

## *Long Term Epilepsy Monitoring Unit at Life Entabeni Hospital*

We are pleased that you will soon be coming to the Epilepsy Unit at Life Entabeni Hospital. This pamphlet has been designed to answer questions you may have about the video-EEG monitoring process.

Each of our patients is assigned a nurse to help take care of your admission, discharge, and follow-up appointments. Please call if you have questions that haven't been answered in this brochure.

Here is what you can expect to happen during your stay with us:

### *The Diagnostic Process*

Patients come to the Epilepsy Unit for a variety of reasons. Most have epilepsy that has been hard to manage with medication. These patients hope that a medication change may reduce their seizure frequency. Or, they hope that surgery may be possible to stop their seizures.

Some patients come because they have seizure-like symptoms. These patients want to know whether they have epilepsy, or if their symptoms are due to some other cause. Sometimes patients have non-epileptic seizures that are due to heart or blood vessel disease, or to emotional and stress factors.

You are being admitted for a continuous video-EEG monitoring procedure (24 hours a day until discharge) and other tests to allow our Epilepsy Monitoring Team to make recommendations about your treatment. Patients generally spend 5-7 days in the hospital to complete this testing process.

### *Pre-authorisation*

A pre-authorisation number must be obtained from your medical aid **PRIOR** to your admission; your medical aid will request the following information –

1. **Procedure codes:** 6010 and 6011 (or 6018 and 6019 as they are phasing out the previous two codes)
2. **ICD-10 code:** G40.9 (unless otherwise stipulated)
3. **Referring doctor's practice number**
4. **Life Entabeni Hospital Practice number:** 5801982
5. **Epilepsy Unit's Practice number (Candice Böttcher):** 7520824
6. **Date of admission**
7. **Medical Aid information for patient and main member**
8. Occasionally your medical aid will request a letter of motivation from your doctor so it is strongly advised that you contact them at least 2 weeks prior to your date of admission. Should you require assistance, feel free to contact our pre-admission clinic on 031-2041300 ext 346.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** In my experience patients on the following medical aid schemes will **always** be required to submit a letter of motivation from your referring doctor - **Gems, Bestmed, Bonitas, Liberty, Resolution, Allcare, SANDF, CAMAF, Sedmed, Cape Medical plan.**

If you are a Discovery Key Care member, pay special attention to the pre-authorisation procedure. You will require both a specialist authorisation and a hospital authorisation.

Please ensure that this letter is obtained ASAP. I suggest that you send off this letter personally and not leave it up to the doctor's rooms.

Your medical aid will most likely only give you authorisation for 1 day. Please do not let this concern you. When you are admitted a case manager will be assigned to you who will update your medical aid on a daily basis.

### ***Reporting to the Admitting Desk***

On the morning of your admission, you will first report to the Admitting Desk, which is located at the entrance to Life Entabeni Hospital. They will be expecting you and should have your name and bed booking. You will go through standard admission process and will be sent to the Neurology Ward where they will fill in the necessary documentation and give you a file.

### ***The Video-EEG Monitoring Procedure***

You are going to be on continuous video monitoring during your admission, except when in the bathroom. The camera recording your seizure events is connected to a computer that records your brain waves. To obtain this important information, small silver electrodes filled with gel will be attached to your scalp with special skin glue and gauze.

This technology allows us to observe and record your seizures and your responses to them. It tells us if your seizures are coming from a specific location in the brain. Because we need to observe several seizures, your doctor may lower or stop your anticonvulsant medication. By adjusting your medication, we hope to increase the number of seizures you have while on the monitor.

Once all the information is at hand at the end of the monitoring process, it should be possible for us to make a very accurate diagnosis regarding the type of epilepsy you have. This might lead to a change in your medication or add other treatment options, which will hopefully control your epilepsy better.

### ***Help Us Help You***

There are several things you can do to help us make your stay successful and comfortable:

- With electrodes on your scalp, it's not possible to shampoo daily. However, you will be able to shower with the help of your nurse and if you could arrive with clean hair, **free of ANY styling products, braids or hair extensions** it would help us a great deal.
- Because of the need to be on camera throughout your stay (except when using the bathroom), some patients find it confining not to be able to move about as freely as they wish. But if we do not record you, we cannot get the information we need to help you. Your stay can be a good time for catching up on reading, watching TV and movies, writing letters, enjoying calls and visits from friends, and working on hobbies that can easily be done in bed. I suggest you bring along your own set of headphones or alternatively a set can be purchased at the front desk when you arrive.

## ***Nursing Care and Seizures***

Please come prepared to discuss your medical history with myself and the nurse during admission. It is important that you bring a list of all your medications, how much of each you take, and how often. **Bring with you all your current medications in the original containers.** Our pharmacy will dispense any other medications you need during your stay.

The hospital is a safe place to have seizures because our nurses are specially trained and are here 24 hours a day to help you. They will do everything they can to make your environment safe and to protect you from injury. We take two specific safety precautions throughout your stay: (1) the guard rails of your bed are kept up at ALL times; (2) a nurse must stand by anytime you are out of your bed.

Our nurses will ask you to report all seizures, auras or seizure warnings that you have. They will show you how to use the seizure alarm button located next to your bed. Any time you feel a seizure coming on, you will press the alarm to alert the nurses. They will be on hand to help whenever you need assistance.

### ***What to bring***

Now that you have a sense of what's going to be happening while you're in the hospital, you are probably wondering what to bring with you. Here are our suggestions:

1. Casual and comfortable clothes such as jeans, sweatpants, button-down shirts or shirts with large necks, pajamas, robe, underwear, and slippers. There are no laundry facilities for patient use. **Please bring enough clothing changes for the length of your stay.**
2. Personal hygiene articles such as shampoo and conditioner, body wash/soap, deodorant, toothbrush and toothpaste. Please also bring along a fine-toothed comb.
3. Magazines, books, crossword puzzles, handicrafts, stationery, and games that can easily be used while in bed (cell phones and laptops are allowed but cannot be charged at your bedside). Do not forget to bring along your own chargers.
4. Snack items such as fruit or drinks. A small refrigerator in the communal kitchen is provided for patient use.
5. **Bring all relevant MRI's and CT brain scans.**

### ***General Information***

**Please leave anything of value at home. Entabeni Hospital will not be responsible for theft or loss of personal property.**

- Visiting hours are 3 pm to 4pm and 7pm to 8pm.
- A DVD machine is available only in the **private pediatric room**. Please bring your own DVD's.
- You cannot smoke in your room during your stay here. You can use nicotine patches or odorless electronic cigarettes without visible vapor. No chewing gum is permitted.
- Free Wi-Fi is available.

## ***Getting Results of Your Tests***

Your doctor will give you preliminary results before you leave the hospital, but a complete report will be available on your follow-up appointment with your doctor which should be booked for **2 weeks after you leave the unit**. The Epilepsy Monitoring Team carefully reviews each patient's test results. We want your evaluation to be as thorough as possible so that we can decide on the best course of treatment.

## ***Your admission date***

Although every effort is made to ensure that your booking date is kept as is, on the odd occasion the patient booked before you may need to have their stay extended which will result in a short delay regarding your admission date. There are various reasons why this may happen, the most common being that the patient has not had enough seizures for us to make a decision on their treatment. Only once we have collected enough information on their problem, can the patient be discharged. These rules will also apply to you, so ultimately the person who is currently occupying the bed takes priority. Should this be the case, you will be informed at least 24 to 48 hours in advance. Your patience will be much appreciated.

## ***Cancellations***

Any cancellations or changes to your date need to be made at least **2 working days** prior to your admission.

## ***Inquiries***

Contact Candice Böttcher on the following numbers:

Work: (031) 2041490

Fax: (031) 2041407

Email: [info@epilepsy.co.za](mailto:info@epilepsy.co.za)

Website: [www.epilepsy.co.za](http://www.epilepsy.co.za)

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