The Critical Care Unit

A visitor’s guide

Contact numbers:
Tel: 01473 702800
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What is the Critical Care Unit?
The Critical Care Unit (CCU) is an area of
the hospital which is specially designed
to closely monitor and treat patients with
life-threatening conditions. Patients may
need specialist treatment because one or
more of their organs, for example kidneys
or lungs, are not working properly. The
Critical Care Unit is the combined areas of
High Dependency Care and Intensive Care.

High Dependency Care is for patients
requiring more care, monitoring and
treatment than can be given on a general
ward. One nurse cares for two patients.

Intensive Care is for patients who require
constant medical and nursing support to
keep their body functioning. They may
have more than one organ which is not
working properly and they may not be able
to breathe on their own. One nurse cares
for one patient.

Admission to the Critical Care Unit may be
unplanned, following a deterioration of a
patient’s condition, or may be planned, for
example after surgery.

Occasionally, it may be necessary to move
a patient to another hospital for more
specialist care.

The Critical Care Unit has 12 beds and
one paediatric room, especially for caring
for critically unwell children. Due to
clinical condition, it is necessary to care
for patients in a mixed-sex environment.
Please speak to the bedside nurse for
more information about same-sex
accommodation.
The Critical Care team

Doctors
The care on CCU is coordinated by a consultant anaesthetist, with specialist training in intensive care (intensivist), who has overall responsibility for the patients’ care. They are assisted by a team of specialist registrars (anaesthetists) and junior doctors. During the ward round, the medical team will assess the patient, make decisions about treatment and prescribe medications. The medical team will also review the patient’s condition regularly throughout the day and overnight.

Nurses
The bedside nurse monitors each patient for changes in their condition, gives medication and specialist treatment, and provides personal care. He or she is assisted by a health care assistant (HCA) and assistant practitioner (AP) and managed by a highly specialist team of sisters/charge nurses, the lead nurse and the matron.

The multidisciplinary team
There is a large team within the CCU. On the unit you can expect to see physiotherapists, dietitians, radiographers, pharmacists, ward clerks and members of the Housekeeping team.

Rehabilitation Round
This is a multidisciplinary round on Thursdays from 1.30–3.30 pm, in which selected patients are reviewed and their care planned to meet their rehabilitation needs.
Information for visitors

Between the hours of 6 am and 9.30 pm, you can access the Critical Care Unit in the Garrett Anderson Centre via the main entrance. Take the door to the right of the Emergency Department entrance then take the lift or stairs to the first floor. If there is no receptionist, use the videophone by the door. Your call will be answered on the Unit and someone will open the door for you. Your patience is appreciated during this time.

If you are visiting between 9.30 pm and 6 am, you should report to the Emergency Department reception desk via the main entrance in the Garrett Anderson Centre, and a member of staff from CCU will come and collect you. There is a 24-hour exit near the South Wards entrance (Entrance 2); please speak to a member of staff if you wish to be shown this.

There is open visiting on the unit, but we ask that only two visitors be at a bedside at any one time, and visitors will be asked to wait in the family room during the ward round to maintain confidentiality for all patients. Visiting should be kept to short periods as our patients need frequent rest. There may be certain circumstances where these rules are waived; this is at the discretion of the nurse in charge. Please speak to the nurse in charge before bringing children onto the Unit.

During your visit, patients may require care or treatment, so you may be asked to wait in the family room or reception area during these times.
Car parking
Please use the visitors’ car parks. If you require a 3-day or 7-day parking permit (at a reduced cost), please speak to the nurse looking after your relative.

Toilets
These are located in the Critical Care Unit reception area and the South Wards reception area.

Telephones
Mobile phones may be safely used in the family room and reception area.

Accommodation
In certain circumstances, we are able to provide overnight accommodation for the patient’s next of kin. Please speak to the nurse in charge for more information.

Spiritual care
Please speak to the nurse looking after your relative if you would like a chaplain involved in your relative’s care. Chaplains provide spiritual and pastoral support for patients and the family, friends and carers of patients throughout Ipswich Hospital, as well as staff. Chaplains aim to provide an inclusive service for people of all faiths, and of no faith, recognising each person as an individual and respecting their values, age, gender, disability, culture and sexual orientation.

Patient belongings
We may ask you to take away some belongings and valuables due to limited storage space. You may like to leave items such as toiletries, glasses and hearing aids
as these are useful as the patient starts to recover.

**Infection control**

Our staff maintain a high standard of hand hygiene by either washing their hands or using alcohol gel between patient contacts. Research has shown that this is one of the most effective ways to prevent the spread of infection. Therefore, we ask that all visitors clean their hands both before and after visiting the CCU.

Patients are tested for MRSA infection on admission to the CCU, and are given preventative treatment. Isolation rooms may be used for patients who are at a greater risk of developing an infection, or who have an infection that specifically needs isolating. Visitors may be asked to take extra precautions in these rooms, such as wearing gloves, a mask and apron. Please speak to the nurse who will explain what you need to do, and will answer any questions you may have.

Flowers are not permitted on the Unit due to the risk of infection that the water may carry.

We ask that people feeling generally unwell avoid visiting until they are fully recovered.

In the interests of hygiene and infection control, please do not bring food or drink onto the Unit. We do not have facilities to keep patient’s own food or drinks on the Unit.
Confidentiality and information sharing

We take a patient’s confidentiality seriously. We ask that enquiries are made by one nominated family member (often the next of kin). You can telephone the unit anytime, but to protect the patient’s confidentiality, we will only give limited information over the telephone. We will aim to give information in person wherever possible.

We want to keep patients and their families informed and involved in the care we give. If you would like to have a meeting with the doctor looking after your relative, please speak to the bedside nurse, who will arrange this. It may be helpful to write down any questions you may have before this meeting.

Notes:

Feedback to us

At Ipswich Hospital, we work to improve the quality of the service we give to our patients, their families and the community, so we would like to hear about your experiences.
‘We are Listening’ leaflets are available on the feedback station located outside the family room if you wish to make any comments, compliments, suggestions or have concerns. Alternatively, please feel free to request a meeting with the senior management team.

Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you have any comments, compliments or complaints. Leaflets entitled ‘Your Views Matter’ are available from the reception area and feedback station.

If you feel you would like to contribute to the Ipswich Hospital Critical Care Charitable Fund, please contact the lead nurse or matron for details. This fund is used in a variety of ways, including purchasing new equipment and improving facilities for patients and their families, as well as helping towards educational opportunities for staff.

If there is anything you think we can improve upon, please take the time to let us know by contacting either the lead nurse or matron at:

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