



# **Intensive Care Unit**

## **Information for patients and relatives**



### **Visiting Times**

2.00pm – 4.00pm

6.00pm – 8.00pm

### **Patients Rest period**

12.30pm – 2.00pm

## Introduction

Welcome to the Intensive Care Unit in Tallaght hospital. When you or your relative is admitted to Intensive Care, it can be a stressful and worrying time. The following information has been put together to make this experience a little easier for you.

This booklet provides practical information and advice on what to expect. It tells you how critical illness may be treated and what recovery may be like.

All the Intensive care team are available to offer valuable support you and your families during this difficult time .

We will do our best to create a friendly and supportive environment that promotes an optimistic, yet realistic outlook. If you need any further information, please do not hesitate to ask any member of the nursing or medical teams.



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## When Intensive Care is needed

A patient may be in Intensive Care because of an accident, an illness or for treatment after major surgery. These patients require constant monitoring and support from equipment, medication and specialist staff. Many ICU patients need support for many organs such as the heart, lungs and kidneys. We use specialist equipment such as ventilators (for breathing support) and dialysis machines (for kidney support)

We understand that having a relative in ICU can be a very emotional and stressful time. Your relative may be connected to various machines and drips and may look very different from usual. ICU can be a frightening and noisy environment for the patient and relatives. We understand this and the importance of communication and will try to update you regularly.

The length of time patients spend in ICU, depends on how ill they are and may vary from days to weeks.



## Admission to the Intensive Care Unit

When a patient is first admitted to ICU, it may take some time for the doctors and nurses to assess and treat your relative. You will be asked to wait in the waiting room during this important time. We will do our best to keep you updated about your relatives condition. We appreciate this can add to feelings of anxiety, worry and frustration. However, we ask for your patience and will do our best to keep you updated about your relatives condition and will allow you to visit as soon as possible.

On every visit to the ICU, you will need to ring the buzzer and you will be asked to take a seat in the waiting room. A member of staff will bring you into the unit.



## **Preventing Infections in Intensive Care Control**

Tallaght hospital is committed to reducing the spread of infections. Please use the hand gel or wash your hands before entering and on leaving the ICU.

Hand gels are located at various points throughout the hospital. This reduces the spread of infection to your relative as well as the relative of others.

### **What to expect**

We encourage you to choose a representative to link in with the staff in ICU for updates on your relatives condition. This person can be a spokesperson and relay information to family and friends. Their phone number will be kept in the patients chart.

It is hospital policy that we do not give out any information about your relatives care or treatment over the phone. This is to protect patients confidentiality.

We welcome you to share with us information about your relative including beliefs, cultural, spiritual and religious. This information helps us to know and understand their needs so we can provide the best care.

### **Daily routine**

The daily routine of the intensive care is very busy with treatments and procedures around the clock.

In the morning we have ward rounds, X-rays and physiotherapy so visiting is not allowed. In the afternoon includes rest time, which has proven to be a beneficial part of patients' treatment.

## Visiting times

Visitors are an important part of the patients day, however, so to is rest and medical/nursing care. Visiting, to the ICU is 2-4pm and 6-8pm. If you wish to visit outside of these hours, you must discuss it with the Clinical Nurse Manager on duty.

Due to lack of space and for the safety of your loved one, we ask that only two immediate family members be present at the bedside at one time. We do not advise visiting by children under 16 years of age as we feel the sights and sounds of the ICU can be distressing and upsetting.

If you are unwell, for example, have diarrhoea, vomiting, cough or cold, please do not visit. If you are unsure, please contact the Clinical Nurse Manager on duty.

## What can I bring in for my relative?

Due to lack of space at the bedside and for infection control reasons, personal belongings are limited. Anything that isn't needed will be sent home, any valuables will be kept in the hospital safe, then returned to you.

Fresh flowers are not allowed in the unit. However, we would ask you to bring in items, such as:

- Shower gel
- Small soft tooth brush and toothpaste
- Comb or hairbrush
- Aerosol deodorants (not roll on type)
- Personal toiletries
- Spectacles and hearing aids to assist communication
- Photographs and cards from well wishes (optional)
- Music CD's

## **How long will my relative stay in intensive Care?**

The length of your relatives stay in the ICU will vary depending on their reason for admission and how they respond to treatment . Every patients recovery differs.

Your relative will have good days but you should be prepared for setbacks. Please try not to get discouraged with this and rely on your family and friends for support. We encourage you to share your worries with nursing and medical teams. We are here to listen and offer assistance. Please ask any questions you may have.

## **After discharge from ICU**

Once your relatives condition has improved, the doctor will decide when they can leave the ICU and go to the high dependency unit (HDU) or to the ward.

The nurses and physiotherapists will help your relative to get back their independence and strength as much as possible.

## **Chapel and Pastoral care**

The hospital's chapel is located on the ground floor near the reception area. Pastoral care and support are available to patients and their relatives regardless of their religious beliefs. If you need the Chaplin, please let the nurse at the bedside know.

## **Facilities on the unit**

There are two waiting rooms on the Intensive Care Unit, equipped with a drinks machine and a visitors toilet.

We ask that you do not bring food into the visitors rooms and not to leave valuables unattended.

Please turn off your mobile phone when coming into the ICU.

## ICU Research

We don't always know why patients become very sick from infection and why others do not become as ill by the same infection. In Tallaght ICU we have an active research programme to help us to improve our understanding of why this happens.

We believe that this will help us to improve our treatments for future critically ill patients. As a result you may be asked by ICU staff for permission to be included in such research.

This usually involves taking a small blood sample or a swab. There is no risk involved to the patient and the patient's treatment is not affected or changed in any way.

Taking part in research in the ICU is voluntary for patients. The Doctor will fully explain to the patients and their families what is involved. We ask patients or their relative for written consent to take part in any of our research.

## The Intensive Care Team

Intensive Care Director,

Dr Gerard Fitzpatrick

Intensive Care Unit Consultants

Dr Maria Donnelly  
Dr Arabella Fahy

CNM3 ICU

Sr. Lisa Dunne

❖ ICU Doctors

❖ ICU Nurses

❖ Healthcare Assistants

❖ Pharmacist

❖ Physiotherapist

❖ Dietician

❖ Audit Nurses and ICU Secretary

❖ Clinical Physicist

❖ Cleaning Operatives

❖ Porters

❖ Housekeeping staff



### **Statement of Values**

Respect for patient autonomy  
Respect for each other  
Partnership and Teamwork  
Fairness and Equality  
Caring - Openness

