Major trauma patient information

This information is for people who have been admitted to hospital after a major trauma (multiple, serious injuries). This information aims to supplement the information given to you by your health care team.

During your hospital stay, many health care professionals may be involved in your care, and there is often a lot of information to remember. This booklet gives you a brief introduction to some teams you may be working with, as well as some more information and contact details of organisations that can offer support to you and your family and whānau after you leave Wellington Regional Hospital.

Feedback

Te Whatu Ora Capital, Coast and Hutt Valley is committed to providing the best services for our community and is continually involved in service development and improvement. Please take the time to complete one of our feedback forms online or ask your in-hospital staff to provide a paper version to let us know what we are doing well or if there is anything we could do better.

**Email:** [feedback@ccdhb.org.nz](mailto:feedback@ccdhb.org.nz)

**Website:** www.ccdhb.org.nz/contact-us/feedback-suggestions-complaints-and-compliments/

Useful contacts

**ACC:** [www.acc.co.nz](http://www.acc.co.nz) Tel: 0800 844 657

**Wellington Regional Hospital:** email: ccdhb.org.nz Tel: 04 385 5999

**Central equipment pool:** Tel: 04 385 5999 ext 6334

**Wellington Centre**  
**Peke Waihanga | Artificial Limb Service:** [www.pw.co.nz](http://www.pw.co.nz) Tel: 04 389 2045

Additional contacts or information/guidance:

Acute pain service

The acute pain management service (APMS) provides advice to your doctors and therapists on managing acute (severe and sudden) episodes of pain. APMS provides treatment that reduces your pain with as few side effects as possible.

Pharmacist

Pharmacists are experts in medicines. They are available for help and advice to you and all the hospital team. The pharmacist makes sure that you get the best from your medicines. The pharmacist will talk with your doctors to make sure that all medicines prescribed are suitable for your needs.

Consult-liaison

Consult-liaison is a clinical service focused on the assessment and treatment of people’s mental health/psychological wellbeing in the general hospital setting.

Teaching hospital

Wellington Regional Hospital is a teaching hospital. In the ward, there may be health professional students working with trained staff. You may be asked to participate in teaching sessions – you may refuse if you wish.

Patient care coordinator

The patient care coordination service organises all stages of the patient’s journey to support discharge. Patients who have more complex conditions, have longer length of hospital stays and require more complex discharge planning can get support from this service.

Chaplains

Hospital chaplains and their volunteers make regular visits to wards. We listen and provide company and emotional and spiritual support as identified by the patient. No judgement, no agenda. We have time.

Support services

**Do you have a disability support need?** If so, please let staff know.

**Do you need an NZSL interpreter?** If so, please let staff know as soon as you can.

Who may be involved in your care?

Doctors

Following major trauma, doctors from different services may be involved in your care, depending on what injuries have occurred. These may include:

* orthopaedics (bones, muscles, joints and spine)
* general surgery (perform a wide range of surgeries)
* neurosurgery (brain, nervous system and spine)
* cardio-thoracic surgery (heart, chest and lungs)
* plastics (repair and reconstruct missing or damaged tissue and skin).

Nurses

Nursing staff provide 24-hour care while you are in hospital.

Rehabilitation and your allied health team

Rehabilitation begins as soon as you start to recover. The type of rehabilitation you will need is based on your injuries. People from many teams will work with you through your recovery.

Some of the allied health team members involved in your care may include:

**Physiotherapist**

The physiotherapist may be involved from a very early stage, helping with the management of breathing problems. As recovery progresses, the physiotherapist will do a complete assessment of how you move your body. The physiotherapist will help you regain movement and strength.

**Occupational therapist**

In the hospital, the focus of the occupational therapist is to work alongside you and your whānau, encouraging recovery through participation in activities of everyday life. The occupational therapist will help you get back your independence in the basic activities of daily living, which may include toileting, showering and dressing. The occupational therapist will do an assessment to see where you may need support with these activities. The occupational therapist will also discuss your home environment to find out any needs or concerns you may have before you are discharged from hospital, including whether you may need any equipment at home that will make things safer and easier for you during your recovery. The occupational therapist also complete assessments and monitoring for concussion depending on your injuries. This will involve checking every day for symptoms of concussion. The occupational therapist will refer you to either an inpatient rehabilitation centre for traumatic brain injuries or to the concussion service in the community if this is needed to help you recover.

**Allied health assistant**

The allied health assistant works across the allied health team, in particular physiotherapists and occupational therapists. Working alongside your therapists, the allied health assistant may be involved in helping you with your exercise programme, practicing tasks and providing you with the equipment you might need before going home.

**Social worker**

The social worker may be involved at the early stages of your stay in hospital. They may help with the planning of your discharge. The social worker can provide emotional and wellbeing support. They can also discuss and help you with financial worries around ACC or Work and Income.

**Speech-language therapists**

Speech-language therapists assess and treat difficulties with communication, feeding and swallowing. Speech-language therapists can help you express yourself so people can understand you and help you understand what other people are saying to you.

**Dietitian**

A dietitian may be involved in your care if you need more support with nutritional requirements for your recovery. You may need food that has extra nutrients or nutritional drinks or tube feeding to maintain your weight. If your bowel has been injured, you may need intravenous nutrition. A dietitian may also be involved if you have another health condition affecting your food intake, such as severe allergies or bowel disorders. If you have special dietary needs, the dietician can help provide you with the foods that will best help you recover.

**Whānau care services**

Whānau care services provides clinical, advocacy and support services for patients and whānau. The team also supports patients and whānau to engage with and access hospital and community health and social services. A Māori chaplain is also available. Either you, your whānau or your health care team can ask for help/refer you to whānau care services.

**Location:** Level 2, Cultural Centre, Wellington Regional Hospital

**Hours:** Mon–Fri 8.00 am–6.00 pm

**Phone:** 04 806 0948

**Email:** wcs@ccdhb.org.nz

**Pacific Health Unit**

The Pacific Health Unit supports Pacific patients and their families during their stay at our hospitals. The team:

* acts as a patient advocate
* helps patients understand their care and treatment
* provides health information and education
* provides information on community and social support services
* links patients to community providers
* provides cultural support
* provides support with complex cultural or social dynamics.

The Pacific Health Unit can also refer patients and their families for follow-up support in the community when the patient is discharged from hospital.

**Location:** Level 2, Cultural Centre, Wellington Regional Hospital

**Hours:** 8.30 am to 5.00 pm, Monday to Friday

**Phone:** 04 806 2320 Fax: 04 385 5421

**Email:** PHUreferral@ccdhb.org.nz

Ongoing rehabilitation

Depending on your injuries and individual needs, a longer period of rehabilitation may be needed to help you return home safely and to achieve your goals. Often this period of rehabilitation cannot happen on the acute wards in Wellington Regional Hospital, and you may be transferred to another hospital.

Patients who live in the Capital & Coast district will be transferred to our rehabilitation ward based in Kenepuru Hospital.

Patients who live outside of the Capital & Coast district will normally be transferred to their local hospital if ongoing rehabilitation is needed.

Other parts of your care and recovery

Pain management

It is normal to feel pain after surgery. During your hospital stay, you will be given pain relief medication to make sure your pain is well controlled. This will allow you to take part in rehabilitation and help with your recovery. It is important to talk with your nurse and healthcare team to make sure your pain control needs are being met. It is better to continue to take the pain medication as prescribed to allow you to move more. If pain continues once you are discharged home, you should call your GP and ask for help.

Concussion

Occupational therapists may also assess for concussion depending on the type of accident. Part of this pathway includes checking every day for concussion symptoms. They will refer you to either an inpatient rehabilitation centre for traumatic brain injuries or to the concussion service in the community if this is needed to help your recovery.

Constipation/bowel management

Constipation (being unable to do a poo regularly) can become a problem due to some pain medications and not being able to physically move around. A few things can help, including:

* moving, walking and sitting up in the chair regularly
* drinking enough fluids throughout the day
* eating high-fibre diets, including fruit, vegetables and grains. If the dietitian has given you a diet, make sure you continue to follow it
* in hospital, you will be offered laxatives if you need them; contact your GP if you continue to have problems once at home.

Emotional support

Any hospital stay can be an extremely difficult time for you as a patient and your family, whānau and friends. During your hospital stay, if you or your family or whānau would like to speak to anyone about your situation, your in-hospital health care team can access services for you.

Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC)

Your health care team will be involved in completing ACC forms for you. Your therapists may refer you to ongoing therapy services in the community through ACC.

ACC is here to help you in your recovery process. They will provide you with support at home and work should you need additional help. However, you will need to ask ACC for this help. Some examples of support are taxi services if your injuries mean you cannot drive, help at home with showers, housework and/or childcare if you have dependent children.

If you were in employment when you had your accident, ACC will be able to help you with income compensation while you recover from your injury. You will need to ask/remind your treating team for an ACC 18 (ACC medical certificate) before leaving the hospital. Send one copy of this to your employer and one copy to ACC.

If you are too unwell to communicate with ACC for additional support or to ask questions, you can ask someone to speak with ACC on your behalf. This can be done with a form called Authority to Act (ACC5937). ACC will not share any information with anyone if they do not receive this form.

If you are a parent of a child who has had a significant accident, ACC can provide support for your child at home and/or school if that is needed. Unfortunately, ACC does not support/pay parents to take time off work to look after their child after an accident, but it can pay for someone else to do this while you return to work.

If you are unsure of what you are entitled to, you can contact ACC on 0800 101 996.

COVID-19

Te Whatu Ora Capital, Coast and Hutt Valley is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its community and staff. Information around changes to services and visitor restrictions at various levels can be found on our website (www.ccdhb.org.nz) or by calling 04 385 5999.