

Coming into hospital

Information for patients (Adult)

This leaflet contains information to help prepare you for your hospital stay; about how you will be admitted, and what we at the hospital will do to make your stay as comfortable as possible.

If you have been admitted to the hospital as an emergency, you may not have had time to prepare for coming into hospital. In this case the nursing team looking after you will be able to assist you.

If you have any further questions please ask a member of staff when you arrive at the hospital.

Before you are admitted to hospital

If you are going to have a planned operation you may be asked to attend a Pre-operative Assessment Clinic (POAC). At this appointment you will meet a member of the POAC nursing team who will perform a detailed assessment, asking you about your medical history and general health. You may have various tests (e.g. blood tests, ECG). You will need to bring any current medications that you are taking or a repeat prescription to this appointment. The nursing staff will be able to advise you about any medication that will need to stop before your operation.

The clinic visit also gives you a chance to ask any questions you may have about your operation.

Preparing for your admission to hospital

We will send you a letter with the date of your admission and details about where to go when you arrive at the hospital.

If you are coming into hospital on the day of a planned operation please ensure you have followed the instructions given to you at your pre-assessment appointment about fasting (eating and drinking), which medicines to take and other pre-operative preparation.

Communication Needs

If you have any additional communication needs please advise staff when you are in contact with the hospital. This could be at the outpatient clinic appointment, the Pre-Assessment Clinic appointment or when you are admitted as an emergency. If you require an interpreter then please raise this with staff as early as possible in your care pathway.

What to bring with you

Please bring:

- any tablets or other medicine you are taking (in their original pack or bottle)
- your dentures, spectacles and hearing aid if you usually use these personal items
- two sets of night wear, dressing gown and slippers
- day clothes to wear whilst on the ward with well-fitting footwear
- any walking aids you normally use e.g. walking stick / frame
- toiletries and two flannels
- tissues and moist antiseptic wipes

We encourage patients to dress during the day if possible.

However we can only provide a small locker to store clothing and other items. Please use a bag that is a similar size to cabin bag for flying (preferable a maximum 10kg weight) for your clothing and personal belongings.

Please make sure you have up to date details of your emergency contact and your GP, including phone numbers. If you have attended POAC these will already have been documented.

Please do NOT bring:

- valuables (e.g. jewellery, large amounts of money, credit cards, cheque books)
- mains operated equipment; e.g. portable radios or TVs
- alcohol
- items of sentimental value

Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust and its staff do not accept any liability for the loss, theft or damage to patients' personal property or money unless it has been handed in for safe keeping and an official receipt obtained.

You are reminded that you are responsible for any property belonging to you that you choose not to hand over for safe keeping.

Mobile telephones

Mobile telephones may interfere with the working of some medical equipment. Please ask ward staff about using your mobile telephone on the ward. Please be considerate towards others while using a mobile telephone and turn it off if requested to by staff. Mobiles (or any other form of camera) **MUST** not be used to take photographs or film other patients or staff in hospital including audio recording.

If you bring a mobile telephone into hospital you will not be able to charge this via the hospital mains electric.

The day of your admission

When you arrive at the hospital please follow the instructions in your letter as to where to attend. You will most likely be asked to wait in one of our admissions areas until your operation takes place or a bed is available on the ward. You may be taken

directly to theatre from here and will not be taken to a ward until after your operation.

In order to use our theatre services effectively, the teams will operate throughout the morning and afternoon. The order of patients going to theatre is usually decided on the day, so you may be asked to attend at the start of the operating list, but experience a wait before being taken to theatre. The team will advise you on the day.

Unfortunately, in some circumstances it may be necessary for your operation / procedure to be cancelled on the day, after you have arrived at the hospital. You will be told as soon as possible if this happens and arrangements will be made to re-book your surgery / procedure.

Please try to arrange for a relative or friend to come with you. It is helpful to have someone to take away any belongings or clothes you will not need in hospital. There is limited space in waiting areas so please only have one person accompanying you.

If you use personal items such as dentures, spectacles or a hearing aid, please tell the nurse looking after you. The nurse will provide you with special container(s) for your dentures / hearing aid, which will be marked with your name. Please use any container(s) provided to store these items whenever you are not using them. Please do not wrap your dentures / hearing aids in tissues whilst you are in hospital as there is a risk they can be mistaken for rubbish and cleared away by staff.

Patients with disabilities

There are disabled parking bays near the main entrances of the Trust hospitals. Wheelchairs are available to transport patients from the main entrances to other areas of the hospital (the wheelchairs are £1 coin operated).

Identity band

When you are in hospital, you need to wear an identity band with accurate details about you; please check these details are

correct. This band ensures that staff can identify you correctly and give you the right care.

Consent

Before an operation you need to sign a consent form. You may have done this at an earlier appointment however the doctor will discuss consent again with you before your operation. You should take this opportunity to ask any questions or discuss any concerns you may have about the planned surgery.

On the ward

Each ward provides its own information for patients. All wards have a ward manager who is responsible for the overall management of the ward. However whichever ward you are on the following information will probably apply.

Nursing staff

On admission to the ward, you will be introduced to a nurse who is part of the team looking after you during your stay. Staff are happy to answer any questions you may have or to discuss any concerns.

Other staff

Members of hospital staff wear different styles and colours of uniform according to their job and grade. All staff should wear a name badge and a photographic identification badge giving their name and occupation; staff should introduce themselves to you. Please ask if you are unsure who a staff member is.

Students

Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust hospitals support doctors, nurses and other healthcare professionals who are undertaking their training, in addition to our fully qualified workforce. You will be asked for your verbal consent to be seen by any student. We hope that you will agree to be seen by these

students but you do have the right to refuse and this will not affect your treatment in any way.

Consultants' ward rounds

Your consultant and other doctors in their team will visit you regularly to discuss your treatment. Please ask ward staff if you need to know a likely time for these visits. You may wish to make a note of any questions you want to ask.

Visiting hours

Patients generally need rest to help recovery. For this reason wards have specific visiting hours. These hours vary from ward to ward. Please check the visiting hours for your ward with the nursing staff. Generally, patients may only have two visitors at a time to avoid disturbing other patients.

Confidentiality and information

Information about your treatment and progress is strictly confidential between you and the staff looking after you. They will not pass it on to anyone except your GP or other relevant healthcare providers without your permission.

Only limited information can be given over the telephone as staff cannot verify who they are speaking with. It is preferable for there to be a nominated family member or friend to telephone the ward as opposed to multiple callers.

Meals

Meal times vary from ward to ward. On most wards you will receive a daily menu card to complete for the following day's meals. Please tell the ward staff if you have any specific dietary requirements (e.g. diabetic, low fat).

Special menus are also available to cater for the needs of vegetarian patients or patients from particular ethnic groups. Hot and cold drinks are served at various times throughout the day.

Mobility

Please stay as active as possible during your hospital admission. This will contribute to your recovery. Ask the ward staff if you require help in getting out of bed, dressing and / or mobilising. Please do follow staff advice for mobilising.

Going home

There is a separate patient information leaflet titled 'Discharge Information' that provides full information about being discharged from hospital. Please ask staff if you would like this leaflet.

Parking

Parking is available at all sites on a Pay & Display basis. Please allow plenty of time for parking as available spaces may be limited. Each hospital has a drop-off zone for patients with mobility problems.

Smoking

Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust operates a **no smoking policy**. This applies to all outside areas as well as inside the buildings. Please co-operate with this policy.

Contacting the hospital

Maidstone Hospital

Hermitage Lane
Maidstone
Kent, ME16 9QQ
01622 729000

Tonbridge Road
Pembury
Tunbridge Wells
Kent TN2 4QJ
01892 823535

Admissions Lounge

Pink Zone,
First Floor
01622 224446

Short Stay Surgical Unit

Orange Zone
Level -1
01892 634273

Tunbridge Wells Hospital

MTW NHS Trust is committed to making its patient information accessible in a range of languages and formats. If you need this leaflet in another language or format please ask one of your clinical care team or the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS). We will do our best to arrange this.

Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust welcomes all forms of feedback from our service users. If the standard of service you have received from the Trust does not meet your expectations, we want to hear from you. Please speak with the ward manager or the nurse in charge in the first instance, or you can contact the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)** on:

Telephone: ☎ 01622 224960 or ☎ 01892 632953

Email: mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net

or visit their office at either Maidstone or Tunbridge Wells Hospital between 9.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

You can be confident that your care will not be affected by highlighting any areas of concern or making a complaint. The Trust will retain a record of your contact, which is held separately to any medical records. If you are acting on behalf of a patient, we may need to obtain the patient's consent in order to protect patient confidentiality. More information on PALS or making a complaint can be found on the Trust's website: www.mtw.nhs.uk or pick up a leaflet from main reception.

Issue date: January 2019
Database reference: RWF-OPLF-PC24

Review date: January 2022
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