
Steps currently in place to prevent the spread of infection to protect our patients, visitors and staff

Patient and staff safety is our priority, especially during this pandemic. To stop the spread of the virus we are following government advice, using personal protective equipment (PPE) as required, practicing physical distancing, have restricted visiting in place and have increased hand and surface hygiene practices.

Visiting restrictions

We are sorry that we are not currently allowing visitors in our hospitals. This has been a difficult decision to make but the risk of spreading the infection is too high. Visitors will only be considered in exceptional circumstances, including:

- for a patient at the end of life
- one regular carer for a patient with additional needs, such as a patient with dementia
- one parent/guardian for a child
- one birth partner

Please speak to the nurse or midwife in charge of the ward or unit to consider any exceptional arrangements.

Any visitors who are allowed must:

- not come to the hospital if feeling unwell, including any cold or flu symptoms
- wear a face covering inside hospital buildings
- wash or gel their hands as soon as they enter a ward or unit
- follow the additional measures, including wearing PPE as directed by staff.

We know that it's important for our patients to see family and friends but please consider if your visit is essential. Patients can access tablet devices with video call function to keep in touch with their relatives. Ask the person in charge for more information.

If you have been permitted to visit your loved one, wards may at any time restrict the number of visitors, the hours that visiting is permitted, the time of day visiting is allowed, who can visit patients and the number of times you can visit per day/week.

Please respect our staff and their decision to restrict visiting.

Carers coming to hospital

Carers are welcome to come to hospital to support patients' health and social needs. Although there are restrictions on visitors coming to hospitals, a familiar carer or supporter is not considered a visitor. We

recognise carers play a vital role in supporting patients' communications needs – particularly where a patient has dementia, learning disabilities and/or autism. We can provide carers with a 'carers passport' so that each patient's main carer can be identified easily. Ask your care team for more information.

Wearing a surgical mask

If you are permitted to visit your loved one you must wear a face covering as soon as you enter the hospital building and keep it on. When you reach the ward, we will give you a surgical mask to wear, we may also ask you to wear additional PPE. We will provide you with the PPE you need to enter the ward. On leaving the ward we will help you to remove your PPE and put your face covering back on to leave the hospital building. If you are exempt from wearing a mask, please speak to a member of staff.

Clean your hands regularly

To help reduce the spread of infection, you should wash your hands with soap and water before entering our hospitals and often once inside – for at least 20 seconds. Where soap and water are not available, please use hand sanitiser gel.

Physical distancing – stay two metres apart where possible

Please maintain a distance of two metres from others to stop the spread of infection.

We appreciate this is not always possible in a hospital, but we encourage everyone to do this whenever they can.

How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3313 0088** (Charing Cross, Hammersmith and Queen Charlotte's & Chelsea hospitals), or **020 3312 7777** (St Mary's and Western Eye hospitals). You can also email PALS at imperial.pals@nhs.net The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street London W2 1NY

Email: ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net
Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team:
imperial.communications@nhs.net

Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website:
www.imperial.nhs.uk

Trust-wide
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Visiting during the Covid-19 pandemic

Information for relatives and carers