

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

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# Why is my ward closed?

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The ward on which you are a patient has been closed to new admissions. This is due to a number of patients on the ward having symptoms of infectious diarrhoea and/or vomiting, or other highly transmissible infection.

We want to stop the infection spreading to other patients, wards and departments in our hospital, and to people who may be visiting their friends or family in hospital. Closing the ward is one of the ways we can minimise the risk to others.

### **What will help to stop the spread of infections?**

A good way of helping to stop the spread of infections is hand washing and wearing personal protective equipment such as gloves, aprons or masks. All staff will be doing this before and after any contact with patients or their environment.

You will also see all staff 'bare-below-the-elbows' which means no wrist watches or jewellery will be worn other than a wedding band. They will also be wearing gloves and aprons when they are carrying out some aspects of your care. These gloves and aprons will be put in the bin before they move on to care for another patient.

If you are experiencing any symptoms of infection you may be cared for in a single room on the ward.

### **What can I do to help?**

You are requested to:

- Make sure that you do not have too many personal items on the bedside table or locker top, as this can make cleaning these surfaces difficult.
- Make sure you always wash your hands after going to the toilet and before eating. Follow any other infection prevention and control instructions that you may be given by any of our staff. If you need help with this, please ask your nurse or any of our staff who will ensure you get the help you need.
- Let your nurse or healthcare professional know if you are feeling unwell, have diarrhoea or have been sick so that they can take the correct precautions.

### **Can I still have visitors?**

When a ward has been closed there will be no visitors unless there are exceptional circumstances. This can be discussed with your nurse or healthcare professional. This will help to prevent the spread of the infection to people outside of the hospital ward.

### **When will the ward be re-opened?**

While the ward is closed, the Infection Prevention and Control team will visit the ward regularly to monitor the number of patients and staff affected by the infection and discuss and agree with staff how best to handle the situation. The ward will be re-opened by the Infection Prevention and Control team, in discussion with the ward teams, when there have been no further new patients with symptoms.

Before re-opening, the ward will have a thorough clean of all affected rooms, floors and furniture, and the curtains will be changed. Visitors will be permitted once this has been completed.

### **Will the ward being closed affect my discharge home?**

Your discharge may be affected if you are showing symptoms of the infection.

Patients going to a care home may be kept in hospital until the ward is re-opened. This is to stop the spread of infection to care homes. For further information on this please speak to your nurse.

**If you have any further questions or concerns, please talk to one of your nurses, healthcare professionals or a member of the Infection Prevention and Control team.**

### **Contact details**

The Infection Prevention and Control team is available Monday to Friday, between 8am-4pm on 01623 622515 extension 3525 or 6268 (there is an answerphone outside these hours).

Staff can contact the team for you if you wish.

### **Further sources of information**

- NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)
- Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)
- World Health Organisation: [World Patient Safety Day 2023: Engaging Patients for Patient Safety \(who.int\)](https://www.who.int/campaigns/world-patient-safety-day-2023)

### **Patient Experience Team (PET)**

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

**King's Mill Hospital:** 01623 672222

**Newark Hospital:** 01636 685692

**Email:** [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net)

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net).

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you.

External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them.

If you require a full list of references for this leaflet, please email [sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net) or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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