



Boarders Procedure

Effective: 24 February 2021

1. Guiding Principles

As a health care provider, WA Country Health Service Great Southern (WACHS GS) Albany Health Campus recognises the importance of the support of family and friends during periods of hospitalisation.

Where it is deemed necessary for the medical wellbeing of the patient to have this support available 24 hours-per-day, arrangements can be made to accommodate a family member or friend as a boarder. The hospital's ability to accommodate boarders is dependent on the availability of space and the needs of other patients.

This site procedure is intended to:

- endorse the hospital's support of boarders where warranted by the patient's condition
- differentiate between 'Chargeable' and 'Non Chargeable' Boarders
- identify for staff, the processes and procedures that apply for the admission of boarders.

2. Definitions

Boarders	<p>A boarder is a person who receives food and/or accommodation but for whom the hospital or health service does not accept responsibility for treatment and/or care.</p> <p>A boarder is not an admitted patient; however the hospital is to register them.</p> <p>People accompanying a sick person can only be classified as boarders if they stay overnight i.e. in the case of patients admitted as 'same day' who have someone stay with them, this person is not a boarder.</p> <p>Babies in hospital at age nine days or less cannot be boarders. They are admitted patients with each day of their stay deemed to be either 'qualified' or 'unqualified'.</p>
Accommodation	<p>Accommodation provided to boarders can vary according to the hospital's workload at any given time and may include a:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. chair next to patients bed b. fold up bed in patient's room c. fold up bed in day room.

3. Procedure

- 3.1 Boarders are to be permitted to accompany inpatients during their hospitalisation where it is considered necessary for the patient's medical and emotional wellbeing.
- 3.2 The hospital's ability to accommodate boarders is to take into consideration the availability of space and the needs of other patients.
- 3.3 The treating doctor and nurse manager are to determine those patients who require a boarder to accompany them during their hospital stay.
- 3.4 The treating doctor is to sign a 'Request for Patient to have a Boarder' form.
- 3.5 Boarders are to be classified as 'Chargeable' or 'Non Chargeable' according to the following criteria:
 - **Non Chargeable Boarders** – Boarders, for which no charges are raised, are a:
 - mother accompanying a sick child for breast-feeding
 - breast-fed baby accompanying its sick mother
 - person accompanying a sick child for the child's medical wellbeing, as determined by the doctor.
 - **Chargeable Boarders** - Accommodation for persons accompanying patients other than above, including eligible war service veteran patients.
- 3.6 Definitions for 'Non Chargeable' and 'Chargeable' boarders are set out in the, WA Health [Fees and Charges Manual](#). Staff members do not have the delegation to vary these determinations and/or waive any boarder fees.
- 3.7 Boarders are entitled to up to three meals per day and accommodation.
- 3.8 Meals provided to boarders are to be as per the normal patient menu, and menu forms are to be distributed to, and collected from, boarders in conjunction with the patient menus.
- 3.9 Boarders are required at all times to conduct themselves in an appropriate manner, comply with all hospital policies and procedures and respect the rights and needs of other patients and visitors.
- 3.10 Unless exceptional circumstances dictate otherwise, each patient is only entitled to **one (1)** boarder.

4. Charges for Boarders

4.1 The following fees apply for boarders in hospitals:

No charges are to be raised for a

- mother accompanying a sick child for breast-feeding
- breast-fed baby accompanying its sick mother
- person accompanying a sick child for the child's medical wellbeing, as determined by the doctor.

Fees for boarders are as per, WA Health [Fees and Charges Manual](#), with charges being reviewed annually.

4.2 Payment of Boarder Accounts

The patient is responsible for the payment of boarder charges. Wherever possible, accounts for boarder charges are to be settled before the patient leaves hospital.

4.3 Boarder accounts for patients with private health insurance

Where the patient has private health insurance, cover for boarders may be provided by their health fund, however this varies according to the fund, level of coverage and number of days the boarder stays. Patients are to verify with their fund if boarders are covered.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 The admitting doctor and ward nursing staff are to determine the patient's medical need to have a boarder and the hospital's capacity to provide accommodation for boarders.
- 5.2 The treating doctor is to sign a 'Request for Patient to have a Boarder' form.
- 5.3 The ward clerk is to file the 'Request for Patient to have a Boarder' form in the patient's notes.
- 5.4 The ward clerk is to advise kitchen staff each day of the boarders on their ward.
- 5.5 Kitchen staff are responsible for distributing 'patient menus' to boarders and supplying boarders with meals at each meal time.
- 5.6 Medical records staff, on receipt of patient record/ Request for Patient to have a Boarder form, are responsible for completing a Debtor Invoice Request form and forwarding it to the Finance Accounts Payable hub.
- 5.7 The Finance Accounts Payable hub is responsible for raising the boarder account and sending to the patient for payment.
- 5.8 Where the patient/boarder wishes to pay the boarder account before the patient leaves hospital, the cashier is to receipt the payment based on number of days as a boarder multiplied by the current boarder rate as per WA Health [Fees and Charges Manual](#).

6. Compliance

Failure to comply with this procedure may constitute a breach of the WA Health Code of Conduct (Code). The Code is part of the [Integrity Policy Framework](#) issued pursuant to section 26 of the [Health Services Act 2016](#) (WA) and is binding on all WACHS staff which for this purpose includes trainees, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors for service (including all visiting health professionals and agency staff) and persons delivering training or education within WACHS.

WACHS staff are reminded that compliance with all policies is mandatory.

7. Evaluation

Evaluation is to occur annually in July, to coincide with the annual review of inpatient fees.

8. Appendix

Appendix 1: [Patient Information - Inpatient Boarders](#)

9. Standards

[National Safety and Quality Health Service Standards – 5.4.b](#)

10. Legislation

[WA Health Services Act 2016 \(WA\)](#)

11. References

WA Health [Fees and Charges Manual](#)

12. Related Forms

[Request for a Patient to have a Boarder Form - Great Southern](#)

13. Related WA Health Policies

WA Health MP 0058/17 [Admission Policy](#)

WA Health [Fees and Charges Manual](#)

14. WA Health Policy Framework

[Financial Management](#)

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Appendix 1 Patient Information: Inpatient Boarders

As a health care provider, the Albany Health Campus recognises and embraces the importance of patients having the emotional support of family and friends during their hospitalisation.

Where it is deemed necessary for the medical wellbeing of the patient to have this support available 24 hours-per-day, arrangements can be made to accommodate a family member or friend overnight as a boarder.

A 'boarder' is only approved where it is considered essential to the patient's medical wellbeing.

The hospital does not provide for any treatment or care of boarders, but provides accommodation and meals during their stay as a boarder.

Boarders are entitled to overnight accommodation and to be provided with three meals per day. Accommodation does not necessarily infer the provision of a bed, and may be a chair in the patient's room.

The ability of the hospital to accommodate boarders is dependent upon the availability of space and must, at all times, take into consideration the needs of other patients. Except where a patient's condition may dictate, each patient is restricted to one boarder.

Boarders fall into two categories, being:

- **Non Chargeable Boarders** - Accommodation for a mother accompanying a sick child for breast feeding, or a breast fed baby accompanying its sick mother, or persons accompanying a sick child for the medical wellbeing of the child (as determined by the doctor).
- **Chargeable Boarders** - Accommodation for persons accompanying patients (other than above), including eligible war service veteran patients.

The current charge for boarders is \$40.00 (inclusive of GST) per day.

Where the **patient** has been admitted as **private** and the **patient** has the appropriate level of private health insurance cover, boarder fees are claimable from the patient's private health fund.

Accounts for boarder charges can be paid at the time of discharge at the Cashier's office in the main hospital foyer or alternatively, an account can be forwarded to you by mail. The hospital is **not** able to forward boarder accounts direct to health funds where the patient was admitted as a private patient.

Further information can be obtained from:

- your admitting doctor
- the admissions or ward clerk at the time of admission
- contacting the hospital on 08 9892 2222.