

# Waiting in our Emergency Department

**This leaflet explains why you are having to wait in our Emergency Department.**

## **Why am I having to wait?**

Our Emergency Department at St George's is very busy at the moment and the hospital is full. This means that you may experience a longer wait than we would like to be seen by one of our clinical teams or to move to a ward in the hospital if that is what you need.

We are very sorry for this and can assure you that all our staff are doing everything they can to see and treat everyone who needs it as quickly and safely as they can.

## **What do I do if I am worried that I am getting worse?**

We can reassure you that if you need emergency treatment then you will receive it. Our staff are working around the clock to make sure they provide the best care to all our patients but they will prioritise seeing the sickest people.

If you are worried that your condition is getting worse while you are waiting, then you should let one of our staff know. However, we do ask for your understanding and patience while we all work hard to manage the high numbers of people attending our hospital.

## **What can I do if I don't want to wait?**

Waiting times will be longest for those people that don't need treatment in our Emergency Department straightaway or for those who could be treated elsewhere.

We understand that sometimes it is hard to know how to access help. You can find information on other sources of help available to you through NHS 111, either by telephone or online.

Direct appointments to see a clinician will be arranged via NHS 111 if the clinical condition requires this. We also have a range of quick access clinics and outpatient services that you can access through your GP if you need specialist care. Our navigators can help you access GP appointments if you are struggling with this.

In many cases of minor illness or injury, your local community pharmacist can also advise you. (See below.)

## What if I am worried about my mental health?

If you need mental health support in a crisis, and live in Wandsworth, Merton, Sutton, Kingston or Richmond, you can call our 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Line on 0800 028 8000.

The line offers emotional support and advice to people of all ages from trained NHS mental health professionals, who will help you get further support if you need it.

## How can I support your staff to care for me?

We do understand how difficult it is waiting for a long time when you feel unwell or are worried about yourself or a loved one. However, we do not condone or tolerate violent or aggressive behaviour towards our staff or our security team.

To help us to care for you efficiently, you can use our website *EDCK.in* to give us information about yourself and view your position in the queue using your smartphone. Look out for the banners and QR codes in the waiting room.

## Contact us

### 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 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing (near the lift foyer).

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

**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

### 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

### Local pharmacy

Your local pharmacy can help with minor health concerns. Find a pharmacy near you online. **Web:** Search for "NHS Find a Pharmacy".

### 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)

