

Sickle Cell Emergency Department Bypass Unit

This leaflet explains about the Sickle Cell Emergency Department Bypass Unit for people living with sickle cell disease. If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is the Sickle Cell Emergency Department Bypass Unit?

As part of measures implemented by NHS England, the Sickle Cell Emergency Department (ED) Bypass Unit is being set up for people with sickle cell disease to attend when they have a sickle cell crisis.

The aim of this initiative is to help to address the longstanding health inequalities experienced by patients with sickle cell disease by improving access to specialist care. Healthcare professionals working in the Sickle Cell ED Bypass Unit are trained in caring for patients experiencing sickle cell crises. Patients presenting with a crisis will be reviewed promptly by a clinician who understands their condition and can provide effective pain relief in a timely manner.

Who can attend the Sickle Cell ED Bypass Unit?

- Service users will call the triage line and will be assessed based on their symptoms.
- If you have a painful sickle cell crisis, you can receive treatment on the Sickle Cell ED Bypass Unit based on the severity of your pain.
- If you experience severe chest pain, fever, acute abdominal pain, sudden loss of vision, acute shortness of breath, severe headaches, confusion or speech disturbance then you will be

advised to attend the Emergency Department (ED) where you can be safely assessed.

- If you have any symptoms related to pregnancy, you will be directed to maternity triage.
- The aim is to provide immediate pain relief as an outpatient. This may help to avoid patients being admitted to hospital.
- This service is for those with an episode of acute sickle pain that is not responding to two or more consecutive doses of oral pain relief medication at home. It is important that you do not wait until the pain becomes severe.
- Analgesia will be given within 30 minutes and a clinician will be there to assess your needs and formulate a treatment plan.
- Your pain will be monitored and if your pain is under control, you can go home after the recommended period of observation.
- If your pain continues or investigations are recommended, then you may be admitted to hospital.

Where do I need to go?

- Ring the Sickle Cell ED Bypass Unit triage 'phone line: 07570 253 884.
- You will be advised whether it is appropriate for you to attend the Sickle Cell ED Bypass Unit, based on your symptoms.
- If you are advised to attend the Sickle Cell ED Bypass Unit, you should make your way to the hospital immediately.
- Attend Gordon Smith ward, 3rd Floor Lanesborough Wing and inform the nursing staff of your arrival.
- You will be directed to our dedicated treatment area. Any friends or family members with you will be asked to stay in the waiting area as there is limited space in the treatment area.

Does it cost anything?

- No, it doesn't cost anything.

- Please arrange transport for going home. Hospital transport is only available based on strict criteria.

What do I need to bring with me?

Bring a list of your current medications including dosage. Please ensure you arrive on time.

Useful sources of information

- To avoid disappointment, please do not present to the Sickie Cell ED Bypass Unit without speaking to the triage nurse.
- If you present to the Sickie Cell ED Bypass Unit without calling first, you may be advised to attend the ED or your GP depending on symptoms.
- Someone else can ring on your behalf if they can verify your name, date of birth and can fully answer the triage questions.
- You may leave once the doctor caring for you is confident that your pain is under control. If you have received strong opioid pain relief, you should remain in the unit for a minimum of two hours after the last administration before you leave.
- Drowsiness is one of the side effects of opioid medications. You should not drive for at least two hours after receiving this type of pain relief.
- If the team recommends that you are admitted to hospital but you decline or leave the unit before the recommended observation period, you will be asked to sign a form. This will be recorded in your medical notes.

Contact us

The Sickie Cell ED Bypass Unit is open 24/7 365 days a year.

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm the 'phone is carried by a

Haemoglobinopathy Specialist Nurse. Monday to Friday 5pm to 9am

the 'phone is carried by a Haematology Nurse. During weekends and bank holidays the 'phone is carried by a Haematology Nurse.

**For any general enquires please contact the
Haemoglobinopathy Specialist Nurse: 07825 978 812 or email:
Haemoglobinopathy.Nurses@stgeorges.nhs.uk**

West London Haemoglobinopathy Coordinating Centre (HCC)

Supporting patients, families, and clinicians in understanding and managing red cell disorders across West London.

Web: [West London Haemoglobinopathy Coordinating Centres \(HCC\)](#)

**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 advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or care. You can contact the PALS team on the advisory telephone line Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 2pm to 5pm.

A Walk-in service is available:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday between 10am and 4pm

Friday between 10am and 2pm.

The Walk-in and Advisory telephone services are closed on Wednesdays.

Please contact PALS in advance to check if there are any changes to opening times.

PALS is based within the hospital in the ground floor main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough wings.

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

NHS UK

The NHS 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.



Reference: HAE_SCE_LP_01 **Published:** May 2025 **Review date:** May 2027