

## Patient information

# Paediatric Acute Trauma Service

This leaflet offers further information about the major trauma centre at The Royal London Hospital. It explains what a major trauma centre is, why your child has been admitted to the major trauma centre, and what will happen during your time here. If you have any further questions, please speak to a member of the team looking after you.

### What is a major trauma centre?

In this leaflet, the word trauma is used to describe a physical injury. A major trauma centre (MTC) is a hospital with the best available skills and equipment to treat patients who have injuries of a very serious nature. Patients with the most serious injuries are taken straight to a major trauma centre. Studies have shown that this leads to better results for the patients involved, and the NHS now uses this system across England to provide the best care for those who are seriously injured. This means that The Royal London Hospital receives patients from across North East London and the surrounding counties for emergency treatment. Our large team has the skills to help manage these injuries and to provide the necessary advice and care.

### What has happened?

It is not uncommon for seriously injured patients to have no memory/limited memory of the events leading up to their injuries or their initial treatment. This may include being taken to a local hospital before being transferred to The Royal London Hospital, or being brought straight to The Royal London Hospital by land or air ambulance.

### Initial treatment may have included:

- scans such as a CT (computerised tomography) scan, an MRI (magnetic resonance imaging) scan, or an x-ray



- medicines to help your child stop bleeding, to control pain, to help your child breathe or to reduce the risk of infection
- surgery to stop the bleeding, remove any foreign objects from your child's body, or fix any damaged organs or bones.

Children who have been unconscious or unable to see, hear or understand clearly at the time, may not remember these details. This is normal and a nurse or doctor can help by providing information about what has happened during that time.

### How long will my child be in hospital?

Every child is different and it may be necessary for some patients to be kept unconscious while their bodies heal. If this is the case, staff can explain your child's injury to you and your family, and can also discuss any necessary treatment and the likely length of stay. Once your child is fully conscious, staff will help you to explain what happened during their period of unconsciousness/memory loss.

### What happens next?

After receiving care at The Royal London Hospital patients are often transferred to a hospital closer to their home. The Royal London works alongside many smaller hospitals known as trauma units (TUs). If you are not well enough to go directly home from The Royal London, you will be transferred to your nearest appropriate hospital or to a local rehabilitation service. Clear information about your treatment and ongoing requirements will be passed on to the medical and therapy teams at the trauma unit or rehabilitation service before you are transferred.

Transfer to another hospital will be discussed with you and your family in advance so that everybody understands what is happening and why. You will be able to ask questions about anything you are unclear on. You will receive a medical discharge letter as well as a **rehabilitation prescription** before leaving the major trauma centre. The rehabilitation prescription sets out what therapies and other treatments are needed to help your child recover from their injuries. This will be available to other healthcare professionals providing ongoing care after you have left The Royal London.

Rehabilitation is a process of assessment, treatment, management and ongoing evaluation to support your child to achieve their maximum potential for physical, cognitive and psychological function, participation in society and quality of living.

The chart below shows the typical experience of a patient who has suffered serious injuries. It is important to remember that not all patients arrive at the hospital in the same way. However, once the patient arrives at The Royal London Hospital and has been identified as a major trauma patient, the same basic process applies to ensure the best possible care.

### Who will care for my child?

We have a team with expertise in all aspects of trauma care. Our team includes:

- **Paediatric surgeons:** These are highly trained doctors who will manage your child's injuries. This may involve taking them to the operating theatre to undergo surgery. Some injuries can be managed without surgery.
- **Specialist paediatric doctors:** Your child may need medical input from other specialist doctors, such as intensive care, neurology, neurosurgery, orthopaedics, maxillo facial, plastic surgeons and ophthalmologists. Your child's doctors will liaise closely and keep

you updated on their individual input, and may also see your child in a follow up clinic after they are discharged.

- **Major trauma nurse coordinator:** The major trauma nurse coordinator oversees the entire pathway of your care during your time in the major trauma centre. They will see you and your child soon after their injury and will work with all of the other healthcare professionals to ensure that you receive seamless care.
- **Clinical nurse specialist:** If your child has an injury that involves a specific medical team involvement (such as neurology) you may have a clinical nurse specialist who will work closely alongside the major trauma nurse coordinator. Your child's clinical nurse specialist will also be able to provide you and your family with injury specific information and support, and may see you in a follow up clinic once your child has been discharged.
- **Clinical psychologists:** Psychologists work in a range of settings with adults and children who are experiencing mental and physical health problems. The psychologist can work with you and your child to try to reduce distress and enhance wellbeing. He/she can provide information and support to help you to make sense of how you are feeling and help you work through any problems you are experiencing.
- **Clinical psychiatrist:** Your child and family is likely to be seen by a clinical psychiatrist who is a doctor that specializes in assessing, treating and managing mental disorders and syndromes, which can be common following a traumatic event. They may also look at prescribing medication to help with any on going issues.
- The **Acute Paediatric Therapies Team** provides specialist intervention to children and families needing support following a traumatic injury. They work closely with each other and the nurses, doctors, community teams to optimise recovery and ensure a safe, timely and supported discharge from hospital to their home or external rehabilitation services.
- Our **Occupational Therapy** service helps children to carry out everyday activities such as playing, getting dressed and going to school, as safely and as independently as possible.
- Our **Physiotherapy** service aims to assess and promote a child's physical ability. This will include assessment of muscle tone, muscle strength and length and may include assessment of balance and coordination.
- Our **Dietetics** service aims to assess and ensure a child's changing nutritional needs are continually being met. This may include use of different diets, plans and routes of nutrition to support your child's growth, weight and nutritional wellbeing.
- Our **Speech and Language Therapy** service provides diagnostic intervention to promote safe and enjoyable eating, drinking and swallowing and effective communication skills with their family, friends and staff.
- Our **Play Team** provides specialist preparation, distraction for children to facilitate child-centred care before, during and after medical procedures and support children and their family to engage in play activities to encourage wellbeing and happiness during their stay.
- **Chaplaincy:** The chaplaincy/spiritual care team is a multi-faith team that offers spiritual and religious care to patients and their visitors. You do not need to think of yourself as 'religious' to use this service. Many people value the opportunity to talk to someone about what is happening to them and how they feel about the changes they are facing. Our team includes Christian, Muslim and Jewish chaplains, as well as a range of volunteers from other faith traditions.
- **Clinical pharmacists:** The clinical pharmacy team consists of pharmacists and pharmacy technicians. They provide advice to those prescribing medicines throughout the hospital to ensure that patients receive the best medicines for their care. They also

provide advice to patients on how to best use their medicines. All patients have their medication reviewed and adjusted according to their needs and all wards are visited daily.

- **Pain service:** If your child requires help with their pain control they can be referred to the pain service. This is a team of specialist nurses and anaesthetists who can advise on how best to optimise the effects of painkillers and who can suggest other ways to enhance pain control.

We are committed to providing the best care possible and are happy to answer any queries or concerns that you or your family may have.

### **What facilities are available?**

#### **Accommodation**

The Children's Trust offer free on site accommodation at Stephenson House for parents to stay nearby if their child is admitted to the paediatric critical care unit. Further information regarding the service is available from ward nursing staff.

If you are the parent of a child who has been admitted to the ward and wish to stay with your child, there is enough space at the bedside for one parent to stay overnight. Please speak to the ward/unit managers if you have any questions or concerns.

### **How can I give my feedback?**

Your feedback is important to us and we are always looking at ways to improve our services. Please take a few minutes to complete our patient survey, which can be found on the ward. If you are unable to do this for yourself, please ask a family member or a member of staff to help you. Alternatively, you can ask for a patient experience leaflet. Our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is available to listen to any comments, queries, compliments, complaints or suggestions that you may have. Contact details are listed at the end of this leaflet.

## Patient Advice and Liaison Service

If you need general information or advice about Trust services, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 020 3594 2040 or visit [www.bartshealth.nhs.uk/pals](http://www.bartshealth.nhs.uk/pals). Alternatively please contact staff who are providing your care if you require clinical advice.

## Large print and other languages

For this leaflet in large print, please speak to your clinical team.

For help interpreting this leaflet in other languages, please ring 020 8223 8934.

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