

Care of children and young people suffering self-harm

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please telephone the PALS desk on 01271 314090.

You have been admitted to Caroline Thorpe Ward because you have either expressed the desire to or have harmed yourself.

This leaflet is to help you understand the care we provide and any restrictions we may need to make. Our priority is to keep you safe.

We will always treat you with dignity and respect.

What is self-harm?

Self-harm is when a person chooses to inflict pain or injury on themselves in some way.

It is, for lots of people, a way of coping with negative feelings, to make you feel more in control or to punish yourself.

It can also be a way of relieving overwhelming feelings that build up inside such as anxiety, anger, isolation, guilt or desperation.

What you may be feeling?

You may be feeling anxious, depressed or about to explode.

We will give you the opportunity to talk about your feelings.

We will provide activities to keep you busy or help you relax, for example, films, computer games, artwork and air-hockey. You will also have time to just rest.

Treatment

All forms of treatment will be discussed with you and once you are happy with the information provided, you will be asked to sign the care plan.

We might need to take blood samples and carry out intravenous treatment depending on the reason for your admission.

We might also need to monitor your pulse, blood pressure, breathing, temperature and heart rhythm.

When you arrive we will refer you to the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Someone from this team will come and visit you on the ward. This will be an opportunity for you to share your feelings with a specialist in private.

Your parents/carer will also be invited to speak to the CAMHS. This will be important for your support and can be done with you or separately.

This service is currently available Monday – Friday, 9am – 5pm with regional cover Saturday and Sunday; this may result in you having to remain on the ward over the weekend.

Confidentiality and information sharing

There are times when we might need to talk to other professionals about your care. We also might need to talk to your parents/carer. If this is the case, we will always talk to you about this.

Your nurse will explain the issues around confidentiality and information sharing within the team on admission and throughout your stay as necessary.

Observation

We want to keep you safe and monitor how you are feeling, so as well as talking to you, we might also be observing your activity and mood. We will try to maintain your privacy and dignity wherever possible.

The level of observation will depend on the severity of your symptoms. It may be necessary to have a nurse stay with you at all times.

Personal belongings

We will need to go through your belongings with you. There are certain things that could cause harm to yourself or others so are not allowed.

These are things like:

- Sharp objects such as scissors razors, glass, blades, sharpeners, pins
- Items with cords or strings such as shoe laces or belts, chargers
- Drugs, alcohol, medication, aerosols

Your family or carer will be asked to take them home and agree that such items are not brought on to the ward.

Mobile phone/camera

If staff feel it is appropriate, we will ask for mobile phones to be either taken home or stored securely on the ward. We have a portable ward phone you may use to contact friends and family if necessary. We ask that no photographs are taken on the ward.

Smoking

This trust has a no-smoking policy.

If you smoke you will be offered a nicotine replacement to help reduce the effects of withdrawal. Staff will not take you outside to smoke.

Hygiene

There are showers available on the ward for you to use. We will provide wash things for you if you do not have any.

Sometimes we might need to put a time limit on bathroom activity.

Food and drink

We will provide you with a choice of meals from a menu, and will encourage you to eat healthy food as this can help with mood swings.

Visitors can also bring you take-away treats.

Parents/carers and visitors

We will welcome parents/cares to visit freely and they can stay as long as you or they would like.

Visiting hours for other friends and family is between 2pm and 7.30pm. If you feel uncomfortable at any time or do not wish to see someone, please tell your nurse.

Security and wellbeing

We understand that you may be having a difficult time. However across the Trust, we do not tolerate inappropriate language or violent behavior.

To maintain the safety of patients, relatives and staff, we might sometimes need to lock the ward door.

We understand that sometimes you may feel very anxious or angry and want to leave the ward. However for your own safety, we will encourage you to stay.

If you feel increasing levels of anxiety, please let someone know so we can help you.

If you decide to leave the ward before you are discharged, we will need to do all we can to keep you safe. This might include contacting your parents/carers, social services or in some cases the police.

Discharge

You will only be in hospital for as long as is necessary.

Follow up

After discharge from Caroline Thorpe Ward you will be offered ongoing support from the CAMHS team.

If you feel you would like the hospital to hear the story of your experiences at home or on the ward, with social services or with CAMHS, then please tell a member of staff. You could write it down in your own words or a member of staff could write it for you confidentially.

If you agree, we would then share your experience across the Trust (we would not use your name), to help us understand your problems and use your story to improve the way we work in the future, both for yourself and others.

Help available

Young Minds provides information and advice for young people and adults with concerns about the mental health of a child or young person. www.youngminds.org.uk

Youth2Youth (Y2Y) is a unique helpline run by young people for young people. www.youth2youth.co.uk

Ysmart Drugs and Alcohol Services for under 18's. www.y-smart.org.uk
Tel: 0800121475

Selfharm UK

A young person friendly site for sharing positive experiences of coping. www.selfharm.co.uk

The Site

A recovery-orientated website with suggestions of support. www.thesite.org/mental-health/self-harm

Kooth (formally XenZone)

Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people
www.kooth.com

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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