



Oxford University Hospitals  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Oxford Retrieval Team

*Part of Southampton and Oxford Retrieval Team (SORT)*

Information for parents/carers



# SOUTHAMPTON OXFORD **RETRIEVAL TEAM**



The Southampton Oxford Retrieval Team (SORT) is a collaboration between two paediatric intensive care units (PICUs).

It delivers expert paediatric critical care to hospitals throughout the south of England.

The Oxford Retrieval Team takes care of children while they are being moved to an Intensive Care Unit, such as the Paediatric Critical Care Unit at the John Radcliffe Hospital in Oxford.

The decision to transfer a child to an Intensive Care Unit is made in their best interests, so that they can receive specialist treatment.

It can be a stressful, even frightening time for parents, children and families, and we understand you may feel anxious or that you have no control over the situation.

Our specially-trained doctors and nurses are experienced in caring for very ill children during a transfer. They are here to help and support you, so please feel free to ask them questions and tell them if you are worried about anything.

Please also feel free to ask the Paediatric Critical Care Unit team at the John Radcliffe Hospital any questions you may have.

Your Oxford Retrieval Team doctor is:

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Your Oxford Retrieval Team nurse is:

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Your trainee Oxford Retrieval Team member is:

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## Before the move

When we arrive at your local hospital we will introduce ourselves to you and to the staff caring for your child. They will then explain the situation to us, and give us the information we need.

We will then work with them to prepare your child for transfer. Although we will be busy, we will keep you informed.

The equipment in the ambulance will depend on your child's age and size. The aim is to continue the care that your child has received at your local hospital, using equipment specially designed for travel.

We may have an extra doctor or nurse with us, who is training in the transfer of very ill children.

## Travelling with your child

If you would like to travel in the ambulance with your child, you are very welcome, but please read the points below carefully.

We can offer one seat in the ambulance for a parent or carer on a case-by-case basis. Sometimes we feel it is not in the best interest of the child, family or team for a parent or carer to travel with us. If this is the case, we will explain our decision to you.

You may bring one piece of luggage with you in the ambulance.

Most parents or carers feel less anxiety if they travel with their child in the ambulance, but some families prefer to travel together in another vehicle; it is important to choose what is best for you.

If you need medical care or support yourself, it may not be safe for you to travel with your child in the ambulance; we can discuss this with you and decide together.

If you are a new mother, you must have been discharged from postnatal care in order to travel with your child.

It is important for any parent or carer travelling in the ambulance to be able to get into the ambulance unaided.

For many parents or carers, the transfer gives them an opportunity to organise care for other children, collect clothes or toiletries, or even get some sleep. If you want to take this opportunity, then **please do so**. The days leading up to a transfer to an Intensive Care Unit can be exhausting for families, and **no-one will judge you if you do not travel with us**.

## Safety in the ambulance

Please always wear your three-point seatbelt.

If the ambulance has to stop so we can care for your child, please stay seated with your seatbelt on, unless we tell you otherwise.

Sometimes we need to carry out treatments or procedures during the journey to keep your child as well as we can. We will try to explain these to you at the time. If we do not have the opportunity, we will explain in full when we arrive at the Intensive Care Unit.

Our team needs to focus solely on caring for your child: please allow them to carry out any necessary procedures without hindering them.

We might use emergency lights and sirens to get through heavy traffic: this can be difficult for some people, especially if they have issues with travel sickness.

If you are travelling in the front of the ambulance, it is vital that you do not distract the driver.

## For families who are not travelling in the ambulance

If you are not travelling with us, please tell us your plans.

It is not safe for you to 'tailgate' the ambulance, or try to keep up with us: please focus on driving safely.

We may use lights and sirens to minimise delays due to traffic, and not because there is an emergency in the ambulance: however, this may still make you feel anxious.

The Paediatric Critical Care Unit in Oxford is in the main John Radcliffe Hospital building, not the Children's Hospital. It is close to the Emergency Department on Level 1 – please follow the signs.

Make sure we have given you a parking permit. Park in a staff car park and put the permit on your dashboard. We can go over parking issues in more detail once your child is settled on the Unit.

## Feedback

We aim to provide the highest quality of care to your child and the whole family. We always welcome comments and feedback, so please speak to any member of our team if you have concerns.

We are involved in a national transport study called DEPICT, looking at best practice for transfers. We will tell you about this in due course.

# Further information about Oxford's Paediatric Critical Care Unit

[www.ouh.nhs.uk/children/services/critical-care](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/children/services/critical-care)

[www.ouh.nhs.uk/children/leaflets.aspx](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/children/leaflets.aspx)

Tel: **01865 220 632/3**

#oxpaedscriticalcare

If you have a specific requirement, need an interpreter, a document in Easy Read, another language, large print, Braille or audio version, please call **01865 221 473** or email **PALS@ouh.nhs.uk**

## Oxford Paediatric Critical Care Unit

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[www.ouh.nhs.uk/information](http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/information)

