

# Welcome to the Neurosurgery Unit 7.3

Our goal is to get you home.

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The Neurosurgery Unit is for people with brain and/or spinal cord injury or disease. Our goal is to give the best possible care to you using a team approach.

We have different levels of care to support your recovery. We will also suggest ways your loved ones can support you during your recovery.

## **The Unit offers 2 levels of care depending on your needs:**

- Neurosurgery Intermediate Care Unit (IMCU)
  - › Patients who need close observation and monitoring are cared for in this unit. Each bed is in a private room.
- Neurosurgery floor
  - › Almost all patients spend part of their stay on this floor. Most of our patients' recovery takes place in this 31-bed area.

Most people are admitted to the Neurosurgery floor, but your stay may include admission to both of these care areas.

## **Transitioning from the ICU**

Coming to the IMCU or Neurosurgery floor from the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) is an important step in your recovery. The ICU nurse will call Unit 7.3 and tell us about your treatment plans.

- You will have the same neurosurgeon and neurosurgery residents as you did in the ICU.
- As you get better, the health care team will not need to check your vital signs (heart rate, temperature, breathing, blood pressure) as often and you may not be connected to a monitor.
- In the IMCU, there are 3 registered nurses (RNs) caring for 6 patients.
- Each nurse assigned to help with your care will also be caring for other patients. You may not see a nurse at all times.
- You will have a call bell to alert the nurse if you need anything, but please be patient. Your nurse may be helping another patient.

## **Visitors**

IMCU visiting hours:

- › 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
- › 3:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Rest is important for healing, so we do not allow visitors from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.

- Loved ones are important for your recovery. If you are not able to decide who may visit, your next of kin will decide with guidance from a nurse.
- We understand that this may be an emotional time for you. Please talk to us about any needs that come up.
- We try to limit visitors to 2 at a time. If a visit is making you upset or uncomfortable, we may ask your visitors to leave the room.

**Message to loved ones:**

We do not encourage visitors to stay overnight. Leaving the hospital to rest and take care of personal matters will help you to be at your best as part of your loved one's health care team. It will also help you get ready for when your loved one is discharged. If you get too exhausted (tired) now, it will be harder to help your loved one after they leave the hospital.

## Home First and discharge planning

- It is important to start planning for your discharge home as soon as you are admitted to the hospital. Right now, you may not feel ready to go home. Our team will work with you to make sure that you have the support you need to go home.
- We know that for most people, living at home is where they want to be. Home First is about:
  - › creating a discharge plan with the goal of getting you back home.
  - › providing the care you need to keep living at home.
- We know that it can be stressful to find and put in place all of the programs and services you need. **Please ask for a referral to Home First.** We can connect you to programs and services in your area.
- We can help you figure out the best next step for you if you meet one of these:
  - › You are facing health changes that affect your ability to meet your needs.

### OR

- › You are helping a loved one who wishes to return home from the hospital, but needs help to do this.
- We work with you and your loved ones to find the best ways to support you at home.

**The following organizations can help you find resources to support your discharge from the hospital or your care at home:**

**Caregivers Nova Scotia**

- › <http://caregiversns.org/>
- › Phone (toll-free): 1-877-488-7390
- › Email: [info@CaregiversNS.org](mailto:info@CaregiversNS.org)

**211**

- › [www.ns.211.ca](http://www.ns.211.ca)
- › Phone: 211
- › Email: [help@ns.211.ca](mailto:help@ns.211.ca)
- › Text: 21167
- › Live chat is available online  
Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

If you need a place to stay, there are not-for-profit lodgings near the QEII that have rooms for patients and their loved ones.

### **Halifax Haven Guest Home**

- › Email: [halifaxhaven@gmail.com](mailto:halifaxhaven@gmail.com)
- › 5897 Inglis Street
- › Phone: 902-421-1650

### **Point Pleasant Lodge**

- › [www.pointpleasantlodge.com](http://www.pointpleasantlodge.com)
- › 1121 South Park Street
- › Phone: 902-421-1599

### **The Dr. Susan K. Roberts Lodge That Gives Canadian Cancer Society**

- › [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)
- › 5826 South Street
- › Phone: 1-800-639-0222 (toll-free) or  
902-420-1849

Local hotels also have discounted rates for patients' loved ones. Please ask your nurse or the unit clerk for help when your loved ones is deciding where to stay.

The neurosurgery team will oversee your care. The team is in the hospital at all times, but there may not be a doctor on the floor at all times. This means that you may have to wait to talk with a doctor for meetings with your loved ones or non-urgent issues. We will try to help you plan ahead if you would like to talk with a doctor.

**We encourage your loved ones to help with your care.**

- Loved ones can help with tasks like feeding or physiotherapy.
- Meal times are often busy with activities like patients returning from the operating room (OR) or getting medications. Help with meal trays is greatly appreciated.

**TV service is available on the floor.**

- TVs are provided by an outside company. Please ask your nurse for information on this service.

**There are no patient phones in the IMCU.**

- Cell phones can be used.



# **Your team members**

## **You and your loved ones**

Loved ones can give some of the best medicine. We are happy to arrange a meeting with members of the health care team to answer your loved ones' questions and concerns.

## **Nurses**

Our nurses have special knowledge in neuroscience nursing. They watch for changes in your condition and arrange for your care with other team members.

## **Charge Nurse**

The charge nurse is responsible for managing care and patient movement within the unit. The charge nurse is also a resource and support for staff, patients, and families.

## **Nurse Practitioner (NP)**

The NP is a Registered Nurse (RN) with advanced knowledge, skills, and education. The NP works closely with you, your loved ones, and other health care providers to address all of your health needs and manage acute (short term) and chronic (ongoing) illnesses.

## **Brain Tumour Coordinator**

The Brain Tumour Coordinator is an RN trained in the care and support of patients with tumours. The Brain Tumour Coordinator helps to transition your care from the hospital to home, and arrange any follow-up visits.

## **Transsphenoidal (TSS)/Pituitary Nurse**

The pituitary nurse:

- › goes over what you need to know before and after your surgery.
- › answers your questions and helps you understand your medications, blood work, and follow-up appointments with the team.
- › tells you about research projects at Nova Scotia Health and how you may take part.
- › is your contact for questions and advice after your discharge home.

## **Continuing Care Coordinator**

The continuing care coordinator helps arrange for services you may need when you go home. Please read the pamphlet *Continuing Care: Important Information for You* for more information:

- › [www.nshealth.ca/sites/nshealth.ca/files/patientinformation/2120.pdf](http://www.nshealth.ca/sites/nshealth.ca/files/patientinformation/2120.pdf)

## **Dietitian**

The dietitian works with other team members to make sure you are getting the right type and amount of food. Together with the speech language pathologist, they can help with any swallowing problems you may have.

## **Occupational Therapist (OT)**

The OT helps you do daily activities on your own, like washing, dressing, eating, and using the kitchen. They can also help with memory and problem-solving skills. They may also suggest equipment to make going home as safe and easy as possible.

## **Physiotherapist (PT)**

The PT helps you to do as much as you can on your own. They will work with you on your strength, balance, and movement. Your loved ones is encouraged to help too.

## **Recreation Therapy**

The recreation therapy team helps you improve and/or keep your abilities in the areas of concentration (focus), and physical, emotional, and social health. They support you in doing more for yourself and making healthy leisure choices.

## **Unit Manager**

The unit manager looks after the administration and leadership of the unit, together with the hospital's administrative staff.

## **Patient Representative**

This service is available to patients and/or families who have concerns or compliments about any part of their hospital care. To talk to the patient representative:

- › Phone: 902-473-2133
- › Phone (toll-free): 1-844-884-4177
- › Email: [healthcareexperience@nshealth.ca](mailto:healthcareexperience@nshealth.ca)

## **Social Worker**

The social worker can help you and your family cope with the stress and hard decisions that often come with illness and being in the hospital. They can also help with financial (money) concerns, plans for going home, and setting up a meeting with you loved ones, if needed.

## **Speech Language Pathologist (SLP)**

The SLP works with patients who have trouble talking and understanding spoken and/or written words. The SLP also helps with swallowing problems.

## **Spiritual Care**

Spiritual care services are available for support of your spiritual needs. The nursing staff will help you contact them. The chapel is on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the Halifax Infirmary site at the Summer Street entrance, down the hallway by the Security office.

## **Helpful hints**

### **Parking**

- The parking lot on Summer Street charges an hourly rate to a maximum of \$14.50 per day. After you have been in the hospital for 2 weeks, the unit clerk can give your loved ones a form to get a discounted rate.
- There is metered parking on Summer Street. You may also make contactless payments and add time to your parking through the Hotspot or Park Indigo apps. You can download these apps from the Apple App Store or from Google Play.
- There is also 1 and 2-hour parking on the streets around the hospital. Please note that these times are strictly enforced and if the meter runs out you may get a parking ticket.

## **Personal belongings**

The hospital and staff are not responsible for the loss of any valuables or personal items. Please send any valuables or money home with your loved ones.

## **Crisis room**

This is a quiet room for patients' loved ones. They can talk privately with a health care team member and/or their loved one about the patient's plan of care.

## **Brain Repair Centre**

The Brain Repair Centre is made up of a group of research scientists. They focus on the treatment and repair of the brain and how it is affected by diseases like Parkinson's, ALS, stroke, spinal cord injury, and depression.

## **Waiting room**

There is a waiting room for loved ones between units 7.2 and 7.3. This is a comfortable area with a TV, puzzles, and magazines.

## **Washroom**

The visitors' washroom is beside the entrance to Unit 7.3.

## **Important phone numbers**

### **IMCU:**

› 902-473-2668

### **Unit 7.3 Nurses' station:**

› 902-473-2088 or 902-473-2089

### **QE II Patient Line (to connect to patient rooms):**

› 902-473-1510

## **Conveniences at the H.I. site**

- Summer Savory Restaurant, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor

Hours:

› 7:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. (everyday)

- Drugstore, 1<sup>st</sup> floor

Hours:

› 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. (weekdays only)

Prescription service is available.

# Notes:

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This pamphlet is for educational purposes only. It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider. The information may not apply to all situations. If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.

Find this pamphlet and all our patient resources here:  
<https://library.nshealth.ca/Patients-Guides>

Connect with a registered nurse in Nova Scotia any time:  
Call 811 or visit: <https://811.novascotia.ca>

*Prepared by:* Neurosurgery Nursing Staff  
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