

# St George's Major Trauma Centre

**This leaflet explains more about the major trauma centre at St George's Hospital. It explains what a trauma centre is, why you or your loved one has been admitted to the major trauma centre and what will happen during your time there.**

**If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.**

## What is a major trauma centre?

In this leaflet, the word trauma is used to describe a physical injury. A major trauma centre (MTC) is a hospital with the best available skills and equipment to treat patients who have very serious injuries.

Patients with the most serious injuries are taken straight to a major trauma centre, because this leads to better results for the patients involved and the NHS now uses this system across England to provide the best care for those who are seriously injured. This means St George's Hospital receives patients from across south west London and surrounding counties for emergency treatment. Our large team has the skills to help with these injuries and provide the right advice and care.

## What has happened?

It is not uncommon for seriously injured patients to have no memory or limited memory of what happened leading up to their injuries and treatment. You may have been taken to a local hospital before being transferred to St George's Hospital or been brought straight to St George's by land or air ambulance.

### **Initial treatment may have included:**

- scans such as a CT (computerised tomography) scan, an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan or an X-ray
- medicines to help you stop bleeding, to control pain, to help you breathe or to reduce the risk of infection
- surgery to stop the bleeding, removal of any foreign objects from your body or fixing any damaged organs or bones.

Patients who have been unconscious or unable to see, hear or understand clearly at the time, may not remember these details. This is normal and a nurse or doctor can help by providing information about what has happened during that time.

## How long have I been in hospital and how long will I need to be in?

If you have limited memory or no memory of what has happened, our doctors and nurses can give you information about how long you have been at the hospital.

Every patient is different and it may be necessary for some patients to be kept unconscious while their bodies heal. If this is the case, staff can explain your injuries to your family, and discuss your treatment with them and how long you are likely to stay in hospital. Once you are fully conscious, staff will help you understand what has happened while you were unconscious or had memory loss. Family members, friends and others can also help give you this information.

### About your injuries

More than half a million people are admitted to hospital following serious injury every year. These injuries include broken bones and head injuries and may also involve damage to skin, muscle, internal organs or other soft tissue.

Your treatment and how quickly you recover depends on a number of things, such as how large, what kind and where your injury is. Your age and health before the injury will also make a difference to your recovery.

It can take a long time to recover from serious injury. Many patients admitted to hospital will take more than a year to fully recover, so your rehabilitation may also need to carry on for longer than a year.

You must allow yourself the time your body needs to heal and recover.

Serious injuries can happen when you least expect them and can change your life and the lives of your family and friends for a long time.

Serious injuries may affect you emotionally as well as physically and it can also take time to adapt emotionally to what has happened.

You might find it useful to write down your injuries in words that make sense to you.

### My injuries

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## Who will care for me and give support to me and my loved ones?

We have a team of experts in all aspects of trauma care, including:

- **Surgeons**, highly trained doctors who will manage your injuries. This may involve taking you to the operating theatre for surgery, although some injuries can be managed without surgery.
- **Major trauma nurse specialists**, who oversee your care while you are in the major trauma centre. They will see you the day after your injury and work with all the other healthcare professionals in the team to make sure you have seamless care.
- **Clinical psychologists**, who help adults and children with any emotional problems caused by their injury. The psychologist works with you to try to lower your distress and raise your wellbeing. They can also give you information and support to help how you are feeling, to make sense and to work through any problems.
- **Physiotherapists**, who help you try to get the same movement and ability back that you had before your injury. A physiotherapist will assess and treat you and plan your continuing rehabilitation.
- **Occupational therapists**, who support you to focus on practical, achievable goals so you can get as much independence back as possible. An occupational therapist may assess and treat you for a traumatic brain injury or may help you with hand and upper limb rehabilitation. They may also help you to learn new ways of doing everyday tasks such as washing and dressing and can recommend living aids or adaptations to your home.
- **Speech and language therapists**, who assess and treat any difficulties with communication, such as speech, language or writing. They are also experts in

assessing and advising on swallowing difficulties. A nurse or doctor will refer you if needed.

- **Dietitians**, who can help make sure you are getting the best nutrition - a vital part of your recovery. They can provide advice about the best things to eat and drink, help to manage any nutritional problems such as deficiencies or intolerances and prescribe supplements or tube feeds if you are not able to eat or drink enough on your own.
- **Chaplaincy/spiritual care team**, a multi-faith team offering spiritual and religious care to patients and visitors. You do not need to be religious to use the service – it may just help to talk to someone about what is happening and how you feel about the changes you are facing. Our team includes Christian, Muslim and Jewish chaplains, as well as a range of volunteers from other faith traditions.
- **Clinical pharmacists and pharmacy technicians**, who give advice to prescribers to make sure you get the best medicines for your care and can also advise you how best to use your medicines. All patients have their medication reviewed and adjusted according to their needs and all wards are visited daily.
- **Pain service**, a team of specialist nurses and anaesthetists who can give you help with pain control and advise on how best to take your painkillers.

We also provide a Major Trauma Signposting service (MTSP), including:

- **A rehabilitation coordinator**, who can give **legal advice** to help with any confusion around the legal and compensation process and how it may support your rehabilitation. The rehabilitation coordinator can give you advice while you are at St George's or after you have been discharged. They will try to answer any queries you or your family have and can be contacted on 03300 439879.
- **Citizen's Advice** also forms part of the MTSP at St George's Hospital and can give advice on issues such as welfare benefit entitlement during your recovery, debt and finance, housing, employment, immigration and Power of Attorney. The service is available to all major trauma patients and their family and is entirely confidential. Citizen's Advice can be contacted on 07496 959 818 or at [majortraumacab@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:majortraumacab@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

## What will happen next?

If you are not well enough to go straight home from St George's, you will be transferred to your nearest appropriate hospital or local rehabilitation service. St George's works alongside many smaller hospitals known as trauma units (TUs).

If this happens it will be discussed with you and your family beforehand to make sure everybody understands what is happening and why. You will be able to ask questions about anything which is not clear to you.

Before leaving the major trauma centre you will be given a medical discharge letter and a **rehabilitation prescription**, which sets out the therapies and other treatments you need

to help you recover. This will be available to the healthcare professionals caring for you after leaving St George's - clear information about your treatment and continuing needs will be passed to your new trauma unit or rehabilitation service before you are transferred.

Rehabilitation is a process of assessment, treatment, management and continuous evaluation to help you get back to the best physical, mental and emotional state that you can, so that you can take an active part in society and have the best possible quality of life.

## What facilities are there at St George's?

### Accommodation

The Pelican Hotel offers onsite accommodation to patients' family members. There is also a Holiday Inn nearby in Colliers Wood, and other accommodation options in Tooting to suit a range of budgets.

<b>Pelican Hotel</b> <b>Tel:</b> 020 8767 9767 <b>Web:</b> <a href="http://www.pelican-london.com">www.pelican-london.com</a>	<b>Holiday Inn, South Wimbledon</b> <b>Tel:</b> 020 8545 7300
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If you are the parent of a child who has been admitted to the ward and wish to stay with them, there is space at the bedside for one parent to stay overnight. If your child is admitted to critical care, parental accommodation will be provided. Family accommodation can also be provided, but there is sometimes a waiting list. Please speak to the ward or unit manager if you have any questions or concerns about this.

### Car Parking

The trust provides parking facilities for visitors of patients in the major trauma centre. Charges apply, but concessions and permits are available to one visitor per major trauma centre patient. For more information, see the car parking sheet in your information pack.

## How can I give feedback?

Your feedback is important to us as we are always looking at ways to improve our services.

Please take a few minutes to fill in our patient survey on the ward tablets. If you are unable to do this for yourself, please ask a family member or a member of staff to help you.

Alternatively, you can ask for a patient experience leaflet. These can be found in your information pack.

Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is available to listen to any comments, queries, compliments, complaints or suggestions that you may have. Contact details are listed at the end of this leaflet.

## Useful sources of information

The South West London & Surrey Trauma Network website has useful information: [www.swlandstn.com](http://www.swlandstn.com)



Follow us on Twitter: @stgeorgesmtc

SWLS Trauma Network@SWLS\_trauma

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about the major trauma centre, please contact the major trauma nurse specialists on 020 8725 2363, Mon-Fri (8am to 5.30pm)  
Sat/Sun (8am to 3.30pm).

You can also email us at [major.traumanurses@nhs.net](mailto:major.traumanurses@nhs.net)

**For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit [www.stgeorges.nhs.uk](http://www.stgeorges.nhs.uk)**

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## 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 wings (near the lift foyer).

**Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** [pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto: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](http://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

### AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all of our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website ([www.accessable.co.uk](http://www.accessable.co.uk)). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.