

## Keeping you and your loved ones safe

The outbreak of Covid-19 has brought unprecedented challenges and meant that we have had to do things differently to keep you, your loved ones and indeed everyone working here at the Trust safe.

### Visitor Restrictions

Covid-19 can be a serious illness that may lead to death. Anyone can catch it and anyone can spread it. For that reason we have had to introduce visitor restrictions until further notice. This is particularly important to protect those in our community most vulnerable to the virus. Evidence shows that this includes older people, those from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (*BAME*) and people suffering with conditions such as diabetes.

We are however, allowing one named visitor who is either an immediate family member or carer to visit in the following exceptional circumstances:

- The patient you wish to visit is receiving end of life care
- You are the birthing partner accompanying a woman in labour
- You are a parent or appropriate adult visiting your child.

If you are named visitor you will be issued with a special visitor pass. You may be asked to show this during your visit. It may also be necessary for you to wear Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) on some of our Wards. We will advise you if this is required.

Children, who are not patients, are not permitted to visit any of our Wards at this time.

### Keeping you in touch

We understand that not being able to see your loved ones can be upsetting. This is why we are doing all we can to enable you to keep in touch safely. The following are some of the ways you can do this:

- People should bring in their own mobile or tablet device if they have one. You are then free to call or video for a chat. We have free WiFi.
- We also have tablet devices that for those patients that don't have access to their own.

- You can email what you would like to say to [LetterToYourLovedOne@boltonft.nhs.uk](mailto:LetterToYourLovedOne@boltonft.nhs.uk) we will then print this out, pop it in an envelope and give it to your loved one. Just remember to include their name and date of birth on the email.
- We have also launched the 'Two Hearts' initiative on our wards. This involves two matching cards or objects in the shape of a heart. One for the patient and one that can be sent to a loved one so you can feel connected.
- You can also contact the ward directly. However, please be patient with us at this extremely busy time. Our number one priority is treating patients so we might need to get back to you.

## Spiritual support

Our Chaplaincy Service is here to support people through this difficult time.

They have prayers and resources available for staff and patients that offer spiritual and pastoral care for those who need it.

Our Muslim Chaplin, Imam Faruk, is available 24/7. He can be contacted by phone in the first instance but if the patient is distressed or at the end of their life they will be offered a face to face Chaplin visit. Unfortunately, to keep them and our patients safe no visiting faith leaders are allowed at this time. Although, we welcome contact via phone or video.

We also have Quran cubes that can be given out from the Chaplaincy to wards for patients and Ramadan packs containing prayer beads. Thanks to BCOM for donating these.

We ensure all our staff are aware of the importance of the correct religious observances such as positioning and care of the body of patients immediately before and after death.

## Communication support

We have in place access to telephone interpretation in over 200 languages. We can use this service to communicate with anyone who requires it. We also have Trust Link workers who are readily available to offer language support to families in Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati and Hindi. They can be contacted by our switchboard between 8am and 5pm.

We also use pictorial images to communicate with patients where there is a language barrier.

## Don't delay in seeking medical care

We want to stress that we are still open to treat other acute and life threatening conditions. If you are injured or seriously ill you should come to hospital as we have all the usual treatments available in Accident & Emergency (A&E). We don't want anyone to avoid coming to hospital if they need urgent medical treatment.

If patients have Covid-19 symptoms (persistent cough or temperature) then they are tested and separated from those patients without symptoms on arrival in A&E and are kept on separate wards.

Remember - if you have chest pain, stroke symptoms, heavy bleeding, severe tummy pain or headache, or have a child who is very unwell we have life-saving treatments.

Our maternity services also continue to operate as usual. Although, to ensure everyone's safety, we can only allow a single birthing partner to accompany mums during delivery.

## Protecting your community

We know you want to do all you can to help protect your community. You can do this by following the Government's advice on social distancing. Stop the spread of Covid-19 and save lives by:

- Staying at home: Only go outside for food, health reasons or work (but only if you cannot work from home)
- If you do go out, stay 2 metres (6ft) away from other people at all times
- Wash your hands as soon as you get home

Do not meet others or invite them to your house. Even friends or family.

Remember, you can spread the virus even if you don't have symptoms.

## Highest level of care

We would like to reassure you that providing patients with the highest possible level of care is our number one priority. We treat everyone who attends Bolton Foundation Trust as individuals. We aim to meet all their needs both physical and spiritual with compassion and understanding.

We would like to thank you for your continued support in these challenging times.