Royal United Hospitals Bath
NHS Foundation Trust

Are you worried?

Information for patients, relatives and carers.

The RUH, where you matter

This leaflet gives information that may help you or your loved one when they are in hospital.
If you suddenly feel unwell, call for help from your ward team.

What is Martha's Rule?

Martha's Rule is a patient safety service for inpatients and their friends/families and staff. Patients, relatives, friends, carers or staff can call for advice and help if there are concerns about the patient's condition. **This service was previously known as 'Call for Concern'.**

Who runs the Martha's Rule Service?

Martha's Rule is run by a team of specialist adult critical care nurses who are available 24 hours a day to help support ward staff in the care of very unwell patients. They can offer advice over the telephone and/or come to the ward to review the patient's condition if there is a noticeable change. The team can also discuss with the relevant consultant or team regarding your concerns.

When to contact the Martha's Rule Service

- When there is a significant change in your/the patient's condition and, after discussion with the ward team, your concerns have not been addressed.
- You have ongoing medical concerns after you have spoken to the ward nurses or doctors.

When not to contact the Martha's Rule Service

- Martha's Rule is a patient safety service. It should not be used to report general problems such as issues with bed, room, food or parking.
- Martha's Rule is not for obtaining medical updates or a general second opinion.

Please speak to a member of staff, nurse in charge or ask for the ward manager or matron to discuss these issues.

The difference between the Martha's Rule Service and a general second opinion

The Martha's Rule Service is for acute deterioration. It is for staff, inpatients or their friends/families to ask for a review if the patient's condition is getting worse and, after raising concerns with the team on the ward, it has not been resolved.

How to contact the Martha's Rule Service

Critical Care Outreach Tel: 07775 821211

- Call directly on the above number.
- Please leave a message and you will be called back as soon as possible.
- Please be aware the team cannot give a call back time as they may be with other patients, however, will call you back as soon as possible.

What we need to know when you call

- Your name or the name of the patient you are concerned about, contact number.
- The ward you or they are on.
- A brief description of your concerns.

What happens next?

One of the Critical Care Outreach team will take your call. The clinician may help over the telephone or visit the ward to discuss your concerns and contact the relevant team for further advice and support. Consent will be gained from the patient before discussing next steps with the ward team and will then update you as needed

If you would like this leaflet in email form, large print, braille or another language, please contact the Patient Support and Complaints team on **01225 825656.**

martha's rule
detecting deterioration

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
Combe Park, Bath, BA1 3NG

01225 428331 | www.ruh.nhs.uk

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