

Emergency Department (A&E)

This leaflet explains more about the Emergency Department (A&E).

What is the Emergency Department?

We treat patients who have suffered a recent injury or who have developed a sudden illness. All Emergency Departments use a priority system where the most seriously ill patients are seen first.

Will I be seen in the Emergency Department?

We may direct you somewhere else if your nurse thinks that your condition would be better managed elsewhere, or you need to be seen in a specialist area.

What is the process of being seen?

1. **Streaming** – If you arrive at the pedestrian entrance, you will be greeted by a nurse who will ask you a few questions to assess the seriousness of your condition and direct you to the most appropriate service.
2. **Registration** – The receptionist will call your name and register you.
3. **Nurse assessment** – Some people need more assessment after registration. A nurse may call your name to further assess your priority and may arrange for some tests.
4. **Treatment** – You will be directed to one of the treatment areas. You may be seen by a doctor or a practitioner. Not everyone is treated by the same members of the clinical team.

Children's Emergency Department – There is a separate team of children's nurses and doctors (for patients under the age of 18). Children register directly with reception and get assessed and treated in the Children's Emergency department.

How long will I wait?

We are working hard to see you as quickly as possible. Please remember that waiting times can differ between treatment areas, specialists and due to prioritisation of patients. Other people may therefore be called before you. If you have been referred by your GP or another hospital to a particular team, you will have to register at the Emergency Department. Although this team will be expecting you, they may not be able to see you immediately. This is because they cover the whole hospital and may be busy with another ill patient on a ward or in theatre. **If your condition worsens while you are waiting, you have any concerns or you require any medication for pain please speak to a nurse.**

Is the Emergency Department always the best place for treatment?

If you have been suffering from a medical problem for more than 48 hours you should first try calling your GP surgery or NHS 111 (see below).

Does it cost anything?

Treatment provided in the Emergency Department is free apart from prescription charges for some patients. However, you may have to pay for any treatment outside the Emergency Department if you are visiting the UK, or not living here on a lawful and settled basis. We have a legal duty to establish entitlement to free NHS treatment (outside the Emergency Department) and you may be asked to provide proof of entitlement.

Useful services

FOOD AND DRINK - There are several cafés in the hospital, please ask staff for directions. There are also vending machines in the waiting area.

TOILETS – There are toilets in the waiting area including a disabled toilet. The toilets are checked and cleaned regularly. However please do alert staff if there is a problem.

Going home

We will send your GP a letter with details of your visit to the Emergency Department. Please ensure we have your correct contact details in case you need to be contacted for follow up. Please also ask any questions about your care, medication or further treatment before you leave. If you have any further questions regarding your medication after you leave, you can call the Medicines Information Patient Helpline 020 8725 1033 (11am to 3pm Monday to Friday).

Transport

The hospital is well served by public transport. Unfortunately we are unable to provide transport home for most patients. If you want to order a taxi there is a free phone in the waiting area.

Don't take your troubles home

If you have any concerns or questions concerning your stay and would like to discuss them further, please ask to speak to the nurse in charge or Matron.

Feedback on our service

We value your feedback to continue to improve our service. You will receive a text message to provide feedback on your experience in the next few days. Otherwise please fill in a comments card.

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing

Tel: 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health. **Web:** www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

Tel: 111

If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you. For more information, leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

Emergency Department Staff should be able to carry out their work without fearing for their safety. Anyone who is threatening or aggressive to Trust staff or who damages Trust property will be asked to leave by security. If appropriate, the Trust will take legal action and press for the maximum penalty.

