

Preparing for your appointment

A guide for outpatients



Welcome to Barts and The London NHS Trust

We look forward to meeting you – and have created this booklet to help you prepare for your appointment.

Barts and The London hospitals produce some of the best clinical outcomes in the UK - evidenced by **one of the best survival rate records in the NHS**. National reports produced by Dr Foster show that our three hospitals - The Royal London in Whitechapel, St Bartholomew's (known as Barts) by St Paul's in the City and The London Chest in Bethnal Green - continue to have an excellent survival rate record - a clear indicator of clinical excellence. Our mission is literally to bring excellence to life - to give patients the best possible care so that they can live better, fuller, longer lives. Our **world renowned hospitals** have made and continue to make an **outstanding contribution to modern medicine**.

Our dedicated professionals are passionate about caring for you. You'll get the best care we can give. Our patient-centred approach means we'll ask what you think, and give you all the information you need to help you play an active part in any decision making. And you'll be treated in an environment where your comfort, privacy and dignity are respected.

Patients tell us that coming to hospital can be daunting. So this booklet is full of useful information, from how to get here to what to expect when you arrive.

So, please take a moment to read this guide and if you've got any questions, just give us a call on tel 020 7601 8099.

See you soon.



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Before your appointment

What if I cannot attend my appointment?

If you are not able to keep your appointment or wish to change it to a more convenient time, it is vital to tell us as soon as possible so that your appointment can be given to another patient. Call the Appointments Centre on tel **020 7601 8099** (8am-6pm, Monday to Thursday, 8am-5pm, Friday or 9am-12noon, Saturday), email appointments@bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk or write to the Appointments Centre, Ground Floor, Outpatient Department, St Bartholomew's Hospital, West Smithfield, London EC1A 7BE.

Cancellations by us

We try to keep every appointment we make, but medical emergencies and unforeseen circumstances mean that we sometimes have to cancel appointments. If this happens, we are sorry for any inconvenience caused and will arrange a new appointment for you as soon as possible. Please note that the hospitals cannot reimburse you for any costs incurred as a result of a cancellation.

No show? Let us know

Around 87,000 people do not turn up for their appointments each year. As a result, many other people have to wait longer for their appointment.

If you do not phone or write to cancel your appointment and do not attend, you will not automatically be issued with another appointment. You will need to go back to your General Practitioner (GP) or referring doctor to arrange this.

What to bring with you

We suggest that you bring the following things with you to your appointment...

- ✓ **Your appointment letter or appointment card**
That's the letter or card sent to you with this guide. It contains detailed information, including the date of your appointment and where to go when you arrive.
- ✓ **Information about you**
The hospital staff will already have details about your condition, but they will need the following information about you:
 - Your personal details, including your address and full postcode and date of birth
 - Your home address if this is different from where you are currently living
 - Your GP's address and telephone number

✓ Medicines and allergy treatments

We'll need to see information about any medicines you're currently taking, including those for any allergies. We'll need to know the names of the medication, what you're taking it for and how often you take it. Include everything – tablets, injections, liquids, creams, inhalers and eye drops. Don't forget to include any products bought from a pharmacy, supermarket or the internet, including homeopathic or herbal remedies. We need to compile a complete record of all the medicines you're taking, so that we can best plan any treatment you may need.

✓ Questions you may have

Think about any questions you'd like to ask your doctor – for example, 'What treatment options do I have?' 'What will the treatment or procedure involve?' 'How will I feel after my treatment?' 'When will I be able to resume normal activities?'. You may find it helpful to write your questions down and bring the list with you to your appointment.

Getting to hospital



The enclosed map will show you how to find the hospital and provides details of public transport links. If there is no map enclosed, please contact the Appointments Centre on tel 020 7601 8099 for a copy, or view it on the Trust's website at www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk by clicking on the 'Find us' link from the homepage.

Congestion charge

The Royal London and The London Chest hospitals are both situated just outside the congestion charging zone. If you need to drive through the zone to get to hospital, please visit the Transport for London website at www.cclondon.com for advice on how to pay and possible exemptions (for example, if you are registered as disabled).

Barts Hospital is within the congestion charging zone. All patients/visitors who drive to the hospital are therefore liable to pay the charge although there are some exemptions and discounts, such as:

- Those with disabilities who hold a blue badge (formerly an orange badge)
- Residents living within the congestion charging zone
- Drivers of alternative fuel vehicles

A full list of categories of drivers/vehicles eligible for exemptions and details of how to pay the charge can be found on the Transport for London website www.cclondon.com or call 0845 900 1234. To qualify for an exemption or discount you must register with Transport for London, which can also be done via the website.

Your transport questions answered...

Can the hospital provide transport?

Transport can be provided only if you are assessed by our transport assessment officers as being medically unable to make your own way to and from hospital and have no other means of travel. This will be reviewed each time you come to hospital. For more information, please call our Travel Shop on tel 020 7601 7966.

Can I get help with travel costs?

Possibly. If you are on a low income, you may be entitled to reclaim travel expenses for journeys by public transport (minimum price fares only and not taxis). We will need to see:

- ✓ Proof that you are getting one or more of the following benefits: Income Support, Working Families Tax Credit, Disabled Persons Tax Credit, Pension Credit (guaranteed credit only), Income Based Job Seekers Allowance or a certificate of low income called an HC2 (AG2) or HC3 (AG3).
- ✓ Proof that you attended your appointment. You'll need to ask the clinic or ward staff to give you a signed travel claim form.
- ✓ Proof of your travel costs (for example: bus, tube or train tickets, or petrol receipts). You will get your receipts back before you leave hospital.

Please take your documents to the relevant office:

- **The Royal London Hospital** – Outpatients Reception Desk, on the ground floor of the Outpatients Building (behind surgical outpatients). It's open Monday to Friday, 10am-4pm (tel 020 7377 7000 ext 3077).
- **Barts Hospital** – the Fares Office on the ground floor of Outpatient Wing. It's open Monday to Friday, 9am-4pm (tel 020 7601 7400).
- **The London Chest Hospital** – Admissions Office, on the ground floor of the main building. It's open Monday to Friday, 8.30am-5pm (tel 020 8983 2415).

On arrival at hospital...

Your appointment letter or appointment card (that's the letter or card sent to you with this guide) should tell you where to go when you arrive. If not, please call the Appointments Centre on tel 020 7601 8099 to find out where you should go. **Please arrive in plenty of time so you do not miss your appointment.**

When you arrive at the clinic/department

On arrival, please speak to the clinic receptionist, who will explain what you need to do next.



What staff will need to know

The clinic/department staff will need you to confirm your name and address (including the full postcode), your ethnic origin and GP's address and telephone number. It's also standard procedure to ask for the name and contact telephone number of a close relative or friend. Staff will already have some details about your condition.

At your appointment...

When you see the doctor

At your appointment, you may be seen by the consultant in charge of your care, or by another doctor who works on the consultant's team. If the consultant or doctor decides that you need to be seen again, you will be asked to book a new appointment with the clinic receptionist before you leave.

Is it alright to ask lots of questions?

Yes, go ahead, we really encourage this. We want you to become involved in your health care and play an active part in decision making. We'll give you lots of information, in person and in writing, so you can feel confident that you are getting the best possible care. It's important that you understand all the information you are given and are clear about your diagnosis/condition and tests or treatment. So fire away, whether you want to know more about your condition, or the tests you might need, or the treatment options available. And if you're worried or want a second opinion, then talk it through with someone in the team looking after you. We'll always make time to listen, so please speak up if you have any queries or concerns.

please
speak **up**

How you'll identify us

All staff in our hospitals wear identity badges, which should be visible at all times. Ask any member of staff to show you their badge, and they'll be happy to do so. You can also expect staff to introduce themselves. Staff such as nurses, healthcare support workers and domestics all wear uniforms. Doctors and consultants don't have uniforms, but may wear a white coat.



Will I come into contact with students?

It's possible that you will come into contact with students, as all our hospitals are involved in teaching students. Often, you will see student doctors, nurses and other trainee clinical staff in the clinic/department. They may help with giving you direct care or examinations (under supervision) and you might be asked to discuss your condition with students. You have the right to refuse to be seen or treated by students – refusal will not affect the rest of your care.

Will I be asked to take part in research?

Our staff are involved in a variety of research projects and at some stage in your treatment you may be asked to be involved with one of these projects. Any research you are asked to take part in will be relevant to your care. Your consent to be part of a research project will be asked for separately to all other aspects of your treatment. You have the right to refuse to be involved in any research – refusal will not affect the rest of your care.

Will any samples or specimens be taken from me?

Sometimes samples or specimens are taken from you during your treatment to help us understand your condition or plan your treatment. If you are not happy for these samples or specimens to be used for research purposes, then please make this clear to a doctor or nurse who is involved in your care. To find out more, please ask a member of staff for a copy of the *Tissue Use* information leaflet.

Do you need my consent before treatment or surgery?

Yes, we do. We won't go ahead with treatment or surgery without your permission. And you have the right to refuse any treatment or examinations. If you are not able to give your consent, staff will act in your best interests.

Is smoking allowed in the hospital?

No, not at all. As part of our commitment to health and safety, we have a no-smoking policy for all staff, patients and visitors. Smoking is not permitted in any of our hospitals, building or grounds, including the entrances.



Smokers' cessation clinics: If you want to give up smoking, we can offer support and advice. We run smokers' cessation clinics for patients attending any of our hospitals. For further information or to book a place, please contact the smoking cessation clinic on tel 020 7882 8230.

Mobile phones: You may use your mobile phone in the hospital apart from when you're on a ward or area of the hospital where there is sensitive medical equipment. We do need to be strict about this as mobiles can interfere with this type of equipment and put lives at risk. If you want to use your mobile, please check with a member of staff that it is safe to do so.

What measures are in place to ensure security in the hospital?

We work in partnership with the Metropolitan and City of London Police to ensure the safety and security of all patients, visitors and staff. To help us, please...

- ✗ Don't leave any valuables unattended.
- ✓ Report any loss or theft to the ward staff as soon as possible.
- ✓ Report anything suspicious to staff.

Aggressive behaviour: We expect all patients and visitors to treat other patients, visitors and hospital staff with respect. Please note that we operate a zero tolerance policy for aggression and violence.



Your handy guide to beating the bugs

You're in safe hands at Barts and The London, as we're proud to have low rates of MRSA (methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus*). Keeping the spread of infection at bay is critical and is taken very seriously at our hospitals. Here are two ways you can help us...

1. Always clean your hands when entering and leaving clinics/departments/wards, before and after contact with other patients and staff, and after going to the toilet. Hand-rub dispensers are located by the entrances to all clinics/departments and wards.

2. Make sure that your healthcare professional cleans their hands before they come into contact with you. This helps to prevent the spread of infection.

A member of staff will be able to talk you through the procedures in place to minimise the risk of infection in our hospitals.



After your appointment...

How do I get my prescription?

If the doctor prescribes new or different medication, he/she will either write and inform your GP or give you a prescription to take to the hospital pharmacy, which you can find:

- At The Royal London Hospital, on the ground floor of the Outpatients Department (open Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm)
- At St Bartholomew's Hospital, on the ground floor of the Outpatients Wing (open Monday to Friday, 9am-5.30pm)
- At The London Chest Hospital, in the basement of the main building (open Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm and Saturday 9.30am-11.30am)

The standard prescription fee will be charged unless you are exempt from charges. If you are exempt, please provide proof – for example, an exemption certificate. Hospital pharmacy prescriptions are not valid for dispensing by your local community pharmacist and you should therefore collect your prescription items before you leave the hospital.

Follow-up appointments

If you need to come back for follow-up care, an appointment will usually be made before you leave the clinic. If not, we'll send you a letter to invite you back.

I'm an overseas visitor – will I have to pay for my treatment?

Yes, the NHS charges overseas patients, unless they are exempt. Clinic staff or the Paying Patients Office (tel 020 7480 4608) can advise you about this.

Services for you



Our facilities – from coffee shops to pay phones: All of our hospitals offer a number of facilities including coffee shops/tea bars, shops, public phones, toilets and baby changing areas. Follow signs in the hospital or ask a member of staff for further information.

Hearing difficulties: If you have hearing difficulties and need a signer (British Sign Language) to accompany you to your appointment, please let us know as soon as possible. Contact the health advocacy administrator on tel 020 7377 7280, fax 020 7943 1310, minicom 020 7943 1350, or email PALS@bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk

Interpreting and support services: We have our own multi-lingual health advocacy service for patients who do not understand and speak English. This service is free and provides information, support and advice.

We can arrange for an interpreter to be present when you speak to your healthcare professionals. Our advocates can also advise hospital staff on any relevant cultural, religious or social issues. If you can, please telephone the administrator before you arrive to arrange assistance on tel 020 7377 7280.

Alternatively, contact your appropriate health advocate directly:

- Bengali (Sylheti), Hindi and Urdu tel 020 7377 7326
- Cantonese and Vietnamese tel 020 7377 7319
- Somali tel 020 7377 7328
- Turkish tel 020 7377 7355

If you'd like an interpreter for any other language, please let us know and we will try to help.

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS): The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) offers on-the-spot advice for patients, their families and friends. They can also help to resolve problems you might experience at our hospitals and aid communication with hospital staff. The PALS office is situated in the main reception at The Royal London Hospital, so do drop in if you have any concerns. You can also contact PALS on tel 020 7943 1335, minicom 020 7943 1350, or email PALS@bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk

Overnight accommodation: Some overnight accommodation is available for patients who attend the hospital for regular treatments and have to travel a long way. Please discuss your needs with the clinic/department staff.



Principles of care

Caring for our patients – our commitment to you

You matter to us and building a good relationship with you and those close to you is the cornerstone of everything we do. We understand that your health care does not begin when you come to our hospital and end when you go home. By working together as one team we will ensure you experience the highest standards of care.

Ensuring you feel that you are in safe hands

- All our staff are here to care for you
- We will ensure that you are safe and feel secure
- You will know who is responsible for your care
- Our staff will have the right knowledge and skills to care for you

Involving you in your care

- We will work with you, the people close to you and others involved in your care to enable you to get the continuing personal care you need when and where you need it
- We will provide you with accurate and timely information
- We will help you to plan your care and understand the treatments available to you
- We will work to promote understanding between all those involved in your care so that you experience a seamless service

Talking with you about the care you need

- We will do our best to find out what is important to you and will respect your beliefs, personal values, choices and preferences
- We will be honest and open with you. If we make a mistake, we will do what we can to remedy it. We will apologise and take action to prevent it from happening again

Showing you how much we care

- We will work in a way that preserves your dignity and privacy
- You will not experience negative attitudes or inappropriate behaviour from us
- We will strive to develop and improve the care we provide

Working with you to provide the best care

- We will do our best to ensure your environment is clean and tidy
- We will involve you in planning how we deliver and improve our services
- We want you to share with us feedback you have on your experiences of care in our hospitals



Your health record

So that you can receive the best possible care, we will create a 'health record' for you, storing personal information about your health and treatments. Your health record will be maintained in paper and computer (electronic) formats. It will detail all the treatments you have received at our hospitals, including electronic scans, x-rays, and letters relating to your care – for example, from us to your GP or social services. Your health record will also contain personal information such as your name, address, next of kin and ethnic origin.

Confidentiality: Everyone in the NHS has a legal duty to ensure that your health record is kept confidential at all times. It is only shared with staff and others directly involved in your care (such as your GP, community nurse, or therapist), when it is necessary for them to do their job.

Your health record and/or personal information might be used in the following ways:

- To monitor and review the Trust's performance, using information such as the number of people who attend outpatient clinics, management of waiting lists and planning of future services
- For auditing and monitoring healthcare professionals and standards
- For teaching and training staff, including those from other NHS organisations
- For research by staff employed by Barts and The London NHS Trust and Barts and The London, Queen Mary's School of Medicine and Dentistry, our joint research partner
- For evidence of treatment, in order to receive payment for our services from other NHS organisations
- For investigating a complaint (if you should need to make one)

Queries about your health record:

If you have any concerns or questions about what your health record is being used for, or who could have access to it, please ask the person providing your care. Alternatively, contact our Privacy Officer on tel 020 7480 4791 or email privacy.officer@bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk

Accessing your health record:

You have the right to obtain a copy of your health record, containing all the information the Trust holds about you. Please write to the Information Co-ordinators Team, Health Records Department, Barts and The London NHS Trust, The Basement, Outpatients Department, The Royal London Hospital, Whitechapel, London E1 1BB or tel 020 7377 7149. Alternatively, you can download the Application for Personal Information form from our website at www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk/forpatients/know_your_rights.asp. The website also contains more detailed information about how health records may be used, and your rights under the Data Protection Act 1998.

How you can help us: We would be grateful if you could help us keep your health record up to date, by informing us when your details change, such as your address, GP, telephone number, next of kin or emergency contact details. Contact the Trust Appointments Centre on tel 020 7601 8099 (8am-6pm, Monday to Thursday, 8am-5pm, Friday or 9am-12noon Saturday), email appointments@bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk or write to the Trust Appointments Centre, Ground Floor, Outpatient Department, St Bartholomew's Hospital, West Smithfield, London EC1A 7BE.

Tell us what you think

We are committed to providing a high-quality service for all our patients, and will do everything possible to make sure that your visit to our hospital is as comfortable as possible. We are constantly developing the services we provide for patients and visitors, and would welcome your input. If you'd like to make a comment, suggestion or complaint, please do one of the following:

- Speak to the staff at your clinic/department
- Contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on tel 020 7943 1335 or email PALS@bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk
- Read the *Tell us* leaflet and complete and return the form. The leaflet can be picked up from clinics and wards in the hospital.
- Fill in our online feedback form by visiting: www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk/forpatients/tell_us_what_you_think.asp

Get involved

If you'd like to get more involved with helping us improve services at the hospital, please contact the Patient and Public Involvement Project Manager, based at The Royal London Hospital on tel 020 7377 7000 ext 2590.

If you are a good listener, like helping people and have time to spare, you might like to consider voluntary work at one of our hospitals. More than 500 volunteers are already working closely with our staff to provide some of the more personal and caring services for patients, visitors and our 8,000 strong workforce. Without their help services like the ward trolley service would cease to exist. To find out more about volunteering at The Royal London Hospital call tel 020 7377 7792, for Barts Hospital or The London Chest Hospital call tel 020 7601 8339.

Be part of your world-renowned local hospitals – join our foundation trust

Barts and The London is now signing up patients, carers and local residents as members of our new NHS foundation trust – a new kind of organisation with stronger links to local communities and greater independence to develop services in line with the needs of local people and patients.

As a foundation trust, we will be accountable via elected representatives to our members, who will be local residents, patients or their carers and hospital staff. Anyone who lives in the City, Tower Hamlets, Newham, Hackney or south Islington can become a member, as can people who have been patients or carers at any of our hospitals – Barts, The Royal London and The London Chest – in the past three years.

As a member of the new foundation trust, you would be supporting your local hospitals and could contribute to their future development. Members will be able to vote in elections or stand as a governor for the members' council, a new representative body. You will also have access to information about the foundation trust, health and healthcare issues.

For more information or to join our foundation trust, please call 0870 707 1598, email ft@bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk or visit www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk/ft.

Charitable giving at our hospitals

Every year, many patients, local people, charitable trusts and companies help us raise money to make a difference to the care provided in our hospitals. Barts and The London Charity's fundraising team works in close partnership with hospital staff to develop specific appeals or to identify how charitable donations can be best used to support the well-being of patients and staff.

Current appeals include Barts and The London Children's Hospital, heart cells research and cancer care and research.

The fundraising team can advise on how best to support our various appeals, whether you are an individual, a company or a trust and whether you are looking to take part in an event, need help organising your own fundraiser, or wish to make a one-off or regular donation.

For more information, please call 020 7618 1720, e-mail appeals@bartsandthelondoncharity.org.uk or visit www.bartsandthelondoncharity.org.uk.

We're here to help

Any questions about your appointment? Call the Appointments Centre on tel 020 7601 8099 (8am-6pm, Monday to Thursday, 8am-5pm, Friday or 9am-12noon Saturday). Or email appointments@bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk. Alternatively, write to the Trust Appointments Centre, Ground Floor, Outpatient Department, St Bartholomew's Hospital, West Smithfield, London EC1A 7BE.

Switchboard: For general enquiries, tel 020 7377 7000

Website:
Visit www.bartsandthelondon.nhs.uk

Minicom: If you have hearing or speech difficulties, please call our minicom on 020 7377 7019

NHS Direct: For general health information, call NHS Direct on tel 0845 46 47 or visit www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

Large print, audio or translation:
To receive this leaflet in large print or audio (English and Bengali/Sylheti only), please call the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on tel 020 7943 1335.

If you would like help interpreting this leaflet, please call the health advocacy administrator on tel 020 7377 7280.

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Bengali

এই ডকুমেন্ট বা প্রমাণপত্রটি অনুবাদে আপনার যদি কোন সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয়, তবে অনুগ্রহ করে হেলথ অ্যাডভোকেসি অ্যাডমিনিস্ট্রেটরকে ০২০ ৭৩৭৭ ৭৩২৬ নম্বরে ফোন করুন।

Somali

Haddii aad jeclaan lahayd in lagaa caawiyo turjumidda dukumentigaan, fadlan Maamulaha u Doodidda Caafimaadka ka wac 020 7377 7328.

Turkish

Bu belgenin tercümesiyle ilgili yardıma ihtiyacınız varsa, lütfen Sağlık Savunma Yöneticisini 020 7377 7355 nolu telefondan arayınız.

Vietnamese

Nếu quý vị cần giúp dịch tài liệu này, xin gọi Quản Lý Bảo Vệ Quyền Lợi Sức Khỏe (Health Advocacy Administrator) tại số 020 7377 7319.

Chinese

如果您希望有人为您传译本文件, 敬请致电 020 7377 7319, 联系保健管理员 (Health Advocacy Administrator)。