Geriatric Team
Information for patients, carers and their families

The Geriatric Team provides specialised care for the older person, who may also be frail, living with dementia or experiencing an episode of acute confusion. The Geriatric Team is based in both the Sunshine Coast University Hospital and Nambour General Hospital.

The Geriatric Team is staffed by a multi-disciplinary team comprising of:

- geriatricians
- clinical nurse consultant geriatrics
- nurses
- pharmacists
- recreation officer
- occupational therapists
- social workers
- speech therapists
- dietitians
- physiotherapists
- aged care liaison
- allied health assistants.

The goal is to optimise an older person's level of functioning, through comprehensive medical assessment, management and review, nursing care and allied health support, aimed to support the individual's recovery.

We encourage you to take an active part in the care of your loved ones during the course of their admission. Assisting with feeding, personal care and walks outdoors can be vital to recovery. However, we do ask that you please first discuss with nursing staff before taking your loved ones off ward.

Low stimulus environment
If deemed beneficial in consultation with families/carers, we may recommend admission to our secure area.

This area offers a low stimulus environment which may help the recovery process by providing a safe space where unsettling noises and distractions are minimised. It is an environment with the ability to manage complex behaviours and care needs often associated with frailty, dementia and delirium. To help us maintain a low stimulus environment for patients, we request your assistance with keeping noise and visitors to a minimum.

It would be appreciated if:

- visitors are kept to less than four at a time
- excessive noise by visitors is avoided
- voices are low and electrical devices, such as mobile phones on silent
- assigned meeting rooms are used for larger meetings or aged care assessments.

Patient-centred care
We will develop an individual care plan for each patient, including food and fluid preferences, preferred routines and personal interests.

Please take the time to fill out the sunflower included in this pack, to assist us to develop a person-centred profile of care.
An important note about valuables
Patient property remains the responsibility of the patient. Wherever possible, please take valuables home for safekeeping.

The Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service does not accept responsibility for loss or damage to patient property while admitted.

What you can expect
- Option of secure low stimulus environment
- Patient focused care planning
- Individual and group therapy programs
- Nursing staff who respect the needs of the older person
- Specialised multi-disciplinary team support
- High falls risk prevention awareness
- Patient monitoring alarm system.

Belongings
Patients with a cognitive impairment often do not understand what personal belongings are theirs. It is not uncommon for items to go missing so please take valuable items home.

Please ensure all clothing and personal items are labeled. Items that could potentially be used as a weapon are not to be bought into the inpatient units, such as glass vases, scissors, knives or frames.

Importance of the rest period
Fatigue has been proven to increase agitation and restlessness for confused and frail patients. Research shows a short rest period after lunch may prevent individuals from becoming over tired and agitated during the afternoon period. It is preferred that visitors do not attend during the rest period.

Patient identification
Photos may be taken of each patient to assist with identification. Patient’s may be fitted with a monitoring device to enable the freedom to move around the unit safely. Staff will discuss this with you in the first instance.

Washing
Laundering facilities are not available. Please see nursing staff for collection of washing.

Medications
During admission, new medications may be commenced to optimise healthcare outcomes. This will be discussed with family. Patients will be closely monitored to observe the effects and to watch for side effects.

Preventing falls
Older people have a higher risk of falling. This can be due to a number of issues, including decreased mobility, side effects of medications and medical conditions. We aim to prevent falls through; good non-slip footwear, minimising clutter, and alarm devices. If an adverse incident should occur, staff will contact the next of kin. Please advise staff if there is any time you wish not to be contacted.

Group and individual therapy
Individual and group therapy programs are developed for patients during admission. Research shows this to be very beneficial to patient wellbeing. To personalise therapy, staff may talk with you about your loved one’s interests and ask you to fill out a Sunflower form. It is important for staff to know about your loved one, and if they have any strong likes or dislikes.

Visiting hours
See each ward for visiting hours.
Protected patient rest period is between 12.30pm to 2.30pm each day.

Feedback
If you would like to give a compliment, make a suggestion about how we can improve our service or make a complaint, we would like to hear from you. Consumer compliment feedback form or a Consumer complaint feedback form are available from reception. You can also talk to any of our staff.