

Outstanding Care,
Compassionate People,
Healthier Communities



Sherwood Forest Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Patient initiated follow-up (PIFU)

Information for patients



This leaflet provides information on patient initiated follow-up appointments at Sherwood Forest Hospitals. It explains what patient initiated follow-ups are and how they work.

Patient initiated follow-ups won't be suitable for every patient, but if your hospital care team think they could be right for you, they will discuss this with you. Please contact your hospital care team if you'd like more information about patient initiated follow-ups.

What are patient initiated follow-ups?

This is a new approach to arranging outpatient appointments.

At the moment, regular follow-up appointments are arranged by the hospital within a specific time frame, for example, every six months or every year. Some patients find these regular visits useful and reassuring. For others, it can be frustrating or stressful coming to hospital if they don't feel they need to.

Through your patient initiated follow-up pathway, you can arrange follow-up appointments with your hospital care team when you feel you need them, or if your symptoms get worse. This puts you in control of your follow-up appointments and gives you access to support and guidance when you need it most.

Why are we introducing this new type of follow-up?

This type of follow-up, that is led by the patient, offers several benefits:

- You have more control over your follow-up appointments and when you have them – appointments are made based on your individual needs.
- For many people it will mean they don't need to come to hospital as often, meaning less time off work and travelling.
- With fewer patients coming in when they don't need to, we can make appointments available more quickly for those that do need them.
- We can also reduce our carbon footprint by lowering the number of patients travelling to the hospital unnecessarily.

How do patient initiated follow-ups work?

If your hospital care team think that patient initiated follow-up might be suitable for you, they will discuss this with you, and you will be placed on a patient initiated follow-up pathway. This means you won't receive regular follow-up appointments and will only need to contact the service if you feel that you need an appointment.

Your hospital care team will tell you how long your pathway will last for, and you will be on a dedicated patient initiated follow-up pathway list which will be checked regularly.

In most cases, if you don't need to see your hospital care team at all within this time, you will be discharged back to your GP. They will refer you back to the hospital if you need to be seen again in the future.

There will be some exceptions to this for patients with conditions where it may not be appropriate for them to be discharged from the hospital, such as diabetes. Your hospital care team will discuss this with you and make you aware of what will happen at the end of your pathway.

If you are under the care of more than one department, it is important to remember that your patient initiated follow-up pathway doesn't apply to all of them. Some departments may still send you regular follow-up appointments and it's important that you attend these so that they are able to monitor your condition.

What you need to do?

If you are placed on a patient initiated follow-up pathway and you experience a change or worsening of your symptoms, you should, in the first instance, contact your GP or phone 111 for advice. If you need to contact the service to arrange an appointment, these details can be found on your letter or via the Trust's website.

How to book an appointment

Call the number on your letter and ask for a patient initiated follow-up appointment. To arrange an appointment, you must:

- Have been given a patient initiated follow-up pathway and discussed this with your hospital care team.
- Contact the service within the timeframe advised in your letter.

If you lose the service's contact information, please visit the Sherwood Forest Hospitals Foundation Trust website and search for 'PIFU'; here you will find your service's contact information.

Alternatively, please get in touch with The Trust's Patient Experience Team (PET) on the following relevant numbers or email and they will direct you to the service you need:

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

We want to provide the best possible care to all our patients. If you have additional needs or requirements (for example you need large print leaflets or an interpreter), please make your hospital care team aware when you book your appointment.

Frequently asked questions

How long will I have to wait for an appointment if I need one?

If you need to be seen because your symptoms have worsened, you will be given priority and offered an appointment within the timescales agreed with your hospital care team.

Why have you set a deadline for me to make an appointment?

Your pathway will last for a specific amount of time. Your hospital care team will talk to you about how long your pathway will be open and this will depend on your condition.

How do I provide feedback on my experience of the patient initiated follow-up pathway?

Following your appointment or visit, we may contact you for feedback. The Trust values feedback and undertakes surveys to gain a better understanding of the experience of our patients and to improve services.

To do this we may pass your details to our approved survey contractor, and you may be asked for feedback via text message, telephone, email, or letter.

You can also give feedback by using the following QR code or link (type the link into your browser) to complete our Friends and Family Test.

<http://ratenhs.uk/SG3zXK>

If you do not wish to participate in a survey, there will be an opt out option via the text message you receive.



Please contact our Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net if you need further assistance with your survey.

Further information

If you haven't been offered a patient initiated follow-up pathway and would like to know more about patient initiated follow-ups, please contact your care team.



Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

Information reproduced with permission of Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust

This document is intended for information purposes only and should not replace advice that your relevant health professional would give you. External websites may be referred to in specific cases. Any external websites are provided for your information and convenience. We cannot accept responsibility for the information found on them. If you require a full list of references (if relevant) for this leaflet, please email sfh-tr.patientinformation@nhs.net or telephone 01623 622515, extension 6927.

To be completed by the Communications office
Leaflet code: PIL202412-02-PIFU
Created: December 2022 / Revised: December 2024 / Review Date: December 2026