

Tuesday, 16 June 2020

Dear All

Following recent announcements by the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, from Monday, 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020 we will be implementing new measures on the use of face masks and coverings in hospital.

As part of the measures, visitors and patients coming to hospital for planned and outpatient care will need to wear face coverings when in the hospital setting to reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus to other patients and staff.

Face coverings can be made of cloth and be reusable in line with [government guidance](#) on the use of face coverings for public transport. Face coverings worn as part of religious beliefs or cultural practice are also acceptable, providing they are not loose and cover the mouth and nose.

People who do not bring a face covering with them when attending hospital will be provided with one by the trust. Some patients who are currently shielding have also been provided with a surgical facemask for necessary in-person appointments.

Wearing a face covering may be difficult for some people due to physical or mental health conditions. In these instances, other measures will be considered on a case by case basis, for example, timed appointments and being seen immediately on arrival.

We understand that the use of face masks by clinical staff can be challenging for patients who are deaf or hearing impaired. Where possible, clear masks will be used by clinical staff to communicate with these patients, or alternative communication techniques employed such as the use of visual aids like writing things down, speech to text apps, and sign language.

All staff in clinical and non-clinical roles will also wear face masks when not in clinical environments that require PPE as part of the new measures, including staff only and public areas.

These recommendations have been made in addition to existing national COVID-19 [IPC guidance](#) and other measures to reduce transmission risk such as hand hygiene and social distancing.

Patient and staff safety continues to be our number one priority. We believe these measures for staff and patients will help to reduce the risk of nosocomial transmission of COVID-19.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with if you have any questions.

Kind regards,  
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