

## Critical Care

### Visiting Critical Care



Use the alcohol hand gel available and wash your hands with soap and water when entering or leaving the critical care unit.

#### HANDS



You are required to wear a face mask over your nose and mouth at all times on when on our hospital sites unless you are exempt.

#### FACE



Please maintain social distancing when you're on our hospital site.

When visiting patients, please stay at the patient's bedside at all times by using the chair provided.

#### SPACE

Please do not visit other patients on the unit or in other wards.

### Welcome

This information is for the family and friends of patients.

It is to help you prepare to visit patients staying in the Critical Care Units.

Please remember that we are here to help you. Please contact the Critical Care team if you have any questions or concerns about visiting patients in the Critical Care Units.

Our contact telephone number is at the end of this information leaflet.



## Patient Information

### **About Critical Care**

The Critical Care Units provide intensive care for patients.

Intensive care is provided to treat patients who need constant observation and care that uses specialist equipment and treatments. This may be needed by patients due to major surgery, serious injury, or serious illness.

Patients are sometimes transferred out of critical care as they get better and no longer need intensive care. Patients can be transferred from Critical Care to a High Dependency Unit (HDU) or to an Enhanced Care Unit (ECU). Patients can then be transferred to a general hospital ward when they are ready.

Some patients are in a critical care unit for shorter periods of time than others. This depends on their illness or injury.

### **Our Critical Care Units**

Our Critical Care Units are two areas:

- Cardiothoracic Critical Care Unit
- General Critical Care Unit

Both of our areas care for all types of patients who need intensive care.

Patients undergoing cardiac or thoracic surgery are mostly cared for in the Cardiothoracic Critical Care Unit.

It may be necessary to move patients from one area to another within the Critical Care Units. We inform the patient and the next of kin of any move between the areas.

Our critical care areas use separated side rooms and walled areas to care for patients who have COVID-19 or other infectious illnesses.

## Patient Information

### Visiting times

#### Normal visiting times

Normal visiting times are **11am to 7pm** each day.

Please be aware that these times can change when we need to protect our patients and you. Changes to visiting times can happen when we have a rise in COVID-19 cases or we need to take other infection control measures.

When we make changes to visiting times we:

- let the next of kin and key family members know
- let visitors know with posters and leaflets available at the entrance to the critical care area

#### Outside of normal visiting times

Please ring the doorbell at the entrance to the critical care area. We will respond to you as soon as we can.

#### Who can visit?

- Visiting is only for immediate family and very close loved ones.
- A maximum of **2 people** can visit a patient's bedside at one time. We request this as critical care is very busy with our staff and special equipment.
- We do not recommend a lot of visitors for intensive care patients. Intensive care patients get tired easily and this does not help their care.
- Friends and other loved ones should wait until patients are moved to a ward area before visiting.
- We ask you to follow our requests as they are in place to support our patients and keep them safe while they need intensive care.
- We understand this can be difficult for you to manage as you and your loved ones want to support the patients in our care.
- We need your help to let other friends and loved ones know this information.
- Please do not visit if you feel unwell.

## Patient Information

### **What should you wear when you visit?**

Please wear a face mask and suitable clothing.

Wearing a face mask is a minimum requirement for visitors in most cases.

Please ask a member of our team if you are unsure of what to wear.

You will find our contact details at the end of this information leaflet.

### **COVID-19 testing before your visit**

We are encouraging all visitors to perform a Lateral Flow Test before visiting our sites. We will not request proof of a negative test.

### **If you test positive for COVID-19:**

- please do not visit either of the Critical Care units
- please follow the Government isolation guidance

### **What to expect during your visit**

Please bring as few personal belongings as possible.

You should not bring bags, handbags, electronic devices, gifts, food or other unnecessary items with you. We ask you to follow this to help keep the critical care area clean and safe for our patients.

There is limited space at the patient's bedside. This means that we do not have patient lockers to store personal belongings. You should remove your outer clothing, e.g. coat or jacket when you visit.

We recommend that you have no sleeves or wear jewellery below your elbows. This allows you to easily wash your hands with soap and water or hand gel, available to you when you visit.

We try to keep the critical care units as quiet and calm as possible for our patients. We ask our visitors to help us achieve this at all times.

No children under the age of 10 years can visit the unit unless this has been agreed with the Modern Matron or deputy before your visit.

## Patient Information

### **Your visit to General Critical Care Unit**

#### **Normal visiting times**

Please check-in at the General Critical Care Unit reception desk when you arrive. We will ask for your name and who you have come to visit. You will then be collected by a member of our team and we will take you to the patient that you are visiting.

#### **Outside of normal visiting times**

Please ring the doorbell at the entrance of the General Critical Care Unit when visiting outside of normal visiting times. Please allow us a few minutes to respond as we will be providing patient care.

### **Your visit to Cardiothoracic Critical Care Unit**

#### **At all times**

Please ring the doorbell outside the entrance of the Cardiothoracic Critical Care Unit. We will come to ask you who you have come to visit. We may ask you to wait while we check this with the nurse in charge of the patient's care. We will then return to collect you and we will take you to the patient that you are visiting.

### **Social distancing, PPE and hand washing**

We will offer you a change of face mask when you visit. We do this to minimise the risk of infection.

You will then be given advice about social distancing, wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) and hand washing before you visit the patient. It is important that you follow our advice to protect our patients. You will not be allowed in either critical care area if you do not follow our advice.

You will be asked to wear a surgical facemask if you are visiting a high-risk area or a patient with COVID-19. You may also be asked to wear a face visor which we will provide.

## Patient Information

### **Support during your visit**

Your visit may be upsetting. We understand that you may need comfort and support during or after your visit. You are most welcome to use our relative's room during this time.

We are also able to offer an overnight room for relatives when it is needed. Please speak to member of our team for support with this.

We can also support you as you leave your visit. Please ask a member of team if you would like us to support you as you leave the patient's bedside.

### **When leaving the Critical Care Units**

Please put the PPE you have worn in the bins provided when you leave the Critical Care Units.

Please wash and clean your hands when asked. This is to help protect yourself and others from infection.

You will be given a new face mask so you can leave the hospital setting safely.

### **When not to visit**

#### **Please do not visit:**

- if you feel unwell
- if you have symptoms of COVID-19
- if you have tested positive for COVID-19 and you should be following the Government self-isolation guidance

Anyone showing symptoms of high risk infection or COVID-19 will be asked to leave. They will not be allowed to visit our patients.

You should not visit if you have flu like symptoms, a chest infection, diarrhoea or vomiting or you are feeling unwell. We ask this to keep our patients safe.

## Patient Information

We would be happy to arrange a convenient time to update you on your loved ones status if you are unable to visit. We can update you with by telephone or virtually using one of our bedside iPads.

### **If you are unable to visit**

#### **Telephone updates**

We can support you during this difficult time by arranging times for telephone updates about your loved one. Please request this by asking a member of our team or contacting the phone number at the end of this leaflet.

#### **Virtual visits**

We can also arrange a **virtual visit** to the bedside using Facetime, if you have the equipment to connect with us. A member of our team will hold one of our iPads at the patient's bedside during the Virtual Visit.

A nurse will assist the conversation with you for a short period of time if the patient is not able to communicate

We can help support WhatsApp or private telephone communications if you provide us with a phone for patients.

The patient's views on virtual visiting will be sought, honoured and documented wherever possible.

We will store patient personal devices in line with the healthcare setting's guidance on safe keeping of property.

#### **Messages, photographs and symbolic items**

We can also pass messages or photographs to the patient if conversations are difficult. You can provide these by email. Please provide the full name and date of birth of the patient so we can make sure that your messages or photographs go to them.

Please email your messages or photographs to:

[GMBGENCC@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:GMBGENCC@uhcw.nhs.uk).

We can also pass on any physical items to the patients that connect them to friends and loved ones.

## Patient Information

### Car parking

Visitors are encouraged to pay for car parking through alternative ways to avoid queues at payment machines.

Payments can be made by:

- PAYPHONE mobile app
- by visiting [www.paybyphone.co.uk](http://www.paybyphone.co.uk)
- texting REG and your car registration to 65565
- by calling 0304007275

Payment can be made at any time until midnight on the day of parking.

If you use the pay machines onsite, please use the alcohol gel before and after.

### Contact information

**If you have any questions, please contact the Critical Care team on 024 7696 6892.**

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please speak to the Critical Care team and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

To give feedback on this leaflet please email [feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk](mailto:feedback@uhcw.nhs.uk)

#### Document History

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