



PATIENT INFORMATION

Private Care

Guidance for In-patients

Private Care at South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust

Introduction

This leaflet is designed to provide answers that you, as a Private Inpatient may wish to ask and you are advised to read its contents very carefully.

Hospital charges are reviewed regularly by South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Your attention is drawn to the Private Patient Tariff which gives details of the current level of charges. This is published separately on the Trust's website.

Will I have the use of my own room?

Hospital beds are not designated for private use but, you will, under normal circumstances, be admitted to a bed in a side ward or a single room. It is only when a single room is required for somebody else on medical grounds and when no other suitable accommodation is available, that you would be cared for in other hospital accommodation.

Arrangements can be made in advance for you to see the type of accommodation offered to private patients.

It should be emphasised however, that both NHS and patient patients receive exactly the same standards of clinical care, services and accommodation.

What do the charges cover?

Consultant fees

You are advised to discuss with your Consultant the fees you are to be charged for specialist medical services. You will receive a separate account from your Consultant(s).

Hospital charges

The fees charged by South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust represent a proportion of the total running costs of the hospital and therefore, include some element in respect of the cleaning, laundry, building and engineering maintenance, clerical and secretarial support, laboratory staff and many behind the scenes activities you may not be aware of during your stay. These contribute vitally to the functioning of the hospital.

The fees charged by South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust are intended to cover all treatment associated costs both direct and indirect.

They do not cover:

1. Your Consultant's fees
2. The Anaesthetist's fees
3. The fees of other Consultants responsible for X-Ray and Pathology investigations, or any other specialist who may be called in by your Consultant
4. Special private nursing fees
5. The Cost of telephone calls, newspapers, special foods, private television and other personal amenities
6. Drugs which you will need after leaving hospital. Under normal circumstances, you will be given a prescription to be dispensed privately or be referred back to your family doctor. However, if it is necessary for you to be provided with drugs on discharge (e.g. to tide you over until you have access to a longer term supply), you will be given a maximum of two or three days supply for which there will be no additional charge.

During the course of treatment, you may be allowed to leave the hospital for short periods. If your bed is reserved for you during your absence, but you are away for the hospital for a continuous period of 24 hours or more, your hospital fee will be reduced by 12.5% for each day of absence.

If you are transferred from Torbay Hospital to one of the peripheral hospitals, you may be transferred to the care of your General Practitioner as an NHS patient. No additional charge will be made.

Return visits to NHS premises for reviews, follow-up outpatient appointments etc, are not covered by inpatient charges and, such visits will be regarded as outpatient or day case attendances and, subject to the procedures and charges for these category of patient.

When do I have to meet the charges?

Prior to the provision of any service, you will be asked to sign an undertaking to pay the Trust the fees due to it in respect of accommodation and services it provides.

The ability of a Consultant to offer services, and subsequently charge his/her own fee for professional services, is also dependent on you completing the Trust's undertaking to pay.

How do I pay?

Your account must be paid prior to admission.

Private Health Insurance

If you intend to finance your private care from a Private Health Insurance Scheme, you are advised to check the adequacy of your insurances before requesting private patient status.

If you are a member of a Private Insurance Scheme e.g. BUPA, PPP, you will be required to sign a declaration authorising South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to bill the insurance company direct.

If you are not covered by Private Health Insurance, you are responsible for paying South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. The account will be sent to you at your home address.

Payments by Cheque

Cheques should be crossed and made payable to South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust and sent to the Cashier's Officer, Level 2, Torbay Hospital.

Payment in Cash

You will be directed to the Cashier's Office, Level 2, Torbay Hospital who will give you a receipt for monies received.

Payment by Credit Card

You may ring the Cashier's Office prior to the day of admission on 01803 654508 to arrange for mail order to go to the Cashiers Officer, Level 2, Torbay Hospital on the day of admission.

Can I change from private to NHS status?

Once admitted as a private patient, you will not normally be allowed to transfer to NHS status. A transfer to NHS status will only be authorised by the Private Patient Officer and your Consultant, based on medical considerations which are exceptional or, were unforeseen at the time you elected to have private care, e.g. you enter for a minor operation and are found to be suffering from a different, more serious complaint.

If you wish to transfer to NHS status you must confirm your intention in writing to the Private Patient Officer. Until the change in status is confirmed, you will be regarded as a private patient and therefore liable to pay the Trust.

If you have any questions about the information in the leaflet please contact the Private Patient Officer on 01803 654508