

# Intensive Care Patient Diaries

## Information for Patients

**This leaflet explains why we keep patient diaries for some patients on Intensive Care.**

### What is a patient diary?

Patients often have little or no memory of their time on the intensive Care Unit. Your memory can be affected by experiencing critical illness. Some patients may recall nightmares or hallucinations from this time, which can be frightening. Although the team does its best to keep you updated throughout your stay on Intensive Care – it is likely that you will have some gaps in your memory.

For some patients, recovering from critical illness can be a stressful and worrying time and you may have a lot of questions about your time on Intensive Care. For this reason, a member of the team looking after you will start a patient diary. The aim of the diary is to help you to make sense of what happened to you during your time on Intensive Care.

### How does it work?

The nursing staff will start a diary for you, writing down what has been happening during each day. Other healthcare professionals, including doctors and physiotherapists may also contribute. We also encourage your family members to write in the diary and pass on your messages or to relay information from home. Your diary is kept at your bedspace at all times and treated as a confidential document.

### What should be written in the diary?

The diary is not a medical record of your care. It should contain day to day information on significant events that you may not remember. For example, we may write down who visited you during a shift or any information about current events. If we know what your interests are, we will include for example updates on significant sports events. If you have any visitors, we will encourage them to add an entry to your diary.

### What happens to the diary when I leave the Intensive Care?

When you leave Intensive Care, the Critical Care Follow Up team will maintain contact with you. Your diary will be stored securely. For most patients, we will offer you an appointment at our Critical Care follow Up Clinic. At this clinic – you will be seen by a member of the team who was involved in your care. As part of the appointment, you will be offered your diary and a member of the team will support you with reading it.

Some patients do not want to read the diary. The decision lies with the you and we will

respect whatever decision you make. We will require you to sign a consent form if you wish to receive your diary.

**Please remember - the diary remains hospital property until it is handed over to the patient and a consent form is signed.**

## Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about your diary, contact us at [icufollowup@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:icufollowup@stgeorges.nhs.uk)

## Useful sources of information

ICUsteps, the intensive care patient support charity  
[Home - ICUsteps](#)

**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)**

## Was this information helpful? Yes / No

**Please let us know, contact [patient.information@stgeorges.nhs.uk](mailto:patient.information@stgeorges.nhs.uk) and include the leaflet title.  
Thank you.**

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## 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](mailto: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](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 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.



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