

Mental Health Care Program

Inpatient Handbook



St. Thomas Elgin
General Hospital

Welcome

In keeping with our values of compassion, accountability, respect, excellence and safety, St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital is committed to providing an excellent patient care experience.

To support you during your admission to the Inpatient Mental Health Care Unit, we have outlined some information that we believe to be helpful.

Should you have any questions in regard to your hospital admission please discuss these with your psychiatrist, assigned nurse or the Mental Health Care Manager.

What to Expect?

St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital is dedicated to providing an excellent patient care experience, every time.

As an inpatient in the mental health care program, you can expect:

- Individual meeting(s) with members of your health care team
- Group programming to promote your recovery

A word about groups – At the beginning of your stay, you may find that you tire easily and have trouble with concentration. Do not be discouraged; this is a normal stage in your recovery.

It is recommended that you participate in programs as they have been designed to support your recovery by:

- Achieving and maintaining an optimum level of functioning in preparation for discharge
- Experiencing quality of life that is meaningful to you
- Developing realistic goals and expectations to help you succeed

Things to Know



Scents Policy

We would ask that you refrain from using strong scented perfumes, lotions or aftershave while on the inpatient unit as the hospital is considered scent free.

Clean Hands Heal

We are committed to good hand hygiene and we promise to work hard to protect you from germs that can spread in a hospital setting. Everyone will be washing their hands before entering and after leaving your room, touching your belongings or person.

We ask that you and your visitors also take the opportunity to prevent the spread of germs that can make you sick by using the hand washing stations or hand sanitizers located on the unit.

Smoking

St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital is a smoke free facility by law. Smoking is NOT permitted anywhere in the hospital or on the hospital grounds. If you smoke and have passes, you must leave the hospital property. The hospital assumes no responsibility for any injuries that may occur as a result of your decision to smoke while a patient at the hospital. Pass time to smoke must be taken outside of individual, group and program times. For individuals who are restricted to the unit because of concerns for their safety, nicotine replacement therapy will be offered. Smoking cessation counselling is also available.

Meal Services

A menu selection is available daily. Your assigned nurse can assist you in placing an order. Should you forget to order a meal, a standard meal is delivered. A tray service is provided in the unit's dining room. After you have eaten your meal, we ask that you return your tray to the diet cart.

Nutrition breaks are available to you and you are welcome to obtain these from our unit kitchenette. Special needs can be discussed with your nurse. Personal food items may be labelled and stored in the refrigerator located in the dining room. We ask that no food items be kept in your room.

We would ask that patients and their visitors support our attempts at keeping our kitchen area neat and tidy. We traditionally close the dining area at 10:30 p.m. each night. Please approach staff should you require a drink or light snack to help you settle for the night.

“The staff was always willing to listen to me and explain things which I really appreciated.”

Safety and Privacy

Safety, both physical and psychological, is a necessary condition for effective treatment. Aggressive or violent behavior towards others or property will not be tolerated.

Protecting Your Privacy

Personal information obtained will only be shared with team members within the circle of care to ensure the best treatment to enhance your well-being. Your assigned nurse will review the limits of confidentiality with you as part of the admission process and address any questions.

Although cell phones and computers are allowed within the hospital, we ask that you respect the privacy of others by refraining from using the camera, video or sound recording functions and restricting the use of your cell phone or computer to your room. In the event that the health care team has concerns regarding safety, you may be asked to refrain from using the devices or alternatively using them under supervision.

A video surveillance system has been installed in areas throughout the hospital including common areas within the inpatient mental health unit. Video surveillance is supported by hospital policy and informed by legislation such as Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA), Personal Health Information Act (PHIPA)

and the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). Video surveillance is used to assist in the unobtrusive monitoring of care and treatment. Where a higher expectation of privacy is concerned such as showers and washrooms, video surveillance will not be used.

Alcohol and Non-Prescription Drugs

Because most medications interact negatively with substances, we strongly recommend that you refrain from their use while undergoing treatment. To respect the treatment being provided on the inpatient unit, we ask that alcohol and drugs not be brought to the unit by yourself, family or visitors. In the event that such items are brought to the unit, you will be asked to give them to nursing staff. If you are unwilling to honour this request, your team will question the feasibility of maintaining hospitalization at this time.

Preparing for Your Stay



What Not to Bring:

As part of routine safety protocols, belongings are checked on admission and again when returning from passes. Belongings brought in by family or friends are also checked. Items to avoid include:

- Aerosols
- Alcohol solvents and other toxic or hazardous substances
- Firearms and ammunition (fake or real)
- Glass and metallic containers (i.e. vases, drink cans, etc.)
- Pornographic material

In the event that an item brought into hospital is deemed to be a prohibited item, these will be removed, sent home with your family, discarded or sent to our local police department for safe keeping. You may retrieve the items at the local police department on your discharge.

For safety reason, all electrical appliances used in the hospital must have a CSA or ULC approval sticker on them. Staff will ask to check your appliances on admission. Any recharging cords must be locked up in your lockers and staff approached to unlock when wanting to use.

What to Bring:

When preparing for an overnight or extended stay at the hospital, bringing personal items from home can help make a patient's stay more comfortable. Please consult the lists below to identify what to bring for a stay.

- Personal toiletry items: (may include)
 - Toothbrush & toothpaste
 - Brush
 - Soap
 - Unscented deodorant
 - Shaving equipment
 - Shampoo
 - Kleenex
 - Pyjamas or night gown, bathrobe & non-slip slippers or shoes
- Health Card (OHIP)
- Current prescriptions and non-prescription (vitamins, supplements and herbals)

Include a list of recent medications from your pharmacy. Please bring medication in their original containers



I want to thank everyone for taking such good care of me. We are so fortunate to have our hospital and all who help make it so great.”

Use of Hospital Facilities

Bedrooms

Rooms are assigned by staff and may change during your stay. Patients are not to enter others' rooms. Please visit in the lounges. Your living area should be kept tidy including making your bed.

Clothing and Laundry

Please wear your street clothes while on the unit. For safety, you are required to wear non skid footwear. Disposable slippers are available. On rare occasions for safety reasons only, you may be required to wear hospital clothing.

Laundry facilities are available on the unit at no cost. Staff will provide laundry detergent and assistance should you require. Clean towels and face clothes will be provided to you each evening by the staff.

Use of Showers and Linen

The shower areas on the unit are open daily from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. We ask that once you have completed your shower and are exiting the room to please slide the door sign to dirty. This way, the staff will know to clean the shower for the next person. Please use the hampers located in the hall to place dirty hospital linen and towels.

Telephone Calls

There is a portable phone for your use. Local calls only. If a long distance call needs to be made, you will need to call collect. Personal cell phones may be used only in your room. While in meetings or groups, you are asked to set your cell phone to silent alert.

In order to support the needs of other patients who are attempting to settle for the night, we would ask your assistance in restricting use of the phone after 10 p.m.

Loss or Damaged Property

St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital assumes no responsibility for loss or damage to personal property. Please send valuables home as space is limited on the unit. If this is not possible, staff will secure your belongings in a storage area. If you happen to leave any belongings behind on discharge, we will keep them on the inpatient unit for 48 hours only. Special arrangements can be made; otherwise the unclaimed items will be disposed of.

Visitor Information



Unit Passes and Visitors

Throughout your admission the health care team will discuss with you, your need for assistance in maintaining safety. Pass levels are determined based on these continued discussions. Although your independence is important to us, STEGH clinicians do retain the legal right to decline passes if they decide this is in your best interest. Our current pass levels are as follows:

- Level 0: No passes
- Level 1: 20 minute passes; 4 per day
- Level 2: 2-4 hour passes
- Level 3: Day Pass (up to 8 hours)
- Level 4: Passes Ad Lib

We would ask that when you are going on pass to inform your assigned nurse

and notify them of your expected return. Please sign out at the communication desk. You may be required to take medications while away from hospital. Upon returning from pass, check in with your assigned nurse.

We ask that you return from your last pass no later than 9 p.m. In the event that you are delayed, please contact the unit and speak with your nurse.

Visiting

Visits from family members and friends can be an important part of your recovery and are welcome. Visits will be discussed with you. We ask that your support persons check in with staff at the communication desk upon arrival to the unit.

Discharge Planning

Red, Yellow, Green

We believe that planning for discharge begins on admission. While receiving treatment on the inpatient unit, you may be introduced to members of our outpatient services and our other care partners such as the Canadian Mental Health Association to continue your recovery.

The whiteboard located in your room is an important daily check-in for you and your assigned nurse to highlight

important appointments, goals and special needs for the day. It also assists in planning activities for discharge: Red means 3 or more days of hospitalization; Yellow means 2 to 3 days to discharge; Green means that discharge is within 24 hrs.

Your health care team will work with you and your family to develop a safety plan that reflects your needs and situation.

“ It is up to all of us to continue to hold the dream and believe that tomorrow will be better than today, to nourish the seed of recovery and to be a beacon of hope amidst the doubts and the darkness. Keeping the flame alive until the individual has the strength to take it back and continue on their journey is an important task. Without hope, recovery is not possible.”

– David Simpson, Patient Advocate

We would like to acknowledge Stratford General Hospital for assisting with the development of our patient guide.

*If you have questions please contact Deborah Gibson,
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