



**Royal Berkshire**  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Welcome to the Surgical Assessment Unit (SAU)

**Monday-Friday 7am-7pm**

Information for patients,  
relatives and carers

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You have been admitted to the Surgical Assessment Unit (usually called SAU). This leaflet explains what happens here and what you can expect.

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The SAU is located on Lister Ward on Level 3 in South Block. We open at 7am until 7pm but continue assessing patients until 10pm. The SAU Team care for patients with a surgical problem, who may need to be admitted to hospital. Referrals are made to SAU by GPs, clinics and the Emergency Department (A&E).

### What will happen when I arrive at the SAU?

The SAU nurse will:

- Greet you and confirm your details.
- Check your blood pressure and temperature.
- Ask how much pain you are in.
- Take some blood this may involve inserting a cannula (a small plastic line that can stay in your vein for up to 72 hours, this is used to administer medication and fluids if required).
- Take a urine sample to test for infection.
- Do a pregnancy test for women of child-bearing age. If you think you may be pregnant please tell the nurse.
- MRSA swabs will be taken (nose and throat) if you are going to be admitted to hospital.
- Anti-embolism stockings to help prevent blood clots will be placed on your legs if you are going to be admitted to hospital.

## How does SAU work?

Our aim is that within 4 hours of arriving on SAU your investigations will be reviewed by a senior doctor. Once you have been seen by a doctor you will receive advice on the next steps in your care plan. This may involve further investigations and being admitted to hospital.

## Can I eat?

You may take sips of water unless otherwise advised by the nurse on your arrival but should not eat anything as this can delay scans or procedures.

## Being admitted / discharged

If a decision regards admission to hospital is made we will transfer you to a ward as soon as possible.

If a decision to discharge has been made we will give you a letter to take home with you or you will be sent one in the post a few days after your discharge. This will also be sent to your GP. This letter is normally written by the doctors. Any medication that you may need will be provided by pharmacy or the ward prior to discharge.

## What about my privacy and dignity?

We ensure the privacy and dignity of all our patients.

We will maintain this by closing the curtains during examinations and procedures and by ensuring that patients wear appropriate clothing.

## How can I help with infection control?

Please use the hand gel located by sinks and placed on bedside cabinets and encourage your visitors to do the same. Please do not

allow your visitors to sit on the beds; chairs are provided by the bedside.

### What are the visiting hours?

One visitor may stay with you while you are being assessed until you have been seen by a doctor and have a confirmed plan of care.

There are a variety of restaurants and shop available for visitors to use. Please speak to a nurse regards their location.

### What if I have a question or problem?

If you have a question or problem please do not hesitate to ask any of the nursing staff on SAU.

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[www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk](http://www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk)

This document can be made available in other languages and formats upon request.

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