

Chesterman Unit.... Your questions answered

What is Chesterman Unit?

Chesterman is an admissions unit for patients having surgery. Patients are prepared for theatre here and then go to a different ward after their operation. This gives the nurses on the wards longer to discharge previous patients who are ready to leave hospital. It also gives them time to prepare the wards for new patients. Some patients will go home the same day (day cases) and some will require an overnight stay – or longer (inpatient). This will depend on the type of surgery you are having.

How does Chesterman work?

On the unit you will be seen by a nurse, surgeon and anaesthetist who will check you in safely for your procedure. Some, but not all, patients may require blood tests before surgery – our health care assistant will do this task. You will have the opportunity to discuss the procedure and any concerns or questions you may have.

Once you have been seen by both the surgeon and anaesthetist you will return to the waiting room. The surgical team will go back to theatre and have a meeting to discuss each patient's procedure and the theatre staff's names and roles in the room. This is when the team also decide the order patients will be operated on. Chesterman staff will then get the first patients ready and can inform the rest of the patients of their location on the list. Those scheduled for later on in the day will be advised if they can drink anything while they wait. Theatres will then inform us when they are close to finishing their current case and we will take you into the side room to get dressed for theatre. Once the theatres are ready we will walk you or get you a trolley (if you require one) to theatre. Please be aware that all theatre times are estimated and sometimes procedures do overrun.

What will happen to my bags and belonging when I go to theatre?

Your bags are labelled once you have changed in the side room. When you leave, they are recorded in our property book and are placed in a locked cupboard. At the end of our working day we transfer all your property to the ward you will recover on.

Will I get any medication?

Some surgery requires a 'pre-med' before you go for your operation. This is normally in the form of a painkiller which aims to improve your post-operative pain. This may be given close to the time of your surgery or a couple hours before. Please let the nurse know if you are in pain and they will ask the doctors to prescribe something else for you.

What will happen to my medication?

If you take daily or regular medication, the nurses will collect this from you and lock it away in our medication cupboard. We will transfer it to the ward while you are in theatre. It is important you give us all medication as a safety measure no matter what it is.

Where am I going after my operation?

Please ask the nurses who will be able to inform you of this and provide your relatives with contact numbers and visiting times.

How long will the operation take?

Please ask the nurses as every operation is different.

I need a medical certificate (sick note for work), how do I get one?

If you are a day case, please inform the nurses on Chesterman and they can get this ready for you. If you are going to a ward afterwards please inform the nurses on the ward after your operation.

Why do some patients attend in the afternoon and go to surgery before me?

There are a number of different operating lists running every day – all day, morning and afternoon lists. Occasionally some all-day list patients will have to wait longer and unfortunately this means the patients on the top of the afternoon list go into surgery before them. This is due to all lists running independently. We understand this may be frustrating for you – please come and speak to the nurses if you feel this way.

Any further questions please don't hesitate to approach any of the nursing team.

Further information

More information about the Trust can be found on our website www.royalberkshire.nhs.uk

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

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