Paediatric Assessment Unit (PAU)

Authors: Dr Tariq Bhatti; Helen Sibley; Julie-Anne Dowie

Reviewed: January 2013
Next review date: January 2014
## CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OVERVIEW</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCOPE OF THE SERVICE</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SERVICE DESCRIPTION</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STANDARD APPLICABLE</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GUIDELINES FOR PAU UNIT</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADMISSION CRITERIA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXCLUSION CRITERIA</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DISCHARGE PROCESS</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSE LED ADMISSION AND DISCHARGE CRITERIA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX 1: PARENT INFORMATION LEAFLET</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX 2: ADMITTING PATIENTS: DISCHARGING AND TRANSFERING PATIENTS TO/FROM PAU ON PAS</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX 3: PAU ADMISSION PATHWAY</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
OVERVIEW OF SERVICE

This document outlines the operational policy for the new observation and treatment unit situated in the children’s and young people’s ward (Ash).

The unit will provide a short stay service for the assessment, observation and treatment of children & young people (C&YP). It will aim to improve emergency flow and ensure that C&YP receive care in an appropriate environment, prevent unnecessary inpatient admissions and reduce length of stay.

SCOPE OF SERVICE

Paediatric Assessment Unit (PAU) is situated within the Children’s (Ash) ward at St. Peter’s Hospital, NHS foundation trust. The unit will be operational 24 hours, seven days a week. It will provide care for children from birth to their 18th birthday, with acute conditions for whom a short stay with treatment and/or assessment is likely to enable them to be discharged home, without requiring an inpatient admission to Ash ward. A percentage of patients will require inpatient admission to Ash ward.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

PAU has a 4 bedded bay and 2 bedded cubicle within Ash ward, initially additional to the 23 inpatient beds. PAU will admit children for short stay admission. The Unit is staffed by senior paediatric trained nurse and a senior paediatric doctor under direct supervision of consultant paediatrician. There is access to a treatment room (shared with Ash ward) and computer (WoW) to access results/imaging studies. Patients and parents will have access to all the ward facilities available to patients on Ash ward. Children and young people admitted to PAU will be subject to the same policies and procedures (including child safeguarding) as those governing patients in Ash ward. PAU will admit children from A&E department, Rapid Access Clinic and out patient clinics. At present there is no direct access to GP referrals.

STANDARD APPLICABLE

NSF (2004) for children, standard 6 and 7

GUIDELINES FOR PAU

- PAU is staffed by an experienced paediatric nurse who is responsible for day to day running of the unit.
- The unit will open for admissions 24 hours, seven days a week including Bank Holidays (individual admissions are short stay- up to 8 hours duration).
- One senior paediatric doctor will cover the unit during its opening hours. The A&E registrar will cover both A&E and PAU during their shift, while long/short day registrar will provide cover in the morning hours before A&E registrar shift. Night time PAU will be covered by the night shift registrar.
- The unit will have an emergency resuscitation trolley shared with Ash ward that will be checked by the nursing staff on a daily basis.
- The Admissions book will be completed documenting all admissions to the unit.
- All children admitted to PAU will have their admission, investigation and initiation of treatment performed in the A&E department and transferred only when medically stable.
- A full written management plan along with formal handover to both nursing and medical staff should take place when transferring a patient to PAU.
• All notes and any results of investigations should move with the patient when transferring to the unit.
• All children admitted to PAU will be reviewed regularly with a view to timely, safe discharge or admission to Ash ward if needing in patient stay.
• The Nurse in charge will have overview of the current and projected activity. She will update A&E and ward regularly. She will keep regular and effective communication with the family throughout the child’s stay on PAU.
• Patients can be discharge by the nurse (see nurse led discharge criteria).
• The decision to close PAU should only be taken by the most senior staff (see ward closure policy).
• Children should only be accepted in PAU if they fulfil the criteria for admission (see below).
• All children admitted to PAU will be under the care of the attending consultant.
• All children admitted to PAU will have a nurse assessment within 10 minutes and by a doctor within one hour of their arrival. There will be regular reviews with a view to either discharge the child (if safe to do so) or admit to the ward.
• Clerical and admin support for PAU will be shared with Ash ward.

ADMISSION CRITERIA

• Children and Young people between 0 to 18th birth day.
• Children with medical conditions e.g. breathing difficulties (bronchiolitis, asthma), croup, viral illness, rash, diarrhoea, vomiting, febrile convulsions, head injuries, accidental overdose, known diabetics (not in DKA) or other medical conditions likely to need a short period of treatment and /or observation.
• Most children will come via A&E with medical conditions and will be expected to be discharged after a period of treatment and observation.
• Children can also be admitted for treatment, from out patient clinics including Rapid Access Clinic who meet aforementioned criteria. This should take place after discussion with the referring clinician.
• It is expected some children may need inpatient facility, this should be arranged once decision is made to transfer the child to Ash ward.
• All parents should be offered the “parent information leaflet – Paediatric Assessment Unit”.

EXCLUSION CRITERIA

• Sick children in A&E who are known to need inpatient ward or close observation in COB, should be transferred directly to the ward.
• CAMHS patients
• Children transferred back from Tertiary units
• Children referred by their GP should go directly to the A&E department.
• Children with “Open Access” should be seen in A&E or Oak/Ash ward, however, admission to PAU can be arranged if child is likely to improve and only needs short stay.

DISCHARGE PROCESS

• Child should be discharged after a period of observation/treatment once it is safe to do so.
• Child should only be discharged if care can be given safely at home.
• Children’s community nursing team help can be sought during working hours. Contact telephone numbers (Ashford team ext 2280 Woking team 01483 783162)
• Parents should receive advice and or written information as necessary.
• Patients can be discharged by the nurse in charge (see nurse led discharge criteria)
- Children discharged from the PAU if they become more unwell, should either attend their GP or come back to the Paediatric A&E department.
- All children when discharged should have discharge letter with copies sent to the GP.
- Arrange appropriate follow up in the out patient clinics when necessary.

**NURSE LED DISCHARGE CRITERIA**

Children admitted in the PAU can be admitted or discharge by the nurse if they meet the following criteria:
- Child should have a clear written management plan for observation and treatment. They have a clear written plan for admission and discharge criteria.
- Nurse in charge ensures child meets the criteria for discharge. Patient discharge letter should be ready for parents to take with copies for GP and notes.
- Parents are given advice and written information (where necessary) with discharge letter.

**ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE**

This will be assessed regularly. Safety and efficiency of the unit will be audited and clinical risks assessed regularly.

**PARENT INFORMATION SHEET**

Please see Appendix 1.

**ADMITTING PATIENTS: DISCHARGING AND TRANSFERING PATIENTS TO/FROM PAU ON PAS**

Please see Appendix 2.
Appendix 1

PARENT INFORMATION SHEET

Paediatric Assessment Unit (PAU) is a newly operational unit opened 21st January 2012 which consists of a 4 bed bay and 2 bed cubicle situated in the children and young person’s ward to provide safe observation and treatment to those children who are likely to need only a short stay in hospital before they are able to go home.

The PAU aims to minimise time spent in hospital and number of children admitted to the ward by providing rapid assessment, observation and appropriate treatment by clinicians with paediatric expertise.

Your child is first assessed in Accident and Emergency Department and if it is decided that your child is likely to need some treatment and longer observation, but not necessarily an admission to the inpatient ward, he/she will be transferred to PAU. Your child’s nurse or doctor will discuss with you the care plan before such transfer. Your child may receive initial tests and treatment in A&E, however, further care will be carried out in the PAU.

You need to stay with your child during his/her admission to PAU. The nurse and doctor will keep you informed about the progress of your child during your stay and will try and keep you informed about when we expect you will be able to take him/her home.

The doctor and nurse will do regular checks on your child (observations) during his/her stay this will help them to decide if your child can be discharged home.

At discharge you will be given a “discharge letter” with the details of the child’s medical condition and further advice if necessary.

Once discharged home if your child becomes more unwell you can get further advice from your GP or take your child back to our Paediatric A&E department.
**Appendix 2**

**Admitting PAED A&E patients in PAU**

To admit a patient from A&E to PAU ward, select function ADM.
Type in Patient number, then select the A&E ATN by selecting the number.

Press enter until you reach the following screens. Add relevant information.
To Transfer a patient from PAU to ASH use the XFR function. Press enter until you see the following screen then enter relevant information.

Enter Ward patient is being transferred to.

To Discharge patient use DSC function, press enter until you reach the following screen. Enter relevant details.
Appendix 2

PAU ADMISSION PATHWAY

RAC REFERRALS

A&E REFERRALS

OUT PATIENT REFERRALS

CHILDREN MEET THE CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO PAU
MANAGEMENT PLAN CLEARLY DEFINED AND WRITTEN (AGREED WITH
THE PARENTS AND OR YP)
REFERRING CLINICIAN/NURSE FORMALLY HANDBOVER THE CARE,
NOTES, INVESTIGATIONS TO THE NURSE IN CHARGE PAU
PARENT INFORMATION SHEET GIVEN TO THE PARENTS/ CYP

NURSE TRIAGE AND MEDICAL REVIEW AS DEFINED IN GUIDELINES.
REGULAR REVIEWS AND ASSESSMENTS

CHILD’S CONDITION IMPROVES - DISCHARGE HOME WITH ADVICE
COMPETE DISCHARGE LETTER
MAKE FOLLOW UPS IF REQUIRED

CHILD LIKELY TO NEED LONGER OBSERVATION AND TREATMENT- ARRANGE
ADMISSION TO ASH WARD. TRANSFER CHILD WITH NOTES AND CLEAR
HANDBOVER TO THE WARD STAFF

Patients first • Personal responsibility • Passion for excellence • Pride in our team