

Dear optometrists,

As you will know from my e-mail dated 23rd June 2020 we are now prioritising patients for cataract surgery based on clinical and social needs. It's a difficult time for everyone so we really appreciate your understanding and ability to liaise with patients within primary care. We're honouring all referrals received pre-covid and have sent out letters to everyone who is waiting for an appointment. We've asked them to get in touch with you if they notice significant deterioration whilst they wait.

If a patient you've referred comes back to you reporting deteriorating vision or circumstance whilst they wait, please exclude other causes of reducing vision through another eye examination which can usually be performed under GOS re-test criteria. Please let us know if you think their situation has changed at ccs@addenbrookes.nhs.uk, or securely at 01223 254444. You do not need to do another cataract pre-assessment or referral.

If the initial referral was rejected because it does not meet guidelines but now you feel they do, a new referral would be warranted.

Please be wary of wet AMD developing underneath a dense cataract. If in doubt (scotoma or distortion reported rather than blur, rapid worsening over weeks rather than months) please get in touch.

To re-iterate the new guidelines for any new cataract referral:

- Please do not refer patients with unilateral vision loss unless there are exceptional circumstances
 - Please do not refer patients with 6/12 or 6/15 bilaterally unless there are exceptional circumstances
 - Patients with 6/60 bilaterally will be given surgical priority, then patients with 6/18 bilaterally or significant anisometropia due to second eye status
 - Patients who are struggling to work, meet driving standards or care for others would meet exceptional circumstances and may be considered for surgery/higher priority. Information regarding this must be explained in the referring letter
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We are doing everything we can to resume routine surgery for all our patients and hope the current restrictions in referral criteria are very temporary. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments. Thanks for everything you are doing on the ground.

Sarah & the team
