

Delivering Same Sex Accommodation

Your Privacy - Our Responsibility



Options available

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this leaflet then please call:

01253 955588

Our Four Values:

People Centred

Positive

Compassion

Excellence

Privacy, Dignity and Respect

The NHS Constitution makes clear that all patients have a right to privacy and be treated with dignity and respect.

This leaflet explains how we work to safeguard your privacy and dignity during your hospital stay, by providing you with sleeping, toilet and washing facilities that you share only with patients of the same sex.

What does same sex accommodation mean?

Same sex accommodation means only patients of the same sex (i.e. men or women) will sleep in the same bay or ward and use the same washing and toilet facilities.

Most of the hospitals wards are designated by same sex only, which means the whole ward will contain only men or women.

In the wards which aren't same sex, men and women are separated into bays (separate areas containing a number of beds).

Toilet and washing facilities should be easy to get to, not a long way from your bed and you shouldn't have to walk through or past a bay of the opposite sex to get to a toilet or bathroom.

Why is delivering same sex accommodation so important?

Patients tell us that the elimination of mixed sex accommodation makes a big difference to how comfortable and relaxed they feel while they are in hospital.

Having to share accommodation with members of the opposite sex can compromise people's privacy and dignity at a time when they may already be feeling vulnerable.

Some patients also have cultural or religious reasons for not wanting to share accommodation with members of the opposite sex.

The Government also requires all hospitals to offer same sex accommodation and facilities, and all NHS organisations have to declare compliance with this on an annual basis.

We meet all national requirements and have gone a step further by improving our signage and information on same sex accommodation to ensure our patients and carers understand what facilities are available and where and how to access them.

Will there be times when same sex accommodation isn't possible?

The majority of our patients will always be in same sex accommodation.

However there may be occasions when this is not possible.

This is most likely to happen if a patient needs urgent, highly specialised or hi-tech care.

In this situation medical need becomes the priority and staff will make sure patients receive appropriate treatment as quickly as possible.

They will be expected to keep patients informed and move them into same sex accommodation as quickly as possible or as their condition improves and is safe to do so.

If as a patient or carer you feel you do not understand why you (or your loved one) has been placed in a mixed sex environment, or you are anxious about being in a mixed sex area, please ask to speak to the sister in charge or the ward / unit manager.

What is happening in my local hospital?

In Blackpool Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, to ensure we are delivering same sex accommodation we:

- have built newly assigned areas to accommodate separate sleeping facilities
- ensure staff undertake regular training to remind them of the privacy and dignity needs of all our patients
- have amended signage to show whether its a male or female bay/area
- complete monthly mixed sex accommodation audits in conjunction with the local CCG's

What can you expect during a hospital stay?

To uphold your privacy and dignity our staff will ensure:

- that you will be addressed politely and respectfully, called by your preferred name (please make sure you tell staff what you prefer to be called).
- that except in times of clinical need you will be cared for in a same sex bay or ward.
- that you only share toilet and bathroom facilities with patients of the same sex.
- that you are appropriately covered and dressed if you are in a mixed sex environment.
- that you will be listened to if you express concerns or ask questions of nursing or ward staff, and that staff will do their best to resolve these concerns.
- that you are cared for by a member of staff of the same sex if you have requested this.

Useful contact details

Hospital Switchboard: **01253 300000**

Patient Relations Department

The Patient Relations Department offer impartial advice and deal with any concerns or complaints the Trust receives. You can contact them via:

Tel: **01253 955589**

email: **patient.relations@bfwh.nhs.uk**

You can also write to us at:

Patient Relations Department, Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR

Further information is available on our website:

www.bfwh.nhs.uk

References

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this leaflet are available on request from:

Policy Co-ordinator/Archivist 01253 953397