

Ophthalmology

Introduction

In March 2020, every hospital was instructed by NHS England to postpone all outpatient appointments and routine surgery to help the NHS tackle the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. There have been further delays to our recovery due to the prioritisation of the booster programme in December 2021 and January 2022 relating to the concerns over the potential impact of the Omicron variant and it is possible that we may see further delay to our recovery in the future.

At Milton Keynes University Hospital, our hospital staff worked hard to free up beds, change wards and move clinicians and other support staff around, where it was safe to do so, to where they were most needed to tackle coronavirus head-on.

This has meant there is a national backlog of diagnostic appointments/procedures and those non-emergency treatments/operations. We are working hard within our hospital to reduce this backlog, which has been made more complicated due to rigorous infection control safety measures put in place to protect both our patients and our staff from COVID-19 and other transmissible infections. As a result of these measures some planned treatments are taking longer to perform than they did before which is also adding to delays.

Unfortunately, given the above, this could mean that you wait longer for diagnostic procedures and, if required, treatment/surgery following diagnosis and this wait could be up to two years for some patients. You may also have some of your appointments virtually either by telephone or video where that would be possible.

To read more about what we are doing to tackle our waiting lists and the support available to manage your condition while you are waiting, please visit [My Hospital Journey - Milton Keynes University Hospital \(mkuh.nhs.uk\)](https://www.mkuh.nhs.uk/my-hospital-journey)

Guidance for Patients

You have been referred for an appointment to the Ophthalmology Service, which is based in the Eye Clinic located in the Yellow Zone – Level Two of Milton Keynes University Hospital.

We run clinics for both adult and paediatric patients Monday to Friday by appointment only.

For more information on the types of clinics we run, visit [Ophthalmology - Milton Keynes University Hospital \(mkuh.nhs.uk\)](https://www.mkuh.nhs.uk/ophthalmology).

My Planned Care Patient Information Platform

All of our Ophthalmology patient information leaflets are available on our website here - [Patient Leaflets - Virtual Library - Milton Keynes University Hospital \(mkuh.nhs.uk\)](#). They may help to manage your condition while you wait for your appointment and will also help you to prepare ahead of that appointment.

Our webpage here - [My Hospital Journey - Milton Keynes University Hospital \(mkuh.nhs.uk\)](#) – also has more information about the support available to you while you wait to see us and some strategies to help maintain your health and wellbeing.

What should I do if my health is deteriorating?

Urgent Health Advice

For urgent health advice about physical or mental health, when it's not an emergency, please call 111 from any landline or mobile phone. You can also visit www.nhs.uk. The NHS 111 service is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Life Threatening Emergencies

For something life threatening such as severe bleeding, breathing difficulties or chest pains – please dial 999.

GP surgeries are still open

If you experience an increase in pain or a change to any symptoms, you should in the first instance contact

your GP for review and advice. Your GP will be able to contact the hospital if they feel you need to be seen sooner.

Mental Health Support

Waiting for hospital treatment can be a worrying time, so please don't delay asking for help if you are struggling with your mental health.

If you've been feeling low or very anxious and this is affecting your day-to-day life, you should consider going to see your GP (doctor).

You can also access a range of support here - [Mental health services - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#).

Contact Us

If you have a question about your hospital treatment, please get in touch with us using the ophthalmology contact details on our website here - [Ophthalmology - Milton Keynes University Hospital \(mkuh.nhs.uk\)](#).

If you are waiting for your appointment, we will write to you as soon as we can with a date and time.