

Standard Operating Procedure: Maternity services imaging appointment process

1. Introduction and overarching policy/guideline

Leicester hospitals Maternity Department provide approximately 140 scan slots per day. These consist of Nuchal Translucency Test (NT) Detailed anomaly scan and Growth scans. We provide these across two sites being the LRI and LGH. These scans are performed by sonographers and Midwife Sonographers.

This SOP should be used in conjunction with the overarching [Ultrasound UHL Obstetric Guideline](#).

Scan capacity can be challenged for a number of reasons and therefore all scan slots are vital to the key performance delivery of our service. We have recognised that an improvement needs to be made to the process for when a woman arrives late for her scan appointment with a sonographer or midwifery sonographer.

Currently there is a local agreement in place that if a patient arrives for their scan 10 minutes late or more it is at the discretion of the Sonographer as to whether they can accommodate the scan. There are inconsistencies within our service whereby inequality to our patients has occurred. Therefore this SOP will align both sites and processes to be consistent. [This SOP applies to all obstetric USS appointments.](#)

The risks that have been identified currently are as follows;

- Poor patient experience, patients are being cancelled on the day and rebooked.
- Impact on Sonographers scan lists, often overrunning.
- Impact on scan capacity.
- Non compliance with KPI's due to patient having to be booked at a later date.
- Delay in identifying any abnormality in pregnancy
- Increase in patient complaints.

2. Procedure

A new process has been agreed between Maternity Services and the Imaging department to provide an equitable service across both sites.

If a patient has not arrived to the imaging room by their booking time, the Sonographer will attend the reception area and check with the Clinic coordinator to see if the patient has arrived. If the patient has not made contact and has not arrived in the Department the Sonographer will wait in the reception until they arrive or until a time where the appointment would have to be cancelled.

It has been agreed that it is reasonable to allow the patient up to 10 minutes after their booked time to enable the scan appointment to go ahead, or 15 minutes for a Detailed anomaly scan.

Should a patient arrive for their scan within the timeframe the Sonographer will attempt to complete the scan booked.

If for any reason the Sonographer is unable to complete the scan within the time. The patient will be rebooked for another scan.

If the patient arrives in the department after the timeframe, then the Clinic coordinator will advise the patient that their scan will not go ahead that day. They will be cancelled on the system (CND) and rebooked for a new date, where possible keeping to booking dates. We understand that this may cause upset to some of our patients and for those wishing for a more detailed explanation of the cancellation reasons, they will either be escalated to a manager on site or given the information for PILS. Please search 'Having an ultrasound scan of your baby on YourHealth or click on the following link – leicestershospitals.nhs.uk

This will also be the process for any patients who call to advise that they will be late for their appointment, should a patient advise that they will be over 10 minutes late, the clinic coordinator will advise that their scan will be cancelled that day. Where possible every effort will be made to rebook the patient within their booking dates.

Actions to be taken:

- Clinic letters checked to ensure that patients are aware of our cancellation process.
- Letters will also communicate to patients the need to plan their journey to allow time for carparking etc.
- Signage to be displayed in all Antenatal areas to advise patients that anyone arriving over 10 minutes late will not be seen.

3. Key Words

List of words, phrases not contained within the title that may be used by staff searching on PAGL If none – state none.

The Trust recognises the diversity of the local community it serves. Our aim therefore is to provide a safe environment free from discrimination and treat all individuals fairly with dignity and appropriately according to their needs.

As part of its development, this policy and its impact on equality have been reviewed and no detriment was identified.

CONTACT AND REVIEW DETAILS			
SOP Lead (Name and Title) SOP Author: Joan Morrissey Service Manager Obstetrics Natalie Dalgetty General Manager Obstetrics Hillary Brookes – Clark Sonographer Lead		Executive Lead Chief Nurse	
Details of Changes made during review:			
Date	Issue Number	Reviewed By	Description Of Changes (If Any)
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