

# MANAGING MAJOR TRAUMA DURING COVID 19 PANDEMIC

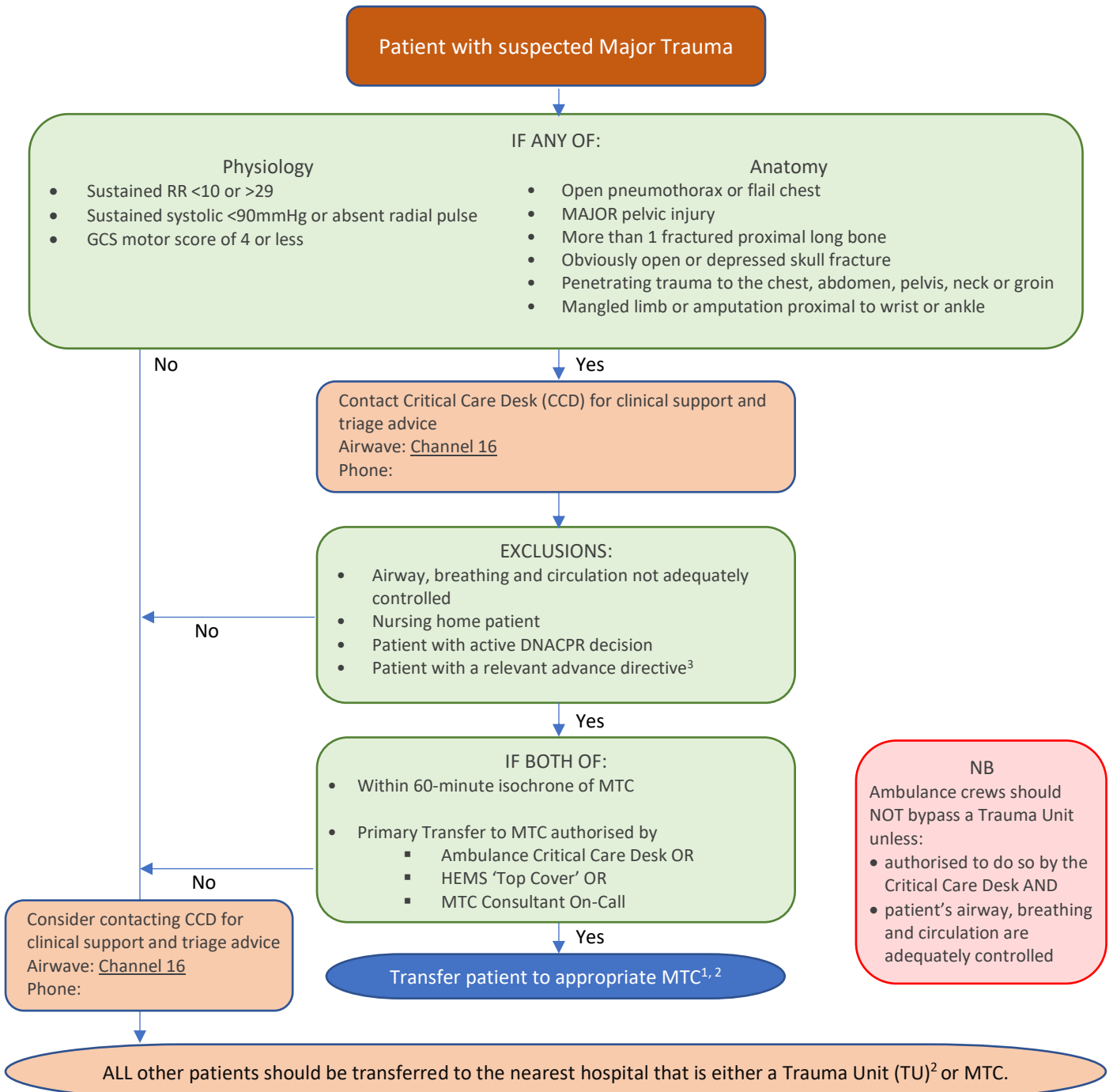
Sussex Trauma Network

South East London, Kent and Medway  
Trauma Network

South West London and Surrey Trauma  
Network

## PRE-HOSPITAL TRIAGE:

Current decision trees suspended. The networks will now move to the following trauma decision tree.



Abbreviations:  
 CCD – Ambulance Service Critical Care Desk  
 DNACPR – Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation  
 MTC – Major Trauma Centre  
 TU – Trauma Centre  
 HEMS – Helicopter Emergency Medical Service

Notes:  
 1. Appropriate MTC – Adults and children 16 and over – Royal Sussex County Hospital, Kings College Hospital or St. George’s Hospital - unless relief agreed by adjacent MTC  
 Children under 16 – Kings College Hospital, St. George’s Hospital or Southampton General Hospital  
 2. Patients should not be turned away from either MTC or TU once they have been conveyed. They should be assessed, and secondary transfer arranged if appropriate.  
 3. Relevant Advance Directive – a written signed document that shows the patient’s wish to have limited care in circumstances that include the patient’s present condition.

## SECONDARY TRANSFER PROTOCOLS

### Principles

1. These protocols apply after a patient has been assessed at a Trauma Unit (TU) and the assessing Team determine that the patient may benefit from transfer to a Major Trauma Centre (MTC).
2. Patients triaged to a TU should be assessed and stabilised within the Emergency Department (ED) and not 'turned around' at the front door.
3. The Major Trauma Centre at the Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH) will have a 24/7 rota of selected consultants to act as "Major Trauma Centre Advice Consultant". The person on duty at any time can be contacted on . The purpose of this Consultant is to take and screen referrals from Trauma Units to ensure that those patients being transferred to the MTC do so at a time that maximises MTC bed capacity and that patients are not transferred long in advance of any surgical procedure they require. The Advice Consultant will either negotiate with the Consultant of relevant specialities within the MTC OR advise that a Consultant at the TU does this negotiation.
4. Use of the "Major Trauma Centre Advice Consultant" will not be throughout the whole COVID-19 pandemic. They will be used when either the MTC or Network are at risk of being overloaded.
5. The decision as to whether the "Major Trauma Centre Advice Consultant" is in use will be decided prospectively. This decision will depend on the OPEL Level of the MTC and the Trauma Network. See [Appendix 2](#) for a description of the OPEL Levels.

This outcome of this decision will determine whether **PATHWAY A** or **PATHWAY B** is in use for non-immediate secondary transfers – see below. Which pathway is in use will be notified to all participating hospitals. It is the responsibility of each hospital to cascade this information to relevant clinicians.

**PATHWAY A** – Normal Service – when MTC and the Network are both at OPEL 1 level (see [Appendix 2](#))

**PATHWAY B** – Reduced Capacity – when either MTC or Network are at OPEL level 2 or above. This is when the "Major Trauma Centre Advice Consultant" will be in use

**PATHWAY A** is the default pathway for non-immediate secondary transfers.

6. These protocols comprise two levels of transfers as follows:
  - a. **Immediate Transfers (<60 minutes)** – for patients with life threatening conditions.

These patients will include those who have been taken to the Traumas Unit for attempted stabilisation due to distance from the MTC (> 60-minute isochrone), as well as patients who either deteriorate at the TU or have been found after initial assessment to have a life-threatening condition.

    - i. Patients meeting the exclusion criteria (nursing home patient, active DNACPR decision or relevant advanced directive) will not be suitable for immediate transfer.
    - ii. Contact SECamb to arrange an immediate transfer to RSCH
    - iii. Treating senior clinician in TU to contact the ED Consultant at RSCH (01273 696955)
    - iv. Examples of pathologies requiring immediate transfer:
      1. Extradural haematoma with altered GCS
      2. Traumatic subdural haematoma in patients <70 years old and requiring airway support
      3. Proven vascular injury with on-going bleeding
      4. Truncal penetrating injury with haemodynamically instability or evidence of pericardial tamponade
      5. Penetrating injury to the neck with expanding haematoma

- b. **All other transfers / requests for advice (Non-immediate)** –

For all other referrals, there are two separate pathways each with their own algorithm below:

Either

- i. for patients with a head injury (**PATHWAYS A & B**) contact the duty Neurosurgical Consultant or Registrar at RSCH (01273 696955) AND complete on-line referral on [www.referapatient.org/refer-a-patient](http://www.referapatient.org/refer-a-patient)

OR

ii. for all other cases – first identify which **PATHWAY** is in use at the time. If you are not sure, use **PATHWAY A** – but you may then be asked to make a second telephone call as per **PATHWAY B**:

1. **PATHWAY A** - contact duty Consultant for the relevant speciality at the MTC.
2. **PATHWAY B** - contact the 'Major Trauma Centre Advice Consultant' at RSCH on 07741 234469.

In either case this contact should ideally be from a consultant. But in all cases contact must only occur after discussion with the consultant leading the patient's care at the TU.

DO NOT make adult trauma referrals by any other routes.

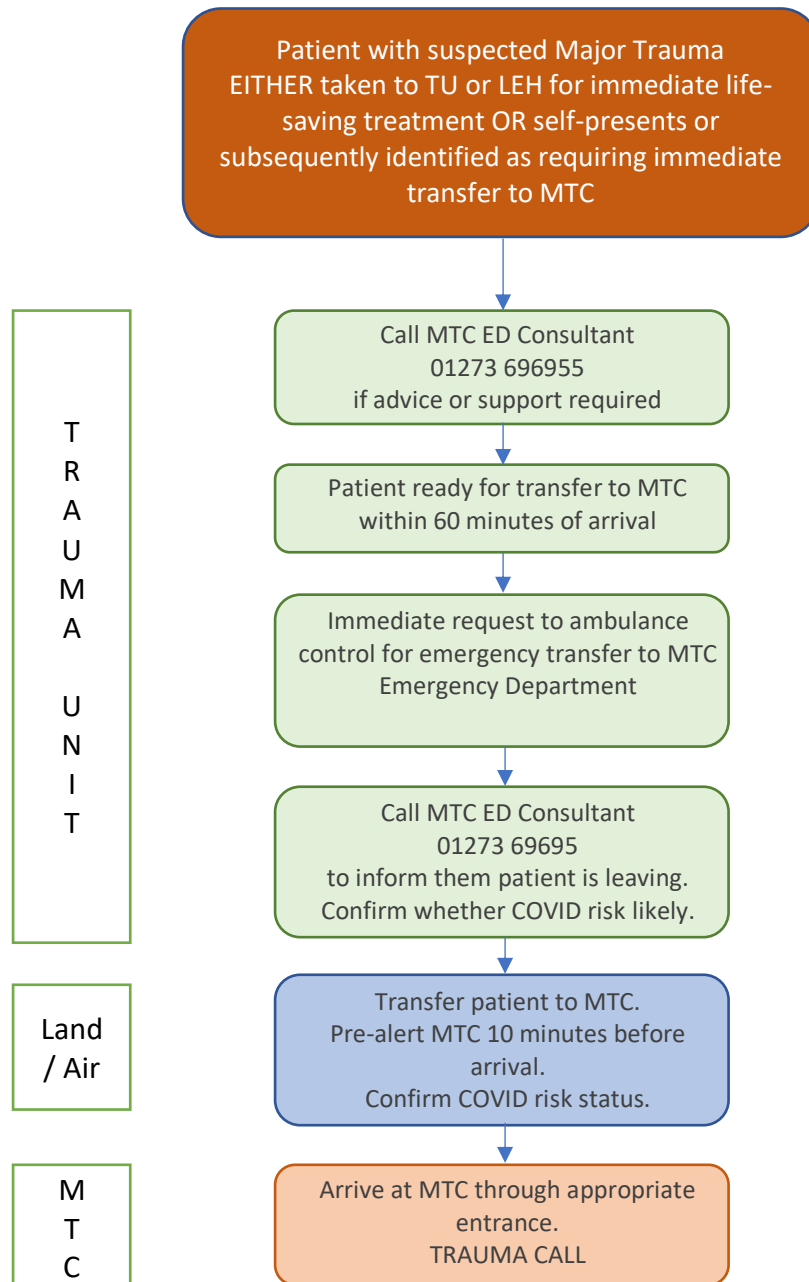
Paediatric major trauma referrals should be made to your normal receiving Paediatric MTC.

7. All secondary transfers should only occur after a doctor at the receiving hospital has been informed of and agreed to the transfer.
8. The MTC will provide 24/7 access to a major trauma consultant and consultants in neurosurgery, cardiothoracic surgery, general surgery, paediatric surgery, liver surgery and intensive care to discuss the appropriateness and feasibility of transfer.
9. Wherever possible in the appropriate timeframe, discussion between sending and receiving hospital should be between Consultant and Consultant. If a Consultant cannot assess the patient sufficiently quickly (e.g. in the Immediate Transfer group), then the Consultant may delegate this role to a doctor who is able and authorised to:
  - a. perform an accurate assessment of the patient's condition and needs
  - b. agree to and arrange admission at the "sending hospital" if the outcome of the consultation is not to transfer the patient
  - c. act as host and arrange theatres etc. if the outcome of the consultation is for a specialist surgeon to attend perform the surgery at the "sending hospital".
10. The separate Transfer Protocol for Spinal Injury is suspended.
11. Exclusion Criteria for transfer of patients from TU to MTC:
  - a. nursing home patient
  - b. patient with a relevant advanced directive
  - c. patient refused by the consultant at the MTC
  - d. patient over the age of 75 with fixed, dilated pupils
12. When arranging Emergency or Urgent secondary transfer to the MTC always contact the Ambulance service. They will assess and decide whether transfer by HEMS might be more appropriate. Patients considered to have risk of COVID-19 should NOT be transferred by helicopter – because time to clean the helicopter is prohibitive.
13. The two algorithms below are for adults and children from their 16<sup>th</sup> birthday. For children under 16, referrals should be direct to relevant Paediatric MTC - Kings College Hospital or Southampton General Hospital. When transferring children to the Paediatric MTC, the telephone numbers to contact the ED Consultants are as follows:
  - a. Kings College Hospital: 0203 299 9000 ext. 5447
  - b. Southampton General Hospital: 023812 206 666 (Direct dial Resus Priority Phone).

## Immediate Transfers (<60 minutes)

For all Adults and Children from their 16th birthday

See principles listed above



Notes:

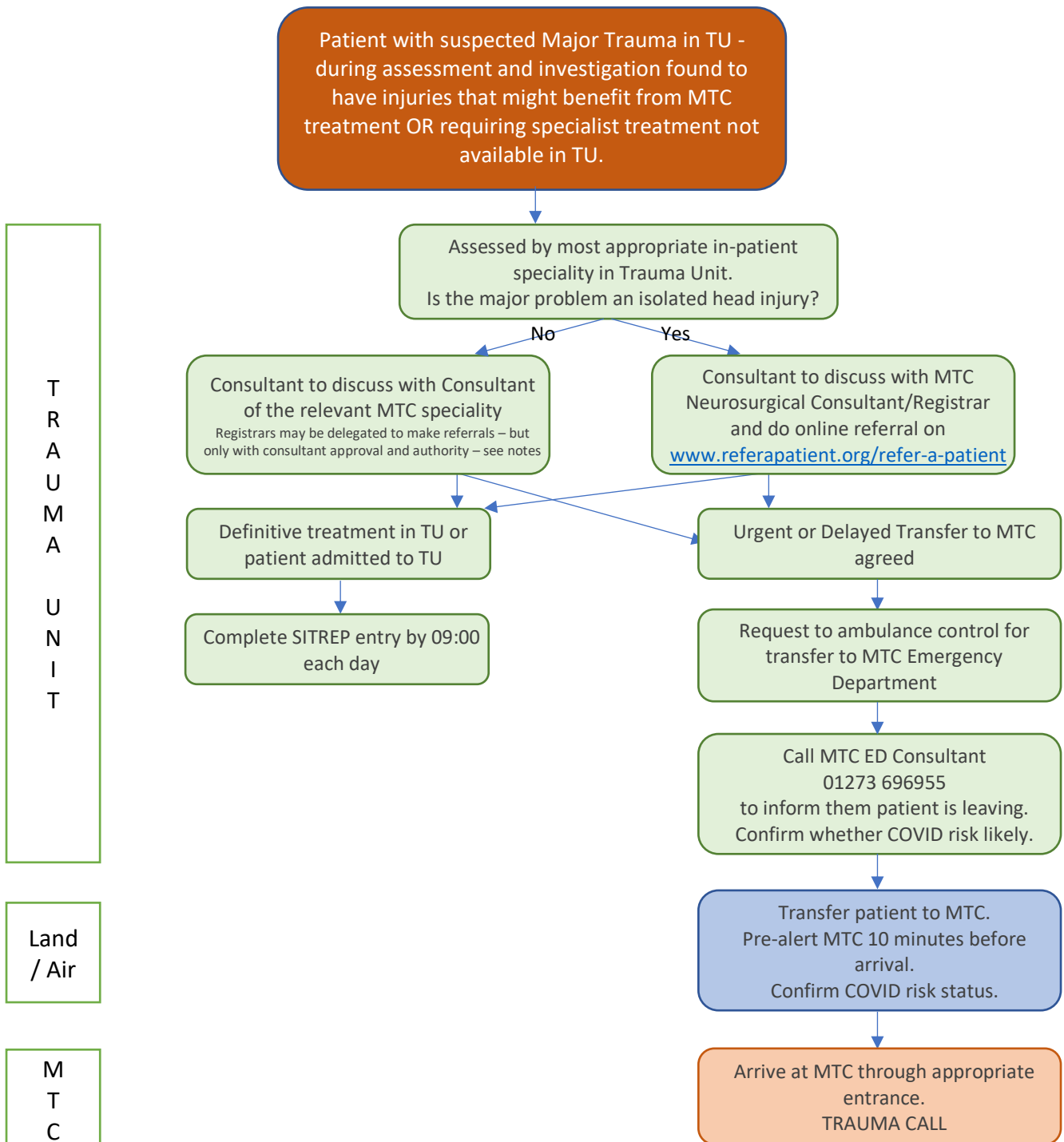
4. When transferring children under 16 to a Paediatric MTC, the telephone numbers to contact the ED Consultants are as follows:
  - a. Kings College Hospital: 0203 299 9000 ext. 5447
  - b. Southampton General Hospital: 023812 206 666 (Direct dial Resus Priority Phone).

All Other Transfers / Requests for Advice  
(Non-immediate)

PATHWAY A – Normal Service

This is the default Pathway for non-immediate referrals. But you may be advised to use Pathway B when the capacity is reduced.

For all Adults and Children from their 16th birthday  
See principles listed above



T  
R  
A  
U  
M  
A  
  
U  
N  
I  
T

Land / Air

M  
T  
C

Notes:

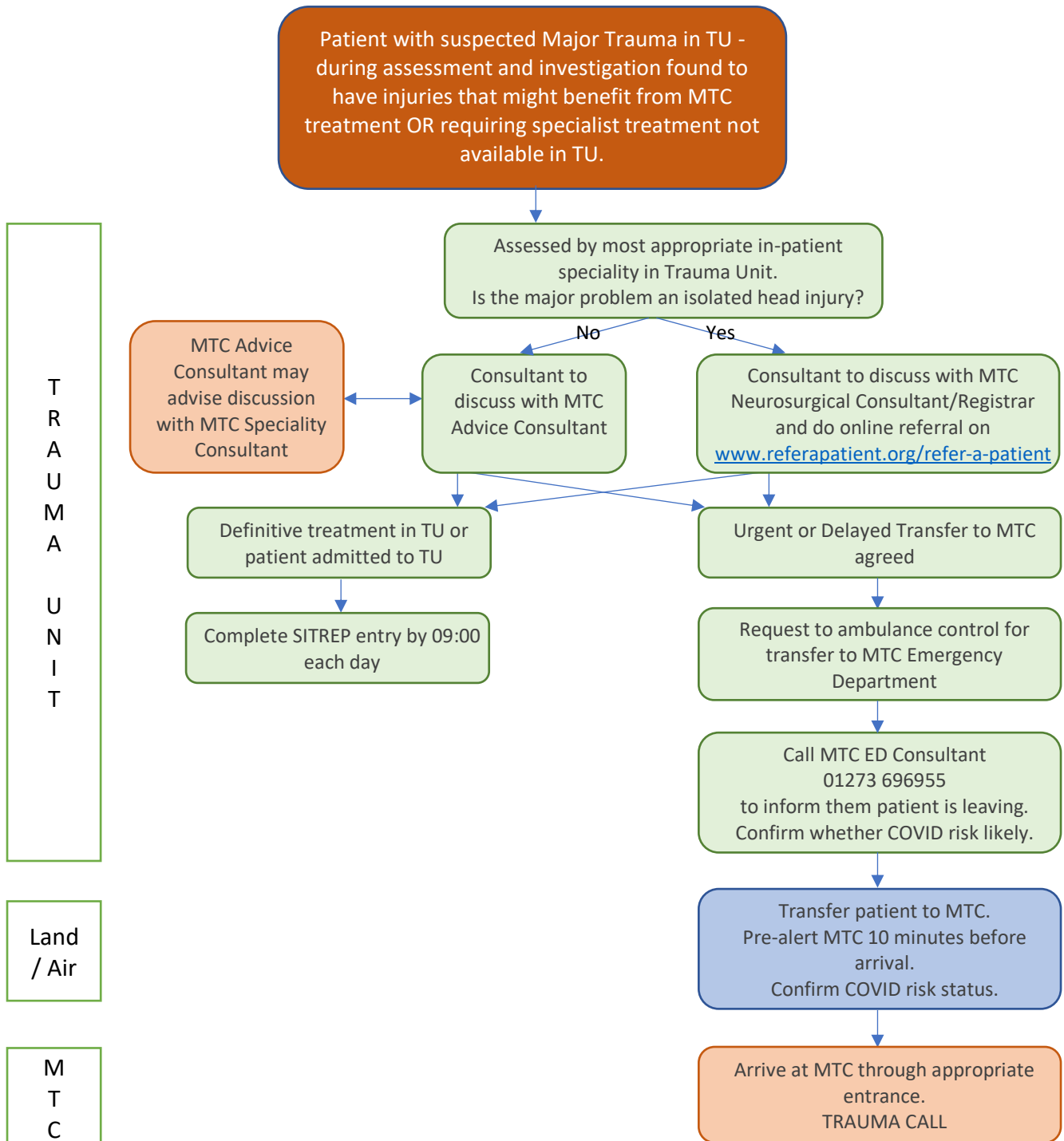
4. When transferring children under 16 to a Paediatric MTC, the telephone numbers to contact the ED Consultants are as follows:
  - a. Kings College Hospital: 0203 299 9000 ext. 5447
  - b. Southampton General Hospital: 023812 206 666 (Direct dial Resus Priority Phone).

All Other Transfers / Requests for Advice  
(Non-immediate)

PATHWAY B – Reduced Capacity

This is Pathway for use when the MTC or Network capacity is reduced. This should be notified in advance.

For all Adults and Children from their 16th birthday  
See principles listed above



Notes:

4. When transferring children under 16 to a Paediatric MTC, the telephone numbers to contact the ED Consultants are as follows:
  - a. Kings College Hospital: 0203 299 9000 ext. 5447
  - b. Southampton General Hospital: 023812 206 666 (Direct dial Resus Priority Phone).



## SITREP REPORTS

Each Trauma Unit will complete SITREP entries for each Major Trauma patient who is still an inpatient in the TU and who has been referred to, or whose case has been discussed with, the MTC on a SITREP spreadsheet and e-mail it each day by 09:00 to [bsuh.sussextrauma@nhs.net](mailto:bsuh.sussextrauma@nhs.net).

This will allow the MTC and the Network managers to track all patients that are still in the Trauma Units that might still require specialist advice or treatment.

For each patient, the following details will be required:

- HOSPITAL ID (Local)
- NAME
- DOB
- COVID STATUS IF KNOWN:- positive/unknown/negative
- CONTACT NUMBER FOR TREATING CONSULTANT
- BRIEF RESUME OF INJURY
- ONGOING CLINICAL ADVICE REQUIRED?: - yes/no
- MANAGED LOCALLY?: - yes/no
- ONGOING NURSING OF REHAB ADVICE REQUIRED?: - yes/no
- PATIENT DISCHARGED?: - yes/no

**NB. An MTC Consultant will only telephone the named TU Consultant if the ONGOING CLINICAL ADVICE REQUIRED section is marked as YES**

## APPENDIX 1 - ABBREVIATIONS

CCD	Ambulance Service Critical Care Desk
DNACPR	Do Not Attempt Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation
HEMS	Helicopter Emergency Medical Service
MTC	Major Trauma Centre
RSCH	Royal Sussex County Hospital
TU	Trauma Unit



APPENDIX 2 - NATIONAL OPEL TRIGGERS FOR MAJOR TRAUMA CENTRE AND NETWORK

MAJOR TRAUMA	Major Trauma Specific Trigger Points
OPEL - 1	<p><b>MAJOR TRAUMA CENTRE</b> MTC able to receive critically injured patients into appropriate critical care area</p> <p><b>MAJOR TRAUMA NETWORK</b> Network functioning as currently; triage tool at steps 1 &amp; 2 (limited) only</p>
OPEL - 2	<p><b>MAJOR TRAUMA CENTRE</b> MTC can provide immediate resuscitation, emergency surgery and specialist critical care for life threatening conditions <b>but</b> limited capacity for other categories of automatic transfers or ward level patients.</p> <hr/> <p><b>MAJOR TRAUMA NETWORK</b></p> <p>Any one of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• MTC at <b>OPEL-2</b></li> <li>• 1-3 TUs not accepting triage positive trauma (if all TUs in network escalate to <b>OPEL-3</b>)</li> <li>• 1-3 TUs or critical care transfer service not able to support time critical secondary transfers (if all TUs in network escalate to <b>OPEL-3</b>)</li> <li>• Pre-hospital running only primary transfers</li> </ul>
OPEL - 3	<p><b>MAJOR TRAUMA CENTRE</b> MTC can provide immediate resuscitation, emergency surgery and specialist critical care for life threatening conditions <b>but</b> MTC unable to accept other categories of automatic transfers or ward level patients</p> <hr/> <p><b>MAJOR TRAUMA NETWORK</b></p> <p>1. MTC at <b>OPEL-2 AND</b> any of the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-hospital running primary transfers and time critical secondary transfers only</li> <li>• 1-3 TUs only able to accept triage positive patients with airway compromise or life threatening haemorrhage</li> <li>• 1-3 TUs or critical care transfer service not able to support time critical secondary transfers</li> </ul> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>2. Adult or paediatric MTC in network at <b>OPEL-3</b></p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>3. All TUs only able to accept triage positive patients with airway compromise or life threatening haemorrhage</p> <p><b>Or</b></p> <p>4. All TUs and / or critical care transfer service not able to support time critical secondary transfers</p>
OPEL - 4	<p><b>MAJOR TRAUMA CENTRE</b></p> <p>Any one of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No capacity for critical care</li> <li>• MTC cannot provide immediate resuscitation and/or emergency surgery</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>MAJOR TRAUMA NETWORK</b></p> <p>Any one of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-hospital service unable to run primary transfers</li> <li>• All TUs unable to accept triage positive trauma and support time critical transfers</li> <li>• Any MTC is at <b>OPEL-4</b> (either adult/paediatric/combined MTC ) No rapid access to specialist care</li> </ul>