

Lotus Ward



A young person's guide

Welcome

Staff and some of young people at Lotus Ward have put together this information. We hope this will give you an idea of what to expect when you arrive.

What is Lotus Ward?

Lotus Ward is a specialist adolescent mental health service based in Middlesbrough which provides a safe place to stay, with support from trained staff.

The ward is open 24 hours a day and is run by trained nurses and support workers. There are also Doctors, Social Workers, Occupational Therapy, Psychologists, Activity Workers and Teachers.

Where is it?

Lotus Ward located within Acklam Road Hospital in Middlesbrough.

Who is it for?

We have 10 beds providing comprehensive assessment and treatment for young persons between the age of 13 to 18 with mental health needs.

Who are the staff at Lotus Ward?

It can be confusing at first knowing what different people do because each member of staff is trained to help you in different ways.

All the staff work as a team to help you work things out. You will have key workers – a small group of specific staff who will be your main team, who you can turn to if you have any problems.

Other staff involved in your care could be

There are many other people who are there to help you: psychiatrists, psychologists, psychotherapists, social workers, teachers, occupational therapists, nurses and support worker.

If you have religious or cultural needs the staff will help to support you or you can access the on-site multi-faith room.



Why do I need to be here?

A doctor has decided that it is the best place for you to offer support, assess your needs and provide any possible treatment. Staff at Lotus Ward will support you to get the right treatment to help you. You may have a number of worries and questions about what it will be like. Here are some feelings that you may recognise.

Helpless... like you have no control.

Pleased!
Things might start to change.

Angry... you don't want to go in to the ward.

Alone... no-one understands what you're going through.

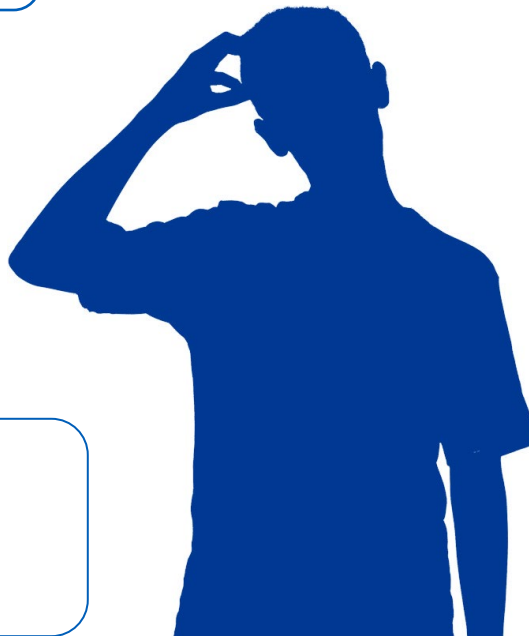
Hurt... that someone else thinks you need to get better.

Embarrassed... in case people think you're mad.

Depressed... things are never going to get better.

Scared... to go to a new place, where you don't know what to expect.

Upset... that you have to leave your friends and your family for a while.



What help is available?

There are several ways in which we help young people depending on what they need. You will have a period of assessment at the beginning of your stay after which you might be offered some of the following:

- Group therapy sessions
- Individual therapy (1:1)
- Occupational therapy

Getting young voices heard

We have skilled independent advocates who are trained to help children and young people in care express their views. This could be when they:

- Want support at reviews and other meetings
- Disagree about plans that have been made
- Have concerns about their care
- Need to make a complaint

Coram Voice provides support to young people with mental health difficulties. They provide individual advocacy through the visiting advocacy services. Voice also provides Independent Mental Health Advocates (IMHA's) trained specifically to work with young people, as required in the Mental Health Act 2008.

Education

If you are under 16 and in full time education then you will be supported throughout your stay at Lotus Ward by the teachers from River Tees Multi- Academy Trust either on the ward or at class rooms. The teachers are based at Lotus Ward throughout term time. This won't be like the school that you usually go to. You learn in smaller groups and you can get more support from the teachers. If you have left school the teachers may help you look into further education.

Will I be able to see my family?

Family visits are encouraged and this can be fully discussed with you and your family when you arrive on the ward. There are two family rooms that you can use.

What is there to do on Lotus Ward?

You will be given a weekly timetable which will identify which educational sessions or therapeutic groups you are expected to attend. This will be given at the beginning of each week and when you are not in class rooms when the school day has finished or on a weekend you can keep your self busy by:

- Watching TV or films
- Playing games
- Listening to music
- Gardening
- Playing on the games consoles
- Ward based activities in the art room
- Play musical instruments
- Cooking and baking

We also have quiet areas where you can be alone if you choose.

Within Lotus Ward there is also access to a gym, music room, mixing decks and a sports hall where you can play all kinds of sports.

How long will I be here?

Our aim is to ensure that you do not stay in hospital for longer than necessary and the whole team will work with you to ensure that your admission period is as short as possible.

What will the other young people be like?

You will be one of a small group of young people, who maybe experiencing different mental health problems or emotional difficulties.

A lot of young people feel worried when they hear the words **mental health problem** or **mental illness**, often because they don't understand what it means, or because they have heard stories about it that aren't true. When you learn more about mental health problems and mental illness you should find out that it's not as frightening as you think.

Here are some things other young people in our services have said:

I spent my birthday in hospital which made me unhappy as I missed my family. The staff and other young people made a real effort so I could enjoy my day.

Mark 14

Knowing other people have similar problems to you and you are not alone.

Jo 16

I have enjoyed some of the groups at the Arc and having my lunch at Cafe Amelia with staff. The outside area was really nice and we had a picnic.

Emma 15

The most helpful part was having a key worker. They teach you stuff, like life skills, how to deal with illness and how to cope so it doesn't happen again.

Sarah 18

If you have a problem there are always staff to talk to and try and help you move on with your life.

Adam 14

What can I bring with me?

You should bring enough clothes to last two weeks. You can wash your clothes on the ward. Remember to bring indoor and outdoor clothing and footwear.

Make sure you bring:

- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Things to wash or shower with
- Any other toiletries that you like to use.

If this is not possible, we can provide these.

Please give any medicines or tablets to the nurse in charge.

What should I not bring?

Do not bring anything that is valuable or special, as things can get lost or broken. Electrical items will need to be checked before you use them. Some items are restricted to keep you safe.

Phones are allowed but we ask you to disable your cameras to protect the privacy of other young people on the ward

Aerosols or razors are not allowed to be kept in young people's bedrooms but will be stored safely for when you need to use them.

Please do not bring:

- Pets - although they can visit
- Cigarettes, e-cigarettes, tobacco, lighter fuels or lighters
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Scissors
- Knives
- Pornographic material
- Vapes.

Other questions you may have about Lotus Ward:

Will I have to share a room?

Each young person has their own ensuite bedroom. You can decorate your room with posters as long as they are not offensive to others.

Will I be able to go out or visit home?

That depends on your individual needs and what is agreed with your doctor. Most young people will be able to have leave at some point, including overnight stays at home. If we are concerned about your safety, you may need to be accompanied out of the ward with staff.

What should I tell other people?

It can take time working out who you feel comfortable talking to. It's up to you how much you tell people.

How much are my parents or carers involved?

Everyone is different. Staff may want to involve your parents or carers to help them understand you better. What you say to staff is confidential and will usually only be told to your parents with your permission. You will have regular reviews of your care during your stay to discuss your progress and anything else that could be done to help you. You and your parents or carers will be invited to attend and we will discuss if anything else should be done to help you.

Problems, complaints or suggestions

Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne and Wear NHS Foundation Trust have a complaints policy and the staff will support and advise you if you need to make a complaint.

If you think that we could improve our service or you have any comments please let a member of staff know or use the suggestions box located on the ward.

Contact details

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Middlesbrough

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