

Being admitted to Ellern Mede during the period of COVID-19 precautions



Admission Guidance for Patients

Welcome to Ellern Mede

Here is some information specific to the current global COVID-19 pandemic and any precautions we have taken that you should know of during your hospital stay. Ellern Mede hospitals have continued to function safely and to safely admit new patients throughout this time.

We have had no cases of patients contracting the virus. Any staff who either developed symptoms or tested positive for the virus were successfully quarantined in time for this not to have spread to others.

New Patients: As a new patient, if you have tested negative for COVID-19 immediately prior to admission, your admission to the wards will be normal. If you have not been tested, you will be tested on arrival at Ellern Mede. Until the results are known, you will be allocated your own room for 7 days. This is bound to feel a bit lonely and we have to ask for you to be patient until we are sure you can safely mix with wards and activities. Our staff will do everything they can to give you extra company and attention during this time. They will wear protective clothing such as gloves and masks, please don't feel afraid of this, it is just standard procedure for aiding the control of infections. Once we are sure you are safe, we will move you to a shared room and interaction with other patients.

Restricted visiting rules: We are as eager as you are to welcome regular family visits however just at this time, they have to be less frequent and they unfortunately, for the protection of all, have to be socially distanced, no hugging etc, and your visitors will have to wear masks.

School: In place of face to face classroom education, you will use a Tablet Computer to access remote online lessons with teachers and other pupils.

Hand-washing: Please wash your hands after you have touched surfaces, frequently, for a minimum of 20 seconds with soap and water, and avoid touching your face.

Masks: At some stages, depending on risk level, you might be asked to wear a mask. As of June 2020, this would only be where it is not possible to maintain a 2 metre distance within a group.

Latest News for patients

Two people at a time family visits allowed now, just one family visit per week, and this is a Socially Distanced Visit, preferably out of doors, perhaps in a Marquee in the garden, if not, then in a specific pre-booked visiting room.

This is to minimise the number of different households mingling during the time when we are still dealing with a virus for which there is no Vaccine and few treatments.

Ellern Mede visiting rules during pandemic

Where patients and parents can safely continue to communicate via technology only, we would encourage them to do so. The ambition of the Ellern Mede team remains to minimise all external visits to the hospitals as much as possible (which to date has worked well.) Per Family visits will be restricted to a maximum of one visit per week by up to **TWO** parents or family members.

1. Visits to each hospital site will be limited to a maximum of 4-5 appropriately spaced parental visits per day (6 on weekends).
2. Visits will be agreed at least 24 hours in advance (48 hours for weekend visits) by the individual Ward Manager; the Centre Manager must be advised of the arrangements (to enable them to coordinate visits as we wish to spread out visits as much as possible).
3. Visits will be time limited (1½ hour) and social distancing **MUST** be observed (not within 2 meters) at all times during the visit.
4. The visiting parent must arrive within 15 minutes of the agreed time and use the intercom system to alert the ward staff they have arrived. (or use the relevant phone number of necessary).
5. The parent will then be met by an appropriate member of the ward team.
6. The visiting parent must complete or confirm the health questionnaire and if no health issues are identified, the parent will then have their temperature taken. Any temperature above 37.8 centigrade will be advised and the visit will be abandoned.
7. Whenever the weather is appropriate and it is safe to do so, visits should take place in the garden areas of Ellern Mede hospitals. An Ellern Mede staff member will be available to support the visit when required.
8. When the weather or other factors (e.g. following risk assessment) does not allow garden visits the individual hospital's "designated visiting area" will be used. Again, social distancing **MUST** be observed (not within 2 metres) at all times during the visit.
9. When the parent/family member first enters the hospital they must immediately wash their hands thoroughly before going to the visiting area or room.
10. When the visit is complete, if a room is used, the room should be cleaned with antiseptic wipes or spray by the Ellern Mede housekeeping team or in their absence the care staff team member.
11. All visits and indeed this protocol will be subject to "no notice" cancellation in the event of e.g. severe staffing shortages or an "outbreak" of COVID-19 amongst patients. In these cases and wherever possible, the Ward Manager or Nurse in Charge will immediately contact all parents who are due to visit on that day to alert them of the cancellation of the visit and why.

Yours sincerely



Peter J Curtis

Managing Director on behalf of the SMT