



**Leeds Community
Healthcare**
NHS Trust

Going to appointments at LCH during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic

Information for patients

We recognise you may have concerns about coming to your appointment during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

To minimise the risks we are providing more telephone and video consultations where this is appropriate for your care. If you need to be seen in person we have changed our services to reduce the number of patients and staff in our clinics and health centres.

We have also increased cleaning between patients and introduced new signage to support social distancing.

This booklet tells you what you need to do to keep yourself safe, and protect other patients and our staff from coronavirus.

It is very important that you read this information and your appointment letter carefully. The letter may contain specific instructions for you to follow before your clinic consultation.

Before your appointment

If you or anyone in your household develops a symptom that might be related to coronavirus, **please do not come into the healthcare building**. You must ring the contact number on your appointment letter so we can rebook your appointment. This will also help us to give the clinic time to someone else who needs it. If you have NHS transport booked, please remember to cancel this too.

Coronavirus symptoms are:

- **high temperature** - this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature).
- **new, continuous cough** - this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual).
- **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

If you think you have the symptoms of coronavirus, please use the online advice hub who can tell you if you need medical help:

<https://111.nhs.uk/service/COVID-19/>

It is important for you to know the coronavirus has increased demand on the entire health service. If we need to make any changes to your appointment we will try to let you know well in advance – we will try not to cancel or postpone any appointments or procedures that have been booked. However, there may be times when we are not able to provide your care as planned.

Up to 24 hours before the day of your appointment, the booking team may contact you by telephone. The purpose of the call is to check you for possible symptoms of coronavirus or to see if there is any possibility you could have been in contact with the virus. If the team think this is possible, you will be provided with more guidance for attending your appointment.

When you arrive at your appointment, you will be asked these questions again. You may also have your temperature checked and staff will direct you to wash your hands with soap or to use alcohol gel.

Please travel to your health appointment on your own if you can so that we can make sure NHS-funded transport is available for those who need it the most.

Shielding

Some people are clinically extremely vulnerable and are at high risk of getting seriously ill from coronavirus. If you or anyone in your household has received a letter recommending shielding or have been told to shield by the service you are attending, please ring the booking team using the contact number on your appointment letter and we will rebook your appointment or provide further guidance. If you have NHS transport booked, please remember to cancel this too.

At our health centres

To maintain the safety of our patients and staff it is very important that the number of people at our health centres and in our departments at any one time is very low.

Social distancing must be maintained by patients, visitors, and staff at all times. Sometimes this is difficult to achieve. There are some actions you can take to help.

- Please keep to the left when walking along our corridors
- Please walk in single file if you are able

- Please comply with social distancing signs and floor markings
- Please follow one way routes when directed to do so by staff



2M ↑↑↑

**PLEASE DO NOT CROSS THIS LINE
KEEP A SAFE DISTANCE**

↑↑↑ **2M**

Your appointment

Please do not arrive early for your appointment. Try to attend no more than 10 minutes before your expected appointment time. If you arrive earlier than this you may be asked to return nearer to your appointment time. This is to stop too many people being in the building at one time. If you arrive late, your appointment may need to be rebooked for another date.

We kindly ask that you **attend on your own**, if at all possible. If you need help with walking, communicating, or have other care needs, then no more than one carer or family member who lives at same address should attend the appointment with you.

Parents are asked that only one parent attends the department with their child. If you have been driven to the hospital, your driver will be asked to wait outside the hospital, or in their car.

Patient Transport Service (PTS)

Yorkshire Ambulance Service NHS Trust can provide transport to your healthcare appointments if you are eligible for NHS-funded transport due to a medical or mobility need and are not able to get there any other way.

However, social distancing measures mean that we are transporting fewer patients - normally only one patient per vehicle at a time. Before requesting transport, please consider if you could drive yourself to your appointment, or if friends or family could drive you there (in line with government guidelines). These are the safest ways to travel during the COVID-19 pandemic. Unfortunately, not everyone coming with you to your appointment will be able to use hospital transport and they may be asked to meet you at the hospital.

If you need NHS-funded transport for this appointment you must book it directly, by calling **0300 330 2000**.

It is extremely important to cancel your transport if your appointment or treatment is cancelled or if your plans change. This is to make sure that we don't make unnecessary journeys that could be used to help other patients.

All outpatients and visitors must wear a face covering

Face coverings do not replace the need to follow social distancing rules but may prevent you passing on coronavirus before you have symptoms.

If you have your own face covering, you must wear this to your appointment. On your arrival, clinical staff may ask you to wear a surgical face mask whilst you are with us. Thank you for your cooperation with this. Children up to the age of one do not need to wear a face covering.

A cloth face covering should cover your mouth and nose while allowing you to breathe comfortably. It can be as simple as a scarf or bandana that ties behind the head. When wearing a face covering, take care to tuck away any loose ends.

Wash your hands or use hand sanitiser before putting it on and after taking it off. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth at all times and store used face coverings in a plastic bag until you have an opportunity to wash them.

Do not touch the front of the face covering, or the part of the face covering that has been in contact with your mouth and nose. Once removed, make sure you clean any surfaces the face covering has touched.

You should wash a face covering regularly. It can go in with other laundry, using your normal detergent. Information on how to make your own face covering may be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering/how-to-wear-and-make-a-cloth-face-covering

Travelling from home

There are some important steps that you can take to protect yourself and others from the spread of coronavirus when travelling to and from your appointment and during your time in our hospitals:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport. Use a sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.
- Maintain two metres distance from people who are not part of your household.
- Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch a cough or sneeze. Then bin the tissue, and wash your hands, or use a sanitiser gel.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

We thank you in advance for helping yourself, our patients and our staff to stay safe. If you have any questions please contact us using the telephone number on your appointment letter. You can also find more advice on our website at:

www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk

We can make this information available in Braille, large print, audio or other languages on request.