National University Hospital

# Frequently Asked Questions for Next-of-Kin

**1. What can patients expect in the Emergency Department?**

After registration, patients will be triaged – a nurse will assess and prioritise patients based on the severity of their condition.

**Patients are then seen by our doctors in order of urgency. The attending doctor might also order further tests.** If so, please expect to wait about 4 - 6 hours for the finalised test results.

After reviewing the test results, the doctor will decide if the patient needs to be admitted to the hospital. **Please refer to Q9 and Q10 respectively for what to expect when the patient is to be hospitalised or discharged.**

**2. How can I receive updates about the patient?**

Only the Main Spokesperson (MSP) will receive updates on the patient. Do approach our counter staff to update your contact details if you are the MSP. **Updates will be provided with the patient's consent when applicable.**

Although a patient can have multiple family members registered in our system, the medical team will only update the MSP. We seek your understanding that we will only be able to update the MSP as our medical team is focusing on delivering care and treatment to the patient.

Note: Caregivers who have been authorised by the patient and granted access in **HealthHub** may also track the patient's visit progress and receive visit updates through the app.

**3. Can I visit the patient in the Emergency Department?**

You may refer to our visitation policy here.

For more information, please approach our counter staff at the ambulance bay.

**4. Can I contact the patient while they are in the Emergency Department?**

You may contact the patient via his/her mobile phone.

If the patient did not bring his/her mobile phone and/or charger to the A&E, you can pass a phone to the patient via the staff at the counter.

If the patient does not have a mobile phone, please approach our counter staff at the ambulance bay for assistance.

**5. Do I need to wait at the Ambulance Bay for the patient's entire A&E visit?**

No. If you have been registered as the Main Spokesperson, the medical team will contact you over the phone if the need arises.

**6. Will patients be provided non-medical care (e.g. food etc.) in the A&E?**

**A&E Observation Area:**

Patients in the observation area will be provided with:

- A trolley bed, a blanket, and a change of clothes.
- Meals and hot beverages (unless patients are restricted from eating and drinking for a medical procedure).

**7. The patient has additional needs (e.g. dementia / non-communicative / requires tube feeding). Will the patient's needs be taken care of?**

Yes. If the patient has any special needs, please inform the counter staff. This will alert our nurses to provide the necessary care to the patient.

**8. I would like to pass some items to the patient. Is that allowed?**

You may pass essential personal items like clothes, toiletries, eyeglasses, phones, etc. to the staff at the counter. They will ensure the items are given to the patient where deemed appropriate.

However, please refrain from passing valuables (e.g. wallet / money / jewellery) to the patient, so as to prevent them from being misplaced.

Medications are also not allowed as the clinical team will provide the necessary treatment required.

NUH shall not be held liable or responsible for the loss or damage of any valuables or personal items during a patient's stay with us.

**9. The patient will be admitted to the hospital. What can I expect?**

When there is a need for admission, the hospital will allocate a suitable bed for the patient. The patient will stay in the A&E until their bed is ready.

In the meantime, the Main Spokesperson (MSP) may be contacted for financial counselling. (e.g. information about ward class and charges).

After the patient has been transferred to the ward, the MSP will receive an SMS with the ward and bed details. As waiting times may vary due to inpatient bed availability, you may wish to return home to wait for the SMS.

10. **The patient will be discharged. Is there anything I should take note of?**

If the patient is planned for discharge from A&E, the medical team will prepare the required discharge documents, prescriptions, and plans for follow-up care. No other action is required on your end.

**A&E Observation Area:**

If you intend to fetch the patient from A&E, please inform the clinical team (directly or via the patient / counter staff) to aid coordination. This will allow the clinical team / patient to notify you when the patient is ready to leave. To minimise waiting outside the A&E, we recommend that you wait for this notification before coming to fetch the patient.

**If you have further questions, please approach our counter staff at the ambulance bay.**