

Guidance to all Visitors on Infection, Prevention & Control



Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS staff are available to offer advice or information on healthcare matters. The office is in the Main Foyer (Gate 4) of Doncaster Royal Infirmary. Contact can be made either in person, by telephone or email. PALS staff can also visit inpatients on all Trust sites.

The contact details are:

Telephone: 01302 553140 or 0800 028 8059

Preventing and controlling infection is vital in a hospital setting and it is a huge challenge for hospitals today.

Visitors can play an important part in keeping infections away from sick patients.

The following points are for the protection of patients and visitors:

Leave infections at home:

If you or those accompanying you feel unwell, please do not visit the hospital and advise other family members or friends that this is our strong recommendation.

Coughs, colds, flu, chest infections, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, a rash with or without a fever, or feeling generally unwell are all conditions which suggest that you may transmit an infection to patients who are already ill. You will also be more susceptible to acquiring a secondary infection by visiting a hospital.

If an outbreak of infection occurs on a ward the hospital will have to restrict visiting and information will be provided on the changes needed.

If the person you wish to visit is critically ill, please speak to the ward staff first if you are at all unwell but still want to visit.

Prior to visiting the ward, please ensure that you wash your hands thoroughly

USE THE HAND GEL PROVIDED WHEN YOU ARRIVE ON THE WARD AND AS YOU LEAVE

Please repeat hand washing at your first opportunity after the visit



Hand gel use is a supplement to good hand washing and is not instead of it - use the gel on clean hands.

Children of the patient are always welcome. Other visiting children should be over 12 years of age for control of infection reasons especially related to viral infections. This is for their own wellbeing. Please discuss with nurse in charge for special arrangements.

The accompanying adult of any visiting child is asked to assist the child with hand washing and gel use.

Visitor numbers are restricted at the bedside at any one time. If this poses a difficulty, please speak to the ward staff.

Visitors are asked not to sit on the patient's bed, as this is a potential infection risk.

If the patient you are visiting is infectious or particularly vulnerable to infection e.g. has a health condition which makes them less resistant, is elderly, is a child, has had surgery or has a wound due to trauma etc. then you are advised to stay within their bed area and be especially vigilant to hand hygiene.

Gifts for patients - flowers are welcome, unless there are special considerations for a patient and ward staff will advise you if this is the case. Please be aware flowers do not fare well in a hospital environment due to the heat.

Gifts of fruit or food need to be discussed with the ward staff. This is due to special diets, as well as the need for the safe storage of perishable food to prevent infections.

Please inform the nurse looking after the patient you are visiting if you have any concerns regarding infection prevention and control.

OTHER VISITING INFORMATION

Extended visiting hours have been introduced to recognise that more flexibility was required in the time and duration of the visiting arrangements for the benefit of most patients.

Equally, a balance has to be achieved that allows adequate time for patient's meals (unless the visitor wishes to assist the patient), rest and recuperation, which are all essential to a smooth recovery. Some wards have a 'quiet or rest period' during the day, when they minimise any disruption including visiting, for their patients to aid a restful sleep in the afternoon. Where that applies, the ward will have a notice to this effect.

Some patient's conditions may mean they are too unwell to receive many visitors, or for long periods, and for these patients adequate time for rest is vital. In such circumstances, particular visiting arrangements will be discussed with visitors.

During visiting the nursing or medical staff may need to undertake an examination, procedure or confidential discussion with the patient. In most cases visitors will be asked to step outside of the ward whilst this takes place. This is solely for the patient's benefit and to preserve both their dignity and confidentiality. Visitors are asked to respect patient confidentiality and to work with the staff to maintain this.

In some cases, the staff may prefer the visitor to remain if they are the next of kin; for example to discuss a patient's ongoing care plan, if this need for wider discussion arises it will be explained at the time.

Information for visitors on a patient's wellbeing can be obtained from the staff on duty, the nurse caring for the patient, or by requesting an appointment with a member of the medical team.

For most visitor enquiries, information can only be given with the patient's consent and this includes over the telephone. If the patient is not able to give their consent to information sharing, the next of kin will be able to have regular updates as required.

Photography, including use of a mobile phone to do this, is only permissible with the agreement of the nurse in charge. This is to protect the privacy of patients.

Thank you for your support to the prevention and control of infection in hospital for the optimum recovery of all our patients.

