

Glossary

Anaemia: a condition where the number of red blood cells is lower than normal.

Anaesthesia: the use of medications to stop pain during surgery or other procedures. It works by making patients lose feeling in a specific area or by sending patients to sleep.

Delirium: becoming suddenly confused.

Critical care units (also known as intensive care units): specialist hospital wards for treating seriously ill patients.

Endoscopy: a test where a long tube with a small camera is passed through the body.

Enhanced Recovery After Surgery: an evidence-based approach that helps people recover faster after an operation.

Frailty: a health state often experienced by older people. It includes a person's ability to recover easily from illness and injury.

General anaesthetic: a technique that is used to send the patient to sleep during an operation, so they don't feel anything.

Glycated haemoglobin test: a test of average blood sugar levels over the last two to three months.

Implant: an artificial medical device placed inside the body during surgery to replace or support a damaged body part, or to improve certain functions, such as a hip or knee replacement.

Incidents: an event that can impact a patient's health or safety during their care, including things like medication errors, falls, infections, or any other possible causes of harm.

Intraoperative: the time during an operation.

Obstructive sleep apnoea: when someone's breathing stops and starts while they are sleeping.

Perioperative: the time from being considered for surgery through to recovering after surgery.

Perioperative care of older people undergoing surgery (POPS): a health service that supports older people before, during and after surgery.

Policy/policies: a set of rules, standards and guidelines that help make sure that the hospital runs smoothly and safely.

Post-anaesthesia care unit: any area in a hospital where patients recover from anaesthesia.

Postoperative: the time after an operation.

Preoperative: the time before an operation.

Process measures: a measure looking at the activities and steps that should happen when care is being delivered including what, how and when things are done. An example is whether the patient had their temperature taken. Process measures are often collected fairly frequently.

Protocols: detailed plans or procedures that explain how to perform specific tasks or handle certain situations. They are like step-by-step instructions to make sure things are done correctly and consistently.

Recovery room: an area near the operating theatre where patients are closely monitored after their operation.

Regional nerve blocks: medicine that prevents pain from a specific area of the body.

ReSPECT plans: personalised plans that are created through conversations between a person, their families and professionals to recommend what should happen in a future emergency situation, where the person might not be able to make decisions or express choices for themselves (for example, if they are unconscious).

Resuscitation: the process of reviving someone who is unconscious.

Structure measure: a measure that assesses the resources, environment and settings in which care is provided. An example would be the number of patients per nurse. Structure measures might be collected fairly infrequently – for example every month or every year.

Team briefings: a meeting with all of the surgical team before surgery to discuss what needs to happen during the operation.

Tranexamic acid: a medicine that controls bleeding.