The following conditions are not routinely seen at the Alfred:

- Patients who are being treated for the same condition at another Victorian public hospital
- Children under 18 years of age are not seen at The Alfred

REFERRAL PROCESS: NEUROLOGY AND STROKE

STEP 1
You will be notified when your referral is received by outpatients. Essential referral content will be checked and you may be contacted for further information if required.

STEP 2
The referral is triaged by the specialist unit according to clinical urgency. This determines how long the patient will wait for an appointment.

STEP 3
Patients with urgent conditions are scheduled to be seen within 30 days. Patients with routine conditions are given the next available appointment according to clinical need. Both the referrer and patient are notified.

Please note: The times to assessment may vary depending on size and staffing of the hospital department.

If you are concerned about the delay of the outpatient appointment or if there is any deterioration in the patient’s condition, please contact the Neurology Registrar on call on 9076 2000.

The Alfred gratefully acknowledges the assistance of the Canterbury and District Health Board in New Zealand in developing these guidelines. They are intended as a guide only and have been developed in conjunction with the Heads of Unit of The Alfred.
The clinical information provided in your referral will determine the triage category. The triage category will affect the timeframe in which the patient is offered an appointment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMMEDIATE</th>
<th>URGENT</th>
<th>ROUTINE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct to the Emergency &amp;</td>
<td>Appointment timeframe within 30 days</td>
<td>Appointment timeframe greater than 30 days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma Centre</td>
<td></td>
<td>depending on clinical need</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These include:
- Headache with ‘red flags’ ([see headache](#))
- Suspected spinal cord compression
- Acute and sudden onset of prominent weakness (Guillan Barré Syndrome)
- Acute relapse of multiple sclerosis or neuroimmune disease with motor, cerebellar or visual deficit
- A patient with MS or a neuroimmunological condition with a suspected opportunistic infection.

These include:
- New onset severe sciatica or brachialgia with pain radiating below the knee or into the hand respectively
- New onset or uncontrolled trigeminal neuralgia
- Brachial neuritis
- Frequent blackouts
- Unstable epilepsys
- New headache in patients over 50 years of age
- Evidence of new or enhancing lesions on MRI in patients with MS on disease modifying treatment.

These include:
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Parkinson’s disease
- Migraine (> 2 year history)

Phone the Neurology Registrar on call on 9076 2000 and/or send to The Alfred Emergency & Trauma Centre.

Urgent cases must be discussed with the Neurology Registrar on call to obtain appropriate prioritisation and a referral faxed to 9076 6938.

Fax referral to 9076 6938

If you are concerned about the delay of the outpatient appointment or if there is any deterioration in the patient’s condition, please contact the Neurology Registrar on call on 9076 2000.
EPILEPSY

**Evaluation**

- Medical history
- Details of management to date
- Medications
- U&E, Cr
- FBE
- LFT’s
- Drug levels if the patient is already taking antiepileptic medications (preferably AM levels taken prior to the morning dose)
- Arrange EEG prior to appointment:
- CT or MRI is sometimes indicated to exclude acute/subacute causes requiring early intervention, including:
  - Focal deficit post-ictally
  - Persistent altered mental state post-ictally
  - Fever
  - Recent trauma
  - Persistent severe headache, > 1 hour post seizure
  - History of malignancy
  - History of anticoagulation
  - Possible immunodeficiency
  - Worsening of mental state post-ictally
  - Partial onset seizure in a person with no previous seizures
  - Age >40 years in a person with no previous seizures.

These may require discussion with the Neurology Registrar and urgent admission.

**Referral Guidelines**

Refer to Epilepsy Clinic (either First Seizure Clinic or Epilepsy Management Clinic).

If the **neuro-imaging is abnormal**, contact the Neurology Registrar on call on 9076 2000 to verify whether acute assessment and intervention is required.
## HEADACHE

### Evaluation

- Medical history
- Medications

**Refer immediately to Emergency Department if any headache ‘red alerts’ are present:**

- Onset over age 50 *(consider giant cell arteritis, mass lesion, CVA)*
- Very sudden onset *(consider SAH, pituitary apoplexy, haemorrhage into mass lesion)*
- Onset following head trauma *(consider subdural/epidural haemorrhage)*
- Progressively increasing frequency and/or severity over weeks to months *(consider mass lesions, subdural, analgesic rebound)*
- New onset in patient with HIV or cancer *(consider meningitis, abscess, metastasis)*
- Signs of systemic illness *(fever, neck flexion stiffness, rash)*
- Focal neurological symptoms or signs excluding typical aura *(consider mass lesion or stroke)*
- Papilloedema *(consider mass lesion, pseudotumour cerebri)*
- First ever headache with focal neurological symptoms or signs, especially persisting for >1 hour *(consider stroke)*

### Referral Guidelines

If ‘red alerts’ are present, refer IMMEDIATELY - phone Neurology Registrar on call on 9076 2000 and/or send to The Alfred Emergency and Trauma Centre.

*The Alfred Outpatient Referral form*

## MOVEMENT DISORDERS / DYSTONIA

### Evaluation

- Medical history
- Medications
- Management to date

### Referral Guidelines

Refer to Movement Disorders Clinic.

*The Alfred Outpatient Referral form*

*The Alfred EEG/EMG Referral Form*
### DEMENTIA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Referral Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| - Medical history  
- Medications  
- FBE, ESR  
- U&E, Cr  
- Ca++  
- TFTs  
- B12, red cell folate  
- LFTs  
- Random glucose  
- CT or MRI Brain  
- Syphilis serology  

**RACGP guidelines on Dementia** |
| Refer to Cognitive, Dementia and Memory Service (CDAMS) at Caulfield General Medical Centre.  
This is a multidisciplinary, specialist diagnostic service for patients with previously undiagnosed memory loss/cognitive problems.  
Patients must live in the cities of Stonnington, Port Phillip or the section of Glen Eira north of North Rd.  
Appointments can be made through Caulfield Access  
Ph: 9076 6776  
Fax: 9076 6773  
Email: access@cgmc.org.au  
For further information, phone Clinic Coordinator (Elizabeth Rand) 9076 6010 or 9076 6393, or click here:  
[Cognitive Decline and Memory Service information](#) |
## TIA - KNOWN OR SUSPECTED

### Evaluation

- Required in all patients:
  - U&E, Creatinine
  - FBE
  - ECG
  - CT scan
  - Doppler studies

- Optional tests which may have been arranged:
  - INR
  - MRI and MRA inclusive
  - Echocardiogram
  - Holter monitor

The ABCD2 score is a useful assessment tool.

The **ABCD^2 Score** assists in identifying those patients with suspected or definite TIA who are at high risk of stroke and therefore require urgent investigation and diagnosis. The score is an assessment tool which facilitates effective early management of patients with TIA who are at high risk of stroke.

| A | Age ≥ 60 years | = 1 point |
| B | BP > 140 systolic ± diastolic ≥ 90 | = 1 point |
| C | Clinical: limb weakness |
| | : speech disturbance | = 2 points |
| D | Duration of TIA: ≥ 60 minutes |
| | : 10 – 59 minutes | = 2 points |
| | : < 10 minutes | = 1 point |
| D | Diabetes | = 1 point |

### Referral Guidelines

Refer to the [Stroke and TIA clinic](#) and [RACGP guidelines on TIA and Stroke](#)

## VERTIGO

### Evaluation

Refer to the ENT Referral Guidelines. The [Alfred Outpatient Referral form](#)
# MULTIPLE SCLEROSIS AND NEUROIMMUNE DISORDERS

## Outpatient Referral Guidelines

**Evaluation**
- Medical history, including details of rapidly deteriorating neurological deficits or psychosocial issues
- Medications to date
- FBE
- U&E, Cr
- LFTs
- CT or MRI Brain if available

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Referral Guidelines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If acute focal neurological or visual deficits, consider IMMEDIATE referral—phone the Neurology Registrar on call on 9076 2000 and/or send to The Alfred Emergency and Trauma Centre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If not acute, refer to the MS and NI clinic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Alfred Outpatient Referral form</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>