National Hospital for Neurology and Neurosurgery

A guide for inpatients
If you would like this document in another language or format or require the services of an interpreter please contact your admission ward or Clinical Nurse Specialist. We will do our best to meet your needs.

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Coming to the NHNN
This booklet has been written to prepare you for your hospital stay. We hope that you will find it helpful. We understand that this may be a stressful time for you and your family. Please remember our staff are here to help. We will aim to keep you fully informed about your care and treatment, ask you what you think at the key stages, and ensure you are included in decisions about your care. Do not hesitate to ask a member of the clinical team caring for you if you have any questions about your care or treatment.

The NHNN is part of the University College London Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust. The Chief Executive of the Trust is Sir Robert Naylor.

Do you need an interpreter?
We use telephone, face-to-face interpreters and text translation services. Let us know as soon as possible if you require a face-to-face interpreter as this can take up to 72 hours to arrange.
Preparing for your hospital stay

If you need to change your admission date, please contact us as soon as possible and we will try to arrange a date that is convenient for you.

Your admission letter should tell you what to do to prepare for your admission and provide a contact number if you have any questions. Remember to follow any instructions about eating or drinking on the day of your admission to avoid your treatment being delayed or postponed.

If you get a cough, cold, skin infection or stomach upset please contact the admissions number on your letter.

If you are coming to hospital the day before your planned surgery or investigations please do not leave home until you have had a phone call from the admissions office. An Admissions Officer will call you on the day of admission. They will confirm that your bed is available, which ward you will be admitted to and what time to come in. For admission enquiries, call 020 344 84774.

If you have a Key Worker, Social Worker or other professional who regularly helps you at home please speak to them and the hospital team before your admission. This will help us to plan your discharge from hospital.

If your telephone number changes please inform the Admission Office as soon as possible.
Cancellations
If your operation is cancelled on the day of admission, you should be re-admitted within a month of the cancellation.

Disability allowance and sickness benefit
If you receive a pension or benefit please bring your pension number, national insurance number or number of any other benefit you receive with you.

Do:
- Let relatives or friends know you will be in hospital and give them the telephone number of the hospital
- Cancel any regular deliveries such as milk or newspapers
- Cancel any home help such as meals-on-wheels
- Arrange for dependent relatives or pets to be cared for
- Dispose of any food that will spoil

Planning to get to the hospital
Parking is restricted with limited metered parking on the square, disabled parking bays are available. Usual Blue Badge restrictions apply in and around Queen Square. Congestion charges apply, for information about exemptions call ☎ 0845 900 1234
For information about local contact National Car Parks
☎ 0845 050 70 80  🌐 www.ncp.co.uk
See our map on page 23 for nearest bus, train and tube information. You can also download a useful travel guide from our website or contact Transport for London on ☏ 020 7222 1234 or ✉ www.tfl.gov.uk. For national travel information go to ✉ www.transportdirect.info or contact National Rail Enquiries on ☏ 08457 48 49 50 or go to ✉ www.nationalrail.co.uk

**Travel fares reimbursement**
Please bring proof of benefit or tax credit entitlement with you. Restrictions apply on tickets that can be refunded and the benefits that qualify.

**What do I need to bring?**
✓ Any medicines you usually take including all prescription, herbal, homeopathic or non prescription medicines (tablets/capsules, liquids, creams, ointments, inhalers, patches, injections, eye drops etc). If you have a ‘dosette box’ or something similar please bring this as well.
✓ A list of any allergies you may have – such as medicines, food, latex or sticky plasters.
✓ All your paperwork letters and scans or x-rays relating to your admission; if you are unsure please contact your consultant via their secretary.
✓ The name and contact details of your GP, next of kin or contact person.
✓ Information relating to any regular clinic appointments you attend, such as diabetes clinics or your warfarin yellow book.
✓ Your house keys.

You should pack a small bag with:
✓ Your usual toiletries (including sanitary products if required). Aerosols cannot be used as they can activate fire alarms.
✓ Comfortable nightwear. This should be loose, easy to get on and off (no tight sleeves or necks), a dressing gown and enclosed slippers with a non–slip sole.
✓ If you wear a denture or partial plate bring a container labelled with your name.

Bring also:
✓ Your usual mobility aids.
✓ Your glasses and case with your name on it.
✓ If you wear a hearing aid bring its case and a spare battery.
✓ A small amount of loose change for payphone or vending machines.
✓ Something to read (books or magazines).
What not to bring ....

✗ Valuable items or large amounts of cash.
✗ Alcohol - is not allowed within the hospital.
✗ Bed linen or towels – these are provided for you.

Please note: There is no shop or laundry facilities in the hospital.

Safety and storage of property
Please avoid bringing valuable items into hospital if you can; for example mobile phones, i-Phones, i-Pads and laptops. Although the hospital does all it can to keep the hospital as safe and as secure as possible, please note that the hospital will not be liable for any personal property loss or theft if the item has not been handed in for safe keeping to staff. You will be asked to sign a disclaimer form to highlight your awareness of this position on admission.
Storage in clinical areas is limited; your assistance in restricting what you bring into hospital will be appreciated.

Smoking
Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the hospital, including the entrances and exits. Electronic cigarette use is not permitted.
Mobile phones
Mobile phones are permitted but must be switched to silent mode when on the wards. Please consider other patients when using your phone and ask your visitors to leave the ward area to make or receive calls.

Where do I go when I get to the hospital?
Please go directly to the ward the Admissions Officer has confirmed with you. Wheelchairs are available if you require assistance to the ward, there is a wheelchair ramp at the front entrance of the hospital and lifts to all wards.

Arriving on the ward
You will be met by a nurse or the ward clerk who will check your details and explain the ward routine to you. Your nurse will give you a wrist band to identify you and you must wear it at all times while you are in hospital. This is vital to ensure you are always given the correct treatment or medicines. You will also be told the name of the nurse responsible for your nursing care. At the start of each shift the nurse looking after you will introduce themselves to you. You should expect all clinical staff you meet to introduce themselves by name and role.
Your nurse will need to know if:
- You are taking any medicines.
- You have any allergies.
- You have any outpatient appointments you will miss.
- You need help with social security benefit, pensions or allowances.
- You will need help from Social Services on discharge.
- You need a medical certificate.
- You have valuables or money to be stored.

Your care
Who will be responsible for my care?
Your consultant is responsible for your care. You will be seen by your consultant or a member of their team daily.

Will I be told about my treatment?
Yes, as fully as possible. The team caring for you will discuss your treatment with you and provide written information where it is available. It is important that you understand the information that you are given – do not hesitate to ask questions if you are unsure about anything that is said to you.
Consenting to treatment
We want to involve you in all the decisions about your care and treatment. If you decide to go ahead with treatment, by law we must ask for your consent and will ask you to sign a consent form. This confirms that you agree to have the procedure and understand what it involves. Staff will explain all the risks, benefits and alternatives before they ask you to sign a consent form. If you are unsure about any aspect of your proposed treatment, please don’t hesitate to speak with a senior member of staff again. If you are unable to give your consent, your medical team will act in your best interests. You have the right to refuse any treatment or tests.

Teaching and research
The NHNN is a teaching hospital and you may see student doctors, nurses or therapists in wards and departments working under supervision. If you would prefer not be seen or treated by students please speak to the ward sister, charge nurse or your consultant. The NHNN also has a world wide reputation for medical research and from time to time patients are asked to take part in a research project. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you will not be included without your informed
consent.
Your care will not be affected in any way if you choose not to be seen or treated by students, or if you do not wish to be included in teaching or research.

**Specimens and blood tests**
You may be asked to give blood samples and other specimens to help us understand your condition and manage your treatment. No specimens such as blood or tissue will be used for research without your consent.

**Your health records**
To ensure you get the best care possible we keep confidential information about your health and other details such as your name, address, date of birth and GP details. We observe our legal and professional duties when we process this information.
If you would like to know how your information will be used and protected by UCLH, please see our leaflet (How information about you will be used by UCLH).
If you would like to view your medical records please ask your nurse to arrange this for you. If you wish to have a copy of your records please be aware that there is a charge.
Pregnancy
If there is a possibility you could be pregnant it is important to tell your doctor. Some medicines, anaesthetics and x-rays can be harmful to unborn babies and certain neurosurgical procedures require multiple x-rays or scans to be taken during surgery.

On the ward
We will try to make your stay as comfortable as possible. Please do not hesitate to speak to a member of staff if you require any further information or have any concerns. All staff wear an identity badge with their name, photo and job title on it. This should be visible at all times, if you cannot see someone’s badge please ask to see it.

Privacy and dignity
Your privacy and dignity is of the utmost importance. We provide single sex bays, wards and bathrooms (with the exception of the critical care areas and recovery). If you have any concerns about your bed arrangements please speak to the nurse looking after you. We will try to find you a more suitable space.
Meals
The hospital provides a variety of diets such as kosher, halal and vegetarian and vegan upon request. Meals or snack boxes can be provided if you miss a meal. Meal times may vary slightly, but are generally:
  - Breakfast from 8am to 9am
  - Lunch from 12pm to 1pm
  - Supper from 6pm to 7pm
Patients should not bring their own food into the hospital as there are no storage or reheating facilities. Food prepared outside of the hospital may not be subject to the same quality control as provided by the hospital.

Protected mealtime policy
The hospital maintains a protected meal time policy. This means that you will not be disturbed by hospital staff during your meal and you should expect to eat your meal without interruption.
To ensure that all patients benefit we ask that visiting is avoided during this time. However, if you require assistance with your meals and you would prefer a member of your family to help, please inform the nursing staff.
Deep Venous Thrombosis (DVT)
All patients are assessed for their risk of acquiring DVT and given the appropriate preventative care. Information leaflets are available on the wards; please ask your nurse if you have not received one. More information about DVT is available from NICE (www.nice.org).

Infection control
We are working hard to fight infection and we ask all our patients and visitors to help. The most effective way of preventing the spread of infection is by good hand hygiene—washing your hands with soap and water and using the hand gel provided. To limit the spread of infection, single rooms with ensuite bathrooms may be used. If you are in a single room you may be moved if it is needed for another patient.

It is very important that you:
▪ Wash your hands with soap and water after visiting the toilet and before meals. Do not hesitate to ask for help.
▪ Do not touch wounds, dressings, drips, drains, catheters or other medical devices or allow your visitors to touch them.
▪ Wash and dry your hands before and after assisting other patients.
If you are unsure if a member of staff has cleaned their hands before they approach you please ask - they will not be offended. If you have any questions or concerns about infection, the infection control practices of the staff, or the cleanliness of the ward do not hesitate to speak to a member of the nursing staff. Infection control staff are also available.

Visitors
Visitors are required to wash their hands or use the hand gel provided on entering and leaving the ward area. Your visitors should not sit or place coats or other items on beds, sit on patient chairs or use the patient toilets.

Visitors with colds, flu, diarrhoea and vomiting and other infectious illnesses should stay away until they are well.

Visiting hours
Visiting hours are generally between 10am and 8pm with a rest period between 1pm and 2pm. These times may vary, please check with the ward directly. Visitors should avoid visiting in large groups and always adhere to the ward visiting hours. We ask that there are no more than two visitors at the bed space. This helps keep
noise to a minimum, promotes rest and comfort and ensures that privacy is maintained for all patients. Please speak to the sister or charge nurse to arrange out of hours visiting.

**Children**
If children under the age of 12 wish to visit please speak to the nurse in charge, sister or charge nurse beforehand. Children must be supervised by an adult at all times.

**Restaurant and café**
The hospital restaurant located on the lower ground floor is open from 7.30am to 8pm. Visitors are welcome to use the coffee shop on the ground floor of the Royal London Hospital for Integrated Medicine (next door), open from 8am to 4pm.

**Flowers**
Flowers are not permitted on any wards.

**Telephone enquiries**
Family, friends and carers are welcome to telephone. However, to protect your privacy and maintain confidentiality we are unable to give information about your medical condition over the telephone.
It is helpful to nominate a spokesperson to relay information
if you think there may be a large number of people calling; this can be your next of kin or other family member or friend. Once you have a named spokesperson, inform the nurse or ward administrator who this will be.

**Mail**

Mail is delivered to the ward daily. Ask your relatives and friends to write your name and the name of the ward on all correspondence. Outgoing stamped post can be placed in the out tray at the ward reception desk.

**Hospital chapel**

Everyone is welcome to use the hospital chapel. The chapel is open to people of all faiths and none and provides a space for prayer or quiet. The chapel is located on the ground floor of the hospital near the main entrance. If you would like a chaplain or other religious representative to visit you please speak to the ward administrator or a member of the nursing staff.
Going home

To ensure that you are discharged safely and on time from hospital we will start planning your discharge as early as possible. All patients admitted to hospital for tests, investigations or procedures should be given a provisional discharge date within 24 hours of admission. Those patients requiring extended hospitalisation, but not the specialist care of the NHNN may be transferred to their local or referring hospital if appropriate care can be provided there.

Your nurse will be responsible for your discharge plan. If you have any concerns about how you will manage when you go home please speak to your nurse, they will contact the appropriate members of the hospital team. You will not be discharged until all the arrangements have been made. We will aim to discharge you from the ward by 11am. The ward staff will direct you to the Discharge Lounge where you can wait in comfort for your transport or medicines.

When making plans to go home, you should consider:

- Will you need help with meals or daily activities?
- Will you need someone to stay with you, or prepare your home for your return?
- Will you need to be collected from hospital, or require
hospital transport? (Please note, only patients who qualify are eligible for hospital transport)

- Does your home need adapting to meet your needs?
- Will you or your carer be able to manage?
- Will you have housing problems on or soon after discharge?
- Will you require the help of Social Services?

**Before you leave the ward:**

- Leave your contact details with the ward administrator.
- Ask your nurse for any medical certificates you may need.
- Collect money or valuables given for safekeeping.

**Before you leave hospital make sure you have:**

- A copy of your discharge letter.
- Your medicines (you should also know how to take them, what they are for and how to store them).
- Details of care required from other health professionals such as practice nurse or district nurse.
- Understood your agreed care plan.
- Information about potential lifestyle changes, with appropriate written advice to help you.
- Instructions on how to care for your wound and when any stitches or clips need to be removed.
- Details of follow up appointments.
Advice about when you can expect to return to work.
Contact details of your Clinical Nurse Specialist, medical team or ward should you have any worries or concerns.
All the information your family requires to look after you.

Further information

Patient feedback
We welcome your feedback. Your comments will be used to monitor and improve the service we provide. Ask your nurse how you can leave your feedback.
If you are unhappy with any part of your experience here please speak to the ward sister, charge nurse or matron. You can also contact PALS directly or ask a member of staff to do this for you.
If you would like to have a formal investigation into a complaint, contact our Complaints Department on ext 73413 or write to:
Chief Executive
250 Euston Road
London
NW1 2PG
All complaints will be dealt with promptly and you will be kept informed of all actions taken.
Protecting, staff, patients and visitors from abuse
Harassment, threats or actual violence against staff, patients or visitors will not be tolerated and action will be taken over incidents of unacceptable behaviour.

Equality and diversity
Our staff are committed to ensuring the rights, dignity and cultural values of our patients are respected. We will ensure that no person receives less favorable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, gender, religion and belief or sexual orientation.

Have your say
As a patient or local resident you are entitled to become a member of ULCH Foundation Trust and have a say in the way the Trust develops and improves its services. If you would like more information or would like to become a patient member, sign up at our website or contact us via switchboard.
Where to find us
The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) provides a personal contact point to assist patients, relatives and carers. PALS can also help resolve issues or concerns that you may have with any of the hospital services. Please call or email to arrange to speak to the PALS officer. ☎ 020 3448 3237 or ⌘ pals@uclh.nhs.uk