

Preparing for your hospital stay

Welcome to Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. This leaflet aims to provide you with information to help you prepare for your stay in hospital. If you have any questions, please ask a member of staff.

More detailed information may be found on our website, where you can also read our bedside guide. www.qvh.nhs.uk

About Queen Victoria Hospital

Queen Victoria Hospital (QVH) is a specialist NHS hospital providing life-changing reconstructive surgery, burns care and rehabilitation services for people across the South of England.

Our world-leading clinical teams also treat common conditions of the hands, eyes, skin and teeth for the people of East Grinstead and the surrounding area. In addition we provide a minor injuries unit, expert therapies and a sleep service.

We are a centre of excellence, with an international reputation for pioneering advanced techniques and treatments. Everything we do is informed by our passion for providing the highest quality care, the best clinical outcomes and a safe and positive patient experience.

Wards

We have two adult wards, Margaret Duncombe and Ross Tilley, and a children's ward known as Peanut Ward.

Our burns unit cares for burned patients, people with extensive skin loss (through various causes) and people who have undergone major reconstructive surgery. The unit includes an intensive care unit, rehabilitation facilities and an outpatient and emergency burns assessment clinic.

Peanut Ward is for our young patients up to the age of 16. It is a bright and modern ward where all children are allocated individual rooms. Please ask for the Peanut Ward booklet for more information.

Most of our wards are made up of separate bays which are designated for either male or female patients with dedicated single-sex washing and toilet facilities nearby. Only the recovery ward has mixed sex accommodation since a higher level of observation and nursing is required. Every effort is taken to maintain patients' privacy and dignity in this area.

Patient transport

Patients are expected to make their own arrangements to get to and from hospital, usually with help from friends and relatives. Patients on some benefits, for example income support, may be able to claim back some of the cost of their travel from the hospital cashier's office.

Where you live	Transport provider	Telephone
Surrey Downs	G4S	0333 335 0645
Surrey (Other)	SECAmb	0300 200 1067
Sussex	Coperforma	0300 777 2131
Kent & Medway	G4S	0800 096 0211

Patient transport services are available for patients travelling to NHS appointments whose medical condition means they cannot get to their appointment in any other way. These services are provided on a countywide basis, depending on where you live. You should contact your relevant patient transport service provider to check your eligibility.

QVH is well served by local bus services, particularly routes 281 and 400. Buses and taxis connect with East Grinstead train station, which has services to London Bridge, London Victoria and East Croydon. More details can be obtained from National Rail Enquiries on 08457 484950.

Car parking

Parking on the hospital site is pay and display. Current charges can be found on our website. Please allow plenty of time for parking which can be difficult at busy times.

What to bring with you

- your hospital admission letter and any other relevant documents
- the name, address and telephone number of your GP
- proof of benefit for travel claims (if you are eligible)
- any tablets or medicines that you are currently taking
- clothing: two sets of nightwear, dressing gown, underwear and slippers - after an operation loose fitting nightwear will be more comfortable
- toiletries i.e. soap, toothbrush/paste, razor and box of tissues
- any walking aids you normally use, such as a walking stick or a frame (clearly labeled with name and address)
- glasses / hearing aid
- your diary, to arrange further appointments
- things to do, books, magazines, knitting, writing materials and postage stamps
- small amount of money in change e.g. for newspapers etc.

You will have a small locker next to your bed for your personal possessions. Storage space is limited.

Preparing for your operation

Please follow any instructions that have been given to you carefully. People who are having surgery, are advised not to remove hair from the surgical site and are advised to have (with help if needed) a shower, bath or bed bath the day before or on the day of surgery.

Visiting

We understand how important visits from friends and family are to our patients. It is also important that patients are able to rest and that our staff have time to carry out assessments and give treatment.

Most of our wards have fixed visiting times (see below) and we ask that friends and relatives respect these. Visiting outside these times to accommodate specific circumstances, for example long journeys, may be arranged at the discretion of the ward manager.

The hospital has a protected meal time policy to ensure patients are able to eat without interruption and don't miss meals. This means that visiting is not allowed between 12pm and 1pm and 5pm and 6pm, unless you are a patient's carer and will be helping them with eating. Remember other patients may wish to rest or sleep during visiting hours, so please show them consideration.

Ward	Telephone number	Visiting times
Burns Unit	01342 414440	2pm - 5pm and 6pm - 8pm
Intensive Care Unit	01342 414176	Open visiting (nurse's discretion)
Margaret Duncombe Ward	01342 414450	2pm - 5pm and 6pm - 8pm
Peanut Ward	01342 414469	Open visiting (nurse's discretion)
Ross Tilley Ward	01342 414451	2pm - 5pm and 6pm - 8pm

Reducing the risk of infections

For the safety of our patients, it is important that visitors do not come to the hospital if they have been unwell in the last 48 hours, especially with a cold, diarrhoea or vomiting. They must wait until they have been clear of symptoms for at least 48 hours before visiting.

On our burns ward, where patients are especially susceptible to infections, a maximum of two visitors are allowed at the bedside at any one time.

In all our wards, we ask visitors not to sit on the patient's bed. Please do not bring babies or young children onto wards because hospitals can be unsafe for them, except in areas where children are patients.

Flowers

It is lovely to receive flowers when in hospital. To help us reduce the risk of infection and keep bedside areas safe and tidy, we ask that floral bouquets are provided in oasis or in pots. The number of flowers by your bedside may be limited due to space.

Some bugs and germs that are often found in flowers and their water can be an infection risk to patients with significantly weakened immune systems. For this reason we do not allow flowers in the intensive care unit, the burns unit or in certain areas of Ross Tilley ward.

Your friends and relatives could consider other gifts such as fruit or magazines.

Smoking

Patients undergoing reconstructive surgery are at particular risk from the effects of smoking because nicotine causes the arteries to constrict, reducing blood flow to all parts of the body. Reduced blood flow can negatively affect the healing of transplanted tissue or a reconstructed site. If you would like help to stop smoking, please speak to your nurse or doctor.

QVH is a smoke-free environment, both inside and outside our hospital buildings. Smoking shelters are provided on site – please ask a member of staff for details.

Confidentiality

We take your confidentiality very seriously. While you are under our care, we will record information about you to support your treatment. We will only disclose information about you to other professionals who need it to help care for you. All our staff have a confidentiality clause in their contracts, and we comply with appropriate legislation and guidance including the Data Protection Act 1998, the NHS Care Record Guarantee and Department of Health's Confidentiality Code of Practice. In certain situations we are required by law to report information to certain authorities, but this information is only provided after formal authorisation has been given by a health professional.

The Data Protection Act 1998 allows you to have access to your health records. This is a formal process that has to be arranged by your consultant following a written request.

Letting people know

If you agree, we will keep your family, carers and friends informed about your progress. It would be helpful if one nominated person rang the ward and then passed news to other friends and relatives. Please ask this person to ring after 9.30am, by which time the doctors will have completed their ward rounds.

Our staff will need contact details for a relative in case of an emergency. If your relative has a 'number withheld' block on their home telephone to prevent unwanted callers who withhold their number, staff calling from the hospital will not be able to contact them. In these circumstances, please agree alternative arrangements with staff for contacting your relative.

On the ward

While in hospital you will be under the care of a consultant (named on your admission letter) and his or her medical team. Your nurses will organise your day-to-day care and the ward manager/ lead nurse co-ordinates the ward activities.

If you are worried about your condition or are in pain or discomfort, please let the staff on the ward know. If you would like to know more about your treatment, the doctors and nursing staff responsible for your care will be happy to discuss it with you.

Dressing and washing

If you need help with getting changed or washed, please ask your allocated shift named nurse.

Consent to treatment

We need your written consent before we can operate or carry out certain procedures. Your doctor will explain the benefits and risks of treatment, and any alternative treatment options. Some minor procedures do not require formal consent, but staff will explain the risks, benefits and alternatives before asking for your verbal consent.

You have a right to withdraw from treatment at any time, even after you have signed a form. It is your decision.

Valuables and personal possessions

We cannot be responsible for the security of your valuable items, so you may wish to give these to a relative or friend to take home. If you have any valuables you want to keep in hospital, you will be asked to sign a disclaimer that they are left at your own risk. Secure lockers are available on Ross Tilley, Margaret Duncombe and our burns wards. Please ask your nurse for information about using these.

Telephones and personal electronic equipment

You may use your mobile phone in most areas of the hospital subject to the agreement of the ward or department manager. Please respect other patients when using your phone by keeping your ringtone on silent and being discreet when speaking. To maintain the confidentiality and privacy of other patients please do not take photographs on your phone or any other device in patient areas. A public telephone is provided in the main hospital corridor.

To protect the safety of our patients, our staff and our equipment, you may not connect any personal electronics or chargers to hospital plug sockets without them first being tested and approved by our facilities team. This can take several days to arrange. In most cases we recommend that you ask friends and relatives to charge personal electronics for you at home. However, if you are staying with us for more than a couple of days and have electronic items you would like to plug in, please ask your nurse to arrange for them to be tested.

As with other valuables (see above) we cannot be responsible for the security of these items and you will be asked to sign to say that you understand they are at your own risk.

Your medicines

It is very important that we know exactly what medicines you have been or are currently taking so that we can decide on the best treatment for you. Show any medicines you are taking when you come into hospital to the nurse, doctor and the pharmacist on the ward.

Food

Please let us know as soon as possible if you have any dietary requirements. This helps our dietician to arrange special menus for you, and the more notice we have the better. If your treatment involves a special diet related to your medical condition you will be seen by the hospital dietician. It may be necessary to restrict your diet for medical reasons.

Otherwise you will be served three meals each day. You will be served a continental or cooked breakfast on the ward in the morning. There is a choice of menu for lunch and supper. Refreshments, including soft drinks, tea, coffee, biscuits and snacks, are also offered and available throughout the day.

If you are going to have an operation, you will not be able to eat or drink for a while beforehand. Please ensure you check with the nursing staff on admission if you are able to eat as you may be scheduled for surgery the same day.

Catering facilities for visitors

- Spitfire Restaurant - open 7.30am to 3pm
- Hurricane Café - open 10am to 5pm
- Lancaster Lounge – 24 hour access to seating and vending machines

Daily newspapers and some personal hygiene items may be purchased from the Spitfire Restaurant.

Accommodation

We do not have facilities for visitors to stay overnight at QVH other than on the intensive care unit and Peanut Ward (please check arrangements with ward staff). But if your relatives and friends need to find somewhere to stay locally, information on hotels and B&Bs is available online at: www.eastgrinstead.gov.uk/tourism/accommodation.php

Chaplaincy, spiritual and pastoral care

We have a team of chaplains in the hospital who are trained professionals bound by the NHS rules of confidentiality. They are available 24 hours a day, visit wards regularly and are available to listen to your hopes, fears, worries, joys - whatever is important to you - and will support you during your stay.

If you would like to see a member of the chaplaincy team, please ask a member of staff. A representative from your own religion is always welcome.

The hospital chapel is open at all times and available to people of all faiths (or indeed no faith at all), who wish to use it for private prayer or just quiet contemplation. A Christian service of Holy Communion is held on each Tuesday at 1pm in the Chapel. Patients who are not able to get to this service may have Holy Communion at their bedside.

Interpreting services

A telephone interpretation service is available at all times and the lead nurse/ manager for the area can support you in accessing this service. Where other interpreting is required, such as Makaton, sign language or Braille, this can be arranged by the ward manager.

Going home

We will do everything we can to get you home as soon as you are well enough. Your multi-disciplinary team, led by your consultant, will constantly review your estimated discharge date. Where appropriate, your discharge will be coordinated with local district nursing and/or social services teams to ensure that you get all necessary support at home while you recover.

On the day you are discharged, we aim for you to be ready to leave by 12pm. Once you are up and dressed, we may ask you to wait for your final paperwork and medication in the discharge lounge or dayroom. You will also be given any necessary follow-up outpatient / therapy appointments. Nursing staff will be on hand to answer any questions you may have before you leave.

Before you leave - checklist

- please arrange for a relative, carer or friend to collect you
- ensure you have comfortable clothes and shoes to wear home
- if you are prescribed medicines to take home, it is important that you read any enclosed information and understand fully how and when to take them - the nursing staff will explain your medication to you and your relative or carer if necessary.
- make sure that any tablets or medications that you brought into hospital are returned to you
- if you require proof of your stay in hospital for your employer, or a medical certificate signed by a doctor, please ask
- check that you have all your personal belongings and ask for the return of any valuables you may have handed in for safekeeping
- complete your discharge questionnaire

Patient feedback

Patient feedback plays a crucial part in helping us to achieve high standards of care and we may wish to contact you after your appointment or treatment to ask about the quality of the care and treatment we have provided. You are not obliged to respond to any requests for feedback. If you would prefer not to take part, please let one of our staff know and they will ensure that this is recorded on the relevant system.

If you have any questions about how we use your information, please contact the information governance lead: Tel: 01342 414223

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS is a confidential service available to help you sort out problems or concerns about the hospital's services and pass on your views and comments. PALS also acts as a central point where you can get information about the hospital's services and help with accessing further health information. You can ask to speak to PALS, or call them on 01342 414355.

Complaints

Whilst we strive to do the best for all the patients in our care, we acknowledge that sometimes patients may be unhappy about an aspect of their visit or care. We take all concerns raised very seriously. If you are not happy, please tell the person in charge of the ward or department as soon as possible. If you are still unhappy, contact PALS (see above).

If the query or problem is not resolved, and you wish to make a formal complaint, you may contact our Patient Experience Manager on 01342 414355 or write directly to the Chief Executive.

Contact details

Queen Victoria Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
Holtye Road
East Grinstead
West Sussex
RH19 3DZ

Tel: 01342 414000

Web: www.qvh.nhs.uk

Email: info@qvh.nhs.uk

Please ask if you would like a copy of this information in another language or a larger format.