

Welcome to Neuro Critical Care

Information for visitors



Adult
Critical Care



When your loved one is admitted to Neuro Critical Care, it can be a very stressful time. Though some admissions are planned, most are not. This booklet aims to provide practical information and advice on what to expect.

Why are people admitted to Neuro Critical Care (NCC)?

There are many reasons why people may need critical care. These can include a planned admission following a major operation for observation or following a sudden illness or accident. Critical Care Units are run and staffed by specialist doctors and nursing staff who have undergone extensive training in critical care.

A wide range of specialised equipment is used on Neuro Critical Care. This allows very close monitoring of vital bodily functions and temporary support of those functions that cannot be maintained by the patient.

Neuro Critical Care at Leeds General Infirmary has two areas:

- **ICU** - The Intensive Care Unit. There is one nurse looking after one patient.
- **HDU** - The High Dependency Unit. There is one nurse looking after two patients.

NICU and NHDU are next to each other on C Floor of Jubilee Wing in Leeds General Infirmary. The full address and contact numbers can be found on the last page of this information leaflet.

What happens on admission and what can I expect?

When your relative is transferred to us we need to assess their immediate needs, stabilise their condition and make them comfortable. This can take some time and may mean that you cannot visit for some time after your relative is admitted. We appreciate that you will be anxious to see your loved one and that it can be frustrating waiting for news. We aim to keep you informed of progress and will allow you to visit as soon as possible.

When you enter the unit for the first time there is a lot to take in. The environment is noisy and your relative may be connected to monitors, drips and machines. Your nurse will explain what all these various machines and lines are used for.

You may hear buzzers and see numbers on the monitors flash. Try not to be worried by this, as this gives an early prompt to alert the nurses to the slightest changes in the patient's condition.

Please ensure that you wear a mask when inside the Hospital.

Arriving at the Unit

Once you have arrived at the unit, please push the intercom entry button outside the unit main door and state who you are visiting. A member of the ward staff will answer the intercom and ask who you have come to see.

There may be a delay in answering the intercom, especially if the unit is busy. If no-one answers after a few minutes, ring again. A member of staff will greet you at these doors; they will then ask to take your temperature. The staff member will assist you with putting on gloves and an apron to enter the ward; they will then show you to the correct bed space.

Please be aware we need to know who is on the units for fire safety and security reasons, and Covid restrictions, so we would be grateful that you do not let people on the unit before they have spoken to staff.

Infection Prevention & Control

Please remember to remove your apron and gloves, wash your hands at the wash basins found at the unit entrance when entering and leaving the unit. This simple measure helps us with the prevention and control of infection. If you have any concerns regarding hand hygiene please feel free to discuss these with a member of staff.

Visiting

Visiting relatives on Neuro Critical Care is important for both relatives and patients. However, we recommend that as much as possible, visitors should be restricted to immediate family or very close friends. Visiting can be emotional and exhausting for both visitor and patient. Due to on-going Covid restrictions, at present we only allow one, two hourly visit per day per patient and we will only allow two visitors onto the unit.

NCC visiting times are either:

13.00 - 15.00 or 17.00 - 19.00

Please telephone the unit each morning to book your visiting slot, we cannot always guarantee your preferred visiting time, however, we will do all we can to accommodate this.

It is also important for you to get lots of rest and to have regular drinks and meals. The nurses and doctors will look after your relative, but it is important that you look after yourself so you are strong when your relative needs you.

Some children find the experience upsetting and we would ask you, as parents, to judge what your child would cope with. We have information books for children about Intensive Care; please ask your nurse if you would like a copy. We ask you to use your own discretion and consider the risks of infection to a young immune system when deciding whether to bring a baby to visit.

Food and Drink

Smoking is not permitted anywhere within the hospital grounds. For reasons of health and safety, please do not bring hot food or takeaways into the visitor's rooms. We know from experience strong food smells have caused distress to families and have been difficult to eradicate.

Shops at Leeds General Infirmary

On the next page you will find details of all the shops located at Leeds General Infirmary.

Jubilee Wing

Fontanella Coffee House

The coffee house offers a wide selection of hot and cold drinks, hot snacks including breakfast & lunch pots (perfect for when you're in a hurry!) Alongside, sandwiches, salads, cakes and snacks

Eatwell Express

Small convenience store offering newspapers, magazines, cards, stamps, gifts, essentials, small selection of groceries, hot grab & go snacks, sandwich meal deals, hot drinks and a large range of bottled/canned drinks.

Eatwell Restaurant (C floor)

The restaurant is open Monday to Friday; 7:30am to 6pm and 8am to 2pm at the weekend.

The restaurant serves a delicious array of food, all of which is freshly prepared onsite using the finest ingredients by our Head Chef and the team.

Breakfast service is from 7:30am to 11:15am and offers a traditional full English, a toasting station, porridge, pastries and fresh bean to cup coffee.

Talking to and touching your relative

Your relative may be unconscious as a result of their illness or the drugs given to them to keep them comfortable. They may be able to hear you even if they cannot respond. Although it may feel strange, talk to them normally to let them know you are there, as they are more likely to respond to a familiar voice. Though the equipment and tubes may be unnerving, remember they are still the person you know underneath.

You may wish to hold their hand; the nurse will show you how to do this safely. One of the results of being sedated during Intensive Care is that patients may not have any memory of that time. Some relatives have found it helpful to keep a diary of the patient's stay in Intensive Care, and we can help you with this. These diaries have been shown to be helpful in the patient's recovery as they will aid their understanding of what happened to them during their illness. Please speak to your nurse if this is of interest to you.

What can I bring my relative?

Patients often appreciate their own personal items and toiletries, dentures, spectacles and hearing aids to make communication easier. Photographs and cards from well-wishers are welcome, although there is limited room at the bed-spaces. Any other property will need to be taken home, due to lack of space and storage facilities. Anything of value, especially money or jewellery, will be sent to the hospital cashiers for safe keeping. Unfortunately we cannot allow fresh flowers or plants on the unit.

Communication with the Unit

The Neuro Critical Care Team will keep you informed of your relative's progress. The members of the team will always do their best to answer your questions fully and promptly. If you would like to speak to the doctors caring for your relative, please ask the nurse at the bedside, who will be able to arrange this for you. At busy times there may be a delay before one of the medical team is available. We appreciate that families want to be updated on their loved ones condition and progress. However we are unable to give lots of information over the telephone for reasons of confidentiality. Experience has shown that communication works more

effectively if the family nominates one person as the contact point and they in turn can then pass on relevant information to others. This reduces the number of telephone calls, and hence interruptions, for the team caring for your relative. Some families set up family passwords so they can be sure we are giving information to the correct person, if you would like us to set this up, please ask your nurse.

Mobile telephones

Mobile phones can affect equipment. Please turn off your mobile phone and do not use it anywhere in the Unit except in the visitors' waiting rooms. We respectfully ask you not to take photographs or use any other recording device. Please charge your phones before visiting and do not leave charging in visitors rooms, as your charger may present a fire risk

Parking

Parking is available on the LGI site but it is extremely limited. Please speak to the Nursing Staff regarding Parking Permits that may be available to you.

Religious Support

Pastoral care and support are available to patients and their relatives, regardless of faith or beliefs. If requested a chaplain will visit patients and relatives on the Unit.

Sickness benefit

Please ask a member of staff if you need a letter of confirmation that your relative is an in-patient on the Unit. Your local Social Services Department can provide advice with benefits or support with family issues whilst your relative is a patient on ICU.

Neuro Critical Care Team

- **Matron and Senior Sisters** – Navy blue uniform - Matron has red piping. These are the most experienced and senior nurses on the ward. They manage and oversee resources and ensure the care of patients is maintained in line with national guidelines, policies and procedures.
- **Ward Sisters** – Royal blue uniform. Take charge of a shift and ensure the smooth running of the unit.
- **Staff Nurses** – Sky blue uniform. They are registered nurses who plan and evaluate care and set realistic and achievable rehabilitation goals with teams and therapists.
- **Physiotherapist** – Navy blue theatre scrubs. The physiotherapist will help with mobility, balance and confidence, they will give advice towards progress and rehabilitation.
- **Health Care Assistant** – Pale green uniform. These support the registered nurses and therapists in delivering and implementing care, and assist your loved one in achieving his/her goal.
- **Advances Nurse Practitioner** - Theatre blues. These are very experienced nurses with a background in intensive care, accident and emergency or cardiac services.
- **Anaesthetists and Neuro Surgeons** – Theatre scrubs. Our medics offer a 24 hour service and one is always on the unit.
- **Ward Clerk** – Navy blue and white blouse. Provide administrative support to the ward.
- **Housekeeping** – Pale blue uniform- Provide continuous upkeep of the ward areas.

We appreciate this is a difficult time for all Family, Friends & Carers, but we do not tolerate physical or verbal abuse of any kind towards our staff members.

We would ask you to also please be aware that patients can suddenly deteriorate and we may ask you if needed to leave a bed space or ward area.

We hope this information leaflet will be helpful to you, please do not hesitate to speak with any of the critical care staff with any queries you may have.

Useful contacts

Neuro Critical Care

C Floor, Jubilee Wing,
Leeds General Infirmary,
Great George Street,
Leeds, LS1 3EX

ICU / Ward L3: 0113 392 7403 or 0113 392 5768

HDU / Ward L2: 0113 392 7402 or 0113 392 6795

Matron:

Laura Sedgley

Senior Sisters / Charge Nurses:

- Carla Smith
- Emma Millbanks
- Alison Rourke
- Sam Beard
- Mick Stone
- Sarah Wild

Comments or Complaints

If you would like to discuss any aspect of care on the unit or if you have a complaint, please contact the Clinical Service Manager or the Ward Matron so that we can try to resolve the situation.



© The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust • 2nd edition (Ver 3)
Developed by: Laura Sedgley, Senior Sister & Steve King, Matron
Produced by: Medical Illustration Services • MID code: 20220608_005/EP

LN004453
Publication date
06/2022
Review date
06/2024