

# **Welcome to 6 West**

**Spine and Orthopedic Surgery Unit  
Hamilton General Hospital**

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**Information for patients and their families**

**Curing - Caring - Comforting**

**905-527-4322, ext. 46650**

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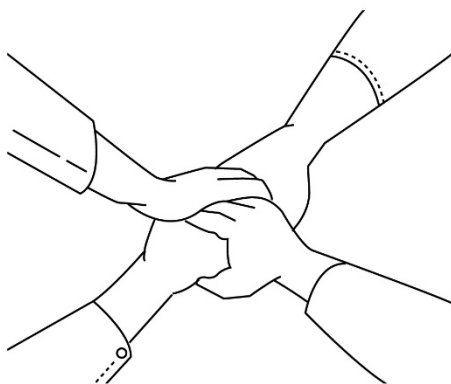
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## About 6 West ...

We care for people who have conditions affecting the spine and spinal cord, as well as other orthopedic ailments or injuries.

You will have new experiences in the hospital and you may have questions. This booklet will help answer some of your questions about 6 West.

Any member of the health care team will be pleased to answer your questions at any time – no question is too simple to ask.



## The 6 West Health Care Team

A team of people work together to provide your care on 6 West. You and your family are important members of our team.

Members of the health care team will teach you and your family about:

- what has happened
- what treatment and care is needed
- what to expect during your stay on the unit
- what to expect when you leave the hospital

Any of these team members may be involved in your care.

| Team member                           | How they help   |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Business Clerk</b>                 | Greet and direct families and friends who visit the unit, direct telephone calls received at the central station to the right person, answer your call bells and get you the help you need, provide clerical, administrative or business support to patients, families and those providing service and/or care. |
| <b>Chaplain</b>                       | Provide spiritual guidance and support; non-denominational.   |
| <b>Charge Nurse</b>                   | Supervise the unit and is available to discuss nursing care, hospital services and patient needs.   |
| <b>Clinical Educator</b>              | Develop and deliver educational material that addresses unit specific needs and patient safety.   |
| <b>Clinical Manager</b>               | Provide leadership and day-to-day support to the 6 West Unit.   |
| <b>Dietitian/ Dietician Assistant</b> | Make sure you meet your nutritional needs and receive the foods that are best for you. Teach you and your family about your diet. Evaluate and change your nutritional needs to help in your recovery.  |
| <b>Environmental Aide</b>             | Responsible for maintaining a clean and safe environment.   |
| <b>Health Care Aide</b>               | Help the nurse with your bath and personal care needs, help you get out of bed and may help you with your meals. Not always available on the unit at all times.   |

| <b>Team member</b>                 | <b>How they help</b>   |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Nurse</b>                       | Coordinates your care with other health team members, provides ongoing monitoring and treatments to improve your condition. Teaches you and your family about your condition, advocates and provides for your care and recovery.   |
| <b>Nurse Practitioner</b>          | A nurse with advanced training who helps manage your health care needs.  |
| <b>Nutrition Services Aide</b>     | Delivers and picks up meal trays.  |
| <b>Occupational Therapist (OT)</b> | Helps to restore your independence with your daily activities. Teach you how to use and customizes special equipment which allows you to overcome your limitations. Helps you identify what supports or equipment you will need when you are planning to leave the hospital. |
| <b>Pharmacist</b>                  | Assesses your medication and dosages, answers questions about your medications, and manages medication therapy for patients.   |
| <b>Physician or Surgeon</b>        | The doctor in charge of your care.<br>MRP – most responsible physician.  |
| <b>Physician Assistant</b>         | Works with your surgeon to manage your medical care.   |
| <b>Physiotherapist (PT)</b>        | Helps to improve your strength, movement and balance. Teaches you how to use aids such as a cane or walker if needed. Helps you gain maximum independence in mobility by building strength and restoring function to the greatest extent.                                    |

| Team member  | How they help   |
|--|---|
| <b>Physiotherapy Assistant/<br/>Occupational Therapy<br/>Assistant</b> | Works under the direction of your PT or OT to assist in increasing your independence with your mobility and your activities of daily living.  |
| <b>Resident</b>  | A doctor in training who works under the direction of the doctor in charge of your care.  |
| <b>Respiratory Therapist</b>   | Helps the team with your respiratory care which includes: caring for your tracheostomy, testing your lung function and looking after your oxygen needs. Assesses and treats patients with respiratory problems.   |
| <b>Social Worker</b>   | Helps patients and families adjust to illness or injury, access community resources and plan for discharge. Helps you and your family learn ways of coping with changes in your lives related to your health. Provides you with information about financial, legal, and support services. |
| <b>Speech-Language<br/>Pathologist</b>                                 | Assists you with your communication difficulties. Assesses and makes suggestions for managing your swallowing problems.   |
| <b>Spinal Cord Injury Pilot</b>  | Assists patients with spinal cord injuries as they prepare to go home from the hospital.  |

## What personal items will you need on 6 West?

Please bring these items to 6 West:

- Personal hygiene care items and toiletries such as a hairbrush, comb, shampoo, soap, lotion, deodorant, safety or electric razors, shaving cream, toothbrush, toothpaste and mouthwash.
- If you wear dentures, please bring cleaning and fitting products, and a denture cup clearly labelled with your name. Ask your dentist to label your dentures with your name.
- Loose and comfortable clothing.
- A pair of walking/running shoes for therapy.
- Non-skid, full back slippers.
- Sleepwear and housecoat.

If you bring in electronic equipment, it must be checked by the Maintenance Department for safety.

**Do not leave valuables or money in the hospital.**  
Patients and their families are responsible  
for personal items left at the bedside.

### Room set up ...

- Place all flowers, cards, gifts, personal items and clothing on the window sill, wall shelf or in bedside table drawers. Please arrange these items so they do not crowd patient areas or increase a patient's risk of falling.
- If you move chairs or furniture into or around the room, please put them back when you are finished.
- Send anything home you are not using.



## Visitors

- Family and friends may visit 6 West. **Only 2 visitors at a time.**
- There are no set visiting hours. However, please keep in mind patient care needs in the morning and throughout the day, and their need for rest.
- Visitors are required to follow all hospital rules. Please note that:
  - You must talk to a Nurse, Dietician, or Speech-Language Pathologist before giving any food or drink to a patient. They may be on a special diet that prevents you from directly feeding them or bringing in preferred foods.
  - Call a nurse if you see that another patient needs help rather than giving help yourself.
- Sometimes, family members want to stay overnight. Talk to the nurse if you feel that it would help you or your family member. The decision on whether your family member stays depends on others in the room and your needs and comfort.
- Rooms are available at the Mark Preece Family House, located at 191 Barton Street East, for families of patients being treated in Hamilton area hospitals. Please visit [www.markpreece.ca](http://www.markpreece.ca) for details. You can also call 905-529-0770 and ask for the manager on duty or email [info@markpreecehouse.ca](mailto:info@markpreecehouse.ca) for more information.

## Family spokesperson

We ask that one person be chosen as the family spokesperson. The health care team will speak to this person who can pass information on to family and friends. Information over the phone will only be given to the spokesperson. The nurse may not always be available to speak with you. Please be patient when you call.

Give the nurse all telephone numbers where the next-of-kin can be reached. It is important to leave a work and home telephone number.

The doctor will only give out information and test results to the patient, family spokesperson and the next-of-kin or substitute decision maker.

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## Infection

Infections spread easily. **Prevent the spread of infection by:**

- Cleaning your hands with the alcohol rub before and after visiting.
- Not using a patient's washroom. Public washrooms are located by the elevators.
- Asking a family member or friend not to come into the hospital if they are sick.



## Isolation

If your loved one is in an isolation room, please STOP and read the sign posted on the door to the room or the curtain. You may need to wear a gown, mask and gloves before entering. Please ask the nurse for help.



## Reminders

- Clean your hands with the alcohol rub when you enter and leave the patient's room.
- Put coats and other personal belongings, such as hand-bags in the "clean dedicated" zone within the patient's room. Use the coat hooks or plastic bags provided.
- Do not put any personal belongings on the patient's bed or other surfaces in the patient's room.
- Before you leave the patient's room, throw the gowns and gloves in the correct bins.
- Clean your hands with alcohol rub after you take off the gloves.

## Falls

You will see this sign if the patient you are visiting is at risk for falling.

**Do not** lower bedrails or help the patient to get up without first speaking to the nurse, physiotherapist or occupational therapist.



## Medications

While you are on 6 West:

- inform staff of all current medications including non-prescribed over the counter medications.
- your nurse will give you your medications.
- send other medications home unless you are told otherwise.



## Meals

Meals are served at 8:30 a.m., 12:30 noon, and 5:30 p.m.



If you have special diet requirements, please inform the staff.

Menus must be completed daily and handed to staff before 11:00 am. Please inform staff if assistance is required.

Food may be brought in if approved by the nurse caring for you.

## Educational resources

There are education resources available for you and your family on 6 West. Ask a member of the health care team for information.

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## Preferred accommodation

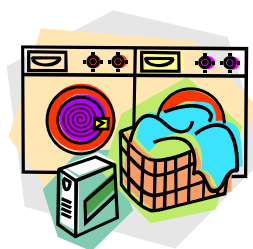
Special room requests may be accommodated if they are available.

The patient or family member can go to the Admitting Department or call ext. 46234 and sign for/verify coverage with insurance companies.

The hospital is not responsible for eye glasses, dentures, hearing aids, jewelry, cash, electronic devices or any other personal items you bring to 6 West.

## Laundry

Bedding will be changed as needed. Please send clothes home for washing. You may bring in your own pillow for comfort.



## TV, internet and telephones

Cable television is available by request and for a fee. Call ext. 41234.

To request TV hook-up, fill out a card located by the central station. Put the completed card and method of payment in the drop box.

A patient phone at bedside is free of charge for local calls.

Wireless internet is available for a fee.

Visit [www.hamiltonhealthsciences.ca/hotspots](http://www.hamiltonhealthsciences.ca/hotspots)

## Fragrance restricted

We are a fragrance restricted hospital. Please do not wear or bring perfume, cologne, aftershave, scented hair spray or other scented products.



## We are smoke-free

Hamilton Health Sciences is smoke-free. This means that smoking is not allowed anywhere on the grounds, including parking lots, garages and vehicles.



For support or help to stay smoke-free:

- We can provide you with nicotine replacement products to make your hospital stay more comfortable. Talk to a member of your health care team at Hamilton Health Sciences.
- contact Smoker's Helpline toll-free at 1-877-513-5333 or [www.smokershelpline.ca](http://www.smokershelpline.ca)

## Discharge

Planning to leave the hospital, called discharge, begins early in your hospital stay. You will be discharged once the health care team has completed your treatment.

You will need to arrange for a ride home.

If you do not live in Hamilton, you may be transferred back to your local hospital to complete your recovery closer to home. Our staff will arrange this transportation.

If you have questions before you leave, ask a member of your health team.



## **Discharge** (continued)

- You do not necessarily stay as long your surgeon says you will (pre-operatively).
- Once the health care team has completed their treatment, discharge home will be arranged.
- You are responsible for making transportation arrangements and covering any associated costs.

Before you leave the hospital, you need to know:

- activities you are allowed and not allowed to perform
- any special equipment for home, such as a walker or bath seat, and if needed, where to obtain the equipment
- safe application and removal of braces/collars/slings
- proper cleaning and maintenance of braces/collars/slings
- how to shower, bath and shave with a device
- how to care for your incision
- follow-up appointments with the physician
- staple/suture removal
- medications for home and any changes to your prescriptions since your surgery

Members of your health care team will discuss and answer these questions before you leave the hospital. There are also patient education materials on the unit for you to take home for reference. If you have any questions, please ask a member of your health care team.

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## **Discharge** (continued)

You will receive:

- A complete list of follow up appointments with the surgeon. These will be booked by the business clerk.
- Discharge orders and educational materials, including medication prescriptions and wound care instructions.
- Home care services, if required and deemed necessary by your health care team.
- Information concerning prescribed assistive devices (wheelchair, walker, bath chair, etc.) with a list of vendors providing rental/purchase of equipment is required.

## **Community resources**

Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN)

- A government funded organization that works to provide in-home health care services as well as coordinating referrals to other helpful community services such as home meal delivery services, transportation services and adult day services.
  - Useful for patients of all ages and level of ability.
  - Services provided directly by the LHIN are free of charge to Ontario health card holders.
  - Personalized care plans developed to meet individual needs.
  - LHIN will be arranged only if warranted and ordered by a physician.
  - Services available outside of Hamilton may vary.
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## Helpful/other information

- Gift Shop is located on Level M (Main), open Monday to Friday
- Barton Bean Coffee Shop is located on Level M (Main) and is open 24 hours, 7 days a week (excluding Christmas and New Year's Day)
- Hamilton General Drugstore is located on Level M (Main). Hours are Monday to Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Chapel is available to visitors on Level M (Main)
- Information Desk is located on Level M (Main) close to the main entrance at the front of the hospital
- Marketplace on Victoria (cafeteria) is located on Level 1 and is open Monday to Friday, from 7:00 am until 6:30 pm
- vending machines are located outside of the Marketplace on Victoria on Level 1
- visitor washrooms are located by the visitor elevators on each level of the hospital
- bi-monthly or monthly parking passes can be purchased at the Parking Office located on the ground level of the parking ramp, ext. 44061
- wireless internet service is available for a fee.  
For more information ask your business clerk or visit [www.hhsc.ca/hotspots](http://www.hhsc.ca/hotspots)

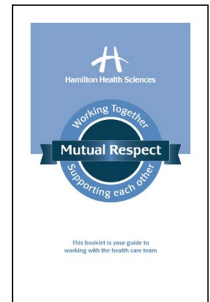


## A note to families and visitors

We understand that families feel a lot of stress when a loved one is in the hospital. We will do our best to help you cope.

To help us focus on patient care, we trust that families, visitors and staff treat each other with respect.

Respect is important when challenges are experienced. Our staff follow a Code of Conduct based on values such as caring and respect. If you would like to obtain a copy of this booklet, please ask a staff member. Reading this booklet will help you know how you and your family can help.



If you have a concern please feel free to talk with a staff member.

## Patient Experience

At Hamilton Health Sciences we welcome your feedback. Hearing from patients and families is the best way to improve our care and services. If you have compliments or concerns about your care, please speak with a member of your health care team or the unit/area manager.

If you wish to share your feedback or compliments further, or feel your concerns have not been addressed, please contact the **Office of Patient Experience at 905-521-2100, ext. 75240.**