

Outstanding Care,
Compassionate People,
Healthier Communities



Sherwood Forest Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Booklet 1

Adult Critical Care Unit (ACCU)

Information for patients and visitors



Visiting hours: 2pm - 7pm

Direct phone number: 01623 672268

Welcome to the ACCU, King's Mill Hospital

We are sorry that your loved one is unwell and has been admitted onto the unit, but we would like to make their stay with us as comfortable as possible. This booklet is the first in a set of four designed to help the patient and their family throughout their stay on the ACCU as well as during their recovery and rehabilitation from critical illness. If there is anything at all that you are uncertain about, please do not hesitate to ask a member of the team.

What is the ACCU?

On the ACCU we care for patients who need closer monitoring and more intensive treatment than those patients cared for on the wards. Nurses on the ACCU care for either one or two patients each. We will endeavor to maintain the highest standards of care throughout your stay and all changes will be explained as they occur.

Where is the ACCU?

The ACCU is situated on Level 0. Please follow the signs for the Critical Care Unit/Intensive Therapy Unit. When you arrive please press the intercom button to attract the attention of a member of the ACCU team. The button is located to the right of the double doors at the entrance to the ACCU. Someone will be with you as soon as possible to let you into the unit. At busy times this can sometimes take a few minutes.

If you want to contact the ACCU by telephone to enquire about a patient's condition, the direct line telephone number is **01623 672268**.

Using this number avoids connection via the switchboard and allows us to answer your enquiry as quickly as possible.

What happens when a patient arrives on the unit?

When first admitted to ACCU, the doctors and nurses will be very busy treating the patient. This can sometimes take several hours, but we will try to keep you informed of any changes in their condition during this time. As soon as possible, a doctor or nurse will discuss the patient's illness, treatment and plans of care with you. You will be able to see the patient at the earliest opportunity. If you feel you have been waiting for a long time please approach any member of staff.

When you first visit the patient, there will be a lot of equipment around the bed and possibly unfamiliar sounds that you may hear. The nurse caring for the patient will explain all of these to you and answer questions you may have.

Who looks after the patient?

All critical care patients are allocated a qualified ACCU nurse on admission to the unit, however, we do work as a team so you will see other ACCU nurses working with your loved one.

Specialist critical care nurses, doctors and consultants will be caring for the patient in ACCU but you will also see doctors and nurses from other specialties who will be involved in care.

You will also see other professionals helping to care for the patient in ACCU, such as the physiotherapists, dieticians, pharmacists, speech and language therapists (SLT), occupational therapists (OT) and other specialist nurses. ACCU also has a dedicated Family Liaison nurse service, available to support you from Monday to Friday 8am to 4pm with any questions or concerns you may have.

All of these healthcare professionals will keep you informed. If you are unsure of who someone is, or if you wish to speak with a specific nurse or doctor please ask the bedside nurse.

Privacy, dignity and same sex accommodation

Sherwood Forest Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is committed to making sure that all patients receive high quality care that is safe, effective and focused on their needs.

Providing same sex accommodation is an effective way of helping to achieve this goal and to give all patients the best possible experience while they are in hospital. Specific sleeping areas, toilet and washing facilities are designated as either men-only or women-only. Mixed sex accommodation is where men and women have to share sleeping areas or toilet and washing facilities.

The ACCU is a highly specialised area where both men and women receive urgent care, but please be assured that privacy and dignity will be maintained at all times.

As soon as the patient's condition allows, they will be transferred to same-sex accommodation on one of our wards.

If you, as a patient, have any concerns about sharing sleeping accommodation with a person of the opposite sex please speak to one of the nurses.

Spiritual issues

We acknowledge and respect the religious and cultural beliefs of all patients admitted to ACCU. We recognise that during a patient's stay on ACCU patients and relatives are faced with a whole range of changing emotions.

A member of the chaplaincy team is available at any time to offer emotional or spiritual support.

If you would like to see a hospital chaplain, your own minister or faith leader, we will be pleased to make arrangements for you. A Faith Centre is available for quiet reflection near ACCU. Any member of the team will be able to direct you.

To contact the chaplain directly please visit the Faith Centre or phone:

01623 622515 and dial **extension 3047**.

How can I (as a visitor) help the patient?

If it is anticipated that the patient will be on the ACCU for a few days, you will have the opportunity to keep a diary of events for them.

Any member of the family, friends or the ACCU team can write in the diaries, which have been shown to help recovery after critical illness.

Patients who are unresponsive, those who have been sedated or those who have been in ACCU for a long time, as well as their families, can benefit from reading the diary.

Diaries help to 'fill in the gaps' for the patient and can be used in discussions that may aid recovery. Please ask the nurse caring for the patient about this.

Other things you can do while you are visiting include:

- Talking to the patient as you would normally, even if you think you are not heard or understood.
- Bringing in a favorite piece of music which can be played quietly.
- Ask the bedside nurse if you wish to be involved in some of the basic nursing care, for example, you may wish to clean the patient's mouth with a swab or rub cream into their hands and feet.
- If you are unsure about touching the patient, or if you would like some private time, please discuss this with the bedside nurse. The nurse will explain everything and help you to do this safely.

Who should visit and for how long?

Rest and sleep is very important to the patient's recovery. There are several things we try to consider in order that the patient (and the family) gets adequate rest during a period of critical illness.

- We request the number of visitors is kept to a minimum. Two visitors can visit at the bedside at one time. This helps to keep noise levels down, but also reduces the risk of infection.
- In certain circumstances you may visit at any time of the day or night, but please discuss this with the nurse caring for the patient.
- Visiting on the unit is from 2pm until 7pm.
- We recognise that the critical care environment has the potential to cause distress, particularly to children. For this reason, and to protect patients and visitors from exposure to infection, we do not routinely allow infants or children under 16 onto the unit. There are of course exceptions to this in different circumstances. However, we would still ask you to carefully consider the emotional and psychological impact of bringing a younger person onto the unit.
- When an under 16 years visit is authorised, it must be pre-booked and co-ordinated by the nurse in charge, family liaison nurses or one of the department sisters at a time which allows us to minimise risk to all involved.
- Should you wish to discuss any of our visiting times or guidance, we would ask you to speak to the nurse in charge or Adult Critical Care sister on duty.

Please discuss any concerns or difficulties you may have regarding patient visiting with the family liaison team or nurse in charge of the unit.

You may telephone the ACCU directly at any time on **01623 672268** to enquire about the condition of the patient.

We do, however, request that **one** member of the family acts as spokesperson and relays information to all other relatives and friends in order to limit the time we spend on the phone, away from the patient. In order to maintain patient confidentiality, medical details cannot be discussed over the phone. A member of staff is always available to discuss the care and treatment of the patient when you visit the ACCU.

What will the patient need?

The patient will require toiletries, such as soap and deodorant whilst in ACCU. Loose fitting clothes, nightwear and slippers will be required later, as the patient recovers. We dress our patients in gowns, which are special items of clothing that are easier to put on and take off to accommodate the tubes and equipment the patient may need when critically ill.

Glasses, dentures and hearing aids will be required if normally worn.

It is advisable to keep the patient's property to a minimum due to limited space.

We provide towels, gowns and wash cloths. We are not able to take responsibility for any belongings left with the patient; where possible all items of value must be taken home by the patient's next of kin. If you know of any items of value that are with the patient please ask the bedside nurse for them.

What can I do when I visit?

Hot drinks and cold water are available in the waiting area. Please help yourself and inform a member of staff if there are any problems with these facilities.

Please do not take drinks to the patient's bedside because of the close proximity to vital electrical equipment, to avoid accidents and reduce infection risks.

Mobile phones must not be used on the ACCU as they may interfere with medical equipment. Please ask a member of staff where you are able to use your mobile phone.

The garden area is available for quiet reflection. It is a NO SMOKING AREA.

The nearest phone is situated in the main reception of the King's Treatment Centre.

Visitor toilets are available just inside the waiting area on ACCU.

A toilet with wheelchair access is available inside the unit. Please ask a member of staff to direct you.

Quiet rooms are available for private discussions with a doctor or nurse. If you or your family wishes to use these, please ask a member of staff at any time.

Overnight accommodation is not currently available. Again, please discuss this with any member of staff.

If you require first aid, please approach a member of staff.

We aim to maintain the highest standards. If you feel any of the facilities are not to your satisfaction please inform a member of staff immediately.

What can I do to help reduce the spread of infection?

To control the risk of infection throughout the hospital and the ACCU it is important that you follow some simple guidelines:

- You must use alcohol hand gel frequently during your visit. If you cannot use the alcohol gel for any reason, please use soap and water which can be found at the sink next to the patients' bedside. Please follow the hand washing guidelines displayed at each sink area. Gel dispensers can be found at the patient's bedside and at all entrances and exits. Using the gel will help to reduce the risk of cross infection. Please inform a member of staff if you find an empty dispenser.
- Critical care patients cannot drink bottled water. This is due to the high mineral content and increased infection risk.
- Please follow any specific guidelines given to you by the nurses regarding your relative and infection control.
- If you are feeling unwell, for example if you have a cold or any diarrhoea, it may be best to avoid visiting for a period of time. Please ask a member of staff about any concerns by telephoning the unit prior to visiting.
- Fresh flowers are unfortunately not allowed within the ACCU due to the risk of water spillage near electrical equipment and the infection risk that flowers may pose. We can display flowers in the waiting area should any visitor bring them to the ACCU.
- Coat hooks are provided in the waiting area. Please remove your coats before entering the main unit, but do not leave any valuables in the waiting area.

What happens when the patient goes to a ward?

When the patient is recovering and is almost ready to return to the ward, the nurse will start to remove some of the equipment and monitors. This will help prepare the patient for their step down.

The critical care outreach team (CCOT) will usually be involved in care at this point to help prepare. They will also visit the patient on the ward to support you and your family as necessary and continue any specialist care if needed.

Some patients who have been on ACCU for a few days will be invited to a follow up outpatient clinic approximately two/three months after leaving the unit. This allows the family and patient an opportunity to discuss any issues, concerns or feelings they may have had during their stay on ACCU. If you have completed a diary during the patient's stay, this may provide a useful prompt for discussions at the clinic.

Occasionally a patient may be transferred to an Intensive Care Unit in another hospital. The nurse in charge of the ACCU and a senior doctor will discuss this with you if such a transfer is being considered.

Hospital facilities available:

- Marks & Spencer/WH Smith - selling gifts, toiletries, magazines and snacks. There is also an ATM cash dispenser located within the shop, which is free to use.
- Costa Coffee.
- Restaurant (6th floor).
- Daffodil Café (ground floor).
- Vending machines.
- Faith centre.
- Library trolley.
- Snacks and essentials trolley.
- Voluntary services.

Parking

Long stay 'saver tickets' are available to help reduce costs for regular visitors. Please contact the Patient Experience Team (PETs) by visiting their office situated in the hospital's main entrance reception area, or telephoning 01623 672222 (or internal extension number 6101).

Smoking

The Trust operates a **No Smoking Policy** throughout its buildings and car parks. We thank you for your co-operation.

Further information

In order to maintain your own well-being, it is important that you have adequate rest and sleep. You can be assured everything possible is being done for the patient while they are cared for on the ACCU. It is however, sometimes helpful to see your own GP who can help and advise if you are having trouble sleeping or eating.

If we cannot help with your concerns or enquiries the Patient Experience Team (PETs) will be happy to discuss these. Please contact them by visiting their office situated in the main entrance reception area or telephoning 01623 672222 (or internal extension number 6101).

Research

Advances in medical knowledge and treatment have been brought about by research. Research is undertaken in this ACCU and across the country. All these research trials are approved by an independent ethics committee of outside experts to make sure patients' best interests are protected. Patients and relatives may be asked to be involved in this research. A member of staff will discuss any research trials which may involve the patient or relative and discuss issues about consent and taking part.

The Intensive Care Society offers a website for relatives of patients who have been or are in ACCU. It is useful for further information and provides an opportunity to discuss your feelings online. This can be found at www.ics.ac.uk or they can be contacted by writing to:

The Intensive Care Society 29B Montague Street, London, WC1B 5BW

Telephone: 0207 291 0690

Please do not hesitate to ask the nurse caring for the patient or the family liaison nurse, or nurse in charge for help and guidance in any matter or area of concern.

If you wish to contact the matron or unit leader for the ACCU about any aspect of your critical illness or your recovery, call them via the direct line on 01623 672268.

ACCU Family Liaison Team

Available to support you at this time, please ask for them during your visit or contact them Monday-Friday 8am to 4pm 07584 331 934



Further sources of information

ICU Steps: www.icusteps.org

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

King's Mill Hospital:

01623 672222

Newark Hospital:

01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

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.

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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