



## Ward patient information

Watford General Hospital  
Hemel Hempstead Hospital  
St Albans City Hospital

*Welcome to the*  
***Acute Admissions***  
***Unit (AAU)***  
*Watford General Hospital*

This leaflet can be made available in Braille, symbol / picture format or produced in another language – please contact PALS (Patient Advice & Liaison Service on 01923 217198)

West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust

Acute Admissions Unit (AAU)  
Watford General Hospital  
Vicarage Road  
Watford  
Herts  
WD18 0HB

**Tel: 01923 217778**

## Welcome – We are here to help

We understand that having to stay in hospital can be a stressful and worrying time for you and your relatives or carer. We will endeavour to make your hospital stay as comfortable and stress free as possible.

## Acute Admissions Unit (AAU)

The AAU is situated at the rear of Accident and Emergency and comprises 120 beds. AAU is divided into two levels, Level 1 and Level 3.

Level 1 is the admitting area in which your initial assessment takes place and Level 3 is a short stay Ward, dedicated to patients who require admission for only a few days.

During your time in the AAU, you may be moved between suites, depending on your medical needs.

## AAU Contact Details

It is best to ring after 11am when making enquiries, as by this time the Doctor will usually have seen all the patients and recommendations for their care and treatment will have been made.

Please note that we are unable to give diagnosis or personal information over the phone, in line with NHS policy on confidentiality.

**AAU Main reception:** 01923 217778

**AAU Level 1 Reception:** 01923 436623

**AAU Level 1 Green bay:** 01923 217473

**AAU Level 1 Purple bay:** 01923 436626

**AAU Level 1 Yellow bay:** 01923 436611

**AAU Level 1 Blue bay:** 01923 436610

**AAU Level 3 Main Reception:** 01923 217760

**AAU Level 3 Green bay:** 01923 436681

**AAU Level 3 Purple bay:** 01923 436100

**AAU Level 3 Yellow bay:** 01923 436669

**AAU Level 3 Blue bay:** 01923 217065

## The Spiritual and Pastoral Care Team

The hospital's Spiritual and Pastoral Team is multi-faith and provide pastoral, spiritual and religious care for your needs, as well as your relatives and carers.

If you would like a member of the Spiritual and Pastoral Care Team to visit you, please ask a member of staff to arrange this for you. Should you wish to make contact with your own religious leader, please also ask a member of staff to assist you with this.

## Going Home

- Please arrange for a relative, carer or friend to collect you.
- If you have no one to take you home, please speak to a member of staff.
- Please note that we do not routinely provide transport to take you home.

Please also arrange to have some outdoor clothes, brought in prior to leaving the Ward, as we recommend that patients don't go home in their night clothes.

You may be taken to the Discharge Lounge while you wait to be discharged. This is a warm and friendly environment, situated by the main reception area of PMoK. The Lounge has a TV and magazines and while you are waiting there, meals, snacks and refreshments will be made available to you.

Your discharge from hospital will be thoroughly discussed with you, by your Named Nurse and a discharge pack will be given to you, giving you helpful information.

*The Nursing Staff of AAU*

## Admission to AAU

If the decision to admit you to AAU is made, you will be allocated to one of the four suites; they are divided and identified by colours: Green, Purple, Blue and Yellow.

Once you have seen an AAU Consultant you may be referred to a specialist Consultant. At this point a decision will be made as to which Ward would be most suitable for your care.

Please be aware that the average length of stay on AAU Level 1 is 24 hours, while you wait for a bed suitable for your medical needs. In exceptional circumstances, you may be transferred to another Ward during the night. Please note that every effort is made to avoid late night transfers.

## Staff Uniforms

<b>Matron:</b>	grey / red trim
<b>Senior Sister:</b>	navy blue with white spots
<b>Sister:</b>	navy blue
<b>Specialist Nurses:</b>	navy blue / red trim
<b>Staff Nurses:</b>	pale blue & white striped
<b>Student Nurses:</b>	royal blue
<b>Senior Health Care Assistant:</b>	burgundy
<b>Health Care Assistant:</b>	grey
<b>House Keeper:</b>	lilac & white striped
<b>Patient Administrator:</b>	non-uniform
<b>Cleaner:</b>	<b>men</b> navy blue/ <b>women</b> white & blue striped

## Infection Control

Everyone needs to play their part in preventing and controlling the spread of infection.

Please help us to protect you and others by cleaning your hands before you enter the Ward, using the alcohol hand gel. Please also clean your hands before you leave the Ward, by washing with soap and water or use the alcohol hand gel.

*Please encourage your relatives and visitors to do the same.  
Don't forget, it is okay to ask us if we have cleaned our hands!*

## Visiting Times

AAU has different visiting hours depending on which level you are receiving your care. To reduce noise and overcrowding we operate a two visitors per patient policy. In exceptional circumstances the number of relatives, carers or friends visiting a patient can be increased and this must be discussed with the Nurse in Charge.

**AAU Level 1:** 11am to 8pm

**AAU Level 3:** 2pm to 8pm

## Meal Times

Hot and cold drinks are served to patients throughout the day and there is a beverage trolley serving hot drinks for visitors on the AAU.

**Please note that patients who are remaining on AAU for over 24 hours will be offered a hot meal.**

**Breakfast:** 6.30am to 7.15am

**Lunch:** 12pm to 1pm

**Supper:** 5pm to 6pm

## Snack Boxes

Snack boxes are available for patients during the day and evening. Please ask a member of staff for details.

## Mobile Trolley Service

This service visits the Ward twice a day, morning and afternoon, where you are able to buy newspapers, toiletries and confectionery.

## Retail Outlets

- **League of Friends Tea Bar:** Level 2, Outpatients Department
- **League of Friends Tea Shop:** Vicarage Road, main hospital entrance
- **W H Smiths:** Level 2, by Main Reception
- **Spice of Life Restaurant:** Opposite Main Reception

## Day of Operation

If you have been advised that you are going to have an operation, please ensure that one member of the family is delegated to ring the Ward, on the day of your operation, who can then update other relatives and friends on your progress.

## Valuables

While we encourage you not to bring in valuables to hospital, we appreciate that many of our patients may wish to have their mobile phones and iPods with them. These items will be listed on a Patients' Property sheet, which you will be asked to sign and provided with a copy.

Please arrange for a relative, friend or carer to take anything of value home if you don't need it.

## Ear Plugs

These are available for all patients to help get a good night's sleep. Please ask a member of staff should you require these.

## Mobile Phones

Patients may use mobile phones, but we would appreciate if you would keep them on silent mode during your stay and use them appropriately, so as not to disturb other patients.

## Parking

Concessionary parking is available for carers and visitors. Please ask a member of staff for details.

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

The hospital's PALS team is available to patients, carers, relatives or friends who wish to raise concerns regarding your stay in hospital. PALS can also provide information about support groups, concessionary travel costs and other benefits.

PALS can be contacted on 01923 217198. Alternatively, please ask a member of staff to contact PALS on your behalf, who can visit you on the Ward. PALS staff are available Monday to Friday, 10am to 4pm.

## Senior Staff Team

If you have any worries or concerns regarding your care or your stay in hospital, a Senior Sister is available 7 days a week from 7.15am to 7.45 pm. Please just ask one of the nursing staff to arrange this for you.

**Matron of the AAU:** Angela White

**Senior Sisters:** Maxine Bucknor-Haye, Andrea Bunyard, Rachel Reed and Karen Skinner.

## Assessment on AAU

On your arrival, your details will be confirmed by a Patient Administrator. You will then be greeted by a Sister and taken through to the Assessment Bay, which is situated on Level 1, in the Purple Suite, where your initial assessment will take place.

Please ensure during this time that you do not eat or drink anything without first checking with a member of nursing staff.

A nurse will take a set of observations during this process (and any other diagnostic procedures specific to your presenting condition, for example a blood test).

Once you have been assessed, you will then be required to wait for a Doctor to examine you. It is possible that you could be sent for an X-ray, scan and other tests to help the Doctors decide what treatment you need. Therefore you may remain in this area until all these results are ready for the Doctors to review.

Most of these tests can be performed within the AAU. Depending on when you arrive in the unit, you will be seen by the Consultant on duty on the morning or afternoon Ward round.

Once we have received the results of your tests and investigations and you have been reviewed by the Consultant / Registrar, a decision will be made as to whether you need to stay in hospital or can go home.

If you have any questions about your care during your stay on the AAU, please ask to speak to the Nurse in Charge.