



Palatine ambulatory care unit

A guide for patients and their carers



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The Christie website

For more information about The Christie and our services, please visit www.christie.nhs.uk or visit the cancer information centres at Withington, Oldham, Salford or Macclesfield.

Introduction

This information booklet has been designed to provide an overview for patients and carers (or companions) about the ambulatory service available as part of the haematology and teenage and young adult (TYA) services at The Christie.

There are also a range of resources regarding ambulatory care available on The Christie website (www.christie.nhs.uk) including electronic copies of this guide.

What does ambulatory care mean?

Ambulatory care is where some treatments previously requiring an inpatient stay, including high dose chemotherapy and stem cell transplant, can be delivered in a day unit setting.

You will be able to attend the Palatine ambulatory care unit during the day to receive your treatment. Overnight you will be able to either go home or stay in accommodation provided by the hospital, rather than staying on an inpatient ward.

In some cases you will continue to receive some of your treatment through a small electronic pump overnight. If this is the case for the treatment you are receiving, your nurse will inform you.

Can I stay at home during my treatment?

Your safety and quality of care is of the utmost importance and so whether or not you can stay at home will depend on where you live and the type of treatment you will be receiving. Your consultant must agree to you being at home during this stage of your treatment if this is suitable.

These are some of the things we feel are important for you to understand before agreeing to ambulatory care. This is to ensure that all of our patients remain safe during the course of their treatment.

In order to be considered suitable to stay at home during your treatment, you will need to:

- live within an hour's drive of The Christie
- agree to return to the hospital if you have any problems with your pump, day or night
- have a family member or friend staying with you at all times who is available to bring/accompany you to the hospital at any time of day or night during the course of your treatment
- have a mobile phone and be contactable at all times
- agree to contact The Christie if you experience any problems

If you meet all of the other criteria for treatment via ambulatory care but do not live within an hour's drive, you will still be able to receive treatment but will be accommodated in an apartment at Staycity in Manchester city centre.

What are the benefits of having my treatment in ambulatory care?

Ambulatory care for the treatment you're receiving is already in place at a number of other hospitals. Feedback from patients receiving treatment in this way at other hospitals is that they enjoy the relaxed atmosphere and additional privacy provided by staying either in their own homes or in a hotel room.

Other benefits include:

- you will be able to spend your time away from The Christie either at home or in a comfortable environment, allowing you to rest
- if you are staying at home it is hoped that this will add a greater degree of normality and independence to your treatment experience
- your carer or companion can stay with you at all times – this is not possible if you are an inpatient on the ward
- you will receive the same treatment as on the ward except we will see you at an allotted appointment time, between the hours of 8am–8pm during Monday to Friday and 8am–8pm on Saturday and Sunday.
- if required, you may receive some of your treatment through a small portable pump, this is held either in a small waist bag or a rucksack (this will allow you to continue with your daily life away from The Christie)

What are the Palatine ambulatory care unit opening hours?

The Palatine ambulatory care unit is open every day 8am–8pm including weekends.

What happens when I attend the unit?

- You will be given an appointment time to attend the treatment. The frequency of appointments will depend on your treatment type, but may be daily, on alternate days or less often.
- At each visit, you will be assessed by a nurse who will take your observations including temperature, pulse and blood pressure. You may also be weighed.
- Any symptoms such as nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhoea will be assessed at each visit.
- If required, you will have blood tests taken along with any other necessary tests.
- If you or your nurse has any concerns you will be reviewed by the medical team.
- During your time in ambulatory care you will be responsible for taking your oral medications. You will receive a chart explaining your medication where you can record that you have taken them. At each visit the nurse will check that you are managing your medication and help with any problems.
- Any treatment prescribed will be administered and if required you will be connected to a pump to continue treatment at home. The length of time you spend on the unit will vary depending on the treatment you are having. Staff will make sure you know how long each visit is expected to take.

- Please be aware that some treatments may take longer than expected or we may experience delays in your treatment. You may also have days where you feel more tired than normal. You need to allow some flexibility for this.
- At the end of each visit to ambulatory care, your nurse will assess if you are medically safe to return home or to hospital accommodation. Any concerns will be discussed with you.

Are meals provided?

Lunch is provided for patients only within the Palatine ambulatory care unit.

The Christie restaurant is open to all patients and visitors and serves a range of hot and cold food and drinks. It is located in department 19 and is open from 7.15am to 4pm, Monday to Friday.

The Christie also has an M&S Food to Go and a WHSmith located in the main Oak Road entrance. For opening hours, visit The Christie website. Withington town centre is a short walk away and has a Co-op Food and Sainsbury's Local supermarket.

What happens when I leave ambulatory care each day?

The aim of ambulatory care is that you continue to lead as normal a life as possible while undergoing treatment.

Staff on the day unit will talk to you about the treatment pump, how to care for it and what to do if there are any problems with it.

You will need to take your temperature if you feel unwell.

Depending on your treatment, you may need to measure your urine and keep a record of what you drink. You may need to test your urine each time you go to the toilet. Staff will talk to you about this and provide you with equipment if it is necessary.

If there are any problems with the pump overnight or you are concerned about anything, you should phone The Christie Hotline for support and advice.

What do I need to be aware of during ambulatory care?

Temperature: You need to check your temperature if you feel unwell or hot, and before you contact the hotline.

Showering: You should shower every day, taking care not to get your central line dressing wet.

Central line dressings: Dressings are usually changed once each week but can be changed daily if the exit site becomes wet or is infected.

Mouth care: It is very important to take particularly good care of your mouth at this time. One of the side effects of your treatment may be that you develop a sore and painful mouth, this is called mucositis.

We suggest you use a soft toothbrush to clean your teeth after meals and rinse regularly with water.

If you need pain relief for your mouth this may be given in tablet form to start with but can also be given by injection. It may be that mucositis means you have to be admitted to hospital. If this is necessary it will be discussed with you at the time.

Bleeding: If you develop any signs of bleeding e.g. from your gums, nose bleeds or bruising (bleeding under the skin) it is important that these are reported. Platelet transfusions will be given as required to support your platelet count.

Infection: As your white cell count drops you become more susceptible to infection. It is important that you report any signs of infection so you can be started on antibiotics.

Nutrition: Good food hygiene is important. Remember to wash your hands before and after handling food. Food should be thoroughly cooked and piping hot. Avoid takeaways and food that has been kept warm for long periods. Avoid all shellfish. Ensure eggs are cooked until yolk and white are solid. Avoid unpasteurised cheeses and yogurts.

What if I become unwell during my treatment as an ambulatory patient?

It is important that you contact The Christie if you develop any of the following symptoms:

- temperature of 37.5°C or above or below 36.0°C
- shivers or hot flushes
- persistent episodes of nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea
- shortness of breath or difficulties with your breathing
- redness or pain around your Hickman line site or PICC
- signs of bleeding

During working hours (Monday to Friday 8am–8pm and Saturday and Sunday 8am–8pm) phone the Palatine ambulatory care unit on **0161 956 1079**. You can also phone The Christie main switchboard on **0161 446 3000** and ask for ambulatory care.

At night or when ambulatory care is closed please call The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week).

Depending on your symptoms it may be necessary to admit you to hospital. Staff will advise you where to go to be reviewed. If the unit is open you will be seen there, if possible. Other arrangements will be made if it is not possible.

If you are asked to come to the hospital to be seen, it is important that you leave home/hospital accommodation straight away.

In an emergency

An emergency is any urgent situation where you require immediate medical attention. In an emergency, you or your carer must dial 999.

What happens when my treatment is finished?

Depending on your treatment you may continue to be seen on the haematology or TYA day unit 2 or 3 times per week.

If this isn't required, an appointment will be made for you to be seen in the appropriate outpatient clinic.

If required we will organise a district nurse to flush your central line.

We will ensure you have advice on who to contact once you have been discharged with all the appropriate medication.

Hotel accommodation

What is the hotel accommodation like?

Where possible, we would like patients to stay at home in a familiar environment. Where this is not possible (because home is too far away), you will be offered accommodation with your carer or companion in an apartment in Staycity next to Manchester Piccadilly station, in the city centre.

All apartments offer one twin bedroom and a sofa bed. Detailed information about the facilities is available at www.staycity.com/manchester/piccadilly

Staycity facilities also include:

- 24 hour reception
- free Wi-Fi
- café
- gym
- ironing and laundry facilities
- cable TV
- basic cooking facilities
- shower and bath
- bed linen and towels
- central heating/air conditioning
- a lift to all floors

The apartments are cleaned weekly and also have a deep clean in-between guests.

Check-in time is from 3pm however, Staycity will try to accommodate you earlier if possible. Luggage can be stored in a secure location until your room is ready.

If you would like extra nights to be added to your stay that are not required as part of your treatment, this must be done directly with Staycity and will not be reimbursed. Extra accommodation for friends and family is also available but this will need to be booked directly with Staycity and any cost associated with this will not be reimbursed by The Christie.

Any complaints you have with the accommodation or facilities must be directed to the Staycity reception. This is staffed 24 hours a day.

Are meals provided?

Breakfast is not provided as standard during your stay. Breakfast is available for an extra charge at the on-site café. There are cooking facilities in your apartment.

Lunch will be provided (for patients only) on the unit during your treatment. Dinner is not provided during your stay.

Staycity have kindly offered a 15% discount on food and drinks for Christie patients. Please see reception for more details.

Pets

No pets of any kind are allowed in the apartments with the exception of assistance dogs.

How will accommodation be booked?

Your stay will be booked for you by our scheduling staff. However, you should contact Staycity before you arrive and they will confirm your booking and provide details regarding check in times. **You must contact Staycity yourself to confirm your booking.** Due to GDPR regulations, The Christie cannot do this on your behalf.

On the day you are due to go home, you will need to check out of your room by 11am.

There is no charge for the accommodation. However, any non-accidental damage to the apartments may be chargeable on departure. For this reason you will need to leave credit or debit card details as security. If you have any queries or concerns about this please call the scheduling team on **0161 918 3924/7249**.

What about transport?

Transport to The Christie for treatment each day will be provided if required, or you may choose to use public transport or bring your own car.

If you need parking, there is a charge per day at Staycity's car park, please check their website for the most up-to-date charges. Please note that this cost will NOT be reimbursed by The Christie.

What do you need to bring?

- Mobile phone and charger.
- Details of your current medication and enough medication for your stay.
- Toiletries including a soft toothbrush.
- Light luggage that is easily transportable to The Christie.
- Digital thermometer (if you do not have a thermometer, The Christie will provide one for you).
- Books, magazines, games etc. There is a television and free Wi-Fi in the apartment.
- Any required mobility aids.

Contact details

The Christie

If you need help or advice at any time during your ambulatory care treatment, please call on any of the following numbers:

- The Christie Hotline on **0161 446 3658** (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
- the unit directly on **0161 956 1079** or call the main switchboard on **0161 446 3000** and ask for the Palatine ambulatory care unit
- you may also contact your clinical nurse specialist or key worker

Hotel

Staycity Manchester Piccadilly

- Reservations: **020 3744 7525**
- Enquiries: **0161 238 9800**
- Email: manchester-piccadilly.info@staycity.com

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

The Christie is committed to producing high quality, evidence based information for patients. Our patient information adheres to the principles and quality statements of the Information Standard.

If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact the-christie.patient.information@nhs.net

Contact The Christie Hotline for
urgent support and specialist advice

The Christie Hotline: 0161 446 3658

Open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

Visit the Cancer Information Centre

The Christie at Withington **0161 446 8100**

The Christie at Oldham **0161 918 7745**

The Christie at Salford **0161 918 7804**

The Christie at Macclesfield **0161 956 1704**

Open Monday to Friday, 10am – 4pm.

Opening times can vary, please ring to check
before making a special journey.

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www.christie.nhs.uk



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