

The right to stay with the person you care for

- Carers should have access to their loved one whenever they are needed
- The needs of the person being cared for are at the centre of this access principle
- Carers should be welcomed
- Carers have a right – but not a duty – to be with the person they care for
- Carers are there to nurture, not to nurse

• STAY •
WITH ME

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Email: dhc.pals@nhs.net

Tel: 0800 587 4997

For further advice and support regarding caring please contact: dhc.carer.support@nhs.net

The information in this leaflet is available in additional languages and alternative formats. Please contact the Trust for further details.

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NHS

Dorset HealthCare
University
NHS Foundation Trust

Information for carers

While the person you care for is in hospital



Dorset HealthCare University NHS Foundation Trust

Sentinel House
4–6 Nuffield Road
Poole, Dorset
BH17 0RB
☎ 01202 277000

🐦 @DorsetHealth
🌐 www.dorsethealthcare.nhs.uk

Information
for patients,
relatives and carers

Excellence
Compassion
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Welcome

At Dorset HealthCare we define a carer as 'a person who provides unpaid help and support to a partner, child, relative or friend who could not manage without this help'.

We value and support carers and we'd like to welcome you in all of our services.

We will help you continue in your caring role, if you wish, while the person you care for is in hospital.

This leaflet aims to provide guidance for visitors and carers that is respectful and appropriate for everyone and helps ensure that patients receive the best care from all of us. We recognise that patients may benefit from having the support of their usual carer while they are in hospital. We believe carers should have additional support to continue in their important role. This is different to a hospital visitor who would adhere to the regular guidelines for visiting patients.

Support to carers

We are committed to the principle that carers should have access to their loved one whenever they are needed, be welcomed and be there to nurture, not nurse.

Carer's Passport

We've developed a carer's passport that enables you to be with the person you care for on the ward outside regular visiting hours. Once you've identified yourself to staff as a carer you should wear your 'passport' at all times outside regular ward visiting hours.



Our staff welcome your presence in the early morning, during the day and later in the evening with any assistance you would like to offer. Currently overnight stays are at the discretion of ward staff.

Nursing and medical staff will carry out numerous reviews and assessments every day and are happy for you to be included in these with the consent of the person you care for. There may be times when a more detailed discussion is needed so a specific appointment may sometimes be arranged with you. There may also be situations in the hospital which affect your carer role and we will discuss these with you.

What we ask of you

Infection control: please help to prevent the spread of infection by always washing your hands with soap and water and using alcohol hand rubs when visiting the hospital. If you have any infectious condition, including coughs, colds, diarrhoea or vomiting, please contact staff for advice before visiting. Staff will inform you of any infection control issues relating to the person you care for.

Confidentiality: Please respect other patients' confidentiality by leaving the ward when asked (e.g. when another patient's information may be overheard).

- If there is more than one identified carer please co-ordinate with each other and stagger your presence to best meet the needs of the person you care for.
- Please use the bedside chair rather than sitting or lying on the bed.
- Always check with a member of staff before touching wounds or any medical equipment.
- Please don't try to use manual handling aids - staff are specially trained to use this equipment.
- Please don't use the patients' toilets - Instead ask where the nearest public toilets are.
- Please don't share things like toiletries, tissues or items of hospital equipment.
- Please ensure that you are fit and well to carry out your carer role in the hospital.
- Please be mindful of other patients in the ward environment. Each patient receives care specifically tailored to their needs.
- Please do not assist other patients with their needs.
- If you have any concerns or need to discuss anything please speak to the nurse in charge or contact the PALS (see contacts overleaf)