

Coming to Hospital – Who is the treating team?

When the person for whom you care needs to come to hospital, the treating team is responsible for their care.

The treating team is made up of health professionals, the person requiring care, and you, the carer.

We encourage you to be active in making decisions in relation to the treatment plan and discharge process of the person for whom you care.

Health Professionals you may meet

Doctors

Are responsible for the overall management of medical conditions. The person for whom you care will meet staff specialists, visiting medical officers or general practitioners (specialists) who are in charge; trainee specialists called Registrars; and junior doctors known as Interns. They will look after the prescribing of medication, ordering of tests and overall care alongside other team members.

Nurse Unit Manager (NUM)

Is responsible for the smooth running of the ward or unit ensuring that the person for whom you care, the carer and family members are included in the Treating Team.

Nurses

Manage wound care, medications, injections and other complex nursing care. They also shower, feed and reposition. They will help you and the person for whom you care develop and action a care plan to meet individual needs.

Discharge Planner

A co-ordinated approach to the episode of care and discharge planning will be provided, by using a case management approach. They will assist you, the carer in gaining contact with the doctors and other members of the health care team.

Occupational Therapist

Provides assistance and information about the possible effect of illness or injury on the person for whom you care, focusing on their ability to manage everyday tasks such as showering and dressing, eating, meal preparation and community access.

They can provide you (the carer) with guidance as to how to assist the person for whom you care to continue to participate in his/her everyday roles and routines. They can also provide advice and organise equipment to assist you to care at home. The Occupational Therapist may liaise with you about the home environment and organise home modifications if required for ongoing care.

Physiotherapist

Focuses on restoring a person's function, maximising their mobility (including wheelchair mobility) and health. One of their main roles is to concentrate on mobility retraining. This involves bed mobility, assessing the ability to sit, stand, balance, walk; and upper limb work to build strength and endurance.

Speech Pathologist

Works with individuals who have a communication or swallowing impairment. Their role is to assess, manage, treat and educate patients, their carers and families in relation to their communication and swallowing.

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Pharmacist

Medication is seen as an important role for many carers to ensure that the person for whom they care continues to take them as prescribed when they go home.

Pharmacists provide information about getting better results from the medicines prescribed; avoiding side effects where possible; and enjoying better health.

Social Worker

If a social worker is available, they assist patients, families and carers with personal and practical difficulties. They are able to provide referrals for counselling for grief, loss and family relationship concerns including abuse and violence issues, as well as offering support in coping with illness.

They may provide information regarding financial matters, accommodation or legal concerns. They have information and can assist with referrals for community services to help with maintaining independence and safety. Social workers are also strong advocates for client's rights and participation in Health Care.

Dietitian

Will see the person for whom you care if they require a special diet to ensure that a safe and adequate intake of food and fluids meets their energy and nutrient requirements.

Other staff you may meet

- Ward Clerks – a good point of contact for general information
- Service staff – delivery of meals, cleaning
- Volunteers

What can you expect from Hunter New England Local Health District?

- Excellence Every Patient, Every Time
- Think Patient, Think Carer
- To be informed of your Rights and Responsibilities and Compliments and Complaints

What can you expect from the Health Professionals involved?

- A team of committed and dedicated healthcare professionals
- To identify you as the carer
- To include you in decision-making regarding the care and treatment of the person for whom you care
- That each health care professional involved contributes as part of a team
- To treat you in accordance with the NSW Carers Charter

What can we expect from you (the carer) and your family?

- Identify yourself as the carer and make yourself known
- Ensure your contact details are recorded
- Inform us of any important information about the person for whom you care
- Not to hesitate to ask questions. Our team is only too happy to answer them
- Talk to us about the care, therapy and decision making (if appropriate) of the person for whom you care