

Stead Family Children's Hospital

# Resources for Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) Families

This handout is a quick summary of the NICU social workers' services. **Read the NICU Resources handout in Your Baby's Journey binder to learn more.** Please tell your baby's social worker if you would like to talk using an interpreter.

NICU social workers offer many services, such as:

- Information and emotional support
- Discharge or transfer planning

Each baby in the NICU has a social worker. If you have not met yours yet, please ask your nurse to call your social worker.

- Autumn Yarger at 319-356-4900
- Katie Sieren at 319-353-7039
- Jenny Duffy or Kelly Miller at 319-356-1847
- Kathy Shey or Audrey Halden at 319-356-8405

## Education

- [YourNICUBabyNow.com](http://YourNICUBabyNow.com) is an online library. It is offered free of charge by University of Iowa Stead Family Children's Hospital. Use password 02826 to watch the videos and other parent support information.

## Parking

- A parking pass for 1 free exit will be given to each family per calendar day by the NICU unit clerk.

## Food

- The NICU provides the family 1 tray of food each day. This is offered through room service from **4 p.m. to 8 p.m.** Instructions about the program are next to the phone in your baby's room. Talk with your baby's nurse if you need help.
- There is a food pantry next to the NICU Family Lounges outside Bay 1 to 3 and Level 6.

## Housing

### Rossi Guest House

- Call 319-384-9240 to put your name on the waiting list.
- It is in the Heartland Inn in Coralville.
- It gives comfort and lodging to family members of patients.
- The fee is \$10 per night. There is no sliding scale.
- Rooms have a mini fridge and microwave.

### Ronald McDonald House (RMH) of Iowa City

- Call 319-500-7642 to put your name on the waiting list.
- It is near the hospital.
- It has a shuttle.
- You get a free parking pass for RMH and ramps.
- The suggested fee is \$15 a night.
- No family is turned away if you are not able to pay.
- There are rules about quarantining before you can stay. Talk with RMH staff to learn more.
- Learn more at [rmhc-eiwi.org/be-our-guest/rmh-hotel-guide/](http://rmhc-eiwi.org/be-our-guest/rmh-hotel-guide/).

## Rooming in with your baby

Talk with your nurse to learn more about this.

## Local hotels

- Hotels near the hospital offer discounts to families during this time. Ask for the Hospital Rate or Ronald McDonald rate when you reserve a room.

## NICU Family Lounge

- Food pantry, shower, restroom, refrigerator, microwave, TV, computers, lockers, and pumping rooms are offered.
- The sleep space is closed at this time.

## Transportation assistance

We know you want to be with your baby, and sometimes it is hard due to work schedules, responsibilities for other children, and costs or availability of transportation. Talk with your NICU social worker if these are problems for you.

## Emotional support

Having a baby in the NICU can be very stressful for parents. We know this is a hard time, but you are not alone. We are here to help you.

**NICU social workers:** They can give emotional support and offer other resources.

**NICU parent group:** Has activities, education, and a time to meet other NICU families. The group meets Tuesdays from 1 to 2 p.m. in the Edward Bell Conference Room (outside the main NICU door). Flyers are posted on the unit with weekly topics. You must wear a mask.

**UI Health Care Women's Wellness and Counseling Service:** They offer counseling, mental health services, and medication management. Call 319-384-5499 to make an appointment or ask your NICU social worker to arrange this. They also have a handout called Tips for COVID-19 Coping. Your NICU social worker can give you this.

**Hand to Hold ([handtohold.org](http://handtohold.org)):** They help families before, during, and after NICU stays and infant loss. They offer resources for the whole family, such as:

- Virtual support groups
- Podcast (some are COVID/NICU specific)
- 1-on-1 mentoring from someone who has been there

**Postpartum Support International ([postpartum.net](http://postpartum.net)):** This organization is dedicated to help with emotional changes people experience during pregnancy and after birth. They offer information, support, and resources. They have a helpline, peer mentor program, and online support group.

**NICU meditation:** This is a free 15-minute guided meditation for NICU families by Sage Nest Yoga. Listen to it on:

**For people who do not have Spotify** at [sagenestyoga.buzzsprout.com](https://sagenestyoga.buzzsprout.com) and [tinyurl.com/nicumeditation](https://tinyurl.com/nicumeditation)

**For people who have Spotify** at [tinyurl.com/sagenest](https://tinyurl.com/sagenest) and [tinyurl.com/meditation-nicu](https://tinyurl.com/meditation-nicu)

**UI Health Care Chaplains:** They are always available to support NICU families. They offer prayer books, poems, and blessings for uncertain times. Ask your nurse if you would like a Chaplain visit.

## Financial help

Families often worry about how the cost of a NICU hospitalization will affect their household. They often want to learn more about their health care coverage and ways to help with the costs. Talk with your NICU social worker if you need help finding resources that could help with your baby's NICU stay.

## Private insurance

Call your private insurance to learn about your health care coverage. There is a customer service phone number on the back of your insurance card.

You may also want to apply for the Medicaid program on your child's behalf. Medicaid may pay your out-of-pocket medical expenses not covered by your private insurance. It may help cover your insurance premiums too.

## Medicaid

Call DHS at 877-347-5678 to add your baby if you are already enrolled in Medicaid.

Even if you have private insurance, your baby and family may be able to get Medicaid. It can help with costs not covered by your private insurance for 1 year. It may help cover your health insurance premiums too.

There are many ways families can get Medicaid. Ask your NICU social worker if you may be eligible or for help with the application process.

## Supplemental Security Income (SSI)

Your baby may be able to get SSI due to their low birthweight or diagnosis. SSI is a federal program run by the Social Security Administration. It may give supplemental Medicaid insurance to help pay medical bills.

SSI gives cash income of:

- \$30 each month while your baby is in the hospital
- \$0 to \$710 each month after your baby leaves the hospital

In Iowa, SSI and SSI-related Medicaid are based on your baby's income and length of stay in the hospital. When your baby goes home from the hospital, the SSI cash income may change. Your income will be a part of deciding the amount of SSI cash income you will get. The Medicaid eligibility will carry on automatically for 1 year.

Talk with your NICU social worker if you think your child is eligible. They are happy to help you with this application. You can call the Social Security Administration at 800-772-1213 or go to [ssa.gov](http://ssa.gov).

## Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)

All children that can get Medicaid are also able to get WIC. When a child is eligible, the mom and other children in the family under age 5 are too. WIC may be able to help you get a breast pump. WIC is also a supplemental nutrition program for:

- Babies
- Children under age 5
- Pregnant women
- Breastfeeding women
- Women who have had a baby in the last 6 months

WIC helps families by offering:

- Health foods
- Nutrition education
- Referrals to other health care agencies

There is a WIC clinic held at UI Health Care 2 times each month. Your NICU social worker is happy to help you with an appointment. They can give you the information you will need from the hospital to sign up in WIC for your baby.

You can also sign up in WIC closer to your home. Go to [idph.iowa.gov/wic](http://idph.iowa.gov/wic) to learn more or to find your local office. Find income eligibility at [idph.iowa.gov/wic/how-to-apply](http://idph.iowa.gov/wic/how-to-apply) or at 1-800-532-1579.

## Birth certificates/paternity affidavits

Your NICU social worker is happy to help with your questions.

**Birth certificates:** Birth certificates need to be filled out at the hospital where the baby was born. You do **not** need a paternity affidavit to give your baby the father's last name on the birth certificate. In Iowa, a mother can give the baby the last name of her choice.

**Paternity affidavits:** Filling out and filing voluntary paternity affidavit legally creates paternity for a child born to parents who are not legally married.

- **You do not need a paternity affidavit to give your baby the father's last name.** When parents are not married, the father's name and information will not be listed on the birth certificate by the state as the father of the baby unless a paternity affidavit is filed.
- There is no age limit on when to file.
- There is no fee for filing.
- You can get a form at the front desk of the Mother-Baby Care Unit on 6JPP.
- It must be signed with a notary public present. There is free notary at the Concierge at the Main Entrance Information Desk at UI Health Care (Elevator E, Level 1), from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The phone number is 319-356-1900.
- Parents must have:
  - A current, government-issued photo identification (ID) card when they sign.
  - Copies of the parents' IDs must be filed with the paternity affidavit.
- Give filled out affidavits and ID copies to the Mother-Baby Care Unit or your NICU social worker.

## Discharge planning

Your baby's care team will work with you to make sure you feel ready and confident to go home when your baby is about ready to leave the hospital.

- Your baby's nurses will teach you what you need to know. They will go over your baby's cares until you feel comfortable.
- A nurse or social worker from the discharge team will help arrange any special needs your baby may have, such as home oxygen or a visiting nurse.

Often, parents like to room-in with their baby before going home. This gives you time to practice doing your baby's cares while you have NICU nurses to help you learn. We are privileged to be able to offer this "care by parents" experience in our NICU.

## Transfer planning

As your baby gets better, you might want to have them transferred to a hospital closer to your home. Please let your baby's care team know if this is something you want. We will do our best to make these arrangements when it is safe for your baby.

**Please note:** This packet was made to be a resource for NICU families during UI Health Care's response to COVID-19. The information may change often during this time.