



**Royal Berkshire**  
NHS Foundation Trust

Please use the hand gel provided  
when entering and leaving the unit.

# Welcome to the Acute Medical Unit (AMU) and the Higher Monitoring Unit (HMU)

Information for patients,  
relatives and carers

AMU1	Tel: 0118 322 6936 / 6937
AMU2	Tel: 0118 322 5692 / 5693
HMU	Tel: 0118 322 8850 / 5691

## About the Acute Medical Unit (AMU)

You will come to AMU if you been in the Emergency Department (A&E) and need to be seen by the medical team or admitted to a bed.

AMU is on level 1 in Centre Block. Our unit is divided into two areas: AMU1 and AMU2; we have an open plan layout which helps us to closely monitor you if we need to. We also have a Higher Monitoring Unit (HMU) for patients who require closer monitoring.

You will be admitted to either AMU 1 or 2, where you will be cared for by a particular AMU doctor and nursing team. Your allocated nurse will take a baseline set of observations and make you comfortable. You will then be reviewed by one of the acute medical doctors who will assess and examine you to develop a plan for your care. The junior doctor working in this area will ensure that your treatment plan is reviewed on a regular basis, with support from your consultant team and other professionals working on AMU.

Appropriate tests will be carried out and the results shared with you when available. The assessment process will take around 4-6 hours.

## A typical day on AMU

The consultants' ward rounds start at 8am each morning, and you may be visited by either an AMU consultant or one of the visiting consultants from varying specialities, such as: respiratory medicine, gastroenterology, neurology, oncology or cardiology, depending on your plan of care.

Please be aware that these ward rounds can last until 11.30am, and you may not be seen in order of your arrival time but in order of your clinical need. We will do our best to see you as soon as possible. Throughout the day you may also be visited by a member of one of the pharmacy or therapy teams to ensure you are receiving the right treatment to support your recovery. Nurses' drugs rounds are between 8am-10am, 12pm-2pm, 5pm-7pm and 9pm- 11pm.

Some patients admitted to AMU have been admitted with symptoms that may require them to be 'nil-by-mouth'. This means that they will be unable to eat and drink until they are assessed by a doctor or specialist swallow nurse. We know it can be upsetting to be without food or water, but it is necessary for patient safety.

## Medication

Please check with your nurse whether it is ok to take your regular medication. Sometimes your regular medication may be stopped or changed. Your medication will be stored securely in the locker provided for you. All controlled drugs will be kept in a controlled drug cupboard.

## What to bring with you

Please bring any current medication or a repeat prescription sheet, comfortable clothes, slippers or shoes, walking aids, things to read or to occupy yourself, and basic toiletries. Your belongings are your responsibility. Please do not bring in any valuables.

## Meals

Breakfast is served between 8am and 10am. Lunch is a hot or cold meal served between 12pm and 2pm. Dinner is a hot or cold meal served between 5pm and 7pm. If you arrive after this time we can still offer you a snack-box. Please let one of the members know if you are hungry.

## Side rooms

Side rooms are used for patients who are either potentially infectious or who are at an increased risk of picking up infections from others. To reduce the risk of infection we keep the doors closed and ask those entering these rooms to wash their hands and to check with a nurse before going in. Unfortunately we are unable to provide private single rooms. If you have any concerns, please speak to the nurse in charge.

## What happens if I need to be admitted to hospital?

If you are required to stay in hospital, you will be transferred to the appropriate specialist ward, depending on bed availability. You might also be transferred to a ward that is not your speciality but your doctors would come and see you in those wards. Sometimes you might stay on AMU for more than 48 hours. However you will continue to get your prescribed treatment and your speciality doctors will continue to see you on AMU. Unfortunately, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to contact your family members/carers to inform them you will be transferred, due to the

busy nature of the unit. We ask that family members/carers contact the unit after 11am in order to let them know if you are still on the unit. Please note, confidential information cannot be communicated via the telephone. We kindly ask you to call us after 11.30am and to nominate one family member to ring the ward.

### What happens if I am to be discharged?

You will be involved in your discharge planning and will be given an estimated discharge date. We will provide you with any necessary medication to take with you, and also a summary of care which details any treatment you have received. Those awaiting relatives/carers to collect them will be transferred to the discharge lounge. Please speak to your nurse if you have any concerns regarding your discharge

### Friends and Family Test

On discharge we ask you to complete a short tick-box form to give feedback on your hospital experience. We can use this to both appraise good practice and identify areas for improvement.

### Help and enquiries

For general enquiries please contact the Patient Relations Team on 0118 322 8338. For enquiries regarding clinic appointments, clinical care and treatment please contact switchboard on 0118 322 5111. They will put you through to the correct department / service.

If you need a translation of this document, an interpreter or a version in large print, Braille or audio, please contact AMU or HMU.

### Our commitment

We aim to provide care of the highest quality, to always communicate and listen to patients, to ensure all patients are treated with dignity and respect at all times, to provide clinical care in a safe environment and in a confident manner, and to provide relevant information at the right time.