



Keeping in touch with patients in hospital and visiting during Coronavirus restrictions

Patient Experience

Information for Families, Carers and Friends

Introduction

Following government guidance, changes have been made to visiting our hospitals as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. To keep patients, their families and loved ones safe, visitors may not be allowed or visiting times and/or visitor numbers may be limited, depending on hospital policy at the time.

We know that not being able to visit a family member or friend in hospital when they are unwell and receiving care and treatment is very difficult.

With the current changes to visiting in place, being kept informed on the condition and progress of a patient can be of great concern to families, carers and friends. Staff are aware that families want to be kept up to date on the health and wellbeing of their family member / loved one whilst in hospital.

This leaflet has been produced to:

- Support families, carers and friends to keep in touch with patients and keep up to date about care and treatment (with the patients consent) during a hospital stay.
- Provide Information about the exceptions to the visiting advice that will be in place for most patients. It is also to help those where visits have been agreed to do so, as safely as possible, to protect themselves, patients and staff.



WAYS TO KEEP IN TOUCH WITH PATIENTS

Personal Mobile Devices

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Calling the Ward

You may want to call the ward to ask for updates if you have been not able to contact your relative/ friend on their personal mobile device. If you need to telephone the ward for an update, please nominate a single family member to make the call. This will prevent long wait times for other patients and their families wishing to make calls. The ward may give you a password to confirm your identity when you call. This helps us to keep patient confidentiality and makes sure we are speaking to, and sharing information with the right person

Staff on our wards always try to answer the ward telephone as quickly as possible. Sometimes there may be a delay in

answering the phone. There may be times the person you need to speak to is not available as they are involved in patient care. If this is the case please call back. Alternatively you can call our Family Liaison Service, details of this service are included in this leaflet.

FaceTime and Skype

For patients who do not have access or are not able to use a personal device, we have a number of iPads on some of our wards that allow patients to video call a nominated relative with the help of our ward staff.

To make use of this service you will need to enable FaceTime on your Apple® device or sign up to a free Skype account, and then call the ward for further information.

Please speak to a member of staff on the ward who will be able to arrange these calls for patients if a device is available.

Family Liaison Service

Call 01623 672222 Monday to Friday (10am to 4pm)

All calls regarding updates for loved ones need to be made to the ward directly. If you have been unsuccessful calling the ward directly, and require an update, you can call our Family Liaison Service (FLS).

Our FLS can help to arrange for you to get a call back from someone to discuss any medical or treatment concerns you have about your loved ones care.

To access this service, we'll need to be able to identify you as next of kin and you will need to be able to provide a patient password.

VISITING OUR HOSPITALS

Patient Property Drop-Off

Monday to Friday (9am – 5pm)

At all 3 of our hospitals, relatives or friends of patients can make a single drop-off of items for loved ones. Items could include clothing for home travel, toiletries, letters, cards or photographs. **Please do not include any items of value, jewellery or large amounts of cash.**

Items should be provided in a sealed, disposable bag, no larger than a supermarket carrier bag. The bag should be labelled with the patient's name, date of birth and ward. The drop-off points at our hospitals are the Community Involvement Hub located in the main entrance at King's Mill Hospital and main reception desks at Mansfield Community and Newark Hospitals.

Belongings must be brought in by a single person who does not have any COVID-19 like symptoms.

Please do not include alcohol, illicit medications / drugs or valuable items.

Unfortunately we will not be able to tell you the bag has been received and cannot accept liability for this service. Unlabelled bags and property will not be accepted.

Visiting Our Hospitals

To keep patients, their families and loved ones safe, visitors may not be allowed or visiting times and/or visitor numbers may be limited. This will depend on hospital policy at the time. This is to help prevent the spread of Coronavirus and keep patients, their families and loved ones safe.

However we know that not being able to visit can be very difficult for families. There are certain exceptions for visiting in place. These are subject to change, so please check with ward or department where the person you are visiting is being cared for.

The compassionate visiting policy includes:

- Parents for patients under 18 years old
- Carer for adult patients needing help
- 1 relative collecting a patient being sent home
- Up to 2 immediate family members for patients at end of life
- Birthing partners - Your Midwife will be able to provide further details for visiting
- Long term patients with specific needs

Each patient situation will be looked at individually and when invited to visit the ward/unit staff will ask about your own personal risks as a visitor, for example

- Have you been shielding?
- Had symptoms of Coronavirus during the previous 14 days?
- Have been asked to self Isolate for 14 days after being in contact with someone within department where the person you are visiting is being cared for.

This information will be treated confidentially and will only be used in helping to decide if a visit is appropriate.

VISITING OUR HOSPITALS

How to visit our hospitals safely

All visitors will be greeted by the Meet and Greet Team in the main entrance.

Visitors will be asked to wear a mask provided by the Meet and Greet Team and keep to our on-site safety guidance and 2 meters social distancing

- Only visit once you have permission.
- Please arrive at the exact time agreed with the ward/unit
- Please wash your hands and use the hand sanitisers that are available throughout the hospital
- Please arrive at the main hospital entrance using the designated areas as sign posted. The team will direct you to the ward by the most direct route

The Meet and Greet Team who will take visitors temperatures using a infra-red contactless temperature equipment. Any visitor with a recording of 37.8 or more will be regretfully declined entry into the hospital.

- If you are a carer and have been issued with a carers passport please show this to the Meet and Greet Team.
- The number of people able to use the lifts, at any one time, is limited and confirmed on signage next to the lifts. If you are able to and want to use the stairs, please keep to the left
- Only bring essential personal belongings when you visit the hospital
- When you arrive at the ward please speak to a member of staff who will be able to talk to you about visiting, direct you to the bedside / cubicle of the person you are visiting, and help you with any additional Personal Protective Equipment that you may need to wear during your visit
- The ward staff will take your temperature and ask you if you have had symptoms of

Coronavirus or been in contact with someone who has. If you answer yes your visit will need to be postponed.

- The ward staff will ask you to wash your hands
- The ward staff will leave you with the nurse call bell, so you can call for any assistance and to let them know when you are leaving the ward
- You must take off all additional personal protective equipment, except your face covering and wash you hands before you leave the ward
- If you have been visiting a patient with Coronavirus, you will have been asked to wear personal protective equipment. You will not need to self-isolate after leaving the hospital
- If you have been visiting a patient with Coronavirus we would recommend you do not use public transport if possible, when you are going home
- These restrictions apply across all hospitals for all patients
- Whilst visiting please go directly to the ward / unit and do not use restaurants / cafes, shops or cash points

PLEASE HELP US PROTECT PATIENTS, STAFF AND VISITORS. DO NOT ATTEND THE HOSPITAL WITHOUT PRIOR AGREEMENT, THIS INCLUDES THE HOSPITAL GROUNDS.

Further Guidance

Further information is available on our website:

<https://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk/for-patients-visitors/visitors/ward-visiting-times/>

If you would like this information in another language or format such as EasyRead or Braille, please telephone:

01623 672222