

Outpatient clinics

***Information for
patients and carers***

Aberdeen Royal Infirmary

This leaflet is also available in large print and on computer disk.

Other formats and languages can be supplied on request. Please call Quality Development on (01224) 554149 for a copy. Ask for leaflet 0656.

Do you have a hearing impairment?

If you have any hearing difficulties please let a member of clinic staff know when you arrive so you do not miss your appointment. British Sign Language interpreters are also available by arrangement.

If you are a minicom user and need to contact us, please telephone our minicom operator on (01224) 550702. You can also fax us on (01224) 553678.

Do you have a disability?

Please inform staff of any additional needs (such as a lifting aid) you may have relating to your disability.

Do you have difficulty speaking English?

If you have a problem speaking, reading or understanding the English language, we have Language Line telephone interpreting services available.

If you prefer, we can arrange for a face-to-face interpreter, but we do need to know about this in advance. Please ask an English-speaking friend to let staff know before you come in to hospital by calling the telephone number on your card or letter.

Welcome to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary

An appointment has been made for you to attend an outpatient clinic at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. You will find details of the date, time and which clinic you are to attend on your appointment card or letter.

Any additional information about your appointment is contained on a coloured page enclosed.

You are welcome to bring a relative or friend with you.

Please bring your medicines with you, or a note of all your medication, when you attend for your appointment.

If you need a lifting aid (such as a hoist or stand aid) during your visit, please call us as soon as possible on the number on your appointment card or letter to arrange this with staff.

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Hospital appointments and waiting times

To make sure your waiting time is kept as short as possible:

- Contact the hospital as soon as you know you cannot attend an appointment or admission (the telephone number will be on your appointment card or letter).
- Arrive for your appointment or admission at the right time.
- Tell hospital staff and your GP as soon as possible if you change your address or telephone number.
- Let hospital staff know if there are any dates you know you will be unable to attend, such as holidays.

Your GP will not be able to arrange for an earlier appointment unless your condition deteriorates.

If, unfortunately, your condition does deteriorate whilst you are waiting for your appointment, you should make a new appointment with your GP who will consider what needs to be done.

How to get here

Public transport

The map on the centre pages shows the bus stops near the hospital. First Aberdeen services 3, 5, 6, 23 and 40 and Stagecoach Bluebird services 10, 18, 59 and 305 pass the Foresterhill site (routes correct at time of printing).

For more information about public transport (including buses and trains) please call Traveline Scotland on 0871 200 22 33 (www.travelinescotland.com).

Coming by bicycle

There are cycle hoops across the Foresterhill site where you can secure your bicycle. Please check the NHS Grampian website (www.nhsgrampian.org) for their locations.

Car parking

Getting to Aberdeen Royal Infirmary (ARI) from outside Aberdeen by car

If you are unsure of the best route you can use route planners such as on the Automobile Association (AA) website (www.theaa.com). Please use the postcode AB25 2ZN for ARI in route planners and sat-navs. You can also contact ARI Concourse Reception on (01224) 554567.

Parking at Foresterhill

Please note that the parking arrangements at Foresterhill are currently under review and may change during the lifetime of this booklet.

The central section of Foresterhill Road (shaded in the map on the centre pages of this booklet) is now for emergency vehicles, taxis and buses only. All other vehicles should follow the “loop road” which goes round the large car park to the west of ARI.

Parking can be difficult at Foresterhill, so if possible please avoid bringing your car. If you need to bring your car, please allow extra time to find a parking space.

There is short-stay car parking for patients and visitors (maximum stay three hours) in the following areas:

- Within the main Foresterhill site (signs show the areas for patients/visitors)
- In the large patients' and visitors' car park to the west of ARI (enter this car park from the loop road).

If there are not any spaces on the Foresterhill site, you can use the Aberdeen City Council pay and display spaces on the roads surrounding the site. The Council pay and display machines show the charges and time restrictions for these spaces. You need to buy a parking ticket from the machines located close to these spaces and display this in your car.

The hospital cannot accept responsibility for vehicles or belongings left in hospital grounds.

Main hospital site

Access to the main hospital site is for disabled badge holders, outpatients with valid appointment cards, patient

drop off/collections, emergency vehicles and priority staff permit holders only. Areas for patients' and visitors' parking are clearly signposted.

You can only enter the main Foresterhill site by showing your appointment card or letter to the attendant at the barrier (if you forget your card or letter, you may have to park in the large patients' and visitors' car park west of ARI). The barrier attendant will give you a ticket with your date and time of entry and raise the barrier for you. Please display the ticket on your car dashboard.

At unmanned barriers, just press the green button at the barrier for a ticket. Display this ticket on your dashboard.

To exit the car parks, insert your ticket into the slot at the barrier and the barrier should be raised for you.

Large short stay patients' and visitors' car park (west of ARI)

The entrance for this car park is from the loop road. There are no entry/exit barriers in this car park. Please park in the section reserved for patients and visitors. When you have parked your car, take a ticket from the machine and display it on your windscreen. There are also disabled parking spaces in this car park.

Parking charges

There is no charge for parking on the Foresterhill site for up to three hours (there is a charge for the council spaces on surrounding roads). Please note that disabled badge holders are not subject to the three hour limit.

You must only park in the areas designated for patients. You may be given a penalty notice if you park inappropriately (such as on double yellow lines, in a disabled space without valid permit, in medical emergency spaces, across multiple bays etc) or if you do not have a ticket clearly displayed on your dashboard/windscreen.

Drop off points

If you are being dropped off or collected by a relative or friend there are drop off points (**30 minute maximum stay**) in the following areas:

- next to the West Gate Ambulance entrance of ARI
- at the Rotunda (revolving door) entrance of ARI
- in the large patients' and visitors' car park (west of ARI)

Please note that vehicles parked in drop off areas for more than 30 minutes are subject to a penalty notice. Remember to display your ticket in your car.

Disabled parking

Disabled parking spaces are available close to the hospital buildings. These are outlined on the map on the centre pages. Please note that disabled badge holders are not subject to the three hour limit.

If you are a disabled badge holder, please show your badge to the barrier attendant. The attendant will give you a ticket to display on your dashboard and will raise the barrier for you.

Disabled badge holders must not park on double yellow lines within the complex. This is to allow continual access for emergency vehicles, including fire engines. Disabled badges should only be used when the driver is disabled or carrying the disabled person in the vehicle. If this is not the case, badges should be removed from the dashboard and you should not park in a disabled parking space.

Taxis

There are freephones for a taxi service available throughout the hospital.

Attending and returning home by ambulance

If you are coming to hospital by ambulance and you live rurally or on the outskirts of Aberdeen you should be ready to travel from 8.30am for a morning appointment and 12.30pm for an afternoon appointment.

If you are coming to hospital by ambulance and you live in Aberdeen city, please be ready at least one hour before your appointment time.

Every effort is made by the Ambulance Service to bring you to the clinic on time. If there are any delays, please do not be concerned as you will be seen as soon as possible after your arrival at the clinic.

If the ambulance does not arrive please contact the clinic receptionist at the telephone number on your appointment card. He/she will investigate the delay on your behalf and get back to you as soon as possible.

Map – across centre pages

Map – across centre pages

If you are returning home by ambulance you will be picked up from the same clinic area. You may have to wait for an ambulance to take you home. The clinic reception staff will keep you informed of any delays. Please tell the clinic staff if you are leaving the clinic or if you have been waiting a long time.

If you qualify for ambulance transport and need an ambulance for your next appointment please let the staff at the clinic know.

On arrival

Please hand your card in at the clinic reception desk. The clinic receptionist will check your details. You will then be asked to go to the clinic waiting area and you will be seen according to your appointment time.

We aim to see patients at their appointment time, or at least within 30 minutes of their appointment time. If delays are likely, we will keep you informed of the reason and how long you are likely to have to wait. Please note, several types of clinic may be running at the same time.

If you are diabetic you should bring a snack with you in case you are delayed.

Some tests may have to be performed before you are examined, and in a number of clinics you may be asked to provide samples of blood and/or urine.

All permanent members of staff wear a name badge that has their photo to help you identify them.

Your consultation

A specialist is always responsible for the clinic session. You may not be seen by him or her, but by another clinician who can discuss your management with the specialist, if required.

If it is decided at your consultation that you need surgery, you will need to have your fitness for an operation assessed (known as pre-admission assessment). This is carried out immediately after your consultation in the Outpatient Department, the Short Stay Unit or in Phase 2 of Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. Staff will direct you to the right place. If your assessment can't be carried out immediately after your consultation, we will arrange another appointment for this to be done.

Your assessment will be carried out by healthcare professionals and can take from 30 minutes up to several hours. Having an assessment done at this time means that you will have to spend less time in hospital when you come in for your operation.

Clinical teaching

Aberdeen Royal Infirmary is a teaching hospital where we train students and conduct research. While recognising that you need not assist in teaching or research, we hope that you will wish to help us if asked to do so. Please let staff know if you do not wish students to be present during your consultation.

After your appointment

You may be asked to return to the clinic. The hospital specialist will send your GP a report advising of any treatment, or further investigations needed.

If your treatment is to begin immediately, you will be given a letter to hand to your GP.

Confidentiality

All healthcare professionals have a duty to protect your privacy and confidentiality. No unauthorised personnel will have access to your records. We comply fully with the provisions and obligations of the Data Protection Act 1998 in storing and processing your information. The booklet "Confidentiality - it's your right" gives you more information. You can ask staff for a copy or call Corporate Communications on (01224) 554400.

As well as NHS staff, you might receive care from a social worker or others employed by different organisations. They might need to know relevant information about your health. No information about your medical condition, in which you can be identified, will, without your express consent, be provided to any person or organisation outwith the NHS.

Health records

When you attend hospital, information about you is recorded in manual files and on computer. Patients' health records are a most important source of information. Some use may be made of this information for audit and management studies to help improve how we deliver

services, to improve the way we treat people or to help improve the health of the general public. We may be undertaking studies to assess the frequency or behaviour of certain diseases. Wherever possible, your personal details will be removed. We take great care to ensure that no patient can be identified. You may also be approached, and asked to be involved in teaching sessions to help train student doctors, or to take part in research studies. Staff should ask you for your agreement to this.

We hope you will accept that such work is very important for advancing medical knowledge. We therefore ask you to accept that your health records may be used in this way.

If you are concerned about your information being shared, you can object. If this is your decision, tell a member of NHS staff providing your care or write to the Health Records Manager at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary. If you do so, your record will be marked and it will not be made available for audit, research or other studies without your express consent. Before reaching such a decision, you may find it helpful to discuss the matter with those responsible for your hospital care. Sometimes the law allows the NHS to share your information without your permission, for example to notify of an infectious disease.

Data Protection Act 1998

Your rights under the Act

The Data Protection Act 1998 is the legislation that governs how we can use, store, process and transfer your personal information. NHS Grampian complies with this legislation at all times.

This Act also provides you with the right to access the personal information we hold about you; this is called subject access.

A leaflet entitled “How to see your Health Records” gives information about your rights under the above Act and how you can get access to your health record. You can ask staff for a copy or call Corporate Communications on (01224) 554400. The leaflet tells you about:

- The information that is collected in the NHS about you
- How that information can be used
- How you can find out more about the information held about you.

You can also contact the Information Governance Team on 01224 551549 or email nhsg.infogovernance@nhs.net for further information and advice or to request a copy of your medical record.

General information

Refreshments

Refreshments are available throughout the hospital for outpatients and visitors. These services are provided by drinks/snack dispensers and the Women’s Royal Voluntary Service.

The Cairngorm Coffee Shop is behind the Main Entrance near the hospital shops. It is open Monday to Friday 8am to 8pm and from 11am to 8pm Saturday and Sunday.

Fire alarms

The fire alarm is tested every Wednesday morning. Staff will tell you if you should leave the area at any time.

Help us to prevent the spread of infection

The most common way germs are spread is by people's hands. Hand hygiene is the single most important thing you (or your visitors) can do to help reduce the spread of infections either by washing your hands or applying the alcohol hand gel provided.

Hospital cleanliness

We take the cleanliness of our hospitals very seriously. If you have any cause for concern, please speak to a member of staff.

Telephones

There are coin operated public telephones available throughout the hospital.

The use of mobile phones is **not permitted** in the hospital except in clearly designated areas. The signals can affect vital medical equipment. Please switch your mobile phone off before you enter the hospital.

Smoking and alcohol

There is no smoking throughout ARI. Alcohol must not be consumed in the hospital or its grounds.

Drugs

The hospital does not accept unauthorised drugs or illicit substances being brought on to its premises.

Violence and aggression

The safety of patients and staff is very important to NHS Grampian. Therefore, aggressive or violent behaviour will not be tolerated. NHS Grampian takes a serious view on this and will act accordingly.

Travel costs

If you receive Income Support, Employment and Support Allowance (income based), Job Seeker's Allowance (income based) or Pension Credit Guarantee Credit, hold a valid NHS Exemption Certificate, or are from the Highlands and Islands area, you may be entitled to help with hospital travel costs. If you are named on an HC2 or HC3 certificate or complete an HC5 form, you may also be entitled to help with travel costs. You must bring details of your benefits and appointment card when you attend the hospital. Reimbursement will only be at the cheapest public transport rate. **Please keep any tickets and receipts as proof of your travel costs.**

Reimbursement and queries are dealt with by the General Office, Administration Dept, Aberdeen Royal Infirmary.

Social Work Department

There are social workers in the hospital who can discuss any non-medical problems resulting from your visit. You can contact Social Work through the clinic receptionist.

Hospital chaplains

A hospital chaplain is available to meet you or your relatives at any time. Chaplains are willing to visit anyone – people of any faith or none. Please ask a member of staff to contact a chaplain for you or you can phone (01224) 553316 (email nhsg.chaplaincy@nhs.net).

Everyone is welcome to use the hospital chapel, to appreciate its stillness and for personal prayer and reflection. The chapel is on the ground floor (near the lifts for Wards 39 to 51).

Do you look after someone?

Carers look after family, partners and friends in need of help because they are ill, frail or have a disability. The care they provide is unpaid. It is important not to confuse carers with employed care workers. If one of the roles in your life is that of a carer, information, advice and support is available across Grampian. VSA Carers' Centre, 38 Castle Street, Aberdeen (01224 212021) can help you to access your local contact point. If you live in Moray, contact Quarriers (carers' support) on (01343) 556031. There is also information for carers on the NHS Grampian website (www.nhsgrampian.org).

Healthline 0500 20 20 30

NHS Grampian healthline is a free local service available Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm. Call us for information about any matter relating to your health or health services in Grampian. Any information requested is sent by post free of charge. All calls are confidential and are answered by trained health advisors.

Independent Advice and Support Service for NHS users (IASS)

If you would like independent advice about any healthcare concerns, or general advice on dealing with the impact of ill health or disability, you can contact the IASS (part of the Citizens Advice Bureau) on 0845 330 5012. Please note that this service is due to be replaced in 2011.

Tell us what you think

We would welcome any comments you may have. What did you like about the service you received? If you wish to praise our staff, comment on our standards of care or any other aspect of NHS services in Grampian, please let us know by completing one of our feedback cards. They are available in all clinics. All compliments, comments and suggestions will be acknowledged and passed to staff.

If you are unhappy with any aspect of the service you receive please speak to the person in charge of the area, who will try to resolve the problem as quickly as possible.

If for any reason, you would prefer not to speak to a member of staff, you can:

either Complete a feedback card. Please tick the “Complaint” box on the card to confirm you wish to make a complaint,

or Write a letter to:

NHS Grampian Feedback Service
St Martin’s House
181 Union Street
Aberdeen
AB11 6BB

You can also contact the NHS Grampian Feedback Service on **0845 337 6 338**.