

The Children's Observation Unit (COU)

Welcome to the COU

We are the children's observation unit caring for children from ages 0 to 16 years. We provide care for children attending hospital for medical or surgical procedures with the aim of discharge home within 24 hours of admission. Some children arrive for booked surgical procedures and some following treatment in the Emergency Department. We also see children attending for minor tests, clinics and reviews.

Contact details

Telephone: 01223 348313

Directions from the main reception

Turn right as you enter through the revolving door at the hospital main entrance. Turn left and walk past the hairdresser, across the corridor and the lifts and stairs are on the left. Take the lifts or stairs up one floor to level 3. Turn right out of the lifts or stairs and turn right again along the long corridor. The Children's Observation Unit is located on the left-hand side, signposted EAU 3 Children's Observation Unit.

Opening hours

Our service currently runs 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Ward facilities

- Shower and toilet.
- Play room (please ensure your child is supervised at all times).
- Lunch is served between 12:00 and 12:30. There is a selection of cold sandwiches, crisps, yoghurts and fruit for your child to choose from daily. You do not have to pre order food unless your child has any special dietary requirements.
- Evening meals are served in the same way as lunch between 17:00 and 17:30, but this is a choice of a hot meal.
- If your child has any dietary requirements please telephone the ward prior to your child's admission to let us know and ensure these requirements are documented by your nurse on admission.
- We are able to provide some brands of formula milk for babies. Specialised milk feeds may be organised by our dieticians. Please advise your Nurse as soon as possible to allow for this to be arranged.

- Breast-feeding mothers will be provided with their meals.
- If your child misses a meal then a hot meal can be provided outside of the regular meal times and a selection of cold snacks will be available. Please ask your nurse, nursery nurse or ward assistant for a missed meal menu at anytime.
- Food and drinks may be brought in from home and kept on the ward in the fridge or freezer. Please ensure that they are labelled with name and date.

On your arrival

Your allocated nurse will show you around the ward and ask for information about your child to enable them to care for your child appropriately. You will be given the opportunity to ask questions at any time throughout your child's stay. If your child is admitted for a surgical procedure, he/she will be allocated a bed space, when one is available, so that you can begin to make yourself and your child comfortable.

Visiting hours

- We strive to work in partnership with parents and carers and have accommodation for one parent to stay overnight on the unit with their child. There are no set visiting times, however only two adults can be present at the bedside at any given time. One sibling/ child may visit after discussion with the nurse in charge. After eight pm we ask visitors to be kept to parents/carers and immediate family only, as this is when most children want to settle down for bed, and we try to keep the noise level down.

When you have visitors, please be considerate of other patients who may be feeling very unwell. A lot of noise or commotion may prevent them from resting.

Plan of care

Following admission, either from home or from the emergency department, your allocated nurse will complete some paperwork, checking details with you. Following this, they will take and record your child's pulse rate, temperature, breathing rate and weight. These are important measurements to ensure that your child is fit and healthy for the procedure. They also provide a baseline prior to undertaking any procedure or investigations.

If your child is having an operation, the doctors (both medical and surgical specialities) and anaesthetist (if necessary) will then visit you and your child on the ward. Complete the consent form outlining the procedure to be undertaken, having fully explained everything to you. This will give you the opportunity to ask questions regarding the procedure.

When your allocated theatre slot is ready, the porters will arrive on the unit to collect your child and take him/her to theatre, along with a member of staff from the unit. One parent is allowed into the anaesthetic room in addition to the nurse, and can comfort your child whilst he/she are given the anaesthetic. The nurses will then take you to the recovery area where you will receive a pager so that they can contact you when your child is waking up. This allows you to be able to get some food and a drink whilst your child is in theatre.

If your child is not having an operation you will have been informed by the doctors of the plan of care, as all children are different.

Infection control

- If you or your visitors are unwell **please do not** come onto the ward. Some of our patients are vulnerable to infections due to their illnesses.
- If you or any of your visitors have diarrhoea or vomiting please inform your nurse and prepare to go home. Visitors must be clear of infection for 48 hours.
- Alcohol gel is provided throughout the ward. To help us prevent the spread of infection please use this on entering and leaving. On occasion the nursing staff may inform you of the need to wash your hands with soap and water instead of using the gel.
- Please limit the amount of property you bring with you, as cluttered bed spaces are difficult to clean.
- Addenbrooke's has a number of advice leaflets for patients and their visitors about infection control. They can be accessed from the Addenbrooke's website:
http://www.addenbrookes.org.uk/patient_visitors/information_leaflets/library/list_i.html

If you do not have access to the internet, please contact PALS on 01223 216756 or extension 2756.

Who to contact for further advice/questions

For further information about the Children's Observation Unit please contact the ward clerk or ward manager 01223 348313.

To discuss care issues please contact the ward manager or nurse in charge.



We are currently working towards a smoke free site. Smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas.

For advice and support in quitting, contact your GP or the free NHS stop smoking helpline on 0800 169 0 169

Help with this leaflet:



If you would like this information in another language, large print or audio format, please ask the department to contact Patient Information: 01223 216032 or patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Polish

Jeżeli chciałbyś uzyskać te informacje w innym języku, w dużej czcionce lub w formacie audio, poproś pracownika oddziału o kontakt z biurem Informacji Pacjenta (Patient Information) pod numerem telefonu: 01223 216032 lub pod adresem patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Portuguese

Se precisar desta informação noutra língua, em impressão de letras grandes ou formato áudio, por favor peça ao departamento que contacte a secção de Informação aos Doentes (Patient Information) pelo telefone 01223 216032 ou através do e-mail patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Arabic

إذا كنت تود الحصول على هذه المعلومات بلغة أخرى، بالأحرف الكبيرة أو بشكل شريط صوتي، يمكنك أن تطلب من القسم الاتصال بمعلومات المريض على الرقم: 01223216032 أو عبر البريد الإلكتروني: patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Cantonese

如您需以另一語言版本、特大字體或錄音形式索取本資料，請要求部門聯絡病人諮詢服務：電話 01223 216032，電郵地址 patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Turkish

Eğer bu bilgileri başka bir dilde veya büyük baskılı veya sesli olarak isterseniz, lütfen bulunduğunuz bölümdeki görevlilere söyleyin Hasta Bilgilendirme servisini arasinlar: 01223 216032 veya patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Urdu

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی دیگر زبان میں، بڑے الفاظ میں یا آڈیو طریقہ سے درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی اس شعبہ سے پیشینٹ انفارمیشن سے ذیل کے ذریعہ رابطہ کرنے کی درخواست کریں: 01223 216032 یا patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk

Bengali

আপনি যদি এই তথ্য অন্য কোন ভাষায়, বড় অক্ষরে বা অডিও রেকর্ডিং পেতে চান তাহলে 'প্যাশেন্ট ইনফরমেশান' এর সঙ্গে 01223 216032 নম্বরে ফোন করে বা patient.information@addenbrookes.nhs.uk ঠিকানায় ই-মেইল করে যোগাযোগ করার জন্য ডিপার্টমেন্টটিতে অনুরোধ জানান।

Document history

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