

# Information for patients and carers

Maintaining safety while the number of  
patients using our hospitals is  
increasing.

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## What does an increasing number of patients mean?

Now more patients are being admitted than discharged in our hospitals.

This is caused by several factors, which includes but is not limited to:

- An increasing number of frail people in our communities who require care to prevent them coming into hospital or need addition care when leaving the hospital
- An increase in the number of people who are attending our emergency departments either through acute illness such as flu or trauma due to the weather or outdoor activities
- The availability of social care to respond to the same increasing number of patients who have complex needs

## Responding to an increasing number of patients

Our hospitals have several plans they use when there is an increase in the number of patients. We expect this increase at certain times of the year and our plans usually help us to respond to this with minimal disruption to patients, families, and services.

Since the pandemic, our hospitals have been working hard to restore services to pre pandemic levels, but this recovery continues to place extra pressure on all our services. Our patients and families feel this in the form of extra waiting times or cancellation of services that were previously easier to access.

## What you can expect

For some patients attending the Emergency Department, there may be a need to see and assess you in areas outside of the department. You may experience long waiting times and need to move from areas you have been assessed in to allow other patients to be assessed.

For some patients in wards, there may be a need to care for you in a temporary bed space. Please be assured the time you spend will be as short as possible and we will be able to provide you with privacy when you require this.

Staff will be allocated to observe you in the areas. These areas may not have access to normal facilities. **Please ask for what you need, please do not be deterred by how busy it may feel.**

These actions are not something that are undertaken lightly and are carefully monitored to ensure any risks are managed. These are complex decisions to make which are continuously reviewed. We want to be open with our patients, families, and colleagues about why we are doing some of these things and that our intention is to always return to normal working as quickly as possible.

## Listening to you

We want to encourage you to talk to us about anything that is worrying you. We will do all we can to ensure you are treated effectively and are as comfortable as possible during these times. You can speak to any member of our teams if you are concerned. There is always a shift leader on duty who you can ask to speak to should the nurse looking after you be unable to address any concerns. In addition to this there is a ward or department manager or in their absence the matron can be contacted.

## How can I help?

Patients and families can help by ensuring that they plan for what will happen when they are being discharged from our care. Organising bedrooms, equipment, carers, food shopping and clothing for the day of discharge, are simple but important things that delay people being discharged in the mornings.

Please talk to your nurse about anything you think may prevent you from being discharged when you are ready.  
Work with us, understand we are trying our best and that we want you to feel safe, listened to and well cared for.

Assume the good in our teams, please understand it is not their decision to work in this way and talk to us if you are worried so we can take prompt action.

## Contact details

Should you require further advice or information please contact the ward or department manager, alternatively, the matron is available to speak to, their mobile details are at the entrance to the ward or can be obtained from the shift leader.

If you do not feel able to speak to the people caring for you or your loved one, please contact our patient advice and liaison services (PALS):

Phone number: 01772 522972

Email: [PALS@LTHTR.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@LTHTR.nhs.uk)

Monday to Friday, 9am-4pm (excluding Bank Holidays)

Follow PALS on X: @LthtrPals

The Patient Experience and PALS Team provides support for our patients, their families, and carers. They aim to:

- Actively listen and respond to concerns, suggestions, or queries to help improve patient experience
- Provide information on NHS Services

- Offer advice on the NHS complaints process and provide information on how to seek independent advice if you wish to make a complaint
- Feedback your views to the relevant staff, Chief Executive and Trust Board
- Help the organisation learn from feedback and concerns to improve your experience

You can contact our friendly team, Monday - Friday between 9am - 4pm (excluding bank holidays):

- By email: [PALS@lthtr.nhs.uk](mailto:PALS@lthtr.nhs.uk)
- By phone **01772 522972**

## Sources of further information

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk)  
[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)  
[www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)  
[www.patient.co.uk](http://www.patient.co.uk)

**Follow us on social media @lancshospitals**

**Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust is not responsible for the content of external internet sites.**

All our patient information leaflets are available on our website for patients to access and download:

[www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets](http://www.lancsteachinghospitals.nhs.uk/patient-information-leaflets)

Lancashire Teaching Hospitals is a smoke-free site. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on any of our premises, either inside or outside the buildings. Our staff will ask you about your smoking status when you come to hospital and will offer you support and advice about stopping smoking this will include Nicotine Replacement Therapy to help manage your symptoms of withdrawal and the opportunity to speak to a nurse or advisor from the specialist Tobacco and Alcohol Care Team.

If you want to stop smoking, you can also contact Smokefree Lancashire on Freephone **08081962638**

**Please ask a member of staff if you would like help in understanding this information.**

**This information can be made available in large print, audio, Braille and in other languages.**

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**Division:** Corporate Safety and Quality

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