

# Information for Head and Neck Cancer patients about your hospital stay

## Introduction

This leaflet gives you information about Ward 2b, what to expect during your stay and lists some of the things that you should bring with you for your hospital stay. Also included are pictures showing the colour of the uniforms that the staff members wear and their role on the ward.

Listed at the end of the leaflet are useful contact details for available support services, including the details for the Head and Neck Cancer team.

We understand that you may feel nervous coming into hospital for surgery. We hope the information in this leaflet helps you to feel ready for your stay.

If there is anything else that you need, please contact one of the Head and Neck Specialists using the details at the end of this leaflet. We aim to make your stay as comfortable as possible.

## Ward 2b

Ward 2b has 22 beds. There are rooms called bays which have 4 or 5 beds in them. There are also 5 single rooms. If you are in a bay there will only be people of your sex with you.

Visiting hours are 11.00am to 8.00pm.

Free Wi-Fi is available on all our wards. If you have any difficulty connecting to this, please speak to a member of the ward staff.

Reference No.

**GHPI1672\_05\_24**

Department

**Head and Neck/  
Oncology**

Review due

**May 2027**

## Patient Information

### What to bring with you

You will have a bedside locker allocated to you to keep some of your personal belongings in. Please be aware that storage space is limited.

Here is a handy list of some of the essential items that you will need for your hospital stay:

- Washbag including items such as a toothbrush, toothpaste, soap, flannel, deodorant, etc.
- Pyjama's – we suggest bringing V-neck or button up pyjama tops due to the area of your surgery
- Towel
- Your regular medication and inhalers
- Notebook and pen
- Slippers
- Casual/comfy clothing and shoes
- Mobile phone/iPad/laptop (with chargers)
- Tissues
- Something to keep you entertained, such as books, magazines, crosswords, knitting, cards etc.
- A small amount of money if you want anything from the shop - staff will be happy to help get these for you.

**Please be aware that you will be asked to sign a form, explaining that we cannot accept responsibility for your belongings.**

### Your hospital stay

You will be asked to attend a pre-operative (pre-op) assessment appointment before your surgery. At this appointment you will be given important information about when you should stop eating and drinking (known as Nil by Mouth) before your operation. You will also be given information about stopping certain medications if needed.

On the morning of your operation, you will go to the Mayhill Unit at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital where you will be prepared for your surgery. Your belongings will be looked after by the Mayhill Unit staff, and delivered to Ward 2b while you are having your operation.

## Patient Information

In some cases, patients need to go to the Department of Critical Care for a period of time after their operation for closer observation. Your surgeon will inform you about this possibility before your surgery. We will transfer you to Ward 2b as soon as the Critical Care doctors think it is appropriate.

After the surgery, a member of staff will contact your next of kin to tell them how the procedure has gone and how you are doing.

You will be seen every day by your medical team, which consists of doctors, speech and language therapists, dietitians, clinical nurse specialists and ward nurses. We work together to make sure all your needs are met. There is more information about what these members of staff do later in the leaflet.

We will encourage you to get up and move around as soon as you are able. We will also ask you to wear clothes or pyjamas that are loose around the neck to allow for drains/dressings.

The symptoms experienced after an operation will vary from patient to patient. It is important that you report any symptoms such as pain, feeling sick, breathlessness, constipation (difficulty in emptying your bowels) etc. to the nurse looking after you so that they can help you, or report it to the doctors.

There is a nurse call bell next to your bed. This is a button that you can press to let the nurses know that you need to their attention.

## Directions to Mayhill Unit

There are two entrances to the hospital and at both there is a volunteer's reception desk. The volunteers will be able to direct you to Mayhill Unit.

You can use the lift to the right of the stairway to get to Mayhill Unit if needed.

Patient  
Information

## The Team

**Ward Sister/Charge Nurse**

They are responsible for managing the ward. They focus on your safety and well-being while you are on the ward.

**Clinical Nurse Specialist**

Their role is to support you through your patient journey. They will work with the team to make sure that you have all the medications, equipment and support you require before you are discharged.

**Staff Nurse**

They are responsible for your nursing care. Each staff nurse will be responsible for 6 to 8 patients during their shift.

**Healthcare Assistant**

They will help other members of staff with your care, for example taking your blood pressure. The healthcare assistants will also help you with your daily personal care needs.

**Domestic**

The domestic staff are responsible for the cleanliness of the ward. They will also offer you drinks, such as tea, coffee or squash during the day.

**Patient  
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## Clinical Nurse Specialist

Where possible, one of the Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNS) will visit you during your stay. This gives you an opportunity to ask any questions about your care or to talk about any other concerns you may have. The CNS' will discuss and work with the ward nurses and doctors if you need support for any symptoms that you are having following your surgery.

There may be times when the CNS' are not able to see you during your stay due to their outpatient clinic responsibilities. If you would specifically like to talk to one of the team, please do not hesitate to ask a member of the ward team to contact them and let them know.

## Help with your diet

A member of the dietary team will support you before your surgery, while you are on the ward and once you have gone home after your operation.

The dietitian will support you with ideas about the best foods to eat to make sure that you are well nourished before your surgery. Improving your diet before surgery can help with the healing and recovery process.

If your consultant has mentioned the possibility of a feeding tube, the dietitian will be able to provide further information about this.

During your stay on the ward, the dietitian will be working with you to make sure you are eating and drinking enough to help with your recovery. They will give you information before you are discharged and continue to support you once you are at home.

The main aim will be to make sure that you do not lose too much weight before and after surgery. If you want to lose weight, they can support you with this at a later date.

**Patient  
Information**

## Speech and Language Therapy

Speech and language therapists provide support for patients who have speech, voice and eating/drinking difficulties.

Some surgeries can cause short and long term side-effects that can affect your ability to use your voice or to eat and drink as normal. The speech and language therapist will have already discussed this with you.

The speech and language therapist will support you during your hospital stay with any communication and/or eating and drinking difficulties you may experience. They will also provide ongoing support and advice when you are discharged from hospital.

## Support and Information Services

### The FOCUS Cancer Information and Support Centre

Oncology Centre

Cheltenham General Hospital

Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 4:30pm

Tel: 0300 422 4414

### Maggie's Centre

The Lodge

College Baths Road

Cheltenham

GL53 7QB

The centre provides information, benefits advice, psychological support, courses and stress reducing ideas for both patients and relatives.

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 4:00pm

Tel: 01242 250611

Website: [www.maggies.org](http://www.maggies.org)

## Patient Information

### **Charlie's Cancer Support and Therapy Centre**

The centre provides free holistic therapies, activities and support.

Unit 2  
Venture Business Centre  
Madleaze Road  
Gloucester  
GL1 5SL

Tel: 01452 939 000  
Tuesday to Thursday, 10:00am to 2:00pm

Email: [charlies2014@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:charlies2014@yahoo.co.uk)

Website: [www.charlies.org.uk](http://www.charlies.org.uk)

### **Macmillan Hub**

Situated in the atrium at Gloucestershire Royal Hospital. This service provides information, support and benefits advice.

Monday to Friday 9:00am to 4:00pm

Tel: 0300 422 8880

Email: [ghn-tr.macmillanhub@nhs.net](mailto:ghn-tr.macmillanhub@nhs.net)

## **Contact information**

### **Ward 2b**

Tel: 0300 422 6184

Available every day at all times

### **Head and Neck Clinical Nurse Specialists**

Tel: 0300 422 6785

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm

### **Head and Neck Specialist Dietitians**

Tel: 0300 422 3460

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm

### **Head and Neck Specialist Speech and Language Therapists**

Tel: 0300 422 8105

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm

### **Head and Neck Unit Navigator**

Tel: 0300 422 6280

Monday to Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

**Patient Information**

**Head and Neck Support Worker**

Tel: 0300 422 6555

Monday to Friday, 8:00am to 4:00pm

**Mayhill Unit**

Tel: 0300 422 6752

Available every day at all times

**Department of Critical Care**

Tel: 0300 422 6178

Available every day at all times

Content reviewed: May 2024

## Making a choice

### Shared Decision Making

If you are asked to make a choice, you may have lots of questions that you want to ask. You may also want to talk over your options with your family or friends. It can help to write a list of the questions you want answered and take it to your appointment.



#### Ask 3 Questions

To begin with, try to make sure you get the answers to three key questions if you are asked to make a choice about your healthcare.

1. What are my options?
2. What are the pros and cons of each option for me?
3. How do I get support to help me make a decision that is right for me?

These resources have been adapted with kind permission from the MAGIC Programme, supported by the Health Foundation

\* Ask 3 Questions is based on Shepherd HL, et al. Three questions that patients can ask to improve the quality of information physicians give about treatment options: A cross-over trial. Patient Education and Counselling, 2011;84: 379-85



<https://aqua.nhs.uk/resources/shared-decision-making-case-studies/>