Outpatient Department patient information

This leaflet contains information which you may find useful regarding your forthcoming appointment.

Your appointment

It is the Trust’s responsibility to provide timely clinical care therefore it is important you keep your appointment.

If you wish to cancel or re-book your appointment, please contact us by:

- calling the Outpatient Appointment Line on **01202 704738** 9am-4.30pm, Monday to Friday (excluding Bank Holidays) and choosing the appropriate option
- visiting the hospital website at [www.rbch.nhs.uk](http://www.rbch.nhs.uk). If you click on ‘appointment cancellations’ on the homepage, you will be taken to a form to complete

If you are unable to keep your appointment and do not inform us, another appointment may not be made for you and you may be referred back to your GP. Please be aware you are only able to re-book your appointment twice.

The Trust will soon be offering patients the opportunity to have their outpatient appointment letter emailed to them. If you would like more information about how you can access this service please visit [www.rbch.nhs.uk/email](http://www.rbch.nhs.uk/email).

Can I bring someone with me to my appointment?

Yes you are welcome to have a relative or friend accompany you for your appointment.

Is my personal information confidential?

Yes. The Data Protection Act 1998 also gives you the right to see any information we hold on you. If you would like to apply to see your details, or would like more information about your rights under the Act, please write to The Medico Legal Manager at the hospital who will be happy to help.

How do I prepare for my appointment?

Please bring the following items with you for your appointment:

- Your appointment letter
- Details of any current medication you are taking
- A list of questions you may wish to ask the doctor
- Your diary in case you require any future appointments or treatments

What if I have specific requirements for my appointment?

If you have any specific requirements that need additional support at your appointment from a family member or carer, or if you have specific needs such as language or hearing, please contact the telephone number on your appointment letter and we will be happy to assist you. Please note the main outpatient area has a hearing loop system.
What do I do when I arrive for my appointment?

Please allow plenty of time to book in for your appointment. Patient self check-in screens are located in the waiting area for you to check in quickly for your appointment. Alternatively you can book in at the reception desk. Please note you will be asked if you been lawfully resident in the UK for the last 12 months.

You are being asked this question because the Trust has a duty to protect NHS resources by identifying those patients who are not ordinarily resident in the UK and may be chargeable for the care they receive.

How long will I be at the hospital for?

Please allow up to two hours for your appointment, should you need tests or assessment for surgery.

If you require any investigations before your appointment, you will be directed to the appropriate department.

We hope that you will be seen at your appointment time or within 30 minutes of that time. Occasionally there are unavoidable delays, though the clinic staff will keep you informed. If the clinic is delayed and you are unable to wait, please report to the receptionist who will be happy to advise you about making a further appointment.

What happens during my consultation?

You may not see the Consultant on each visit however the doctor who treats you will be a member of the consultant’s team and be fully able to continue your treatment and care. If you need a Fit for Work Certificate, please ask the doctor before you leave.

What if I need an operation, treatment or investigations?

If you require any of these the doctor will discuss this with you during your appointment and explain what is going to happen. You may need to sign a consent form which the doctor will discuss with you. Before signing, please ask any questions you may have if you are not sure or do not understand anything.

Can I have a copy of the clinic letter which is sent to my GP?

You are entitled to a copy of the letter which is sent to your GP after your appointment. We will be happy to send you a copy if you wish, please ask your Consultant who will ensure a copy is sent to you.

What happens after my appointment?

If you require another appointment you will be asked to go to the reception desk. If your next appointment is over six weeks, an appointment will be sent to you in the post nearer the time. We will aim to arrange an appointment for a mutually convenient date and time.

How long will I have to wait if I need treatment or an operation?

The Trust will endeavour to ensure patients first definitive treatment will be within the 18 week time frame. For more information please visit www.nhs.uk/choiceintheNHS and search for ‘waiting times’.

What if I have some comments and suggestions to make?

We welcome all comments as they let us know when we get it right as well as when there is room for improvement. If you have any feedback on our service, please put a note in the suggestion box located in the main outpatients waiting area.

If there is any aspect of your care or service with which you have not been satisfied, please talk to the nurse in charge so that any problems can be solved straight away. If you are still unhappy, please contact PALS (Patient Advice and Liaison Service) on Telephone 01202 704886 or email: pals@rbch.nhs.uk Alternatively you can speak or write to the Complaints Manager at the Hospital who will deal with your complaint.
What do I do if I need an outpatient prescription?

Please be aware you will only be issued a prescription to take to the hospital pharmacy if a medicine is:
- required urgently
- only available from the hospital, or requiring specialist supervision

For all other prescriptions the doctor will write to your GP to recommend the treatment. You will need to visit your GP surgery in a couple of weeks to collect a prescription. You should not need to make a separate appointment to see your GP. Please allow a couple of weeks for the letter from Outpatients to reach your GP.

Is there any additional information I need to know?
- Travelling to the hospital - for the most up to date information, please visit www.rbch.nhs.uk
  Click on ‘Patients and visitors’ and then ‘Travelling to hospital’
- Wheelchairs are available for patient use. Please ask a member of staff if you are unable to find one
- Refreshments can be purchased within the Outpatients Department
- Disabled toilets and Baby Changing Facilities are located in Main Outpatients, Eye Unit and Orthopaedic departments
- Mobile Telephones - please refrain from using your mobile telephone within the Outpatient department
- Smoking - The Hospital is non-smoking, apart from designated smoking areas situated outside our hospital buildings. For details on the location of the smoking areas please ask a member of staff
- Disabled toilets with hoist facilities are located in the Eye Unit and the main entrance

Please note that there is no facility at the hospital for looking after young children should you bring them with you.