



University  
Hospitals Sussex  
NHS Foundation Trust



# Martha's Rule:

If you're worried someone  
in hospital's condition  
is getting worse, talk to us.

You know yourself or the person you're here for better than us. If you notice a change or you're worried they are becoming more unwell, please tell us. We're here to listen and help.



Scan here to find  
out more or to view  
the Easy Read version

## What is Martha's Rule?

Martha's Rule has been introduced to help detect any unexpected signs of deterioration early. It gives you the right to ask for a rapid review if you're worried someone in hospital is becoming more unwell.

## How we monitor patients

We regularly check things like blood pressure, heart rate and temperature and take blood tests, including overnight. How often these checks are done will depend on a patient's individual condition and needs. In addition, we will ask at least daily if they are feeling better or worse.

## Your role is vital

Patient's themselves or their loved ones are often the first to notice that something is not right. You may notice small changes before they show up in our routine measurements which could be early warning signs of deterioration.

### **Please tell us if you are worried about:**

- changes in temperature – feeling hotter or colder
- any changes to the skin, for example they are pale or have a rash (this may be harder to see on black or brown skin), or sores or blisters
- pain getting worse
- low energy or unusual sleepiness
- feeling thirsty or peeing less often
- changes in breathing
- unusual or worsening confusion
- anything else that worries you.

Telling our staff about these changes can help us to detect deterioration early so we can take action to prevent patients becoming more unwell.

If your concern is about communication with the care team, treatment planning or any general issues relating to the ward, please speak to the Ward Manager, Matron or Medical/Surgical Team responsible for the patient.

## What to do if you're worried

**Step 1.** Please speak to the team on the ward caring for you or the person you are worried about to discuss the concerns you have.

**Step 2.** If, after speaking to the doctors and/or nursing staff on the ward, you are still worried and feel the ward team is not dealing with your concerns, call or text for a rapid review.



**Royal Sussex County Hospital  
and Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital**  
(Brighton and Hove)

**07917 836543**

**Princess Royal Hospital** (Haywards Heath)

**07747 201999**

**Worthing Hospital** (Worthing)

**07788 878656**

**St Richards Hospital** (Chichester)

**07710 978715**

Your call / text will go to a different team in our hospital. They will work with you and your care team to arrange any further review or treatment needed. The service is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, however, please be aware the team responding to these calls attend medical emergencies in the hospital so may not be able to respond immediately.

For any other complaints or grievances, contact  
the **Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)**

**Royal Sussex County Hospital** - 01273 696955 Ext. 64511 or 64973  
or email [uhsussex.pals@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.pals@nhs.net)

**Princess Royal Hospital** - 01444 448678  
or email [uhsussex.pals@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.pals@nhs.net)

**St Richard's Hospital** - 01243 831822  
or email [uhsussex.palschichester@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.palschichester@nhs.net)

**Worthing and Southlands hospitals** - 01903 285032  
or email [uhsussex.palsworthing@nhs.net](mailto:uhsussex.palsworthing@nhs.net)

**Using the right route helps us respond quickly to those who need immediate care. Thank you for helping us keep patients safe.**

To successfully deliver care, there needs to be mutual respect, politeness, and courteous communication between staff, patients, and visitors. We operate a zero-tolerance policy which means we will not tolerate violence, discriminatory language or aggression towards staff, patients or members of the public.

## Have you used this service?

To provide us with a better understanding and continually improve our service, we would really value your feedback in using this service. You can complete an anonymous survey by scanning the QR code OR you can give feedback via a text message on the Martha's Rule mobile phone number.



Thankyou