

# building a caring future

HOSPITAL | COMMUNITY | HOME

## Coming into Hospital Information for patients, relatives and carers

Issued by Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

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## Welcome to Northumbria Healthcare Trust

Welcome to Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. You will shortly be coming into hospital. We know that coming into hospital can be a difficult and worrying time for you and your loved ones. This leaflet aims to give information that will help you prepare for your stay. We hope you find it useful, should you have any questions this does not answer, please ring the number on your admission letter.

If you have access to the internet we recommend that you visit our website before coming into hospital, there is lots of information on our website including information on each hospital, maps and ward visiting times. Visit [www.northumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk) and click on “Patients and Visitors”.

This information can be made available in large print, Braille or other formats or languages on request. If you are deaf, have a hearing loss or have difficulty using the telephone for other reasons, you can contact the Trust via email using your preferred email address at [contact@northumbria.nhs.uk](mailto:contact@northumbria.nhs.uk). Please note that we cannot guarantee the security of public emails, and we will provide you with further advice on this. You can also communicate with us through Typetalk or other similar systems.

## How to cancel or rearrange your admission

If you need to rearrange your admission, or feel unwell before you are due to come into hospital, please let us know. We will be pleased to give you guidance or help you rearrange your appointment.

If you are unable to attend it is important that you let us know as soon as possible. If you turn down more than two admissions you will be referred back to your GP.

Please call us on 03 44 811 8118

Monday to Friday from 8.00 am to 6.30pm.

## How to get to the hospital

The addresses for all the hospitals within Northumbria NHS Healthcare Foundation Trust are listed at the end of this booklet.

Information about public transport services is available from Traveline on 0871 200 22 33.

Maps are available on our website: [www.Northumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.Northumbria.nhs.uk)

Each hospital has car parking for which a charge is made using coin-operated machines. A limited number of free parking places are available for disabled drivers.

Your driver may drop you off at the main entrance. The car should be moved as soon as possible to make way for other vehicles.

Please make your own transport arrangements if you can.

## Patient transport

Transport to and from the hospital can be arranged if required on medical grounds. If this service is required and you live in:

- Northumberland or Newcastle upon Tyne, contact North East Ambulance Service on 0191 215 1515
- North Tyneside, Cumbria or other areas, contact your GP Surgery

Patient transport is available Monday – Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) for attendances between 9am and 5pm.

Please remember - if you change your appointment/admission you also need to change your patient transport booking.

## Parking

There are free lay-bys at all hospitals for pick-ups or drop-offs. The car should be moved as soon as possible to make way for other vehicles.

Car parking is available at all hospitals. There is no charge to park at

Rothbury Community Hospital or Sir GB Hunter Memorial Hospital. Please make sure that you bring change with you and leave plenty of time to find a space. You must pay the correct amount for parking. Please check the tariffs displayed in car parks.

We offer concessionary free parking for regular visitors of long stay patients. This includes patients who are staying in hospital for more than one week and for visitors staying in the hospital with a patient for example parents staying with children on the paediatric ward. Please ask the nurse in charge for more details.

## **Disabled parking**

Each hospital site has a number of designated free parking bays reserved for registered disabled drivers displaying a blue badge.

## **Before your admission**

### **If you need assistance**

Please let us know if you need any extra help or assistance. For example we can help if you, or someone you know, needs an interpreter or uses sign language.

Wheelchairs can be provided at the main entrance if you need one.

A buggy service is provided at North Tyneside General Hospital. This may be able to take you to the department you need.

Please let us know of any extra help you need before you come into hospital. If you cannot let us know in advance ask a member of staff on arrival for help.

Contact us on 03 44 811 8111 for any assistance you need.

## What to bring with you

It would be helpful to bring :

- Your letter telling you about your admission date and ward
- The name and address of your GP.

You should also bring the usual items you would take for a short break such as:

- Nightclothes, day clothes and well-fitting footwear
- Toiletries (facilities are available on the ward for electric razors)
- Any medication you are taking, including any prescription or over the counter medicines
- Spectacles and any walking or hearing aids and dentures
- Proof of exemption for your prescriptions and proof of identification for collecting certain medicines, if appropriate
- Books or magazines
- A small amount of cash for parking, use of the bedside communication system, or to use in the hospital shop.

We do not have facilities to wash patients' clothing. If you may have a problem with laundry, please discuss this with the nurse when you are admitted.

**We cannot accept responsibility for the loss of any item.**

## What not to bring with you

You are strongly advised not to bring in large amounts of cash or any valuables including jewellery (except wedding rings).

## When you arrive

Enter the hospital by the main entrance. The staff at the reception desk or a hospital volunteer will direct you to the ward stated on your letter.

## During your stay with us

### The team caring for you

A team of nurses, supported by healthcare assistants, will be responsible for your care in the hospital. They will introduce themselves to you and discuss and plan your care with you.

To discuss any aspect of your care please speak to the nurse in charge or the matron for that area.

### Meal times

During your hospital stay you will be provided with breakfast, lunch and an evening meal which you can choose and order through the bedside communication system. The staff will help you with this.

Approximate meal times are:

Breakfast	7.30am to 8.15am
Lunch	11.45am to 12.30pm
Tea	5.00pm to 5.30pm

If you arrive in between meal times you will be offered a snack box. They are available 24 hours a day upon request.

The nutrition nurse service works with the dietitians to improve your nutritional care. We can cater for any special diets, allergies and religious requirements. Please let us know in advance or speak to a member of staff on your arrival.

A snack trolley visits most wards during the day. Please ask ward staff for more information. Our general hospitals have shops selling snacks, refreshments and newspapers.

We have a 'protected mealtime policy' in place to make sure you can enjoy your meal without unnecessary interruption. However, there may be times when essential medical care is required during this time. We ask, if possible, for friends and family to avoid visiting or contacting the ward during mealtimes. The only exception would be if your friends or family are asked by the ward staff to help you with your meals.

We have a limited amount of fridge space for patients' use. All items should be named and dated. All items in the fridge past their use by date will be disposed of.

### **How can I keep my family and friends informed?**

Please arrange for only one person to telephone the ward to ask about your condition. This person can then be responsible for passing on the information to others. This will prevent vital telephone lines being blocked with non-urgent calls. We can only give progress reports over the telephone where consent has been given. This will be discussed with you when you are admitted to hospital.

### **Routine checks**

While you are in hospital there are several procedures which everyone must follow and we will carry out some routine checks to make sure we continue to provide the safest care to all patients.

## Infection control

Infection control is one of our priorities. We continually work to reduce our infection rates.

Everyone must wash their hands or use the hand sanitiser gel when entering and leaving the wards.

You will be screened for the presence of Meticillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA) on your skin before and during admission. The staff will give you more information about how this is carried out.

## Mobility

We will work with you to understand what help you may need with your mobility (such as help to get in and out of bed). If you need to bring in your own equipment, please contact the ward directly to let them know before you come into hospital.

## Medication

Please bring all of your usual medicines into hospital with you. They will be stored in a locked cupboard beside your bed and only you will use them. We will discuss your usual medicines with you.

Nursing staff can only give your medicines at the times shown on your prescription chart. Please discuss any queries you may have with the nursing or pharmacy staff on your ward. If you are attending for day surgery you should make sure you have some of your usual painkillers at home. Any medicines you require, as a result of your treatment, will be provided before you are discharged.

If you are coming into hospital for day surgery and you normally pay NHS prescription charges you will need to pay for any medicines prescribed.

# Protecting and respecting you

## Your rights and responsibilities

We take the safety and well-being of patients, staff and members of the public very seriously. This includes zero tolerance of violence and aggression toward staff. Aggressive patients, relatives or visitors will be asked to leave the premises.

We expect our staff to treat you, your relatives and friends, with courtesy and consideration and without discrimination. The co-operation of you and your visitors will enable our staff to care for you and other patients in the most effective and efficient way.

## Your privacy and dignity

We are committed to meeting the needs of all of our patients regardless of age, sex, race, religion, disability or sexuality. We expect all patients to be treated with dignity and respect by our staff.

We want to ensure you have the privacy you need while you are in hospital. All of our wards provide same sex accommodation, this means that the bay you sleep in and the bathroom you use will not be shared by members of the opposite sex.

We understand you may need assistance while you are in hospital, when you could normally manage on your own. If you have any concerns, please discuss them with the nurse in charge.

You may be asked the same questions a number of times during your hospital stay. This is part of the checking process to make sure we have the correct patient and to check whether any of your details have changed. This may also occur as you meet different staff or go to other wards or departments.

## Consent

Consent is your agreement for a health professional to examine you or provide you with care or treatment. You may be asked for your consent on a number of different things while you are in hospital. You may indicate consent non-verbally, for example by putting out your arm when asked for a blood pressure check, or verbally by saying you agree with a request, or sometimes in writing.

You may withdraw your consent at any time even if you have given it in writing on a consent form.

If you have made arrangements for someone else to make decisions on your behalf, such as a Lasting Power of Attorney for health and welfare or finances, or you have a court appointed deputy, it is important you let the health professional know at the earliest opportunity. A record can be made on your notes of who this person is so that we can contact them about your care and treatment now or in the future.

You should also let the health professional know about any advance care planning you have made such as advance statements or decisions to refuse a particular treatment, should you be unable to make the decision at the time the treatment is proposed. An Advance Decision to Refuse Treatment is sometimes called a living will. A record can be made on your notes about this and how health professionals can find your current copy.

A parent or legal guardian will usually be required to give consent for a child under 16.

If you have any concerns please raise these with the staff.

## Confidentiality

Our staff have a duty to respect the confidentiality of your information.

Health professionals involved in your care need to share clinical information about you, they will not divulge anything they learn about you to anyone who is not immediately concerned with your care. When other agencies are involved in your care, we may need to share details about you to enable us to work together for your benefit. Information will only be shared with other agencies if they have a genuine need for it and, where possible, we will ask your consent for this.

In some circumstances, we may have a legal responsibility to disclose your personal health information to other organisations. If you do not wish particular information to be shared, please speak to one of the health or social professionals involved in your care.

You can choose to limit use or disclosure of your information. If you wish to discuss your rights, please speak to a doctor or nurse when attending your clinic appointment.

We will only give information about your condition to close relatives or carers with your permission. Please let a member of staff know if there is information you would not wish us to share with them. We will respect your wishes.

## Chaperones

All patients and staff have the right to request a chaperone. A chaperone is usually a trusted adult who will ensure your privacy, dignity and interests are supported and protected during consultations, examinations, investigations or procedures. In the case of patients who are under the age of 16, this is usually an adult with parental responsibility.

## How we can support you

### Chaplaincy

Our Chaplaincy team provides confidential comfort and support to people facing difficult situations such as living with illness, facing bereavement or life pressures. They are available to people of all faiths or none.

If you would like a chaplain you can contact them through switchboard on 03 44 811 8111.

### Smoking

Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust is a smoke free environment. Smoking is not permitted at all within the hospital buildings or grounds, other than in the designated smoking shelters. If you wish to access our Smoking Cessation services and you live in:

- Northumberland contact 01670 813135
- North Tyneside 0191 2292911

If you live in other areas contact the national NHS Smoking Helpline: 0800 169 0169.

## Personal equipment

### Mobile phones and other electronic media

Mobile phones produce electromagnetic interference which can affect medical equipment. Most modern mobile phones and other electronic media include camera and video recording capabilities. The potential for mobile phones to be used to take inappropriate photographs or videos could interfere with patients' privacy and dignity. In addition, ringtones or music played via mobile phones could disturb patients who are trying to recuperate. Constant noise from other patients on mobile phones would be equally disruptive to those patients wishing to rest.

**For these reasons mobile phone use is banned in clinical areas.**

### Mobile phone use is allowed in the following areas:

- Hospital reception and entrance areas
- Waiting areas
- Non-clinical communal areas – including restaurants, day rooms and café areas
- Public corridors.

### Patient owned electrical equipment

All equipment must be checked for electrical safety before being used in hospitals. If you wish to use your own mains powered electrical equipment (including chargers) please speak to a member of staff. They will arrange for the hospital Estates Department to come and check the equipment. Please use headphones when using equipment with audio output.

**We accept no liability for loss or damage to patient owned equipment.**

## Our facilities

### Phone, television and radio

Most wards now have bedside communication systems which include phone, television and radio. This service is run by Hospedia. Cards are required to use the system and these can be purchased from the machines located around the hospitals. Payment can also be made by card by contacting Hospedia on 0845 414 0414. Contact Hospedia on this number to provide more details and set up your personal phone number for your stay in hospital. Please note cards purchased with cash cannot have part refunds.

Some hospitals have a free local hospital radio station, please ask a member of staff about this.

At locations where bedside communications systems are not available televisions will be available in wards and/or day rooms and payphones will be available for patient use.

## Benefits and travelling expenses

### Social security benefits

A stay in hospital may affect your pension or benefits. Information is available to download from [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk). You can telephone the Benefit Enquiry Line: Freephone 0800 882 200 or Text phone 0800 243 355.

### Medical certificates

People who have been at work prior to their admission to hospital must complete a self certificate (form SC1) to cover the first seven days of absence, even if a hospital certificate has been issued to cover this period. Form SC1 can be obtained from an employer, Job Centre Plus office or online using the link below.

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport/Illorinjured/DG\\_172014](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/MoneyTaxAndBenefits/BenefitsTaxCreditsAndOtherSupport/Illorinjured/DG_172014).

This link gives you access to information regarding entitlements and telephone contacts for advice.

## Help with travelling expenses

The trust follows the Department of Health guidelines for reimbursement of patient travel expenses for people who receive certain benefits. You may be entitled to reclaim the cost of your travel to and from the hospital as well as car parking charges.

A parent or escort accompanying a young person may be entitled to help with costs if they receive the relevant benefits.

If you are entitled to receive reimbursement of your travel costs you can reclaim them from the hospital cashier's office. You will need to provide:

- Proof of entitlement, from the relevant awarding body
- Your appointment card or letter
- Your tickets for the journey to hospital or proof of payment (ticket or receipt) if you are claiming for car parking charges.

## When you leave hospital

Before you leave hospital, we will complete an assessment of any continuing need you may have for support. This support would be either from a health professional or social services. You and your carers will be involved at every stage in planning the arrangements for your discharge from hospital. If you are concerned about returning home, please speak to the ward staff.

## Day of discharge

We will aim for you to leave the ward by 11.00am. When you are ready to leave we may arrange for you to wait in the discharge lounge. The discharge lounge is a calm, comfortable environment where you can wait for your transport home. The staff will make sure that whoever is picking you up knows where you will be.

## Transport home

Please make your own transport arrangements if you can. If possible you should arrange for someone to come and pick you up to take you home. The ward staff will be able to give you a time when you are likely to be discharged.

If you are unable to make your own transport arrangements, please tell the ward staff who will make arrangements for you.

## Information for visitors

As a visitor you have an important role to play in a patient's recovery and here you can find information that you may find useful for your visit and also how you can help patients during your visit.

There is more information on our website including information on each hospital, maps and ward visiting times. Visit [www.northumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk) and click on "Patients and Visitors".

Visiting times vary from ward to ward in each hospital. Most wards are able to be flexible if a patient is very poorly or you have to travel to visit. Please speak to the ward staff if you need to make alternative arrangements.

The infection control team and all staff are responsible for helping reduce and prevent the spread of infections, but everyone can help including visitors.

Please help us and our patients by following our simple advice:

- Wash your hands and use alcohol gel before entering and leaving the ward
- Do not sit on patients' beds
- Do not use patient toilets
- Do not visit if you are unwell or have an infection, for example a heavy cold or diarrhoea.

## Children

Children are welcome to visit patients on most wards if accompanied by a responsible adult. However please speak to ward staff before bringing very young children in. Please read the section on the use of mobile phones and electronic media and ensure such equipment is used responsibly.

## Flowers

We need to ensure we can keep the wards as clean as possible. Although flowers look lovely they collect dust and can harbour germs in the water and soil. We ask that visitors do not bring flowers into our hospitals.

## Comments, compliments, concerns and complaints

We are committed to providing you with a high quality health service and the best care and treatment possible. Your feedback is extremely important to us so we know what we're doing right, and understand more about what we need to do to change things for the better.

If you, or a member of your family or a carer, wish to discuss any concerns you have about your treatment or care you should speak to the person in charge of your care, for example the ward manager or modern matron, so they can help to resolve the matter straight away.

If you would prefer to talk to someone who is not involved in your, or your relative's, care or are unsure who to talk to, you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). PALS provides free, confidential advice to patients, their families and carers. They will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and help to sort out problems quickly on your behalf. You can contact PALS on Freephone 0800 032 0202 or email [northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk](mailto:northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk) Text/SMS 01670 511098.

## **Making a complaint**

If you are unhappy with the treatment or service you have received from the NHS you have the right to make a complaint, have it investigated and receive a response. Care will be taken to ensure your complaint remains confidential.

## **Compliments**

We are always delighted to receive positive comments about our staff and services and we use these to highlight where things are working well. If you are pleased with the care or treatment you have received, please let us know and we will pass on your compliments to the person or service concerned. If you have any comments please let us know – your feedback will help us to review and improve the services we provide.

## **How to contact us:**

### **Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust**

Freepost RSTB-GBLA-HBAS  
Patient Services and Quality Improvement Department  
Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust  
7-8 Silver Fox Way  
Cobalt Business Park  
Newcastle upon Tyne  
NE27 0QJ.

**Telephone: 0191 203 1340**

**Email: [patient.services@nhct.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.services@nhct.nhs.uk)**

**You can also contact us by completing the form inside the Compliments, Comments, Concerns and Complaints leaflet which is available from every ward. PALS leaflets are also widely available.**

## Hospital contact details

For all of our hospitals (except Rothbury)

Telephone: 03 44 811 8111

Alnwick Infirmary  
South Road  
Alnwick  
NE66 2NS

Berwick Infirmary  
Infirmary Square  
Berwick-upon-Tweed  
TD15 1LT

Blyth Community Hospital  
Thornton Street  
Blyth  
NE24 1DX

Hexham General Hospital  
Corbridge Road  
Hexham  
NE46 1QJ

Wansbeck General Hospital  
Woodhorn Lane  
Ashington  
NE63 9JJ

North Tyneside General Hospital  
Rake Lane  
North Shields  
NE29 8NH

Morpeth NHS Centre  
Dark Lane  
Morpeth  
NE61 1JX

Rothbury Community Hospital  
Whitton Bank Road  
Rothbury  
Morpeth  
NE65 7RW  
Telephone: 01669 620555

Sir GB Hunter Memorial Hospital  
The Green  
Wallsend  
NE28 7PB





## Alternative Formats

If you would like a copy of this information in large print, another language, audio tape or other format please call the Contact Centre on **03 44 811 8118**

## Other sources of information

### NHS 111

### NHS Choices

[www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx](http://www.nhs.uk/pages/homepage.aspx)

### NICE (National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence)

[www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)

### Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Freephone: **0800 032 0202**

Text: **01670 511098**

Email: [northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk](mailto:northoftynepals@nhct.nhs.uk)

### Northumbria Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

General Enquiries **03 44 811 8111**

[www.northumbria.nhs.uk](http://www.northumbria.nhs.uk)

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