

## MIXED SEX ACCOMMODATION DECLARATION

**We are proud to confirm that mixed sex accommodation has been eliminated in all our hospitals.**

Every patient has the right to receive high quality care that is safe, effective and respects their privacy and dignity. Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust is committed to providing every patient with same sex accommodation, because it helps to safeguard their privacy and dignity when they are often at their most vulnerable.

We have the necessary facilities, resources and culture to ensure that patients who are admitted to our hospitals will only share the room where they sleep with members of the same sex, and same sex toilets and bathrooms will be close to their bed area. Sharing with members of the opposite sex should only happen in exceptional circumstances based on clinical need, for example where patients need specialist equipment such as in our Intensive Care / High Dependency Units or Coronary Care Units. Our Renal Dialysis Units including our Satellite Units, care for people who are dressed and cared for in an outpatient environment, therefore these patients may choose to socialize with people of the opposite sex as this is also a time for social engagement.

We are compliant with the Governments requirement to eliminate mixed sex accommodation, except when it is in the patients overall best interest, or reflects their personal choice.

### **What does this mean for patients?**

Other than in the circumstances set out above, patients admitted to Epsom and St Helier University Hospitals NHS Trust can expect to find the following:

- The **room where your bed is** will only have patients of the same sex as you;
- Your **toilet and bathroom** will be just for people of the same sex as you, and will be close to your bed area.

It is possible that there will be both men and women patients on the Ward, but they will not share your sleeping area. You may have to cross a Ward corridor to reach your bathroom, but you will not have to walk through areas where people of the opposite sex are.

You may share some communal space, such as day rooms or dining rooms, and it is very likely that you will see both men and women patients as you move around the hospital, for instance, on your way to have an x-ray or if you are going to an operating theatre.

It is probable that visitors of the opposite sex will come into the room where your bed is, and this may include patients visiting each other. It is almost certain that both male and female nurses, doctors and other staff will come into your bed area.

If you need help to use the toilet or take a bath (e.g. you need a hoist or special bath) then you may be taken to a 'unisex' bathroom used by both men and women, but a member of staff will be with you, and other patients will not be in the bathroom at the same time.

**The NHS will not turn patients away just because a ‘right-sex’ bed is not immediately available.**

### **What are our plans for the future?**

Over the last few years, we have invested significant resources to update our wards, toilet and bathroom facilities and our day surgery units to help us eliminate mixed sex accommodation.

This has included extending the numbers of high dependency coronary care beds, so that men and women are not cared for together, and refurbishing our Coronary Care Unit at Epsom Hospital to improve the facilities for patients. Some wards have had a complete refurbishment with extra single bedrooms, bathrooms or toilets being built.

We have undertaken a significant amount of work within our Day Case Units to ensure that patients will only be next to patients of the same sex and any bathroom facilities will be separate. A refurbishment has taken place in our Epsom Day Case Unit to allow for adherence to the elimination of mixed sexes.

Paediatric patients are given the option if they wish to be segregated from children of the opposite sex. Information is in the ward area as to what a patient would need to do if they do change their minds.

Importantly, any plans we have for new buildings or refurbishment will take into account this requirement, in particular ensuring new buildings have more single rooms with en-suite facilities.

### **How will we measure success?**

We need to know if we are maintaining these standards. Should a patient be unexpectedly admitted to an area with a member of the opposite sex, we would review this urgently with the patient, and plan to move them as soon as possible into an alternative bed. We monitor our compliance with this standard on a daily basis, and this is also monitored on a weekly basis by the Trust’s Executive Committee and every month by the Trust Board. We also submit this data centrally on a monthly basis.

We think it is vital to measure our success by what our patients are telling us, and we use our ‘Patient Feedback Tracker’ Survey regularly to look at our patient’s view of our accommodation. We have this information at Ward and Department Level so that we can make individual plans to improve the situation if necessary. In addition, we receive annual feedback via the Care Quality Commission’s National Inpatient Survey.

### **What do I do if I think I am in mixed sex accommodation?**

If whilst an in-patient you have any concerns that you are not in same sex accommodation, please speak with the Ward Manager or Matron who will be happy to assist.

### **We want to know about your experiences**

We welcome any comments you may have about your experience in our hospitals. Please let the Ward Manager or Matron know if you have feedback or contact our Patient Advice and Liaison

Service (PALS). PALS can be contacted on:

PALS Epsom & St Helier University Hospital NHS Trust  
Wrythe Lane Carshalton Surrey SM5 1AA  
Tel: 020 8296 2508 Email: pals@esth.nhs.uk



Daniel Elkeles  
**Chief Executive**



Pippa Hart  
**Chief Nurse and Director of Infection Prevention & Control**

31 March 2015