Dear <Salutation> <First Name> <Last Name>,

During this unprecedented time with the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19), we want to assure you, and your families, that your safety and eye health remain our priority.

Understandably, you may feel anxious about attending regular clinic appointments, for various reasons, but please know that our clinic follows strict guidelines around infection control.

We aim to minimize patient, and staff, risk of exposure while undertaking crucial eye care services; therefore, the following practices are implemented based on the most recent clinical recommendations.

**How we have adapted our clinic practice**

* Only patients with urgent needs and/or those requiring frequent management, such as your anti-VEGF injections, are being seen at this time. This action limits exposure while addressing the needs of patients requiring urgent care.
* Non-urgent appointments are being rescheduled, but our practice remains open should an emergency occur, or if there are changes to your vision between visits that require care.

**Information regarding your upcoming appointment**

* We may reach out to you, prior to your appointment, with a series of questions regarding your current health status.
* We have adapted our scheduling to allow for the minimum number of patients within the waiting room at any given time.
* You may not receive your regular visual acuity test or eye scan before your anti-VEGF treatment procedure. This is to ensure that you are in the clinic for the minimal amount of time required.
* Your ophthalmologist may wear a mask with a plastic shield over their eyes and limit conversation during any part of the examination.
* To limit unnecessary exposure between patients and staff, we may defer scheduling of your next appointment via phone rather than at completion of your visit.

**Ways you can reduce the risk of exposure during your visit**

* If you have had direct exposure to a positive COVID-19 patient or have a cough or fever, it is essential to call your doctor’s office ahead of time and let them know. Consequently, if your visit is not an emergency, they may ask you to stay at home.
* If you arrive at the appointment and are unwell, you may be asked to reschedule the appointment so that you do not expose other patients.
* If you anticipate a cough or sneeze during your exam, kindly cover your face with a tissue. Wash your hands with soap and water or disinfectant as soon as you can.
* Please limit to one person accompanying you to your appointment.
* The clinic may ask you and/or the person accompanying you to wait outside, instead of in the waiting room. This is a normal practice to protect you, the other patients, and the office staff as per agreed protocols of social distancing.
* While in the waiting room, maintain a distance of at least 1.5 to 2 meters (5-6 feet) from others.
* You may, or may not, be given a mask to wear during the treatment.

**If you are unable to attend your visit**

* We are asking only patients for whom treatment is crucial to preserve sight in an eye to maintain appointments and we will take all measures to minimize risk. Risk will not be completely eliminated, however, and we will understand if, despite the safety measures above, you choose to cancel a visit at any time.
* Please contact the clinic as soon as possible to cancel your appointment and schedule a replacement appointment.
* In the lead up to your next scheduled appointment, regularly monitor your vision, such as with an Amsler Grid test, attached to this email, making sure to alternate eyes when conducting the test.
* If you do notice a change in your vision, please contact us to assess if an emergency visit is needed.

**Other ways to limit your exposure and reduce your risk during daily life**

https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public

* **Wash your hands frequently:** Regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water.
* **Maintain social distancing:** Maintain at least 2 meters (6 feet) from others.
* **Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth:** Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses. Once contaminated, hands can transfer the virus to your eyes, nose, or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and can make you sick.
* **Practice respiratory hygiene:** This means covering your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when you cough or sneeze, then disposing of the used tissue immediately.
* **If you have a fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical care early:** Stay home if you feel unwell, but if you have a fever, cough, and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention and call in advance.
* **Stay informed and follow the advice given by your healthcare provider:** Stay informed on the latest developments about COVID-19. Follow the advice given by your healthcare provider and your national and local public health authorities on how to protect yourself and others from COVID-19.