

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Teledermatology

About the service

Teledermatology is a service where a professional clinical photographer, based in the Clinical Illustration department, will take a series of digital photographs of your skin lesion. These photographs are then sent to a dermatologist for remote assessment to see if you need to come into hospital for further treatment. **You will not have a face-to-face consultation with a doctor at this appointment.** Only lesions that are documented on your referral can be photographed during your appointment.

The service will not be able to assess rashes or other skin conditions such as eczema, acne or psoriasis. If you are concerned about any other lesions or skin problems, please seek advice from your GP.

What happens next?

Shortly after you have seen your GP, you will receive a call from the teledermatology team to schedule an appointment in the Clinical Illustration department (either at King's Mill or Newark Hospital). This appointment will be within two weeks of the date of referral by your GP.

If you change your mind or cannot attend your appointment, it is important that you contact the teledermatology team to cancel or arrange an alternative appointment on 01623 622515 extension 6662.

How long will it take and what will happen?

The photographer will ask you a few questions to confirm your identity and the skin lesion(s) being assessed. There will be an opportunity for you to ask questions about the photography.

The photographer will use a professional digital camera, including one that has a dermatoscope (a hand-held visual aid device used to examine and diagnose skin lesions and diseases) attached to it. The dermatoscope will come into contact with your skin with gentle pressure applied; this is not an invasive procedure and should not hurt.

You may be asked to remove some clothing, make-up, or jewellery to gain a better view of the skin lesion. If you are required to remove clothing to show a sensitive area of your body, you may request a chaperone. The whole process will take no longer than 20 minutes.

Once the photographs have been taken, your images will be securely uploaded to your Electronic Patient Record.

Please note, you will not be given a diagnosis during your teledermatology appointment.

Do I need to give permission for photography?

The photographer will ask you to give verbal consent to confirm you are happy for photographs to be taken of your skin lesion(s) to be used in your clinical care. We will not take any photographs without your permission.

You will also be asked if you consent to your photographs being used for research and teaching purposes. You can withdraw this consent at any time by contacting the Dermatology department on 01623 622515 extension 6662. The consent for photographs to be used for your clinical care cannot be withdrawn as these form part of your medical record.

How will I find out the results of this photographic procedure?

If all your lesions are assessed as being non-cancerous (benign) you will be discharged back to your GP. You will be sent a letter confirming this with some additional information advising you of the need to continue to monitor your skin for any concerning changes.

For lesions that need further review, you will either be given:

- A face-to-face appointment.
- A telephone appointment.

In cases where an outcome cannot be determined you may be:

- Booked for a biopsy (skin sample) or the removal of the skin lesion.
- Booked for a priority face-to-face clinical appointment with a dermatologist in hospital.

If the outcome states there is no indication of anything to be worried about, you may be offered:

- Reassurance and a routine follow up appointment in Dermatology; this may require photographs to be repeated.
- Reassurance by letter with no follow up appointment required and you will be discharged.

If you require non-urgent treatment, the teledermatology team may contact your GP to ask for treatment to be arranged for you.

You should receive a letter with your results within two weeks of your teledermatology clinic appointment. If you are not contacted after two weeks please call the teledermatology team on 01623 622515 extension 6662.

Does an urgent follow up appointment mean I have cancer?

Not necessarily. You could be asked to come back urgently for a number of reasons and you will be generally seen within a few weeks.

We would like to reassure you that skin cancer is rare and most lesions are found to be benign and present no problems at all.

General skin care advice

It is important to check your skin regularly for any changes. You may want to ask a family member or a friend to examine your back or hard-to-see areas.

Following the ABCDE rules can help you identify changes that may need further review:

- Asymmetry – the two halves of the lesion may differ in shape.
- Border – the edges of the lesion may be irregular, blurred or notched.
- Colour – the colour may be uneven with more than one area of pigmentation.
- Diameter – report any mole larger than 6mm or one that is changing in size or shape.
- Evolution – changes in size, shape, colour or elevation, or any new symptoms (such as bleeding, itching or crusting).

It can be helpful to take photographs of your lesion to see if it is changing over time. It can be useful to do this every month using a camera phone and a size marker (such as a five pence piece) placed next to the lesion.

If you notice any of the changes described above or are concerned about a mole or patch of skin for any other reason, you should contact your GP practice as soon as possible.

How to reduce the risk of skin cancer

Unprotected exposure to UV radiation can increase your risk of skin cancer. It is therefore important to be careful in the sun.

The British Association of Dermatologists (BAD) have compiled the following 'Top Sun Safety Tips' to protect your skin:

- Cover your skin with adequate clothing and wear a hat that protects your face, neck and ears. If you have fair skin or many moles, wearing sun protective fabrics is recommended.
- Spend time in the shade between 11am and 3pm when it's sunny. Step out of the sun before your skin has a chance to redden or burn.
- When choosing a sunscreen, look for a high protection SPF - ideally SPF 50 or 50+. Apply plenty of sunscreen 15 to 30 minutes before going out in the sun, taking care to reapply every two hours and straight after swimming or towel-drying. Sunscreens are not an alternative to clothing and shade, they just offer additional protection. No sunscreen will provide 100% protection.
- Keep babies and young children out of direct sunlight.
- Do not use sunbeds.

Contact details

Please follow instructions below for directions to the Clinical Illustration departments at King's Mill and Newark Hospital.

Directions to Clinical Illustration, King's Mill Hospital – Level 1:

1. From the main entrance walk straight ahead passing Costa Coffee on your left.
2. Continue straight ahead passing the Faith Centre on your right.
3. Turn first right through the double doors.
4. Towards the end of the corridor, you will find a set of lifts, enter and go up to level 1.
5. Exit the lifts and walk straight down the corridor.
6. At the end of the corridor turn right.
7. Walk to the end of the corridor then turn left.
- 8 You will now see Clinical Illustration ahead.

Directions to Clinical Illustration, Newark Hospital:

1. From the main entrance walk ahead passing the Patient Advice Liaison Office on your left.
2. Turn left and follow the overhead sign to Eastwood Centre.
3. At the end of the glass corridor, you will find Clinical Illustration door on your right. Please knock on the door to gain our attention.

From the Eastwood Centre

Walk past reception, turn left up the corridor, turn left following the way-out sign. Clinical Illustration door is on the left.

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

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