Information NOW
Information for people in Newcastle upon Tyne

While you are in hospital

When you arrive

When you arrive at your hospital you will be welcomed by a member of staff, who will explain the processes to you and what to expect. You will be given an identity wristband to wear at all times while you are in the hospital.

A nurse will usually co-ordinate your admission and fill in the paperwork for you. You will need to provide the name, address and a contact number of the person you would like to be contacted in an emergency. This could be your spouse or partner, or a friend or other relative.

For some procedures, including operations, you will be asked to sign a consent form. A copy of this form will be given to you.

Your Individual Needs

You may have some specific needs that you would like to be considered and included in your hospital care. For more information on the support and services available please visit the Newcastle Hospitals website;

- **Spiritual, religious or pastoral care**
- **Interpretation, textphone, carers, guide dogs, loop systems, Deafsign, wheelchair or special equipment**

Accessible Information

The Accessible Information Standard is a UK law to make sure that people who have a disability, impairment or sensory loss are given information they can easily read or understand. Health and care services such as hospitals must find out your information and communication needs make sure you get support the way you need it in an accessible format.

For example you may need large print text for a letter or a British Sign Language (BSL) interpreter at medical appointments for communication.

Read more about Accessible information

Your Rights

You have a legal right to a reasonable standard of care and treatment from hospital staff. There are also some basic standards which NHS hospitals are required to meet. These include:

- Respect for privacy, dignity and religious and cultural beliefs
- Respect for confidentiality
- A clean and safe hospital environment
- An individual with responsibility for your care
- Name badges to be worn by all staff

If you have any concerns about your standard of care, in the first instance raise them with the staff involved or with the nurse in charge of your ward.

If you want to **complain about health services**, you can make a formal complaint or contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).**

Call for Concern (or Martha's Rule)

Call for Concern (also known as Martha's Rule) means you can get an urgent review in hospital if you are worried that you, your relative or friend is becoming more unwell. You can call a dedicated team if you think your concerns are not being listened to or acted upon. The team is available to support you and staff on the ward. This also applies to if you are in accident and emergency (A&E).

If you are worried about you or your relative or friend becoming more unwell, you should tell any nurse or member of staff in the first instance and they will act. If you have done this and:

- There has been no change in the care
- The ward has not acted upon your concerns
- You are still worried that you, your relative or friend is getting more unwell

You can contact the numbers below to get a review:

Freeman Hospital: 0191 244 8881

RVI: 0191 917 7319

They will ask you to tell them the following information:

- Patient name
- Ward
- Description of your concerns
- Contact details and relationship to the patient, if you are not calling for yourself

You can find out more information about Call for Concern / Martha's Rule here.

Comments, Compliments and Suggestions

There are 'Comment and Suggestion' boxes located within the public areas of hospitals. Alternatively, you can email any feedback using the **online form** on the Newcastle upon Tyne

Hospital NHS Foundation Trust's website.

Benefits

Your benefits while you are in hospital can be affected so it is important to keep your social security office informed.

It can be tricky to work out exactly how your benefits will be affected by a stay in hospital. You can talk to someone the benefits you may be entitled to at an independent advice service such as:

- **Citizens Advice Newcastle**
- **Newcastle Welfare Rights Service**

Infection control

Everyone can help **Keep our hospitals clean** to prevent the spread of infection. Hand washing is really important because 80% of disease is spread by your hands. They may look clean, but your hands carry many germs even if you can't see them.

To wash your hands effectively you need to follow the guidelines below:

- Wet your hands with warm, running water.
- Add liquid soap and rub your hands together to make a lather for at least 15 seconds, covering all surfaces of your hands.
- Rinse your hands well.
- Dry your hands thoroughly with a clean, disposable towel.
- Use an alcohol-based hand sanitiser only when soap and running water isn't available.

Meals

Meals and hot drinks are served throughout the day in hospital. You should let the nursing staff know about any dietary needs or food allergies, so that the hospital can cater for your dietary requirements.

There are also refreshment facilities, such as restaurants, coffee shops and snack bars, available for patients, relatives and friends in some of Newcastle's hospitals.

If you eat well in hospital you are more likely to recover from illness quickly and go home sooner. Unfortunately, as an older patient, you are at the greatest risk of becoming malnourished during your stay.

Visit Age UK's page on **Preventing Malnutrition** for more information.

Television, radio, telephone and WiFi services

Hospedia provide TV, Radio and telephone services in Newcastle Hospitals. This means that you can watch television, listen to the radio, make and receive telephone calls, and use the Internet and email from your bedside.

Wifi is available in all Newcastle hospitals. This is a paid for service which means you can connect your laptop, tablet or mobile devices to the internet.

Visitors and relatives enquiries

When you have a stay in hospital it helps if you can try to nominate one person to make enquiries about your condition, and they can then let other members of your family or friends know how you are doing.

Most hospitals have times at which you can receive visitors. Check with the relevant hospital for information about when you can visit. Bear in mind that different wards often have different visiting times.

If your friends or relatives are ill with a cough, cold or any other infectious condition, they should contact the ward for advice before visiting.

If you, or someone you know, are in hospital and have no friends or family who are able to visit, the Chaplaincy Service can offer a listening ear and some welcome company.

Visit **nhs.uk** for more information.

Wristbands

When you are in hospital you need to wear a wristband with your details on, so that staff can identify you and ensure that you get the right care. A member of staff will put a wristband on you as soon as you are admitted to hospital and you should wear this throughout your stay.

If you don’t have a wristband, you should ask a member of staff for one. If it comes off or is uncomfortable, ask a member of staff to replace it for you.

Student training

While you are in hospital you may be asked if you are willing to contribute to student training, especially as Newcastle has a major teaching hospital. This may involve students being present during your consultation or treatments.

Please remember that you don’t have to take part if you don’t want to. If you would prefer not to have students present, tell the medical or nursing staff. It is your right to refuse and this will in no way affect your treatment.

Research

You may be asked if you would agree to participate in a research project during your stay in hospital. Research into new treatments and better ways of providing healthcare is an important part of the hospital's work.

However, you don't have to take part if you don't want to. You also have the right to decline or to withdraw from the research at any time even if you do initially agree.

Check the accessibility of the hospital before you visit

AccessAble can help you to plan your trips to places like railway stations, colleges, universities, hospitals and more. They visit and review the accessibility of places in Newcastle. Use their directory of venues to find wheelchair friendly venues, read more about facilities and disabled access available. Such as:

- photos of the facilities
- entrance to the building
- accessible toilets or changing places
- how easy it is to move around the venue
- lifts
- transport and parking
- dementia friendly
- quiet or safe space
- sign language

Other Useful Information

- **Care on the hospital ward for people with dementia** – Alzheimer's Society
- **This is me** – Alzheimer's Society booklet

The **NHS Help Card** is an initiative from NHS North East which aims to help and support you whenever you visit your NHS hospital, doctor, dentist, optician or pharmacist.

The card features a blank panel on the front where you can write down any special requirements and a tick list of different languages on the reverse for those who cannot speak English. You can show the card to a member of staff if you need help, for example:

- if you are unable to walk far
- if you are confused, lost or don't know where to go
- if you cannot speak or hear
- if you do not understand English
- if you have a learning disability

NHS Help Cards are available free by contacting **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS).**

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Useful Organisations

Citizens Advice Newcastle (CAN)

Email: citycab@newcastlecab.org.uk

Website: http://citizensadvice-newcastle.org.uk

Telephone: 0808 223 1133

Address: 4th Floor, City Library, NE1 8AX

Newcastle Welfare Rights Service

Email: welfare.rights@newcastle.gov.uk

Website: www.newcastle.gov.uk/welfarerights

Telephone: 0191 277 2627

Address: **POSTAL ADDRESS ONLY - No face-to-face advice is given here, NE7 7LX

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Email: pals@nhct.nhs.uk

Website: https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/hospitals/what-is-pals-patient-advice-and-liaison-service/

Telephone: 0800 032 0202

Address: Freepost PALS,

Age UK England

Email: contact@ageuk.org.uk

Website: www.ageuk.org.uk

Telephone: 0800 678 1602

Address: Age UK, EC3N 2LB

Newcastle upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Website: https://www.newcastle-hospitals.nhs.uk

Telephone: 0191 233 6161

Address: Freeman Hospital, NE7 7DN

WiFi Spark patient entertainment

Email: info@hospedia.com

Website: https://www.wifispark.com/hospedias-new-payment-system

Telephone: 0344 848 9555

Address: Customer Relations, Hospedia, DG1 4ZZ

Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust (CNTW)

Website: https://www.cntw.nhs.uk/

Telephone: 0191 246 6800

Address: St Nicholas Hospital, NE3 3XT

AccessAble

Email: hello@accessable.co.uk

Website: https://www.accessable.co.uk/organisations/newcastle-city-council/

Telephone: 01438 842 710

Address: Unit 7 Arlington Court, SG1 2FS

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