

Ambulatory Oncology Care Unit (AOCU)

This leaflet explains about the Ambulatory Oncology Care Unit. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is AOCU?

AOCU is

- A day case area for patients requiring urgent assessment/monitoring/treatment for cancer treatment/disease related problems.
- Open 9.00am to 5.00pm (last admission 3.00pm), Monday to Saturday including public holidays.
- Specifically for patients currently receiving treatment at St George's Hospital or within six weeks of treatment.
- Staffed by Oncology Nurse Practitioners with medical back up as required.

What it is not

- A drop-in.
- An overnight stay area but if you need to stay in hospital, you'll be admitted from AOCU to a ward.
- An assessment unit for non-cancer/non-treatment related conditions, e.g. falls, acute chest pain, bleeding OR unstable unwell patients. These patients will continue to attend local Emergency Departments.

Who can use this service?

This service is available to any St George's Hospital patient who has cancer and is currently receiving chemotherapy, radiotherapy or immunotherapy.

What if I am not feeling well?

If you have had chemotherapy or other anti-cancer treatment and have any of the below symptoms you should URGENTLY call on the number below.

1. Mouth ulcers that reduce the amount you can eat or drink
2. Nausea that is not controlled with your anti-sickness medication
3. Vomiting (on more than one occasion)
4. A rash
5. A swollen limb
6. Worsening of existing breathlessness



7. Gum / nose bleeds or unusual bruising
8. Pain that is not controlled with your pain medication
9. Constipation, cough or problems passing urine
10. Sudden shortness of breath
11. A fever (above 38 degrees)
12. Shivering episodes
13. Flu-like symptoms
14. Diarrhoea
15. You feel very unwell.

Note: For items numbers 10-12, you will likely be instructed to attend A&E.

What do I need to do and what happens if I need to be seen?

You can always contact us on 0783 114 7653 for advice if you have the symptoms above. If you call during AOCU opening times you'll be asked to come for assessment in AOCU (between 9.00am and 5.00pm Monday to Saturday) or to A&E if out of hours or if you're feeling unwell. You might also be advised to see your GP if your problem is not related to your cancer or cancer treatment.

Note: If the phone is not answered, please leave a message with your name, hospital number and problem and your call will be returned as soon as possible.

If you have received chemotherapy in the Trevor Howell Day Unit then you should have been given an Acute Oncology alert card. Please ask your nurse for one if you have not.

Where do I need to go?

AOCU is in Gordon Smith ward on the 3rd floor of Lanesborough wing of St George's Hospital. You will be asked to come to the unit for assessment or treatment from 9.00am to 3.00pm.

If you call after 3.00pm, you might be asked to go to A&E or come to AOCU the following morning.

Does it cost anything?

The service itself is free. The only costs you may incur will be the cost of the phone call itself (the number is not a high cost number) and any travel costs if we advise you to come to the hospital for assessment on that day.

What will happen when I come to AOCU?

When you come to AOCU you will be seen and assessed by the team and might have investigations done (for example blood test, X-ray, etc.). Depending on the results of the assessment or investigation you might stay for the day for treatment and/or monitoring.

If needed you might stay in hospital and be admitted from AOCU.

Who are the AOCU team?

The main members of the team are:

Dalisay Domingo-Navallo, AOS Lead Nurse/Advanced Nurse Practitioner

Sophie Golden, AOCU Clinical Nurse Specialist

Mary Grace Nunez, AOCU Clinical Nurse Specialist

Caitriona NiMhuirís, AOCU Clinical Nurse Specialist

Maria Felguera-Guzman, AOCU Clinical Nurse Specialist

Louise Breeze, AOS/CUP Clinical Nurse Specialist

Dr Mehran Afshar, Consultant Oncologist/AOS Lead

Dr Jason Chow, Consultant Oncologist

Dr Tim Benepal, Consultant Oncologist

Dr Stefania Redana, Consultant Oncologist

Dr Catherine Cafferkey, Consultant Oncologist

Donna Nottage, AOCU Coordinator

Useful sources of information

The Macmillan information centre is on the ground floor of Grosvenor wing. It is open most days and patients are welcome to drop in for a chat or more information.

Additionally, Macmillan can be contacted free of charge on 0800 808 0000 (Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 9.00pm) or on <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/>

Contact us

For queries relating to appointments, please call between 9.00am and 5.00pm

Monday to Friday.

Outpatient appointments: 020 8725 4370

Chemotherapy appointments: 020 8725 0519

Scan appointments. Please call the relevant scanning department directly or call your Clinical Nurse Specialist for advice.

CT scanning: 020 8725 4189

MRI scanning: 020 8725 2933

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk

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

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

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (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.



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