



# Having an eye operation as a day case patient (under a general or local anaesthetic)

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Information for patients from the Ophthalmology and Day Surgery units

## Telephone numbers for Day Surgery Units and the Ophthalmic Unit

- Channel Day Surgery Centre, **William Harvey Hospital**, Ashford  
Telephone: 01233 616263 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
- Canterbury Day Surgery Centre, **Kent and Canterbury Hospital**, Canterbury  
Telephone: 01227 783114 (7:30am to 8pm)  
Telephone: 07887 687645 (8pm to 7:30am)
- Day Surgery, **Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital**, Margate  
Telephone: 01843 234499 (7:30am to 8pm)  
Telephone: 07887 651162 (8pm to 7:30am)
- Ophthalmic Units, **Kent and Canterbury Hospital**, and **Buckland Hospital**, Dover  
Telephone: 01227 866493, option 4 (8am to 6pm)  
Telephone: 07887 804133 (6pm to 8am)

## Preassessment teams

- William Harvey Hospital  
Telephone: 01233 616743
- Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital  
Telephone: 01843 234458
- Kent and Canterbury Hospital  
Telephone: 01227 783114

## What is day surgery?

Day surgery is when a patient has their operation on the day of admission to hospital, and is discharged home on the same day. Back at home they are looked after by relatives or friends, and supported by their community healthcare team, including their GP and district nurses where appropriate.

## What are the advantages to having day surgery?

- Most day surgeries can be carried out sooner.
- Admission dates are much less likely to be cancelled if you are able to have day surgery.
- Many people like to spend as little time as possible in hospital and prefer to be at home with their children, relatives, and friends.
- There is less disruption to your daily routine. For example, childcare is easier to plan and very often you will be back at work sooner.

## How can I prepare for my surgery?

While you wait for your surgery date, you can start preparing for your operation. Research shows that fitter patients, who are able to improve their health and activity levels before surgery, recover more quickly. Taking an active role in planning and preparing for your operation will help you:

- feel in control
- leave hospital sooner, and
- get back to normal more quickly.

To help with this, you may be contacted by a member of the One You Kent (OYK) team. OYK work in the community, and help patients improve their general health. This includes help and advice on:

- Stopping smoking
- Losing weight
- Getting more exercise

More information can be found on the following web sites.

- One You Kent (<https://www.kentcht.nhs.uk/service/one-you-kent/>) (Kent Community Health)
- Fitter Better Sooner Toolkit (<https://www.cpoc.org.uk/patients/fitter-better-sooner-toolkit>) (Royal College of Anaesthetists)

## What will happen at my preassessment appointment?

Before the date of your operation, you may be asked to come into hospital for a preassessment appointment. **It is important to come to this appointment, if you don't your operation may be cancelled.** You may be booked for a telephone preassessment. Please check your appointment letter, which will tell you whether you need to be available for a phone call.

At preassessment you will be seen by a nurse who will discuss your medical history with you and assess your fitness in preparation for your operation. The nurse will need to know:

- any **serious illness** or **major operations** you have had
- any **allergies** you have to medicines / metals, tablets, or plaster; and
- any **medicines / tablets** you are taking; please bring them with you or bring a list of them.

#### On the day of your surgery, please bring the following with you to hospital

- Any tablets, medicines, or inhalers that you are taking **in their containers**.
- Slippers, sandals, or indoor shoes, and a dressing gown.
- Something to occupy you if you have to wait, for example a magazine, book, or knitting.
- A small amount of money for telephone calls. Mobile phones may be allowed in some areas. Please check when you arrive.
- A contact number for the person that is taking you home after your surgery.

#### Do not

- **Please do not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital.** East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed in to Trust staff for safe-keeping.
- **Please do not wear contact lenses or eye make-up to the hospital** on the day of your surgery. You should make arrangements to wear glasses if you need them for normal use.

#### What should I do before the day of my operation?

**Please ring the Waiting List Office or the unit where you are booked to come for your surgery (Surgical Admissions Lounge or Day Surgery) as soon as possible if you will not be coming for surgery. This will give us time to offer the place to another patient.**

**If you develop a cough, cold, sore throat, other illness, or become pregnant, you must ring the unit where you are booked to attend (Surgical Admissions Lounge or Day Surgery) to let them know.**

**If anything changes with your medical history, please contact your Preassessment Team.**

You must arrange for a responsible adult to collect you from the hospital after your operation, and to take you home (in a car or taxi, not by public transport). It is not advisable or safe to travel home on your own.

If you have had a general anaesthetic or cannot see, due to an eye shield covering your good eye, you must arrange for a responsible adult to be with you for the first 24 hours following your operation.

If you have small children or elderly dependant relatives at home, you should ask someone else to help look after them for at least the first 24 hours after you return home.

## What happens when I arrive at hospital?

The maps at the end of this booklet show the location of the day surgery centres and surgical admissions lounges.

- After arriving at the Day Surgery centre or Surgical Admissions Lounge you will be seen by a nurse. They will ask you questions, and take your pulse, blood pressure, and temperature.
- You will have wristbands put on showing your identity and other details.
- You may be asked to change into a cotton theatre gown and your dressing gown.
- You may be seen by a member of the surgeon's team, who will ask further questions and examine you briefly.
- Where appropriate the site of the operation will be marked.
- You will be asked to sign your consent form, if this has not already been done. Use this time to ask hospital staff any further questions or raise concerns. Remember that you can withdraw your consent for treatment at any time.
- If you are having a **general anaesthetic**, the anaesthetist will put a very small tube (called a cannula) into a vein in your hand or arm. If you are having a **local anaesthetic**, you will be given an injection or eye drops to numb the area that is going to be operated on. More information is available in the **You and your anaesthetic** leaflet (/you-and-your-anaesthetic).

**Please try not to smoke for at least 48 hours before your operation.**

## What should I do before my surgery?

This will depend on the type of surgery you are having. You will be given the necessary information at your preassessment appointment.

## What should I do to prepare for my operation?

### If you are having a general anaesthetic or sedation

- **Please adhere to the following fasting instructions before your MORNING admission.** On the day of surgery, do not eat food **after 2:30am**. Please do not drink milk or juice with pulp **after 2:30am**. You may drink non-alcoholic clear fluids, such as water or black tea / coffee until 6:30am. This does not include fizzy drinks.
- **Please adhere to the following fasting instructions before your AFTERNOON admission.** On the day of surgery, do not eat food **after 7:30am**. Please do not drink milk or fruit juice with pulp **after 7:30am**. You may drink non-alcoholic clear fluids, such as water or black tea / coffee until 11:30am. This does not include fizzy drinks.

**If you are having local anaesthetic without sedation**, you may eat and drink light refreshments up until coming into hospital.

**Try to have a bath or shower at home before coming to the hospital. Dress comfortably in loose fitting clothes.**

**Unless told otherwise, take your regular medicine as usual on the day of your operation with only a sip of water.**

**Please do not wear nail varnish, false nails, or make-up unless you have been told otherwise by a doctor or nurse, as this may interfere with the monitors used during your anaesthetic.**

### **What happens after my operation?**

If you have a general anaesthetic you will be taken to the recovery room, which is next to the operating theatres, and looked after by a recovery nurse. Whilst in the recovery area your blood pressure will be taken several times. When you are able, you may be asked to move to a reclining armchair before being discharged home.

### **How will I feel after my general anaesthetic?**

Some people feel wide awake straightaway, while others feel sleepy for several hours. Some people may feel sick. If sickness is severe you may be given an injection to treat this. You may have a sore throat.

### **When will I be allowed home?**

- Before you are allowed home you will need to be awake and not in a lot of pain / severe discomfort.
- A nurse will give you an information leaflet about the operation you have had. Please ask any questions and make sure you understand the instructions.
- You may be given an outpatient appointment if necessary.
- You will be given some written instructions and a copy of your GP letter, and usually some eye ointment to use at home. Please use it as instructed.
- Your eye may be covered with a pad. Please wear it as advised on the day of surgery and remove as instructed (usually between one to seven days, depending on your operation).

### **How will I feel when I get home?**

You may feel tired. Try to rest for the first 24 hours after your surgery.

### **If you have a general anaesthetic**

- Do not do any strenuous activities.
- Do not operate machinery or do anything needing fine co-ordination or judgement, for example using a cooker, for at least 24 hours.
- Do not make any important decisions or sign important documents for the first 48 hours after your operation.

- You must not drive a car, or ride a motorbike or bicycle for at least 48 hours, unless told otherwise by your doctor.
- You may eat as you wish. However, your appetite may be poor to begin with, but you must drink plenty of fluids.
- Do not drink alcohol or take sleeping tablets for at least 24 hours.
- Follow the advice on the leaflets that you have been given.
- Some people may feel emotional or “weepy” during the first few days; this is normal.

If you are feeling unwell, are in severe pain, or have other concerns about your surgery, call Day Surgery on one of the numbers listed on page 1 of this booklet, or your out of hours GP.

### Are there reasons why I will be kept in hospital overnight?

A small number of patients may need to be kept in hospital overnight, and transferred to a 24 hour ward. The most common reasons for this are:

- you needed a more complicated operation
- you have been slow to recover from the anaesthetic; or
- you are in severe pain or are vomiting.

### How do I use the eye drops / ointment?

Read the label that comes with your drops / ointment for the directions.

- Wash your hands.
- Sit or lie comfortably with your head tilted backwards looking at the ceiling.
- Gently pull down your lower eyelid with one finger to form a sac.
- Holding the eye drops / ointment in your other hand, bring the dropper close to your eye (not too close, as it may touch your eye causing pain / cross contamination) and squeeze one drop into the sac. Do not let the dropper touch your eye or eyelid. If you are using ointment, add about a quarter of an inch of ointment to the inner surface of the lower lid of your eye.
- Close your eye and blot any excess solution with a clean tissue.
- Replace the cap of the eye drops / ointment immediately after use (if any contamination occurs, please discard and use a new bottle / tube).
- You may find it easier to get someone else to help you, or to use a dropper aid available from pharmacies.
- Use only for the eye mentioned on the label, unless told otherwise.
- Discard the bottle / tube once treatment is completed, otherwise use a fresh bottle every four weeks.

- If you do not have enough, get more drops / ointment from your GP before you run out.

### Can I still use my other eye drops?

Yes, please continue all your usual eye drops, such as artificial tears or glaucoma medicines. Use a fresh bottle for your operated eye and a separate bottle for your other eye for the first month after surgery. Please leave a gap of three to five minutes between different eye drop medicines.

### Can I clean my eye?

You can gently clean your eye (after washing your hands) using some boiled cooled water; made fresh every time, and some cotton wool pads. Please do not use a flannel or handkerchief on your eye for the first month due to the risk of infection.

### What can I do for the first one to two weeks after surgery?

- You can do your normal activities such as reading, watching television, going out, and light housework.
- Avoid getting dirt in your eye or lifting anything heavy.
- Do not lean forward to wash your hair, lean backwards instead; keeping soap and tap water away from your eye.
- Avoid rubbing your eye.
- If you wear glasses, place your thumbs over the ends of the frame when putting them on, to avoid any chance of poking your eye.

### When can I swim?

You cannot swim until four weeks after your surgery; to reduce the risk of getting an infection in your eye.

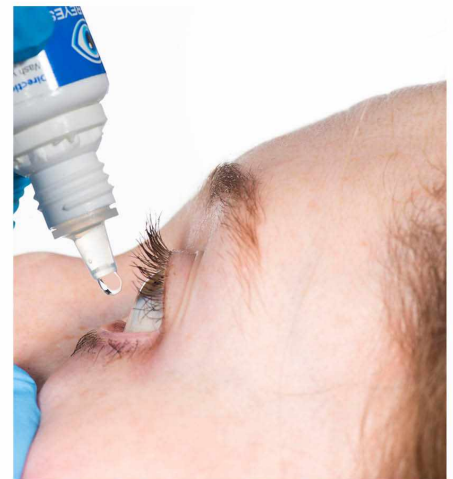
### When can I wear eye make-up?

You can wear eye make-up when your eye has healed and you have stopped using your ointment.

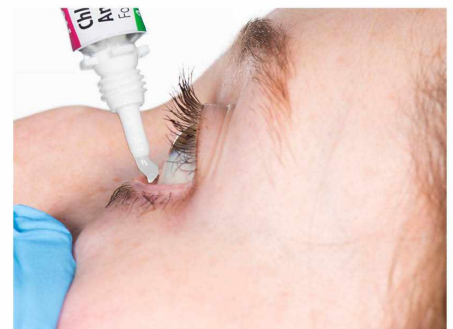
### Will I need a follow-up appointment?

Some patients are given a follow-up appointment at the hospital; a member of staff will let you know if you need one.

### Eye drops



### Eye ointment



Using eye drops / ointment

## When can I drive?

You can drive a car or a mobility scooter when you feel safe to do so, and you are meeting the DVLA standard.

We advise that you contact your car insurance company as there are specific restrictions that individual companies may have and you may not be covered.

More information is available on the following web sites. Alternatively, you can contact the DVLA for advice.

- Check if health condition affects your driving (<https://www.gov.uk/health-conditions-and-driving>)
- Driving eyesight rules (<https://www.gov.uk/driving-eyesight-rules>)

## When can I go back to work?

You can usually return to work about one week after your surgery, depending on what work you do. Office / computer work can start again as soon as you feel able.

## Can I travel after surgery?

It is usually fine to travel, once you have recovered from your eye operation. However, if you have a gas bubble in your eye (some vitreoretinal patients) you cannot fly until your eye doctor tells you it is safe to do so. For other eye operations, there is usually no restriction on flying.

Please make sure you take your eye drops / ointment with you when you travel. Consider travel insurance and how to get medical help for foreign travel.

## What should I do if I am worried about my eye?

Please remember that most patients have a very good result from their surgery. If you develop any problems following your operation, please call us using one of the numbers below (Monday to Friday).

- **Kent and Canterbury Hospital, Canterbury**
  - Waiting List Co-ordinator Telephone: 01227 866444
  - Ophthalmology Suite Telephone: 01227 866493, option 4
- **Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Hospital, Margate**
  - Waiting List Co-ordinator Telephone: 01843 234364
  - Day Surgery Telephone: 01843 234458
- **William Harvey Hospital, Ashford**
  - Waiting List Co-ordinator Telephone: 01233 616757
  - Channel Day Surgery Centre Telephone: 01233 616263

## Useful web sites

- Kent Association for the Blind (KAB) (<https://www.kab.org.uk/>)
- Glaucoma UK (<https://glaucoma.uk/>)



- NHS: Health A-Z (<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/>)

### Channel Day Surgery Centre, William Harvey Hospital Ashford

**Channel Day has its own pay and display parking area.** On turning into the hospital grounds, take the first left, this goes up pass the new Ashford One private hospital and staff car parks, the road then curves to the left then right, keep following ahead and you will see signs for Channel Day. Go past the loading bay and you will see a glass fronted building with a car park opposite.

If you are coming from the main hospital car park, please ask for directions at the main hospital reception desk. Follow signs on the floor for Navy Zone, for the Rotary Suite, at the end of the corridor turn right. Go past the stairs and enter the double doors to the left (which are opposite the lifts). Follow this all the way along to the reception of the Rotary Suite, turn left and then take the stairs / lift down to Channel Day Surgery. Reception is directly in front of you.

### Channel Day Surgery Admissions

Alternatively, Channel Day Surgery Pay and Display parking can be found at the back of the hospital. After entering the hospital grounds from Kennington Road, continue on the main drive, past the car park on the left and follow the road around to the back of the hospital. Our Channel Day and Rotary Suite entrance is on the right, with pay and display parking on the left.



## Day Surgery, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (QEQM) Hospital Margate

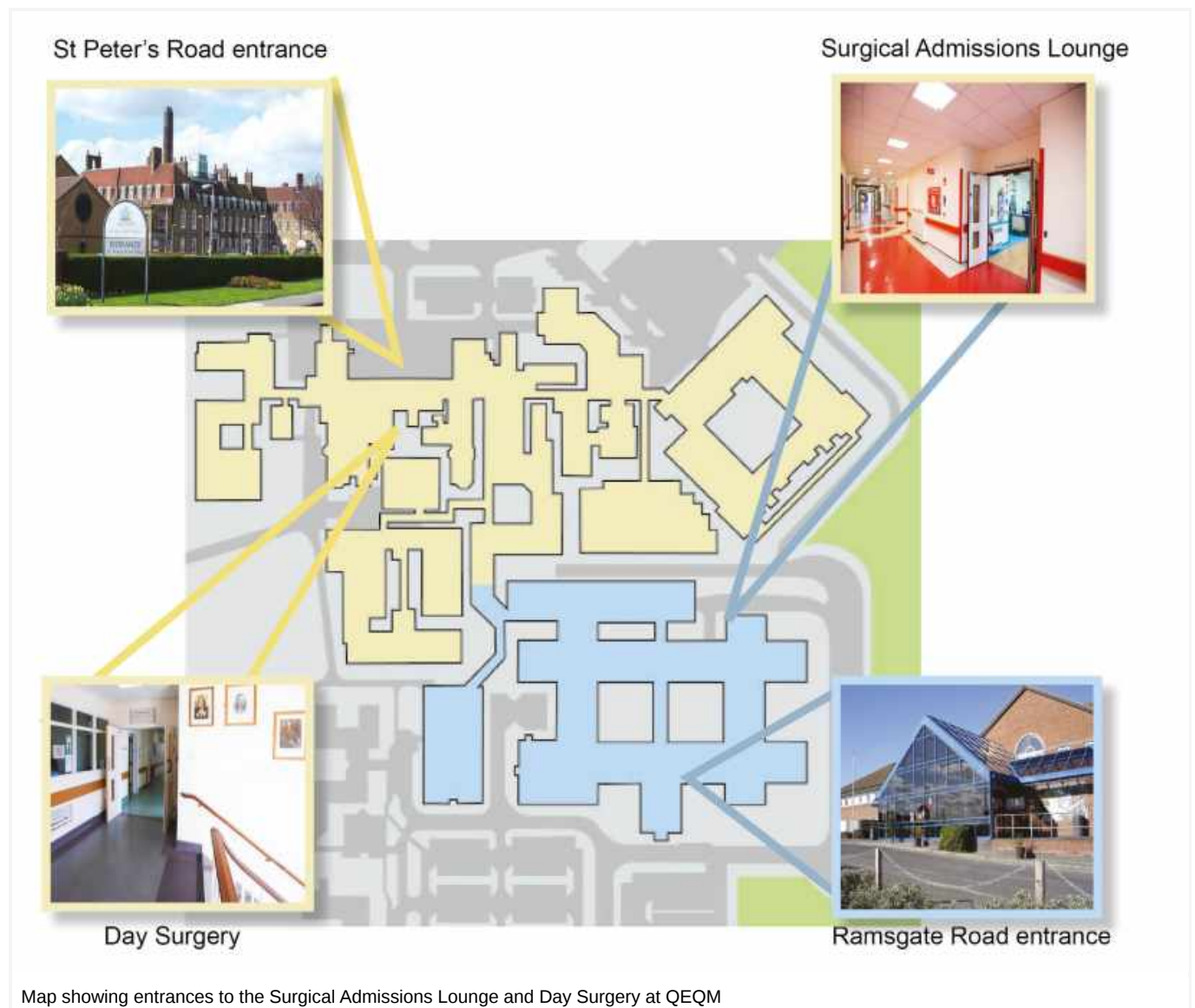
If arriving by car, park in the pay and display car park outside the St. Peter's Road entrance (the old hospital entrance).

Enter the main doors of the St. Peter's Road entrance. Opposite the doors, you will see a staircase. Go up the staircase. Opposite the top of the staircase (slightly to the right) you will see a glass window. Behind this is the Day Surgery reception where the receptionists will be pleased to help you.

For patients needing to use a lift, turn left after entering the main doors of the St. Peter's Road entrance. Walk 100 yards to the lift on the right hand side of the corridor. Enter the lift and go to the first floor. Exit the lift and turn left into the Day Surgery ward.

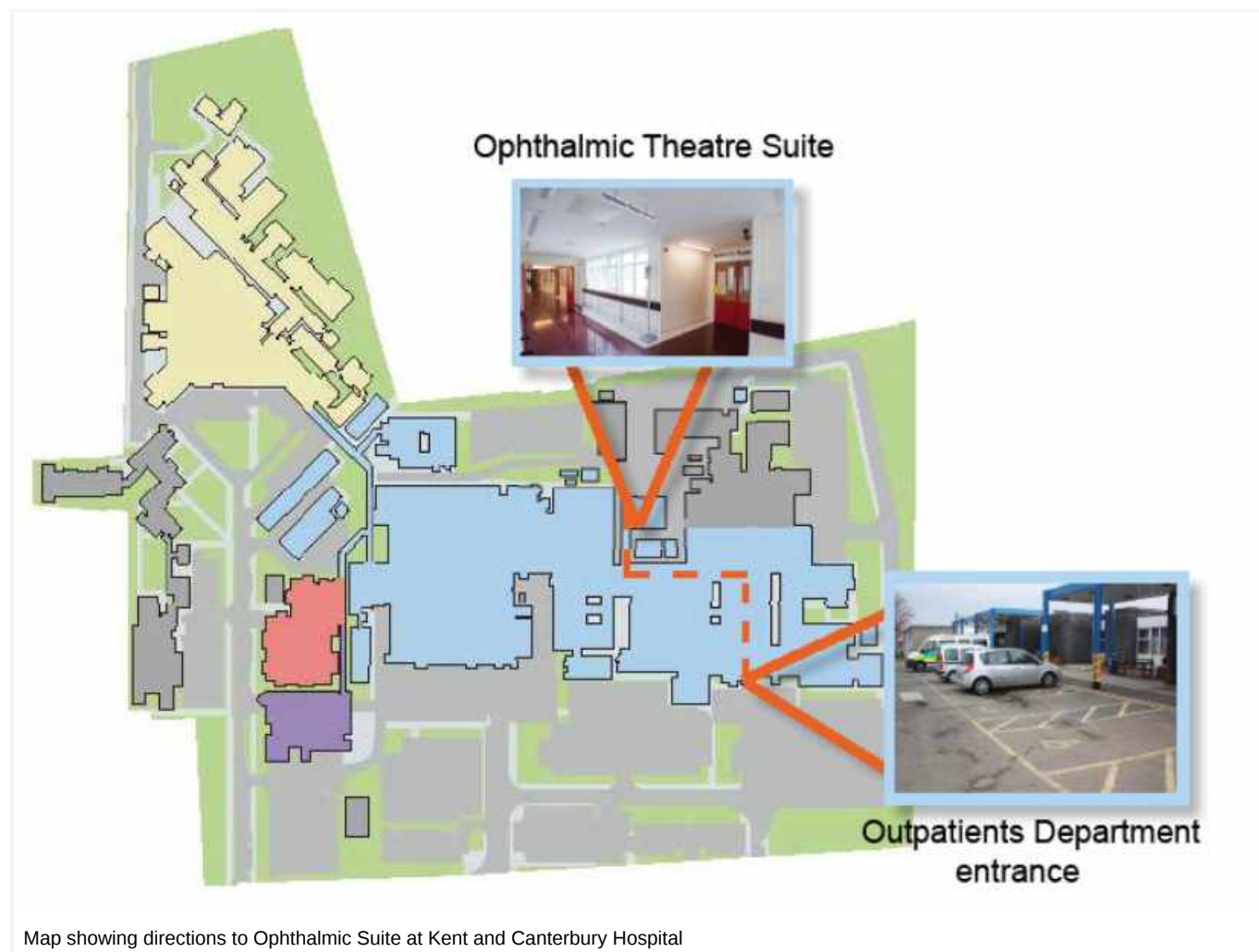
## Surgical Admissions Lounge, QEQM Hospital Margate

Enter through the Ramsgate Road entrance. Go straight down the corridor and take the stairs on your left up to the first floor. Turn left through the doors and follow the corridor all the way down to the end. The Surgical Admissions Lounge reception is on your left.



## Ophthalmology Theatre Suite, Kent and Canterbury Hospital Canterbury

Enter the doors at the Outpatients entrance to the hospital. Go past the outpatients reception desk and follow the corridor down to the bottom. Turn left and the Ophthalmic Theatre Suite is down the corridor on your right hand side. If you come to Pathology, you have passed the Ophthalmic Theatre Suite.



**This leaflet has been produced with and for patients.**

**Please let us know:**

- If you have any accessibility needs; this includes needing a hearing loop or wanting someone to come with you to your appointment.
- If you need an interpreter.
- If you need this information in another format (such as Braille, audio, large print or Easy Read).

**You can let us know this by:**

- Visiting the Trust web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/ais>).
- Calling the number at the top of your appointment letter.
- Adding this information to the Patient Portal (<https://pp.ekhuft.nhs.uk/login>).
- Telling a member of staff at your next appointment.

**Any complaints, comments, concerns or compliments**, please speak to a member of your healthcare team. Or contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 01227 783145 or email ([ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net](mailto:ekh-tr.pals@nhs.net)).

**Patients should not bring large sums of money or valuables into hospital.** Please note that East Kent Hospitals accepts no responsibility for the loss or damage to personal property, unless the property has been handed into Trust staff for safe-keeping.

**Further patient information leaflets** are available via the East Kent Hospitals' web site (<https://www.ekhuft.nhs.uk/patient-information>).

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