

Surgical Ambulatory Care Unit (SACU)

Information for patients

How does Surgical Ambulatory Care Unit (SACU) work?

We care for patients from a broad range of surgical specialties. We provide early assessment for ambulatory emergency surgical patients and treatment for surgical conditions.

We aim to provide rapid access to assessment, diagnosis and treatment outside of the emergency department for stable ambulant surgical patients on the same day of arrival. We hope to avoid you being admitted to the hospital as an inpatient and, if clinically safe to do so, you will go home on the same day of arrival.

As a result, you may have more than one investigation or intervention while on the unit. We ask that you remain patient as these investigations and results can take some time.

SACU is not a walk-in service.

A referral must be sent and discussed with the accepting surgical team.

Location:

The SACU is located on the Integrated SDEC and Discharge Unit on the first floor of the Golden Jubilee Wing, Kings College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London, SE5 9RS.

Tel: 020 3299 7089

SACU Referrals are accepted from 8.30am to 6pm, Mondays to Sundays.

Who do we treat?

You may have been referred to SACU by King's Emergency Department (ED), your doctor, GP, NHS 111, London Ambulance Services (LAS), outpatient clinics, or a ward or other hospital department.

Our surgical specialties include General Surgery, Urology, Upper Gastrointestinal Surgery, Colorectal Surgery, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Orthopaedics, Trauma Surgery and Gynaecology.

What will happen?

SACU is a multidisciplinary area, and you will often see more than one speciality of staff. One of our nurses will help coordinate your care and will communicate with you throughout your stay.

On arrival you will be asked to take a seat in our waiting area. A nurse or healthcare assistant will take your details, record your observations and perform any blood tests that have been requested. We will then organise any other planned investigations you need (ultrasound scan, CT, X-ray).

A doctor will review you in one of our assessment rooms and decide on the most suitable treatment.

We will make every attempt to see you quickly. Unfortunately, there may be a delay at times as our doctors may be operating or caring for people elsewhere in the hospital. If this is the case, we will let you know.

What time should I come to the SACU?

Patients from Emergency Department (ED) or Urgent Treatment Centre (UTC)

If you visited ED overnight and have been asked to attend SACU for a review the following day, please attend promptly in the morning between 9am and 10.30am, unless you have received a text message confirming the exact time of your appointment. We will have basic knowledge of your background and the reason for your referral. We may carry out repeat tests and planned investigations.

If you have been scheduled for an ultrasound scan, please do not eat or drink anything other than water in the morning before your appointment as this will cause a delay to your scan.

If you need a repeat investigation such as blood tests, X-rays, CT scan or ultrasound, it may take some time to get the results. Please be patient with the staff as they are trying their best to get it organised as soon as possible but as this is a trauma centre, there can be a long wait.

Patients from a GP

If you have been referred to SACU by your GP, bring a copy of the referral letter with you (if you have one). Please aim to arrive within two hours of your GP appointment time and no later than 4pm, to make sure we can complete the necessary investigations.

Patients from a ward or outpatient clinic

If you have been referred to SACU after a stay in hospital, please come at the exact time you are booked in.

Please bring your discharge letter with you as this will help us to make sure you receive care as planned on leaving hospital. Your primary care team may ask you to attend so we can check your progress after you're discharged. Please be prepared to wait for a review as it may take some time for the results of investigations to come back.

How long will I be in the SACU?

You may be here for two to six hours, or sometimes longer, depending on why you have been referred.

Will I stay or go home?

Our aim is to reduce the time you spend in hospital. You may be asked to return for further investigations.

If a minor procedure is needed, we will try to do this on the day in one of our treatment rooms. If a general anaesthetic is needed, you may be admitted to the hospital overnight for this. In some cases, patients may be operated on in our Day Surgery Unit at a later date, depending on the earliest availability.

Some operations must be planned in advanced (elective surgery) and you may have to wait several weeks to months for this. You will be contacted by the hospital's surgical admissions team about this.

If you haven't heard from them after 4 weeks, the surgical admissions team can be contacted on 020 3299 8960.

If you do need admission to hospital this will be discussed with you by the doctor.

Follow-up appointments

Most patients can have their tests or procedures on the same day. If you do need to come back, we will book a follow-up appointment with you.

Follow-up appointments are carried out between 9am and 11am. We ask that you report promptly to Staff Base Room in Surgical Ambulatory Care Unit (SACU), Integrated SDEC and Discharge Unit, First Floor, Golden Jubilee Wing to ensure the efficiency of our service.

SACU provides a 2 weeks follow-up window to our surgical patients from the day they last visited SACU if the concern is related to the previous attendance. You must contact the department to discuss if it is appropriate for you to be reviewed in SACU.

The SACU hotline service provides non-urgent surgical specialist advice from a clinician from Monday to Friday, 9.30am to 4pm. For urgent and out of hours advice, patients must call their GPs or NHS 111 or attend the nearest Emergency Department for emergency cases.

Wound care

Unfortunately, due to limited capacity and resources, we cannot provide regular wound care. After your procedure with SACU, please book dressing changes with your GP or local walk-in centre for the continuation of your wound care.

Chaperone

Our examination and treatment in the King's College Hospital Outpatients and Clinics are carried out by both male and female practitioners.

If you feel that you would like a chaperone to be present during any examination or procedures, please ask a member of the team.

Violence and abuse

Violence or abusive behaviour is never ok. Neither will be accepted towards patients, visitors or members of staff.

Patient feedback

We are always trying to improve our service and welcome any feedback. You will be asked to help us by completing an "I Want Great Care" survey on discharge. Please feel free to leave any comments.

Pharmacy

Medications can be collected from the Outpatient Pharmacy. This is located on Denmark Hill next to the Dental Institute. However, on Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm, tickets need to be collected first from the Pharmacy Ticket Booth on the ground floor of the Golden Jubilee Wing, next to the stairs.

Consent

We must by law obtain your written consent to any operation and some other procedures beforehand. Staff will explain the risks, benefits and alternatives before they ask you to sign the consent form. If you are unsure about any aspect of the procedure or treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to speak with a senior member of staff again.

Useful contact information

Surgical Administrators Details

- New Patient Appointments: 020 3299 1919
- SACU Hotline (Monday to Friday 9.30am to 4pm): 020 3299 5364
- Surgical Outpatient Clinic (Second floor, Willowfield Building): 020 3299 2428 or 020 3299 2590
- Dental and Oral and Maxillofacial Outpatient Clinic: 020 3299 7918
- Colorectal Secretaries: 020 3299 3210, 020 3299 3869 or 020 3299 3268
- Oral and Maxillofacial Service Delivery Manager: 020 3299 5194
- Orthopaedic Secretaries: 020 3299 3388 or 020 3299 3649
- Upper Gastrointestinal Surgery Secretaries: 020 3299 6361, 020 3299 5502, 020 3299 3065 or 020 3299 5188
- Urology Secretaries: 0203 299 3244, 020 3299 4856, or 020 3299 3628

Admissions and Surgery

- Day Surgery Unit (DSU): 020 3299 3483
- Surgical (Colorectal and Upper GI) Admissions: 020 3299 8960
- Urology Admissions: 020 3299 1155
- Gynaecology Admissions: 020 3299 4045
- Dental and Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Admissions: 020 3299 0035 or 020 3299 0147

Imaging Departments

- CT Department: 020 3299 3361
- CT Email: kch-tr.ct_reception_dh@nhs.net
- Ultrasound Department: 020 3299 3059
- Ultrasound Email: kch-tr.us_reception_dh@nhs.net
- MRI Department: 020 3299 1797
- X-Ray / Radiology Department: 020 3299 3111

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) is a service that offers support, information and assistance to patients, relatives and visitors. They can also provide help and advice if you have a concern or complaint that staff have not been able to resolve for you. They can also pass on praise or thanks to our teams. The PALS office is located on the ground floor of the Hambleton Wing, near the main entrance on Bessemer Road - staff will be happy to direct you.

PALS at King's College Hospital, Denmark Hill, London SE5 9RS

Tel: 020 3299 4618

Email: kings.pals@nhs.net

If you would like the information in this leaflet in a different language or format, please contact our Interpreting and Accessible Communication Support on 020 3299 4618 or email kings.access@nhs.net

www.kch.nhs.uk

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Urgent & Planned Care
Corporate Comms: 2759