

July 2018



Vhi Medical Centre

HeartCheck Information Pack

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Checklist - to make your appointment run smoothly on the day please:

- ✓ Fully complete the Medical Questionnaire in advance and bring it with you.
- ✓ Read the Consent Form (included within the Questionnaire) but do not sign it in advance.
- ✓ Remember to fast for 8 hours, but you should still drink water (see page 7).
- ✓ Let us know in advance if you have any special requirements (e.g. access or doctor gender).
- ✓ Arrive early to check-in at reception as if you are late we may not be able to proceed (see page 3).
- ✓ Bring credit/debit card (if payment required).

Our mission

We strive to continually improve the quality of our clinical and customer service, to create value and make a difference, and help you actively maintain and improve your own health and wellbeing.



HeartCheck is designed to make you feel at ease on the day but if you have any concerns or questions please contact the Medical Centre Administration Team on 056 775 3010.

About HeartCheck

What is HeartCheck?

Cardiovascular disease is still one of the most common and most serious health problems in Ireland. Research has clearly shown that a small number of factors determine most of your risk of developing cardiovascular disease.

HeartCheck is a set of tests and assessments which are designed to give you information about your risk of developing cardiovascular disease. We use a calculation called SCORE to estimate your overall risk based on your results and measurements.

Many of the important risk factors for cardiovascular disease are in your control, and we will use your results to provide you with personal guidance on how you can reduce your risk.

We also do a resting ECG. This is not part of the risk assessment, but it can sometimes give additional information about your heart (see page 8).

It is important to understand that screening tests may point towards a possible problem without giving a clear answer to the nature of the problem or the seriousness of it.

For many people the main outcome of their screening may be advice about how to make changes towards a healthier lifestyle. However for other people screening will identify medical issues. Screening is only the first step in preventive medicine. It is just as important that such issues are monitored and if necessary investigated further or treated. For this reason it is very important to discuss any findings from your assessment with your GP, who will be able to advise you, and assist you in taking any further steps that are needed.

What HeartCheck is not

HeartCheck only looks at selected tests and even if these tests indicate you are at low risk, it does not mean that you will not develop cardiovascular disease in the future.

Always talk to your GP if you develop any symptoms that you are concerned about, either before or after this HeartCheck.

HeartCheck is not designed to evaluate pre-existing conditions, and we cannot provide a second opinion service. Established illness needs to be monitored and treated by your GP, who has access to your previous test results.

Reasons why you should postpone your appointment

If you are unwell or taking antibiotics you should contact us to postpone your visit to Vhi Medical Centre as your test results may be affected.

The results for pregnant or breast-feeding women will also be affected by hormonal changes, so we would recommend you postpone your appointment if this applies to you.

If you have recently had the same tests done with your GP or another screening provider it is best to leave a gap of at least 6 months before repeating (longer for some tests), as natural variations in your body may lead to slightly different results which could be confusing.

PLEASE NOTE

HeartCheck is not a substitute for seeing your GP. It is an additional service which may provide useful information for you and your GP.

Preparation for your appointment

Q Can I change my appointment?

A Yes, you can change your appointment date and time but please give us at least 2 days notice. Call 056 775 3010 to check availability and reschedule.

Q Do I need to prepare for my appointment?

A Some of the tests carried out require preparation (see checklist on page 1). In general you should wear comfortable clothing, as you may need to remove some items (but we will take care to protect your dignity).

Q What if I have accessibility needs?

A If you have any special access requirements please let us know in advance and we can advise you on access and have extra staff available to assist if required.

Q Can I bring someone with me?

A Yes you can bring someone with you, however, some of the tests require you to concentrate and as we do not have childcare facilities on site, we suggest that if you have children you may need to make alternative arrangements for their care.

What to expect on the day

Q What happens if I am running late?

A Please try to arrive early for your appointment in order to check-in. If you are more than 15 minutes late you will miss your allocated appointment time. We will do our best to fit you into another empty appointment slot the same day, but if we are full that may not be possible. Due to the impact on other customers' appointments we may not be able to proceed with your appointment that day. You will be offered another appointment on another day.

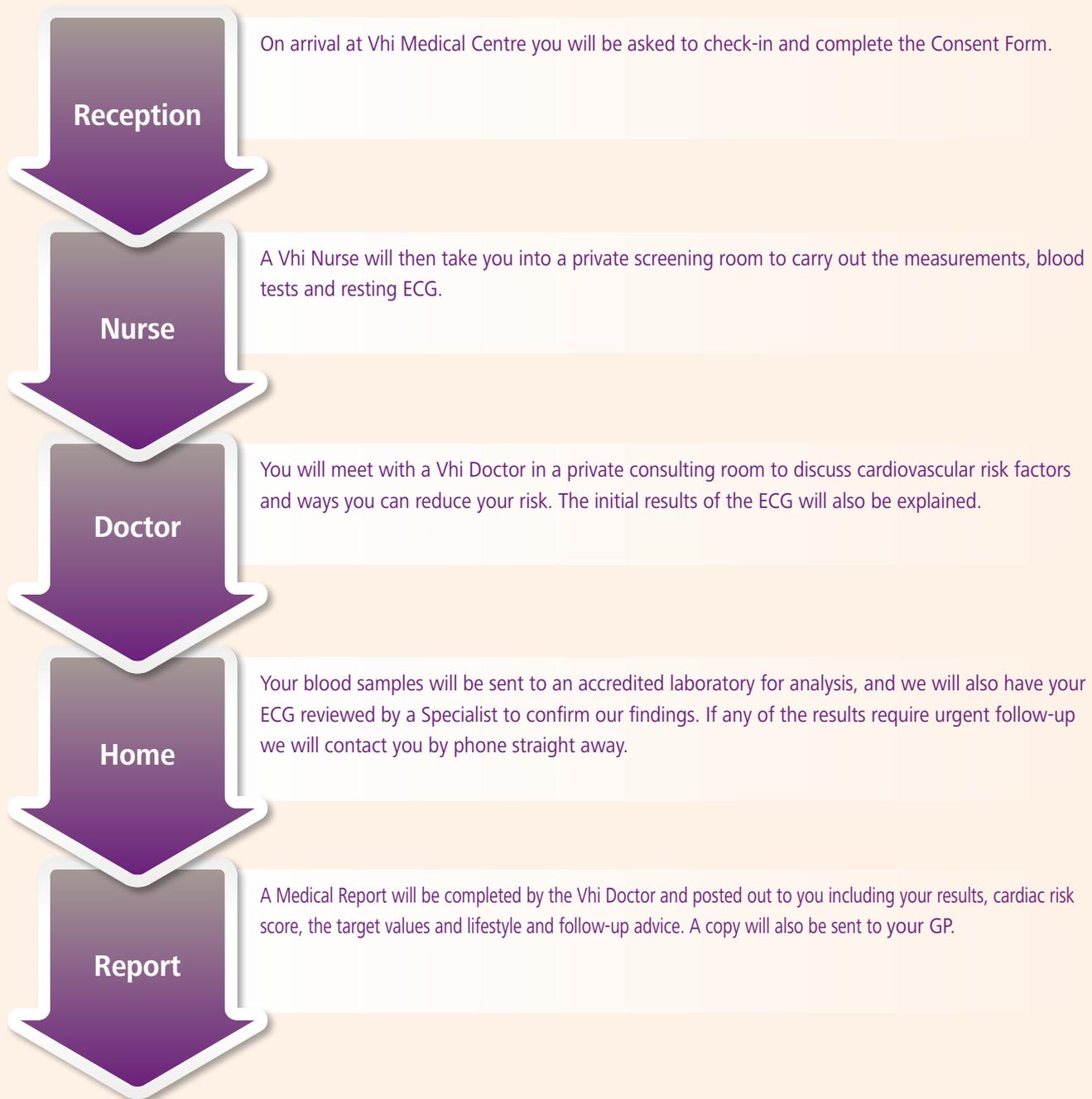
Q How can I pay?

A Please bring a credit/debit card to settle any outstanding charges. Payment will be taken at reception when you arrive. For security reasons we cannot accept cash payments.

Q How long will it take?

A The appointment usually takes about 35 minutes with the Nurse, and the consultation with the Vhi Doctor usually takes 20 minutes. There may be a small gap between the two appointments. While we try to run on time, occasionally appointments over-run slightly because some people have more complex medical needs. Should this occur, we will keep you informed. Please note that if you are also having a CancerCheck appointment on the same day the combined consultation may be longer (up to 2 hours in total).

Q What will happen?



Q What happens if you find something serious?

A On occasion potentially serious or urgent issues may be identified during the process. The Vhi Doctor will discuss any such concerns with you and will advise you on the appropriate steps to take. They will provide you with a clear plan of action and will contact your GP directly to ensure that your GP is aware of the issue so they can deal with it quickly and efficiently.

Sometimes the Vhi Doctor will need to contact you about non-serious issues that they can explain better on the phone than just in a report. So if you are contacted by a Vhi Doctor and miss the call please do not worry, they will call you back when they are next in.

Q Will I have to come back again?

A On rare occasions some people may need to return to Vhi Medical Centre for a repeat test to confirm a result (at no extra cost). We will contact you by phone to make an appointment if this is required.

Q When will I get a written copy of the results?

A Following screening, you will receive a medical report and a copy will be sent to your GP. You should receive this within 21 days of your appointment. If a serious issue is identified on your results you will be contacted before you receive your report.

The medical report records all your test results and the target values that you should aim towards for good health. The report also includes lifestyle advice, a summary of what was discussed at your consultation, and a summary of what you are advised to follow up with your GP.

Q What do I need to do next?

A For screening to be of value it is important that you arrange to see your GP to discuss any issues identified, so that they can be appropriately managed. It is also advisable to take along your copy of the report with you just in case your GP doesn't have it to refer to.

(Note: Follow-up GP visits and any further investigations or treatments are not included in the cost of the screening, but you may be able to submit the receipts as part of an out-patient claim subject to the usual terms and conditions of your health insurance plan).

If you do not understand the results you can phone the Vhi Doctor and they will explain them, but please be aware that our Doctors do not work in the Vhi Medical Centre everyday so they may not be available to call you back the same day.

Test information

Blood pressure (BP) measurement

Description of the (BP) measurement test

When your heart beats it pumps blood around your body and as it moves it pushes against the sides of the blood vessels. This is your blood pressure. During each heart beat your BP varies between a maximum (systolic) and a minimum (diastolic) pressure. We will measure your blood pressure using an inflatable cuff on your arm.

Purpose of the test

If your BP is too high it puts extra strain on your heart and blood vessels. This increases your risk of heart attacks, strokes and other cardiovascular problems. We will tell you your BP measurement and provide advice if it requires follow up.

Who is eligible to take the test?

Everyone.

Preparation required for the test

You will need to remove clothing from your upper arm to perform the measurement.

Height and weight measurement

Description of the height and weight measurement test

Height and weight are measured and these are used to calculate body mass index (BMI). It is a measure of your weight in kilograms related to your height in metres.

Purpose of the test

BMI is used by healthcare professionals to assess if someone's weight is putting their health at risk. The further your BMI is above 25, the more overweight or obese you are and the greater the risk to your health.

Who is eligible to take the test?

Everyone.

Preparation required for the test

You will need to remove your shoes and coat/jacket or heavy clothes for the weight measurement.

Waist circumference measurement

Description of the waist circumference measurement test

A Vhi Nurse will use a tape measure to measure around your waist. This is used to calculate a waist circumference.

Purpose of the test

Being overweight is a risk factor for heart disease and diabetes, but the way fat is distributed over the body can also be an indicator. People who store fat around their organs and middle are at higher risk.

Who is the test suitable for?

Everyone.

Preparation required for the test

You will need to remove your coat/jacket or thick outer clothes for the waist measurement.

Body fat composition measurement (bioimpedance)

Description of the body fat composition measurement (bioimpedance) test

Bioelectrical impedance measures the resistance of body tissues to the flow of a small, harmless electrical signal. Electricity flows more easily through the parts of the body that are composed mostly of water (such as blood, urine and muscle) than it does through bone, fat or air.

Purpose of the test

This test gives a measure of body composition known as body fat percentage.

Who is the test suitable for?

This test is suitable for anyone that does not have an implanted pacemaker.

Preparation required for the test

None.

Blood tests

Description of the blood tests

The Vhi Nurse will take some blood samples. This procedure may cause temporary discomfort and occasional bruising, but this does not happen often.

Purpose of the test

The samples will be analysed in a laboratory for:

- **Fasting glucose and haemoglobin A1c** - Glucose and haemoglobin A1c tests are used to diagnose diabetes and pre-diabetes.
- **Fasting lipid profile** - Lipid profile refers to certain cholesterol measurements. There are a number of different forms of cholesterol in your blood and we will measure some of these. We will measure total cholesterol, triglycerides, high density lipoprotein (HDL; "good cholesterol") and low density lipoprotein (LDL; "bad cholesterol") cholesterol. If your total cholesterol, LDL or triglyceride levels are high or HDL is low it is a risk factor for heart disease. High HDL levels can help protect your heart health.
- **Urea, creatinine, potassium and eGFR** are blood tests which measure kidney function. Creatinine, age, gender and ethnicity is used to calculate your eGFR (estimate of kidney function) which helps build a more accurate picture of your cardiovascular risk score.

Who is the test suitable for?

Everyone.

Preparation required for the test

You will need to fast for 8 hours before these tests to ensure that your glucose and cholesterol tests are accurate. During this time you should not consume food or beverages, although you should drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration. It is not advisable to greatly exceed the 8 hours fasting time.

During fasting you can take all regular medication as prescribed, unless it needs to be taken with food, and then you should delay taking your medication until after your appointment.

Avoid alcohol, smoking and vigorous exercise the night before your appointment.

If you have been diagnosed with diabetes you should not fast, as your insulin/medication may cause a dangerous hypoglycaemic (low glucose) episode. This will affect the results of your glucose and some of your lipid tests, but the Vhi Doctor will discuss this with you.

Resting electrocardiogram (ECG) test

Description of the resting electrocardiogram (ECG) test

An instrument, called an electrocardiograph, is used to measure the electrical signals generated by the heart. The ECG test is painless. The ECG machine records electrical impulses coming from your heart - it does not put any electricity into your body. Small pads are placed on your arms, legs and chest. Wires from the ECG machine are connected to the pads and the machine records the electrical impulses.

As part of this test the Vhi Doctor will ask about any personal or family history of heart problems, any symptoms you may have and will listen to your heart. This will help us to advise you regarding the results of your ECG test.

Purpose of the test

An ECG can show up irregularities in the electrical activity of your heart. Some may indicate problems, but some can also be very minor and do not require follow-up.

A Vhi Doctor will check the test results and discuss them with you at the first appointment.

The ECG results will also be reviewed by a Specialist and discussed at your second visit. If there is any urgent issue we will contact you to discuss any further action that might be needed before your second visit.

Please be aware that the ECG is a screening test performed at a single point in time. A normal ECG can not definitively say that you do not have a problem or that you will not develop one in the future.

The ECG test also detects minor changes which may not be of any significance, or it may not be clear from the test how significant they are, and you may need to discuss the results with your GP to see if further investigations are required.

Who is the test suitable for?

Everyone can have this test, however for people with an existing heart condition the results of the ECG test may be more difficult to interpret. If this impacts you the Vhi Doctor will discuss it with you, and will advise you how best to use the information from the ECG.

Preparation required for the test

The Vhi Nurse may have to shave a small area of chest hair to attach the pads. It is advisable not to wear bodycream or moisturiser on the day of your appointment, as this can stop the pads sticking to your skin.

Consultation with Vhi Doctor

Description

20 minute consultation with a Vhi Doctor, who will explain your results, what they mean for your cardiovascular risk and what steps you can take to reduce your risk.

Purpose of a consultation

To provide you with the information to reduce your risk of developing heart or cardiovascular disease.

Who is suitable for the consultation?

Everyone.

Preparation required for the consultation

None.

Directions

Vhi Medical Centre Dublin

Europa House, Harcourt Street, Dublin 2

GPS co-ordinates

Latitude 53.333756, Longitude -6.263097



Description of the building:

Vhi Medical Centre is on the lower-ground floor of Europa House which is a red-brick building on the corner of Harcourt Street and Charlotte Way (opposite the Harcourt Street Luas stop). Enter through the main entrance steps and revolving door and take the lift down to Vhi Medical Centre on the lower ground floor. There is no Vhi signage outside, but there is a Europa House sign above the door and on the pillars beside the steps, and a small Vhi sign inside the lobby behind the desk.

Walking from city centre:

Vhi Medical Centre is close to the city centre. From Stephen's Green Shopping Centre follow the Luas tracks along the side of St. Stephen's Green and up Harcourt Street (it is the end of Harcourt Street farthest from St. Stephen's Green). Europa House is on the right hand side of Harcourt Street at the corner of Charlotte Way.

By Luas:

Vhi Medical Centre is opposite the Harcourt Street Luas stop which is one stop from the Green Line terminus at St. Stephen's Green. Coming from the south side there are park and ride facilities on the Green Line at Balally, Stillorgan, Beacon South Quarter and Sandyford.

Car parking:

There is no public car park at Europa House. There is limited on-street parking (pay and display) on the surrounding streets. The nearest large public car park is Stephen's Green Car Park at the back of the Royal College of Surgeons with access from Mercer Street which is a short walk away.

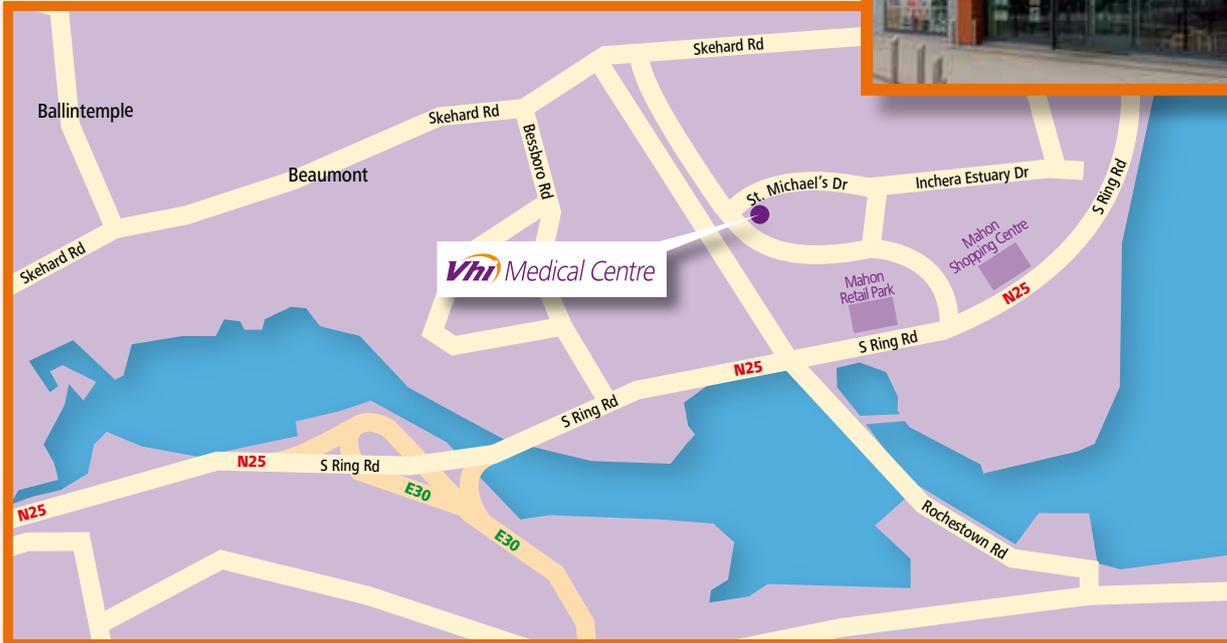
Note: For disabled access requirements, please contact us in advance for directions to an alternative entrance or a disabled lift on 056 775 3010.

Vhi Medical Centre Cork

Vhi SwiftCare Clinic, City Gate, Mahon, Cork

GPS co-ordinates

Latitude 51.886157, Longitude -8.404954



City Gate:

Vhi Medical Centre is located inside the Vhi SwiftCare Clinic on the left as you enter City Gate. Go in the main Vhi SwiftCare Clinic entrance and Vhi Medical Centre is through the door straight ahead.

From Cork city centre:

Take the South City Link Road to the Kinsale Road roundabout. Take the slip road at this roundabout for Dublin, Limerick and the Jack Lynch Tunnel (heading east). Continue and take the 4th exit for Mahon/Blackrock (signposted exit 10). Stay in the left-hand lane, keeping left at the top of the slip road, and continue straight through traffic lights at Mahon Point and Mahon Retail Park. City Gate is on the right hand side of the road after Mahon Point and Mahon Retail Park. Get into the right lane and take the right turn once you reach the Veterinary Centre and CSPCA (on your left). Then take the entrance on your immediate right and you will have entered City Gate.

From the Dublin Road:

As you approach Cork, the first roundabout you encounter is the Dunkettle Interchange. Go through the roundabout taking the 2nd exit which leads into the Jack Lynch Tunnel. As you exit the tunnel you are on the South Ring Road. Take the first exit off the road, the slip road for Blackrock, Mahon and Mahon Point staying in the outer lane. Turn to your right at the top of the slip road and continue straight through the traffic lights by Mahon Point and Retail Park. City Gate is situated on the right hand side of the road after Mahon Point and Mahon Retail Park (see above).

Car parking:

There is limited parking available at City Gate in an underground car park. To enter it drive straight forward down the ramp at the entrance to City Gate. The escalators will bring you out of the car park to ground level. Please leave a few minutes to walk from the car park to Vhi Medical Centre.

Directions by bus:

The 215 bus from Cloghroe/Blarney to Mahon Point stops at City Gate. The bus stop is at the Daybreak shop on Grand Parade. (Note: this information is correct at the time of printing but we would suggest you check with the bus company before travelling).

Vhi Medical Centre Galway

Unit 10, An Tornóg, Headford Road, Galway, H91 E2R8

GPS co-ordinates

Latitude 53.293935, Longitude -9.036975



An Tornóg:

Vhi Medical Centre is located at the right-hand end of a brick building in a small development (An Tornóg) which also houses a Tesco Express shop. Enter through the Vhi sign-posted entrance by using the buzzer access pad. It is on the ground floor.

From Eyre Square (Galway City Centre):

Head northwest on Eyre Square/R336 toward St Patricks Avenue. After 1.1km the road turns slight right onto Prospect Hill/R336. Continue to follow R336 for 0.7km. At the roundabout, take the 2nd exit onto Sandy Road. Continue for 1km, at the T Junction turn left, and at the roundabout, take the 3rd exit onto Headford Rd/N84. Turn left into An Tornóg at Tesco Express/Vhi.

Train, bus and coach stations all link onto Eyre Square.

Car parking:

There is limited parking available at An Tornóg in front of the building.

Directions by bus:

Bus Éireann Route 407 runs roughly every 30 minutes from Galway city centre (Eyre Square) through to Baile an Chóiste via Headford Road. The bus stop is across the road from An Tornóg, approx. 3 minute walk.

See www.buseireann.ie for further details.

Patient rights

Every patient in Ireland has the right to expect that the healthcare services they receive are of a high standard. This section outlines some of the patient rights that we believe you are entitled to in every healthcare setting and describes what we are doing to make sure that you receive quality care from us.

Dignity and respect

You have the right to be treated with respect, dignity and consideration for your religious and philosophical beliefs and values. If you have any special requirements please do not hesitate to contact us in advance of your appointment.

Withdrawal from process

At any point, you have the right to discontinue the process. If you wish to withdraw, please let a member of staff know and we will talk to you about issuing your results up to that point.

Accessibility and mobility

We offer our services to customers based on medical appropriateness, and all people have the right to equal access as long as the tests are medically suitable. We are also committed to ensuring that access to our Vhi Medical Centres is made as easy as possible for everyone.

Safe and effective services

We provide services in a safe environment, delivered by competent, skilled and trusted professionals. If you have any concerns about the facilities please let a member of staff know.

Communication

At all stages of the process it is our aim to provide you with information about the tests, results options and costs in a language you understand. If there is anything you are unsure of, or if you require further explanation, please ask any member of staff.

Information

You have the right to be informed of the name of any person involved in your care. All of our clinical staff wear name badges and introduce themselves, but if you are not sure who someone is or want any further information, please do not hesitate to ask.

Training and audit

Occasionally, for training and audit purposes, a second Nurse or Doctor may be present at your appointment. This is to help us improve the quality of the services we provide. Your permission will be sought when this happens, and you have the right to refuse.

Participation

You have the right to be involved in decisions regarding your health and no tests will be done without your informed consent. You also have the right to ask someone to accompany you during your appointment.

Comment

We value your comments and views about our services. You will be given the opportunity to participate in a feedback survey after your appointment. The results will be kept anonymous and will be analysed and used to improve our service.

We aim to provide you with the highest levels of service. However, should any aspect of the service fall below your expectations we are eager to hear about it. Vhi Medical Centres have a complaints procedure, and any member of staff can take the details of your comments or concerns and we will treat any complaint objectively with courtesy and respect. We will investigate your comments thoroughly and you will be informed of the outcome as soon as possible.

If you prefer to put your complaint in writing you can send it directly to:

Vhi Medical Centre Manager
Europa House
Harcourt Street
Dublin 2.

Vhi Medical Centres' complaint procedure is without prejudice to your statutory rights to complain to the Ombudsman, the Medical Council, or An Bord Altranais (The Nursing Board).

Vhi Medical Centres are also accredited by Joint Commission International. If you have serious concerns about patient safety and quality of care they have a complaints procedure you can use.

For further information visit <http://www.jointcommissioninternational.org/contact-us/report-a-quality-and-safety-issue/>

Patient responsibilities

As well as having rights, everybody has responsibilities, and we would kindly request that you please observe the following when visiting Vhi Medical Centres:

- Notify us as soon as possible if you will be late or unable to attend an appointment
- Do not smoke in Vhi Medical Centres
- Treat staff and other visitors with courtesy and respect
- Observe any instructions given regarding facility health and safety and test instructions
- Provide us with accurate health information, as this will form the basis of your assessment
- Accept responsibility for managing your own health and follow the advice of the assessing Vhi Doctor in seeking further treatment when advised to do so.

