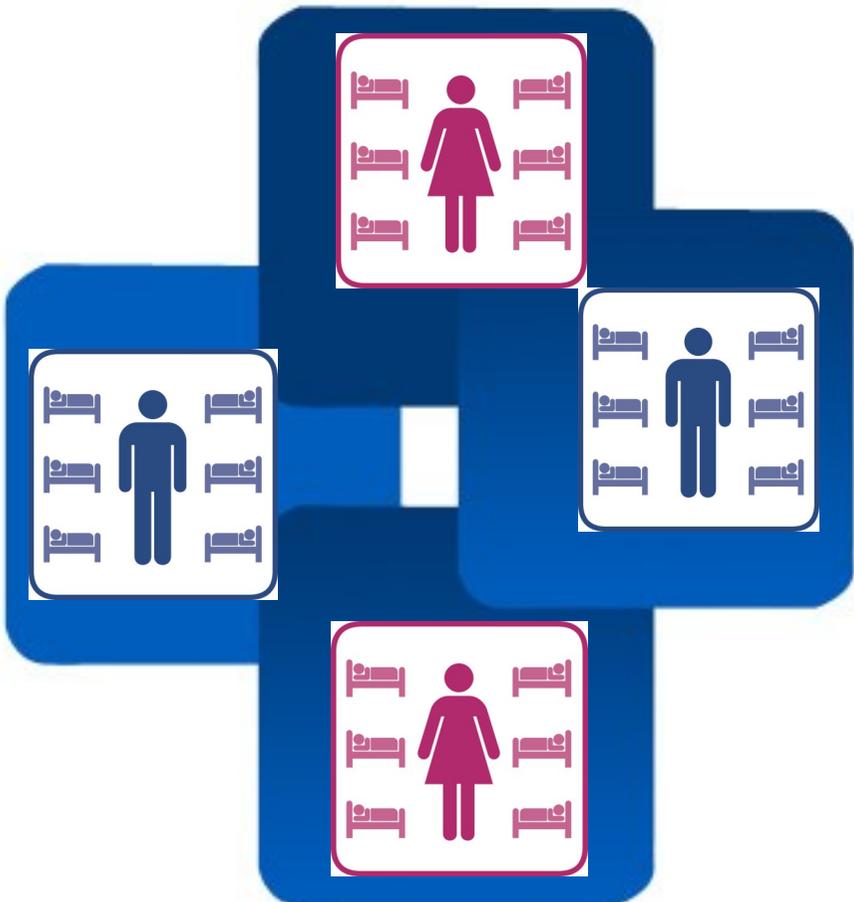


# Same-Sex Accommodation

## Your Privacy

## Our Responsibility



## **Our aim**

We aim to treat all patients with privacy and dignity in a safe, clean and comfortable environment. This means that, with a few exceptions, we will care for you in a same-sex ward or bays with separate washing and toilet facilities for men and women.

## **What does same-sex accommodation mean?**

Same-sex accommodation means only patients of the same sex (i.e. men or women) will sleep in the same bay or ward and use the same washing and toilet facilities.

Some of the hospital's wards are designated as same-sex only, which means the whole ward will contain only men or women.

In other wards men and women will be separated into bays (separate areas containing a number of beds). These bays will have their own washing and toilet facilities which will be designated for women or men only. This means, for example, that a female patient will not need to walk past a male patient bay to get to a toilet or bathroom.

Disabled facilities (bathrooms and toilets) contain specialist equipment and so are for use by either men or women.

## **Why does the hospital have same-sex accommodation?**

The hospital keeps male and female patients apart to maintain the privacy and dignity of patients, which is something patients tell us is extremely important to them.

Many patients feel vulnerable while in hospital and sharing sleeping, toilet and washing facilities can make patients feel distressed or anxious.

## Will I always be in same-sex accommodation?

We care about your privacy and dignity but there may be occasions when it is not possible to care for all patients in a same-sex environment. This is most likely to happen if a patient needs emergency or specialist care where patient safety and clinical needs are our first priority.

If you are placed in a bay with patients of the opposite sex, a nurse or doctor will explain why that has been necessary and make every effort to maintain your privacy whilst in that area. You will be moved to a same-sex area as soon as it is safe to do so.

## What you can expect during your hospital stay

- ◆ That you will be addressed politely and respectfully, and will be called by your preferred name (please make sure you tell staff what you prefer to be called)
- ◆ That you will be cared for in the most appropriate place according to your clinical needs;
- ◆ That, except in times of clinical need, you will be cared for in a same-sex bay or ward;
- ◆ That you will only share toilet and bathroom facilities with patients of the same sex;
- ◆ That you will be listened to if you express concerns or ask questions of nursing or ward staff, and that staff will do their best to resolve those concerns;
- ◆ That you may ask to be cared for by a nurse or doctor of the same sex and that every effort will be made to meet your request.

## Who can I speak to if I want to know more?

Please speak to any member of ward staff if you have any questions about same-sex accommodation or other aspects of privacy and dignity.

## I'm unhappy about my care, what should I do?

If you are unhappy about any aspect of your care you can speak to the ward sister, nurse in charge or matron. Please don't be nervous about raising concerns - we are here to listen and respond.

If you feel your concerns have not been resolved by ward staff then you can speak to the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) who will advise and help you.

PALS by telephone: 01438 285811

PALS by email: [pals.enh-tr@nhs.net](mailto:pals.enh-tr@nhs.net)

## Other information

This leaflet is available in different languages or formats on request.

Date of publication: January 2015

Author: J Pennell

Reference Number: SSA V2

[www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk)

Review Date: January 2019

© East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust

Content reproduced with kind permission from Bedford Hospital NHS Trust