



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Coming to Bluefin Ward for an operation

Information for children
and their families

Welcome to Bluefin Ward

What is this information about?

This information is about Bluefin Ward at Worthing Hospital.

It tells you:

- What type of ward Bluefin is and who we care for.
- How to get ready for your stay.
- What you need to bring into hospital with you.
- What will happen when you arrive at the ward for your stay (when you are admitted to the ward).
- The things that we ask you and your visitors to do, or not do. These help to make sure that the ward is a nice place where you can be cared for and recover as well as possible.
- Visiting the ward.
- How we keep you safe on the ward and how you can help with this.
- About playing and other things to do while you are staying in Bluefin.
- About meals, snacks and drinks.
- The shops and restaurants which are in the hospital.
- About leaving Bluefin (being discharged) and going home.
- About the support available if you are, for example, worried, anxious, feeling down or have any other concerns.

Why have I been given this information?

You have been given this information because your child will be staying in Bluefin ward around the time of their operation.

We understand that staying in hospital may be a worrying time for you and your child, and we aim to give you the information and support that you need.

Reading this information can help you and your child to get ready for their stay in Bluefin and to know what to expect from their stay.

What sort of ward is Bluefin?

Bluefin is a busy ward for children and young people from birth up to a child's 18th birthday. We care for people who need medical care or an operation for many different conditions. The ward usually has 21 children and young people staying in it.

There are lots of health care professionals trained to look after your child. You will meet get to meet them during your stay. There are surgeons who do the operation, anaesthetists who give the sleepy medicine your child has for the operation, nurses and health care assistants who look after you before and after your operation, and there is a play assistant who has a large playroom full of toys to help keep you occupied.

How can I help my child get ready for their stay?

It helps children and young people to cope with their operation and stay in hospital if they are prepared and know what to expect.

- The pre-op nurse (nurse who makes sure you are okay to have your operation) will phone you around two weeks before your child or young person is due to come into hospital for their operation. This is so we can talk with you about their operation and check how their health is to make sure that it is safe for them to have their operation.

The pre-op nurse will also talk with you about nil by mouth times. These are times when you must stop giving food and drink to your child before their operation.

If you do not get a date for a phone call from the pre-op nurse, please contact the ward.

If you feel it would be better for your child or young person to have a face to face appointment please phone Bluefin ward to arrange this.

- Your child may be worried or anxious about having an operation. Sharing information about having an operation and anaesthetic (medicine so that they do not feel pain or are 'asleep' while they have their operation) with them may help.

You can find information about this which has been produced by experts (The Royal College of Anaesthetists) on this website,

<https://www.rcoa.ac.uk/patients/patient-information-resources/information-children-parents-carers>



Other parents and children have found these leaflets from the site useful:

'Rees bear has an anaesthetic'. For ages 3 to 6.

'Davy the Detective: Finding out about anaesthetics'. For ages 7 to 11.

'Your child's general anaesthetic'

'General anaesthesia, a brief guide'. For young people from 12 years old.

This animation – **'A little deep sleep'** on You Tube, can also be helpful for children up to the age of 12.

<https://youtu.be/NIV2zLkOqjI>



Which things should I bring into hospital on the day my child or young person comes in for their stay?

Please **do** bring these things:

- Short sleeved pyjamas or nighty for your child or young person to change into.
- Any medicines your child or young person is taking.
- A phone charger for you or your child or young person.
- Something to comfort and occupy your child such as a comforter and favourite toy or book.

Please also bring these if your child needs them:

- Nappies.
- Special feeds or equipment.

You can get free wi-fi by connecting to 'NHS Wi-Fi'.

What happens on the day that my child or young person comes into hospital (the day of their admission)?

- Please do follow the instructions that you were given by the nurse at your pre-op assessment clinic appointment about when to stop your child eating and drinking before their operation.
- We will ask you to bring your child or young person to the hospital so that they are ready to come onto Bluefin at either 7.30am or 12.00 midday.
- Soon after you arrive at Bluefin a member of the team that is caring for your child or young person will come to see you.
- We will take you and your child or young person to either:
 - the playroom, for younger children.
 - 'Charlies'. This is Bluefin's room for teenagers.
- This is so they can settle onto the ward.
- A nurse will do some checks on your child such as taking their blood pressure and measuring how fast they are breathing). These checks are called 'observations'. They will also measure your child's weight and height and put some numbing cream on their hands.
- After this we will take them to their bed. This might be in a room on the ward that has six beds in it or in a 'cubicle' that has one bed in it.
- Cubicles are usually for young babies or children who need to be cared for without other people in the same space. This is to keep them safe.
- You will talk with the surgeon (the doctor who will do your child's operation) and the anaesthetist (the doctor who will give your child medicine so that they should not feel any pain or will be 'asleep' during their operation).

- After we have spoken with you about your child's operation, we will ask you to sign a 'consent form'. Signing the consent form means that you understand what your child's operation involves and agree to them having it.

Please **do ask** if you have not understood anything that we tell you and would like us to explain it better or if you have any questions before you sign the consent form.

- When the room where your child will have their operation (the 'theatre') is ready we will walk upstairs with you and your child to the anaesthetic room. Your child will lie on a trolley and the numbing cream will be taken off.
- We will then put a cannula into your child's hand. This is a small hollow needle with a tube at the end that we use to give your child medicine from a syringe. The anaesthetic doctor will then put the 'sleepy medicine' into the cannula, and your child will fall asleep very quickly.
- The nurse will then take you downstairs to the ward to wait while your child is having the operation.
- Once the operation is finished your child will go into the recovery area. When they start to wake up the nurse will be rung to let them know they can bring you back upstairs to be with your child while they are waking up.
- Before they can go home your child needs:
 - To be able to eat and drink.
 - To have been to the toilet.
 - To be able to walk and move around (mobilise).
 - To have their pain well controlled. The nurses will make sure your child has had enough pain killing medicine to make them comfortable.

- When the doctors are sure that all these things are ok we will tell you that you can take your child home (they can be discharged).
- The amount of time that your child has to stay in hospital depends on which operation they have and how they are afterwards.

The nurses will explain to you how long they think your child may have to stay in hospital.

What do I need to know about visiting my child while they are staying in Bluefin?

There are not set visiting times on Bluefin.

To help your child or young person and others to recover as well and as quickly as possible and stay safe please **do** follow this guidance:

- Two parents can be with their child or young person at any time in the day while they are in the ward. Be aware, only one parent can be with their child for the short time that they are in the anaesthetic room.
- If your child has to stay in hospital overnight, one parent can stay with them. There are camp beds next to every child's bed.
- Make sure that any visitors under 18 years old are supervised by an adult.
- Do not allow anyone to visit your child or young person if they feel unwell or have symptoms of an infection.

Be aware

If you need to make different arrangements for visiting for important reasons do discuss this with the nurse in charge before your visit.

How can I help to keep the ward safe for my child or young person and other people?

Be aware

We have a 24-hour security video entry system to help keep the ward safe.

Please **do not** let people onto the ward you do not know. Do not let people follow you through the door without them using the entry system.

If people try to follow you, tell them they must ring the buzzer themselves and ask a member of staff to let them in if they are allowed to be there.

You can also keep your child or young person and others on the ward safe by:

- Washing or cleaning your hands often and every time that you enter or leave your room and the ward. Use the soap and hand sanitizer which are in every room and bay in Bluefin.
- Making sure that the sides of the cot are fully up when your child is in their cot.
- Making sure that your child's bed and the space around it are free from clutter. This is so that ward staff can clean the area properly and so that they can get to your child or emergency equipment easily if they need to.
- Making sure the 'parents' bed' is stored away properly during the day if you have used it.
- Keeping a lid on any hot drinks.
- Checking with a nurse that it's ok before you take your child off the ward.

What do I need to know about mealtimes, eating and drinks?

Be aware

Please check with a nurse before you give your child or loved one anything to eat or drink.

There are some times before and after their operation when your child must not eat or drink anything (nil-by-mouth times). We will tell you when these are.

Food:

We serve meals for all patients on the ward.

- Mealtimes are:
 - **Breakfast: 7.30am to 8.30am**
 - **Lunch: 12.30pm to 1pm**
 - **Dinner: 5.30pm to 6pm**
- A member of staff will visit you well before mealtimes so that you or your child can choose from the menu.
- Food is served from a trolley and brought to your bedside.
- If you would like to bring your own food in, please label it with your name and the date and store it in the parents' fridge in the parents' room. The parents' room is near the entrance to the ward. Ask a member of staff to show you where it is.

Drinks:

- We will bring a jug of fresh water to your bedside twice a day. You are welcome to ask for more.
- You can also get water from the filtered water dispensers on the ward.
- You can help yourself to tea and coffee from the parents' room which is near the entrance to the ward.

Shops and restaurants

As well as the food and drinks which you can get on the ward there are other places you can get them, including shops and restaurants, in Worthing Hospital:

- Costa Coffee at the Main Reception. Open 7am to 6pm, Monday-Friday, and 9am to 5pm at weekends.
- WHSmith convenience shop at the Main Reception. Open 8am to 8pm, Monday-Friday, and 8am to 5pm at weekends.
- League of Friends café and shop in the North Wing entrance. Open 7am to 5pm, Monday to Friday and 9am to 4pm Saturdays.
- Vending machines in the ground floor foyers near Pharmacy, and in the West Wing foyer.
- There is also an ATM (cashpoint machine) in the West Wing foyer.

What can I do to help to make sure that Bluefin is a nice environment for people to be in and to respect patients' privacy and dignity?

Please do

- ✓ Keep your conversations, the volume of the television and other noise as quiet as you can. Patients need sleep and rest to help them to recover so try to avoid disturbing them.
- ✓ Keep mobile phone conversations as short as possible if you are in an area that other patients or visitors are using.
- ✓ Make sure that what you say and how you say it are appropriate for anyone who may hear.
- ✓ In cubicles, keep the blind up enough so that staff can check that your child or young person is ok. This means they do not need to come into the cubicle if they do not need to.

Please do not

- ✗ Take photos of other children or staff.
- ✗ Make recordings of other patients' care on your phone or other device.

What support do you provide for my child or young person (and me) during their stay?

We understand that staying in hospital may be a worrying time for you and your child, and we want to help support you throughout.

We offer:

- A ward Play Assistant and a Youth Worker. They:
 - Provide activities to keep children occupied.
 - Support your child to get through treatment which is making them anxious
- lots of toys, books, games and DVDs with portable DVD players. Please ask staff for these if they are not in your cabinet drawer.
- A playroom (which is at the end of the ward)
- a teenage room (called Charlies) for over 12s – ‘Charlies’. This is next to the playroom.
 - Please be aware: your child or young person should not use these rooms if they have an illness which other people might catch from them (a contagious illness).
 - Children in the playroom must have a parent or member of staff to supervise them while they are in the playroom.
- The chaplaincy team. They are there to listen to you and to give you time to talk and are for people from all faiths or none. If you would like them to visit you please tell your nurse.

What should I do if I have any concerns, questions or complaints?

Please **do** speak to the nurse looking after you, the nurse in charge or to our ward manager Sam Barnes.

If you have a complaint which they cannot address, then please contact the PALS (patient Advice and Liaison Service):

PALS

Phone: [01903 285154, option 2.](tel:01903285154)

Email: uhsussexpalsworthing@nhs.net

How can I contact Worthing Hospital or Bluefin ward?

Worthing Hospital and Bluefin ward

Worthing Hospital address:

Lyndhurst Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 2DH

Bluefin ward

01903 285135 or **01903 285136**

Worthing Hospital

01903 205 111

The ward is open 24 hours a day so someone should always be available to take your call. They may not be able to answer your questions straight away if they need to find out further information. In this case they may need to phone you back.

Bluefin is open 24 hours.

This information is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove, Haywards Heath, Chichester and Worthing.

Ref. number: 2436

Publication date: 11/2024

Review date: 11/2027

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