

**Manchester Royal Eye Hospital**  
**Acute Services**

**Information for Patients**

# Welcome to Acute Ophthalmic Services at Manchester Royal Eye Hospital

**The Acute Ophthalmic Services at Manchester Royal Eye Hospital consists of the Emergency Eye Department (EED) and Acute Referral Centre (AFC).**

The EED is a nurse practitioner/doctor led service. During the day it is primarily led by nurse practitioners who are highly qualified and skilled nurses trained in the management of eye emergencies and other diseases.

The AFC is a doctor/optometrist led service providing care for patients who have already been seen in EED and require further follow up within a week.

EED and AFC are very busy departments that often have long waiting times. This leaflet will explain what to expect during your time in these departments and to raise awareness of other services available to you.

## **Booking in at reception EED and AFC**

The receptionist requires certain information in order to register you in the department. Please make sure all your details are correct at the time of registration especially contact telephone numbers and GP details.

## **Triage in EED**

Triage is a process which involves prioritising cases so the more urgent cases are seen before the less urgent cases.

You will see a triage nurse. This nurse will need a brief description of the emergency that has brought you to our emergency department. Please give clear details about your symptoms, any allergies you have, the amount of pain you are experiencing and any

other relevant information. The nurse will ask you to do a simple eye test. This nurse might/might not need to:

- Measure your blood pressure
- Measure your temperature
- Shine a light in your eye(s)
- Put some drops in your eye(s)

## **Waiting in EED and AFC**

You will be asked to take a seat in the waiting area. There is a water dispenser for refreshment and a television for your entertainment. Should you need to know where the café is please ask a member of staff. Do not eat or drink if you have been advised by the triage nurse not to until you have seen the nurse practitioner. If you are unsure whether you can eat or drink, please ask a member of staff. Please note that the AFC waiting area is also shared with the clinical imaging and diagnostics department so patients could arrive after you and be called before you because they are using a different service.

## **Consultation**

A nurse practitioner/doctor will see you. They will take a full history, examine your eyes, do any investigations, administer drops, treat you, prescribe medication if required, give you relevant information and give a follow-up appointment if necessary.

## **Frequently asked questions:**

### **What are the opening hours?**

We are open from 8.00am to 8.00pm. Outside of those hours please attend Manchester Royal Infirmary Accident and Emergency Department on the ground floor of Manchester Royal Infirmary, or your local Accident and Emergency Department.

### **How long will I be here?**

This is a very difficult question to answer in an emergency department, as the situation can change continuously. We aim to see you at triage within 1 hour and aim to have you through the department within 4 hours wherever possible. This can be shortened or lengthened by various, unforeseen factors including your own condition or other

presenting emergencies. We appreciate your patience and understanding. Appointment times given for ARC are arrival times, and whilst we would aim to see you as near to that time as possible, delays do occur and you should allow extra time for your appointment.

### **Why do I keep telling people the same information?**

The receptionist needs to know why you have come today as certain conditions will be sent through to triage immediately. The triage nurse will need to take a history again to prioritise your case. The nurse practitioner or doctor will need to ask all the information again, but in more detail as this will enable them to make a diagnosis and treat you accordingly.

### **Why are people who arrived after me going in before me?**

- There is a triage system in operation and although someone might not look like an emergency, they could have a sight threatening illness and will therefore be seen sooner.
- Some people have been seen before you, sent to other departments for investigations and are now arriving back in our department.
- When there's a long waiting time people often go out for a coffee or snack, so might just be returning from a break.
- After triage people often take a pager and go to the coffee shop or outside and when paged they return to the department.

We always seek to be fair and see our patients as quickly as possible. However, if you feel you have been overlooked, please ask the receptionist who will check for you.

### **Have I come to the right place?**

This is the Emergency Eye Department. Usually your first port of call would be your GP or Optician. They are able to advise you as to the urgency of your condition and will, very likely write a referral letter or phone our department to seek advice or book an appointment on your behalf.

### **Other services that can help:**

#### **Walk in centre**

Walk in centres treat minor illnesses and injuries and might be able to help you.

## Local hospital

Check with your local hospital; a lot of local hospitals provide ophthalmic services and could be nearer to you and not as busy.

## Opticians

If you are a patient who belongs to the Manchester area you can ask your optometrist if they are part of the Red Eye Scheme or Minor Eye Conditions Scheme (MECS). Optometrists who run this scheme are approved to diagnose and treat many ocular emergencies. If they are unable to treat you they will refer you to your GP or directly to the hospital.

Regular visits (every 1-2 years) to your optician are recommended for everyone even if you don't wear glasses or contact lenses, as the optician is able to check the health of your eye as well as prescribe glasses.

## General Practitioner (GP)

Your GP might be able to offer treatment and advice and will be able to communicate with us if they feel it is appropriate.

## Pharmacist

Your local pharmacist can offer advice on basic common eye infections and can suggest medicines.

## Self-care

If you have been diagnosed with a chronic condition (a problem that reoccurs or you have been experiencing for a long period of time), for example dry eye or blepharitis, it is important that you follow the instructions you have been given for managing the condition. You might need to increase the frequency of drops in some circumstances and continue lid cleaning for many months.

Chronic conditions do not usually require emergency treatment and you should seek advice from your GP or optometrist if you have persistent worries, before attending an emergency department.

## Patients of Manchester Royal Eye Hospital

You could have had surgery or are possibly in-between appointments; EED is not always the best place to attend unless you have had a surgical intervention within the last 2 weeks. In the first instance you should contact your consultant's secretary who might be able to help by discussing your case with one of the doctors who belong to your consultant's team or contact the specialist nurses who are part of the team, Retinal Specialist Nurse, Glaucoma Specialist Nurse, Corneal specialist Nurse, Uveitis Specialist

Nurse, Paediatric Nurse). During weekends and out of hours you can contact EED to seek advice.

### Could I have an appointment?

Appointments are not given for EED as this is an emergency department

### Can I have any help paying for the car park?

If you have been here over 6 hours the staff will be happy to give you a letter for the car park assistant making sure you only pay for the first 6 hours. Please ask at reception.

We thank you for taking the time to read this and hope that you have found it useful.

### Contact details

**Emergency Eye Centre:** (0161) 276 5597 8.00am - 8.00pm every day

**Acute Referral Centre:** (0161) 276 5597

**Retinal Specialist Nurse:** (0161) 701 4820

**Glaucoma Specialist Nurse:** (0161) 701 4819

**Corneal specialist Nurse:** (0161) 701 4819

**Uveitis Specialist Nurse:** (0161) 701 4819

**Paediatric Nurse:** (0161) 701 8244

The above numbers are available 8.00am - 5.00pm Monday - Friday and will have an answerphone service.