

## Patient Information

# Welcome to the St Albans City Hospital Haemodialysis Unit



# Welcome to the St Albans City Hospital Satellite Haemodialysis Unit

This leaflet is intended to provide you with information regarding your dialysis appointments.

## About the Unit

The St Albans City Hospital Haemodialysis Unit is one of five such units managed by East and North Hertfordshire NHS Trust.

The unit has 16 stations and is open **Monday to Saturday**.

Dialysis treatment is carried out between **7.15am and 10.30pm** on each of these days. The telephone number for the unit is **01727 897588**.

The Matron for this nurse-led unit is Sue Samme and the Senior Sister is Sally Mayne. Their core working hours are Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm.

Upon starting dialysis with us every patient is allocated a primary nurse. He or she is responsible for overseeing your care and treatment, and discussing any worries or concerns you may have. Your primary nurse will not be on duty every time you come for dialysis, however there will be a senior nurse available on each shift for you to discuss any matters with.

## Appointment System

Your dialysis appointments will usually be on the same days at the same time. Occasionally we need to change appointment days and times, and sometimes the unit in which you dialyse. This is only done when absolutely necessary and we would endeavour to give you a weeks notice of any change. In such instances a senior nurse will inform you of your new appointment and facilitate a smooth change.

If you need to change an appointment for a particular reason such as going away for the day or attending another appointment elsewhere etc., please let us know as soon as possible by speaking to the senior nurse on duty who will try to arrange a swap with another patient for that day.

## **Personal Belongings**

We do not have storage facilities in the unit so please limit belongings to essential items only. Additional items on the unit can be a potential health and safety and infection control hazard for staff and patients. Please note the hospital does not accept responsibility for patient's personal belongings, so please leave any items of value at home.

## **Arriving for Treatment**

When you arrive for dialysis please take a seat in the renal unit reception area and a member of staff will show you into the unit when we are ready to start your treatment. We aim to have you on dialysis within 30 minutes of your appointment time. If there are further delays, a member of staff will come and speak to you and keep you informed of the situation.

If you find you are regularly late starting your treatment, then please speak to a senior member of staff as we may need to look at the treatment schedule or change your appointment time.

## **Pre-treatment Assessment**

When you enter the dialysis unit always remember to clean your hands using the soap and water available in the observation area. If you have a fistula, you should also wash your arm with soap and water prior to treatment.

As part of your pre-dialysis assessment, a member of staff will help you record your weight, blood pressure, pulse and temperature. If possible, please remove your shoes whilst being weighed as this will provide a more accurate reading, but please remember to put them back on before walking around the unit.

## **Before Your Treatment**

It is important to inform the nurse if you have been unwell or have received any other treatment since your last dialysis, for example, any nose bleeds or a dental extraction, as we may need to make some changes to your treatment for that day.

Once you are sitting at your allocated bay, please remove your shoes as this helps to prevent damage to the treatment chairs and complies with our infection control measures.

## **Privacy and Dignity**

We want to ensure your privacy and dignity is maintained at all times. Most patients who attend hospital for their dialysis treatment have formed personal friendships with other patients and do not mind sharing a treatment area with patients of the opposite sex. However, if you feel uncomfortable with this arrangement please speak to the sister in charge. Your request will be treated with respect and alternative arrangements will be made.

If you are in hospital and are attending the unit wearing night clothing, your privacy and dignity will be maintained with the use of screens in the treatment area and, whenever possible, in a specifically designated area in the unit.

## **During Dialysis**

There is a patient call bell at every dialysis station. The staff will ensure this is given to you at the start of your treatment and will show you how to operate it. You can use this to alert the staff if you feel unwell or require assistance.

Every dialysis station has its own television / radio system. Headsets and remote controls can be obtained from the housekeeper. However, some patients just prefer to read, have a chat or sleep while they are on dialysis.

Any other equipment that you bring in, such as a portable DVD player or laptop computer is done so at your own risk, but please speak to the senior sister first.

Ideally, these items should be powered by battery, if this is not possible then all electrical equipment (including phone chargers) must be PAT tested by the Trust before they can be used in the clinical area. Please ask the sister or housekeeper to arrange this, but please remember, all personal items are your responsibility. Please try to keep them safe from any damage or from getting mislaid.

## **Refreshments**

There is a hot and cold water dispenser in the waiting area for self service where tea, sugar and milk is also available. We provide biscuits in the dialysis unit. If you would like a cup of tea whilst on dialysis or help to make a drink, please ask a member of staff. We advise you to avoid eating meals and drinking throughout the duration of your treatment as this may make you feel unwell. If you chose to eat and drink during treatment then please ensure the staff are aware of this at the beginning of your treatment.

If you are diabetic, it is advisable to bring a snack and cold drink with you. Alternatively, you can purchase refreshments from the nearby Costa coffee shop.

## **Doctors' Rounds**

Doctors and nurses carry out regular ward rounds that are scheduled on various days and times. These give the doctors an opportunity to evaluate your treatment and discuss any changes in care with you. Should you need to speak to a doctor in private, then we can arrange a clinic appointment for you.

## Travel Arrangements

We encourage patients to be independent with their travel arrangements. If you, a family member or a friend provide transport for your dialysis treatment, you will be provided with a hospital parking permit and you will be eligible to claim for travel expenses. Further information can be obtained from the renal secretary.

If you choose to use public transport you will be reimbursed a percentage of your travel expenses. Please speak to the senior nurse in charge who will be able to give you more information on how to claim the amount of reimbursement you are entitled to.

If neither of these options are suitable for you, or you find there has been a change in your circumstances and you are no longer able to find your own way to the hospital for dialysis, please speak to a member of staff.

## Feeling Unwell at Home

Should you feel unwell at home, please contact

- the dialysis unit during dialysing hours (please refer to page 1 for opening times) and advice will be given accordingly.
- If you are unwell during GP out of hours or when the unit is closed, you can ring Ward 6B (Nephrology Ward) at Lister Hospital on **01438 781068**.
- Alternatively contact your GP or arrange to go to your nearest A&E.

If you feel unwell it is important that you **do not** miss a dialysis appointment unless the dialysis team have discussed this with you.

## Medication

Repeat prescriptions for your regular medication needs to be requested from your GP. There are occasional exceptions, please speak to a member of staff who can advise you accordingly.

My Primary Nurse is \_\_\_\_\_

My appointments are \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Questions while in hospital

We encourage you to be involved in decisions about your care and treatment. Please talk to us if you would like more information or have any questions about your care.

**Questions that I would like to ask:**

## Tell Us More - Comments, compliments and suggestions

We welcome your comments about what was good about your visit and what would have made your experience better. Your feedback is anonymous and is used to help improve the services we provide to all our patients. Our Friends and Family Test survey asks you the question **“How likely are you to recommend our department/unit to friends and family if they needed similar care or treatment?”** After your visit to the hospital, if you would like to leave feedback, please complete our survey and post it in the box provided. Thank you.

## Additional Information

You will be issued with your own patient identity card, which you will need to wear prior to and during your dialysis treatment. This is a Renal Department requirement. The card will be kept in the unit and made available to you each time you come in for treatment.

## Useful Contact Details

St Albans Haemodialysis Unit 01727 897588

## Other Useful Telephone Numbers

Ward 6B, Nephrology Ward, Lister Hospital	01438 781068
Bedford Haemodialysis Unit	01438 286750
Harlow Haemodialysis Unit	01279 278205 / 278206
Lister Haemodialysis Unit:	01438 285657 / 284152
Luton & Dunstable Haemodialysis Unit	01582 497538
Social Worker	01438 284957
Renal Counsellors	01438 781233
Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)	01438 285811
National Kidney Federation	01909 487795

## Further Information

[www.kidneypatientguide.org.uk/site/intro.php](http://www.kidneypatientguide.org.uk/site/intro.php)

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

You can request this information in a different format or another language.

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