



**St Helena  
Government**

## **HEALTH SERVICES ON ST HELENA**

### ***YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED***

Over the last month, the Health Directorate has made information available to everyone regarding their services. The Health Directorate has put together a Question & Answer information sheet based on queries received following the publications. The Health Directorate is trying to ensure that as much information as possible reaches those who need it the most - that is you the public. If the public is aware of what is offered and when, then we get a better use of our service and a better outcome for everyone.

The below questions and answers will hopefully answer some of the common queries you may have:

#### **What are the contact numbers for the General Hospital, Clinics and Pharmacy?**

The main switchboard number is tel: 22500, from here you can be put through to all other services in the General Hospital and Hospital Administration Building. The number for Half Tree Hollow Clinic is 23563.

#### **What are the opening times for the General Hospital, Clinics and Pharmacy?**

The Hospital does not close. Each Clinic has a different opening time. Full information on opening times have been uploaded to the Health Directorate Section of the SHG website via: [www.sainthelena.gov.sh/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/INFORMATION-FOR-HEALTH-SERVICE-USERS.pdf](http://www.sainthelena.gov.sh/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/INFORMATION-FOR-HEALTH-SERVICE-USERS.pdf)

#### **What is the procedure for making/attending an appointment?**

You should contact Medical Records on tel: 22321 and request an appointment. When you arrive, please report to Medical Records on the ground floor of the Hospital Administration Building as they will mark you as present for the doctor to see. If you cannot make your appointment, please telephone and cancel as we can offer it to someone else.

#### **Can I call the Hospital to talk to a doctor or nurse about my illness or must I make an appointment?**

You can contact the Hospital Staff or the Community Staff for support and advice. If they are concerned they can liaise with a doctor and make a plan. Unfortunately, it is not possible for patients to just call through to doctors, as they will be in consultations with others.

### **What numbers should I call afterhours or in an emergency?**

The number for the Hospital is tel: 22500 at any time. **If it is a genuine emergency it is important to call 911.**

### **If I am sick afterhours, do I come to the Hospital or what should I do?**

It depends on you and what is wrong. Out-of-hours is for emergencies. If you feel it is an emergency please come to the hospital, if you need an ambulance please call 911. If you are unsure, some simple tips to try first can be: If you have pain, try and take some painkillers first (over the counter meds like paracetamol or ibuprofen).

### **How long can I expect to wait before a doctor/nurse assesses me?**

If you go to the Hospital out-of-hours, you will have an initial assessment by a nurse within 15 minutes. Depending on the reason for your attendance you may be fully assessed then, or asked to wait whilst other inpatient care is prioritised. Your wait for a doctor will depend on your triage. If you attend the outpatients' clinic your wait will depend on the number of patients before you and the clinical urgency of your complaint.

### **Why does a doctor not always see me?**

If you arrive out-of-hours or to a clinic setting without a doctor's appointment you will be triaged first. Triage helps determine how you and your illness/injury is managed. Nurses are able to offer advice/support and some treatment alongside the Pharmacist. If you need to see a doctor, a decision will be made based on the severity and urgency of your illness/injury as to whether that needs to be right away or in one to two days or a few days. Generally coughs and colds do not require a doctor as they are viral illnesses and self-limiting (meaning they go away on their own).

### **What can I expect from the Ambulance service? How long will I need to wait before they arrive?**

You can expect a professional and competent team to attend you. The team is made up of Nurses, Healthcare Assistants and the Ambulance Technician. The length of time you wait will depend on your location and on the phone call we receive. It is very important if you need an ambulance to dial 911. Then you need to stay calm, stay on the phone and give the Hospital as much information as possible. The staff will organise the ambulance whilst you are on the phone, it will not delay it leaving. The staff may be able to give you help support and instruction whilst the ambulance is on the way, so please do not hang up.

## **What can I expect if I am admitted into Hospital?**

If you are admitted into Hospital as an emergency, you can expect to undergo test and investigations to determine your treatment. You may be admitted for observation if that is needed. You will be admitted into a ward and orientated by the nurses. Your doctors will see you in the mornings to review results and make any further plans. They will keep you informed throughout your stay of what is happening next.

## **What are the visiting hours for the Hospital?**

11am-12pm and 2pm-8pm Monday to Sunday. Visitors are limited two persons per bed space.

## **How long can I expect to wait for blood test or scan results?**

Up to two weeks after the test. If it is a test that has to be sent off-Island, these can take longer.

## **Will I be contacted if my blood test/scan/x-ray results are ready or do I need to make contact with the Hospital and if so with who?**

We are asking all patients to update their information with Medical Records Officers (home, work, mobile). If your results are normal then we can telephone you and advise you of this and save you a trip to the Hospital. If you haven't heard from us, please telephone Medical Records and they will find out if you need an appointment or not.

## **Is there an afterhours' fee?**

There is an out-of-hours consultation fee of £13.50 for residents and £85.00 for visitors and non-residents.

## **What are the prices for Health Services on St Helena and where can I find these prices?**

Prices can be found on the St Helena Government (SHG) website at: [www.sainthelena.gov.sh/health-and-social-welfare/](http://www.sainthelena.gov.sh/health-and-social-welfare/), on the noticeboards at the Hospital and in the Clinics around the Island.

## **How do I access Mental Health Services?**

The Mental Health Team is based at St John's Villa within the Hospital grounds, and is available Monday – Friday from 8.30am - 4.30pm. The Mental Health Team offers support for people of any age who may be experiencing emotional distress or mental health problems. You can self-refer or, with your consent, the Mental Health Team can accept referrals from your school, employer, health professional, friends or family. The Health Directorate has Mental Health Nurses and a Psychologist available on-Island,

after 4.30pm and at weekends to provide a crisis service. Please contact the main Hospital switchboard on tel: 22500 who will ask the nurse on-call to make contact with you by telephone. If necessary, the Mental Health Team will see a patient at the General Hospital out of hours or offer an appointment the next day.

### **How confidential is my information?**

All medical records are confidential. They can only be accessed by Health Staff. The staff are able to audit who accesses records and when to ensure the system is being used correctly.

**If you have any queries or questions regarding the Health Directorate or the services, these can be directed to the Hospital Nursing Officer, Lisa Niemand, via email: [lisa.niemand@sainthelena.gov.sh](mailto:lisa.niemand@sainthelena.gov.sh) or by tel: 22500 ext: 2040.**

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