

## Breast Surgery – First Outpatient Appointment

### Introduction

The Covid pandemic has had a significant impact on the NHS ability to provide routine elective services. We recognise that patients are waiting longer than we would all like and it is not always possible to identify when treatment will take place.

### Waiting Times

As a guide, referral to treatment waiting times are available on the NHS [My Planned Care Website](#).

### Guidance for Patients

You have been to see your GP with a concern within your breast; they have referred you to the hospital to see a Breast Consultant, Registrar or Clinical Nurse Specialist who will carry out an assessment.

Once referred, you will be seen as quickly as possible (usually within two weeks) in one of our 'New Patient Clinics'. Most patients referred to the breast clinic will NOT have cancer, but it is important to establish the correct diagnosis for each patient quickly, so that appropriate advice and treatment can be given.

Assessment of the breast is divided into three parts and is referred to as 'Triple Assessment'.

Triple Assessment Process:

- Clinic appointment - Symptoms / history / examination
- Investigations - Ultrasound scan / Mammogram
- Biopsy - if appropriate following the other two assessments

You will be seen in the breast clinic at the hospitals Outpatients Department in Location A27. You will be asked some routine information about your general health as well as your breast problem. You may be asked about previous operations, other medical problems, any medication you may be taking, family history of breast or ovarian cancer and your menstrual history. You will have a physical examination of both breasts and armpits (axilla). This will involve you undressing from the waist upwards. Therefore it may be advisable to wear a two piece outfit for the appointment.

Your Consultant, Registrar or Clinical Nurse Specialist may then send you for further tests; this will be in the form of an Ultrasound Scan, a Mammogram or both.

The staff within the Breast Imaging Department may recommend a biopsy of the breast and/or axilla.

## My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

A breast biopsy can be carried out in the following ways:

- Free Hand Core Biopsy
- X-Ray Guided Core
- Ultrasound Guided Core Biopsy

Staff within the Breast Imaging department may also recommend a needle aspiration where imaging findings are consistent with a breast cyst. However, aspiration is not always recommended for all breast cysts as these are safe to leave alone.

Following these investigations, you will then return back to see the Breast Consultant, Registrar or Clinical Nurse Specialist who will review the final report from Breast Imaging and discuss the findings with you.

If you have had a breast biopsy, these samples will be sent off to our Pathology Labs to be analysed and reported. Your Breast Consultant, Registrar or Clinical Nurse Specialist will make arrangements for you to receive your results at the earliest opportunity.

**Please allow** enough time for parking, as the car parks can be very busy.

**Please note** this clinic appointment can take up to 3 hours.

### What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

The referral from your GP will have been reviewed and triaged by the team to grade your clinical priority based on the information in the referral.

If you are concerned that your condition or symptoms are deteriorating since you were referred to us, please contact the department. You will be asked the detail the changes in your condition/symptoms since seeing your GP at the time you were referred, and this will be passed to the clinical team will re-assess your priority.

In the case of needing emergency care or urgent review, please contact 111 or your own GP.

### Contact Us

01902 307 999