What Happens at the Eye Clinic? (Ophthalmology)

Outpatient Department
Central Operations

This leaflet has been designed to give you important information about your condition / procedure, and to answer some common queries that you may have.
What do I need to bring with me?
You will need to bring the following:

- An appointment letter
- A list of current medications including any eye drops
- Your spectacles used for watching television, driving or distance and reading
- Your spectacle prescription. This is available from your optician
- Your diary or list of dates when you will not be available so suitable times can be booked for tests, treatment or follow up clinic appointments
- We advise that you should have someone else drive you to the hospital as it is likely you will have drops put in your eyes (to dilate your pupils to allow the Doctor to look into the back of your eyes) which will have a temporary effect on your vision. We will be unable to dilate your eyes if you are driving home.

Where do I report to on arrival?
On arrival please report to the Out Patient reception written on your appointment letter. The receptionist will check that all your details held on computer including your name, address and contact number are up to date and correct. You may also be asked for additional information which we are obliged to collect and will help us provide a better service, e.g. Ethnic group. You will then be directed to the appropriate waiting area.

What will happen when I arrive in the clinic?
Your appointment will start when the nurse calls you into a room for a simple vision test.

After the vision test the nurse may put some drops into your eyes. The drops will dilate (enlarge) your pupils (the central area in the coloured part of your eyes) and make it easier for the Doctor to examine the back of the eye. It takes approximately 20 to 30 minutes to take effect and will make your vision blurred. This is why we ask you not to drive home.

How long will I have to wait?
The eye test nurse will endeavor to see you within 30 minutes of your appointment time to carry out your simple eye test. All patients are seen in time order. Please do not worry if patients attending after you appear to be seeing the Doctor before you as there can be up to 5 clinicians working at any one time and you may be on a different Doctors appointment list. The eye test nurse will explain this to you in the vision testing room. Depending on your eye condition you may need to have up to three different tests carried out before you are seen by the doctor, this can sometimes result in a wait of up to two hours.

How will we keep you informed of any delays?
As this is a very busy clinic delays are sometimes inevitable we will however keep patients informed of any delays both verbally and by completing the communication boards outside of the clinic. The eye test nurse will give you a coloured card which corresponds to the Doctor you will be seeing; this will enable the nursing staff to keep you updated of any delays for each Doctor. The eye test nurse will explain this system to you when she carries out your eye test. If you have any concerns regarding this please ask to speak to the nurse in charge, whose name
will be displayed on the communication board.

**Which doctor will I see?**
You will see either the Consultant to whom you have been referred or a member of his/her team.

**Will there be anyone else present?**
There will be clinic nurse present who will provide any help or support you might need. There may also be medical or nursing students present in the clinic. This is a valuable part of their training. If you would prefer them to leave during your consultation please inform the clinic nurse.

**Can I bring a friend or relative with me?**
Yes, friends or relatives often provide valuable support. You are advised to let someone else drive you to your appointment as your vision may remain blurred for several hours if you have drops put in your eyes. They can stay with you for the duration of your visit in most cases. Where this is not possible, during some types of treatment, they can wait in the clinic for your return.

**What will happen during my consultation?**
The Doctor will ask you questions about your general health and about the eye problems you are having. He/she will want to know about any medication you are currently taking so please bring a list with you.

**Will I be examined?**
The Doctor will examine your eyes using a special microscope called a ‘slit lamp’. This is painless and only requires you to put your chin on a chin rest and look in the direction asked so that the Doctor can shine a light in your eyes. You may need additional drops in your eyes to allow clearer examination of the back of your eyes. If this is the case you will be asked to take a seat back out in the waiting area until the drops have taken effect which will be a minimum of 20 minutes. You will then be called back in to see the Doctor so that you examination can be completed. The Doctor will discuss your eye condition with you and explain what treatment or further tests may be needed.

**Will I require any further investigations?**
Depending on the nature of your eye problem, the Doctor may ask you to see one of the following specialist staff:
- Orthoptist. Who carries out specific diagnostic tests and treats defects of vision and abnormalities of eye movement
- Contact Lens Specialist Optician who visits at specific times
- Clinical Nurse Specialist (CNS)
- Medical Photographer

All the above professionals provide assessment and examination support for the eye clinic and will explain all tests and procedures as needed. If additional tests and examinations are required they can usually be arranged before you leave clinic. Where this is not possible you will receive a letter from the clinic giving the time and date of the examinations along with any special instruction/preparations you need to make before attending.
Will I require treatment?

Any suggested treatment and options will be explained fully during your consultation in order for you to make an informed decision. If you require medication you will be given either a letter to take to your GP who will prescribe the appropriate medication or a prescription to take to the hospital Pharmacy who will dispense the medication. This is dependent on how quickly you require the medication. If your Consultant suggests surgery as an option, this will be discussed with you in depth in order for you to make a decision. If agreed wherever possible you will be given a date to suit you before you leave the clinic to enable you to make necessary preparations.

How long will I be in clinic?

Because of the amount of time it takes for the drops to take effect and the length of time it takes to carry out a full eye examination please be prepared to be in clinic for up to two hours.

How do I make my next appointment?

Some eye conditions require you to return to the hospital for monitoring. At the end of your consultation you will be given a form to take back to the receptionist who will make your next appointment at a time and date convenient to you.

To whom do I direct any enquiries?

For queries about your appointment, to cancel or change your appointment please ring the Contact Centre (refer to appointment letter for telephone) the consultant and nursing staff will be pleased to answer any queries you have about your condition or care at the time of your appointment. If you need to discuss your referral or have queries about your condition which arise before or between appointments your GP should be able to help. He will receive a letter informing him of the outcome of your consultation. If you require a copy of the clinic letter please inform us when you attend for your appointment.

If you need to query information you were given during your consultation please contact the following:

**Scunthorpe General Hospital**
Clinic Nurse 01724 282282 – 2387
Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm

**Diana Princess of Wales Hospital Clinic**
Nurse 01472 874111 – 2687
Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm

**Goole & District Hospital**
Mon – Fri 9.00am – 5.00pm
01724 290074

If you have any queries which can wait until your appointment it is often helpful to make a note of them.

**Interpreter Phone**
Interpreting services are available via a telephone service. If you require this service inform the nursing staff on arrival.
Concerns and Queries
If you have any concerns / queries about any of the services offered by the Trust, in the first instance, please speak to the person providing your care.

For Diana, Princess of Wales Hospital
Alternatively you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on (01472) 875403 or at the PALS office which is situated near the main entrance.

For Scunthorpe General Hospital
Alternatively you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on (01724) 290132 or at the PALS office which situated on C Floor.
Alternatively you can email: nlg-tr.PALS@nhs.net

Confidentiality
Information on NHS patients is collected in a variety of ways and for a variety of reasons (e.g. providing care and treatment, managing and planning the NHS, training and educating staff, research etc.).

Everyone working for the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential. Information will only ever be shared with people who have a genuine need for it (e.g. your GP or other professionals from whom you have been receiving care) or if the law requires it, for example, to notify a birth.

Please be assured however that anyone who receives information from us is also under a legal duty to keep it confidential.

Zero Tolerance - Violent, Threatening and Abusive Behaviour
The Trust and its staff are committed to providing high quality care to patients within the department. However, we wish to advise all patients / visitors that the following inappropriate behaviour will not be tolerated:

- Swearing
- Threatening / abusive behaviour
- Verbal / physical abuse

The Trust reserves the right to withdraw from treating patients whom are threatening / abusive / violent and ensuring the removal of those persons from the premises.

All acts of criminal violence and aggression will be notified to the Police immediately.

Risk Management Strategy
The Trust welcomes comments and suggestions from patients and visitors that could help to reduce risk.

Perhaps you have experienced something whilst in hospital, whilst attending as an outpatient or as a visitor and you felt at risk.

Please tell a member of staff on the ward or in the department you are attending / visiting.

Moving & Handling
The Trust operates a Minimal Lifting Policy, which in essence means patients are only ever lifted by nursing staff in an emergency situation.

Patients are always encouraged to help themselves as much as possible when mobilising, and if unable to do so, equipment may be used to assist in their safe transfer.

If you have any questions regarding moving and handling of patients within the Trust, you
may speak to any member of the nursing staff, the designated keyworker within the department or the Trust Moving & Handling Coordinator.

Northern Lincolnshire and Goole Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

Diana Princess of Wales Hospital
Scar tho Road
Grimsby
01472 874111

Scunthorpe General Hospital
Cliff Gardens
Scunthorpe
01724 282282

Goole & District Hospital
Woodland Avenue
Goole
01405 720720

www.nlgh.nhs.uk

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