

# Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

**If it matters to you, it matters to us**

## What is PALS?

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a friendly, easy to access service for patients and visitors of Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells Hospitals.

We are here to help people using services provided by the Trust. If you have any questions or concerns about the service you have received from our hospitals, this leaflet will explain what to do.

## How can PALS help me?

PALS can:

- help answer any questions you may have about Trust services
- provide information on Trust services
- record and pass on your comments and compliments
- help resolve any concerns you have about the services provided at our hospitals

Unfortunately, PALS can't:

- give out test results
  - provide clinical advice
  - issue refunds
  - deal with enquiries relating to services not provided by the Trust
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## Dealing with concerns

An important part of PALS work involves helping people who are unhappy with a service provided by the hospital.

If you are worried, confused or concerned about any aspect of a hospital service, please tell us as soon as possible. If you are on a ward, ask to speak to the ward manager. If you are in a clinic, ask for help at reception. In many cases, our staff will be able to deal with your concerns then and there.

If this isn't possible, or your concerns are not resolved after talking to staff, contact PALS. We will work with you to try to resolve your concerns as quickly as possible.

To help us do this, please provide:

- your full name, address and daytime telephone number
- the patient's full name, date of birth and hospital number (if known)
- as much information as possible, including names of staff, dates, times and locations of events

If you are contacting us on behalf of someone else, we may need to obtain their consent for you to act on their behalf. We will discuss this with you when you get in touch with us.

In some cases, it may not be possible to deal with your concerns through PALS. If this happens, we will explain why and direct you to another service or to our formal complaints process.

## Will raising concerns affect my care?

No, absolutely not. Patients have the right to raise concerns about the service they have received. We want to know if you are unhappy so that we can try to put things right. Details of your contact with PALS are not held within your healthcare records and only those people who need to know will be aware that you have contacted us. If you have any worries in this respect, please speak to a member of PALS staff.

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## Frequently asked questions

### **Can PALS change my appointment/admission date?**

Unfortunately, the PALS team are not able to make or amend appointments or admission dates. Please contact the relevant Clinical Administration Unit using the number provided on your appointment/admission letter or via:

**Main switchboard**

 01622 729000

### **My admission was cancelled – can you guarantee it won't happen again?**

Unfortunately, we can never offer such a guarantee, due to the unpredictable nature of the hospital environment. Both our hospitals have busy emergency departments which means we cannot always be certain about the number of patients who may need to be admitted as an emergency. We understand the impact that cancelling an admission has and for this reason, we monitor our bed situation extremely closely and will do all we can to honour admission arrangements. However, patient safety is our priority and we will not compromise this.

### **How can I get a copy of my healthcare records?**

Information on applying for access to healthcare records and the application form can be found on the Trust's website: [www.mtw.nhs.uk](http://www.mtw.nhs.uk).

Alternatively, you can contact the Subject Access Team directly:

**By email:** [mtw-tr.SAR@nhs.net](mailto:mtw-tr.SAR@nhs.net)

**By phone:**  01892 638895

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## How can I contact PALS?

You can visit the PALS office at Maidstone Hospital or Tunbridge Wells Hospital. The offices are normally open between **9.00am – 5.00pm, Monday to Friday**. Please ask a member of staff at main reception, who will be happy to direct you.

Alternatively, you can contact us:

**By phone:** ☎ 01622 224960 (Maidstone Hospital)  
☎ 01892 632953 (Tunbridge Wells Hospital)

If all the staff are busy when you call, your call may be transferred to our answerphone. Please leave a message with your contact details. We check our messages at regular intervals and all calls are returned, normally within one working day.

**By email:** [mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net](mailto:mtw-tr.palsoffice@nhs.net)

**By SMS text:** 07736 195022 (Maidstone Hospital)  
07736 195024 (Tunbridge Wells Hospital)

**In writing to:** PALS Team Leader  
Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust  
Maidstone Hospital  
Hermitage Lane  
Maidstone ME16 9QQ

**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 PALS Team. We will do our best to arrange this.**

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