



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Caring safely for you at home before your emergency treatment

General surgery

Patient information

What is this information about?

This information is about the Surgical Ambulatory Emergency Care (SAEC) service run by Worthing and St. Richard's Hospitals.

It explains:

- What the SAEC service is and why it may be better for you than staying in hospital before you have an operation (surgery) or other emergency treatment.
- What happens in hospital before you go home to be cared for by the SAEC Team.
- What you should do if you become unwell while being cared for at home by the SAEC Team.
- What happens if you need further tests or scans before you come back to hospital for your operation, procedure or other treatment.
- How you will be told about the details of your operation and where you should come for it.
- What you must do, and not do, on the day that you come back into hospital for your operation.

Why have I been given this information?

You have been given this information because you have a condition which needs emergency treatment. The clinician who has seen you believes that receiving medical care at home from the SAEC Team before you have your treatment would be right for you.

Reading this information will help you to:

- Know what to expect when you receive care from the SAEC Team.
- Keep you as safe as possible while you are at home being cared for by the SAEC Team.

- Know how to get medical care or advice if you need it while you are at home.
- Prepare for an operation if you need one so that it goes as well as possible.

What is SAEC?

Sometimes we are unable to give you the tests, or other operation or procedure that you need on the same day that we first see you in hospital.

SAEC is a way for you to avoid having to stay in hospital, sometimes for several days, while you are waiting to have them.

The SAEC Team will follow you up while you are at home via the phone. They may bring you back to the hospital if there are concerns while you are at home.

This kind of care is often called 'a virtual ward'.

Is care at home from SAEC Team right for everyone?

No. Some people will still need to stay in hospital (be admitted).

This may be because of their clinical condition or because, for some reason, their home is not the best place in which to care for them.

Be aware

If, for any reason, you do not think that care at home from the SAEC Team is right for you, do please let the team know.

What should I do if I become unwell while I am at home?

If you are concerned that you are, or may be, unwell **do** use the **NHS 111 [111.nhs.uk service](https://111.nhs.uk)**; contact your GP practice or go to A&E (the Emergency Department). You should do this straightaway.

What happens before I leave hospital to go home for SAEC Team care?

We will:

- Do any blood tests that you need to have before you go home.
- Check things such as your blood pressure, heart rate, temperature and how much oxygen is in your blood. This is to make sure that you are well enough to be cared for at home.

You should:

- Make sure that the SAEC Team have your contact details. This is so we can arrange the next steps in your care. These may be, for example, making an appointment for you coming back into hospital for an operation or ultrasound scan.

Do not eat or drink anything if you have been told that you are waiting to have an operation unless:

- You have been told that it is ok for you to eat or drink.
- You have been given 'fasting' instructions and are following them. Please see the section on fasting which appears later in this information.

What should I do, and not do, on the day that I am due to come back to hospital for an operation?

On the day of your operation:

Do

- ✓ Bring a book or something to occupy you while you wait.
- ✓ Make sure we have the person who will be collecting you after your operation.
- ✓ Bring a bag to hold your everyday shoes and clothes.

Do not

- ✗ Bring a dressing gown or slippers
- ✗ Wear jewellery
- ✗ Wear make-up
- ✗ Wear nail varnish or false nails.

What happens if I need further tests?

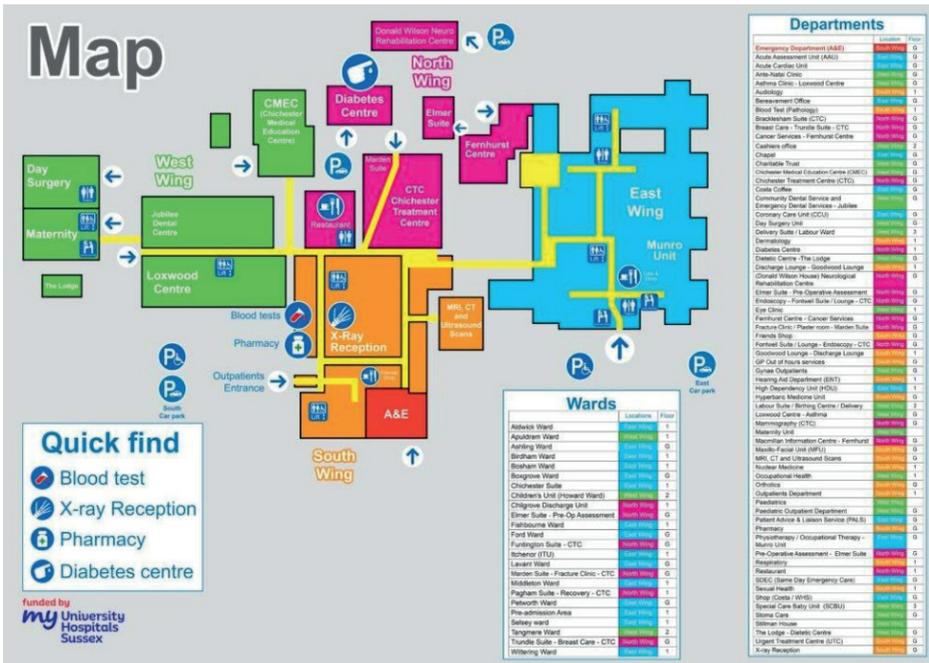
If you need to have a scan, we will call you and tell you when and where to come for it.

You will be called and be given a time and a place for a scan, or for all other appointments and follow-ups please follow signs to the Emergency Floor and the Ambulatory Care Area.

Worthing Hospital map



St Richard's Hospital map



What should I do if I am asked to come into hospital for an operation?

Do

- ✓ Make sure that you know which hospital you should go to for your operation. You may be offered an operation at Worthing or St Richard's hospital.

Be aware,

You can tell us which hospital you would prefer to come to for your operation. We will try to give you your operation at the hospital that is best for you.

If your operation is at:

- **St. Richard's Hospital** – please come to Pagham Ward. This is on the first floor of the Chichester Treatment Centre in the North Wing of the hospital.
- **Worthing Hospital** – please come to the Chanctonbury Suite. This is on the second floor of the East Wing.

I have been asked to 'fast' before my operation. What should I do?

Do

- ✓ Follow these instructions on fasting if you have been asked to. This can help your operation to be as safe and go as well as possible and help you to recover afterwards. Fasting means that you do not have food or most drinks before an operation.
- **For a morning operation: Do not** eat any food (including milk and chewing gum) after midnight on the night before your operation. You can drink clear fluids only until 6.30am on the morning of your operation day.

- **For an afternoon operation:** Do not eat any food after 7.30am on the morning of your operation. You can drink clear fluids only until 7.30am on the morning of your operation day.

Be aware,

- please assume your operation will be in the morning unless we tell you otherwise.
- ‘Clear fluids’ means water, black tea or black coffee, or squash.

What happens when I go home to be cared for by SAEC?

- One of the SAEC Team will phone you. Please make sure that your contact details are up to date before you leave the hospital.
- You will be admitted to our ‘Virtual Care Ward’. You have not been discharged from our care.

Be aware,

If you feel unwell or have concerns **do** either contact your GP Practice, go to A&E (the Emergency Department) or contact NHS 111. You should do this straightaway.

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This leaflet is intended for patients receiving care in Brighton & Hove, St Richard’s Hospital and Worthing Hospital.

Ref. number: 2683
Publication date: 12/2025 Review date: 12/2028

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