

Useful information about your forthcoming outpatient appointment



A guide for you and your relatives

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This information is designed to make your forthcoming outpatient appointment as straightforward as possible. We recognise that visits to the hospital can be an unsettling experience, so our aim is to ensure that any anxiety is kept to a minimum.

You have been asked by your doctor to attend for an outpatient appointment, to see a member of the medical team who are specialists in the type of problem you may have. Your appointment card or letter will provide you with the date and time of your appointment.

There are occasions whereby patients are referred to their local hospitals to see one of our specialist but may need to undergo a procedure at another site within the Trust. Any such decisions would be discussed with you at your first outpatient visit.

18 weeks referral to treatment

We know that having prompt access to NHS treatment and care is extremely important to you. We are committed to providing treatment from referral to treatment in 18 weeks.

However, there may be times when you cannot begin treatment within 18 weeks, such as:

- when **you choose a later appointment for your treatment**, perhaps because of work commitments or a holiday
- **when you are not medically fit to be treated**, for example if you are too overweight for surgery to be carried out safely
- when your condition requires an **extended period of testing and observation**, before a diagnosis can be made. This will only apply to a very small number of patients.

You can be reassured that if you need treatment for urgent conditions like cancer and heart disease you will be seen and receive treatment more quickly.

Amending or cancelling your appointment

If, for any reason you are not able to keep your appointment, please tell us as soon as possible, so that your appointment can be offered to another patient. In order to reduce non-attendance to clinic the contact centre operates a telephone reminder service one week prior to your appointment date.

Non-attendance to outpatient appointments does effect the waiting times for other patients and delays further treatment.

If you cannot make an appointment and need to cancel or rearrange, please ring our contact centre on **0161 778 2233**. Our office is open from 8am to 8pm, Monday to Friday and 9am to 1pm on Saturdays. Alternatively you can email with your details to: booking@pat.nhs.uk.

Please ensure you provide your hospital number and appointment details, along with the reason for your cancellation.

Please provide your hospital number and name with all email communications.

If you have not phoned or emailed to cancel your appointment and you do not attend, please note that you **will not automatically be issued with another appointment.**

Cancellations by the hospital

Whilst we make every effort to make sure appointments are not cancelled, there are occasions when, due to the unavailability of clinical staff, your appointment may have to be cancelled. If this is the case we will arrange for a new appointment for you as soon as possible.

How can I get to the hospital?

By public transport: For advice on how to travel to your local hospital, please contact GMPTE through their website on www.gmpte.com or via telephone on 0871 200 22 33.

By taxi: Taxis are permitted to drop off and collect patients and visitors at all hospital entrances. See note below on travel claims.

By car: Cars may pick up and drop off at all hospital entrances. Car parking is available on all hospital sites, although a charge is made for parking on the premises. You may experience difficulty in parking at peak times, therefore, please allow time to park in order to arrive on time for your appointment.

By ambulance: This option is only available if there is no other way for you to get to the hospital for your appointment. This can be arranged by your GP surgery.

Whilst there are designated parking spaces for the disabled, these are limited in number.

Patient travel claims: You may be entitled to help with your travelling expenses for attending hospital appointments. To qualify for help you must be receiving one of the following:-

- 1 Income Support
- 2 NHS Tax credit
- 3 Disability working allowance
- 4 Pension credit
- 5 Job seeker's allowance
- 6 Hold a current HC2 or HC3 form.

To claim your money, you may go to the General Office but you must take the following:-

1. Proof of benefit – this must be a current letter from the DSS stating your exact type of benefit OR a current NHS tax credit exemption card/letter OR a current HC2 or HC3 exemption form. **Only these items are acceptable proof.**
2. Proof of outpatient appointment – your appointment card or letter.
3. Bus tickets – If these are not produced, an allowance will be made. Weekly/monthly bus tickets – we will pay you the daily rate for that ticket by dividing the cost of the ticket by the number of days it covers. A petrol allowance is paid for car users.

Taxi fares are not paid by the hospital – but the bus fare allowance may be given. A taxi receipt must be obtained.

What should I bring with me to my appointment?

- your appointment card or clinic letter
- your personal details, such as your full address, postcode and contact phone number
- details of any medicines or tablets you are taking
- proof of exemption from payment of prescriptions - where applicable.

Please note: Other specific requirements will be detailed on your appointment letter.



Where should I go on my arrival?

Please check the location of the clinic on your appointment letter or card and report to the receptionist for that clinic. It is important you attend on your allocated time.

The receptionist will ask you a number of questions concerning your personal details. On your first visit, the receptionist may ask you for further information to make sure we have a complete and accurate record of you. All the information provided to the receptionist is strictly confidential.

How long will I be at the hospital?

Every effort is made to ensure that patients are seen at their appointment time. However on occasions this is not possible, so please be prepared should there be any delays.

If you need to have an x-ray, tests or a pre-operative assessment, your appointment may last for the whole of the morning or afternoon. Please bear this in mind when planning your visit.

You will be advised if clinic delays are significant and the reason for them.

Who will I see during my appointment?

You will be under the care of a particular consultant or specialist in relation to your medical condition. When you attend any outpatient appointment you will be seen by either the consultant or a member of their team.

Your privacy

Your privacy and dignity will be respected at all times. A nurse may call you through the clinic to be weighed and to test your urine, should this be necessary. If you wish a friend or relative may accompany you throughout your consultation. A nurse can be present to act as chaperone should you require any examination.

Noticeboards in clinic areas provide details of the staff available in each clinic and other important information. If you are unsure at any time, please ask any member of staff who will be happy to assist you.

When you see the doctor/clinician/practitioner

Ask for clarification on anything that you don't understand and discuss anything that is worrying you. You are entitled to clear explanations about any proposed treatment, including any risks involved in that treatment and if there are any alternatives.

Occasionally the doctors are accompanied by students, medical or nursing staff who are learning through experience. If you do not wish students to be present at your consultation, please advise the nurse in charge.

If you would prefer to be accompanied by a nurse throughout the consultation and examination, please advise the nurse in clinic.

If you are asked to make another appointment, please book this with the receptionist before you leave. Please ask the nurse in clinic for guidance and help if you are unsure of any information that has been given to you.

Planned procedures

The clinician may decide that your condition requires a procedure and it is possible that a date for this may be arranged at your appointment.

Once a decision has been made for you to undergo a procedure, you may be screened for MRSA (Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*) colonisation. This may happen either in the outpatient clinic or in the pre-operative clinic if you are scheduled to have a surgical procedure. Further information will be available from the nurses undertaking the screening.

What about my prescriptions?

If the doctor prescribes new or different medication, he/she will either write to your GP, or, if an immediate change is required, give you a prescription to take to the hospital pharmacy. The standard NHS prescription fee will be charged unless you are exempt from charges. If you are you will need to provide proof of your exemption.

Are you an overseas visitor?

Overseas visitors are people who are not “ordinarily” resident in the UK. This is regardless of whether or not you are a British citizen or have lived or worked here in the past.

The Pennine Acute Trust has a legal obligation to identify potential overseas visitors and assess if they are eligible for free NHS treatment. Charges for treatment may apply, unless they fall within certain exemption categories.

When attending hospital, the receptionist will ask “Have you lived in the UK for the last 12 months?” This question is asked of everyone who attends the hospital, as the only relevant fact is residency, and this cannot be judged from external appearance or nationality.

If the answer to this question is no, or if there is any doubt, a member of the overseas visitors team will conduct an interview. When you are interviewed, you may be asked for evidence and/or proof of certain exemptions. You will be informed of your status as soon as possible.

For further information on overseas visitors please contact the Overseas Visitors Manager on 0161 656 1030.

What else do I need to know?

What about the confidentiality of my information?

We keep all personal and medical information strictly confidential, and all our staff have a legal duty to respect this. In order to provide you with the best care possible, some of the information will be shared with other healthcare professionals in the Trust and in the community, such as your GP, and, only where appropriate and with your approval, with other care organisations such as social services. All of this is limited to a need-to-know basis.

Personal property

We cannot accept responsibility for the loss of personal property or valuables unless you have handed them over for safekeeping and you have a receipt. Therefore please avoid bringing valuables and unnecessary items into the hospital.

Clothing

We suggest that you wear loose fitting clothing, or clothing that can be removed easily should you require an examination or investigation.

Smoking

Smoking is not allowed within any of the Trust's hospital buildings and grounds.

Mobile phones

We would be grateful if you would switch off your phone whilst in hospital in order to protect your own privacy and that of others.

Children

Unless it is your child who has the appointment, it is preferable to make alternative arrangements for your child. Hospitals are not a suitable environment for children, and can be a distraction for you when being given important information about your health. Children under 16 years should be accompanied by a responsible adult with the authority to give consent to treatment on their behalf, if required.

What if I have individual or special needs?

Our aim is to ensure our services are accessible to all patients and visitors.

- if English is not your first language or you have a hearing impairment, then interpreter services (including sign language) are available for your outpatient appointment. To book an interpreter please contact the Ethnic Health Team on 0161 627 8770 at least two days before your outpatient appointment
- wheelchairs or special equipment. You can bring with you any special equipment you require for your visit. We recommend that you contact the hospital before your appointment
- guide dogs – guide dogs are permitted in the hospital
- carers – please advise the nursing staff in the clinic if you are a carer or have one so they can take your needs into account
- breastfeeding area – if you require a private area, please ask a member of staff, who will direct you.

If you require any further information then this is available on our website www.pat.nhs.uk.

Our service

If you have any comments about the service we have provided then please:

Speak directly to the ward/departmental staff and try to resolve the issue locally first.

Or if needed, contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service:

Fairfield	0161 778 2455
North Manchester	0161 720 2707
Royal Oldham	0161 627 8678
Rochdale Hospitals	01706 517354

If English is not your first language and you need help, please contact the Ethnic Health Team on 0161 627 8770

اگر انگلش آپکی مادری زبان نہیں ہے۔ اور آپ بات چیت کرنے میں وقت محسوس کرتے ہیں۔ تو مدد کیلئے آپ اسٹھنک ہیلتھ ٹیم سے نیچے دیئے نمبر پر رابطہ کریں۔

若英語並非閣下的第一語言和需要幫忙的話，請致電 0161 627 8770 聯絡少數民族健康組。

0161 627 8770

ইংরেজী যদি আপনার মাতৃভাষা না হয় অথবা ইংরেজী বলতে ও বুঝতে আপনার অস্ববিধা হয় তাহলে এথনিক হেলথ টীমের সাথে নীচের টেলিফোন নাম্বারে যোগাযোগ করুন।

0161 627 8770

જો અંગ્રેજી આપની પહેલી ભાષા ન હોય અને આપને મદદની

જરૂર હોય તો મહેરબાની કરીને એથનિક હેલ્થ ટીમનો

૬૨૭-૮૭૭૦ નંબર પર સંપર્ક કરો.

Jeżeli angielski nie jest twoim pierwszym językiem i potrzebujesz pomocy proszę skontaktować się z załogą Ethic Health pod numerem telefonu 0161 627 8770.

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