

FACTFILE: GCSE HOME ECONOMICS: Child Development



Health Professionals

Learning Outcomes

Students should be able to:

- Describe the role of the following health professionals during pregnancy and birth:
 - Doctor (GP)
 - Sonographer
 - Midwife
 - Obstetrician
 - Paediatrician
 - Gynaecologist

Focus on careers

How do you pursue a career in the following?

Midwife

The midwife has been trained in the care of pregnant women and babies; they therefore are experts at monitoring the mother during her pregnancy, looking after them during the birth and caring for the new-born baby. When pregnant the mother will have most of her check-ups with a midwife and they are the professional that will deliver the baby unless there are complications.



Midwives can be based in the hospital or in the community. A community midwife will work from a GP's surgery and complete home visits up to 10 days after the baby is born. The woman will have her first appointment with the midwife at approximately 8–10 weeks of pregnancy. At this appointment the midwife will 'book in' the woman. They will take note of where the woman is planning to give birth, gain information on any relevant health problems and give the woman advice in areas such as diet, supplements and lifestyle choices.

Throughout antenatal care the midwife will take the woman's blood pressure and check their urine for glucose, protein and signs of infection. They will also complete regular blood tests and listen to the baby's heart beat with the use of a doppler.

Sonographer

Most women will get two ultrasound scans when pregnant. The first scan is at approximately 12 weeks and the second at approximately 20 weeks. It is the role of the sonographer to complete these scans.

At both scans the sonographer will put ultrasound jelly on the pregnant woman's stomach; this will help ensure there is a better picture as good contact will be made between the skin and the probe. The sonographer will then use the handheld probe to see a picture of the baby on the screen.

At the first scan the sonographer will check the estimated date of delivery (EDD) matches the calculations from the woman's last period. They do this by measuring the size of the fetus.



The second scan is often known as the anomaly scan. At this scan the sonographer checks for abnormalities in the baby. Measurements are also taken to ensure the baby is growing as it should be. If at either of the scans the sonographer picks up on any abnormalities or if the pregnant woman is in poor health they may be offered additional scans or tests.

If the pregnant woman is offered various screening tests for example amniocentesis or Chorionic Villus Sampling the sonographer will be involved to ensure a clear picture of the baby is seen using the ultrasound.

These scans help the mother bond with the baby. Other family members can feel involved as the sonographer will print out a picture of the baby for the mother to take away.

Doctor

There are many doctors who may be involved during pregnancy and birth. These doctors have specialist training in a certain area.



The General Practitioner (GP) is based at the local health centre. Some GP's will confirm pregnancy. If the pregnant woman has any minor ailments during pregnancy, e.g. vomiting, a rash or a throat infection they will visit the GP to get a diagnosis and treatment. If there are any complications just like before pregnancy, the GP will refer the pregnant woman on to the correct practitioner.



Link your Learning

Screening tests carried out during pregnancy.
– Video of what happens during a scan

<http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/pages/ultrasound-anomaly-baby-scans-pregnant.aspx?tabname=Getting%20pregnant>

Obstetrician

An obstetrician is a doctor who specialises in pregnancy, labour and after birth. If everything during the pregnancy is straightforward it is unlikely that the pregnant woman will see an obstetrician.



If there are complications with the mother's or baby's health the obstetrician will monitor the mother's pregnancy.

If the labour is complicated or the baby becomes distressed the obstetrician will be involved in the delivery of the baby. They will help with an assisted delivery such as one which requires the use of forceps or ventouse extraction.

If the mother requires a caesarean section the obstetrician will be the doctor to carry out this procedure.



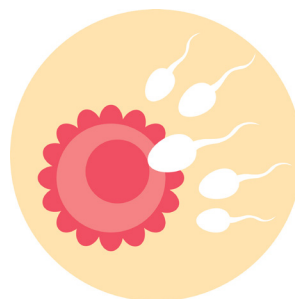
Link your Learning

Describe different types of assisted labour to find out if the Obstetrician is involved.

Gynaecologist

A gynaecologist is a doctor who is trained in the health of the female reproductive system.

A gynaecologist may have been involved in a pregnancy where the woman has had problems conceiving or they have gone through a treatment of IVF.



If the pregnant woman has a Sexual Transmitted Infection the Gynaecologist will monitor her health throughout pregnancy.

Paediatrician

A paediatrician is a doctor who specialises in the health of babies and young children.

If during screening tests the baby has been found to have a condition the paediatrician would meet with the parents to inform them of the care the child may need when born. A paediatrician will be at the birth of a baby with a condition or a premature delivery. After the birth either a paediatrician or a midwife will check the baby before allowing the mother and baby to go home.



Learning Activity

Who am I? One student has to ask questions to the rest of the class to identify which practitioner they are.

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