened to with compassion and care.

How to book

Speak to your midwife, GP, physiotherapist or health visitor to be referred to the clinic. Alternatively, you can self-refer by emailing: leedsth-tr.birthreflections@nhs.net

Birth Partners can also refer. They will need a signed consent form from their partner to access their medical records if they wish to be seen on their own.

Information on emotional wellbeing after birth

Feeling tearful, anxious, or low in the first week after giving birth is very common. This is known as the "baby blues", and it usually passes within a few weeks. It's a completely normal response to the hormonal and emotional changes following birth.

If these feelings last longer or become more intense, it could be a sign of postnatal depression, which can affect anyone. You might feel persistently low, overwhelmed, or struggle to bond with your baby.

This is nothing to be ashamed of, and support is available.

Some people may also experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress following birth, particularly if the experience felt frightening or out of control. This can include flashbacks, nightmares, feeling on edge, avoiding reminders of the birth, or difficulty sleeping. These feelings are valid, and support is available - please don't hesitate to reach out if this sounds familiar. All the above information and symptoms also applies to birth partners.



Please speak to your midwife, health visitor, physiotherapist or GP if you're struggling - they're here to help. You can also refer yourself to Leeds Mental Wellbeing Service for free and confidential support.

All these feelings are valid and treatable - we're here to talk and ensure you get timely, accessible support.

Your experience is valid. Your voice matters.

Whenever you're ready, we're here to listen.

Questions / Notes

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What did you think of your care?

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© The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust • 1st Edition Version 1
Developed by: Sophie Banks - Specialist Personalised Care and
Choice Midwife
Produced by: Medical Illustration Services • MID code: 20250630_001

LN006066
Publication date
01/2026
Review date
01/2029