

# Haere mai! Welcome to the Intensive Care Unit (ICU) & High Dependency Unit (HDU)



## Information for whānau/family

This booklet provides practical information to support you while in the ICU or HDU, and on the recovery journey towards home. We realise this is a stressful time for you and your whānau/family. Our team is here to care for and support you through critical illness and the ICU journey.



**Te Rui Atawhai**  
**Wellington Intensive Care Unit**

ICU: Level 3

HDU: Level 5

Wellington Regional Hospital  
Riddiford Street, Newtown, Wellington  
wellingtonicu.com

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# Key information – admission to the ICU

## TELEPHONING FOR INFORMATION ON YOUR LOVED ONE'S CONDITION

You are welcome to call the unit anytime you want information on your loved one's progress.

|                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Access the hospital switchboard on:</b>                                         |
| 04 385 5999                                                                        |
| Ask to be put through to the ICU. You will then be connected to the bedside nurse. |

During shift changes (7am to 8:30am, and 7pm to 8pm) it can be difficult to get through to the unit. Ideally call the unit outside of these times. There may be delays in answering phone calls after 8pm, when there is no Ward Administrator on duty.

We are careful to maintain patient confidentiality whilst ensuring you are updated on your relative's condition and are only able to give information to a nominated contact person. It is often easier if this person acts as a 'family spokesperson' who communicates information to the rest of the whānau/family.

There is also the option of creating a family password that you can give to other people in your whānau/family. This will allow them to call the unit and be given brief information on your loved one's condition. The nominated contact person for your whānau can set this up by talking with the bedside nurse.

## What to expect during the first few hours of admission

There is a very good video outlining what admission to the ICU looks like. Please access by using the QR code:



[info.health.nz/  
CriticalCare](https://info.health.nz/CriticalCare)

## VISITING IN PERSON

We understand that you want to be with your loved one as much as possible. We try to allow as much flexibility as we can for visits but we do ask visitors to wait outside during nursing handover:

|                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>Please do not visit at these times:</b> |
| 7am–8.30am                                 |
| 7pm–8pm                                    |

We respectfully request that only **two people** are present at the bedside at any one time due to space constraints.

There may be times when we have to ask you to leave the bedside e.g. for nursing care, to take an x-ray, or for emergencies on the Unit. Staff will ask you to wait in the Waiting Room. You will be able to come back in as soon as possible.

## VISITING OVERNIGHT

In general we advise not to visit after 10pm unless there are specific circumstances. It is important for our patients to get rest overnight and we encourage you to do the same.

Please discuss visits after 10pm with the nurse looking after your loved one. Access to the hospital after 8pm is via the after-hours entrance only.

## PARKING

Unfortunately, there is almost no free parking on streets around the hospital. The ICU provides a free parking ticketing system to help with the cost.

Parking tickets for the underground carpark and the carpark at the rear of Te Wao Nui, the children's hospital, can be validated. (The car park by the Emergency Department is prepay and cannot be reimbursed.)

ICU parking validation is available for **one person, per patient, once a day**. Bring your ticket to the ICU central Ward Administrator during your visit for it to be validated.

Speak to reception staff, nurses or volunteers in the ICU if you need more information.

## VISITING REMOTELY

If you have whānau/family members who are unable to visit but would like to attend a family meeting (or visit the patient) there are ZOOM phones available. Ask the bedside nurse if you would like this organised.

## OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATION

While we appreciate you want to be close to your loved one, we discourage sleeping in the Waiting Room. If you live locally, please go home to sleep and be assured we will ring the nominated contact person if we think you should return to ICU.

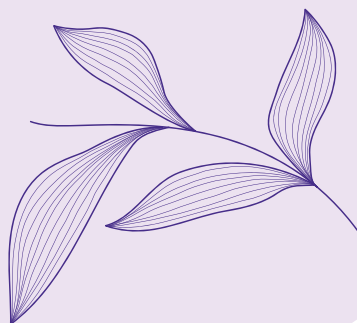
Hospital based accommodation is limited. Alternatively there are several motels nearby. *See the list on page 15.*

## NATIONAL TRAVEL ASSISTANCE (NTA) INFORMATION

If your loved one lives outside of Wellington and more than 250km from Wellington Hospital, they may be eligible for National Travel Assistance (NTA).

To begin the process, please contact the hospital in the district closest to your loved one's hometown and ask to speak with the National Travel Assistance Coordinator. They will guide you through the application.

If the NTA Coordinator requests further information to complete the registration, a hospital Social Worker may be able to help.



## **FAMILY MEETINGS/HUI ROOMS:**

We are happy to arrange meetings to enable discussion between whānau/family and medical staff. Unfortunately, there are limited meeting spaces in the ICU and HDU. If you have a large family/whānau and a meeting with doctors planned, please approach the nurse

in charge or Manaaki Whānau so we can try to arrange a larger hui room.

## **COMMUNICATION & INTERPRETERS**

If English is not your first language, please approach the bedside nurse to organise an interpreter.

## **Expectations of you & your whānau/family while visiting**

ICU has a no tolerance policy to violence, shouting, cursing or aggression of any sort. Any violence or aggressive behavior will be addressed immediately and you will be asked to leave.

Alcohol and drug use are forbidden in the hospital and grounds. Any people who have been drinking alcohol and taking substances should not visit and will be asked to leave.

### **PRIVACY OF STAFF & OTHER PATIENTS**

**No photos, videos, or other electronic recordings are permitted in the ICU.**

This is to protect the privacy of your loved one, staff and other patients. It is a privacy breach to video or photograph staff performing cares or during family meetings, and is strictly forbidden.

Mobile phones are permitted for calls only.

### **HAND HYGIENE**

To protect the patient and your own health, please use sanitising gel provided before and after visiting.

### **SHOES**

Shoes need to be worn at all times in the ICU. Having bare feet may put you at risk of cuts or infection.

### **PATIENT VALUABLES & TAONGA**

Please do not store or leave valuables at your loved one's bedside (especially phones, technology, jewellery). Take these home with you.

Any taonga present with/on your loved one can remain and we will take good care of this. Please talk with the bedside nurse about any special instructions you have.

# Daily life in the ICU & HDU

## About the ICU & HDU units

We provide critical and acute care for a wide range of patients. The units are very busy and can seem chaotic at times. All members of the health care team are highly skilled, dedicated individuals, who are passionate about caring for your loved one.

### ICU

Located on level 3 of the main hospital. There are 24 bedspaces split into three ‘pods’. Each bedspace has a dedicated nurse for one-on-one care. *See map of the Units bedspaces on page 16.*

|                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ICU                                                                                  |
| Level 3, Wellington Regional Hospital                                                |
| Directions: from the hospital atrium, take the stairs, escalator or lift to level 3. |



### HDU

The high dependency unit (HDU) is located on level 5 of the main hospital and is also referred to as **5 East, HDU**. There are 12 bedspaces in HDU. Each nurse in HDU cares for 2 patients.

|                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5 EAST, HDU                                                                                                                                    |
| Level 5, Wellington Regional Hospital                                                                                                          |
| Directions: from the hospital atrium, take the orange lifts up to level 5. Exit the lift, turn right and right again, HDU will be on the left. |

Your loved one may be transferred from ICU to HDU, then on to the ward, or may be transferred directly to the ward.

### TIKANGA

We follow basic Māori tikanga protocols in our unit—this may differ from what you see in other wards or hōhipera (hospitals). We encourage you and your whānau to speak to your loved one’s nurse if you have any specific tikanga you wish us to follow. We are dedicated to ensuring culturally safe practice and want to get it right.

We encourage rongoā such as the use of mirimiri (depending on patient’s clinical condition). If you wish to help provide essential cares to your loved one, please speak with the nurse at the bedside.

# About the ICU team

## NURSING STAFF

Our nurses have special training in intensive care. They work 12 hour shifts, where they may look after one or two patients each. There is an Associate Charge Nurse Manager (ACNM) on each shift who you can speak to if you have any concerns that your nurse cannot address.

## MEDICAL STAFF

Our medical team is led by 15 ICU specialists who supervise 27 registrars. The specialist is responsible for all decisions made about your loved one and will collaborate with other hospital doctors when necessary. They will meet with you regularly to discuss progress and plans. If you would like a specific meeting arranged, please let the bedside nurse or ACNM know.

## WARD ROUNDS

The ICU doctors do an in-depth ward round between 8:30am–10:30am every day. This team is made up of 2–3 doctors and a senior nurse, led by an ICU specialist. They assess the patient, make plans for the day and teach junior team members.

After the morning ward round the medical staff are happy to make time to meet and answer questions from family.

There is a shorter ward round at 4pm and at 8pm (in ICU only, not HDU), where patients are handed over to the next shift of doctors and the team usually spend a few minutes at each bed space. Ward rounds by other medical specialists may happen at any time of the day.

## RESEARCH AND TEACHING

We are a teaching and research unit, this allows us to provide better care for our patients. During your loved one's stay you may be approached by a member of the research team with information regarding a current study.

We support medical, nursing, and other students in our units. We also frequently have nurses present who are learning the knowledge and skills necessary to work in our ICU. These learners are always supported by more experienced staff.

## Other teams you may encounter

### Kia ora from the ICU Social Work team

Our role is to support you, your loved one and whānau throughout the ICU journey.

We're here to listen and to assist you—whether you're feeling worried, sad, unsure about what's next or how you will manage. We can help.

We can connect you with specialist support:

- Māori/Pacifica teams
- Chaplaincy/spiritual services
- Community services.

We can assist you with practical matters:

- Day-to-day needs
- During and after family meetings
- Advocacy for you and your whānau throughout your loved one's ICU admission.

Ask any nurse, doctor, or staff member to refer you to our team, or approach us directly if you see us in the unit.

### Kia ora from the ICU Psychology team

We recognise that time spent in ICU can be stressful, confusing, and emotionally challenging. Sometimes it's just good to have someone independent to talk to who is able to listen.

Our Psychology team is available Monday to Friday and can offer support to patients, their families and whānau to help manage challenges or distress associated with an ICU stay.

If you would like a confidential talk or support to help manage during this time, please ask the bedside nurse to make contact with our Psychology team.



## Kia ora from the Manaaki Whānau team

*Nau mai rā ki te Te Rui Atawhai Intensive Care Unit. He mihi aroha tēnei nā Manaaki Whānau. Kei konei mātou hei tautoko, hei manaaki i a koe me tō whānau i tēnei wā taumaha.*

A warm welcome to Te Rui Atawhai Intensive Care Unit, with heartfelt greetings from Manaaki Whānau. We are here to support and care for you and your whānau during this challenging time.

Guided by the principle of whanaungatanga, Manaaki Whānau builds meaningful relationships, nurturing trust and connection during your healthcare journey in the Intensive Care Unit. Manaaki Whānau walk alongside Māori patients and their whānau, offering cultural support, advocacy, and guidance—upholding tikanga and ensuring that their healthcare is not only clinically sound, but culturally aligned.

### NGĀ MAHI NUI – KEY ROLES

**Whānau Support** We offer emotional, physical, and cultural care to ensure whānau feel safe and supported within the ICU.

**Navigation** Through whanaungatanga (relationships, connection) and understanding, we help whānau navigate through their journey in ICU.

**Advocacy** We uphold the mana (dignity, authority) and voice of whānau when required. We listen, support, and speak when required to assist decision-making, ensuring whānau remain central in their own health journey.

**Cultural Safety** We support healthcare staff to work in alignment with Te Ao Māori values, Wairuatanga (spirituality), Tapu (sacredness), Noa (balance), and Kaitiakitanga (guardianship), so that whānau feel culturally safe and respected.

### ME PĒHEA TE WHAKAPĀ MAI – HOW TO CONTACT US

If you need support, please don't hesitate to speak with any staff member at the bedside, they can refer you to Whānau Care Services for Manaaki Whānau to see you and your whānau.

Manaaki Whānau is part of the Māori specialist services within Whānau Care. We are here to walk alongside you, uplift you, and ensure your whānau feels supported during this time. If you see us in the Intensive Care Unit, come up and kōrero with us directly, we're here for you.

## Pacific Health team

*Talofa Lava, Mālō e Lelei, Kia Orana,  
Taloha Ni, Fakatalofa Atu, Fakaalofa  
Lahi Atu, Halo Olaketa, Mālō Ni, Bula  
Vinaka, Noa'ia, Welcome.*

Our vision is that our Pacific peoples are empowered and enabled to live longer quality lives, supported by a culturally responsive health system.

The Pacific Health Unit (PHU) is dedicated to ensuring a seamless healthcare journey for Pacific patients. We provide services across Wellington, Kenepuru, Hutt Valley and Wairarapa hospitals.

Our team works closely with Pacific patients and their aiga/family to understand their health requirements and connect them with culturally appropriate social and clinical support services—both within the hospital and in the broader community.

We have close relationships with community-based Pacific support services and will refer patients to them to ensure ongoing care and support.

### **Pacific Health Unit**

Wellington Regional Hospital,  
Cultural Care Centre, Level 2

Open: Monday to Friday,  
8:30am–5pm

Phone: 04 806 2320

Email: [PHUReferral@ccdhb.org.nz](mailto:PHUReferral@ccdhb.org.nz)



# At the bedside

Let your loved one know that you are there, talk to them and touch them. We suggest bringing in photos of your loved one, friends and whānau/family so they have familiar things at the bedside. We also suggest bringing in basic toiletries, such as deodorant and body lotion, for your loved one. *Please do not bring cut/fresh flowers as they are an infection risk.*

## What does ICU care look like?

### MACHINES & TECHNOLOGY

As whānau/family we regard you as being part of the ICU team. We want you to have as much information as possible about what the ICU looks like and what some of the machines and technology do. The *My Life After ICU* website has very good information about equipment used and how they work to support your loved one through critical illness.

Most of the monitors in the ICU have an audible alarm. This is a safety feature to alert the nurse to changes in your loved one's condition. The nursing staff are very familiar with these alarms, please ask them to explain what the alarms mean if you are worried about them.

### DELIRIUM

Sometimes it can be scary when your loved one has been asleep/sedated and is in the process of waking up. It is not uncommon for them to act and behave very differently to how they normally would, and they can be agitated and restless. This settles with time. However sometimes this agitation can persist and be worse at night. This is called *delirium*—a very common side effect of ICU treatment and being unwell. The nurses and doctors are very experienced with caring for patients with delirium.

If you are worried about your loved one being confused or acting out of character, talk about this with the bedside nurse and doctors. Ask for a copy of the delirium pamphlet which can help you to understand why it happens and ease your mind.

### PET THERAPY

We have a number of therapy dogs who come and visit with patients.

Please speak to your bedside nurse who can arrange a visit if your loved one would benefit.

# Taking care of yourselves

Taking care of yourself is vital. For some people, recovery can be a long journey and sharing the load with family/friends is encouraged. We encourage you to take regular breaks and get outside for some fresh air when you can.

The courtyard near the café on the ground floor (through the atrium) is a nice place to sit, though it can get busy at meal times. There are many cafes in Newtown, all within walking distance of the hospital.

## IF YOU BECOME ILL OR NEED MEDICAL HELP

If you are wanting to see a GP while away from home there are online options for a GP video consultation on the Health New Zealand/Te Whatu Ora website (*see link below*). Providers available and their costs are outlined on the webpage.



<https://info.health.nz/services-support/online-phone-healthcare/online-gp-care>

## AFTER HOURS MEDICAL CENTRE

Wellington Accident and Urgent Medical Centre (AMC) is a 15 minute walk down Adelaide Road, towards the Basin Reserve. If you are having medical issues and you are out of region, or your GP is unavailable, you can visit them for urgent problems and accidents, such as sprains, lacerations and broken bones.

|                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Wellington Accident &amp; Urgent Medical Care</b><br>17 Adelaide Road, Mount Cook |
| Open: every day of the year,<br>8am–9pm                                              |
| Phone: 04 384 4944                                                                   |



# The recovery path

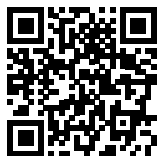
## Getting better & transfer to the ward

Once your loved one is recovering and their ICU or HDU treatment is complete, we will plan their transfer to the ward. This happens only when it is safe and appropriate to do so.

As your loved one is getting better, 24-hour observation is no longer needed. On the ward your loved one will be cared for by nurses who also care for other patients. This is standard for ward level care.

We recognise the transition can be both exciting—because you are moving closer to home, and scary—as you leave the ICU or HDU. You may feel you need to be present to support your loved one through this change.

The link below outlines the transfer process, which may help prepare you for the transition.



DISCHARGE FROM  
CRITICAL CARE:

[info.health.nz/  
CriticalCare](https://info.health.nz/CriticalCare)

## THE PATIENT AT RISK (PAR) TEAM:

The PAR team leads a 24-hour in-hospital service for all adult, paediatric, women's and mental health wards across the Wellington and Kenepuru hospitals. When your loved one is transferring to the ward, a member of the PAR team will visit them beforehand to ensure they are safe to go, and again on the ward to make sure they are stable. If there are any clinical issues, they will escalate to the appropriate team.

## KŌRERO MAI

As whānau/family, you may be aware of subtle changes in condition or your loved one getting sicker in hospital. If you have any concerns, follow these steps to request a review by a PAR nurse:



If you are worried about a change in your condition, or that of a loved one, please talk to your nurse or doctor.



# Returning home – information for the patient & whānau/ family

## FOR THE PATIENT

As a patient going through critical illness, the journey through the hospital may have been challenging. If you have spent a long time in ICU, there can be some residual physical issues, memory problems and 'brain fog' once you get home. You could also feel low in mood, anxious and be worried about what recovery may be like in the forthcoming weeks. This is very common among patients who have experienced critical illness.

If you have been discharged home and find you are struggling with physical or wellbeing issues please see your GP.

## FOR WHĀNAU/FAMILY

As a family member you have also undergone the critical illness journey and can have issues with your own wellbeing. If you find you are struggling, please make an appointment with your GP to explore the issues, and get support.



This website is dedicated to supporting patients and whānau/family through recovery at home

and will explain what to expect and how recovery can affect you.

<https://www.mylifeaftericu.com/adults-in-icu/>



# Additional resources

## HOSPITAL SHOP

The Hospital Shop is located in the main hospital entrance and is open 7.30am to 5.30pm Monday to Friday, and 9am to 3pm over the weekend.

Bus (Snapper) cards, drinks, snacks, gifts, and magazines can be purchased here.

## HOSPITAL CAFÉS

Wellington Regional Hospital has two cafés and a coffee bar:

|                                                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Mojo — main atrium</b><br>7am–6pm, weekdays / 8am–3pm, weekends and public holidays.           |
| <b>Mojo — Clinical Services Block</b><br>7am–4pm, weekdays / closed weekends and public holidays. |
| <b>Vibe Café — Ward Support Block</b><br>7am–7pm, weekdays / 8.30am–6pm, weekends.                |

## SUPERMARKETS:

|                                                  |
|--------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Woolworths (including pharmacy)</b>           |
| 3 John Street (5 minutes walk from the Hospital) |
| 7am–10pm, 7 days                                 |

|                                                          |
|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>New World</b>                                         |
| 195 Riddiford Street (10 minutes walk from the Hospital) |
| 7am–10pm, 7 days                                         |

## PHARMACIES:

|                                      |
|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Unichem Newtown Mall Pharmacy</b> |
| 195 Riddiford Street                 |
| 04 389 8394                          |

|                                    |
|------------------------------------|
| <b>Woolworths Pharmacy Newtown</b> |
| 3 John Street                      |
| 04 389 4923                        |

|                                  |
|----------------------------------|
| <b>Unichem Lychgate Pharmacy</b> |
| 100 Riddiford Street             |
| 04 389 9855                      |

## BUS STOPS

There are two bus stops outside the hospital going into the town centre. Most bus tickets can be purchased with cash or Snapper card.

|                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Metlink (for bus destinations and timetables)</b>                |
| <a href="https://www.metlink.org.nz">https://www.metlink.org.nz</a> |

## TAXIS

Combined (Blue Bubble) Taxis are available at the front main entrance of the hospital.

## ATM

There is an ATM in the hospital atrium.

## CHAPLAINCY SERVICE & PRAYER ROOM

The prayer room is available to people of all denominations and spiritual beliefs. It is situated to the left of the main entrance in the Atrium. Ask a member of the ICU team if you would like to speak to a Hospital Chaplain.

## ACCOMMODATION

|                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Adelaide Motel</b>                                                |
| 209-211 Adelaide Road, Newtown                                       |
| (04) 389 8138                                                        |
| <a href="http://www.adelaidemotel.co.nz">www.adelaidemotel.co.nz</a> |

|                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Apollo Lodge</b>                                               |
| 49 Majoribanks Street, Mt Victoria                                |
| (04) 385 1849                                                     |
| <a href="http://www.apollolodge.nz">http://www.apollolodge.nz</a> |

|                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ascot Motor Lodge</b>                                                 |
| 46 Riddiford Street, Newtown                                             |
| (04) 380 0047                                                            |
| <a href="http://www.ascotmotorlodge.co.nz">www.ascotmotorlodge.co.nz</a> |

|                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Marksman Motor Inn</b>                                            |
| 40-44 Sussex Street                                                  |
| (04) 385 2499                                                        |
| <a href="http://www.marksmanmotel.co.nz">www.marksmanmotel.co.nz</a> |

|                                                                          |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Richmond Guest House</b>                                              |
| 116 Brougham Street, Mt Victoria                                         |
| (04) 380 0047                                                            |
| <a href="http://www.ascotmotorlodge.co.nz">www.ascotmotorlodge.co.nz</a> |

|                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Sojourn Apartment Hotel</b>                                       |
| 22-26 Riddiford Street, Newtown                                      |
| (04) 974 9090                                                        |
| <a href="http://www.sojournhotels.co.nz">www.sojournhotels.co.nz</a> |

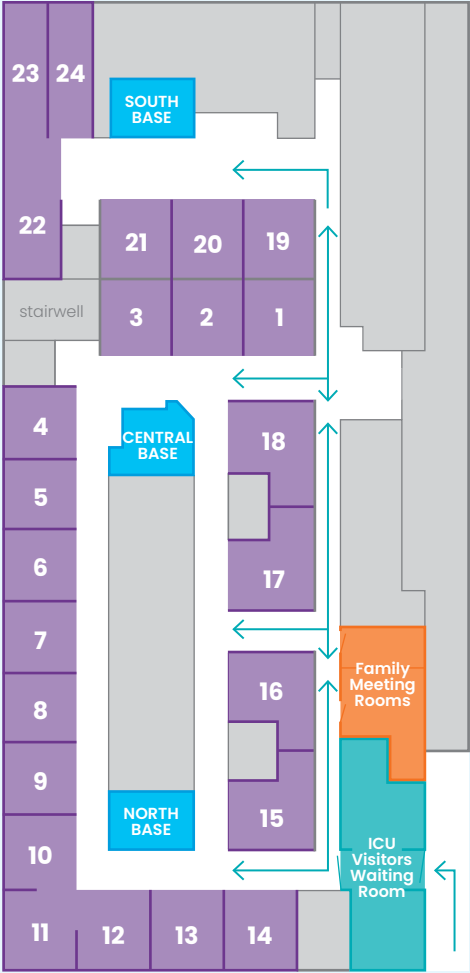
|                                                                                    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Southgate Motor Inn</b>                                                         |
| 22-26 Riddiford Street, Newtown<br>(across the road from the Emergency Department) |
| (04) 939 9292 or 0508 867 829                                                      |
| <a href="http://www.southgate.co.nz">www.southgate.co.nz</a>                       |

|                                                                     |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Te Pehi Parata Whānau Whare</b>                                  |
| Level 2, Community Health Building,<br>Wellington Regional Hospital |
| (04) 806 0948 or ext 80948                                          |

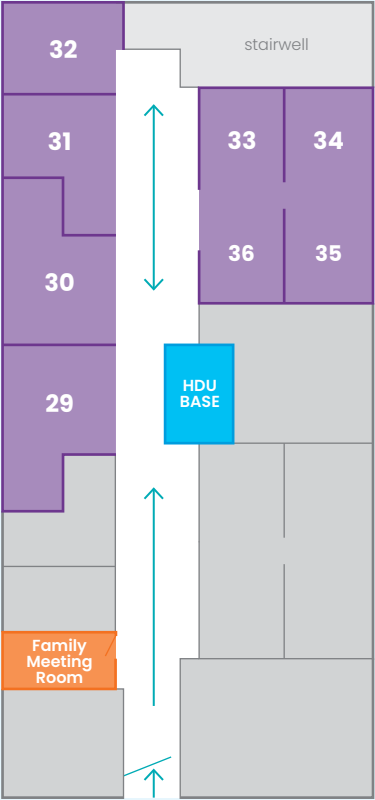
|                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Wallace Court</b>                                               |
| 88 Wallace Street, Mt Cook                                         |
| (04) 385 3935                                                      |
| <a href="http://www.wallacecourt.co.nz">www.wallacecourt.co.nz</a> |

|                                                                                                     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Ronald McDonald House</b>                                                                        |
| Accommodation for family of patients<br>17 years of age or younger who do not live<br>in Wellington |
| 30-80 Riddiford Street<br>(across the road from the main hospital<br>entrance)                      |
| (04) 389 5505                                                                                       |
| <a href="http://www.rmhc.org.nz">www.rmhc.org.nz</a>                                                |

ICU BEDSPACES



HDU BEDSPACES



Wellington Regional  
Hospital Nga Puna  
Wai Ora website



<https://info.health.nz/locations/wellington-hutt-and-kapiti/wellington-regional-hospital#patient-and-visitor-information-10151>



Wellington  
ICU website

<https://wellingtonicu.com/>



Te Rūi Atawhai  
Wellington Intensive Care Unit

ICU: Level 3

HDU: Level 5

Wellington Regional Hospital  
Riddiford Street, Newtown, Wellington  
[wellingtonicu.com](http://wellingtonicu.com)