



**We can provide interpreters for a variety of languages, information in larger print or other formats (e.g. audio) - please call us on 01932 723553.**

**To use the Text Relay service, prefix all numbers with 18001.**

اگر نیاز به ترجمہ دارید، لطفاً با شماره 01932 723553 تماس بگیرید۔

ने उगाठुं उरनमे सी लेउ वै उं विरपा वरवे एस नंघर उे डेन वरवे: 01932 723553

اگر آپ اس کا اردو زبان میں ترجمہ چاہتے ہیں، تو براہ کرم اس فون نمبر 01932 723553 پر رابطہ کریں

Se precisa de uma tradução por favor contacte: 01932 723553

আপনার অনুবাদের দরকার হলে এখানে যোগাযোগ করুন : 01932 723553

यदि आपको अनुवाद की ज़रूरत है तो कृपया इस नंबर पर फोन करें: 01932 723553

Jeżeli chcemy, aby te informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić 01932 723553

**Ashford Hospital**  
London Road  
Ashford, Middlesex  
TW15 3AA  
Tel: **01784 884488**

**St. Peter's Hospital**  
Guildford Road  
Chertsey, Surrey  
KT16 0PZ.  
Tel: **01932 872000**

Website: [www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk](http://www.ashfordstpeters.nhs.uk)

## Information for Family and Friends staying with patients who are in the last days of life



**Patient Information**

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## Further Information

We endeavour to provide an excellent service at all times, but should you have any concerns please, in the first instance, raise these with the Lead Nurse, Sister or Deputy Sister on duty. If they cannot resolve your concern, please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01932 723553 or email [pals@asph.nhs.uk](mailto:pals@asph.nhs.uk). If you remain concerned, PALS can also advise upon how to make a formal complaint.

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**Author:** Rebecca Rogers / Fiona Power **Department:** Supportive and Palliative Care

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## **Fundraising**

If you would like to make a donation please make cheques payable to –

Ashford and St Peter's Cancer and Palliative Care Trust Fund

The doctors and nurses will have explained to you that there has been a change in your relative or friends condition. They believe that the person you care for is now dying and in the last hours or days of life.

You and your relative or friend (where possible), will be involved in the discussion regarding care. The aim being that you are fully informed and individualised care needs are met. If your relative or friend's condition improves then the plan of care will be reviewed and changed. All decisions will be reviewed daily.

## **Communication**

The doctors and nurses will ask you for your contact details, so that you are kept updated. Caring well for your relative or friend is important to us. Please speak to the doctors and nurses if there are any questions you may have, no matter how insignificant you think they may be or how busy the staff may seem. We are happy to explain, support and answer your questions.

## **Medication**

Medicine that is not helpful at this time may be stopped and new medicines prescribed. Medicines for symptom control (pain, shortness of breath, agitation, nausea and vomiting) will be given should the need arise. If possible these will be given by mouth but, at some stage they may need to be given by injection or by continuous infusion with a small pump called a syringe driver.

## **Comfort**

We want to make sure that as far as possible all your relative's / friend's needs are met. You can support care in important ways such as spending time together, sharing memories and news of family and friends.

During the dying phase, care will be delivered to ensure the patient is comfortable but some routine ward tests, such as blood pressure monitoring or blood tests, may be reviewed and stopped.

The doctors and nurses will not want to interrupt your time with your relative or friend, however routine care needs will be reviewed 2 hourly.

## **Reduced need for food and drink**

Loss of interest and a reduced need for food and drink is part of the normal dying process. When a person stops eating and drinking it can be hard to accept even when we know they are dying. Your relative or friend will be supported to eat and drink for as long as possible. If they cannot take fluids by mouth, fluids given by a drip may be considered.

Fluids given by drip will only be used where it is helpful and not harmful. This decision will be explained to your relative or friend if possible and to you.

Good mouth care is very important at this time. The nurses will explain to you how mouth care is given and may ask if you would like to help them give this care.

## **Communication**

The doctors and nurses will ask you for your contact details, so that you are kept updated. Caring well for your relative or friend is important to us. Please speak to the doctors and nurses if there are any questions you may have, no matter how insignificant you think they may be or how busy the staff may seem. This may be all very unfamiliar to you and we are happy to explain, support and answer your questions.

You will be offered a communication sheet; this is to promote individualised care. Please share this with any significant family members or friends and return to the nursing staff, so that care may be reviewed on a daily basis.

Bereavement booklets are available on the ward with information regarding support and guidance.

Further information to support this leaflet may be accessed in the Macmillan information room (in outpatients) or located in the ward staff resource file.

Refreshments are available in several areas.

There are vending machines situated throughout both hospitals.  
There are also cafes / shops open Monday - Sunday.

### **St Peter's Hospital**

Aspects - opening times, Monday to Friday **07.30 – 15.00pm**

Retreat - opening times, Monday to Sunday **07.30 – 19.00pm**

WH Smiths - opening times, Monday – Friday **08.00 – 19.00pm**  
Saturday / Sunday **11.00 – 16.00pm**

Abbey Wing - Café / Shop opening times, Monday to Friday  
**09.30 - 16:15pm**

Sunday **13:30 -16:30pm**

### **Ashford Hospital**

Retreat – opening times, Monday to Sunday **08.00 - 17.00pm**

Aspects – opening times, Monday to Friday **07.30 - 15.30pm**

Café (outpatients) Monday to Friday **08.00 - 16.00pm**

### **Public Transport**

Information regarding local bus routes is available at the main entrance to each hospital.

### **Breathing**

Occasionally in the last hours of life, breathing may become noisy and troublesome. This is often due to an accumulation of secretions in the chest and a reduced ability to cough. This may be upsetting to listen to, however, we will aim to control this symptom and reduce distress for the dying person. Breathing through the mouth, may cause the lips and mouth to become dry, regular moistening of mouth with damp sponge aids comfort.

### **What to expect**

The dying person will generally spend more time sleeping and their periods of wakefulness will lessen. Eventually there may be a lapse into unconsciousness and the duration of this period will vary from patient to patient.

There may be many changes that you see during this time, these may include long pauses between breaths; the skin becoming pale and cool to touch, your friend or family member being less responsive to you. Signs of dying are different to every person and our aim is to support you.

### **Further information**

Changes to care at this complex, uncertain time are made in the best interest of the patient, their relatives or carers and needs to be reviewed regularly by the multi-disciplinary team (MDT).

The recognition and diagnosis of dying is always complex; irrespective of previous diagnosis or history. Uncertainty is an integral part of dying. There are occasions when a patient who is thought to be dying lives longer than expected and vice versa.

Should you wish to speak to anyone from the Palliative Care team please speak to the ward staff and they will be able to arrange this for you.

## **Chaplaincy**

The Trust provides a chaplaincy service that is available 24/7. The chaplains and the volunteers who work alongside them, would be very happy to spend time with you and your loved one, whether or not you belong to a particular denomination or faith tradition. You may simply like to chat with one of the chaplains or you may like one of them to pray with you or your loved one. If you are a member of a faith community and would like the chaplains to contact someone who represents your particular tradition they would be happy to do that for you. The Team has an open and informal approach and if you would appreciate their support please ask a member of the ward staff to contact the 'on call' chaplain for you.

There is a Multi-Faith Worship Centre at both Ashford and St Peters Hospitals. The Centres are open to EVERYONE all day, every day and access to them at night can be provided by our Security staff. At Ashford Hospital the centre is close to the hospital main entrance and at St Peter's Hospital, it is beside the A&E department. Again – you are warmly invited to use the centre for prayer if that is appropriate for you, or simply as a quiet and peaceful space away from the busyness of the ward.

## **Visiting**

You are welcome to visit at any time of day or night; there are no restrictions to visiting. If visiting after 9pm, the hospital door will be locked so please use doors located by A & E at St. Peters Hospital. If visiting Ashford hospital out of hours, the ward will arrange for security to give you access.

We do however advise that the number of visitors at any one time, are kept to a reasonable amount.

If you wish to stay overnight we may be able to offer a camp bed so that we can make you as comfortable as possible during this difficult time. Please inform the ward staff if you would like to stay with your relative / friend.

## **Involvement**

Increasing the involvement of relatives and carers in all aspects of patient care is something that the Trust supports. It may be that you wish to be involved in whichever aspect of care you feel comfortable doing e.g. mouth care.

You may wish to bring some personal effects from home i.e. photographs etc.

## **Car parking and Refreshments**

Car parking is available in the visitor's car park, situated at the front of both hospitals, however, charges do apply.

It is possible to buy a weekly pass for £20. Blue Badge ticket holders can produce their badge at reception and will be given a free parking ticket to exit.