

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

First Outpatient Appointment – Haematology Service

Introduction

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, healthcare services nationally were impacted in the way in which they provided treatment, including routine elective services. As such patients may have had to wait longer than we all would wish.

The following guidance has been certified by clinicians who are responsible for your care and should aid you as you wait to attend the hospital. This summarises information about the service, as well as offering information on how you can support yourself while waiting to attend your outpatient appointment.

About the Haematology Service

Our Haematology service operates at Walsall Manor Hospital.

The most common reasons for referral to the service are the finding of abnormalities in the blood count or symptoms experienced by the patient that the referring doctor thinks may be caused by an issue with the blood, bone marrow or sometimes lymph nodes. Other reasons may be due to thrombosis problems or advice about blood thinning.

All patients attending the clinic (in person or virtually) will be seen by a consultant or senior speciality doctor on their first appointment.

Often additional investigations are sometimes required to help make a diagnosis. These may include additional blood tests, and some patients will also need X-rays, scans and / or bone marrow test.

If these tests are required you will be reviewed with the results. Many patients can then be discharged from the Haematology Department, but some will need further investigation and treatment via the clinic.

Responding to changes in your condition

You can look up your condition at <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/> for an overview of what you can expect or should look out for.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

It is possible that your condition may change. If you think things are getting worse, or that the medicine prescribed to you has either stopped working or is no longer working as intended, you should contact your GP as soon as possible. They may wish to review you and can contact the Trust for advice and guidance from the Trust's Haematology team.

If your condition worsens suddenly, you can dial NHS 111 or go to <https://111.nhs.uk/> if you believe the situation is not an emergency.

NHS 111 staff can guide you where to get help for your symptoms, advise you if you're not sure what to do and tell you how to find general health information and advice. Including where to get an emergency supply of your prescribed medicine and how to get a repeat prescription.

They may also be able to arrange for an appointment at a medical facility near you.

In the event of an emergency or life-threatening change in condition always head to A+E or dial 999 as appropriate.

General health measures

Your mental and physical condition can also be improved by adopting a healthier lifestyle, which can help speed-up the body's healing process.

Such measures include eating healthily and making sure you have what the body needs, staying active through exercise (where your condition allows), minimising or cutting out alcohol use and stopping smoking.

Attending your appointment

You will receive communication about your appointment by letter, or through a third-party online service partnered with the NHS (ERS). You may also receive a reminder phone call closer to the time of your appointment.

Your appointment will be at one of our outpatient clinics at Walsall Manor Hospital on Route 126 or via telephone. On most occasions you will be required to attend Route 002 for blood tests prior to your appointment.

Make sure you check the date, time and location of your appointment carefully.

If you are uncertain about when to come in and where to go, please telephone the contact number on your letter.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

What you should bring to your appointment

Please remember to bring:

- Your appointment letter and any other information that we may have sent to you
- Any medicines or inhalers that you are presently taking.
- Information about any change in your personal details, for example, if you have a new address or a new GP
- Proof of entitlement to free prescriptions
- A small amount of money in case you need to buy a drink or snack.

If you require additional assistance

We aim to respect your privacy, dignity and religious and cultural beliefs at all times during your visit. Please call the number on your appointment letter if you have any special needs, such as if you need an interpreter or signer and this was not booked at the time your appointment was originally scheduled. An interpreter can then be arranged to help you at your appointment.

Phone or Face to Face consultations

In the event your appointment is either a face to face appointment or a phone consultation, you should follow the instructions given in the letter.

Make sure you are available, ready and prepared in a room or area that you will be comfortable in and will have privacy, as you will be discussing your clinical situation with your healthcare professional.

If you cannot attend your appointment

We understand that you may not be able to attend an appointment we have arranged for you.

Whether you are unable to attend due to other commitments, are ill, your condition has improved, or you have decided not to proceed with your treatment for a personal reason, you can either cancel or reschedule your appointment at any time.

This can be done online via the secretaries on email Haem.secs@nhs.net or 01922 656487.

If you are unable to attend because you are on holiday, please ensure you provide our Trust with the dates that you are away.

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

It is very important you let us know if you cannot attend. This allows us to rearrange things for you promptly and see if another person requiring treatment can use the vacant slot. We may even contact you after your appointment date is given should a free slot become available at an earlier time.

If you do not tell us that you cannot make the appointment, you will be marked as having not attended and this may result in significant delays to your appointment, or even your case being closed for repeated no-shows.

- If you are unable to attend due to unexpected situation on the day, please inform us of why you missed the appointment

Contact details

Should you require any further details about your outpatient appointment call 01922 656487.