

ADMITTED PATIENT LEAVE POLICY®

DOCUMENT SUMMARY/KEY POINTS

- Admitted Patient Leave is:
 - also referred to as 'gate-pass' or 'gate-leave'
 - defined as temporary absence of from Sydney Children's' Hospitals Network (SCHN) with the intent to return for further treatment.
 - managed by the Patient Flow Unit (or AHNM after-hours) in consultation with the treating team.
- Admitted patient leave at SCHN is generally permitted **if** the period of leave does **not exceed 48 hours**. Refer to the [Procedure](#) and/or the [Algorithm](#) for more information.
- The *exception* to this is involuntary patients under the Mental Health Act 2007 who may require extended leave pending a Mental Health Review Tribunal Hearing. In this instance, the leave bed should be used by another patient.
- Other patients absent from SCHN for longer periods (>48 hours) should be discharged and re-admitted if treatment is to be continued.
- Patients returning <72hours do not require a full medical and nursing admission.
- **DAY admitted patient leave** is available for patients requiring time away from the hospital (e.g. for treatment at another facility) and *returning the same day*. Patient Flow Unit should be notified of day admitted patient leave.
- **OVERNIGHT admitted patient leave** must be part of an agreed 'best practice program'. Patient Flow Unit should provide authorisation for overnight admitted patient leave.
- Document in the patient's medical record the admitted patient leave notification or authorisation and expected date and time of return.
- All patients using 'gate-pass' must always be recorded in the Patient Management System (PMS) as 'admitted patient leave' and select Day or Overnight.
- When the patient returns, update PMS as 'returned from leave' and document the return in the patient's medical record.

Approved by:	SCHN Policy, Procedure and Guideline Committee	
Date Effective:	1 st December 2015	Review Period: 3 years
Team Leader:	Manager	Area/Dept: Patient Flow Unit [CHW & SCH]

CHANGE SUMMARY

- The CHW policy of the same title has been replaced by this Sydney Children's Hospital Network (SCHN) policy.

READ ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- All clinical managers should read this policy.
- Patient Administration Officers should read and acknowledge they understand the contents of this policy.

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Preamble

The Sydney Children's Hospitals Network (SCHN) provides tertiary level services to the children of NSW as well as local services to patients living within its catchment area. The services are used by current inpatients, outpatients and patients who are awaiting further care (e.g. from ED).

On occasion, it may be necessary to consider admitted patient leave from the hospital for a short period of time as part of the patient care plan (instead of discharging and arranging a booked readmission a few days later). Consideration for admitted patient leave should only be done if it is consistent with best practice and if it is possible to do in a safe manner.

However, admitted patient leave may directly impact episode funding [[NSW Health PD2008_063](#)] and therefore it must be recorded accurately in order to:

- Calculate occupied bed days (which excludes leave) and
- Identify the "real" length of stay (i.e. the period of resource usage) for an episode of care [by deducting leave days from the "calculated" length of stay (the period between admission and separation) for that episode].
- Analyse costs per patient and for planning.

The period of leave affects admission and separation rates, particularly for long stay patients who may have several leave periods.

Types of Admitted Patient Leave

Admitted Patient Leave is also referred to as 'gate-pass' or 'gate-leave' and is defined as temporary absence of from SCHN with the intent to return for further treatment. Admitted patient leave is managed by the Patient Flow Unit (or After Hours Nurse Manager [AHNM] if after hours) in consultation with the Treating Team.

Day admitted patient leave

Day admitted patient leave (day gate-pass) is leave **occurring during the day** for either treatment at another facility or for defined recreation and returning the same day. Day gate-pass patients should be placed on leave for the period they are out of the ward. Examples of these include, but are not limited to: patients requiring PET scan, EPS study, radiotherapy and dental treatment.

Overnight admitted patient leave

Overnight admitted patient leave (overnight gate-pass) is used when an absence from the hospital is required for one or two nights. It is used as part of an agreed 'best practice program'. The following areas have recognised programs requiring overnight patient leave for best patient care:

- Eating Disorder patients
- Rehabilitation Patients
- Long term or complex patients
- Mental Health Patients for more information, **at CHW** refer to the Children and Adolescents with [Mental Health Problems Requiring Inpatient Care – Hall Ward](#) guideline and **at SCH** refer to [Admission to Mental Health \(Saunders\) Unit](#).

Policy

SCHN must ensure that every available bed is open and ready for patient use but recognises temporary absence from a ward or unit is necessary periodically for treatment or transition purposes.

- **Day admitted patient leave** is permitted, however the leave must be documented in Patient Management System (PMS) and Patient Flow Unit (or AHNM if after-hours) should be notified by the Treating Team.
- **Overnight admitted patient leave** is generally permitted **if** the period of leave does **not exceed 48 hours**. Requests for overnight gate-pass must be authorised by Patient Flow Unit (or AHNM if after-hours) and documented in PMS. Refer to the below [Procedure](#) and/or the [Algorithm](#) for more information.
 - The *exception* to this is involuntary patients under the Mental Health Act 2007 who may require extended leave pending a Mental Health Review Tribunal Hearing. In this instance, Patient Flow should be made aware of the situation. The leave bed should be used by another patient whilst awaiting the hearing.
- All other patients absent from SCHN for longer periods (i.e. > 48 hours) must be discharged and re-admitted if treatment is to be continued.
- Patients returning < 72hours do not require a full medical and nursing admission.

Procedure

(Refer to [algorithm](#) below)

Preparing for admitted patient leave

When a patient has been identified as clinically eligible for admitted patient leave:

- Parents/carers are to be advised that no guarantee can be given that the child will return to the same bed space or ward on their return to SCHN.
- The Treating Team must document in the patient notes if the leave is 'day gate-pass' or 'overnight gate-pass'.

The **Treating Team must contact Patient Flow Unit** (or AHNM) to notify of the leave (day or overnight gate-pass) and to request authorisation of the leave if the leave is overnight. In the instance when authorisation is not obtained and *overnight* gate-pass is required, the patient should be discharged and re-admitted if treatment is to continue.

Prior to leaving SCHN grounds

1. A parent/carer must complete a Patient leave Form.
2. The Patient Leave Form must be witnessed by nursing or medical staff and then placed on the front of the patients notes when the patient commences the leave.
3. Document in the patient's medical record:
 - i. the patient has gone on leave and
 - ii. notification to Patient Flow Unit (if Day leave) or authorisation by Patient Flow Unit [or AHNM] if overnight leave.
4. Document in Patient Management System (PMS) the type of leave (day or overnight).

Returning from leave

5. Document "returned from leave" in PMS.
6. Document in the patient's medical record the child has returned from leave.
All patients returning from leave < 72hrs do not require a medical or nursing admission.

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Admitted Patient Leave (Gate-pass) Algorithm

