



Wirral University  
Teaching Hospital  
NHS Foundation Trust

# Call for Concern Martha's Rule: Detecting Deterioration

Information for Patients

[wuth.nhs.uk](http://wuth.nhs.uk)

You know yourself or your loved one better than anyone. If you're worried about a health condition getting worse, talk to us.

## **What is Martha's Rule?**

Martha's Rule supports patients, families, and carers to request a rapid review if their condition or of a loved one, is deteriorating (Getting worse) and they are concerned this is not being responded to.

You may notice small changes before they show up in our routine measurements. These changes could be early warning signs of deterioration.

## **Difference between Martha's Rule and second opinion**

Martha's Rule allows hospital inpatients and their families to seek an urgent review if their condition, or the condition of a loved one, is deteriorating. A second opinion is when you would like to see another consultant to discuss any diagnosis or treatment.

## **How we monitor patients**

While someone is in hospital, we regularly check their vital signs and other important health measurements. The frequency of these checks will depend on the patient's individual condition and needs. Sometimes we may need to wake patients to do these checks. In addition, we will ask at least daily if they are feeling better or worse. This is to monitor any unexpected changes in their condition.

## **Your role is vital**

To help us detect the early signs of deterioration, please tell us if you are worried about:

- Changes in temperature – hot or cold to the touch
- Worsening pain
- Any changes to the skin (e.g. rash)
- Low energy, drowsy or sleepy
- Levels of hydration
- Changes in breathing
- New confusion
- Anything else that worries you

Telling our staff about these changes can help us to detect deterioration early so we can take action to prevent more serious health problems.

## **What to do if you're worried**

- 1 First, speak to the team caring for you or your loved one.
2. If, after speaking to the care team, you remain worried and feel your concerns are not being addressed, you can ask for a rapid review by calling 0151 604 7676 or extension 7676 . You can also ask any member of staff how to do this or look out for our Martha's Rule posters which are above each patient's bed space. Your call will go to a different team in our hospital, who specialise in the care of critically ill patients. The team will need to know the patient's name and ward location, as well as your immediate concern. They will work with you and your care team to arrange any treatment needed or further review. The service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## **When NOT to make a Call 4 Concern?**

Call 4 Concern is a patient safety initiative only for concerns related to deterioration in your or your loved one's health. To report concerns regarding for example, food, nursing care, discharge issues, parking or any other general issues please speak to your nurse or the Ward Manager in the first instance. You can also raise concerns and complaints to the Patient Experience Team on 0151 604 7660.

## **Our commitment**

We will regularly ask for your views and take your concerns seriously. We see you as a partner in the care we are providing and want you to raise any worries and concerns you may have.

Visit our website to find out more about Martha's Rule:

[www.wuth.nhs.uk/your-health/call-4-concern-marthas-rule/](http://www.wuth.nhs.uk/your-health/call-4-concern-marthas-rule/)

You are not bothering us - we want to hear from you.

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille and on tape.  
Please contact 0151 604 7289 if calling from outside the  
Hospital and x2761 if calling from inside the Hospital.



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