



Information relating to your stay at Bethesda Health Care

Welcome to the Palliative Care Unit at Bethesda Health Care

The Bethesda Palliative Care Unit (PCU) has been providing expert care for patients with life limiting illnesses for many years. It has an excellent reputation for providing care for patients and their families facing the challenges of living with life limiting conditions. Admission to the unit can be for symptom control, carer fatigue and for end of life care.

Bethesda's approach to patient care is a holistic one, with individualised goals and care plans set up with patients, their families and friends. The PCU aims to work with patients and their families to provide comprehensive and coordinated care which maximises quality of life for the patient whilst providing support for families and friends.

Our philosophy of care focuses on:

1. Maintenance of dignity
2. Maximising quality of life
3. Consultation in decision making
4. Optimising symptom control

Care is provided by an expert multi-disciplinary team of health professionals and we work collaboratively with other care providers involved in the patient's care, including Silverchain, general practitioners, oncologists and specialists.

Length of stay will vary from patient to patient and discharge is considered once a patient's condition is stable. If longer term care is required and you are unable to return home, we will work with you and your family to find alternate care.

We accept public and private patients. The PCU operates 20 beds on the Bayview Ward (level one).

Visiting Hours: 10:00am to 8:00pm daily. Please speak with the Ward Coordinator if visits are required outside of these hours.

Staffing of the Palliative Care Unit

The PCU is staffed by a dedicated team of doctors, nursing staff, personal care assistants (PCAs), allied health staff and volunteers who are extremely committed to improving the quality of life of our patients, whilst providing support to their families and friends.

Doctors are on the ward Monday to Friday, from 9.00am - 5.00pm and there is a doctor available on call after hours. The PCU nursing staff are experienced in caring for patients with palliative conditions and are present on the ward 24 hours a day. They are supported by personal care assistants (PCAs).

The PCU has a number of qualified allied health staff available to see patients including a social worker, a counsellor, occupational therapist, and in addition, we can organise for a physiotherapist, or other allied health professional, to review a patient if the team feels it would be beneficial.

Bethesda also offers the services of a Pastoral Care team (chaplain/ religious minister) who can provide spiritual and emotional support to patients, their families and friends. The Pastoral Care team can also arrange for religious leaders from a variety of faiths to visit patients, on request.

Volunteers in the PCU are very important members of our team. They are a group of special people from all walks of life who give willingly of their time on the ward. Their roles are varied and include spending time with patients to provide company, encouraging patients in their interests, giving massages, helping patients outside their room and assisting staff in day-to-day caring needs. Patients will find a pamphlet in their room that lists the activities our volunteers can assist with during a stay.

Communication

You, your family and your friends play an integral role in helping us to set and implement sustainable goals. The BPCU will include you in care decisions, liaising with your nominated family member, or friend if you are too unwell.

Family meetings play an important part in the care we offer, often initiated when there are important decisions to be made, or if discharge options are being considered.

The PCU ward reception phone number is (08) 9340 6311 with a receptionist present between the hours of 8.00am – 3.00pm, Monday to Friday. Outside of these hours, it may take longer for the phone to be answered as ward staff will be attending to patient care.

We kindly ask that large families whose members require condition updates about a family member, nominate just one person to make contact with the ward. This will ensure our nursing staff can attend to patient care as much as possible.

The team in the PCU will endeavour, at the earliest opportunity, to contact the nominated family member or friend about any changes in a patient's condition. Please advise staff if your primary contact person does not want to be contacted overnight. Please let staff know if you need to talk to the doctors, or if you have any questions.

White Boards

Each patient's room has a white board to help with communication. On the white board you will find the names of the doctors and nurses looking after you each shift. You will also find the direct phone number for the room.

There is a section called "family questions and notes" that you are welcome to write on. Alternatively, the staff looking after you may also leave your family messages such as "bring more toothpaste" or "contact social worker".

In each patients room there is a folder for the benefit of the patients and family to communicate to staff and for staff to write messages or updates as relevant. It is up to the patient as to where they would like to store this file and who has access to it.

Medications

Prescription medications are supplied by an off-site pharmacy (777 Stirling Drive-in Pharmacy). For some long term medications there may be a cost involved. If you have any concerns, please see your nurse.

Clothes and Laundry

Patients are asked to bring in their own pyjamas or night dresses, or any day clothes they may want to wear. Please also bring shoes for comfort and safety if walking around. The hospital does not provide a personal laundry service, so please ask family or friends to attend to any laundry.

Toiletries

Please bring all toiletries, shaving or trimming equipment with you as these are not provided on the ward.

Bringing food in for patients

If patients would like food and drink that is not provided by the hospital, there is a fridge available in the communal Day Room. All food/drink must be labelled with the patient's first name, room number and date of when items were first placed in the fridge.

Food poisoning is caused by eating food which contains harmful levels of bacteria or toxins. This can occur if food is not handled safely during preparation, cooking, storage, transport or serving. Food poisoning can be very serious for people recovering from an illness or for patients with a suppressed immune system.

Bethesda does not accept responsibility for food prepared outside the hospital and provided to patients by visitors.

Advice to boarders and overnight visitors

At times it may be necessary for family or friends to visit or stay overnight.

- Please speak to nursing staff if you feel this is required.
- Requests to stay or visit are at the discretion of the ward coordinator or hospital coordinator (after hours).
- Two visitors may be able to stay, but that depends on the size of the patient's room. Visitors are not allowed to sleep in the day rooms, since that prevents other people from using them.
- A small charge is levied to cover linen. A light breakfast is included in that charge. In some cases this charge may be covered with the patient's private health fund. If you have financial concerns, please speak with the ward coordinator.
- For security and safety reasons, it is **IMPERATIVE** that visitors **DO NOT** wander through the hospital at night **OR** let themselves or others in and out of the building. The hospital doors are closed from 8:00pm to 6:00am.
- If you do need to leave the building, you must advise one of the night staff and wait until the door can be opened for you.
- Bethesda is a smoke free facility - cigarette breaks for patients **CANNOT** be accommodated overnight because it compromises the safety of the building and its occupants.
- If you have any questions about staying overnight, please direct them to the ward coordinator (during office hours) or to the hospital coordinator (after hours).
- Boarders will be required to complete some paperwork for their stay on the ward.

Meals for visitors

- A fridge is provided for families to keep food chilled.
- We are unable to provide food preparation areas or equipment because of food regulations.
- If you require knives, forks or plates, please ask a staff member or a volunteer who will be happy to assist you.
- All food and drinks left in the fridge are to be labelled.

- The fridges content is monitored by staff for safety reasons.
- The hospital kitchen is unable to provide meals for visitors, though some allowances are made for boarders. Please check with the ward coordinator.
- Coffee and tea facilities are available in the Day Room opposite the ward reception.

Café

The café sells a variety of food and beverages Monday to Friday, 8.00am - 2.30pm. Occasionally, the café does close early, or may be closed for a hospital event, which will be displayed on the notice board outside the café. The ward reception will also be aware of any early closure so please feel free to ask.

Snack and vending machine

A snack vending machine is located on the ground floor, next to the lifts/stairs to the Riviera Ward, opposite the main reception. There is a variety of soft drinks, snacks and healthier options available to purchase. The machine takes coin and card payment.

Drinks trolley

The drinks trolley is a volunteer service which runs most evenings from 4.00pm - 5.00pm providing a complementary pre-dinner drink (alcoholic and soft drinks) to patients, families and visitors within the ward.

Day Rooms

PCU has two rooms which allow patients and their family and friends to spend time together outside of the patient's room. One of these day rooms is opposite the reception desk on the ward. It is equipped with several couches, a table and chairs, a television, and a variety of other books etc. We have an array of information pamphlets on a variety of topics relating to support for patients and their families and friends.

Another day room overlooks the river at the end of the ward. It has a wonderful view and is equipped with binoculars for those who would like a closer view of the dolphins in the river. At times, staff may need to use one of the day rooms for a family meeting. We ask for your understanding if we need you to move from a day room for a short period while it is used for this purpose.

Chapel

The Chapel is located on the ground floor of the hospital. It is designed to be a place of quietness and reflection. You may like to pray or record a prayer in the prayer book. The Chapel is open from 6.00am until approximately 8.00pm.

WiFi details

The hospital has a Wireless Internet connection for you to access. Select 'BethesdaPatient' and enter the password Bethesdaw1f1

Garden area

The garden area is located on the same level as Bethesda's main entrance. It can be accessed via the lift to the ground floor and is located at the end of the corridor opposite the Chapel. Smokers from PCU are limited to the pergola area, but all patients and visitors can use the garden areas between the hours of 8.00am - 5.00pm. Please ask your nurse or a volunteer to help you, should you require assistance.

Smoking

Bethesda is a 'smoke free' hospital, but an exception is made for palliative care patients only. Palliative care patients may use the pergola in the garden area described above. Please note the exemption is not extended to visitors or staff.

- The garden area (pergola only) is available from 8.00am - 5.00pm daily.
- Smoking is not permitted in any other area of the hospital.
- Nicotine replacement therapy is available on request for patients.

Parking

Bethesda has visitor parking outside the main entrance. The cost of parking is \$3 per hour or \$15 per day, 8.00am - 6.00pm, Monday to Friday. The parking machines take cash and credit cards and change can be obtained at reception. There are a number of ACROD parking bays near the main entrance.

There is also two hour free parking on Victoria Avenue and limited free all day parking on Bayview Terrace. If there are any issues meeting the cost of parking, please ask to see the social worker.

Public transport

Bethesda is a short walk from the shopping precinct Claremont Quarter, where the Claremont train station is located. The train station is on the Fremantle to Perth rail line. The train station is located on Gugerri Street. Bethesda is located on Queenslea Drive next to Christ Church Grammar School. Additionally, many bus routes pass close by.

Teaching and research

Bethesda Palliative Care Unit is a specialist facility which has a strong focus on teaching and research in the area of palliative care. As a result of our involvement in teaching and research, we aim to help the wider community to improve palliative care for those who require it. As such, we teach many different students, including medical, nursing and allied health students.

As a specialist unit, PCU assists many different research programs which vary over time. As with any research activity, if individuals are asked to participate, it is up to them to decide whether to do so. All research activities are approved by the PCU and supported by the staff who work in the unit.

Feedback

We want to hear what you have to say about our services. Your feedback will let us know what is important to you as we always try to improve our services. If you would like to offer a suggestion, provide feedback or compliment us, please feel free to contact the Clinical Nurse Manager, Elizabeth Brearley ebrearley@bethesda.org.au or provide feedback via the online form on our website.