



What if I cannot keep the appointment?

If you cannot keep the appointment please let the hospital know as soon as possible so they can arrange another appointment for you. However it's important you attend your appointment within the two week time frame so serious illness can be ruled out and your mind put at rest. Also if you do need treatment, this can be started as soon as possible which often leads to a better outcome.

How do I get to the hospital?

If you cannot use public transport, drive yourself or arrange a lift with friends or family. Please speak to your surgery to see if you are eligible for patient transport.

Visit our travel website to find out more about getting to and from the hospital:

www.bfwhospitals.nhs.uk/departments/travel

More information

You can get more details about the two week referral system and cancer specific information from the web sites below:

www.bfwh.nhs.uk/visiting or **www.nhs.uk/cancer**

Options available

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this leaflet then please call: **01253 655588**

Patient Relations Department

For information or advice please contact the Patient Relations Department via the following:

Tel: **01253 655588** email: **patient.relations@bfwh.nhs.uk**

You can also write to us at:

Patient Relations Department, Blackpool Victoria Hospital, Whinney Heys Road, Blackpool FY3 8NR

Further information is available on our website:

www.bfwh.nhs.uk

Travelling to our sites

For the best way to plan your journey to any of the local sites visit our travel website:

www.bfwhospitals.nhs.uk/departments/travel/

Useful contact details

Hospital Switchboard: **01253 300000**

Your Appointment

Write your appointment details here for your own records:

Date:

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Time:

.....

Place:

.....

References

This leaflet is evidence based wherever the appropriate evidence is available, and represents an accumulation of expert opinion and professional interpretation.

Details of the references used in writing this leaflet are available on request from:

Policy Co-ordinator/Archivist 01253 303397



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Blackpool Teaching Hospitals **NHS**
NHS Foundation Trust

Your Two Week Wait

Don't put the clock back



Why has my GP referred me to the hospital?

Whilst your GP can diagnose and treat many problems themselves, they need to arrange for you to see a hospital doctor who specialises in your particular problem. This may be because:

- Your GP feels your symptoms need further investigations
- The treatment your GP recommended has not been effective
- The results of the investigations your GP arranged appear abnormal

Your GP will use national guidelines to help him or her make a decision about referring you to hospital.



It is essential you attend your hospital appointment because early diagnosis of a disease may mean more effective treatment and better outcomes. For this reason, where there is a possibility that symptoms could indicate cancer, people are referred urgently to see a specialist on what is called a “two-week pathway”.

The great majority of people referred this way do not have cancer, but it is important to see a specialist as soon as possible to confirm or exclude a cancer diagnosis.

What is the two week pathway?

Patients with symptoms that could be caused by a serious health problem (including cancer) need to be seen by a specialist and assessed within two weeks of a General Practitioner’s (GP) referral. This is because many serious illnesses are more likely to be cured if they are treated early.



We appreciate that this is a worrying time for you, but hopefully you will be reassured that your GP is taking the problem seriously and that you will not be waiting too long to get an exact diagnosis. Over recent years approximately 970 of 7500 patients referred to Blackpool Victoria Hospital were diagnosed and treated for a new primary cancer.

So what happens now?

If you don’t already have an appointment time and date, your GP will forward your referral to the hospital who will then contact you shortly (excluding weekends and bank holidays) to arrange an appointment. This may be in the form of an outpatient appointment or a diagnostic test, a CT scan for example.

In the unlikely event you are not contactable by telephone, a letter will be sent out with your appointment details. The hospital is unable to give appointment details to friends or family or leave answer phone messages due to patient confidentiality.

What can I do to help?

- If the local hospital contacts you with an appointment offer, do your best to fit in with what they are offering
- Ensure your GP has your correct address and contact details – including your mobile/ daytime telephone number
- Contact your GP if you have any concerns or questions about what is happening to you prior to attending your appointment
- You might want to prepare some questions to ask at the appointment, write them down in advance to take with you
- You can also arrange to bring someone with you to your referral appointment, some people find it helpful to have a friend or a relative with them

What if I don’t receive an appointment?

If you have not received details of your appointment within three working days of seeing your GP, please contact the hospital to which you are being referred and express your concerns. They will assist in finding you an appointment because it’s your right to be seen by a specialist within two weeks of being urgently referred by your GP.



If it’s not possible to be seen when you want to, the NHS must do everything they reasonably can to offer you clinically appropriate alternatives.