

Information for patients waiting for treatment

The NHS had to postpone many operations and procedures during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, to treat high numbers of patients who were very unwell with COVID-19.

At East Kent Hospitals, we were able to provide emergency and life-saving surgery, but many procedures had to be postponed.

We sincerely apologise if you have been referred to us and have had to wait longer than planned for treatment.

We have been able to re-open hospital services safely and we are doing all we can to provide as many operations and procedures as possible.

What this means for you

Please be assured that we know you are waiting. As soon as your operation can be scheduled, we will contact you. You do not need to contact the hospital or your GP.

If your condition has worsened since you were referred to us for treatment, please tell your GP or contact your consultant's secretary (their name will be on the letter you received from the hospital to confirm that you are on the waiting list for treatment).

If after speaking to your GP or consultant's secretary you still have concerns, you can contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) by telephone on 01227 783145 or email ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net. The PALS service is open 9am to 4pm Monday to Friday (excluding bank holidays).

If you no longer need treatment, for example, if you have had your procedure elsewhere, please let us know by contacting your consultant's secretary.

How the NHS is prioritising patients for treatment

We are inviting patients into hospital for treatment based on their clinical priority. Cancer and clinically urgent patients remain our main area of focus, and our clinicians are reviewing the notes of each patient on the waiting list, to ensure each procedure is prioritised correctly.

We want to reassure you that you are still on our waiting list.



We understand that being ill or in pain has a significant impact on your quality of life. So we are also working with our partners to identify procedures that can be carried out in community settings rather than the main hospitals, so more people can be seen as quickly as possible.

Four-brand new operating theatres, currently being built at Kent and Canterbury Hospital, will be dedicated to patients needing planned orthopaedic operations, such as hip and knee replacements. They are due to open this summer. This will help us treat patients waiting for orthopaedic operations more quickly, and will mean our other operating theatres will have more capacity to treat other patients.

Further information

More information on what to expect when you come to your appointment is available on our website at www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/coronavirus-updates

If you need written information in another format such as audio, Braille, Easy Read and large print or an interpreter, please contact your consultant's secretary.

If you have a hearing impairment you will be able to communicate by video with an interpreter who will relay what is being said on the phone to the member of staff. You will need to download the StarLeaf app to access this service. For more information, please visit our website at www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/video-sign-language

