

## Main theatres

# Your journey from your home, to the operating theatre

**This information aims to describe what happens when you are about to undergo surgery and introduces you to the staff you will meet during this time.**

Before you leave for the hospital, please remember you are allowed to drink Water up to **ONE HOUR** before surgery.

You will be offered a glass of water on arrival to the ward or waiting area. You may be allowed further water depending on the timing of your surgery. If your surgery is delayed for an emergency patient, please ask the staff caring for you if you are allowed any further water.

## Who are the theatre team/staff that will be caring for you?

### **Health care assistant / support worker / chaperone**

A member of staff who cares for you throughout your theatre journey, but also supports the theatre practitioner during the operation

### **Theatre practitioner**

A member of staff who supports the surgeon with the instrumentation needed for the operation

### **Anaesthetic practitioner**

A member of staff who will support the anaesthetic team throughout your operation

### **Surgeon (consultant and/or registrar)**

The doctor who performs the operation

### **Anaesthetist (consultant and/or registrar)**

The doctor who administers the anaesthesia and monitors you throughout your operation

## How will I get to theatre?

Your journey starts with a member of staff from the theatre admissions unit coming to the ward to collect you.

## Patient Information

Your paperwork and theatre checklist will have been completed on the ward by the nursing staff. This is one of several checks that we will go through to ensure we have the right person for the right operation. Once the member of staff from theatre admissions has verified with the nurse you are ready and all your checks have been completed, it's time to go. You will either be taken on your ward bed, in a wheelchair or walked down, this depends on how mobile you are and which operation you will have.

### **Where will I wait for my operation?**

The **theatre admission unit** is contained within the theatre department; it has beds for the 22 theatres on the first floor. Here you will be checked in by the anaesthetic practitioner from the theatre team, they will repeat your checklist questions and double check your details are correct. Sometimes the surgeon and the anaesthetist will come and see you here if they haven't seen you on the ward. Once this is done we will take you to the anaesthetic room or sometimes directly to theatre if you are having a local anaesthetic.

### **Where will I have my anaesthetic?**

The anaesthetic room is where you will usually have the anaesthesia that has been discussed with you by the doctors. The chaperone and the theatre practitioner will be in here with you as well as the anaesthetist. Then standard monitoring devices will be placed on you: these will monitor your heart, blood pressure and oxygen in your blood.

Everyone is monitored in this way and it is nothing to be concerned about. Once all the monitoring devices have been applied and the anaesthetic given, you will be transferred onto the operating table if needed and taken into theatre.

### **What will happen to me during my operation?**

Whichever operation you are having today the process is generally the same whether you are asleep or awake. The surgical site will be cleaned and draped with sterile sheets and everyone will be busy around you doing their preparation. Just before the surgeon starts the procedure a safety checklist will be performed for everyone to listen to and explain their roles, we will check you are the right patient, what procedure you are having and where on your body the surgery will be performed. We will check this against your paperwork, wristband and any X-rays or scans that are available. Once the final check has been done the surgeon will confirm with the anaesthetist that it is safe to start.

### **Where will I wake up after my surgery?**

After the procedure you will be moved back into a bed and taken to the recovery area, it looks very similar to theatre admissions unit. This is a small area within the theatre department. Here you will be cared for by a recovery practitioner on a one-to-one basis who will ensure you are comfortable and that it is safe to take you back to your ward.

### **Emergency and elective theatres**

This is a brief explanation of the differences between emergency trauma and elective operations.

## Patient Information

**Elective** is a planned operation, for example, a knee replacement, cataract removal or gall stones. This is where the operation date is planned in advance and the theatre is booked.

**Trauma emergency** is where your body has a wound or suffered shock produced by sudden and unexpected physical injury (i.e. an accident) which would result in you being placed on the emergency trauma list.

**General Emergency** is for non-orthopaedic cases and it covers any urgent procedure that cannot wait for the elective list.

### Why do I have to wait for my operation?

Your position on the emergency and trauma list is not always guaranteed and can change continually if someone has had an accident and their injuries are greater and they have been prioritised, they will take your place on the list and sometimes go straight to the top. This hospital is a major trauma centre, we have some very urgent cases being admitted and this will also have an effect on a fluctuating emergency trauma list.

### Dignity and respect in theatre

While having your operation you may feel embarrassed and uncomfortable, the theatre staff are extremely respectful of your dignity and take extra time to consider your feelings. Some operations may require you to remove your underwear, the ward has disposable underwear.

If you wear glasses, hearing aids or dentures you are welcome to wear them to theatre and they can be removed in the anaesthetic room and labelled with your details, they will be returned to you in the recovery ward. If you have any worries or concerns, then please raise them with any theatre team member and we will do our best to help you.

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format please contact 024 7696 5847 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy

#### Document History

Author	Mark Ferriby
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Published	June 2011
Reviewed	March 2019
Review	March 2021
Version	5
Reference	HIC/LFT/1229/11