



University Hospitals Birmingham
NHS Foundation Trust



**Partners in care:
patients, carers and staff
working together**

Building healthier lives

UHB is a no smoking Trust

Carers play a vital role in the care, health and wellbeing of patients. At University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust (UHB), we want to ensure that carers are recognised and supported to enable you to continue your caring role as much, or as little, as you wish while the person you care for is in hospital.

“A carer is a person of any age who provides unpaid care and support to a family member, friend or neighbour who is disabled, has an illness or long-term condition, or who needs extra help as they grow older.” Carers UK 2023

This does not have to be the patient's next of kin. Staff working together as 'partners in care' with carers, can help the cared for to feel safer in an unfamiliar place, such as a busy hospital ward or unit.

You may already be involved in caring for your relative or friend at home and may have a lot of knowledge and experience about their likes, dislikes, what feels comfortable for them, and the type of support they need.

If you would like to continue this care in hospital, please speak to one of the nurses on the ward. They will be happy to talk to you about how you can help. The patient must agree (if they are able) for you to help care for them in hospital.

If patients are unable to give consent, or have power of attorney in place, staff will share information in line with the current legislation and will also agree an appropriate level of involvement, always acting in the best interest of the patient.

You will be asked the following questions:

- What care do you usually give at home?
- Have you been trained in delivering care?
- What do you feel you are able or not able to do?
- Does your relative or friend have any special equipment that could be brought in to support them?

Please do not feel that we are placing an extra burden on you. We understand you may not be able to or want to be involved by physically supporting your relative or friend in hospital. We recognise that this may be a time for you to rest, in readiness for when the person you care for leaves hospital.

If you wish to be involved with your relative or friend's care, we will ensure you are comfortable and safe whilst on the ward and will discuss the following with you:

- Hand washing and the current infection control procedure, including personal protective equipment (PPE) - there may be occasions where you will be asked to wear a face mask, gloves or a plastic apron
- The requirement of being 'bare below the elbow' in clinical areas
- Restricting movement between bed spaces in shared bays, to reduce the risk of transmitting infections. The desire to help other patients could result in transmission of infections
- The level of care you can provide, such as manual handling and personal care
- How to stop your relative or friend's skin getting sore
- How you might help with eating and drinking, including what information to share with nursing staff about how much your relative or friend has eaten or drunk
- How to help reduce the risk of your relative or friend falling
- What to do if the fire alarm goes off
- The medication that your relative or friend will receive upon discharge

Each time you come to the ward or unit:

- Please report to the nurse caring for your relative or friend
- Ask staff for an update on your relative or friend's condition and care plan, including plans for discharge
- Tell the staff when you are leaving the ward and share any concerns or other information staff may need to know

Discharge from hospital

To ensure a safe discharge, an assessment should be carried out by hospital staff to see if you will need any additional support once discharged.

The discharge plan should take account of your:

- Willingness and ability to provide support, recognising that the person you care for may be discharged with very different needs to those prior to admission and that the level of care and support required may now have increased
- Your availability due to other commitments such as work or childcare
- How you will be able to sustain your caring role post discharge taking account of your age, mobility, own health needs etc.
- Relationship with the person you will be caring for
- Need for respite/a break from caring

Ward staff and/or the carer support officers should discuss the practical and emotional aspects of providing care post discharge with you and arrange the appropriate support for you before, during and after discharge. You may also be signposted towards relevant carer support organisations in the community.

Partner in care card

A Partner in Care (PiC) card has been developed in partnership between UHB and Birmingham Forward Carers. The card is designed to ensure recognition and support for you as a carer continues whilst the person you care for is in hospital.

A carer is eligible for a partner in care card if they have been referred to a carers support officer and:

- Are the unpaid carer of a patient currently undergoing inpatient treatment at UHB
- Have completed a 'partners in care' leaflet with ward staff
- Are supporting with a significant level of care
- Are spending a significant amount of time at the bedside

Whilst not all carers are eligible for a partner in care card, ward staff will still work with carers as a partner in care and ensure you have access to appropriate facilities.

Our staff will support you with:

- Access to hot and cold drinks and food (where appropriate) whilst on the ward
- A guest bed, bedding and breakfast, if an overnight stay is required and appropriate
- A sleep kit to help reduce noise/light disturbance on the ward
- A comfortable chair to sit by the bedside
- Access to crosswords, word search puzzles and colouring books.
- Checking in with you regularly to see how you are feeling and whether you wish to be involved in the delivery of care
- Open access to visiting when appropriate

To obtain a 'partner in care' card, please ask a member of staff to refer you to the Carer Support Service or you can contact the carer support officers yourself – see back page for contact details.

Other facilities

There are restaurants and cafes which you are welcome to use at each hospital site, please visit our website for more information:

www.uhb.nhs.uk/services/catering/our-retail-offer.htm/

We also have Faith and Community Centres at each hospital site across the Trust that can be used, please see our website for more information:

www.uhb.nhs.uk/services/chaplaincy/

Supportive and palliative care

Our supportive and palliative care service supports patients (and their relatives/carers) with life limiting illnesses and complex symptom control

www.uhb.nhs.uk/services/supportive-and-palliative-care/

Other information

If there is any other information you need, please ask or a member of ward staff or carer support officer who will assist.

Consent for involvement as a ‘partner in care’:

Patient’s name and signature

Name: _____

Signature: _____

I agree for the named carer (s) below to be involved in my care.

Relative or carer’s name (s) and signature (s)

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Relationship to patient: _____

I wish to be involved in my relative’s/friend’s care whilst they are in hospital. I am available during the times listed below:

Times I am available:

Morning	Afternoon	Evening

You can change your mind at any point without having to justify your decision.

We have made some suggestions about the sort of care you may wish to be involved in, but please feel free to add your own.

I would like to be involved with	Yes	No
Communication – in what way?		
Mealtimes – please state which meals		
Activities		
Washing and dressing		
Walking		
Anything else?		

Things you are unable to help with:

Medication

To ensure that medications are given safely and correctly, you will not usually be involved in the preparation or dispensing of medication. Under the supervision of a trained professional, you may remind or assist the person you care for to take their medication.

Interpreting

You will not be able to use your language skills to interpret between the patient and health care professional regarding care and treatment. Arrangements will be made to meet the patient's language and communication needs, through professional interpreting services.

However, in the event of an emergency that requires interpretation relating to consent or treatment and care, any decisions will be made in the patient's best interest and will not be delayed waiting for an interpreter.

Moving and lifting of the patient with or without equipment

Due to health and safety regulations, you will be unable to assist in any form of patient lifting or moving.

Our priority is our patient's recovery

We know that relatives and carers play a critical role in caring for people at home and become experts in their relative or friend's care. We want to learn and benefit from your valuable skills and experience.

You can also be part of your relative or friend's care and wellbeing by sharing your thoughts and ideas, and by being present at ward rounds or meetings involving their care. When sharing information or discussing care, as well as including those who we have identified as carers, we will include (with the patient's consent) people who have long standing close relationships with the patient.

We will recognise the knowledge and expertise of anyone who the patient identifies they have a significant or long-standing relationship with. Where patients are unable to give consent or have power of attorney in place, staff should share information in line with the current legislation, always acting in the best interest of the patient.

John's Campaign

We support John's Campaign (2014), which is an initiative that opens visiting hours to carers, so they are able to stay with their friend or family member. Carers should be welcomed, and the collaboration between patients and all connected with them is crucial to their health and their wellbeing. There is more information available at:

www.johnscampaign.org.uk

Carer Support Service

We have two carer support officers, who can support carers in the following ways:

- Identify you as a carer at the earliest opportunity
- Recognise the value and expertise you have and empower you to recognise your caring role
- Encourage your health and wellbeing
- Provide a carers information pack to support you whilst the person you care for is in hospital and on discharge back into the community
- Refer you to the appropriate organisation for a 'carers assessment' of your individual needs
- Provide you with advocacy support when needed during discussions about care planning and discharge from hospital
- Support you if the person you care for is at the end of their life or has sadly died

Queen Elizabeth and Good Hope Hospitals Birmingham

Santiago Laz Aparicio

Mobile: 07584475802

Email: carers@uhb.nhs.uk

Heartlands and Solihull Hospitals

Pat Porter

Mobile: 07584475787

Email: carers@uhb.nhs.uk

Please make a note of the ward contact details here:

Ward name	
Ward contact	
Ward telephone	

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email **patientexperience@uhb.nhs.uk**.

Patient Experience

Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham
Mindelsohn Way, Edgbaston
Birmingham
B15 2GW
