

REFERRALS

The senior psychiatric registrar or the unit manager will take referrals for the parent infant program.

There are three mother baby units in Victoria. This program covers the north east third of Victoria. This includes the northern and eastern metropolitan regions as well as the Hume region.

WHO CAN MAKE REFERRALS?

Health professionals such as Psychiatrists, Psychologists, General Medical Practitioners and Maternal and Child Health Nurses may refer clients for inpatient treatment on the unit.

REFERRAL DETAILS

To make a referral, please contact the Unit and we will fax you a Referral Form.

LOCATION



Parent Infant Program
Austin Hospital

Postal Address:

Acute Psychiatric Unit
Austin Hospital
Studley Rd Heidelberg,
3084

Telephone: (03) 9496 6407
Facsimile: (03) 9496 4366



Mental Health Clinical Service Unit

AUSTIN PARENT INFANT PROGRAM



Parent Infant Program

The Parent Infant program is located within the Acute Psychiatric Unit at The Austin Hospital. It is a 6-bed unit for mothers with mental health problems with their babies up to 12 months of age.

Whilst having a baby is often a positive experience, 30% of women have significant difficulties and another 14% have postnatal depression. One in 600 mothers have more severe mental illness. This is not related to whether they wanted a baby or their capacity as a mother. Childhood experiences, lack of available support and/or the stress of caring for a baby all day (and night), every day can be overwhelming. This is a period of vulnerability for depression and other mental illnesses.

It is because women want to be good mothers that they ask for help at this time, sometimes in the form of an admission to hospital.

What to expect

Individualised treatment is tailored to best meet the needs of mother and infant focusing not only on the two as individuals, but also as a dad.

The average length of stay is two weeks. Clients see the psychiatry registrar regularly during the week and the consultant psychiatrist weekly.

Nursing staff may help with childcare overnight for the first two nights so that mothers can have uninterrupted rest. Otherwise, mothers are expected to care for their babies with minimum assistance if required.

Clients may be expected to attend relevant group programs, eg anxiety management, dance therapy, art therapy. Video taping of mother baby interactions may be considered an important part of treatment.

Partners are encouraged to participate and may stay for limited periods to support mothers, depending on the situation.

What to bring

Baby clothing, disposable nappies, feeding bottles, formula (if required), dummy, baby medications and any preferred baby creams or lotions, washing powder, blue maternal/child health book, pram, favourite toys.

A bottle steriliser is available on the unit. Also available are cloth nappies, a breast pump, nappy disposal units, change mats, cots, baby bath, linen, towels, nappy rash cream, baby monitors.

Staff Profiles

Director/Consultant Psychiatrist

Professor Anne Buist
Parent Infant Program

Associate Unit Manager

Wynne Stamboulakis

