
Ward A2 - Neurosciences critical care unit (NCCU)

Telephone:

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Visiting times:[Coronavirus - an update on our visiting policy](#)

Addenbrookes provides acute neurosurgical services for all of East Anglia and adjacent parts of other counties, with a total catchment population of about 2.3 million people.

The NCCU cares for patients with acute brain injury, regardless of the underlying cause. It also cares for those who experience major trauma, up to 800 people every year receive major traumatic injuries in this region – in a car crash, for example. Major trauma is the leading cause of death for people under the age of 40 in the UK.

Good intensive care can minimise disability and maximise the potential for recovery. The Neuro critical Care Unit also provides intensive care management for a range of other medical and surgical conditions

Our patients

Approximately 1100 patients are treated each year on the NCCU. Of these a large proportion of these have neurological or neuro surgically related illness.

About a hundred of these patients have severe head injuries requiring intensive care. Other patients admitted as emergencies have diagnoses including uncontrolled epilepsy, stroke, and respiratory failure as a result of diseases of nerves or muscles, or are admitted following neurosurgery.

Most of these patients are from East Anglia, but others are referred from other parts of the UK or the rest of the world.

NCCU is part of the major trauma pathway-the East of England Major Trauma Centre (MTC) serves one of the largest Trauma Networks in England with a population of 6.1 million residents and 12 Acute Hospital Trauma Units spread over 7,380 square miles.

Purpose-built Unit

A major £2.1 million expansion of the Neurosciences Critical Care Unit (NCCU) at Addenbrookes was completed in December 2000. The purpose-built Unit consists of 23 critical-care beds. These are used flexibly with other critical-care units within the Trust, with facilities to care for 17 level 3 patients and 6 level 2 patients on HDU.

Staffing in the Unit

The clinical activities of the NCCU are coordinated by our intensive care consultants, who share responsibility for the management of patients with admitting multiple speciality consultants. Major clinical input is provided by the Departments of Neuroradiology and Neurophysiology. The NCCU team is completed by specialist nurses, scientists, physiotherapists, dietitians and pharmacists.

Training on the NCCU

The NCCU has an important role in the specialist training of both medical and nursing staff. Medical staff rotate onto the unit for periods of time ranging from 3 to 12 months gaining specialist skills in neuro critical care.

Specialised nursing staff are trained on the NCCU where we have a preceptorship programme for newly qualified nurses. Nurses new to critical care receive foundation study days including respiratory, cardiovascular, neuro and trauma.

Staff may go on to further study and work towards degree or masters credits from the critical care course which is currently run through the University of East Anglia in Partnership with the East of England Critical Care Network.

There are also many CPD opportunities whilst working on NCCU, such as link nurse roles, involvement in research, service evaluation and audit.

Allied health professionals including physiotherapists, radiographers, dietitians, speech and language therapists and occupational therapists also rotate onto the unit as part of their training and professional development.

Research in the NCCU

The NCCU provides the infrastructure for a comprehensive programme of clinical research.

This aims to identify and influence new treatments in patients with acute brain injury.

A major part of this research involves the Wolfson Brain Imaging Centre, which provides for research into acute brain injury the scanning facilities for positron emission tomography (PET) and magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). Addenbrooke's is the only centre in the world with such facilities.

The unit also has close links with the Cambridge Centre for Brain Repair on the Addenbrooke's site. The synergy provided by clinical research working alongside patient care means that management protocols based on research can result in substantial and significant improvements in the outcome of brain injury and disease.

Addenbrookes is part of the Shelford group, NCCU also has links with ICNARC, East of England Critical Care network, East of England trauma Network, Addenbrookes abroad.

Finding us:

From the main hospital entrance: in the reception area turn right onto the main concourse. Turn left and go towards the main ward lifts. Before the lifts, turn left onto the long corridor and head towards Outpatients. Follow the corridor around a dog leg. The corridor then straightens out and after a short distance you will find the entrance to A2 on the right hand side. Use the intercom system to gain entry.

Disabled Go accessibility information