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NHS
Royal United Hospitals Bath
NHS Foundation Trust

Are you worried about a child or a young person?



Information for parents and carers and young people who are staying in hospital.

What is Martha's Rule?

Martha's Rule is a patient safety service for children, young people and their families or carers. Parents, carers, staff or patients can call for advice and help if there is a concern about the condition of a child who is in hospital. **This service was previously known as "Call for Concern".**

If a child or young person suddenly feels unwell, call for help immediately from your ward team.

Who runs the Martha's Rule service?

Martha's Rule is run by a team of specialist adult critical care nurses who will work alongside the paediatric and neonatal medical and nursing teams to address your concerns.

The team are available **24 hours a day** to help support ward staff in the care of very unwell children. The team can offer help over the telephone and or discuss with the relevant consultant or team regarding your concerns if there is a noticeable change in the child's condition.

When to contact the Martha's Rule service

- There is a **significant change** in a child or young person's condition and, after discussion with the ward team your concerns have not been addressed.
- You have **ongoing medical concerns** even after discussing them with the ward nurses or doctors.

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When not to contact the Martha's Rule service

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

If you need to discuss such issues, please ask for the ward manager or matron.

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. The team, however, will call back as soon as possible.

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What we need to know when you call

1. The name of the child or young person you are concerned about
2. The ward they are on
3. A brief description of your concerns
4. Your contact details and relationship to the child

What happens next?

One of the Critical Care Outreach team will take your call. The team may:

- Offer support and advice over the telephone.
- Visit the ward to discuss your concerns and contact the appropriate medical team for further advice and support.

The team will gain consent from the parent/carer and/or the patient before discussing with the ward team and will then update you.

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**.

Royal United Hospitals Bath NHS Foundation Trust
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Date of publication: January 2026| Ref: RUH CCM/011

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