

Surgical Admissions Unit (SAU) Patient Information



The Information Standard Certified Member

Information

If you need this information in large print, easy read, on audiotape or in another language please call 0800 7838058 or e-mail pals@dchft.nhs.uk

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Welcome to the Surgical Admissions Unit (SAU)

The SAU is currently located on Abbotsbury surgical short stay unit, North wing, Level 2

This leaflet gives you some basic information about the unit and what you may expect.

Whilst you are with us we will endeavour to make your stay as comfortable as possible. If there is anything you require please do not hesitate to ask.

What is the Surgical Assessment Unit?

Our SAU is a bay of 4 beds designated for all new patients who are suspected of having an illness that may require surgery, and have been referred to the unit by their GP, Accident and Emergency or an outpatient clinic.

The purpose of the unit is to improve the overall experience for patients who may require surgery by reducing the time waiting for assessments and investigations. It also aims to speed up admissions to a hospital ward if you are required to stay in hospital.

This does not necessarily mean that you need an operation.

SAU is a mixed sex unit, and on occasions there will be both male and female patients for short periods of time whilst they are being assessed by the Surgical team. We would like to reassure you that safeguarding your privacy and dignity is a high priority for all our staff.

What can I expect to happen?

You will be welcomed by one of our nursing staff. They will take a brief history from you of your illness and then take your blood pressure, pulse, respiratory rate, and temperature and oxygen saturation. A routine E.C.G. (tracing of your heart) may then be obtained plus routine bloods and possibly a cannula (drip line) if you are likely to require treatment by this method. We often require a specimen of your urine so please check with the nurses before visiting the bathrooms. Also for women of child-bearing age a pregnancy test will be carried out. If you think you may be pregnant please tell the nurse.

The doctor may request an x-ray or other similar scan depending on your complaint.

If you are going to be admitted to hospital routine MRSA swabs will be taken from your nose and groin and you will be given anti-embolism stockings to wear on your legs to help prevent blood clots.

On admission to SAU all patients are asked not to eat or drink anything until a plan of care has been made. If this is going to take a long time then fluids may be given through the cannula in your arm. The nurse in the unit will inform you when you can eat and drink.

How long will I be here?

This depends on the nature of your presenting illness. Blood test results can take up to two hours and the doctors require these results before being able to make a decision about your needs. In addition, if further procedures/scans are required this may involve a longer stay. You will be seen by a doctor as soon as possible and kept informed of any plans.

If you require admission for further investigations and treatment you will be transferred to a ward most suited to your condition. Sometimes there are delays in this process and if you have any issues, please speak to the nurse working in the unit.

If you have driven yourself to the hospital the nurse on the unit will be able to give your car details to the hospital security and parking charges will be waived. If a friend or relative has brought you to the hospital then parking charges need to be paid.

Who's who?

Our uniforms and what they mean:

- Black with red piping – Matron
- Navy blue with lilac piping – Nurse Practitioner/Specialist Nurse
- Navy blue with white piping – Junior/Senior Sister
- White with red piping – Staff Nurse
- White with pale blue piping – Health Care Assistant

Visiting

Visiting hours on the SAU are the same as the inpatient ward however as the SAU is a short term unit we ask that visitors are kept to a minimum as we have limited space and wish to ensure the privacy and dignity of all of our patients. If you are moved to an inpatient ward the staff will be able to let you know about the visiting hours and rules.

We ask you politely not to sit on the patients' trolleys.

Children under 10 years of age should be discouraged from visiting due to risk of contracting infections.

As the SAU is a short stay facility you may find your relative has been transferred to another ward. This is common practice and you will be redirected upon your arrival.

How can I help with infection control?

Please use the hand gel located by sinks and placed on bedside cabinets and encourage your visitors to do the same. Please do not allow your visitors to sit on the beds; chairs are provided by the bedside.

Flowers

Dorset County Hospital policy is for no flowers for any patient on any ward. Please save your kind gifts of flowers until your family member is discharged home.

Toiletries

If you are admitted we have a small stock of toiletries, however, you may prefer to have your own brought in by family/friends.

Medication

It is helpful if you bring your own medicines in with you or if you can arrange for a family member or friend to bring them in on your behalf. They will be locked in the locker by your bed.

Property

Dorset County Hospital Trust accepts no responsibility for your property. You should be asked by a member of the nursing staff to sign your understanding of this policy. We strongly advise you to arrange to have any valuables and large amounts of money taken home for you by family/friends.

Volunteer trolley

The Hospital volunteers visit the ward Monday to Friday with a selection of toiletries, snacks and sweets should you wish to buy anything to enhance your stay.

Discharge & transport

If you are to be discharged directly from SAU there may be a delay waiting for your medicines. It is possible you will wait for these in our waiting room or in the patient discharge lounge in another part of the hospital. We will try to reduce any waiting as far as is possible.

Transport is very restricted and only certain categories of patients can access the transport service. We will always ask for a relative or friend to help with this whenever possible.

Follow up

You will receive a copy of the letter sent to your General Practitioner (GP) outlining the care provided and any follow up required.

There are a number of ways that your care could be followed up. Your team will identify if you require follow up tests or consultations after discharge these will be requested and the appointments sent to you.

Concerns, comments & complaints

If you or your relative have any concerns during your stay then please speak to a member of staff who will endeavour to rectify the situation.

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) team are available to give advice, information or help resolve a concern or complaint. They can be contacted by visiting their office on the level 1.

If you have a question or problem please do not hesitate to ask any of the nursing staff.

Telephone No: 01305 254123 or Abbotsbury Ward 01305 254830

You can comment on your hospital experience on the NHS choices website: www.nhs.uk