

First Outpatient Appointment

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on our ability to provide routine planned care. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when we will be able to see and treat you. This document provides you with information and guidance around your first outpatient appointment including getting to our hospitals and guidance on what to do if your health is deteriorating.

Once we have received your referral

If your GP has referred you to us, they have used a system called the Electronic Referral Service (ERS) to make the referral into the hospital. Your GP would have selected the service that they feel is most appropriate to investigate your health concerns.

If your GP gave you a letter with an appointment on, this means that you have been booked into an available appointment from those available for that service. They may have also given you a reference number and password so that you can book, change or cancel your appointment online or by phone.

If your GP did not give you a letter with an appointment on, this means that the appointment is still to be booked. When we receive your referral via the Electronic Referral system (ERS), it will be checked by a clinical person, e.g. a Nurse, Consultant or Doctor to decide what the right next step is for you. They will decide who is the best person to see you and if you need a face to face or telephone appointment.

Alternatively you may have been referred to one of our services by other healthcare professionals, where your referral will be checked by a clinical person, e.g. a Nurse, Consultant or Doctor to decide what the right next step is for you. They will decide who is the best person to see you and if you need a face to face or telephone appointment.

Appointments

If you have a hospital appointment but do not need to stay overnight it means you are being treated as an outpatient or a day-case. You may need to attend a clinic for a test, treatment, advice and support.

Please check your appointment card or letter for the correct location at either:

[Macclesfield District General Hospital](#)

[Congleton War Memorial Hospital](#)

[Knutsford and District Community Hospital](#)

What to bring with you to your appointment:

- Your appointment card or letter
- Details of any medicines or tablets you are taking
- Any samples that have been requested e.g. urine
- Any questionnaires you have been asked to fill in prior to your appointment

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- Money for prescriptions, refreshments and car parking
- Proof of exemption from prescription charges
- A list of any questions
- Proof of UK Residency e.g. medical card, passport, UK driving licence

Arriving for your Outpatient Appointment

Your outpatient appointment letter will detail which site you need to report to. Please book in at the reception desk on this site where your details like name and address, GP and next of kin will be checked. You will be asked to sit in the waiting room until you are called by a nurse or volunteer for your appointment.

The hospital has an appointment system, so arriving early may not mean that you will be seen sooner. There are usually several doctors and clinics running in the same area so other patients may appear to have the same appointment time as you.

We always try to make sure that you are seen by the doctor as near to the time of your appointment as possible. A notice board will display which clinics are running on this site and will indicate any delays, please make staff aware if you have been in the waiting room for an unreasonable length of time.

At your appointment, you may need to have blood tests or X-Rays. This means that you may have to spend longer than expected at the Outpatient Centre.

Have your details changed?

If your personal details have changed in any way since your last visit, please inform the Patient Administration Staff when you attend for your next appointment. Please also ensure you inform your GP.

When you see the Doctor

You may be seen by the named consultant on your appointment letter or another clinician who works on the consultant's team. Please ask the doctor to explain anything that you don't understand, and discuss anything that is worrying you. Any proposed treatment, including any risks involved in that treatment and any alternatives should be clearly explained to you before you decide whether to agree to it.

If you are asked to make another appointment, please book this with the clinic receptionist before you leave handing any outcome forms the nurse may have given you in clinic.

Training and Research

Student Doctors or other clinical staff in training are sometimes present in the clinic. You may be asked to talk about your condition with students and allow them to examine you. You may also be asked to take part in research. If you do not want to take part in any training or research please tell a member of staff. You do have the right to refuse.

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 given to another patient.

Please call us on 01625 663333 between 8.00am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday if you wish to cancel your appointment.

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If you have not called to cancel your appointment and do not attend, you will not automatically be issued with another appointment.

Cancellations by us

We endeavour to make sure appointments are not cancelled but this may sometimes occur because of medical emergencies and unforeseen circumstances. If this happens, we will arrange a new appointment for you as soon as possible. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

Interpreters

To arrange a language interpreter or sign language interpreter for your appointment please inform the department via the contact number on your appointment letter. They will then arrange this for you. All outpatient areas have access to hearing loops if required.

How do I get to the hospital?

The addresses of all our hospital sites are provided on our website: [Our hospitals :: East Cheshire NHS Trust](#) where you can select each site which takes you directly to a page where you can find out about:

- Getting here
- Car Parking
- Appointments
- Visiting times

You can also select [Site Maps and How to Find us :: East Cheshire NHS Trust](#) Here you will find maps of each of our hospital sites.