

Healthier Communities,
Outstanding Care



Sherwood Forest Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

SFH@ Home (Virtual Ward)

Information for patients, care providers
and relatives



This leaflet aims to provide supportive information about the next step after your stay in hospital.

What is a virtual ward?

You have been unwell and had a stay in hospital, however, the medical team in the hospital feel that your condition is stable and that you can safely recover at home, providing you have the right support and monitoring. The NHS can offer this support and monitoring at home; this is called a virtual ward.

The virtual ward means that you can stay in the comfort of your own home and healthcare staff will remotely monitor your condition or visit you where you normally live to deliver treatment until you get better. Monitoring your condition means that if you become unwell, this will be picked up early and you can access treatment in hospital quickly if you need it. SFH@ Home is the hospital's name for a virtual ward.

The SFH@ Home team

You will receive input from a multi-agency team that may consist of:

- A senior hospital doctor
- A senior hospital pharmacist
- A senior hospital nurse
- An occupational therapist
- Healthcare assistants
- A community advanced clinical practitioner (ACP)
- Other community staff will be involved with your care; this will be individual to your needs.

The SFH@ Home process

Before you leave hospital, a clear medical plan with your ongoing acute medical needs will be communicated to all the people involved in your ongoing care. This is a shared plan which is updated daily with clear actions to be communicated to everyone involved. You will be medically reviewed daily by a member of the SFH@ Home team. When you are ready to be discharged from the pathway the team will discuss this with you. A discharge letter will be sent to your GP.

Recovering from your illness

There are some simple steps you can take to keep well and aid your recovery. As these will be different for everyone, you should adjust them according to your symptoms and how you feel:

- Increase your activities gradually as your condition improves.
- Eating regularly will help you regain strength and aid your recovery. You may find that large meals make your breathing feel more difficult, so eating little and often is advised. If you need further advice on nutrition, please talk to a healthcare professional.
- Unless you have been advised to restrict your fluid intake, drink plenty of fluids to keep yourself well hydrated.
- Take your medications as prescribed by your GP, or new medications on your discharge summary.

What should I do if I feel unwell?

You will be given instructions on what to do if you feel unwell, which includes telephoning (and asking for) a member of the SFH@ Home team between the hours of 8am and 5pm, seven days a week, on the number below:

SFH@ Home Team: 07500 814560

If you feel unwell outside of these hours, please call 111 or 999.

Who looks after my medicines whilst I am cared for by SFH@ Home?

You should continue to take your medicines in the way you normally do at home. If you have been discharged from hospital, it is important that you follow the information in your Discharge Summary.

The SFH@ Home team will give you clear instructions if you need to change any of your medicines and will explain how your new medicine will be supplied to you. If you are unable to take your medicines for any reason, let the SFH@ Home Team know. You can use the phone numbers in this leaflet or tell a member of the team when they visit you.

A member of the pharmacy team may contact you to offer advice and support with your medicines. If you would like to talk to the pharmacy team, contact the SFH@ Home team.

Signs that show that you are probably recovering may include:

- ✓ Gradual improvement
- ✓ Fully mobile, able to manage stairs, not acutely confused
- ✓ Normal eating and drinking
- ✓ No signs of fever (raised temperature).

At higher risk. Call the Virtual Ward team in hours or out of hours, or for urgent medical attention ring NHS 111 if you have any of the following signs/symptoms or readings:

- ✓ Feeling more unwell
- ✓ Reduced mobility or too weak to get out of bed
- ✓ Not eating or drinking adequately
- ✓ Unable to speak full sentences due to breathlessness
- ✓ Fever consistently and not responding to cooling down or paracetamol
- ✓ New or worsening swelling to lower limbs.

Call 999 for an urgent assessment if you have any of the following signs/symptoms or readings:

- ✓ Your health is rapidly worsening over a period of hours
- ✓ Short of breath sitting quietly
- ✓ Severe or sudden onset of chest pain
- ✓ Cold, clammy or mottled skin
- ✓ New confusion or feeling drowsy, accompanied with tremor/shaking.

Frequently asked questions

How long will SFH@ Home support me?

The maximum length of stay is two weeks. If you are still unwell or need ongoing treatment, you will be referred to another team who will continue to deliver your care.

Who will be in charge of my care?

A senior doctor from Sherwood Forest Hospitals will oversee your care, alongside other health/social care professionals which may include advanced clinical practitioners, nurses, physiotherapy, dieticians, social care workers, voluntary services and other professionals as needed.

If I need be admitted into hospital, can I be discharged back to the SFH @ Home Team?

If you have been on the pathway but must be admitted to hospital for treatment, then, if appropriate, you can be transferred back.

What if I don't want to be transferred to and cared for by SFH@ Home?

A nurse or doctor will discuss any concerns that you may have.

Please be aware that the longer you stay in hospital, the more likely you are to suffer from deconditioning (which means you are less able to do your everyday activities such as washing, dressing, walking etc.), loss of independence and hospital acquired infections.



Further information

Our Patient Experience/Advisory/Customer Care teams are available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints and will ensure a prompt and efficient service. Please call or email the relevant team below:

- **Sherwood Forest Hospitals**

Telephone: 01623 672222

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

- **Nottinghamshire Healthcare Trust**

Telephone: 0115 993 4542

Email: PALSandComplaints@nottshc.nhs.uk

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.

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 (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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