



## Information for parents and carers of children having radiotherapy

This leaflet gives you information about your child having radiotherapy as an outpatient. There is more detailed information in The Christie booklet 'Radiotherapy'.

### Referral to The Christie

Your child's consultant has requested for your child to be seen by a consultant at The Christie for consideration for radiotherapy treatment. The Christie is the regional treatment centre for radiotherapy providing a wide range of specialist care.

On arrival at The Christie, you will be given a warm welcome and introduction to the consultant and the specific team members who will work closely with you and your child.

### The paediatric team

The Christie has a specialist team of professionals who have specialised training to help and support children and young people:

- clinical oncologists
- paediatric specialist radiographer
- play specialist and paediatric support co-ordinator
- paediatric community liaison nurse
- paediatric staff nurses within the Palatine Treatment Centre day unit
- consultant paediatric anaesthetist
- paediatric nurses and recovery practitioners

### Radiotherapy process

Before radiotherapy treatment starts, your child will need to come for some preparation appointments. These include the following but may vary depending on your child's needs:

- mould room preparation
- radiotherapy planning scans

### Play at The Christie

We have qualified play specialists who are dedicated to radiotherapy preparation and support for children and young people. The play specialists will help your child to understand the radiotherapy process. This takes place during play preparation sessions which also enable your child to experience aspects of the treatment through play and visits to the hospital which will help your child to become familiar with staff and the hospital surroundings.

Play is a valuable tool to enable understanding and awareness and will help your child to feel comfortable with the radiotherapy treatment. The play specialist will attend most appointments with you and your child to offer full support and guidance.

## General anaesthesia

If your child is unlikely to tolerate radiotherapy treatment even after support from the play specialists, they may be offered general anaesthesia. This is performed at The Christie by the specialist children's team from the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital. Once this has been agreed you will need to follow strict fasting guidelines for your child. These instructions **MUST** be followed **every time** your child comes for radiotherapy.

### Fasting instructions

**No FOOD/MILK/JUICE after 02:00am**

**Your child can continue to drink water until 06:00am**

**Nothing by mouth at all after 06:00am.**

If these instructions are not followed, we will be unable to perform the general anaesthetic for safety reasons and your child will have their treatment cancelled for that day.

To ensure the best possible outcome for your child, they need to have their treatment daily, Monday to Friday.

The consultant anaesthetist will visit you and your child on the Palatine Treatment Ward (PTW, department 27) every morning of the radiotherapy treatment and perform an assessment. You will then accompany your child, with a member of the PTW nursing team to radiotherapy suite 10.

Your child will then be given a general anaesthetic, either via their venous access (Hickman line<sup>®</sup>, portacath) or mask. You will be able to stay with them until they are asleep and then the PTW nurse will escort you back to the PTW.

Following the radiotherapy, and once your child is awake, the PTW nurse will escort you back to radiotherapy and you will both accompany your child back to the ward.

Your child will be discharged from the PTW when they are fully recovered.

### Post discharge instructions

If you have any concerns about your child once you have returned home, please phone Ward 84 at the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital on **0161 701 7489** or **0161 701 7433**.

**Do not bring your child back to The Christie.** If your child needs to return to hospital, you will be advised to bring them to The Royal Manchester Children's Hospital.

### Appointments

During treatment, your child will be reviewed by their consultant on a weekly basis within the Monday clinic held in the Palatine Treatment Centre (PTC, department 30). You **must** see the PTC day unit nurse on a daily basis except when your child is reviewed by their consultant. The radiotherapy review will involve checking for skin reactions and to assess for any complications related to the radiotherapy treatment.

The PTC day unit nursing team are able to carry out central line flushes and blood tests if needed during radiotherapy treatment. Please speak to a member of staff if this is necessary.

### Treatment side effects

Radiotherapy treatment is individualised and side effects may vary. These will be explained

clearly during your consultation and throughout the planning process to enable you and your family to provide consent for treatment. If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact the team at any point who will be happy to discuss your concerns with you.

### **Travelling and car parking**

Please refer to our separate travelling and car parking leaflet, or visit our website for the latest information.

## **Useful contact information**

Paediatric radiographer:

**0161 446 8395 / 0161 446 3000** bleep 12317

Play specialist and paediatric support co-ordinator:

**0161 918 7034 / 0161 446 3000** - bleep **12304**

Paediatric community liaison team leader:

**0161 446 3955 / 07721 879437**

PTC day unit: **0161 446 3858**

PTC outpatients: **0161 446 3593**

Ward 84 at the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital: **0161 701 7489** or **0161 701 7433**

If you need information in a different format, such as easy read, large print, BSL, braille, email, SMS text or other communication support, please tell your ward or clinic nurse.

We try to ensure that all our information given to patients is accurate, balanced and based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence. If you would like to have details about the sources used please contact **patient.information@christie.nhs.uk**

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For more information about The Christie and our services, please visit [www.christie.nhs.uk](http://www.christie.nhs.uk) or visit the cancer information centre at Withington, Oldham or Salford.

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The Christie Patient Information Service  
August 2016 - Review August 2019

