

Welcome to the Emergency Department

Tel: 01271 322480

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 contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net.

We hope this leaflet will help to explain some parts of your visit to the Emergency Department.

What will happen

1. After booking in at the reception, you will be called by the triage nurse

You will be given the opportunity to explain what has happened to you and why you have come to us for attention. The nurse may carry out some initial observations, (blood pressure, temperature, heart rate, respiratory rate and oxygen saturations). They might give you some first aid, offer you some pain relief or give some simple advice. The nurse may need to perform an ECG or request an x ray. They may direct you to another more appropriate healthcare provider such as your GP, out of hours GP or a dentist. Sometimes the triage nurse may be able to give all the treatment that you need at triage but usually you will still need to wait to see a doctor or a nurse practitioner.

2. The triage nurse will assess your problem and you will be given a priority category. This determines how urgently you will be seen. If requested, you will be told which category you have been allocated. There are four categories as defined in the Emergency Department Revised Triage Scoring (Dec 2019). They range from 1 (most urgent) to 4 (least urgent) as follows:

Category 1 (Red) – Immediate resuscitation

Patients in this category are in need of immediate treatment for preservation of life.

Target time to be seen: immediately

Category 2 (Orange) – Very urgent

This includes patients who are seriously ill or injured, who require time critical intervention.

Target time to be seen: 10 minutes

Category 3 (Yellow) – Urgent

This includes patients with serious problems, but who are in a stable condition.

Target time to be seen: 60 minutes

Category 4 (Green) – Standard

This includes patients who are not in immediate danger or severe stress.

Target time to be seen: 120 minutes

- 3. The nurse may tell you the likely waiting time to see a doctor or nurse practitioner, but this may vary.**
- 4. You will then be asked to take a seat in the waiting area and to wait for your name to be called.**

From time to time, those waiting will be checked to see whether there needs to be any change in priority. If you are worried or feel you should be reassessed, or you are in pain or feel unwell, please let the triage nurse or receptionist know.

There is a separate waiting area for children.

You should generally not have anything to eat or drink until after you have been seen by the doctor or nurse practitioner. You can discuss this with the triage nurse if necessary.

Order of patients being seen

You may notice patients who arrived after you being called before you. This may be because:

- They have been allocated a higher priority
- They can be seen by a different healthcare professional in the ED
- Their GP has sent them direct to a specialist team.

Although the department seems quiet ...

Please remember many emergency patients arrive by ambulance or even helicopter. They may be receiving lifesaving or urgent treatment from staff.

If you do not understand what is happening to you, please do not hesitate to ask.

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 rduh.pals-northern@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Royal Devon University Healthcare NHS Foundation 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.

Tell us about your experience of our services. Share your feedback on the Care Opinion website www.careopinion.org.uk.

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