

Emergency Eye Practitioner Service

Ophthalmic Specialist Practitioners are based within the Emergency Department daily between 09:15 and 17:00 hours.

Outside of these times, the Emergency Department clinical teams provide initial assessment and treatment of ocular conditions. They are supported by the On-call Ophthalmologist.

A 'Triage assessment' will be carried out by the Triage Nurse to establish priority for care, and this is an opportunity to have medicine for pain, should it be necessary.

Ophthalmic Specialist Practitioners identify and manage acute eye injuries/conditions. They will assess your situation and either treat you themselves, or make a referral to an appropriate clinician. Those requiring sight saving measures will be attended to first.

Those who attend with long-standing signs and symptoms may be referred to their General Practitioner; Optometrist or Walk-in Centre.

People with a flare up of a preexisting eye condition may telephone the Ophthalmic Telephone Triage team for an appointment on **01392 402399**. Monday to Friday: 9.00 to 12.30 and 14.00 to 16.30 only.

Those with Glaucoma or Glaucoma medication related problems should telephone:

The Glaucoma Monitoring Team on **01392 406045** Monday to Friday 9.00 to 4.30.

Only current patients of the Macular Service with new visual distortion should telephone the Macular Team on **01392 406052**, Monday to Friday 9.00 to 4.00 only.

Who is eligible to use the service?

This service for people who have:

- Sustained eye injuries.
- Acute painful loss of vision.
- Acute painless loss of vision.

How to access the service

Referral to the Emergency Eye Service team is by General Practitioner; Minor Injury units, Walk in Centre, Optometrist, Paramedic and Ambulance or First Aid personnel.

Is equipment or special clothing needed?

Please be aware that in order to have your eyes examined eye drops to dilate your pupils may be used.

You are advised not to attempt to drive a vehicle or operate machinery until the effects of the dilation drops have completely worn off.

Please make arrangements for your journey home.

Where to go for the service and how to find it

The Emergency Eye Practitioner Service is situated within the Emergency Department (Area H, level 1), and is accessed by registering at reception.

The Emergency Department is situated at the rear of the hospital. See Hospital map.

After this, a triage assessment will be made by the triage nurse. All patients will require a triage assessment even if you are expected by a specialist team.

The triage nurse may make a referral to the on-site Walk in Centre team, Out of Hours General Practitioner service for non-urgent conditions. The Triage Nurse may make a referral to other hospital based specialist team or to the Emergency Eye Service; this is dependent on the nature and cause of your problem.

Access to The West of England Eye Unit (Area E level 1) is by appointment only. **There are no walk-in services at this unit.**

Further information on how to find us

- A park and ride service is available at Digby for the Royal Devon & Exeter Hospital (Wonford).
- Operates Monday to Friday (except bank holidays).
- Times of Operation 06.40 (from Digby) – 21.45 (from Wonford).
- 10-15 minute interval bus service.
- Operates non stop to the hospital. Route number PR3.
- Inexpensive rates.

- For further information on the charges please contact Car Parking on 01392 402358 or view our website www.rdehospital.nhs.uk
- Bus Service is operated by Dartline Coaches.
- Space for 400+ Cars (including disabled bays).
- Security attendant during hours of operation.
- CCTV in operation.
- This car park is locked at 22.30.

When is the service available?

The Emergency Eye Service is available daily for trauma and sight threatening conditions.

It is not a walk in service for non-urgent long standing conditions.

Is there a waiting time?

The waiting time will depend on priority. Patients assessed as having category 1, 2 & 3 presentations will be attended to before category 4.

If you have a non-urgent problem, you should make arrangements to see your General Practitioner or Optometrist.

If you are already being treated for a condition by another healthcare professional you should keep them informed of your progress. This allows them to make changes to your treatment plans, or arrange a referral for specialist opinion.

How often do I need to attend?

Patients should only need to attend once with the same condition.

Patients having flare ups of recurring conditions, or who are currently being monitored by specific ophthalmology teams should follow the contact details above.

Do I need to bring any documents?

You will need to bring your referral letter with you.

If you have been referred to the department by another healthcare professional, please bring your distance spectacles as your distance visual acuity will be tested and recorded.

If you wear contact lenses please bring your distance spectacles.

Please bring a list of your current medications.

Please bring evidence of prescription fee exemption.

What is not available

We cannot provide transport.

Are interpreters needed?

Where possible, please inform us if you require an interpreter.

Are there any costs involved?

If medications are prescribed they can be obtained at the onsite Boots Pharmacy or the Hospital Pharmacy. Prescription charges apply. Please bring exemption certification if you have this.

Are there any advantages or disadvantages?

There is limited space for visitors. We welcome primary carers.

Who to contact if I have further questions?

Contact the Emergency Eye Practitioner Service:

01392 402399 Monday to Friday, 09:00 to 12:30, and 14:00 to 16.30, only.

Please keep calls to a minimum as they distract us from caring for patients.

The Trust cannot accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the information given if the leaflet is not used by RD&E staff undertaking procedures at the RD&E hospitals.

© Royal Devon and Exeter NHS Foundation Trust

Designed by Graphics (Print & Design), RD&E