Face masks and coverings

03 July 2020

From Monday (15 June) all outpatients and visitors at Addenbrooke's and the Rosie Hospitals will be required to wear a face covering when inside the hospital premises.

In addition, all clinical and non-clinical staff will also be required to wear a medical grade mask.

The measures affect all hospitals across England and have been brought in by the Government to protect patients and staff based on evidence that:

- people who work in a hospital environment are more likely to catch coronavirus whether they work in a clinical setting or not.
- face coverings can help reduce the risk of transmission if you are suffering from coronavirus including those who are not showing symptoms.

Face coverings should cover the mouth and nose while allowing the wearer to breathe comfortably and can be as simple as a scarf or bandanna that ties behind the head to give a snug fit.

If a patient is unable to tolerate a mask or a face covering and/or unable to due to a clinical reason, then a visor is acceptable for the patient to wear. Staff will be wearing masks and will socially distance.

In May, the Government set out advice for people on how to make their own face coverings easily at home, using scarves or other textile items

If anyone arrives at the hospitals without a face covering, a medical grade face mask will be provided in emergencies.

These can be collected everyday from the following hospital entrances:

- Addenbrooke's main entrance (06.00 - 22.00)
- Rosie main entrance (06.00 - 20.00)

- ATC (06.00 - 20.00)
- Outpatients (08:00 – 18:00)
- Medical grade face masks will continue to be handed out to each patient who comes into Accident and Emergency.

Patients who are shielding, and have been provided with a surgical facemask for their appointments, should ensure these are worn. Where not already provided, patients should wear a face covering and they will be offered a medical grade face mask on arrival at their clinic.

Patients and visitors should wash their hands or use hand sanitiser before putting their face covering on and after taking it off.

It is important that, wherever possible, people don't touch their face covering when wearing it to avoid hand to mask transmission of the virus.

Non medical, or cloth face masks are only effective when used alongside other preventative measures such as:

- Social distancing – keeping two metres apart
- Regular hand washing
- Avoiding touching your face
- Respiratory hygiene – using a disposable tissue if you sneeze or cough into your elbow
- Cleaning surfaces regularly

The expectation is that all patients will wear a face covering, or a face mask, with the exception of pre-school children, older children who are distressed, people with learning disability and people with clinical reasons not to wear a mask.

Medical grade face masks should be safely disposed of in the bins provided at the main entrances.

The face mask policy will be in place at the hospital until further notice.

Further mask use instructions are available here.

Frequently asked questions are available here

Everyone is being reminded to follow Public Health England advice to:

• Always carry tissues with you and use them to catch your cough or sneeze. Then bin the tissue, and wash your hands, or use a sanitiser gel.

• Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after using public transport. Use a sanitiser gel if soap and water are not available.

• Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.

More information can be found on the NHS website here.

We will continue to review our visiting policy as the situation regarding COVID-19 develops.