

Visitor Safety on 5 South Specialized Dementia Unit (SDU)

Toronto Rehab

For families and friends visiting the Specialized Dementia Unit

Read this pamphlet to learn more about:

- Why safety is important
- How we keep patients and visitors safe
- What you can do to stay safe



Patient Education



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Why is safety so important?

All patients on the Specialized Dementia Unit at Toronto Rehab (5 South) have dementia. They have come to Toronto Rehab because their behaviours caused by dementia have made it hard for them to live safely in their home.

Safety is important because our patients' behaviours may be risky for other patients or for staff and visitors to the unit.

How do we keep patients and visitors safe?

Because our patients have dementia, we have special rules in place to keep everyone safe.

For overall safety:

- We have a cordless nurse call bell system. When a patient or visitor rings the call bell, it goes straight to the care station and to a special mobile phone that all nurses carry. This helps us make sure that we hear all calls as quickly as possible.
- We use photos and check at least 2 patient identifiers (such as name and hospital ID). This makes sure that we give the right treatment to the right patient, every time.
- We develop care plans for each patient on how to best manage their behaviours and needs.

You can press the **red “Staff Assist”** button in any emergency, such as aggression, a fall or anything else.



To make sure our patients do not leave the unit by themselves.

Our unit is secure. We check who comes in and who leaves the unit to make sure that our patients do not wander off alone.

We use a wander alert system. It tells us if a patient is near an open exit or stairwell entrance.



To keep our patients safe from accidents, such as falls or choking:

- We assess all patients within 1 day of getting to the hospital to see how well they are able to move around. We then create a falls prevention plan for each patient.
- We sometimes use alarm beds and wheelchair alarms. These tell us when a patient has gotten up and may need help walking.
- We assess patients who have swallowing problems or may have a high risk of choking. We provide meals or supplements to meet every patient's needs.

To make sure our patients' behaviours are safely managed:

- We know which patients are at a higher risk of unsafe behaviour.
- All of our staff members are trained in ways to work with patients in difficult situations.
- We try to redirect wandering patients so they don't end up in the same area.
- Our unit has been specifically designed to keep patients safe. We make sure that patients can't use equipment or items that could be dangerous to them. We also keep clutter out of the halls whenever possible to keep patients safe.
- We have recreational activities to give patients a chance to socialize with others and to be involved in familiar, enjoyable meaningful activities.
- Recreational activities are offered throughout the day, in the evenings and on weekends, which can be a difficult time for patients with dementia.

What is your role in safety?

As visitors to the unit, you also play an important role in safety. Here are a few important things you can do to help keep you, your loved one and other patients as safe as possible.

When entering and leaving the unit:

- Sign in at the care station when you arrive so that we know you are here. Be sure to sign out when you leave.
- Make sure there are no patients near the door when you come in or leave the unit.
- Wash your hands throughout your visit, especially when you arrive and leave. Please don't visit if you're sick or have symptoms like coughing, sneezing, fever, upset stomach or diarrhea.

During your visit

Let the nurse know if the patient you are visiting is upset or agitated, or if you are worried about their behaviour. Don't try to handle this yourself.

Contact with other patients:

- Do not try to help or redirect other patients, even if you have met them before.
- Do not get involved if you see patients getting angry with one another. Remain calm and ask staff for help.
- Do not try to help or stop someone who is standing up from their wheelchair. Get help from staff.

Personal belongings

Keep a close watch on your personal belongings. We can help you to lock your things in a patient's closet if you would like to.



Do not bring items that could be dangerous like breakable containers, glass picture frames, vases, sharp objects or small items that someone could choke on.

Food

Let the nurse know if you've brought food for the person you are visiting. Depending on their swallowing needs, they may only be able to eat certain types of foods.

Never feed other patients. Many patients have special diets or are at a higher risk of choking.



Remember, you can press the red "Staff Assist" button in any emergency, such as aggression, a fall or anything else.



**Ask us anytime you are not sure about
a situation. We're here to help.**



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