

## Information about your face-to-face appointment with a clinician

### Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language, please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net).

### Why am I having a face-to-face appointment?

Your clinician has determined that a face-to-face appointment is necessary. They would like to be able to physically see you, for example if they need to examine you, or require you to undertake some tests.

### What will happen?

Your hospital letter will advise you of the appointment date and time.

If you are having a procedure, we may need you to be tested for COVID-19 a few days before your outpatient appointment. We will provide you with details about arranging this test.

On your appointment date, please report to the reception desk at the location specified on your appointment letter.

We are keeping the number of patients in our waiting areas to a minimum. Please arrive at the time requested on your appointment letter. If you are early for your appointment and you arrive by car, you may be asked to wait in your car until your appointment time.

The safety of our patients and staff is our top priority and we want to reassure you of the measures we have in place at our hospital sites to keep you safe from coronavirus.

- You will be greeted by hospital staff who will take your temperature and ask you screening questions before they sign you in for your appointment.
- Please bring your own face covering with you wherever possible, but if you do not have one available when you come to the hospital, please see a member of staff on arrival and we can provide you with one.
- All of our staff are wearing personal protective equipment to protect both patients and staff.

- **If you have the COVID-19 app** – In line with national guidance we are displaying QR code posters in the areas where you may be waiting. If you have the NHS COVID-19 app, please use your mobile phone to scan the QR code, so that you can be contacted by Test and Trace if needed.

## How should I prepare for my appointment?

- Make sure you know where you are going for your appointment. A map of NDDH is available on the Trust website  
[www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk/patient-information/nddh/maps](http://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk/patient-information/nddh/maps)
- Please bring a list of all your current medication (prescribed and non-prescribed) and any documentation relevant to your condition or appointment.
- You may want to bring a pen and paper to write any notes.
- Write down a list of questions you want to ask and bring this with you, so you don't forget.
- Make sure you use the hand sanitiser as you enter the hospital or wash your hands.

Due to current visitor restrictions, we ask that you attend your appointment alone. However, we can make exceptions in certain circumstances to enable someone to accompany you to provide emotional support. For paediatric appointments, we ask that only one parent or carer accompany the child.

We try to keep our leaflets as up to date as possible, but sometimes we need to make changes quickly. For the latest information, please go to our website  
[www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk)

Please contact the department if you require any specific communication support or other relevant assistance for the appointment, such as interpretation, sign language or learning disability support.

Although national guidance has changed regarding isolation following COVID-19 contact, our guidance remains the same. To ensure the safety of our patients, please do not attend your appointment if you or someone in your household has symptoms of Coronavirus or if you have recently had contact with someone with COVID-19. Symptoms include a new, persistent cough, a high temperature (37.8 degrees centigrade or higher) and a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste.

## What if I need to change or cancel my appointment?

If you are unable to attend this appointment, please notify us at least three days before your appointment date by contacting us using the details on your appointment letter. This will allow us enough time to offer another patient the appointment slot.

## What happens if I miss my appointment?

Please ensure you make every effort to attend your appointment. One missed appointment costs the NHS around £160.

Some of our services have appointment reminders, so you may receive text messages or phone calls to remind you about your appointment. If you wish to opt out of this service, please contact the department on the booking letter.

If you do miss an appointment the clinician will decide on the next step, which could include re-booking your appointment or discharging you back to your GP.

## **What if I don't want my appointment to be face-to-face?**

Please contact the department on the appointment letter to request another form of appointment. Please note that it may not be possible to change the appointment format.

## **What happens if I need an interpreter?**

We can arrange for an interpreter to be present at your appointment. Please ask a family member or a friend to phone the number on your appointment letter at least three days before your appointment and tell us what language is needed, if you have not already discussed this with us.

## **Parking**

Parking is available at our hospital sites. Charges do apply at some sites, but some sites are free. Please go to our website [www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk](http://www.northdevonhealth.nhs.uk) for more information on parking options at each of our sites. Carers who are registered with Devon Carers are able to claim free parking whilst supporting the person they care for during an outpatient visit.

To register with Devon Carers, please call 01392 307720 or go to the Devon Carers website online at [devoncarers.org.uk](http://devoncarers.org.uk).

Our car parks can get extremely busy. We always encourage patients and visitors to use public transport and nearby car parks if able to do so.

For advice on patient transport, please telephone the Patient Transport Advice Service on 0345 155 1009.

## **Smoking**

All Trust sites are smoke-free. Please do not smoke in any hospital buildings, grounds or car parks. Anyone on site using an electronic cigarette (e-cigarette) as a substitute to smoking will also be asked to stop.

## **What happens after my appointment?**

Your GP may receive a letter after your appointment, and we will send a copy of this letter to you. If you DO NOT wish to have a copy of this letter, please contact the department.

## **How was your appointment?**

Your experience of our outpatient services is very important to us. Your feedback helps us to know what is working well, and what we could do better.

Please let us know your feedback either using the Friends & Family feedback cards available from our reception areas, or by completing our online survey which can be accessed at [www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/OutpatientFeedback](http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/OutpatientFeedback)

or using this QR code



## NHS Constitution

The NHS Constitution pledges that patients can expect to start their consultant-led treatment for non-urgent conditions within a maximum of 18 weeks from referral. This is unless the patient chooses to wait longer, or it is clinically appropriate that they do so. If you have any concerns regarding the length of time you are waiting, please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on 01271 314090 or [ndht.PALS@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.PALS@nhs.net), who will be happy to support you.

### PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email [ndht.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ndht.pals@nhs.net). You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

## Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

'Care Opinion' comments forms are on all wards or online at [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk).

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