

Information for visiting inpatients in our National Spinal Injuries Centre

We recognise the important role family and friends play in supporting our patients during a stay on our spinal unit.

Restrictions are currently in place to ensure any risk of infection is minimised. These restrictions are under constant review. Please find details of our current guidelines below.

Visitors will be allowed into the National Spinal Injuries Centre (NSIC) following the **rule of one**. This means:

One visitor, per patient, per day pre-booked into a specific 3 hour time slot.

- **Exceptions apply if you are:**

- Supporting a person with a learning disability, or autism, or dementia where not being present would cause the patient to be distressed.
- Supporting a patient who has communication challenges, including hearing or visual impairment or for whom English is not their first language

There may be other exceptional circumstances that will require case-by-case assessment – please talk to the ward manager.

- **Designated visitors**

- A designated visitor will be identified when the patient is admitted.
- Patients are required to provide the name of their designated visitor so that a record of visitors can be maintained for safety.
- This designated visitor must be the same person throughout the duration of the patient's stay on the unit.

- **Time slots and booking visits**

A member of the ward staff will contact the designated visitor to book visits.

There are two time slots for visiting:

- 9:00 am - 12:00 noon
- 2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

- Visitors **must not** enter our hospital if they feel unwell, in particular if they:

- Have a temperature, a new continuous cough, a loss of taste or smell, or diarrhoea or vomiting.
- Have been in contact with someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19
- Are self-isolating or shielding

Frequently asked questions

1. Can a different person visit each day?

A designated visitor must be the same person throughout the duration of a patient's stay on the unit.

2. Can I bring my child with me when I visit?

Sorry, no. Patients can only have one designated visitor, (unless previously agreed under special circumstances).

3. Where do I go when I arrive?

Entrances at all our hospital sites have been restricted. Please use the main entrance to Stoke Mandeville Hospital.

- Please refer to our hospital location maps for [Stoke Mandeville Hospital](#),
- If someone else has given you a lift to the hospital, then your driver needs to remain in their car, or wait somewhere off the hospital site, and will not be able to enter the hospital building.

4. Will I be given personal protective equipment to wear?

- In line with national guidance, [anyone entering our hospitals is required to wear a face covering](#) at all times.
- For your own safety and that of our patients and staff we will not allow anyone into our unit who is unable, or who refuses, to wear a facemask – there are no exceptions.
- As a designated visitor you will be asked to sanitise your hands, be given a surgical facemask to wear, and have your temperature checked before your visit.
- We will ask you to use hand sanitiser before and after you leave.

5. How do I get to the ward?

- If you haven't visited the NSIC before, please ask a member of staff for directions to the ward when you make your appointment.
- If you wish to use a lift please note the restrictions limiting the number of passengers posted by each lift. An exception is for NHS staff escorting a patient. Patients should be given priority. It may be quicker to use the stairs, if you can.
- Please keep left in corridors and on the stairs.

6. What areas of the NSIC are available for visits?

For patients who are able to leave their wards:

- Visits will take place in Horatio's Garden
- Please note, once you are in the garden you will need to remain there for the duration of your visit and will not be able to repeatedly exit and re-enter the area.

For patients who are unable to leave their ward:

- Visits will take place on the ward

- Once you are on the ward please make your way to your relative or friend's bedside.
- You will be asked to stay in place for the duration of your visit, unless you need to use the toilet.
- Please keep your mask on at all times.
- Please do not sit on your relative or friend's bed.
- Please sit on chairs provided.
- Please do not sit with any other patients on the ward. You may only visit the patient you are the designated visitor for.
- At the end of your pre-booked time slot, you will be asked to leave the ward.

7. Can I use the toilet during my visit?

Yes, please use public toilets. Do not use toilets reserved for patients or staff.

8. What happens when I leave the ward?

Please make your way back to where you entered. When you reach the entry point, please sanitise your hands, remove your mask and place it in the bin provided, and sanitise your hands once again.