

Patient information

Surgical assessment unit (SAU) / surgical same day emergency care (SSDEC)

This leaflet gives you some basic information about the surgical assessment unit (SAU) and surgical same day emergency care (SSDEC) unit and what you may expect when being cared for by these services.

Whilst you are with us, we will endeavour to make your stay as comfortable as possible. If there is anything you require, please do not hesitate to ask a member of our nursing staff.

Surgical same day emergency care (SSDEC)

You may have been referred to the SSDEC by the emergency department, your GP, NHS 111, ambulance or following recent discharge from a hospital ward.

The SSDEC unit sees and assesses patients who need treatment, investigations, or diagnostics on the same day, rather than being admitted to hospital overnight. You may be with us for a few hours whilst awaiting tests and results.

The unit is open five days a week from 8am to 8pm with the last admission at 6pm.

Surgical assessment unit (SAU)

The SAU is designated for all new patients who may need to be admitted to hospital with a surgical problem. Referrals are made to the SAU by your GP, hospital clinic or the emergency department.

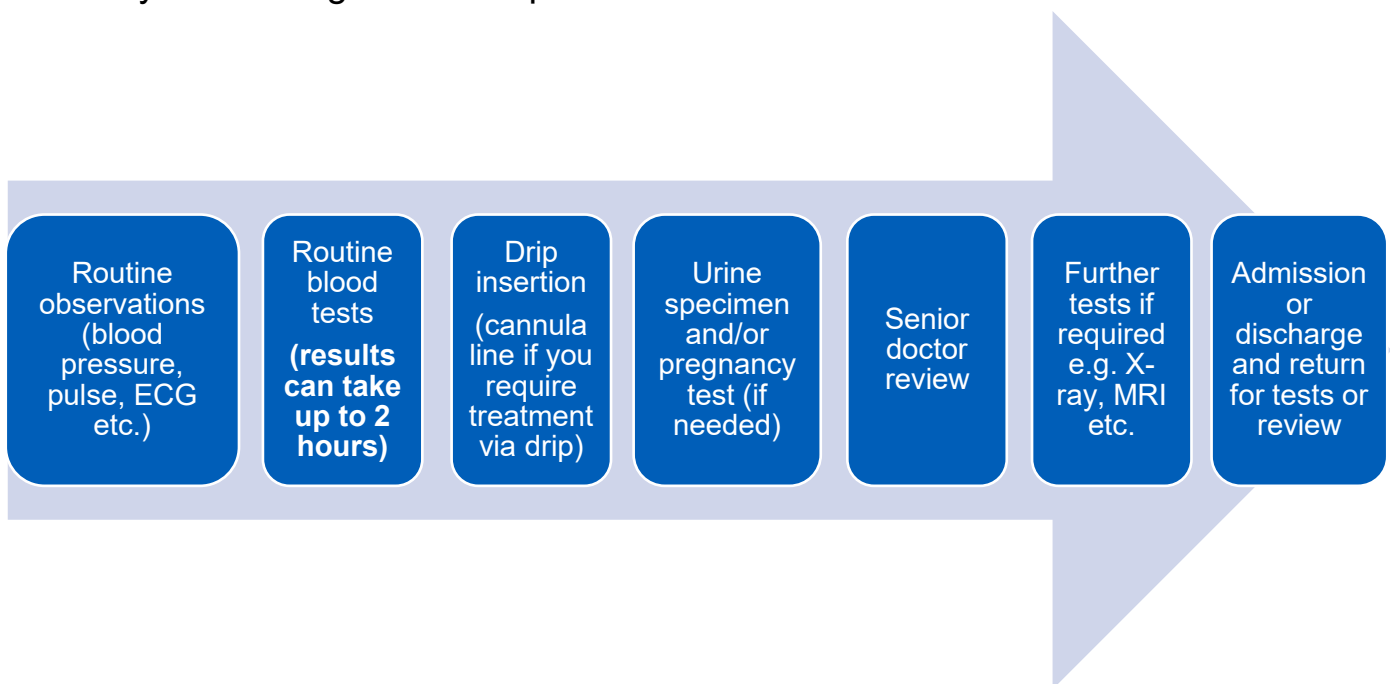
Patients usually stay on the SAU for 24 to 72 hours. If you need to stay longer than this, you are likely to be moved to a general surgical ward.

What can I expect to happen?

You will be welcomed by one of our nursing staff. They will take routine observations such as your blood pressure, pulse, respiratory rate, temperature, and oxygen saturation. A routine ECG (a simple test to check your heart's rhythm and activity) may then be obtained, plus routine blood tests. A cannula (drip line) might be inserted if you are likely to require treatment by this method.

We often require a specimen of your urine so please check with the nurses before visiting the toilet. Also, for women of child-bearing age, a pregnancy test may be carried out. If you think you may be pregnant, please tell a nurse.

A senior doctor will review you. Once the doctor has seen you, you will receive advice on the next steps in your care plan. This may involve further investigations such as x-ray or other similar scans depending on your complaint. You may need admission to the hospital, or you may be asked to go home and return another time for review, or to have your investigations completed.



How long will I be here?

**Average SSDEC length of stay:
6 hours**

Blood test results can take 2 hours

This depends on the nature of your presenting illness. Blood test results can take up to 2 hours and the doctors require these results before being able to decide about the next steps in your care plan. In addition, if further procedures/scans are required this may involve a longer stay. You will be seen by a doctor as soon as possible and kept informed of any plans. Sometimes there are delays in this process depending on the clinical needs of other hospital patients. If you have any issues, please speak to a nurse working in the unit.

Discharge

If you are to be discharged directly from SAU, there may be a delay waiting for your medicines. It is possible you may have to wait for these in the patient discharge waiting area, which is in another part of the hospital.

We will try to reduce any waiting as far as it is possible.

Follow up

There are several ways that your care could be followed up. We will identify if you require follow up tests or consultations after discharge; these will be requested, and the appointments sent to you.

Concerns, comments, and complaints

If you or your relative have any concerns during your stay, then please speak to a member of staff who will endeavour to rectify the situation. Our patient advice and liaison service (PALS) team are available to give advice, information or help resolve a concern or complaint. You can contact them by telephone: 01284 712555 or by email:

PALS@wsh.nhs.uk



We also collect patient feedback through questionnaires, either written or via the QR code displayed here and on the ward.

If you would like any information regarding access to the West Suffolk Hospital and its facilities, please visit the website for AccessAble (formerly DisabledGo) <https://www.accessable.co.uk>

