

Paediatric Intensive Care Unit

Information for Parents, Carers and Visitors.



Unit Number 01 878 4256

Main Hospital Number 01 878 4200

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Welcome

Welcome to the Paediatric Intensive Care (PICU). We are a 9 bedded unit and we provide care for children with a variety of different conditions during a critical stage of their illness.

When your child is admitted to PICU this can cause significant distress to children and their families. You may be worried by what you see in the unit. The environment can be overwhelming, especially due to the altered appearance of your child whilst very sick and the different equipment that we use. Our aim in PICU is to support children and their families at a very stressful time in their lives.

This booklet is designed to tell you about your child's stay in PICU and to explain some of the equipment that you will see. The information contained in this booklet is aimed to help you over the coming hours and days.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask the nurse looking after your child. We understand that you are receiving a lot of information in a short space of time so it can be difficult to remember everything. We are here to help with any questions and concerns you might have.



Where is PICU ?

PICU is situated on the 3rd floor of the main Temple Street Children's University Hospital building. The lift opposite the X Ray Department will take you directly to PICU.

Security

As the children are very sick within the unit, access to the unit is restricted. We have swipe card access for staff to ensure the safety and security of all children

An intercom system is used by visitors to gain access to PICU. The doors are electronic and you have to press a buzzer and then a member of staff will buzz you in. Sometimes it can take us a while to answer the door if the unit is busy so your patience is appreciated. Please do not leave the door open for strangers.

Only bring essential money and valuables with you and keep your valuables with you at all times. The hospital will not be responsible for any losses.



Visiting PICU

Visiting times;

We encourage you to visit as much as you wish while your child is on PICU. Parents can visit at any time. Grandparents are encouraged to visit in the afternoons. Brothers and sisters may visit after consultation with the nurse in charge.

Only 2 visitors are allowed by a bed space at a time this is to reduce the risk of infection, reduce noise level and to allow our children to rest

We do not allow visitors during morning and evening nursing hand over times which are 7.30 am - 8.30 am and 7.45 pm - 8.45 pm.

Please note that there are times when procedures are carried out on the unit. Although they may not involve your child we will ask all parents and visitors to leave the unit at these times.

Handwashing

When entering the unit, we ask that you use the washbasin directly outside the unit entrance. Please leave overcoats and large bags outside on the hangers, as they are not allowed on PICU. Please do not leave valuables in pockets or bags.



To prevent infection from entering the area we also ask that you use the hand gel provided at all entrances and at each bed space.

Contacting the Unit for Information

When you are not on the ward with your child, you are welcome to phone us to check on their condition at any time of the day or night. The unit numbers are

01 8784256

01 8784501

01 8784359

In order to protect your child's privacy we are unable to provide information to anyone other than parents or carers. We ask that other family members do not contact the unit themselves but obtain information from you.

What Happens in PICU?

PICU is a very different environment from other hospital wards. Your child is here as they require specialist care that can only be given in PICU.



It can be a very stressful place for families. Our aim is to try to make your stay as comfortable and easy to cope with as possible. We will keep you informed at all times of the care that your child is receiving and any changes that occur.

There are often lots of different machines and wires around the bed space which help monitor and give treatment to your child.

Parents have told us in the past that they were surprised about the amount of equipment needed to help their child but knowing what the general purpose of the machine greatly helped them.

When you feel confident, we do encourage you to be involved in your child's care. As appropriate, you will be very welcome to help with care such as washing your child. Your child's nurse will guide you as this can be a daunting task at first. If you are uncomfortable with this, holding their hand, stroking their head and speaking to them helps comfort and reassure them.

Quiet Time

The PICU environment causes loss of sleep for a number of reasons including noise and light. Lack of sleep can delay wound healing and the body's immune response.

To promote rest and comfort in PICU we plan that non essential nursing or medical tasks will not be performed on your child during quiet time unless absolutely necessary. We promote comfort ensuring our patients are pain free. Lights are dimmed; incubators are covered with a blanket and alarms will be reduced. Parents are encouraged to sit quietly at the bed space although we encourage parents to use this time each day for rest or to get something to eat. The PICU is a stressful environment for you too.

Quiet time is between 1.30 pm - 3 pm

We would ask visitors not to ring the door buzzer during this time unless completely necessary as we cannot reduce its volume within the unit.



Who Will Look After My Child?

You and your child's needs in the PICU will be looked after by various members of our team.



Nursing Staff

The nursing staff work 12 hour day and night shifts. There is always a nurse in charge on each shift. Each bed space will have a designated nurse to look after them; sometimes a nurse may look after 2 patients at the same time depending on their need.

Medical Staff

There is a doctor in the PICU throughout the day and on call at night. The doctors discuss every child each morning and makes a plan for the day and inform the rest of the team including yourselves.

The doctors perform a midday round and evening ward round where they assess every patient and make changes to the plan if needed.

You are more than welcome to be present and ask questions after these rounds with the doctors. Some parents find it useful to write down any questions or concerns that they have to help remind them when the doctor is present.



Physiotherapists

We have a dedicated team of physiotherapists that review each child daily and see if they need any treatment from them. Sometimes physiotherapy is still needed even after your child is off the breathing machine. The physiotherapy team will explain any treatment that they give your child.



Dietitians

Most children in the PICU are sedated and on ventilators (breathing machine). As a result they cannot eat or drink as normal. Nutrition is usually provided by feeding through a tube, with liquid feeds. The dietitian will advise on the most appropriate feed for your child depending on their age weight and clinical condition.



Pharmacist

We have a dedicated pharmacist who visits the unit Monday to Friday. The pharmacist advises the doctors and nurses on medication use and safety. This might include advice on the best way to give medication or what medication combination should be avoided. They are available for any questions you might have about your child's medicines.

Health Care Assistant

We have two dedicated healthcare assistants (HCA) is working within our unit. Our HCAs work as part of our nursing team to provide care to children and support to their families. Our HCAs also provides assistance and support to breast feeding mothers. Our HCA's wear a green uniform.

Ward Clerk

Our ward clerk co-ordinates the administration and communication within our unit Monday – Friday 8.30am – 4.30pm. When you contact or visit the unit she is usually your first point of contact.

Support for Families on PICU

Being in the PICU can be a very difficult time for families. It can be a stressful environment and parents have described feelings of anxiety, lack of control and anger. It can be difficult to express these feelings to friends and family. As well as the staff caring for your child, there are a variety of other people who can help you and your family at this time

Social Worker

A social worker available to talk to you and your child if you are worried and need some extra support. They provide support, advice and guidance to help you cope with day-to-day things. They can also give information regarding financial support. Please ask your nurse or doctor if you would like any further information regarding a social worker referral.

Equipment in PICU

There are many different pieces of equipment in PICU which can be daunting and overwhelming for families. Your nurse and doctor will explain the procedures and equipment that your child might need while they are with us. Here are some helpful information and pictures of some of our equipment;

Monitors

We continually monitor your child's heart rate, blood pressure, oxygen levels and other vital signs that the team need to check. The results are displayed on the screen as a number. The monitors have alarms set to alert the teams to changes in the results, but the alarms do not necessarily mean that something is wrong. These alarms are set specifically for your child and change depending on their condition. They are very sensitive and a small movement from your child can set them off. It can take families a little while to get used to the different alarms.



Breathing Tube

Often children in our unit need help with their breathing. The endotracheal tube (ETT) is a tube that goes down either the nose or mouth and down into the lungs. These are not very comfortable so your child will have to be on medication to make them sleepy (sedated) and comfortable. While the ETT is in place your child will not be able to make any sound when they speak or cry. They will also not be able to eat or drink anything until the tube is removed so nutrition will be provided by the nurse through a naso gastric tube straight into your child's stomach.

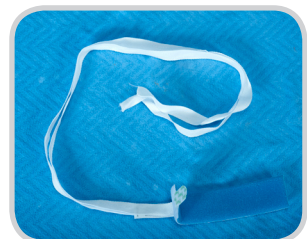
Ventilator



Your child's breathing tube (ETT) will be connected to a ventilator. The ventilator supports breathing and can take over the role of breathing if needed. A humidifier is attached to the side of the ventilator to warm and moisten the air that is delivered to your child.

Holding Devices

Sometimes it is necessary to keep children's arms still to prevent them from pulling at their lines and tubes. For this we use soft wrist holding devices. They are not uncomfortable and are used for your child's safety





Nasogastric Tube (NGT)

This is a small tube that goes down the nose and into the stomach. It is used to give expressed breast milk, formula milk and medication when a child is unable to eat or drink themselves. Most children in the PICU are given a smaller amount of fluid than at home but when we can, we give extra liquid nutrition through the feeding tube.

Intravenous Lines

These are plastic lines that go into the vein and allow medicine and fluids to be given straight into the bloodstream. Sometimes a large line is put in the neck or groin with three connections on it. This allows a lot of medicines to be given at the same time and for regular blood samples to be taken.



Pumps

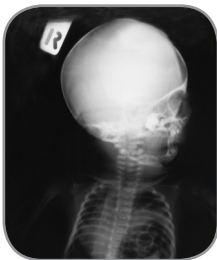
Some medicines need to be given by an intravenous infusion so they are running continuously. Infusion pumps are used for this.



Catheter

Sometimes a small tube is inserted into a child's bladder. It allows urine to be collected, removed and measured. It collects in a urine bag that hangs off the side of the bed.

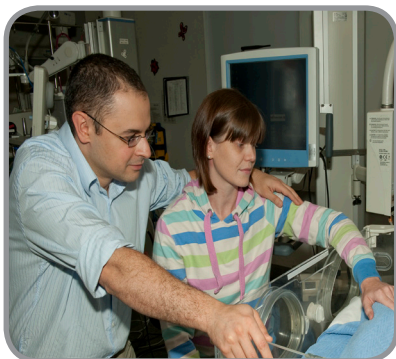
X-Rays



X-Rays are regularly performed on children in PICU to check the position of the breathing tube and to take a look at their lungs. This will involve putting a hard board behind your child's back for the xray.

Parental Involvement

We aim to provide 'Partnership in Care' which means that we would like you to be involved in your child's care as much as you feel able.



Talking to and touching your child can provide a lot of comfort and reassurance to them, even if they have been given medicines to make them sleepy, as usually they will still be able to hear.

When your child is well enough, even if they are still on the ventilator we will try to provide 'cuddles' and quiet time between you and your child. A natural time for this is often in the afternoon, although it does depend on your child's condition. Parents have said that cuddles can help them to feel close to their child. Please talk to your child's nurse about how this can be part the daily plan for your child.

You are welcome to take photographs of your child while they are in PICU, please check with the nurse caring for your child if you can use a camera or camera phone. This can be helpful for siblings who are unable to visit the hospital and for your child when they have been discharged. Please be aware of other patients and our staff's privacy when taking photos and only take photos of your own child.

Infection Control

The hospital has strict infection control procedures to protect all our patients, visitors and staff.

- Please remove all outdoor clothing when you arrive to the unit and hang them on the coat hooks beside the sink.
- Please wash your hands in the wash area to the right of the PICU main entrance. This helps to reduce the amount of infection carried into the PICU.
- Please ensure that all your visitors are aware of the infection control procedures and follow this when visiting.
- Please do not come to visit or allow visitors to your child who are unwell as they might put your child and others in the unit at risk.



Further visiting restrictions are sometimes put in place for certain infections if there is a high risk to others. There is a bottle of alcohol gel at each bed space and entrances to PICU. This should be used by staff and visitors alike, especially before approaching the bed space.

Staff

You will notice that staff will perform thorough hand washing before and after any procedures with your child. They will use gloves and aprons and sometimes facemasks.

Isolation

Sometimes it is necessary to place children with certain medical conditions in isolation. We have cubicles for this and notices on the door explain who may enter the room. Your child's nurse will explain further precautions if necessary.

Confidentiality

We respect your child's privacy and to maintain confidentiality and can not give information to relatives over the telephone.



PICU Visitor's Facilities

There is no provision for parents or carers to sleep overnight in the PICU. This is because our nursing staff need to be able to gain access to patients at all times. The unit can also get noisy and you may find it difficult to get a good night's sleep. There is one emergency overnight room and a shower room on the unit for those who arrive during the night.



For your own wellbeing, it is really important that you try to get some sleep because when your child is awake you will be exhausted.

Parents Accommodation Information

While your child is in PICU, we will look to accommodate parents who require somewhere to stay in hospital accommodation. Accommodation is limited and we accommodate parents and/or guardians only. Unfortunately, we cannot accommodate siblings in these rooms or in the hospital for safety reasons and we ask you to make other arrangements.

Parents accommodation is run separately to the unit, there are facilities to prepare and cook food. If there are no rooms available in the hospital, you will be provided with a list of bed and breakfast accommodation within walking distance of the hospital.

Breast Feeding

Temple Street Children's University Hospital encourages breastfeeding as a way of providing nutrition for babies and infants. On the PICU, your child may be unable to breast-feed but we have facilities for mothers to express their milk.

We have two electric pumps in the PICU and staff can show mothers how to use it. We will provide mothers with their own expressing kit.

The expressed breast milk will be stored in the fridge/ freezer in the patient's kitchen. Expressed breast milk can be stored for up to 3 months and once defrosted used for 24 hours. Please clearly label your bottles with your child's name and the date and time the milk was expressed.



Mobile Phones

Please switch your mobile phone off when you are with your child on the PICU. You are welcome to use your mobile phone in the parents lounge.

Transfer to the Wards

When your child is getting better, we will transfer them to a ward or back to a local hospital depending on what care they need.

Some parents feel anxious and worried about moving from the intensive care to the ward areas. This is a natural reaction and we will do all we can to try and help you with this transition. Your child will only be moved if the medical teams involved with their care think that they are ready.

One of the worries parents have is going from having an individual nurse to a nurse caring for a number of patients. As your child gets better, they will no longer need a nurse looking after them the whole time and you can be more involved with the general care of your child on the ward. Before the transfer, when possible, if you wish to look around the ward you are going to before you move please ask your nurse to arrange this.

Parking and Travel

We encourage parents to leave cars at home and use public transport where possible as there is limited parking outside the hospital.

Parents and visitors can now park in Q-Park Clerys on Cathal Brugha Street, Dublin 1 for up to 24hrs for only €6 with €1 donated to the hospital with every validation. Tickets must be validated at the reception desk or security desk in the hospital before you leave

The hospital is easily accessed by bus and train. The nearest train stations are Drumcondra or Connolly Station. Buses that leave you to Parnell Square or Dorset Street serve the hospital.

Food and Drink

The unit is often a hot, dry environment due to the lights and machines we use. Two water coolers are available, one on the unit and another in the parents sitting room.

Hot food and drinks are not allowed on the unit for safety reasons. Food and drinks are allowed to be consumed in the parents room. Please tidy up after yourself.

The Temple Café in the basement is opened

Monday – Friday 7.30am – 2.30pm

Breakfast 8.30am – 10.30am Lunch 11.45am-2.30pm

Saturday Sunday and Bank Holidays 8.30 – 10.30am

Outside these hours there are vending machines, seating, microwave and a television in the Temple Café.

Local Facilities

There is an information board for parents in the Temple Café providing some information on local restaurants and coffee shops.

There is a Spar supermarket 2 minutes walk from the main entrance to the hospital . There are cafes shops and a chemist along Dorset street

The city centre is close by with O’Connell Street a 10 minute walk from the hospital. Please ask any member of staff for directions.

Mountjoy Square Park is also close by.

Further Information

If you have any other questions about your stay on PICU or the care your child is receiving please ask the nurse looking after your child or the nurse in charge of the unit at the time.

If you have any concerns or would like to talk to our PICU Nursing Unit Manager (CNM 3) over any particular issues you have had during your child's stay in PICU please ask to speak to Annette Hanlon or contact her directly on 01 878 4737. Please be assured that we deal with this confidentially and it will not affect your child's treatment.

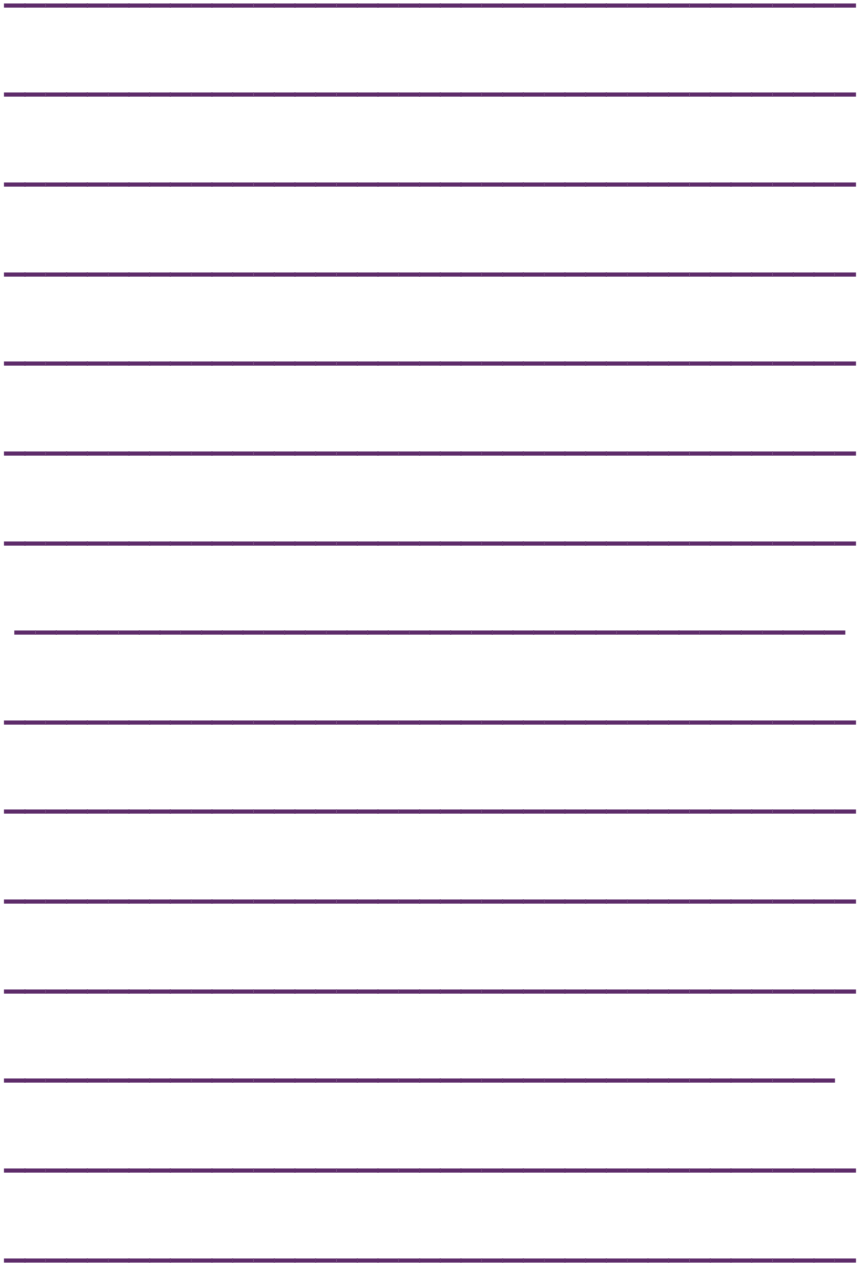
Annette Hanlon
CNM3
PICU
Temple Street Children's University Hospital
Temple Street
Dublin1

Feedback

We welcome suggestions and ideas on how we can improve the care we give to the children and families in our care.

Questions

Sometimes it can be difficult to remember when what you have been told about your child and their condition. On the following pages is space for you to write down any notes or questions that you may have



This booklet is produced using funds donated by
Parents and Children of Scoil an Duinninigh
Bothar Faoldroma,
Sord,
Co. Ath Cliath

Our campus is smoke free from February 13th 2013



Please remember to wash your hands
or use hand gel when visiting the Hospital

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The information contained in this booklet is correct at time of print