

I hope you are well during this time of preparation for Christmas.

Holy Cross is already looking festive, with decorations up in different areas of the hospital, although it goes without saying that this Christmas, for everyone, is going to be very different. But there is some good news! Mercifully the covid-19 outbreak at the Marie Therese House convent passed by with a light touch, so the Sisters can now continue with their preparations for Christmas too.

We want to provide, in outline, the visiting and booking arrangements over Christmas.

Visiting arrangements

Starting from Saturday 19th December 2020 through to Sunday 3rd January 2021 we will be allocating four pre-booked 1 ½ hour visiting slots per ward daily, as follows:

St Mary's Ward (downstairs)*: each day (including bank holidays and weekends):

10.30-12.00 noon, 12.15-13.45, 14.00-15.30, 15.45-17.15.

St Anthony's Ward (upstairs)*: each day (including bank holidays and weekends):

10.30-12.00 noon, 12.15-13.45, 14.00-15.30, 15.45-17.15.

Booking arrangements

On weekdays from this Friday 4th December to Thursday 17th December, please call the Reception team from 10am to 4pm. They will allocate you initially up to two sessions during this two week period. There will be no bookings taken on Friday 18th December. However from Monday 21st December to Thursday 31st December (excluding any Bank holidays and weekends) you can call the Reception team between 10am and 4pm to enquire about the availability for an additional visit. The Reception Team is contactable on 01428 643311.

Unfortunately it is not going to be possible to welcome extended parts of families into the hospital. The time for that will come when an effective vaccine programme is rolled out, and that shouldn't be too long. So we will need to limit this to those family members who usually visit – often the next of kin. We are aware of families where specific dynamics need to be accommodated (and families of patients who have been newly admitted to Holy Cross may wish to contact Rasheed in this respect)

If you are visiting from a Tier 3 area, please book your visit to take place within five day government window (from Wednesday 23rd – Sunday 27th), and, as mentioned last week, if your Christmas get together is a largish gathering then please would you arrange your visit to Holy Cross beforehand and not after.

We will also facilitate Virtual Visiting. Details on booking virtual visits and availability will be provided via this email update next week. Although it is Christmas, we would still ask you to consider Virtual Visiting first as it is the safest way, and can allow different friends and family to join online.

Finally, you may have heard in the media about tests being available in care homes to enable safe visiting. Being an independent hospital, this is not available to us. Therefore next week we will also include details about safety elements for your visit to Holy Cross.

Rasheed can be contacted at r.meeran@holycross.org.uk

With kind regards and gratitude for your patience and understanding.

Ross

**Visits will take place in non-ward areas (inside rather than outside) and more details will be included in next week's communication.*