

## **Emergency eye referrals to hospital**

The Emergency Departments in both Scarborough and York are very stretched yet receive a number of emergency eye referrals from GPs and minor injuries that should be referred directly to ophthalmology since it is unlikely that the staff in A&E have the expertise or equipment to deal with eye emergencies that cannot be managed by primary care.

To avoid patients having a long and frustrating wait in A&E please use this document as a local guide as to how to refer to the local hospital eye service to avoid referring via A&E.

### **York and Scarborough**

**Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm and weekends 9am to 2pm**

Phone 01904 726758 and a trained nurse practitioner will take your call and give appropriate advice or an appointment. This may be to fax a referral or contact the patients GP. If they need to they can speak to an ophthalmologist for advice.

Outside normal hours as above phone York Hospital on 01904 631313 and ask for the on call ophthalmologist. Please be prepared for some delay as this doctor may be seeing patients or may be driving between sites.

You may prefer to fax York Eye Department on 01904 726890, if you feel it can wait until the next working day (faxed referrals are seen by a consultant ophthalmologist within 24 hours for action).

#### *Safety-netting*

*If you are given an appointment for a patient and are concerned about what they should do if they have a deterioration before that date you should consider giving them the phone numbers as above so that they can contact the appropriate eye department directly for advice or to expedite their visit.*

**Symptoms that should prompt the patient to seek emergency medical care**, if need be via A&E. These are likely to conditions with a possible threat to life such as;

- Acute onset of hemianopia (? stroke)
- Amaurosis fugax recurring more than once over 24 hours (imminent risk of stroke)
- Papilloedema with neurological symptoms or new severe headache and or vomiting
- Sudden onset of 3rd nerve palsy (less than a week) with pain
- Any acute onset cranial nerve palsy in a child