



**South and West Herts  
Health and Care  
Partnership**



**West Hertfordshire  
Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Trust**



# A guide to...

## The Virtual Hospital

### *Patient Information*

#### How to contact us

The Virtual Hospital  
Watford General Hospital  
West Hertfordshire Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust  
Vicarage Road, Watford  
Hertfordshire WD18 0HB

**Tel:** 01923 217063 **Email:** [westherts.virtualhospital@nhs.net](mailto:westherts.virtualhospital@nhs.net)

If you need this leaflet in another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01923 217 198** or email [westherts.pals@nhs.net](mailto:westherts.pals@nhs.net)



Author	Jessica Scott
Department	Virtual Hospital
Ratified / Review Date	October 2023 / October 2024
ID Number	17-2168-V1



## Welcome to our Virtual Hospital

Our virtual hospital provides a holistic approach to care for people within their own home, minimising the need for hospitalisation.

During your admission to our virtual hospital (VH), you are a patient under the care of a consultant or a community team and will be monitored from the comfort of your own home.

When you are 'admitted' to our virtual hospital (VH) you will be under the care of a hospital consultant. You may also be cared for by a community team (for example district nurses), your GP and voluntary services. You will be monitored from the comfort of your own home.

We aim to reduce the number of visits you need to make to the hospital.

The virtual hospital is part of South and West Herts Health & Care Partnership, working with community and hospitals partners to care for you through the virtual hospital

## How the virtual hospital improves your care

- Reduces the risk of you needing to come back to hospital, by remotely monitoring your health
- Enables you to recover from the comfort of your own home or within familiar settings, which is good for your emotional and mental wellbeing
- Involves GPs throughout your care with us to improve communication between all the healthcare teams looking after you.
- Personalises your care to match your needs.
- Reduces the stress an admission to hospital can cause to both you and your support network.

## How will I be cared for?

We will provide monitoring devices for you to use at home. The device will either transmit results to a central hub at Watford General Hospital, or you will update it manually. For transmitted results, these can be seen in an App on a mobile device called Masimo. You will be given an instruction booklet which has clear information about the app and how to use the devices. By downloading the app used, you are consenting to your data being shared with the healthcare team.



The hub is staffed by nurses from 8am to 6pm every day and they will review your results several times a day, and they will call you to see how you are getting on. If the nurses have any concerns, they will discuss them with a consultant.

Your ongoing care will be reviewed daily by a team which will include specialist nurses, and doctors from both the hospital and the community including a GP. The GP will liaise with your own GP to make sure they are up to date with your care.

### **When can I start the programme and how long will I be on it?**

This programme starts the day after you are discharged from the hospital, or as soon as introduces you to the virtual hospital. The length of time will depend on your recovery. A clinician will regularly monitor your progress, similar to the way they would at a physical hospital.

### **What should I do whilst under the Virtual Hospital's Care?**

- You will need to ensure any manually measured observations are recorded and communicated to the hub eg, weight, temperature, etc. These will all be explained to you before you go home.
- There is a daily questionnaire you must complete so that we can track your wellbeing.
- Please answer phone calls from the virtual hospital. We will call you to discuss your wellbeing, so look out for these calls. We may phone you a few times to ensure you are well.
- Because your care is shared, please expect visits from community trusts and voluntary services and allow them in so they can help to look after you. All staff will carry identification.
- Please report any new symptoms, or changes to symptoms, to the VH team.
- If you move location, please tell us your whereabouts, we need to support you and ensure your safety is maintained wherever you are.
- If any medication changes are made, please pick up the new prescription from an appropriate pharmacy.
- You will need to come to the hospital if any further diagnostic or outpatient tests are required.
- Sometimes, it may be necessary to arrange face-to-face appointments and assessments to review your care – please attend these.
- Please take care of all the equipment provided for you, including chargers, so that we can reuse them once you are better and your care with the virtual hospital ends.

## How am I monitored?

You are monitored via the Masimo Safetynet app, which is downloaded to your mobile phone. If you do not have a mobile phone, we will lend you an iPad (tablet-android). You will be shown how to use the devices provided, and the app before you leave hospital or are admitted to the virtual hospital.

If you are given 'wearables' (example below), these will continuously monitor you and send the information to the team automatically. Any data you input into the app will also be sent to us so we can monitor you.



## Observations and how often they are taken

### **For heart failure patients:**

Weigh yourself once a day, all other observations need to be provided at roughly 8.30am, 11.30am and 3.30pm (blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen saturations).

You will use Masimo for some of these measurements.

### **For ABC (asthma, bronchiectasis, and COPD) patients:**

Observations need to be provided at roughly 8.30am, 11.30am and 3.30pm (blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen saturations).

You will use Masimo for some of these measurements.

### **For respiratory infection patients:**

Observations need to be provided at roughly 8.30am, 11.30am and 3.30pm (temperature, heart rate and oxygen saturations)

You will use Masimo for some of these measurements.

### **For post-surgery patients:**

Observations need to be provided at roughly 8.30am, 11.30am and 3.30pm (blood pressure, heart rate and oxygen saturations).

You will use Masimo for some of these measurements.

## **For Frailty Patients:**

We will call you to discuss your wellbeing and you will be supported by our community team working within Central London Community Healthcare Trust.

### **What should I do if I feel unwell or worried?**

The virtual hospital team is available every day from 8am to 6pm.

Please call the virtual hospital hub and ask for advice.

If you have a question about your care and you feel you need to speak to someone, then please call the Hub team at the following numbers:

01923 217063

01923 217770

07773 650571

**If you are worried outside of 8am-6pm, please call 111.**

**If it is an emergency or if you feel very unwell, please call 999.**

### **What happens after I am discharged from the Virtual Hospital?**

You will be informed that you are being discharged and provided with a plan of any follow-ups needed. A discharge summary will be posted to your address and a copy will be sent to your GP surgery.

Once discharged, any monitoring devices and their chargers must be returned to the one of the following –

Watford General Hospital (Cardiac Centre Reception)

Hemel Hempstead Hospital (Level 3, Verulam Wing, Respiratory Reception)

If you cannot bring these back to these sites, we will find an alternative route. Some devices are disposable, but most need returning.

### **What happens to my data and information?**

By downloading the app used, you are consenting to your data being shared with the healthcare team. We will keep an electronic record of your recorded results for seven years.

## Contact Details

### Virtual Hospital Hub:

01923 217063

01923 217770

07773 650571

If you have any questions about your care, you can email the VH team:

[westherts.virtualhospital@nhs.net](mailto:westherts.virtualhospital@nhs.net)

### Masimo

0800 0869016 - 24/7 helpline

You can call this number at any time if you have technical difficulties. Please note this number is only for technical issues about using the device - not for any health or care related questions).

### For complaints and compliments

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) at West Herts. The PALS office is based at Watford General Hospital near Main Reception in the main building (PMOK). The team operates a drop-in service Monday to Friday, between 8am and 4pm.

**Email:** [westherts.pals@nhs.net](mailto:westherts.pals@nhs.net)

**Phone:** 01923 21719