

Same-sex accommodation

Information and advice for patients and visitors

Patient Experience

Why same-sex accommodation matters

Sandwell and West Birmingham Hospitals NHS Trust is committed to providing every patient with same-sex accommodation because:

- Mixed sex accommodations can affect patients' privacy and dignity at a time when they are already feeling vulnerable.
- Patients can be concerned about physical exposure, being in an embarrassing or threatening situation, noise and confidentiality.
- Worries can disrupt a patient's recovery.
- Patients feel more relaxed and comfortable in same-sex accommodation.
- Patients expect to be put into same-sex accommodation.

When might mixed-sex accommodation be unavoidable?

Sharing with members of the opposite sex will only occur in exceptional circumstances and based on the patients clinical need (for example, the need for specialist equipment or monitoring such as critical care, assessment or coronary care units) or if the hospital is exceptionally busy and it is safer to admit to a shared area than keep the patient waiting for a bed. Should this occur patients would be moved to same-sex accommodation as quickly as possible.

Same-sex accommodation at City Hospital

Most of the Victorian Nightingale wards at City Hospital operate on a same-sex basis. The remaining speciality-based wards at City Hospital are organised with men at one end and women at the other, with separate washing/toilet facilities at either end of the ward and a privacy screen dividing men and women. Every effort has been made to ensure patients should not need to pass through accommodation for toilet/washing facilities used by the opposite sex to get to their own.

Same-sex accommodation at Sandwell Hospital, Rowley Regis Hospital and Sheldon Block, City Hospital

Patients admitted to Sandwell Hospital, Rowley or wards in Sheldon Block City Hospital are admitted to same-sex bays clearly separated from the main ward corridor. Patients have access to separate male and female toilet/washing facilities on each ward and every effort has been made to ensure patients should not need to pass through accommodation for toilet/washing facilities used by the opposite sex to get to their own.

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Our plans for the future

Our plans for the future involve:

- Continuing our focus on standards of privacy and dignity on all of our wards through our system of regular ward reviews and observation of care audits.
- Ensuring that high standards of privacy and dignity are built into the plans for our new acute hospital scheduled for 2020 and including 50% single rooms.

Find out more

If you have any questions please speak to the senior ward sister or matron.

To find out more about the 'Delivering same-sex accommodation' programme visit:

www.nhs.uk/samesexaccommodation

For more information about our hospitals and services please see our websites www.swbh.nhs.uk and www.swbhengage.com, follow us on Twitter @SWBHnhs and like us on Facebook www.facebook.com/SWBHnhs.

Sources used for the information in this leaflet

NHS Institute for Innovation and Improvement, 'Delivering same-sex accommodation', 2010

If you would like to suggest any amendments or improvements to this leaflet please contact the communications department on 0121 507 5420 or email: swb-tr.swbh-gm-patient-information@nhs.net



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Incorporating City, Sandwell and Rowley Regis Hospitals
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ML3996
Issue Date: March 2013
Review Date: March 2015