

They need us. We need you.

A guide to Critical Care nursing





A message from our Chief Nurse and Director of Education



Thank you for your interest in joining the Critical Care nursing team at Great Ormond Street Hospital NHS Foundation Trust. I want to tell you more about the hospital, what it's like to work in critical care and the important role that critical care nurses play in helping the patients we care for and their families.

Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) is one of the world's leading children's hospitals. Since the hospital first opened in 1852, it has been dedicated to finding new and better ways to treat the patients we care for. That ambition remains as true today as it ever has. The hospital provides specialist care and treatment to children and young people from across the UK and internationally.

Many of the patients we care for have complex, life-limiting or life-threatening conditions. They are referred to us by other hospitals because of the specialist nature of our work. The hospital has more than 50 paediatric specialties and expert

clinical teams who are working at the forefront of paediatric healthcare. It also has many national specialist services, some of which are only available here.

The hospital has the largest intensive care service for children in the UK and Europe. Many of the children and young people we see need our critical care services and our Critical Care nursing team are central to the care we are able to provide. The complexity and diversity of our patient population means that our critical care nurses are asked to care for children with a broad range of conditions.

Demand for our services means that we are looking to recruit more critical care nursing staff to join us. We want nurses to build their careers with us. We offer a wide range of opportunities to develop both your clinical knowledge and skill, as well as supporting your academic education. We have dedicated practice educators to help support you. As a result, our nurses

have the opportunity to develop levels of expertise that are second to none.

Working in the Critical Care team is highly challenging but deeply rewarding. We do hope you will want to find out more and perhaps decide to apply to work with us.

Liz Morgan

Chief Nurse and Director of Education



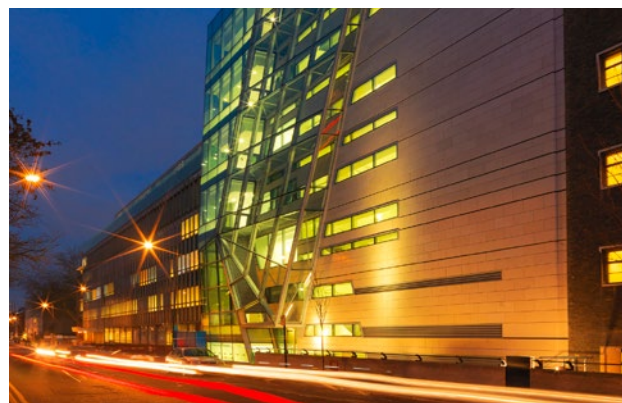
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About Great Ormond Street Hospital

Great Ormond Street Hospital is an acute specialist trust for children, providing a full range of specialist and sub-specialist paediatric health services, as well as carrying out clinical research and providing education and training for staff working in children's healthcare.

GOSH has the widest range of health services for children on one site in the UK. There are more than 200,000 patient visits a year (outpatient appointments and inpatient admissions). We are the largest paediatric centre in the UK for cardiac surgery, neurosurgery, craniofacial surgery, nephrology and renal transplant. GOSH also works with University College Hospitals in London to form the largest centre in Europe for children with cancer.

Advancing medical research is very important to us. Working in partnership with the UCL Institute of Child Health, GOSH is the only academic Biomedical Research Centre specialising in paediatrics and a member of UCL Partners, which is an alliance between University College London and leading hospitals to advance world-class research. GOSH also works with international partners who are specialists in their fields to help develop new treatments for children's illnesses. There is an academic lead for critical care research in the team to support those medical and nursing professionals who wish to pursue research interests in this important area of medicine.



Educating and training children's healthcare professionals is central to our mission. GOSH plays a leading role in training paediatric doctors, allied health professionals and together with London Southbank University, we train the largest number of children's nurses in the UK. You can find out more about our education and training programmes for critical care nurses later in this brochure.

'The child first and always' has been the hospital's motto for almost 100 years. That focus and commitment remains the same today. We emphasise looking after the child's overall wellbeing and that of their family, as well as their medical condition.

Critical care nursing at Great Ormond Street Hospital

We employ over 1,000 registered nurses who, as a valued part of the multidisciplinary team, have the privilege of working with, supporting and caring for children, young people and their families. Over 200 of these nurses work in our Critical Care teams. We are passionate about achieving our shared aim of delivering world-class care, putting the child first at all times. We cater for both nurses who are new to critical care and the more experienced nurse.

Being in intensive care is a critical time for patients. It is unimaginably stressful for parents who are so reliant on the expertise of the team to care for their child. Our critical care nurses are so important, providing the skills and expertise to help. The Trust has the largest paediatric intensive care service in the UK and in Europe. It comprises a Paediatric Intensive Care Unit, Neonatal Intensive Care Unit and a Cardiac Intensive Care Unit.

Some nurses do rotate between the units, particularly at the start of their careers in critical care. This gives them the opportunity to experience the breadth of specialist care provided at the hospital and more of the leading edge treatments offered here.

Other nurses prefer to develop their expertise in one of the three specialist areas. While there are differences between each of the units in terms of the highly specialist care they provide, each of the teams require nurses who like working in an extremely

fast-paced and dynamic environment but who can remain calm in a crisis. They also need nurses who wish to become real experts in their field. This includes providing opportunities for nurses who are interested in research and pioneering new and better ways to help the children in their care. Opportunities are available to specialise in educational, clinical nurse specialist and advanced nurse practitioner roles.

Working in the highly pressurised environment of intensive care is not for everyone but the rewards are incredible. You are working at the forefront of paediatric medicine and the results of your care make such a difference to patients' lives and, of course, their families.





Case study

Mary Sellings, Senior Staff Nurse,
Paediatric Intensive Care Unit

Before joining Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH), I was working on a paediatric ward at another London hospital. One of my colleagues had worked on the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit at GOSH and recommended that I give it a go.

It was very different to what I was used to, but the support I received was phenomenal. You're never pushed to do anything you don't want to do and the learning opportunities have been amazing.

There isn't a day that goes by that I don't learn something new, and I think someone who's been here for 20 years would say exactly the same. I've been here four and a half years now and I've still got a lot to get under my belt.

There's a clear developmental pathway when you start on the Unit, and once you've been here for about a year, you'll be encouraged to take an intensive care course that includes shifts on the three different units: Paediatric Intensive Care,

Neonatal Intensive Care and Cardiac Intensive Care.

Of course it can be stressful. There's a lot of machinery on the Unit, and everything can look very complex. But your colleagues aren't just your colleagues, they're also your friends. It's important to remember they're going through exactly the same things you are and will understand how you're feeling.



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Our Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU)

Approximately 1,200 patients are admitted to our Paediatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) each year. They are mainly admitted from the North Thames area, but our specialist departments also service the UK and abroad.

We offer support and services for our colleagues in general surgery, ear nose and throat, spinal surgery, neurology, oncology, renal, respiratory, endocrinology and metabolic medicine. We are also one of two London centres for children requiring neurosurgical intensive care in London. Consequently, almost all children and infants admitted to PICU receive supportive ventilation.

Our PICU has state-of-the-art equipment and facilities to allow the development of new treatments and management strategies for critically ill children. We have a variety of ventilators to provide individualised ventilator strategies appropriate to the care of each child. We also promote a full range of nurse-led renal support therapies.

Staff are acutely aware of the stress suffered by parents and relatives of children who are admitted to the Unit. To ensure the child and family's needs are met, we use the partnership philosophy of nursing care to encourage parents and significant others to participate in care as they feel able. We have a large support network, which includes a team of family liaison nurses, a play specialist, access to interpreters, social workers and psychological support.

PICU can be a very stressful environment to work in. We are a diverse team who work incredibly hard for the children and families in our care. We aim to minimise stress through reflective practice, the preceptorship programme, psychosocial meetings and regular social events, as well as close co-operation and teamwork.





Case study

Jo Garwood, Senior Staff Nurse, Paediatric Intensive Care Unit

My mum was a patient at Great Ormond Street Hospital and my grandmother is a regular supporter of the charity so I'd always wanted to work here at some point in my career. Before applying, I thought the work might be too specialist and I wasn't sure if I was ready to focus my skills, but I chose the Paediatric Intensive Care Unit because the work is so varied and challenging. Also, because we offer one-to-one nursing care, you develop a very personal relationship not just with your patients but their whole family.

I'd previously been working in Australia, so the accommodation bureau helped me find somewhere to live when I moved to London. I didn't know the area at all so being close to the hospital was a priority. The flat I was allocated was just a five-minute walk away.

I totally understand why working in intensive care can seem daunting. I remember being shown around the

Unit and being surprised by how busy it was and hearing lots of words that I didn't understand. But, from your first day, you'll be assigned a mentor. You'll work alongside them for your first few months while you achieve your competencies. You'll start with low dependency patients and move on to higher dependency care as you get more confident and your abilities improve.

As you progress, you can also work towards becoming a Band 6 nurse and supporting more junior members of the team. There's also the option to work with the Family Liaison team or take on more educational and teaching responsibilities. Hopefully, I'll be rotating onto the Children's Acute Transport Service (CATS) team next year, which will be a real opportunity to take my nursing to the next level.







Our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU)

Our Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) treats approximately 500 patients per year. There is no obstetric facility within the hospital and the Unit mainly cares for general surgical neonates referred from other hospitals. We often treat neonates with necrotising enterocolitis, bowel obstruction, oesophageal atresia, tracheoesophageal fistulae and other congenital anomalies.

Neonates with complex medical and surgical problems from other specialties are also admitted (laryngeal clefts, sacrococcygeal teratomas). There is extensive research by both surgical and medical teams into causes and treatments for necrotising enterocolitis in neonates.

We also admit neonates who may need extracorporeal life support (ECLS, also known as extra-corporeal membrane oxygenation, or ECMO) and employ maximal medical management. This includes nitric oxide and high frequency oscillation to try and avoid the use of ECLS if possible. Two of the consultants have a specialist research interest in persistent pulmonary hypertension of the newborn.

The NICU is part of the North Thames Central Neonatal Network. In this collaboration we aim to provide the best service possible for neonates by sharing best practice and service opportunities with our colleagues in University College London Hospitals (UCLH), Whittington, Royal Free, Chase Farm and Barnet.

We have regular meetings with colleagues from the University College Hospital (UCH) Neonatal Unit to discuss shared patients and best practice.

Our staff also provide a strong support network for families and there are regular midwife clinics, family liaison nurses, psychological support and breast feeding specialists available.





We're proud to
say we work at
Great Ormond
Street Hospital





Case study

Heather Parsons, Senior Staff Nurse
and **Marianne Forbes**, Staff Nurse,
Neonatal Intensive Care Unit

We work in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit, looking after babies who are generally pre-term and too sick to support themselves. They usually need ventilators to help them breathe, medication to support their blood pressure and total parenteral nutrition (fluids containing vitamins, minerals and fats) to help them grow. We also deal with surgical issues, complexities that a baby might be born with or that are diagnosed after birth, that require specialist involvement.

There is a one-to-one nurse-patient ratio on the Unit, but we do work as a team because our patients require a high degree of care. Our patients are under the supervision of many multidisciplinary teams, including our surgical, renal, neurological and metabolic services. We also work closely with physiotherapists, dietitians and speech and language therapists. It's our responsibility to know what a child's

specific nutrition requirements are and know their blood results for the Pharmacy team.

We also take care of the more general aspects of childcare, such as washing the child and cleaning and dressing wounds. They are being supported by a lot of machinery so we do our best to hide the tubes and wires and make them as tidy and comfortable as possible.

Working with such sick children isn't as scary as it might sound. You'll learn really quickly, and there's lots of support available on the Unit. You'll have a four-week supernumerary period when you start, working alongside someone who knows the Unit, the staff and the equipment.

The patients we see have usually been referred from other centres that were unable to provide the care that they need, which means we do see conditions that wouldn't be treated elsewhere. You can

never know everything and if you have a question, there's always someone who can answer it.

Our jobs can be upsetting at times so you do need a degree of maturity and professionalism. We can't get emotionally involved as we need to be there to support the families, whether they need a hug, space to reflect or time alone with their child.

We're definitely proud to say we work at Great Ormond Street Hospital. We deliver an excellent level of care, and the parents are so thankful for everything we do. We sometimes hear from them years later when their children are doing well at home and that's such a satisfying feeling.

Our Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (CICU)

Our Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (CICU) is a predominantly surgical unit for children under 18 years of age who need intensive care for conditions involving the heart, lungs or airways.

Children with heart or lung problems may sometimes become so sick that they need machines and medicines to help keep them alive. When that happens, they will be admitted to CICU for such treatment.

The Unit offers a wide range of experiences and learning opportunities following post-op surgery including heart and lung transplantation, tracheal reconstruction, thoracic surgery, pulmonary hypertension and mechanical heart, lung and renal assist.

Treatments include medications that cannot be safely given on a general ward, and use of machines that can take over the work of the lungs, heart and kidneys. The Unit is responsible for the care of children who need artificial heart and lung support technology such as extra-corporeal membrane oxygenation (ECMO) and Berlin Heart.

In summer 2012, the team moved into new purpose-built facilities with additional space to provide greater privacy for families and an improved working environment for the clinical teams.

As with the other intensive care units, the team is very conscious of the stress parents and relatives of children on CICU are under, and there is a large support network to help. This includes psycho-social support, play and interpreters.







Case study

Neil McIntosh, Staff Nurse, Cardiac Intensive Care Unit

I joined Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH) two years ago, after working in an Accident and Emergency department as a Charge Nurse. I'd also done some expedition medicine in Sri Lanka, Thailand and the Sahara, worked for Travel Health consultancy in Exeter and provided on-set advice to the BBC programme *Casualty*.

After completing my Emergency Nurse Practitioner course, I decided that I enjoyed caring for children more than adults, so chose to move into paediatric nursing.

At first, it was quite a change to see just how sick the children at GOSH can be. Before, I'd mainly treated children with minor injuries. Here, I care for children who need intensive monitoring, have arrhythmia problems or might be recovering from a heart operation.

The Practice Education team were really helpful when I started. There was a full package to support me in achieving my competencies and I also had a supernumerary period, working with an

experienced Cardiac Intensive Care Unit (CICU) nurse who showed me the ropes. It was so different to my previous jobs, but the team were happy to give me extra support to help build my confidence.

We offer one-to-one nursing on CICU, which means I do everything for my patient during my shift. After giving them a top-to-toe assessment when I arrive, I check their drug infusions are running at the prescribed rates and assist with any investigations or procedures they might need. It's really rewarding when you can see a difference in the condition of your patient by the end of the shift, especially if you're able to transfer them out of intensive care and onto the ward.

I wanted to work at GOSH because of the education programmes it offers. Last year, I completed my paediatric nursing conversion course and next, I hope to undertake the intensive care course. It's university-based but includes placements on the different intensive care units. I'll then

be able to look after patients who require more acute care and further improve my nursing skills.

Working in critical care is hard work, but you'll learn something new every day. It will take a while to settle in, especially if you're new to paediatrics or critical care, but help is always available if you need it.



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The Children's Acute Transport Service (CATS)

The Children's Acute Transport Service (CATS) is one of the largest specialist paediatric retrieval services in Europe, based at Great Ormond Street Hospital and serving the North Thames and East Anglia Regions. We receive over 2,000 calls a year and provide both clinical management advice to our district general hospitals and transportation of the critically ill neonate or child as appropriate.

Our philosophy at CATS is to provide intensive care management to the neonate or child at the point of contact, ensuring that the most appropriate care is delivered in a timely and safe manner. This requires a strong collaborative relationship with our service users, so outreach education, provision of stabilisation study days and case base reviews are paramount to our activity.

We are committed to improving standards and safety within the transport environment and have worked tirelessly to achieve accreditation by the Commission for Accreditation of Medical Transport Systems (CAMTS). We are one of only three services outside of North America to be granted this status. For the most

part our transfers are land based but we also perform 40–50 aeromedical transfers a year, both nationally and internationally, by either rotary, or fixed-winged aircraft.

As CATS are stabilising and transferring children into several lead centres, our team is exposed to a huge array of pathologies and specialties which provides an invaluable opportunity for learning. This is supported by a mentoring system that promotes individualised teaching and learning as well as participation in both unit and directorate educational programmes.

The CATS team was one of the first UK services to employ Advanced Nurse Practitioners within the retrieval setting. These nurses have undergone a Masters level training and educational programme and will go as lead clinicians during the transfer process.

Nursing staff from all the paediatric intensive care units in our region are given the opportunity to rotate from their base units through to CATS following a period of structured education and assessment.



Case study

Simon Mansfield-Sturgess, Charge Nurse, Paediatric Intensive Care Unit

Before coming to Great Ormond Street Hospital (GOSH), I worked in district general hospitals on paediatric wards, looking after patients with conditions like asthma or diarrhoea and vomiting. I decided that I wanted to challenge myself, so applied for a position at GOSH as a pan-Trust nurse, supporting all the different clinical services.

Moving into intensive care has been one of the greatest learning curves I've experienced in my career. Over the last eight years, I've worked my way up to Charge Nurse, but every single day I still learn something new.

My day is mainly spent overseeing the ward and supporting nurses at the bedside. Every morning, there are a series of handovers and walk rounds as we make plans for the day. The rest of the day is spent putting those plans into practice and overseeing the rest of the nursing team. Some of them are more junior than me, others are just as

experienced – either way, it's always good to have a second opinion when you're making decisions.

At GOSH, we want to be the leading centre for children's nursing. That means there are many more education and training opportunities available to nurses than at other hospitals, particularly in critical care. All our nurses have the chance to undertake an intensive care course and an advanced respiratory course to supplement their bedside learning. I'm on my Masters pathway at the moment, studying to become an Advanced Nurse Practitioner.

In addition, there are opportunities for senior nurses to carry out several shifts a month with the Children's Acute Transport Service. This is a mobile intensive care retrieval service that picks up children from around the country. Working closely with just one doctor and an ambulance technician under stressful conditions has really helped hone my skills, and was

definitely an area I aspired to work in when I first joined the team.

If you're considering working here, the advice I would give you is to go for it. You will never know whether intensive care is the right environment for you until you've tried it. You will learn so much here, and we'll support you all the way. Come and meet us and see what we do – we'd be really happy to show you round the Unit.



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Education and training

The hospital aims to provide world-class education to that we can be sure that our patients and their families are being cared for by nurses who provide world-class clinical care underpinned by world-class research.

We want staff to strengthen their existing skills and also to learn new skills. This is particularly important in a highly demanding and specialist service such as critical care. As well as ensuring high quality care, we hope that nurses will want to stay and develop their careers with us.

Our academic partner for nursing education is London South Bank University (LSBU). Together with LSBU, the hospital offers a comprehensive programme of continuing professional development, including the core intensive care course. The Paediatric Intensive Care course is run by a lecturer practitioner based at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

The hospital has a fully integrated education department known as LEaD (Learning, Education and Development). Education and development underpin our mission to deliver world-class clinical care and innovative clinical research.

Each intensive care unit has a team of Practice Educators who support learning at the bedside. The Practice Educators and

LEaD work closely together to design, commission and deliver innovative educational and development programmes specific to emerging service requirements and the needs of individual staff.

All nurses who join our team will undertake an initial orientation programme which includes a one-week hospital induction, a unit specific induction and a supernumerary period when you will work with a mentor or other team members.

The Critical Care team recruits Band 5 and Band 6 nurses. There are tailored education and training programmes for each band and these vary according to the specific ICU. Each member of staff will follow the intensive care preceptorship programme but will have an individualised review to ensure that this programme accounts for and builds on previous experience and skills. The hospital has a range of e-learning programmes to complement clinical learning and training.

Initiative and innovation are encouraged and we hope that nurses will take on research and teaching projects to update and improve knowledge and clinical practice. We encourage nurses to suggest areas for improvement within the team and to present these ideas to the team. Some of our nursing staff present at national and international intensive care conferences so that their experience and knowledge can be shared with others.



Living and working in London

While moving to London may seem a daunting prospect, it's also an exciting opportunity and we will do all we can to help you find your feet and start to enjoy the city.

Great Ormond Street Hospital is located in Bloomsbury next to a leafy square with many shops and cafes near the British Museum. It's also very close to Covent Garden and the West End. The hospital's sports and social committee organises regular events and helps to secure special staff offers including reduced price tickets to cinemas and theatres.

We will also introduce you to other members of staff who are new to London and support will be available from your new team who recognise that everyone needs time to settle in to a new location.

Flexible and additional working

We strongly support staff in finding the right work-life balance, whether they have childcare or other commitments. The most important factor in deciding if we can support a request for flexible working is whether we can continue to deliver a high quality service to our patients, our families and our staff.

Our staff work a wide range of patterns including annualised hours, term-time working, self-rostering, compressed hours, job shares and, of course, part-time working. Availability of flexible working positions varies so please talk to our team about potential opportunities.

If you'd like to consider working additional hours, you can also register with our nursing bank.



Accommodation

One of the main concerns for new staff is finding affordable accommodation close to the hospital. The Trust has invested in a variety of local accommodation which is available to new starters for a 12-month period while you establish yourself. You may also be aware of a key worker accommodation scheme which applies to NHS staff.

There is a staff hotel so people who live too far to commute each day can use this as a temporary base on a regular or ad-hoc basis. For instance, some of our staff work a few day shifts in London and then return to their home for the rest of the week until they're next on duty.

There is much more information about all these options, including contact details for the accommodation team, on the hospital website at www.gosh.nhs.uk/accommodation



Transport

There are excellent underground, overground and bus links to the hospital. Our website has an interactive map which shows you all the potential routes to and ways to get to the hospital at www.gosh.nhs.uk/getting-here

Staff who commute to work can take advantage of our interest-free season ticket loans to help spread the cost of travel.

You could also choose to cycle and take advantage of the special Cycle First scheme which offers savings on your bike and safety equipment.

Supporting staff with dependents

If you have childcare responsibilities, we subsidise a holiday play-scheme and offer an on-site nursery. We also offer childcare vouchers and employ a child and care co-ordinator to help you find the right childcare solutions for your needs.

We try to be as supportive as possible to staff who have particular needs at different stages in their careers. We recognise the needs of staff who have elderly, disabled or other dependents and offer them understanding, flexibility and support.

We also offer excellent arrangements for staff wanting to take maternity, paternity and adoption leave.

Additional benefits

We want to make sure that we look after our staff and have a range of services you can use. This includes a free on-site staff physiotherapist, subsidised massage service and free staff counselling service.

Our staff also enjoy a range of discounts from local and national businesses including local gyms, restaurants and shops.

Contact us

If you are interested in applying for a position within our Critical Care team or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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