

When someone is dying

Practical information for visitors



This leaflet is designed for the relatives and friends of people who are nearing the end of their life and may die soon. It contains practical information about services and facilities available to you at both the Royal Sussex County Hospital (RSCH), Brighton and Princess Royal Hospital (PRH), Haywards Heath. This leaflet is tailored towards the friends and relatives of adults, not children.

When are visiting times?

In both hospitals visiting times are:

- 3pm to 8pm

If you speak to the ward Sister or Charge Nurse, it is often possible to visit outside these hours, and if the person is in a single room staying with them overnight may sometimes be permitted.

Where are the toilet facilities I can use in the hospital?

Visitors are not permitted to use patient bathrooms, but ward staff will be able to tell you where the nearest public access toilets are to you.

How can I contact my friend or family member during their stay?

Mobile phones can be used, although it is important to not disturb other patients when using them. In certain areas of the hospital, you will be asked not to use mobile phones due to potential interference with medical equipment and lack of mobile signal. Patients may have a telephone at their bedside which can be used to contact them directly. Alternatively, it is possible to contact the ward through the hospital's switchboard:

- RSCH – 01273 696955
- PRH – 01444 441881

Both hospitals also have WiFi access on-site, which can be purchased by credit or debit card.

What other support and advice is available during this time?

We understand that this is an extremely challenging time for everyone, but there are various sources of support available.

The doctors and nurses on the ward caring for your friend or relative are the best people to approach initially if you have any questions.

The hospital spiritual care team are available to listen, counsel, advocate and provide emotional support to whoever needs it. You can contact them by calling switch board and ask to be put through to:

- RSCH Ext. 4122
- PRH Ext. 8232

We have a variety of information leaflets you may find informative. Please ask ward staff if you would like further information on anything and they will explore the available resources for you and can print the leaflets.

If the specialist palliative care team are involved in your friend or relative's care you can also speak with them directly.

Is there anything to help if my friend or relative is dying?

When someone is close to dying you should be told what to expect. A leaflet called "What to expect when someone important to you is dying" can support discussions you will have if this should occur. It may also be a challenge explaining things to children and teenagers. A 'Book Box' is available at both hospitals, which has a variety of age-appropriate books and resources. Families may find these useful to help younger family members understand what is happening. Please ask any of the specialist palliative care team or ward staff if you wish to access these resources.

If your friend or relative does die during their stay in hospital the ward staff and hospital bereavement office team will be there to guide you through the next steps.

Royal Sussex County Hospital, Brighton (RSCH)

How do I get to the hospital?

The RSCH is accessible by car and has a pay-on-foot, small, multi-storey car park, which can be reached from Bristol Gate. Queues to access this can be long.

There are also short-term pay-and-display parking bays in the permitted residential areas surrounding the RSCH. These can be paid for with coins or using a smartphone app.

Bus routes stopping outside the RSCH include 1, 1A, 7, N7, 14B, 14C, 23, 27C, 37, 37B, 47, 52, 57, 71, 73, 94A, 271 and 272 and include services to Brighton train station.

There is a taxi rank opposite the main hospital in Paston Place. There is a taxi Freephone in Accident and Emergency reception.

Is there anywhere to get food and drink?

At the RSCH there are many food outlets within the hospital and in the surrounding area.

Waves restaurant is located opposite the Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital (RACH). Opening times are:

- Monday – Friday 9am to 3.30pm

Subway restaurant is next to Waves and is open:

- Monday – Friday 7am to 8pm
- Saturday 8am to 7pm
- Sunday 9am to 5pm

The **Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) shop** is situated on Level 5 of the Thomas Kemp tower. Opening times are:

- Monday – Friday 9am to 8pm
- Saturday – Sunday 9am to 7pm

Another **RVS shop** is located on Level 8 of the Millennium Wing. It is open:

- Monday – Friday 10am to 2pm

There is also a **RVS café** on Level 5 of the RACH. Opening times are:

- Monday – Friday 9am to 3.30pm

Costa Coffee can be found within the main entrance of the Barry Building (the main hospital building accessible from Eastern Road).

Opening times:

- Monday – Friday 7am to 7pm
- Saturday 9am to 7pm
- Sunday 9.30am to 6pm

Within the surrounding Kemptown area there are many cafes and restaurants open daily.

There are also **vending machines**, which can be used 24 hours a day. Some of these only take coins rather than notes or card. These are located throughout the hospital including:

- Level 5 of the Thomas Kemp Tower, outside of the Acute Medical Unit
- 1st floor of the Barry Building
- Level 6, 7 and 8 of the Millennium Wing
- Level 8 and 9 of Sussex Kidney Unit

It may be possible to bring food onto the ward and store it in a patient-only fridge. This is something you should discuss with the ward staff.

What other facilities are available?

At the RSCH, there are two **cash machines** onsite; one to the left of the Barry Building entrance and the other is within the Subway restaurant.

A **WH Smith** can be found on level 5 of RACH and is open:

- Monday – Friday 8am to 7pm
- Saturday – Sunday 10am to 3pm

Amigo shop is found next to the Costa Coffee in the Barry Building, where you can buy newspapers. Opening times:

- Monday – Friday 7am to 7pm
- Saturday – Sunday 9am to 6pm

Pharm@Sea can be found next to the main outpatients' department, opposite the main hospital on Eastern Road. This has a dispensing service for hospital prescriptions but also over-the-counter medications as well. Opening times are:

- Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9am to 6pm
- Tuesday and Thursday 9am to 7pm
- Saturday and Sunday 9.30am to 1.30pm

The **Macmillan Horizon Centre** on Bristol Gate can offer specialist support in a calm and welcoming environment. It also has a café which you can use. It is open:

- Monday – Friday 9am to 4.30pm

Are there any quiet areas available to me?

At the RSCH an interdominational chapel is situated on the first floor of the Barry Building. It is open 24 hours a day to anyone, with Christian services occurring 10am every Sunday and morning prayer at 9am every weekday.

There is a Muslim prayer room also on the first floor of the Barry Building, at the top of the spiral staircase. This is also open 24 hours every day.

The Oasis is on Level 6 of the RACH and is always open for those who want a quiet space for reflection. There are also meditation sessions on Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

The nearest green space from the RSCH can be found in St George's Church, opposite Sussex House. Alternatively, the seafront is a five minute walk away from the main hospital site.

The Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath (PRH)

How do I get to the hospital?

If you are driving to the PRH there are three pay-on-foot car parks open to the public within the hospital grounds.

Bus routes 30, 39, 40X, 270, 271 and 272 also stop outside the PRH. The nearest train station is Haywards Heath, which is a 30 to 40 minute walk. Alternatively, there are taxis or buses to the hospital from stop B on Perrymount Road.

There is a taxi Freephone in the Accident and Emergency department at the PRH.

Where can I get food and drink?

A **League of Friends café** can be found on the ground floor, just within the main hospital entrance. Opening times are:

- Monday – Saturday 8am to 5pm
- Sunday 12pm to 5pm

Bluebells restaurant is located on the second floor of the main hospital and is open:

- Monday – Friday 7.30am to 4pm
- Saturday and Sunday 8.30am to 4pm

There are **vending machines** available in the hospital which operate 24 hours a day. Not all of these take notes or cards so it is advisable to bring coins. They can be found in:

- A&E waiting room
- Bluebells restaurant
- Hurstwood Park

Are there other facilities in the hospital?

At the PRH, a **cash point** is located on the ground floor, next to the League of Friends café. There is also a hospital shop in the same area.

Where can I find quiet areas in the hospital?

The PRH chapel is located on the first floor of the main building. It is also open to anyone 24 hours a day.

Within the chapel area there is a Muslim prayer room, which is open day and night to anyone wishing to use this facility.

The PRH is surrounded by green spaces, with benches found near the main entrance.

If there are other questions you have about practical issues, please ask a member of staff on the ward you are visiting, or the team on the front desk of the main hospital entrance.

Disclaimer

The information in this leaflet is for guidance purposes only and is in no way intended to replace professional clinical advice by a qualified practitioner.