

HAVING A BABY DURING A PANDEMIC



How Matilda Hospital Stepped Up

Being pregnant is such a special time in a woman's life and the prospect of adding a new bundle of joy to the family is exciting for expectant parents. At least that's how it ought to be and how it was for many in the pre-pandemic era. Since Covid-19 hit, some of this excitement has turned to anxiety and worry. Expectant mothers were faced with choosing a safe place to give birth, one which wouldn't be heavily impacted by the pandemic and one that provided some peace of mind. Some hospitals had restrictions that would allow only the mother in the birthing room and that was a little nerve wracking.

Matilda International Hospital introduced special standard room maternity care packages, allowing for more cost-effective access to private care during the coronavirus outbreak. The special packages included nursing care, room, meal charges and treatment normally associated with delivery.

Two mothers share their experiences of giving birth during a global pandemic.

Ms Catherine Siu gave birth to son, Walton, in late June 2020. This was baby number two for her and she opted to go to Matilda for this delivery after discovering the special package on offer. Her obstetrician gave her a few options where to deliver on HK Island. After doing the comparison, Catherine preferred a hospital close to

Central as it is close to her family. She also felt more comfortable at a hospital located far from the city and from the crowds.

During Catherine's pregnancy, her hormones made her feel particularly sensitive, depressed and worried, especially when she saw there had been over 100 COVID cases per day reported on TV. She opted to go out less and kept up social distancing. Her mother helped with the grocery shopping and she only went out for antenatal check-ups.

Catherine felt relieved when she made the decision to deliver at Matilda. She felt the staff gave her a lot of support and the midwives were extremely caring. All of this put her at ease. During the COVID outbreak her family could visit her at hospital. The midwives at Matilda gave her a lot of care and attention. They talked to her and gave her a lot of support, like family.

- To Stay Safe & Healthy: "When I go out, I will try to keep social distancing, not to have social gathering with friends, and use a covering to protect the baby."
- Wishes for her baby: "During the COVID pandemic, many people said that the air is fresher and the sky is blue and I hope my baby will preserve such environment and good health for everybody."

Ms Evonne Tam, a first-time mother, gave birth in mid July 2020 to her son, Benedikt. Originally, she planned to

deliver at Queen Mary Hospital (QMH) but after learning about the special packages at Matilda, she opted to go there instead. She had heard Matilda had a good reputation but wasn't sure if she could afford it. When she had a look at the Outbreak Response Packages, she found them more affordable than she expected.

There were a few reasons Evonne chose Matilda. As a first-time mom, she felt it was important to have her husband there with her and this was possible at Matilda. She also liked the environment and felt the care there is special and personal, both before delivery and after delivery. For Evonne, a more comfortable environment and somewhere like home to have her delivery was important.

During the time of her pregnancy there were an increasing number of COVID cases and she was worried about the safety during her delivery. She was relieved her husband could be there with her and that her baby could stay with her too. Everything was smooth for her delivery in the end and for that she was very thankful.

She thinks public hospitals, especially QMH, are good too.

- Wishes for her baby: "I hope my baby will be kind-hearted. The pandemic makes us more humble and I hope my child will cherish life, embrace the world and the world precious resources." 