

Reference:	FOI.19976.26
Subject:	Neurodivergent Intrapartum Care
Date of Request:	20 March 2026

Requested:

I would be grateful if you could confirm whether your trust holds the following information, and if so, provide copies or links where available:

Policies and Procedures

1. Does your trust have any formal policies, pathways, or standard operating procedures that reference the care of neurodivergent patients during labour and birth?

If so, please provide copies or links.

Guidelines or Protocols for Staff

2. Does your trust provide any guidance or protocols for staff relating to communication approaches, sensory adjustments, reasonable adjustments, or other supportive care for neurodivergent patients during the intrapartum period?

If so, please provide copies or links.

Resources, Tools, or Training Materials

3. Does your trust use any resources, tools, or training materials (e.g. visual aids, communication tools, sensory supports, or staff training resources) to support neurodivergent patients during labour and birth?

If so, please provide copies, links, or a brief description.

Where possible, I would appreciate if the information can be provided in an electronic format. If documents are not held centrally but are used locally within services, a brief description of what is available would be helpful. If no information is held or available, please confirm this.

Response:

1. Hywel Dda University Health Board (UHB) confirms it does not have any formal policies, pathways or standard operating procedures at present that reference the care of neurodivergent patients during labour and birth. However, a guideline is currently in development and is being co-produced by the Maternity service, Perinatal Mental Health service and Learning Disability service.
2. The UHB does not have any guidance for staff relating to communication approaches, sensory adjustments, reasonable adjustments or other supportive care for neurodivergent patients during the intrapartum period. However, as detailed in response to question 1, a guideline is currently in development.
3. The UHB confirms it does not currently have resources, tools or training materials in place to support neurodivergent patients during labour and birth. However, a new task and finish group is being established to develop resources and tools to support neurodivergent patients during this period.

However, the UHB does have resources available to support neurodivergent patients during pregnancy. Each woman and birthing person who books into the UHB's Maternity services receives a set of hand-held maternity notes. These notes are based on an All-Wales standardised document, however, a number of local adaptations have been implemented to further support equity of access and personalised care for neurodivergent service users.

As part of the appointment booking process, all women and birthing people are routinely asked whether they identify as neurodivergent and whether they have any specific communication needs, sensory needs, or reasonable adjustments that would support their care during pregnancy, labour, birth, and the postnatal period. This information is recorded using a dedicated 'Neurodiversity and Communication Needs Sticker' which is attached to the front of the hand-held maternity notes. The sticker provides a clear and visible prompt for all maternity staff, across all care settings, to recognise and respond to individual needs, including adapting communication styles, providing clear explanations, allowing additional time, and making appropriate environmental or sensory adjustments where possible

Use of the sticker is embedded as standard practice across all Maternity services within the UHB and compliance is monitored through regular audit processes as part of routine clinical governance and quality assurance arrangements. Audit findings demonstrate consistently high levels of compliance, providing assurance that neurodiversity and communication needs are being proactively identified and communicated across the multidisciplinary team. This approach supports continuity of care, promotes inclusive practice and helps to ensure that neurodivergent women and birthing people receive safe, personalised and compassionate care throughout the intrapartum pathway.

If a service user identifies any communication needs, they are supported to complete a 'Maternity Passport'. This is a co-produced document developed in collaboration with Maternity services, Learning Disability services and the service user, to ensure it is meaningful, accessible, and reflective of lived experience. The 'Maternity Passport' enables women and birthing people to document their individual communication preferences, sensory needs, triggers, supportive strategies and any reasonable adjustments that may be required throughout pregnancy, labour, birth and postnatal care.

The document is printed on dedicated purple paper to support ease of identification and visibility. Ensuring it is readily accessible to all clinicians involved in a woman's care across different settings and points of the maternity pathway. This helps to promote continuity, consistency and person-centred care. Where women and birthing people identify particular needs or preferences, the 'Maternity Passport' supports staff to tailor their approach, adapt communication styles and make appropriate adjustments, reducing the need for individuals to repeatedly explain their needs and improving their overall experience of maternity services.

A copy of the 'Neurodiversity and Communication Needs Sticker' and the 'Maternity Passport' can be found at Attachments 1 and 2.