



York and Scarborough
Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Information for carers of people in hospital

① For more information, please contact:
Patient Experience Team: 01904 721007 or
yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net

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Introduction

1. Are you a carer?

Carers can be any age. They may help with personal care, medication, cooking, shopping, housework and emotional support. They are parents, grandparents, children, partners, family members, friends or neighbours. They help someone who cannot manage on their own because of illness, disability, addiction or age.

2. Supporting carers

York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust recognises the vital role carers play in supporting their relative/friend when they are in hospital.

We support the right of all carers to visit and support their relative/friend and help support them in hospital.

This leaflet provides tips on how to work with hospital staff to ensure your relative/friend has the best possible care in hospital. It also lists support available from local carers organisations.

Information for carers of people in hospital

1. John's Campaign in our hospitals

This is a national initiative that supports the carers of people with dementia, or any other patient who is deemed to be vulnerable, to continue to care for them when in hospital. Vulnerable patients can include people with a sensory impairment, communication need, autistic people, people who experience anxiety or other mental health condition(s), people who have a learning disability and people with other disabilities or complex needs.

John's Campaign means a carer becomes a 'care partner' and then works closely with hospital staff to support the patient. A care partner can be on the ward beyond normal visiting times and support their relative/friend with washing and at mealtimes as appropriate. Care partners can access free car parking for 14 days by taking your Care Partner card to the appropriate car park to register your vehicle.

To find out more, talk to the senior nurse on the ward, see the John's campaign leaflet on our website (<https://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/seecmsfile/?id=1911>), scan the QR code or find information on wards.



2. What matters to me

Whatever the situation for your relative/friend, it is really helpful if hospital staff know important information about them including their needs, likes, dislikes and interests. This is called 'what matters to me'.

If your relative/friend is admitted to hospital, or even if they are in A&E, 'what matters to me' will help staff provide the best care for them.

The form should include information about their underlying conditions, medication, allergies and the best way to communicate. It can provide details about what they like to eat and drink and when; their usual routine or the belongings/things that help them feel comfortable.

If you complete a 'what matters to me' for your relative/friend, show it to the appropriate staff, including ambulance staff, if needed.

Many organisations have these forms including the Alzheimer's Society ([this_is_me_1553.pdf](#) (alzheimers.org.uk)), but you can also create your own listing important information.

Hospital staff may be able to help you get copies.

Tips for when the person you care for is in hospital

1. Admission, including via A&E (Emergency Department)

- Things can take time. If your relative/friend comes via A&E, they may have to go to other departments, including the Emergency Medical Unit (EMU) before going to a ward. This is usually for tests to be done to help with diagnosis.
- It is normal for a diagnosis to happen when someone is on a ward.
- It may take time for your relative/friend to be admitted to a ward. This could be because of hospital pressures meaning there are not always beds available for all patients. Our staff will work hard to find a bed for your relative/friend. They will tell you when there is any news.
- Your relative/friend may be admitted to one ward on a temporary basis until a bed is available on the appropriate ward. Ask staff if you are not sure what is happening.

2. Contacting the ward and getting information

- Visit our website for more information about visiting areas with special requirements:
<https://www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/visiting/>

- The best time to phone the ward for an update is in the afternoon after 2pm. In the morning, staff are getting people up and dressed, providing breakfast and lunch. Mornings are also when doctors visit patients. Please avoid calling at mealtimes: breakfast 7.30am-9am and lunch 12 noon-1.15pm.
- If you are part of a large group supporting your relative/friend, please identify one or two key contacts who can ask for information and take part in meetings as appropriate. Give the ward staff the key contacts' names and contact details.
- If your relative/friend doesn't have capacity (the ability to make decisions about their care), the person who is recorded as next of kin will be the main point of contact for information and questions about their care.
- You may not always be able to speak to your relative/friend's doctor. However, nurses on the ward can give you the latest information.
- Depending on the time you or others speak to the ward staff you may get different information about your relative/friend. Please always take the most recent information as the most accurate. If you aren't sure, please ask one of the ward staff.
- If there are any issues about who should or shouldn't have information about your relative/friend, the staff team will agree with your relative/friend (if they have capacity, or their next of kin if not) who should have information. They may introduce a password to confirm information is being given to the right person. Please speak to staff if you think this is needed.

3. Supporting your relative/friend

- Find out more about what people should bring to hospital on our website at: York and Scarborough Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust - Coming into hospital (yorkhospitals.nhs.uk).
- If you bring anything into the hospital, please make sure it is clearly labelled with the patient's name. Let ward staff know if you bring anything in or if you take anything away.
- If possible, take photos of key possessions including glasses, hearing aids etc. This will make it much easier to find them if they are lost.
- Things to bring:
 - Your relative/friend's glasses, hearing aid(s) or dentures as appropriate.
 - The person's wheelchair if needed.
 - Loose clothing to wear in the day and night, including slippers and well-fitting shoes.
 - A hand towel and toiletries including toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, shampoo, hairbrush and shaving equipment as appropriate.
 - Things that will mean something to your relative/friend.
 - A pillow or blanket if reassuring/helpful.
 - Books, puzzle books, newspapers and activities depending on what your relative/friend enjoys.

- Don't bring:
 - Valuables or things that are irreplaceable. Bring copies of photos rather than originals.
 - Jewellery, including loose rings and large amounts of money. Please take these home to keep them safe.
- If you notice that any of your relative/friend's belongings are missing, tell the ward staff as soon as possible to make it easier to find them.
- You can usually take your relative/friend out of the ward. It can be good for a patient to get some fresh air, or a different view. Most hospitals have gardens or outdoor spaces where you can sit if the weather is good. Before you take someone out, check with the ward staff and let them know where you are going. Normally you cannot take a patient off hospital premises. If you want to do this, please check with the ward sister in advance.
- If your relative/friend has a pet and you are not able to look after it, there are schemes that can help. In York, Age UK can help (<https://keepyourpet.co.uk/>), in other areas, the Cinnamon Trust can help (<https://cinnamon.org.uk/>).

4. On the ward

- Please talk to ward staff, including Occupational Therapists, to see what you can do to support your relative/friend. This could include help at mealtimes, personal care or other things. There will always be something you can do even if it is a hand massage or applying moisturiser.
- Visit your relative/friend as often as possible. But make sure that a lot of people don't visit at once as that can be overwhelming for your relative/friend and for other patients. Try to have different people visiting on different days. If it is appropriate for a larger group to visit, let the ward staff know in advance.

5. Discharge

- Staff should speak to you in advance about your ability and willingness to provide care and support when the person goes home. This will help them plan the discharge of the person you care for without making any assumptions.
- All staff try to plan discharges in advance. Sometimes it can happen quickly when funding or a place in care/care package has been arranged. Be patient and flexible. While it may feel rushed, it isn't.
- Ask staff when everything will be ready for your relative/friend's discharge.

- If your relative/friend needs a wheelchair for discharge, please bring one if you have one as it will make everything quicker. You can get a hospital wheelchair from the hospital reception or they can help you locate one. A porter can help if needed.
- Getting their medication can take time. It might be possible for you to return later to collect this if your relative/friend is ready to go, and it is not.
- If your relative/friend is being discharged by ambulance, they can only take two items/carrier bags on the ambulance. This includes walking aids. If your relative/friend has more belongings, please collect them before discharge.
- Hospital transport gives a 90-minute window for pick up. So a 10am pick up may be as early as 9.15am or as late as 10.45am. Hospital transport also tries to take more than one person at a time, so your relative/friend may not come straight home as other people need to be dropped off first.

Support for you

1. Carers card

Carers who care for someone over 18 can register for a free carer's emergency card. This puts a plan in place in case you are suddenly taken ill, involved in an accident or anything affects your ability to provide care. It alerts healthcare professionals that you are a carer and makes sure your plan is put into action so your relative/friend is supported if you are not there.

In York find out more via York Carers Centre at: Carers Emergency Card | York Carers Centre. Or contact 01904 715 490 or enquiries@yorkcarerscentre.co.uk.

In North Yorkshire, find out more via North Yorkshire Council at: www.northyorks.gov.uk/adult-care/carers/carers-emergency-card.

In East Riding, contact Your Life Your Way: <https://www.yourlifeyourway.uk/>; telephone: 01482 396500 or email: ercarers@eastriding.gov.uk.

All carers are entitled to a carer's assessment. This is carried out by your local council, often in partnership with local carers organisations. It will help you think about the caring role you play, how it affects your life and any support you need.

Find out more:

York: www.yorkcarerscentre.co.uk/adult-carers/ask-for-a-carers-assessment-of-need/

North Yorkshire: <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/adult-care/carers/carers-assessment>

East Riding: Your Life, Your Way - Adult carer's assessment (yourlifeyourway.uk)

2. Home from Hospital

Home from Hospital is a free service to support anyone over 18 who has been in hospital, in A&E or had a day case procedure. It provides support over a number of weeks including shopping, prescription collection, telephone/home visit support, liaising with health and social care professionals and more.

North Yorkshire

The Home from Hospital service for North Yorkshire, including Whitby, is managed by Carers Resource and is for North Yorkshire residents over 18. Find out more: www.carersresource.org/hospital-related/home-from-hospital/

People can self-refer and be referred by a health professional. The service is delivered in partnership with Carers Plus Yorkshire in Scarborough and Ryedale.

East Riding

The East Riding Home from Hospital service, including Bridlington is delivered by Carers Plus. Find out more at: www.carersplus.net/ourservices/home-from-hospital.

Patients need a referral from a healthcare or social care professional. If you think this service could benefit your relative/friend, ask one of the nurses on the ward to make a referral.

York (available for those 60+ only)

In York the service is provided by Age UK. You can find out more at: Age UK York | Home From Hospital by phoning 01904 726191 or emailing ageukyork@ageukyork.org.uk.

3. Local carers organisations

Our excellent local carers organisations provide free information, support and more for carers of all ages.

York Carers Centre

Website: <https://yorkcarerscentre.co.uk>

Email: enquiries@yorkcarerscentre.co.uk

Telephone: 01904 715490

Carers Plus Yorkshire – covers Ryedale, Scarborough, Whitby, Bridlington, Hambleton and Richmondshire

Website: <https://www.carersplus.net>

Email: admin@carersplus.net

Telephone: 01723 850155

Your Life Your Way – East Riding

Website: <https://www.yourlifeyourway.uk/>

Email: ercarers@eastriding.gov.uk

Telephone: 01482 396500

Tell us what you think of this leaflet

We hope that you found this leaflet helpful. If you would like to tell us what you think, please contact the patient experience team on 01904 721007 or at yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

Teaching, training and research

Our Trust is committed to teaching, training and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. You can opt out if you do not want students to observe. We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS offers impartial advice and assistance to patients, their relatives, friends and carers. We can listen to feedback (positive or negative), answer questions and help resolve any concerns about Trust services.

PALS can be contacted on 01904 726262, or email yhs-tr.patientexperienceteam@nhs.net.

Leaflets in alternative languages or formats

If you would like this information in a different format, including braille or easy read, or translated into a different language, please speak to a member of staff in the ward or department providing your care.

Patient Information Leaflets can be accessed via the Trust's Patient Information Leaflet website:

www.yorkhospitals.nhs.uk/your-visit/patient-information-leaflets/

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