

INFORMATION ON YOUR APPOINTMENT

Waiting Times

We would firstly like to sincerely apologise about the length of your child's wait to be seen. We understand the impact of delaying medical care, but please let us reassure you that we are committed to doing everything we can to provide the best medical care possible during these most challenging of times.

COVID-19 has resulted in unprecedented pressures on the whole NHS and many of our services have been unable to operate at their usual capacity, meaning that waiting times are longer. This is not just due to the need to allocate the resources required to treat patients with COVID-19 in our hospitals. Other ways we have been impacted include the need to reduce the number of patients we can see each day in order to maintain social distancing, the result of the extensive additional infection prevention controls implemented in our hospitals, and availability and absences of staff, including cases where staff have needed to self-isolate in accordance with Government guidelines.

We would like to thank you for your patience so far and reassure you that your child has not been forgotten. We are continually reviewing individual cases and patients will be seen as soon as possible. We are prioritising patients who need care more urgently and ask for your understanding with this. We will contact you as soon as possible.

We are increasingly delivering more non-emergency services, such as planned operations, outpatient appointments and diagnostic tests. Patients who require urgent treatment will be prioritised wherever possible.

Your Appointment

If we need to make changes to the appointment we will try to let you know in plenty of time. We will try not to postpone any appointments or procedures that have been booked, but if the appointment is cancelled, we will make sure you know why this has happened.

If your child's condition has got worse whilst you have been waiting, or you are worried about new symptoms, and your child has not yet had an initial appointment with the hospital, please make an appointment with your GP. If your GP feels that your child needs to be seen by the hospital sooner then they will let us know and we will review your child's clinical priority. If your child has already had an appointment with the hospital then please contact us. Our clinical team will review your child's symptoms and will contact you to make a telephone or outpatient appointment.

For non-urgent advice you can also call NHS 111 – or access the online advice hub that can tell you if you need medical help by visiting: <https://111.nhs.uk/>

Emergency departments are open and treatment is available day and night, seven days a week, in cases where immediate emergency care is needed.

If you think your child no longer needs an appointment, please contact us using the telephone number on the original appointment letter. This is important, so that we can use that time to see other patients.