If you would like this document in another language or format, or require the services of an interpreter, please contact us on 020 3456 7890 ext 78695. We will do our best to meet your needs.

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1. Introduction
This information booklet has been designed for our patients and their carers/companions to provide an overview of the Ambulatory Care facility within Cancer Services for adult patients.

2. What is Ambulatory Care?
Ambulatory Care (AC) provides the opportunity for many of our patients to receive a variety of treatments, including high dose chemotherapy, without having to stay in hospital overnight.

As an eligible patient, rather than remaining in hospital throughout your treatment, you will receive your care in University College Hospital Macmillan Cancer Centre during the day, and at night you will stay in a hotel located a short distance away. You may even be able to stay at home – this will depend on your treatment and how far you live from the hospital.

“Close proximity to the hotel, freedom of movement, knowledgeable and helpful staff. Nice to be able to converse with fellow patients both in Ambulatory Care and Hotel.”
(AC patient quote 2015)

3. Can I stay at home during my treatment?
Many of our AC patients do stay at home during the night. This will depend on the type of treatment you will be having and your consultant must also consent to this.

To stay at home you must:

- Live within a 60 minute travel time to UCLH (according to AA route planner)
- You must have family or a friend available to drive you to the hospital at anytime of the day or night
- You must have a mobile and be contactable at all times.
4. What advantages does AC offer me?

• We hope that staying in a hotel will provide you with a comfortable environment to rest in between your daily treatments.

• Your partner or relative may stay with you throughout your treatment – this is not always possible in the hospital.

• You will receive the same treatment as on the ward except that it is scheduled between the hours of 08:00 and 20:00.

• If receiving chemotherapy, your treatment may be delivered through a small portable pump allowing you to continue daily life away from the hospital and to enjoy local London with your family and friends.

• If you are staying at home, it is hoped that this will add a greater degree of privacy, independence and normality to your treatment experience.

  “I felt like I was in a community. I liked that you could talk to other patients. There was a relaxed atmosphere, which I think helped my stay.” (AC patient quote 2015)
5. What happens during the AC opening hours (daytime)?

A ‘typical’ day in AC:

• You will be given treatment times to attend each day. This allows you to plan for visitors, your meals and your rest time.

• You will be assessed daily by your AC Nurse; clinical observations will include your temperature, pulse, blood pressure and weight.

• Symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and fatigue will be assessed daily.

• If necessary, you will have a daily blood test.

• If requested by your medical team, other investigations will be carried out.

• You will receive your prescribed chemotherapy treatment and if required, any additional intravenous fluids, blood or platelet transfusions.

• Your doctors will visit you daily and your consultant will visit you twice a week if you are a haematology patient.

• You will be responsible for taking oral medications and the nurse will check daily that you are managing with this and order medications for you when necessary.

• Please note, treatments may sometimes run later than expected, or you may have days where you feel more tired than usual so it is important to allow some flexibility for this.
6. What happens during AC out of hours (night-time)?
After 20:00 AC closes and your medical and nursing notes are transferred to T16 South, one of our haematology wards at UCLH. The AC mobile and bleep are held all night by the nurse in charge, so if you phone from your hotel or home, the in-patient team will have immediate access to your records.

7. What if I become unwell during my stay in AC?
It is important that you contact the AC mobile at any time of the day or night if you develop any of the following symptoms:

- Temperatures near to or above 38 degrees
- ‘Shivers’ or ‘hot flushes’ regardless of temperature
- Persistent episodes of nausea or vomiting
- Persistent diarrhoea
- Shortness of breath or difficulties with your breathing
- Redness or pain around your PICC or Hickman line
- Any situation where you feel generally ‘unwell’ or ‘not right’

Depending on your symptoms, it may be necessary to admit you to hospital. You may require closer monitoring and/or additional treatment such as fluids or antibiotics that cannot be managed within the ambulatory setting.

If unwell during AC opening hours:
- Phone the AC mobile or bleep

If you require hospital admission, the AC nurses will arrange this for you.
If unwell during AC out of hours:
• Always phone the AC mobile or bleep
• Explain your symptoms to the person taking the phone call.

If necessary, the inpatient team may ask you to make your way to the appropriate hospital ward to be assessed. In some circumstances you may have to go to Accident and Emergency for review until a bed is available. If you feel well enough, you may walk over to the hospital with your carer/companion. If you do not feel able to walk over, please ask the hotel to call an ambulance.

If you experience any infective symptoms e.g. runny nose/sneezing, persistent diarrhoea or vomiting, we will advise you where to go for your assessment within the hospital. If you have infective symptoms you may need a side room as it is important that you do not mix with other patients. This may not be on a oncology/haematology ward. Please be assured that your doctors will remain the same and you will be transferred back to a haematology/oncology ward when appropriate.

If you are neutropenic, please let whomever you speak to know. If you are calling an ambulance it is important to advise the call taker of this and of your symptoms and give them the phone number and address of your hotel accommodation (see Important Contact Details).
8. **What should I do in an emergency?**

An ‘emergency’ is any urgent situation where you require immediate medical and nursing assistance.

If you require urgent medical attention:

- Call ‘999’ immediately
- State your symptoms and location
- If you have a carer/companion staying with you, they should call the AC mobile to update the team

9. **Where will I be staying?**

If you are not staying at home, you will stay at a local 4* Hotel close to UCLH. The AC team will advise you on where you will be staying and will provide additional leaflets relating to your accommodation details.

>“Cotton Rooms well thought out and perfect for patients who don’t need to be on a ward. I was always seen promptly and felt very safe there” (AC patient quote 2015)

**Checking into the hotel**

- You may check into your room after 14:00
- Your room and breakfast for both you and you carer/companion will be paid for by AC
- AC **does not** cover any extra expenses such as bar, restaurant, room service or mini-bar bills, phone calls (excluding calls made to the hospital), and any non-accidental damage to the hotel during your stay. You will be asked to pay these additional costs when checking out of the hotel
Checking out of the hotel

- On the day you are due to be discharged, you will need to check out of your room by 11:00.

- If you are admitted to hospital during the day, you or your carer/companion must ‘check out’ at the hotel reception by no later than 14:00. If you are unable to do this, two members of staff will do this on your behalf. Failure to check out on time will result in you incurring additional hotel costs. We cannot offer hotel accommodation for your carer/companion if the decision to admit you to hospital happens before 14:00.

- If the decision to admit you to hospital occurs after 14:00, your carer/companion may stay in the hotel overnight, but must ‘check out’ after breakfast the following morning by 11:00.

10. What do I need to bring?

- A thermometer
- A mobile phone with charger
- Light luggage that can be easily transported to the hospital by you or your carer
- All medication you are taking
- Books, magazines and puzzles
11. Follow up care
When discharged from AC you will be given:

- A purple chemotherapy record book. This book contains information regarding:
  - Your current cycle of treatment
  - **What to do** and **who to call** once you have been discharged from AC
  - Your next clinic appointment and your next cycle of chemotherapy dates

- If applicable, dates and forms for blood tests
- If required, we will organise a district nursing service for your weekly central line care and for your blood tests
- Depending on your particular treatment, you may be required to return to AC during your neutropenic period. AC staff will arrange this for you.
12. Frequently asked questions

Are meals provided?
• **Breakfast** is provided for you and your carer/companion within the hotel accommodation.

• **Lunch** is provided for patients only within AC, with a selection of hot meals, sandwiches, yogurts and fresh fruit with tea/coffee and hot chocolate on offer

• **Meal Vouchers** to the value of £5.00 are available for lunch and dinner. These are to be used at the main hospital canteen located on the ground floor.

The canteen is open between 07:30 and 20:00, Monday to Friday. Hot food is served for lunch between 11:45 and 15:00. Dinner is served between 16:00 and 18:00.

On weekends and bank holidays, the canteen is open from 07:30 to 17:00, and hot food is served until 16:00.

Alternatively, you can purchase meals at your own expense at the many local restaurants in the area.

Is transport available?
AC does not provide transport from home to AC for everyone. However you can find out if you are eligible for transport by calling 020 3447 9757 between the hours of 08:00 to 20:00 Monday to Friday.

What happens if my blood counts are low?
During the period when your blood counts are low and you are ‘neutropenic’ you are more at risk of infection. Your AC nurse will advise you daily regarding your blood counts and provide you with written information regarding symptoms to look out for and what you should and shouldn’t do at this time.

If you need any blood products during your stay, you will have those with us in AC.
13. The Macmillan Support and Information Service

The Macmillan Support and Information Centre is based on the ground floor of the University College Hospital Macmillan Cancer Centre, Huntley Street. It provides a relaxed and informal space where patients and their families and friends can ask questions and talk through their concerns with specialist staff. The team offers support at any stage of a patient’s experience with cancer. Visitors can access a range of information resources, including leaflets and booklets. Patients can also be referred onto appropriate services such as complementary therapy, the wig service, dietitian, welfare and benefits advisers and the psychological and emotional care team.

There is a programme of supportive activities on offer to help patients manage the effects of their treatment and meet other people who have shared similar experiences.

Visiting the Macmillan Support and Information Service does not require an appointment and the team ensure that visitors are seen as quickly as possible.

Address: University College Hospital Macmillan Cancer Centre, Ground Floor, Huntley Street, London WC1E 6AG

Telephone: **020 3447 8663**

Email: **supportandinformation@uclh.nhs.uk**

Opening hours: 09:00 to 17:00, Monday to Friday
14. Important contact details

If you require help or advice, please do not hesitate to call us at any time:

**Ambulatory Care Unit**

- Mobile: 07908 256 182
- Telephone: 020 3456 7890 (switch)
- Extension: 78695
- Opening times: Monday to Friday 09:00am till 18:00pm
  Saturday to Sunday 09:00am till 17:00pm
- Bleep: 0845 155 5000 or 020 3456 7890
don ‘2’ when instructed then enter bleep number
  ‘7777’

**Cotton Rooms**

1 University Street

London

WC1E 6AQ

Telephone: 020 7380 0030

**The Grafton Hotel**

130 Tottenham Court Rd, London W1T 5AY

Once discharged, if you require any advice, please contact 020 3447 3893 and follow the instructions to be put through to the best person to advise you.

Alternatively you can contact your designated Clinical Nurse Specialist

**In an emergency dial 999 for an ambulance**
15. Space for questions or notes
15. How to find us