

COVID Referral Pathway for Colchester Hospital

During the COVID 19 pandemic, Ophthalmology department have a duty of care to protect the patients, many of them are elderly and or have significant comorbidities. We in the trust have taken measures to protect eye patients. The risk of infection must be weighed against the risk to sight. On the basis of current guidance in NHS and from Royal College of Ophthalmologists we have –

1. Trust is still accepting all (urgent and routine) the referrals as before, but due to uncertainty with COVID19 we are not able to book or offer routine and less urgent appointments.
2. Postponed all routine Ophthalmic Surgery
3. All face to face routine Ophthalmic appointments have been postponed
4. The Activity in the ophthalmic service has been significantly reduced to prepare and redeploy the staff in the Hospital and the trust to deal with COVID19 emergencies.
5. We are open for ophthalmic emergencies as before and able to provide care and treatment to these patients. The referral process to emergency eye clinic, opening hours, contact numbers and email will remain same as before the COVID 19.
6. Eye department is still offering treatment for patients with Urgent sight threatening conditions like WET AMD, Retinal detachment, corneal ulcers, and penetrating eye injury.
7. The postoperative appointments for routine Cataract surgery patients have been postponed or have been changed to telephone appointments. The contact number given to patient on discharge following surgery is operational. Any patients with post-operative problem/complaints can be signposted to call this number for Triaging and advice.

Emergency Referrals

Patients who you consider an emergency can be referred in to the hospital but should only be done after advice and guidance with an Ophthalmologist.

Contact the hospital on 01206 286882. This contact number is attended by senior triage nurses at this moment. The on-call consultant can be approached as well through this number for advice.

The switchboard in the hospital should be able to put you through to one of the doctors if this number is busy.