

Patient advice sheet

Information for Carers

At Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust (BHT) we recognise and value the role of those looking after the people we are caring for. You are family, friends, neighbours, and loved ones. Many of you are carers, and some of you won't even realise it. You are a carer if you give up your time, to look after someone who needs help because of their illness, frailty, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction and cannot cope without your support. The care you provide is unpaid, though you may be in receipt of Carer's Allowance

Want to carry on caring whilst your loved one/friend is in hospital?

If you are caring for someone, and you would like to keep supporting them while they are in our care, let us know. We will ask the patient if they are happy for you to do so. If they are not able to give their consent, then we may ask you to provide proof of Power of Attorney, Advance decision, or Deputyship.

Carer Passport

If you and the patient agree, (or a member of the nursing team if the patient doesn't have capacity), one of the ward team will talk to you and the patient about what the patient can usually manage to do and their usual routines. It would be helpful if you could share any information that will help us to provide great care, including any assessment/life story documents such as, 'This is Me.' We will discuss with you how you can continue to care and support the patient. This may include helping with things like, washing, dressing, and feeding. We will work with you so that you are aware of any restrictions or if these activities need to be carried out by or with a member of the nursing team.

Please let a member of staff know if you, or the person you care for, wear a hearing aid or have hearing difficulties. Interpreting services are available in several languages, and in British Sign Language. If your English is limited, please let a member of the ward team know and an interpreter will be requested for you.

We will ask you to complete and sign a Carer Agreement before we issue you with a Carer Passport badge, which must be returned to a member of the ward team when the person you are caring for returns home.

The Carer Passport entitles you to:

- Agree with staff about the care you want to assist with
- Visit the ward to provide care between 8am and 10pm, or longer in exceptional circumstances, such as end of life or dementia
- Reduced car parking fees (£20 for 7 days)



Promoting a safe and comfortable environment

To help us to keep all of our patients safe and comfortable we ask that you:

- Adhere to infection control processes
- Wash your hands on a regular basis
- Speak to a nurse before taking the patient out of the ward.
- Keep noise and mobile phone use to a minimum
- Respect the privacy of other patients which may mean that we ask you to leave the bedside for a short period of time

Frequently Asked Questions

Will I be able to stay overnight?

It's important that you look after your own wellbeing as well as that of the person you are caring for. We don't have spare beds available so unless there are exceptional circumstances e.g., patient is at the end of life or has dementia, it will not be possible to stay overnight, and this would have to be agreed in advance with the nurse in charge. You are welcome to stay until 10.00pm and return at 8.00am the following morning.

Will there be somewhere that I can freshen up or go to the toilet?

The ward team will let you know where the nearest sinks and public facilities can be found.

Who is responsible if the patient falls or is injured while I am caring for them?

The safety of the patient remains the responsibility of the Trust. In the event of injury or a fall, please inform a member of staff who will assist

What if I want to undertake a process that requires a high level of training/competency (e.g., bowel management for a spinal patient)

Where relevant, you will be asked to provide evidence of training having been completed. If you have been undertaking the process when the patient was at home, you may be able to continue to do so with supervision from clinical staff.

I share caring responsibilities with someone else. Can we both apply for a Carer Passport?

Yes. Each patient can have up to two Carer's Passport holders although only one of you can be attending in the capacity as a carer at any one time. Up to two people can be at a patient's bedside during normal visiting hours.

I am not the patient's next of kin. Can I still apply for a Carer Passport?



Yes. If the patient would like you to help with their care in hospital you can apply for a carer passport even if you are not the next of kin. If the patient is not able to express their wishes, staff will decide what is in the patient's best interests

If I am unwell, or at short notice can't attend for another reason, can I nominate someone else to take my place, even if they don't have a Carer Passport?

Yes. The substitute carer should discuss with a member of the ward team on arrival.

Can I use the same Carer Passport each time the patient is admitted or for outpatient appointments?

No. The Carer Passport is only valid whilst the patient is an inpatient in hospital. If the patient comes back into hospital, you will need to apply for a new Carer Passport.

I am a Young Carer. Can I apply for a Carer Passport?

You can apply for a patient passport if you are 16 or over. If you are aged between 16 and 18 you will be given a named member of staff who will support, you while you are in the ward. If you have any questions or worries while you are caring for the patient, please let the member of staff know. They will check in with you regularly to make sure you are ok.

Can I bring in food for the patient I am caring for or for myself? And if so, is there a fridge I can keep it in and somewhere that I can heat it up?

You can bring in cold or tinned food which can be stored in the ward's patient fridge. Please make sure that it is labelled with the patient's name and the date it was put in the fridge. Food should be eaten the same day and please take any leftovers home with you, or they will be thrown away. Unfortunately, we cannot heat up food either for yourself or for the person you are caring for

Will I be offered food and refreshments whilst I am on the ward?

You may be able to have a tea, coffee, or water on the ward. Please ask a member of staff. Whilst we are not able to provide you with food, there are two restaurants at Stoke Mandeville Hospital, a café and a snack bar at Wycombe Hospital, and a coffee shop at Amersham Hospital.

Will I receive discounted car parking?



You can apply for a 7-day permit, which costs £20 for the week. Please speak to a member of the ward team for a parking concession form. You will need to complete the form and take it to the main hospital reception at Stoke Mandeville Hospital or to the cashiers' office at Wycombe Hospitals. For Amersham Hospital and Buckingham Hospital, you will need to complete the form, give it back to the staff member to send by email and then call 01494 425271 to make the payment. The parking concession will be applied, and your car registered on the system.

The person I care for doesn't speak or has limited English. Can I interpret on their behalf?

You can interpret day to day conversations, but for conversations related to the patient's care and treatment, arrangements for leaving hospital, and any medical information staff will arrange an interpreting service. Please let a member of the ward team know so that we can arrange interpreting services.

I would like to provide moral/emotional support but not practical support. Can I still apply for a Carer Passport?

Yes. We understand that providing emotional support is just as important as providing practical support.

Other advice or support available to carers

Carers Bucks: supports the health and wellbeing of unpaid carers of all ages and in different caring roles. They offer telephone and in-person information, advice, guidance, and emotional support, including delivering countywide carer support groups. Carers Bucks' hospital team can support carers throughout the hospital stay and post-discharge.

Telephone: **0300 777 2722**.

Email: mail@carersbucks.org

Website: www.carersbucks.org

Patient Advice and Liaison Service: The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) at Buckingham Healthcare NHS Trust, offers confidential advice, support and information to patients and carers. We aim to resolve any concerns or problems you have as promptly as possible.

Telephone: **01296 831120**

Email: bht.pals@nhs.net

Spiritual, religious, and pastoral care: Being in hospital can be difficult and stressful for patients, and carers. It can be emotionally and spiritually unsettling, making it harder to cope with illness or injury. As chaplains we are available to come alongside patients, and carers to provide spiritual, pastoral, and religious support, whether a religious belief is held or not.



Telephone: **0129631 6675**

Patient Advice Sheet

If you would like a copy of this information on audiotape, in large print or translated, please call the Patient Advice Liaison Service on 01296 831120 or email bht.pals@nhs.net

Give your views on the Carer Passport

We are always trying to improve. Please take a moment to complete this questionnaire about your experience of the Carer Passport. Point your phone camera at the QR code below and press on the link that appears.

