



# Outpatient appointments during COVID-19 pandemic

## Information for patients

Coronaviruses are a large group of viruses that can cause illnesses ranging from a mild common cold to severe disease. COVID-19 is a new coronavirus identified in December 2019 and has been declared a Pandemic by the World Health Organisation.

To enable hospital staff and the community to best prepare and respond to COVID-19 we are reviewing all public outpatient appointments and how they are being delivered.

The health and wellbeing of our patients, visitors and staff is our top priority. As we continue to review and improve our readiness and response to COVID-19, reducing face-to-face patient interactions, where practical, is one of the ways we can deliver care to patients whilst maximising patient and staff safety.

We understand some of these changes may be inconvenient for patients with planned outpatient appointments however it is necessary to ensure the safety of staff and provision of care at this time. Your understanding and support of the WA public health system is greatly appreciated as we work to manage this unprecedented global clinical situation together.

The hospital will contact you in relation to any changes to your outpatient appointment. The hospital may discuss a digital consultation- that is, whether you have a phone, mobile phone, email, tablet or other suitable device and internet access for an appointment.

Our decision to discharge you to your GP, postpone or change a booked consultation will consider your individual clinical needs; the ability to have an appointment via a digital consultation; and resourcing availability of the hospital.

Hospital staff will regularly review upcoming appointments to determine the best way to deliver care for you. Please follow the advice on your outpatient appointment letter, but be aware that this may change. Please follow the most recent direct advice received from the hospital. If you wish to change your appointment (including cancel) or update your contact details call **Outpatient Direct (1300 855 275)** or the phone number indicated on the appointment letter.

Please do not come to the hospital for an appointment unless you have been asked to do so.

Please do not come to a hospital outpatient appointment if you meet the criteria for [self-isolation](#) without liaising first with the **National Coronavirus Helpline** on **1800 020 080** for further advice. In that event, we would need to determine if your appointment needs to go ahead and what special arrangements are required to allow your appointment to proceed safely.

**Last updated 31 March 2020**

**This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.**

© Department of Health 2020

Copyright to this material is vested in the State of Western Australia unless otherwise indicated. Apart from any fair dealing for the purposes of private study, research, criticism or review, as permitted under the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968, no part may be reproduced or re-used for any purposes whatsoever without written permission of the State of Western Australia.

[health.wa.gov.au](http://health.wa.gov.au)