About the Trust

The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust is one of the largest general hospital trusts in the country. We provide acute medical and surgical services to Reading, Wokingham and West Berkshire and specialist services to a wider population across Berkshire and its borders.

The Trust has set itself an ambitious vision for the future to deliver: “the best healthcare in the UK for our patients in our community”.

Our drive to deliver this vision will be carried forward through four strategic objectives:

− Exceed patient and customer expectations
− Work together to create a modern and sustainable healthcare system
− Deliver the best healthcare in the best possible place for patients
− Provide the best place to work, train and learn.

What you can expect:

Single sex accommodation

The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust is committed to ensuring that all patients are treated with dignity and respect and that their privacy is maintained at all times.

We believe that providing single sex accommodation is an effective way of helping to achieve this goal.

Single sex accommodation may be provided in two ways:

1. Single sex wards (i.e. the whole ward is occupied by either men or women but not both).
2. Single sex bays or rooms within mixed wards (i.e. bays or rooms which accommodate either men or women, but not both; with designated single sex toilets and washing facilities within or adjacent to the bay or room).

In exceptional circumstances where a patient needs urgent or specialist care in areas such as the Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit, Cardiac Care Unit or Recovery, or when isolation to prevent infection is required, mixing men and women may be unavoidable. We will work to resolve such situations as quickly as possible and will keep patients and their families informed of our actions. During these times, our priority will be to maintain patients’ privacy and dignity.

In line with the national programme we are working to have all single sex wards.

Details of the type of accommodation provided on each ward and unit can be found by accessing the Wards and Departments section of the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk, by contacting each ward or by contacting PALS (the Patient Advice and Liaison Service) on 0118 322 8338.

If you have any concerns about privacy and dignity, please speak to the ward sister/charge nurse in the first instance or the matron for the area. Alternatively, you can contact PALS or the Patient Relations team on 0118 322 8338. You can also email in any concerns or comments to talktous@royalberkshire.nhs.uk
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Please Ask
Remember, if you have any questions about your treatment, aftercare or any other matters, please ask your doctor, nurse or other health professional – they will be happy to help! Things you might want to discuss include:

− Is this the right treatment for me? What are the risks and benefits? What will happen if I don’t have any treatment?
− I’m worried about my care. Can you talk to me about my concerns?
− Is there somewhere private we can go to discuss my condition/treatment?
− I’m worried about my medication and any side effects. Please explain them to me.
− Do you have any written information that I can take home? Remind me of instructions, after care advice, support organisations.
− Can I have this information in a different language or format? I need information in different languages and formats to suit my needs.

Infection Control
The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust takes infection prevention and control very seriously. A dedicated infection prevention and control team provides expert advice to the Trust on the daily management of infection and informs patients, visitors and staff on strategies to minimise the risk of healthcare associated infection.

The Trust has adopted a range of measures to challenge healthcare associated infection. These include:

− Education
− Promoting high standards of hand hygiene
− Care of intravenous devices (drips or IVs)
− Strict antibiotic prescribing
− Screening for MRSA (meticillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus)

The Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust participates in the Department of Health’s (DH) mandatory surveillance scheme. This means that the number of patients developing infection due to MRSA in the blood (bacteraemia) and the number of patients acquiring Clostridium difficile associated diarrhoea, are reported to the DH which publishes these figures. The latest figures are available on the DH website www.dh.gov.uk.

If you have questions about your risk of developing an infection then please ask the health care staff looking after you or visit the Infection Control pages on the Trust website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk
The service you can expect

− You have the right to receive considerate, respectful and compassionate care, regardless of your age, gender, race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation or disability.
− You have the right to receive care in a safe environment free from all forms of abuse, neglect or harassment.
− You have the right to be called by your chosen name and to be told the names of the doctors, nurses and other health care team members involved in your care.
− You have the right to be told by your doctor about your diagnosis and possible prognosis, the benefits and risks of treatment and the expected outcome of treatment, including all possible outcomes. You have the right to be given written information (patient leaflet) as well as a full discussion with the relevant healthcare professional about the planned procedure before any non-emergency procedure begins.
− You have the right to have your pain assessed and to be involved in decisions about managing your pain.
− You can expect full consideration of your privacy and confidentiality in care discussions, examinations and treatments. You may ask for a chaperone during any type of examination.
− You, your family members and friends with your permission have the right to participate in decisions about your care, your treatment and services provided, including the right to refuse treatment to the extent permitted by law. If you leave the hospital against the advice of your doctor, they and the hospital will not be responsible for any medical consequences that may occur.
− You have the right to agree or refuse to take part in medical research studies. You may at any time withdraw from a study.
− You have the right to British Sign Language or foreign language interpreter services. We will provide an interpreter as needed.
− You have the right to be involved in your discharge plan. You can expect to be told in a timely manner of your discharge, transfer to another facility or transfer to another level of care. Before your discharge, you can expect to receive information about any follow-up care that you may need.
− You can expect that all communications and records about your care are confidential, unless disclosure is allowed by law. You have the right to see or get a copy of your medical records and have the information explained, if needed. It may possible to add certain information to your medical record by contacting the Medical Records Department on 0118 322 7057. An application form is also available on the Trust website at www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk. You do not need to give a reason for wanting to see your health records. Upon request, you have the right to receive a list of people to whom your personal health information has been disclosed.
− If you have a learning disability and could not tolerate being in hospital without a familiar carer, you have the right to have a familiar carer with you during your stay to provide reassurance and aid communication between yourself and the hospital staff.
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− You have the right to voice your concerns about the care you receive. If you have a problem or complaint, you may talk with your doctor, nurse manager or a department manager. You may also contact PALS or the Patient Relations Department at 0118 322 8338 or e-mail talktous@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

What we expect from you

We aim to provide every patient with the best possible care and treatment. However, patients also have responsibilities for themselves.

− You are expected to provide complete and accurate information, including your full name, address, home telephone number, date of birth, NI or NHS number, your GP details, when it is required.

− You are expected to provide complete and accurate information about your health and medical history, including present condition, past illnesses, hospital stays, medicines, vitamins, herbal products and any other matters that pertain to your health, including perceived safety risks.

− You are expected to ask questions when you do not understand information or instructions. If you believe you cannot follow through with your treatment plan, you are responsible for telling your doctor. You are responsible for any consequences if you do not follow the care, treatment and services plan.

− You are expected to actively participate in your pain management plan and to keep your doctors and nurses informed of the effectiveness of your treatment.

− Please leave valuables at home and only bring necessary items for your hospital stay.

− You are expected to treat all hospital staff, other patients and visitors with courtesy and respect; abide by all hospital rules and safety regulations; and be mindful of noise levels, privacy and number of visitors.

− You are expected to keep appointments, be on time for appointments or call the ward or department if you must cancel an appointment.

− If you are well enough you need to be responsible for looking after your personal hygiene needs – using the toilet and washing yourself without nursing/healthcare professional supervision.

− If you are well enough you are expected to complete your menu cards and feed yourself.

− If you are well enough you are expected to move yourself in order to change position, get into and out of bed and around the ward. This is part of the hospital’s minimal handling strategy in line with European Legislation on reducing injuries to staff, and gives independence and dignity to patients.

− On arrival at hospital you may be asked how long you have been resident in the UK. If you are not normally resident in the UK, regardless of your nationality, a member of the overseas team will visit you. If this process does not happen please let a member of staff know or contact the Overseas Patient Team on 0118 322 8654.
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− Unfortunately, the hospital is unable to do any of your personal laundry. You will need to arrange for this to be done by family or friends (if this is a problem, please speak to your nurse). Usually the clothes you arrive in need to be taken home after arrival and returned for your discharge home.

− You will need to make your own travel arrangements for your journey home, unless you have a medical problem that prevents you from using a car, taxi or public transport.

− Patients and visitors to the Trust are reminded that verbal and/or physical abuse to Trust staff, other patients or visitors will not be tolerated. We will also not tolerate deliberate or wilful damage to Trust property or assets. Any person found to be in breach of the Trust’s policy on the management of violent or aggressive behaviour may find their treatment withheld or we may make alternative arrangements for your treatment to be completed elsewhere. If this behaviour is that of a visitor, relative or member of the public, a verbal warning may be issued and the person escorted from the premises by security and, if necessary, the police will be called. The Trust will press for the maximum charges possible against perpetrators of crime or abusive behaviour.

Where you can get more information

The Trust website provides online access to information for patients and their visitors and carers. This includes:

− Details of wards and departments (location, directions, nearby facilities, visiting times, flowers etc).

− Downloadable copies of leaflets and forms (e.g. next of kin, accessing health records).

− How to complain.

− Patient involvement.

Visit the website at www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

If you do not have access to a computer/printer you can telephone the Patient Relations Team to request copies of leaflets/information to be posted to you. You can also telephone the Information Zone on 0118 322 6818 or email them at information.zone@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

The Information Zone is a dedicated health information point and is located on Level 1, near the main entrance on Craven Road in the Royal Berkshire Hospital. Patients and visitors can pick up free leaflets on benefits, support groups, local facilities, transport as well as NHS and Department of Health promotional literature. The Zone is manned by a team of volunteers and is open between Monday and Thursday 10am until 4pm.
About the Trust

What to do if you have a problem

Talk to us

If you have a comment about the service we provide – positive or negative – talk to us. Your feedback will help us to improve and develop our service. There are different ways of getting your views heard in our Trust. This information will direct you to the right person to help you. Raising an issue will not adversely affect your care or treatment.

First step – talk to us!

We prefer to sort out issues as they arise as often they can be dealt with quickly and effectively. Please speak to a member of staff in the relevant ward or department.

If they can’t help you or you would rather talk to a senior member of staff, ask to speak to the ward manager or matron.

Or, speak to PALS

PALS (Patient Advice & Liaison Service) is a service that can offer you support and guide you through the different Trust services.

Ring 0118 322 8338
Email talktous@royalberkshire.nhs.uk
Visit the PALS office on Level 2 main entrance or ask a member of staff, the receptionists or the switchboard to contact them on your behalf.

If you are still not happy... after speaking with ward staff or PALS, or you feel that you have an issue that cannot be resolved informally, you should write to the Patient Relations Department, giving full details of what you would like us to investigate.

Write to us or send us an email:

The Patient Relations Department
Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust
London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AN
talktous@royalberkshire.nhs.uk

The NHS has a procedure for dealing with complaints received from patients, relatives, friends and carers. We take all complaints seriously and will take action where appropriate. Further details are available in the Trust leaflet called ‘How to make a complaint’.
Your feedback

While you are a patient in the hospital you may be asked to fill in a questionnaire. Your answers will help us to improve our service and make patients’ experience better. If you prefer, you can complete the survey after you have left hospital by visiting our website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk/surveys and selecting the ward or area you have visited. This same survey is also accessible on touchscreen kiosks around the hospital.

You can also post any feedback or suggestions you may have into one of the comments boxes around the hospital. If you would like a response to your feedback, please include your contact details.

You will be able to see what patients think of the service on individual wards by looking at the big orange-red noticeboards that appear in most wards and departments.