

## **Planning in place for ensuring proper response by public and private hospitals**

In an effort to mitigate the situation at the hospitals of the State Health Services Organization and help them respond successfully and promptly to the new increased needs that have appeared due to the pandemic, the following decisions have been made:

### **1. Redirection of patients to private medical centres**

In the present state and in view of the readiness and availability that SHSO hospitals should have, private hospitals shall be treating:

- Urgent cases through their accident and emergency departments, where patients will either be transferred there by ambulances or can directly go on their own,
- Patients referred to them by SHSO hospitals and A&Es and they will also be carrying out urgent surgeries that cannot be performed at SHSO hospitals.

It is noted that the private hospitals shall be treating ONLY emergency cases, not non-urgent cases. The Ministry of Health will not assume the costs for patients who seek help from the private sector on their own and do not fall within the above categories.

It is also noted that suspected coronavirus cases are handled only by SHSO hospitals in compliance with the currently prescribed procedure, which has already been announced.

### **2. Appointments to Outpatient Departments of SHSO hospitals**

As regards cancelled appointments in outpatient care, patients are urged to book appointments either directly with specialists who are part of the National Health System or contact their personal physician (GP) for a referral or advice on what to do. Both GPs and specialists are obliged to serve these patients.

### **3. Scheduled surgery appointments at SHSO hospitals - urgent cases**

Scheduled surgery appointments concerning urgent cases will be referred to the private sector by the attending doctors of the state hospitals.

With regard to cancelled scheduled surgery appointments concerning urgent cases or cases whose surgery cannot be postponed, the patients who have not yet been contacted have to call their attending doctors in SHSO hospitals to look into their case.

In the event that they are not able to find their doctor, patients are urged to contact the Executive Director of the hospital of their district.

### **4. Scheduled surgery appointments to SHSO hospitals - non-urgent cases**

As regards scheduled surgeries that are not urgent and have been cancelled, the patients will be given a new date by the SHSO hospital, where the surgery was scheduled to take place.

### **5. Scheduled surgery appointments to SHSO hospitals - non-urgent cases, whose situation has worsened or changed**

Patients are advised to contact immediately their attending doctors at SHSO hospital or their GP or Gesy specialist doctors for further guidance.