

Very Important Patient: Saudi queen in Valley hospital

Staff at St. Joseph's gets crash course in etiquette

By David Cannella
The Arizona Republic

The seventh floor at St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center has been cleared of all but one patient.

Rooms have been repainted. There's new furniture, chandeliers and Persian carpet. The old furniture is being held in a storage room.

Special treatment for a VIP — Very Important Patient — the queen of Saudi Arabia.

Her Royal Highness apparently arrived late Tuesday night in a convoy of three jets that landed at the executive terminal at Sky Harbor International Airport.

She was whisked to the hospital in a limousine procession consisting of security officials, five private physicians and a host of others.

It's not known if King Faud accompanied her.

No one would talk officially about the royal presence, but the hospital corridors were abuzz.

Most of the staff at the hospital, from nurses and researchers to maintenance workers and security guards said that everyone's talking about "the queen."

"I haven't seen her," one staffer said. "I don't know anyone who has. It's pretty hush-hush."

Employees who were to have contact with the queen, including nurses and doctors, received

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A small fleet of Cadillac and Lincoln sedans, believed being used by the queen of Saudi Arabia's entourage, sits in wait outside St. Joseph's Hospital and Medical Center. The people are unidentified.