

ORTHOPAEDIC

National Access Criteria for First Assessment (ACA)

Category Definitions : These are recommended guidelines for HHS specialists prioritising referrals from primary care

Immediate	- <i>within 1 week</i>
Urgent	- <i>within 4 weeks</i>
Semi-urgent	- <i>within 8 weeks</i>
Routine	- <i>within 16 weeks</i>
Low Priority	- <i>within 24 weeks</i>
Not Seen	

Immediate and Urgent cases must be discussed with the Specialist or Registrar in order to get appropriate prioritisation and then a referral letter sent with the patient, faxed or e-mailed. The times to assessment may vary depending on size and staffing of the hospital department.

NATIONAL REFERRAL GUIDELINES : ORTHOPAEDIC

Category	Criteria
Immediate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspected malignancy. • Disc prolapse with significant neurological deficit • Extreme functional impairment – community living at risk • Trauma not requiring immediate intervention • Major risk of permanent disability through delay
Urgent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe functional impairment – requiring considerable assistance ADL • Severe pain – sleep regularly disturbed, poor analgesic control • Serious congenital condition in infants • Significant risk of permanent disability through delay
Semi - Urgent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate functional impairment – some assistance required ADL • Moderate pain – some sleep disturbance, modest analgesic control • Moderate risk of permanent disability through delay • Employment seriously restricted • Rapidly progressive deformities
Routine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild - moderate functional impairment – restriction of leisure activity, no assistance for ADL • Mild - moderate / episodic pain – satisfactory analgesic control • Low risk of permanent disability through delay • Employment being maintained • Slowly progressive deformities
Low Priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No / minimal functional impairment – no restriction of leisure activity, no assistance for ADL • No / minimal / episodic pain – analgesics seldom required • No / minimal risk of permanent disability through delay • Employment not threatened • No / very slowly progressive deformities • Patient seeking second opinion / reassurance
Not Seen	