**Why have I received a letter asking if I would like to remain on the waiting list**

We are currently in the process of contacting all of our patients who are on a waiting list awaiting an elective procedure that has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, these patients will receive a letter through the post. Your response will help us understand if you still require your procedure and want to be treated, this will make sure our waiting lists are accurate and allow us to see the patients who want and need to be seen. We are contacting our longest waiters first so if you do not receive a letter you may do in the near future, please be assured that you will still be prioritised if your clinical need dictates that you need to be seen sooner. Please be advised this does not include any patients referred to our hospital for procedures relating to cancer conditions.

We would urge all patients who receive a letter regarding their procedure to complete the slip and return to us in the stamped address envelope provided as soon as possible. If you do not respond within10 working days from the date of the letter you may be removed from the waiting list and referred back to the care of your GP if clinically safe to do so. Both yourself and your GP will receive a letter confirming this action.

If you respond stating that you would like to remain on the waiting list you will be offered a date for surgery according to clinical priority and waiting time but due to the amount of people waiting you may not hear straight away.

If you respond stating that you would like to be removed from the waiting list, we will ask your consultant to review your clinical notes and you will be removed from the waiting list if it is clinically safe to do so. In the instances where you have or are being treated elsewhere you will be removed immediately. Upon removal both yourself and your GP will receive a letter to confirm this action.

We sincerely apologise for the delay you may have experienced and we are doing our best to accommodate all patients on our waiting lists.

**Pre-assessment appointment & Covid swab**

Prior to your procedure you may be asked to attend a pre-assessment appointment, this may be face to face or by telephone. The way in which we are delivering our pre assessments has changed since the onset of COVID-19 due to social distancing rules we cannot see as many patients in our clinics as we did previously. We now also ask our all of our patients to attend a COVID swab 3 days prior to surgery to ensure we are treating patients in the safest environment possible.

We would ask you if you would make sure you attend these appointments as if you do not attend, this will mean your surgery will be cancelled and this slot could have been used for another patient with a higher clinical need. Please also be mindful that if you do not attend, your clinical notes will be reviewed and you may be discharged back to the care of your GP and you will need a new referral from your GP to start the process again meaning a further delay to receiving treatment for your condition.