



NEWSLETTER

For Elected Representatives

CATARACT SURGERY



Julie Silvestri

This month we're spotlighting **Cataract Surgery**. We know this is an important issue for your constituents, having received lots of individual queries from your offices.

Julie Silvestri, Clinical Director of Ophthalmology Services with responsibility for the cataract pathway in Northern Ireland, talks about how access to waiting lists is being made equal for patients through a newly designed cataract pathway with models at Downe, South Tyrone and Mid-Ulster hospitals.

She explains the challenges the service faced during the Covid-19 pandemic with limited access to theatres, redeployed staff and how they managed to keep treating patients throughout, by the use of greenfield sites.

Hear about our mega clinics, in-house waiting list initiatives, as well as future positive developments within cataract surgery, including electronic patient records.

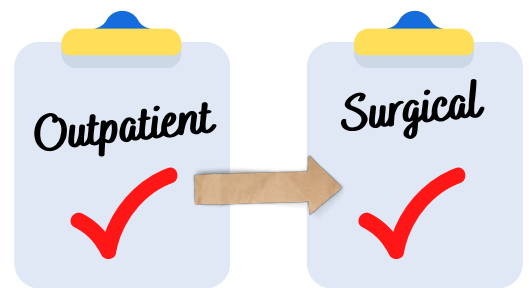
How do Cataract waiting lists work?

In order to provide equity of access to cataract services across Northern Ireland, all Trusts are split into

Two Waiting Lists



Each list is broken down into **Outpatients and Surgical Lists**



Within each list patients are graded as **Urgent or Routine**



Waiting Lists

There is unfortunately, an extremely high demand for our cataract service, but following the Covid-19 pandemic, services have been re-established and access to our theatres has improved, with most lists having now been restored.

We're delighted this has had such a major impact and really helped us to improve our waiting lists.

Outpatient

Routine
2.5 years

Urgent
9 months

Surgical

Routine
9 months

Urgent
2 months

What to expect when having surgery at Downe Hospital

Do your constituents have upcoming surgery scheduled at Downe Hospital?

Follow us on a walk through to find out what they can expect from:

- first arriving at the hospital
- checking in
- meeting with their consultant
- having some pre-theatre health checks
- being admitted onto a ward for surgery
- having their eye prepped with drops
- having a nerve blocker injected into the eye

Finally, you will see a state of the art theatre where the 20 minute surgery will be performed.



In the meantime...

should your constituents experience any further deterioration in their vision, they should discuss this with their Optometrist or GP, who can provide further details on their visual status, to be re-triaged by a Consultant Ophthalmologist.

Did you know?... your constituents can check the waiting times for cataracts, or any Trust service? Simply check the HSC website



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