

To keep patients safe please observe the following rules

- Always clean your hands when entering the unit and again when you leave. Sinks and/or hand gel is available for you to do this
- Switch your mobile phone to silent and refrain from using at the bedside. Please do not take any photographs
- Only 2 visitors per patient at one time, unless agreed otherwise
- Children must not visit without discussing with the nurse in charge first
- Please do not bring flowers
- Please adhere to visiting times
- Respect all patients' privacy and dignity
- Please keep belongings to a minimum, the bedside nurse will be able to advise you on what is needed
- Please respect those who are looking after your relative or friend

If you have any questions about visiting please speak to the nurse in charge at any time

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) or Patient Experience Team (PET)

If you require any further information, support or advice about the hospital services that you or your relative is receiving, you can contact the PALS/PET team. Contact details will be available from nursing staff on the ward, the hospital main reception or the hospital switchboard. Alternatively you can access the hospitals via the following link:

www.wyccn.org/critical-care-units

There is also information and support for patients and relatives affected by critical illness at:

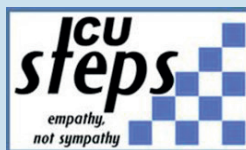
www.wyccn.org/patient-information



or

www.icuunwrapped.co.uk

ICU Steps is a charitable organisation set up to offer support for patients and their families/friends through the long road to recovery from critical illness



www.icusteps.org

Information for Visitors to Critical Care



This leaflet has been prepared to help guide you whilst visiting family and friends in the Critical Care Unit

Unit Telephone Number:

Visiting Times:

There will be times when you are asked to leave the unit. This will be:

- to allow patients to sleep
- during meal times
- during ward rounds or medicine rounds
- during medical emergencies
- during investigations, treatments or procedures and care



Quick Checklist

- ☐ Have you received your information booklet?
- ☐ Have you received a patient diary to complete?
- ☐ Have you received car parking/restaurant information?

WhatsApp

Have you thought about setting up a communication group to communicate with friends and family about your loved one? It could reduce the number of phone calls or requests for information you receive.



What should I expect?

Seeing a patient in ICU for the first time can be distressing. They are likely to be connected to many machines and drips and will often look different from how they normally look.

Some of the machines have alarms that may sound to let staff know that something needs doing, for example if a drip needs to be changed. Usually, there is nothing to worry about. The staff will closely watch the patient at all times and be happy to explain the machines to you.

When a patient is first admitted, it is normal for you to feel helpless, and desperate to know everything about their chances of recovery. However, the patient will need time to let their body rest and get over the shock of becoming so ill.

As a patient wakes from sedation, they may behave out of character. This could be because of their illness or medication. They may be agitated, confused, scared or paranoid. They may also have hallucinations and nightmares that seem very real to them. Patients sometimes believe the staff are trying to hurt them.

This can be distressing for you and the patient but it should improve as they get better and begin to recover.

How can I be involved?

There may be nothing for you to do but sit by their bedside and wait. Some relatives or friends find it helpful to be involved in caring for the patient. You may be able to help by doing things such as brushing their teeth or hair, moisturising their hands and feet. This will depend on how ill the patient is, and won't always be possible. If you want to help in this way, please ask the nurse looking after the patient.

Talking to your relative or friend may also help. Even though they are sedated, the patient may be aware of being touched and be able to hear. Keeping up a one-sided conversation can be difficult, but talking about experiences of holidays and good times can make you feel better too. You could try reading a book, newspaper or magazine to them.

Patients are seen by a Consultant twice a day or more frequently if the patient's condition requires. Involving you is important and we will do this when we can. We will always act in the best interests of the patient.