

Welcome to Variety Club Ward

Welcome to The Children's Hospital at Westmead. We hope you find this information helpful during your stay on Variety Club Ward.

You should also receive a copy of the booklet, *A Guide to The Children's Hospital at Westmead*. If you haven't got a copy, please ask the staff for one.

If you have any more questions about the ward or the Hospital in general, please feel free to ask any of the nurses on the ward.

Variety Club Ward is a general medical and isolation unit. We care for up to 18 patients at any one time, each nursed in either single or double rooms.

We care for a wide range of patients in this ward, for example those with:

- contagious childhood diseases and contacts of those diseases, e.g. chicken pox, measles, rubella or mumps
- bronchiolitis eg RSV, influenza or parainfluenza
- vaccine preventable diseases such as pertussis (whooping cough) and meningitis
- dermatological conditions eg eczema
- respiratory illnesses, such as asthma, pneumonia and cystic fibrosis.

We also care for oncology patients in Variety, as these patients are very susceptible to infectious illnesses.

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Visiting

If you are a parent or carer, we consider you a part of your child's health care team, rather than a visitor. You may stay with your child at all times.

For everyone else (including your child's brothers and sisters), visiting hours on the wards are 10am to 12 noon and 2pm to 8pm. The Hospital has a rest period between 12 noon and 2pm every day. Only parents and carers may stay with their child during the rest period. Please ask family and friends not to visit during this time.

For the safety of your child and other patients, we can't let anyone visit your child if you're not there, unless you make prior arrangements with staff.

More information about visiting is in the ***A Guide to The Children's Hospital at Westmead*** booklet.

Ward access after hours

For the safety of children, families and staff, only patients and parents/carers are allowed on the ward outside visiting hours. Staff will open the door for you to enter or leave the ward after hours – check the signs near the ward doors for more information.

If you are staying with your child overnight, you need to be listed on our register. Some time in the afternoon or evening, one of our staff will come round and ask for your name and some ID so that your details can be added to the register.



When will you see your doctor?

Your doctor will see your child every day, but there is usually no set time. Please let your nurse or the ward clerk know if you are leaving the ward, so they can get in touch with you if your doctor comes in to see your child.

The resident or registrar (junior doctors) in your child's medical or surgical team will let your child's consultant know that you

are in Hospital. Often, your child is seen by the resident or registrar, rather than the consultant, but they will be reporting to the consultant. In most cases, junior doctors and the nursing staff will provide most of your child's day-to-day contact and care.

A **resident** is the most junior member of the medical team. They have practiced medicine under close supervision in an adult hospital for at least two years before working at this Hospital.

A **registrar** is a doctor who is training to become either a paediatrician or a surgeon.

A **consultant** is a specialist in a particular area of medicine, e.g. renal medicine (related to the kidneys and bladder) or ophthalmology (eyes). All consultants are responsible for teaching and supervising our junior doctors.



Care boundaries

As a member of your child's health care team, we strongly encourage you to be actively involved in your child's care and in decisions about their care. However, *it is very important that you provide care for your child only*. Please speak with a nurse if you have concerns for another child.





Getting to know the ward

The nurse who admits your child to the ward will show you and your child around the ward. This will help you become familiar with the ward and know where everything is. If this doesn't happen, please speak to a member of staff.

Our Volunteers can take you for a walk to show you the rest of the Hospital, if you would like. Please ask a member of staff to arrange this for you.

Safety

Keeping your hands clean is the single best way to prevent the spread of infections in the Hospital and at home. Please wash your hands before and after touching, feeding and changing your child and ask your visitors to do the same. Also, if friends or family are unwell, please ask them not to visit.

Please feel free to ask staff caring for your child if they

have washed their hands when they enter your child's room.

For more information on reducing infection, ask staff for a copy of the brochure for kids, parents and families, called 'Stopping the spread of germs'.

Patients and carers must not share beds with patients. It is not safe to put your child into your chair bed with you and patient beds are

not designed for adults. Please always put your child to sleep in their bed where we can safely care for them.

Very small objects or toys must be kept out of reach of our smaller patients. Please make sure these items are securely out of reach at all times.

You can use this space to write down questions you have for any of the staff looking after you/your child or any information about your child you think they should know.



Security

Please try to keep valuable items at home, if possible. If you do have valuable items with you, including your mobile phone, jewellery, cameras or money, please keep them safe at all times.

The ward kitchen

The ward kitchen can only be used by staff. Please speak with any of the nurses if you would like your food or drink or need to feed your child.

To prevent children from getting burnt, no hot drinks or boiling water are allowed in patient areas.

Showers and toilets

Most wards have shower and toilet facilities in the parent lounge which can be used by parents and carers at any time. We will provide you with clean towels and you can buy toiletries from the vending machines around the Hospital if you need them. Please don't use the children's bathrooms.

Phones

You can receive calls from friends and family directly to your bedside phone. When you arrive at the ward, you will be given the number – please let someone know

Parent Lounge

There is a parent lounge on most wards. This is a child-free space where you can go to relax, watch TV, enjoy the free tea and coffee facilities or have something to eat in peace and quiet. A small fridge is provided where you can keep food. Please label any food with your child's name and the date. Any unlabelled food will be thrown away. There is also a fridge in your child's room that you can use to store your food.

Please keep the volume of the TV to a minimum, for the sake of all parents/carers using the lounge. The TV will be turned off in the evenings, as there are parents/carers sleeping in the rooms attached. Please keep the parents' lounge, room and bathroom facilities clean and leave the area as you would like to find it yourself. If the area is dirty, please let a member of staff know so we can organise a cleaner.



if this doesn't happen.

Please note that if you receive a phone call after 8pm or before 7am, it will automatically be diverted to the nurses' station, to not disturb others in the room.

You are also able to make free calls from the bedside phone to any Australian landline or mobile phone. For calls within Sydney metro, or calls to any Australian mobile phones, dial **401 2340**, and then the number. For calls outside the Sydney metro area, including interstate, dial **401 1110**, and then the number.

We ask that you be respectful of other patients and families by keeping your phone calls brief and please do not make calls from the ward late at night.

There are public phones located around the Hospital. Staff can direct you to the nearest public pay phone.

Phone cards purchased at the Kids Plus Chemist or the Bear Bite Cafeteria can be used to make calls from public phones and bedside phones in the Hospital.

Using your mobile phone

It is usually fine to use your mobile phone on the wards, but it may interfere with medical equipment in some cases. If you would like to use your mobile phone, please ask nursing staff first.

Television and other entertainment

Each bed has access to the in-house Starlight Channel (channel 8), and the radio. Commercial channels are also available. Handsets placed near your child's pillow will allow them to hear the TV without disturbing others in the room. We ask that all TVs are switched off at 9.30pm so that patients can rest.

There are videos, DVDs, board games, colouring, painting etc available to entertain your child – just ask your nurse!

There is a patient play area located at the end of the long corridor for patients and visitors to play in. Please ensure that the room is left tidy after use.

Emergency equipment drawer

The left drawer of the bedside locker is reserved for emergency equipment and is labelled 'Staff Only'. Please do not put anything in this drawer.



Meals

Patient Meals

Most patients receive a menu and can choose their meals (if your child has a short admission, they may not have the chance to do this). There are Dietary Assistants and Dietitians who are available to answer questions or help with any special dietary needs. A snack trolley for patients is located on each ward.

Never give food or drink to your child if there is a 'Nil by Mouth' or 'NBM' notice on the bed. This could be dangerous for your child. Please never give food or drink to any child other than your own.

Meals for Parents

Meals are not provided for parents free-of-charge. There are a number of places at the Hospital where snacks and meals can be purchased from early morning to late evening.

On level two (street level):

The Bear Brasserie
Monday – Friday,
8am to 7pm

Starbucks
Monday – Friday,
6am to 11pm

Saturday and Sunday,
7am to 10pm

On level one:

The Bear Bite Café
Monday – Friday,
8am to 8pm

Saturday, Sunday
and Public Holidays,
8.30am to 6.30pm

You are welcome to bring food onto the ward and store it in the fridge in the parents' lounge area or in the fridge in your room. Please remember to mark food clearly with your name and the date.

Snacks can be purchased from a trolley that the Volunteers bring to each ward every weekday morning (except on public holidays). Snacks, drinks and other items, such as toiletries, are also available from vending machines around the Hospital.

Bringing Food into the Hospital

Food safety is important for you and your child. To stop bacteria spoiling food, food needs to be kept below 5°C or above 60°C, otherwise it can become spoiled and may cause food poisoning.

If you bring food into the Hospital, please remember:

- Hot food is difficult to keep hot, so it's better to chill the food overnight.
- Bring cold food or chilled food in an esky with ice. Remember, bacteria will multiply if the food is not kept consistently cold.
- Food can be reheated in the microwave on the ward. Please make sure it's thoroughly heated through before eating.

If you want to bring food in for your child, please talk to staff first, to make sure it won't interfere with your child's diet or treatment plan.



Other services

Patients' Friend

The Patients' Friend is here to represent the interests of you and your child and, where appropriate, negotiate on your behalf. If you have an issue with any aspect of your child's hospitalisation, firstly please let a member of your child's health care team know. If you are not satisfied, please phone the Patients' Friend on (02) 9845 3535 or on extension 53535 from your bedside phone. The office of the Patient's Friend is on level two of the Hospital, next to Kids Health.

Accommodation

You can stay overnight on a chair bed beside your child's bed. There is room for only one parent/carer to stay by the child's bedside overnight. If this is a problem, please speak with the Nursing Unit Manager or Nurse in Charge of the shift.

All chair beds must be folded up in the morning for safety reasons. Please reuse the linen while you are staying at the Hospital.

Please make sure you're not blocking the emergency equipment drawer when you are sleeping in the chair bed.

A limited number of parent rooms are also available on most wards, for a nightly fee. These

rooms are allocated by the Nursing Unit Manager and, as availability is very limited, a number of factors are taken into account when a room is allocated.

You may also stay in the Parents' Hostel on level two of the Hospital. Rooms sleep up to two adults. To book a room, please phone the Parents' Hostel directly on (02) 9845 2958 or on extension 52958 from your bedside phone. There is a nightly fee to stay in the Hostel.

No other children can stay in the Hospital overnight, except if they have to be with you to be breastfed.

Sibling Care

The Sibling Care Centre is located at the bottom of the ramp on level one. For a small fee, the Centre can provide child-minding for the brothers and sisters of children who are in Hospital. The Centre is open seven days, 9am to 3pm Monday to Friday and 10am to 2pm most weekends and is staffed by trained volunteers. The Centre closes on Christmas Eve and re-opens at the beginning of February each year. For bookings, please phone the Volunteer Service on (02) 9845 3840.



The Parent and Carer Resource Centre

The Parent and Carer Resource Centre, located on level two of the Hospital, opposite Kids Health, is provided by the Carer Support Program.

The Centre has been designed by parents for parents. It provides a relaxing and homely environment where parents and carers can take a break and it is staffed by a team of trained Carer Support Volunteers who are dedicated to providing a friendly atmosphere and a listening ear.

The Resource Centre offers a range of free services to parents and carers and we will try to respond to any query or request. If you cannot make it into the Centre or prefer not to leave your child's bedside, our Volunteers can come to you to keep you company or to bring you carer or local information. Just phone 50580 from the bedside phone. For more information about the Parent and Carer Resource Centre, refer to the booklet *A Guide to The Children's Hospital at Westmead*.

Volunteers

Volunteers are available if you need someone to sit or play with your child when you can't be there. Ask the nursing staff or the ward clerk and they can arrange this service for you.



Radio Bedrock and the Starlight Express Room

Radio Bedrock and the Starlight Express Room are on level two of the Hospital (opposite Camperdown Ward).

You can go up to the Starlight Room to play video games, do art and craft or to just hang out. If you can't go to the Starlight Room you can call them on the bedside phone to request music or a movie or to enter one of the many competitions.

This area is a retreat for patients and is a 'doctor-free zone'.

The Starlight Express Room is open Monday to Friday, 10.30am – 5pm and Saturday, Sunday and public holidays, 11am – 4pm.

RADIO BED ROCK

Radio Bed Rock Studio (live interactive show)

Monday to Friday,
6pm – 8pm

Radio Bed Rock Song Request line (phone 53577)

Monday to Friday,
10.30am – 5pm

Saturday and Sunday,
10.30am – 2.30pm



Discharge planning: getting ready to go home

We will try to keep you informed of any plans we have to send your child home. Discuss your child's discharge plans early with their doctor so you are well informed and can make necessary arrangements with your family.

You will receive a discharge summary which will either be given to you before you go home or will be posted to you. If your child needs a follow up appointment, you may be given a phone number to make the appointment, or we may make the appointment on your behalf and phone you with the information. Please check with staff.

Staff will tell you if you need any medication for your child before going home, but you should also ask them about this.

If your child is given new medication, make sure you fully understand how to give the medication and what side effects to look out for.

Please let us know as soon as you can if there are any problems which may delay your child's discharge, such as lack of transport. As there are usually other patients waiting for a hospital bed, we can't allow your child to stay in the bed after they've been discharged. We may be able to help you with alternate arrangements, so please speak with staff if you have any issues.

There are facilities in the Hospital you can use while you're waiting to leave the Hospital, such as the Parent and Carer Resource Centre or the Kids Health bookshop, both on Level Two. Your nurse can give you more information.



Other important information

Your rights and responsibilities

At The Children's Hospital at Westmead, we are committed to family-centred care. An important part of this philosophy is to support the rights and responsibilities of patients, their families and staff.

Please take some time to learn your rights and responsibilities. You'll find them outlined in the booklet, *A Guide to The Children's Hospital at Westmead* and in posters around the Hospital.

Privacy and confidentiality

Nurses are not able to give you any information about your child over the phone.

Please respect the privacy of all families and do not discuss the health of other patients with visitors or other parents.

Curtains around the bed are closed at certain times when nurses are caring for your child. For safety reasons, it is really important that curtains remain open at all other times.

We ask that you do not close the curtains around your child's bed, even at night. Nurses will open them if you have closed them unnecessarily.

Professional Boundaries

Patients and families often form good relationships with staff (which includes Volunteers) during their stay at The Children's Hospital at Westmead and we believe this is helpful for everyone. However, staff are required to follow the Hospital's Code of Conduct, which means they are not allowed to form personal relationships with patients or families and must maintain professional boundaries at all times.

Therefore, we ask that you do not form a personal relationship with any staff member outside of the Hospital. For example, asking staff to be a 'friend' on Facebook or exchanging phone numbers with staff is not appropriate.

Staff have to say 'no' to any requests from families that may be seen as going beyond professional boundaries. If this happens, please don't be offended.

If you have any questions or concerns about this, please feel free to talk to the Nurse Unit Manager on your ward.

Smoking area

The designated outdoor smoking area is located on Level 2, to the side of the main entrance. This area is for parents, carers and visitors only. Follow the signs out the front or ask staff for directions to the smoking area.

Smoking is not allowed anywhere else on the Hospital grounds. When you smoke near the front or back doors, or near ward areas, you are putting the health of others at risk through passive smoking – even if you are outside. If you have to smoke, please smoke in the designated area only.

If you would like some information or help on quitting smoking, call the Quit Line on 137 848 (13 QUIT).



Parking

If you are in hospital for more than a week, or if you have a healthcare card or RTA mobility pass, you may be entitled to a parking concession. Please ask the nurse in charge of your ward or speak with a social worker.

We hope this information is useful during your stay on this ward. If you need help at any time while you are in Hospital, please don't hesitate to ask any of our staff, who are more than happy to help.

