

NHS outpatient clinic opens at Birmingham New Street to alleviate hospital pressure

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An empty shop at Birmingham New Street station has become an NHS outpatient clinic for patients to have routine blood tests away from hospital.

From Tuesday, Network Rail is providing the former retail space for free to medics for six months to alleviate pressure on Midlands hospitals as they deal with the coronavirus pandemic.

The temporary phlebotomy clinic will be staffed by the University Hospitals Birmingham trust and tests will be carried out by appointment only.

Moving some outpatient services like routine blood tests out of hospitals will protect healthy people from encountering patients sick with coronavirus.

Patrick Power, Birmingham New Street station manager, said: "We're doing everything we can to support the NHS in this unprecedented time so offering up this empty retail unit was a real no brainer.

"The clinic being based in the Midlands' largest transport hub means it will be extremely easy for people to travel to should a routine blood test be advised by their doctor. With some train services being reduced however I'd advise people to check www.nationalrail.co.uk daily to check the time of their train.

“I’d also like to reassure passengers that we are following all of Public Health England’s guidelines to keep people safe and continue to regularly deep clean the station to stop the spread of coronavirus.”

Dr David Rosser, CEO, University Hospitals Birmingham NHS Foundation Trust, said: “The Trust has made some important decisions which will reduce the number of people attending our hospitals and community services in person.

“The aim is to limit footfall across our sites to ensure only the most acutely unwell inpatients, people who require emergency interventions and those with essential appointments are on site, enabling those who do not need to attend to avoid unnecessary travel and exposure to a large healthcare setting.

“The new off-site clinic is one of the measures that will help ensure we can best meet the needs of our patients during a sustained period of pressure.”

Photo credit: Network Rail