

**BRISTOL CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL**

At Bristol Children's Hospital care is provided for both babies and children with heart problems. Caring for the whole family has always been a priority of the hospital staff and we at the Heart Circle try to contribute to that in any way we can.

**The Baby Unit**

The Baby unit cares for babies from birth to the age of about six months. Providing your baby is not too poorly, they will be cared for by the Baby Unit whatever tests or treatment they need.

**The Medical Ward**

Wards 31 and 36 are for children up to about ten years. You are more likely to be admitted to Ward 31 if your child requires Cardiac Catheterisation. Ward 36 is for treatment that does not involve an operation.

**The Surgical Ward**

You will come to Ward 33 if your child is going to have an operation. Usually surgery is on a Wednesday afternoon. After most operations your child will probably need what we refer to as a 'special nurse' who will look after your child over night and probably for part of the next day.

**Older Children**

Ward 35 is designated for older children. Whatever tests or treatment are required, your child may come here if he/she is 10 years or older.

**The Intensive Care Unit**

This is for babies and children who are either very sick or who require a 'special nurse' for longer periods. The staff on the ICU look after children with any serious illness, providing specialist care through potentially life-threatening periods.

The Family Support Worker, Helen Vegoda, has a room in the Hospital where parents can go if they wish. Her number is given below.

**Parent Facilities**

Whichever ward your child is on, you will be welcome to stay with us as well. We have a variety of facilities for parents including rooms to stay in, kitchens, rest rooms, etc., so please ask on the ward if you wish to be resident or telephone prior to admission to let us know. We cannot always guarantee a room for you but we will always be able to find you somewhere to sleep! We also have a canteen attached to the Children's Hospital and Maternity Hospital, so please ask us for directions.

**Additional Help**

Hospital admissions are often stressful, so if we can help you in any way, please do not hesitate to ask. To make your stay easier, we also have a social worker and a Deaconess.

**We hope your stay will be as comfortable as possible.**

**BRISTOL ROYAL INFIRMARY**

**Facts and Information**

Following investigations at the Bristol Children's Hospital it may be necessary for your child to have an operation on their heart at the Bristol Royal Infirmary. Your doctor will refer you to a Heart Surgeon who will discuss the proposed operation with you.

Following this appointment, a letter will be sent to you informing you of a date for your child's admission. If at any time you are concerned about your child's admission or operation you can ring the Cardiac Liaison Sister on Ward 5 at the Bristol Royal Infirmary. Her contact number is given below.

Before your child is admitted for surgery you may like to visit the Cardiac Unit. This would consist of meeting Helen Stratton, the Cardiac Liaison Sister and other staff on the Unit. Arrangements for such a visit can be made through the Family Support Worker at the BCH or Helen Stratton at the BRI. Their phone numbers are given below.

**The Cardiac Surgery Unit**

Open heart surgery is carried out at the Bristol Royal Infirmary where there are special theatres and equipment to enable your child or baby to have their operation.

There are two parts to the Unit, 5A and 5B, both on Level 6 of the main BRI complex. 5A is where the nursery is and where your child will be admitted. If you have visited prior to admission you may be familiar with the nursery, the playroom and some of the nurses. When you come to the Ward there will be a nurse or nursery nurse to admit and settle you and your child into their new surroundings. Everyone on the Unit understands what an anxious time this is. Please feel free to ask any questions at any time, however trivial you may feel they are: it will help the staff to care for you and your child.

In the Nursery there will be children awaiting and recovering from surgery. You may find it comforting and helpful to talk to the parents of the children. However, many parents have told us that they feel the need to be on their own from time to time. Helen Stratton, the Cardiac Liaison Sister has an office near the nursery so if you feel you need to discuss anything please contact her.

**Come Prepared**

Children are encouraged to wear their own clothes when able and 'wash and wear' clothes are the most practical. There are laundry facilities provided by the Heart Circle on Ward 5 and in the Parents' Hostel. It is not necessary to bring nappies or bed linen. If you child is bottle fed you should bring your own bottle and teats as the Ward may not have the correct type; milk and food will be provided.

If your child has any special requirements you can discuss these with Sister or Helen Stratton prior to admission. A favourite toy may be brought but the Nursery on Ward 5 is very well equipped. Please remember to label any toys that you bring. You should bring your own clothing and toiletries.

**Parent Facilities**

All parents have use of the dayroom on Ward 5 and have access to a toaster, kettle