



## Patient Information Leaflet Worcestershire Glaucoma Support Group

### How to safely attend hospital appointment in Covid-19 Era

#### Covid-19 – Important Information for Your Safety

#### Introduction

During the COVID 19 pandemic, eye care was being delayed and only was occurring for those requiring urgent care. Routine check-ups were either being cancelled or rescheduled for later dates. As we are coming out of lockdown, we are restarting ophthalmic services slowly while taking all the possible precautions to keep all our patients and staff safe. We have identified that there's a need for good quality information regarding what patients should be doing before attending their clinic appointment in the rapidly changing advice from government and how to go about doing so without putting oneself at risk. We have tried to summarise all the possible actions you can take and what actions our healthcare facilities are taking.

**Thank you for observing our strict safety measures when attending our hospitals**

**Please do not come to the hospital if you have either:**

1. A high temperature of over 37.8 degrees – you feel hot to touch on your chest or back
2. A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
3. Loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

**Stay at home. Do not travel. Check the latest guidance at: [www.nhs.uk/coronavirus](http://www.nhs.uk/coronavirus)**

If you need medical help from your GP practice, contact them either online, by an app or by phone to be assessed.

If you need urgent medical help, use the NHS 111 online service. If you cannot get help online, call 111.

If it's a serious or life-threatening emergency, call 999

If you are told to go to hospital it is important that you go to hospital.

**You should continue to attend your appointments, unless you have been told not to attend.**



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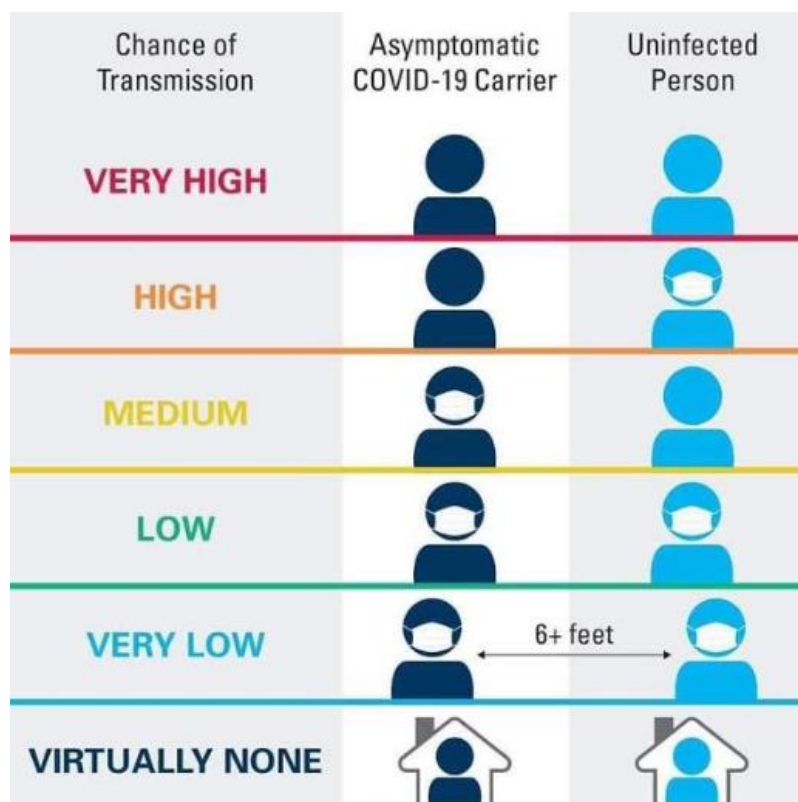
### Using a Face Mask

All patients and visitors must wear a mask when within a building/enclosed space across our sites. You will be given a mask when you arrive for your appointment or treatment. We understand that some of you may not tolerate a face mask due to underlying medical conditions, in that cases we will try to maximise alternative ways to keep you safe. Please ensure that you follow these guidelines:

#### DO

- Wear your mask at all times unless told otherwise by a member of staff
- Use the mask properly - ensure it covers your nose and mouth. Do not allow to dangle around your neck.
- Wash your hands before putting your mask on and taking it off
- Ask a member of staff for a new mask if yours becomes soiled/very damp
- Dispose of your mask each day, you will be given a new one when you need it by a member of staff if you are with us for more than one day
- Wear your mask when you are in areas of the building where you will come into contact with other people
- If you have to remove your mask for any reason, fold it in on itself and place in your pocket/bag to be re-used
- Continue to observe social distancing, keeping at least 2 metres from other people

Figure 1. Impact of face mask on the chances of transmission.





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### Infection prevention and control

- Please use hand sanitizer provided and wash your hands often with soap and water
- Please cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the bin
- Do not touch your eyes, nose, and mouth
- Please use facial covering where possible

Our housekeeping teams are working tirelessly to ensure that our hospital is as clean as possible. If you have any concerns about cleanliness, please raise them with nurse in charge in our department. Our staffs are keen to ensure you are completely confident that they are providing the highest possible level of care and cleanliness.

### What to expect in ophthalmology outpatient department:

It is best to wear face mask from your car to the eye department. You will be greeted by a staff outside ophthalmology department. Your temperature will be checked. You may be given a surgical face mask. We will also provide hand sanitizer. We will ask you some screening questions.

You will be guided to appropriate waiting area. We have arranged all our waiting area as per the government guidance on social distancing. At a given time very few people will be waiting in the department.

We have streamlined all our pathways so that you will undergo all the investigations first before seeing the designated healthcare professional. We may ask you to fill a brief questionnaire about any recent changes in your health and your medications. Some of you may just undergo all the investigations and will go home. Your results will be reviewed by the specialist and a treatment plan will be formulated. Your GP will be informed about any changes to your treatment. We shall also send you a copy of the letter to explain things.

If you are in the department for a face to face consultation, you will be seen by the specialist nurses or doctors. They will try to reduce the close contact time to a minimum. They may ask you some questions from an internal phone. Each face to face clinic is using two clinic rooms. When you are examined by specialist on machines, we all should try to keep quiet. Only conversation at this stage will be instructions from the investigator / examiners. We are not allowing any visitors in the clinic room at present. After examination, further explanation will be given either at 2 meters or via internal phone from the second clinic room.

Further actions will depend on the outcome of the consultation.

If you are scheduled for a surgical procedure, you will be taken to surgical waiting area. Just like outpatients, we have taken social distancing precautions in surgical area. You would have received all the instruction before the day of operation via telephone and in written format. Our intention is to keep the time spent in our department to a minimum. After operation, you will be given all the postoperative drops and instruction.

We expect everyone to adhere to follow the above advice on infection control at all times. This way, we will be able to provide a safe & timely care to maximum number of our patients.

These plans may need to be adapted as government advice change. If you have any concerns or worries, please discuss them with the team by phone prior to the appointment or at the time of the appointment.