

PATIENT INFORMATION

Guidance for patients attending as Day Case patients and Outpatients Private Care

Introduction

This leaflet is designed to provide answers that you, as a private outpatient/day case patient, may wish to ask. You are advised to read its contents very carefully.

If you elect to attend an NHS Hospital as a private patient for a “continuous episode of care”, all services used will be regarded as being provided on a private basis.

Hospital charges are reviewed annually, and any changes will come into effect on that day.

What do the charges cover?

Outpatients

If you are attending the Hospital as an outpatient, the charges cover:

1. General private consultations covering the use of accommodation and facilities
2. Investigative and other procedures that may subsequently arise (a charge for each procedure)
3. Further subsequent consultations (a charge for each consultation)
4. Treatment (a charge for each treatment)

Day case patients

If you are attending the Hospital as a day case patient, the charges cover:

1. General medical and nursing care
2. Any further services, e.g. diagnostic tests, drugs and appliances on discharge and certain high cost treatments must be paid for and will be charged separately in accordance with those charges specified for private outpatients.

Consultant fees

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

Items for which no specific charge has been determined

For any procedure or treatment (e.g. therapy) or items (e.g. appliances) supplied, (including medicines, other than those administered during the course of treatment or procedure for which you are attending) for which there is no charge stipulated, you will be charged at the full economic cost of providing the services or items.

How do I obtain private prescriptions for medicines?

As a private outpatient or day case patient, you will not normally be provided with drugs or medicines except, where they are administered within the Hospital, as part of the treatment or procedure for which you are attending. You will be referred back to your family doctor or be given a prescription by the practitioner to be made up by a retail pharmacist. In these circumstances, the Hospital's own pharmacy department will not provide you with any medicines or drugs prescribed. Only under very exceptional circumstances (e.g. where the drug or medicine is not available from a retail chemist), will the medicine or drug be supplied by the Hospital pharmacy. You will be liable for the full economic cost of providing the drug and medicine as stipulated above. You will not however, be liable for the NHS prescription charge.

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. You will receive an account which must be paid prior to your treatment.

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

How do I pay?

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 insurance cover before requesting private patient status. If your insurance cover does not enable the charges to be met, you will be liable to pay the Hospital for any outstanding charges.

If you are a member of a Private Insurance Scheme, e.g. AXA, AVIVA, Vitality, The Exeter and WPA you will be required to sign a declaration authorising South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust to bill the insurance company directly. You will also need to provide the Private Patient's Officer with your membership number and an authorisation code for the private medical treatment/appointment. If you are not covered by Private Health Insurance, you are responsible for paying South Devon Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. The invoice will be sent to you by email, or you can ask for a copy to be sent to your home address.

Pay by secure pay-by-Link

The Private Patient's Officer will e-mail you a secure pay-by link to make the payment using your credit or debit card.

Payment by bank transfer

The hospital's bank details are on the invoice. Please use the invoice number as your bank reference to ensure the transferred money is linked to your account.

Payment in cash or credit card

You will be directed to the Cashier's Officer, Level 2, Torbay Hospital, who will give you a receipt for monies received. You can also ring the Cashier's Office prior to the day of admission on 01803 654 508 to make payment over the phone.

Where do I report for treatment?

You should report to the reception desk of each service department you attend and not go directly to treatment areas. You should retain your copy of the undertaking to pay insurance authority, as you will be asked to produce them when you report to the reception desk.

Can I change from private to NHS status?

Outpatients

If you are eligible for NHS services and wish to discontinue your treatment as a private patient, this is permissible providing you are given no greater priority than an NHS patient with a similar condition. However, it is not permissible for you to transfer between private and NHS status during an "episode of care". You must confirm in writing, to the Private Patient Officer, you wish to transfer to NHS status. Until your change in status is confirmed you will be liable for private patient charges.

Day case patients

If it becomes necessary for you to stay longer than allowed as a day case, you can be admitted to a private inpatient bed or, be transferred to an NHS bed, providing that you are given no greater priority than an NHS patient with a similar condition. Your written intention to transfer to NHS status must be approved by the Private Patient Officer, in consultation with your Consultant. The transfer will be based on medical considerations. If you are admitted as a private patient, you will be asked to sign another undertaking to pay which will cover the appropriate inpatient charges.

Amenity bed

This is accommodation, in a single room, which is not for the time being needed by any other patient on medical grounds. An amenity bed can be requested by a patient preferring to have single accommodation but who is being cared for as an NHS patient. The charge made for the room represents the national cost of the privacy of a single room. Cost and availability of the room is available on application from the Private Patient Officer.

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