

Rheumatology Patient Initiated Follow-Up

Corporate

The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

If you wish to access PIFU, please call the team on:

01902 481 777

What is 'Patient Initiated Follow Up' (PIFU)?

- Patient-initiated follow-up (PIFU) puts you in control of when you are supported by your healthcare team. It means spending less time attending hospital appointments, but still having access to specialist clinical input when you need it
- You can initiate a follow up appointment when you feel you need one due to a change in your condition or circumstances, or if your symptoms are causing you trouble
- You will have direct access to guidance when you need it the most, as opposed to attending a follow up within a set time-frame which may not be needed
- If your condition is stable, you may not find it helpful to attend regular outpatient appointments scheduled by the hospital. Sometimes, these appointments may not result in any change to your treatment, but you will have spent time and energy putting arrangements in place to attend your appointment
- Your specialist care team will tell you how long your PIFU lasts for, and for some conditions this might be open ended. Otherwise, at the end of the PIFU period, your ongoing care will be with your GP, who can always refer you back to the hospital in future should that be necessary
- If you are being looked after by more than one department, you may have separate PIFU plans in place for multiple conditions
- Sometimes you may still receive regular follow up appointments but at a reduced frequency while you are on PIFU. It is important for you to still attend these so that your specialists can monitor your condition if needed.

The PIFU service offers:

Open access to advice, support, and appointments as and when you need them. These may be via telephone or video call, or face to face, based on your individual needs and circumstances.

How is PIFU beneficial to you?

- Reducing cost and stress of hospital attendance – You will not be making any unnecessary journeys to the hospital to attend a follow up appointment which may not really be needed. You will only have an appointment made if you feel you need or want one
- Care based on your individual needs – You have more control over your care and how an appointment is initiated, as opposed to attending follow up appointments at fixed routine intervals. We will aim to see you within a few weeks after you get in touch
- Shorter waiting times – With fewer patients coming in for regularly scheduled follow ups that they do not really need, we can make appointments available more quickly for those that need them more urgently
- Reduced carbon footprint – By lowering the number of unnecessary journeys being made, we can reduce the carbon footprint of our local community.

How do I make an appointment?

Making an appointment is easy; you just need to call the booking team on the number provided at the start and end of this leaflet. Please provide your NHS number when you call, which can be found at the top of any hospital letter. Please briefly explain that you need some clinical advice and are on PIFU.

In most cases we will arrange an appointment for you within 12 weeks. Sometimes it will be most appropriate to support you by having a remote consultation over the telephone or video link, but an in-person appointment may also be arranged if necessary.

Please note, to arrange a patient-initiated follow-up appointment with the Rheumatology team, you must have previously agreed with your Rheumatology specialist that this is the right pathway for you. The appointment can only be arranged for the specific condition discussed. Any new issues will need to be discussed with your GP or care provider.

What symptoms should I get advice about?

Your clinician will outline the most important situations that should prompt you to contact them. That does not mean that you cannot contact them at other times if you think you need to. Some of the most common queries are:

- If you have concerns or questions about treatment side effects or changes
- If you wish to return to regular follow-up appointments instead of PIFU
- If you have a flare for more than five days that you are unable to manage
- If you wish to discuss some issues relating to your condition or simply feel it is time for a review.

When you should NOT use PIFU

If you require urgent medical attention, you should contact your GP, NHS 111 or attend the Emergency Department (ED) also known as Accident & Emergency (A&E) if you are very unwell. For medical problems that are not related to the specialty or pathway for which you are on PIFU, your GP remains your first point of contact.

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01902 481 777

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。