



Supporting the needs and rights of carers - Our commitment to improve patient and carer experiences

In placing patients firmly at the centre of everything we do, we recognise and value the role that you have in the health, comfort and wellbeing of our patients

“When carers are well supported, they can provide better care for the person they care for and report better well-being outcomes themselves”

Ablitt, Jones and Muers (2009)

Trust standard and key interventions

The Trust defines a “carer” as a person of any age who provides help and support to a parent, child, partner, relative or close friend because of their illness, frailty or disability.

1. Open access/visiting

Unrestricted visiting

As a carer you may wish to visit outside traditional visiting hours to help care for your relative or friend.

Our staff facilitate where possible open access to enable you to maintain and contribute to the care of your relative or friend. This may include access out with normal visiting hours such as at meal times.

On occasion you may be asked to leave the ward area to ensure that the privacy and dignity of other patients is maintained. We appreciate your cooperation and support with this.

Accompanying for a test or investigation

As a carer you may wish to accompany your relative or friend for a test or intervention.

In most situations this can be accommodated however where there is risk of harm or exposure to you it may not be possible to arrange. Please ask our staff.

Staying overnight

As a carer you may wish to stay close by your relative or friend at night time.

Our staff can signpost you to local accommodation options including some within the grounds of the hospital (a charge may apply). Requests to stay by a relative’s bed will be facilitated where possible by our staff.

At times you may be asked to leave the ward area to ensure that the privacy and dignity of other patients is maintained. We appreciate your cooperation and support with this.

2. Sharing information

As a carer you will be kept updated with key information

To improve communication and to care effectively we expect our nursing staff to ask you about your caring role on admission. This will then be documented within the nursing records.

We expect our staff to communicate effectively and share relevant timely information with you. In all situations you will receive non-confidential (relevant) information which will aid your caring role.

Confidential information

Confidential information differs from relevant information and can only be shared if consent is given by the patient or you the carer have a legal right or duty to act on the behalf of the patient with regards to their healthcare.

When you have a legal right or duty to receive confidential information about the patients healthcare you will be included in relevant discussions and letters can be copied to you.

If you have been involved in a best interest decision about treatments and ongoing care you will be included in all relevant discussions.

3. Wellbeing of carers

Practical help and support we offer carers:

- Please tell us if you need to take a break. We appreciate your help, but also understand your need for rest and recuperation.
- Our **Carers Information Card** contains key information which will help and support you while your relative or friend is in hospital. This includes a map which identifies food and beverage facilities, parking pay points and other relevant information within the hospital. Please ask staff for your Carers Information Card.
- By law as a carer you are entitled to a formal carers assessment by your local authority. The purpose of this assessment is to ensure your own needs as a carer are recognised and met, and that you are aware of your rights to emotional and financial help and support. Our staff can signpost you to the appropriate local authority for this assessment.
- Our staff can signpost you to local carers agencies and community based support groups.
- The chapels on site and The Holistic Centre at The James Cook University Hospital welcomes carers. The centre offers a quiet space and access to complementary therapies. Tea and coffee is also available.
- We have dedicated changing places available, please ask staff to direct you.
- Our staff can provide you with information relating to long stay onsite car parking.