

Going Home to Virtual Ward

Here to help you get home safely, and sooner.



What is the Virtual Ward?

Virtual Ward is a service that provides consultant led clinical care to you in your own home. This is done by a team of Doctors, Advanced Clinical Practitioners, Nurses, Physiotherapists, Occupational Therapists, and Health Care Support Workers. This allows you to remain in your own home, while still receiving the care that you need.

A stay on Virtual Ward is usually for up to 14 days.

The 'virtual' part of Virtual Ward is that it follows a model of care from a hospital ward. You still stay in your own home, but we have a consultant, a team of clinical staff, and we refer to our patients as being in a Virtual Ward bed. You will still see staff from Virtual Ward in person.

Why Virtual Ward ?

Evidence shows that patients recover more quickly in their own environment, with fewer complications.

There are no visiting times, and you are not restricted in where you can go, in fact some of our patients have even had a trip to the seaside while they have been on Virtual Ward.

Before you are admitted

Before you are admitted to Virtual Ward your medical team in hospital will have a discussion with the Virtual Ward team about your condition, and if you would be able to be safely looked after on Virtual Ward. Your initial care and treatment plan will be discussed and agreed, and then plans will start to be made for your discharge from hospital.

Once discharged from Hospital.

All patients will be seen by the Virtual Ward within 24 hours of discharge. Some patients will require an assessment on the same day as their discharge, while other patients can safely be seen the following day. This will have been decided before you are discharged.

While you are on Virtual Ward, all of your healthcare will be managed by the Virtual Ward Team, so instead contacting your GP, you will contact Virtual Ward.

8am to 8pm – contact 07974 080 415

From 8pm to 8am contact NHS 111

My first Visit by Virtual Ward.

When you are seen by the team you will be given a welcome pack which includes numbers to call to contact the Virtual Ward Team looking after you.

You will receive a comprehensive assessment which will not just be about your illness, but how you are generally and how you are able to look after yourself at home. Blood tests may be carried out, and some diagnostic tests (such as x-rays) may be arranged.

Sometimes this assessment may show that you need to be seen by other members of the team such as a Physiotherapist or Occupational therapist. We might also identify the need to put some equipment in to support you. This will be ordered, or even supplied on this first visit.

Your medication will be reviewed and some changes may be made. If you require medication via an injection or intravenously, we will be able to do this on Virtual Ward.

Some patients may benefit from remote monitoring of their observations. If this happens you will be given the equipment and training on how to take your own blood pressure, pulse, and temperature. You will then record this on a tablet device. This will allow you to be supported, without having to wait in for a visit or have disruptions to you day.

Virtual Ward Routine

Like a hospital ward, the Virtual Ward has a daily routine, but this is for the staff on Virtual Ward, not the patients.

Each morning there is a Multidisciplinary Team Meeting where any changes or alterations to plans are discussed with the Virtual Ward Medical Team. This may be a change in a plan due to the patient condition changing, or even a discharge if the patient is responding well to treatment.

After this visits are planned for the day and you may be seen by a member of the team. If required the consultant is able to come out and assess you.

If you are on any medication that is given by the Virtual Ward team, you will be aware of when they are coming to see you for this.

Then there is a weekly Ward Round where all patients are reviewed and a plans made, which will include discharge planning.

Discharge from Virtual Ward

We will be planning your discharge from the very first visit. While we aim to discharge you within 14 days, if it is still clinically indicated we may keep you on for longer. You will know what the plan for discharge is, who will continue to see you, and who to speak to you if you need help afterwards.

You may still be seen by some of the same staff, especially if we have referred you to another team.

We will send your GP a discharge letter so they know what we have done on Virtual Ward.

Virtual Ward Leadership

Virtual Ward is primarily provided by Shropshire Community Health NHS Trust.

The Community Service Manager is Steph Wedmore – steph.wedmore@nhs.net. She can be contacted on the number above.