



Supplementary Material

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Patient Protocol – “Blue Screened” Pathway

The protocol is based on the NICE guidance (NG179) for arranging planned care in hospitals and diagnostic services, July 2020. Patients are offered surgery from either remote telephone/video call clinics or face-to-face clinics by orthopaedic consultants. Once a date for operation is set the pathway is as follows:

1. Screening questions –At listing / prior to attending for preop and at preop
Any positive response = medical review with high chance of postponement for > 7 days (clinically depending), referral for COVID-19 swab if indicated
2. Self-isolation for 14 days preoperatively
3. COVID-19 swab and screening done 72 hours prior to surgery
4. Advised to further self-isolate
5. Information leaflet given with contact details of preop screening department
6. Swab results checked 48 hours prior to surgery
7. Screened on the day of surgery including temperature check
8. COVID-19 swab taken as inpatient if any clinical concern arising
9. All patients advised to minimize social contact for 14 days postoperatively

Screening questions asked at each healthcare episode:

- Have you tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 7 days?

- Are you waiting for a COVID-19 test or the results?
- Do you have any of the following symptoms:
 - New, continuous cough;*
 - High temperature or fever;
 - Loss of, or change in, sense of smell or taste?

* A new, continuous cough means coughing for longer than an hour, or three or more coughing episodes in 24 hours. If the patient usually has a cough, it may be worse than usual.

- Do you live with someone who has either tested positive for COVID-19 or had symptoms of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

Theatre Protocol

All staff taking part in elective theatre are permitted to use the same hospital entrance, however must not go through any areas containing patients at risk of COVID-19. This includes the emergency department and orthopaedic trauma ward. Elective theatre staff must use a separate break room from the rest of the emergency theatre staff. At the time of the study staff were not routinely tested for COVID-19 unless symptomatic.

Ward Protocol

The elective orthopaedic ward is ring fenced. All admission must have passed the screening tests prior to surgery. No admissions were permitted from other specialties. No patients were boarded either to or from the elective ward. Nursing and allied health professionals were working exclusively on this ward to avoid any cross contamination from other areas. Medical staff were advised not to visit the ward on a day they have any duties in other non-screened areas.