

Open Access to the Children's Units – A Parent's Guide

Children with short term illnesses

Date and time from:	Date and time to:

Your child has been admitted to the Children's Ward (Kipling) or the Short Stay Paediatric Assessment Unit (SSPAU). The doctors are happy for you to take your child home but we know that sometimes it takes a few days for children to get better and we feel that it would be helpful for you to have open access.

You will have **open access** for 24 hours after your child has been discharged, or if your child is discharged at the weekend, open access may extend until Monday morning. This means that if your child's condition gets worse, does not start to improve, or you have further concerns relating to this current illness, you can contact the children's unit on the numbers provided below. The doctor or nurse will listen to your concerns and decide on a plan, which may be either

- To provide reassurance and/or further advice about what you can do at home
- Advise you to bring your child back to hospital.

If you still think that your child is not improving and it is after 24 hours following discharge, you will need to take him/her to your GP.

If your child becomes unwell with a **different** illness or symptoms after being discharged from hospital, you will need to take him/her to the GP, not contact or return to, the hospital.

Children with long term conditions

If your child has a long term condition, you may have been told that they can have long term open access to the ward. Open access applies if:

- Your child becomes unwell due to deterioration in their long term condition
- With an illness related to the long term condition
- With an illness that makes their long term condition worse

It does not apply if they have an illness that is unrelated to their long term condition which is stable. In this case please take your child to the GP.

If your child is unwell, please take them to the GP in the first instance or contact the Children's Community Nurse if you usually see one.

Children receiving treatment for cancer who have febrile neutropenia must be brought directly to the children's unit. Please phone us first.

If your child is very unwell and you feel that they need urgent care they must be taken to the Emergency Department (ED/A&E) first, not brought directly to the children's unit.

Please do not bring your child directly to the children's unit without letting us know you are coming. It is important that we know they are coming so that we can prepare for their arrival or we may be able to give you advice which will avoid you having to bring your child in to hospital. If the unit is busy there may be a delay in your child's treatment if we are not expecting them.

CONQUEST HOSPITAL		EASTBOURNE DGH	
Kipling Ward	01424 758039	Friston SSPAU	01323 414946
Kipling SSPAU	01424 757507		01323 435766

For any other health matters not related to your child's current illness or long term condition it may be useful to call NHS 111. NHS 111 is a 24 hours a day, confidential helpline.

Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: (01323) 417400 Ext: 5860 or by email at: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department.

Tel: (01424) 755255 Ext: 2620

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your nurse or doctor.

Reference

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:
Caroline Stephenson, Practice Educator. Davina Piper, Sister. Liz Vaughan, Ward Matron, Nicola Dean, Ward Matron. Dr Graham Whincup, Consultant.

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Responsible clinician/author: Caroline Stephenson, Practice Educator, Paediatrics.