

January 4th, 2022

STAKEHOLDER BRIEFING NOTE ON PAUSING ELECTIVE CARE IN GREATER MANCHESTER

Hospitals in Greater Manchester have made the difficult decision to pause some non-urgent surgery and appointments due to the rising impact of Covid. Patients who will be affected by this are being contacted.

This is a temporary measure, and the aim is to impact the fewest number of patients. It will not affect cancer and urgent care including cardiac surgery, vascular surgery and transplantation. The Christie will continue to provide cancer care in a Covid secure way and Rochdale continues to provide cancer and other urgent surgery as a Covid secure site for Greater Manchester.

In addition, our diagnostic services, including endoscopy, and the majority of our out-patient services will continue wherever possible.

Staff have worked tirelessly to try to maintain services and deliver the highest quality of healthcare to local people. But Covid admissions are rising sharply (from 126 on December 19th to 359 on Jan 2nd), as are inpatient diagnoses (193 to 738 for the same period), and in some hospitals more than one in five patients have Covid (though this is not translating into critical care pressure at present). However, the main reason is the high and rising level of staff absence, with around 15% off, either ill with Covid or isolating. There are also outbreaks in an increasing number of care homes, which is affecting how people are discharged from hospital. The bed modelling suggests these challenges may get worse, not better, in the next week or two.

The decision affects hospitals across the region and will start to be implemented from today (Tuesday January 4th). Our hospitals will be contacting those affected as soon as possible. **If you are not contacted then assume your treatment is continuing as planned.** There is no need to contact the hospital or your GP practice for this information.

We understand how disappointing this will be for patients who have appointments or procedures affected, especially those who have already waited some time, and we know people will be worried.

While you Wait is an online resource launched in Greater Manchester to help patients manage their physical and mental wellbeing while waiting for hospital care, by providing information and advice.

The page features resources on how to look after both physical and mental health while waiting for treatments and advice on managing conditions.

Anyone waiting for treatment and can find advice and support on the Greater Manchester While you Wait website (www.whileyouwait.org.uk) and the latest publicly available statistics can be found [here](#).

The hospitals affected are as follows:

- Royal Bolton Hospital
- Fairfield General Hospital
- Manchester Royal Infirmary
- Manchester Royal Eye Hospital
- University Dental Hospital of Manchester
- St Mary's Hospital
- North Manchester General Hospital
- The Royal Oldham Hospital
- Salford Royal Hospital
- Stepping Hill Hospital
- Tameside General Hospital
- Trafford General Hospital
- Royal Albert Edward Infirmary
- Wrightington Hospital
- Leigh Infirmary
- Wythenshawe Hospital
- Macclesfield District General Hospital

This has been a very difficult decision and not one that we have taken lightly, but we've done it so we can keep people safe, can maintain the very best infection control measures, can make sure we deploy staff to where they're needed most and can keep looking after people who need urgent and emergency care, including cancer treatment.

We would urge anyone with health concerns to continue to come forward for help and treatment in the usual way, using their local emergency department only for serious illnesses or injuries.

And we would also ask everyone to keep doing their bit to minimise the spread of the virus – please get vaccinated and boosted, wear a face covering in enclosed spaces, wash your hands more frequently and minimise your contact with people outside your immediate household.

Best wishes,

Fiona Noden, chief executive of Bolton NHS Foundation Trust, co-chair of Greater Manchester Hospital Gold command and lead for elective care in Greater Manchester

Sarah Price, interim chief officer Greater Manchester Health and Social Care Partnership