

Welcome

The Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) is a special ward for children and young people who are seriously ill or recovering from major surgery.

We're committed to providing safe, high-quality, family-centred care and working in partnership with you to ensure the best possible outcome for your child. We believe parents and carers play an important role in the care we provide and we welcome your involvement in their care wherever possible.

Our staff are always available to answer any questions you may have during your child's stay.

Location and access

The PICU is a locked unit located on Level 4 of the hospital, just around the corner from the A lifts. To enter, please see our reception staff or use the intercom beside the entry doors. Please be patient – our staff may be busy attending to your child and may not be able to answer straight away.

For the security of patients, visitors and staff, all external entrance doors to the hospital are locked between 8pm and 6am. Entry to the hospital during these hours is through the Emergency department on Stanley Street. You can exit at any time from any door.

Should you need to leave the hospital between 8pm and 6am, you will need a pass out to reenter the hospital. Please ask our nursing staff for one.

Visitors

Parents and carers can visit anytime (day or night) and are encouraged to spend as much time with their child as possible.

Other visitors are welcome between 10am and noon, and 2pm and 9pm with parent/carer approval. We ask that no more than two people at a time are at your child's bedside. Please ensure young visitors are supervised by an adult at all times. Exceptions may only be made at the discretion of the nurse in charge.

Parents/carers will be asked to complete a visitors form on admission stating who can visit their child without their presence.

Your child's care team

Caring for your child in intensive care requires a team of health professionals 24 hours a day. A registered nurse will provide direct bedside care and will be in close attendance at all times during your child's stay.

A nurse unit manager and associate nurse manager will also be available to assist with any concerns or questions you may have about the care of your child.

At least two medical registrars (doctors), including a fellow (senior doctor), will be in the unit at all times to care for your child under the guidance of the medical director and consultant staff specialists. These are the primary doctors taking care of your child in PICU.

Other health care professionals who may visit your child to provide specialised services and support, include:

- Physiotherapists provide respiratory (chest) treatment, continue your child's milestone development and assist with mobilisation.
- Pharmacists prepare and supply any medications that your child requires.
- Radiographers take X-rays with a portable machine in the unit.
- Dietitians assess your child's nutritional intake and provide individualised advice to meet their medical and/or health needs.
- Anaesthetists administer anaesthetic to put your child to sleep during and after any operation.
- Speech pathologists assess your child's speech, voice and language skills and assist with any specific feeding difficulties
- Occupational therapists help maintain your child's health while they are in the PICU. This may include working with nurses to keep your child's skin healthy; looking after their hands if they are swollen or feeling stiff and helping them (or their siblings) cope with the unfamiliar hospital environment.
- Social workers provide support, counselling, and help with emergency accommodation if needed.
- Welfare officers provide assistance with accommodation, travel and parking.

Equipment and treatment

While your child is in the PICU, they may be hooked up to various pieces of equipment. Don't be alarmed, these machines provide us with the information needed to care for your child. The most common things you may see include:

- A monitor positioned above your child displays their heartbeat, breathing rate, oxygen level and blood pressure. This information is recorded via the leads placed on your child's chest.
- An arterial line allows staff to collect blood samples without having to use a needle each time. It also measures your child's blood pressure.
- A ventilator provides oxygen and helps your child breathe. This treatment is adjusted according to the results of 'blood gas' blood tests.
- The computer at each bedside is used to document notes on your child's condition and progress.

Monitor alarms and beeps are often heard in PICU and can be frightening, but they do not necessarily mean there is something wrong. The bedside equipment is highly sensitive and sometimes just a small movement by your child can set off an alarm. Your child's nurse will advise you if there is a concern. We ask that you do not touch any of the equipment including the silencing of alarms.

Daily routines in PICU

- Shift handover occurs every day between 7am and 7.30am and in the evening between 7pm and 7.30pm. At this time, all important information about your child's care will be passed on to the next shift's nursing team.
- Ward rounds take place every morning and afternoon. During rounds, the staff specialists and other staff looking after your child will visit to check their progress. Parents/carers are invited to participate in the afternoon rounds.

Hand hygiene

Please be sure to wash your hands when you enter and leave the unit, and before and after touching your child. Look for the 'Five moments of hand hygiene' posters in each bedspace to learn the safest way to wash your hands.

Keeping your child safe

- Patient identification (ID) bands must be worn at all times. The band confirms your child's name and essential details and ensures he/she receives the right treatment.
- Uncovered hot drinks (ie. tea and coffee) cannot be brought on to the ward under any circumstances.
- Friends and family are asked not to visit if they are sick, or have recently been sick. This helps prevent the spread of infection to patients.
- All inpatient wards are nut-free due to the risk of allergies. Please do not bring nuts or products containing nuts (including peanut butter) into the ward.
- Fresh flowers and latex balloons are not permitted in the hospital because they can trigger allergic reactions in some patients.

If you leave the unit...

Please tell your child's nurse:

- where you will be
- your contact telephone number
- the time you expect to return.

Telephones

For the comfort of all patients and families, we ask that all mobile phones be turned to silent/vibrate before entering the unit. Wherever possible, please make or receive calls outside the PICU.

Public telephones are located on Levels 1 and 2.

Parent and carer wellbeing

Having a child in intensive care can be very stressful, so it is important for parents and carers to take some time to look after themselves, too.

We encourage you to:

- Take frequent breaks from your child's bedside
- Go for a walk outside and get some fresh air.
- Sleep and rest when possible.
- Eat and drink regularly. Meals and snacks should be eaten in the parent lounge, not at the bedside.
- Express your feelings, fears and worries to staff or someone else you can talk to.
- Write down any questions you have.

Patient entertainment

The touch-screen Patient Entertainment System found at each inpatient bedside allows children to access a range of television stations, radio, games, internet, movies, video conferencing and patient information.

Please be mindful of volume levels. Many of our patients require a quiet environment for their recovery and we ask that everyone respects the comfort of others. Headphones should be used for TVs and portable electronic devices.

Family facilities

Ward lounge

PICU has two family lounges. The main family lounge is located just outside the entrance to the unit. This includes a fridge, microwave, tea/coffee-making facilities and a TV.

The second family lounge is located next to Bed 12 and includes a fridge, microwave, tea/coffee-making facilities and a TV.

The toilets for PICU family members or visitors are located next to the main parent lounge at the PICU entrance.

Please be respectful of these areas as they are for all families of critically ill children to use.

Balcony

There is a large outdoor balcony within the unit that parents are welcome to use. Entry to the balcony is via the ward's entry corridor.

Laundry facilities

Laundries are located on levels 8 and 11 of the hospital for parents and carers. These facilities are open 24 hours.

Emergency overnight accommodation

Children's Health Queensland in partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities has 10 single rooms available on Level 5 of the hospital for parents and carers of children in the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit. Each room has access to a shared parent lounge, kitchenette and bathroom facilities. Two rooms will have ensuites, one with disabled access. Ask our staff for more information.

Emergency accommodation keys must be returned to staff when your child is being transferred from PICU.

Transfer from PICU

When your child no longer requires intensive care services they will be moved to one of the hospital's general wards for further care.

We are generally able to anticipate their time of discharge but please keep in mind that times may vary due to unexpected circumstances. We will try to discuss this with you, however if your child is discharged early, we will contact you by phone or in person before hand. It is important to always let our nursing staff know how we contact you if you leave the unit.

Training and research

The PICU is committed to supporting training and research activities that will improve the health of children in Queensland and around the world. Our research team has a strong, established track record and is dedicated to exploring and improving critical illness for children and their families. While you are in the PICU, you may be approached by one of our research team members to take part in one of our research projects. There is no obligation for you and your child to participate. Whether you decide to participate or not, your child will receive the same standard of care.

Contact us

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t 07 3068 1400 | 07 3068 1111 (general enquiries)
f 07 3068 2119

For more information about the hospital, see our Welcome booklet on the Patient Entertainment System or via our website:
www.childrens.health.qld.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/welcome-lcch-book.pdf



If you need an interpreter, ask staff to contact the Interpreter Services Coordinator.

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