



 Northern Beaches Hospital

Patient Information Guide

Please leave this information for the next patient. This guide is the property of Northern Beaches Hospital. Thank you.

Top Tips for Safe Health Care



What you need to know for yourself, your family or someone you care for.

1 Ask questions

You have the right to ask questions about your care.



2 Find good information

Not all information is reliable. Ask your doctor for guidance.

3 Understand the risks and benefits

Find out about your tests and treatments before they happen.

4 List all your medicines

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you need more information about the medicines you are taking.



5 Confirm details of your operation beforehand

Ask to be told who will be doing your procedure and what will happen to you.

6 Ask about your care after leaving hospital

Ask for a written outline of your treatment and what should happen after you get home.

7 Know your rights

You have a number of rights as a patient. Read our guide to find out what they are.

8 Understand privacy

Your medical information is confidential. You can ask to see your medical record.

9 Give feedback

Feedback helps health professionals spot when improvements can be made.

Download our free booklet at:
www.safetyandquality.gov.au/toptips

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Welcome to Northern Beaches Hospital

Northern Beaches Hospital wishes to acknowledge the Gayamaygal and Garigal people, who are the Traditional Owners of this land. Northern Beaches Hospital would also like to pay respects to the Elders both past and present and extend that respect to the Aboriginal communities of today.

Thank you for choosing Northern Beaches Hospital for your care. With our focus on quality care and customer service, we will do our best to make your stay with us a positive experience.

Our experienced staff and doctors will discuss your treatment with you and encourage you to be involved with your care.

Please let us know of any particular needs and expectations and discuss any concerns with our staff or doctors.

Our Hospital

Northern Beaches Hospital opened on 30 October 2018.

Features of our state-of-the-art hospital include:

- 488 beds for private and public patients, with room to expand in the future
- 50-space emergency department, plus a medical centre (GPs) on site
- 14 operating theatres, two cardiac catheter labs and four procedure rooms
- Critical care services, including intensive care
- Medical and surgical services
- Mental Health services
- Maternity, paediatrics, orthopaedics and cancer care specialties to name a few
- Outpatient, dialysis and chemotherapy services conveniently located close to the main entrance
- Imaging, pharmacy, pathology and diagnostic facilities with the building enabled for future technologies
- Helipad for emergency transport.

Our Hospital

Location and Wayfinding

Northern Beaches Hospital is at:

**105 Frenchs Forest Road (West)
Frenchs Forest NSW 2086.**

In addition to traditional signage within the hospital, we also have wayfinding machines on the ground floor to assist with navigation around the hospital.

Car Park

The nine storey, 1,400-space car park links to the hospital by a covered walkway. Parking fees apply, which are set by NSW Health. Standard discounts apply and disabled parking is available. Car park machines are located on the ground floor of the car park. Drop off points are located at key areas around the hospital, such as outside the Emergency Department.

Buses

A bus stop is located on Frenchs Forest Road close to the entrance of the hospital. Timetables and routes are available from www.transportnsw.info/routes/bus

Taxis

Taxis can be called using the dedicated, free phones located within the hospital at the Concierge Desk, Emergency Department Reception and Transit Lounge.

Visiting Hours

Visiting hours are in place to ensure that patients have a balanced amount of time with family and friends, as well as time to rest and recuperate. For special circumstances, including maternity and Intensive Care, please speak to the ward staff.

For the majority of other areas, visiting hours are 10.00am to 1.00pm, then again from 3.00pm till 8.00pm. Any visits outside of these hours must have approval from the relevant ward staff.

Children must be supervised at all times whilst visiting in the hospital and noise levels should be kept to a minimum. Visitors' lounges are available in each ward.

Valuables

It is advisable that you do not bring valuable items such as jewellery or large amounts of money to the hospital. If you are admitted via the Emergency Department, we suggest your valuables

are sent home with your relatives or friends as soon as possible. We cannot accept any responsibility for personal belongings.

Retail Amenities

We have a large retail area on the ground floor with excellent food and drink options and areas inside and outside the hospital to sit in comfort. We also have a café on level 7 located with the specialist consulting suites that anyone can access.

On the ground floor, for patient and visitor convenience, is a convenience store, florist and retail pharmacy.

An ATM is situated on the ground floor.

Room Amenities

Nurse Call Buttons

Each bedside handset has a call button that registers your need for assistance. A member of the nursing staff will show you how to use this during your initial orientation to the room. Nurse call buttons are also located in ensuite bathrooms and toilets.

Televisions

The television in the room is provided free of charge to private patients and for a small fee to public patients. Public patients can purchase TV content online, by calling a customer service hotline or from one of the dedicated vending machines located in the hospital.

Turn the TV on by pressing the 'TV' button on the nurse call handset. Wait five to ten seconds for the TV to turn on and navigate using the 'Up' and 'Down' buttons.

Telephones

For patients who do not have their own mobile phone with them, they can access a hands-free telephone in each ward for urgent calls. Please ask staff should you require the use of the phone during your stay.

Wi-Fi

Wi-Fi is available throughout the hospital, including patient rooms and public areas. Ensure Wi-Fi is enabled on your device and select the Healthscope network.

Electrical Appliances

Small electrical appliances such as shavers and hairdryers may be used in the hospital. However, it is necessary to have these items checked and tagged as electrically safe by a qualified electrician prior to your admission, so please advise nursing staff if you wish to use appliances that have not been checked. Faulty equipment may interfere with the use of vital medical equipment. We do not accept responsibility for damage to, or personal injury from, electrical items bought into the hospital.

Inpatient Services

Patient Information Boards

There is a whiteboard or glassboard in each patient room, which gives patients and their families and carers information about your stay in hospital, including the name of your specialist, nurse and other healthcare providers, tests and diet specifications. These boards can also be used for you to write down questions that you want to ask your doctor when they next visit you.

Meals

Our large, onsite production kitchen means that we can produce 'fresh cook' food for patients with a seasonal menu. We will deliver delicious, healthy food options to your room, meeting personal preferences and medical/dietary requirements. Daily menus offer meal choices consistent with dietary guidelines.

Patients can order their own meals directly in the room, without the need for a staff member to visit and take meal orders. Requests can be made via the in-room entertainment system, accessed through the nurse call handset and your television. For a written step-by-step instructions on how to order your meals through the in-room entertainment system, please ask a staff member.

If you are bringing food into the hospital, please check with a member of staff prior to consuming, as food may interfere with your care, including some medications. Additionally, if you are bringing in your own food into the hospital, there is an option to 'opt out' of hospital meals –please alert staff if you do not wish to receive a hospital meal.

Housekeeping

Patient rooms are cleaned daily by our in-house Housekeeping Service. If you require any additional housekeeping, please talk to a member of staff.

Mail

Mail is distributed to wards each weekday. Any mail received after discharge will be forwarded to your home address.

Flowers and Balloons

Flowers and balloons delivered for patients will be sent to the patient's room when permitted. Due to infection control precautions, live flowers are not permitted in Intensive Care.

Hospital Staff

Medical Staff

Medical care is provided to you by a comprehensive team of doctors working across a wide range of specialty services. Each patient is admitted under the care of a Specialist Doctor, who is responsible for leading the medical team.

We also have a range of junior medical staff, including trainees and career medical officers, to support our specialists. Public patients can expect that more of their care, day to day, will be undertaken by junior staff, under the supervision of a specialist. Private patients can expect more direct interaction with their specialist, supported by junior staff and career medical officers as required.

Our medical services are led by the Medical Director (a doctor) who is a member of the hospital's Executive team.

Nursing Staff

Nurses are responsible for providing 24 hour care to patients, and play a key role in coordinating your care needs. Nursing care is provided by Registered Nurses who work in teams with Enrolled Nurses and Assistants in Nursing. The Nurse Unit Manager has overall responsibility for the care on their ward and is available during office hours to answer your questions. Patients may also receive specialist nursing care or advice from a number of Clinical Nurse Specialists, Educators and Consultants. Our nursing services are led by a Director of Nursing who is a member of the hospital's Executive team.

Allied Health Staff

The Allied Health team includes Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, Speech Therapists, Social Workers and Dietitians. Some patient groups, for example Orthopaedic and Intensive Care patients, will be seen routinely by Allied Health staff. In other circumstances nursing and medical staff will make referrals as necessary. All Allied Health staff will develop individualised patient care plans, and work closely with nursing and medical staff to support your recovery. Our Allied Health services are led by a Director of Allied Health, who is a member of the hospital's Executive team.

Dietitians

Dietitians are experts in nutrition. A dietitian would work with you to assess your dietary intake and ensure that you are meeting your nutritional needs. They work closely with the food service team to tailor your meal provision to best suit your requirements.

Speech Pathology

Speech Pathologists specialise in assessment and management of swallowing and communication disorders in the adult and paediatric population in an acute inpatient environment. We use leading technology for the assessment of swallowing disorders. Speech Pathologists work closely with patients, their families/carers and the multidisciplinary team to ensure the best possible outcomes for our patients.

Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapists (OTs) aim to help you stay safe, improve independence in day to day tasks, and remain at home. We do this by using a holistic approach to assess function, self-care, cognition, psychosocial needs, and the home environment. We provide a broad range of education, prescribe adaptive equipment, provide linkages to community occupational therapy, and coordinate with you, your family and the hospital team to assist in a timely and safe discharge.

Social Work

A Social Worker provides a holistic assessment of your needs and circumstances, they work as part of the multidisciplinary team within the hospital. The Social Worker can see you and your relatives during your hospital admission to provide emotional support and counselling regarding adjustment to your illness and hospitalisation. The Social Worker can also provide you with information, advice and referrals for accessing community supports and services for when you return home.

Physiotherapy

Physiotherapists work throughout numerous areas of the Northern Beaches Hospital.

Their practice is based on research and they can assess, diagnose and treat a wide range of conditions. These conditions may involve musculoskeletal, neurological or cardiorespiratory disorders.

Common assessments and treatments that you may receive from the Physiotherapist may include: assessment of your movement and mobility; the prescription of an exercise program; treatment of new musculoskeletal injuries or pain; treatment and advice for respiratory illnesses; rehabilitation for neurological conditions such as stroke; post-operative therapy; treatment and advice for baby and childhood conditions; falls education and management and casting & splinting of injuries.

The Physiotherapist can impact your recovery and how long you stay in hospital by reducing complications associated with immobility, as well as maximising your physical and/or cardiorespiratory function and reducing falls-related injuries.

Clinical Support Staff

During your stay, you will be looked after by a number of staff providing support services including administrative staff, wardspersons, catering staff, diet aides and housekeeping staff. Each member of our staff has received specific training for their role and is an integral part of the Northern Beaches Hospital team.

Volunteers and Consumer Consultants

Many people in the Northern Beaches area contribute to the hospital community by volunteering their services. There is a wide range of roles undertaken by volunteers including concierge and wayfinding, patient companion, tending to flowers and designated ward helpers.

Consumer consultants contribute to the planning and review of service delivery and are sometimes involved in gathering patient feedback. Volunteers are subject to the same screening processes as employees, and are fully trained for their roles.

Students

Northern Beaches Hospital has a strong commitment to clinical teaching and supports a range of educational programs for healthcare professionals. You may at times be attended to by medical students, student/trainee nurses, or allied health students. Students are in the hospital on a supernumerary basis (additional to the permanent, qualified workforce), and are always fully supervised by qualified doctors, staff and educators.

Other Information

Medical Imaging

Healthcare Imaging Services are located on the ground floor and provide services to inpatients and outpatients. Services include general x-ray, ultrasound, computed tomography (CT), magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), interventional imaging, mammography, and nuclear medicine. Whilst outpatient services operate within business hours, emergency inpatient services are available 24/7.

Pathology

Pathology services are provided by Clinical Laboratories. They are located on the ground floor near Outpatients and on Level 6 near the Specialist Consulting Suites. Clinical Laboratories provide a comprehensive range of pathology tests for both inpatients and outpatients.

Pharmacy

Pharmacy services are provided by EPIC Pharmacy, located on the ground floor. They provide hospital and retail pharmacy services. Some patients on high risk medications or complex medication regimes will receive medication counselling and education from a clinical pharmacist. If you have any questions about your medications please speak to your nurse in the first instance, and if you need

to see a pharmacist then additional support will be arranged. If you have a concession card for pharmaceuticals please present this card on admission or as soon as possible afterwards.

Multi-faith Services

Multi-faith services and religious visits can be arranged on request in patient rooms. Please ask a member of the nursing team if you require a visit. There is also a dedicated multi-faith space on level 5 that patients are welcome to visit, but please check with your nurse before you leave the ward.

Support and Advocacy

Should you need it, your nurse will be able to arrange the support of a professional interpreter or pastoral carer to support you during your stay. For more complex needs we have a team of social workers who are able to coordinate both in-house and community services. A referral will be made on your behalf if needed. There are also many advocacy groups who can offer support for you during and after your stay in hospital; your nurse or social worker will have access to further information if you need it.

Veterans Services

Northern Beaches Hospital has a Veterans Liaison Officer available to co-ordinate the hospital stay of Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) patients, with hospital healthcare providers.

The Liaison Officer is able to:

- Provide preadmission and discharge planning support
- Assist in the co-ordination and streamlining of hospital care
- Refer patients to appropriate services and resources
- Coordinate DVA client visiting and information services in conjunction with ex-service organisations
- Provide general health and lifestyle education and counselling
- Act as a single point of contact for DVA patients, their families and carers, ex-service organisations and the DVA, with particular regard to the resolution of concerns and problems.

Smoking

As a healthcare facility we endorse a smoke free environment for all staff, visitors and patients, and therefore smoking is prohibited in the hospital and on the hospital grounds. For patients who find this difficult, please discuss alternative therapies with your doctor or nurse, as we are equipped to provide appropriate support. Patients who wish to smoke must leave the hospital grounds at their own risk, unaccompanied by staff. Please inform the ward staff of your intention to do so.

Consent to Treatment

Medical or surgical procedures, operations and some treatment (such as blood transfusion) require patient consent or the consent of a legal guardian. Consent may be implied, verbal or written, depending on the circumstance. Written consent is obtained by a member of the medical team. This can happen prior to or during admission. You should always be provided with the information needed to make an informed decision about your treatment options. If you have questions at any time about your treatment, please do not hesitate to discuss this with your doctor, nurse or allied health professional.

Informed Financial Consent

Informed financial consent for private patients is an important responsibility for hospitals and people providing healthcare services. Northern Beaches Hospital will provide as much information as possible to ensure you can make an informed decision relating to using your private insurance or funding you're your own care. The level of benefits offered by Private Health Funds vary according to level and duration of membership. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to check with your individual fund concerning exact benefits and gaps. If you are an elective patient, estimate of surgeon's fees and anaesthetist's fees should be provided by your doctor's office prior to booking with the hospital.

Patient and Visitor Code of Conduct

Patients of Northern Beaches Hospital are requested to:

- Provide, to the best of your knowledge, accurate information about your current medical problems, previous illnesses, medications, visits to hospital, allergies and other matters relating to your state of health, in order to help our staff care for you
- Ask staff for a clear explanation of treatments, tests and medications recommended for your care and let them know immediately if you do not understand instructions or advice given to you
- Discuss any worries or concerns with a relevant member of staff
- Inform staff if you intend to leave the ward or hospital grounds
- Be courteous and considerate to other patients and to hospital staff - aggressive or violent behaviour towards staff, other patients or visitors will not be tolerated
- Observe the No Smoking rule of the hospital - do not smoke on hospital grounds
- Ask your relatives and friends to visit in small groups, preferably no more than three people at a time
- Inform partners that overnight stays for visitors is not permitted except if the patient is terminally ill, a minor, non-English speaking, suffering from dementia, the partner of a private maternity patient, or otherwise at the discretion of the hospital
- Keep the volume of radio and television sets to a minimum
- Ensure children are supervised at all times
- Avoid the use of mobile phones and if necessary, keep on 'silent' mode.

Other Information

Patient Rights

Patients have the right to:

- Considerate and respectful care, regardless of your beliefs and ethnic, cultural and religious practices
- Know the name of the doctor who has primary responsibility for coordinating your care, and the identity and functions of others who are involved in providing care
- Seek a second opinion and to refuse the presence of any healthcare workers who are not directly involved in the provision of your care
- Receive information from your doctor in non-technical language, regarding your illness, its likely course, the expected treatment, and the plans for discharge from the hospital and for follow-up care
- Receive from your doctor a description of any proposed treatment; the risks, the various acceptable alternative methods of treatment, including the risks and advantages of each and the consequences of receiving no treatment before giving consent to treatment. Also, unless the law prohibits, you may refuse a recommended treatment, test or procedure and you may leave the hospital against the advice of your doctor, at your own risk, after completion of hospital discharge forms
- Participate in decisions affecting your healthcare
- Participate in bedside clinical handover
- Be informed of the estimated costs charged by the hospital (private patients only)
- Refuse participation in any medical study or treatment considered experimental in nature (you will not be involved in such a study without your understanding and permission)
- Confidentiality and privacy. Details concerning your medical care, including examinations, consultations and treatment are confidential. No information or records pertaining to your care will be released without your permission, or the permission of your representative unless the release is required or authorised by law or necessary to enable another healthcare worker to assist with your care
- Not to be restrained, except as authorised by their doctor or in an emergency when necessary to protect them or others from injury
- Retain and use their personal clothing and possessions as space permits, unless to do so would present a safety issue, impinge on the rights of other patients or be medically contraindicated
- Expect safety where practices and environment are concerned
- Privacy for visits during established patient visiting hours
- Make a comment or complaint about the treatment or the quality of the health services or care without fear that they will be discriminated against
- Have their dietary and other special needs considered.

Patient Responsibilities

Patients have the responsibility to:

- Provide accurate and complete information about present clinical complaints, past illnesses, hospitalisations, medications and other matter relating to their health
- Report unexpected changes in their condition to the responsible practitioner
- Report if they do not comprehend a contemplated course of action or what is expected of them
- Follow the treatment plan recommended by the practitioner primarily responsible for their care. This may include following instructions of nurses and allied health personnel as they carry out the coordinated plan of care and implement the responsible practitioner's orders
- Keep appointments and, when unable to do so for any reason, to notify the responsible practitioner or the healthcare facility
- Provide information concerning their ability to pay for services (private or Medicare ineligible patients only)
- Accept the consequences of their actions if they refuse treatment or do not follow the practitioner's instructions
- Be considerate of the rights of other patients and hospital personnel and provide assistance in the control of noise, smoking and numbers of visitors
- Be respectful of the property of other people and of the hospital
- Behave in a lawful manner and contribute to a safe and comfortable environment
- Respect the privacy of other patients. Any disclosure, whether accidental, de-identified, deliberate, or otherwise, of another patient's presence and / or treatment in hospital, without the express permission of that patient, is prohibited.

Discharge from Hospital

Discharge planning begins on admission to hospital; we want to ensure that when ready, you are transferred to the most appropriate environment, having been fully assessed and with any required support services in place. The admitting nurse will discuss your home environment and plans for discharge, and screen those patients who may need additional care planning. If your doctor or nurse think you may benefit from transfer to a rehabilitation or community care provider, this will be discussed with you. All care planning will be in conjunction with the patient and family. If complex or further care

is not required, the ward nurses will assist you to make all the necessary personal arrangements. It's advisable to think ahead and talk to staff about how you will be transported home, and who will be there to help you in the recuperative period. Once ready for discharge, discharge time is prior to 10.00am. For well patients waiting for transport (including by a friend or relative), we have a supervised Transit Lounge available for temporary stay on the ground floor.

Quality, Safety and Performance

Northern Beaches Hospital is committed to continuous improvement of the care and service that we deliver.

We evaluate our performance through a robust quality and safety program, key elements include:

- Strong internal governance and leadership
- Accreditation by independent, external organisations
- Ensuring clinical quality and safety is the focus of all hospital activities
- Sharing the responsibility for clinical excellence between the Executive, all clinical (including doctors) and non-clinical staff
- Engaging consumers in the design, delivery and evaluation of our services
- Continuous monitoring, review and improvement of measured outcomes
- Extensive benchmarking of performance measures with other hospitals
- Listening and responding to feedback from patients, doctors and staff
- Publically reporting important quality data.

Working in partnership with our patients is fundamental to our model of care, which is why it's important to us that patients have an understanding of the National Safety and Quality Healthcare Service Standards. The National Standards provide a framework for delivery of the best possible evidence based care. The following information is an overview of each standard, what you can expect from us, and how you can play a part in improving your health outcomes.

Clinical Governance (Standard 1)

Reporting on our Quality and Safety Systems

Measuring healthcare outcomes is an important part of analysing, benchmarking (comparing ourselves to other hospitals) and improving our care and service. We report performance indicators extensively within Healthscope, to NSW Health, and to the Australian Council on Healthcare Standards (ACHS).

You can view our outcomes on the Australian Government website www.myhospitals.gov.au (click on quality and safety), and on the MyHealthscope website www.healthscopehospitals.com.au (click on quality and navigate to Northern Beaches Hospital).

Learning from our Mistakes

We record and investigate any instances that either result in patient harm, or have the potential to do so. Whilst we take care to maintain staff and patient confidentiality by removing identifying details, reports of any unplanned adverse event are widely shared within Healthscope. We ensure that the staff involved, managers, senior doctors and the hospital Executive are all involved in the review process. This enables us to learn vital lessons, implement changes and reduce or prevent recurrence. If you suffer an unexpected outcome or harm whilst in hospital, our staff are trained to tell you about this in a way that is consistent with the Australian Open Disclosure Framework.

Listening to Feedback

We actively seek your comments, concerns and compliments and we invite you to discuss any questions or concerns with our staff at any time. If you're not sure who to speak with or you need to speak with someone more senior, please ask to speak with the Nurse Unit Manager who will be able to assist you. Our preference is to manage issues you have during your stay, so that we can improve your experience. However, you can also provide a written comment about your stay by using the feedback forms available in each ward. All feedback is taken seriously, and if you have a complaint it will be fully investigated and you will receive a formal response. After discharge, a sample of patients will receive an electronic survey about our care and service delivery. Whilst survey completion is voluntary, we value all feedback and use the information to help drive improvement.

Healthcare Records and Privacy

We respect and uphold your rights to privacy protection under the Australian Privacy Principles contained in the Privacy Act 1988.

We will record all of your personal and medical details required for your care. We use personal information about you:

- to provide medical treatment and care to you
- to ensure that key medical information is transferred between hospital clinical staff, and to your GP or healthcare provider responsible for continuing care once you are discharged
- to meet legislative requirements
- for our internal administrative requirements and the administrative requirements of stakeholders such as NSW Government and Private Health Funds
- for revenue purposes
- for benchmarking and clinical indicator reporting in a de-identified form
- to provide data in both an identified and de-identified form to State and National Government agencies
- to provide data in a de-identified form to the Private Hospital Data Bureau
- so that discharge summary information can be uploaded to MyHealthRecord (unless you have opted out of the scheme).

Patients have the right to request access to their medical records by making an application in writing to the Director of Nursing, Northern Beaches Hospital. For more information you can find the Healthscope Privacy Policy on our website.

Emergency Planning

Northern Beaches Hospital has comprehensive and fully tested procedures for all potential emergency scenarios. Each staff member is trained for their respective roles in responding to emergencies. In the unlikely event of an emergency, please remain in your bed or room, and follow directions from staff.

The hospital regularly conducts fire drills and tests of the alarm system, which is a necessary part of our safety program. You will hear an overhead message prior to a drill or alarm testing. We apologise in advance for any disruption caused.

Partnering With Consumers (Standard 2)

Patient Centred Care

A core part of our philosophy is to provide care that is Patient Centred, which means driven by and focused on individual patient needs.

Our model of patient centred care includes:

- continuity of care and smooth transitions through the healthcare system
- individualised care planning
- patient education and support for self-care
- patient involvement in decision making
- emotional support, empathy and respect
- involvement of, and support for, family and carers
- attention to physical and environmental needs.

Partners in Decision Making

As a patient you play an essential role in the healthcare team; being actively involved in decision making improves the quality of your healthcare outcomes. In order to make informed decisions, you need to have a good understanding of your condition and treatment options. We have many different education resources available to meet individual circumstances. One of the most important ways we can support

your understanding is by ensuring our staff are always open to answering your questions. We recommend that you write down your questions, or you may ask staff to make reminder notes on the patient information board in your room.

As a guide, the following questions may help you to best understand your care:

- What are my options?
- What are the benefits and harms?
- How likely are these?

Quality, Safety and Performance

Consumer Consultants

We have a number of Consumer Consultants, some of whom have advised and assisted us throughout the hospital planning process and who continue to provide input into service delivery. Consumer Consultants are vital and provide us with relevant consumer focused feedback and suggestions. Any information developed for patients is first reviewed and edited by our Consumer Consultants. They are invited to review our programs and outcomes, attend patient focus groups and collect patient feedback. Should you wish to learn more about this program please ask to speak to the hospital Quality Manager.

Advanced Care Planning

Advanced Care Planning is a process of thinking about what is important to you about your quality of life, and what matters most at the end of life, and developing a verbal and written record of this. You may develop either an Advanced Care Plan or an Advanced Care Directive. Talking to family and loved ones, whilst not always easy, is an important part of this process. You may also seek advice from your doctor, spiritual advisor and/or legal representative.

If you are admitted in an emergency and unable to communicate, it's often difficult for loved ones to make crucial treatment decisions without guidance of what you would have wanted. Having an Advanced Care Directive offers a way to be involved in decisions about your health, even if you're not in a position to communicate. We recognise the importance of advance care planning, and if you do not have the capacity to decide for yourself or communicate your wishes, your doctor will follow your valid Advanced Care Directive.

An Advanced Care Directive is valid and legally binding if:

- the person had decision-making capacity when they made it
- the person was not influenced or pressured by anyone else to make it
- it has clear and specific details about treatment that they would accept or refuse
- the person has not revoked it
- it extends to the situation at hand.

If you have an Advance Care Directive or Advance Care Plan, please let us know as soon as possible after admission.

If you would like to think about the process of advanced care planning for the future, you can access further information via the NSW Health website.

If you are incapable of making or communicating your decisions and there is no clear and valid Advanced Care Directive, your doctor will seek consent for treatment decisions from your 'Person Responsible.'

In NSW, legislation contained in the NSW Guardianship Act determines who can legally consent or decline treatment being offered to you, if you are unable to speak for yourself. This is the Person Responsible.

The treating doctor will identify the Person Responsible according to a hierarchy, as follows:

- An Enduring Guardian (a person legally appointed by you) or a guardian appointed by the NSW Guardianship Tribunal
- Your spouse, de facto or same sex partner with whom you have a close ongoing relationship
- Your carer – a person who provides ongoing, regular care (not a care worker or volunteer)
- A close friend or relative with whom you have an ongoing relationship
- If you have any doubts, you should legally appoint your preferred person/s as your Enduring Guardian.

Preventing and Controlling Healthcare Associated Infections (Standard 3)

We take every step possible to minimise the risk of hospital acquired infection. Our infection control program is based on a broad range of strategies that include building design and maintenance, environmental cleaning, robust sterilisation processes, safe disposal of clinical waste, effective use of antibiotics, staff education according to best practice principles, and an active surveillance program. However, the single most important measure in reducing hospital acquired infection is hand hygiene.

Hand hygiene is a general term that covers both hand washing with soap and water, and the use of alcohol based hand rub. Our staff are trained to perform hand hygiene in accordance with World Health Organisation guidelines, and patients will be aware of hand gel at each bedside area.

Please do not hesitate to remind or check with staff about performing hand hygiene.

Members of the public are asked to perform hand hygiene as you enter and leave our hospital, after going to the toilet, after blowing your nose, before, during and after preparing food, and before and after offering assistance to a patient.

Choose to use alcohol hand rubs when hands are visibly clean, using the following technique:

- Remove excess jewellery
- Squirt enough hand rub product to cover both of your hands
- Roll to distribute over palms, back of hands and between fingers
- Rub hands together until dry.

Choose to use soap and water when hands are visibly dirty, using the following technique:

- Remove excess jewellery
- Wet hands with water
- Apply soap
- Rub all over
- Rinse off with water
- Pat hands dry with paper towel
- Dispose of paper towel in bin.

Aseptic Technique

This describes measures we take to protect you from contamination during clinical procedures such as surgery, insertion of medical devices (such as an intravenous cannula), performing a wound dressing, and during the administration of intravenous medications.

Our staff undergo training and assessments to ensure their aseptic technique is of a very high standard.

Invasive Devices

Most patients will need an invasive device at some point during their hospital admission. An invasive device is a general term for a medical device such as intravenous cannula, wound drain, nasogastric tube, urinary catheter, epidural catheter and others. As with any intervention, patients should receive education specific to the care of each device. In general, you can assist us to prevent infection by letting staff know if the dressing is loose or soiled, that the insertion site is painful or changes in any way, and ensuring that anyone handling the device performs hand hygiene before and after doing so.

Transmission Based Precautions

Staff routinely use standard precautions to control the spread of infections, and will do so with all patients. Standard precautions include hand hygiene and protective equipment such as gloves, eyewear and gowns for certain procedures. If a patient is suspected or confirmed as having an infection with the potential to spread to others, additional precautions may be implemented. These additional precautions are based on the mode of transmission the potential infection and may include isolation and additional protective equipment. In this instance, we will offer information and education based on individual circumstances. It is essential that patients and visitors comply with staff instructions and any signage regarding transmission based precautions.

Quality, Safety and Performance

Medication Safety (Standard 4)

It is important that our staff are aware of all medications that you normally take, including herbal and naturopathic medicines. You must provide us with a complete and accurate list of your current medications on admission to hospital or as soon as possible following your admission.

We will document all existing medications in your medication history and reconcile this with your medication plan whilst in hospital, and your discharge medications once you are transferred to another healthcare provider or to home. We also need you to tell us about any known allergies or sensitivities to medications. This will be documented on your medication chart and in a section of your electronic medical record known as 'Alerts'. If you experience an adverse reaction to medication whilst in hospital, we will investigate and include the information in your discharge summary so it is communicated to other healthcare providers.

Your medications may change whilst you are in hospital and you may be prescribed discharge medications for continued use at home. If your medication requirements change significantly whilst you're with us, if you are on a complicated regime, or if you are prescribed certain medications, a clinical pharmacist will visit you and explain your new medications. If you are at all unclear or would like further clarification of your medications, please speak to your nurse or doctor. You can also ask the Nurse Unit Manager to arrange a clinical pharmacist to visit if you are still concerned. All patients will receive a printed discharge summary that includes a medication record and instructions.

We have strict guidelines for the prescription and administration of medications that aim to minimise the risk of medication error. For example, our nursing staff will ask for your name, date of birth and allergies each time they administer a medication to you. They will confirm your identity against

your medication chart and your hospital identification band. Medication administration requires concentration from the nursing staff and interruptions have been shown to increase the risk of error.

Comprehensive Care (Standard 5)

You and your Healthcare team are partners in reducing the risks associated with needing an admission to hospital. Throughout your admission, nurses will assess your clinical status and risk of developing known complications. If you are at risk of developing a complication, this will be discussed with you and a treatment plan developed to minimise your risks.

Reducing the Risk of Blood Clots

If you are unwell and in hospital, you are at a much higher than normal risk of developing a blood clot in your leg or lung.

One reason for your risk increasing whilst in hospital is that you are not moving around as much as you normally would.

Because you have had surgery or are unwell, blood flow through the veins can become sluggish and allow a clot to form in your leg. This is called a deep vein thrombosis (DVT). This clot can break apart and some could travel to the lungs, which is called a pulmonary embolism. Both of these can be very serious, which is why we do everything we can to avoid this happening.

Another reason is the body's own protective mechanisms. When you undergo surgery or suffer an injury, the body's natural reaction to stop you from losing too much blood is to make the blood clot easier. Once the initial risk of bleeding has passed or is reduced, unfortunately the tendency to clot can remain, leaving you more likely to develop blood clots in the legs or lungs.

Your doctors and nurses will usually use one or two methods for reducing the risk of forming blood clots: medication or mechanical prevention.

Medication to Prevent Blood Clots

Medications that interfere with the natural clotting process are often known as anticoagulants or 'blood thinners'. These may be administered as a tablet, injected under the skin usually in the stomach, or via an intravenous infusion. Your doctor will decide which is the most appropriate for you - not all patients will require medication.

Mechanical Prevention

Forms of mechanical prevention include graduated compression stockings (sometimes called TEDs), and intermittent compression devices (sometimes called calf compressors). Compression stockings are elasticated stockings that should be properly fitted on admission by your nurse. If they feel uncomfortable or too tight around your leg or toes, or are rolling down or becoming wrinkled, please tell your nurse straight away. The stockings must be worn until you are advised to remove them by your doctor or nurse.

Intermittent Compression Devices are a disposable cuff wrapped around the whole circumference of leg. They automatically inflate and deflate at regular intervals. These are usually removed when you become mobile.

Regardless of the method of prevention prescribed for you, it's important to stay as mobile and active as possible. Movement of the legs stimulates blood flow, so you should try to start moving as soon as possible (even if you are bed bound). Nursing or physiotherapy staff may give you exercises for your legs and feet whilst you are unable to walk, or lying on the bed between walks. The team will assist and encourage you to get up and walk as soon as you are able to do so.

Preventing and Managing Pressure Injuries

A pressure injury (also known as pressure sore, pressure ulcer, or bed sore) is an area of skin that has been damaged due to unrelieved and prolonged pressure. Pressure ulcers may look minor, such as redness on the skin, but they can hide more damage under the skin surface.

Pressure ulcers are usually found on bony parts of the body, but can occur almost anywhere that pressure has been applied for a period of time. Common sites include the buttocks, tail bone, heels, elbows, hips, shoulder blades and back of head.

Almost anyone can develop a pressure injury, but we know that people most at risk include:

- those confined to a bed or chair and unable to move independently
- those with loss of sensation or poor circulation
- those with skin that is frequently moist
- those with either high or low Body Mass Index, and those with poor nutrition following prolonged surgery.

What can we do to Prevent Pressure Injuries?

Relieve the Pressure

Keeping active and changing position (even slightly) on a regular basis is extremely important. For patients unable to move independently, the nursing staff help you to change position at regular intervals. You may also be provided with special equipment such as air mattresses that will assist to relieve pressure.

Look After your Skin

It is important to keep your skin clean and dry using a mild soap and moisturiser if needed. Please do not hesitate to tell staff if your skin or bedding is damp. Tell staff if you have any pain or discomfort in a particular spot, or if you notice reddened or broken skin. Avoid massaging skin over bony prominences.

Eat as Well as Possible

Good nutrition is an important part of good health generally and preventing or healing pressure injuries specifically. Recognising that this is often a challenging aspect of hospital admission for many reasons, we have a dietetics and catering service designed to offer the best possible nutrition whatever your circumstances. If you have questions about the catering service or would like to speak to a dietician, please speak with your nurse.

Preventing Falls and Harm from Falls

In hospital, your risk of falling, tripping or slipping is increased and you will be surprised at how easy it can be. In addition to the risk of injury, falling over can affect confidence and increase the fear of further falls, making it harder to stay independent.

There are a number of reasons why someone might fall. These include:

- poor mobility and balance
- being in an unfamiliar environment
- badly fitting footwear and clothing
- urgent need to go to the toilet or incontinence
- poor eyesight
- medications that can cause drowsiness or dizziness.

Quality, Safety and Performance

Mechanical Prevention

CALL DON'T FALL - Use your call bell.

You may need to use the toilet unexpectedly or more frequently while in hospital. If you need help, or think you need to visit the toilet more often, please ask for assistance. The nurses are here to help you feel as comfortable as possible.

Tiled floors, vinyl and other hard surfaces can be slippery, especially if wet or wearing certain types of footwear. Sit down to shower and use the rails for support while standing in the shower. If you feel unsafe, remain seated and ask for assistance.

Familiarise yourself with your room and bathroom. Make sure you know the layout of your room and know where everything is.

Wear comfortable clothing that is not too long. Loose or full length clothing like pants, pyjamas or dressing gowns can cause you to trip and fall. Make sure these are the right length for you.

We strongly recommend that, if possible, patients should bring supportive well-fitting shoes and wear them whenever walking. If this isn't possible, you may be provided with grip socks during your stay.

Only wear your distance glasses for walking. Keep them clean and within reach. Be careful when wearing bifocal or multifocal glasses as these can affect your ability to judge depth and distance.

At night, use your light button on your call bell to turn on the light before getting out of bed. Turn the light on in the bathroom.

Our Strategies to Prevent Falls

The nurse admitting you will orientate you to your room and the call bell system. The nursing staff will assess your risk of falling on admission and daily thereafter, or if your condition changes. We will implement different prevention strategies depending on your risk. This may range from providing you

with grip socks, advising you to wait for supervision or assistance before walking, providing increased nursing supervision, or allied health referrals.

If required, a physiotherapist will assess your mobility and provide you with an appropriate walking aid. They will discuss the outcome of this assessment with you and your family and provide you with education and advice, and an individualised care plan to improve mobility.

We have a system of patient rounding whereby the nurses will proactively visit and, amongst other things, ensure you have your possessions and call bell to hand.

We have further falls prevention information available should you require it - please do not hesitate to ask.

If you do fall, do not try to get up alone. Wait for help to ensure you get back onto your feet safely.

Nutrition

Providing the best possible nutrition is an essential part of helping you recover. All patients are assessed and referred to a dietician for individual care if required. Our dietitians also work with our catering service to ensure we meet the highest possible standards and needs of our patients. We are able to provide menus to meet all dietary requirements, and our menu ordering system links with the medical record so that you are only able to order food that is safe and appropriate for you.

Communicating for Safety (Standard 6)

All inpatients are required to wear two identification bands, which will be either red or white. A red band will inform staff that you have an 'Alert' such as a medication allergy or, for example, a history of difficulty with anaesthetics. Please leave your identification band intact until formally discharged from hospital.

We are required to check your identity not only for medication administration but prior to performing procedures. Sometimes patients find this repetitive, but it is an important part of our systems for keeping you safe and making sure we are providing the correct treatment to the correct patient.

Effective communication between clinical staff is essential for providing you with coordinated and high quality care. Clinical handover is the transfer of information and responsibility for your care between one person or team to another. Our nursing handovers occur at the bedside and, unless you request otherwise, with your involvement. You are invited to participate by clarifying the information passed on, asking questions if needed, and making requests that address your particular needs. As clinical handover involves discussion of confidential information and a physical assessment, the staff may ask your visitors to leave the room whilst handover takes place. If you would prefer that a family member is present and involved in the process, please let the nursing staff know.

In each room is a patient information board (white or glass board) which contains essential information about your treating team/s and care plans. It is a good communication tool between you and the clinical staff. The staff will update the board at each clinical handover with information such as the nurse looking after you for the oncoming shift, any medical instructions such as dietary regime, and the times of any booked investigations or tests. You should be comfortable with and understand the information displayed.

Blood Transfusions (Standard 7)

A transfusion of blood or blood products, when required, can be an essential element of your treatment and recovery. We adhere to national prescribing guidelines and ensure you will not be advised to have a blood transfusion unless necessary. We have extremely strict controls over our transfusion processes and practices to ensure blood transfusion is as safe as possible. If you do require a blood transfusion, unless it is a life threatening emergency, you will be asked by your doctor to provide written consent.

You will be supplied with verbal and written information regarding the risks and benefits, and we strongly advise you to discuss with your team if you have any questions around this.

Responding to Clinical Deterioration (Standard 8)

Our staff are trained to recognise and respond to any change in your condition. If you should suddenly deteriorate, we have systems in place to ensure you receive immediate attention from the most appropriate medical and nursing staff. Our emergency response teams will depend on your location and condition, but may include intensive care, anaesthetic or paediatric specialists. We will ensure all information is conferred to your Specialist.

We also strongly support your role, and that of your family, in escalating concerns. If you or your family/friends are worried about a change in your condition, we encourage you/them to call your nurse. If you remain concerned, please ask to speak with the Nurse Unit Manager or doctor.

You will have contact details on your patient information board. We support patient and relative involvement and recognise that you know how you feel, or how your relative usually behaves.

If you or your relative feel acutely unwell and in need of medical attention, you can activate the R.E.A.C.H program as described below.

R.E.A.C.H Escalation of Care

Are you worried about a recent change in your condition or of the person you care for?

What is R.E.A.C.H?

You know yourself or the person you care for best. R.E.A.C.H will help with serious concerns that you feel have not yet been addressed or acted on by staff.

You know yourself or the person you care for best. The R.E.A.C.H process is designed to help you escalate serious concerns about clinical care and safety.

Use the steps of the REACH communication process if you are worried or notice a change in condition.

What does R.E.A.C.H stand for?

R.E.A.C.H has been designed to make each stage of the process as clear as possible. If you would like further information at any time, please ask the team looking after you.

R	Recognise
E	Engage
A	Act
C	Call
H	Help is on its way

R.E.A.C.H in practice

- R** You may **RECOGNISE** a change in your condition or of the person you care for.
- E** **ENGAGE** with the nurse or doctor that is looking after you or the person you care for and tell them your concerns.
- A** **ACT** if your concern is not responded to, ask to speak to a nurse in charge and request a "R.E.A.C.H review".
- C** If you are still concerned you can **CALL** for an independent review by a member of the R.E.A.C.H team.
- H** **HELP** will be on its way.

How do I call for a R.E.A.C.H review?

At Northern Beaches Hospital you can directly call a member of the R.E.A.C.H team on ~~0303~~ via your bedside phone, or if using your own mobile phone, call 02 ~~0105 0303~~ **9105 5126**

Will I offend staff if I R.E.A.C.H out?

No.

Staff at Northern Beaches Hospital support patient and carer involvement. You know how you feel or how the person you care for usually behaves. We also encourage you to raise your concerns with us during handover between staff shifts when staff are at your bedside discussing your care.

We want to work with you to create the best experience for yourself or the person you care for.

Mental Health Standards

Our mental health service complies with the Australian National Standards for Mental Health Services. Many of these the standards align with and can be mapped to the National Standards.

The key principles of the mental health standards are:

- mental health services should promote an optimal quality of life for people with mental health problems and / or mental illness
- services are delivered with the aim of facilitating sustained recovery
- consumers should be involved in all decisions regarding their treatment and care, and as far as possible, the opportunity to choose their treatment and setting
- consumers have the right to have their nominated carer(s) involved in all aspects of their care
- the role played by carers, as well as their capacity, needs and requirements as separate from those of consumers is recognised
- participation by consumers and carers is integral to the development, planning, delivery and evaluation of mental health services
- mental health treatment, care and support should be tailored to meet the specific needs of the individual consumer
- mental health treatment and support should impose the least personal restriction on the rights and choices of consumers taking account of their living situation, level of support within the community and the needs of their carer(s).



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