

Same Sex Accommodation

Safeguarding your privacy and dignity

Every patient has the right to receive high quality care that is safe, effective and respects their privacy and dignity. The Whittington Hospital NHS Trust is committed to providing every patient with same sex accommodation because it helps to safeguard their privacy and dignity when they are often at their most vulnerable.

We are proud to confirm that mixed sex accommodation has been virtually eliminated in our trust. We have the necessary facilities, resources and culture to ensure that patients who are admitted to our hospitals will only share the room where they sleep with members of the same sex, and same-sex toilets and bathrooms will be close to their bed area.

Sharing with members of the opposite sex will only happen by exception based on clinical need (where patients need specialist care or special equipment is needed such as when being looked after on the high dependency or critical care units or when patients choose to share for instance in our chemotherapy or thalassaemia unit).

What does this mean for patients?

Other than in the circumstances set out above, patients admitted to the Whittington Hospital can expect to find the following:

Same sex-accommodation means:

- The ward or bay **where your bed is** will only have patients of the same sex as you
- Your **toilet and bathroom** will be just for your gender, and will be close to your bed area

It is possible that there will be both men and women patients on the same ward as you but they will not share your sleeping area. You may have to cross a ward corridor to reach your bathroom, but you will not have to walk through opposite-sex areas.

You may share some communal space, such as day rooms or dining rooms, and it is very likely that you will see both men and women patients as you move around the hospital (e.g. on your way to X-ray or the operating theatre).

It is probable that visitors of the opposite gender will come into the ward or bay where your bed is and this may include patients visiting each other.

It is almost certain that both male and female nurses, doctors and other staff will come into your ward or bay area.

If you need help to use the toilet or take a bath (e.g. you need a hoist or special bath) then you may be taken to a "unisex" bathroom used by both men and women, but a member of staff will be with you, and other patients will not be in the bathroom at the same time.

The Whittington will not turn patients away just because a "right-sex" bed is not immediately available

To ensure we deliver our commitment we will work:

| Patient Experience |
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| To ensure that there is an on-going process in place to measure patient experience of single sex accommodation with reports submitted to our Trust Board |
| To ensure there is a process to track other mechanisms for determining patient experience of single sex accommodation, e.g. through patient complaints/comments from Governors, PALs and LinKs |
| To provide information leaflets for patients on single sex accommodation and ensure they are used by staff in discussions with patients. |
| Delivery of single sex accommodation will always be considered when planning any new or refurbished estate development schemes |
| Where there are rare occurrences of gender mixing for non-clinical reasons, a process exists to investigate the reason and take remedial actions as required to prevent future occurrence |
| The relevant Trust policies will refer to requirement to delivering single sex accommodation and privacy and dignity |
| Staff Culture |
| The Board is committed to on-going delivery of single sex accommodation |
| The Trust believes that delivering single sex accommodation should be the norm. Mixing will only occur by exception for reasons of clinical justification or patient choice. |
| If mixing does occur, staff will attempt to rectify the situation as soon as possible, whilst safeguarding the patient's dignity and keeping the patient informed about why the situation occurred and what is being done to address it (with an indication of how long this will take) |
| Issues of privacy/dignity and single sex accommodation are included in mandatory staff training and induction and the trust provides training to support the elimination of mixed sex accommodation and to promote the protection of privacy and dignity. |

If our care should fall short of the required standard, we will report it. We will also set up a monitoring mechanism to make sure that we do not misclassify any of our reports. We will publish the results of our monitoring on our website under the single sex accommodation domain

What do I do if I think I am in mixed sex accommodation?

If in the event of a rare circumstance when it is impossible to provide separate accommodation, then our staff will be expected to correct the situation as soon as possible, whilst safeguarding your dignity. They will keep you informed about why this has happened and what we are doing to put it right and how long this will take.

We want to know about your experiences. Discuss your concerns with the ward manger on your ward or you can contact the clinical site practitioner (available 24 hours a day on bleep 3589 via switchboard) if you have any comments or concerns. Any nurse on your ward will be able to help you to do this.

These situations are taken very seriously and each case is investigated to ensure we learn from the experience. Every breach of our 'single sex standard' is reported to the Trust board.

Signed:

Joe Liddane
Chairman

Dr YiMien Koh
CEO