

WATERBIRTH AVAILABILITY IN ADELAIDE

Compiled by Birth Matters SA

There are five key issues which affect whether or not you will be able to have a waterbirth.

1. Whether the hospital's insurance cover and/or risk management unit allows waterbirth.
2. If you are having a private obstetrician, then whether they support waterbirth.
3. Whether there are baths deep enough for birth in water (or the woman can hire a birth pool).
4. Whether such a bath/pool is actually available at the time you go into labour or need it.
5. Whether there are midwives experienced and confident to support waterbirth, and the maternity unit manager is happy that waterbirth is not an OH&S issue for their midwives.

PUBLIC HOSPITALS AND HOME

The SA Dept of Health's has policies on *Labour in Water* and *Birth in Water* to guide midwives and women birthing through public hospitals. The policies are available at www.health.sa.gov.au/ppg in the drop down area – Section 1, Chapter 5b.

Hospital	Waterbirth	Details
Midwifery Group Practice at Women's & Children's Hospital	Yes	Midwives, facilities and management supportive of waterbirth, as long as deep bath available in labour.
Southern Midwifery Group Practice at Flinders Medical Centre	Yes	Midwives, facilities and management supportive of waterbirth, as long as deep bath available in labour
Midwifery Group Practice at Queen Elizabeth Hospital	Yes	Midwives, facilities and management supportive of waterbirth, as long as deep bath available in labour. Large baths and experienced midwives.
Lyell McEwin Birth Centre	Maybe	Deep baths. Midwives from Northern Women's Community Midwifery Program very supportive of waterbirth and can attend waterbirth here or at home.
Home	YES	Most midwives attending homebirths in SA are confident and experienced in supporting waterbirth at home. Around 2/3 of all homebirths in SA occur in water.

PRIVATE HOSPITALS

In September 2006 Birth Matters contacted the maternity unit of each of Adelaide's five private hospitals to clarify whether or not they were able to accommodate women wishing to have a waterbirth.

Hospital	Waterbirth	Details
Ashford	Maybe	Not generally offered, but may be possible for woman to negotiate it in advance with a private obstetrician. However, limited number of rooms with appropriate sized bath.
Burnside	No	Hospital's insurance does not allow women to have waterbirths.
Calvary	No	No midwives able to support women to birth in water. However, they do have baths that can be used during labour.
Flinders Private	No	Have looked into it on request but no obstetricians attending this hospital will support waterbirth. Risk management/OH&S also unsupportive at this stage. Baths may be deep enough if other obstacles could be overcome.
North Eastern Community	Maybe	Not generally offered. May be possible for woman to negotiate in advance with private obstetrician. DO have midwives confident in supporting waterbirth, and some spa baths.