

Short Stay Paediatric Assessment Unit (SSPAU)

What is the SSPAU?

The short stay paediatric unit accepts patient referrals from GPs, A&E, Children's Community Nurses, and other healthcare professionals. We also undertake some complex investigations requested by GPs and Consultants as well as patient reviews following admission.

In the SSPAU children and young people are assessed by hospital and community nurses, and doctors to decide on the most appropriate care and treatment for your child in the right place. Our aim is to try and prevent your child from needing to be admitted to hospital overnight.

We may need to do some investigations such as a blood test, urine test or x-rays, or refer your child to another speciality doctor such as a surgeon. We may need to keep your child on the unit for observation and treatment, for example, antibiotic therapy. This will mean that you may have to stay for several hours before a decision can be made for you to take your child home or be admitted for overnight care. This will usually be on Kipling Ward at Conquest Hospital but, depending on where you live, we may be able to find you a bed closer to home at Brighton or Pembury Hospitals.

The SSPAU's admit children for both routine and emergency care. This may mean that the doctors and nurses can get busy with an emergency and routine care may get delayed. If this does happen, we will try to keep you informed. As a result, appointment times are not guaranteed and we advise that, where possible, you make arrangements for any other children.

If you have an appointment for your child to have a blood test, please remember that we usually try to apply "magic cream" to numb the area, and this takes 30 to 45 minutes to work and the skin will remain numb for 4-5 hours afterwards. You may wish to arrive earlier than your appointment time so that the cream can be applied

Why is best to take my child home?

If you can give the care that your child needs at home, this is the best place for her or him. Being in a familiar place will mean that your child is less anxious, is more likely to get back to their normal activity, and is less likely to come into contact with a child who has an infectious illness. It will also be less disruptive for your family life.

What happens if my child becomes worse when we are at home?

Please contact the SSPAU or the ward at the Conquest on the telephone numbers provided at the end of this information sheet. You will be advised on the most appropriate course of action. We may give you some advice on doing something different with your child or reassuring you that you are doing the right thing and to continue. Or you may be advised to bring your child back into one of our hospitals for further assessment and treatment, depending on what time of day you call us.

What facilities are available in the SSPAU for parents?

You are encouraged to stay with your child throughout their stay with us, to give them the support needed and to accompany them during investigations. You are welcome to use the ward kitchen (Kipling Ward) or the parents room (Friston SSPAU). Meals will be provided for your child. We are unable to provide meals for parents and/or siblings, although there are facilities in each hospital to buy food for yourself. **Please check with a nurse before giving your child anything to eat or drink.**

We have toys and play facilities available for your child and there are televisions above most of the beds, and DVDs available.

What other support is available to us when we are at home?

We will ask the Children's Community Nurses to contact you if appropriate, who may also arrange to visit you at home. You can also contact your GP for any follow up care that might be needed or you may be asked to come back to the SSPAU for review.

Travel between hospital sites

If you are seen first on Friston SSPAU at Eastbourne District General Hospital and the doctor feels that it is necessary for your child to be admitted overnight for further treatment and observation, he or she will be transferred to the inpatient ward, Kipling Ward, at Conquest Hospital in Hastings. If the doctor thinks that they are well enough, you may be able to take your child in your own car. If they have to be transferred in an ambulance, you will need to accompany your child in the ambulance. **This might mean that you have to leave your car at Eastbourne DGH. Please let a member of nursing staff know if you have to leave your car in the car park for a prolonged period of time as we can make special arrangements with the car parking team.**

Please be aware that we are unable to provide transport back to Eastbourne from the Conquest Hospital or provide funding for a taxi. You are therefore advised to make suitable arrangements, for example:

- Someone else to drive your car to the Conquest Hospital, **if insured to do so.**
- A friend or family member to accompany your child in the ambulance so that you can drive to the Conquest Hospital.
- If you do not have a car, arrange with a friend or family member to collect you and your child from the Conquest Hospital when discharged home.
- Arrange a taxi or use public transport

Contact details

Friston SSPAU (Eastbourne DGH): Tel: (01323) 414946 (0700 to 21.00 Monday to Friday and 10.00 to 18.30 Saturday/Sunday):

Eastbourne DGH: Tel: (01323) 417400 (Switchboard)

Conquest Hospital: Tel: (01424) 755255 (Switchboard)

Kipling Ward (Conquest Hospital): Tel: (01424) 758039 Direct Line 24 hours

Kipling SSPAU (Conquest Hospital): Tel: (01424) 757507 (0730 to 1930)

Important information

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is not intended 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 our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) – details below.

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

This information is available in alternative formats such as large print or electronically on request. Interpreters can also be booked. Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offices, found in the main reception areas:

Conquest Hospital

Email: esh-tr.palsh@nhs.uk - Telephone: **01424 758090**

Eastbourne District General Hospital

Email: esh-tr.palse@nhs.uk - Telephone: **01323 435886**

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

Written by: Caroline Stephenson, Practice Educator, Paediatrics.

The following clinicians have been consulted and agreed this patient information:

Fran Edmunds, Head of Nursing Women's and Children's Clinical Unit.

Liz Vaughan, Ward Matron,

Nicola Dean, Ward Matron,

Salah Mansy, Consultant Paediatrician.

Next review date: November 2018

Responsible clinician/author: Caroline Stephenson, Practice Educator.

© East Sussex Healthcare NHS Trust – www.esht.nhs.uk