

ICU Visitor Information

The Intensive Care team would like to welcome you to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). Our team will provide you with regular updates about your family member or friend and you are welcome to ask questions. Sometimes the nurses and doctors may not be able to answer all your questions as the patient's condition may be unpredictable.

The privacy of the patient is also important. Access to the bedside and patient information may be limited due to the Privacy Act. We can only give information about the condition of the patient to immediate family.

Getting Information about the Patient

You may call the ICU on (04) 385 5999 at any time for information about your relative.

It is often easiest if you nominate a spokesperson who speaks for everybody. This person is also responsible for sharing information with family and friends.

Please ensure we have your contact details when you leave the hospital.

Taking a Break

We know that you are concerned about your family member or friend; however you need to look after yourself and take regular breaks.

There is an ICU waiting room which has tea and coffee available for all ICU visitors and relatives visiting or waiting to enter ICU. We have admissions 24 hours a day to this stressful ICU environment. Please make new visitors welcome.

Meals

You can buy meals for yourself from Wishbone Cafe or Fuel. Fuel coffee bar is by the purple lifts outside Ward 1. Wishbone is in the Atrium of the hospital.

There are also restaurants and cafes nearby in Newtown (5-10 minutes walk).

The Hospital Shop is located in the hospital Atrium and is open 7.30am–5.30pm Monday-Friday, 9am–3pm Saturday and Sunday.

Overnight Accommodation

While we appreciate you want to be close to your loved one, we discourage sleeping in the waiting room. If you live locally, please go home to sleep and be assured we will ring if we need you to return to ICU.

The Whanau House has limited space but may be available. If you would like assistance with accommodation just ask a member of the team.

Alternatively there are motels nearby in Newtown.

The ICU Team includes:

Nursing Staff

Our nurses have special training in intensive care nursing. The nurses in this ICU work 12 hour shifts, where they usually look after one patient each. There is an Associate Charge Nurse Manager (ACNM) on each shift who you can speak to if you have any concerns that your nurse cannot address.

Medical Staff

Doctors work in the unit 24 hours a day. They work closely with the nurses to provide comprehensive care. There are seven specialists who direct the care of the patients and supervise the registrars (doctors who have years of experience and are in training to be specialists). You will meet more than one doctor and they are available for your questions.

No Smoking Policy

Capital & Coast DHB has a smoke-free policy. This means NO Smoking anywhere in the hospital or hospital grounds. If you would like help with stopping smoking, please speak to the ACNM.

Visiting

We understand that you want to be with the person who you care about as much as possible. Please use the intercom phone before entering the Unit. We ask that there only be two people at the bedside at any one time. We encourage visiting at any time; however there will be times when we may ask you to leave to ensure the privacy of all patients in the ICU. This includes when nursing handover and doctors' rounds are happening. These are:

From 6:45am to 10:30am

From 4pm to 5pm

From 6:45pm to 8pm

From 9pm to 10pm

There may be other times when we may have to ask you to leave the bedside, eg to take an x-ray or emergencies on the unit. Staff will ask you to wait in the Waiting Room, and you will be able to come back in as soon as possible.

Please be assured that if we have any concerns about the patient during these visitor free hours, we will contact you immediately.

To protect the patient and your own health, please wash your hands with the soap or use gel provided in the ICU before and after visiting.

Visiting is exhausting for both the seriously ill and their loved ones. Therefore, it is important that the patients get rest periods during the day. We would also encourage visitors to ensure they take rest periods and don't forget to eat.

At The Bedside

Let your loved one know that you are there, talk to them and touch them.

Please don't touch any of the equipment that we use to monitor the patient. Most of the equipment in the ICU is designed with an alarm. They can be loud and frightening. This is a safety feature to alert the nurse to changes.

The staff rely on these alarms and will respond as necessary. If you are concerned about the surrounding equipment please ask your nurse to explain it to you.

What Can I Bring for the Patient?

We suggest a photo of your loved one, friends and family, and personal toiletries.

Please do not bring cut/fresh flowers as they are an infection risk. The water is also a risk to the electrical equipment.

Mobile phones may be used in the relatives' Waiting Room but please do not take them into the bed space.

Shoes

Shoes need to be worn at all times in the ICU as there may be glass, blood, or needles on the floor. Having bare feet may put you at risk of cuts or infection.

Research

We regularly conduct research to help us better care for our patients. You may be approached by staff for consent to include your relative in this process.

Parking

Limited parking is available in the Hospital underground car park accessed from Riddiford Street. Payment is required on exiting. Free parking may be found on streets around the hospital.

The Quiet Room/Chaplaincy Service

The Quiet Room is available to people of all denominations and spiritual beliefs. It is situated to the left of the main entrance in the Atrium. To contact a Hospital Chaplain please ask a member of the team to 'page' them.

Contact Details:

Intensive Care Unit (ICU)

Level 3 South

Wellington Regional Hospital

Phone: (04) 385 5999