

## Patient information for urgent referrals

This information sheet explains why your Dentist or Optometrist has referred you to hospital, what it means and what you need to do

### Why have I been referred urgently to hospital?

You've been referred urgently because your Dentist or Optometrist feels your symptoms need further investigation and has referred you to a specialist. You can expect to be seen quickly to find out what is wrong with you.

### Does this mean I have cancer?

There are many common conditions that these symptoms could be linked to, including the possibility of cancer. Most people who have an urgent referral don't have cancer.

In the event that cancer is diagnosed, then ensuring that the diagnosis is made early means treatment is likely to be more effective and this is why it is important that you are seen urgently.

Because this referral is urgent, it means that you will be offered an appointment at hospital within two weeks but it may be within a week. You may need to be available for further tests over the next four weeks to receive a diagnosis quickly.

### What does your Dentist or Optometrist need to know?

- Make sure your Dentist or Optometrist has your correct address and telephone number including a mobile number if you have one as the hospital may contact you via telephone
- If you are unable to attend an appointment within the next two weeks, please tell your Dentist or Optometrist
- If you require a translator, please let your Dentist or Optometrist know and they will arrange this for you
- If you have not received an appointment from the hospital within two weeks, please contact your Dentist or Optometrist practice

### What will happen next?

Your Dental or Optometry practice will send your details over to the hospital. The hospital will then contact you to arrange the appointment, the hospital may also send you additional information relating to the appointment, including any tests you are likely to have on the day you attend.

Once you have agreed your date it is very important that you attend. Please call the number on your confirmation letter to let the hospital know immediately if you are unable to keep your appointment.

### **What will happen at the hospital?**

When you have your hospital appointment you will usually see a specialist or have a diagnostic test. You will be told in advance if you need to have any tests during your appointment, so please ensure you follow any instructions given to you in advance. You are welcome to bring a friend or family member with you, as it may be helpful if you have concerns about understanding what the medical team will discuss with you.

### **Any questions?**

If you have any concerns or questions regarding your referral to hospital, please call your dentist or optometrist, to speak to the person who referred you.

### **Useful links for further information**

<https://www.cancerresearchuk.org/>

<https://www.macmillan.org.uk/information-and-support>