



Community Assessment Unit (CAU)

at Eltham Community Hospital

Improving lives

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Community Assessment Unit (CAU)

The CAU is a unit with 10 chairs and 10 beds, based in Eltham Community Hospital. We assess and treat patients referred to us from their GP, community nursing and therapy teams, care homes and A&E. The people referred to us are usually over 65, do not need admission to hospital and would benefit from a thorough assessment by a geriatrician.

What should I expect?

At the unit you will be assessed by the team, who will look at your overall health and well-being. When you leave the unit, you will have a clear plan of what will happen next.

What happens when I arrive?

When you arrive at the unit, one of our nursing team will ask you some initial questions and take observations such as blood pressure, weight, height and so on. They may also do an ECG (tracing of your heart) and blood tests if required. There are also x-ray facilities, which may be needed if you have had a fall.

You will then be seen by the following people as appropriate, depending on the reason you were referred to us:

- the **CAU junior doctor** and duty **elderly care consultant**
- **pharmacist** – who will review your medications and discuss any problems you may have taking them
- **occupational therapist or physiotherapist** - to assess your mobility and whether any aids may assist you
- **care co-ordinators** – if you might need more support at home
- if there are concerns about your mood or your mental health, our **mental health liaison team** will be able to speak to you.

What will they do there?

After you have been assessed, the team may suggest changes to your medications, recommend further investigations, begin treatment, or refer you to a specialist team. They may also offer mobility aids or further assessment and support at home. We may also ask you to come back to CAU at a later date for a check-up appointment.

Will I get something to eat?

Yes, if you are with us over lunch time or dinner time you will be offered a sandwich at lunch time and a hot meal in the evening. Hot and cold drinks are available. There are many shops in Eltham High Street, within two minutes' walk, if relatives or friends wish to purchase snacks or refreshments.

When will I go home?

You will usually go home within a few hours, although we may ask you to wait for test results before you go. Rarely, we'll ask you to stay overnight, if for example we feel it would not be safe to go home until support was in place or further investigations or treatment were complete.

We will discuss and involve you in all decisions about your care.

What happens next?

The plan for when you go home and any follow up appointments will be shared with you. We will send a 'discharge summary' of your visit to your GP and a copy to you once we have all the results. Please talk to a member of the team if you have any questions or contact us by telephone between 9am and 5pm.

We are continuously striving to make our services the best they can be. To help us with this, please complete a short questionnaire about your experiences at the CAU. This helps us to know what we are doing well and where we may need to improve. We appreciate your feedback and ask you take the time to complete the questionnaire.

Contact

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