

Who can be a part of Mother's Day Connect?

Mother's Day Connect (MDC) is open for any women who would like to visit, encourage and support other women as they start their motherhood journeys. Unfortunately, due to the sensitive nature of childbirth and respecting cultural practices, men are not permitted to visit as part of MDC.

Is Mother's Day Connect only for women in Cape Town?

No! Mother's Day Connect started in Cape Town, but we have grown this movement to include women from around the country and would love to reach even more cities and mothers. If you're outside of Cape Town, we need you!

Is Mother's Day Connect only for public hospitals and Midwife and Obstetric Units (MoU)?

No, Mother's Day Connect can be hosted at any birth facility around the country. To date, we have primarily hosted the event at public care facilities but are open to bringing this experience to private care facilities as well. If you have a facility in mind, please email us at mothersday@embrace.org.za to learn more.

How do I join a hospital?

Sign up on our [website](#). Once you have completed the sign-up form you will be added to our mailing list and will receive notification as soon as our web app is available. On this app, you will be able to RSVP to a specific hospital and your hospital team leader will receive direct notification of your sign up.

My nearest hospital/ MoU isn't listed yet. What do I do?

Contact us at mothersday@embrace.org.za with the name of the facility. It is possible that we are already aware of this venue and we're still awaiting permissions from the hospital. Or it may be new to us in which case we can provide you with all the tools to help lead a team to visit this facility.

How do I start a team?

Email us at mothersday@embrace.org.za and tell us which maternity unit you would like to visit. We'll contact you to send you all the information you need to contact your local hospital to gain permission for a visit. Once permission is granted, your hospital will be listed on the booking event page and you will be named as the leader or co-leader. People will be able to sign up to join you by booking a spot to attend MDC at your hospital/birthing facility.

What is a city co-ordinator?

This year, we have enlisted the help of some amazing Embrace community members to act as city co-ordinators. They are available to offer extra support to team leaders across the country.

What do leaders do?

The team leader creates a space for team members to plan their Mother's Day Connect visit and acts the chief liaison with the hospital and Embrace hub team. Read more about the role of the team leader [here](#).

How many leaders do you need per team?

It depends entirely on you. For a small 8-bed Midwife and Obstetric Unit (MoU), you would only need one leader. For bigger hospitals with more than one ward, you may want to consider asking some friends to co-lead with you.

How do you know how many volunteers are needed for each maternity unit?

The number of volunteers should never exceed the number of beds in the ward. Our recommendation is to have half the number of volunteers to the number of beds. It is unlikely that the ward will be completely full. If it is, one volunteer will easily be able to visit with two moms in an hour.

How do I know who is on my team?

Once you sign up on our website a team leader will add you to group communications with other team members who have signed up to visit the same hospital. Through this group chat your group will be able to plan and coordinate your visit in advance.

How many moms can we expect to visit?

It's very difficult to say as one can never predict the number of women giving birth at a facility on any given day. You might arrive to a fairly empty ward and it could be full by the time you are ready to leave. You should be prepared to visit as many moms as there are beds in the facility.

What should we bring for the mothers?

The emphasis of this day is on encouragement and kindness, but we all know a small gift goes a long way in making someone feel special. You may want to bring along some baked treats or you might want to get some small donations.. It's entirely up to you! We've created a [gift guide](#) for you to offer some inspiration.

We will be creating a very special and unique Mother's Day card which will be available for download and print in multiple languages. We would encourage you to ensure that each mom receives a card to commemorate her part in this special movement.

Should we bring something for the babies?

You are most welcome to bring something for the babies. If you have second-hand clothing in very good condition, we suggest you collect these items and give them to the nursing staff to distribute to mothers at their discretion. We ask that you please do not give second-hand items as part of your gift for Mother's Day Connect gifts. Again, refer to our gift guide for inspiration.

What should we bring for the nurses?

Many of the nurses are mothers too. Why not bring them some cake to make their Mother's Day tea time just a little bit sweeter? 😊

Help! I'm really shy. What do I say to a mom I don't know?

We understand that visiting a stranger can be a little bit awkward. Start by introducing yourself, wishing her a Happy Mother's Day and complementing her sweet new baby. Other kind questions: How are you feeling? What is your baby's name? Does the name have any special meaning?

Are we allowed to take photographs?

We would love you to take a team photograph outside of the hospital. Please share it with us. Many hospitals have very strict photo policies and will not allow you to take photographs inside. By signing up as a volunteer you are agreeing to follow the rules of the hospital. If they are relaxed with this rule, please do not take any photographs of a mother or her baby **without her expressed permission**. We want to encourage volunteers to be very sensitive to the mood of the room and to the mood of the mothers. Many mothers would prefer not to have their photograph taken on the day they have given birth. Please respect this.

Can I bring my children with?

No, children under the age of 13 are not allowed to visit maternity units. Please do not bring your young children along with you as there will be no one to look after them whilst you go and visit.

I have another question. Who can I ask?

Feel free to ask your questions on the Embrace [2019 Mother's Day Connect Facebook Event page](#). You can also email us at mothersday@embrace.org.za

I want to advertise this event. May I use your branding?

Yes, we would love it if you would help us spread the word! Please feel free to contact us via mothersday@embrace.org.za if you require a high-res graphic.

I have connections with the media. Can we share MDC 2019 with them? Is there an official spokesperson they can interview?

Yes, we have a PR plan but would love your help getting the message out there. Please refer any media to mothersday@embrace.org.za.