

Natural Child Birthing center (NCBC): an Initiative towards Empowering Women & Midwives



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Birth is one of life's most intense, impressive and transformative events -- the creation of mother and her family. There are emotional, social and for some, spiritual transitions that accompany the birth of a baby. We all have different hopes and dreams, choices and desired outcomes for ourselves, our babies and our families. With the right care and support, the vast majority of women can achieve a normal and un-medicated birth, with minimal technological interventions, even those who have had difficult pregnancies. Women, who are educated about birth, have adequate nutrition and take the time to find caregivers who are experts in normal birth, rarely face problems, or need interventions. 85% of women all over the world have been found to have normal vaginal births if empowered and supported by competent midwives.

By adopting medicalised model women have been paying the price of relinquishing their power and dignity to receive care. Scientification of "life events", a force has affected almost all cultures on the planet including India, mainly India "the mother of civilizations".

There is also a need to remember the philosophy of normal birth, "it is also the birth of you as a mother, and of you and your partner as a family".

Realizing the need for supporting women in making their own decision for giving birth to their babies in a natural way, we are seeking to initiate Natural Child Birthing Centre (NCBC) alongside present department of Obstetric at Choithram Hospital and Research Centre, Indore.

Philosophy of Natural Child Birthing Centre:

Women have the right to make choices to have a spontaneous, safe and supported birth. No matter where or how a woman births, or if medical help is required, the care she receives should remain woman-centered and respectful devoid of unnecessary medical intervention.

Vision: 'We envision "Healthy Babies" born to "Healthy Mothers" through natural process of birthing'.

Mission: 'To provide Safe, Sensitive & Skilled care to mothers and to enhance the health and well-being of the new born. To build mother's self confidence in handling child-bearing by empowering her with appropriate information, knowledge, skill and support. This strategy enhances her and her family's participation and facilitates decision- making, which promotes trust and mutual respect between midwife /doctor and the woman'.

What this centre will provide?

Our natural child birthing and guidance centre will provide complete information to guide women through their participation to achieve the birth they want. We include information on the benefits of natural birth, tips to address the many hurdles women birthing in India face (fear, lifestyle, family issues, lack of choices, over-medicalised care, lack of support, physical or emotional issues, and previous traumatic experiences). There will be added information on comfort measures, massage, yoga, Lamaze, meditation, use of other alternate therapies such as acupressure, music (*Garbh sanskar*), naturopathy, and squatting or any other desirable position for birthing. **The criteria and process of admission to the birthing centre and referral out of the birthing centre to a room if medical intervention**

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is required:

How will the women get registered in this center?

- o All pregnant women will be registered under obstetrician as usual in the out- patient department of the hospital. They will be referred to the counseling 'Healthy Mother-Healthy Baby Cell'.
- o Low risk pregnant women will be screened for suitability of booking in a NCBC by Obstetricians, & Midwives.
- o Midwives posted in the NCBC will be responsible for antenatal assessment & examination
- o Obstetrician and the midwife will work together along with the pregnant woman in making decision about any investigation and care strategies.

The outcome of the consultation may indicate that the woman is suitable for birthing in NCBC unit.

Non-suitability for birthing at NCBC may be recognizable at booking, or arise later in pregnancy, or become apparent during labour. In such situation the midwife, obstetrician and the woman together re-evaluate the plan for place of birth. Women must be informed that primary birthing units are mainly midwife led for the constant support, however, obstetrician will always be available.

Preparation and motivation for optimizing normalcy in child-birth:

"Healthy Mother- Healthy Baby" clinics are in existence since 2010 at Choithram Clinic Annapurna Road, Indore and at Choithram Hospital & Research Centre, Indore since 2015. These clinics are run by the Maternity Dept of Choithram College of Nursing. The ante natal care and information about services for the birth and birth plans, where pregnant women are given the opportunity to consider their options in the following ways:

- o Caring for and assisting women through the unique techniques of the package called, "Garbh Sanskar" and care by experienced midwives during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum period.
- o Providing 'woman centered' care, by working in partnership with women and their families.

- o Assisting women in making choices about pregnancy and childbirth.
- o Counseling services in nutrition, Yoga and alternate therapies available
- o Health education programs/workshops for couples on birth preparedness, parenting and newborn care.
- o The "Garbh Sanskar" Package is such that special attention to mother and her specific concerns is paid through individual and group counseling.
- o Birth preparedness and mother craft (Finance, transport, baby mother kit, place of delivery hospital/ NCBC.
- o Preparation for labour, Video on "Experiencing labour".
- o Supporting individual choices in birthing with birth companions.
- o Birth companionship is promoted especially of the husband.
- o Promoting vaginal birth in low bed/ on birthing stool, using various techniques & positions of their choice in birthing.
- o Avoiding an episiotomy/ enema (following WHO guidelines)
- o Encouraging and supporting breastfeeding.
- o Ensuring satisfaction with their birthing experience.

All those registered for child birth in the NCBC are screened earlier and categorized as "Low-Risk Women"

The care of the 'low risk woman' in child birth: The care will be based on "The Midwives Model of Care"

- The Midwives Model of Care is based on the fact that pregnancy and birth are normal life processes, care include:
 - Monitoring the physical, psychological, and social well-being of the mother throughout the Childbearing cycle
 - Providing the mother with individualized

education, counseling, and prenatal care, continuous hands-on assistance during labor and delivery, and beyond i.e. postpartum support

- Minimizing technological interventions, identifying and referring women who require obstetrical attention.
- Homelike: have good-sized low height beds (not hospital beds).
- More freedom than in a hospital setting (for changing positions, etc.)
- Go home the same day as birth or next day after establishing successful breast feeding.

Who would be responsible for the woman's care in the birth centre:

The primary care providers will be midwives registered with the Choithram College of Nursing. Supervision of the functioning of the birthing centre will be by Nursing College Dept. of Maternal Nursing in collaboration with HOD, Dept of Obs. & Gynae CH&RC. *Please note:* There will be only one Consultant /resident doctor at the Birth Centre at the time of birth to avoid overcrowding.

Natural Birth Centre staff includes:

- Administrative staff/Supervisors/ counselors (From Nursing College) - 2
- Midwives (B.Sc. N, GNMs and ANMs)- 6
- Helpers -6

Women may need to be shifted to a consultant-led unit / Choithram hospital Labour Room:

- If woman opts for quick/strong pain relief, such as an epidural.
- If woman's condition necessitate assistance by ventouse.
- Any indication to have a caesarean section.
- If her baby needs special care. (However, all midwives are trained in life-support and resuscitation techniques and in managing emergencies).

Woman can be transferred to the consultant-led birthing unit via trolley, wheelchair, or bed.

Midwife will arrange the transfer. Midwife attending the woman may remain with her as desired by her.

Induction Training of midwives/other support staff for ensuring the minimum levels of competencies they would require in order to work on the birth centre, has been planned.

NCBC will start functioning from 1st August, 2016

This initiative of establishing natural birthing centre is being taken up by the midwives, because they believe that, *“We should never forget that women deserve **respect-support - love**.....so that they can be loving & confident mothers”*