

Information for patients sent into hospital by their GP

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please telephone the PALS desk on 01271 314090.

Welcome to the Emergency Department (ED).

Your GP has contacted the in-patient specialist team here at North Devon District Hospital and they are expecting your arrival. As soon as a bed becomes available, you will be taken to the ward.

Patients with medical conditions usually go to the Medical Assessment Unit (MAU). Patients who referred to other specialists go to Fortescue, King George V or Lundy Ward.

As you are expected by the specialists, you will not be seen by the ED doctors unless you need immediate attention.

However, you will be seen here in ED by the 'triage' nurse, who will ask a little about your condition and may take your pulse and blood pressure. They will check the severity of your condition, offer you pain-killers if needed, and tell you whether or not you can have anything to eat or drink.

The triage nurse will tell the specialist team that you have arrived. If necessary you will also be allocated a nurse who will carry out detailed checks such as a heart trace, and any blood tests that are needed.

You will then need to wait either in the waiting room or in a cubicle until the specialist doctor can see you. They will try to get here as quickly as possible, but if a bed becomes available before then you will go straight to the ward.

We will always make every effort to make sure you do not have to spend more than four hours in ED. However, if the hospital is very busy, or you are poorly and need treatment that is best given here, you may be in the ED for longer.

Please feel free to ask your nurse or other staff members if you or your family need more information about your care at any time.

As we are an emergency department, we do not have the facility to provide you with a hot meal.

Please bear in mind that patients are seen in triage order, not necessarily according to their time of arrival, so people who arrive later may be seen before you if they need more-urgent treatment.

ED is a busy and unpredictable environment and can get very busy with little warning. Please remember that patients arrive by foot, ambulance and helicopter and may require life-saving treatment from our staff.

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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